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**NOTICE OF PREPARATION**

2010 OCT 15 AM 10:31  
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
EL DORADO COUNTY

FROM: Redevelopment Agency of the City of Placerville  
City Hall, Second Floor  
3101 Center Street  
Placerville, CA 95667

CONTACT: John Driscoll, City Manager / City Attorney

DATE: October 14, 2010

SUBJECT: **NOTICE OF PREPARATION OF A DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT (EIR) FOR THE PLACERVILLE REDEVELOPMENT PLAN ADOPTION**

The Redevelopment Agency of the City of Placerville (Agency) will be the Lead Agency and will prepare an environmental impact report for the project identified below. We need to know the views of interested persons as to the scope and content of the environmental information to be included in the EIR. Agencies should comment on the scope and content of the environmental information, which is germane to the agencies' statutory responsibilities in connection with the project.

The project description, location, and the probable environmental effects are contained in the attached Initial Study. This Initial Study, also available for public review at the above address, will be used to focus the EIR on only those issues that may potentially result in a significant adverse impact. The No Project Alternative and at least one other alternative will be considered in the EIR.

Due to the time limits mandated by State law, your response must be sent at the earliest possible date, but not later than 30 days after receipt of this notice.

Please send your response to John Driscoll at the address shown above. We will need the name for a contact person in your agency.

**PROJECT TITLE: PLACERVILLE REDEVELOPMENT PLAN ADOPTION**

**PROJECT LOCATION:** PLACERVILLE EL DORADO  
City (nearest) County

John Driscoll  
City Manager / City Attorney  
Responsible Entity Official-Name and Title  
Signature  
10/14/2010  
Date

# PLACERVILLE REDEVELOPMENT PLAN ADOPTION INITIAL STUDY

*Redevelopment Agency of the City of Placerville*



*Prepared for:*  
*Redevelopment Agency of the City of Placerville*  
*City Hall, Second Floor, 3101 Center Street*  
*Placerville, CA 95667*

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*City of Placerville*  
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*530-642-5200*

*Prepared By:*  
**THE ERVIN CONSULTING GROUP**  
*8561 Almond Bluff Court*  
*Orangevale, California 95662*  
*916-989-0269*

*Date: October 14, 2010*

# PLACERVILLE REDEVELOPMENT PLAN ADOPTION

## INITIAL STUDY

This Initial Study has been required and prepared for the Placerville Redevelopment Agency (Agency), City Hall, Second Floor, 3101 Center Street, Placerville, CA 95667, pursuant to Title 14, Section 15060 et seq. of the California Code of Regulations.

### ORGANIZATION OF THE INITIAL STUDY

This Initial Study is organized into the following sections:

**SECTION I – PROJECT INFORMATION:** Page 3 - Provides summary background information about the project name, location, sponsor, and the date this Initial Study was completed.

**SECTION II – EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:** Page 5 - Includes a Summary of the Project Description and environmental analysis.

**SECTION III - PROJECT DESCRIPTION:** Page 7 - Includes a detailed description of the Proposed Project.

**SECTION IV - ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST AND DISCUSSION:** Page 17 - Contains the Environmental Checklist Form together with a discussion of the checklist questions. The Checklist Form is used to determine the following for the proposed project: 1) Potentially Significant Impacts, which identifies impacts that may have a significant effect on the environment, but for which the level of significance cannot be appropriately determined without further analysis, in an Environmental Impact Report (EIR), 2) Potentially Significant Impacts Unless Mitigated, which identifies impacts that could be mitigated to have a less-than-significant impact with implementation of mitigation measures, and 3) Less-than-significant Impacts, which identifies impacts that would be less-than-significant and do not require the implementation of mitigation measures.

**SECTION V - ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS POTENTIALLY AFFECTED:** Page 61 - Identifies which environmental factors were determined to have either a Potentially Significant Impact or Potentially Significant Impact Unless Mitigated, as indicated in the Environmental Checklist.

**SECTION VI - DETERMINATION:** Page 63 - Identifies the determination of whether impacts associated with development of the Proposed Project are significant, and what, if any, added environmental documentation may be required.

**SECTION VII - REFERENCES:** Page 65 .

## SECTION I - PROJECT INFORMATION

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Project Name: Placerville Redevelopment Plan Adoption

Project Applicant: Redevelopment Agency of the City of Placerville  
City Hall, Second Floor  
3101 Center Street  
Placerville, CA 95667

Project Manager: John Driscoll  
City Manager / City Attorney  
City of Placerville  
City Hall, Second Floor  
3101 Center Street  
Placerville, CA 95667  
Phone: 530-642-52002  
jdriscoll@cityofplacerville.org

Redevelopment Consultant: Jim Simon, Principal  
RSG, Inc.  
309 W 4th Street  
Santa Ana, CA 92701  
Phone: (714) 541-4585  
Fax: (714) 541-1175  
jimsimon@webrsg.com

Environmental Consultant: The Ervin Consulting Group  
8561 Almond Bluff Court  
Orangevale, California 95662  
Phone (916) 989-0269  
Fax (916) 200-1371  
info@ervincg.com

Initial Study Completed: October 14, 2010

## SECTION II – EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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Placerville is located in El Dorado County (County) on the western slope of the Central Sierra Nevada at the junction of U.S. Route 50 (US 50) and State Route 49 (SR-49). Placerville occupies approximately five square miles at the bottom and up the slopes of a ravine bisected by Hangtown Creek and Highway 50.

The Proposed Project entails the adoption of a Redevelopment Plan for a 1,077-acre Redevelopment Project Area (Project Area) within the jurisdiction of the City of Placerville (City) and adjacent County unincorporated areas. The proposed Redevelopment Plan would authorize the use of redevelopment tools to remove blight within the project area over a 30-year period, following adoption of the Redevelopment Plan in mid-2011.

The proposed Project Area includes most of the City's commercial areas, including the Placerville Drive, Downtown, and Broadway areas. Additionally the Project Area contains properties on the west and east perimeters of the existing City limits in the unincorporated County, including the areas known as Smith Flat and Motor City. Adoption of the Redevelopment Plan with respect to these unincorporated areas would also be subject to approval by the El Dorado County Board of Supervisors.

The Redevelopment Plan is a programmatic document, which empowers the Placerville Redevelopment Agency (Agency) to implement a variety of tools to revitalize the Project Area consistent with the California Community Redevelopment Law (CRL; Health and Safety Code Section 33000 et seq). The Redevelopment Plan provides that land use policies shall be those established by the City and County General Plans, as applicable, as such policies exist today, or may be hereafter amended. Consistent with the respective City and County General Plans, implementation actions may include:

- Improvements to public infrastructure and facilities serving the Project Area
- Repairs, rehabilitation, and reconstruction of Project Area properties
- Removing impediments to economic development
- Increasing, improving, and preserving the community's supply of affordable housing

The Redevelopment Plan would authorize the Redevelopment Agency to collect tax increment revenue, generated from increases in the assessed value of the Project Area, to finance the cost of these activities. Specific actions would be implemented gradually over the duration of the Redevelopment Plan, in accordance with the annual budget and five year implementation plan of the Redevelopment Agency. Such specific actions may require additional environmental analysis at a future date. The Redevelopment Plan would also authorize the Redevelopment Agency to use eminent domain on property that is not occupied as a residence.

## SECTION III - PROJECT DESCRIPTION

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### PROJECT LOCATION

Placerville is located in El Dorado County (County) on the western slope of the Central Sierra Nevada at the junction of US 50 and SR-49. Situated approximately midway between Sacramento and Lake Tahoe, Placerville lies about 25 miles east of Folsom, which marks the eastern edge of the intense urban development of the Sacramento Metropolitan area. The rural residential communities of El Dorado Hills and Shingle Springs lie just to the west of Placerville along Highway 50, and the City of South Lake Tahoe is approximately 60 miles to the east along Highway 50. Auburn lies approximately 25 miles north of Placerville on Highway 49 and Jackson is approximately 34 miles to the south on Highway 49.

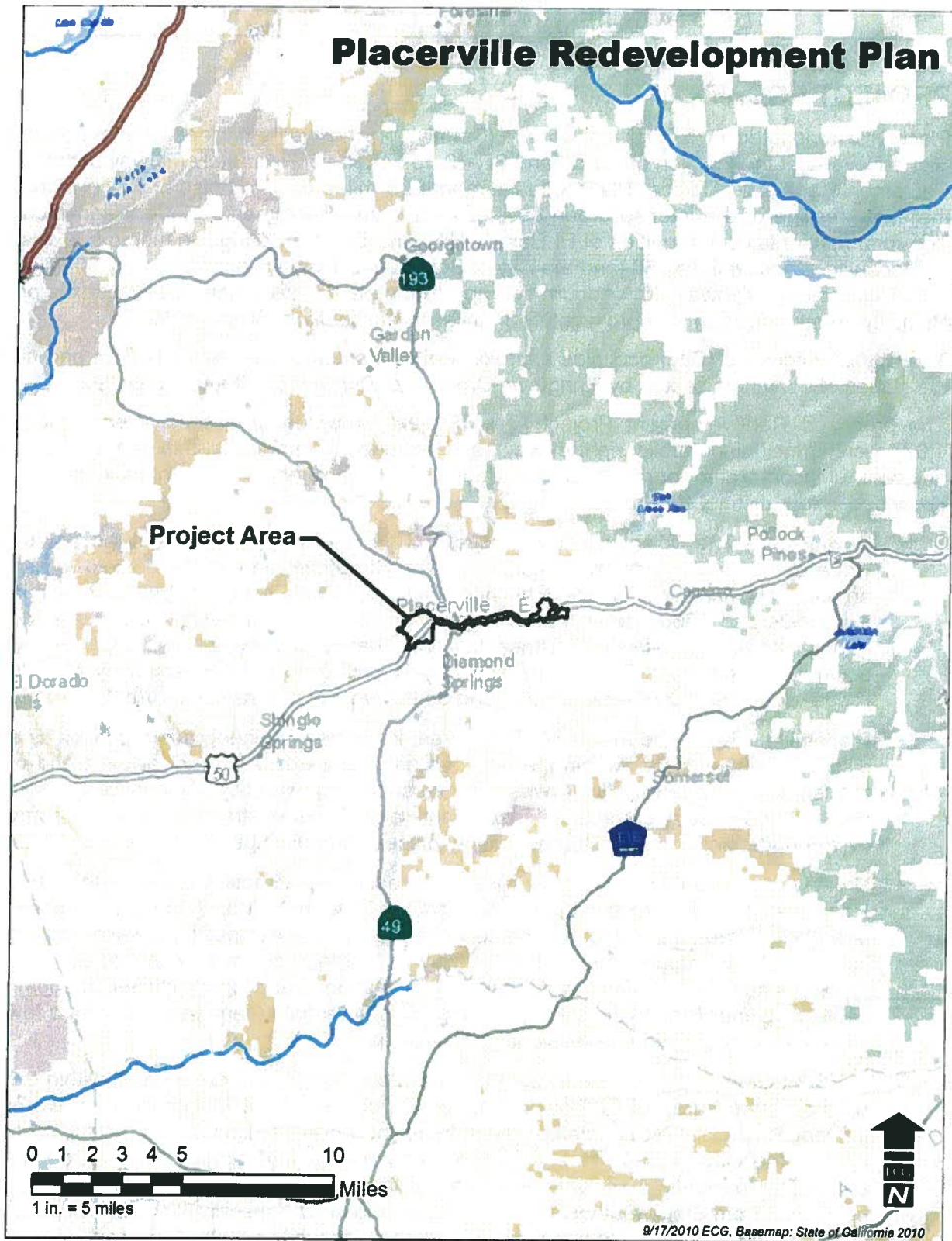
The City of Placerville (City) occupies approximately six square miles at the bottom and up the slopes of a ravine bisected by Hangtown Creek and Highway 50. (Figure 1, page 8).

The proposed Redevelopment Project Area (Project Area) encompasses approximately 1,077 acres (including public right-of-way) and includes properties within the City and adjacent unincorporated portions of the County. The Project Area can generally be described in four distinct subareas:

- **Downtown** – The Downtown area is one of the most defined districts in the City by virtue of the clarity of its character. The Main Street segment of the downtown has an unusually rich complement of historic buildings. There are many buildings built in the 1850s and 1860s as well as a number of buildings representative of the early 1900s, 1920s, and 1930s. These buildings define the overall character of the downtown area, bounded on the north by Highway 50, on the south by Miner's Ridge, on the east by Cedar Ravine, and on the west by Sacramento Street.
- **Placerville Drive** – The Placerville Drive area, by virtue of its geographic location, is a distinctly separate area within the City. Its entry and exit points are at each end of the length of Placerville Drive where it intersects Highway 50. Placerville Drive is dominated by strip commercial uses, and also includes the El Dorado County Fairgrounds, and many El Dorado County offices and buildings.
- **Broadway** – The Broadway area runs in an east-west direction between Mosquito Road and Newtown Road. It parallels Highway 50 to the north. Although Broadway is a single street, it is frequently perceived as two sections, upper and lower, due to its different identities. Lower Broadway is largely a linear commercial strip characterized by fast food restaurants, gas stations, and small cluster shopping centers. Upper Broadway includes scattered commercial enterprises including a few motels and other mixed professional and retail uses.
- **Smith Flat/Motor City** – The Smith Flat and Motor City areas are located within the unincorporated area of El Dorado County, within the City of Placerville's sphere of influence. Smith Flat is located generally to the north of Highway 50, immediately east of the City boundaries and includes commercial and single family residential uses. The former lumber mill is also located within the Smith Flat area. Motor City is separated from Smith Flat by Highway 50 and is located generally to the southeast of Highway 50. Mobile home parks are the primary uses in the Motor City area.

