
3.11 LAND USE AND PLANNING

3.11.1 INTRODUCTION

This section describes the existing land uses in the project vicinity that could be affected by implementation of the Proposed Action and its alternatives. It also describes the relevant land use plans, policies, and regulations governing the project area affected by the Proposed Action and alternatives considered in this Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). The focus of this section is consistency with applicable land use plans and policies. Impacts on agricultural and recreational land uses, as well as those related to growth inducement, are discussed in other sections of this EIS. The following sources were used to prepare this section:

- Placer Vineyards Specific Plan EIR prepared by Placer County (2006);
- Placer County General Plan;
- Placer County Zoning Ordinance, Edition #10;
- Placer Vineyards Specific Plan;
- Elverta Specific Plan;
- Sutter County General Plan; and
- Sacramento Region Blueprint Transportation/Land Use Plan prepared by Sacramento Area Council of Governments.

3.11.2 AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

The Proposed Action is located in the southwest portion of unincorporated Placer County and is characterized by gently rolling topography and large, open annual grassland area. The City of Roseville is located to the east and the community of Antelope, in Sacramento County, is located to the south. The project site is bounded on the north by Baseline Road, on the east by Dry Creek and Walerga Road, on the south by the Sacramento/Placer County line, and on the west by the Sutter/Placer County line and Pleasant Grove Road. The project site contains approximately 5,230± gross acres (2,117± gross hectares), with an east-west length of approximately 6 miles (10 kilometers) (Placer County 2006).

3.11.2.1 Project Site – Existing Land Uses and Designations

The Proposed Action and alternatives would develop a large-scale, mixed-use, mixed-density master planned community on approximately 5,230 acres (2,117 hectares) of the project site. Another 243 acres (98 hectares) both on- and off-site would be dedicated to infrastructure needed to support the community.

The predominant land use within the project site is agriculture, consisting mostly of grazing land. There are approximately 150 residences within the project site. Although there are a few residences scattered throughout the agricultural properties, rural residential development occurs primarily in the northwest and southwest corners of the project site. A number of home occupation/ancillary uses are located throughout the rural residential areas. A mini-storage facility is located on the east side of Pleasant Grove

Road in the southwest corner of the project site. A convenience store is located on the southeast corner of Baseline Road and Pleasant Grove Road in the northwestern portion of the project site. An abandoned portion of the Union Pacific Railroad right-of way traverses the westernmost portion of the project site (Placer County 2006).

The project site is also crossed by three electrical transmission and distribution line easements. These transmission and distribution lines are part of Western Area Power Administration (WAPA), Pacific Gas & Electric (PG&E) and Sacramento Municipal Utility District (SMUD) systems (Placer County 2006).

The project site is currently designated as Urban in the Placer County General Plan. The Placer Vineyards Specific Plan was approved by Placer County in 2007. Following the approval of the plan, the project site was rezoned by the County. Participating properties within the project site to be developed were zoned SPL-PVSP (Placer Vineyards Specific Plan) while non-participating properties in the area to be developed were zoned F (Farm) with combining designations. The rural residential areas located in the Special Planning Area (SPA) were zoned RA (Residential-Agriculture) with a 10-acre (4-hectare) minimum parcel size. The DR (Combining Development Reserve) designation was applied over the non-participating properties and the SPA. The convenience store located at the northwest corner of the SPA was zoned C1 (Neighborhood Commercial) and the mini-storage facility located at the southwest corner of the SPA was zoned IN (Industrial). The area along the north side of Dry Creek was zoned O (Open Space) to correspond with the Greenbelt and Open Space land use designation (Placer County 2006).

3.11.2.2 Off-site Infrastructure – Existing Land Uses and Designations

Water Transmission Lines

As discussed, in **Chapter 2.0, Proposed Action and Alternatives**, water would be provided to the project site on a long-term basis from the Sacramento River and on an initial basis from the American River via pipelines built by Placer County Water Agency (PCWA). As shown in **Figure 2.0-7** in the project description, the long-term transmission pipeline would extend from the Sacramento River to the project site along Elverta Road, Pleasant Grove Road, and Baseline Road. Current land uses along Elverta Road are primarily agricultural with some rural residential while current land uses along Pleasant Grove Road and Baseline Road include agriculture, rural residential, and a small amount of commercial and industrial uses (Placer County 2006).

The initial surface water supply would be routed through the City of Roseville's existing water distribution system, and as shown in **Figure 2.0-7** in the project description, the water would be extended to the project site from the City's distribution system near Baseline Road and Fiddymont Road via a proposed 24-inch (61-centimeter) diameter pipeline along Baseline Road. Current land uses along this section of Baseline Road are agricultural and low density residential (Placer County 2006).

An additional, complementary scenario for conveying PCWA's American River Pump Station (ARPS) water would deliver the water via a pipeline from the future Ophir Water Treatment Plant (**Figure 2.0-5b, Alternate Water Supply Infrastructure**). The water pipelines would be installed generally along Ophir Road, which becomes Taylor Road, connecting to the transmission main from the Foothill Water

Treatment Plant at Penryn Road. The proposed transmission system includes a water pipeline branching to the northwest before the Penryn connection, and running through the Bickford Ranch planned development. After Bickford Ranch, the water pipelines would connect to the existing PCWA Zone 1 system just north of the Sunset Water Treatment Plant in Rocklin. The proposed water pipelines would then be constructed through the existing Whitney Ranch development within existing road right-of-ways. Beyond Whitney Ranch, the water pipelines would cross under SR 65, and extend westerly through a mixture of industrial and open space, crossing Industrial Avenue. From that point, a water pipeline would be constructed through agricultural land, continuing to the south and connecting to the Regional University planned development project. The water pipeline would be constructed further south through agricultural land, eventually ending at the intersection of Baseline Road and Watt Avenue, abutting the project site.

