Draft

Mine Shaft Digital Billboards Project
Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration

Prepared for:

RANCHO CORDOVA
CALIFORNIA

Prepared by:

AECOM

September 2023

Draft

Mine Shaft Digital Billboards Project
Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration

Prepared for:

City of Rancho Cordova
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September 2023

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AB	Assembly Bill
amsl	above mean sea level
ANSI	American National Standards Institute
APN	Assessor's Parcel Number
BMPs	best management practices
BSA	biological study area
CAA	federal Clean Air Act
CAAQS	California ambient air quality standards
CAL FIRE	California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection
CalEEMod	California Emissions Estimator Model
Caltrans	California Department of Transportation
CARB	California Air Resources Board
CDFW	California Department of Fish and Wildlife
CEQA	California Environmental Quality Act
CEQA Guide	*Guide to Air Quality Assessment in Sacramento County*
CESA	California Environmental Species Act
CH_4	methane
City	City of Rancho Cordova
CNDDB	California Resources Agency Natural Diversity Database
CNPS	California Native Plant Society Rare Plant Inventory
CO	carbon monoxide
CO_2	carbon dioxide
CO_2e	CO_2-equivalents
Council	Cordova Community Council
CRPD	Cordova Recreation and Park District
CWA	Clean Water Act
dB	decibels
dBA	A-weighted decibels
DDT	dichlorodiphenyltrichloroethane
DOC	California Department of Conservation
DPM	diesel PM
Draft CAAP	Draft Climate Action and Adaptation Plan
DTSC	Department of Toxic Substances Control
EIR	environmental impact report
EPA	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
ESA	federal Environmental Species Act
EV	electric vehicle
fc	foot-candles
FCUSD	Folsom Cordova Unified School District
FEMA	Flood Emergency Management Agency
FHWA	Federal Highway Administration
FTA	Federal Transit Administration
GC	General Commercial

General Construction Permit	General Permit for Discharges of Storm Water Associated with Construction Activity Construction General Permit Order 2009-0009-DWQ
GHG	greenhouse gas
GWP	Global warming potential
HFCs	hydrofluorocarbons
Hz	hertz
in/sec	inches per second
IPaC	Information for Planning and Consultation
IS	initial study
ISA	International Society of Arboriculture
L_{dn}	Day-Night Noise Level
LED	light emitting diode
L_{eq}	Equivalent sound level
L_{max}	Maximum sound level
L_n	Statistical Descriptor
LRA	Local Responsibility Areas
MLD	Most Likely Descendent
MND	mitigated negative declaration
mph	miles per hour
MRZ	mineral resource zone
MT	metric tons
N_2O	nitrous oxide
NAAQS	national ambient air quality standards
NAHC	Native American Heritage Commission
NO_X	nitrogen oxides
NPDES	National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System
NWIC	Northwest Information Center
OEHHA	Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment
PFCs	perfluorocarbons
PM	particulate patter
PM_{10}	PM equal to or less than 10 micrometers in diameter
$PM_{2.5}$	particulate matter less than 2.5 microns in diameter
PPV	peak particle velocity
RCNM	Roadway Construction Noise Model
RCPD	Rancho Cordova Police Department
RMS	root-mean-square
ROG	reactive organic gases
SACRT	Sacramento Regional Transit District
SB	Senate Bill
SCGA	Sacramento Central Groundwater Authority
SF_6	sulfur hexafluoride
SFNA	Sacramento Federal Nonattainment Area
SMAQMD	Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District
SMARA	Surface Mining and Reclamation Act of 1975
SMFD	Sacramento Metropolitan Fire District
SMUD	Sacramento Municipal Utility District
SR	State Route

SSHCP	South Sacramento County Habitat Conservation Plan
State CEQA Guidelines	California Environmental Quality Act Guidelines
Superfund	Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act
SVAB	Sacramento Valley Air Basin
SWPPP	Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan
SWRCB	State Water Resources Control Board
TAC	toxic air contaminant
UDA	Urban Development Area
UL	Underwriters Laboratories
UL-E	Underwriters Laboratories Environmental
US 50	U.S. Highway 50
USACE	United States Army Corps of Engineers
USFWS	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
VdB	vibration decibel
VMT	vehicle miles traveled
µin/sec	microinch per second

1 INTRODUCTION

Section 21080(a) of the California Public Resources Code states that analysis of a project's environmental impact is required for any "discretionary projects proposed to be carried out or approved by public agencies…" In this case, the City of Rancho Cordova (City) has determined that an initial study (IS) is required to determine whether there is substantial evidence that implementing the Mine Shaft Digital Billboards project would result in significant environmental impacts.

Pursuant to Section 15063 of the California Environmental Quality Act Guidelines (CEQA Guidelines) (Title 14, California Code of Regulations, Section 15000 et seq.), an initial study is a preliminary environmental analysis that is used by the lead agency as a basis for determining whether an environmental impact report (EIR), a mitigated negative declaration (MND), or a negative declaration is required for a project. The CEQA Guidelines suggest that an initial study contain, in brief form, a project description; a description of the environmental setting; an identification of environmental effects by checklist or other similar form; an explanation of environmental effects; a discussion of mitigation for significant environmental effects; an evaluation of the project's consistency with existing, applicable land use controls; the names of persons who prepared the study; and identification of data sources used in the review of environmental impacts and the conclusions reached in the document.

Section 15070 of the CEQA Guidelines provides that a lead agency may prepare a mitigated negative declaration when (1) the initial study shows that there is no substantial evidence that the project may have a significant effect on the environment; or (2) the initial study identifies potentially significant effects, however incorporation of mitigation measures into the project would reduce all impacts to a less-than-significant level. Mitigation measures are identified to avoid, eliminate, or reduce potentially significant adverse impacts of the proposed project. Section 15064 specifies that, when an initial study identifies significant environmental impacts, the lead agency must prepare an EIR.

The analysis in this initial study concludes that the proposed project, with implementation of mitigation measures, would have no significant impacts. As such, further environmental review is not required by CEQA.

PROJECT REQUIRING ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

The Cordova Community Council (Council) is proposing to construct two advertising billboards with electronic displays on the south side of U.S. Highway 50 (US 50) and Folsom Boulevard between Sunrise Boulevard and Hazel Avenue in the City of Rancho Cordova. The signs would be located in two separate areas on an 11.4-acre parcel. Each sign would have a monopole that would support two electronic displays angled to provide line-of-sight for highway travelers. Each billboard would be 60 feet wide by 20 feet tall. The top of the east location sign would be 60 feet above ground surface. The top of the west location sign would be 70 feet above ground surface.

DOCUMENT ORGANIZATION

This initial study is organized into five chapters:

- **Chapter 1, "Introduction,"** provides summary information about the proposed project and describes the purpose and content of the initial study.

- **Chapter 2, "Project Description,"** provides the project location, project background, project objectives, detailed project description, and the needed permits and approvals.
- **Chapter 3, "Environmental Checklist,"** contains the completed initial study checklist. The checklist contains an assessment and discussion of impacts associated with each particular environmental issue. When the evaluation identifies potentially significant effects, as identified in the checklist, mitigation measures are provided to reduce such impacts to less-than-significant levels.
- **Chapter 4, "References,"** identifies the information sources used in preparing this initial study.
- **Chapter 5, "List of Preparers,"** identifies the individuals who contributed to this initial study.

Appendices contain technical information to supplement the mitigated negative declaration.

2 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The Cordova Community Council (Council) is proposing to construct two advertising billboards with electronic displays on the south side of US 50 and Folsom Boulevard between Sunrise Boulevard and Hazel Avenue in the city of Rancho Cordova. This section provides the project location, project objectives, project description, and the needed permits and approvals.

2.2 PROJECT LOCATION AND SETTING

As shown in Exhibit 2.4-1, the project site is located at 2300 Mine Shaft Lane in the city of Rancho Cordova. The total project site is approximately 11.40 acres in total land area and identified by the Sacramento County Assessor to include Assessor's Parcel Number (APN): 072-0231-014 (Exhibit 2.4-1). The current general plan land use designation is Folsom Boulevard Planning Area, and the current zoning is General Commercial (GC). The project site is a former mini-golf course with a building and associated parking lot. The site is level and mostly covered with hardscape surfaces, although it does contain ruderal grassland and trees, with the greatest extent west of the existing building. It is bordered by light rail tracks, Folsom Boulevard, and US 50 to the north. The site is bordered by Folsom South Canal on the south side. The unincorporated community of Gold River is located north of US 50, and to the south is open space and industrial uses.

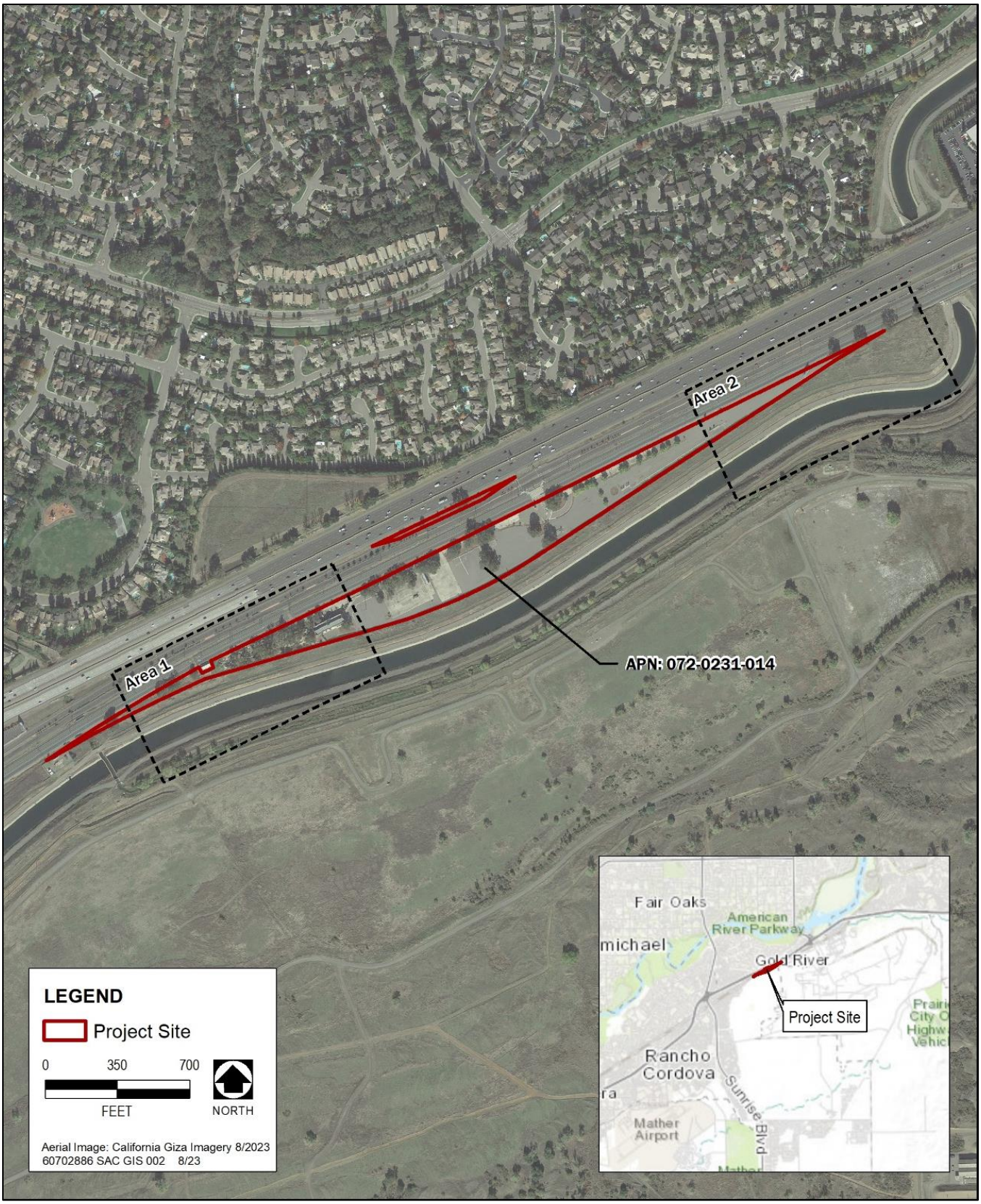
2.3 PROJECT OBJECTIVES

The Council, the project proponent, was founded in 1959 as an "organization of organizations," a forum for citizens to meet and plan community events. The development and long-term lease of two digital freeway billboards is a critical component of a strategy that would provide the Council with long-term financial stability to carry out its mission. The project proponent understands that the marketplace for one or more digital freeway billboards along the US 50 corridor is limited. At some point in the near future, the City of Folsom, or Sacramento County may approve one or more digital billboards in this same corridor. If this happens before digital freeway billboards are approved for the Mine Shaft property, the moment of opportunity will be lost, market value for the proposed billboards will be diminished, and the City of Rancho Cordova will lose the chance to have input into this advertising delivery system. The following project objectives have been identified:

- Develop a revenue source for the Cordova Community Council from the ownership of two digital billboards.
- Provide a productive use for a currently unused property located near US 50.
- Provide the City of Rancho Cordova and community groups with a medium for communicating to area residents.

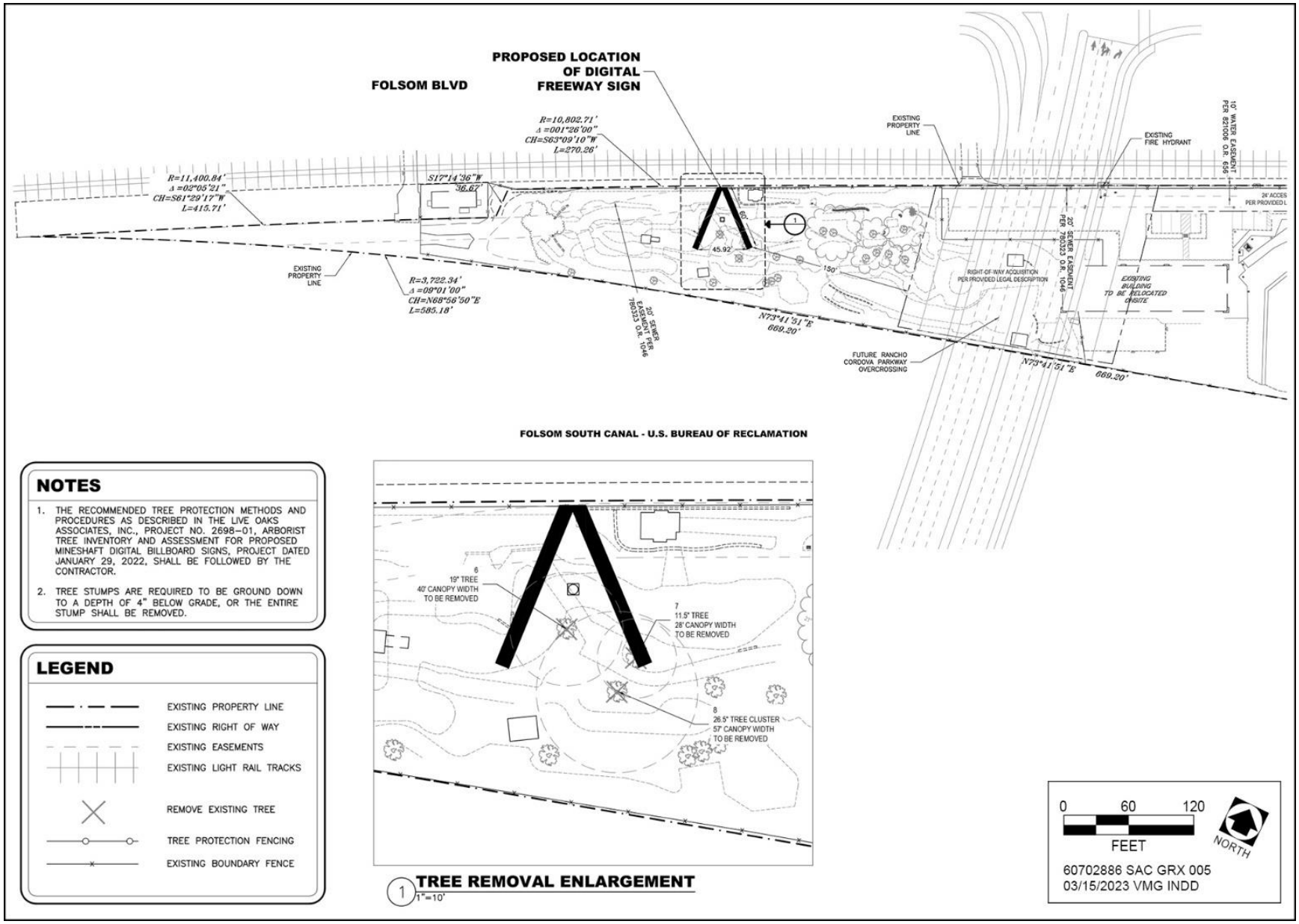
2.4 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Council is proposing to construct two digital billboards on the 11.4-acre project site. The billboards would be located in two separate areas on the parcel, as shown on Exhibit 2.4-1. Exhibit 2.4-2 shows the site plan for the west location sign (Area 1). Exhibit 2.4-3 shows the site plan for the east location sign (Area 2). The west location sign would be located approximately 150 feet west of the planned right-of-way of the future Rancho Cordova



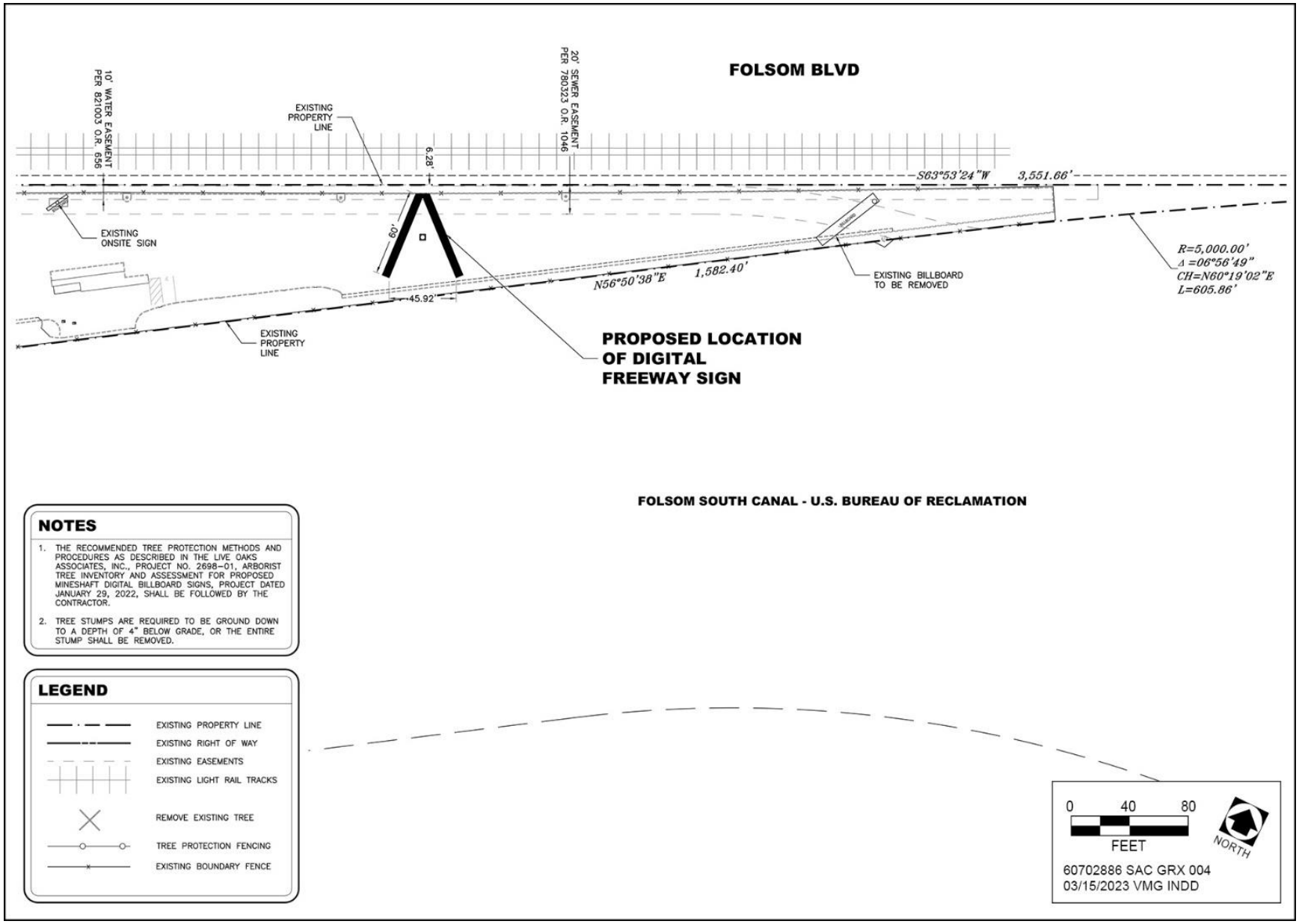
Source: AECOM 2023

Exhibit 2.4-1 Project Site Location



Source: RCS Engineering; adapted AECOM 2023

Exhibit 2.4-2 Site Plan – West Location (Area 1)



Source: RCS Engineering; adapted AECOM 2023

Exhibit 2.4-3 Site Plan – East Location (Area 2)

Parkway overcrossing. The east location sign would be located approximately 250 feet east of an existing billboard sign related to the previous land use. Both billboards would be located near the northern property line.

Each sign would have a monopole that would support two electronic displays angled to provide line-of-sight for highway travelers. Each billboard would be 60 feet wide by 20 feet tall. Exhibit 2.4-4 shows the plan view of the west location, as well as a photo-simulation of the sign as viewed from eastbound US 50. The top of the west location sign would be 70 feet above ground surface. Exhibit 2.4-4 also shows the sign in relation to the planned Rancho Cordova Parkway Interchange Project (City of Rancho Cordova and Caltrans. 2014) that would span the highway just east of the west location sign. Exhibit 2.4-5 shows the plan view of the east location sign, as well as a photo-simulation of the sign as viewed from eastbound US 50. The top of the east location sign would be 60 feet above ground surface.

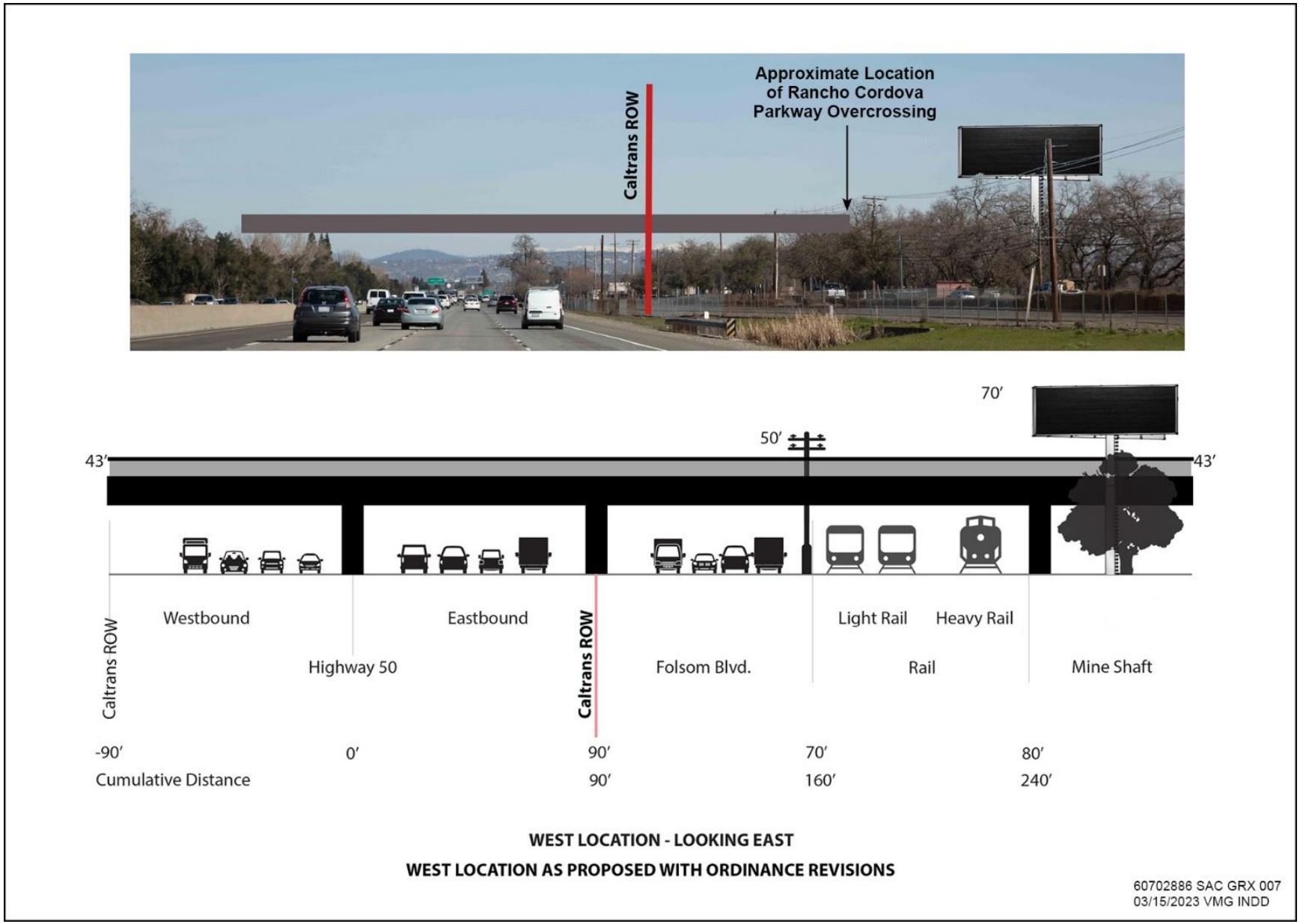
2.4.1 CONSTRUCTION

Access to the project site would be through the existing driveway on the south side of Folsom Boulevard at approximately the mid-point of the site. A small amount of fill would be trucked in to cover on-site concrete drainage ditches to temporarily allow equipment to access the construction sites. The staging for construction of the west location sign would be east of the sign between the location of a planned highway overpass and the sign structure (see Exhibit 2.4-2). Minor grading by a backhoe and removal of 20 trees would be required to clear the construction site and staging area for construction of the west location sign, 3 to clear the footprint for the sign itself and the other 17 for the staging area. To prevent soil erosion and water quality impacts during construction, the proposed project would incorporate best management practices (BMPs) during construction, such as silt fencing, storm drain inlet protection, dewatering and proper material and waste storage. The construction staging area for the east location sign would be immediately to the west, and no grading or tree removal would be required. However, to improve visibility of the east location digital billboards from US 50, 7 trees would be removed from a small area between Folsom Boulevard and the eastbound lane of US 50. This area is shown on Exhibit 2.4-1. Combined with the tree removal on the project site, the project would involve the removal of 27 trees in total.