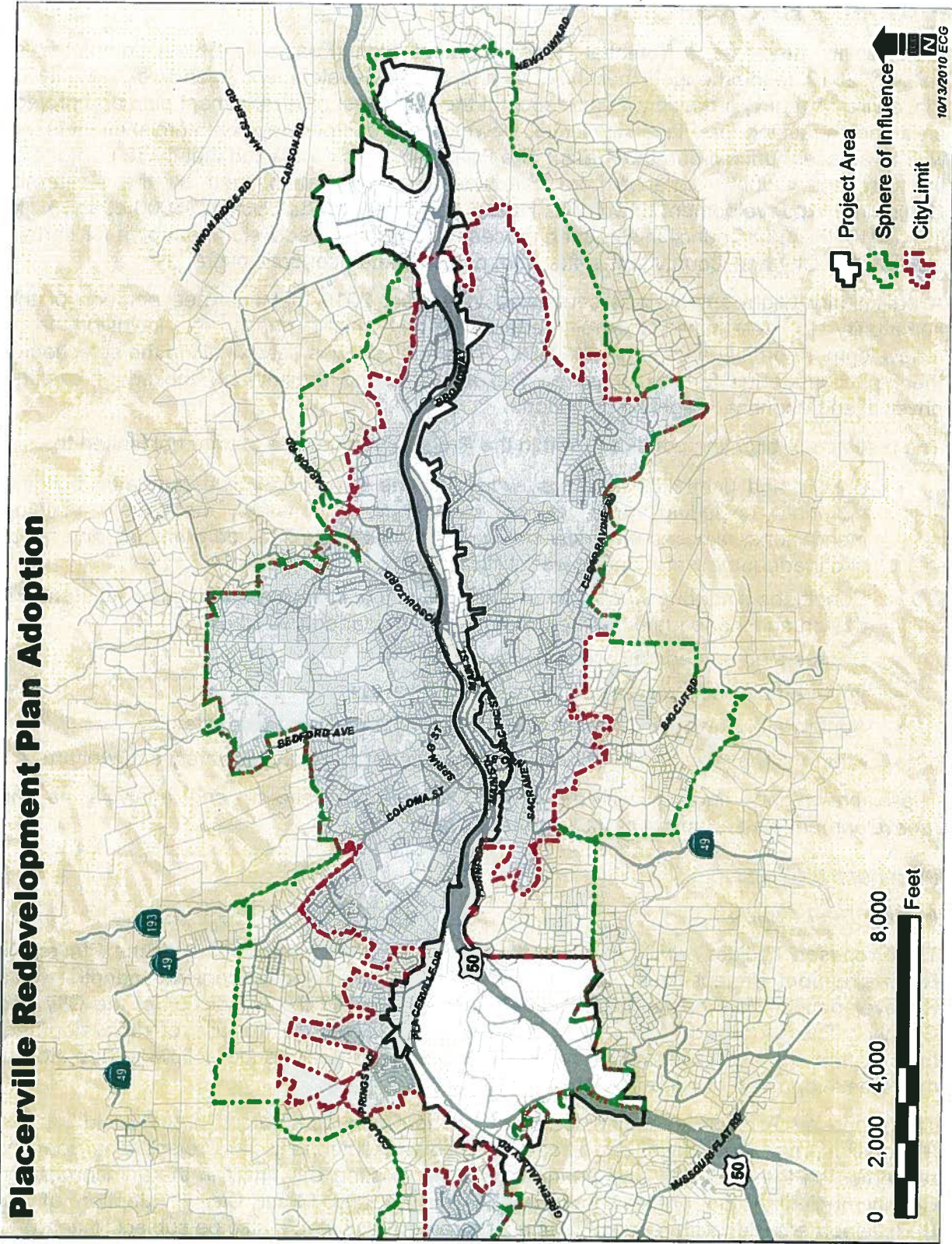
Major streets that traverse the Project Area include US 50, Placerville Drive, and Broadway. The Project Area boundaries are shown on Figure 2 (page 9).

III. PROJECT DESCRIPTION



Source: The Ervin Consulting Group, 2010  
Basemap: State of California, 2010

**FIGURE 1**  
**PROJECT VICINITY**



Source: The Ervin Consulting Group, 2010

**FIGURE 2**  
**PROJECT AREA BOUNDARIES**



## PROJECT BACKGROUND

A Feasibility Study for a Potential Redevelopment Plan (Feasibility Study) completed in January 2010 recommended that the City and the Redevelopment Agency of the City of Placerville (Agency) proceed with formation of the City's first redevelopment plan and project area encompassing the Placerville Drive, Downtown and Broadway commercial districts, as well as adjacent unincorporated areas. The Feasibility Study indicated that these portions of the City and County suffered from conditions of blight as defined by the California Community Redevelopment Law (CRL; Health and Safety Code Section 33000 et seq.). In May 2010, the City Council initiated the process to prepare a redevelopment plan for certain areas of the City and County that suffer from physical and economic blight.

A preliminary blight survey was conducted in August 2010 that analyzed portions of the community to determine whether certain territory might qualify for inclusion in a redevelopment project area under the CRL. This analysis was used to aid in the selection of the final boundaries for the proposed Project Area and preliminarily looked at existing physical and economic blighting conditions.

The preliminary blighting conditions within the Project Area include but are not limited to:

- Unsafe and unhealthy buildings, which include damaged and deteriorated building materials (including roofs, eaves, overhangs, and walls), inadequate building foundations, exposed electrical wiring, low fire flows, antiquated drainage, and faulty and inadequate water and sewer utilities.
- Conditions hindering viable use of buildings or lots including buildings of substandard design and inadequate facilities, and parcels of inadequate size.
- Depreciated or stagnant property values.
- Impaired property values due to hazardous wastes.
- Abnormally high business vacancies and abnormally low lease rates.
- A high crime rate that constitutes a serious threat to the public safety and welfare.

These preliminary findings will be subject to further research and analysis as the redevelopment plan adoption process goes forward.

## PROPOSED PROJECT

### *Project Description*

The Proposed Project entails the adoption of the Redevelopment Plan for the Placerville Redevelopment Project Area. The City Council is scheduled to consider adoption of a Redevelopment Plan for the 1,077-acre Project Area within the jurisdiction of the City and County. The proposed Redevelopment Plan would authorize the use of redevelopment tools to remove blight within the Project Area over a 30-year period, following adoption of the Redevelopment Plan in mid-2011.

The proposed Project Area includes most of the City's commercial areas, including the Placerville Drive, Downtown, and Broadway areas. Additionally the Project Area contains properties on the west and east perimeters of the existing City limits in the unincorporated County, including the areas known as Smith Flat and Motor City. Adoption of the Redevelopment Plan with respect to unincorporated areas would also be subject to approval by the El Dorado County Board of Supervisors (Board).

The Redevelopment Plan is a programmatic document, which empowers the Agency to implement a variety of tools to revitalize the Project Area consistent with the CRL. The

Redevelopment Plan provides that land use policies shall be those established by the City and County General Plans, as applicable, as such policies exist today, or may be hereafter amended. Consistent with the respective City and County General Plans, implementation actions may include:

- Improvements to public infrastructure and facilities serving the Project Area
- Repairs, rehabilitation, and reconstruction of Project Area properties
- Removing impediments to economic development
- Increasing, improving, and preserving the community's supply of affordable housing

The Redevelopment Plan would authorize the Redevelopment Agency to collect tax increment revenue, generated from increases in the assessed value of the Project Area, to finance the cost of these activities. Specific actions would be implemented gradually over the duration of the Redevelopment Plan, in accordance with the annual budget and five year implementation plan of the Agency. Such specific actions may require additional environmental analysis at a future date. The Redevelopment Plan would also authorize the Agency to use eminent domain on property that is not occupied as a residence.

#### ***Project Objectives***

The purposes and objectives of the Redevelopment Plan are to eliminate the conditions of blight existing in the Project Area, as defined by CRL, and to prevent the recurrence of blighting conditions within the Project Area. The Agency proposes to eliminate such conditions and prevent their recurrence by providing, pursuant to the Redevelopment Plan, for the planning, development, re-planning, redesign, redevelopment, reconstruction, and rehabilitation of the Project Area and by providing for such facilities as may be appropriate or necessary in the interest of the general welfare, in accordance with the General Plan and other planning documents, as they may be adopted or amended from time to time. The Proposed Project will achieve the purposes of the CRL by:

- The provision of opportunities for the participation of owners and tenants in the revitalization of their properties
- The elimination or alleviation of blighting influences and environmental deficiencies
- The installation of new or replacement of existing public improvements, facilities, and utilities in areas that are currently inadequately served with regard to such improvements, facilities, and utilities
- The development and rehabilitation of housing in the Project Area, the City of Placerville, and El Dorado County for low- or moderate-income persons and families
- The replanning, redesign, and development of undeveloped or underdeveloped areas which are stagnant or improperly utilized
- The encouragement of modern, integrated development with improved pedestrian and vehicular circulation

The foregoing redevelopment goals and objectives are to be pursued and accomplished, subject to and consistent with, the City and County General Plans, as amended from time to time.

#### ***Redevelopment Project Components***

The proposed redevelopment programs in the proposed Project Area include the following:

- Public/Private Development Program
- Targeted Business Recruitment Program

### III. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

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- Infrastructure Improvements Program
- Community Facilities Program
- Community Business Revitalization Program
- Land Assembly and Relocation Program
- Affordable Housing Program

The proposed redevelopment programs, as described below, and implementing projects will address the existing blighting conditions and provide infrastructure for future development within the Project Area. It is believed that as blighting conditions are further reduced, that new private sector investment will occur in the Project Area and lead to further removal of blight. Therefore, the Agency's program of redevelopment will serve as a catalyst to remove blighting conditions and spur the creation of affordable housing.

#### 1. Public/Private Development Program

Public/private coordination occurs when the Agency participates in significant private development projects. Through an Owner Participation Agreement (OPA) or Disposition and Development Agreement (DDA), the Agency may assist with new development or the expansion of existing facilities. The implementation of this program will improve the overall quality and aesthetics of the Project Area by improving existing buildings or by developing new contemporary facilities, which will alleviate related blighting conditions such as structural deterioration, obsolete design, and inadequate building size while increasing the overall value of the property.

#### 2. Targeted Business Recruitment Program

This program would create incentives for the recruitment of specific types of businesses that would provide goods and services that are desired by the community. Types of incentives include land acquisition, land cost write-downs, and low-interest loans for commercial rehabilitation or other authorized activities. In addition, the Agency would like to attract businesses that will create well paying jobs in industries with strong future growth potential.

#### 3. Infrastructure Improvements Program

Infrastructure improvements cover a variety of public works projects ranging from correcting utilities, traffic capacity projects, transit improvements, parking facilities, new streets, undergrounding overhead transmission lines, storm drainage and sanitary sewers, flood control improvements, sewer treatment facilities, and many other assorted capital projects. This may also include streetscape projects including new curbs, gutters, and sidewalks where they do not exist or where broken curbs, gutters, and sidewalks require replacement; installing street trees and shrubs; constructing both decorative and handicapped accessible crosswalks; constructing new medians with landscaping; installing street furniture, such as trash receptacles and newspaper racks; and improving area lighting by increasing the number of luminaries, increasing the wattage of individual streetlights, or adding pedestrian streetlights. The goal for these improvements is to increase desirability to invest and develop in the Project Area by improving the character of the Project Area and reducing infrastructure costs that would otherwise be borne by the private sector. This in turn should increase retail opportunities, jobs, and housing availability to the community and improve property values.

#### 4. Community Facilities Program

Community facilities projects focus on the need for new or improved community facilities such as parks, community centers, libraries, and cultural facilities. Projects are anticipated

for development using Agency and/or other funds from the County, State, and Federal governments. These projects are intended to encourage further investment in their respective neighborhoods and make them more desirable places to visit and live.

5. Community Business Revitalization Program

The Community Business Revitalization Program could be developed to provide assistance to businesses in the Redevelopment Project Area to encourage restoring, modernizing, and improving the façades of commercial structures to enhance the attractiveness and visibility of the area.

By eliminating physical deterioration and improving the substandard (obsolete) appearance of the commercial buildings and surrounding sites, more patrons will be attracted which will improve retail sales.

6. Land Assembly and Relocation Program

The purpose of this program is to assemble small, underutilized, and/or poorly configured parcels of property into sites suitable for new development, and to thereafter sell and/or lease property for private development.

By expanding existing buildings, the Agency will help to reduce the number of inadequately sized buildings, which will in turn accommodate a wider variety of contemporary commercial uses. By assembling small parcels, the Agency will reduce the number of inadequately sized parcels and provide adequate space to develop contemporary facilities or expand existing buildings to accommodate a wider variety of uses.

Land assembly would likely take place in response to property owner, developer, or Agency initiated efforts to assemble the property needed for the expansion of existing uses or for the creation of sites capable of development for new uses. The Agency may also choose to participate in the acquisition of property for infrastructure or public facilities purposes, which would primarily benefit the Project Area. The program may also include site preparation activities such as demolition and clearance, and assistance for environmental remediation. The Agency will not have eminent domain authority to acquire real property that is occupied as a residence.

The Agency will provide relocation assistance as required by State or Federal laws and regulations. This will ensure that uniform, fair, and equitable treatment is afforded to displaced businesses and residents as a result of the Agency's land assembly program.

7. Affordable Housing Program

As required by state law, 20% of the gross tax increment funds received by the Agency must be deposited into a fund that would be used to assist in the production and preservation of low- and moderate-income housing. The Agency may assist in a variety of programs to increase, improve or preserve affordable housing such as the following:

a. *Production*

The Agency can make loans and grants from the Low and Moderate Income Housing Fund to non-profit and for-profit developers for the new construction or rehabilitation of affordable housing. Loans can be made on a deferred payment and/or below market interest rate basis.

The Agency can also participate in land acquisition, land cost write-down, developer recruitment, credit enhancement, and other participation to cause affordable housing to be developed. Such affordable housing could be rental or ownership housing.