A secondary initial surface water supply from the American River could be made available if the Sacramento River supply is not available when the initial supply, as described above, has been fully used. The supply would be conveyed to the project site via a new pipeline extending from the Cooperative Transmission Pipeline that currently ends near Antelope and Walerga Roads, as shown in **Figure 2.0-7** in the project description. This pipeline would be extended westerly along Antelope Road to Watt Avenue and then north to the project site. Current land uses along this section of Antelope Road and Watt Avenue are primarily low-density residential, including a school and a small amount of commercial. Alternatively, this supply could be conveyed in a proposed 16-inch (41-centimeter) diameter pipeline constructed in PFE Road from Cook Riolo Road to Watt Avenue and northerly to the project site. Current land uses along this section of PFE Road are primarily single-family residential, including a school, along the eastern segment and agricultural along the western segment (Placer County 2006).

Recycled Water Transmission Lines

As discussed in **Chapter 2.0, Proposed Action and Alternatives**, it is also proposed that recycled water be provided to the project site from the Dry Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant (DCWWTP) and ultimately from the Pleasant Grove Wastewater Treatment Plant (PGWWTP). As shown in **Figure 2.0-7** in the project description, initially, a connection would be made to an existing 24-inch (61-centimeter) gravity recycled water line that currently terminates south of Dry Creek on the east side of Walerga Road. The pipeline would be extended from the south of Dry Creek, in a northerly direction along Walerga Road to Baseline Road where it would turn west to the project site. In the future, as the west Placer area builds out, it is anticipated a recycled water line would be constructed from the PGWWTP to serve the project site and surrounding areas. As depicted in **Figure 2.0-7** in the project description, the future recycled water line would extend westward from PGWWTP along Phillip Road to the alignment of Watt Avenue, and then south to Baseline Road where it would tie into other recycled water infrastructure. The PGWWTP supply would supplement and/or ultimately replace the DCWWTP supply. Current land uses in the areas traversed by the proposed pipeline from DCWWTP are generally agricultural, open space, and low-density residential in nature. A pipeline extending from the PGWWTP would largely cross open space and agriculturally used land (Placer County 2006).

Sewer Trunk Lines

As discussed in **Chapter 2.0, Proposed Action and Alternatives**, the Applicant's proposed option for sewer service is to connect the entire project site to the DCWWTP. Under this option, wastewater flows from the western 4,340 acres (1756.3 hectares) (Shed A) of the site would be directed to DCWWTP via two 16 to 20 inch (41 to 51 centimeter) diameter force main pipelines in the same utility corridor which would extend from the project site southerly along the alignment of Watt Avenue, then easterly along the alignment of PFE Road and northerly to the plant. Current land uses along Watt Avenue, PFE Road, Hilltop Circle, and Cook Riolo Road include agriculture, undeveloped land, rural residential and a small amount of low density residential, commercial, industrial and public uses (Placer County 2006). In addition, under the Applicant's proposed option, a majority of wastewater flows from the eastern 890 acres (360.2 hectares) (Shed B) of the site would discharge to an off-site trunk sewer line connection point at its southerly boundary, and then cross Dry Creek and be carried by a gravity sewer trunk line to a lift station. From the lift station, wastewater flows will be carried in a 12-inch (30-centimeter)-diameter force main along the south side of Dry Creek, to an existing force main located approximately 1,400 feet (426.7 meters) east of Walerga Road. Existing land uses along this alignment are primarily agricultural and undeveloped lands south of Dry Creek, with Dry Creek located north of the alignment (Placer County 2006).

As discussed in **Chapter 2.0, Proposed Action and Alternatives**, as a second option, flows from Shed A could be discharged to the Sacramento Regional Wastewater Treatment Plant (SRWWTP). The utility corridor would extend from the project site to the south, following the alignment of Sorrento Road to the Sacramento Regional County Sanitation District (SRCSD) Upper Northwest Interceptor at a point in Elkhorn Boulevard. Current land uses along this section of Sorrento Road include rural residential, agriculture and undeveloped land. An alternative corridor has also been identified for the proposed connection to SRCSD which would extend south from the project site following the alignment of Elwyn Avenue, west along Elverta Road and finally south along the alignment of West 6th Street to the SRCSD Upper Northwest Interceptor at a point in Elkhorn Boulevard. Current land uses along these sections of Elwyn Avenue, Elverta Road and the alignment of West 6th Street include agriculture, undeveloped land, and rural residential (Placer County 2006).

Roadway Improvements

As discussed in **Chapter 2.0, Proposed Action and Alternatives**, a number of off-site roadway improvements are planned as part of the Proposed Action. Baseline Road, the existing arterial roadway that forms the northern boundary of the project site, would be improved in phases, with an ultimate buildout of six travel lanes (typically equivalent to a 100-foot-wide [30-meter-wide] ROW). Baseline Road improvements would include roadway widening on the south side of the existing roadway from the Walerga/Fiddymont Road intersection to the Sutter County line. Current land uses north of Baseline Road are primarily agricultural with a small amount of rural residential, industrial, and commercial. Additionally, five intersections along Baseline/Riego Road would also be improved. Current land uses surrounding these intersections are primarily agricultural with a small amount of rural residential,

commercial, and industrial. Three of these intersections are located entirely within Sutter County (Placer County 2006).