The prefabricated sign structures would be delivered by truck and assembled in the staging areas. An auger would be used to bore 4-foot-diameter by 50-foot-deep holes, which would involve removal of approximately 8 cubic yards of excess fill for each sign foundation. A crane would be used to install the monopoles in the holes and lift the sign parts in the air for attachment to the monopoles. Construction would not affect the existing on-site water, sewer, and drainage facilities. Electric service to the project site would be provided by Sacramento Municipal Utility District. Electrical lines could be extended either underground or aboveground from existing infrastructure to the sign locations. Construction of both digital billboards is anticipated to occur in fall 2023, and the duration of construction would be approximately one month.

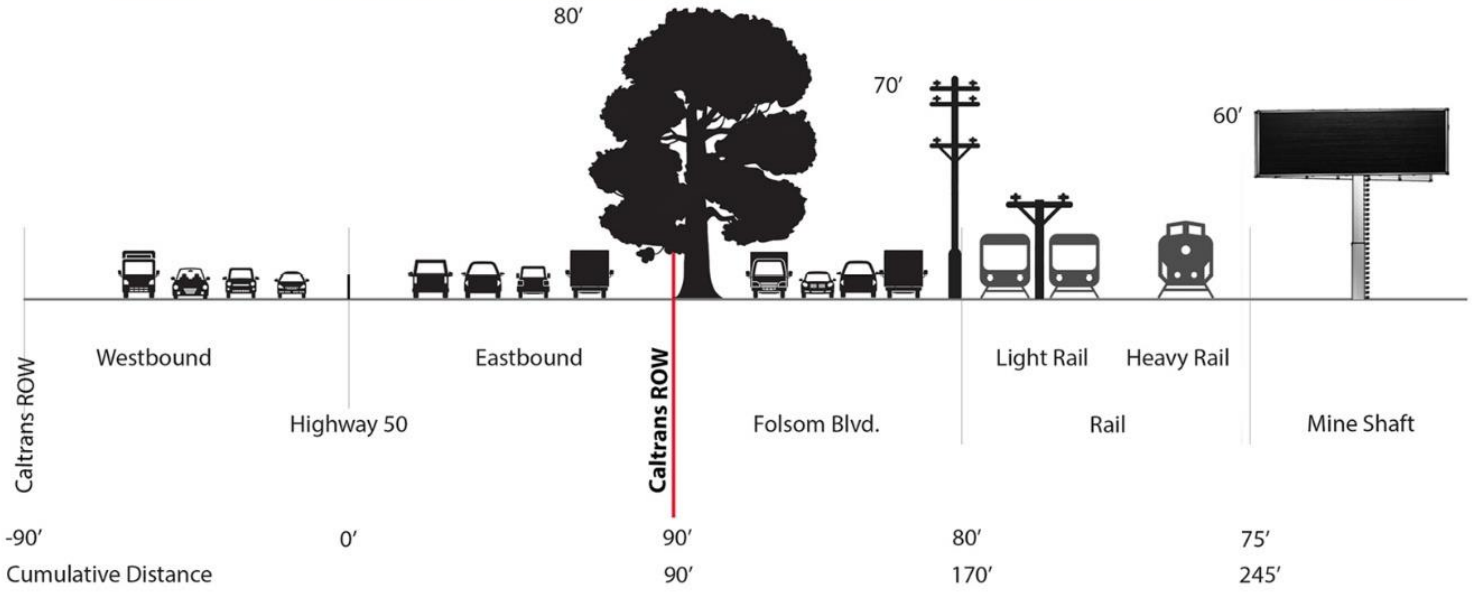
2.4.2 OPERATION

The billboards would be operated 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year. The electronic messages would be static, with no movement. The minimum display time for each message would be 8 seconds. Brightness would be 0.3 candles above ambient light. The brightness would automatically adjust up or down based on ambient light conditions.



Source: Primero Outdoor Media; adapted AECOM 2023

Exhibit 2.4-4 Plan View – West Location



Source: Primero Outdoor Media ; adapted AECOM 2023

Exhibit 2.4-5 Plan View – East Location (Area 2)

2.4.3 CITY DISCRETIONARY AND MINISTERIAL ACTIONS

Discretionary approvals and permits are required by the lead agency, the City of Rancho Cordova, for implementation of the proposed project and include:

- Site Design Review – Two (2) Digital Freeway Signs
- Conditional Use Permits
- CEQA Document Certification
- Operating Use Agreement

In addition, the proposed project would require the following ministerial entitlements from the City of Rancho Cordova for construction:

- Demolition permits
- Grading permits
- Building permit

3 ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST

PROJECT INFORMATION		
1.	Project Title:	Mine Shaft Digital Billboards Project
2.	Lead Agency:	City of Rancho Cordova
3.	Contact Person and Phone Number:	Arlene Granadosin-Jones, AICP Senior Planner City of Rancho Cordova Planning Department 2729 Prospect Park Drive Rancho Cordova, CA 95670
4.	Project Location:	2300 Mine Shaft Lane in the City of Rancho Cordova Assessor's Parcel Number: 072-0231-014
5.	Project Sponsor	Cordova Community Council
6.	General Plan Designation:	Folsom Boulevard Planning Area
7.	Zoning:	General Commercial
8.	Description of Project:	

The Cordova Community Council (Council) is proposing to construct two advertising billboards with electronic displays on the south side of Highway 50 and Folsom Boulevard between Sunrise Boulevard and Hazel Avenue in the City of Rancho Cordova. The billboards would be located in two separate areas on an 11.4-acre parcel. Each sign would have a monopole that would support two electronic displays angled to provide line-of-sight for highway travelers. Each billboard would be 60 feet wide by 20 feet tall. The top of the east location sign would be 60 feet above ground surface. The top of the west location sign would be 70 feet above ground surface.

9.	Surrounding Land Uses and Setting:	The project site is bordered by light rail tracks, Folsom Boulevard, and Highway 50 to the north. The site is bordered by Folsom South Canal on the south side. The unincorporated community of Gold River is located north of Highway 50, and to the south is open space and industrial uses.
10:	Other public agencies whose approval may be required:	None

ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS POTENTIALLY AFFECTED:

The environmental factors checked below would be potentially affected by this project, involving at least one impact that is a "Potentially Significant Impact" as indicated by the checklist on the following pages.

☐ Aesthetics	☐ Agriculture & Forestry Resources	☒ Air Quality
☒ Biological Resources	☒ Cultural Resources	☐ Geology & Soils
☐ Greenhouse Gas Emissions	☐ Hazards & Hazardous Materials	☐ Hydrology & Water Quality
☐ Land Use & Planning	☐ Mineral Resources	☐ Noise
☐ Population & Housing	☐ Public Services	☐ Recreation
☐ Transportation/Traffic	☒ Tribal Cultural Resources	☐ Utilities & Service Systems
☒ Mandatory Findings of Significance		

DETERMINATION (To be completed by the Lead Agency)

On the basis of this initial evaluation:

☐ I find that the proposed project **COULD NOT** have a significant effect on the environment, and a **NEGATIVE DECLARATION** will be prepared.

☒ I find that although the proposed project COULD have a significant effect on the environment, there WILL NOT be a significant effect in this case because revisions in the project have been made by or agreed to by the project proponent. A **MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION** will be prepared.

☐ I find that the proposed project **MAY** have a significant effect on the environment, and an **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT** is required.

☐ I find that the proposed project **MAY** have a "potentially significant impact" or "potentially significant unless mitigated" impact on the environment, but at least one effect 1) has been adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and 2) has been addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis as described on attached sheets. An **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT** is required, but it must analyze only the effects that remain to be addressed.

☐ I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, because all potentially significant effects (a) have been analyzed adequately in an earlier **EIR** or **NEGATIVE DECLARATION** pursuant to applicable standards, and (b) have been avoided or mitigated pursuant to that earlier **EIR** or **NEGATIVE DECLARATION**, including revisions or mitigation measures that are imposed upon the proposed project, nothing further is required.

A. Granadosin-Jones — 09/28/23

Signature — Date

Arlene Granadosin-Jones — Senior Planner

Printed Name — Title

City of Rancho Cordova

Agency

EVALUATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

1. A brief explanation is required for all answers except "No Impact" answers that are adequately supported by the information sources a lead agency cites in the parentheses following each question. A "No Impact" answer is adequately supported if the referenced information sources show that the impact simply does not apply to projects like the one involved (e.g., the project falls outside a fault rupture zone). A "No Impact" answer should be explained where it is based on project-specific factors as well as general standards (e.g., the project will not expose sensitive receptors to pollutants, based on a project-specific screening analysis).

2. All answers must take account of the whole action involved, including off-site as well as on-site, cumulative as well as project-level, indirect as well as direct, and construction as well as operational impacts.

3. Once the lead agency has determined that a particular physical impact may occur, then the checklist answers must indicate whether the impact is potentially significant, less than significant with mitigation, or less than significant. "Potentially Significant Impact" is appropriate if there is substantial evidence that an effect may be significant. If there are one or more "Potentially Significant Impact" entries when the determination is made, an EIR is required.

4. "Negative Declaration: Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated" applies where the incorporation of mitigation measures has reduced an effect from "Potentially Significant Impact" to a "Less Than Significant Impact." The lead agency must describe the mitigation measures, and briefly explain how they reduce the effect to a less than significant level (mitigation measures from "Earlier Analyses," as described in (5) below, may be cross-referenced).

5. Earlier analyses may be used where, pursuant to the tiering, program EIR, or other CEQA process, an effect has been adequately analyzed in an earlier EIR or negative declaration. Section 15063(c)(3)(D). In this case, a brief discussion should identify the following:
   a) Earlier Analysis Used. Identify and state where they are available for review.
   b) Impacts Adequately Addressed. Identify which effects from the above checklist were within the scope of and adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and state whether such effects were addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis.
   c) Mitigation Measures. For effects that are "Less than Significant with Mitigation Measures Incorporated," describe the mitigation measures which were incorporated or refined from the earlier document and the extent to which they address site-specific conditions for the project.

6. Lead agencies are encouraged to incorporate into the checklist references to information sources for potential impacts (e.g., general plans, zoning ordinances). Reference to a previously prepared or outside document should, where appropriate, include a reference to the page or pages where the statement is substantiated.

7. Supporting Information Sources: A source list should be attached, and other sources used or individuals contacted should be cited in the discussion.

8. This is only a suggested form, and lead agencies are free to use different formats; however, lead agencies should normally address the questions from this checklist that are relevant to a project's environmental effects in whatever format is selected.

9. The explanation of each issue should identify:
   a) the significance criteria or threshold, if any, used to evaluate each question; and
   b) the mitigation measure identified, if any, to reduce the impact to a less-than-significant level.

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3.1 AESTHETICS

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
I. Aesthetics. Would the project:				
a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a State scenic highway?	☐	☐	☐	☒
c) In nonurbanized areas, substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings? If the project is in an urbanized area, would the project conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality?	☐	☐	☒	☐
d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?	☐	☐	☒	☐

3.1.1 SETTING

VISUAL CHARACTER OF THE PROJECT SITE

The project site is located in an urban area (U.S. Census Bureau 2020). The project site is a former mini-golf course with a building and associated parking lot and is surrounded by a chain-link fence. The site has nearly level topography and is mostly covered with hardscape surfaces, although it does contain ruderal grassland and trees, with the most existing vegetation focused in the area west of the existing on-site building. The project site is bordered by SACRT (Sacramento Regional Transit District) light rail tracks, Folsom Boulevard, and US 50 to the north. The site is bordered by Folsom South Canal on the south side. The unincorporated community of Gold River is located north of US 50, and to the south is open space and industrial uses.

Views across the project site to the north are the railroad, road, and highway uses to the north and west, with a structure at the end of the parking lot. Views from the project to the south include Folsom South Canal and Buffalo Creek to the south and east. The visual quality of the project site is low because of the surrounding urbanized environment (i.e., adjacent commercial uses and nearby industrial uses). And although the north side of the project site contains some native oak trees, overall, the site does not contain any unique visual features or landscape characteristics that influence visual quality. In addition, the project site has no cultural visual resources (e.g., buildings) or rock outcroppings and is not located such that it would be visible from a State scenic highway.

Exhibit 3.1-1 and Exhibit 3.1-2 show current site conditions from two viewpoints. Viewpoint 1 shows the site looking east toward the existing billboard at the eastern end of the parcel. Viewpoint 2 shows the northern periphery of the site along the light rail tracks looking west.

Source: AECOM 2023

Exhibit 3.1-1 Viewpoint 1

Source: AECOM 2023

Exhibit 3.1-2 Viewpoint 2

VISUAL CHARACTER OF THE SURROUNDING AREA

The visual character surrounding the project site consists of residential, commercial, office, open space, and various transportation uses. The site is bordered to the north by SACRT light rail tracks, Folsom Boulevard, and US 50. The site is bordered by Folsom South Canal on the south side. The unincorporated community of Gold River is located north of US 50, and to the south is open space and industrial uses.

A residential neighborhood comprised mostly of detached, single-story single-family residences is located approximately 400 feet north of the project site on the north side of US 50. The rear yards of these residences include ornamental trees, landscaping, and a berm elevated sound wall that backs up along US 50. These features tend to screen views of the project site. The Folsom South Canal and Buffalo Creek border the project site to the south and east. It is separated from the project site by a chain link fence and adjacent open space that is mostly covered with grassland and scattered trees. South of the canal and creek is the Westborough Planning Area, an approximately 1,665-acre undeveloped area that is planned for a mix of uses, including open space bordering the project site, as well as residential and employment uses. There are commercial businesses and offices to the east of the project site, the two closest being Beck's Furniture & Sleep and E Health, a health insurance agency.

Views of the project site would be best seen by motorists traveling on from Folsom Boulevard and US 50. Viewers of the project site would also include passengers on the SACRT light rail transit, as well as employees and patrons of local businesses east of the project site. The overpass for the planned Rancho Cordova Parkway Interchange Project (City of Rancho Cordova and Caltrans. 2014) would cross the site approximately 150 feet east of the proposed west location sign.

SCENIC HIGHWAYS AND CORRIDORS

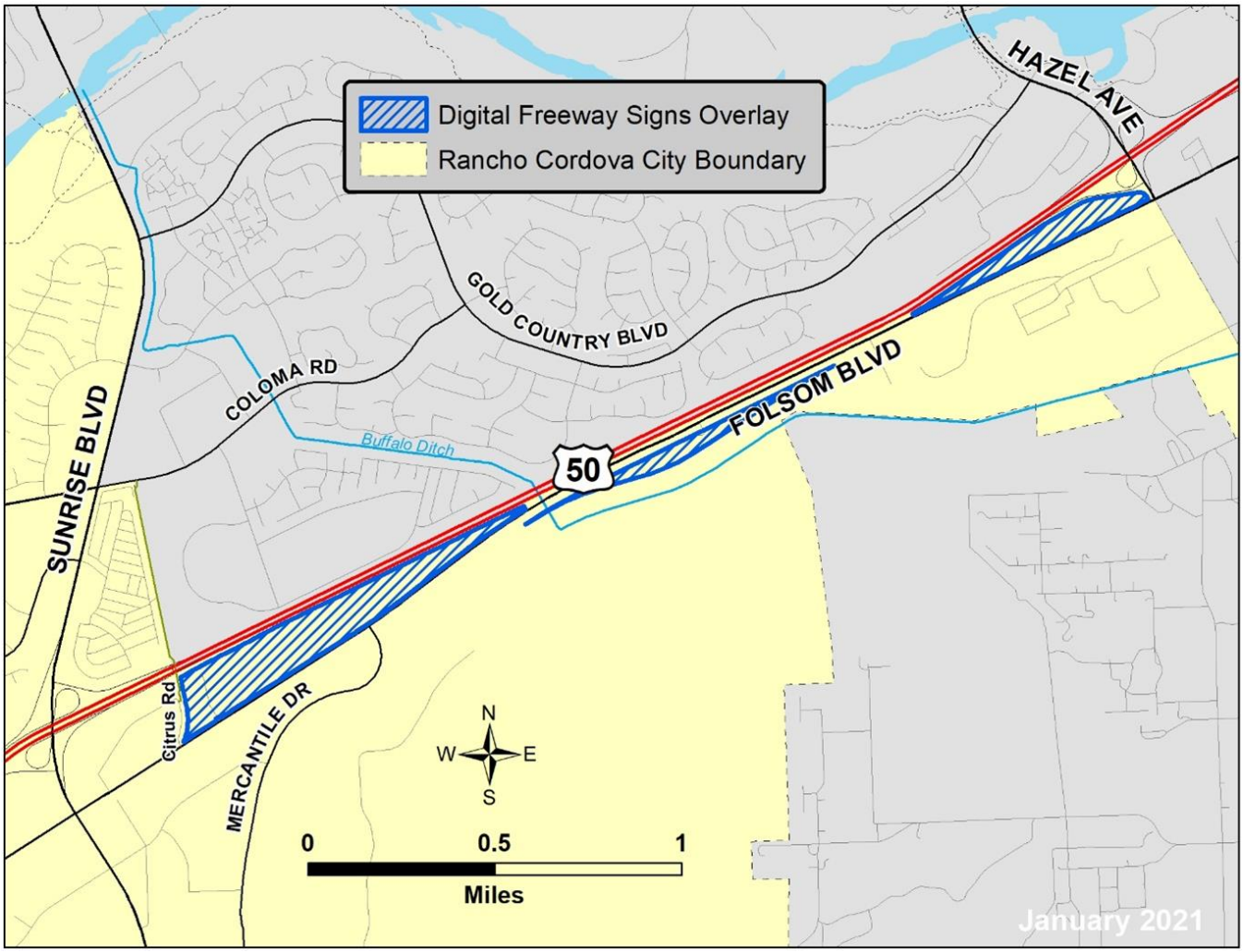
The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) manages the State's Scenic Highways Program. There are no California State Scenic Highways located at or nearby the project site. The nearest State scenic highway, State Route (SR) 160, is over 17 miles west of the proposed project area (California Department of Transportation 2019). Additionally, the project site and surrounding vicinity do not include any State or County-designated vistas (California Department of Transportation 2019).

LIGHT AND GLARE

The project site is in an urbanized environment and is surrounded by existing sources of light and glare. These sources include existing streetlights along Folsom Boulevard and within residential areas north of the project site, exterior lighting on commercial buildings to the east, parking lot lighting, illuminated signage, reflective building material, and vehicular headlights. The project site is currently vacant, and existing parking lot lighting is not in use.

CITY OF RANCHO CORDOVA DIGITAL FREEWAY SIGN STANDARDS

Section 23.743.150 (Digital Freeway Signs Overlay) of the City of Rancho Cordova Municipal Code, allows for consideration of digital freeway signs in certain, specific locations within the city with a use permit and a digital freeway signs operating agreement (City of Rancho Cordova 2022). The digital freeway signs overlay encompasses three specific geographies in the northeastern area of the city, including the mineshaft area. These locations are shown on Exhibit 3.1-3. Section 23.743.150 (C.) includes the following development standards:



Source: City of Rancho Cordova 2022

Exhibit 3.1-3 Digital Freeway Signs Overlay Location

- Legally existing billboards may be refurbished to become a digital freeway sign, subject to the development standards below and issuance of a conditional use permit.
- A digital freeway sign may consist of, at most, two digital display areas, each positioned to be visible only by opposing directions of traffic. Double-faced signs shall not have an interior angle between the face of the panels greater than 45 degrees.
- The maximum height shall be 60 feet.
- The maximum area of each digital display area is 672 square feet.
- Distance between Signs. No digital freeway sign shall be located within 2,500 feet of any other digital freeway sign within the city limits.
- The sign structure supporting and surrounding the digital display area shall be as small as feasibly possible so as to avoid any unnecessary height or width to the sign. The sign structure shall not add stylistic or architectural detailing to further call attention to the sign.

- Decorative pole covering is required for newly constructed digital freeway signs as well as any existing traditional billboard that is converted to a digital freeway sign. Such covering shall be simple and streamlined in material and design so as to not call further attention to the sign.
- Digital freeway signs shall display static messages only, and shall not have animation, movement, or the appearance or optical illusion of movement in or on any part of the sign structure, design, or pictorial segment of the sign. Each static message shall not include flashing or scintillating lighting or varying light intensity.
- Each message on the sign must be displayed for a minimum of eight seconds.
- Digital freeway signs shall not operate at brightness levels of more than 0.3 foot-candles above ambient light, as measured using a foot-candle meter at a distance of 250 feet from the sign face. Each digital display area shall have a light sensing device that will adjust the brightness of the sign as ambient light conditions change throughout the day.
- The sign will not require substantial trimming or reduction of existing vegetation and landscaping. The sign will not obstruct or obscure on-site signs on the same or adjacent properties.
- The sign shall not create a visibility hazard to traffic on adjacent streets, freeways, or parking areas. The sign will not reduce parking availability as required by this title. The sign will not interfere with on-site vehicular circulation.

CALIFORNIA CODE OF REGULATIONS: TITLE 4, DIVISION 6, CHAPTER 1 OUTDOOR ADVERTISING

Outdoor advertising displays require a permit from Caltrans if they are within 660 feet from the edge of the right-of-way and viewed primarily by persons traveling on the main-traveled way of the freeway (Caltrans 1998). The northern edge of the project site is approximately 150 feet from the edge of right-of-way of US 50.

3.1.2 DISCUSSION

Because the project site is located in an urban area, the discussion under checklist question c) will address the project conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality.

a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?

No Impact. A scenic vista is generally considered a view of an area that has remarkable scenery or a resource that is indigenous to the area. The City of Rancho Cordova has no officially designated scenic vistas in the vicinity of the project site. The project site consists of a vacant urban lot with nearly level topography surrounded by existing developed properties. As described in the Project Description (Section 2), Exhibit 2.4-2 shows the sign in relation to the planned Rancho Cordova Parkway Overcrossing that would span the highway just east of the west location sign and Exhibit 2.4-3 shows the plan view of the east location sign, as well as a photo-simulation of the sign as viewed from eastbound US 50. Refer to Exhibit 2.4-4 and Exhibit 2.4-5 for photo simulations and a Plan View of the West Location (Exhibit 2.4-4) and a Plan View of the East Location (Exhibit 2.4-5). These figures demonstrate the poor visual quality of the site and the lack of scenic vistas in the surrounding areas.

b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a State scenic highway?

No Impact. The project site is not located along a State scenic highway, nor does it contain any other scenic resources, such as rock outcroppings or historic buildings (California Department of Transportation 2019). The

nearest State scenic highway, SR 160, is over 17 miles west of the proposed project area (California Department of Transportation 2019).

c) If the project is in an urbanized area, would the project conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality?

Less than Significant. The proposed project is construction and operation of two advertising billboards with electronic displays on the south side of US 50 and Folsom Boulevard between Sunrise Boulevard and Hazel Avenue in the City of Rancho Cordova. This is an urban area consisting of commercial uses northeast of the project site and residential uses north of the project site. As stated under checklist item a), the visual quality of the project site is low because of the surrounding urbanized environment and because the project site does not contain any unique visual features or landscape characteristics that influence visual quality. In addition, the overpass for the Rancho Cordova Parkway Interchange Project (City of Rancho Cordova and Caltrans 2014) will cross the project site approximately 150 feet east of the west sign location.

The proposed project would require site design review and conditional use permits from the City of Rancho Cordova. In addition, the project would be required to meet the city's digital freeway sign standards (Section 23.743.150 of the municipal code) or obtain variances as allowed. For example, the east location sign (Exhibit 2.4-5) is proposed to meet the 60 feet height limit, while the west location sign (Exhibit 2.4-4) is proposed to be 70 feet in height and would require a variance. The two digital billboards would be located approximately 2,900 feet apart and, therefore, meet the requirement that no digital freeway sign shall be located within 2,500 feet of any other digital freeway sign within the city limits. In addition, the billboards would not operate at brightness levels of more than 0.3 foot-candles above ambient light, automatically adjusting as ambient light conditions change. The digital billboards would have display areas of 1,200 square feet, which is greater than the 672 feet specified in the ordinance. However, the project proponent has requested a deviation from this standard, as is allowed under the digital freeway signs operating agreement with the city. The operating agreement will also require removal of the existing billboard located at the east end of the project site. Finally, as the project site is within 660 feet of a Caltrans right-of-way (US 50), it would be subject to Caltrans permit requirements and applicable standards for outdoor advertising displays.

