



# PLANNING AND BUILDING DEPARTMENT

## PLANNING DIVISION

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### **NOTICE OF INTENT TO ADOPT A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION**

**NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN** that the County of El Dorado, as lead agency, has prepared a Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) for the below referenced Project. The Draft MND analyzes the potential environmental effects associated with the proposed Project in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). This Notice of Intent (NOI) is to provide responsible agencies and other interested parties with notice of the availability of the Draft MND and solicit comments and concerns regarding the environmental issues associated with the proposed Project.

**LEAD AGENCY:** County of El Dorado, 2850 Fairlane Court, Placerville, CA 95667

**CONTACT:** County Planner: Lela Shelley, 530-621-5859

**PROJECT:** DR22-0007/Cool Station, Automobile-based Commercial Project

**PROJECT LOCATION:** The property, identified by Assessor's Parcel Numbers 071-080-007 & 071-500-036, consisting of 5.2 acres, is located on the northeast corner of the intersection between California State Highway 49 and California State Highway 193, in the Cool Rural Center, Supervisorial District 4.

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION:** Design Review for the proposed two-phase construction of a 7,205-square-foot commercial building including a 2,585-square-foot drive-thru quick serve restaurant, and a 4,620-square-foot Convenience store. An additional 3,024-square-foot fuel canopy would be developed alongside the commercial building as Phase One, with associated driveways, parking lot, utilities, signage, and landscaping improvements. Phase Two would include a 2,852-square-foot building expansion and the development of an 1,892-square-foot carwash.

**PUBLIC REVIEW PERIOD:** The public review period for the Draft MND set forth in CEQA for this project is **30** days, beginning **September 22, 2025**, and ending **October 21, 2025**. Any written comments must be received within the public review period. Copies of the Draft MND for this project may be reviewed and/or obtained in the County of El Dorado Planning and Building Department, 2850 Fairlane Court, Placerville, CA 95667, during normal business hours or online at <https://edc-trk.aspgov.com/etrakit/>. In order to view attachments, please login or create an E-Trakit account and search the project name or application file number in the search box.

Please direct your comments to: County of El Dorado, Planning and Building Department, County Planner: Lela Shelley, 2850 Fairlane Court, Placerville, CA 95667 or EMAIL: [planning@edcgov.us](mailto:planning@edcgov.us)

**PUBLIC HEARING:** A public hearing before the Planning Commission has not been scheduled. Once that date has been determined, a public notice will be issued.

COUNTY OF EL DORADO  
PLANNING AND BUILDING DEPARTMENT  
KAREN L. GARNER, Director  
September 19, 2025

DR22-0007 Cool Station  
Automobile - based Commercial Project  
Exhibit M - ISMND

### Notice of Completion & Environmental Document Transmittal

Mail to: State Clearinghouse, P.O. Box 3044, Sacramento, CA 95812-3044 (916) 445-0613  
For Hand Delivery/Street Address: 1400 Tenth Street, Sacramento, CA 95814

SCH #

Project Title: DR22-000 7

Lead Agency: El Dorado County Planning Division

Contact Person: Lela Shelley, Assistant Planner

Mailing Address: 2850 Fairlane Court

Phone: (530) 621-5859

City: Placerville

Zip: 95667

County: El Dorado

Project Location: County: El Dorado

City/Nearest Community: Cool

Cross Streets: California State Highway 49 and California State Highway 193

Zip Code: 95614

Longitude/Latitude (degrees, minutes and seconds): 38 ° 53 ' 13.9 " N / 121 ° 00 ' 56.5 " W Total Acres: 5.2 Acres

Assessor's Parcel No.: 071-080-007 & 071-500-036

Section: 18

Twp.: 12

Range: 9

Base: MDM

Within 2 Miles: State Hwy #: State Hwy193 & State Hwy 49

Waterways: North Fork American River

Airports:

Railways:

Schools: Northside Elementary

#### Document Type:

CEQA:  NOP

Draft EIR

NEPA:  NOI

Other:  Joint Document

Early Cons

Supplement/Subsequent EIR

EA

Final Document

Neg Dec

(Prior SCH No.)

Draft EIS

Other:

Mit Neg Dec

Other:

FONSI

#### Local Action Type:

General Plan Update

Specific Plan

Rezone

Annexation

General Plan Amendment

Master Plan

Prezone

Redevelopment

General Plan Element

Planned Unit Development

Use Permit

Coastal Permit

Community Plan

Site Plan

Land Division (Subdivision, etc.)

Other: Design Review

#### Development Type:

Residential: Units \_\_\_\_\_ Acres \_\_\_\_\_

Office: Sq.ft. \_\_\_\_\_ Acres \_\_\_\_\_ Employees \_\_\_\_\_

Commercial: Sq.ft. 14,973 Acres \_\_\_\_\_ Employees 6-8

Industrial: Sq.ft. \_\_\_\_\_ Acres \_\_\_\_\_ Employees \_\_\_\_\_

Educational: \_\_\_\_\_

Recreational: Continue trail and trailhead parking

Water Facilities: Type \_\_\_\_\_ MGD \_\_\_\_\_

Transportation: Type \_\_\_\_\_

Mining: Mineral \_\_\_\_\_

Power: Type \_\_\_\_\_ MW \_\_\_\_\_

Waste Treatment: Type \_\_\_\_\_ MGD \_\_\_\_\_

Hazardous Waste: Type \_\_\_\_\_

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

#### Project Issues Discussed in Document:

Aesthetic/Visual

Fiscal

Recreation/Parks

Vegetation

Agricultural Land

Flood Plain/Flooding

Schools/Universities

Water Quality

Air Quality

Forest Land/Fire Hazard

Septic Systems

Water Supply/Groundwater

Archeological/Historical

Geologic/Seismic

Sewer Capacity

Wetland/Riparian

Biological Resources

Minerals

Soil Erosion/Compaction/Grading

Growth Inducement

Coastal Zone

Noise

Solid Waste

Land Use

Drainage/Absorption

Population/Housing Balance

Toxic/Hazardous

Cumulative Effects

Economic/Jobs

Public Services/Facilities

Traffic/Circulation

Other: TCR, GHG, energy, wildfire

#### Present Land Use/Zoning/General Plan Designation:

General Commercial (CG), Community Design Review (CG-DR)

#### Project Description: (please use a separate page if necessary)

Design Review for the proposed two-phase construction of a 7,205-square-foot commercial building including a 2,585-square-foot drive-thru quick serve restaurant, and a 4,620-square-foot Convenience store. An additional 3,024-square-foot fuel canopy would be developed alongside the commercial building as Phase One, with associated driveways, parking lot, utilities, signage, and landscaping improvements. Phase Two would include a 2,852-square-foot building expansion and the development of an 1,892-square-foot carwash.

Note: The State Clearinghouse will assign identification numbers for all new projects. If a SCH number already exists for a project (e.g. Notice of Preparation or previous draft document) please fill in.

### Reviewing Agencies Checklist

Lead Agencies may recommend State Clearinghouse distribution by marking agencies below with an "X".  
If you have already sent your document to the agency please denote that with an "S".

- |                                     |   |                          |   |
|-------------------------------------|---|--------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | Air Resources Board                         | <input type="checkbox"/> | Office of Historic Preservation                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | Boating & Waterways, Department of          | <input type="checkbox"/> | Office of Public School Construction                |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | California Emergency Management Agency      | <input type="checkbox"/> | Parks & Recreation, Department of                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | California Highway Patrol                   | <input type="checkbox"/> | Pesticide Regulation, Department of                 |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Caltrans District # 3                       | <input type="checkbox"/> | Public Utilities Commission                         |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | Caltrans Division of Aeronautics            | <input type="checkbox"/> | Regional WQCB # _____                               |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | Caltrans Planning                           | <input type="checkbox"/> | Resources Agency                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | Central Valley Flood Protection Board       | <input type="checkbox"/> | Resources Recycling and Recovery, Department of     |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | Coachella Valley Mtns. Conservancy          | <input type="checkbox"/> | S.F. Bay Conservation & Development Comm.           |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | Coastal Commission                          | <input type="checkbox"/> | San Gabriel & Lower L.A. Rivers & Mtns. Conservancy |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | Colorado River Board                        | <input type="checkbox"/> | San Joaquin River Conservancy                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | Conservation, Department of                 | <input type="checkbox"/> | Santa Monica Mtns. Conservancy                      |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | Corrections, Department of                  | <input type="checkbox"/> | State Lands Commission                              |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | Delta Protection Commission                 | <input type="checkbox"/> | SWRCB: Clean Water Grants                           |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | Education, Department of                    | <input type="checkbox"/> | SWRCB: Water Quality                                |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | Energy Commission                           | <input type="checkbox"/> | SWRCB: Water Rights                                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | Fish & Game Region # _____                  | <input type="checkbox"/> | Tahoe Regional Planning Agency                      |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | Food & Agriculture, Department of           | <input type="checkbox"/> | Toxic Substances Control, Department of             |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | Forestry and Fire Protection, Department of | <input type="checkbox"/> | Water Resources, Department of                      |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | General Services, Department of             | <input type="checkbox"/> | Other: _____  |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | Health Services, Department of              | <input type="checkbox"/> | Other: _____  |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | Housing & Community Development             |                          |   |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Native American Heritage Commission         |                          |   |

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**Local Public Review Period (to be filled in by lead agency)**

Starting Date September 12, 2025 Ending Date October 12, 2025

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**Lead Agency (Complete if applicable):**

Consulting Firm: <u>Ascent, Inc.</u>	Applicant: <u>MHA Design Services</u>
Address: <u>455 Capitol Mall, Suite 300</u>	Address: <u>11584 Francis Drive</u>
City/State/Zip: <u>Sacramento, CA, 95814</u>	City/State/Zip: <u>Grass Valley, CA 95949</u>
Contact: <u>Sean Bechia</u>	Phone: <u>(530) 263-5899</u>
Phone: <u>916-444-7301</u>	

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Signature of Lead Agency Representative:  Date: 9/11/2025

Authority cited: Section 21083, Public Resources Code. Reference: Section 21161, Public Resources Code.

Initial Study/Proposed Mitigated  
Negative Declaration  
for the DR22-0007 / Cool Station -  
Automobile-based Commercial Project

Prepared for:

El Dorado County  
2850 Fairlane Court  
Placerville, CA 95667  
530/621-5859

Contact: Lela Shelley, Project Planner

July 2025

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**ATTACHMENTS**

- Attachment A Air Quality Analysis
- Attachment B Biological Assessment
- Attachment C Traffic Impact Analysis Memorandum

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

2023 Ozone Plan	Sacramento Regional 8-Hour Ozone Attainment and Reasonable Further Progress Plan
AB	Assembly Bill
ADMP	Asbestos Dust Mitigation Plan
APN	Assessor's Parcel Number
AQAP	air quality attainment plan
Basin Plan	Water Quality Control Plan for the Sacramento and San Joaquin River Basins
BMP	best management practice
C	Commercial
CAAQS	California Ambient Air Quality Standards
CAL FIRE	California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection
CARB	California Air Resources Board
CDC	California Department of Conservation
CEQA	California Environmental Quality Act
CESA	California Endangered Species Act
CFC	California Fire Code
CHRIS	California Historic Resources Information System Center
CL	Commercial Limited
CNDDDB	California Natural Diversity Database
CO <sub>2</sub>	carbon dioxide
County	County of El Dorado
CRHR	California Register of Historic Resources
CRPR	California rare plant rank
CWPP	community wildfire protection plan
dB	decibels
DC	Design Review - Community
DWR	California Department of Water Resources
EDCAQMD	El Dorado County Air Quality Management District
EDCHMP	El Dorado County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan
EDCSO	El Dorado County Sheriff's Office
EMD	Environmental Management Department
EP	Ecological Preserve
ESA	federal Endangered Species Act
FR	Forest Resource
ft	feet
GHG	greenhouse gas
HVAC	heating, ventilation, and air conditioning
IS/Proposed MND	Initial Study/Proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration
LAMP	local agency management plan
LOS	level of service
LUST	leaking underground storage tank

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MCAB	Mountain Counties Air Basin
MMRP	mitigation monitoring and reporting program
MRZ	Mineral Resource Zones
MS4	municipal separate storm sewer system
msl	mean sea level
MTCO <sub>2</sub> e/yr	metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent per year
NAAQS	National Ambient Air Quality Standards
NAHC	Native American Heritage Center
NCIC	North Central Information Center
NOA	Naturally Occurring Asbestos
NOx	oxides of nitrogen
NPDES	National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System
NR	Natural Resource
NRCS	Natural Resource Conservation
ORMP	Oak Resources Management Plan
PG&E	Pacific Gas and Electric Company
PM <sub>10</sub>	respirable particulate matter
PM <sub>2.5</sub>	fine particles
PRC	California Public Resource Code
Project Applicant	MHA Design Services
Project	DR22-0007 / 2-Phase Cool Station - Automobile-based Commercial Facility
ROG	reactive organic gases
ROW	right-of-way
RWQCB	regional water quality control board
SB	Senate Bill
SB	Senate Bill
SGMA	Sustainable Groundwater Management Act
SIP	State Implementation Plan
SMAQMD	Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District
SR	State Route
SRA	state responsibility area
SWMP	storm water management plan
SWPPP	storm water pollution prevention plan
TAC	toxic air contaminant
Technical Advisory	<i>Technical Advisory on Evaluating Transportation Impacts in CEQA</i>
THRIS	Tribal Historic Information System
TPZ	Timber Production Zone
UAIC	United Auburn Indian Community
US 50	US Highway 50
USFWS	US Fish and Wildlife Service
USGS	US Geological Service
VMT	vehicle miles traveled
WERS	Western El Dorado Recovery Systems

# 1 NOTICE ON INTENT TO ADOPT A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION

This Initial Study/Proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/Proposed MND) has been prepared for the County of El Dorado (County) as the lead agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The purpose of this IS/Proposed MND is to evaluate and disclose potential environmental effects resulting from the DR22-0007 / 2-Phase Cool Station - Automobile-based Commercial Facility Project (Project). Under CEQA, the lead agency is the public agency with primary responsibility over approval of the project.

The County prepared this Proposed MND because, although the attached IS identifies potentially significant environmental effects, revisions to the Project have been made or agreed to by the applicant that would avoid the effects or mitigate the effects to a point where clearly no significant effects would occur, consistent with Section 15070 of the State CEQA Guidelines.

## 1.1 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

MHA Design Services (the Project Applicant) has submitted an application to the County (the Lead Agency) for the DR22-0007 / 2-Phase Cool Station - Automobile-based Commercial Facility Project (Project). The project site consists of two parcels, one approximately 3.8-acres and one 1.4 acres (5.2 acres total). The Project is proposed in two-phase construction of a 9,787 square foot (sf) commercial building including four (4) suites as follows: 1,250 sf visitors center, a 1,500 sf non-drive-thru tenant, a 2,525 sf drive-thru quick serve restaurant, and a 4,512 sf commercial store (C-store).

## 1.2 PROJECT LOCATION

The Project site is located on the northeast corner of the intersection between California State Highway (SR) 49 and California SR 193, in the unincorporated community of Cool, in El Dorado County, California (assessor parcel number [APN] 071-080-007 and 071-500-036).

## 1.3 MITIGATION MEASURES INCLUDED IN THE PROJECT TO AVOID POTENTIALLY SIGNIFICANT IMPACTS

The following mitigation measures are identified in the attached IS to reduce potentially significant impacts.

### **Mitigation Measure 3.4-1: Nesting Bird and Raptor Protection**

The project applicant shall implement the following measures to protect nesting birds and raptors:

- ▶ To minimize impacts to special-status bird species, raptors, and other native birds, development activities (e.g., vegetation clearing, ground disturbance, staging, construction of off-site improvements, and tree removal [if unavoidable]) shall be conducted during the nonbreeding season (approximately September 1 through January 31, as determined by a qualified biologist), when feasible. If project activities are conducted during the nonbreeding season, no further mitigation is required prior to the proposed activity.
- ▶ If development activities must commence during the avian nesting season (between February 1 and August 31), within 7 days prior to commencement of work a qualified biologist familiar with birds of California and with experience conducting nesting bird surveys shall conduct focused surveys for special-status birds, nesting raptors, and other native birds. Surveys shall be conducted in publicly accessible areas within 0.25 miles of the development activity area for white-tailed kite, 500 ft of the development activity area for other raptor species and special-status birds, and 50 ft of the development activity area for non-raptor common native bird nests.

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- ▶ If no active bird nests are found, the qualified biologist shall submit a report documenting the survey methods and results to the applicant and El Dorado County, and work may proceed. If at any time during the nesting season there is a lapse of two weeks or more with no work, a new survey for nesting birds shall be completed before work proceeds.
- ▶ If an active bird nest is found, a no-disturbance buffer shall be established around the nest site until the breeding season has ended or a qualified biologist has determined that the young have fledged or the nest is no longer active.
- ▶ The size of the no-disturbance buffer shall be determined by the biologist, based on the sensitivity of the bird species, nesting chronology of the species, disturbance characteristics (type, extent, visibility, duration, and timing), existing ambient conditions, and other factors (e.g., screening from existing structures, vegetation, or topography), as determined by the biologist. Buffers typically shall be 0.25 miles for white-tailed kite, 500 ft for other raptors, 100 ft for non-raptor special-status bird species, and at least 20 ft for common non-raptor bird species. The size of the buffer may be adjusted if a qualified biologist determines that such an adjustment shall be unlikely to adversely affect the nest. Any buffer reduction for a special-status bird species shall require coordination with CDFW.
- ▶ Daily monitoring of the nest by a qualified biologist during activities shall be required if the activity has potential to adversely affect the nest as determined by the qualified biologist, the buffer has been reduced, or if birds within active nests are showing behavioral signs of agitation (e.g., standing up from a brooding position, flying off the nest) during project activities, as determined by the qualified biologist.
- ▶ Documentation of compliance with this mitigation measure and any required coordination with CDFW shall be provided to El Dorado County before commencement of any project construction activities.

**Mitigation Measure 3.4-2: Oak Resources Protection**

If Project implementation results in the loss or removal of a native oak tree on the project site that qualifies for protection under the ORMP, the project applicant shall obtain a permit from the County and pay the mitigation fee for oak woodland impacts as stated in the ORMP. The project applicant shall coordinate with the County prior to any planned removal of native oak trees and notify the County of any damage to native oak trees during construction and comply with any ORMP requirements. For three years after any project construction under retained native oak trees, if any of these trees die from conditions attributable to changes in the ground in the tree's dripline, the applicant will coordinate with the County and comply with any ORMP mitigation requirements.

**Mitigation Measure 3.5-1: Protection of Unknown Archaeological Resources**

In the event that unknown buried archaeological deposits (e.g., prehistoric stone tools, milling stones, shells, midden soils) are encountered during construction, all ground-disturbing activity within 100 ft of the resources shall be halted and a qualified professional archaeologist (36 Code of Federal Regulations 61) and appropriate Native American tribal representative shall be notified immediately and retained to assess the significance of the find. Construction activities could continue in other areas. If the find is determined to be significant by the qualified archaeologist or Native American tribe (i.e., because it is determined to constitute a unique archaeological resource), the archaeologist, in consultation with the Count and the culturally affiliated Native American tribe(s) shall develop appropriate procedures to protect the integrity of the resource and ensure that no additional resources are affected. Procedures could include but would not necessarily be limited to preservation in place, subsurface testing, or contiguous block unit excavation and data recovery.

**Mitigation Measure 3.18-1: Protection of Known Tribal Cultural Resources**

Components of the project that require earth-moving and excavation could impact the known Tribal cultural resource (P-09-003627). The project, as currently designed, would not result in ground disturbance within the known Tribal cultural resource. However, final engineering and other factors could change, which could cause project activities to move towards the Tribal cultural resource. To better protect the Tribal cultural resource in the event of unforeseen circumstances, a paid Tribal monitor authorized by UAIC will be present when the fencing is placed around the Tribal cultural resource. The monitor shall provide guidance on the placement of the fencing to achieve the desired protection of the Tribal cultural resource. A Tribal monitor from UAIC shall also be present during the removal of the fence. The applicant, or applicant's representative, shall fund the presence of the monitor during fence installation. In

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addition, the applicant, or applicant's representative, shall contact and coordinate with the tribe 7 days prior to the installation of the fencing as well as 7 days prior to the removal of the fence.

**Mitigation Measure 3.18-2: Protection of Unanticipated Discoveries of Tribal Cultural Resources**

If any suspected Tribal cultural resources are discovered during ground disturbing construction activities, all work shall cease within 100 ft of the find, or an agreed upon distance based on the project area and nature of the find. A Tribal Representative from a California Native American tribe that is traditionally and culturally affiliated with a geographic area shall be immediately notified and shall determine if the find is a Tribal cultural resource (PRC §21074). The Tribal Representative will make recommendations for further evaluation and treatment as necessary.

When avoidance is infeasible, preservation in place is the preferred option for mitigation of Tribal cultural resources under CEQA and UAIC protocols, and every effort shall be made to preserve the resources in place, including through project redesign, if feasible. Culturally appropriate treatment may be, but is not limited to, processing materials for reburial, minimizing handling of cultural objects, leaving objects in place within the landscape, or returning objects to a location within the project area where they will not be subject to future impacts. Permanent curation of Tribal cultural resources will not take place unless approved in writing by UAIC or by the California Native American Tribe that is traditionally and culturally affiliated with the project area.

The contractor shall implement any measures deemed by the CEQA lead agency to be necessary and feasible to preserve in place, avoid, or minimize impacts to the resource, including, but not limited to, facilitating the appropriate tribal treatment of the find, as necessary. Treatment that preserves or restores the cultural character and integrity of a Tribal cultural resource may include Tribal Monitoring, culturally appropriate recovery of cultural objects, and reburial of cultural objects or cultural soil.

Work at the discovery location cannot resume until all necessary investigation and evaluation of the discovery under the requirements of the CEQA, including AB52, have been satisfied.

## **1.4 REVIEW AND APPROVAL**

The purpose of the IS/Proposed MND is to present to decision-makers and the public information about the environmental consequences of implementing the project. This IS/Proposed MND will be available for a 30-day public review period from September 22, 2025 to October 21, 2025.

Supporting documentation referenced in this document is available for review at:

County of El Dorado  
Planning and Building Department  
2850 Fairlane Court, Building C  
Placerville, California 95667

Comments should be addressed to:

Ande Flower, Planning Manager  
Planning and Building Department  
2850 Fairlane Court, Building C  
Placerville, California 95667

E-mail comments may be addressed to: [lela.shelley@edcgov.us](mailto:lela.shelley@edcgov.us)

If you have questions regarding the IS/Proposed MND, please call Lela Shelley (530) 621-5859. If you wish to send written comments (including via e-mail), they must be postmarked by October 21, 2025.

After comments are received from the public and reviewing agencies, the County may (1) adopt the MND, a mitigation monitoring and reporting program (MMRP), and approve the project; (2) undertake additional

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environmental studies, potentially including preparation of an Environmental Impact Report; or (3) deny the project. If the project is approved, the project proponent may proceed with the project.

## **1.5 PROPOSED FINDINGS**

The County has reviewed and considered the proposed project and has determined that the project will not have a significant effect on the environment, with the proposed mitigation measures and based upon the substantial supporting evidence provided in the IS. The County hereby prepares and proposes to adopt a MND for this project.

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## 2 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

### 2.1 PROJECT OVERVIEW

MHA Design Services (the Project Applicant) has submitted an application to the County of El Dorado (County) (the Lead Agency under CEQA) for the DR22-0007 / 2-Phase Cool Station - Automobile-based Commercial Facility (Project). The Project site is currently vacant and consists of two parcels with a combined acreage of 5.2 (APN's 071-080-007 and 071-500-036).

### 2.2 PROJECT LOCATION AND EXISTING SETTING

The proposed Project is located in the unincorporated community of Cool, in El Dorado County, California in Section 18, Township 12N, and Range 09E, on the Auburn, California 7.5-minute USGS quadrangle. The Project site is within the western slope of the Sierra Nevada foothills, 33 miles northeast of the City of Sacramento (Figure 2-1). Folsom Lake is approximately 6 miles west of the Project and the U.S Highway 50 corridor is approximately 11 miles south of the Project site.

The Project site is located on the northeast corner of the intersection between SR 49 and SR 193 (Figure 2-2). The Project site is currently undeveloped, but portions had been previously developed as a school site that is no longer present. The surrounding properties are located in a rural setting with various commercial developments in the immediate vicinity as various open space areas that are characterized by annual grasslands and oak woodlands. The property slopes gently to the southwest, with elevations ranging from approximately 1,520 to 1,560 feet (ft) above mean sea level (msl). A cluster of rock outcrops occupy the majority of the western portion of the Project site.

Existing development on-site consists of a utility corridor that runs east/west through the southern portion of the Project site. There is also a paved pedestrian/bicycle path running along the southern edge of the Project site. Patches of gravel and paved surfaces remain from the demolished school site.

Adjoining properties are developed with residential and commercial uses such as restaurants, shops, a grocery store, and a gas station. A Dollar General store is located directly north of the Project site's boundaries. There is one residential property of approximately 1 acre approximately 400 ft east of the Project site.