### III. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

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#### *b. Preservation*

The Agency may offer low-interest or no-interest loans or grants to assist low- and moderate-income homeowners in making repairs to existing residences. Such repairs could consist of correcting health and safety violations, re-landscaping, and re-painting. This preserves the affordability of the housing and extends its lifespan, as well as improving the neighborhood. Additionally, such programs can be extended to owners of rental properties to make repairs to affordable rental housing. In either case, covenants must be recorded to keep these properties affordable for the time period required by CRL. Some of the objectives of the preservation program include:

- Conserve and improve existing housing and residential neighborhoods. Provide loan and/or grant assistance to eligible households demonstrating the inability to maintain the physical condition of their primary residences.
- Preserve the existing affordable housing stock. Work with existing providers of affordable housing to extend the terms of expiring affordable housing contracts.
- Require that all affordable multi-family and homeowner housing subsidized by Agency funding contains provisions that assure long-term affordability in compliance with CRL.

#### *c. Affordability Assistance*

These programs can involve direct subsidies to lower the cost of producing housing or first-time homebuyer programs to assist very low- to moderate-income families with mortgage assistance for the purchase of a home. The latter can take the form of a deferred loan with a low interest rate and equity sharing provisions. When the home is sold, the loan and equity share would be used to help another first-time homebuyer. Senior households in the low- to moderate-income category may also be targeted in such programs.

#### ***Requested Entitlements***

The EIR will serve as the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) compliance document for the Placerville Redevelopment Plan adoption and for subsequent actions by the Agency in furtherance of the Redevelopment Plan.

The Redevelopment Agency of the City of Placerville, as Lead Agency, would take the following actions:

- Certify the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) and adopt Findings and a Mitigation Monitoring Plan

The City of Placerville, as Responsible Agency, would take the following actions for project approval:

- Adopt the Placerville Redevelopment Plan
- Adopt Findings and a Mitigation Monitoring Plan

The County of El Dorado, as Responsible Agency, would take the following actions:

- Adopt the Placerville Redevelopment Plan
- Adopt Findings and a Mitigation Monitoring Plan

The EIR will be used by the following public agencies and boards in the approval of implementation activities under the Redevelopment Plan:

- City Council of the City of Placerville

- Board of Supervisors of the County of El Dorado
- Board of the Redevelopment Agency of the City of Placerville
- Planning Commission of the City of Placerville
- All Departments of the City of Placerville who must approve implementation activities undertaken in accordance with the Redevelopment Plan
- All other public agencies that may approve implementation activities undertaken in accordance with the Redevelopment Plan

The EIR will be used in the adoption of and approval of any of the following redevelopment project implementation activities that may be necessary:

- Approval of Disposition and Development Agreements (DDA)
- Approval of Owner Participation Agreements (OPA)
- Approval and funding of public facilities and improvements projects
- Sale of tax increment and/or other bonds, certificates of participation and other forms of indebtedness
- Acquisition and demolition of property
- Rehabilitation of property
- Relocation of displaced occupants
- Approval of certificates of conformance
- Approval of development plans, including zoning and other variances and conditional use permits; including those for low- and moderate-income housing units
- Issuance of permits and other approvals necessary for implementation of the Redevelopment Plan

## SECTION IV – ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST AND DISCUSSION

### 1. AESTHETICS

Would the proposal:

| Issues   | Potentially Significant Impact | Potentially Significant Impact Unless Mitigated | Less-than-significant Impact | No Impact |
|--|--------------------------------|---|------------------------------|-----------|
| A) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?  |                                |   | X                            |           |
| B) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway? |                                |   | X                            |           |
| C) Substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings?  |                                |   | X                            |           |
| D) Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?                                    |                                |   | X                            |           |

#### ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

Placerville's visual setting is consistent with its location at 2,000 feet above mean sea level (msl) in the Sierra Nevada foothills. Views from any given location may include forested ridges, hillsides and canyons, creeks, homes, offices, businesses, and roads. From some areas of the City, the viewshed includes the high mountains of the Sierra Nevada crest 30 miles to the east.

The California State Scenic Highway Program is administered by Caltrans. The goal of the program is to preserve and protect scenic highway corridors from changes that would diminish the aesthetic value of the adjacent land (California Streets and Highways Code, Section 260 et seq.). A scenic corridor is the land generally adjacent to and visible from the highway, and is identified using a motorist's line of vision (Caltrans 2007).

US 50 between the Government Center interchange in Placerville and South Lake Tahoe is an officially designated scenic highway, and was nominated by El Dorado County. The County has a General Plan policy directing staff to prepare an ordinance establishing standards for the protection of scenic highways, including US 50; the County has not yet adopted a scenic highway ordinance.

The City of Placerville General Plan (1989) identifies goals and policies that seek to preserve and enhance the City's existing community character and sense of place by developing projects that build upon positive design features.

#### STANDARDS OF SIGNIFICANCE

For purposes of this Initial Study, an impact would be significant if implementation of the Redevelopment Plan would do any of the following:

- Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista

#### IV. ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST AND DISCUSSION

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- Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway
- Adversely alter the existing visual character or quality of the Project Area
- Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area

#### ANSWERS TO CHECKLIST QUESTIONS

##### **Questions A through C**

A major objective of the Redevelopment Plan is to eliminate blight and blighting influences within the Project Area that contribute to the disjointed and degraded visual quality of the Project Area. This could include building rehabilitation, historic preservation, new construction consistent with adopted plans and policies, streetscape improvements, and other public infrastructure improvements.

US 50 is a designated scenic highway within the Project Area. All redevelopment activities must be consistent with the General Plan, which identifies goals and policies that seek to preserve and enhance the City's existing community character and sense of place by developing projects that build upon positive design features. Therefore, future redevelopment projects are anticipated to preserve and enhance the scenic highway and the visual character and quality of the Project Area.

According to the blight survey, streets in the Project Area are generally in poor condition. Topography, moisture, temperature extremes (an average of 93 degrees in the summer; 33 degrees in the winter), and several other factors, including budget concerns, all contribute to the severe damage that was observed on most roads. The Redevelopment Plan could fund some improvements to the degraded and blighted roadways through redevelopment engendered development. Therefore, the Proposed Project would have a beneficial aesthetic impact on the Project Area.

##### **Question D**

Development engendered by redevelopment activities will result in increases in light and glare from domestic, commercial, and public lighting. Any development encouraged by redevelopment activities must install lighting and reduce glare in compliance with the City's City Code requirements in the Zoning Ordinance (Title 10, Chapter 4, Sec. 10-4-16), and County Code requirements (Title 17, Chapter 17.14, Sec. 17.14.170). The purpose of the City Code section is "to regulate lighting to balance the safety and security needs for lighting with the city's desire to preserve the nighttime skyline..." and both the City and County codes are intended to ensure that light trespass and glare have a negligible impact on surrounding property, especially residential. Because the Project Area is already urbanized and affected by existing sources of light and glare, the incremental increase in light and glare associated with redevelopment activities, as regulated, will be less than significant.

#### FINDINGS

Impacts associated with aesthetics are *less than significant* and will not be further discussed in the EIR.



## 2. AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY RESOURCES

Would the proposal:

| Issues   | Potentially Significant Impact | Potentially Significant Impact Unless Mitigated | Less-than-Significant Impact | No Impact |
|--|--------------------------------|---|------------------------------|-----------|
| A) Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?   |                                |   |                              | <b>X</b>  |
| B) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?   |                                |   |                              | <b>X</b>  |
| 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))? |                                |   |                              | <b>X</b>  |
| D) Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?   |                                |   |                              | <b>X</b>  |
| 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?   |                                |   |                              | <b>X</b>  |

### ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

The Project Area is located primarily within the City of Placerville with some contiguous portions of unincorporated County areas, and is developed with urban uses and land use designations. All unincorporated land within the Project Area is designated residential or commercial, and all incorporated land is designated for urban uses. There is no Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance, for Farmland of Local Importance within the Project Area, or any forest or timberland maintained for timber production.

The Placerville City Code includes a Woodland and Forest Conservation ordinance (Chapter 13 of Title 8) intended to preserve and enhance urban forest lands within the City. The ordinance regulates tree removal by establishing minimum canopy retention standards for residential subdivisions that are used as thresholds of significance under CEQA. These standards identify the amount of canopy that should be retained during development. This amount is calculated by multiplying the appropriate rate by the percentage of existing canopy cover (i.e., for 50% existing cover, 0.80 x 50, or 40%, must be retained). The ordinance requires issuance of a Woodland Alteration Permit and preparation of a Woodland Alteration Plan before significantly altering any forest or woodland.

#### IV. ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST AND DISCUSSION

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##### STANDARDS OF SIGNIFICANCE

For purposes of this Initial Study, an impact would be significant if implementation of the Redevelopment Plan would conflict with adopted agricultural policies or zoning, or result in the loss of forestry land.

##### ANSWERS TO CHECKLIST QUESTIONS

###### *Questions A through E*

As noted above, the Project Area is located primarily within the City of Placerville with some contiguous portions of unincorporated County areas, and is developed with urban uses and land use designations. All unincorporated land within the Project Area is designated residential or commercial, and all incorporated land is designated for urban uses. There is no Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance, or Farmland of Local Importance within the Project Area. There is also no forest or timberland maintained for timber production in the Project Area. Although pine forest habitat exists throughout the Project Area on slopes and in low density areas, the entire Project Area is designated for urban uses.

The proposed Redevelopment Plan would not convert prime agricultural land to non-agricultural use, would not conflict with agricultural zoning or a Williamson Act contract, nor would the Redevelopment Plan involve any other changes resulting in a conversion of Farmland. The proposed Redevelopment Plan would not result in a loss of forest lands or resources. Therefore, the proposed Redevelopment Plan would have no effect on agricultural resources.

##### FINDINGS

The proposed Redevelopment Plan would be consistent with adopted land use designations and policies for the Project Area, and would have *no effect* on agriculture or forestry resources and will not be further discussed in the EIR.

### 3. AIR QUALITY

Would the proposal:

| Issues  | Potentially Significant Impact | Potentially Significant Impact Unless Mitigated | Less-than-Significant Impact | No Impact |
|---|--------------------------------|---|------------------------------|-----------|
| A) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?   | X                              |   |                              |           |
| B) Violate any air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation?  | X                              |   |                              |           |
| C) 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 (including releasing emissions which exceed quantitative thresholds for ozone precursors)? | X                              |   |                              |           |
| D) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?  | X                              |   |                              |           |
| E) Create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people?   |                                |   | X                            |           |

#### ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

The Project Area is located within the Mountain Counties Air Basin (MCAB) and is located within the El Dorado County Air Quality Management District (EDCAQMD). Air pollutant emissions within the Basin are generated by stationary and mobile sources, and mobile sources account for the majority of the air pollutant emissions.

From an air quality perspective, the topography and meteorology of the MCAB combine such that local conditions predominate in determining the effect of emissions in the basin. Regional airflows are affected by the mountains and hills, which direct surface air flows, cause shallow vertical mixing, and create areas of high pollutant concentrations by hindering dispersion.

Inversion layers, where warm air overlays cooler air, frequently occur and trap pollutants close to the ground. In the winter, these conditions can lead to carbon monoxide (CO) "hotspots" along heavily traveled roads and at busy intersections. During summer's longer daylight hours, stagnant air, high temperatures, and plentiful sunshine provide the conditions and energy for the photochemical reaction between reactive organic compounds (ROG) and oxides of nitrogen (NO<sub>x</sub>) that results in the formation of ozone (O<sub>3</sub>). Because of its long formation time, O<sub>3</sub> is a regional pollutant rather than a local hotspot problem.

In the summer, the strong upwind valley air flowing into the basin from the Central Valley to the west is an effective transport medium for O<sub>3</sub> precursors and O<sub>3</sub> generated in the Bay Area and the Sacramento and San Joaquin valleys. These transported pollutants predominate as the cause of O<sub>3</sub> in the MCAB and are largely responsible for the exceedances of the state and federal O<sub>3</sub> ambient air quality standards (AAQS) in the MCAB. The California Air Resources Board (ARB) has officially designated the MCAB as "ozone impacted" by transport from those areas (13 CCR sec. 70500).

#### IV. ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST AND DISCUSSION

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The County is designated as non-attainment with federal and state O<sub>3</sub> standards. O<sub>3</sub> violations within the MCAB are primarily due to the transport of pollutants from the Bay Area, Sacramento Metropolitan area, and San Joaquin Valley, as well as from the use of internal combustion engine, wood-burning stoves, fireplaces, and occasionally due to smoke from nearby wild fires. The County is also in non-attainment for the state 24-hour and annual average PM<sub>10</sub> (particulate matter under 10 microns in size) standards, unclassified for the federal PM<sub>10</sub> standards and state annual PM<sub>2.5</sub> (particulate matter under 2.5 microns in size) standard, and unclassified/attainment with federal PM<sub>2.5</sub> standards.

#### STANDARDS OF SIGNIFICANCE

The following thresholds are based on the CEQA Guidelines, as amended. For purposes of this Initial Study, an impact would be significant if implementation of the Redevelopment Plan would result in any of the following:

- Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan
- Violate any air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation
- A cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the proposed project region is in non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard (including releasing emissions which exceed quantitative thresholds for ozone precursors, including volatile organic compounds (VOCs) and NO<sub>x</sub>)
- Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations
- Create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people

#### ANSWERS TO CHECKLIST QUESTIONS

##### ***Questions A through C***

The proposed Project Area is located within the MCAB, which is considered a non-attainment area for selected pollutants. Vehicles associated with redevelopment activities would produce emissions that contribute to regional O<sub>3</sub> and the deterioration of AAQS. The net increases in regional emissions of O<sub>3</sub> precursors are significant environmental effects. In addition, air pollutants would be emitted by construction equipment, and fugitive dust (PM) would be generated during grading and site preparation. Traffic increases (discussed in Section 16, Transportation and Traffic) and short-term construction impacts associated with the redevelopment activities could contribute to significant adverse air quality impacts. These issues will be discussed in the EIR.

##### ***Question D***

The Redevelopment Plan may expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations. This issue will be discussed in the EIR.

##### ***Question E***

The Redevelopment Plan programs and implementing projects will address the existing blighting conditions and provide infrastructure for future development within the Project Area consistent with the General Plan. The Redevelopment Plan does not propose any change in land use to industrial uses that could create objectionable odors. Odor impacts would be *less than significant*.