Construction at the west sign location would involve the removal of 20 trees for installation of the monopole and for preparation of a staging area associated with the planned highway overpass to the east. In addition, to improve visibility of this sign from US 50, 7 trees would be removed from a small area between Folsom Boulevard and the eastbound lane of US 50. This area is shown on Exhibit 2.4-1. The project would conform with the City of Rancho Cordova Tree Preservation Ordinance. Ordinarily, the ordinance requires applicants who are granted permits to remove protected trees to prepare and implement a tree replacement plan. However, since there is no suitable location to replace trees on site, and there are no designated off-site locations, in-lieu fee payments would be made instead.

Because the proposed project would comply with city regulations governing location and design for digital freeway signs as well as a digital signs operating agreement with the city and comply with the City of Rancho Cordova Tree Preservation Ordinance, the proposed project would not conflict with any applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality.

d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?

Less than Significant. The operation of both proposed advertising billboards with electronic displays would introduce new sources of lighting. However, the billboards would incorporate light sensing technology that would automatically adjust the brightness of the sign as ambient light conditions change throughout the day so that the brightness level would remain at 0.3 foot-candles (fc) above ambient light, as measured using a foot-candle meter at a distance of 250 feet from the sign face, as required by Section 23.743.150 (Digital Freeway Signs Overlay) of the City of Rancho Cordova Municipal Code.

A foot-candle is a measurement of light intensity. One foot-candle is defined as enough light to saturate a one-foot square with one lumen of light. One lumen of light is approximately equal to the amount of light put out by one birthday candle that is one foot away from you. To put this in perspective, the average incandescent light bulb that is one foot away from you is about 100 watts, which is 1.6 foot-candles. As an example of how the project would adjust to ambient light conditions, unobstructed full sunlight shining on the project area on a sunny day at noon is estimated to be about 10,000 fc, and in this case, the sign would illuminate to 10000.3 fc (Facility Solutions Group 2019). An average night has about 0.005 fc, so at that time, the digital billboards' brightness would be 0.305 fc (Facility Solutions Group 2019). Thus, the billboards would never be much brighter compared to ambient conditions than a single birthday candle or incandescent lightbulb viewed from 1 foot away. In this case, the light would be measured by a foot-candle meter from 250 feet away, so 0.3 candles above ambient light would be the equivalent of looking at about 75 birthday candles from 250 feet away. It should be noted that ambient conditions include standard streetlights on Folsom Boulevard, standard streetlights on the nearby Tenderfoot Drive. As noted above, existing parking lot lighting is not in use.

Construction activities are expected to last one month and would occur during the day and would not require nighttime lighting or other sources of light or glare. Therefore, for the reasons discussed above, the project would not create a substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area.

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3.2 AGRICULTURE & FORESTRY RESOURCES

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
II. Agriculture and Forestry Resources. In determining whether impacts to agricultural resources are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to the California Agricultural Land Evaluation and Site Assessment Model (1997, as updated) prepared by the California Department of Conservation as an optional model to use in assessing impacts on agriculture and farmland. In determining whether impacts to forest resources, including timberland, are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to information compiled by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection regarding the state's inventory of forest land, including the Forest and Range Assessment Project and the Forest Legacy Assessment project; and forest carbon measurement methodology provided in Forest Protocols adopted by the California Air Resources Board. Would the project:				
a) Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use or a Williamson Act contract?	☐	☐	☐	☒
c) Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code section 12220(g)), timberland (as defined by Public Resources Code section 4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code section 51104(g))?	☐	☐	☐	☒
d) Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?	☐	☐	☐	☒
e) Involve other changes in the existing environment, which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?	☐	☐	☐	☒

3.2.1 SETTING

The project site is a former mini-golf course with a building and associated parking lot, and no records were found indicating that this land has been used for agriculture in the last century. The project site and surrounding area are not zoned for agricultural uses (see Section 3.10, "Land Use and Planning," for further discussion).

The California Department of Conservation's Important Farmland classifications—Prime Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance, Unique Farmland, and Farmland of Local Importance—recognize the land's suitability for agricultural production by considering the physical and chemical characteristics of the soil, such as soil temperature range, depth of the groundwater table, flooding potential, rock fragment content, and rooting depth. The classifications also consider location, growing season, and moisture available to sustain high-yield crops. Together, Important Farmland and Grazing Land are defined by the California Department of Conservation as "Agricultural Land" (California Public Resources Code, Sections 21060.1 and 21095).

Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines focuses the analysis on conversion of agricultural land on Prime Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance, or Unique Farmland; therefore, any conversion of these lands would be considered a significant impact under CEQA. According to the Sacramento County Important Farmland map, published by the California Department of Conservation's Division of Land Resource Protection, the project site and adjacent lands are designated as Urban and Built-Up Land. This is land that is used for residential, industrial, commercial, institutional, and public utility structures and for other developed purposes (California Department of Conservation [DOC] 2018a). The California Department of Conservation does not consider Urban and Built-Up Land to be Important Farmland.

Under the California Land Conservation Act of 1965, also known as the Williamson Act, local governments can enter into contracts with private property owners to protect land (within agricultural preserves) for agricultural and open space purposes. No parcels within or adjacent to the project site are under Williamson Act contracts (DOC 2018b).

Public Resources Code Section 12220(g) defines forest land as land than can support 10-percent native tree cover of any species, including hardwoods, under natural conditions, and that allows for management of one or more forest resources, including timber, aesthetics, fish and wildlife, biodiversity, water quality, recreation, and other public benefits. An arborist survey (Appendix B) conducted in June 2022 recorded 81 native oak trees and 2 non-native palm trees within the project site. While the western portion of the project site has a tree canopy that exceeds 10 percent cover, these trees do not exist within natural conditions. There is no land that qualifies as forestland within the project site.

3.2.2 DISCUSSION

a) Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?

No Impact. As discussed previously, the project site and surrounding areas are designated by the Sacramento County Important Farmland map, published by the California Department of Conservation's Division of Land Resource Protection, as Urban and Built-Up Land (DOC 2018a). Urban and Built-Up Land is not considered

Important Farmland under CEQA (Public Resources Code Sections 21060.1 and 21095 and CEQA Guidelines Appendix G). Therefore, the conversion of this land would not be considered a significant impact.

b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use or a Williamson Act contract?

No Impact. The project site and surrounding area are not zoned for agricultural uses. No parcels within or adjacent to the project site are under Williamson Act contracts (DOC 2018b). Therefore, the proposed project would not conflict with existing zoning for agricultural uses or a Williamson Act contract.

c) Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code section 12220(g)), timberland (as defined by Public Resources Code section 4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code section 51104(g))?

No Impact. The project site is not zoned as forestland, timberland, or a Timberland Production Zone. Therefore, the proposed project would not conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forestry resources.

d) Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?

No Impact. Approximately 20 native oak trees would be removed from the project site, and an additional 7 native oak trees would be removed from a small area between Folsom Boulevard and the eastbound side of US 50. While there are areas within the project site that have a tree canopy that exceeds 10 percent cover, these trees do not exist within natural conditions; thus, there is no land that qualifies as forestland within the project site. Therefore, implementation of the proposed project would not result in conversion of forest land to non-forest use.

e) Involve other changes in the existing environment, which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?

No Impact. See responses to items a) and d) above. Because no agricultural land uses or forestland are present within or adjacent to the project site, implementing the project would not result in other changes in the physical environment that cause the conversion of agricultural land, including Important Farmland, to non-agricultural uses or cause conversion of forestland to non-forest uses.

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3.3 AIR QUALITY

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
III. Air Quality. Where available, the significance criteria established by the applicable air quality management or air pollution control district may be relied on to make the following determinations. Would the project:				
a) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?	☐	☒	☐	☐
b) Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard?	☐	☒	☐	☐
c) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?	☐	☐	☒	☐
d) Result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people?	☐	☐	☒	☐

3.3.1 SETTING

The project site is located in the city of Rancho Cordova, which is within the Sacramento Valley Air Basin (SVAB). The Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District (SMAQMD) regulates air quality within the SVAB.

Air quality is defined as the concentration of pollutants in relation to their impact on human health. Ambient concentrations of air pollutants are determined by the amount of emissions released by pollutant sources and the ability of the atmosphere to transport and dilute such emissions. Natural factors that affect transport and dilution include terrain, wind, atmospheric stability, and the presence of sunlight. Therefore, existing air quality conditions in the project area are influenced by factors such as topography, meteorology, and climate, as well as the quantity emissions released by air pollutant sources.

The SVAB climate is characterized by hot, dry summers and cool, rainy winters. Typically, winds transport air pollutants northward out of the SVAB; however, during approximately half of the time from July to September, the wind pattern shifts southward, blowing air pollutants back into the SVAB and exacerbating the concentration of air pollutant emissions in the air basin. In addition, between winter storms, high pressure and light winds contribute to low-level temperature inversions and stable atmospheric conditions, resulting in the concentration of air pollutants.

Individual air pollutants at certain concentrations may adversely affect human or animal health, reduce visibility, damage property, and reduce the productivity or vigor of crops and natural vegetation. Six air pollutants have been identified by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the California Air Resources Board (CARB) as being of concern both on a nationwide and statewide level: ozone; carbon monoxide; nitrogen dioxide; sulfur dioxide; lead; and particulate patter (PM), which is subdivided into two classes based on particle size – PM equal to or less than 10 micrometers in diameter (PM_{10}) and PM equal to or less than 2.5 micrometers in diameter ($PM_{2.5}$).

Health-based air quality standards have been established for these pollutants by EPA at the national level and by CARB at the state level. These standards are referred to as the national ambient air quality standards (NAAQS) and the California ambient air quality standards (CAAQS), respectively. The NAAQS and CAAQS were established to protect the public with a margin of safety from adverse health impacts caused by exposure to air pollution. Both EPA and CARB designate areas of California as "attainment," "nonattainment," "maintenance," or "unclassified" for the various pollutant standards according to the federal Clean Air Act (CAA) and the California Clean Air Act, respectively. Because the air quality standards for these air pollutants are regulated using human and environment health-based criteria, they are commonly referred to as "criteria air pollutants." With respect to regional air quality, the SMAQMD region is currently designated as nonattainment for the NAAQS and CAAQS for ozone, and nonattainment for the NAAQS for 24-hour $PM_{2.5}$, and the CAAQS for PM_{10} (SMAQMD 2017). The SMAQMD region is designated as an attainment area for all other criteria air pollutants (SMAQMD 2017).

3.3.2 THRESHOLDS OF SIGNIFICANCE

The SMAQMD published the *Guide to Air Quality Assessment in Sacramento County* (CEQA Guide), which provides air quality guidance when preparing CEQA documents (SMAQMD 2020). This document presents the SMAQMD's CEQA thresholds of significance for construction and operational emissions. Table 3.3-1 lists the SMAQMD recommended thresholds of significance for criteria pollutant emissions.

Table 3.3-1 SMAQMD CEQA Air Quality Thresholds of Significance

Phase	NO_X	ROG	PM_{10} [1]	$PM_{2.5}$ [1]
Construction	85 pounds/day	N/A	80 pounds/day and 14.6 tons/year	82 pounds/day and 15 tons/year
Operational	65 pounds/day	65 pounds/day	80 pounds/day and 14.6 tons/year	82 pounds/day and 15 tons/year

Source: SMAQMD 2020.

Notes:

[1] The particulate matter thresholds apply to projects that impose the SMAQMD's Best Available Control Technology or Best Management Practices, as feasible. Otherwise, the particulate matter thresholds would be zero (0) pounds per day.

CEQA = California Environmental Quality Act; N/A = not applicable; NO_X = oxides of nitrogen; PM_{10} = suspended particulate matter less than 10 microns in diameter; $PM_{2.5}$ = fine particulate matter less than 2.5 microns in diameter; ROG = reactive organic gases; SMAQMD = Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality District.

3.3.3 DISCUSSION

a) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?

Less than Significant with Mitigation. Air quality plans describe air pollution control strategies to be implemented by a city, county, or region. The primary purpose of an air quality plan is to bring an area that does not attain federal or State air quality standards into compliance with the requirements of the CAA and California Clean Air Act requirements. SMAQMD prepares plans to attain state and national ambient air quality standards in the SVAB. The Sacramento Federal Nonattainment Area (SFNA) was designated as "severe" nonattainment for the 1979 1-Hour ozone NAAQS, and this standard has been revoked. In September 2017, the SMAQMD approved a Redesignation Substitution request, which demonstrated that the SFNA met EPA's requirements to be redesignated as attainment based on ambient air quality monitoring. The 2017 Sacramento Regional 2008 8-Hour Ozone Attainment and Further Reasonable Progress Plan is the most updated plan issued by SMAQMD, approved by CARB on November 16, 2017.

The CEQA Guide is intended to provide a tool to identify proposed development projects that may have a significant adverse effect on air quality. According to the CEQA Guide, projects whose emissions are expected to meet or exceed the recommended significance criteria will have a potentially significant adverse impact on air quality, and therefore, potentially conflict with or obstruct implementation of the SMAQMD air quality plans. Project emissions that do not exceed these thresholds would not impact SMAQMD's ability to reach attainment.

As discussed in detail below in Section 3.3.3(b), modeled project construction emissions would not exceed the SMAQMD thresholds of significance. However, although construction emissions would not exceed SMAQMD thresholds, due to the nonattainment status of the SVAB with respect to ozone, PM_{10}, and $PM_{2.5}$, SMAQMD recommends that all construction projects implement the SMAQMD Basic Construction Emission Control Practices (SMAQMD 2020). SMAQMD's Basic Construction Emission Control Practices include such measures as watering the construction site twice daily, limiting vehicle speeds on unpaved roadways to 15 miles per hour, minimizing vehicle idling, covering haul trucks transporting soil, and cleaning paved roads. Without incorporation of SMAQMD's Basic Construction Control Practices, the project construction activities would be considered to potentially conflict with or obstruct implementation of the SMAQMD's air quality plans for PM and the impact is considered to be **potentially significant**.

Following construction activities, operation of the digital billboards would be limited to the indirect electricity consumption, which would generate greenhouse gas emissions (discussed in Section 3.8, Greenhouse Gas Emissions) and would not generate criteria air pollutants. Therefore, operation of the project would not conflict with any applicable air quality plans.

Mitigation Measure AIR-1: Implement the SMAQMD Basic Construction Emission Control Practices.

Comply with Basic Construction Emission Control Practices identified by the SMAQMD and listed below or as they may be updated in the future:

- Water all exposed surfaces two times daily. Exposed surfaces include, but are not limited to soil piles, graded areas, unpaved parking areas, staging areas, and access roads.

- Cover or maintain at least two feet of free board space on haul trucks transporting soil, sand, or other loose material on the site. Any haul trucks that would be traveling along freeways or major roadways should be covered.
- Use wet power vacuum street sweepers to remove any visible track out mud or dirt onto adjacent public roads at least once a day. Use of dry powered sweeping is prohibited.
- Limit vehicle speeds on unpaved roads to 15 miles per hour (mph).
- All roadways, driveways, sidewalks, parking lots to be paved should be completed as soon as possible. In addition, building pads should be laid as soon as possible after grading unless seeding or soil binders are used.
- Minimize idling time either by shutting equipment off when not in use or reducing the time of idling to 5 minutes [required by California Code of Regulations, Title 13, sections 2449(d) and 2485]. Provide clear signage that posts this requirement for workers at the entrances to the site.
- Provide current certificate(s) of compliance for CARB's In-Use Off-Road Diesel-Fueled Fleets Regulation [California Code of Regulations, Title 13, sections 2449 and 2449.1].
- Maintain all construction equipment in proper working condition according to manufacturer's specifications. The equipment must be checked by a certified mechanic and determined to be running in proper condition before it is operated.

SIGNIFICANCE AFTER MITIGATION

With implementation of Mitigation Measure AIR-1, the project would not conflict with or obstruct an applicable air quality plan. This impact would be **less than significant with mitigation**.

b) Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard?

Less than Significant with Mitigation. By its very nature, air pollution is largely a cumulative impact. The nonattainment status of regional pollutants is a result of past and present development within the SVAB, and this regional impact is cumulative rather than being attributable to any one source. A project's emissions may be individually limited, but cumulatively considerable when taken in combination with past, present, and future projects.

Construction of the project would generate temporary emissions of criteria air pollutants, including nitrogen oxides (NO_X), reactive organic gases (ROG), carbon monoxide (CO), PM_{10}, and $PM_{2.5}$. As shown in Table 3.3-1, SMAQMD has quantitative thresholds for NO_X, PM_{10}, and $PM_{2.5}$; thus, construction emissions for these pollutants were quantitatively estimated for the project.

As described in Section 2, Project Description, construction of both billboards is anticipated to occur in fall 2023, and the duration of construction would be approximately one month. Emissions associated with construction activities were modeled using the California Emissions Estimator Model (CalEEMod) version 2022.1. CalEEMod allows the user to enter project-specific construction and operational information, such as types of construction equipment, number and length of off-site motor vehicle trips, daily vehicle trips, and anticipated energy

consumption details. Table 3.3-2 presents the project's daily and total construction-related emissions. Additional details are provided in Appendix A.

Table 3.3-2 Construction-Related Daily and Total Emissions

Description	NO_X	PM_{10} [1]	$PM_{2.5}$ [1]
Maximum Daily Emissions (lbs/day)	9.37	0.69	0.38
SMAQMD Threshold: Maximum Daily Emissions (lbs/day)	85	80	82
Total Emissions (tons)	0.08	<0.005	<0.005
SMAQMD Threshold: Annual Emissions (tons/year)	N/A	14.6	15
Exceeds Thresholds?	No	No	No

Source: SMAQMD 2020.

Notes:

[1] The particulate matter thresholds apply to projects that impose the SMAQMD's Best Available Control Technology or Best Management Practices, as feasible. Otherwise, the particulate matter thresholds would be zero (0) pounds per day.

lbs/day = pounds per day; N/A = not applicable; NO_X = oxides of nitrogen; PM_{10} = suspended particulate matter less than 10 microns in diameter; $PM_{2.5}$ = fine particulate matter less than 2.5 microns in diameter; SMAQMD = Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality District; tons/year = tons per year.

As shown in Table 3.3-2, emissions associated with construction of the two billboards would not exceed SMAQMD thresholds of significance. Therefore, these emissions are not considered cumulatively considerable. However, although construction emissions would not exceed SMAQMD thresholds, due to the nonattainment status of the SVAB with respect to ozone, PM_{10}, and $PM_{2.5}$, SMAQMD recommends that all construction projects implement the SMAQMD Basic Construction Emission Control Practices (SMAQMD 2020). Without implementation of the SMAQMD Basic Construction Emission Control Practices as described in Mitigation Measure AIR-1, the contribution of construction-related emissions from the project would have the potential to be cumulatively considerable, resulting in a **potentially significant** impact.

Following construction activities, operation of the digital billboards would be limited to the indirect electricity consumption, which would generate greenhouse gas emissions (discussed in Section 3.8, Greenhouse Gas Emissions) and would not generate criteria air pollutants. Thus, operation of the project would not result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard.

SIGNIFICANCE AFTER MITIGATION

Implementation of Mitigation Measure AIR-1 would ensure that construction would not exceed SMAQMD's thresholds of significance. The impact is considered **less than significant with mitigation**.

c) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?

Less than Significant. Some members of the population are especially sensitive to air pollutant emissions and should be given special consideration when evaluating air quality impacts from projects. For the purposes of a CEQA analysis, the SMAQMD considers a sensitive receptor to be facilities that house or attract children, the elderly, and people with illnesses or others who are especially sensitive to the effects of air pollutants. Hospitals, schools, convalescent facilities, and residential areas are examples of sensitive receptors (SMAQMD 2020). The

project site is located on the south side of US 50 and Folsom Boulevard between Sunrise Boulevard and Hazel Avenue in the city of Rancho Cordova. Sensitive receptors in the vicinity of the project site include single-family residential uses north of US 50 in the project area, approximately 430 feet away.

Criteria Air Pollutants

As shown in Table 3.3-2, construction-related activities would result in emissions of criteria air pollutants, but at levels that would not exceed the SMAQMD regional thresholds of significance. The regional thresholds of significance were designed to identify those projects that would result in significant levels of air pollution and to assist the region in attaining the applicable state and federal ambient air quality standards, which were established using health-based criteria to protect the public with a margin of safety from adverse health impacts due to exposure to air pollution. As such, the criteria air pollutant emissions associated with construction of the project would not expose sensitive receptors to substantial criteria pollutant concentrations. The digital billboards are electric; therefore, operation of the project would not expose sensitive receptors to substantial criteria pollutant concentrations. Therefore, this impact would be **less than significant**.

Toxic Air Contaminants

In addition to criteria air pollutants, construction of the project would also generate toxic air contaminant (TAC) emissions, specifically diesel PM (DPM), associated with heavy-duty construction equipment operations. The Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA) developed a Guidance Manual for Preparation of Health Risk Assessments (OEHHA 2015). Due to uncertainty in assessing cancer risk from very short-term exposures, OEHHA does not recommend assessing cancer risk for construction of projects lasting less than two months for the nearest residential receptor. Since the duration of construction activities for the project are anticipated to last approximately one month and would cease following completion of the project, the overall exposure period would not approach the requirements for assessing cancer risk (OEHHA 2015).

In addition, construction emissions would occur intermittently throughout the day and would not occur as a constant plume of emissions from the project site and would vary on a day-to-day basis. Concentrations of mobile-source diesel PM emissions are typically reduced by approximately 60 percent at a distance of around 300 feet (100 meters) (Zhu and Hinds 2002). Furthermore, the project would implement Mitigation Measure AIR-1, which requires implementation of idling limits and maintaining equipment in proper working condition, which would reduce construction-related TAC emissions. Due to the intermittent and temporary nature of construction activities, and the dispersive properties of TACs, as well as the fact that PM emissions would be far less than the SMAQMD emission threshold, short-term construction would not expose sensitive receptors to DPM emission levels that would result in a health hazard. As described previously, operation of the project would be limited to electricity consumption associated with operation of the two billboards, which would not be a source of TAC emissions. As a result, this impact would be **less than significant**.

d) Result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people?

Less than Significant. The occurrence and severity of odor impacts depend on numerous factors, including the nature, frequency, and intensity of the source; wind speed and direction; and the presence of sensitive receptors. Typically, odors are generally regarded as an annoyance rather than a health hazard. However, manifestations of a person's reaction to foul odors can range from the psychological (i.e., irritation, anger, or anxiety) to the

physiological, including circulatory and respiratory effects, nausea, vomiting, and headache. The ability to detect odors varies considerably among the population and overall is quite subjective.

Potential construction-related sources of other emissions, such as those leading to odors, include diesel construction equipment that emit exhaust. However, because of the amount and types of equipment, the temporary nature of these emissions, and the highly diffusive properties of diesel exhaust, nearby receptors would not be affected by diesel exhaust odors associated with construction of the project. Construction activities associated with the project would be minimal and the odors would be typical of most construction sites and temporary in nature. Operation of the project would remain similar to existing conditions and would not add any new odor sources. As a result, the project would not result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people. Therefore, this impact would be **less than significant**.

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3.4 BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
IV. Biological Resources. Would the project:				
a) Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special-status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?	☐	☒	☐	☐
b) Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?	☐	☐	☐	☒
c) Have a substantial adverse effect on State or federally protected wetlands (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?	☐	☐	☐	☒
d) Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?	☐	☐	☐	☒
e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?	☐	☒	☐	☐
f) Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?	☐	☐	☒	☐

3.4.1 SETTING

Field reconnaissance, database searches, and background literature review were conducted to characterize biological resources present or with the potential to occur within the project site. No protocol-level wildlife or botanical surveys have been conducted within the project site to date. A site reconnaissance survey was conducted on March 8, 2023. During this survey, land cover types and aquatic features were mapped within the 11.4 acre project site, plus a 200-foot buffer in order to capture conditions immediately surrounding the project site. The project site plus the 200-foot buffer comprises the biological study area (BSA), which totals approximately 58.4 acres. Background research for this survey included a records search of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Information for Planning and Consultation (IPaC) (USFWS 2023), the California Resources Agency Natural Diversity Database (CDFW 2023), the California Native Plant Society Rare Plant Inventory (CNPS 2023), and the National Wetlands Inventory (USGS 2023). Appendix B contains a comprehensive table of species with potential to occur within a five-mile radius of the BSA.

SPECIAL-STATUS SPECIES

All plants with a California Rare Plant Rank are considered "special plants" by California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW). The term "special plants" is a broad term used by CDFW to refer to all of the plant taxa inventoried in CDFW's CNDDB, regardless of their legal or protection status. Plants ranked as California Rare Plant Rank 1A, 1B, 2A, and 2B may qualify as endangered, rare, or threatened species within the definition of CEQA Guidelines Section 15380. CDFW recommends that California Rare Plant Rank 1 and 2 species be addressed within the context of CEQA analyses and documentation. In general, California Rare Plant Rank 3 and 4 species do not meet the definition of endangered, rare, or threatened pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15380; however, these species may be evaluated by the lead agency on a case-by-case basis to determine significance criteria under CEQA.

