

FINDINGS

Williamson Act Contract WAC17-0002/Rombauer Vineyards Board of Supervisors/May 8, 2018

1.0 CEQA FINDINGS

- 1.1 The proposed request for a Williamson Act Contract is Categorically Exempt from CEQA pursuant to Section 15317 stating that, “Class 17 consists of the establishment of agricultural preserves, the making and renewing of open space contracts under the Williamson Act, or the acceptance of easements or fee interests in order to maintain the open space character of the area.”
- 1.2 The documents and other materials which constitute the record of proceedings upon which this decision is based are in the custody of Planning Services at 2850 Fairlane Court, Placerville, CA 95667.

2.0 GENERAL PLAN FINDINGS

2.1 The project is consistent with General Plan Policy 8.1.1.1.

Policy 8.1.1.1 states that Agricultural Districts shall be created and maintained for purposes of conserving, protecting and encouraging agricultural use of such lands. The project parcel is within an Agricultural District

2.2 The project is consistent with General Plan Policy 8.1.1.4.

Policy 8.1.1.4 requires that the procedures set forth in The Procedure for Evaluating the Suitability of Land for Agriculture shall be used for evaluating the suitability of agricultural lands in Agricultural Districts and Williamson Act Contract lands. The project parcel is located within an Agricultural District, has been reviewed for agricultural suitability and has been determined to have met the required standards sufficient to be granted approval of a Williamson Act Contract

2.3 The project is consistent with General Plan Policy 8.1.3.5.

Policy 8.1.3.5 states that for any parcel 10 acres or larger identified as having an existing or potential agricultural use, the Agricultural Commission must consider and provide a recommendation on the agricultural use or potential of that parcel and whether the request will diminish or impair the existing or potential use prior to any discretionary permit being approved. The Williamson Act Contract application was forwarded to the Agricultural Commission for review and recommendation at a public hearing on October 11, 2017. The Commission voted to recommend approval of the Williamson Act contract.

2.4 The project is consistent with General Plan Policy 8.1.4.1.

Policy 8.1.4.1 requires the County Agricultural Commission to review all discretionary development applications involving land zoned for or designated agriculture. The El Dorado County Agriculture Commission reviewed the application on October 11, 2017 and determined that the Williamson Act contract met the minimum criteria for agricultural operations.

2.5 The project is consistent with General Plan Policy 8.2.4.1.

Policy 8.2.4.1 seeks to ensure long-term conservation, enhancement, and expansion of viable agricultural lands. The project is consistent with Policy 8.2.4.1 by the request for the use of the project parcel under the provisions of the Williamson Act Contract program.

3.0 ZONING FINDINGS

3.1 The proposed use is consistent with Title 130.

Vineyards on the subject property, which is zoned Planned Agriculture (PA-20), are permitted by right in accordance with Section 130.21.020 of the Zoning Ordinance (Agricultural, Rural Lands and Resource Zone Districts Use Matrix). The PA zone district is consistent with Section 130.40.060.B.1 of the Zoning Ordinance.

4.0 ADMINISTRATIVE FINDINGS

4.1 Williamson Act Contract

The property satisfies the County's three criteria for the establishment of an Agricultural Preserve, as defined in Resolution Number 188-2002, as follows:

4.1.1 Minimum Acreage for High-Intensity Farming Operations:

Minimum Acreage – 20 contiguous acres: WAC17-0002 consists of 217.68 acres containing 148.71 acres of vineyard.

4.1.2 Capital Outlay for High-Intensity Farming Operations:

Minimum Capital Outlay - \$45,000: WAC16-0003 has exceeded the minimum \$45,000 by expending \$5,342,488 in vineyard and improvements.

4.1.3 Income for High-Intensity Farming Operations:

Minimum Annual Gross Income - \$13,500: WAC17-0002 has exceeded the minimum annual gross income by earning \$828,838 in grapes per year.