**FINDINGS**

Redevelopment activities and redevelopment-engendered development could result in ***potentially significant*** violations of air quality standards or contribute to existing or projected air quality violations; these issues will be further discussed in the EIR. Impacts associated with odors are ***less than significant*** and will not be further discussed.

### 4. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

Would the proposal result in impacts to:

| Issues   | Potentially Significant Impact | Potentially Significant Impact Unless Mitigated | Less-than-Significant Impact | No Impact |
|--|--------------------------------|---|------------------------------|-----------|
| 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 Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service? | X                              |   |                              |           |
| B) Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Game or US Fish and Wildlife Service?   | X                              |   |                              |           |
| C) Have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?   | X                              |   |                              |           |
| 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?   | X                              |   |                              |           |
| E) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?  | X                              |   |                              |           |
| 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?   | X                              |   |                              |           |

#### ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

The mild climate and variety of vegetative habitats in the Project Area support an abundance of wildlife species. Chaparral, oak woodland, open grasslands, and riparian plant associations can all be found. Although residential development has tended to displace many of the more sensitive animals, a number of larger mammal species, such as deer, have remained due to the amount of vacant and low density land throughout the Project Area.

#### STANDARDS OF SIGNIFICANCE

For purposes of this Initial Study, an impact would be significant if implementation of the Redevelopment Plan would do any of the following:

- 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 Game (CDFG) or United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)

- Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations or by the CDFG or USFWS
- Have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (CWA; including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means
- 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
- Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance
- Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan

#### **ANSWERS TO CHECKLIST QUESTIONS**

##### ***Questions A through Question E***

Biological habitats and vegetation communities found in the Project Area include mixed oak forests, woodland, riparian, and potential wetlands. These habitats support a range of species that may include special status species that could be affected by redevelopment activities and development. Development engendered by the proposed Redevelopment Plan may therefore have an effect on biological resources; this issue will be discussed in the EIR.

##### ***Question F***

The entire Project Area is located within a County Designated Community Region of the County Integrated Natural Resources Management Plan (INRMP). The INRMP is defined by County General Plan Policy 7.4.2.8 and is being prepared in accordance with applicable HCP and NCCP Guidelines. The status of the INRMP process and resources mapping will be discussed in the EIR.

#### **FINDINGS**

Redevelopment activities and redevelopment-engendered development could result in ***potentially significant*** impacts to biological resources; these issues will be further discussed in the EIR.

**5. CULTURAL RESOURCES**

Would the proposal:

| Issues   | Potentially Significant Impact | Potentially Significant Impact Unless Mitigated | Less-than-Significant Impact | No Impact |
|--|--------------------------------|---|------------------------------|-----------|
| A) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in § 15064.5?    | X                              |   |                              |           |
| B) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to § 15064.5? | X                              |   |                              |           |
| C) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?        | X                              |   |                              |           |
| D) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?                           | X                              |   |                              |           |

**ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING**

Placerville is a "gold rush" town named after the placer gold deposits found in its river beds and hills in the late 1840s. The highly publicized discovery of gold in the tailrace section at Sutter's Mill in Coloma (only 10 miles from Placerville) in 1848 resulted in the migration of thousands of fortune-seekers to Northern California in the mid 1800s. The town of Placerville was named after the placer deposits found in the river bed between Spanish Ravine and the town plaza. During the gold rush, Placerville became an important supply center for the surrounding mining camps.

**STANDARDS OF SIGNIFICANCE**

For purposes of this Initial Study, an impact would be significant if implementation of the Redevelopment Plan would do any of the following:

- Cause a substantial change in the significance of a historical or archaeological resource as defined in CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5
- Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature
- Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries

**ANSWERS TO CHECKLIST QUESTIONS**

**Questions A and B**

The Project Area is located in an existing urbanized area, which has been developed with both commercial and residential uses since the Gold Rush. Previously recorded prehistoric and historic sites have been inventoried within and in proximity to the Project Area. Redevelopment activities could adversely affect historic and cultural resources in the Project Area through both infrastructure and development activities - including construction, demolition, and rehabilitation. Although redevelopment funding is often used for historic preservation, inappropriate use of funding inconsistent with the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for the Rehabilitating Historic Structures* could result in an adverse effect on listed structures.



Listed or eligible structures could be directly or indirectly impacted by redevelopment activities, or sub-surface archaeological deposits disturbed during construction. Cultural and historic resources will be discussed in the EIR.

**Question C**

Paleontology is defined as a science dealing with the life of past geological periods as known from fossil remains. Paleontological resources include fossil remains, as well as fossil localities and formations, which have produced fossil material in other nearby areas. This resource can be an important educational resource, and are classified as non-renewable scientific resources. Paleontological resources are protected by California Public Resources Code (PRC) Section 5097.5. A search of the University of California Museum of Paleontology (UCMP) collections database did not identify any evidence of significant paleontological resources in the Project Area. However, the possibility of a paleontological resource in the Project Area exists, and therefore will be discussed in the EIR.

**Question D**

Human remains encountered within the Project Area would likely come from archaeological or historical archaeological contexts. Human burials, in addition to being potential archaeological resources, have specific provisions for treatment in PRC Section 5097 and Sections 7050.5, 7051, and 7054 of the California Health and Safety Code (HSC). Because prehistoric or archaeological sites are present in the City's Planning Area, the presence of human remains is a possibility. If remains are encountered, disturbing these remains could violate PRC and HSC provisions, as well as destroy the resource. Therefore, this cultural resource issue will be discussed in the EIR.

**FINDINGS**

Redevelopment activities and redevelopment-engendered development could result in a **potentially significant impact** for paleontological, archaeological, and historic resources. These issues will be further discussed in the EIR.

## 6. GEOLOGY AND SOILS

Would the proposal result in or expose people to potential impacts involving:

| Issues  | Potentially Significant Impact | Potentially Significant Impact Unless Mitigated | Less-than-Significant Impact | No Impact |
|---|--------------------------------|---|------------------------------|-----------|
| A) Expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42.</li> </ul> |                                |   | X                            |           |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ii) Strong seismic ground shaking?</li> </ul>  |                                |   | X                            |           |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?</li> </ul>  |                                |   | X                            |           |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>iv) Landslides?</li> </ul>   |                                |   | X                            |           |
| B) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?   |                                |   | X                            |           |
| 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?  |                                |   | X                            |           |
| D) Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial risks to life or property?  |                                |   | X                            |           |
| 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?  |                                |   |                              | X         |

### ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

#### *Regional Geology*

The County is located in the Sierra Nevada geomorphic province of California, which is east of the Great Valley province and west of the Range and Basin province. The Sierra Nevada province is characterized by steep-sided hills and narrow, rocky stream channels. This province consists of Pliocene and older deposits that have been uplifted as a result of plate tectonics, granitic intrusion, and volcanic activity. Subsequent glaciation and additional volcanic activity are factors that led to the east-west orientation of stream channels. The southwestern foothills where the Project Area is located are composed of rocks of the Mariposa Formation that include amphibolite, serpentine, and pyroxenite.

### ***Seismicity***

Based on historical seismic activity and fault and seismic hazards mapping, The County is considered to have relatively low potential for seismic activity, and is located beyond the highly active fault zones of the coastal areas of California. According to the California Division of Mines and Geology, there are no active faults or major earthquake epicenters in the Placerville area. The inactive Melones Fault does, however, pass through town. Strong groundshaking poses a greater seismic threat than the possibility of a local ground rupture. The Project Area is not crossed by any fault in an Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zone. In addition, no portion of the County is located in a Seismic Hazard Zone (i.e., regulatory zones that encompass areas prone to liquefaction and earthquake-induced landslides) based on the Seismic Hazards Mapping Program administered by the California Geological Survey (Department of Conservation, 2010). Lateral spreading is typically associated with areas experiencing liquefaction; because liquefaction hazards are not present in El Dorado County, it can be concluded that the Project Area is also not at risk from lateral spreading.

### ***Landslides***

The term landslide includes a wide range of ground movement, such as rockfalls, deep failure of slopes, and shallow debris flows (mudflows). There are many different types of landslides, including translational/rotational slide, earthflow, debris slide, debris flow/torrent track, debris slide/amphitheater slope, and inner gorge. Many factors influence the potential for landslide occurrences, such as geological conditions, drainage characteristics, slope gradient and configuration, vegetation, and removal of underlying support. Cuts and fills associated with road building activity are a major cause of slope instability. The County has been subject to landslide hazards in the past. The most notable recent landslide event occurred in 1997 along US 50 east of Placerville. The since-named Mill Creek landslide resulted in the closure of US 50 and significant direct and indirect economic losses. Since this landslide, United States Geological Survey (USGS), in cooperation with the El Dorado National Forest, has actively monitored landslide activity along this stretch of US 50.

Currently there are no statewide mapping programs for landslide hazards in California. Landslide hazard identification maps were produced from 1986 through 1995, but were discontinued when the Landslide Hazard Mapping Act was repealed. However, historical mapping efforts indicate that landslides can be expected to occur in the western third of the county along the Foothills Fault Zone because of the planes of weakness associated with faulting in the area.

### ***Soils***

Soils located on jurisdictional lands on the west slope of the County consist of well drained silt and gravelly loams divided into two physiographic regions, the Lower and Middle Foothills and the Mountainous Uplands. Four soil associations are found in the Project Area; a soil association represents a landscape that has a distinctive proportional pattern of soils. It normally consists of one or more major soils and at least one minor soil, and is named for the major soil. The Project Area contains Mariposa-Josephine, Boomer-Auburn, Cohasset-Aiken-McCarthy, and Holland-Musick-Chaix associations. Although there are no Serpentine-Delpiedra soils in the Project Area, there is vein of naturally occurring asbestos running through the project area (County General Plan EIR, 2003, Exhibit 5.8-2); this issue will be discussed in the hazards section of the EIR.

Expansive soils are soils that increase in volume when they absorb water and shrink when they dry out. When buildings are placed on expansive soils, foundations may rise during each wet season and fall during each dry season. This movement may result in cracking

#### IV. ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST AND DISCUSSION

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foundations, distortion of structures, and warping of doors and windows, which may result in structural hazards. Generally, soils in western El Dorado County have a low to moderate shrink-swell potential, with only 0.01% have a high rating (National Resource Conservation Service (NRCS), 2002).

##### ***Erosion***

Erosion is defined as a combination of processes in which the materials of the earth's surface are loosened, dissolved, or worn away, and transported from one place to another by natural agents. There are two types of soil erosion, wind erosion and water erosion. Erosion potential in soils is influenced primarily by loose soil texture and steep slopes. Loose soils can be eroded by water or wind forces, whereas soils with high clay content are generally susceptible only to water erosion. The potential for erosion generally increases as a result of human activity, primarily through the development of facilities and impervious surfaces and the removal of vegetative cover.

The slope of the terrain in the Placerville area varies from gently sloping (0% to 5%) in the downtown area to steep slopes (5% to +50%) on the adjacent hills. Slope instability poses a greater hazard because of Placerville's very hilly surrounding topography, although this is reduced because the area's soil is generally composed of very stable material. In addition, foundation instability in the P Area can be caused by expansive soils and abandoned water wells. Development on slopes greater than 25% tends to require engineering applications that act to reduce development potential.

##### **STANDARDS OF SIGNIFICANCE**

For purposes of this Initial Study, an impact would be significant if implementation of the Redevelopment Plan would allow a project to be built that will introduce either geologic or seismic hazards by allowing the construction of the project on such a site without protection against those hazards.

##### **ANSWERS TO CHECKLIST QUESTIONS**

###### ***Questions A through D***

Full build-out of the Project Area as adopted in the City and County General Plans will increase the exposure of people and structures to seismic and geologic hazards, particularly in areas of steeper slopes. However, the probability of major seismic events in the County is low. Landslides pose the greatest risk in the hill areas, while the potential collapse of older buildings and the disruption of public services and utilities pose the greatest risk in the existing developed area.

The City enforces the Grading, Erosion and Sediment Control (GESC) ordinance (City Code, Chapter 7), which outlines construction requirements for areas of excessive slope to minimize damage from slope instability. The City requires minimum parcel areas for parcels having a cross slope exceeding 10%. The City requires assurance that the land area – in which grading and for which habitable structures are proposed – is not subject to hazards of land slippage or significant settlement or erosion. The City also requires assurance that the hazards of seismic activity or flooding can be eliminated or adequately reduced (Ord. 1523, 4-11-1995). In addition, the GESC Ordinance and the General Plan Policy Document also include policies and regulations to mitigate potentially adverse impacts with respect to seismic and geologic hazards, including requiring engineering geologic reports, soils and foundation engineering reports, and GESC plans for development.

Structural hazards refer to structures that may be unstable in the event of an earthquake. All new structural proposals are reviewed by the City Building Department for seismic loading through the building permit process; this review is based on California Uniform Building Code (UBC) requirements. There are older structures in the City that were developed before existing City building code requirements were enacted. Specifically, there are existing structures that were developed before the enactment of the Riley Act (1933), which prohibits new unreinforced masonry buildings, and the Field Act (1933), which places safety requirements on the construction of public schools. Redevelopment would provide a tool to assist such properties to conduct seismic retrofitting and other rehabilitation to improve structural stability.

The proposed project is designed to accommodate future population and job growth by removing barriers to General Plan build-out, thereby exposing future residents and workers to potential seismic events. However, the probability of major seismic events in the County is low, and therefore, the potential for public expose to seismic hazards is minimal. Adherence to the City's Building and Safety Code, as required by State and City law, and local ordinances would ensure maximum practicable protection available for users of the buildings and associated infrastructure in the Project Area during seismically induced groundshaking. Because all new development would be required to abide by City building standards, which incorporate standard seismic safety provisions, this impact is considered *less than significant*.

**Question E**

The City Public Works Department's Water and Sewer Lines Division provide wastewater disposal in the Project Area. The Water and Sewer Lines Division operates and maintains approximately 45 miles of water and sewer lines. Future development in the Project Area would connect to the existing wastewater system. Septic tanks or other alternative wastewater disposal systems are not used in the Project Area, thus adoption of the Redevelopment Plan would have *no impact* related to soil hazards for such systems.