The term "California species of special concern" is applied by CDFW to animals not listed under the federal Environmental Species Act (ESA) or California Environmental Species Act (CESA), but that are nonetheless declining at a rate that could result in listing, or that historically occurred in low numbers, or have limited ranges, and known threats to their persistence currently exist. "Fully protected" was the first state classification used to identify and protect animal species that are rare or facing possible extinction. Most of these species were subsequently listed as threatened or endangered under CESA or ESA. The remaining fully protected species that are not officially listed under CESA or ESA are still legally protected under California Fish and Game Code, and qualify as endangered, rare, or threatened species within the definition of CEQA Guidelines Section 15380.

Site Description

The project site is a former mini-golf course with a building and associated parking lot. The project site is mostly paved with ruderal vegetation and trees in the western portion of the project site. The project site is bordered by railroad tracks, Folsom Boulevard, and US 50 to the north and by Folsom South Canal on the south. The community of Gold River is located north of US 50 and open space and industrial uses to the south. The project site is level and situated at an approximate elevation of 125–135 feet above mean sea level (amsl). In addition to the project site, the project involves a small area between Folsom Boulevard and the eastbound side of US 50 that contains native oaks.

Vegetation Communities and Habitats

The two land cover types within the project site and BSA: urban and ruderal disturbed. Vegetation in urban areas consist primarily of introduced ornamental trees and shrubs, as well as invasive weeds in disturbed areas. Area 1 (Exhibit 3.4-1) contains approximately 20 native oak trees, and the area between Folsom Boulevard and the eastbound side of US 50 contains 7 native oak trees. Exotic plant species may provide valuable habitat elements such as cover for nesting and roosting, as well as food sources such as nuts or berries. Native and introduced animal species that are tolerant of human activities often thrive in urban habitats. Urban/developed lands are generally not of high value for wildlife. Birds and mammals that occur in these areas typically include introduced species adapted to human habitation, including rock pigeon (*Columba livia*), European starling (*Sturnus vulgaris*), house sparrow (*Passer domesticus*), house mouse (*Mus musculus*), and Norway rat (*Rattus norvegicus*). Some native species persist in developed lands, including Brewer's blackbird (*Euphagus cyanocephalus*), house finch (*Carpodacus mexicanus*), western scrub jay (*Aphelocoma californica*), and American crow (*Corvus brachyrhynchos*). Urban habitat within the BSA covers approximately 37.4 acres.

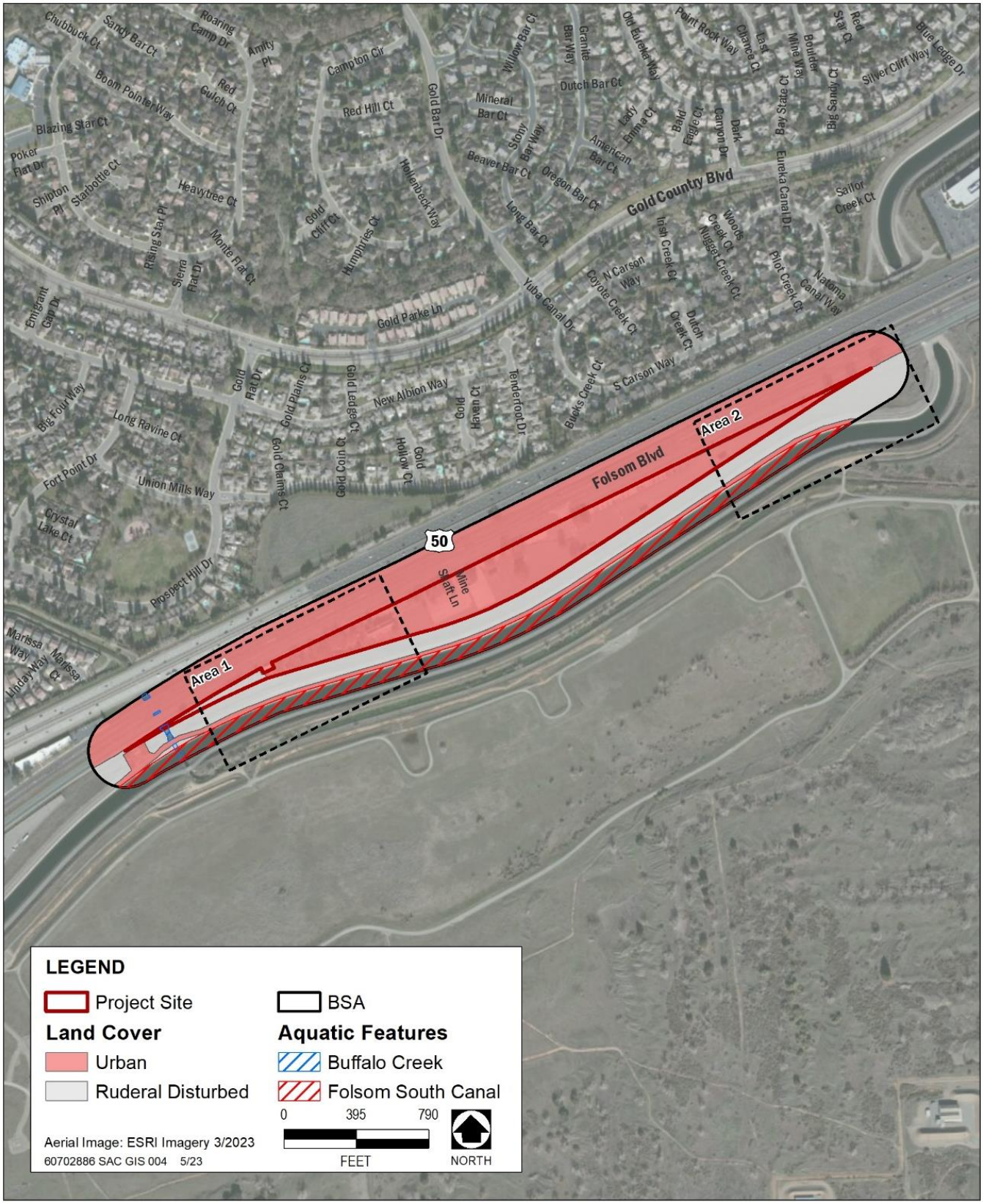

Exhibit 3.4-1 Land Cover Types and Aquatic Features Map

Ruderal communities occur south of the project site, north of the Folsom South Canal. While this area is subject to frequent disturbance and dominated by non-native weedy species, this area is densely vegetated and could provide moderate foraging potential for nesting bird species. Vascular plant species associated with these areas typically include Canadian horseweed (*Conyza canadensis*), turkey mullein (*Eremocarpus setigerus*), milk thistle (*Silybum marianum*), yellow star-thistle (*Centaurea solstitialis*), field bindweed (*Convolvulus arvensis*), wild lettuce (*Lactuca serriola*), prickly sow thistle (*Sonchus arvensis*), common vetch (*Vicia sativa*), and shortpod mustard (*Hirschfeldia incana*). Ruderal habitat within the BSA covers approximately 13.3 acres.

Aquatic Features

Buffalo Creek crosses the narrow sliver of the project site at the western extent of the parcel. The construction footprint and staging areas are restricted to the existing mini golf course and parking lot, which is separated from Buffalo Creek by a chain link fence and a patch of ruderal vegetation. Within the BSA, Buffalo Creek is densely vegetated with cattail (*Typha* spp.) and contains slow moving water. This portion of Buffalo Creek is moderately disturbed due to its proximity to nearby roadways, industrial uses, and public access.

Trees

The City of Rancho Cordova Tree Preservation Ordinance defines a protected tree as a native oak having a trunk diameter of at least six inches or greater, any tree species other than a native oak having a trunk diameter of at least 12 inches or greater on nonresidential property, any tree species other than a native oak having a trunk diameter of at least 24 inches or greater on residential property, any tree planted as a requirement tree for site development, tree permit conditions, landscape plan removal replacement, or other designated condition by the public works director or planning director (City of Rancho Cordova Municipal Code, Chapter 19.12). An arborist survey (Appendix B) was conducted in preparation for this project. This survey identified 90 protected trees on the project site and the off-site location between Folsom Boulevard and US 50.

Special-Status Species and Critical Habitat

The project site provides low value for wildlife. No burrows or nest sites for wildlife were observed within or adjacent to the project site at the time of the reconnaissance survey. The database searches identified previously documented occurrences of 19 special-status plant species and 21 special-status wildlife species in the vicinity of the project site (Appendix B). Of the 40 species known to occur in the vicinity of the project site, one special-status plant species (Sanford's arrowhead [*Sagittaria sanfordii*]) could occur within Buffalo Creek. The remaining 39 special-status species are either unlikely to occur or have no potential to occur.

No critical habitat is located within or near the project site. The nearest critical habitat is 1.5 miles northwest of the project site along the American River, for the valley elderberry longhorn beetle (*Desmocerus californicus dimorphus*). Critical habitat for Sacramento orcutt grass (*Orcuttia viscida*) is located 2.2 miles northeast of the project site.

Wetlands and Waters of the United States and State

Any areas that meet the regulatory definition of "waters of the United States" are regulated under the jurisdiction of the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (CWA). Waters of the U.S. include documented navigable waters of the United States; interstate waters; all other waters where the use, degradation, or destruction of the waters could affect interstate or foreign commerce; tributaries to

any of these waters, and wetlands adjacent to these waters. Potentially jurisdictional waters of the U.S. are typically determined by conducting a wetland delineation according to USACE methods and guidelines. However, because this site is heavily disturbed and no potential wetland features were observed on site during the reconnaissance-level survey, a wetland delineation survey was deemed unnecessary by the biologist. Additionally, a review of the National Wetlands Inventory showed that no wetlands are present within the project site.

Buffalo Creek bisects the westernmost portion of the parcel containing the project. This feature is approximately 600 feet west of the west location sign (Area 1).

Wildlife Movement/Corridors

The project site is located on an approximately 11.4-acre parcel that consists of a former mini-golf course with a building and associated parking lot; no wildlife movement corridors occur on the project site. The parcel is surrounded by US 50, Folsom Boulevard, light rail tracks on the north, and Folsom South Canal to the south. All of these features inhibit movement of mammals, reptiles, and amphibians. Trees on-site could support nesting migratory birds. A small section of Buffalo Creek crosses the westernmost sliver of the parcel and may provide a low-quality movement corridor for wildlife, including for waterfowl and other migratory birds. Project activities will be setback from Buffalo Creek by more than 500-feet. However, Buffalo Creek in the project site vicinity is highly modified, heavily disturbed, and likely of low value for most wildlife. Any wildlife using Buffalo Creek as a movement corridor are not likely to move onto the project site due to poor habitat quality in the project site, a lack of riparian cover along the creek and because of tall, steep banks that likely isolate Buffalo Creek from the project site.

South Sacramento County Habitat Conservation Plan

The project site is within the Urban Development Area (UDA) sub-area of the South Sacramento County Habitat Conservation Plan (SSHCP) plan area and the City of Rancho Cordova is a plan partner (Sacramento County 2018a). The UDA is the area within the SSCHP that is anticipated primarily for development. The proposed project consistency with the SSHCP is required under CEQA because the SSHCP has been adopted. While the installation of digital reader boards is not explicitly listed as a covered activity, covered activities described in the SSHCP are defined broadly to include planned urban growth and all ground-disturbing activities associated with urban development. Thus, this project could be considered a covered activity.

The SSHCP is intended to provide a streamlined process for special-status species and wetlands/waters related permitting in the plan area, providing a multi-species, multi-habitat conservation plan addressing the biological impacts of future urban development in the southern portion of the county. The SSHCP presents a conservation strategy that offsets habitat losses within the UDA through the establishment of large preserves outside of planned development areas that are funded through fee payments for development.

City of Rancho Cordova Tree Preservation Ordinance

The City of Rancho Cordova wishes to “guide the growth of [the] long-term community tree canopy that provides improved air quality, public and mental health, welfare, safety and environmental benefits to the residents, businesses, and visitors of Rancho Cordova.” As such, the Preservation and Protection of Private Trees, Title 19, Chapter 12 of the City of Rancho Cordova Municipal Code protects certain trees and requires an approved permit be obtained before a protected tree has major pruning (pruning in a way which reduces the overall canopy of the

tree by 10 percent or more, or cutting of roots or branches greater than two inches diameter within a 12-month period) or to remove. Chapter 19.12.030 defines which trees are "protected trees" and are therefore subject to permits for removal as follows:

1. Native oak – *Quercus lobata*, valley oak; *Quercus wislizenii*, interior live oak; *Quercus douglasii*, blue oak; or *Quercus morehus*, oracle oak – having a trunk diameter of at least six inches or greater; or

2. Any tree species other than a native oak having a trunk diameter of at least 12 inches or greater on nonresidential property; or

3. Any tree species other than a native oak having a trunk diameter of at least 24 inches or greater on residential property; or

4. Any tree planted as a requirement tree for site development, tree permit condition, landscape plan removal replacement, or other designated condition by the public works director or planning director.

3.4.2 DISCUSSION

a) Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special-status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?

Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated. Trees in and around the project site could provide suitable nesting habitat for common, urban adapted migratory birds and raptors, such as Brewer's blackbird, western scrubjay, American crow, and red-tailed hawk. These birds are protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act and Section 3503.5 of the California Fish and Game Code. Project construction includes the removal of 27 trees that could provide suitable nesting habitat for birds and roosting habitat for bats. If construction activities occur during nesting bird season (typically February 1 to August 30) or roosting bat season (May 1 to August 31), removal of any trees could potentially result in the destruction of an active nest. Additionally, birds nesting or bats roosting within 250 feet of active construction, within trees, shrubs, or in the dense ruderal vegetation south of the project site, may be disturbed by project construction noise and vibration, causing nest abandonment. Any potential impact on nesting birds or roosting bats would be **potentially significant**.

Mitigation Measure BIO-1: Conduct Preconstruction Nesting Bird and Roosting Bat Surveys and Implement Appropriate Avoidance Buffers.

If construction would occur during the bird nesting season (typically February 1 to August 31) or roosting bat season (May 1 to August 31), project applicant shall retain a qualified biologist to conduct preconstruction surveys for nesting birds and roosting bats no more than 2 weeks prior to the start of ground-disturbing construction activities. The survey shall include all suitable nesting and roosting habitat within the project site and a 250-foot buffer to the project site. Suitable nesting habitat includes all trees, shrubs, and densely vegetated ruderal grassland. Suitable roosting habitat includes trees, buildings, and any other tall structures with crevices suitable for housing bats.

If nesting birds or roosting bats are located during the preconstruction nesting bird and roosting bat survey, an appropriate "non-disturbance" buffer will be established by a qualified biologist to protect the

nest from project-related disturbances until the nest has fledged or is no longer active. An appropriate non-disturbance buffer shall be determined based on the species nesting, site conditions (e.g., existing level of disturbance), and biologist observations and professional judgement. Typical "non-disturbance" buffers are 100 feet for passerines and 250-feet for non-special status raptors and roosting bats. Smaller buffers may be implemented in some circumstances, if nest monitoring by a qualified biologist confirms project activities are not adversely affecting the nest or roost; this typically requires a period of monitoring prior to initiation of project activities to establish baseline nest activity.

SIGNIFICANCE AFTER MITIGATION

Implementing Mitigation Measure BIO-1 would reduce the potentially significant impact on nesting birds to **less than significant** because implementation of this measure would protect nesting birds that occur within the trees planned for removal and nesting birds in the vicinity of the project site from construction-related noise and vibrational disturbances, if project construction occurs during the bird nesting season.

b) Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?

No Impact. Sensitive natural communities include riparian habitat and other natural communities of special concern to resource agencies, areas protected under CEQA, or areas otherwise protected under local regulations and policies. Buffalo Creek and its associated riparian habitat is considered a sensitive natural community. While this feature is within the study area, it is not within the project footprint or within close enough proximity to the project footprint for it to be directly or indirectly impacted by construction activities.

c) Have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?

No Impact. Construction of the two billboards would occur within the fence-line of the former mini-golf course. Buffalo Creek bisects the westernmost section of the parcel; however, project activities would not extend past the existing fence-line of the former mini-golf course, building, and associated parking lot. There are no wetland features within this fenced urban area, and thus, the project would not have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands.

d) Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?

No Impact. No established migratory routes for native species occur on the project site. The project site is on a small, already developed parcel that is surrounded by US 50, Folsom Boulevard, and the Folsom South Canal, which inhibit movement of mammals, amphibians, and reptiles from nearby habitat to any potential low-quality habitat on site. The adjacent Buffalo Creek may serve as a movement corridor for common, urban-adapted, species, and waterfowl and wading birds. However, the proposed project does not propose activities within or along the banks of Buffalo Creek. Furthermore, noise and visual disturbances from temporary construction are not expected to rise above levels of existing urban disturbances along the Buffalo Creek corridor in the proposed

project vicinity. Therefore, implementation of the proposed project would not interfere with the movement of any native species, within established migratory corridors or within use of native wildlife nursery sites.

e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?

Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated. Of the 90 protected trees identified within the project site, project activities would result in the removal of 27 of these trees. Construction could also encroach into the root zone of up to 6 protected trees. Since there is no suitable location to replace trees on-site and there is no designated off-site location, the tree replacement plan will follow the guidelines in Chapter 19.12. 110.C.2 of the City of Rancho Cordova Municipal Code, which requires payment of an in-lieu fee when direct replacement is not feasible. For calculation of the replacement ratio, Chapter 19.12.110.D defines the ratio for which protected trees that are removed should be replaced using the following ratios: a tree in a 15-gallon container or smaller equals one-inch measured as diameter at standard height; a tree in a 24-inch box equals two-inch diameter at standard height; a tree in a 36-inch box or larger equals three-inch diameter at standard height. The contribution toward the in-lieu fund held by the Sacramento Tree Foundation or another acceptable in-lieu fund proposed by the City will be determined after permit approval.

Construction may encroach into the root zone of other protected trees, which could adversely affect the health of these trees, resulting in a **potentially significant** impact.

Mitigation Measure BIO-2 Protection of Trees During Construction

The following measures shall be implemented prior to and during construction to ensure the health of trees that will be preserved:

- An International Society of Arboriculture (ISA)-certified arborist, their designee, or the contractor with oversight from an arborist shall install tree protection fencing around all trees with canopies within 20 feet of construction areas. Tree protection fencing shall be installed prior to any clearing, grubbing, trenching, grading, or land disturbances. The fencing shall be installed around the dripline of the canopy. The fencing shall be temporary, readily visible, and a minimum of 4 feet high and constructed of chain link, orange plastic mesh fence, or a similar material with stationary posts at approximately 10-foot intervals. The fencing shall effectively keep the canopy and trunk of the tree clear from direct contact and damage by foot traffic, equipment, materials, and other disturbances, as well as preserve the roots and soil in an intact and non-compacted state.
- During trenching or digging activities, any roots greater than 2 inches in diameter shall be trimmed using ISA root pruning standards as described in American National Standards Institute (ANSI) Standard A300 (Part 8) to prevent disease and decay from entering the tree. This protocol requires that the root be cut cleanly where the root stops shredding using a sharp tool (hand saw, sharp hand pruner, or sawzall). The root shall be cut perpendicular to growth, not at an angle like cut flowers. Additionally, any roots encountered that are greater than 4 inches in diameter are potentially structural to the tree and shall not be impacted without consultation with an arborist for guidance on minimizing damage to the root.
- All large equipment such as cranes, excavators, backhoes, or trucks that are used to complete project activities shall remain on existing paved surfaces wherever possible and shall remain outside of the

fenced tree protection areas. All stockpiles of material shall be staged in a designated area located at least 5 feet outside of any tree canopy; this designated area shall be identified and communicated to all on site personnel prior to the start of construction. Equipment shall not be allowed to operate west of the line of the existing fence.

- Tarps or plastic shall be placed underneath the concrete truck or mixing location to prevent spilling of liquid onto a permeable surface, which could alter the pH of soil, harm vegetation or trees, or impact water quality of the water table. A spill kit shall be kept on site to properly manage the spilling or leaking of fluids on any type of surface within the project area.
- Although tree pruning is not anticipated, if it is required for any reason, it shall be carried out in compliance with the ISA Tree-Pruning Guidelines and ANSI Standard A300 (Part 1). Any pruning that is greater than 10% of a tree's canopy or limbs greater than 2 inches in diameter is considered major pruning, and an arborist shall be contacted prior to any work being completed for recommended practices to minimize pruning impacts. Construction personnel shall report unanticipated damage to trees from construction activities to the arborist or permit contact immediately.
- Before equipment staging or construction, an arborist or their designee shall inform all construction personnel on site of the tree protection measures in this document and shall provide a pamphlet to the construction manager summarizing the tree protection plan and general provisions specific to this project. The construction manager shall retain the pamphlet on site. Crew personnel shall be reminded to not stage equipment, drive equipment, or stockpile materials under any tree's canopy on the project site because not all protected trees on site are subject to the tree protection fencing. At the time of the training, an arborist or their designee will also check that all the tree protection fencing is in place prior to any clearing, grubbing, trenching, grading, or land disturbances.

SIGNIFICANCE AFTER MITIGATION

Implementation of Mitigation Measure BIO-2 would reduce the potentially significant impact on protected trees to a **less-than-significant** level because prior to construction, extensive steps would be taken to avoid unnecessary encroachment to the root zone and minimize any necessary encroachment.

f) Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?

Less-than-Significant. The SSHCP final Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement (Sacramento County 2018b) includes general and covered species-specific avoidance and minimization measures for covered activities. General Measure Stream-2 requires a 100-foot stream setback from Buffalo Creek (measured from the top of bank) for all covered activities within the UDA where a creek or stream is within the project footprint. The project proposes to install two billboards, both to be installed placed greater than 600 feet east of Buffalo Creek. The project does not propose development within 100 feet of Buffalo Creek. Implementation of the proposed project is not expected to further degrade conditions along Buffalo Creek with respect to the setback, as compared to existing conditions. All other avoidance, minimization and mitigation measures for covered species described in the draft SSHCP are consistent with the proposed project and Mitigation Measure BIO-1. Therefore, implementation of the proposed project would have a **less-than-significant** impact related to consistency with the provisions of the SSHCP.

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3.5 CULTURAL RESOURCES

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
V. Cultural Resources. Would the project:				
a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to § 15064.5?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to § 15064.5?	☐	☒	☐	☐
c) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?	☐	☒	☐	☐

3.5.1 SETTING

The project site is a former mini-golf course with a building and associated parking lot. The building is not currently listed as historic resource. The project site lies within the ethnographic territory of the Nisenan, which are a distinct linguistic group that lives and lived within Yuba, Bear, American, and Feather River drainages and spread from the Sacramento Valley to the Sierra Nevada. Their fertile territory was rich with plant and animal life, which the Miwok hunted and gathered. Tule elk, mule deer, fish, several varieties of acorn, berries, and seed-bearing annual plants were just a few of the things that the Miwok would subsist on (Wilson and Towne 1978; 387).

3.5.2 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

BACKGROUND RESEARCH

Cultural Resources Inventory

AECOM requested a records search on April 4, 2023 of pertinent cultural resources information curated by the North Central Information Center of the California Historic Resources Information System, located at California State University, Sacramento. The records search response on April 6, 2023 included reviews of previously-conducted studies and known cultural resources within a ¼ mile radius of the project site.

The records search assesses the cultural sensitivity of the area by verifying the documentation of known cultural resources at or adjacent to the project site and thus assess the likelihood of the presence of unrecorded cultural resources. This assessment is based on the historical references and the distribution of previously recorded resources in the vicinity of the project site and developing a context for the identification and preliminary evaluation of cultural resources that may be present within the project site.

Six previously recorded cultural resources were identified within ¼-mile of the project site were identified by the records search. The project site is located within the P-34_000335 Folsom Mining District. Within a quarter mile lies the Sacramento Valley Railroad, California's first passenger railroad P-34-000455 which is also parallel to P-

34-001678 (Folsom Boulevard) and P-34-002254, an historic water conveyance system. Also within the quarter mile radius is the Natomas-Aerojet Dredge Fields P-34-001710. All previously recorded resources are historic in nature.

Three previous studies were conducted within a quarter mile radius of the project site (see Tables 3.5-1 and 3.5-2).

Table 3.5-1 Previous Investigations within the Project Study Area

NCIC Report No	Report Title	Author and Date
002557	Finding of No Historic Properties Affected for the Proposed Folsom Widening Project, Sacramento County, California	Maniery, Mary 2000
002594	Historic Property Survey Report Folsom Boulevard Widening Project, Sacramento County, California.	Maniery, Mary and Tracy D. Bakic 2000
002761	Historic Properties Survey Report Downtown Sacramento Amtrak and Folsom Corridor Light Rail Transit Extensions and Double Tracking Project	Waechter, Sharon 1999

Notes: NCIC = North Central Information Center; Report is on file at the NCIC
Source: NCIC 2023; Data compiled by AECOM 2023.