Watt Avenue, the existing north-south arterial roadway that crosses through the central-eastern portion of the project site, would be improved in phases. Watt Avenue would be widened to six lanes from Baseline Road on the north to approximately 1,000 feet (304.8 meters) south of the Sacramento County line. In some areas, the road would be widened to eight lanes with two lanes dedicated for bus transit right-of-way. Current land uses along this section of Watt Avenue are primarily agricultural and rural residential with a small amount of public and low-density residential to the south of the Project site. The widening of Watt Avenue would require the acquisition of one or more existing houses near PFE Road, as well as a small portion of the McClellan High School campus, and the frontage along a small cemetery (Placer County 2006).

3.11.2.3 Existing and Planned Land Uses in the Vicinity of Project Site

Lands to the north of the project site are located in Roseville and unincorporated Placer County, and include the Curry Creek Community Plan area and Sierra Vista Specific Plan area. Areas immediately adjacent to the project site in these areas currently include undeveloped dry pastureland and rural residential uses, generally similar to the conditions on the project site (Placer County 2006).

Lands to the east/southeast of the project site are located in the Dry Creek/West Placer Community Plan area. Areas immediately adjacent to the project site in this area include low-density residential to the east and grazing lands and irrigated cropland (field crops and orchard) to the southeast (Placer County 2006).

Lands to the south of the project site, in Sacramento County, are located in the Elverta Specific Plan area and the Antelope Community Plan area. Moving from west to east, land uses to the south comprise rural residential, agriculture (undeveloped grazing), open space (Gibson Ranch Park), and low-density residential (community of Antelope) (Placer County 2006).

Lands to the west of the project site are located in the South Sutter County Industrial/Commercial Reserve. The current land use in this area is predominantly rural residential (Placer County 2006).

Placer County has recently approved several large development projects in the vicinity of the project site. These include Regional University and Community Specific Plan project which is located to the north of the Curry Creek Community Plan area and the Riolo Vineyards Specific Plan project which is located in the Antelope Community Plan area to the southeast of the project site.

3.11.3 REGULATORY FRAMEWORK – APPLICABLE LAWS, REGULATIONS, PLANS, AND POLICIES

This section summarizes relevant policies contained in the Placer County General Plan that have been developed by the County to guide urban development. This section also summarizes relevant policies contained in the Sacramento Area Council of Governments Blueprint.

3.11.3.1 Placer County General Plan

The following is a list of goals and policies found in the Land Use Chapter of the Placer County General Plan relating to land use.

General Land Use

- Goal 1.A.** To promote the wise, efficient, and environmentally sensitive use of Placer County lands to meet the present and future needs of Placer County residents and businesses.
- Policy 1.A.1.** The County will promote the efficient use of land and natural resources.
- Policy 1.A.3.** The County shall distinguish among urban, suburban, and rural areas to identify where development will be accommodated and where public infrastructure and services will be provided. This pattern shall promote the maintenance of separate and distinct communities.
- Policy 1.A.4.** The County shall promote patterns of development that facilitate the efficient and timely provision of urban infrastructure and services.

Residential Land Use

- Goal 1B.** To provide adequate land in a range of residential densities to accommodate the housing needs of all income groups expected to reside in Placer County.
- Policy 1.B.1.** The County shall promote the concentration of new residential development in higher-density residential areas located along major transportation corridors and transit routes.
- Policy 1.B.2.** The County shall encourage the concentration of multi-family housing in and near downtowns, village centers, major commercial areas, and neighborhood commercial centers.
- Policy 1.B.3.** The County shall encourage the planning and design of new residential subdivisions to emulate the best characteristics (e.g., form, scale, and general character) of existing, nearby neighborhoods.
- Policy 1.B.5.** The County shall require residential project design to reflect and consider natural features, noise exposure of residents, visibility of structures, circulation, access, and the relationship of the project to surrounding uses. Residential densities and lot patterns will be determined by these and other factors. As a

result, the maximum density specified by General Plan designations or zoning for a given parcel of land may not be realized.

- Policy 1.B.6.** The County shall require new subdivided lots to be adequate in size and appropriate in shape for the range of primary and accessory uses designated for the area.
- Policy 1.B.7.** The County shall require multi-family developments to include private, contiguous, open space for each dwelling.
- Policy 1.B.9.** The County shall discourage the development of isolated, remote, and/or walled residential projects that do not contribute to the sense of community desired for the area.
- Policy 1.B.10.** The County shall require that all residential development provide private and/or public open spaces in order to insure that each parcel contributes to the adequate provision of light, air and open space.

Commercial Land

- Goal 1.D.** To designate adequate commercial land for and promote development of commercial uses to meet the present and future needs of Placer County residents and visitors and maintain economic vitality.

General Commercial Areas Policies

- Policy 1.D.1.** The County shall require that new commercial development be designed to encourage and facilitate pedestrian circulation within and between commercial sites and nearby residential areas rather than being designed primarily to serve vehicular circulation.
- Policy 1.D.2.** The County shall require new commercial development to be designed to minimize the visual impact of parking areas on public roadways.
- Policy 1.D.3.** The County shall require that new, urban, community commercial centers be located adjacent to major activity nodes and major transportation corridors. Community commercial centers should provide goods and services that residents have historically had to travel outside of the area to obtain.
- Policy 1.D.4.** The County shall require that significant new office developments locate near major transportation corridors and concentrations of residential uses. New office development may

serve as buffers between residential uses and higher-intensity commercial uses.