**FINDINGS**

The proposed Redevelopment Plan would not expose people to substantial geologic or seismic hazards, and would not cause significant erosion or encourage future development on unstable soils or slopes without appropriate engineering and design. Therefore, the Redevelopment Plan adoption would result in *less-than-significant* impacts related to geology and soils. The potentially significant health hazards related to naturally occurring asbestos in the some of the Project Area soils will be discussed under Hazards and Hazardous Materials in the EIR.

## 7. GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

Would the proposal:

| Issues   | Potentially Significant Impact | Potentially Significant Impact Unless Mitigated | Less-than-Significant Impact | No Impact |
|--|--------------------------------|---|------------------------------|-----------|
| A) Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?      | X                              |   |                              |           |
| B) Conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases? | X                              |   |                              |           |

### ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

This section provides a general discussion of global climate change and focuses on emissions from human activities that alter the chemical composition of the atmosphere. The discussion on global climate change and greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions is based upon the California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006 (Assembly Bill (AB) 32), the 2006 Climate Action Team (CAT) Report to Governor Schwarzenegger and the Legislature, and research, information and analysis completed by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), California Air Resources Board (CARB), as well EDCAQMD guidance.

Global climate change refers to the change in the average weather of the earth that may be measured by changes in wind patterns, storms, precipitation, and temperature. Projected climate changes will likely impact California's public health through changes in air quality, weather-related disasters, and a possible increase in infectious disease. If extreme precipitation and severe weather events become more frequent, and if sanitation and water-treatment facilities have inadequate capacity or are not maintained, increases in infectious diseases may result (CalEPA, 2007).

#### Greenhouse Gas Emissions

GHGs are gases that trap heat in the atmosphere, analogous to the way a greenhouse retains heat. Common GHGs include:

- carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>)
- methane (CH<sub>4</sub>)
- nitrous oxide (N<sub>2</sub>O)
- ozone (O<sub>3</sub>)
- sulfur hexafluoride (SF<sub>6</sub>)
- chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs)
- hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs)
- perfluorocarbons (PFCs)
- aerosols

Global atmospheric concentrations of CO<sub>2</sub>, methane, and N<sub>2</sub>O have increased markedly as a result of human activities since 1750 and now far exceed pre-industrial values determined from ice cores spanning many thousands of years.

The accumulation of GHGs in the atmosphere regulates the earth's temperature. Without the natural heat trapping effect of GHGs, the earth's surface would be about 34°C cooler (CAT, 2006). However, it is believed that emissions from human activities, specifically the

burning of fossil fuels for transportation and energy production, have elevated the concentration of these gases in the atmosphere beyond the level of naturally occurring concentrations.

Individual GHGs have varying global warming potential (GWP) and atmospheric lifetimes. The CO<sub>2</sub> equivalent (CO<sub>2</sub>e) is a consistent methodology for comparing GHG emissions since it normalizes various GHG emissions to a consistent metric. The reference gas for GWP is CO<sub>2</sub> which has a GWP of one. By comparison, methane's GWP is 21. CO<sub>2</sub>e is the mass emissions of an individual GHG multiplied by its GWP. Due to the scale of GHG calculations, one million metric tons (equal to one teragram [Tg]) of CO<sub>2</sub>e is a common unit of measure, abbreviated MMTCO<sub>2</sub>e or TgCO<sub>2</sub>Eq.

#### **REGULATORY SETTING**

Climate change in the Project Area is under the jurisdiction of several agencies including the EPA, the CARB, and the EDCAQMD. Each jurisdiction develops rules, regulations, policies, and/or goals to attain the goals or directives imposed upon them through legislation.

#### **STANDARDS OF SIGNIFICANCE**

For purposes of this Initial Study, an impact would be significant if implementation of the Redevelopment Plan would do any of the following:

- Generate GHG emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment
- Conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of GHGs

#### **ANSWERS TO CHECKLIST QUESTIONS**

##### ***Questions A and B***

The proposed Project Area is located within the MCAB, which is considered a non-attainment area for selected pollutants. The Redevelopment Plan would remove barriers to General Plan build-out, which could result in development patterns and building materials that could increase GHG emissions. General Plan build-out may also increase the number of people exposed to hazards resulting from climate change. This issue will be discussed in the EIR.

#### **FINDINGS**

Redevelopment activities and redevelopment-engendered development could result in ***potentially significant*** impacts to global climate change; these issues will be further discussed in the EIR.

## 8. HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

Would the proposal involve:

| Issues   | Potentially Significant Impact | Potentially Significant Impact Unless Mitigated | Less-than-Significant Impact | No Impact |
|--|--------------------------------|---|------------------------------|-----------|
| A) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?  |                                |   | X                            |           |
| B) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?  | X                              |   |                              |           |
| C) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?  | X                              |   |                              |           |
| 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?                                   | X                              |   |                              |           |
| E) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area? |                                |   | X                            |           |
| F) For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?  |                                |   | X                            |           |
| G) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?  |                                |   | X                            |           |
| H) Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires, including where wildlands are adjacent to urbanized areas or where residences are intermixed with wildlands?   | X                              |   |                              |           |

### ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

The Project Area contains a mix of land uses that could contain hazardous materials, experience hazardous substance contamination, and/or generate hazardous waste. These include structures built before the late 1970s, commercial uses (such as gas stations, dry cleaners, and print shops), and industrial uses.

The Placerville Airport is located approximately 0.25 miles south of the westernmost tip of the Project Area, and is under the jurisdiction of and operated by the County. The airport provides general aviation services for the general public. The airport has a single paved runway. According to data from AirNav.com, approximately 52% of airport operations are for transient general aviation, while the remainder is mostly local general aviation. The



airport does not provide scheduled commercial passenger service. The nearest airport with this service is Sacramento International Airport.

#### **STANDARDS OF SIGNIFICANCE**

For purposes of this Initial Study, an impact would be significant if implementation of the Redevelopment Plan would expose people (e.g., residents, pedestrians, construction workers) to:

- Existing contaminated soil during construction activities
- Asbestos-containing materials (ACM)
- Existing contaminated groundwater during dewatering activities

#### **ANSWERS TO CHECKLIST QUESTIONS**

##### **Question A**

The Redevelopment Plan would remove barriers to development of a range of land uses within the Project Area. Many of these uses, particularly commercial and industrial, would involve the use, transport and/or storage of hazardous materials (e.g., gasoline fuels, demolition materials, asphalt, lubricants, toxic solvents, pesticides, and herbicides) during the construction and operation of such uses. As the redevelopment activities remove barriers to General Plan build-out in the Project Area, an increase in the use of hazardous materials would likely occur in the Project Area. This would increase the likelihood of local residents and employees coming into contact with such materials, as well as increase the potential risk of an accident that could cause serious injury or death.

The use, storage, and transport of hazardous materials during the course of future development are required to be in compliance with local, state, and federal regulations during project construction and operation. Risks associated with the transport of hazardous materials include accidents or spills that release these materials into the environment. The transportation of hazardous materials on area roadways is regulated by the California Highway Patrol (CHP), U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT), and the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans); the use of these materials is regulated by the Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC). The City requires users of hazardous materials to comply with applicable regulations related to the use and storage of hazardous materials, which are designed to reduce potential hazards. General Plan Health and Safety Element policies require the review and control of projects that propose the use and/or storage of hazardous materials.

The El Dorado County Department of Environmental Management, Hazardous Waste Division, is approved by Cal-EPA as the Certified Unified Program Agency (CUPA) for the County. El Dorado County's Environmental Management Department, Solid Waste & Hazardous Materials Division, protects the public health and the environment from the effects of improper handling of hazardous materials. The CUPA requires the submittal of a Hazardous Materials Business Plan when development projects meet established criteria, conducts education and outreach to County residents regarding hazardous materials, and maintains sufficient resources, contacts, and personnel to provide the public with emergency notification in the event of a hazardous materials spill or airborne release. Existing local, state, and federal regulations and requirements reduce or eliminate the potential hazards posed by the increased use, storage, and transport of hazardous materials resulting from future development. Therefore, adoption of the Redevelopment Plan would result in less-

#### IV. ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST AND DISCUSSION

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*than-significant* increases in hazards to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials.

##### **Questions B, and D**

There are a number of constituents of concern that are common in existing urbanized areas due to former uses and previously used substances. These include asbestos, lead, heavy metals and solvents, polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), and hydrocarbon contamination of soil and groundwater from leaking underground storage tanks (LUSTs).

Asbestos, a naturally-occurring fibrous material, was used as a fireproofing and insulating agent in building construction, before such uses were terminated due to liability concerns in the late 1970s. Because it was widely used prior to the discovery of its health effects, asbestos may be found in a variety of building materials and components such as insulation, walls and ceilings, floor tiles, and pipe insulation. There is also a portion of the Project Area soils that contain asbestos which could be disturbed during construction activities. Friable (easily crumbled) materials are particularly hazardous because inhalation of airborne fibers is the primary mode of asbestos entry into the body. Non-friable asbestos is generally bound to other materials such that it does not become airborne under normal conditions. Non-friable asbestos and encapsulated friable asbestos do not pose substantial health risks.

Lead could also be present on the Project Area. Among its numerous uses and sources, lead can be found in paint, water pipes, solder in plumbing systems, and in soils around buildings and structures painted with lead-based paint. Excessive exposure to lead (even low levels of lead) can result in the accumulation of lead in the blood, soft tissues, and bones. Children are particularly susceptible to potential lead-related health problems because it is easily absorbed into developing systems and organs.

Heavy metals can also be found in and around older structures. Old light tubes, thermostats, and other electrical equipment typically contain heavy metals such as mercury. Elemental mercury can also be found in many electrical switches. Due to accidental spills and historic disposal practices before the adoption of more stringent disposal regulations, it is possible elemental mercury may be present in the Project Area. Mercury liquid evaporates slowly if exposed to air, and, at certain levels of exposure, mercury vapors are toxic and can cause kidney and liver damage.

Another common contaminate found in older structures is PCB, an organic chemical, usually in the form of an oil that was historically used in electrical equipment. PCBs are most commonly associated with pole-mounted electrical transformers, but they were also used in insulators and capacitors in building electrical equipment. PCBs are highly persistent in the environment, and exposure to PCBs can cause serious liver, dermal, and reproductive system damage. PCBs are also a suspected human carcinogen. PCBs were not phased out until the late 1970s and into the 1980s; therefore, it is possible that older electrical equipment in buildings that may be rehabilitated or demolished as part of a redevelopment-engendered project could contain this contaminant.

Redevelopment activities often involve the rehabilitation or reuse of older properties that may result in the discovery of previously unidentified contaminated properties, or provide for reuse of identified, but not yet remediated sites. Historical uses which have created releases of hazardous substances or petroleum products may be masked by the present or recent uses of the property. Excavation for new development on recycled properties could damage unidentified underground storage tank (USTs) with some remaining petroleum products that could result in the exposure of construction workers and in the associated significant adverse health effects. In addition, construction activity could uncover unknown

sites of soil contamination that could result in the exposure of construction workers and in the associated significant adverse health effects. Therefore these hazardous materials issues will be discussed in the EIR.

**Question C**

Future projects engendered by the Proposed Project could release hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school within the Project Area. This issue will be discussed in the EIR.

**Question E and F**

Airport-related hazards are generally associated with aircraft accidents, particularly during takeoffs and landings. Airport operation hazards include incompatible land uses, power transmission lines, wildlife hazards (e.g., bird strikes), and tall structures that penetrate the imaginary surfaces surrounding an airport. The Comprehensive Land Use Plan (CLUP) for the Placerville Airport delineates flight safety zones. The safety zones are generally confined to the immediate area north and south of the main runway. However, the CLUP also delineates an overflight zone that encompasses much of the City.

The Placerville Airport could experience an increase in air traffic as a result of General Plan build-out. This may result from increased economic activity due to industrial development and more private aircraft. However, it is not expected that growth resulting from the General Plan build-out would provide an adequate market for scheduled passenger air service, which would be a major source of air traffic. Substantial expansion of the airport or its operations is not anticipated.

The Placerville Airport CLUP overflight zone encroaches upon the eastern portions of the Project Area. Schools, arenas, stadiums, spectator sport facilities, auditoriums, concert halls, outdoor amphitheatres, concert shells, and theaters are considered non-compatible uses within the overflight zone. The Proposed Project does not propose any such specific land uses, and future development must be determined to be consistent with the CLUP prior to local approvals. By only allowing compatible land uses near the airport, the City can ensure that there would be relatively little pressure for restriction or closure of airport operations. Where the Redevelopment Plan may remove barriers to development within the overflight zone, City and County requirements would ensure future development is compatible and that impacts are *less than significant*.

**Question G**

The City is responsible for emergency response and evacuation plans within the City limits. The State of California passed legislation authorizing the Office of Emergency Services (OES) to prepare a Standard Emergency Management System (SEMS) program, which sets forth measures by which a jurisdiction should handle emergency situations and respond to a disaster or hazardous materials release. The City has adopted the September 2006 El Dorado County Operational Area Emergency Operations Plan as the plan document to be utilized by the City for response to disasters and other related critical incidents. The plan defines the primary and support roles of agencies and departments in after-incident damage assessment and reporting requirements. In addition, the plan provides for the operation of police, fire, and health services, as well as transportation alternatives in the event of a multi-hazard emergency.

The Redevelopment Plan would remove barriers to infill development within the older portions of the City and adjacent County areas, and while future construction projects could

#### IV. ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST AND DISCUSSION

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cause temporary detours on some evacuation routes, future development and other redevelopment activities such as infrastructure improvements would not significantly interfere with evacuation routes or emergency response. The Proposed Project would not be expected to result in activities that interfere or negatively affect any adopted emergency response or evacuation plan. Redevelopment would more likely improve emergency response as existing roadways are upgraded within the Redevelopment Project Area and circulation is improved. Improved circulation can decrease emergency response times and facilitate evacuations. Adoption of the Redevelopment Plan would have a *less-than-significant effect* on emergency response and evacuation plans.