Table 3.5-2 Previous Investigations Conducted within 0.25 miles of the Project Study Area

NCIC Report No	Report Title	Author and Date
000247	Cultural Resource Assessment of the Natomas Station, Sacramento County, California.	Peak, Ann S. and Associates 1978
008810	Cultural Resources Inventory, Westborough at Easton, Sacramento County, California	ECORP Consulting, Inc. 2007
010431	Cultural Resources Inventory and Evaluation for the Off-site VELB Preserve Area for the Glenborough at Easton and Easton Place Project, Sacramento County, California, Project No. 2009-165	Westwood, Lisa, and Stephen Pappas, 2010
012346	Historic Property Survey Report for the Rancho Cordova Parkway Interchange, FWHA071120A	Nadolski, John 2007
013763	Cultural Resources Survey of the SA062 Rt 50 & Hazel Ave/B Telecommunication Project, Rancho Cordova, Trileaf. Project #679239	Solis, Laurie 2021

Notes: NCIC = North Central Information Center; All reports are on file at the NCIC
VELB = Valley Elderberry Longhorn Beetle
Source: NCIC 2023; Data compiled by AECOM 2023

CULTURAL RESOURCE FIELD INVESTIGATIONS

On April 7, 2023, AECOM Archaeologist Diana Ewing conducted a pedestrian survey of the project area. Where soils were visible transects of not less than nine feet were completed. The area was predominately paved with dilapidated structures from previous use as both a retail site and an early 1980s mini-golf course (see Exhibit 3.5-1 – Exhibit 3.5-6). Exhibit 3.5-5 shows the current billboard on the site while Exhibit 3.5-6 shows the pavement marks for the location of the newly proposed sign. No archaeological resources were observed.

Exhibit 3.5-1 Former Mini Golf Course (West side of property)

Exhibit 3.5-2 Exposed soils on the southeastern side of the project site

Exhibit 3.5-3 Exposed soils behind former retail building

Exhibit 3.5-4 Paved area on northeastern portion of the project site

Exhibit 3.5-5 Current signage on the northeastern portion of the project site

Exhibit 3.5-6 Pavement marking location for proposed signage (looking southwest)

3.5.3 DISCUSSION

a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to § 15064.5?

No Impact. No historic resources have been identified on the project site. The unused commercial building on the project site is not listed as a historic resource but may not been evaluated for historical significance. Even if this building were a historical resource, installation of the digital billboard structures would not affect this structure, with the nearest construction site more than 200 feet to the west of it. Therefore, the proposed project would not a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource.

b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to § 15064.5?

Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated. The proposed project would involve ground disturbance to install monopoles to support the electronic billboards. An auger would be used to bore 4-foot-diameter by 50-foot-deep holes, which would involve removal of approximately 8 cubic yards of excess fill for each sign foundation. No significant archaeological resources have been identified on the project site. Based on the results of the archival research and field survey, there is low-to-moderate potential that archaeological resources would be encountered during ground-disturbing activities for the proposed project. Despite the limited extent of ground disturbance, if archaeological resources were encountered during these ground disturbing activities, this impact could be **potentially significant**.

Mitigation Measure CUL-1: Accidental Damage and Discovery Protocols

The project applicant or its contractor shall retain a qualified archaeologist to undertake the tasks specified within this mitigation measure. In the event that suspected precontact or historic-period archaeological resources are encountered during debris removal, demolition, excavation, and/or grading of the site, all activity within a 50-foot radius of the find shall be stopped, the project applicant or designee shall be notified, and the qualified archaeologist shall examine the find. Project personnel shall not collect or move any cultural material. The archaeologist shall evaluate the find(s) to determine if it meets the definition of a historical, unique archaeological, and/or tribal cultural resource and follow the further procedures outlined below:

- If the finds do not meet the definition of a historical resource or unique archaeological resource, no further study or protection is necessary prior to resuming project implementation.
- If the find(s) does meet the definition of a historical resource or unique archaeological resource, then it should be avoided by project activities. If avoidance is not feasible, as determined by the City of Rancho Cordova, the qualified archaeologist in consultation with the City, shall make appropriate recommendations regarding the treatment and disposition of such finds, and significant impacts to such resources shall be mitigated in accordance with the recommendations of the archaeologist prior to resuming construction activities within a 50-foot radius.
- If human remains are encountered, project work shall stop in the vicinity of the remains and, as required by law, the Sacramento County Coroner would be notified immediately. An archaeologist also would be contacted to evaluate the find. If the human remains were determined of Native

American origin, the coroner would need to notify the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) within 24 hours of that determination. Pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 5097.98, the NAHC, in turn, would immediately contact a Most Likely Descendent (MLD). The MLD would have 48 hours to inspect the site and recommend treatment of the remains. The project applicant and City shall coordinate with the MLD in good faith to find a respectful resolution to the situation and entertain all reasonable options regarding the descendants' preferences for treatment.

- Recommendations for treatment and disposition of finds could include, but are not limited to, the collection, recordation, and analysis of any significant cultural materials, or the turning over of tribal cultural resources to tribal representatives for appropriate treatment. A report of findings documenting any data recovery shall be submitted to the Northwest Information Center (NWIC).

SIGNIFICANCE AFTER MITIGATION

Because this mitigation measure requires stopping work within the area of any potential find(s), and requires that a qualified archaeologist inspect the find and, in consultation with the City, make recommendations for avoiding or reducing impacts, implementation of Mitigation Measure CUL-1 would reduce impacts of the proposed project to undiscovered archaeological resources to less than significant with mitigation.

c) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?

Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated. Although a low potential would exist, the possibility of encountering human remains cannot be discounted. However, this impact would be reduced to a less-than-significant level with implementation of Mitigation Measure CUL-1 because this mitigation measure requires stopping work within the area of any potential find(s), and requires that a qualified archaeologist inspect the find and, in consultation with the City, make recommendations for avoiding or reducing impacts.

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3.6 ENERGY

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
VI Energy. Would the project:				
a) Result in potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during project construction or operation?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b) Conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency?	☐	☐	☐	☒

3.6.1 SETTING

Electric services in the project area are provided by the Sacramento Municipal Utility District (SMUD). SMUD has served Sacramento County since 1946 and is the nation's sixth-largest community-owned electric utility (SMUD 2023). SMUD delivers electricity to an approximately 900 square-mile area within Sacramento County, serving 1.5 million people. SMUD's primary power sources are natural gas, hydroelectric, and wind (SMUD 2021). Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E) provides natural gas within the city of Rancho Cordova. The project would not require natural gas for operations, so PG&E's capacity to supply natural gas is not discussed further in this Initial Study.

3.6.2 DISCUSSION

a) Result in potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during project construction or operation?

Less than Significant. Energy efficiency is a possible indicator of environmental impacts. The actual adverse physical environmental effects of energy use and the efficiency of energy use are detailed throughout this IS/MND in the environmental topic-specific sections. For example, the use of energy associated with electricity consumption leads to indirect greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, the impacts of which are addressed in Section 3.8, Greenhouse Gas Emissions. There is no physical environmental effect associated with energy use that is not addressed in the environmental topic-specific sections of this IS/MND.

Project activities would increase energy consumption for the duration of construction in the form of fossil fuels (e.g., gasoline, diesel fuel). Transportation energy use during construction would come from the transport and use of construction equipment (off-road), delivery and haul trucks (on-road), and construction employee passenger vehicles (on-road). Construction-related energy consumption would be limited to the short duration of construction (1 month) and would cease upon completion of construction activities. Project operations would result in energy consumption from the use of electricity to operate the billboards. As described in Section 2, Project Description, the billboards would be operated 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year, and the brightness of the billboards would automatically adjust up or down based on ambient light conditions.

Construction and operational energy consumption associated with the project is summarized in Table 3.6-1. Additional modeling assumptions and more details are provided in Section 3.3, Air Quality, and Appendix A.

Table 3.6-1 Construction and Operational Energy Consumption

Energy Consuming Activity	Energy Requirement	Unit
Construction Diesel Consumption [1]	1,841	Gallons
Construction Gasoline Consumption [1]	100	Gallons
Operational Electricity Consumption [2]	115,340	kWh/year

Notes: kWh/year = kilowatt hours per year

[1] Construction-related energy consumption was estimated using the carbon dioxide (CO_2) emissions calculations for the construction activities and application of the U.S. Energy Information Administration's CO_2 emissions coefficients (EIA 2022) to estimate fuel consumption for construction activities.

[2] Operational electricity consumption based on information provided by the manufacturer and an average energy consumption estimate of approximately 158 kilowatt-hours per day per sign.

Source: Modeled by AECOM in 2023.

Due to the short and temporary nature of construction, the anticipated equipment and minor construction work required for this project type, the project would not include unusual characteristics that would necessitate the use of construction equipment that is less energy-efficient than the equipment used at comparable construction sites. In addition, construction contractors are required, in accordance with Mitigation Measure AIR-1 and the CARB Airborne Toxic Control Measure for Diesel-Fueled Commercial Motor Vehicle Idling, to minimize the idling time of construction equipment and trucks by shutting equipment off when it is not in use and limit idling time to a maximum of 5 minutes. Per Mitigation Measure AIR-1, construction contractors would also be required to maintain and properly tune all construction equipment in accordance with manufacturers' specifications. These required practices would limit wasteful and unnecessary energy consumption.

Operational energy consumption would also be minor, and electricity used for the billboards would not be unnecessary since the purpose of the project is to operate two billboards that require electricity. Therefore, energy consumption associated with construction and operation of the project would not be inefficient, wasteful, or unnecessary.

b) Conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency?

No Impact. The project would not use land that was otherwise slated for renewable energy production and does not otherwise conflict with any state or local renewable energy plans. As described previously, the project's operational energy demand would be limited to electricity consumption from the operation of the digital billboards and minor fuel consumption associated with infrequent maintenance-related vehicle trips. In addition, on-road and off-road equipment used during construction and maintenance of the digital billboards would comply with applicable off-road equipment and on-road vehicle regulations, which impose limits on idling and fuel use specifications and ensure fuel is used efficiently. The digital billboards would also be equipped with light emitting diode (LED) lights that are Underwriters Laboratories Environmental (UL-E) Green Leaf certified (Watchfire Signs 2011). Underwriters Laboratories (UL) and UL-E, working with the California Energy Commission and sign industry representatives, developed the program to assist sign manufacturers with testing and certifying products for their compliance to a variety of energy efficiency requirements, including those within Title 24 of the California Energy Commission's Building Energy Efficiency Standards (Watchfire Signs 2011). Therefore, the project would not conflict with or obstruct any state or local plans for renewable energy or energy efficiency.

3.7 GEOLOGY AND SOILS

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
VII. Geology and Soils. Would the project:				
a) Directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:				
i) Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? (Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42.)	☐	☐	☐	☒
ii) Strong seismic ground shaking?	☐	☐	☒	☐
iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?	☐	☐	☒	☐
iv) Landslides?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?	☐	☐	☒	☐
c) Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction, or collapse?	☐	☐	☒	☐
d) Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial direct or indirect risks to life or property?	☐	☐	☒	☐
e) Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative waste water disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of waste water?	☐	☐	☐	☒
f) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?	☐	☐	☒	☐

3.7.1 SETTING

The project site is generally flat, with elevation above mean sea level ranging from approximately 125 to 135 feet. There are no distinctive geological features. The project site is in an area of relatively low seismic potential. No

earthquake faults are known to exist at or near the project site (City of Rancho Cordova and Caltrans 2014). The California Division of Mines and Geology map shows the eastern and central portions of Sacramento County, which include the project site, in a relatively low intensity ground-shaking zone. Liquefaction is considered to be low given the relatively dense/stiff nature of the soils underlying the project site, combined with the lack of groundwater in the upper 50 feet of soil.

The predominant soil type on site is Xerorthents, dredge tailings–urban land complex, 0–2 percent slopes, which consists of well-drained soils with high permeability and low water capacity. The shrink-swell potential for this soil series is low.

3.7.2 DISCUSSION

a) Directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:

i) Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? (Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42.)

No Impact. Surface rupture is an actual cracking or breaking of the ground along a fault during an earthquake and is generally limited to a linear zone a few yards wide. The project site is not located within an Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zone, nor is the site located within or immediately adjacent to the trace of any other known fault; therefore, surface fault rupture at the project site is unlikely.

ii) Strong seismic ground shaking?

Less than Significant. The proposed project would install two digital advertising billboards on a vacant parcel located in a relatively low intensity ground-shaking zone. These structures would be required to follow the seismic standards of the most recent version of the California Building Code, which requires measures to ensure that structures can withstand the maximum expected ground shaking without catastrophic failure. Therefore, the proposed project would not directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving strong seismic ground shaking.

iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?

Less than Significant. As noted above, the project site is located in a relatively low intensity ground-shaking zone. In addition, liquefaction is considered to be low given the relatively dense/stiff nature of the soils underlying the project site, combined with the lack of groundwater in the upper 50 feet of soil. Finally, the proposed sign structures would be required to follow the seismic standards of the most recent version of the California Building Code, which requires measures to ensure that structures can withstand the maximum expected ground shaking without catastrophic failure, including due to liquefaction.

iv) Landslides?

No Impact. The topography at the project site and immediately adjacent to the project site is nearly level, with the average slope gradients across the project site less than 1 percent. In addition, there are no hillsides in adjacent areas that could affect the project site.

b) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?

Less than Significant. Because the project site is flat, minimal grading is required. A small amount of fill would be imported to allow construction equipment to cross on-site drainage ditches. Up to 16 cubic yards of excess fill from bore holes drilled to install the sign structures may be temporarily stockpiled on site during construction prior to removal. However, soil erosion and loss of topsoil would be prevented during project construction through use of BMPs, such as silt fencing and fiber rolls. The project does not require a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) or a grading permit from the City of Rancho Cordova due to its small size, as these small-scale projects on flat terrain typically do not have significant effects related to soil erosion.

c) Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction, or collapse?

Less-than-Significant. The project site does not contain the conditions that could result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction, or collapse of the proposed sign structures. The potential for failure from subsidence, lateral spreading, and liquefaction is low because the groundwater table is at least 50 feet below ground surface, and there are no alluvial deposits. In addition, as noted above, the project site is located in a relatively low intensity ground-shaking zone.

d) Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial direct or indirect risks to life or property?

Less than Significant. The predominant soil type on site is Xerorthents, dredge tailings–urban land complex, 0–2 percent slopes, which consists of well-drained soils with high permeability and low water capacity. The shrink-swell potential for this soil series is low.

e) Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative waste water disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of waste water?

No Impact. The proposed project is installation of two digital advertising billboards on a parcel with no active land uses. No use of an on-site wastewater disposal system is proposed, and no disposal of wastewater is required.

f) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?

Less than Significant. The proposed project would be predominantly located in very highly disturbed soils—the majority of the soils in the project area comprise mine dredge tailings—and have no potential to contain paleontological resources. Further, as noted in the EIR prepared for the City of Rancho Cordova General Plan, a search of the University of California Museum of Paleontology collections database conducted for the General Plan EIR did not identify any evidence of significant paleontological resources in the Rancho Cordova Planning Area (City of Rancho Cordova 2006). The area does not appear sensitive for the presence of paleontological resources.

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3.8 GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
VIII. Greenhouse Gas Emissions. Would the project:				
a) Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b) Conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?	☐	☐	☒	☐

3.8.1 SETTING

Greenhouse gas emissions (GHGs) play a critical role in determining the earth's surface temperature. A portion of the solar radiation that enters earth's atmosphere is absorbed by the earth's surface, and a smaller portion of this radiation is reflected back toward space. Infrared radiation (i.e., thermal heat) is absorbed by GHGs; as a result, infrared radiation released from the earth that otherwise would have escaped back into space is instead "trapped," resulting in a warming of the atmosphere. This phenomenon, known as the "greenhouse effect," is responsible for maintaining a habitable climate on Earth.

GHGs are present in the atmosphere naturally, are released by natural sources, and are formed from secondary reactions taking place in the atmosphere. The following are GHGs that are widely seen as the principal contributors to human-induced global climate change: carbon dioxide (CO_2), methane (CH_4), nitrous oxide (N_2O), hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs), perfluorocarbons (PFCs), and sulfur hexafluoride (SF_6).

Global warming potential (GWP) is a concept developed to compare the ability of each GHG to trap heat in the atmosphere relative to CO_2. The GWP of a GHG is based on several factors, including the relative effectiveness of a gas to absorb infrared radiation and length of time (i.e., lifetime) that the gas remains in the atmosphere ("atmospheric lifetime"). The GWP of each gas is measured relative to CO_2, the most abundant GHG. GHGs with lower emissions rates than CO_2 may still contribute to climate change because they are more effective at absorbing outgoing infrared radiation than CO_2 (i.e., high GWP). The concept of CO_2-equivalents (CO_2e) is used to account for the different GWP potentials of GHGs to absorb infrared radiation.

3.8.2 THRESHOLDS OF SIGNIFICANCE

On May 1, 2023, the City of Rancho Cordova released the Draft Climate Action and Adaptation Plan (Draft CAAP) for public review. The purposes of the Draft CAAP are to identify strategies and measures the City can take to reduce GHG emissions to levels that align with the State's goals and set forth strategies to adapt and promote resilience to the impacts of climate change (City of Rancho Cordova 2023). To reduce communitywide emissions in alignment with statewide targets, the Draft CAAP has established a 2030 target of achieving a GHG emissions level of 36 percent below 2019 levels (438,300 metric tons [MT] CO_2e annually); and a 2045 goal of achieving a GHG emissions level of 81 percent below 2019 levels (129,300 MT CO_2e annually). To achieve the

2030 target and to make substantial progress toward the 2045 goal, the Draft CAAP proposes a Strategy Framework consisting of 14 GHG reduction strategies, 34 GHG emission reduction measures, and supporting actions in the following sectors: On-Road Transportation, Building Energy, Off-Road Vehicle and Equipment, Water and Solid Waste, and Carbon Sequestration. The Draft CAAP was also prepared with the intent to be consistent with the provisions of CEQA Guidelines Section 15183.5 so that development project applicants in the city would have the opportunity to streamline CEQA review for projects that are consistent with the Draft CAAP. A project's consistency with the Draft CAAP would be determined through the Consistency Checklist presented in Appendix G of the Draft CAAP. However, at the time of this analysis, the Draft CAAP has not been approved and Appendix G of the Draft CAAP, has not been released for public review.

Therefore, for the purposes of determining whether the project's construction related and operational GHG emissions would result in a cumulatively considerable contribution to the cumulative impact of climate change, this analysis follows the guidance prepared by SMAQMD in its *Guide to Air Quality Assessment in Sacramento County* (CEQA Guide) (SMAQMD 2021). Table 3.8-1 lists the SMAQMD adopted thresholds of significance for GHG emissions.

Table 3.8-1 SMAQMD GHG Emissions CEQA Thresholds of Significance

Phase	Threshold
Construction	1,100 MT CO_2e per year
Operational	1,100 MT CO_2e per year and implementation of Tier 1 BMPs: BMP 1: no natural gas: projects shall be designed and constructed without natural gas infrastructure. BMP 2: Electric Vehicle (EV) ready: projects shall meet the current CalGreen Tier 2 standards, except all EV capable spaces shall be instead EV ready.

Source: SMAQMD 2021.

Notes:

BMP = best management practices; CalGreen = California Green Building Standards; CEQA = California Environmental Quality Act; CO_2e = carbon dioxide equivalents; GHG = greenhouse gas emissions; MT = metric tons

Since the project includes the installation of two digital, electrical signs and operational activities would be limited to electricity consumption, BMP 1 and 2, which prohibit natural gas infrastructure and require the installation of electric vehicle (EV)-ready spaces for land uses that involve mobile source emissions, respectively, would not be applicable. Therefore, determining whether the project's construction related and operational GHG emissions may result in a cumulatively considerable contribution to the cumulative impact of climate change, is based on SMAQMD's threshold of 1,100 MT CO_2e per year (SMAQMD 2021).

3.8.3 DISCUSSION

a) Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?

Less than Cumulatively Considerable Impact. Construction-related exhaust GHG emissions would be generated from a variety of sources during construction of the project including, but not limited to heavy-duty construction equipment, haul trucks, material delivery trucks, and construction worker vehicles. Construction-related GHG emissions were estimated using the methodology discussed in Section 3.3, Air Quality. Operational GHG emissions would only consist of indirect GHG emissions from electricity consumption of the two

billboards. Based on information provided by the sign manufacturer, daily electricity consumption is estimated to be approximately 158 kilowatt-hours per sign. As described in Section 2, Project Description, the billboards would be operated 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year and electricity would be supplied by SMUD. As such, the annual electricity consumption is estimated to be 115,340 kilowatt-hours per year. GHG emissions associated with this electricity consumption were estimated in the air pollutant emissions estimating software, CalEEMod, which utilizes the SMUD's 2023 GHG intensity factors. Refer to Appendix A for additional details.

Table 3.8-2 presents a summary of the project's total construction related GHG emissions and annual operational GHG emissions.

Table 3.8-2 GHG Emissions Summary

Description	MT CO_2e
Total Construction Emissions	19.4
SMAQMD Threshold (MT CO_2e per year)	1,100
Annual Operational Emissions (MT CO_2e per year)	17.2
SMAQMD Threshold (MT CO_2e per year)	1,100
Exceeds Thresholds?	No

Notes:
CO_2e = carbon dioxide equivalents; GHG = greenhouse gas emissions; MT = metric tons; SMAQMD = Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality District.

As shown in Table 3.8-1, the project's construction and operational GHG emissions would not exceed the SMAQMD thresholds of significance of 1,100 MT CO_2e per year. Therefore, the project's construction and operational GHG emissions would result in a **less than cumulatively considerable** contribution to the cumulative impact of climate change.

b) Conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases.

Less than Cumulatively Considerable Impact. As discussed previously, the City of Rancho Cordova has prepared a Draft CAAP; however, this Draft CAAP has not been finalized at the time of this analysis. Therefore, this analysis is based on an evaluation of statewide plans, policies, or regulations adopted for the purpose of reducing GHG emissions.

In accordance with State law, CARB developed the State's Climate Change Scoping Plan (2008) and Scoping Plan updates (2014, 2017, and 2022) to outline the State's strategy to reduce California's GHG emissions per Assembly Bill (AB) 32, Senate Bill (SB) 32, and AB 1279. CARB's Scoping Plan updates include measures that would indirectly address GHG emissions from construction activities, including the phasing in of cleaner technology for diesel engine fleets and the development of a Low Carbon Fuel Standard. Policies formulated under the mandate of AB 32 that apply to construction-related activity, either directly or indirectly, are assumed to be implemented statewide and would affect the project should those policies be implemented before construction begins.

As described previously, the long-term generation of GHG emissions associated with the project would be limited to electricity consumption. California established a Renewables Portfolio Standard, which requires retail sellers of electricity to meet specific goals of providing their energy supply from renewable sources. Per SB 100, electricity retailers are required to provide at least 60 percent of their supply from renewable sources by 2030. SB 100 also added the requirement that all state's electricity must come from carbon-free resources by 2045. Therefore, these requirements would continue to reduce the carbon content of electricity generation and would reduce GHG emissions associated with the project's electricity consumption.

Furthermore, the SMAQMD quantitative thresholds of significance for GHGs were developed with the intent to ensure at least 90 percent of new GHG emissions would be reviewed and assessed for mitigation, thereby contributing to GHG emissions reductions goals set forth by AB 32 and SB 32. As described in Section 3.8.3(a), the project would not exceed GHG emission thresholds established by SMAQMD, and the project would not include natural gas infrastructure nor generate mobile source emissions during operations. Due to the project's consistency with the above-described plans, as well as not exceeding thresholds of significance, the project would not conflict with applicable plans, policies, or regulations adopted for the purposes of reducing GHG emissions. This impact would result in a **less than cumulatively considerable** contribution to the significant impact of climate change.

3.9 HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

	ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
IX.	**Hazards and Hazardous Materials. Would the project:**				
a)	Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b)	Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and/or accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?	☐	☒	☐	☐
c)	Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?	☐	☐	☐	☒
d)	Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code §65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?	☐	☐	☐	☒
e)	For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?	☐	☐	☐	☒
f)	Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	☐	☐	☒	☐
g)	Expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving wildland fires?	☐	☐	☐	☒

3.9.1 SETTING

USE OF AGRICULTURAL CHEMICALS ON THE PROJECT SITE

Chemicals potentially used in agricultural activities could result in residual concentrations of persistent pesticides in the soil. Persistent pesticides leave residues that remain in the environment without breaking down, such as organochlorine pesticides (e.g., dichlorodiphenyltrichloroethane [DDT], Toxaphene, and Dieldrin). There is no record of this project site being used for agriculture within the last century, thus it is unlikely that organochloride pesticides and other agrochemicals are present in on-site soils.

RESULTS OF RECORDS SEARCH FOR HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

AECOM searched the SWRCB's GeoTracker web site and the California Department of Toxic Substances Control's (DTSC's) EnviroStor web site to identify toxic releases, hazardous waste, or other violations that could affect the project site (SWRCB 2023, DTSC 2023a). The project site is not listed as a hazardous waste site in either of these databases.

DTSC maintains a hazardous waste and substances site list (Cortese list) pursuant to Government Code Section 65962. As of January 2018, the project site is not on this list (DTSC 2023b).

In addition, AECOM searched the EPA's Envirofacts database. The Envirofacts database is an assemblage of EPA databases, including the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (commonly known as Superfund) Information System database, which includes National Priorities List sites being assessed under the Superfund program, hazardous waste sites, and potentially hazardous waste sites. The project site is not listed in the Envirofacts database (EPA 2023).

SCHOOLS IN THE PROJECT VICINITY

No K–12 schools are located within 0.25 mile of the project site. The closest school to the project site is Gold River Elementary School located approximately 0.6 mile to the north.

AIRPORTS AND AIRSTRIPS

The closest airports to the project site are Mather Airport approximately 4.3 miles southwest and Sacramento McClellan Airport approximately 9 miles northwest. The project site is not located in the clear zone, approach-departure zone, or overflight zone of any airport. There are no private airstrips within 2 miles of the project site.