#### 2.2.1 General Plan and Zoning

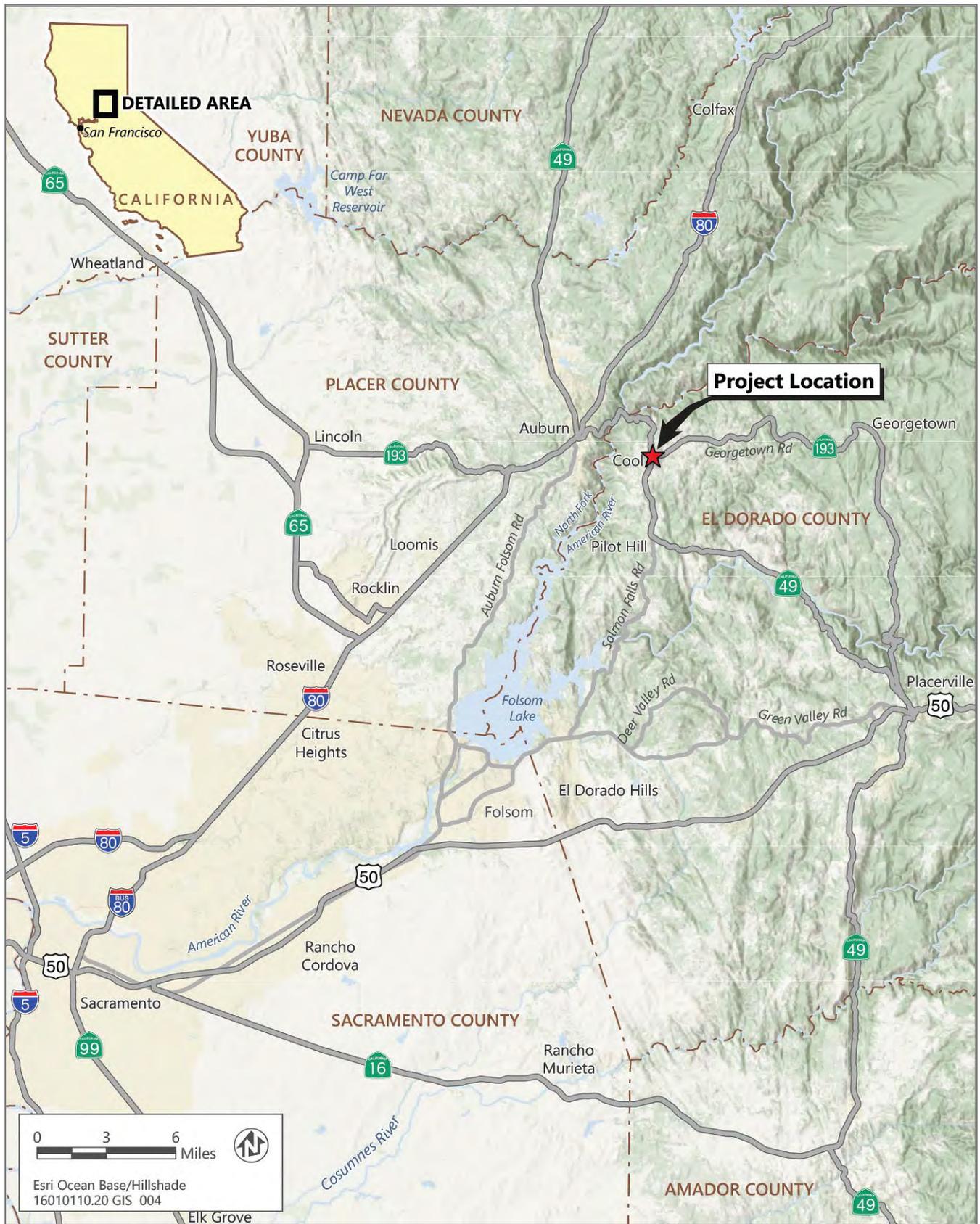
The Project site is designated as Commercial (C) in the County General Plan Land Use Diagram (EDC 2004a). As described in the County's General Plan Land Use Element, the C designation establishes areas for commercial retail, office, and service uses to serve the residents, businesses, and visitors of El Dorado County. These lands typically have a full range of commercial retail, office, and service uses to serve the residents, business, and visitors of El Dorado County. Mixed use development of commercial lands within Community Regions and Rural Centers which combine commercial and residential uses shall be permitted.

The zoning designations for the Project are Commercial Limited (CL) and Design Review - Community (DC). The CL, Limited Commercial Zone, designates areas suitable for lower intensity retail sales, office, and service needs of the surrounding area while minimizing conflicts with the residential uses and outside traffic into the area. Mixed use development compatible with surrounding uses would also be appropriate. The DC, Design Review - Community, are adjacent to or visible from designated State Scenic Highway corridors or located within community design reviews areas established the El Dorado County Board.

### 2.3 PROJECT DESCRIPTION/PROJECT FEATURES/ETC.

The proposed Project would be constructed in two phases. Phase One would consist of a 7,205-sf commercial building including two suites, a 2,585-sf drive-thru quick serve restaurant and a 4,620 sf Convenience store (Figure 2-3). An additional 3,024 sf eight pump fuel canopy would be developed alongside the commercial building as part of Phase One. In addition, as part of Phase One a 2,582-sf building pad would be installed to support future Phase Two construction. Phase Two would consist of development of 1,892-sf carwash on the building pad installed during Phase One.

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Source: Adapted by Ascent in 2025.

Figure 2-1 Regional Location

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Source: Adapted by Ascent in 2025.

Figure 2-2 Project Site

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The project would provide as part of Phase One parking for 61 regular vehicles, 2 Electric charging stalls, 2 trailer stalls, 2 ADA stalls, and racks sufficient to support parking of at least 6 bicycles.

The facility appearance and architecture is responsive to community input and designed to complement Historic Old Town architectural features. Project landscaping will include multiple parking lot tree plantings and a variety of shrubs and ground cover, all compliant with the Model Water Efficiency standard/regulations with low water use. A small patch of oak woodland will be left undisturbed in the east part of the site. There are four individual oak trees along the southern edge of the site (Figures 2-3 and 2-4). The Project would preserve existing trees wherever practical and feasible. There are no plans to remove these trees; however, some grading/ground disturbance would occur under the canopy of these trees. The project will install buffer fencing to identify undisturbed area around rock formations that will remain in place through construction.

Two monument signs are proposed. One would be located at the Northwest corner of the Project site, near SR 49, approximately 80 sf and less than 10 ft tall. The other would be located at the southwest corner of the Project site, near SR 193, approximately 40 sf and 7ft tall. Both would have a brick veneer design at the base to match the buildings, with multi-tenant signage on top.

Access would be provided at two driveways, one on SR 193 and one on SR 49. Driveways would meet all County vehicle design standards, emergency access requirements, and Caltrans encroachment requirements.

The fuel canopy would have eight pumps (16 dispensers). A fuel island would be constructed as part of the canopy area consisting of a concrete slab under the full extent of the fuel canopy with an impermeable surface extending 8 ft minimum beyond the face of the adjacent fuel pump dispenser. This concrete slab will be graded and constructed to prevent drainage across, or from, the dispensing area. This fuel island shall be equipped with drain inlets that direct drainage through sand and oil separators to the sanitary sewer system.

Project lighting would include 16 parking lot fixtures as well as building mounted lighting, and ceiling lighting within the fuel canopy; all with downward shielding fixtures.

As part of proposed Project a segment of Class II bike lane would be constructed along the SR 49, along the Project site's western boundary, extending north from SR 193 to the Project site's northern edge. This segment of Class II bike lane is intended to provide additional access and safety to complement the existing Class I pedestrian/bicycle path along the southern edge of the Project site.

Georgetown Divide Public Utility District (GDPUD) reviewed the Project and found that the Project is within the district's service boundaries. Per GDPUD, the site is entitled to derive service, subject to the district's water service priority policy, upon proper application and payment of the appropriate charges. The subject property is served by a ten-inch water main located in SR 193. There is also a ten-inch water main in SR 49 in the area next to the project site.

The Project would make use of a private on-site septic system. The septic system will meet the requirements for a commercial facility, including a grease interceptor to prevent grease from entering the leach field. A leach field considered sufficient to serve the proposed Project has been identified. However, a portion of the project site is reserve for additional leach field capacity of needed. For electricity the Project would connect to existing Pacific Gas & Electric (PG&E) facilities in SR 193 and or SR 49.

Construction would include grading improvements, utility trenching and drainage system installation, erosion control measures, proposed structures, fuel island, car wash, parking lot paving, landscaping and associated improvements. All construction activities would be completed in conformance with applicable agency requirements, and subject to building permits from the El Dorado County Building Services.

## **2.4 PROJECT APPROVALS**

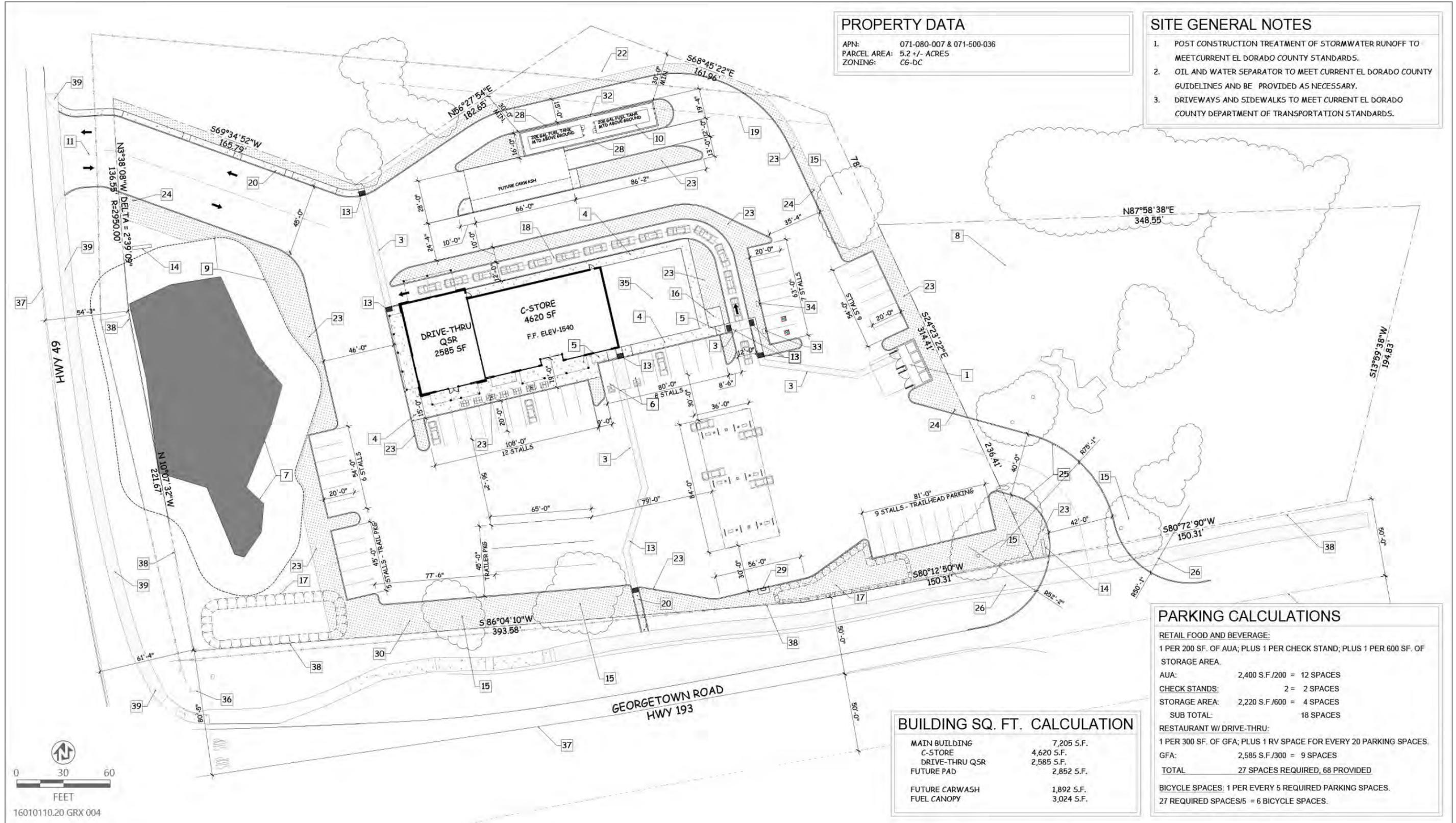
The project would require the following approvals:

- ▶ County of El Dorado: Planning Commission approval
- ▶ CalTrans
- ▶ Georgetown Public Utilities District

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- ▶ El Dorado County Planning and Building departments
- ▶ El Dorado County Air Quality Management District
- ▶ El Dorado County Department of Transportation
- ▶ El Dorado County Fire Protection District
- ▶ El Dorado County Environmental Management Department approval of septic system leach field areas for proposed new parcels.

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PROPERTY DATA	
APN:	071-080-007 & 071-500-036
PARCEL AREA:	5.2 +/- ACRES
ZONING:	C6-DC

- SITE GENERAL NOTES**
1. POST CONSTRUCTION TREATMENT OF STORMWATER RUNOFF TO MEET CURRENT EL DORADO COUNTY STANDARDS.
  2. OIL AND WATER SEPARATOR TO MEET CURRENT EL DORADO COUNTY GUIDELINES AND BE PROVIDED AS NECESSARY.
  3. DRIVEWAYS AND SIDEWALKS TO MEET CURRENT EL DORADO COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION STANDARDS.

BUILDING SQ. FT. CALCULATION	
MAIN BUILDING	7,205 S.F.
C-STORE	4,620 S.F.
DRIVE-THRU QSR	2,585 S.F.
FUTURE PAD	2,852 S.F.
FUTURE CARWASH	1,892 S.F.
FUEL CANOPY	3,024 S.F.

PARKING CALCULATIONS	
<b>RETAIL FOOD AND BEVERAGE:</b>	
1 PER 200 SF. OF AUA; PLUS 1 PER CHECK STAND; PLUS 1 PER 600 SF. OF STORAGE AREA.	
AUA:	2,400 S.F./200 = 12 SPACES
CHECK STANDS:	2 = 2 SPACES
STORAGE AREA:	2,220 S.F./600 = 4 SPACES
SUB TOTAL:	18 SPACES
<b>RESTAURANT W/ DRIVE-THRU:</b>	
1 PER 300 SF. OF GFA; PLUS 1 RV SPACE FOR EVERY 20 PARKING SPACES.	
GFA:	2,585 S.F./300 = 9 SPACES
TOTAL	27 SPACES REQUIRED, 68 PROVIDED
<b>BICYCLE SPACES: 1 PER EVERY 5 REQUIRED PARKING SPACES.</b>	
27 REQUIRED SPACES/5 = 6 BICYCLE SPACES.	



Source: Image produced and provided by MHA Design Services in 2025; adapted by Ascent in 2025.

Figure 2-3 Site Plan

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**PROPERTY DATA**

APN: 071-080-007 & 071-500-036  
 PARCEL AREA: 5.2 +/- ACRES  
 ZONING: C6-DC

**SITE GENERAL NOTES**

1. POST CONSTRUCTION TREATMENT OF STORMWATER RUNOFF TO MEET CURRENT EL DORADO COUNTY STANDARDS.
2. OIL AND WATER SEPARATOR TO MEET CURRENT EL DORADO COUNTY GUIDELINES AND BE PROVIDED AS NECESSARY.
3. DRIVEWAYS AND SIDEWALKS TO MEET CURRENT EL DORADO COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION STANDARDS.

**PARKING CALCULATIONS**

**RETAIL FOOD AND BEVERAGE:**  
 1 PER 200 SF. OF AUA; PLUS 1 PER CHECK STAND; PLUS 1 PER 600 SF. OF STORAGE AREA.  
 AUA: 2,400 S.F./200 = 12 SPACES  
 CHECK STANDS: 2 = 2 SPACES  
 STORAGE AREA: 2,220 S.F./600 = 4 SPACES  
 SUB TOTAL: 18 SPACES

**RESTAURANT W/ DRIVE-THRU:**  
 1 PER 300 SF. OF GFA; PLUS 1 RV SPACE FOR EVERY 20 PARKING SPACES.  
 GFA: 2,585 S.F./300 = 9 SPACES  
 TOTAL: 27 SPACES REQUIRED, 68 PROVIDED

**BICYCLE SPACES:** 1 PER EVERY 5 REQUIRED PARKING SPACES.  
 27 REQUIRED SPACES/5 = 6 BICYCLE SPACES.

**BUILDING SQ. FT. CALCULATION**

MAIN BUILDING	7,205 S.F.
C-STORE	4,620 S.F.
DRIVE-THRU QSR	2,585 S.F.
FUTURE PAD	2,852 S.F.
FUTURE CARWASH	1,892 S.F.
FUEL CANOPY	3,024 S.F.

Source: Image produced and provided by MHA Design Services in 2025; adapted by Ascent in 2025.

Figure 2-4 Site Plan over Aerial Photo

### 3 ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST

#### PROJECT INFORMATION

1. Project Title: Cool Station – Automobile-based Commercial Project

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2. Lead Agency Name and Address: County of El Dorado  
Planning and Building Department  
2850 Fairlane Court, Building C  
Placerville, California 95667

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3. Contact Person and Phone Number: Lela Shelley, Project Planner  
(530) 621-5859

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4. Project Location: Assessor parcel number (APN) 071-080-007 and 071-500-036

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5. Applicant Name and Address: Melvin Higginbotham, 11584 Francis Drive, Grass Valley, CA 95949

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6. General Plan Designation: Commercial (C)

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7. Zoning: General Commercial – Community Design Review (CG-DC)

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8. Description of Project:

MHA Design Services (the Project Applicant) is proposing to develop an automobile-based commercial facility, including a gas station, convenience store, and drive-thru quick serve restaurant; with construction of a car wash at a later date during a second phase of the project. The project would be located on a 5.2-acre site comprised of two parcels (APN's 071-080-007 and 071-500-036). See Chapter 2 of this document for additional information.
9. Surrounding Land Uses and Setting:

The Project site is currently undeveloped, but portions had been previously developed as a school site that is no longer present. The surrounding properties are located in a rural setting with various commercial buildings and facilities in the immediate vicinity as well as open space areas that are predominately characterized by annual grasslands and oak woodlands.
10. Other public agencies whose approval is required: (e.g., permits, financing approval, or participation agreement)
  - ▶ County of El Dorado: Planning Commission approval
  - ▶ El Dorado County Planning and Building departments
  - ▶ El Dorado County Air Quality Management District
  - ▶ El Dorado County Department of Transportation
  - ▶ El Dorado County Fire Protection District
  - ▶ El Dorado County Environmental Management Department approval of septic system leach field areas for proposed new parcels.
11. Have California Native American tribes traditionally and culturally affiliated with the project area requested consultation pursuant to Public Resources Code section 21080.3.1? If so, is there a plan for consultation that includes, for example, the determination of significance of impacts to tribal cultural resources, procedures regarding confidentiality, etc.?

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Yes; At the time of the application request, seven Tribes: Colfax-Todds Valley Consolidated Tribe, Lone Band of Miwok Indians, Nashville Enterprise Miwok-Maidu-Nishinam Tribe, Shingle Springs Band of Miwok Indians, T'si-Akim Maidu, United Auburn Indian Community of the Auburn Rancheria, Washoe Tribe of California and Nevada, had requested to be notified of proposed projects for consultation in the project area. Consultation notices were sent on February 16, 2023. Staff received a request from the United Auburn Indian Community for consultation on March 3, 2023. This request was received within a 30-day period from the date of staff's consultation initiation response. Staff had responded to the UAIC's documentation request on March 6, 2023. Consultation discussions occurred for several months, resulting in an agreement for the full avoidance of the area which may contain indigenous cultural resources. With avoidance built into the project, the county's standard unanticipated discovery condition of approval would be included in the project staff report. Consultation with UAIC will close once planning staff is able to provide a fully complete draft CEQA document and a Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program document. Both environmental documents were sent to the UAIC on August 5, 2025, including modifications requested by UAIC. The UAIC officially closed consultation on August 8, 2025. Shingle Springs Band of Miwok Indians also requested consultation and officially closed consultation on August 20, 2025 deferring to UAIC. No other consultation requests were received.

**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. Where checked below, the topic with a potentially significant impact will be addressed in an environmental impact report.

- |  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aesthetics                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture and Forest Resources | <input type="checkbox"/> Air Quality                                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Biological Resources        | <input type="checkbox"/> Cultural Resources               | <input type="checkbox"/> Energy                                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Geology / Soils             | <input type="checkbox"/> Greenhouse Gas Emissions         | <input type="checkbox"/> Hazards / Hazardous Materials                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hydrology / Water Quality   | <input type="checkbox"/> Land Use / Planning              | <input type="checkbox"/> Mineral Resources                            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Noise                       | <input type="checkbox"/> Population / Housing             | <input type="checkbox"/> Public Services                              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Recreation                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Tribal Cultural Resources                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Utilities / Service Systems | <input type="checkbox"/> Wildfire                         | <input type="checkbox"/> Mandatory Findings of Significance           |
|  | <input type="checkbox"/> None                             | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> None with Mitigation Incorporated |

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**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.

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Signature

Date

Aaron Mount

Planning Manager

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Printed Name

---

Title

El Dorado County Planning

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Agency

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**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 less than significance.

### 3.1 AESTHETICS

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<b>I. Aesthetics.</b>				
Except as provided in Public Resources Code section 21099 (where aesthetic impacts shall not be considered significant for qualifying residential, mixed-use residential, and employment centers), would the project:				
a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) In non-urbanized areas, substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings? (Public views are those that are experienced from publicly accessible vantage points.) If the project is in an urbanized area, would the project conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

#### 3.1.1 Environmental Setting

The Project is in a rural area, with existing development at the Project site consisting of a utility corridor that runs east/west through the southern portion of the site and remnants of past development (e.g., concrete pads). Vegetation on the Projects site consists of annual/ruderal grassland and individual oak trees. There is a rock outcrop on the western portion of the project site near SR 49, although similar rock outcrops are common in the region. SR 49 runs north/south adjacent to the western boundaries of the Project site, and SR 193 runs east/west adjacent to the southern boundaries of the Project site. Views of and views from the Project site are generally limited to immediately adjacent commercial properties as well as residential properties. The visual quality of the Project site is typical for the area, with no unusual or distinctive characteristics. The topography of the Project site slopes gently to the southwest portion of the Project site. Elevations range from approximately 1,520 to 1,560 ft above msl.

A list of the county's scenic views and resources is presented in Table 5.3-1 of the El Dorado County General Plan EIR (EDC 2003, p. 5.3-3). This list includes areas along highways where viewers can see large water bodies (e.g., Lake Tahoe and Folsom Reservoir), river canyons, rolling hills, forests, or historic structures or districts that are reminiscent of El Dorado County's heritage. The Project site is not among the scenic views identified in the General Plan EIR.

There is one eligible state scenic highway, SR 49, adjacent to the western boundaries of the Project site. The nearest officially designated state scenic highway is a segment of US Highway 50 (US 50) near Placerville, approximately 16 miles southeast of the Project site (Caltrans 2025). The Project site is not within the viewshed of State US 50 given the distance and topography.

There are various commercial structures along SR 49 and SR 193 opposite the project site, including shops, strip malls, and a gas station. The area has the character of a rural commercial center at the intersection of two main roads. Existing sources of light and glare within and surrounding the vacant Project site consist of interior and exterior building lights from commercial structures, lights from motor vehicles traveling on adjacent roadways (SR 49 and SR 193), and small

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amounts of glare from light reflected from windows. In addition, the parking lot for the Holiday Market complex, south of the project site, is lighted, and various commercial enterprises in the area have illuminated signage.

### 3.1.2 Discussion

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

**No Impact.** There are no scenic vistas at the Project site. Views from, and of, the project site are limited by topography, existing development, and vegetation (e.g., oak woodland). Because the Project site is not part of a scenic vista, and no scenic vistas are visible from the project site, the Project would have no 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?

**Less than Significant.** As discussed in Section 3.1.1, the Project site is within the viewshed of an eligible state scenic highway, SR 49 along the western boundary of the Project site. Project development will avoid the rock outcrop along SR 49. Oak trees on the project site are on the eastern portion of the parcel and along the southern edge and no tree removal is proposed. No historic buildings would be affected by the Project, and Project structures would have architectural features similar to existing development in the area. Project development would not degrade the characters that make this segment of SR 49 eligible for state scenic highway status. Therefore, the Project would have a less than significant effect on scenic resources within a state scenic highway.

c) In non-urbanized areas, substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views 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?