#### **Question H**

Wildland fire is a major hazard in the State of California, particularly in the foothill areas where the Project Area is located. Wildland fires have caused major resource damage in the County, requiring large investments in burn site rehabilitation. Wildland fires burn natural vegetation on developed and undeveloped lands and include timber, brush, woodland, and grass fires. In the Project Area, wildland fires can put human health and safety, structures (e.g., homes, schools, businesses, etc.), air quality, recreation areas, water quality, wildlife habitat, ecosystem health, and forest resources at risk. This issue will be discussed in the EIR.

#### **FINDINGS**

Redevelopment activities and redevelopment-engendered development could result in ***potentially significant*** impacts to hazards and hazardous materials and wildland fires; these issues will be further discussed in the EIR. Redevelopment would have less-than-significant effects regarding the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials; airport-related safety hazards for people residing or working in the Project Area; and emergency response and evacuation plans. These issues are ***less-than-significant*** and will not be further discussed.

## 9. HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

Would the proposal result in or expose people to potential impacts involving:

| Issues  | Potentially Significant Impact | Potentially Significant Impact Unless Mitigated | Less-than-Significant Impact | No Impact |
|---|--------------------------------|---|------------------------------|-----------|
| A) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements?   | X                              |   |                              |           |
| B) Substantially deplete groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that there would be a net deficit in aquifer volume or a lowering of the local groundwater table level (e.g., the production rate of pre-existing nearby wells would drop to a level which would not support existing land uses or planned uses for which permits have been granted)? | X                              |   |                              |           |
| C) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, in a manner which would result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site?  | X                              |   |                              |           |
| D) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, or substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or off-site?   | X                              |   |                              |           |
| E) 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?   | X                              |   |                              |           |
| F) Otherwise substantially degrade water quality?   | X                              |   |                              |           |
| G) Place housing within a 100-year flood hazard area as mapped on a federal Flood Hazard Boundary or Flood Insurance Rate Map or other flood hazard delineation map?  | X                              |   |                              |           |
| H) Place within a 100-year flood hazard area structures which would impede or redirect flood flows?   | X                              |   |                              |           |
| I) Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving flooding, including flooding as a result of the failure of a levee or dam?  | X                              |   |                              |           |
| J) Inundation by seiche, tsunami, or mudflow?   |                                |   |                              | X         |

### ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

The Project Area is located within the Sacramento River Hydrologic Region, which encompasses approximately 26,500 square miles. The Sacramento River Basin is bounded by the Sierra Nevada to the east, the Coast Range to the west, the Cascade Range and Trinity Mountains to the north, and the Delta area to the south. The average runoff from the basin is estimated to be 21.3 million acre-feet per year (af/yr).

#### IV. ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST AND DISCUSSION

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The Project Area is located within the American River Basin, a subunit of the Sacramento River Basin. The South Fork of the American River is the principal stream in the Region and is located approximately 2.5 miles north of the Project Area. The melting snow pack in the Sierra Nevada, in combination with the operation of numerous reservoirs within the system, maintains flow in the American River year round. Beneficial uses for surface waters of the region include municipal, agricultural, industrial, and recreational uses, freshwater habitat, migration and spawning, and wildlife habitat (Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB), 1998).

More locally, the Project Area is located within the Weber Creek subbasin and Hangtown Creek planning watershed (California Interagency Watershed Map). The area's drainage system generally consists of a network of roadside ditches, channels, and culverts which route drainage to Hangtown Creek or Weber Creek.

With respect to groundwater resources, the Project Area is not situated within a recognized California groundwater basin or subbasin. The nearest recognized groundwater basin, the South American Groundwater Subbasin, is located approximately 20 miles west-southwest and downstream of the Project Area. However, some groundwater likely occurs in isolated pockets, including the shallow alluvial materials associated with surface waters or fractures in the underlying bedrock.

Flooding in the Project Area occurs primarily along open drainages and streams, but localized flooding occurs throughout the Project Area due to inadequate drainage facilities.

#### **STANDARDS OF SIGNIFICANCE**

##### ***Water Quality***

For purposes of this Initial Study, an impact would be significant if implementation of the Redevelopment Plan would result in substantially degraded water quality and result in a violation of any water quality objectives set by the SWRCB, due to increased sediments and other contaminants generated by consumption and/or operation activities.

##### ***Flooding***

For purposes of this Initial Study, an impact would be significant if implementation of the Redevelopment Plan would result in substantially increased exposure of people and/or property to the risk of injury and damage in the event of a 100-year flood.

#### **ANSWERS TO CHECKLIST QUESTIONS**

##### ***Questions A, C through F***

Within the Project Area, stormwater runoff may carry various types of contaminants: motor vehicle oils and fluids, lawn/garden fertilizers, heavy metals, household cleaning products, and others. Since most drainage systems discharge their contents into local streams, stormwater runoff can contribute to the pollution of these streams and downstream waters, including the American River. The Redevelopment Plan would remove barriers to General Plan build-out within the Project Area, which will increase runoff flows. Water quality issues will be discussed in the EIR.

##### ***Question B***

Although the Project Area is not situated within a recognized California groundwater basin or subbasin, some parcels within the Project Area may use private wells for their water source. The Redevelopment Plan would remove barriers to General Plan build-out within the Project

Area, which will increase demand on water supplies over current levels. Groundwater supplies and quality will be discussed in the EIR.

**Questions G, H, and I**

From a local drainage standpoint, the City has historically experienced drainage issues, particularly near streams and drainage ditches. Flooding occurs even during mild storms. This flooding creates circulation issues associated with street flooding and causes some property damage. Flood issues will be discussed in the EIR.

**Question J**

The Project Area will not be impacted by seiche, tsunami, or mudflow due to the underlying and surrounding soils, the distance from an ocean, and lack of nearby volcanoes. As previously noted, no active, or potentially active, faults underlie the City, based on published geologic maps. Surface evidence of faulting has not been observed. Earthquakes are not expected to cause any major ground shaking in the Project Area. Therefore, the exposure of people to a potential seiche, tsunami, or mudflow due to redevelopment activities would be *less than significant*.

**FINDINGS**

Impacts associated with stormwater, flooding, and water quality are ***potentially significant*** and will be discussed in the EIR. Impacts associated with seiche, tsunami, or mudflow are ***less-than-significant*** and will not be further discussed.

## 10. LAND USE AND PLANNING

Would the proposal:

| Issues  | Potentially Significant Impact | Potentially Significant Impact Unless Mitigated | Less-than-Significant Impact | No Impact |
|---|--------------------------------|---|------------------------------|-----------|
| A) Physically divide an established community?  |                                |   |                              | <b>X</b>  |
| B) Conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project (including, but not limited to the general plan, specific plan, local coastal program, or zoning ordinance) adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect? | <b>X</b>                       |   |                              |           |
| C) Conflict with any applicable habitat conservation plan or natural community conservation plan?   | <b>X</b>                       |   |                              |           |

### ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

Land uses in the Project Area are governed by the City and County General Plans and zoning codes. The existing uses in the Project Area primarily consist of commercial (including office, restaurants, retail, and similar services) land uses. Other uses include residential, industrial, and institutional. Incorporated lands in the Project Area are governed by City General Plan land use designations and zoning requirements, and unincorporated lands are governed by County General Plan land use designations and zoning requirements.

### STANDARDS OF SIGNIFICANCE

The City and County treat the discussion of land use and planning effects differently from technical environmental issues. Any physical impacts associated with development would be addressed in the appropriate environmental sections of this Initial Study and the EIR.

### ANSWERS TO CHECKLIST QUESTIONS

#### Question A

The Redevelopment Plan provides for the use of redevelopment tools to remove barriers to planned development, and assist in the elimination of blight and blighting influences in the Project Area. The proposed redevelopment activities include the following programs:

- Public/Private Development Program
- Targeted Business Recruitment Program
- Infrastructure Improvements Program
- Community Facilities Program
- Community Business Revitalization Program
- Land Assembly and Relocation Program
- Affordable Housing Program

The proposed programs and implementing projects will address the existing blighting conditions and provide infrastructure for future development within the Project Area consistent with the City or County General Plans. Growth in the Project Area must be



consistent with the General Plan as mandated by law. No new roadways or major development is identified in the General Plan that would physically divide an established community; therefore, *no impact* would occur.

**Question B**

All planning elements to be contained in the Redevelopment Plan must, by law, be consistent with the provisions of the City's and County's General Plan at the time of adoption of the Redevelopment Plan. Consistency with plans and policies will be discussed in the EIR.

**Question C**

The Project Area is located within a County Designated Community Region of the County Integrated Natural Resources Management Plan (INRMP). The INRMP is defined by County General Plan Policy 7.4.2.8 and is being prepared in accordance with applicable HCP and NCCP Guidelines. As noted earlier, the status of the INRMP process and resources mapping will be discussed in the EIR.

**FINDINGS**

Consistency with adopted plans and policies will be further discussed in the EIR.

### 11. MINERAL RESOURCES

Would the proposal result in or expose people to potential impacts involving:

| Issues  | Potentially Significant Impact | Potentially Significant Impact Unless Mitigated | Less-than-Significant Impact | No Impact |
|---|--------------------------------|---|------------------------------|-----------|
| 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?                                |                                |   | X                            |           |
| 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? |                                |   | X                            |           |

#### ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

In the Placerville area, gold is the major mineral resource. Other mineral resources include chromite, talc, asbestos, and limestone.

The State Geologist has classified areas in the Placerville quadrangle into Mineral Resource Areas (MRZs) with respect to the presence, absence, or likely occurrence of mineral deposits according to guidelines adopted by the State Mining and Geology Board. The California Division of Mines and Geology has also evaluated the Placerville area for the presence or likely occurrence of specific metallic and industrial mineral deposits based on past mineral production in modern geologic concepts relating to mineral occurrence.

Within the Project Area, the most promising hard rock gold deposits occur along the western branch of the Melones fault zone, which runs through the center of Placerville. Another small area, north of US 50 and west of Missouri Flat has significant measured or indicated gold resources. However, there are no active or closed mining sites within the Project Area, and no other identified mineral resource areas (County GP, Figure CO-1).

#### STANDARDS OF SIGNIFICANCE

For purposes of this Initial Study, an impact would be significant if implementation of the Redevelopment Plan would result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and residents of the state, or result in the loss of availability of a locally important mineral resource recovery site delineated on the City's and/or County's General Plan.

#### Question A and B

The City's General Plan Policy Document promotes the protection and conservation of significant mineral deposits in the Placerville area as classified by the State Geologist and designated by the State Mining and Geology Board, and requires buffering around mining operations to prevent encroachment by incompatible uses (Policy V.C.1.). The City General Plan Policy Document also contains a policy prohibiting the development of mining operations in and near streams, creeks, and other waterways, such as Hangtown Creek within the Project Area (Policy V.C.3). The County's Conservation Element also addresses the conservation of mineral resources. Objective 7.2.2 identifies policies to protect mineral resources from incompatible development, including a minimum parcel size of 20 acres and compatible zoning designations.

The proposed Redevelopment Plan would remove barriers to urban development within the Project Area, consistent with adopted land use designations. The only industrial zoning within the Project Area is Planned Development Industrial, which does not allow mining as a permitted or conditional use (City Code Sec. 10-5-22).

There is no City or County designated mining resource or zoning within the Project Area. The City and County do allow mining operations in the Heavy Commercial zone, subject to a conditional use permit, as found in the Motor City area near US 50. However, County ordinance does not allow mining operations within 10,000 feet of an existing residence; therefore, existing development in the Project Area precludes the exploration for and extraction of mineral resources in the unincorporated portions of the Project Area. This area is also not identified as a mineral resource area. The proposed Redevelopment Plan would therefore have a *less-than-significant* impact on mineral resources.

**FINDINGS**

The proposed Redevelopment Plan would have a *less-than-significant impact* on mineral resources.

## 12. NOISE

Would the proposal result in:

| Issues  | Potentially Significant Impact | Potentially Significant Impact Unless Mitigated | Less-than-Significant Impact | No Impact |
|---|--------------------------------|---|------------------------------|-----------|
| A) Exposure of persons to or generation of noise levels in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?   | x                              |   |                              |           |
| B) Exposure of persons to or generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?   | x                              |   |                              |           |
| C) A substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?  | x                              |   |                              |           |
| D) A substantial temporary or periodic increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?  | x                              |   |                              |           |
| 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 expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels? |                                |   | x                            |           |
| F) For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?  |                                |   |                              | x         |

### ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

There are several potentially significant sources of community noise within the Placerville area, including traffic on major roadways and highways, Placerville Airport, and the El Dorado County Fairgrounds Racetrack.

### STANDARDS OF SIGNIFICANCE

Thresholds of significance are those established by the CCR Title 24 standards, the General Plan Noise Element, and the City Noise Ordinance. For purposes of this Initial Study, an impact would be significant if implementation of the Redevelopment Plan would do any of the following:

- Exposed people to exterior noise levels which are above the upper value of the normally acceptable category for various land uses caused by noise level increases due to the project
- Resulted in residential interior noise levels of  $L_{dn}$  45 dB or greater caused by noise level increases due to the project
- Construction noise levels not in compliance with the City's General Plan

**ANSWERS TO CHECKLIST QUESTIONS**

***Questions A through E***

Construction and normal operations from development engendered by redevelopment activities could result in both a short-term (construction) and long-term (operation) increase in existing noise levels and potentially expose people to increased noise levels. New development could result in impacts related to exposure of on-site receptors to existing and future noise levels from traffic noise (local and highway traffic noise sources), aircraft, and commercial and industrial operations. New development could also contribute to traffic volumes along area roadways, which would result in increases in traffic noise levels at existing off-site receptors. Impacts associated with these issues are considered potentially significant and will be further addressed in the EIR.

***Question F***

The Placerville Airport is located approximately 0.25 miles from the westernmost point of the Project Area. The Foothill Airport Land Use Commission has adopted the Placerville Airport CLUP. The plan is intended to protect the public from adverse effects of aircraft noise and exposure to airport-related hazards.