WILDFIRE RISK

The majority of Sacramento County is identified by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) as a Local Responsibility Area. Local Responsibility Areas (LRA), which are under the jurisdiction of local entities (e.g., cities, counties), are required to only identify very high fire hazard severity zones. The CAL FIRE map "Fire Hazard Severity Zones in LRA" for Sacramento County identifies the project site and surrounding area as not being within the Moderate, High, or Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone, which indicates that the risk of wildland fire hazards is not considered moderate, high, or very high (CAL FIRE 2008).

3.9.2 DISCUSSION

a) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?

Less than Significant. Project construction would involve the storage, use, and transport of small amounts of hazardous materials (e.g., asphalt, fuel, lubricants, paint, and other substances) on roadways, such as Folsom Boulevard and regional highways, such as US 50. Regulations governing hazardous materials transport are included in California Code of Regulations Title 22, the California Vehicle Code (California Code of Regulations Title 13). The transportation of hazardous materials is also subject to applicable local, State, and federal regulations, which have been specifically designed to minimize the risk of upset during routine construction

activities. State agencies with primary responsibility for enforcing federal and State regulations and responding to hazardous materials transportation emergencies consist of the California Highway Patrol and the California Department of Transportation. Together, these agencies determine container types used and license hazardous waste haulers for transportation of hazardous waste on public roads.

Construction contractors would be required to comply with California Environmental Protection Agency's Unified Program; regulated activities would be managed by Sacramento County Department of Environmental Resources, the designated Certified Unified Program Agency for Sacramento County, in accordance with the regulations included in the Unified Program (e.g., hazardous materials release response plans and inventories, California Uniform Fire Code hazardous material management plans and inventories). Such compliance would reduce the potential for accidental release of hazardous materials during construction of the proposed project.

Construction and operation of the proposed project are required by law to implement and comply with existing hazardous material regulations. Each of these regulations is specifically designed to protect the public health through improved procedures for the handling of hazardous materials, better technology in the equipment used to transport these materials, and a more coordinated quicker response to emergencies. As the proposed project would comply with existing regulations, it would not create significant hazards to the public through routine, transport, use, disposal, and risk of upset.

b) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and/or accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?

Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated. AECOM searched the EPA's Envirofacts, the SWRCB's GeoTracker, and DTSC's Envirostor web sites to identify toxic releases, hazardous waste, or other violations that could affect the site. The project site is not listed in these databases as a hazardous waste site (EPA 2023, SWRCB 2023, DTSC 2023a). Although the project site is not listed as a hazardous waste site and no hazardous wastes were observed during the site reconnaissance, there is the potential that subsurface hazardous waste may be encountered in on-site soils. The impact would be **potentially significant**.

> **Mitigation Measure: HAZ-1: Retain a Licensed Professional to Investigate Known or Unknown Hazards and Hazardous Materials and Implement Required Measures, as Necessary.**
>
> If, during site preparation and construction activities, evidence of hazardous materials contamination is observed or suspected (e.g., stained or odorous soil or groundwater), construction activities shall cease immediately in the area of the find. If such contamination is observed or suspected, the contractor shall retain a qualified hazardous materials specialist to assess the site and collect and analyze soil and/or water samples, as necessary. If contaminants are identified in the samples, the contractor shall notify and consult with the appropriate federal, State, and/or local agencies, including the Department of Toxic Substances Control. Measures to remediate contamination and protect worker health and the environment shall be implemented in accordance with federal, State, and local regulations before construction activities may resume at the site where contamination is encountered.

SIGNIFICANCE AFTER MITIGATION

Implementation of Mitigation Measure HAZ-1 would reduce the potentially significant impacts related to exposure to hazardous substances to a **less-than-significant** level because any hazardous substances would be

removed and properly disposed of by a licensed contractor in accordance with federal, State, and local regulations, which are specifically designed to protect the public from human health hazards.

c) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?

No Impact. The nearest school to the project site is located more than ½ mile to the north. Therefore, the proposed project would not result in hazardous emissions or handle acutely hazardous materials (i.e., waste containing such dangerous chemicals that it could pose a threat to human health and the environment even when properly managed) within 0.25 mile of an existing school.

d) Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code § 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?

No Impact. The project site is not listed on a hazardous waste and substances site list (Cortese list) pursuant to Government Code Section 65962 (DTSC 2023b).

e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?

No Impact. The project site is not subject to any airport land use plan or located in the clear zone, approach-departure zone, or overflight zone of any airport. The closest public airport to the project site is the Mather Airport, located approximately 4.3 miles to the southwest, and McClellan Airport, approximately 9 miles northwest. Therefore, the proposed project would not result in safety hazards for people residing in the vicinity of a public airport.

f) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?

Less than Significant. Implementation of the proposed project would not interfere with any adopted emergency response or evacuation plans. During the one-month construction of the proposed digital billboards, construction vehicles would access the project site from Folsom Boulevard, a four-lane arterial that is easily passable by emergency vehicles. In addition, the project site contains ample unused parking areas for vehicle queueing and parking, which would prevent back-ups onto Folsom Boulevard. Because the proposed project would not obstruct a route that may be used in emergency evacuation, it would not substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan. Further, operational traffic would be minimal and not impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or evacuation plan.

g) Expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving wildland fires?

No Impact. The project site is flat, mostly paved, surrounded by urban uses, and located in an area of low fire hazard severity. As the conditions for wildfire are not present, the proposed project would not expose people or structures to significant risks, including downslope or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes.

3.10 HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
X. Hydrology and Water Quality. Would the project:				
a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or ground water quality?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b) Substantially deplete groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin?	☐	☐	☒	☐
c) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner which would:	☐	☐	☒	☐
i) Result in a substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site;	☐	☐	☒	☐
ii) Substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or off-site;	☐	☐	☒	☐
iii) Create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff; or	☐	☐	☐	☒
iv) Impede or redirect flood flows?	☐	☐	☐	☒
d) In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk release of pollutants due to project inundation?	☐	☐	☐	☒
e) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan?	☐	☐	☐	☒

3.10.1 SETTING

The project site is within an urbanized area and is developed with a former mini-golf course, a building, and associated parking lot. The site is level and mostly covered with hardscape surfaces. The project area is situated over a shallow unconfined aquifer system, which is approximately 200 feet below ground surface, and a deeper confined groundwater aquifer system ranging from a few hundred feet to over 2,000 feet below ground surface (City of Rancho Cordova General Plan DEIR 2006).

The surface water resources nearest the project site include the Folsom South Canal, Buffalo Creek, and the American River. The Folsom South Canal is located approximately 150 feet south of the project site. The Folsom South Canal is a concrete canal that diverts water from the American River at Nimbus Dam for irrigation, industrial and municipal water supply, and travels about 26.7 miles in a southerly direction to serve Sacramento and San Joaquin counties. Buffalo Creek is located approximately 315 feet south of the project site and is adjacent to the Folsom South Canal. The American River is located approximately 0.75 miles north of the project site and flows through the American River Parkway of open space greenbelt that provides flood protection and recreational opportunities within the City limits.

The Flood Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) classifies the project site as Zone X, an area of minimal flood hazard (FEMA 2012). The project site is not within a tsunami hazard zone (California DOC 2019) or in the vicinity of a reservoir, harbor, lake, or storage tank capable of creating a seiche.

3.10.2 DISCUSSION

a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or ground water quality?

Less than Significant. The proposed project would construct two digital billboards, supported by monopoles, on an existing 11.4-acre commercial site. The billboards would be located in two separate areas on the parcel. Installation of the monopoles would require boring 4-foot-diameter by 50-foot-deep holes, which would include the removal of approximately eight cubic yards of excess fill for each sign foundation. This excess fill would either distributed on-site or hauled to an off-site use that requires fill. Short-term surface water quality impacts would potentially occur during construction-related activities such as grading (west location only), temporary placement of fill to allow construction equipment to cross on-site drainage ditches, drilling the excavated sign hole for the foundation, pouring concrete, and stockpiling excavated fill. Runoff of loose soils and/or construction wastes and equipment fuel during a rainstorm could flow into local storm drains. Such contaminated runoff could potentially threaten downstream water resources that receive runoff from the local drainage network. Because the unconfined aquifer system is approximately 200 feet or more below the ground surface, it is unlikely that groundwater would be encountered during boring to a depth of 50 feet.

Compliance with the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Area Wide Stormwater Program and the City's standard storm water runoff provisions for construction activities, such as runoff control and other measures set forth in the City of Rancho Cordova Municipal Code Chapter 15.12 (Storm Water Management and Discharge Control) would ensure that the project does not violate any water quality standards or any waste discharge requirements during construction. Given the proposed project's minimal impact area and implementation of project-incorporated water quality BMPs, construction activities would not lead to erosion or substantial contribution of polluted storm water runoff that would result in violation of any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements.

The City of Rancho Cordova is a member agency in the Sacramento Central Groundwater Authority (SCGA). To satisfy the California Sustainable Groundwater Management Act, SCGA is collaborating with the Omochumne-Hartnell Water District, Northern Delta, County of Sacramento, and Sloughhouse Resource Conservation District to develop a Groundwater Sustainability Plan for the South American Subbasin, a high priority subbasin within the larger Sacramento Valley Groundwater Basin (South American Subbasin Groundwater Sustainability Agencies 2021) South American Subbasin Groundwater Sustainability Plan.

b) Substantially deplete groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin?

Less than Significant. The proposed digital billboards would not require water to operate. The east sign (Area 2) would be installed in a paved area and therefore would not add to existing impervious surface area. The west sign (Area 1) would require installation of a foundation in an unpaved area; however, the increase in impervious surface area would be less than 13 square feet. Therefore, project development would not interfere substantially with any groundwater recharge from precipitation or on-site sheet flows. Therefore, the proposed project would not deplete groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the proposed project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin.

c) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner which would:

i) Result in a substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site;

Less Than Significant. The project site is within an urbanized area and is developed with a former mini-golf course with a building and associated parking lot. The site is level and mostly covered with hardscape surfaces, although it does contain ruderal grassland and trees, with the greatest extent west of the existing building. Although some tree removal and minor grading would be required to install the west sign (Area 1), BMPs incorporated into the project would ensure containment of fill soils and stormwater City-required BMPs. Therefore, the proposed project would not substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of a course, stream, or river, or through the addition of impervious surfaces as the installation of the proposed digital sign would occur in a developed paved area.

ii) Substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or off-site;

Less than Significant. The project site is within an urbanized area and is developed with a former mini-golf course, a building and associated parking lot. The site is level and mostly covered with hardscape surfaces. Construction of the proposed project involves two digital billboards, supported by monopoles, on an existing 11.4-acre commercial site. The billboards would be located in two separate areas on the parcel. The digital billboard pole would be backfilled, and the surrounding pole area would be incased in concrete, which would add an impervious surface area of less than 13 square feet. Because the proposed project involves minimal ground-disturbing activities, and any drainage pattern changes would be temporary and localized, the project would not substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner that would result in flooding on- or off-site.

iii) Create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff; or

No Impact. As discussed above under checklist items i) and ii) of this section, the proposed project would not alter drainage patterns on the site, nor would it substantially increase the number of impermeable surface area on the site because the project site is within an urbanized area and is developed with paved surfaces. As explained under checklist item a), the potential sources of stormwater pollutants associated with the proposed project would be limited to construction-related chemicals such as petroleum products used for construction equipment.

However, the duration of construction and the amount of equipment and ground disturbance required are short-term and limited. Additionally, the project would incorporate standard BMPs to minimize the potential for storm water contamination during construction. The operation of the digital billboard would not create a source of polluted runoff. Therefore, the proposed project would not create or contribute runoff water that would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff and **no impact** would occur.

iv) Impede or redirect flood flows?

No Impact. As discussed above under checklist item i), ii), and the Setting of this section, the project site is within an urbanized area and is developed with former commercial use. The project site is classified as Zone X, an area of minimal flood hazard (FEMA 2012). The project site is also 125-135 feet above elevation and would remain similar to existing conditions that do not impede or redirect flood flows. Additionally, the proposed project does not consist of housing or present a risk for flooding or redirection of flood flows. The proposed project is not anticipated to substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff during construction or operational activities and would not exceed the capacity of the existing/planned stormwater drainage systems in the project area. Therefore, the proposed project would not impede or redirect flood flows.

d) In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk release of pollutants due to project inundation?

No Impact. As discussed under checklist item iv), the project site is classified as Zone X, an area of minimal flood hazard (FEMA 2012). In addition, the site is 130 feet above mean sea level, and the area is not seismically active. Additionally, the project site is not within a tsunami hazard zone (California DOC 2019) or in the vicinity of a reservoir, harbor, lake, or storage tank capable of creating a seiche. Therefore, the proposed project would not risk the release of pollutants due to project inundation.

e) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan?

No Impact. As discussed above, the proposed project would result in negligible impacts on water quality during the short-term construction process due to the handling, storage, and disposal of construction materials, maintenance and operation of construction equipment, and earthmoving activities. Project construction would not disturb more than one acre of soil and thus, would not be required to obtain coverage under the State Water Resources Control Board's (SWRCB's) General Permit for Discharges of Storm Water Associated with Construction Activity Construction General Permit Order 2009-0009-DWQ (General Construction Permit). Further, the proposed project would not require the use of groundwater and would not involve drilling any new groundwater wells. Therefore, the proposed project would not conflict with or obstruct the implementation of the South American Subbasin Groundwater Sustainability Plan.

3.11 LAND USE AND PLANNING

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
XI. Land Use and Planning. Would the project:				
a) Physically divide an established community?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b) Cause a significant environmental impact due to a conflict with any land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?	☐	☐	☐	☒

3.11.1 SETTING

The project site is within an urbanized area adjacent to a highway and is developed with commercial structures and paved surface parking lots. The proposed project involves the construction of two digital billboards, supported by monopoles, on an existing 11.4-acre commercial site. The billboards would be located in two separate areas on the parcel. The project site is bordered by railroad tracks, Folsom Boulevard, and US 50 to the north and Folsom South Canal on the south side consisting of open space and industrial uses. The unincorporated community of Gold River is located north of US 50.

The City's General Plan land use designation is Folsom Boulevard Planning Area, and the current zoning is General Commercial (GC), which allows general commercial and industrial uses to implement the City's commercial mixed-use and heavy industrial General Plan land use categories. These districts provide sufficient and appropriately located land for general commercial and industrial uses that minimize impacts on residential neighborhoods (City of Rancho Cordova Municipal Code Chapter 23.316 – General Commercial and Industrial Zones).

3.11.2 DISCUSSION

a) Physically divide an established community?

No Impact. The project proposes to construct two advertising billboards with electronic displays on an existing 11.4-acre commercial site on the south side of US 50 in the City of Rancho Cordova. The billboards would be located in two separate areas on the parcel (see Exhibit 2.4-1). The nearest establish community (Gold River in unincorporated Sacramento County) is already separated from the project site by US 50. Therefore, the proposed project would not physically divide any established community.

b) Cause a significant environmental impact due to a conflict with any land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?

No Impact. The proposed project would not introduce new uses or development of new buildings or structures that would conflict with the existing on-site General Plan designation or zoning. For an impact to be considered significant under this threshold, any inconsistency with applicable plans, policies, or regulations would also need to result in a significant adverse change in the environment not already addressed in the other resource sections of

this IS/MND. Those other resource sections discuss consistency of the proposed project with relevant plans, policies, and regulations, as appropriate; provide a detailed analysis of other relevant physical environmental effects that could result from implementation of the proposed project; and identify mitigation measures, as necessary, to reduce impacts. Implementation of the proposed project would not conflict with the adopted City General Plan policies or other land use plan, policy, or regulation that would generate any adverse physical impacts beyond those addressed in detail in the resource sections of this IS/MND.

3.12 MINERAL RESOURCES

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
XII. Mineral Resources. Would the project:				
a) Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b) Result in the loss of availability of a locally important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan, or other land use plan?	☐	☐	☐	☒

3.12.1 SETTING

Under the State of California's Surface Mining and Reclamation Act of 1975 (SMARA), the State Mining and Geology Board may designate certain mineral deposits as being regionally significant to satisfy future needs. The Board's decision to designate an area is based on a classification report prepared by the California Geological Survey and on input from agencies and the public.

In compliance with SMARA, the California Geological Survey has established the mineral resource zone (MRZ) classification system shown in Table 3.12-1 to denote both the location and significance of key extractive resources. The project site is not classified as either MRZ-2 or MRZ-3 (City of Rancho Cordova 2006). Therefore, it is unlikely that it contains significant mineral deposits.

Table 3.12-1 California Geological Survey Mineral Land Classification System

Classification	Description
MRZ-1	Areas where adequate information indicates that no significant mineral deposits are present or where it is judged that little likelihood exists for their presence
MRZ-1	Areas of mined-out PCC-grade aggregate resources
MRZ-2	Areas where adequate information indicates that significant mineral deposits are present or where it is judged that a high likelihood exists for their presence
MRZ-3	Areas containing mineral deposits, the significance of which cannot be evaluated from available data
MRZ-4	Areas where available data is inadequate for assignment to any other mineral resource zone

Note:
MRZ = mineral resource zone; PCC = portland cement concrete

3.12.2 DISCUSSION

a) Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state?

No Impact. No active mining operations are located within or in the vicinity of the project site. Therefore, the proposed project would not result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state. **No impact** would occur.

b) Result in the loss of availability of a locally important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan, or other land use plan?

No Impact. No locally important mineral resource recovery sites are located within or in the vicinity of the project site. Therefore, the proposed project would not result in the loss of availability of a locally important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan. **No impact** would occur.

3.13 NOISE

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
XIII. Noise. Would the project result in:				
a) Generation of a substantial temporary or permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the project in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b) Generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?	☐	☐	☒	☐
c) For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip or an airport land use plan or where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?	☐	☐	☐	☒

3.13.1 SETTING

SOUND, NOISE, AND ACOUSTICS

Sound is the mechanical energy of a vibrating object transmitted by pressure waves through a liquid or gaseous medium (e.g., air). Noise is defined as sound that is unwanted (i.e., loud, unexpected, or annoying). Acoustics is the physics of sound.

The amplitude of pressure waves generated by a sound source determines the perceived loudness of that source. A logarithmic scale is used to describe sound pressure level in terms of decibels (dB). The threshold of human hearing (near-total silence) is approximately 0 dB. A doubling of sound energy corresponds to an increase of 3 dB. In other words, when two sources at a given location are each producing sound of the same loudness, the resulting sound level at a given distance from that location is approximately 3 dB higher than the sound level produced by only one of the sources. For example, if one automobile produces a sound pressure level of 70 dB when it passes an observer, two cars passing simultaneously do not produce 140 dB; rather, they combine to produce 73 dB.

The typical human ear is not equally sensitive to all frequencies of the audible sound spectrum. As a consequence, when assessing potential noise impacts, sound is measured using an electronic filter that de-emphasizes the frequencies below 1,000 hertz (Hz) and above 5,000 Hz in a manner corresponding to the human ears decreased sensitivity to low and extremely high frequencies instead of the frequency mid-range. This method of frequency weighting is referred to as A-weighting and is expressed in units of A-weighted decibels (dBA). All noise levels reported in this section are in terms of A-weighting. There is a strong correlation between A-weighted sound

levels and community response to noise. As discussed above, doubling sound energy results in a 3-dB increase in sound. In typical noisy environments, noise-level changes of 1 to 2 dB are generally not perceptible by the healthy human ear; however, people can begin to detect 3-dB increases in noise levels. An increase of 5 dB is generally perceived as distinctly noticeable and a 10-dB increase is generally perceived as a doubling of loudness. The following are the sound level descriptors commonly used in environmental noise analysis:

- Equivalent sound level (L_{eq}): An average of the sound energy occurring over a specified time period. In effect, the L_{eq} is the steady-state sound level containing the same acoustical energy as the time-varying sound that actually occurs during the same period. The 1-hour, A-weighted equivalent sound level ($L_{eq[h]}$) is the energy average of A-weighted sound levels occurring during a 1-hour period.

- Maximum sound level (L_{max}): The highest instantaneous sound level measured during a specified period.

- Day-Night Noise Level (L_{dn}): The 24-hour L_{eq} with a 10 dB "penalty" applied during nighttime noise-sensitive hours, 10:00 p.m. through 7:00 a.m. The L_{dn} attempts to account for the fact that noise during this specific period of time is a potential source of disturbance with respect to normal sleeping hours.

- Statistical Descriptor (L_n): The n-percent exceeded level, L_n, is the sound pressure level exceeded for n percent of the time. The noise level exceeded n percent of a specific period of time, generally accepted as an hourly statistic. An L_{10} would be the noise level exceeded 10 % of the measurement period.

Sound from a localized source (i.e., point source) propagates uniformly outward in a spherical pattern, and the sound level attenuates (decreases) at a rate of 6 dB for each doubling of distance from a point/stationary source. Roadways and highways and, to some extent, moving trains consist of several localized noise sources on a defined path; these are treated as "line" sources, which approximate the effect of several point sources. Sound levels attenuate at a rate of 3 dB for each doubling of distance from a line source. Therefore, noise from a line source attenuates less with distance than noise from a point source with increased distance.

GROUNDBORNE VIBRATION

Groundborne vibration is energy transmitted in waves through the ground. Vibration attenuates at a rate of approximately 50 percent for each doubling of distance from the source. This approach considers only the attenuation from geometric spreading and tends to provide for a conservative assessment of vibration level at the receiver.

Vibration is an oscillatory motion that can be described in terms of the displacement, velocity, or acceleration. Vibration typically is described by its peak and root-mean-square (RMS) amplitudes. The RMS value can be considered an average value over a given time interval. The peak vibration velocity is the same as the "peak particle velocity" (PPV), generally presented in units of inches per second. PPV is the maximum instantaneous positive or negative peak of the vibration signal and is generally used to assess the potential for damage to buildings and structures. The RMS amplitude typically is used to assess human annoyance to vibration, and the abbreviation "VdB" is used in this document for vibration decibels to reduce the potential for confusion with sound decibels.

EXISTING NOISE ENVIRONMENT

Noise-sensitive land uses are those uses for which quiet is an essential element of the purpose and function of the subject land use. Residential uses are of primary concern because of the potential for increased and prolonged exposure of individuals to both interior and exterior noise levels. Schools, places of worship, hotels, libraries, health facilities, and other places where low interior noise levels are essential are also considered noise-sensitive land uses. Parks, historic sites, cemeteries, and recreation areas are also considered sensitive to increases in exterior noise levels.

The project site is located on the south side of US 50 and Folsom Boulevard between Sunrise Boulevard and Hazel Avenue in the city of Rancho Cordova. Noise-sensitive receptors in the vicinity of the project site include single-family residential uses north of US 50.

The existing noise environment within the project area is primarily influenced by surface transportation noise emanating from vehicular traffic on US 50 and Folsom Boulevard. Intermittent noise from rail traffic south of and parallel to US 50 and Folsom Boulevard also contribute to the project area noise environment. There is no current freight train activity in the city of Rancho Cordova, but the city is served by Regional Transit Light Rail along the Folsom Boulevard / US 50 corridor. Light rail passages in the project area generate noise level of 60 dB L_{dn}, at 100 to 500 feet from center line of tracks (City of Rancho Cordova 2006). In the unincorporated community of Gold River on the north side of US 50, intermittent noise from outdoor activities at residences (e.g., people talking, operation of landscaping equipment, car doors slamming, and dogs barking), also influences the existing noise environment.

Existing traffic noise in the vicinity of the project site was estimated using traffic volumes along US 50, which are shown in Table 3.13-1. Estimated existing traffic noise in the project vicinity would be 78 dBA L_{eq} at 150 feet, which is the distance to the nearest noise-sensitive uses from the US 50 centerline (residences north of US 50). Modeled roadway noise levels assume no natural or artificial shielding between the roadway and the residences. There is a sound wall along US 50 between the receptors and the freeway, which would reduce the traffic noise from the US 50 by approximately 10 dB. Therefore, existing noise from the freeway would be at or below 68 dB at the nearest residences to the project site. Current City standard noise exposure maximums for transportation noise sources is 60 dB L_{eq} (City of Rancho Cordova 2006).

Table 3.13-1 Summary of Existing Traffic Noise Level in the Vicinity of the Project Site

Roadway	Segment	Traffic Volume (Peak Hour)	Distance (Feet)	Noise Level, dB, L_{eq}	Contour Distances		
					70 dB	65 dB	60 dB
US 50	Sunrise Boulevard to Nimbus Road	12,100	150	78	897	2,835	8,966

Notes: dB = decibels; L_{eq} = equivalent sound level (the sound energy averaged over a continuous period of time); US 50 = Highway 50
Modeled roadway noise levels assume no natural or artificial shielding between the roadway and the receptor.
Source: Caltrans 2020a, Data compiled by AECOM in 2023.

REGULATORY SETTING

According to the City of Ranch Cordova's General Plan, impacts to adjacent land uses from stationary sources of noise in the City are limited to 55 dB L_{eq} in daylight hours and 45 dB L_{eq} during nighttime hours. A reduction in 5

dB L_{eq} (to 50/40 dB L_{eq}) is mandated for uses that generate tonal, repetitive, or impulsive noise. Impulsive noise is defined as sound of short duration, usually less than one second, with an abrupt onset and decay. Impulsive sounds include explosions, drop forge impacts, and the discharge of firearms. Tonal noises are generally defined as any sound which can be distinctly heard as a single pitch or a set of single pitches. Repetitive noise is generally defined as noises that are regularly repeated in such a manner as to cause annoyance. For example, back-up "beepers" and pile drivers are both sources of repetitive noise.