**Less than Significant.** The site is located in a developed area surrounded on all sides by similarly zoned General Commercial (CG) and Community Commercial (CC) parcels. The zoning designations for the Project are Commercial Limited (CL) and Design Review - Community (DC). The CL, Limited Commercial Zone, designates areas suitable for lower intensity retail sales, office and service needs of the surrounding area while minimizing conflicts with the residential uses and outside traffic into the area. Mixed use development compatible with surrounding uses would also be appropriate. The DC, Design Review – Community, are adjacent to or visible from designated State Scenic Highway corridors or located within community design reviews areas established the El Dorado County Board. Prior to the application of the (DC), Combining Zone design guidelines and standards shall be adopted by the Board. The proposed development for the Project would be consistent and compatible with these zoning designations (CL and DC) and would not degrade the surrounding land use zoning designations (CG and CC). In addition, the Project design and architecture would be consistent with applicable design guidelines for the site and would be compatible with existing surrounding development. There is an existing gas station with convenience store on the other side of Highway 49 from the project site and various types of other commercial development in the immediate vicinity. The proposed Project would not substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of Project site or surroundings.

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

**Less than Significant.** As discussed in Section 3.1.1, existing sources of light and glare within and surrounding the Project site consist of interior and exterior building lights from widely spaced commercial structures, lights from motor vehicles traveling on adjacent roadways (SR 49 and SR 193), and small amounts of glare from light reflected from windows. In addition, the parking lot for the Holiday Market complex, south of the project site, is lighted and various commercial enterprises in the area have illuminated signage. Development of the Project site would result in new sources of glare, but they would be the same as existing sources including lighting associated with buildings and vehicles, glare from windows, parking lot lighting, and illuminated signage. The Project would be required to comply with the County's lighting Policy 2.8.1.1 that limits excess nighttime lighting. Policy 2.8.1.1 addresses building and parking lot lighting and lighted signage and includes various measures to limit adverse effects from lighting such as limiting brightness levels, directing lights downward, and shielding of lights to avoid potential glare. The Project would not create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area.

### 3.2 AGRICULTURE AND FOREST RESOURCES

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<b>II. Agriculture and Forest Resources.</b>				
<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>Would the project:</p>				
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use or a Williamson Act contract?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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))?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d) Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

#### 3.2.1 Environmental Setting

According to the California Department of Conservation (CDC) Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program, the eastern portion of the Project site is classified as Other Land (CDC 2025a). The western portion of the Project site is identified as Urban and Built-Up Land (CDC 2025b). Neither of these land classifications (Other Land and Built-Up Land) qualify for Prime, Statewide, or Unique farmland designations (EDC 2004b). The Project site is not currently used for agricultural production, has not been used for agriculture in the recent past, and does not currently have Williamson Act enrollment (CDC 2025c).

County lands that are suitable for timber production are typically designated Natural Resource (NR) on the General Plan Land Use map and zoned Timber Production Zone (TPZ) or Forest Resource (FR). The Project site is zoned as CG and CC, and does not contain forestland or timberland. California Public Resource Code (PRC) Section 12220(g)

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defines forest as "land that 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." Although some native oak trees occur on the Project site, there is less than 10-percent native tree cover on the site. PRC Section 4526 defines *timberland* as land that "is available for, and capable of, growing a crop of trees of a commercial species used to produce lumber and other forest products, including Christmas trees." California Government Code Section 51104(g) defines a *timberland production zone* as "an area which has been zoned pursuant to Sections 51112 or 5113 and is devoted to and used for growing and harvesting timber, or for growing and harvesting timber and compatible uses; and timber as trees maintained for eventual harvest for forest project purposes (not including nursery stock."

### 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 in Section 3.2.1, there are no lands designated as Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance, and there are no agricultural uses within the project site. Therefore, the project would not convert Important Farmland to non-agricultural use.

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

**No Impact.** As discussed in Section 3.2.1, the project site is not enrolled in a Williamson Act contract. The existing zoning would not change as a result of the proposed project. If development were to occur, it would be consistent with the zoning. Therefore, the project would not 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))?

**No Impact.** The project site is zoned as CG and CC, and is not zoned as forest land, timberland, or Timberland Production, and does not contain forest land or timberland as defined by the Public Resources Code or Government Code. Therefore, the project would not conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land, timberland, or timberland zoned Timberland Production.

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

**No Impact.** Although some native oak trees occur on the Project site, there is less than 10-percent native tree cover on the site. Therefore, there is no forest land on the Project site meeting the PRC Section 12220(g) definition of a forest. Therefore, the proposed Project would not result in the loss of forest land.

- 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.** The Project site does not contain agricultural or forest land. There is no designated Farmland or forest land in the vicinity of the project site. Project activities have no mechanism to affect Farmland or forest land distant from the project site. Therefore, the project would not result in conversion of Farmland to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use beyond the impact mechanisms evaluated above.

### 3.3 AIR QUALITY

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<b>III. Air Quality.</b>				
Where available, the significance criteria established by the applicable air quality management district or air pollution control district may be relied on to make the following determinations.				
Are significance criteria established by the applicable air district available to rely on for significance determinations?				
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes		<input type="checkbox"/> No	
Would the project:				
a) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

#### 3.3.1 Environmental Setting

The project is located in the Mountain Counties Air Basin (MCAB), which is comprised of the western portion of El Dorado County, the middle portion of Placer County, and the entirety of Plumas, Sierra, Nevada, Amador, Calaveras, Tuolumne, and Mariposa counties. Ozone, respirable particulate matter (PM<sub>10</sub>), and fine particles (PM<sub>2.5</sub>) are the criteria air pollutants of primary concern in this analysis because of their nonattainment status with respect to the applicable National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) and California Ambient Air Quality Standards (CAAQS) in the El Dorado County portion of the MCAB.

The El Dorado County Air Quality Management District (EDCAQMD) is the primary agency responsible for planning to meet NAAQS and CAAQS in El Dorado County. EDCAQMD works with other local air districts in the Sacramento region to maintain the region's portion of the State Implementation Plan (SIP) for ozone. The SIP is a compilation of plans and regulations that govern how the region and State will comply with the Clean Air Act requirements to attain and maintain the NAAQS for ozone. The Sacramento Regional 8-Hour Ozone Attainment and Reasonable Further Progress Plan (2023 Ozone Plan) was prepared by the five local air districts of the Sacramento Federal Non-attainment Area, with the support of the California Air Resources Board (CARB), and is an air quality attainment plan (AQAP) applicable to development in the Project area (CARB 2023).

EDCAQMD has developed a *Guide to Air Quality Assessment: Determining Significance of Air Quality Impacts under CEQA* (EDCAQMD 2002) for use by lead agencies when preparing environmental documents. The guidance includes thresholds of significance for criteria pollutants and toxic air contaminants (TACs) and recommendations for conducting air quality analyses. The guidance also describes project screening criteria to identify projects that can be classified as less than significant for one or more pollutants without the need for detailed calculations or modeling. According to EDCAQMD CEQA guidance (2002), single family housing development has a screening cut-point of 280

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dwelling units (48 dwelling units if they have fireplaces/woodstoves). Emission from operation of a single family housing development that does not reach this cut-point are presumed to be less-than-significant and do not require air quality modeling. For construction exhaust emissions, impacts from projects that encompass 12 acres or less of ground that is being worked at one time are presumed to be less than significant, as long as standard construction emission conditions are in place (EDCAQMD 2002).

An Air Quality Impact Analysis Report was prepared for the proposed Project and is provided as Attachment A. The report models and quantifies expected construction and operational emissions of criteria pollutants and TACs from Project implementation. The EDCAQMD reviewed the Air Quality Impact Analysis Report for the Project and concurred with the results (EDCAQMD 2023). In their review of the report, EDCAQMD concurred that the air quality criteria pollutant resulting from the project would be less than significant, and the project would comply with applicable EDCAQMD rules.

## CRITERIA AIR POLLUTANTS

Concentrations of criteria air pollutants are used to indicate the quality of the ambient air. Emission source types and health effects are summarized in Table 3-1 and El Dorado County's attainment status for the CAAQS and the NAAQS are shown in Table 3-2.

**Table 3-1 Sources and Health Effects of Criteria Air Pollutants**

Pollutant	Sources	Acute <sup>1</sup> Health Effects	Chronic <sup>2</sup> Health Effects
Ozone	Secondary pollutant resulting from reaction of ROG and NO <sub>x</sub> in presence of sunlight. ROG emissions result from incomplete combustion and evaporation of chemical solvents and fuels; NO <sub>x</sub> results from the combustion of fuels	increased respiration and pulmonary resistance; cough, pain, shortness of breath, lung inflammation	permeability of respiratory epithelia, possibility of permanent lung impairment
Carbon monoxide (CO)	Incomplete combustion of fuels; motor vehicle exhaust	headache, dizziness, fatigue, nausea, vomiting, death	permanent heart and brain damage
Nitrogen dioxide (NO <sub>2</sub> )	combustion devices; e.g., boilers, gas turbines, and mobile and stationary reciprocating internal combustion engines	coughing, difficulty breathing, vomiting, headache, eye irritation, chemical pneumonitis or pulmonary edema; breathing abnormalities, cough, cyanosis, chest pain, rapid heartbeat, death	chronic bronchitis, decreased lung function
Sulfur dioxide (SO <sub>2</sub> )	coal and oil combustion, steel mills, refineries, and pulp and paper mills	Irritation of upper respiratory tract, increased asthma symptoms	Insufficient evidence linking SO <sub>2</sub> exposure to chronic health impacts
Respirable particulate matter (PM <sub>10</sub> ), Fine particulate matter (PM <sub>2.5</sub> )	fugitive dust, soot, smoke, mobile and stationary sources, construction, fires and natural windblown dust, and formation in the atmosphere by condensation and/or transformation of SO <sub>2</sub> and ROG	breathing and respiratory symptoms, aggravation of existing respiratory and cardiovascular diseases, premature death	alterations to the immune system, carcinogenesis
Lead	metal processing	reproductive/ developmental effects (fetuses and children)	numerous effects including neurological, endocrine, and cardiovascular effects

Notes: NO<sub>x</sub> = oxides of nitrogen; ROG = reactive organic gases.

<sup>1</sup> "Acute" refers to effects of short-term exposures to criteria air pollutants, usually at fairly high concentrations.

<sup>2</sup> "Chronic" refers to effects of long-term exposures to criteria air pollutants, usually at lower, ambient concentrations.

Sources: EPA 2025.

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**Attainment Status**

As shown in Table 3-2, El Dorado County is designated as nonattainment for ozone with respect to both the NAAQS (8-hour standard) and CAAQS (1-hour Classification and 8-hour standard), nonattainment for PM<sub>10</sub> with respect to the CAAQS, and nonattainment for PM<sub>2.5</sub> with respect to the NAAQS.

**Table 3-2 El Dorado County Attainment Status Designations**

Pollutant	National Ambient Air Quality Standard	California Ambient Air Quality Standard
1-hour Ozone	Nonattainment	Revoked in 2005
8-hour Ozone	Nonattainment	Serious Nonattainment
Carbon Monoxide	Unclassified	Unclassified/Attainment
Nitrogen Dioxide	Attainment	Unclassified/Attainment
Sulfur Dioxide	Attainment	Unclassified/Attainment
24-hour Respirable Particulate Matter (PM <sub>10</sub> )	Nonattainment	Unclassified/Attainment
Annual PM <sub>10</sub>	Nonattainment	
24-hour Fine Particulate Matter (PM <sub>2.5</sub> )	—	Nonattainment
Annual PM <sub>2.5</sub>	Unclassified	Nonattainment

Source: CARB 2025.

**NATURALLY OCCURRING ASBESTOS**

An asbestos map of western El Dorado County prepared by the County shows the location of individual parcels and areas in the following four categories that either contain Naturally Occurring Asbestos (NOA) or are considered to be subject to elevated risk of containing NOA (EDC 2018):

- ▶ Found Area of NOA,
- ▶ Quarter Mile Buffer for Found Area of NOA,
- ▶ More Likely to Contain Asbestos, and
- ▶ Quarter Mile Buffer for More Likely to Contain Asbestos or Fault Line.

The subject Project site is entirely within an Asbestos Review Area, requiring that an Asbestos Dust Mitigation Plan (ADMP) application be submitted to and approved by the EDAQMD prior to project construction if project activities move more than 20 cubic yards of soil (EDC 2018).

**3.3.2 Discussion**

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

**Less than Significant.** Applicable AQAPs (e.g. CARB 2023) for the region, including the MCAB portion of El Dorado County, were developed to bring the region into attainment as required by the federal and California Clean Air Acts. According to the EDCAQMD CEQA guidance (2002), projects are considered consistent with applicable air quality plans if they satisfy the following criteria:

- ▶ The project does not require a change in the existing land use designation, such as through a general plan amendment or rezone.
- ▶ The project does not exceed the “project alone” significance criteria.
- ▶ The project implements applicable emission reduction measures.
- ▶ The project complies with all applicable district rules and regulations.

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The proposed Project would not require a change in existing land use or zoning for the project site and would consist of development which was included in growth projections used in the formulation of applicable AQAPs. Potential short-term construction and long-term operation associated with the proposed development would be required to implement all applicable emission reduction measures and comply with applicable EDCAQMD rules and regulations. The "Project Alone" significance criteria is based on use of an emissions model to estimate a project's long term operational emissions of reactive organic gases (ROG) and oxides of nitrogen (NO<sub>x</sub>). According to the pollutant emissions analysis provided in the Air Quality Impact Analysis Report (Attachment A) and the EDCAQMD review of that report (EDCAQMD 2023), the Project emissions would be below applicable thresholds of significance and can be presumed to have less than significant impacts. Because the Project would not conflict or obstruct implementation of applicable air quality plans, impacts would be less than significant.

**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.** El Dorado County is currently designated as nonattainment with respect to the NAAQS and CAAQS for ozone, the NAAQS for PM<sub>2.5</sub>, and the CAAQS for PM<sub>10</sub>. The significance criteria for ozone is based on two directly emitted primary precursors of ozone, ROG and NO<sub>x</sub>. A project that emits 82 pounds per day or more of either of these pollutants would be considered to have a significant adverse impact on air quality. For the other criteria pollutants, including PM<sub>10</sub>, a project is considered to have a significant impact on air quality if it will cause or contribute significantly to a violation of the applicable national or state ambient air quality standard(s). (EDCAQMD 2002)

According to the pollutant emissions analysis provided in the Air Quality Impact Analysis Report (Attachment A) and the EDCAQMD review of that report (EDCAQMD 2023), Project emissions would not result in a considerable net increase in any criteria pollutant. Construction and operational emissions would be below the 82 pounds per day threshold for ROG and NO<sub>x</sub>. Emissions of PM<sub>10</sub> and PM<sub>2.5</sub> would be not result in significant air quality impacts through compliance with applicable EDCAQMD conditions.

Project development could result in construction related emissions of ROG, NO<sub>x</sub>, PM<sub>10</sub>, and PM<sub>2.5</sub> from activities such as site preparation, grading, building construction, paving, application of architectural coating, off-road equipment, material delivery, and worker commute trips. Additionally, long-term operational emissions associated with the proposed development at the Project site could include area sources (landscape equipment, consumer products, maintenance activities) and mobile sources (vehicle trips to the project site). Emissions resulting from the proposed development would not exceed applicable thresholds. In addition, the Project would meet the County's screening criteria for projects that can be presumed to have less than significant construction and operational impacts without the need for detailed calculations or modeling (e.g., construction area less than 12-acres and development less than the equivalent of 280 dwelling units. Although detailed emissions modeling would not necessarily be needed for the Project, modelling was conducted for the Project and provided in the Air Quality Impact Analysis Report. The results align with a less than significant conclusion based solely on the screening criteria. Emissions would not exceed applicable thresholds and would not contribute substantially to the region's nonattainment status.

**c) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?**

**Less than Significant.** Sensitive receptors are generally considered to include those land uses where exposure to pollutants could result in health-related risks to sensitive individuals, such as children or the elderly. Residential dwellings, schools, hospitals, playgrounds, and similar facilities are of primary concern because of the potential presence of individuals particularly sensitive to pollutants and the potential for increased and prolonged exposure of individuals to pollutants. The closest sensitive receptors to the Project site are existing commercial buildings on adjacent properties, most of which are at least 100 ft from Project site boundaries.

Development of the Project site could result in the release of construction and operational pollutants. Construction-related activities could result in temporary, intermittent emissions of diesel PM from equipment exhaust, including during site preparation and grading. The proposed development could also result in the operational emissions of diesel PM from the increase in vehicle trips and associated diesel PM emissions.

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The pollutant emissions analysis provided in the Air Quality Impact Analysis Report (Attachment A) and the EDCAQMD review of that report (EDCAQMD 2023) includes an analysis of health risks that might result from emissions associated with Project construction and operation. The analysis concluded that sensitive receptors would not be exposed to substantial pollutant concentrations or pollutants that would result in a significant health risk.

Both the CDC and El Dorado County have identified the project site as an area that could contain NOA (EDC 2018). Therefore, ground disturbance could result in the potential for NOA to be mobilized and for particles to reach nearby parcels. Standard EDCAQMD conditions include the preparation and implementation of an ADMP if more than 20 cubic yards of dirt will be moved. Adherence with this standard condition would minimize the potential for the project to expose sensitive receptors to substantial concentrations of NOA. Impacts 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.** Project development could result in the release of construction odors. Because construction-related odors would be intermittent, temporary, and would disperse rapidly with distance from the source, construction-related odors would not result in the frequent exposure of a substantial number of individuals to objectionable odors. With respect to operation, commercial uses, including gas stations, are not land uses that typically generate excessive objectionable odors. In addition, there is already a gas station with convenience store and food service uses in the immediate project vicinity without objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people. Therefore, the proposed project would not generate objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people.

### 3.4 BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<b>IV. Biological Resources.</b>				
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

#### 3.4.1 Environmental Setting

The Project site is located in the community of Cool, in El Dorado County, California. The Project site is in a rural area, with most properties in the region being privately owned. Existing development on-site consists of a utility corridor that runs north/south through the eastern portion of the site, patches of gravel, some paved areas, and concrete slabs and similar features remaining from past development. The eastern part of the site, which is located outside of the development footprint and will not be disturbed as part of the project, is less disturbed by past development. There is a small patch of oak woodland with some rocky features in the east part of the site and an open grassland field. On the far western portion of the site, also outside of the development footprint, there is a large rock outcrop. The project site slopes gently to the southwest, ranging in elevations from approximately 1,520 to 1,560 ft above msl.

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SR 49 borders the west edge of the site and SR 193 borders the south edge of the site. There are commercial properties opposite the project site across both roads. There are also commercial properties to the north and east of the site, intermixed with patches of grassland and woodlands. A store constructed in the past two years is situated north of the site along SR 49, and there is a transmission tower resembling a fake tree north of the central-east part of the site. Beyond this more developed portion of the community of Cool, surrounding land use in this part of El Dorado County is large open space comprised of annual grassland and oak woodlands interspersed with residential properties.

The USDA Natural Resource Conservation (NRCS) Service Web Soil Survey indicates that the project site is underlain primarily by very rocky loam (NRCS 2025) from the DeE soil series. The Project site is not located within any of the County's mitigation areas for rare plants, and it is not within designated critical habitat for any species.

The Project site and surrounding properties are dominated by mixed oak woodland. The predominant trees on the Project site are blue oak (*Quercus douglasii*) and interior live oak (*Quercus wislizeni*). Native shrubs typical of chaparral habitats in the region are present on the eastern and western portions of the site, including buck brush (*Ceanothus cuneatus*), greenleaf manzanita (*Arctostaphylos patula*), and poison oak (*Toxicodendron diversilobum*). The annual grassland and herbaceous vegetation on the site contain native and nonnative grasses and forbs typical of the region including species such as Spanish clover (*Acmispon americanus*), oat (*Avena sp.*), ripgut brome (*Bromus diandrus*), Italian thistle (*Carduus pycnocephalus*), yellow star thistle (*Centaurea solstitialis*), Fitch's spikeweed (*Centromadia fitchii*), annual hairgrass (*Deschampsia danthonioides*), annual fireweed (*Epilobium brachycarpum*), gumplant (*Grindelia camporum*), foxtail barley (*Hordeum murinum*), prickly lettuce (*Lactuca serriola*), long-beaked hawkbit (*Leontodon saxatilis*), creeping wild-rye (*Leymus triticoides*), perennial ryegrass (*Lolium perenne*), medusa-head grass (*Taeniatherum caput-medusae*), rose clover (*Trifolium hirtum*), Ithuriel's spear (*Triteleia laxa*), rat-tail six-weeks grass (*Vulpia myuros*), and Dogtail grass (*Cynosurus echinatus*).

There are no streams, lakes, or potentially jurisdictional Water of the U.S. of any type in the site. There are also no areas in the site that meet the technical criteria of wetlands (i.e., presence of hydrophytic vegetation, hydric soils, and wetland hydrology). The site is upland grasses with soils that appear to be well drained.

### 3.4.2 Discussion

Information on sensitive biological resources previously recorded near the Project site was collected through a search of the following databases and background reports:

- ▶ California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDDB) record search within the Auburn, Greenwood, Pilot Hill, and Coloma US Geological Service (USGS) 7.5-minute quadrangles (CDFW 2025a);
- ▶ California Native Plant Society, Rare Plant Inventory search of Auburn, Greenwood, Pilot Hill, and Coloma USGS 7.5-minute quadrangles (CNPS 2024);
- ▶ US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Information for Planning and Conservation project planning tool (USFWS 2023);
- ▶ USFWS National Wetlands Inventory website (USFWS 2025b);
- ▶ USGS National Hydrography Dataset (USGS 2025a);
- ▶ CDFW Terrestrial Connectivity Data and Resources (CDFW 2025b, Spencer et al. 2010);
- ▶ Site-specific Biological Resources Evaluation Report (HBD Capital LLC 2023)(Attachment B);
- ▶ Conservation and Open Space Element of the El Dorado County General Plan, as amended (EDC 2004a).

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- 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 US Fish and Wildlife Service?

**Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated.** Special-status species are defined as species that are legally protected or that are otherwise considered sensitive by federal, state, or local resource agencies, which fall into one or more of the following categories:

- ▶ officially listed under the federal Endangered Species Act (ESA) or the California Endangered Species Act (CESA) as endangered, threatened, or rare;
- ▶ a candidate for state or federal listing as endangered, threatened, or rare;
- ▶ taxa (i.e., taxonomic category or group) that meet the criteria for listing, even if not currently included on any list, as described in Section 15380 of the State CEQA Guidelines;
- ▶ species identified by CDFW as Species of Special Concern;
- ▶ species listed as Fully Protected under the California Fish and Game Code;
- ▶ species afforded protection under local planning documents; and
- ▶ taxa considered by CDFW to be “rare, threatened, or endangered in California” and assigned a California rare plant rank (CRPR). The CDFW system includes five rarity and endangerment ranks for categorizing plant species of concern. The three relevant to the project are summarized as follows:
  - CRPR 1A - Plants presumed to be extinct in California;
  - CRPR 1B - Plants that are rare, threatened, or endangered in California and elsewhere; and
  - CRPR 2 - Plants that are rare, threatened, or endangered in California but more common elsewhere.

### Special-Status Plants

A Biological Resources Evaluation Report, which included special-status plants assessment, was completed for the Project site in 2023 (HBD Capital LLC 2023) (Attachment B). There are 14 special-status plants with records in the region: Jepson’s onion (*Allium jepsonii*), big-scale balsamroot (*Balsamorhiza macrolepis*), Stebbins’ morning-glory (*Calystegia stebbinsii*), chaparral sedge (*Carex xerophila*), Pine Hill ceanothus (*Ceanothus roderickii*), Red Hills soaproot (*Chlorogalum grandiflorum*), Brandegee’s clarkia (*Clarkia biloba ssp. brandegeeeae*), Bisbee Peak rush-rose (*Crocotanthemum suffrutescens*), Butte County fritillary (*Fritillaria eastwoodiae*), El Dorado bedstraw (*Galium californicum ssp. sierrae*), dubious pea (*Lathyrus sulphureus var. argillaceus*), Layne’s ragwort (*Packera layneae*), oval-leaved viburnum (*Viburnum ellipticum*), and El Dorado County mule ears (*Wyethia reticulata*). A rare plant survey was conducted at the Project site in 2023 and no special-status plants were observed during this survey. Given the disturbed nature of the site and poor habitat conditions, it is considered unlikely that any special-status plant species occur. The Project site is not within an area designated by the County as a preferred ecological preserve for rare plants (EDC 2025a). Considering the absence of rare plants during a past survey, and the very low potential for rare plants to be present, potential impacts on rare plants from Project implementation would be less than significant.

### Special-Status Wildlife

The Biological Resources Evaluation Report prepared for the project includes a special-status wildlife assessment (HBD Capital LLC 2023) (Attachment B). A special-status wildlife survey was conducted at the Project site in 2023 and no special-status wildlife species were observed. According to a review of database searches, there are 12 special-status wildlife species with records in the region: tricolored blackbird (*Agelaius tricolor*), bald eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*), bank swallow (*Riparia riparia*), pallid bat (*Antrozous pallidus*), Townsend’s big-eared bat (*Corynorhinus townsendii*), fisher (*Pekania pennanti*), foothill yellow-legged frog (*Rana boylei*, pop. 3 and 5), Central Valley steelhead (*Oncorhynchus mykiss irrideus*), valley elderberry longhorn beetle (*Desmocerus californicus dimorphus*), and western bumble bee (*Bombus occidentalis*). California red-legged frog (*Rana aurora draytonii*) and monarch butterfly (*Danaus*

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*plexippus*). With no aquatic habitats on the project site, there is no potential for aquatic species to be present. There are no elderberry shrubs on the site that might support valley elderberry longhorn beetle. Given the disturbed nature of the site and poor habitat conditions, it is considered unlikely that any other special-status wildlife species occur and none of these species would be affected by project implementation.