Downtown Areas/Village Centers Policies

- Policy 1.D.5.** The County shall encourage existing and new downtowns/village centers to provide a variety of goods and services, both public and private.
- Policy 1.D.6.** The County shall promote use of first floor space in new buildings in downtowns/village centers for retail, food service, financial institutions, and other high-volume commercial uses.
- Policy 1.D.7.** The County shall encourage new downtowns/village centers and new commercial projects and areas to be designed to maintain a continuous retail façade on all street frontages, except for public plazas and pedestrian passages between the front and rear of buildings.
- Policy 1.D.8.** The County shall require minimal, or in some cases no, building setbacks for commercial and office uses in new downtowns/village centers.
- Policy 1.D.9.** The County shall encourage parking in downtown/village centers to be consolidated in well-designed and landscaped lots or in well-located parking structures.
- Policy 1.D.11.** The County shall require that existing and new downtown/village centers and development within them be designed to integrate open spaces into the urban fabric where possible, especially taking advantage of any natural amenities such as creeks, hillsides, and scenic views.

Industrial Land Use

- Goal 1.E.** To designate adequate land for and promote development of industrial uses to meet the present and future needs of Placer County residents for jobs and maintain economic vitality.
- Policy 1.E.1.** The County shall only approve new industrial development that has the following characteristics:
 - a. Adequate infrastructure and services;
 - b. Convenient connections to the regional transportation network, including connections to existing transit and other non-automobile transportation;

- c. Sufficient buffering from residential areas to avoid impacts associated with noise, odors and the potential release of hazardous materials;
- d. Minimal significant adverse environmental impacts; and
- e. Minimal adverse effects on scenic routes, recreation areas, and public vistas.

Policy 1.E.2. The County shall designate specific areas suitable for industrial development and reserve such lands in a range of parcel sizes to accommodate a variety of industrial uses.

Goal 1.G. To designate for and promote the development and expansion of public and private recreational facilities to serve the needs of residents and visitors.

Policy 1.G.2. The County shall strive to have new recreation areas located and designed to encourage and accommodate non-automobile access.

Policy 1.G.3. The County shall continue to require the development of new recreational facilities as new residential development occurs.

In addition to the goals and policies outlined above, the General Plan requires the use of buffer zones in several types of developments. Land use buffer zones are to be reserved in perpetuity through land use acquisition, purchase of development rights, conservation easements, deed restrictions, or similar mechanisms, with adjacent proposed development projects providing the necessary funding. The exact dimensions of the buffer zones and specific uses allowed in buffer zones are determined through the specific plan, land use permit, and/or subdivision review process. In general buffer zones must conform to the following standards, however, the County process allows for different buffer zone standards to be established within a Specific Plan as part of the Specific Plan approval:

Agricultural/Timberland Buffers

1. **Agriculture/Timberland Buffers.** These buffer zones are required to separate urban uses (particularly residential) from lands designated Agriculture or Timberland on the Land Use Diagram, where noise from machinery, dust, the use of fertilizers and chemical sprays, and other related agricultural/timber harvesting activities would create problems for nearby residential and other sensitive land uses. These buffers also serve to minimize disturbance of agricultural operations from nearby urban or suburban uses, including trespassing by nearby residents and domestic animals.
 - a. **Buffer Dimensions:** Timber harvesting and agricultural practices associated with crop production can contribute to land use conflicts when development occurs adjacent to agricultural and timberland areas. Since production practices vary considerably by crop type, buffer distances may vary accordingly. The separations shown in the table below are required between areas designated Agriculture or Timberland and residential uses, commercial/office uses, business park uses, and some types of recreational uses; no buffers

are required for other uses. The buffer widths are expressed as ranges because of the possible influences of site or project-specific characteristics.

- b. **Uses Allowed in Buffer:** Low-density residential uses on parcels of one to 20 acres (8.1 hectares) or open space uses are permitted within the buffer, although the placement of residential structures is subject to the minimum "residential exclusion areas" shown in the table below. Non-habitable accessory structures and uses may be located in the exclusion area, and may include barns, stables, garages, and corrals.

**Table 3.11-1
Minimum Agriculture/Timberland Buffer Zone Width**

Agriculture/Timberland Use	Buffer Zone Width	
	Residential Exclusion Area ¹	Buffer Range Width ²
Field Crops	100 feet	100 to 400 feet
Irrigated Orchards	300 feet	300 to 800 feet
Irrigated Vegetables, Rice	400 feet	200 to 800 feet
Rangeland/Pasture	50 feet	50 to 200 feet
Timberland	100 feet	100 to 400 feet
Vineyard	400 feet	400 to 800 feet

¹ Residential structures prohibited; non-habitable accessory structures permitted.

² Required buffer dependent on site or project-specific characteristics as determined through County's specific plan, land use permit, and/or subdivision review process.

Industrial/Residential Buffers

2. **Industrial/Residential Buffers.** These buffer zones are required to separate residential land uses from areas designated Business Park/Industrial where noise from vehicles and equipment, the use of hazardous materials in manufacturing processes, truck traffic, and otherwise heavy traffic volumes would be incompatible with nearby residential uses.
- a. **Buffer Dimensions:** Generally, industrial/residential buffers shall be a minimum width of 300 feet (91.4 meters), but may be reduced to not less than 100 feet (30.5 meters) where the buffer includes such features as screening walls, landscaped berms, and/or dense landscaping, with guarantees of proper, ongoing landscaping maintenance.
- b. **Uses Allowed in Buffer:** Commercial and office uses; open space and recreation uses such as greenbelts, parks, and playfields.

General Public Facilities and Services

Goal 4.A. To ensure the timely development of public facilities and the maintenance of specified service levels for these facilities.

Policy 4.A.1. Where new development requires the construction of new public facilities, the new development shall fund its fair share of the

construction. The County shall require dedication of land within newly developing areas for public facilities, where necessary.

Policy 4.A.2.