The City's noise ordinance, which is based on the County noise ordinance, establishes maximum allowable exterior and interior noise levels for affected land uses. The ordinance generally limits exterior noise levels (measured at residential land and agricultural land uses) to a maximum of 55 dBA during any cumulative 30-minute period during the daytime hours (7 a.m.–10 p.m.), and 50 dBA during any cumulative 30-minute period during the nighttime hours (10 p.m.–7 a.m.). The ordinance sets somewhat higher noise limits for noise of shorter duration; however, noise shall not exceed 75 dBA during the day and 70 dBA at night. Activities generally considered to be exempt from the noise standards include construction activities (provided that they occur between the daytime hours of 7 a.m.– 6 p.m., Monday through Saturday, and 9 a.m.–6 p.m. on Sunday), school athletic and entertainment events, activities conducted on public parks and playgrounds, and transportation noise.

3.13.2 DISCUSSION

a) Generation of a substantial temporary or permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the project in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?

SHORT-TERM PROJECT-GENERATED CONSTRUCTION NOISE

Less than Significant. Construction of the two proposed digital billboards on the project site would include site preparation (e.g., minor grading); material (prefabricated sign structures) transport; drilling to bore 4-foot-diameter by 50-foot-deep holes and installing the monopoles in the holes and lift the sign parts in the air for attachment to the monopoles. Some trees on-site would also be removed. Therefore, project construction equipment would include a backhoe (for minimal grading), an auger (for drilling), trucks for material transport, concrete truck, and a crane to install the poles and the two sign boards. A chain saw and backhoe would be used for tree removal. Based upon the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Roadway Construction Noise Model (RCNM) (FHWA 2006), noise levels for individual project equipment can range from 70 dB to 75 dB, L_{eq} and 74 to 79 dB L_{max} at 50 feet, as shown in Table 3.13-2.

The nearest residential uses to the project site are located approximately 400 feet from the project site on the north side of US 50. Based upon the equipment noise levels, usage factors, and a typical noise-attenuation rate of 6 dB for every doubling of distance, exterior noise levels at noise-sensitive receptors located within 400 feet of the project site could be as high as 52 dB to 57 dB L_{eq} from the project construction activities. Also, a sound wall is located between the construction site and the nearest residences, which would provide at least 5 to 10 dB reduction in noise, reducing the project construction noise to below 50 dB, L_{eq}. This level of noise is below the City's threshold of 55 dB for station noise sources. This level is also lower than estimated existing ambient conditions. Therefore, construction of the proposed project would not generate a substantial temporary increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the project in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards.

Table 3.13-2 summarizes modeled construction noise levels at nearest noise-sensitive locations to the project site.

Table 3.13-2 Project Construction Noise Levels

Receiver	Noise Level, dBA L_{eq}, at 50 feet	Noise Level, dBA L_{max}, at 50 feet	Noise Level, dBA L_{eq}, at 400 feet	Noise Level, dBA L_{max}, at 400 feet
Drill Rig Truck	72	79	54	61
Backhoe	74	78	56	60
Flat Bed Truck	70	74	52	56
Concrete Mixer Truck	75	79	57	61
Pickup Truck	71	75	53	57

Refer to Appendix C for modeling input parameters and output results.

dBA = A-weighted decibels; FHWA = Federal Highway Administration; L_{eq} = Equivalent Noise Level; L_{max} = Instantaneous Maximum Noise Level.

Sources: FHWA Roadway Construction Noise Model, January 2006; Modeled by AECOM 2023

LONG-TERM PROJECT-GENERATED STATIONARY NOISE

Less than Significant. Because the proposed digital billboards are electronic and only generate images, not sound, noise emissions from their operation would be negligible. Therefore, operation of the proposed project would not create a substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the project in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards.

b) Generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?

Less than Significant. Construction activities have the potential to result in varying degrees of temporary groundborne vibration, depending on the specific construction equipment used and operations involved. Vibration generated by construction equipment spreads through the ground and diminishes in magnitude with increases in distance.

As discussed above, on-site construction equipment could include a drill rig truck. According to Federal Transit Administration (FTA 2018), vibration levels associated with the use of a caisson drilling[1] is 0.089 inches per second (in/sec) PPV and 87 vibration decibels [VdB referenced to 1 microinch per second (µin/sec) and based on the RMS velocity amplitude] at 25 feet.

Using FTA's recommended procedure for applying a propagation adjustment to these reference levels, predicted worst-case vibration levels of approximately 0.001 in/sec PPV and 51 VdB at the closest existing sensitive receptor, located at 400 feet from the project site, could occur. These vibration levels would not exceed Caltrans's recommended standard of 0.2 in/sec PPV (Caltrans 2020b) with respect to the prevention of structural damage for normal buildings or the FTA's maximum-acceptable vibration standard of 80 VdB (Federal Transit Administration 2018) with respect to human annoyance for residential uses. The long-term operation of the proposed project would not include any vibration sources, and short-term construction would not result in the

[1] Conservatively, assuming a drill rig truck would generate the same level of vibration as a Caisson Drilling. Caisson Drilling is a method used to drill a hole and then insert either a temporary or permanent steel casing in the hole to the desired depth. A drilling rig is an integrated system that drills wells, such as oil or water wells, or holes for piling and other construction purposes, into the earth's subsurface.

exposure of persons or structures to or generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels.

c) For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip or an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?

No Impact. The project site is not located within 2 nautical miles of an airport. The closest airport is Mather Airport, which is located approximately 4.3 miles to the southwest of the project site. Thus, the project would not expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels.

3.14 POPULATION AND HOUSING

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
XIV. Population and Housing. Would the project:				
a) Induce substantial population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b) Displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?	☐	☐	☐	☒

3.14.1 SETTING

According to the US Census, 64,776 people were living in the city of Rancho Cordova in 2010 (U.S. Census Bureau 2022). The 2020 population was estimated to be 79,332, a 22.4-percent increase over the decade. The population in 2021 was estimated to be 80,413, an increase of 1.4 percent from 2020.

3.14.2 DISCUSSION

a) Induce substantial population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)?

No Impact. Construction of the digital billboards is expected to occur over the period of one month in fall 2023. The project could require a small number of workers during site preparation, grading, and construction. The source of the construction labor force is unknown at this time, but workers would likely come from the local labor pool. It is not anticipated that workers would relocate to the project area from other areas in the county or region. Operation and maintenance of the billboards would not require additional labor but would be managed using existing staff of the lessor/operating company. Therefore, the proposed project would not directly or indirectly induce significant population growth in the area that could lead to any adverse physical environmental impact.

b) Displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?

No Impact. There are no existing residences within the project site. Therefore, the proposed project would not displace existing housing, displace a substantial number of people, or necessitate the construction of replacement housing elsewhere.

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3.15 PUBLIC SERVICES

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
XV. Public Services. Would the project:				
a) Result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times, or other performance objectives for any of the public services:				
Fire protection?	☐	☐	☐	☒
Police protection?	☐	☐	☐	☒
Schools?	☐	☐	☐	☒
Parks?	☐	☐	☐	☒
Other public facilities?	☐	☐	☐	☒

3.15.1 SETTING

The proposed project site is located in an area served by the following public service districts:

- Fire Protection: Sacramento Metropolitan Fire District (SMFD)
- Police Protection: Rancho Cordova Police Department (RCPD)
- School District: Folsom Cordova Unified School District (FCUSD)
- Park District: Cordova Recreation and Park District (CRPD)
- Electrical Service: Sacramento Municipal Utility District (SMUD)

3.15.2 DISCUSSION

a) Result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times, or other performance objectives for any of the public services:

Fire protection?

No Impact. The proposed project involves the construction of two digital billboards, supported by monopoles, on an existing 11.4-acre commercial site. The billboards would be located in two separate areas on the parcel. The proposed project would not include residential or employment uses that would increase the number of people

requiring fire protection services. In addition, the temporary construction workforce would be locally sourced rather than requiring workers to relocate to the area. Therefore, no expansion of fire protection services would be required.

Police protection?

No Impact. As discussed above, construction and operation of the proposed project would include housing or employment uses that would create a need for new or additional police protection services or facilities to maintain acceptable police protection performance objectives.

Schools?

No Impact. For the reasons discussed above, the proposed project would not increase the demand for or cause school services or a facilities shortfall. Therefore, the proposed project would not impact schools or increase school service or facility demand.

Parks?

No Impact. The proposed project would not increase the population in the project area as a result of new housing or employment opportunities. Therefore, the proposed project would not increase the use of existing neighborhood or community parks or require the construction of new parks to meet the City's parkland standard.

Other public facilities?

No Impact. The proposed project would not increase the population as a result of new housing or employment opportunities. Therefore, the operation of the proposed project would not increase demand for other public facilities.

3.16 RECREATION

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
XVI. Recreation. Would the project:				
a) Would the project increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b) Does the project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities that might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?	☐	☐	☐	☒

3.16.1 SETTING

The current General Plan land use designation of the project site is Folsom Boulevard Planning Area, and the current zoning is General Commercial (GC). The project site is a former mini-golf course with a building and associated parking lot. The site is level and mostly covered with hardscape surfaces, although it does contain ruderal grassland and trees. The nearest recreational facility is Prospect Hill Park, which is approximately 2,000 feet northwest of the project site.

3.16.2 DISCUSSION

a) Would the project increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?

No Impact. As discussed in Section 3.14, the proposed project would not increase population as a result of new housing or employment opportunities. Therefore, the proposed project would not increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities.

b) Does the project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities that might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?

No Impact. The proposed project is construction and operation of two digital billboards. It does not include recreational facilities.

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3.17 TRANSPORTATION

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
XVII. Transportation. Would the project:				
a) Conflict with a program, plan, ordinance or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle and pedestrian facilities?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b) Conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines§ 15064.3, subdivision (b)?	☐	☐	☒	☐
c) Substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?	☐	☐	☐	☒
d) Result in inadequate emergency access?	☐	☐	☒	☐

3.17.1 SETTING

The project site is located on the south side of US 50 and Folsom Boulevard between Sunrise Boulevard and Hazel Avenue in the city of Rancho Cordova. The site is bordered by railroad tracks, Folsom Boulevard, and US 50 to the north and by Folsom South Canal on the south side. Site access is through an existing driveway on the south side of Folsom Boulevard at approximately the mid-point of the site.

CEQA GUIDELINES SECTION 15064.3

CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3, Determining the Significance of Transportation Impacts, states that vehicle miles traveled (VMT) is the most appropriate measure of transportation impacts and provides lead agencies with the discretion to choose the most appropriate methodology and thresholds for evaluating VMT. The City of Rancho Cordova has adopted the *Transportation Impact Guidelines* to assist projects in assessing transportation impacts under CEQA pursuant to SB 743 and CEQA Guidelines § 15064.3, Subdivision (b) (City of Rancho Cordova 2020). The City's guidance contains screening criteria, significance thresholds, analysis methodology, and mitigation recommendations.

3.17.2 DISCUSSION

a) Conflict with a program, plan, ordinance or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities?

Less than Significant. During the one-month construction of the proposed digital billboards, construction vehicles would access the project site from Folsom Boulevard using the existing driveway. These trips would include delivery of construction equipment (a backhoe and crane), delivery of a small amount of fill to allow truck access to the sign sites, delivery of the sign parts to be assembled, and arrival and departure of construction workers. Operation and maintenance of the digital billboards would require only occasional visits by

lessee/operator staff. All construction activities and staging would occur on the project site and would not alter public rights-of-way. Because these activities would be temporary, confined to the project site, and not alter transportation facilities, the proposed project would not conflict with City policies related to transportation, transit, pedestrian, or bicycle networks.

b) Conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines § 15064.3, subdivision (b)?

Less than Significant. As discussed under checklist item a) above, installation of the digital billboards would generate construction-related trips over a one-month period. Construction trips are not new trips but are existing trips redistributed over the regional transportation network to construction sites over time. In addition, the project's construction trips would be temporary. Therefore, construction activities would not substantially increase VMT in the region. Operation and maintenance of the digital billboards would require visits by lessee/operator staff that would not exceed one visit per month The City's *Transportation Impact Guidelines* include a small-project screening criteria for projects that generate less than 237 daily trips. As the proposed project's operational trips would be far below this screening level, it can be presumed that it would not substantially increase VMT in the region.

c) Substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?

No Impact. The proposed project would not involve the creation or alteration of roadways; therefore, would not result in the creation of unsafe geometric design features. Construction-related traffic would use the existing site driveway, and all construction activities and staging would occur on the project site.

d) Result in inadequate emergency access?

Less than Significant. During the one-month construction of the proposed digital billboards, construction vehicles would access the project site from Folsom Boulevard, a four-lane, east-west arterial that is straight and easily passable by emergency vehicles. In addition, the project site contains ample unused parking areas for vehicle queueing and parking, which would prevent back-ups onto Folsom Boulevard. For these reasons, the proposed project would not result in inadequate emergency access.

3.18 TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES

	ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
XVIII	**Tribal Cultural Resources. Would the project:**				
a)	Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in Public Resources Code § 21074 as either a site, feature, place, cultural landscape that is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American tribe, and that is:	☐	☒	☐	☐
	i Listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, or in a local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code section 5020.1(k), or	☐	☒	☐	☐
	ii A resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code § 5024.1. In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resource Code § 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.	☐	☒	☐	☐

3.18.1 SETTING

CONCEPTS AND TERMINOLOGY FOR IDENTIFICATION OF TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES

Tribal cultural resources are defined in CEQA as a site, feature, place, cultural landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American tribe, which may include non-unique archaeological resources previously subject to limited review under CEQA.

ASSEMBLY BILL 52 NATIVE AMERICAN CONSULTATION

In compliance with AB 52, Native American consultation was initiated for the proposed project. The NAHC was contacted on April 4, 2023 to obtain a CEQA tribal consultation list and to request a search of the Sacred Lands File. No response was received as of the September release of the IS/MND.

3.18.2 DISCUSSION

a) Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in Public Resources Code § 21074 as either a site, feature, place, cultural landscape that is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American tribe, and that is:

i) Listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, or in a local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code section 5020.1(k),

ii) A resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code § 5024.1. In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resource Code § 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.

Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated. No tribal cultural resources have been identified on the project site. In addition, as discussed in Section 3.5 of this Initial Study, no significant archaeological resources have been identified on the project site that may have associations with tribal cultural resources. Based on the results of the archival research and field survey, there is low- to- moderate potential that archaeological resources would be encountered during ground-disturbing activities for the proposed project. However, despite the limited extent of ground disturbance, if archaeological resources associated with tribal cultural resources were encountered during these ground disturbing activities, this impact could be potentially significant.

SIGNIFICANCE AFTER MITIGATION

Because Mitigation Measure CUL-1 requires stopping work within the area of any potential find(s), and requires that a qualified archaeologist inspect the find and, in consultation with the City, make recommendations for avoiding or reducing impacts, this mitigation would reduce impacts of the proposed project to undiscovered archaeological resources that may be associated with unidentified tribal cultural resources to less than significant with mitigation.

3.19 UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
XIX. Utilities and Service Systems. Would the project:				
a) Require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, or wastewater treatment facilities or storm water drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foresee future development during normal, dry and multiple dry years?	☐	☐	☐	☒
c) Result in a determination by the waste water treatment provider, which serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments?	☐	☐	☐	☒
d) Generate solid waste in excess of state or local standards, or in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure, or otherwise impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals?	☐	☐	☒	☐
e) Comply with federal, State, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste?	☐	☐	☐	☒

3.19.1 SETTING

Electrical service to the project site is provided by Sacramento Municipal Utility District. Water service is provided by Golden State Water Company. Wastewater service is provided by Sacramento Regional County Sanitation District. Hughes Internet Wireless Service provides telecommunications services (e.g., data/internet access).

3.19.2 DISCUSSION

a) Require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, or wastewater treatment facilities or storm water drainage, electric power, natural gas, or

telecommunications facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects?

No Impact. The proposed digital billboards would access existing electric power and internet services, which are adequate to serve this use. The proposed project does not require water, wastewater, or natural gas services. For these reasons, the project would not require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded utilities or service systems.

b) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foresee future development during normal, dry and multiple dry years?

No Impact. The proposed project, digital billboards, does not require water service.

c) Result in a determination by the waste water treatment provider, which serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand, in addition to the provider's existing commitments?

No Impact. The proposed project, digital billboards, does not require wastewater service.

d) Generate solid waste in excess of state or local standards, or in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure, or otherwise impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals?

Less than Significant. Installation of the digital billboards would not involve demolition of existing structures. Construction of each sign foundation would generate approximately 8 cubic feet of excess fill. Since this soil is anticipated to be clean, it will either be distributed on site or trucked to another construction project that requires fill. For these reasons, the proposed project would not generate solid waste in excess of state or local standards, or in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure, or otherwise impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals.

e) Comply with federal, State, and local management and reductions statutes and regulations related to solid waste?

No Impact. As discussed under checklist item d), the proposed project would not generate solid waste.

3.20 WILDFIRE

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
XX Wildfire. Would the project:				
a) Substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b) Due to slope, prevailing winds, and other factors, exacerbate wildfire risks, and thereby expose project occupants to pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire?	☐	☐	☒	☐
c) Require the installation or maintenance of associated infrastructure (such as roads, fuel breaks, emergency water sources, power lines or other utilities) that may exacerbate fire risk or that may result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment?	☐	☐	☐	☒
d) Expose people or structures to significant risks, including downslope or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes?	☐	☐	☐	☒

3.20.1 SETTING

The project site is level and mostly covered with hardscape surfaces, although it does contain ruderal grassland and trees, with the greatest extent west of the existing building. It is bordered by railroad tracks, Folsom Boulevard, and US 50 to the north and by Folsom South Canal on the south side. It is located in a Local Responsibility Area for fire protection and is located outside of areas designated by Cal Fire as moderate-to-very high fire hazard severity (CalFire Fire and Resource Assessment Program 2007).

3.20.2 DISCUSSION

a) Substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?

Less than Significant. During the one-month construction of the proposed digital billboards, construction vehicles would access the project site from Folsom Boulevard, a four-lane, east-west arterial that is straight and easily passable by emergency vehicles. In addition, the project site contains ample unused parking areas for vehicle queueing and parking, which would prevent back-ups onto Folsom Boulevard. Because the proposed project would not obstruct a route that may be used in emergency evacuation, it would not substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan.

b) Due to slope, prevailing winds, and other factors, exacerbate wildfire risks, and thereby expose project occupants to pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire?

Less than Significant. As noted above, the project site is located outside of areas designated by Cal Fire as moderate-to-very high fire hazard severity. The site is flat and surrounded by urban uses. The proposed project is construction and operation of digital billboards and would not require people to occupy the site except during the one-month construction period and for occasional maintenance visits. Therefore, the proposed project would not exacerbate wildfire risks, and thereby expose project occupants to pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire.

c) Require the installation or maintenance of associated infrastructure (such as roads, fuel breaks, emergency water sources, power lines or other utilities) that may exacerbate fire risk or that may result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment?

No Impact. The proposed project is construction and operation of digital billboards on a site that is flat, mostly paved, and surrounded by urban uses. Therefore, it would not require installation or maintenance of associated infrastructure that may exacerbate fire risk or that may result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment.

d) Expose people or structures to significant risks, including downslope or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes?

No Impact. The project site is flat, mostly paved, surrounded by urban uses, and located an area of low fire hazard severity. As the conditions for wildfire are not present, the proposed project would not expose people or structures to significant risks, including downslope or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes.

3.21 MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE

	ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
XXI.	**Mandatory Findings of Significance.**				
	a) Does the project have the potential to substantially degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, reduce the number or restrict the range of an endangered, rare, or threatened species, or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?	☐	☒	☐	☐
	b) Does the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? ("Cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects.)	☐	☐	☒	☐
	c) Does the project have environmental effects that will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?	☐	☒	☐	☐

Authority: Public Resources Code Sections 21083, 21083.5.

Reference: Government Code Sections 65088.4.
Public Resources Code Sections 21080, 21083.5, 21095; *Eureka Citizens for Responsible Govt. v. City of Eureka* (2007) 147 Cal.App.4th 357; *Protect the Historic Amador Waterways v. Amador Water Agency* (2004) 116 Cal.App.4th at 1109; *San Franciscans Upholding the Downtown Plan v. City and County of San Francisco* (2002) 102 Cal.App.4th 656.

3.21.1 DISCUSSION

a) Does the project have the potential to substantially degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, reduce the number or restrict the range of an endangered, rare, or threatened species, or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?

Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated. As described in Section 3.4, "Biological Resources," implementation of Mitigation Measures BIO-1 and BIO-2 would reduce potentially significant impacts on protected trees and nesting birds to a **less-than-significant** level.

As discussed in Section 3.5, "Cultural Resources," implementation of Mitigation Measures CUL-1 would reduce potentially significant impacts resulting from inadvertent damage or destruction of significant cultural resources, unique paleontological resources, and inadvertent disturbance to human remains to a **less-than-significant** level.

Therefore, with implementation of outlined mitigation measures, the proposed project would result in less-than-significant impacts involving the potential to degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of fish or wildlife species, cause fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal, or eliminate important examples of the major period of California history or prehistory.

b) Does the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? ("Cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects.)

Less-than-Significant Impact. The geographic context for cumulative impacts is generally limited to the immediate vicinity of the project site with the exception of air quality and greenhouse gas impacts, which are more regional. Past, present, and foreseeable future projects in the vicinity of the project site include:

- Development and ongoing operation of the adjacent transportation networks (railroad, Folsom Boulevard, US 50), Folsom South Canal, and surrounding commercial and residential development;
- Construction and operation of the Rancho Cordova Parkway Interchange Project, which would cross the west end of the project site; and
- Future development of the 1,665-acre Westborough Specific Plan directly south of the project site.

Air quality and greenhouse gas impacts are inherently cumulative by nature, and the impact discussions in Sections 3.3 and 3.8 already consider potential cumulative impacts, which were found to be less than significant or less than significant with mitigation.

Because the majority of project impacts would be short-term, localized impacts that would only occur during the one-month construction period of project implementation, and because none of the past or future projects would overlap with that implementation period, there would be no potential for short-term impacts such as disturbance of wildlife species, construction noise, water quality, or traffic safety to combine with the impacts of other projects to cause a significant cumulative impact.

Potential longer-term visual/aesthetic impacts resulting from the proposed project include changes to the visual character of the site in combination with the Rancho Cordova Parkway Interchange Project, which includes an overpass approximately 150 feet east of the west location sign (see Exhibit 2.4-2). Exhibit 2.4-4 shows the plan view of the west location sigh with the overpass in the background. The Final Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Assessment with Finding of No Significant Impact (City of Rancho Cordova 2014) evaluated aesthetic impacts associated with the height and location of the proposed interchange structure as well as lighting impacts. The visual analysis determined that the proposed interchange structure would create a new visually dominant feature within the US 50/Folsom Boulevard corridor, although viewer response from eastbound travelers was anticipated to be low to moderate due to the short duration of exposure. Mitigation measures are incorporated into the project to require design features to soften the visual appearance of the interchange structure

and to blend in to the surrounding visual setting, such as using landscaping techniques and aesthetic treatments on the hardscape elements of the project, including the overcrossing structure, ramps, retaining walls, and sound walls. However, it was concluded that visual impacts would be considered significant and unavoidable due to the large scale of the interchange structure. This would be a significant cumulative impact.

As shown on Exhibit 2.4-4, the west location digital reader board sign proposed at the west location would be visible above the overpass, which would also include an eastbound on-ramp adjacent to the north side of Folsom Boulevard. However, the proposed project would not have a significant impact on the visual character as it would tend to blend into an already urban environment with visual changes, such as US 50, the Rancho Cordova Parkway Overpass, Folsom Boulevard, chain-link fencing, and power lines that have already reduced visual quality of the area. In addition, the project would comply with City of Rancho Cordova ordinance code for digital freeway signs and tree preservation. Therefore, the proposed project's contribution to a cumulative impact would not be considerable, and the cumulative impact related to visual character or quality would be less than significant.

c) Does the project have environmental effects that will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?

Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated. The proposed project could potentially cause substantial adverse effects on human beings in relation to air quality. However, the proposed project would implement a mitigation measure identified in the air quality section of this IS/MND. This mitigation measure would reduce potentially significant impacts in this resource area to a **less-than-significant** level. In addition, the proposed project would comply with all applicable regulations identified throughout the IS/MND. As such, the proposed project would not cause a substantial direct or indirect adverse effect on human beings.

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None.

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None.

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None.

SECTION 3.16 RECREATION

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SECTION 3.19 UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

None.