Nesting habitat for common raptors, migratory birds, and other nesting birds protected under the Fish & Game Code, Migratory Bird Treaty Act, or other regulations is present in the remaining oak woodland and chaparral on the project site and in woodland habitat adjacent to the project site. Common bird species could also nest in herbaceous vegetation or on the ground in ungraded portions of the site such as Mourning Dove (*Zenaida macroura*), Killdeer (*Charadrius vociferous*), or a variety of other songbirds. If project activities were to commence during the typical bird nesting season (February 1 to August 31), project activities associated with ground disturbance or vegetation removal in the vicinity of bird nests could lead to destruction of nests, abandonment of eggs or young, or forced fledging, which could be a violation of the Fish and Game Code and/or Migratory Bird Treaty Act. Therefore, this impact would be significant.

## **Mitigation Measures**

### **Mitigation Measure 3.4-1: Nesting Bird and Raptor Protection**

The project applicant shall implement the following measures to protect nesting birds and raptors:

- ▶ To minimize impacts to special-status bird species, raptors, and other native birds, development activities (e.g., vegetation clearing, ground disturbance, staging, construction of off-site improvements, and tree removal [if unavoidable]) shall be conducted during the nonbreeding season (approximately September 1 through January 31, as determined by a qualified biologist), when feasible. If project activities are conducted during the nonbreeding season, no further mitigation is required prior to the proposed activity.
- ▶ If development activities must commence during the avian nesting season (between February 1 and August 31), within 7 days prior to commencement of work a qualified biologist familiar with birds of California and with experience conducting nesting bird surveys shall conduct focused surveys for special-status birds, nesting raptors, and other native birds. Surveys shall be conducted in publicly accessible areas within 0.25 miles of the development activity area for white-tailed kite, 500 ft of the development activity area for other raptor species and special-status birds, and 50 ft of the development activity area for non-raptor common native bird nests.
- ▶ If no active bird nests are found, the qualified biologist shall submit a report documenting the survey methods and results to the applicant and El Dorado County, and work may proceed. If at any time during the nesting season there is a lapse of two weeks or more with no work, a new survey for nesting birds shall be completed before work proceeds.
- ▶ If an active bird nest is found, a no-disturbance buffer shall be established around the nest site until the breeding season has ended or a qualified biologist has determined that the young have fledged or the nest is no longer active.
- ▶ The size of the no-disturbance buffer shall be determined by the biologist, based on the sensitivity of the bird species, nesting chronology of the species, disturbance characteristics (type, extent, visibility, duration, and timing), existing ambient conditions, and other factors (e.g., screening from existing structures, vegetation, or topography), as determined by the biologist. Buffers typically shall be 0.25 miles for white-tailed kite, 500 ft for other raptors, 100 ft for non-raptor special-status bird species, and at least 20 ft for common non-raptor bird species. The size of the buffer may be adjusted if a qualified biologist determines that such an adjustment shall be unlikely to adversely affect the nest. Any buffer reduction for a special-status bird species shall require coordination with CDFW.
- ▶ Daily monitoring of the nest by a qualified biologist during activities shall be required if the activity has potential to adversely affect the nest as determined by the qualified biologist, the buffer has been reduced, or if birds within active nests are showing behavioral signs of agitation (e.g., standing up from a brooding position, flying off the nest) during project activities, as determined by the qualified biologist.
- ▶ Documentation of compliance with this mitigation measure and any required coordination with CDFW shall be provided to El Dorado County before commencement of any project construction activities.

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Significance after Mitigation

With implementation of Mitigation Measure 3.4-1, the potential loss of individuals or eggs of special-status birds and other bird species protected under the MBTA and Fish and Game Code as a result of the proposed development at the Project site would be avoided. This would reduce potential impacts to a less-than-significant level.

- 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 US Fish and Wildlife Service?

**No impact.** The Project site does not contain any riparian habitat or aquatic habitats, or sensitive natural communities that would be affected by Project implementation. Therefore, the Project would not adversely affect any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community.

- 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?

**No impact.** The project area does not contain any aquatic habitat (i.e., wetlands, streams, canals, irrigation ditches). Project implementation would, therefore, not result in any impact on State-protected or federally protected wetlands. Therefore, there would be no impact.

- 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?

**Less-than-significant impact.** The Project site does not support habitat for native resident or migratory fish. The Project site is also not within the range of mule deer migration. There are no streams or riparian corridors on the project site that would serve as movement corridors. The Project site is surrounded by existing development and has substantial roads (SR 49 and SR 193) on two sides. The Project site does not connect any existing habitat areas. Therefore, the site does not currently function as an important wildlife movement corridor. Any common wildlife currently using the property would be expected to continue moving through undeveloped portions of the site. Any wildlife moving through the area currently would have to be tolerant of development, human presence, vehicles, and domestic animals. Therefore, no significant impacts on wildlife movement corridors would result from implementation of the proposed Project.

Because of the degraded nature of the habitat on the Project site and the existing surrounding development, the site would not function as a native wildlife nursery site and Project development would not substantially impede the use of a native wildlife nursery site. This impact is less than significant.

- 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.** The adopted El Dorado County General Plan Conservation and Open Space Element discusses significant natural resources in the County, including aquatic habitat, special-status species, and sensitive habitats, and establishes goals, objectives, and policies related to these topics. Relevant policies from the El Dorado County General Plan include:

- ▶ **Objective 7.4.2:** Identify and Protect Resources - Identification and protection, where feasible, of critical fish and wildlife habitat including deer winter, summer, and fawning ranges; deer migration routes; stream and river riparian habitat; lake shore habitat; fish spawning areas; wetlands; wildlife corridors; and diverse wildlife habitat.
  - **Policy 7.4.4.4:** For all new development projects or actions that result in impacts to oak woodlands and/or individual native oak trees, including Heritage Trees, the County shall require mitigation as outlined in the El Dorado County ORMP. The ORMP functions as the oak resources component of the County's biological resources mitigation program, identified in Policy 7.4.2.8

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## **El Dorado County General Plan Biological Resources Policy Update and Oak Resources Management Plan**

The El Dorado County Board of Supervisors adopted the Biological Resources Policy Update and ORMP in October 2017. The Biological Resources Policy Update included revisions to the General Plan objectives, policies, and implementation measures to establish a comprehensive Biological Resource Mitigation Program. The objective of this program is to conserve special-status species habitat, aquatic habitat, wetland and riparian habitat, habitat for migratory deer herds, and large expanses of native vegetation. The ORMP updated and revised the existing Oak Woodland Management Plan, and now defines mitigation requirements for impacts on oak woodlands, individual native oak trees, and heritage trees; and also outlines El Dorado County's strategy for oak resource management and conservation. The ORMP establishes an in-lieu fee payment option for impacts on oak woodlands and oak trees and identifies Priority Conservation Areas where oak woodland conservation efforts will be focused. The standards for implementing the County's ORMP are established in the County's Oak Resources Conservation Ordinance, found in County Code Chapter 130.39.

The ORMP designates three classes of protected oak resources: oak woodlands that have at least 10 percent oak canopy; heritage trees, defined as native oaks with a total trunk diameter at breast height of 36 inches or greater; and individual oak trees, defined as native oak trees with a trunk diameter at breast height of 6 inches or greater that are not located in oak woodlands. An oak woodland removal permit is required prior to removal of oak trees that are part of an oak woodland and an oak tree removal permit is required prior to removal of heritage trees and individual oak trees. Mitigation for impacts on oak woodlands is based on the total area affected ranging from 1:1 mitigation for zero to 50 percent removal to 2:1 mitigation for more than 75 percent removal. Mitigation may be completed with a combination of the following options: acquisition of an off-site conservation easement, payment of in-lieu fees, or either on- or off-site replacement planting of up to 50 percent of the required mitigation area. Mitigation for removal of heritage or individual oak trees requires on- or off-site replacement planting or payment of in-lieu fees at a 3:1 (heritage trees) or 1:1 (individual oak trees) ratio, respectively, to the number of trunk inches removed. Any oak woodland preserved on site and all mitigation planting areas must be protected in perpetuity through deed restrictions or a conservation easement.

### **Protected Oak Resources**

Removal of oak trees is not included as part of the proposed Project; however, the development footprint does extend under the canopy of some individual oak trees. Either through accidental damage, or through changes in ground surface conditions within the tree's dripline, mortality of a small number of individual native oak trees is possible. If mortality to individual oak trees occur, mitigation consistent with the ORMP would be required. Without mitigation, the project would conflict with local policies and ordinances protecting biological resources.

### **Mitigation Measure 3.4-2: Oak Resources Protection**

If Project implementation results in the loss or removal of a native oak tree on the project site that qualifies for protection under the ORMP, the project applicant shall obtain a permit from the County and pay the mitigation fee for oak woodland impacts as stated in the ORMP. The project applicant shall coordinate with the County prior to any planned removal of native oak trees and notify the County of any damage to native oak trees during construction and comply with any ORMP requirements. For 3-years after any project construction under retained native oak trees, if any of these trees die from conditions attributable to changes in the ground in the tree's dripline, the applicant will coordinate with the County and comply with any ORMP mitigation requirements.

### **Significance after Mitigation**

With implementation of Mitigation Measures 3.4-2, impacts to native oaks would be mitigated according to the County's mitigation policies making project activities consistent with County policies and ordinances. This impact would be reduced to a less than significant level.

**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?**

**No Impact.** There are no adopted Habitat Conservation Plans, Natural Community Conservation Plans, or other approved state habitat conservation plans that apply to the Project site. Compliance with County conservation requirements is described under question e.

### 3.5 CULTURAL RESOURCES

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<b>V. Cultural Resources.</b>				
Would the project:				
a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to Section 15064.5?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to Section 15064.5?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Substantially disturb human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

#### 3.5.1 Environmental Setting

The Project site is located within the territory occupied by the Nisenan at the time of initial contact with European Americans. The Nisenan are Native American peoples also referred to as "Southern Maidu" who occupied the drainages of the southern Feather River and Honcut Creek in the north, through Bear River and the Yuba and American River drainages in the south. Villages were frequently located on flats adjoining streams, and were inhabited mainly in the winter as it was usually necessary to go out into the hills and higher elevation zones to establish temporary camps during food gathering seasons. As with all northern California Indian groups, economic life for the Nisenan revolved around hunting, fishing, and collecting of plant foods. Their knowledge of the uses of local animals and plants, and abundant raw materials sources led to the manufacturing of an immense array of primary and secondary tools and implements (Jensen 2022).

Water storage and transportation and related hydroelectric development represent additional important historic themes in El Dorado County, along with logging, ground transportation, public land entry, and homesteading. The early mining activity, coupled with historic through contemporary logging, ranching and associated water distribution projects, have all impacted prehistoric and early historic sites in this portion of El Dorado County and the Project site.

It appears likely that construction of Highway 49, adjacent to the west side of the property, may have affected a portion of the project area, and aerial images of the property indicate that it, as well as the adjacent lands, have been intensively disturbed throughout the past several decades. Cave Valley/Cool Elementary School was established sometime around 1900, and appears to have been located within the present Project site. In 1952, the Northside Elementary School was constructed south of Cool, replacing the former school, which was subsequently demolished. Based on aerial images taken in 1984, the school, or a related building, is standing within the property in November of that year.

A cultural resources records search was conducted on May 17, 2022, by the North Central Information Center (NCIC) of the California Historical Resources Information System at California State University, Sacramento. The records search was conducted to determine if precontact or historic cultural resources had been previously recorded within the Project site, the extent to which the Project site had been previously surveyed, and the number and type of cultural resources within a 0.25-mile radius of the Project site.

The NCIC records search indicated that one prior cultural resources study has occurred within the Project site. An additional 18 studies have been completed within the 0.25-mile records search radius. According to the records search, one archaeological site, P-09-003627, has been previously recorded within the Project site, consisting of bed

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rock outcrops as well as remnants of the historic Cave Valley. Six additional cultural resources have been recorded within the 0.25-mile records search radius.

The previous cultural resources study within the Project site involved efforts to determine whether or not, P-09-003627 extended into the parcel, and if so, to what extent. Those efforts failed to identify any prehistoric or historic-era cultural material within the northern portion of the parcel, and because substantial ground disturbance was noted to the south (present Project site) informal trowel probes and shovel scrapes were conducted. A total of 20 trowel probes were placed at various intervals throughout the western and southern portions of site P-09-003627. No evidence of precontact cultural material was observed within any of the trowel probes, nor on the surface of the site, nor on the soil surface throughout the Project site. All of the lithic material observed within, and among the boulders and outcrops appear to be the result of natural erosion, and contemporary disturbances (target shooting, heavy equipment, etc.).

A pedestrian survey was conducted on June 13, 2022, which was able to identify the remnants of the historic Cave Valley in the location where it was originally recorded. All of the soils located within proximity of, and between, these concrete remnants have been subjected to intensive disturbance associated with wholesale demolition. P-09-003627 exhibits a substantial reduction of original integrity.

P-09-003627 was evaluated for the California Register of Historic Resources (CRHR) to determine if the site meets the criteria to be considered a significant (unique) archaeological resource under CEQA. This site is not associated with events that have made significant contributions to the broad patterns of local or regional history or the cultural heritage of California or the United States. There is no evidence that this site ever made significant contributions to history. While the theme of education appears to be the primary function undertaken at this site, there is no evidence supporting a contribution beyond the typical or mundane. Consequently, this site is recommended not eligible per CRHR Criterion 1.

This site is not associated with the lives of persons important to local, California, or national history. While the resource is associated with early 20th century, historic-era education activities, there is no evidence that those responsible for such activities were prominent in their fields, nor did any particular person involved in activities which resulted in the formation of this resource ever make any known, significant contributions to history. Consequently, this site is not recommended eligible per CRHR Criterion 2.

Based on existing inventory data maintained by the NCIC, there are a number of records on file for historic-era schools that are far better condition, and which possess the better attributes than those present at this site. Such components and the physical remnants which comprise this site are thus not considered rare or underrepresented in the existing California State inventory for the County in general or the project area in particular, nor does this site represent a "... distinctive type..." or "...a distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction." Consequently, this site is not recommended eligible per CRHR Criterion 3.

Data recovery work involving this site could not be expected to provide unique or unusual additional information over and above that which exists in the existing site record. There are no historic-era buried features for which further evaluation or recordation might be considered appropriate. Under these circumstances, further research in the form of data recovery, or additional detailed recording would not likely further our understanding of this site. For these reasons, this site is not recommended eligible for inclusion on the CRHR per Criterion 4.

Considering the fact that site integrity has been substantially compromised, this site is not considered eligible/significant per any of the evaluation criteria, and therefore not a unique archaeological resource under CEQA (Jensen 2022).

### 3.5.2 Discussion

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

**No Impact.** No historical resources were identified at the project site as a result of either the NCIC record search, background research, or pedestrian survey. Therefore, there would be no impact to historical resources as a result of the project.

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

**Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation.** As previously discussed, the pedestrian survey resulted in careful examination of P-09-003627, confirming that the resource does not contain precontact cultural material and does include historic-era cultural material. The site was subjected to CRHR eligibility evaluation and recommended not eligible for inclusion on the CRHR, under any of the relevant criteria, and is therefore not a unique archaeological resource under CEQA (Jensen 2022). Nevertheless, the possibility remains that subsurface archaeological materials could be encountered during ground disturbing activities. This impact would be potentially significant.

**Mitigation Measure 3.5-1: Protection of Unknown Archaeological Resources**

In the event that unknown buried archaeological deposits (e.g., prehistoric stone tools, milling stones, shells, midden soils) are encountered during construction, all ground-disturbing activity within 100 ft of the resources shall be halted and a qualified professional archaeologist (36 Code of Federal Regulations 61) and appropriate Native American tribal representative shall be notified immediately and retained to assess the significance of the find. Construction activities could continue in other areas. If the find is determined to be significant by the qualified archaeologist or Native American tribe (i.e., because it is determined to constitute a unique archaeological resource), the archaeologist, in consultation with the Count and the culturally affiliated Native American tribe(s) shall develop appropriate procedures to protect the integrity of the resource and ensure that no additional resources are affected. Procedures could include but would not necessarily be limited to preservation in place, subsurface testing, or contiguous block unit excavation and data recovery.

Significance after Mitigation

Implementation of Mitigation Measure 3.5-1 would reduce impacts to a less-than-significant level by requiring cessation of work, evaluation of the significance of the find, and implementation of preservation and/or proper data recovery upon discovery of previously unknown resources.

c) Substantially disturb human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?

**Less than Significant.** Based on documentary research, no evidence suggests that any prehistoric or historic era marked or un-marked human interments are present within or in the immediate vicinity of the project site. However, the location of grave sites and Native American remains can occur outside of identified cemeteries or burial sites. Therefore, there is a possibility that unmarked, previously unknown Native American or other graves could be present within the project site and could be uncovered by project-related construction activities.

California law recognizes the need to protect Native American human burials, skeletal remains, and items associated with Native American burials from vandalism and inadvertent destruction. The procedures for the treatment of Native American human remains, and discovery of any human remains, are contained in California Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5 and PRC Section 5097.

These statutes require that, if human remains are discovered, potentially damaging ground-disturbing activities in the area of the remains shall be halted immediately, and the El Dorado County coroner shall be notified immediately. If the remains are determined by the coroner to be Native American, the Native American Heritage Center (NAHC) shall be notified within 24 hours, and the guidelines of NAHC shall be adhered to in the treatment and disposition of the remains. Following the coroner's findings, the NAHC-designated most likely descendants and the landowner shall determine the ultimate treatment and disposition of the remains and take appropriate steps to ensure that additional human interments, if present, are not disturbed. The responsibilities for acting upon notification of a discovery of Native American human remains are identified in PRC Section 5097.94.

Compliance with California Health and Safety Code Sections 7050.5 and PRC Section 5097, would provide an opportunity to avoid or minimize the disturbance of human remains, and to appropriately treat any remains that are discovered.

## 3.6 ENERGY

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<b>VI. Energy.</b>				
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

### 3.6.1 Environmental Setting

California relies on a regional power system composed of a diverse mix of natural gas, petroleum, renewable, hydroelectric, and nuclear generation resources:

- ▶ **Natural gas:** Approximately 39% of California’s net electricity generation is fueled by natural gas, and six out of ten California households use natural gas for home heating (EIA 2024).
- ▶ **Petroleum:** Petroleum products (gasoline, diesel, jet fuel), which are consumed almost exclusively by the transportation sector, account for vast majority of the energy used in California by the transportation sector, with the rest provided by ethanol, natural gas, and electricity (Bureau of Transportation Statistics 2023). For the first time since 1953, transportation’s reliance on petroleum dipped below 90 percent in 2020 during the COVID-19 pandemic. Transportation’s petroleum dependence remained below 90 percent, at 89.7 percent in 2021 and 89.4 percent in 2022 (Bureau of Transportation Statistics 2023). California is the largest consumer of jet fuel and second-largest consumer of motor gasoline among the 50 states (EIA 2024).
- ▶ **Electricity and renewables:** In 2023, renewable resources, including hydroelectric power and small-scale solar power, supplied 54% of California’s in-state electricity generation. (EIA 2024).
- ▶ **Alternative fuels:** Conventional gasoline and diesel may be replaced (depending on the capability of the vehicle) with many alternative transportation fuels (e.g., biodiesel, hydrogen, electricity). Use of alternative fuels is encouraged through various statewide regulations and plans (e.g., Low Carbon Fuel Standard, 2022 Scoping Plan).

Electric service in the Project area is provided by Pacific Gas and Electric Company. Electric service is available for the Project site. A propane tank will be used to provide gas needs to the Project site.

### 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.** Development at the Project site could result in a moderate increase in energy use compared to existing conditions from both construction and operational activities. Implementation of the Project would include construction of the following commercial buildings: a drive-thru quick-serve restaurant, a convenience store, and a building pad for future building expansion (i.e., a car wash). A fuel (station) canopy would be developed alongside the commercial building as Phase One.

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During construction, energy would be required to operate and maintain construction equipment and transport construction materials. The one-time energy expenditure required to construct the physical buildings and infrastructure associated with the proposed development would be nonrecoverable. The energy needs for construction would be temporary and would not require additional capacity or substantially increase peak or base period demands for electricity and other forms of energy. Associated energy consumption would be typical of that associated with construction of commercial centers. Non-renewable energy would not be consumed in a wasteful, inefficient, and unnecessary manner when compared to other construction activity in the region.

The commercial buildings at the Project site could result in a moderate increase in electricity consumption in the region relative to existing conditions. However, the new facilities would be built in compliance with current Title 24 Building Energy Efficiency Standards (or the standards in effect at the time of construction), which serve to reduce wasteful, uneconomical, and unnecessary uses of energy for the State. Operation of the project would be typical of commercial uses electricity for lighting/climate control/ kitchen facilities/miscellaneous appliances/etc. The net fuel consumption associated with potential additional future vehicle trips to the Project site would not be considered wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary in comparison to other similar developments in the region. State and federal regulations regarding fuel efficiency standards for vehicles in California are designed to reduce wasteful, inefficient, and unnecessary use of energy for transportation.

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

**Less than Significant.** Relevant plans that pertain to the efficient use of energy include the Energy Efficiency Action Plan, which focuses on energy efficiency and building decarbonization (CEC 2025). Development at the Project site has the potential to result in a small increase in consumption of energy resources during construction and operation of new buildings and facilities. However, the proposed development would be minor and would be required to comply with all applicable requirements for construction and operational efficiency. The project would not conflict with or obstruct a State or local plan 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
<b>VII. Geology and Soils.</b>				
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 California Geological Survey Special Publication 42.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
ii) Strong seismic ground shaking?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
iv) Landslides?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994, as updated), creating substantial direct or indirect risks to life or property?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

#### 3.7.1 Environmental Setting

Based on mapping by California Geologic Survey, the nearest Alquist-Priolo Fault Zones are over 50 miles from the project site (CDC 2025d). According to the El Dorado County General Plan EIR, "no active faults have been identified in El Dorado County. One fault, part of the Rescue Lineament-Bear Mountains fault zone, is classified as a well located late-Quaternary fault (CDC 1990); therefore, it represents the only potentially active fault in the county. It is

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part of the Foothill Fault Suture Zone system, which was considered inactive until a Richter scale magnitude 5.7 earthquake occurred near Oroville on August 1, 1975 (CDC 1990). All other faults located in El Dorado County are classified as pre-Quaternary (inactive)." (EDC 2003).

The project is within the boundary of a geologic formation of metasedimentary and metavolcanic rocks, which is a Jurassic age (duration about 201.3 million years ago to 145 million years ago; Wagner et al. 1981). The soil located in the project site is known as the Delpiedra Series, classified as DeE, which consists of very rocky loam, very deep, and are well drained soils (0 – 50 percent slopes). This soil type is prominent in the Cool region of the Sierra Nevada foothills (UCD Soils Web 2025). The DeE soil series has a high runoff, a depth to bedrock between 12 to 16 inches, depth to water table is typically more than 80 inches (NRCS 2025).

According to the State Department of Water Resources (DWR), the project site is located outside (approximately 13 miles) of a groundwater basin subject to the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) or a groundwater sustainability plan (DWR 2025). The topography of the Project site slopes gently to the southwest portion of the Project site.

Based on the soil characteristics, topography, depth to groundwater, and distance to active faults, there is low potential for geologic hazards from landslides, steep areas, rock falls, mud flows, liquefaction, and expansive soils at the project site.

### 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 California Geological Survey Special Publication 42.)

**No Impact.** As discussed in Section 3.7.1, the project site is not within an Alquist-Priolo Fault Zone and is located over 50 miles east of the nearest Alquist-Priolo Fault Zones (CDC 2025d). Therefore, the project would not cause substantial adverse effects involving rupture of a known earthquake fault.

- ii) Strong seismic ground shaking?

**Less than Significant** As described in Section 3.7.1, the project site is not within an active fault zone; however, earthquakes in the region have potential to cause seismic ground shaking of low severity at the project site. The proposed construction and building design would be subject to the County's Building Code (Title 110- Buildings and Construction), which incorporates the California Building Code and International Building Code standards. The development at the Project site would involve limited excavation that would not alter seismic and fault conditions in the region and would not create new seismic events or exacerbate existing seismic hazards. Therefore, the project would not cause substantial adverse effects from strong seismic ground shaking.

- iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?

**Less than Significant.** Liquefaction is the process in which water is combined with unconsolidated soils, generally from ground motion and pressure, which causes the soils to behave like a liquid (e.g., like "quicksand"). Liquefaction potential is determined from a variety of factors, including soil type, soil density, depth to the groundwater table, and the duration and intensity of ground shaking. Liquefaction is most likely to occur in deposits of water-saturated alluvium or areas of considerable artificial fill. Other types of seismic-related ground failure include ground lurching, differential settlement, and lateral spreading.