The County shall ensure through the development review process that adequate public facilities and services are available to serve new development. The County shall not approve new development where existing facilities are inadequate unless the following conditions are met:

- a. The applicant can demonstrate that all necessary public facilities will be installed or adequately financed (through fees or other means); and
- b. The facilities improvements are consistent with applicable facility plans approved by the County or with agency plans where the County is a participant.

Policy 4.A.3.

The County shall require that new urban development is planned and developed according to urban facility standards.

3.11.3.2 Sacramento Area Council of Governments

The Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG) is a regional organization that provides a variety of planning functions over its six-county region (Sacramento, Yolo, Placer, Sutter, Yuba, and El Dorado counties). SACOG's primary functions are to provide transportation planning and funding for the region and to study and support resolution of regional issues. The SACOG conducted several local community workshops to help determine how the Sacramento region should grow through the year 2050. In December 2004, the SACOG Board of Directors adopted the Preferred Blueprint Scenario (hereinafter SACOG Blueprint), a vision for growth that promotes compact, mixed-use development and more transit choices as an alternative to low-density development. The SACOG Blueprint is based on the following set of smart growth principles:

Transportation Choices: Developments should be designed to encourage people to sometimes walk, ride bicycles, ride the bus, ride light rail, take the train or carpool. Use of Blueprint growth concepts for land use and right-of-way design will encourage use of these modes of travel and the remaining auto trips will be, on average, shorter.

Mixed-Use Developments: Buildings homes and shops, entertainment, office and even light industrial uses near each other can create active, vital neighborhoods. This mixture of uses can be either in a vertical arrangement (mixed in one building) or horizontal (with a combination of uses in close proximity). These types of projects function as local activity centers, contributing to a sense of community, where people tend to walk or bike to destinations and interact more with each other. Separated land uses, on the other hand, lead to the need to travel more by auto because of the distance between uses.

Compact Development: Creating environments that are more compactly built and use space in an efficient but aesthetic manner can encourage more walking, biking, and public-transit use and shorten auto trips.

Housing Choice and Diversity: Providing a variety of places where people can live— apartments, condominiums, townhouses, and single-family detached homes on varying lot sizes—creates opportunities for the variety of people who need them: families, singles, seniors, and people with special needs. This issue is of special concern for people with very low, low, and moderate incomes. By providing a diversity of housing options, more people would have a choice.

Use of Existing Assets: In urbanized areas, development on infill or vacant lands, intensification of the use of underutilized parcels, or redevelopment can make better use of existing public infrastructure. This can also include rehabilitation and reuse of historic buildings; denser clustering of buildings in suburban office parks; and joint use of existing public facilities, such as schools and parking garages.

Quality Design: The design details of any land use development—such as the relationship to the street, setbacks, placement of garages, sidewalks, landscaping, the aesthetics of building design, and the design of the public rights-of-way—are factors that can influence the attractiveness of living in a compact development and facilitate the ease of walking and biking to work or neighborhood services. Good site and architectural design is an important factor in creating a sense of community and a sense of place.

Natural Resources Conservation: This principle encourages the incorporation of public use open space (such as parks, town squares, trails, and greenbelts) within development projects, above state requirements; it also encourages wildlife and plant habitat preservation, agricultural preservation, and promotion of environmentally friendly practices, such as energy-efficient design, water conservation and stormwater management, and planting of shade trees.

The project site is designated in the SACOG Blueprint for medium- and high-density mixed residential uses and low- and medium-density mixed-use commercial centers in the near term.

3.11.4 SIGNIFICANCE THRESHOLDS AND ANALYSIS METHODOLOGY

3.11.4.1 Significance Thresholds

Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) guidance requires an evaluation of a proposed action's effect on the human environment. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) has determined that the Proposed Action or its alternatives would result in significant adverse effects related to land use and planning if the Proposed Action or an alternative would:

- result in incompatible land uses;
- physically divide an established community; or
- conflict with applicable plans, policies, or regulations.

3.11.4.2 Analysis Methodology

Land use-related impacts would result if development under the Proposed Action or an alternative would result in land uses on the project site that are incompatible with adjacent land uses, or physically divide an existing community, or conflict with adopted plans or policies.

3.11.5 ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES AND MITIGATION MEASURES

Impact LU-1 Result in Incompatible Land Uses

No Action Alt. As explained below, the No Action Alternative would not result in the development of incompatible land uses as existing County regulations would prevent such occurrences. The impact would be **less than significant**. Mitigation is not required.

The No Action Alternative provides for a mixed-use, mixed density regional residential community, which could lead to land use incompatibilities. However, all development on the project site would be guided by existing County regulations which would reduce the severity of potential conflicts so that differing off-site and on-site land uses would be compatible with each other. For example, all proposed commercial and employment uses within the project site will be subject to Design Review, which will permit the County to review proposed uses for compatibility with adjacent existing and proposed land uses and impose compatibility requirements.

With adherence to buffer requirements contained in the County's General Plan, development within the project site would be compatible with adjacent agricultural uses to the north and to the south. This issue is addressed in **Section 3.2, Agricultural Resources**.

Off-site improvements along utility corridors and roadways would not conflict with neighboring agricultural, rural and urban land uses as construction of these improvements would be temporary and would mostly occur within existing rights of way. Only a proposed lift station and force main would be located outside existing rights of way on land that is presently under agricultural production. However, these facilities would be located along the edge of the fields and would not interfere with agricultural production. In addition, most utility improvements would be located underground after construction. As discussed in **Section 3.1, Aesthetics**, mitigation would require the revegetation of all areas containing natural vegetation or landscape material that are disturbed during utility line and roadway construction and that all permanent utility line-related structures extending above ground be screened where feasible.