The Project Area lies within the overflight zone. Schools, arenas, stadiums, spectator sport facilities, auditoriums, concert halls, outdoor amphitheatres, concert shells, and theaters are considered non-compatible uses within the overflight zone. The Proposed Project does not propose any such specific land uses, and future development must be determined to be consistent with the CLUP prior to local approvals. The majority of the Project Area is located within the 55 dB CNEL noise contour of the airport, with the exception of the Motor City, which is within the 60 dB CNEL contour. The Proposed Project would remove barriers to development within the 60 dB CNEL noise contour of the Placerville Airport. All uses are at least conditionally acceptable within that noise contour; therefore, the Proposed Project would not result in an increase in people exposed to excessive aircraft noise, and the impact would be *less than significant*.

**FINDINGS**

Redevelopment activities and redevelopment-engendered development could result in potentially significant noise impacts in the Project Area; these issues will be further discussed in the EIR. The Proposed Project would not expose people to excessive aircraft noise, therefore this impact is less-than-significant and will not be further discussed.

### 13. POPULATION AND HOUSING

Would the proposal:

| Issues  | Potentially Significant Impact | Potentially Significant Impact Unless Mitigated | Less-than-Significant Impact | No Impact |
|---|--------------------------------|---|------------------------------|-----------|
| A) Induce substantial population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)? |                                |   | X                            |           |
| B) Displace substantial numbers of existing housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?   |                                |   | X                            |           |
| C) Displace substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?   |                                |   | X                            |           |

#### ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

Placerville is the county seat of El Dorado County, California. The population was 9,610 at the 2000 census, and an estimated 10,429 in 2010 (California Department of Finance).

#### STANDARDS OF SIGNIFICANCE

The City treats the discussion of population and housing effects differently from technical environmental issues. Any physical impacts associated with increases in population or housing would be addressed in the appropriate environmental sections of this Initial Study.

#### ANSWERS TO CHECKLIST QUESTIONS

##### Question A

The proposed Redevelopment Plan would provide redevelopment tools to remove barriers to infill development that is consistent with the City or County General Plan build-out. Residential infill development and rehabilitation occurring within the Project Area could incrementally increase the permanent population of the Project Area. Increases in population are expected to occur gradually over time as public improvements occur and development progresses, and be within the anticipated population levels identified in the City or County General Plan and specific plans, as they exist now or may be amended. Redevelopment activities and development encouraged by redevelopment also have some potential to encourage localized daytime population growth in the Project Area's employment market area by providing additional jobs that would otherwise locate elsewhere. However, there is no change in land use or zoning proposed as part of the Redevelopment Plan, nor any major new infrastructure improvements/ extensions beyond those identified in the City or County General Plan. Permitted densities within the proposed Project Area will conform to the City or County General Plan and Zoning Ordinances, as currently adopted or as hereafter amended, and other applicable codes and ordinances. The Proposed Project does not propose any changes to allowed population densities.

The proposed Redevelopment Plan would not result in changes in population beyond those identified in regional and local population projections, or induce substantial growth. The City

and County have developed policies and plans to provide for long-term population and housing needs in the General Plans. Population impacts would be *less than significant*.

**Question B and C**

Providing housing for persons of low- and moderate-income is an objective of redevelopment, which provides assistance in the reconstruction or rehabilitation of dilapidated structures, and provides developer incentives for the construction of new housing. The CRL requires that not less than 20% of all tax increment be set aside for preserving, improving, and increasing the City's supply of low- and moderate-income housing. Some relocation of residents may be required to meet redevelopment goals, such as in areas of severely deteriorated housing, which may be beyond rehabilitation. The Agency, however, will not have eminent domain authority over residential uses. The Redevelopment Plan will provide that no persons or families of low- and moderate-income will be displaced unless and until there is a suitable housing unit available and ready for occupancy at rents comparable to those at the time of their displacement. The Redevelopment Plan will further provide that permanent housing facilities must be made available within three years from the time occupants are displaced.

Within 30 days of executing an agreement for acquisition and/or disposition of property that would result in the destruction or removal of dwelling units, the Agency must adopt a replacement housing plan. This plan must identify the location of such housing, a financing plan for rehabilitation, development, or construction, the number of dwelling units housing persons and families of low- or moderate-income planned for construction or rehabilitation, and a timetable for replacing the units on a one-for-one basis.

The proposed Redevelopment Plan area is not anticipated to displace or reduce the supply of low- and moderate-income housing. All low- and moderate-income housing stock removed on a voluntary basis with Agency involvement will be replaced through Agency programs, and the proposed Redevelopment Plan would not give eminent domain authority to the Agency over real property that is occupied as a residence. Therefore, the Redevelopment Plan and annexations would have a *less-than-significant impact* on displacement and affordable housing.

**FINDINGS**

The proposed Redevelopment Plan would not induce substantial growth in the City or County, nor displace people or housing, and would have a *less-than-significant impact* on population and housing.

**14. PUBLIC SERVICES**

Would the proposal have an effect upon, or result in a need for new or altered government services in any of the following areas:

| Issues  | Potentially Significant Impact | Potentially Significant Impact Unless Mitigated | Less-than-Significant Impact | No Impact |
|---|--------------------------------|---|------------------------------|-----------|
| A) Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for any of the public services:<br><br>Fire protection? | X                              |   |                              |           |
| Police protection?  | X                              |   |                              |           |
| Schools?  | X                              |   |                              |           |
| Parks?  | X                              |   |                              |           |
| Other public facilities?  | X                              |   |                              |           |

**ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING**

***Fire Protection***

The El Dorado County Fire District (EDCFD) serves the Project Area as well as other communities along US 50 between Sacramento and South Lake Tahoe, California. Lying on the Western slope of the Sierra Nevada mountain range, the fire district is comprised of grassy hills, brushy valleys, and heavy timber. The district begins in the lower foothills near Salmon Falls at an altitude of 500 feet and ends well into the Sierras at Twin Bridges, an elevation on nearly 6,000 feet.

***Police Protection***

The Placerville Police Department (PPD) is charged with the City's general law enforcement services, and is the first responder for both the incorporated and unincorporated areas of the Project Area.

***Schools***

The Project Area is served by three school Districts. Placerville Union School District (PUSD) is comprised of four schools: Sierra School (K-5) with approximately 450 students, Louisiana Schnell School (K-5) with 390 students, Community Day School (2-5) with approximately 4-5 students, and Edwin Markham Middle School (6-8) with 380 students.

The Mother Lode Union School District is comprised of two schools: Indian Creek School (K-4) with 685 students, and Herbert Green Middle School (5-8) with 625 students.



The El Dorado Union High School District (EDUHSD) serves 7,050 students who enter high school from 12 feeder elementary districts; Union Mine High School serves the Project Area.

**Parks**

There are six parks within the City, covering a combined total of 98.5 acres (County GP EIR, 2003). The only park located within the proposed Project Area is a one acre park at Town Hall on Main Street; the remaining City parks are located north and south of the Project Area. There are no County parks within or near the Project Area.

**STANDARDS OF SIGNIFICANCE**

For purposes of this Initial Study, an impact would be significant if implementation of the Redevelopment Plan would result in the need for new or altered services related to fire protection, police protection, school facilities, parks, or other governmental services.

**ANSWERS TO CHECKLIST QUESTIONS**

**Question A**

The proposed Redevelopment Plan would result in the elimination of barriers to General Plan growth, thus increasing Project Area population over existing conditions. Population increases can increase the demand for public safety services, schools, and other public facilities over existing conditions. This issue will be addressed in the EIR.

The Quimby Act (California Government Code 66477) allows local governments to acquire land sufficient to accommodate three acres of park improvements per 1,000 residents. This standard can be increased locally to five acres per 1,000 residents if the amount of existing parks in a community exceeds the three acres/1,000 residents ratio; the City has established a 5 acre standard in its General Plan. The National Recreation and Park Administration (NRPA) also recommends a standard of five acres per 1,000 people.

The City currently provides approximately 9.4 acres of parkland per 1,000 people. All new residential and mobile home development within the Project Area would be required to pay Quimby Act fees, which have been established by the City to ensure adequate park and recreation facilities are maintained as development proceeds. The County also imposes either land dedication or fees on any parcel map that creates lots less than 20-acres in size.

The proposed Redevelopment Plan could result in the funding of new or improved community facilities such as parks and recreational facilities within the Redevelopment Project Area. The Project Area is currently served by sufficient local park facilities as well as abundant county-wide recreational facilities. Therefore, the proposed Redevelopment Plan would have a *less-than-significant impact* upon the quality or quantity of park facilities.

**FINDINGS**

Impacts associated with fire protection, police protection, schools, and other public facilities are ***potentially significant*** and will be addressed in the EIR. Potential park facility impacts would be ***less than significant***, and will not be further addressed.

## 15. RECREATION

Would the proposal:

| Issues   | Potentially Significant Impact | Potentially Significant Impact Unless Mitigated | Less-than-Significant Impact | No Impact |
|--|--------------------------------|---|------------------------------|-----------|
| A) Would the project increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated? |                                |   | <b>x</b>                     |           |
| B) Does the project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?                        |                                |   | <b>x</b>                     |           |

### ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

The City's Recreation & Parks Department provides recreational services, and maintenance, operation and development of parkland and open space. The department receives guidance from the Recreation & Parks Commission, a commission linking the community to department needs and issues.

The Airports, Parks, and Grounds Division (APGD) of the County General Services Department, established in 1986, is responsible for countywide parks and recreation planning. The primary responsibilities of the APGD as it relates to parks and recreation are to establish a regional trail system throughout the County; regulate and manage boating use of the South Fork American River; coordinate the development of a regional and community parks system; and to implement the Countywide recreation plans.

In addition, Project Area residents have access to other facilities that provide recreational services. The El Dorado County Fairgrounds are located within the Project Area on US 50 near the southwestern entrance to the City. The Fairgrounds include exhibition halls, commercial kitchen, racetrack/grandstand, pavilions, ball fields, and other facilities, including the Placerville Speedway. The El Dorado County Fair is held at this site every June, and the Fairgrounds are also used year-round for exhibits, weddings, shows, banquets, dances, and general entertainment.

Many of the recreational resources located in the County have been developed by state and federal public agencies on public lands that are not directly subject to the City's or County's General Plans. Federal lands provide abundant recreation opportunities to county residents. Recreation on federal lands is provided primarily by the United States Forest Service (USFS) and the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). The USFS provides developed facilities (e.g., campgrounds), owns land upon which private entities may operate recreational facilities (e.g., snowsports resorts), and allows for dispersed recreation (e.g., hiking, backpacking, fishing). The BLM manages its lands primarily for dispersed recreational opportunities, such as whitewater boating and hiking.

Lands under state agency jurisdiction also provide recreational opportunities to County residents. The California Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) owns and/or manages a number of recreational areas in the County, including Folsom Lake State Recreation Area and Folsom Reservoir, Auburn State Recreation Area, Marshall Gold Discovery State

Historic Park, Sugar Pine Point State Park, D.L. Bliss State Park, Emerald Bay State Park, Washoe Meadows State Park, and the Lake Valley State Recreation Area. Many of these State Park units are located in the Lake Tahoe Basin. Recreational areas managed by DPR typically provide developed facilities (e.g., campgrounds) and dispersed recreation opportunities (e.g., hiking, boating).

As an independent, public utility provider, the El Dorado Irrigation District (EID) also provides recreation opportunities in the County. EID owns, operates, and maintains the Sly Park Recreation Area located at the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation's Jenkinson Lake near Pollock Pines and operates the Silver Lake West Campground on SR-88. Sly Park provides developed recreational opportunities (e.g., campgrounds, boat ramps) as well as dispersed recreational opportunities (e.g., hiking, biking, and equestrian trails) on approximately 2,000 acres. EID also owns lands surrounding Bass Lake and plans to develop a park facility at that location. Land surrounding the proposed Texas Hill Reservoir site near Diamond Springs is also owned by EID and may be managed for recreational uses in the future.

#### STANDARDS OF SIGNIFICANCE

For purposes of this Initial Study, an impact would be significant if implementation of the Redevelopment Plan would do any of the following:

- Cause or accelerate substantial physical deterioration of existing area parks or recreational facilities
- Create a need for construction or expansion of recreational facilities beyond what was anticipated in the General or Community Plan

#### ANSWERS TO CHECKLIST QUESTIONS

##### **Questions A and B**

Redevelopment in the Project Area would remove barriers to General Plan build-out, and could engender an increased demand for recreation resources by new residents and/or employees. As noted above, the City currently provides approximately 9.4 acres of parkland per 1,000 people. All new residential and mobile home development within the Project Area would be required to pay City Impact Mitigation fees, which have been established by the City to ensure adequate park and recreation facilities are maintained as development proceeds. The County also imposes either land dedication or fees on any parcel map that creates lots less than 20-acres in size.

The proposed Redevelopment Plan could result in the funding of new or improved community facilities such as parks and recreational facilities within the Redevelopment Project Area. The Project Area is currently served by sufficient local park facilities, as well as abundant county-wide recreational facilities. Therefore, the proposed Redevelopment Plan would have a *less-than-significant impact* upon the quality or quantity of recreational facilities.

#### FINDINGS

The proposed Redevelopment Plan would result in *less-than-significant* impacts to recreational resources. This issue will not be further discussed.

**16. TRANSPORTATION AND TRAFFIC**

Would the proposal result in:

| Issues  | Potentially Significant Impact | Potentially Significant Impact Unless Mitigated | Less-than-Significant Impact | No Impact |
|---|--------------------------------|---|------------------------------|-----------|
| A) Conflict with an applicable plan, ordinance or policy establishing measures of effectiveness for the performance of the circulation system, taking into account all modes of transportation including mass transit and non-motorized travel and relevant components of the circulation system, including but not limited to intersections, streets, highways and freeways, pedestrian and bicycle paths, and mass transit? | x                              |   |                              |           |
| B) Conflict with an applicable congestion management program, including, but not limited to level of service standards and travel demand measures, or other standards established by the county congestion management agency for designated roads or highways?  | x                              |   |                              |           |
| C) Result in a change in air traffic patterns, including either an increase in traffic levels or a change in location that results in substantial safety risks?   |                                |   |                              | x         |
| D) Substantially increase hazards due to a design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?  | x                              |   |                              |           |
| E) Result in inadequate emergency access?   | x                              |   |                              |           |
| F) Conflict with adopted policies, plans, or programs regarding public transit, bicycle, or pedestrian facilities, or otherwise decrease the performance or safety of such facilities?  | x                              |   |                              |           |

**ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING**

**Roadway Network**

Placerville's street and highway system includes local roadways and state highways. There are two state highways within the Project Area. US 50 is a four-lane highway which traverses and bisects the Project Area on an east-west alignment, and is an expressway with signalized at-grade intersections in the downtown area. SR-49 is a two-lane highway which runs generally north-south through the center of the Project Area via local streets.