The potential for liquefaction and other seismic-related ground failure is considered low on the Project site because the Project site is not in an area prone to saturated soils or strong ground shaking. The site is not located within a

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State Designated Seismic Hazard Zone for liquefaction (DWR 2025; CDC 2025d). Therefore, the project would not cause substantial adverse effects from seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction.

**iv) Landslides?**

**Less than Significant.** The project site gently slopes towards the southwestern portion of the site. The potential for landslides to occur is considered low given the lack of steep slopes within or adjacent to the project site. Therefore, the project would not cause substantial adverse effects from landslides.

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

**Less than Significant.** Soil erosion refers to the process by which soil or earth material is loosened or dissolved and removed from its original location. Erosion can occur by varying processes and may occur in the project site where bare soil is exposed to wind or moving water (both rainfall and surface runoff). The processes of erosion are generally a function of material type, terrain steepness, rainfall or irrigation levels, surface drainage conditions, and general land uses.

The proposed Project would not trigger substantial erosion. Construction of the proposed development would include ground disturbance, such as excavation, grading, and trenching, which could increase the potential for erosion to occur. The proposed development would be in compliance with the grading, erosion, and sediment control requirements outlined in Section 110.14 of the County municipal code. The proposed development would also comply with all applicable EDCAQMD fugitive dust requirements. Furthermore, because the proposed development would result in a disturbance area of more than 1 acre, the Project is required to obtain coverage under the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) General Permit for Discharges of Storm Water Associated with Construction Activity (Construction General Permit Order 2009-0009-DWQ). The Construction General Permit requires the development of a storm water pollution prevention plan (SWPPP), with best management practices (BMPs) for erosion and sediment control. The Construction General Permit is issued and enforced by the appropriate RWQCB. The Project site is within the jurisdiction of the Central Valley RWQCB and the project would be subject to all existing regulations associated with the protection of water quality, including erosion and sediment control. The proposed Project would comply with standard requirements for erosion control, thereby preventing substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil. Impacts would be less than significant.

**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.** Refer to Sections 3.7.2(a)(iii) and (iv) above. The project site is located on the DeE soil series, which is very rocky loam, very deep, and well drained soils (UCD Soils Web 2025). The topography is hilly with relatively gentle slopes. The potential for on- or off-site landslides, lateral spreading, liquefaction, or collapse is considered low. Development at the Project site would not cause soils to become unstable.

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

**No Impact.** Expansive soils are typically associated with fine-grained clayey soils that have the potential to shrink and swell with repeated cycles of wetting and drying. The Project site contains very rocky loam soils and does not have fine-grained clayey soils. There would be no impact.

**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?**

**Less than Significant.** The Project site is in a rural area where wastewater treatment is accomplished through onsite septic systems. Development of the new septic system at the Project site would require approval from the County's Environmental Management Department (EMD) and compliance with the County's Private Sewage Disposal System Ordinance (EDC 2024). Before the proposed Project can be approved by the County, information about soil depth,

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soil percolation rate, and the proposed leach field area for proposed septic system must be submitted to the local agency management plan (LAMP) and must demonstrate sufficient percolation rates to meet projected wastewater generation rates.

Wastewater service would be provided to the proposed Project by an onsite septic tank and leach field. The septic system will meet the requirements for a commercial facility, including a grease interceptor to prevent grease from entering the leach field. Preliminary evaluations of soils conditions have found that percolation rates may require a specialized leach field system to accommodate poor drainage rates. A location for a leach field system considered sufficient to support the proposed Project has been identified east of the oak trees that are to be preserved. Additional land south of the proposed leach field has been reserved to allow installation of additional leach line if needed. Sufficient reserved land is available to potentially triple the length of leach line currently being considered. With the ability to substantially expand the leach field in response to poor soil drainage conditions, the project is capable of being supported by the use of an on-site septic system.

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

**No Impact.** As described in Section 3.7.1, the project is underlain by metasedimentary and metavolcanic rocks. The geologic conditions associated with these soil types are not suitable for fossil formation. No fossil-bearing strata or paleontological sites have been previously recorded or observed within or near the project site. Because fossils typically occur in sedimentary rocks, which are not present within the Project site, potential future ground disturbance is unlikely to encounter a paleontological resource. The project would not destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature.

### 3.8 GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

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

#### 3.8.1 Environmental Setting

Certain gases in the earth’s atmosphere, classified as greenhouse gases (GHGs), play a critical role in determining the earth’s surface temperature. Solar radiation enters the earth’s atmosphere from space. Most solar radiation passes through GHGs; however, infrared radiation is absorbed by these gases. As a result, radiation 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.

Prominent GHGs contributing to the greenhouse effect are carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>), methane, nitrous oxide, hydrofluorocarbons, perfluorocarbons, and sulfur hexafluoride. GHG emissions contributing to global climate change are attributable, in large part, to human activities associated with on-road and off-road transportation, industrial/manufacturing, electricity generation by utilities and consumption by end users, residential and commercial on-site fuel usage, and agriculture and forestry. It is “extremely likely” that more than half of the observed increase in global average surface temperature from 1951 to 2010 was caused by the anthropogenic increase in GHG concentrations and other anthropogenic factors together (IPCC 2014).

Climate change is a global problem. GHGs are global pollutants because even local GHG emissions contribute to global impacts. GHGs have long atmospheric lifetimes (one to several thousand years) and persist in the atmosphere long enough to be dispersed around the globe. Although the lifetime of any particular GHG molecule is dependent on multiple variables and cannot be determined with any certainty, it is understood that more CO<sub>2</sub> is emitted into the atmosphere than is sequestered by ocean uptake, vegetation, and other forms of sequestration (IPCC 2013).

As noted in Section 3.3 “Air Quality,” an Air Quality Impact Analysis Report was prepared for the proposed Project and is provided as Attachment A. GHG emissions from the proposed Project were modelled and identified in the report. It is estimated that the proposed Project would emit 13.3 metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent per year (MTCO<sub>2</sub>e/yr) resulting from construction and 412 MTCO<sub>2</sub>e/yr resulting from Project operation. The report does not identify this as a significant amount of GHG emissions. The EDCAQMD reviewed the Air Quality Impact Analysis Report for the Project (EDC 2023). In their review of the report, EDCAQMD concurred that the GHG emissions resulting from the project would be less than significant and the project would comply with applicable EDCAQMD rules.

#### GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSION SOURCES AND SINKS

As discussed previously, GHG emissions are attributable in large part to human activities. CO<sub>2</sub> is the main byproduct of fossil fuel combustion. Methane, a highly potent GHG, primarily results from off-gassing (the release of chemicals from nonmetallic substances under ambient or greater pressure conditions) and is largely associated with agricultural practices, organic material decomposition in landfills, and the burning of forest fires. Nitrous oxide emissions are

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largely attributable to agricultural practices and soil management. CO<sub>2</sub> sinks, or reservoirs, include vegetation and the ocean, which absorb CO<sub>2</sub> through sequestration and dissolution (CO<sub>2</sub> dissolving into the water); respectively, these are the two of the most common processes for removing CO<sub>2</sub> from the atmosphere.

## **STATEWIDE GHG EMISSION TARGETS AND THE CLIMATE CHANGE SCOPING PLAN**

Reducing GHG emissions in California has been the focus of the state government for approximately two decades (State of California 2018). GHG emission targets established by the state legislature include reducing statewide GHG emissions to 1990 levels by 2020 (Assembly Bill [AB] 32 of 2006) and reducing them to 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030 (Senate Bill [SB] 32 of 2016). EO S-3-05 calls for statewide GHG emissions to be reduced to 80 percent below 1990 levels by 2050. EO B-55-18 calls for California to achieve carbon neutrality by 2045 and achieve and maintain net negative GHG emissions thereafter. These targets align with the scientifically established levels needed globally to limit the rise in global temperature to no more than 2 degrees Celsius, the warming threshold at which major climate disruptions, such as super droughts and rising sea levels, are projected; these targets also pursue efforts to limit the temperature increase even further to 1.5 degrees Celsius (UN 2015).

CARB adopted the *Final 2022 Scoping Plan for Achieving Carbon Neutrality* (2022 Scoping Plan) on December 16, 2022, which traces the State's pathway to achieve its carbon neutrality and an 85 percent reduction in 1990 emissions goal by 2045. It identifies the reductions needed by each GHG emission sector (e.g., transportation [including off-road mobile source emissions], industry, electricity generation, agriculture, commercial and residential, pollutants with high global warming potential, and recycling and waste) to achieve these goals. (CARB 2022)

Unlike thresholds of significance established for criteria air pollutants in the EDCAQMD's CEQA guidance (EDCAQMD 2002), the EDCAQMD has not adopted GHG emissions thresholds for land use development projects. In the absence of County adopted thresholds, El Dorado County AQMD recommends using the adopted thresholds of other lead agencies, which are based on consistency with the goals of AB 32. Since climate change is a global problem and the location of the individual source of GHG emissions is somewhat irrelevant, it's appropriate to use thresholds established by other jurisdictions as a basis for impact significance determinations. Projects exceeding these thresholds would have a potentially significant impact and be required to mitigate those impacts to a less than significant level. Until the County adopts a CAP consistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15183.5, and/or establishes GHG thresholds, the El Dorado County AQMD has recommended the use of thresholds adopted by the Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District (SMAQMD). The thresholds of significance established by SMAQMD, and used by EDCAQMD, were developed to identify emissions levels for which a project would not be expected to substantially conflict with existing California legislation adopted to reduce statewide GHG emissions needed to move towards climate stabilization. Per the SMAQMD Thresholds of Significance Table, most recently updated in 2020, if a proposed project results in emissions less than 1,100 MTCO<sub>2</sub>e/yr during both construction and/or operation, the proposed project would result in a less-than-significant impact related to GHG emissions.

### **3.8.2 Discussion**

- a, b) **Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment of conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?**

**Less than Significant.** As stated above, the EDCAQMD recommends the use of thresholds adopted by the SMAQMD for assessing the significance of GHG emissions from individual projects. The SMAQMD thresholds were developed to identify emissions levels for which a project would not be expected to substantially conflict with existing California legislation adopted to reduce statewide GHG emissions needed to move towards climate stabilization. Within these thresholds is the criteria that if a proposed project results in emissions less than 1,100 MTCO<sub>2</sub>e/yr during both construction and operation, the proposed project would result in a less-than-significant impact related to GHG emissions.

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As identified above in Section 3.8.1, an Air Quality Impact Analysis Report was prepared for the proposed Project and is provided as Attachment A. GHG emissions from the proposed Project were modelled and identified in the report. It is estimated that the proposed Project would emit 13.3 MTCO<sub>2</sub>e/yr resulting from construction and 412 MTCO<sub>2</sub>e/yr resulting from Project operation. Both emission estimates are below the 1,100 MTCO<sub>2</sub>e/yr threshold, resulting in a less than significant impact. The EDCAQMD reviewed the Air Quality Impact Analysis Report for the Project (EDC 2023) and concurred that the GHG emissions resulting from the project would be less than significant.

Because both the construction and operational GHG emissions associated with the proposed development within the Project site would be below 1,100 MTCO<sub>2</sub>e, any potential impacts related to GHG emissions would be less than significant. Because emissions would be less than significant, the project also would not conflict with an applicable plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases.

### 3.9 HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<b>IX. Hazards and Hazardous Materials.</b>				
Would the project:				
a) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d) Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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 or excessive noise for people residing or working in the project area?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
f) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g) Expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving wildland fires?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

#### 3.9.1 Environmental Setting

There are no hazardous materials sites at or near the Project site (DTSC 2025, SWRCB 2025). There is a leaking underground storage tank (LUST) clean-up site on the opposite side of SR 49 from the Project site that is no longer an open record (RB Case #: 090101). There are no existing or proposed schools within 0.25 miles of the project site. The nearest school is the Northside Elementary School, located at 860 Cave Valley Rd, Cool, CA 95614, approximately one mile southwest of the Project site. The Auburn Municipal Airport is the closest public airport, located approximately 6 miles northwest of the project site.

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The project and surrounding vicinity are subject to the County's 2022 General Plan Safety Element Update (EDC 2004a), as well as the El Dorado County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan (EDCHMP) (EDCSO 2024), which provides guidance for the County's response in emergency situations, including wildfire and emergency evacuation.

According to the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE), the project site is in a state responsibility area (SRA) within a high fire hazard severity zone (CAL FIRE 2025). Wildfire risks are discussed further in Section 3.20. Development at the Project site would be subject to vegetation management requirements of El Dorado County Municipal Code Chapter 8.09 addressing Hazardous Vegetation and Defensible Space.

### 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.** A hazardous material is defined as any material that due to its quantity, concentration, physical or chemical characteristics, poses a significant present or potential hazard to human health or to the environment if released. Development at the Project site would involve the temporary use, transport, and disposal of hazardous materials in the form of inorganic and organic chemicals, solvents, paints, oil, gasoline, cleansers. However, any construction-related transport, use, and disposal of hazardous materials would be temporary, and all materials would be used, stored, and disposed of in accordance with applicable laws and regulations and manufacturers' instructions. Furthermore, any emissions from the use of such materials would be temporary in nature and localized to the Project site.

Land uses that involve the routine transport, use, and disposal of hazardous materials include but are not limited to manufacturing plants, dry cleaning facilities, gas stations, agricultural properties, recycling centers, refineries, and shipyards. These land uses, including gas stations, are heavily regulated with requirements related to monitoring, spill response, safety, inspection, and material handling. Although there are hazards inherent with the transport, storage, and handling of hydrocarbon fuels (e.g., gasoline, diesel, propane), the regulatory regime applied to gas stations substantially reduces these hazards. In addition, the Air Quality Impact Analysis Report prepared for the Project (Attachment A) and the EDCAQMD review of that report (EDCAQMD 2023) includes an analysis of human health risks that might result from gas station operation. The analysis concluded that sensitive receptors would not be exposed to substantial pollutant concentrations or pollutants that would result in a significant health risk. Considering both Project construction and operation, the proposed Project would not create a significant hazard to the public or the environment.

- 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.** Refer to Section 3.9.2(a) above. The conditions and regulatory environment described regarding the transport, use, and disposal of hazardous materials would also apply to the prevention of, and response to, reasonably foreseeable upset and/or accident conditions involving the potential release of hazardous materials at the Project site. The proposed Project would not create a significant hazard to the public or 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?

**No Impact.** As discussed in Section 3.9.1, there are no existing or proposed schools within 0.25 miles of the project site. Therefore, the project would have no impact related to the emission or handling of hazardous materials, substances, or waste within 0.25 miles of an existing or proposed school.

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- 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?

**Less than Significant.** The Project site is not located near any hazardous materials sites on the California Department of Toxic Substance Control (DTSC) EnviroStor or SWRQCB's Geotracker database (DTSC 2025, SWRQCB 2025). There is a LUST clean-up site on the western side of SR 49, opposite the Project site, that is no longer an open record (RB Case #: 090101). The Project site is located at a site that is mapped as likely to contain NOA (CDC 2000). However, with implementation of an approved ADMP (required if activities on the subject parcel move more than 20 cubic yards of soil) would prevent adverse effects from NOA. The potential impacts of the project would be less than significant.

- 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 or excessive noise for people residing or working in the project area?

**No Impact.** The Auburn Municipal Airport is the closest public airport, located approximately 6 miles northwest of the Project site. The Project site is not within the airport's land use plan. There would be no impact.

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

**Less than Significant.** Development at the Project site would occur in a manner consistent with the existing zoning for the site and planned population growth for the region. At SR 49 a widened 45 ft full-access driveway would serve the project site and be located approximately 400 ft north of SR 193 (Georgetown Road). A second 35 ft full-access driveway would be located on SR 193 directly opposite Ellinghouse Drive approximately 600 ft east of SR 49. This project driveway would form a standard four-way intersection (southbound leg) with the SR 93/Ellinghouse Drive intersection. These roadway improvements would improve access to the Project site. As a result, the proposed alteration of roadways would not hinder emergency response or evacuation. For each point of access, an encroachment permit would be obtained from the County Department of Transportation and driveways would be constructed in accordance with County Design and Improvements Standards Manual. The Project would not increase population in a way that would add appreciable numbers of vehicles to an evacuation. The Project could benefit evacuation efficiency by providing additional capacity for evacuees to fuel their vehicles prior to, or during an evacuation. The Project would not impair or physically interfere with implementation of the EDCHMP.

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

**Less than Significant.** The Project site is in the SRA in an area designated as having a high fire hazard severity zone (CAL FIRE 2025). However, with compliance with existing laws and regulation, such as El Dorado County Municipal Code Chapter 8.09 addressing Hazardous Vegetation and Defensible Space, the Project itself would be more resilient to wildfire. The Project would not bring new homes or large populations into a fire hazard area. The existing unmanaged vegetation on the project site, which is embedded within existing development, would be replaced with structures meeting current fire codes, which could reduce wildfire risk for existing development. The Project would not expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving wildland fires.

### 3.10 HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<b>X. Hydrology and Water Quality.</b>				
Would the project:				
a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or groundwater quality?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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 substantial on- or offsite erosion or siltation;	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
ii) Substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or offsite;	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
iv) Impede or redirect flood flows?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d) In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk release of pollutants due to project inundation?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
e) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

#### 3.10.1 Environmental Setting

According to the USGS Watershed Boundary Dataset, the project site is in the North Fork American River Subbasin and the Lower Middle Fork American River (USGS 2025). There are no streams, creeks, or other water bodies on the Project site. The nearest aquatic feature is Knickerbocker Creek located several hundred feet south of the Project site. is an unnamed seasonal stream that flows south to north through the Project site and that supports a constructed seasonal pond. Knickerbocker Creek joins the North Fork American River approximately 1.5 miles upstream of the upper reaches of Folsom Lake reservoir, which is located approximately 4 miles southwest of the Project site.

According to groundwater basin maps developed under DWR’s SGMA, the Project site is located within a non-basin area, which refers to areas that are not part of a defined groundwater basin (DWR 2025).

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According to the Federal Emergency Management Agency, the project site is within an area of minimal flood hazard (FEMA 2008). The project site is not within a tsunami hazard area (CDC 2024e) and is not in proximity to an enclosed body of water that is susceptible to seiche.

### 3.10.2 Discussion

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

**Less than Significant.** Development associated with the proposed Project could adversely affect surface or groundwater quality through ground disturbance, such as excavation, grading, and trenching; as well as construction of new areas of impervious surfaces.

The Project site is under the jurisdiction of the Central Valley RWQCB. The Central Valley RWQCB adopted the Water Quality Control Plan for the Sacramento and San Joaquin River Basins (Basin Plan) in 1975, with the current fifth edition approved in 2019, as amended in 2020. The purpose of the Basin Plan is to designate beneficial uses of waters within the Sacramento and San Joaquin River basins, establish water quality objectives to protect those beneficial uses, and implement a program needed to achieve those objectives. The Basin Plan establishes water quality standards for both surface and ground waters (Central Valley RWQCB 2019).

Discretionary projects must comply with the County's West Slope Development and Redevelopment Standards (EDC 2024c), the storm water management plan (SWMP) for Western El Dorado County (EDC 2004b), and the County's Grading, Erosion, and Sediment Control Ordinance (EDC 2013). Any future development with a disturbance area of more than 1 acre (43,560 sq. ft.) would also be required to obtain coverage under the NPDES General Permit for Discharges of Storm Water Associated with Construction Activity (Construction General Permit Order 2022-0057-DWQ). Through compliance with all applicable regulations and requirements, potential future development at the Project site would not violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or groundwater quality.

The unincorporated portion of El Dorado County's west slope, including the Project site, is subject to the State of California's Phase II NPDES municipal separate storm sewer system (MS4) permit. As such, the County's post-construction water quality requirements follow those outlined in Section E.12 of the MS4 permit. Under the MS4 Permit, projects that create or replace less than 2,500 sf of impervious surface are exempt from post construction requirements; small projects, including single family homes, which create or replace between 2,500 and 4,999 sf of impervious surface, must follow a set of standard site design measures, found in Section E.12.b of the MS4 Permit (EDC 2024c). Future development at the Project site will be required to comply with applicable NPDES permit requirements, which may include treatment of stormwater prior to the water leaving the site or entering a waterbody, submittal of an Erosion and Sediment Control Plan, and/or other requirements, as applicable. Through compliance with all applicable standard County and State regulations, impacts would be less than significant.

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

**Less than Significant.** The Project site is located in a non-basin area and does not include groundwater wells and would receive water from the GDPUD (For an analysis of the projects effects on water supply, see Section 3.19, "Utilities and Service Systems."). Potential new impervious cover would not reach levels that could substantially affect groundwater recharge; however, development would be subject to applicable stormwater infrastructure requirements for treating stormwater runoff and allowing it to percolate back into the soil. Therefore, development would avoid substantial impacts to groundwater supplies and groundwater recharge.

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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 substantial on- or offsite erosion or siltation;

**Less than Significant.** Development within the Project site would include ground disturbance, such as excavation, grading, and trenching, which could increase the potential for erosion to occur. As described under Question a), potential future development would be required to comply with all applicable regulations and requirements, including the NPDES MS4 permit; the County SWMP, the County Grading, Erosion, and Sediment Control Ordinance; and the Construction General Permit issued by the Central Valley RWQCB, which would require a SWPPP with BMPs to control erosion. With adherence to applicable rules and regulations and implementation of BMPs, potential future development would result in a less than significant impact related to erosion and siltation.

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

**Less than Significant.** Development at the Project site could result in the introduction of new impervious surfaces; however, this would be subject to applicable stormwater infrastructure requirements for treating stormwater runoff and allowing it to percolate back into the soil. Therefore, the proposed development would not 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

**Less than Significant.** Development within the Project site would result in the introduction of new impervious surfaces through ground disturbance activities, such as excavation, grading, and trenching. However, the proposed development would be required to comply with all applicable regulations related to stormwater drainage and water quality protection, including regulations related to the containment of gasoline and gasoline spills. Therefore, the 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.

iv) Impede or redirect flood flows?

**No Impact.** As discussed in Section 3.10.1, the project site is within an area of minimal flood hazard (FEMA 2008). Therefore, any development on the Project site would not result in impacts related to impeding or redirecting flood flows.

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

**No Impact.** As discussed in Section 3.10.1, the Project site is not within a flood hazard zone, a tsunami hazard area, or in proximity to an enclosed body of water that is susceptible to seiche (FEMA 2008; CDC 2025e). Therefore, the Residences Project would not risk release of pollutants due to project inundation in flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones.

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

**Less than Significant.** The Project site is located in a non-basin area and is not subject to a sustainable groundwater management plan. The proposed development at the Project site would be required to comply with requirements of the NPDES MS4 permit, the County SWMP, the County Grading, Erosion, and Sediment Control Ordinance, and the Construction General Permit issued by the Central Valley RWQCB. As part of the development, BMPs would be implemented during construction activities and project operation to prevent stormwater contamination, control sedimentation, and erosion, and comply with stormwater discharge requirements. Because the proposed development would comply with applicable rules and regulations and implementation of BMPs, the project would not conflict with or obstruct implementation of the Basin Plan.

### 3.11 LAND USE AND PLANNING

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<b>XI. Land Use and Planning.</b>				
Would the project:				
a) Physically divide an established community?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

#### 3.11.1 Environmental Setting

The Project site is in a rural setting in the unincorporated community of Cool, in El Dorado County, at the intersection of SR 49 and SR 193. The Project site is predominately characterized by annual grasslands, remnants of past development, and scattered oaks and chaparral. Adjoining properties support various commercial developments and widely spaced rural residences.

The project site is designated as C in the County General Plan Land Use Diagram (EDC 2004a). As described in the County's General Plan Land Use Element, the C designation establishes areas for commercial retail, office, service uses to serve the residents, businesses, and visitors of El Dorado County. The zoning designation for the Project is CL and DC, which designates areas suitable for lower intensity retail sales, office, and service needs.

#### 3.11.2 Discussion

**a) Physically divide an established community?**

**No Impact.** As described in Section 3.11.1, the project site consists of a rural commercial parcel surrounded by similar rural commercial parcels. The project would be compatible with surrounding land uses and would not include physical features that would restrict access to neighboring communities. Therefore, the project would not 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?**

**No Impact.** As discussed in Section 3.11.1, the Project site is designated C for land uses and is zoned CL and DC. The proposed Project is consistent with the objectives of these designations. The proposed Project would not conflict with any land use plan, policy, or regulation. The proposed development at the Project site would be required to conform to all applicable land use and zoning regulations and all applicable policies from the County's General Plan, which may include the following permits or approvals:

- ▶ approval of improvement plans, indicating that the appropriate County agencies have reviewed and approved the project's connection to public utilities and roadways;
- ▶ a grading permit, according to the requirements in the County's Grading, Erosion, and Sediment Control Ordinance (County Code Section 110.14);
- ▶ pad certification, which requires that a soil engineer confirm that the site is adequately compacted to meet engineering requirements and a surveyor or engineer verify that the site is elevated above the floodplain; and

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- ▶ a building permit, which requires payment of various fees (e.g., schools, roads), site plan review, and presentation of various other permits obtained from County departments relating to traffic, public services, and safety.