In summary, land uses within the project site would be compatible with each other and would be compatible with adjacent off-site land uses under the No Action Alternative. In addition, no land use incompatibilities are expected from off-site utility and roadway improvements. Impacts as a result of incompatible land uses are expected to be **less than significant**. No mitigation is required.

Proposed Action (Base Plan and Blueprint Scenarios) Implementation of the Proposed Action under either scenario would not result in incompatible uses. As discussed above, all development on the project site would be guided by existing County regulations which would reduce the severity of potential conflicts so that differing off-site and on-site land uses would be compatible with each other. In addition, all development on the project site would also be guided by the goals, policies and guidelines contained in the Specific Plan. For example, the Specific Plan contains policies that address compatibility of adjoining land uses, compatibility of adjoining large lot rural and agricultural uses, and compatibility of residential uses adjacent to commercial and employment uses. As described in more detail in **Section 3.2**, with adherence to buffer requirements contained in the County's General Plan, development within the project site under the Proposed Action would be compatible with adjacent agricultural uses to the north and to the south. In addition, no land use incompatibilities are expected from off-site utility and roadway improvements. The effect as a result of incompatible land uses are expected to be **less than significant**. No mitigation is required.

Alts. 1 through 5 The effects as a result of incompatible land uses from Alternatives 1 through 5 combined or each alternative individually, are expected to be **less than significant**.

Alternative 1 would not result in incompatible uses. Alternative 1 would affect Parcel 1B by eliminating the proposed religious land use, shifting high-density residential uses to the northern portion of the parcel, and creating open space in the central portion of the parcel. Medium density residential uses would remain in the southern portion of the parcel. The shifting of high-density residential use to the north would not conflict with adjacent uses as the proposed high density residential use would be bordered on the north, east, and south by open space. The high-density residential land use could conflict with low-density residential uses to the west on Parcel 5A. However, as described above, development of these uses would be guided by the goals, policies and guidelines contained in the Specific Plan and existing County regulations which would reduce the severity of potential conflicts. The proposed open space land use would be compatible with all adjacent land uses.

Alternative 2 would not result in incompatible uses. Alternative 2 would affect Parcel 3 by eliminating the proposed commercial, medium density residential, high density residential, and park uses and replacing these uses with a Power Center. In addition, the roadway proposed for the southern portion of the parcel would be realigned to the north to create open space. The religious use located in the southeastern corner of the parcel would remain substantially unchanged. The proposed power center would be compatible with the proposed power center to the west on Parcel 20. Some conflicts could occur between the proposed power center and low-density single-family residential uses to the east on Parcel 1A thus resulting in potentially incompatible land uses. But the two types of land uses would be separated by a major arterial and these

uses would be guided by the goals, policies, and guidelines contained in the Specific Plan and existing County regulations which would reduce the severity of potential conflicts. In addition, all proposed commercial and employment uses within the project site, such as the proposed power center, will be subject to Placer County Design Review, which would place conditions on development to ensure compatibility. The proposed open space use in the southern portion of Parcel 3 would buffer the proposed power center from low, medium, and high residential uses to the south on Parcels 5A and 1B. The proposed religious use in the southeastern portion of Parcel 3 would be compatible with the single-family residential use to the east on Parcel 1A, the religious use to the south in Parcel 1B, and open space uses to the west on the same parcel.

Alternatives 3 and 4 would not result in incompatible uses. Alternative 3 would affect Parcel 16 by eliminating the proposed religious and low-density residential uses and scaling back the planned medium density residential uses in order to create a large open space area. In addition, the park uses proposed on Parcel 16 would be consolidated and moved to the southeastern corner of the parcel. The large open space area created on Parcel 16 would not conflict with proposed uses on the parcel nor would it conflict with agricultural uses to the south and west. Under Alternative 3, medium density residential uses would be located adjacent to low density residential uses to the west on Parcel 17 and a park to the east on Parcel 9 and this could result in conflicts due to incompatibility of land uses. However, development of these uses would be guided by the goals, policies and guidelines contained in the Specific Plan and existing County regulations which would reduce the severity of potential conflicts.

Alternative 4 would affect Parcel 17 by carving out a small area in the southeastern corner of Parcel 17 for open space that would be connected to the large open space area on Parcel 16. The location of the low and medium density residential uses planned for Parcel 17 would not be changed. The small pocket of open space on Parcel 17 would not conflict with the adjacent planned low-density residential uses on the parcel.

Alternative 5 would not result in incompatible uses. Alternative 5 would affect Parcel 23 by scaling back proposed low and medium density residential and park uses on the southern portion of the parcel in order to create a large open space area. In addition, Alternative 5 would adjust the alignment of the proposed roadway on the western half of Parcel 23 to the north. The enlarged open space area would not conflict with the proposed low and medium density residential and park uses on the northern portion of the parcel and would be compatible with the planned open space use to the south on Parcel 24. The proposed open space area would also be compatible to the existing rural residential uses to the west and the planned open space uses to the east on Parcel 19.

If for purposes of analysis, it is assumed that all five alternatives (Alternatives 1 through 5) would be implemented, land uses under these alternatives combined would generally be compatible with each other and surrounding uses for the reasons given

above. In addition, no land use incompatibilities are expected from off-site utility and roadway improvements. Based on the significance criteria listed above and for the same reasons presented for the No Action Alternative and the Proposed Action, impacts as a result of incompatible land uses from Alternatives 1 through 5 combined or each alternative individually, are expected to be **less than significant**. No mitigation is required.

Impact LU-2

Physically Divide an Established Community

No Action Alt. As explained below, the No Action Alternative would not physically divide a community as the project site consists of an undeveloped rural area and the No Action Alternative would not displace a majority of the residences currently located on the project site. In addition, off-site infrastructure would not physically divide a community as most improvements would occur within existing rights of way or would be placed underground. The effect would be **less than significant**. Mitigation is not required.