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APPENDIX A

Air Quality, Energy, and Greenhouse Gas CalEEMod

APPENDIX B

Biological Resources CNDDB Database Search and
Live Oak Associates Arborist Report

Biological Resources CNDDB Database Search

Table B-1. Special-status Plant Species with the Potential to Occur in the Project Vicinity

Common and *Scientific Name*	Legal Status[1]		Distribution	Habitat Association	Identification Period	Potential for Occurrence within the project site[2]
	Federal	State/ CNPS				
Ione manzanita *Arctostaphylos myrtifolia*	FT	1B.2	Amador and Calaveras Counties	Evergeen shrub. Chaparral, cismontane woodland (acidic, Ione soil clay or sandy). Present in elevations ranging from 195 to 1,905 feet amsl.	November through February	**No potential.** The project site is not within this species' elevation range, and habitat is not present within the project site. There are no known occurrences of this species within 10 miles of the project site, and this species was not observed during surveys.
Pine hill ceanothus *Ceanothus roderickii*	FE	1B.2	El Dorado County	Perennial evergreen shrub. Chaparral, cismontane woodland (serpentinite or gabbroic). Present in elevations ranging from 805 to 3,575 feet amsl.	May through June	**No potential.** The project site is not within this species' elevation range, and habitat is not present within the project site. There are no known occurrences of this species within 10 miles of the project site. This species was not observed during surveys.
Red hills soaproot *Chlorogalum grandiflorum*	-	1B.2	Amador, Calaveras, El Dorado, Placer, and Tuolumne Counties	Perennial bulbiferous herb. Chaparral, cismontane woodland, lower montane coniferous forest (serpentinite or gabbroic). Present in elevations ranging from 805 to 5,545 feet amsl.	May through June	**No potential.** The project site is not within this species' elevation range, and habitat is not present within the project site. There are no known occurrences of this species within 10 miles of the project site. This species was not observed during surveys.
Dwarf downingia *Downingia pusilla*	-	2B.2	Fresno, Merced, Napa, Placer, Sacramento, San Joaquin, Solano, Sonoma, Stanislaus, Tehama, and Yuba Counties	Annual herb. Valley and foothill grassland (mesic) and vernal pools. Present in elevations ranging from 5 to 1,460 feet amsl.	March through May	**No potential.** There is one known occurrence of this species within 10 miles of the project site, however, there are no vernal pools or mesic areas within the project area. This species was not found during surveys.
Ione buckwheat *Eriogonum apricum* var. *apricum*	FE	SE/1B.2	Amador County	Perennial herb. Chaparral (openings, Ione soil). Present in elevations ranging from 195 to 475 feet amsl.	July through October	**No potential.** The project site is not within this species' elevation range, habitat is not present within the project site. There are no known occurrences of this species within 10 miles of the project site.
Irish hill buckwheat *Eriogonum apricum* var. *prostratum*	FE	SE/1B.2	Amador County	Perennial herb. Chaparral (openings, Ione soil). Present in elevations ranging from 295 to 395 feet amsl.	June through July	**No potential.** Although surveys were not conducted within this species' blooming period, habitat is not present and the project site is not within this species' elevation range. This species was not observed during surveys.

Common and *Scientific Name*	Legal Status[1]		Distribution	Habitat Association	Identification Period	Potential for Occurrence within the project site[2]
	Federal	State/ CNPS				
Tuolumne button-celery *Erynigium pinnatisectum*	-	1B.2	Amador, Calaveras, Sacramento, San Joaquin, and Tuolumne Counties	Annual/perennial herb. Cismontane woodland, lower montane coniferous forest, vernal pools (mesic). Present in elevations ranging from 230 to 3,000 feet amsl.	June through August	**No potential.** The project site is not within this species' elevation range, and habitat is not present within the project site. There are no known occurrences of this species within 10 miles of the project site. This species was not observed during surveys.
Pine hill flannelbush *Fremontodendron decumbens*	FE	1B.2	El Dorado, Nevada, and Yuba Counties	Evergreen shrub. Chaparral and cismontane woodland (rocky, serpentinite or gabbroic soils). Present in elevations ranging from 1,395 to 2,495 feet amsl.	April through July	**No potential.** The project site is not within this species' elevation range, and habitat is not present within the project site. There are no known occurrences of this species within 10 miles of the project site. This species was not observed during surveys.
El Dorado bedstraw *Galium californicum* ssp. *sierrae*	FE	1B.2	El Dorado County	Perennial herb. Chaparral, cismontane woodland, and lower montane coniferous forest (gabbroic). Present in elevations ranging from 330 to 1,920 feet amsl.	May through June	**No potential.** The project site is not within this species' elevation range, and habitat is not present within the project site. There are no known occurrences of this species within 10 miles of the project site. This species was not observed during surveys.
Bogg's lake hedge hyssop *Gratiola heterosepala*	-	SE/1B.2	Fresno, Lake, Lassen, Madera, Mendocino, Merced, Modesto, Placer, Sacramento, Shasta, Siskiyou, San Joaquin, Solano, Sonoma, and Tehama Counties	Annual herb. Marshes, swamps, lake margins, and vernal pools with clay soils. Present in elevations ranging from 35 to 7,790 feet amsl.	April through June	**Not Likely.** There are six known occurrences of this species within 10 miles of the project site. Suitable habitat occurs within the vernal pool within the project site. However, this species was not found during surveys.
Parry's horkelia *Horkelia parryi*		1B.2	Amador, Calaveras, El Dorado, Mariposa, and Tuolumne Counties	Perennial herb. Chaparral, cismontane woodland especially Ione formation. Present in elevations ranging from 260 to 3,510 feet amsl.	April through June (September)	**No potential.** The project site is not within this species' elevation range, and habitat is not present within the project site. There are no known occurrences of this species within 10 miles of the project site. This species was not observed during surveys.

Common and *Scientific Name*	Legal Status[1]		Distribution	Habitat Association	Identification Period	Potential for Occurrence within the project site[2]
	Federal	State/ CNPS				
Ahart's dwarf rush *Juncus leiospemus* var. *ahartii*	-	1B.2	Butte, Calaveras, Placer, Sacramento, Tehama, and Yuba Counties	Annual herb. Chaparral, cismontane woodland, meadows, and seeps, valley and foothill grasslands, vernal pools (vernally mesic). Elevation: 100 to 750 feet amsl.	March through May	**No potential.** There are two known occurrences of this species within 10 miles of the project site. No suitable habitat is present within the project site.
Legenere *Legenere limosa*	-	1B.2	Alameda, Lake, Monterey, Napa, Placer, Sacramento, Santa Clara, Shasta, San Joaquin, San Mateo, Solano, Sonoma, Stanislaus, Tehama, and Yuba Counties	Annual herb. Vernal pools. Present in elevations ranging from 5 to 2,885 feet amsl.	April through June	**No potential.** There are fifteen known occurrences of this species within 10 miles of the project site. No suitable habitat present within the project site.
Pincushion navarretia *Navarretia myersii* ssp. *myersii*	-	1B.2	Amador, Calaveras, Madera, Merced, Placer, and Sacramento Counties	Annual herb. Vernal pools. Present in elevations ranging from 65 to 1,085 feet amsl.	May	**No potential.** There is one known occurrence of this species within 10 miles of the project site. No suitable habitat occurs within the project site.
Slender orcutt grass *Orcuttia tenuis*	FT	SE/1B.2	Butte, Lake, Lassen, Modesto, Plumas, Sacramento, Shasta, Siskiyou, and Tehama Counties	Annual herb. Vernal pools. Present in elevations ranging from 115 to 5,775 feet amsl.	May through September (October)	**No potential.** There are three known occurrences of this species within 10 miles of the project site. No suitable habitat occurs within the project site.
Sacramento orcutt grass *Orcuttia viscida*	FE	SE/1B.2	Sacramento County	Annual herb. Vernal pools. Present in elevations ranging from 100 to 330 feet amsl.	April through July	**No potential.** There are eleven known occurrences of this species within 10 miles of the project site. No suitable habitat occurs within the project site.
Layne's ragwort *Packera layneae*	FT	1B.2	El Dorado, Placer, Tuolumne, and Yuba Counties	Perennial herb. Chaparral and cismontane woodland (rocky, serpentinite or gabbroic soils). Present in elevations ranging from 655 to 3,560 feet amsl.	April through July	**No potential.** Suitable habitat does not occur within the project site. The project site is outside of this species' known elevation range. There are no known occurrences of this species within 10 miles of the project site.

Common and *Scientific Name*	Legal Status[1]		Distribution	Habitat Association	Identification Period	Potential for Occurrence within the project site[2]
	Federal	State/ CNPS				
Sanford's arrowhead *Sagittaria sanfordii*	-	1B.2	Butte, Del Norte, El Dorado, Fresno, King, Los Angeles, Madera, Merced, Mariposa, Orange, Sacramento, San Bernadino, Santa Clara, Shasta, San Joaquin, San Mateo, Solano, Sutter, Tehama, Tulare, Ventura, and Yuba Counties	Perennial rhizomatous herb (emergent). Marshes and swamps (assorted shallow freshwater). Extirpated from Southern California, and mostly extirpated from the Central Valley. Present in elevations ranging from 0 to 2,135 feet amsl.	May through October	**Could occur.** There are 17 known occurrences of this species within 10 miles of the project site. Suitable habitat occurs within Buffalo Creek within the parcel. Construction would not occur near this creek, so this species could not occur within areas affected by project disturbance.
El Dorado County mule ears *Wyethia reticulata*	-	1B.2	El Dorado County	Perennial herb. Chaparral, cismontane woodland, and lower montane coniferous forest (clay or gabbroic). Present in elevations ranging from 605 to 2,065 feet amsl.	May through July	**No potential.** Suitable habitat does not occur within the project site. The project site is outside of this species' known elevation range. There are no known occurrences of this species within 10 miles of the project site.

Notes for Table A-1

Notes:
amsl = above mean sea level;
CNPS = California Native Plant Society
[1] Status explanations:
– = no listing.
Federal
FT = listed as threatened under the federal Endangered Species Act.
FE = listed as endangered under the federal Endangered Species Act.
State
SE = listed as endangered under the California Endangered Species Act.
California Native Plant Society California Rare Plant Ranks:
1B = plant species considered rare, threatened, or endangered in California and elsewhere.
2B = plant species considered rare, threatened, or endangered in California but more common elsewhere.
California Rare Plant Rank Extensions:
1 = seriously endangered in California (>80% of occurrences are threatened and/or have high degree and immediacy of threat).
2 = fairly endangered in California (20–80% of occurrences are threatened and/or have moderate degree and immediacy of threat).
3 = not very threatened in California (<20% of occurrences are threatened and/or have low degree and immediacy of threat or no current threats known).
[2] Potential for occurrence categories defined:
No Potential = The project site is located outside of the species' geographic or elevational range or no suitable habitat for the species is present within or immediately adjacent to the project site.

Table B-2. Special-Status Animal Species with the Potential to Occur in the Project Vicinity

Common and Scientific Name	Legal Status[1]		Habitat Requirements	Potential for Occurrence in the project site[2]
	Federal	State		
Invertebrates				
Crotch bumble bee *Bombus crotchii*	-	SCE	In California, this species inhabits open grassland and scrub habitats. This species occurs primarily in California, including the Mediterranean region, Pacific Coast, Western Desert, Great Valley, and adjacent foothills through most of southwestern California. This species was historically common in the Central Valley of California but now appears to be absent from most of it, especially in the center of its historic range. Nests have not been well documented.	**Unlikely.** No suitable nesting habitat within the project site. Flowering species such as perennial pepperweed and California poppy may provide some foraging potential, however, these plants are not typically associated with foraging patterns of this species. The nearest CNDDB occurrence is 4 miles south of the project site.
Vernal pool fairy shrimp *Branchinecta lynchi*	FT	–	Vernal pools and other seasonal wetlands, typically small but including a wide range of sizes.	**No Potential.** There is no suitable vernal pool or seasonal wetland habitat present within the project site.
Valley elderberry longhorn beetle *Desmocerus californicus dimorphus*	FT	–	Elderberry shrubs, typically in riparian habitats below 3,000 feet in elevation.	**No Potential.** No elderberry shrubs, required for this species, are present within the project site or within 100 feet of the project site.
Vernal pool tadpole shrimp *Lepidurus packardi*	FE	–	Vernal pools and other seasonal wetlands, typically medium to large but including a wide range of sizes with relatively long inundation period.	**No Potential.** There is no suitable vernal pool or seasonal wetland habitat present within the project site.
Reptiles and Amphibians				
California tiger salamander *Ambystoma californiense*	FT	ST	Vernal pools and other seasonal wetlands (e.g., in ditches) with adequate inundation period and large tracts of adjacent uplands, primarily grasslands, with burrows and other refugia. Not known to breed in streams or rivers.	**No Potential.** There is no suitable upland or aquatic breeding habitat for this species within the project site. While there are vernal pools and seasonal wetland habitat near the project site (south of South Folsom Canal) that could be used by this species for breeding, the highest quality upland habitat in the area is immediately adjacent to those potential aquatic habitat sites, and California tiger salamander would not be expected to migrate into urban areas with upland and aquatic habitat nearby. Additionally, the low-quality habitat just described is highly fragmented. Furthermore, no CNDDB-documented occurrences occur within 10 miles of this site.

Common and Scientific Name	Legal Status[1]		Habitat Requirements	Potential for Occurrence in the project site[2]
	Federal	State		
Western pond turtle *Emys marmorata*	–	SSC	Closely associated with permanent or nearly permanent water in a variety of aquatic habitats. For foraging, ponds, marshes, slow-moving streams, sloughs, and irrigation/drainage ditches; for nesting, soils in nearby uplands with low, sparse vegetation. Basking sites are required for thermoregulation, such as partially submerged logs, rocks, mats of floating vegetation, or open mud banks. Hibernation may occur in aquatic habitats or in burrows of adjacent uplands, often with duff.	**Unlikely.** No permanent water habitat occurs within the project footprint. Buffalo Creek exists within the established project boundaries, but project activities would not extend to that feature. Additionally, this creek is densely vegetated by cattail and lacks basking sites required by this species. The project site itself is comprised of urban land cover type that is not suitable nesting habitat for this species. There are 11 CNDDB-documented occurrences within 10 miles of the project site, the nearest one being 1 mile north of the project site along the American River.
Foothill yellow-legged frog *Rana boylii*	FPE	SE	This species frequents rocky, sunny banks along streams and rivers of all sizes in woodland, chaparral and forest. This species is closely restricted to water.	**No Potential.** There is no suitable rocky or sunny stream within the project site. Buffalo Creek, adjacent to the project site, is densely vegetation and would not provide suitable habitat for this species.
California red-legged frog *Rana draytonii*	FT	SSC	Dense, shrubby riparian vegetation (*Salix lasiolepis*; also *Typha and Scirpus* spp.) associated with deep, still, or slow-moving water. Currently extirpated from the Central Valley.	**No Potential.** The project site is outside the current range of this species. No CNDDB-documented occurrences occur within 10 miles of this site.
Western spadefoot *Spea hammondii*	-	SSC	This species is predominantly a grassland species, although some populations can be found in pine-oak woodlands of the valley foothills. Western spadefoots require shallow, temporary pools or streams during the breeding season. Where natural vernal pools are absent, this species may make use of artificial ponds and stock tanks. Most of the year, western spadefoots reside in burrows at depths of up to 3 feet (1 meter). Spadefoots are capable of digging their own burrows but will use mammal burrows if available.	**Unlikely**. There is no suitable aquatic or upland habitat within the project site.

Common and Scientific Name	Legal Status[1]		Habitat Requirements	Potential for Occurrence in the project site[2]
	Federal	State		
Giant garter snake *Thamnophis gigas*	FT	ST	Open water associated with slow-moving streams, sloughs, ponds, marshes, inundated floodplains, rice fields, and irrigation/drainage ditches within the Central Valley; also requires emergent herbaceous wetland vegetation for escape and foraging habitat, grassy banks and openings in waterside vegetation for basking, and higher elevation upland habitat for cover and refuge from flooding during the snakes inactive season.	**Unlikely.** The project site does not provide the necessary habitat elements to support this species. The ditch is ephemeral, does not provide adequate aquatic habitat to support this species, and is limited in extent and connectivity to suitable habitat in the region. Buffalo Creek is a highly modified intermittent drainage adjacent to the project site. Buffalo Creek could provide potential movement habitat for this species breeding elsewhere in the region; however, the nearest CNDDB-documented occurrences is more than 13 miles south of the project site along the Cosumnes River. Furthermore, the banks of Buffalo Creek are tall, steep (nearly vertical), and very densely vegetated with tall cattail, which likely would provide a barrier for this species.
Fishes				
Steelhead – Central Valley DPS *Oncorhynchus mykiss irideus* pop. 11	FT	--	Cool, clear streams with abundant cover and well-vegetated banks, with relatively stable flows. Pool and riffle complexes and cold gravelly streambeds for spawning. The Yolo Bypass flows attract upstream migrating fish, including this species, from the Sacramento River into the Yolo Bypass at the mouth of the Cache Slough Complex near liberty island (CalFish 2018). Adult Steelhead migrate from the ocean into freshwater streams to spawn between December and March, and Juveniles migrate downstream to the Bay or ocean in late winter or spring.	**No Potential.** The project activities would not have any impacts on streams or waterways where this species could occur.

Common and Scientific Name	Legal Status[1]		Habitat Requirements	Potential for Occurrence in the project site[2]
	Federal	State		
Birds				
Tricolored blackbird *Agelaius tricolor*	–	ST/SSC	For nesting colonially, large, dense stands of freshwater marsh, riparian scrub, and other shrubs and herbs; for foraging, grasslands and agricultural fields. Wintering populations concentrate in the Delta and the central coast in open rangeland; dairies are attractive.	**Unlikely**. No suitable nesting or foraging habitat is present within the project site. Potential low quality freshwater emergent marsh that could be marginally suitable nesting habitat occurs along Buffalo Creek adjacent to the project site; the cattail marsh habitat is relatively small and would not be sufficient to support a nesting a colony. There are 27 CNDDB-documented occurrences within 10 miles of the project site, the nearest presumed extant record located more than 3 miles south of the project site within a large expanse of blackberry in an undeveloped expanse of grassland.
Grasshopper sparrow *Ammodramus savannarum*	-	SSC	This species typically occurs in grasslands, prairies, hayfields, and open pastures with little to no scrub cover and often with some bare ground. This species nests on the ground, often at the base of a clump of grass within an extensive patch of tall grasses or sedges.	**Unlikely.** There is no suitable nesting habitat for this species within the project footprint. Ruderally vegetated areas within the project site could provide low quality foraging habitat, but this species would not be expected to utilize ruderal vegetation for foraging with higher quality foraging habitat (grassland) so close, just south of the Folsom South Canal. The nearest CNDDB-documented occurrence is about 10 miles south of the project site.
Burrowing owl *Athene cunicularia*	–	SSC	For nesting and foraging, grasslands, agricultural fields, and low scrub habitats, especially where ground squirrel burrows are present; occasionally inhabit artificial structures and small patches of disturbed habitat.	**Unlikely.** No suitable burrows were observed within the project site during site surveys. The project site is primarily comprised of a fenced, paved parking lot and an old play area. This site is surrounded by a busy multi-lane highway, as well as residential and commercial development. There is a larger expanse of grassland south of the project site that could be used by this species for foraging or nesting habitat, but the project site itself does not provide suitable nesting or foraging habitat for this species.

Common and Scientific Name	Legal Status[1]		Habitat Requirements	Potential for Occurrence in the project site[2]
	Federal	State		
Swainson's hawk *Buteo swainsoni*	–	ST	Typically nests in large, mature trees in open woodlands, woodland margins, in riparian strips along drainage canals, or in isolated trees; typically places nests high in trees; forages in native grasslands and agricultural fields (hay and grain crops, lightly grazed pastures, and some row crops) up to 10 miles or more from nest sites, depending on habitat availability and cropping patterns; alfalfa is of particular importance.	**Unlikely.** There are more than 30 large stature oak trees within the project site, and the project site is close to grasslands that could be used by this species for foraging. This area is very disturbed, and the oak trees are within an urban landscape adjacent to a noisy highway. There are 14 CNDDB documented occurrences within 10 miles of this project site. The nearest nesting record is 2 miles south of the project site within a grassland habitat that is contiguous with the grassland habitat immediately south of the project site.
Northern harrier *Circus cyaneus*	-	SSC	Meadows, grasslands, open rangelands, desert sinks, fresh and saltwater emergent wetlands. Nests on ground, usually at marsh edge. Mostly nests in emergent wetland or along rivers or lakes, but may nest in grasslands, grain fields, or on sagebrush flats several miles from water. Breeds April to September.	**Unlikely.** There is no nesting or foraging habitat within the project site.
White-tailed kite *Elanus leucurus*	-	FP	Nests in shrubs (in Delta) and trees adjacent to grasslands oak woodland, edges of riparian habitats. Roosts communally, resident year-round, and breeds February-October.	**Unlikely.** While there are large stature oak trees that could support nesting, successful nests for this species are typically greater than 300 feet from roadways and surrounded by natural vegetation. While there are oak trees that could support nests, these trees are within 60 meters of Folsom Boulevard, and within 150 meters of Highway 50. This species is not likely to nest or forage within the project site. The nearest CNDDB records are approximately 2 miles or more to the northwest of the project site, along the American River (CDFW 2023).
Bald eagle *Haliaeetus leucocephalus*	-	SE/FP	Permanent resident and uncommon winter migrant, now restricted to breeding mostly in Butte, Lake, Lassen, Modoc, Plumas, Shasta, Siskiyou, and Trinity counties. Ocean shore, lake margins, and rivers, both nesting and wintering. Build stick nests within large tall trees and typically within 1 mile of permanent water. Wintering populations along major rivers and reservoirs in Yuba County. Breeds February to July.	**No Potential.** The project site is not adjacent to any large rivers or bodies of water, and thus, there is no suitable foraging or nesting habitat for this species within or in close proximity to the project site.

Common and Scientific Name	Legal Status[1]		Habitat Requirements	Potential for Occurrence in the project site[2]
	Federal	State		
California black rail *Laterallus jamaicensis coturniculus*	-	ST	Nests in shallow freshwater marshes, wet meadows, or flooded grassy areas vegetated by fine stemmed emergent plants; characterized by water depths of approximately one inch that do not fluctuate seasonally; locally occupied sites in the Sierra foothills are typically small, densely vegetated, and fed by irrigation water; habitat size varies from less than 0.25 acre to over 30 acres	**No Potential.** No suitable nesting or foraging habitat is present within the project site.
Bank swallow *Riparia*	-	ST	Bank Swallows breed in open lowland areas near bodies of water. They tend to avoid forests, woodlands, or areas where they cannot find appropriate nesting habitats. Bank Swallows build nests, often in large colonies, in vertical banks and bluffs. These colonies are usually made in fairly loose soils that are easy for the birds to burrow into, and are located near large bodies of water so that there is ample airspace for flying.	**No Potential.** There are no vertical banks or bluffs present within the project site that would be suitable nesting habitat for this species.
Mammals				
Pallid bat *Antrozous pallidus*	-	SSC	Pallid bats roost in rock crevices, tree hollows, mines, caves, and a variety of anthropogenic structures, including vacant and occupied buildings. Buildings, mines, and natural caves are utilized as roosts. Occurrence is primarily in arid habitats. Colonies are usually small and may contain 12-100 bats.	**Unlikely.** Potential roosting habitat available within the trees on the project site. The only CNDDB record of this species within the 9-quadrangle search is 6 miles north of the project site.
American badger *Taxidea taxus*		SSC	Most abundant in drier open stages of most shrub, forest, and herbaceous habitats with friable soils. Need friable soils to dig large burrows for dens.	**Unlikely.** No suitable burrows were observed within the project site during site surveys. The project site is largely comprised of a paved parking lot and some ruderal vegetation, and devoid of friable soils necessary to support badger dens.

Notes for Table A-2.

Notes:
amsl = above mean sea level
BSA = Biological Study Area
CNDDB = California Natural Diversity Database
Delta = Sacramento–San Joaquin Delta
DPS = Distinct Population Segment
Project = Mine Shaft Digital Billboards

[1] Status explanations:
– = no listing

Federal

FC = federal candidate for listing under the federal Endangered Species Act.
FE = listed as endangered under the federal Endangered Species Act.
FP = Fully Protected
FPT = proposed for listing as threatened under the federal Endangered Species Act.
FPE = proposed for listing as endangered under the federal Endangered Species Act.
FT = listed as threatened under the federal Endangered Species Act. State
SCE = state candidate for listing as endangered under the California Endangered Species Act.
SCT = state candidate for listing as threatened under the California Endangered Species Act.
SE = listed as endangered under the California Endangered Species Act.
SSC = state species of special concern
ST = listed as threatened under the California Endangered Species Act.

Sources: CalFish 2018; CDFW 2023; data compiled by AECOM in 2023.

[2] Potential for occurrence categories defined:
Could Occur = The species is known to occur in the vicinity of the project site (based on occurrence records within 5 miles and/or professional expertise specific to the site or species), and suitable (or potentially suitable) habitat is present within or immediately adjacent to the project site; or the project site is within the species' range and suitable habitat is present within or immediately adjacent to the project site.
Unlikely = The project site is located within the species' range, and only poor quality habitat occurs on or adjacent to the project site, or the project site is characterized by features that limit the likelihood of a species' occurrence; the project site is not expected to support these species. The species may or may not have been recorded within 5 miles of the project site.
No Potential = The project site is located outside of the species' geographic or elevational range or no suitable habitat for the species is present within or immediately adjacent to the project site.

References

California Department of Fish and Wildlife. 2023. CNDDB: California Natural Diversity Database; Nine-Quad Search for the Buffalo Creek 7.5 minute Quadrangle and. Project species list can be generated online at: https://www.wildlife.ca.gov/Data/CNDDB/Maps-and-Data. Accessed April 2023.

CalFish. 2018. Monitoring of Yolo and Sutter Bypasses for Fish Stranding and Rescue Operations. Available: https://www.calfish.org/ProgramsData/ConservationandManagement/CentralValleyMonitoring/SacramentoValleyTributaryMonitoring/YoloandSutterBypasses-Monitoring.aspx. Accessed April 2023.

Live Oak Associates Arborist Report

APPENDIX C

Noise Model Inputs and Outputs