Because the proposed development would be consistent with existing land use and zoning designations for the project site and all applicable policies from the County's General Plan, and because the development at the Project site would also be required to conform to applicable policies and regulations, the project would not 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.

### 3.12 MINERAL RESOURCES

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<b>XII. Mineral Resources.</b>				
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

#### 3.12.1 Environmental Setting

The California Surface Mining and Reclamation Act of 1975 requires the State Geologist to classify land into Mineral Resource Zones (MRZ) according to the known or inferred mineral potential of that land. Areas classified as MRZ-2 include areas where adequate information indicates that significant mineral deposits are present, or where it is judged that a high likelihood exists for their presence. The process is based solely on geology, without regard to existing land use or land ownership. The primary goal of mineral land classification is to ensure that the mineral resource potential of land is recognized by local government decision-makers and considered before land-use decisions that could preclude mining are made. According to the El Dorado County General Plan EIR, the project site is not within an area classified as MRZ-2 (EDC 2003).

#### 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.** The Project site is not known to support significant mineral deposits; therefore, any future development would not result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource of regional value or of a locally important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a land use plan.

- 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?

See response in item (a) above.

### 3.13 NOISE

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<b>XIII.Noise.</b>				
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 in other applicable local, state, or federal standards?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) For a project located 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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

#### 3.13.1 Environmental Setting

##### ACOUSTIC FUNDAMENTALS

Acoustics is the scientific study that evaluates perception, propagation, absorption, and reflection of sound waves. Sound is a mechanical form of radiant energy, transmitted by a pressure wave through a solid, liquid, or gaseous medium. Sound that is loud, disagreeable, unexpected, or unwanted is generally defined as noise. Noise is typically expressed in decibels (dB), which is a common measurement of sound energy. Definitions of acoustical terms used in this section are provided in Table 3-3.

**Table 3-3 Acoustic Term Definitions**

Term	Definition
Noise	Noise is generally defined as sound that is loud, disagreeable, unexpected, or unwanted.
Decibel (dB)	Sound levels are measured using the decibel scale, developed to relate to the range of human hearing. A decibel is logarithmic; it does not follow normal algebraic methods and cannot be directly summed. For example, a 65-dB source of sound, such as a truck, when joined by another 65-dB source results in a sound amplitude of 68 dB, not 130 dB (i.e., doubling the source strength increases the sound pressure by 3 dB). A sound level increase of 10 dB corresponds to 10 times the acoustical energy, and an increase of 20 dB equates to a 100-fold increase in acoustical energy.
A-weighted decibel (dBA)	The human ear is not equally sensitive to loudness at all frequencies in the audible spectrum. To better relate overall sound levels and loudness to human perception, frequency-dependent weighting networks were developed, identified as A through E. There is a strong correlation between the way humans perceive sound and A-weighted sound levels. For this reason, the A-weighted sound levels are used to predict community response to noise from the environment, including noise from transportation and stationary sources, and are expressed as A-weighted decibels. All sound levels discussed in this section are A-weighted decibels unless otherwise noted.

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Term	Definition
Equivalent Noise Level ( $L_{eq}$ )	The average noise level during a specified time period; that is, the equivalent steady-state noise level in a stated period of time that would contain the same acoustic energy as the time-varying noise level during the same period (i.e., average noise level).
Maximum Noise Level ( $L_{max}$ )	The highest instantaneous noise level during a specified time period.

Source: Caltrans 2013.

### Noise Generation and Attenuation

Noise can be generated by many sources, including mobile sources such as automobiles, trucks, and airplanes and stationary sources such as activity at construction sites, machinery, and commercial and industrial operations. As sound travels through the atmosphere from the source to the receiver, noise levels attenuate (i.e., decrease) depending on ground absorption characteristics, atmospheric conditions, and the presence of physical barriers. Sound from a localized source (i.e., a point source) propagates uniformly outward in a spherical pattern. The sound level attenuates at a rate of 6 dB for each doubling of distance from a point source. Noise from a line source, such as a road or highway, propagates outward in a cylindrical pattern, often referred to as cylindrical spreading. Sound levels attenuate at a rate of 3 dB for each doubling of distance from a line source. Noise attenuation from ground absorption and reflective wave canceling provides additional attenuation associated with geometric spreading. For acoustically absorptive sites such as soft dirt, grass, or scattered bushes and trees, additional ground-attenuation value of 1.5 dB per doubling of distance is normally assumed. When added to the attenuation rate associated with cylindrical spreading, the additional ground attenuation results in an overall drop-off rate of 4.5 dB per doubling of distance. This would hold true for point sources, resulting in an overall drop-off rate of up to 7.5 dB per doubling of distance.

Atmospheric conditions such as wind speed, wind direction, turbulence, temperature gradients, and humidity also alter the propagation of noise and affect levels at a receiver. Furthermore, the presence of a barrier (e.g., topographic feature, intervening building, and dense vegetation) between the source and the receptor can provide substantial attenuation of noise levels at the receiver. Natural (e.g., berms, hills, and dense vegetation) and human-made features (e.g., buildings and walls) may function as noise barriers.

To provide some context to noise levels described throughout this section, common sources of noise and associated noise levels are presented in Table 3-4.

**Table 3-4 Typical Noise Levels**

Common Outdoor Activities	Noise Level (dB)	Common Indoor Activities
	110	Rock band
Jet flyover at 1,000 ft	100	
Gas lawnmower at 3 ft	90	
Diesel truck moving at 50 mph at 50 ft	80	Food blender at 3 ft, garbage disposal at 3 ft
Noisy urban area, gas lawnmower at 100 ft	70	Vacuum cleaner at 10 ft, normal speech at 3 ft
Commercial area, heavy traffic at 300 ft	60	
Quiet urban daytime	50	Large business office, dishwasher in next room
Quiet urban nighttime	40	Theater, large conference room (background)
Quiet suburban nighttime	30	Library, bedroom at night, concert hall (background)
Quiet rural nighttime	20	Broadcast/recording studio
	10	
Threshold of human hearing	0	Threshold of human hearing

Notes: dB = A-weighted decibels; mph = miles per hour

Source: Caltrans 2013.

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## Effects of Noise on Humans

Exposure to excessive noise may result in physical damage to the auditory system, which may lead to gradual or traumatic hearing loss. Gradual hearing loss is caused by sustained exposure to moderately high noise levels over a period of time; traumatic hearing loss is caused by sudden exposure to extremely high noise levels over a short period. Non-auditory behavioral effects of noise on humans are primarily subjective effects such as annoyance, nuisance, and dissatisfaction, which lead to interference with activities such as communications, sleep, and learning.

## EXISTING NOISE SOURCES AND LEVELS

As a rural area with commercial and residential uses, the project site has low levels of ambient noise, with existing noise sources consisting primarily of vehicular traffic along SR 49 and SR 193 and vehicle and operational noise associated with nearby commercial uses. There would also be occasional sirens associated with El Dorado County Fire Protection District Station 72, located approximately 400 feet northwest of the Project site.

## NOISE- AND VIBRATION-SENSITIVE LAND USES AND RECEPTORS

Noise- and vibration-sensitive land uses generally include those uses where noise exposure could result in health-related risks to individuals, places where a quiet setting is an essential element of the intended purpose (e.g., schools and libraries), and historic buildings that could sustain structural damage due to vibration. The project is primarily surrounded by commercial land uses, with dispersed residences beyond these commercial uses. The closest sensitive receptors are residences located approximately 400 ft east of the eastern edge of the Project site.

## AIRPORTS AND PRIVATE AIRSTRIPS

The Auburn Municipal Airport is the closest public airport, located approximately 6 miles northwest of the Project site. There are no private airstrips within 5 miles of the Project site.

## COUNTY NOISE STANDARDS

County Municipal Code Chapter 9.16 (Noise) and Chapter 130.37 (Noise Standards) establish standards concerning acceptable noise levels for both noise-sensitive land uses and for noise-generating land uses, in compliance with General Plan Goal 6.5 (Acceptable Noise Levels). Section 6.5 of the General Plan identifies noise criteria for various stationary and transportation noise sources, including those related to construction.

### 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 in other applicable local, state, or federal standards?

**Less than Significant.** Project implementation could result in temporary or permanent increases in ambient noise levels. During construction, temporary increased noise levels could result from equipment use, construction activities, and increased vehicle trips to the site. Construction-related noise sources would include both mobile and stationary on-site equipment (e.g., dozers, loaders, generators). Construction noise would be short-term and temporary (both during Phase 1 and Phase 2 of construction), and operation of heavy-duty construction equipment would be intermittent throughout the day during construction.

County code exempts certain activities, including construction, from noise standards as long as the construction occurs between the hours of 7:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m. Monday through Friday, and between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. on weekends and on federally-recognized holidays.

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Construction activities would occur within the timeframe identified by the County's noise ordinance when construction noise is exempt from noise standards. Thus, the Project would not generate a substantial temporary increase in ambient noise levels in excess of allowable standards in the vicinity of the project.

Operation of the proposed commercial building, convenience store, drive-thru quick serve restaurant, gas station, and car wash would result in increased operational noise, from both traffic and stationary sources. With new customers and employees at the project site, there would be an increase in average daily traffic volumes and associated increases in traffic noise levels along affected roadway segments near the site. Operational noise would also be generated car wash blower arches and vacuums, and the heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) associated with the commercial buildings. Noise levels generated from HVAC equipment vary substantially depending on unit efficiency, size, and location. Generally, HVAC equipment generates noise levels of 60 dBA at 6 meters (19.6 ft). Car wash generated noise would be somewhat louder. However, residential uses to the east would be shielded by vegetation (oak trees) and topography. The Project site slopes upward to the east, and the topography then slopes downwards on the east side of the Project site. Therefore, the eastern portion of the project site that would not be developed provides a topographic noise barrier. Given the predominance of existing commercial development around the Project site (i.e., grocery store, gas station, food service, strip malls) and barriers between Project development and the nearest residential uses, Project operations would not generate a substantial temporary or permanent increase in ambient noise levels in excess of applicable standards.

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

**Less than Significant.** Project construction would not use ground vibration-intensive activities, such as pile driving or blasting, although pieces of equipment that generate lower levels of ground vibration, such as dozers and pavers, may be used during construction. However, any potential vibration would be minor and temporary and would not result in structural damage or human annoyance. Operation of the proposed Project would involve vehicle trips to and from the site, which could result in some ground vibration. However, the types of vehicles that use SR 49 and SR 193 under current conditions would not change with the proposed Project. There is no evidence of an existing problem with vehicle induced groundborne vibration in the Project area. Although Project operation may result in a small increase in the number of trucks that use SR 49 and SR 193 in the project vicinity (e.g., gasoline delivery trucks), there is no evidence that truck trips on these roadways currently result in excessive groundborne vibration at nearby land uses.

**c) For a project located 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.** There is no private airstrips within 5 miles of the Project site. The nearest public airport is the Auburn Municipal Airport, located approximately 6 miles northwest of the Project site. The Project is not located within an airport land use planning area. Given these circumstances, onsite employees of the proposed Project would not be exposed to airport-related noise in excess of County standards.

### 3.14 POPULATION AND HOUSING

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<b>XIV. Population and Housing.</b>				
Would the project:				
a) Induce substantial unplanned 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)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

#### 3.14.1 Environmental Setting

According to the County General Plan Housing Element 2021-2029 Update, the 2020 population of the unincorporated areas of El Dorado County was 159,722 residents, which was an increase of 7 percent from the 2010 population. Projections estimate that the population will increase an additional 8.8 percent between 2020 and 2030, with an average growth of 0.9 percent per year. In 2018 there were approximately 68,094 housing units in the unincorporated portions of the County. Of these, 56,478 units (82.9 percent) were occupied, and 11,616 units (17.1 percent) were vacant. However, 8,946 units (13.1 percent) were classified as vacant for seasonal, recreational, or occasional uses only (EDC 2003).

#### 3.14.2 Discussion

- a) Induce substantial unplanned 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.** Development within the Project site consists of a commercial center. The Project would not involve construction of new housing and thus would not directly induce population growth. There would be no extension of roads or other infrastructure related to project development. A small construction crew would be required for development of project, which would lead to a temporary increase in population. Operation of the project would require up to 20 new employees. This could result in minor population growth in the area. However, this would not be unplanned growth, but rather would be consistent with "buildout" levels considered in the County General Plan. The County General Plan and associated EIR growth projections considered "buildout," which is development of land to its full potential or theoretical capacity as permitted under General Plan land use designation or zoning district. Population growth that could result from the proposed Project is within the level of "buildout" covered in the County General Plan and is consistent with the maximum level of development allowable under current zoning. Therefore, the project would not induce substantial unplanned population growth.

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

**No Impact.** The project would not displace people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere.

### 3.15 PUBLIC SERVICES

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<b>XV. Public Services.</b>				
Would the project:				
a) Result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, or the 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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Police protection?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Schools?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Parks?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other public facilities?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

#### 3.15.1 Environmental Setting

The El Dorado County Fire Protection District (Fire Authority) provides fire protection to the Project site. The nearest staffed station, Station 72, has a service area of approximately 30 square miles and is located at 7200 St Florian Ct, approximately 1 minute from the Project site. Station 72 is staffed 24 hours a day, 7 days a week by an Engine Company. CAL FIRE has wildland fire responsibility in the Project area.

The El Dorado County Sheriff's Office (EDCSO) provides law enforcement services in the unincorporated portions of the County, including the Project site. EDCSO is made up of the South Lake Tahoe patrol and the West Slope patrol, operating out of Placerville, which serves the Project site. In 2023 the Sheriff's Dispatchers answered 99.71 percent of all 911 calls within 15 seconds, exceeding national standards, which recommend 90% of all 911 calls be answered within 15 seconds (EDCSO 2024).

The project site is within the boundaries of the Black Oak Mine Unified School District. The Black Oak Mine Unified School District enrolls approximately 1,300 students at two middle schools and three elementary schools (BOMUSD 2025).

The closest public park is located approximately 12 miles east in Georgetown, outside of the community of Cool. However, there are nearby open space/recreation areas including the Olmstead loop Trailhead, approximately 500 ft west of the Project site, and the Auburn Lake Trails, located near the intersection of Deer Valley Road and Green Valley Road approximately 0.8 miles east of the Project site.

### 3.15.2 Discussion

- a) Result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, or the 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?

**Less than Significant.** The project could result in a minor increase in population in the area through the addition of new employees. However, this would not result in the need for new or expanded fire protection facilities. The Project site would continue to be served by the Fire Authority. Building permits from County departments would be required relating to traffic, public services, and safety and would require payment of various fees (e.g., schools, roads). Through this process, the project would contribute its proportional amount to support public services operations. The minor addition of population in their service area would not significantly affect the response time, service ratios, or performance of the Fire Authority or any other public service. The Fire Authority would review improvement plans at the time of grading and/or building permit submittal to ensure compliance with applicable fire safety requirements. Thus, the project would not result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered fire protection and emergency services facilities.

#### Police protection?

**Less than Significant.** The Project site would continue to receive law enforcement services from the EDCSO West Slope patrol, operating out of Placerville. Development on the Project site would consist of a commercial center (drive-thru quick serve restaurant, a convenience store, a fuel canopy, a carwash). The proposed Project would add commercial land uses to the project area similar to, or the same as, those that already existing. This would not significantly increase the demand for EDCSO services, or affect EDCSO service ratios and response times. The project would not result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered police protection facilities.

#### Schools?

**Less than Significant.** The Black Oak Mine Unified School District enrolls approximately 1,300 students at two middle schools and three elementary schools (BOMUSD 2025). The project includes development of commercial facilities that could employ new employees. This could result in minor population growth and could have the potential to add new students to the school district. While this population growth could include some student enrollment, the amount would be minor and could be accommodated by existing facilities. The project would not result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered school facilities.

#### Parks?

**Less than Significant.** The potential future population growth in the region that could result from the proposed Project is minor and could be accommodated by existing nearby recreational facilities/opportunities. The project would not result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered public park facilities.

#### Other public facilities?

**Less than Significant.** Given the minor amount of population growth that could result from the proposed Project, it would not cause a substantial adverse physical impact associated with the provision of new or physically altered public facilities.

### 3.16 RECREATION

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<b>XVI. Recreation.</b>				
Would the project:				
a) 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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities that might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

#### 3.16.1 Environmental Setting

Section 3.15.1 includes a summary of the existing public parks and recreational facilities in the vicinity of the project site.

#### 3.16.2 Discussion

- a) 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 3.15.2(a), nearby recreational facilities include Olmstead loop Trailhead and the Auburn Lake Trails. The proposed Project includes development that could generate new employees. This could result in minor population growth that could be accommodated by existing recreational facilities/opportunities. The project would not cause substantial physical deterioration of existing parks or recreational facilities to occur or be accelerated.

- b) 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 Project does not include recreational facilities and would not require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities. There would be no impact.

### 3.17 TRANSPORTATION

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

#### 3.17.1 Environmental Setting

##### EXISTING TRANSPORTATION NETWORK

Access to the Project site is provided by the surrounding roadway network, which includes SR 49 and SR 193 (Figures 3-1 and 3-2). SR 193 supports a Class I Bike Route (off-street) pedestrian-bike shared use paths, which continues along SR 49 on the west side of the highway. The project proposes at SR 49 a widened 45 ft full-access driveway that would serve the project site and be located approximately 400 ft north of SR 193 (Georgetown Road). A second 35 ft full-access driveway would be located on SR 193 directly opposite Ellinghouse Drive approximately 600 ft east of SR 49.

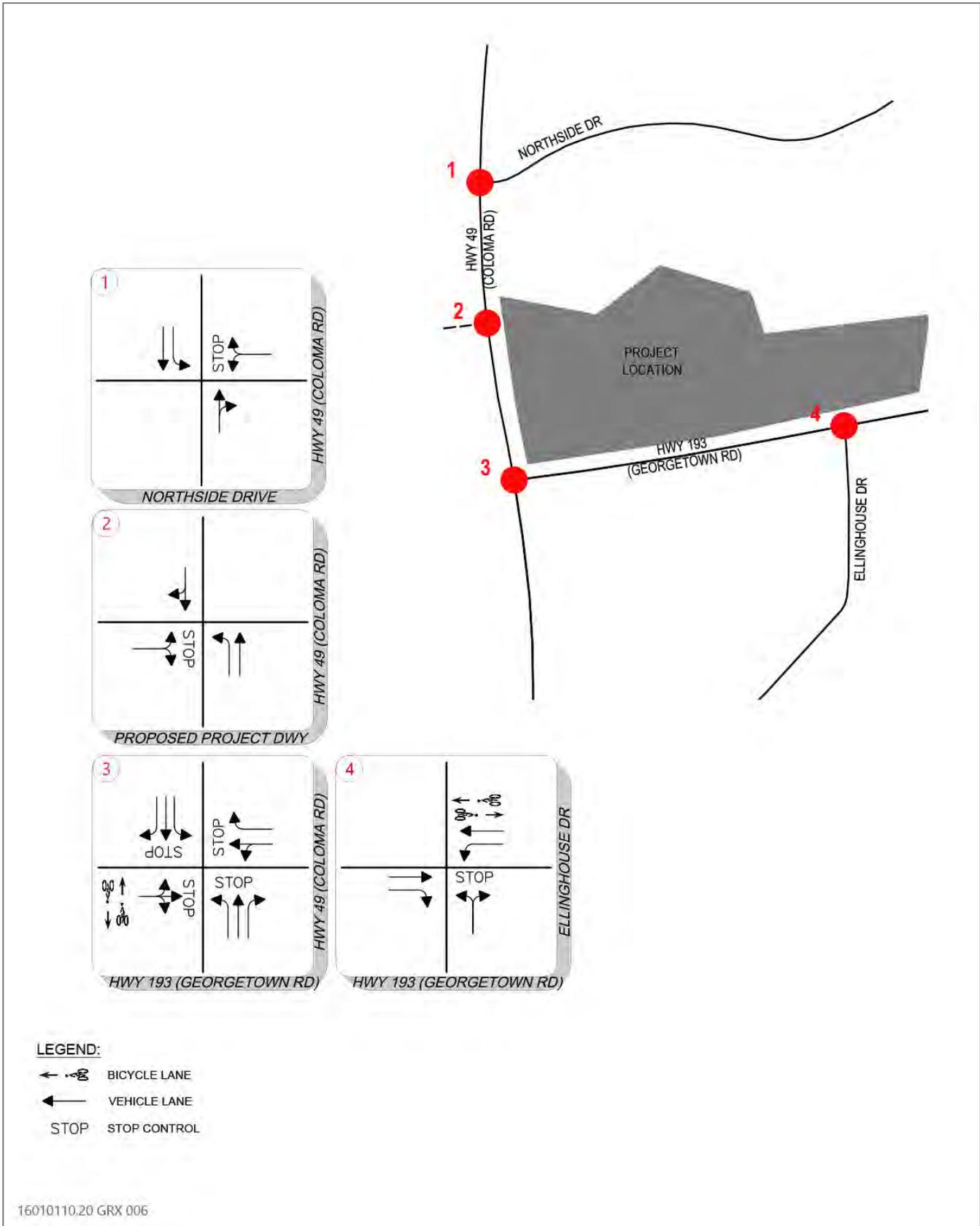
Regional access to the project study area is provided by Interstate 80 (I-80) which extends in an east-west direction approximately 9 miles north of the project site via Highway 49 at Auburn. Interstate 80 provides access west to Sacramento and east to Truckee and Reno.

There is no public transit available in the community of Cool. El Dorado Transit provides public transportation for the western slope of El Dorado County. The Placerville route, which runs hourly on weekdays, is the closest El Dorado Transit route to the Project site, providing a stop approximately 14 miles southwest of the Project site. El Dorado Transit did not require any conditions or actions related to the Project.

Pedestrian and bicycle access to the Project site is currently limited to existing pedestrian crossings at the SR 49/SR 193 intersection and the Class I pedestrian/bicycle path located along the SR 193 (north side) and SR 49 (west side, south of SR 193). As part of proposed project development, a Class II bike lane along the project site's western frontage would extend north from SR 193 along SR 49 to provide additional access and safety to complement the existing Class I pedestrian/bicycle path.

A traffic study for the proposed Project, included as Attachment C, provides a "preliminary operational level" evaluation of traffic operating conditions at the SR 49/SR 193 study intersection. The evaluation incorporated appropriate heavy vehicle adjustment factors, peak hour factors, lane geometries, etc. The traffic study also compiled data related to traffic collisions. There was a total of six (6) collisions at the three primary intersections along SR 49 and SR 193. There were no fatal or severe injury collisions, and all three intersections are experiencing collision rates below the California State average for similar facilities.

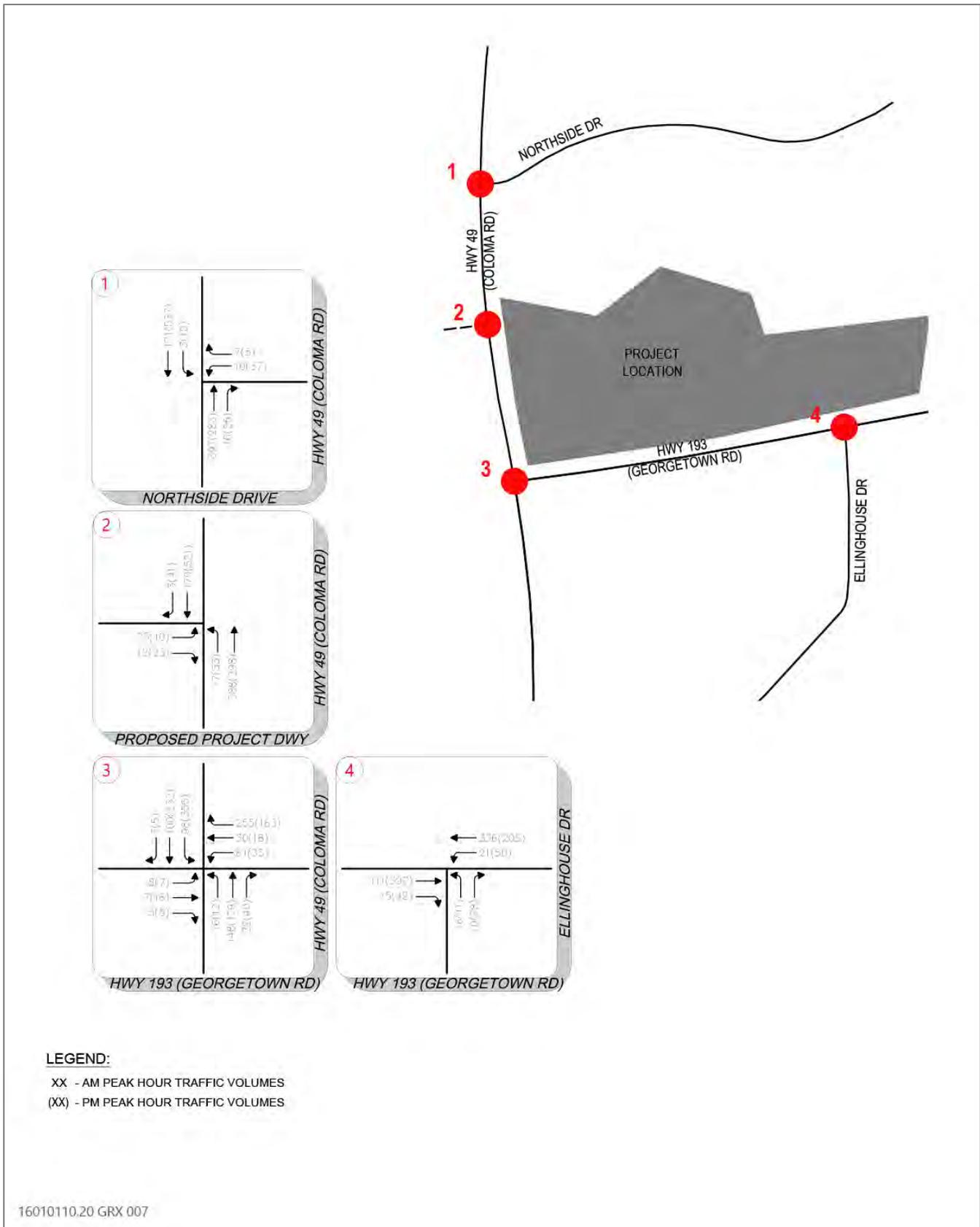
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Source: Image produced and provided by GHD in 2023; adapted by Ascent in 2025.