As discussed in **Chapter 2.0, Proposed Action and Alternatives**, the project site is characterized by gently rolling topography and large, open grazing land with a few stands of native and non-native trees. About 150 rural residences are located in the northwestern corner of the project site with a few other rural residences scattered throughout the remainder of the site. The No Action Alternative would develop the undeveloped portions of the project site. The 150 rural residences are located in a Special Planning Area (SPA). These residences would remain in place and the SPA would continue to be used for large lot rural residential development under the No Action Alternative.

Most off-site infrastructure improvements would occur within existing rights of way and/or would be placed underground and therefore would not physically divide an established community. Only a lift station and force main would be located outside existing rights of way on land that is presently in agricultural production. However, these facilities would be located along the edge of the fields and would not divide an existing community. The No Action Alternative would not physically divide an established community, and therefore, effects of the No Action Alternative are **less than significant**. No mitigation is required.

Proposed Action (Base Plan and Blueprint Scenarios)

The Proposed Action would not physically divide an established community as no community is present within the development area and the Proposed Action would not develop the SPA. Off-site infrastructure associated with the Proposed Action would not physically divide an established community as most improvements would occur within existing rights of way. Based on the significance criteria listed above and for the same reasons presented for the No Action Alternative, the Proposed Action would result in a **less than significant** effect. No mitigation is required.

Alts. 1 through 5 Alternatives 1 through 5 would not physically divide an established community. Similar to the Proposed Action, all of the alternatives would be developed on undeveloped portions of the project site and would not affect the 150 residences located in the SPA as these residences would remain in place. In addition, most off-site infrastructure improvements associated with the alternatives would occur within existing rights of way. Based on the significance criteria listed above and for the same reasons presented for the No Action Alternative and Proposed Action, Alternatives 1 through 5 would result in a **less than significant** effect. No mitigation is required.

Impact LU-3 Conflict with Placer County General Plan

No Action Alt. The No Action Alternative would provide buffers between the project site and adjacent land uses and between uses within the project site. These buffers generally meet the ranges outlined in the General Plan for agricultural and industrial uses. Therefore, no conflict with agricultural and industrial buffer standards contained in the General Plan would result.

Concerning on- and off-site infrastructure, General Plan Policy 4.A.2 requires that the County ensure through the development review process that adequate public facilities and services are available to serve new development. In compliance with County requirements, the No Action Alternative would include a financing plan which describes how backbone infrastructure and public facilities needed to serve new development on the project site would be funded. The financing plan would describe the costs and financing mechanisms that will be used to create these backbone and public facility improvements, including arterial roadways; major sewer, water, storm drainage, and recycled water trunk systems. As a result, added public facilities and services would be provided as required by the General Plan. No conflict with General Plan policies governing the provision of infrastructure would occur.

In summary, no conflict with agricultural and industrial buffer standards contained in the General Plan would result and no conflict with General Plan policies governing the provision of infrastructure would occur. The effect would be **less than significant** and no mitigation is required.

Proposed Action (Base Plan and Blueprint Scenarios) Similar to the No Action Alternative, the Proposed Action provides buffers between the project site and adjacent land uses and between uses within the project site that generally meet the ranges outlined in the General Plan for agricultural and industrial uses. Therefore, no conflict with agricultural and industrial buffer standards contained in the General Plan and open space buffer standards in the Specific Plan would result. In addition, no conflict with General Plan policies governing the provision of on- and off-site infrastructure would occur as the Proposed Action would be required to

undergo development review to ensure that adequate public facilities and services are provided and would include a financing plan detailing how backbone infrastructure and public facilities would be funded. The effect would be **less than significant** and no mitigation is required.

**Alts. 1
through 5**

Alternatives 1 through 5 differ from the Proposed Action in that they place additional acreage in open space. The alternatives would develop the project site with urban uses and an overall density of development similar to the Proposed Action and preserve additional open space in order to avoid jurisdictional waters. Based on the significance criteria listed above and for the same reasons presented above for the No Action Alternative and Proposed Action – Base Plan scenario, the alternatives individually or combined would not conflict with the Placer County General Plan. The effect would be **less than significant** and no mitigation is required.

Impact LU-4 Conflict with SACOG Blueprint

No Action Alt. The No Action Alternative would develop a mixed-use, mixed-density community that would not be consistent with the SACOG Blueprint designations for the project site and would be a **significant** effect.

The amount of residential and non-residential uses provided under the No Action Alternative would not be consistent with the SACOG Blueprint Designations for the project site as the No Action Alternative would provide fewer homes and less acreage for commercial uses than allocated by the Blueprint. In addition, development of the No Action Alternative would conflict with smart growth principles listed in the SACOG Blueprint and thus result in more substantial environmental impacts than would occur under the SACOG Blueprint. For example, the following impacts have the potential to occur:

- An increase in congestion on regional roadways as well as an increase in air pollution from vehicle exhaust would occur under the No Project Alternative as future development on the project site would be more spread out thus violating the smart growth principle of compact growth.
- Less efficient use of natural resources would occur under the No Project Alternative as greater amounts of land, water and energy would be required to provide a greater number of large-lot, detached single-family homes. In addition, greater potential to impact sensitive species, wetlands, agricultural lands, and cultural and historic resources would occur under the No Action Alternative as development that would have occurred on the project site under the Blueprint would be pushed out into existing open space areas. All of these impacts would conflict with the smart growth principle of natural resources conservation.