The local street system is composed of a network of minor arterial roadways, collector road roadways, and local service roadways. Most city streets are currently carrying traffic volumes which are within their capacity range for acceptable peak hour conditions. Notable exceptions are Placerville Drive, Main Street, and Broadway, which are carrying heavier traffic volumes.

**Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities**

The City of Placerville Non-motorized Transportation Plan (Placerville 2005; amended 2010) addresses pedestrian and bicycle travel. The plan provides a blueprint bikeway system and

complies with state law. The resulting bikeway system includes about 3 miles of Class I, 9 miles of Class II, and 6 miles of Class III bikeways. The plan includes an inventory of the City's sidewalks and concepts that can be used to improve pedestrian travel conditions in the City. The overall goal of the plan is to "[p]rovide a safe, efficient and convenient network of non-motorized facilities that establish alternative transportation as a viable option in the City."

***Transit Service***

El Dorado Transit provides transit service within the project area, including fixed-route, dial-a-ride, and complimentary ADA paratransit.

***Rail Service***

No rail service is provided near the Project Area.

***Air Transportation***

The Placerville Airport is located approximately 0.25 miles south of the westernmost tip of the Project Area, and is under the jurisdiction of and operated by the County. The airport provides general aviation services for the general public. The airport does not provide scheduled commercial passenger service. The nearest airport with this service is Sacramento International Airport.

**STANDARDS OF SIGNIFICANCE**

For purposes of this Initial Study, an impact would be significant if implementation of the Redevelopment Plan would do any of the following:

- Conflict with an applicable plan, ordinance or policy establishing measures of effectiveness for the performance of the circulation system
- Conflict with an applicable congestion management program
- Result in a change in air traffic patterns, including either an increase in traffic levels or a change in location that results in substantial safety risks
- Substantially increase hazards due to a design feature or incompatible uses
- Result in inadequate emergency access
- Conflict with adopted policies, plans, or programs regarding public transit, bicycle, or pedestrian facilities, or otherwise decrease the performance or safety of such facilities

**ANSWERS TO CHECKLIST QUESTIONS**

***Question A, B, D, E, and F***

Over the life of the Redevelopment Plan, additional public streets, alleys, and easements may be created in the Redevelopment Project Area as needed for proper use and/or development. It is anticipated that redevelopment may entail abandonment and/or realignment of certain streets, alleys, and other right-of-ways (ROWs). Redevelopment activities within the Redevelopment Project Area would encourage an intensification of commercial, residential, industrial, and other development. This additional development would generate additional vehicular movements throughout the Project Area and the City over existing conditions, as well as an increased demand on transit and alternative transportation modes in the City.

#### IV. ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST AND DISCUSSION

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During construction of projects engendered by redevelopment, there could be hazards due to construction activities. Project construction could create a hazard to pedestrians and cyclists, or inadequate emergency access resulting in a potentially significant impact.

The EIR will evaluate potential traffic impacts and roadway hazards occurring as a result of the Proposed Project.

##### **Question C**

Redevelopment would remove barriers to General Plan build-out within the Project Area, which could increase auto and transit operations. Although a small percentage of new residents or businesses may use general aviation, this number would be quite small, and neither redevelopment activities would result in a significant increase in private air traffic levels or a change in location of air traffic patterns that would result in substantial safety risks from Placerville Airport. The Project Area is not within any airport safety zone. Therefore, the Proposed Project would have a *less-than-significant impact* on air traffic patterns and safety.

##### **FINDINGS**

Impacts associated with transportation and traffic are *potentially significant* and will be addressed in the EIR. The Proposed Project would have a less-than-significant impact on air traffic patterns and safety, thus this issue will not be further discussed.

**17. UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS**

*Would the proposal result in the need for new systems or supplies, or substantial alterations to the following utilities:*

| Issues  | Potentially Significant Impact | Potentially Significant Impact Unless Mitigated | Less-than-Significant Impact | No Impact |
|---|--------------------------------|---|------------------------------|-----------|
| A) Exceed wastewater treatment requirements of the applicable Regional Water Quality Control Board?   | <b>X</b>                       |   |                              |           |
| B) Require or result in the construction of new water or wastewater treatment facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?                            | <b>X</b>                       |   |                              |           |
| C) Require or result in the construction of new storm water drainage facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?                                     | <b>X</b>                       |   |                              |           |
| D) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project from existing entitlements and resources, or are new or expanded entitlements needed?  | <b>X</b>                       |   |                              |           |
| E) Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider which serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments? | <b>X</b>                       |   |                              |           |
| F) Be served by a landfill with sufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the project's solid waste disposal needs?  | <b>X</b>                       |   |                              |           |
| G) Comply with federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste?   | <b>X</b>                       |   |                              |           |

**ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING**

***Water Supply System***

El Dorado Irrigation District (EID) provides potable and recycled water to most of the County, including more than 100,000 residents (EID, 2006). EID's water supply system consists of 1,200 miles of pipeline, 40 miles of ditches, six treatment plants, 33 storage reservoirs, and 21 pumping stations. The City is within EID's Eastern Service Area and currently receives treated water from EID's Jenkinson Lake at Sly Park, approximately 13 miles east of Placerville. As defined in Section 15155(a)(2) of the State CEQA Guidelines, EID is the public water system serving the Project Area.

***Wastewater and Sewer System***

Sanitary sewer services are provided to the Project Area by the City. The City's sewer service area includes the Sphere of Influence (SOI; based on build-out projections), although existing infrastructure is limited to the current service areas within the city limits.

#### IV. ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST AND DISCUSSION

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The City operates the Hangtown Creek Water Reclamation Facility (WRF), located off Cool Water Creek Road approximately 3 miles northwest of the Project Area. The WRF discharges treated effluent to Hangtown Creek.

##### **Storm Drain System**

The City maintains a series of open ditches and drainages throughout the City to convey stormwater from developed and undeveloped areas. Many of the ditches and drainages are remnants of former natural streams and creeks that conveyed runoff from the surrounding foothills to the American River downstream. The primary drainage in the City is Hangtown Creek; this creek generally follows Broadway until it drains into Weber Creek about 3 miles northwest of the City. The creek has been channelized along most of its reach, is diverted to underground pipelines and through culverts, and is lined with concrete in some areas where development required modifications to the natural drainage.

##### **Solid Waste**

Solid waste disposal for the Placerville area is provided by Waste Connections, an integrated solid waste services company that provides solid waste collection, transfer, disposal and recycling services under a franchise arrangement with the City. The solid waste generated in the County is currently disposed of in the Lockwood Landfill, which is located near Reno, Nevada.

#### **STANDARDS OF SIGNIFICANCE**

For purposes of this Initial Study, an impact would be significant if implementation of the Redevelopment Plan would do any of the following:

- Exceed wastewater treatment requirements of the applicable Regional Water Quality Control Board
- Require or result in the construction of new water or wastewater treatment facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects
- Require or result in the construction of new storm water drainage facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects
- Have insufficient water supplies available to serve the project from existing entitlements and resources, or need new or expanded entitlements
- Have inadequate wastewater treatment capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the wastewater treatment provider's existing commitments
- Be served by a landfill with insufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the project's solid waste disposal needs
- Fail to comply with federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste

#### **ANSWERS TO CHECKLIST QUESTIONS**

##### **Questions A through G**

The proposed Redevelopment Plan would result in the elimination of barriers to General Plan growth, thus increasing Project Area population over existing conditions. Population increases can increase the demand for water, sewer, drainage, and solid waste over existing conditions. Increased wastewater flows could contribute incrementally to existing



problems caused by infiltration/inflow during severe storm conditions. Future development would increase impervious surfaces in the Project Area, resulting in an increase in stormwater runoff. New construction and the recycling of existing properties can result in construction waste, as well as create new solid waste demands from new development. These issues will be addressed in the EIR.

**FINDINGS**

Redevelopment activities could engender development that could result in a ***potentially significant impact*** the existing water, sewer, drainage, and solid waste facilities. These issues will be addressed in the EIR.

**18. MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE**

| Issues   | Potentially Significant Impact | Potentially Significant Impact Unless Mitigated | Less-than-Significant Impact | No Impact |
|--|--------------------------------|---|------------------------------|-----------|
| A. Does the project have the potential to degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory? | x                              |   |                              |           |
| 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)?   | x                              |   |                              |           |
| C. Does the project have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?  | x                              |   |                              |           |

**ANSWERS TO CHECKLIST QUESTIONS**

**Question A**

Redevelopment activities and redevelopment-engendered development would involve demolition, excavation, and construction activities in an area that may contain sensitive cultural and biological resources. These issues will be discussed in the EIR.

**Question B**

Redevelopment activities and redevelopment-engendered development, in conjunction with other projects in the City and County, may have a cumulative effect on air quality, biological resources, cultural resources, GHG emissions, hazards and hazardous materials, hydrology and water quality, noise, public services, transportation and traffic, and utilities and service systems. Cumulative impacts will be discussed in the EIR.

**Question C**

Any of the identified potential impacts for air quality, biological resources, cultural resources, GHG emissions, hazards and hazardous materials, hydrology and water quality, noise, public services, transportation and traffic, and utilities and service systems could cause a substantial adverse effect on human beings, either directly or indirectly. These issues will be discussed in the EIR.

## SECTION V - ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS POTENTIALLY AFFECTED

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The environmental factors checked below would potentially be affected by this project.

**Aesthetics**  
(page 17)

**Land Use**  
(page 42)

**Agriculture and Forestry Resources**  
(page 19)

**Mineral Resources**  
(page 43)

**Air Quality**  
(page 21)

**Noise**  
(page 46)

**Biological Resources**  
(page 24)

**Population and Housing**  
(page 48)

**Cultural Resources**  
(page 26)

**Public Services**  
(page 50)

**Geology and Soils**  
(page 28)

**Recreation**  
(page 52)

**Greenhouse Gas Emissions**  
(page 32)

**Transportation and Traffic**  
(page 54)

**Hazards and Hazardous Materials**  
(page 34)

**Utilities and Service Systems**  
(page 57)

**Hydrology and Water Quality**  
(page 39)

**Mandatory Findings of Significance**  
(page 60)

## SECTION VI - DETERMINATION

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**On the basis of the 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

October 14, 2010

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Date

## SECTION VII - REFERENCES

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This analysis incorporates by reference and relies on the following documents (CEQA Guidelines Section 15150(a):

2004 El Dorado County General Plan, Adopted July 19, 2004, El Dorado County Planning Department, retrieved September 2010 from <http://www.co.el-dorado.ca.us/Planning/GeneralPlanAdopted.html>.

City of Placerville, General Plan Policy Document, January 1989 (Amended December 14, 2004).

El Dorado, California, County Code, last updated by February 23, 2010, retrieved September 24, 2010 from <http://sterlingcodifiers.com/CA/El%20Dorado%20County/index.htm>.

Placerville, California, City Code, last updated by 1634 passed December 14, 2009, retrieved September 24, 2010 from [http://www.sterlingcodifiers.com/codebook/index.php?book\\_id=509](http://www.sterlingcodifiers.com/codebook/index.php?book_id=509).

In addition, the document preparers used information from the references outlined below. Documents are available for public review online as noted or at the City of Placerville, City Hall, Second Floor, 3101 Center Street, Placerville, CA 95667.

City of Placerville General Plan Policy Document, adopted January 1989, Amended December 14, 2004.

City of Placerville, Feasibility Study for a Potential Redevelopment Plan, City of Placerville. January 12, 2010, Prepared by: Fraser & Associates and Urban Futures, Inc.

City of Placerville, General Plan DEIR (February 23, 1988), FEIR (January 1990), Prepared by: J. Laurence Mintier & Associates, Planning Consultants: Joseph R. Holland, Consulting Traffic Engineer, and, Brown-Buntin Associates Consultants in Acoustics.

City of Placerville, General Plan, City of Placerville 2008-2013 Housing Element IS/ND, April 27, 2010.

City of Placerville, Lumsden Ranch DEIR (February 2009), FEIR (July 15, 2009) City of Placerville, Community Development Department.

City of Placerville, Storm Water Management Plan, June 2005, Executive Summary

City of Placerville. (2010). Retrieved August 10, 2010, from City of Placerville, CA: <http://www.ci.placerville.ca.us/>.

El Dorado County Fire District, Retrieved August 24, 2010 from El Dorado County, CA <http://www.eldoradocountyfire.com/>.

El Dorado County General Plan Environmental Impact Report, Draft dated May 2003, Final dated January 2004, El Dorado County Planning Department, retrieved September 2010 from <http://www.co.el-dorado.ca.us/Planning/GeneralPlanDocuments.html>.

El Dorado Union High School District, Retrieved August 24, 2010 from City of Placerville, CA <http://www.eduhsd.k12.ca.us/>.

Feasibility Study for a Potential Redevelopment Plan, City of Placerville, January 12, 2010.

Integrated Natural Resources Management Plan, El Dorado County, retrieved September 20, 2010 from <http://www.co.el-dorado.ca.us/Planning/GeneralPlanINRMP.html>.

SECTION VII - REFERENCES

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Placerville Union School District, Retrieved August 24, 2010 from City of Placerville, CA  
<http://www.pusd.k12.ca.us/>.

Placerville website, August 27, 2010, <http://www.placerville-downtown.org/History.html>.

Preliminary Plan for the Placerville Redevelopment Project Area, Redevelopment Agency of  
the City of Placerville, September 21, 2010.