Figure 3-1 Existing Lane Configuration and Traffic Control

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Source: Image produced and provided by GHD in 2023; adapted by Ascent in 2025.

Figure 3-2 Existing Peak Hour Volumes

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In addition, the proposed project driveway on SR 193 is located directly opposite Ellinghouse Drive serving the existing Holiday Market development directly south of the project site. The creation of a four-way intersection on SR 193 helps to reduce potential vehicle-pedestrian conflicts and provides a uniform operation for vehicle right-of-way (ROW) with no driveway offset.

The traffic study (Attachment C) also evaluated project generated vehicle miles travelled (VMT). Residents of the Cool area drive significantly further than the county-wide average for work trips, shopping trips, and dining trips. However, when Cool is the trip destination for work or for shopping, the trip lengths are shorter than the county-wide average. This is because the jobs/housing balance in the Cool area provides few opportunities to work and shop relative to the number of residents. For that reason, many of the jobs associated with the proposed Project are likely to go to local residents who would otherwise work at jobs further away, and that the retail patrons would likely also be local residents substituting trips to the new establishments for trips to more distant shops. Outside residents who use the shops are likely to be pass-by trips will little net increase in VMT arising from their entering and leaving the site.

## REGULATORY SETTING

### Senate Bill 743

SB 743, passed in 2013, required OPR to develop new State CEQA guidelines that address traffic metrics under CEQA. As stated in the legislation, upon adoption of the new guidelines, "automobile delay, as described solely by level of service (LOS) or similar measures of vehicular capacity or traffic congestion shall not be considered a significant impact on the environment pursuant to this division, except in locations specifically identified in the guidelines, if any."

In December of 2018, OPR published the most recent version of the *Technical Advisory on Evaluating Transportation Impacts in CEQA* (Technical Advisory) which provides guidance for VMT analysis. The Office of Administrative Law approved the updated State CEQA Guidelines and lead agencies had an opt-in period until July 1, 2020 to implement the updated guidelines as they related to VMT. As of July 1, 2020, implementation of Section 15064.3 of the updated CEQA Guidelines is required statewide.

The OPR Technical Advisory states that lead agencies may screen out VMT using project size, maps, transit availability, and provision of affordable housing. Many agencies use these screening thresholds to identify when a project should be expected to cause a less-than-significant impact without conducting a detailed study. The screening criteria applicable to this project is for small projects, stating that projects that generate or attract fewer than 110 trips per day generally may be assumed to result in a less-than-significant transportation impact.

### Regional Transportation Planning

El Dorado County is within the boundaries of the Sacramento Area Council of Governments, which oversees the regional transportation plan for the Sacramento region, updated every four years in collaboration with local governments. The El Dorado County Transportation Commission is the Regional Transportation Planning Agency for the west slope of El Dorado County and is responsible for coordinating the regional transportation efforts on the western slope of El Dorado County and the City of Placerville.

The County developed and adopted the El Dorado County and City of Placerville SB 743 Implementation Plan (EDCTC 2019), which shifted the evaluation of transportation impacts from LOS to VMT and describes the CEQA analysis for transportation impacts that shall be used in the County. The El Dorado County Board of Supervisors Resolution 141-2020 adopting VMT thresholds of significance for transportation impacts under CEQA (EDC 2020) includes the following screening criteria to identify projects that are presumed to have less than significant impacts:

- ▶ Projects that generate or attract less than 100 trips per day, consistent with OPR's determination of projects that generate or attract fewer than 110 trips per day and further reduced to 100 to remain consistent with the existing threshold in General Plan Policy TC-Xe;
- ▶ Projects that are within 0.5 miles of either a major transit stop, as defined in Public Resources Code Section 21064.3, or a high quality transit corridor, as defined in Public Resources Section 21155. Consistent with CEQA Guidelines section 15064.3(b)(l) and OPR's conclusions in its Technical Advisory; and

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- ▶ 100% affordable residential development, including moderate, low, and very low categories as defined in the Regional Housing Needs Assessment, consistent with OPR's conclusions in its Technical Advisory.

### 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.** The Project traffic study (Attachment C) evaluated the project relative to County and Caltrans programs, plans, policies, and ordinances related to vehicle access; delivery truck access; emergency access; transportation facility operations; safety for vehicles, pedestrians, and cyclists; and related transportation topics. Through direct coordination with County staff and Caltrans, project design modifications were adopted to further improve Project traffic operations. Further analysis of the Project with the adopted modifications found that applicable programs, plans, ordinances, and policies would be complied with. The proposed Project adequately integrates with the State Highway system and existing and proposed bicycle and pedestrian facilities. There is no transit service in the Project area; therefore, no conflicts with transit systems would occur.

- b) **Conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines section 15064.3(b), which pertains to vehicle miles travelled?**

**Less than Significant.** The proposed development at the Project site would result in temporary additional trips to the Project site during construction. However, during Project operation, VMT would be reduced relative to existing conditions. Currently residents of the Cool area drive significantly further than the county-wide average for work trips, shopping trips, and dining trips. The VMT analysis provided in the Project traffic study (Attachment C) concluded that, overall, the Project would result in reduced VMT compared to existing conditions because a sufficient number of vehicle trips in the Cool area would be a shorter distance for work, shopping, and dining trips to result in a net reduction in VMT. With a new commercial center the residents of the Cool area would have an additional local option for goods and services. Pass through trips along SR 49 and SR 193 may stop at the project site while travelling from one point to another; however, this would not add to total VMT as these vehicle miles would be travelled whether or not the Project was present. Because of the net reduction in VMT resulting from the Proposed project, it would not conflict with or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines section 15064.3(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)?**

**Less than Significant.** As described above in Section 3.17.2(a), the Project traffic study (Attachment C) evaluated the project relative to County and Caltrans programs, plans, policies, and ordinances related to various topics, including facility operations and safety. Through direct coordination with County staff and Caltrans, project design modifications were adopted to further improve Project traffic operations and safety. Further analysis of the Project with the adopted modifications found that the project did not substantially increase hazards resulting from new or modified transportation facilities or from new uses (e.g., gasoline delivery trucks). The Project would not create dangerous intersections, would not include incompatible uses, and would not substantially increase hazards.

- d) **Result in inadequate emergency access?**

**Less than Significant.** As described above in Section 3.17.2(a), the Project traffic study (Attachment C) evaluated the project relative to County and Caltrans programs, plans, policies, and ordinances related to various topics, including emergency access. At SR 49 a widened 45 ft full-access driveway would serve the project site and be located approximately 400 ft north of SR 193 (Georgetown Road). A second 35 ft full-access driveway would be located on SR 193 directly opposite Ellinghouse Drive approximately 600 ft east of SR 49. This project driveway would form a standard four-way intersection (southbound leg) with the SR 93/Ellinghouse Drive intersection. The traffic study concluded that these roadway improvements would provide adequate emergency access to the Project site. The

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study also concluded that the configuration of facilities and buildings on the Project site would allow for adequate emergency vehicle access and movement within the Project site. In addition, the proposed driveways at the Project site comply with County Design and Improvements Standards Manual, County Regional Fire Protection Standards (EDHFD 2022), and California Fire Code (CFC) requirements, including those that define standards for providing emergency access, including fire apparatus access. The surrounding roadways (SR 49 and SR 193) provide adequate circulation and access for emergency response and the project would not significantly modify any roads or otherwise affect emergency response times. Therefore, the 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
<b>XVIII. Tribal Cultural Resources.</b>				
Has a California Native American Tribe requested consultation in accordance with Public Resources Code section 21080.3.1(b)?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No
Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in Public Resources Code section 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:				
a) 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)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) 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 Section 5024.1. In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resource Code Section 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

#### 3.18.1 Environmental Setting

Please reference the Cultural Resources Chapter for the preliminary Ethnohistory of the historic Indigenous groups that occupied the region. The United Auburn Indian Community (UAIC) is a federally recognized Tribe comprised of both Miwok and Maidu (Nisenan) Tribal members who are traditionally and culturally affiliated with the Project area. The Tribe has a deep spiritual, cultural, and physical ties to their ancestral land and are contemporary stewards of their culture and landscapes. The Tribal community represents a continuity and endurance of their ancestors by maintaining their connection to their history and culture. It is the Tribe’s goal to ensure the preservation and continuance of their cultural heritage for current and future generations.

This section focuses on the contemporary tribal communities and Tribal cultural resources as they pertain to AB 52 addressing Tribal Cultural Resources. This section analyzes and evaluates the potential impacts of the project on Tribal cultural resources, both identified and undiscovered. Tribal cultural resources, as defined by AB 52, Statutes of 2014, in PRC Section 21074, are sites, features, places, cultural landscapes, sacred places and objects, with cultural value to a Tribe. A Tribal cultural landscape is defined as a geographic area (including both cultural and natural resources and the wildlife therein), associated with a historic event, activity, or person or exhibiting other cultural or aesthetic values.

AB 52, signed by Governor Edmund G. Brown, Jr., in September 2014, established a new class of resources under CEQA: “Tribal cultural resources.” AB 52, as provided in Public Resource Code Sections 21080.3.1, 21080.3.2, and 21082.3, requires that lead agencies undertaking CEQA review must, upon written request of a California Native American Tribe, begin consultation once the lead agency determines that the application for the project is complete,

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and prior to the issuance of a NOP of an EIR or notice of intent to adopt a negative declaration or mitigated negative declaration.

The County sent notification letters that the project was being addressed under CEQA, as required by PRC 21080.3.1, to the Native American tribes that had previously requested such notifications. Notifications were sent to, Lone Band of Miwok Indians, Wilton Rancheria, Nashville Enterprise Miwok-Maidu-Nishinam Tribe, Shingle Springs Band of Miwok Indians, T'si-Akim Maidu, United Auburn Indian Community of the Auburn Rancheria, Washoe Tribe of California and Nevada, had requested to be notified of proposed projects for consultation in the project area. Consultation notices were sent on February 16, 2023. No responses were received from six of the seven tribes (Lone Band of Miwok Indians, Wilton Rancheria, Nashville Enterprise Miwok-Maidu-Nishinam Tribe, Shingle Springs Band of Miwok Indians, T'si-Akim Maidu, Washoe Tribe of California and Nevada).

The County received a request from the UAIC for consultation on March 6, 2023. In response to the County's notification of the project to UAIC, UAIC conducted a records search for the identification of Tribal Cultural Resources for this project which included a review of pertinent literature and historic maps, and a records search using UAIC's Tribal Historic Information System (THRIS). UAIC's THRIS database is composed of UAIC's areas of oral history, ethnographic history, and places of cultural and religious significance, including UAIC Sacred Lands that are submitted to the NAHC. The THRIS resources shown in this region also include previously recorded indigenous resources identified through the California Historic Resources Information System Center (CHRIS) as well as historic resources and survey data. UAIC expressed great concern related to the protection of precontact component of P-09-003627, which include chert outcroppings that were used as quarry for the material of native people.

UAIC responded on March 13, 2023, requesting that the unanticipated discovery mitigation measure be included in the environmental document. Consultation, undertaken between March 13, 2023, and November 16, 2023, resulted in project design changes which would avoid the rock formations on the western side of the Project site (P-09-003627) and would place fencing around these formations as buffers. UAIC requested and reviewed the cultural resources report prepared for the project. In addition, UAIC also requested review of the Tribal cultural resources section in order to close consultation. On July 2, 2025, UAIC reviewed the section and identified P-09-003627 as a Tribal cultural resource and requested proper protection.

### 3.18.2 Discussion

Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in Public Resources Code section 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:

- a,b) 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)? 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 Section 5024.1. In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resource Code Section 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe?

**Less than Significant. Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation.** Consultation under AB 52 result in the identification of a Tribal cultural resources as defined by PRC Section 21074. UAIC identified P-09-003627, chert outcroppings that were used as quarry for the material of native people, as a Tribal cultural resource. In addition, the possibility exists that previously unknown resources that could qualify as a Tribal cultural resource could be encountered during construction-related ground disturbing activities. This impact is potentially significant.

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**Mitigation Measure 3.18-1: Protection of Known Tribal Cultural Resources**

Components of the project that require earth-moving and excavation could impact the known Tribal cultural resource (P-09-003627). The project, as currently designed, would not result in ground disturbance within the known Tribal cultural resource. However, final engineering and other factors could change, which could cause project activities to move towards the Tribal cultural resource. To better protect the Tribal cultural resource in the event of unforeseen circumstances, a paid Tribal monitor authorized by UAIC will be present when the fencing is placed around the Tribal cultural resource. The monitor shall provide guidance on the placement of the fencing to achieve the desired protection of the Tribal cultural resource. A Tribal monitor from UAIC shall also be present during the removal of the fence. The applicant, or applicant's representative, shall fund the presence of the monitor during fence installation. In addition, the applicant, or applicant's representative, shall contact and coordinate with the tribe 7 days prior to the installation of the fencing as well as 7 days prior to the removal of the fence.

**Mitigation Measure 3.18-2: Protection of Unanticipated Discoveries of Tribal Cultural Resources**

If any suspected Tribal cultural resources are discovered during ground disturbing construction activities, all work shall cease within 100 ft of the find, or an agreed upon distance based on the project area and nature of the find. A Tribal Representative from a California Native American tribe that is traditionally and culturally affiliated with a geographic area shall be immediately notified and shall determine if the find is a Tribal cultural resource (PRC §21074). The Tribal Representative will make recommendations for further evaluation and treatment as necessary.

When avoidance is infeasible, preservation in place is the preferred option for mitigation of Tribal cultural resources under CEQA and UAIC protocols, and every effort shall be made to preserve the resources in place, including through project redesign, if feasible. Culturally appropriate treatment may be, but is not limited to, processing materials for reburial, minimizing handling of cultural objects, leaving objects in place within the landscape, or returning objects to a location within the project area where they will not be subject to future impacts. Permanent curation of Tribal cultural resources will not take place unless approved in writing by UAIC or by the California Native American Tribe that is traditionally and culturally affiliated with the project area.

The contractor shall implement any measures deemed by the CEQA lead agency to be necessary and feasible to preserve in place, avoid, or minimize impacts to the resource, including, but not limited to, facilitating the appropriate tribal treatment of the find, as necessary. Treatment that preserves or restores the cultural character and integrity of a Tribal cultural resources may include Tribal monitoring, culturally appropriate recovery of cultural objects, and reburial of cultural objects or cultural soil.

Work at the discovery location cannot resume until all necessary investigation and evaluation of the discovery under the requirements of the CEQA, including AB52, have been satisfied.

**Significance after Mitigation**

Implementation of Mitigation Measure 3.18-1 would ensure proper protection of the known tribal cultural resource by installing protective fencing, and Mitigation Measure 3.18-2 would reduce impacts to tribal cultural resources to a less-than-significant level by requiring, in the case of a discovery, appropriate treatment (processing materials for reburial, minimizing handling of cultural objects, leaving objects in place within the landscape, or returning objects to a location within the project area where they will not be subject to future impacts) and proper care of significant tribal cultural resources.

### 3.19 UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<b>XIX. Utilities and Service Systems.</b>				
Would the project:				
a) Require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment or stormwater drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunication facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Have insufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry and multiple dry years?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider that serves or may serve the project that it has inadequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand, in addition to the provider's existing commitments?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) Fail to comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

#### 3.19.1 Environmental Setting

Water would be supplied to the proposed Project by the GDPUD. The site is entitled to derive service, subject to the district's water service priority policy, upon proper application and payment of the appropriate charges. The Project site is currently served by a ten-inch water main located in SR 193. There is also a 10-inch water main in SR 49 adjacent to the Project site. The project would make use of a private on-site septic system that would manage wastewater. PG&E provides electrical service with existing power lines along SR 193 and SR 49. Gas would be provided by on-site propane tanks.

El Dorado Disposal Services provides solid waste collection, disposal, and recycling services in the region. Solid waste is transported to the Western El Dorado Recovery Systems (WERS) Transfer Station and Material Recovery Facility, located at 4100 Throwita Way in Placerville, which handles a maximum permitted throughput of 400 tons per day (CalRecycle 2025a). After undergoing processing, non-recyclable waste from the WERS Transfer Station and Material Recovery Facility are delivered to the Potrero Hills Landfill, located at 3675 Potrero Hills Lane, in Suisun City, which has a maximum permitted capacity of 83.1 million cubic yards and, as of the year 2006, a remaining estimated capacity of approximately 13.9 million cubic yards, or 16.7 percent of the landfill's total capacity. The landfill receives a maximum disposal of 4,330 tons per day (CalRecycle 2025b).

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Chapter 8.42- Solid Waste Management Ordinance No. 4525 describes the County's requirements related to the provision of solid waste disposal services including collection and transport. The California Integrated Waste Management Act of 1989 (AB 939) required a diversion of a minimum of 50 percent of discarded materials away from disposal in landfills.

### 3.19.2 Discussion

- a) **Require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment or stormwater drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunication facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects?**

**Less than Significant.** As described in Section 3.19.1, there is utility infrastructure already available on the project site, or along SR 193 and SR 49 adjacent to the Project site. A septic system and leach field would be installed on the Project site. The environmental impacts of installing/connecting utility infrastructure on the project site are evaluated throughout this IS. For example, impacts pertaining to grading, soils, and stormwater are addressed in Section 3.7, "Geology and Soils," and 3.10, "Hydrology and Water Quality."

- b) **Have insufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry and multiple dry years?**

**Less than Significant.** As stated previously, GDPUD reviewed the Project and found that the Project is within the district's service boundaries. Per the "will serve" letter provided by GDPUD, the site is entitled to derive service, subject to the district's water service priority policy, upon proper application and payment of the appropriate charges. GDPUD has sufficient water delivery infrastructure and supply to serve the site.

- c) **Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider that serves or may serve the project that it has inadequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand, in addition to the provider's existing commitments?**

**Less than Significant.** The Project site is in a rural area where wastewater treatment is accomplished through onsite septic systems. Development of the new septic system at the Project site would require approval from the County's EMD and compliance with the County's Private Sewage Disposal System Ordinance (EDC 2025). Before the proposed Project can be approved by the County, information about soil depth, soil percolation rate, and the proposed leach field area for proposed septic system must be submitted to the LAMP and must demonstrate sufficient percolation rates to meet projected wastewater generation rates.

Wastewater service for the proposed Project would be provided by an onsite septic tank and leach field. The septic system will meet the requirements for a commercial facility, including a grease interceptor to prevent grease from entering the leach field. Preliminary evaluations of soil conditions have found that percolation rates may require a specialized leach field system to accommodate poor drainage rates. A location for a leach field system considered sufficient to support the proposed Project has been identified east of the oak trees that are to be preserved. Additional land south of the proposed leach field has been reserved to allow installation of additional leach line if needed. Sufficient reserved land is available to potentially triple the length of leach line currently being considered. With the ability to substantially expand the leach field in response to poor soil drainage conditions, the Project is expected to have sufficient capacity to accommodate use of an onsite septic systems.

- 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.** The proposed Project would generate solid waste from construction as well as solid waste once occupied, including organic waste and recyclable material. Solid waste services to the project site are provided by El Dorado Disposal Services and waste generated at the site would be disposed of at the Potrero Hills Landfill. The

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project would not generate waste in excess of local standards or in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure and would not impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals.

e) **Fail to comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste?**

**Less than Significant.** Solid waste services to the project site are provided by El Dorado Disposal Services and waste generated at the site would be disposed of at the Potrero Hills Landfill. Development at the Project site would be provided with trash, recycling, and organics disposal services in accordance with local, state, and federal regulations. The project would, therefore, comply with regulations including the County's ordinances and AB 939. The Project would not fail to comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction regulations related to solid waste.

### 3.20 WILDFIRE

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<b>XX. Wildfire.</b>				
Is the project located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as high fire hazard severity zones?				
If located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, would the project:				
	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	
a) Substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Require the installation 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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

#### 3.20.1 Environmental Setting

According to CAL FIRE, the project site is within the SRA for fire protection and is located within a designated high fire hazard severity zone (CAL FIRE 2025). The Project is in a rural area, with most properties in the region being privately owned. The topography of the project site is hilly with relatively gentle slopes. There are no steep slopes within or adjacent to the project site

The project site is in an area susceptible to wildland fires. Surrounding properties support widely spaced commercial structures, amongst blue oak-foothill pine woodlands, annual grasslands, and shrublands. Nearby roads that may be used for access to Project site access are SR 49 and SR 193.

#### 3.20.2 Discussion

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

**Less than Significant.** The project and surrounding vicinity are subject to a number of emergency response plans, including the El Dorado County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan (EDCSO 2024), which provides guidance for the County’s response in emergency situations, including wildfire and emergency evacuation. Impairment of emergency response plans or emergency evacuation plans would occur if the project would introduce an undue or extraordinary burden on emergency responders as they respond to an emergency incident. The proposed Project

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would not affect emergency response or evacuation. Development at the Project site would be required to conform to applicable County Development Standards and Guidelines, County Regional Fire Protection Standards, and CFC requirements, including those that define standards for providing emergency access, including fire apparatus access. The surrounding roadways provide adequate circulation and access for emergency response and the Project would not significantly modify any roads or otherwise affect emergency response times. The Project would not increase population in a way that would add appreciable numbers of vehicles to an evacuation. The Project could benefit evacuation efficiency by providing additional capacity for evacuees to fuel their vehicles prior to, or during an evacuation. Therefore, the Project would not impair or physically interfere with 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.** The Project site is in an area susceptible to wildland fires. However, there are no steep slopes in the Project area that exacerbate wildfire risk. The Project would increase human activity at the Project site, thereby incrementally increasing the ignition risk. However, the project would also increase the potential to quickly respond to ignitions via the presence of individuals to identify and report ignitions. The Western El Dorado Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) describes wildfire risks and mitigation strategies for the portion of the County that includes the project site (EDC 2022). Implementation of the County CWPP would reduce the likelihood of an ignition at the project site becoming an out-of-control wildfire. In addition, El Dorado County Fire Protection District Station 72 is located approximately 400 feet northwest of the Project site, allowing a quick response to any ignitions that might occur on the Project site.

The project would also be required to adhere to all fire prevention and protection requirements and regulations of El Dorado County including the El Dorado County Fire Hazard Ordinance and the Uniform Fire Code, as applicable. Pertinent measures include, but are not limited to, the use of equipment with spark arrestors and non-sparking tools during project activities. The project applicant would also be required to develop the project structures to meet defensible space requirements as specified under Objective 6.2.1 of the Safety Element of the El Dorado County General Plan. With adherence to these requirements, the project would not exacerbate wildfire risks or expose project occupants to pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire.

**c) Require the installation 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?**

**Less than Significant.** All elements of the proposed project are included in the project description evaluated in this IS and all temporary and ongoing impacts are disclosed in this document. The project would be served by an onsite wastewater treatment system. Water service is available via an existing water main that serves the site. Electrical lines already exists on adjacent roadways and electrical service would be provided by PG&E. The project would avoid exacerbating fire risk during infrastructure installation through compliance with the most current building and fire codes, CFC requirements, and County Regional Fire Protection Standards, including those for access and roadways, rural water supply, and firefighting. The installation of new infrastructure would also be required to comply with all applicable County regulations to protect the environment, including the ORMP and other measures. Actions associated with development of new utility facilities, including transmission or utility lines, are not exempt from the mitigation requirements of the ORMP. Actions taken to maintain existing utility facilities, as well as action taken pursuant to an approved Fire Safe Plan, including fuel break construction, are exempt from the ORMP mitigation requirements.

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- 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?