In contrast, development of the project site under the SACOG Blueprint would adhere to the growth principle of compact development as development on the project site

would be denser and compactly built thus encouraging more walking, biking, and public-transit use and shorten auto trips. In addition development of the project site under the SACOG Blueprint would adhere to the growth principle of providing transportation choices by concentrating high-density development along the proposed Bus Rapid Transit line on Watt Avenue, thus increasing ridership and reducing vehicle miles traveled and emissions. Denser development under the SACOG Blueprint would also adhere to the smart growth principle of natural resources conservation as this scenario would reduce per capita water consumption due to a decrease in irrigated landscaping associated with large residential lots. However, overall water consumption may go up as the reduction from irrigation may be offset by increased water consumption that would occur with an increase in the density of development. Finally, development under the SACOG Blueprint also offers the potential to preserve habitat and avoid sensitive resources in other parts of the Sacramento region by providing an increased supply of housing on the project site that would preclude providing housing in areas that are currently in agriculture/open space.

In summary, development of the No Action Alternative would not be consistent with the SACOG Blueprint designations for the project site and conflicts with smart growth principles listed in the SACOG Blueprint would result in more substantial environmental impacts. The No Action Alternative would therefore result in a **significant** effect from conflict with the SACOG Blueprint. There is no feasible mitigation available to address this effect.

**Proposed
Action (Base
Plan and
Blueprint
Scenarios)**

The Proposed Action – Base Plan scenario would develop a mixed-use, mixed-density community that would not be consistent with the SACOG Blueprint designations for the project site and would be a **significant** effect. Conflicts with the SACOG Blueprint designations under the Proposed Action – Blueprint scenario would not occur as the scenario is based on those designations.

Similar to the No Action Alternative, the amount of residential and non-residential uses provided by the Proposed Action – Base Plan scenario would not be consistent with the SACOG Blueprint Designations for the project site as the Base Plan scenario would provide fewer homes and less acreage for commercial uses than allocated by the Blueprint.

In summary, development of the Proposed Action – Blueprint scenario would be consistent with the SACOG Blueprint for the project site. While development of the Proposed Action – Base Plan scenario would not conflict with smart growth principles listed in the Blueprint, it would not be consistent with the SACOG Blueprint designations for the project site and would produce substantially fewer dwelling units than the Blueprint scenario. As a result, the Proposed Action – Base Plan scenario would result in a **significant** effect from conflict with the SACOG Blueprint. There is no feasible mitigation available to address this effect.

**Alts. 1
through 5**

Implementation of Alternatives 1 through 5 individually or combined would construct a project broadly similar to the Proposed Action – Base Plan scenario. Alternatives 1 through 5 combined would develop similar types of land uses at the same density as the Proposed Action under the Base Plan scenario, but with slightly smaller development footprints. However, the number of residential units under Alternative 1 through 5 combined would remain the same as under Proposed Action – Base Plan scenario. As a result, Alternatives 1 through 5 individually or combined would not fulfill the SACOG Blueprint objectives as effectively as they would still provide fewer dwelling units than provided by SACOG Blueprint for the project site. As with the Proposed Action, development of the project site under these alternatives would adhere to some of the smart growth principles of compact development, providing transportation choices, natural resources conservation, and preserving habitat and sensitive resources similar to the Blueprint scenario (see discussion above). However, compared to the Blueprint, less development would be built on the project site under these alternatives thus necessitating the construction of additional units off-site. As a result, Alternatives 1 through 5 would result in a **significant** effect from conflict with the SACOG Blueprint. There is no feasible mitigation available to address this effect

Impact LU-5

**Indirect Effects on Land Use and Planning from Off-Site
Infrastructure Not Constructed as Part of the Project**
**No Action
Alt.,
Proposed
Action (Base
Plan and
Blueprint
Scenarios),
and Alts. 1
through 5**

The construction and operation of off-site water pipeline infrastructure by the PCWA that would be used by the No Action Alternative, Proposed Action, and Alternatives 1 through 5, would result in **less than significant** effect on land use and planning.

The water pipelines would not conflict with neighboring agricultural, rural and urban land uses as construction of these improvements would be temporary and would mostly occur within existing rights of way. Use of agricultural land may be temporarily disturbed during construction. The majority of the proposed infrastructure would be underground and would not disturb any adjacent land uses during or divide existing communities.

As described above for on- and off-site infrastructure that would be built as part of the Proposed Action, General Plan Policy 4.A.2 requires that the County ensure through the development review process that adequate public facilities and services are available to serve new development. The pipelines would be constructed to supply water to projects in the area, including the No Action Alternative, Proposed Action, and Alternatives 1 through 5, as required by the General Plan. There would be no conflict with General Plan policies.

Therefore, the effect on land use and planning from the water pipeline infrastructure project would be **less than significant**. Mitigation is not necessary.

3.11.6 RESIDUAL SIGNIFICANT IMPACTS

There are no feasible mitigation measures available to reduce **significant** effects related to the conflict of the Proposed Action – Base Plan scenario with SACOG Blueprint. This effect would also remain **significant** under the No Action Alternative and all on-site alternatives.

3.11.7 REFERENCES

County of Placer. 1994. "Placer County General Plan."

County of Placer. 1995. "Placer County Zoning Ordinance, Edition #10." July 1995, as amended.

County of Placer. 2006. "Final Environmental Impact Report for the Placer Vineyards Specific Plan."
Quad Knopf.

County of Placer. 2007. "Placer Vineyards Specific Plan."

County of Sacramento. 2007. "Final Elverta Specific Plan."

<http://www.msa2.saccounty.net/planning/Pages/ElvertaSpecificPlan.aspx>.

County of Sutter. 2011. "Sutter County General Plan."