**Less than Significant.** The development of the proposed Project would result in construction and operational activities that could introduce new ignition sources that could increase wildfire hazards. However, as discussed in 3.20.2(b), implementation of the Project would not exacerbate wildfire risk. As discussed in Section 3.7.2(a)(iv), the potential for landslides to occur is negligible because the site generally has gentle topography and there are no steep slopes within or adjacent to the Project site. In addition, as discussed in Section 3.10.1, the project site is within an area of minimal flood hazard (FEMA 2008). Development at the Project site could change the drainage patterns of the project site by increasing impervious surfaces; however, development would be designed to comply with the County's West Slope Development and Redevelopment Standards (EDC 2024c), the SWMP for Western El Dorado County (EDC 2004b), and the County's Grading, Erosion, and Sediment Control Ordinance (EDC 2013) to prevent drainage, flooding, and erosion impacts from site runoff (see Section 3.10.2[c] for additional information). Therefore, the Project would not expose people or structures to significant risks from 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
<b>XXI. Mandatory Findings of Significance.</b>				
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, substantially 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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Does the project have environmental effects that will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

#### 3.21.1 Environmental Setting

The environmental setting for this section is presented above in the environmental settings for each of the checklist issue areas. No additional environmental setting is necessary.

#### 3.21.2 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, substantially 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 Impact with Mitigation.** Based on evaluations and discussions contained in Sections 3.1 through 3.20 of this Initial Study, the Project is not anticipated to substantially degrade the quality of the environment. As discussed in Section 3.4, "Biological Resources," the Project would implement Mitigation Measures 3.4-1 and 3.4-2. Therefore, the Project would not 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, or substantially reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal. In addition, as discussed in Section 3.5, "Cultural Resources," and Section 3.18, "Tribal Cultural Resource," although unlikely, ground-disturbing activities during

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project construction may result in the unanticipated discovery of archaeological resources or Tribal cultural resources; however, the County requires that specific procedures be followed in the event of unanticipated discoveries (refer to Section 3.5 Mitigation Measure 3.5-1 and Section 3.18 Mitigation Measure 3.18-1) as a condition of project approval. Therefore, the project would not eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory or Tribal cultural resources.

**b) Does the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable?**

**Less than Significant.** The Project would not result in significant cumulatively considerable impacts for the following reasons:

- ▶ The Project would not make a substantial contribution to the cumulative condition for agricultural and forest resources, biological resources, cultural and tribal cultural resources, and mineral resources due to the lack of Important Farmland and forest land and known mineral resources at the project site. Potential impacts to special-status species, archaeological resources, and Tribal cultural resources would be reduced to less than significant levels through mitigation.
- ▶ Impacts related to geology, soils, and hazards and hazardous materials are generally site-specific and would not substantially contribute to the cumulative condition.
- ▶ The project would be consistent with existing land use and zoning designations for the project site, the County's Municipal Code and ordinances, and the County's Design Guidelines. In addition, population growth from the Project would be minor (if any at all) and would be consistent with the growth anticipated in the County's General Plan. Therefore, the Project would not substantially contribute to the cumulative condition for aesthetics, land use and planning, population and housing, public services, recreation, and wildfire.
- ▶ The Project could indirectly increase impervious surfaces and change drainage patterns within the watershed; however, the Project would not substantially contribute to the cumulative condition for hydrology and water quality because the proposed development would be designed to meet all applicable stormwater quality requirements.
- ▶ With respect to air quality, energy, noise, transportation, and utilities, the project would be consistent with the existing land use designation and the population assumptions for the area. GHG emissions impacts, which are inherently cumulative, 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.** The project's potential effects on the way residents experience the existing environment (aesthetics) and plans for future use of the area (land use and population and housing) would be less than significant. Elements of the project that could physically affect sensitive populations, including air quality impacts and generation of noise, were also found less than significant. GHG emissions, which are understood to result in global warming, would be less-than-significant.

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**DR22-0007 Cool Station  
Automobile - based Commercial Project  
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### **Mandatory Findings of Significance**

No citations are used in this section.

## 5 REPORT PREPARERS

### EL DORADO COUNTY

*Ande Flower* ..... *Planning Manager*

*Lela Shelley* ..... *Project Planner*

### ASCENT

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MITIGATION MONITORING AND REPORTING PROGRAM

**DR22-0007 / Cool Station - Automobile-based  
Commercial Project**

Prepared for:

**County of El Dorado Planning and Building Department  
Planning Services Division**

2850 Fairlane Court  
Placerville, CA 95667

Contact:

**Lela Shelley**  
Assistant Planner  
530.621.5859

July 31, 2025

DR22-0007 Cool Station  
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## MITIGATION MONITORING AND REPORTING PROGRAM

In accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA, Public Resources Code Section 21000 et seq.), an initial study/mitigated negative declaration (IS/Proposed MND) was prepared (State Clearinghouse No. 2025090951) for the DR22-0007 / 2-Phase Cool Station - Automobile-based Commercial Facility Project under the direction of the County of El Dorado (County). The project would result in potentially significant environmental impacts to biological resources, cultural resources, and tribal cultural resources, and would be mitigated to less than significant by the mitigation measures identified in the IS/Proposed MND. The cumulative analysis assumed implementation of the mitigation measures identified for project impacts, which resulted in no significant cumulative impacts and no additional mitigation measures are necessary. The project would not result in any significant and unavoidable impacts.

CEQA and the State CEQA Guidelines (PRC Section 21081.6 and State CEQA Guidelines Sections 15091[d] and 15097) require public agencies “to adopt a reporting and monitoring program for changes to the project which it has adopted or made a condition of project approval to mitigate or avoid significant effects on the environment.” A Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP) has been prepared for the project because the IS/Proposed MND identifies significant adverse impacts related to project implementation, and mitigation measures have been identified to reduce those impacts. Adoption of the MMRP would occur in conjunction with certification of the DR22-0007 / 2-Phase Cool Station - Automobile-based Commercial Facility Project IS/MND.

## PURPOSE OF MITIGATION MONITORING AND REPORTING PROGRAM

This MMRP has been prepared to ensure that all required mitigation measures are implemented and completed in a satisfactory manner before and during project construction and operation, as applicable.

The MMRP table (Table 1) provided herein has been prepared to assist the responsible parties in implementing the mitigation measures. The table identifies the impact, individual mitigation measures, monitoring responsibility, and mitigation timing. The table also provides space to confirm implementation of the mitigation measures after project approval. The numbering of mitigation measures follows the numbering sequence found in the IS/Proposed MND. Mitigation measures that are referenced more than once in the IS/Proposed MND are not duplicated in the MMRP table.

## ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Unless otherwise specified herein, El Dorado County is responsible for taking all actions necessary to implement, or document implementation of, the mitigation measures under its jurisdiction according to the specifications provided for each measure and for demonstrating that the action has been successfully completed. El Dorado County, at its discretion, may delegate implementation responsibility or portions thereof to a licensed contractor or other designated agent.

Section 21081.6 of the Public Resources Code requires the lead agency to identify the “custodian of documents and other material” which constitutes the “record of proceedings” upon which the action on the project was based. El Dorado County Planning Department is the custodian of such documents for the DR22-0007 / 2-Phase Cool Station - Automobile-based Commercial Facility Project IS/. Inquiries should be directed to:

Ande Flower, Deputy Planning Manager  
Planning and Building Department  
2850 Fairlane Court, Building C  
Placerville, California 95667

The location of this information is:

County of El Dorado

**DR22-0007 Cool Station  
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Planning and Building Department  
2850 Fairlane Court, Building C  
Placerville, California 95667

The El Dorado County Planning Department is responsible for overall administration of the MMRP and for verifying that County staff, the project applicant, the construction contractor, or other designated party has completed the necessary actions for each measure. The parties responsible for implementing each measure are responsible for identifying, coordinating with, and reporting to designated County staff monitoring implementation of the MMRP.

## REPORTING

El Dorado County shall require the applicant, contractor(s), or others responsible for implementation of mitigation measures, to maintain records documenting compliance of the activity with the required mitigation measures. Information regarding inspections and other requirements shall be compiled in monthly reports. The reports shall be designed to simply and clearly identify how and when mitigation measures have been adequately implemented. At a minimum, each report shall identify the mitigation measures or conditions to be monitored for implementation, how and when compliance with the mitigation measures or conditions has occurred, the procedures used to assess compliance, and whether further action is required.

## MITIGATION MONITORING AND REPORTING PROGRAM TABLE

The categories identified in the attached MMRP Table 1 are described below.

- ▶ Impact – This column provides the section of the Initial Study checklist table where the impact is identified. For example, Mitigation Measure 3.4-1 addresses impacts associated with Initial Study checklist question IV.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?” Therefore, “IV.a)” is provided in the Impact column (column 1) in Table 1.
- ▶ Mitigation Measure – This column provides the verbatim text of the adopted mitigation measure.
- ▶ Monitoring and Reporting Procedure – This column identifies discrete actions to be implemented as part of the broader mitigation measure.
- ▶ Timing – This column identifies the time frame in which the mitigation will be implemented. The abbreviations used to describe timing are as follows:
  - SS=site selection; DE=detailed project planning or project design prior to project approval;
  - CO=prior to or during construction; OC=prior to occupancy; OP=operationThese abbreviations are also defined in the notes at the end of the Table 1.
- ▶ Verification – This column identifies the party responsible for verifying compliance and is to be dated and signed by that party when the mitigation measure, or portion of the measure, is completed.

DR22-0007 Cool Station  
 Automobile - Based Commercial Project  
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**Table 1 Cool Station – Automobile-based commercial project IS/MND Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program**

Impact	Mitigation Measure	Monitoring and Reporting Procedure	Timing / Frequency	Verification	
<b>Biological Resources</b>					
Impact IV.a)	<p><b>Mitigation Measure 3.4-1: Nesting Bird and Raptor Protection</b></p> <p>The project applicant shall implement the following measures to protect nesting birds and raptors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ To minimize impacts to special-status bird species, raptors, and other native birds, development activities (e.g., vegetation clearing, ground disturbance, staging, construction of off-site improvements, and tree removal [if unavoidable]) shall be conducted during the nonbreeding season (approximately September 1 through January 31, as determined by a qualified biologist), when feasible. If project activities are conducted during the nonbreeding season, no further mitigation is required prior to the proposed activity.</li> <li>▶ If development activities must commence during the avian nesting season (between February 1 and August 31), within 7 days prior to commencement of work a qualified biologist familiar with birds of California and with experience conducting nesting bird surveys shall conduct focused surveys for special-status birds, nesting raptors, and other native birds. Surveys shall be conducted in publicly accessible areas within 0.25 miles of the development activity area for white-tailed kite, 500 ft of the development activity area for other raptor species and special-status birds, and 50 ft of the development activity area for non-raptor common native bird nests.</li> <li>▶ If no active bird nests are found, the qualified biologist shall submit a report documenting the survey methods and results to the applicant and El Dorado County, and work may proceed. If at any time during the nesting season there is a lapse of two weeks or more with no work, a new survey for nesting birds shall be completed before work proceeds.</li> <li>▶ If an active bird nest is found, a no-disturbance buffer shall be established around the nest site until the breeding season has ended or a qualified biologist has determined that the young have fledged or the nest is no longer active.</li> <li>▶ The size of the no-disturbance buffer shall be determined by the biologist, based on the sensitivity of the bird species, nesting chronology of the species, disturbance characteristics (type, extent, visibility, duration, and timing), existing ambient conditions, and other factors (e.g.,</li> </ul>	<p>If development activities must occur between February 1 and August 31, retain a qualified biologist to conduct preconstruction surveys for nesting birds within appropriate buffers; 0.25 mi, 500 ft, 100 ft, or 20 ft.</p> <p>Establish and maintain an appropriate no disturbance buffer if an active nest is found.</p> <p>Survey report and mapping will be provided to El Dorado County.</p> <p>If necessary, consult with CDFW and implement avoidance measures and monitoring.</p>	CO	<p>Surveys conducted no more than 7 days prior to ground disturbance; between February 1 and August 31</p> <p>Survey results, identification of no disturbance buffers (if needed), and coordination with CDFW (if needed) reported to County prior to the start of construction</p> <p>Nest monitoring during construction, as necessary</p>	El Dorado County Planning and Building Department

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Impact	Mitigation Measure	Monitoring and Reporting Procedure	Timing / Frequency		Verification
	<p>screening from existing structures, vegetation, or topography), as determined by the biologist. Buffers typically shall be 0.25 miles for white-tailed kite, 500 ft for other raptors, 100 ft for non-raptor special-status bird species, and at least 20 ft for common non-raptor bird species. The size of the buffer may be adjusted if a qualified biologist determines that such an adjustment shall be unlikely to adversely affect the nest. Any buffer reduction for a special-status bird species shall require coordination with CDFW.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Daily monitoring of the nest by a qualified biologist during activities shall be required if the activity has potential to adversely affect the nest as determined by the qualified biologist, the buffer has been reduced, or if birds within active nests are showing behavioral signs of agitation (e.g., standing up from a brooding position, flying off the nest) during project activities, as determined by the qualified biologist.</li> <li>▶ Documentation of compliance with this mitigation measure and any required coordination with CDFW shall be provided to El Dorado County before commencement of any project construction activities</li> </ul>				

**DR22-0007 Cool Station  
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Impact	Mitigation Measure	Monitoring and Reporting Procedure	Timing / Frequency		Verification
Impact IV.e)	<p>► <b>Measure 3.4-2: Oak Resources Protection:</b> If Project implementation results in the loss or removal of a native oak tree on the project site that qualifies for protection under the ORMP, the project applicant shall obtain a permit from the County and pay the mitigation fee for oak woodland impacts as stated in the ORMP. The project applicant shall coordinate with the County prior to any planned removal of native oak trees and notify the County of any damage to native oak trees during construction and comply with any ORMP requirements. For three years after any project construction under retained native oak trees, if any of these trees die from conditions attributable to changes in the ground in the tree's dripline, the applicant will coordinate with the County and comply with any ORMP mitigation requirements.</p>	<p>If any native oak trees are removed or destroyed, the project applicant shall obtain a permit and pay the mitigation fee.</p> <p>Monitor retained native oak trees for 3 years post-construction. Coordinate with County and comply with ORMP if tree mortality occurs and is due to changed conditions resulting from the project.</p>	DE and CO	Identify any oak tree removal in project plans. Monitor oak tree removal or damage during construction.	El Dorado County Planning and Building Department
<b>Cultural Resources</b>					
Impact V.b)	<p><b>Mitigation Measure 3.5-1: Protection of Unknown Archaeological Resources</b></p> <p>In the event that unknown buried archaeological deposits (e.g., prehistoric stone tools, milling stones, shells, midden soils) are encountered during construction, all ground-disturbing activity within 100 ft of the resources shall be halted and a qualified professional archaeologist (36 Code of Federal Regulations 61) and appropriate Native American tribal representative shall be notified immediately and retained to assess the significance of the find. Construction activities could continue in other areas. If the find is determined to be significant by the qualified archaeologist or Native American tribe (i.e., because it is determined to constitute a unique archaeological resource), the archaeologist, in consultation with the Count and the culturally affiliated Native American tribe(s) shall develop appropriate procedures to protect the integrity of the resource and ensure that no additional</p>	<p>If archaeological deposits are discovered during construction, halt ground-disturbing activity within 50-feet of the resources. Contact a qualified archaeologist.</p>	CO	During construction	El Dorado County Planning and Building Department

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 Automobile - Based Commercial Project  
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Impact	Mitigation Measure	Monitoring and Reporting Procedure	Timing / Frequency		Verification
	resources are affected. Procedures could include but would not necessarily be limited to preservation in place, subsurface testing, or contiguous block unit excavation and data recovery.	Determine appropriate level of archaeological investigation.  Contact appropriate Native American tribe, as needed.			
<b>Tribal Cultural Resources</b>					
Impact XVIII.a) and XVIII.b)	<p><b>Mitigation Measure 3.18-1: Protection of Known Tribal Cultural Resources</b></p> <p>Components of the project that require earth-moving and excavation could impact the known Tribal cultural resource (P-09-003627). The project, as currently designed, would not result in ground disturbance within the known Tribal cultural resource. However, final engineering and other factors could change, which could cause project activities to move towards the Tribal cultural resource. To better protect the Tribal cultural resource in the event of unforeseen circumstances, a paid Tribal monitor authorized by UAIC will be present when the fencing is placed around the Tribal cultural resource. The monitor shall provide guidance on the placement of the fencing to achieve the desired protection of the Tribal cultural resource. A Tribal monitor from UAIC shall also be present during the removal of the fence. The applicant, or applicant's representative, shall fund the presence of the monitor during fence installation. In addition, the applicant, or applicant's representative, shall contact and coordinate with the tribe 7 days prior to the installation of the fencing as well as 7 days prior to the removal of the fence.</p>	<p>Paid Tribal monitor present when fencing placed around Tribal cultural resource. Applicant contacts and coordinates with UAIC at least 7 days prior to fence installation.</p> <p>Paid Tribal monitor present when fencing is removed from around Tribal cultural resource. Applicant contacts and coordinates with UAIC at least 7 days prior to fence removal.</p>	CO	<p>Implement once prior to and during fence installation</p> <p>Implement again prior to and during fence installation</p>	El Dorado County Planning and Building Department
Impact XVIII.a) and XVIII.b)	<p><b>Mitigation Measure 3.18-2: Protection of Unanticipated Discoveries of Tribal Cultural Resources</b></p> <p>If any suspected Tribal cultural resources are discovered during ground disturbing construction activities, all work shall cease within 100 ft of the find, or an agreed upon distance based on the project area and nature of the find. A Tribal Representative from a California Native American tribe that is traditionally and culturally affiliated with a geographic area shall be immediately notified and shall determine if the find is a Tribal cultural resource (PRC §21074). The Tribal Representative will make recommendations for further evaluation and treatment as necessary.</p>	<p>If suspected tribal cultural resources are discovered during construction, halt ground-disturbing activity within 100-feet of the resources.</p> <p>Notify El Dorado County of the find. Contact a Tribal</p>	CO	During ground disturbing activities during construction	El Dorado County Planning and Building Department

DR22-0007 Cool Station  
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Impact	Mitigation Measure	Monitoring and Reporting Procedure	Timing / Frequency		Verification
	<p>When avoidance is infeasible, preservation in place is the preferred option for mitigation of Tribal cultural resources under CEQA and UAIC protocols, and every effort shall be made to preserve the resources in place, including through project redesign, if feasible. Culturally appropriate treatment may be, but is not limited to, processing materials for reburial, minimizing handling of cultural objects, leaving objects in place within the landscape, or returning objects to a location within the project area where they will not be subject to future impacts. Permanent curation of Tribal cultural resources will not take place unless approved in writing by UAIC or by the California Native American Tribe that is traditionally and culturally affiliated with the project area.</p> <p>The contractor shall implement any measures deemed by the CEQA lead agency to be necessary and feasible to preserve in place, avoid, or minimize impacts to the resource, including, but not limited to, facilitating the appropriate tribal treatment of the find, as necessary. Treatment that preserves or restores the cultural character and integrity of a Tribal cultural resource may include Tribal monitoring, culturally appropriate recovery of cultural objects, and reburial of cultural objects or cultural soil.</p> <p>Work at the discovery location cannot resume until all necessary investigation and evaluation of the discovery under the requirements of the CEQA, including AB52, have been satisfied</p>	<p>Representative to evaluate the find.</p> <p>Determine and implement appropriate protection/preservation/treatment if determined to be a Tribal cultural resource.</p>			

Project stage at which implementation of the measure is required: SS=site selection; DE=detailed project planning or project design prior to project approval; CO=prior to or during construction; OC=prior to occupancy; OP=operation

DR22-0007 Cool Station  
Automobile - Based Commercial Project  
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# DR22-0007 / Cool Station – Automobile-based Commercial Project

## Public Comments

Regarding project and Initial Study Mitigated Negative Declaration  
(ISMND)

All comments have been reviewed by staff, and responses sent where appropriate. These comments do not alter staff's recommendation as outlined in the staff report.

DR22-0007 Cool Station  
Automobile - Based Commercial Project  
Exhibit O – CEQA Comments

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**From:** Steven Proe <trails-first@att.net>  
**Sent:** Saturday, September 27, 2025 2:59 AM  
**To:** Planning Department <planning@edcgov.us>  
**Subject:** Cool project gas station?

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Has there been any disclosure about the presence of Asbestos Serpentine soil or under ground " lens " that are known to be located in this area ?  
Plus the need for a traffic signal to be installed along with a wider roadway on both Hwy"s 193 and 49?  
Thank you

---

**From:** Kris Olof <krisolof@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, October 1, 2025 5:39 PM  
**To:** Planning Department <planning@edcgov.us>  
**Subject:** Higginbotham Cool Commercial Center - Question for planning

---

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Hi, After reviewing the plans for the Higginbotham Cool Commercial Center I noticed that the plans do not state the intent for the rest of the partially developed parcel APN:071-500-036. I understand using that parcel for putting the driveway directly across from the driveway of the existing commercial development but I don't understand the plan to leave it vacant. Additionally, the images seem to indicate a retaining wall which would limit future uses from using that driveway. Is there a future planned use for this lot and what will it's zoning be once this project is built?

Thank you,

-Kris  
(707) 391-7360

DR22-0007 Cool Station  
Automobile - Based Commercial Project  
Exhibit O – CEQA Comments

To Whom It May Concern:

We are long term residents of Cool, Ca., and would very much look forward to this project being completed, with the following condition: that to the extent possible the buildings and facades have a “country/old town” appearance – similar to what was done with Dollar General and the older businesses across hwy 49. Our downtown could absolutely use some competition for petroleum sales! The existing fuel station is both difficult to access and due to their monopoly always has higher prices – even compared to Georgetown! We also would love to have the convenience of a local car wash! (wish that were in phase 1).

---

As you likely recognize, Cool sees a lot of pass-through visitors/tourists – heading towards the river and Coloma, to explore our wonderful local trails on horseback/bikes/hiking, or heading upcountry for some of the best off-roading in the country. We feel an additional service center like the one proposed would be very much appreciated by our temporary guests passing through, and that our county of El Dorado would benefit from the extra tax revenue generated by both local folks and out of towners. We are absolutely in favor of this!

Please pass this letter on to the Board of Supervisors as well, for input to their consideration of this project.

Sincerely,

Scott Jessen and Sally Brown  
1761 Shaver Rd.  
Cool, CA  
(530) 887-8735

DR22-0007 Cool Station  
Automobile - Based Commercial Project  
Exhibit O – CEQA Comments

Dear Ms. Shelley,

It's come back, this potential cash cow for El Dorado County's tax collector and the owner of this gas station, (8 pumps !), drive thru food service with a visitor center (or the rest of the drive thru?), a convenience store, and soon a car wash!

During the past few years someone must have noticed the revenue potential. All those motor vehicles, 8k to 10k a day passing through the crossroads of Hwy's 193 and 49.

Never with a thought for the community of Cool. The increased cross traffic will bring delays and an increase in traffic accidents. Does Caltrans have a plan?

Maybe the County believes Auburn Lake Trails is Cool? It is a large part of Cool, but not the totality. Cool wants a town square, and a sense of autonomy from the County's rule. A gas station complex for drive-through traffic is not needed and wanted!

Thank you.

---

Ann Gualtieri  
3060 Triple Seven Road  
Cool, CA. 95614

DR22-0007 Cool Station  
Automobile - Based Commercial Project  
Exhibit O – CEQA Comments

**From:** Nanette Franceschini <goingdogs2@gmail.com>

**Sent:** Monday, October 20, 2025 2:37 PM

**To:** Planning Department <planning@edcgov.us>; Lori Parlin <lori.parlin@edcgov.us>

**Subject:** Comments on the DR22-0007/Cool Station Automobile-based Commercial Project

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Comments on the DR22-0007/Cool Station Automobile-based Commercial Project, comments accepted September 22 to October 21, 2025. I don't think this project will be of the greatest help to Cool and the surrounding communities due to its planned location. Looking at the project rendering it appears to be at road level. The proposed location is bedrock, filled with serpentine; to get it to ground level will require blasting and the spread of the carcinogenic serpentine – a definite health hazard. In the past the project intends to have gas pumps, car wash, fast food restaurant, a sit down restaurant – the proposed septic system is not large enough to handle all of the waste. The developer said it would be linked to the Cool septic system which does not exist so how can that happen. The holding pond for water run off is supposed to be uphill from the station – how will that work without pumping it uphill? The gas and oil run off will go eventually go into the creeks and American River. The height of the canopy for the gas pumps will be quite high thus polluting the dark sky which is a real draw for this community. Traffic congestion at the intersection will be a real problem for cars and pedestrians. . The speed limit on Hwy 193 is 55 mph. There is a pedestrian walkway along 193 which will be impacted as vehicles cross it to get into the station. Vehicles will be crossing over 193 to go into town from the current shopping center; if there is another driveway along 193 close to the intersection that will create a dangerous situation. On Hwy 49 another driveway in the short distance between the intersection and the post office/Dollar General restaurant driveway will contribute to a hazardous situation.

---

Also I want to know where the tax money generated by this project will be allocated. To the Cool-Pilot Hill area for road maintenance, fire mitigation, schools?

Most of the people I have talked with would welcome another gas station in town but at a better different location. The health issues from serpentine being disturbed, traffic congestion, and contamination of the local streams and eventually the American River need to be considered in great detail before approval of this project in its current rendition.

Nanette Franceschini  
3031 Sweetwater Trail  
Cool, CA 95614  
510-299-7568      [GoingDogs2@gmail.com](mailto:goingdogs2@gmail.com)