
5. STATUTORILY REQUIRED SECTIONS

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INTRODUCTION

CEQA requires an EIR to address specific categories of impacts that would result from the proposed project: growth-inducing, cumulative, significant irreversible, and significant-and-unavoidable. This chapter analyzes impacts related to the Clover Valley LSLTSM project for these statutorily required categories.

5.1 GROWTH-INDUCING IMPACTS

An EIR must discuss the ways in which a proposed project could foster economic or population growth in the vicinity of the project and how that growth would, in turn, affect the surrounding environment (see CEQA Guidelines §15126.2(d)). Growth can be induced in a number of ways, including through the elimination of obstacles to growth, or through the stimulation of economic activity within the region. The discussion of the removal of obstacles to growth relates directly to the removal of infrastructure limitations or regulatory constraints that could result in growth unforeseen at the time of project approval.

Several issues must be considered when assessing the growth-inducing effects of development plans, such as the proposed projects. These include the following:

Elimination of Obstacles to Growth: The extent to which infrastructure capacity provided to accommodate the proposed projects would allow additional development in surrounding areas; and

Economic Effects: The extent to which development of the proposed projects could cause increased activity in the local or regional economy.

The elimination of either physical or regulatory obstacles to growth is considered to be a growth-inducing effect. A physical obstacle to growth typically involves the lack of public service infrastructure. The extension of public service infrastructure, including roadways, water mains, and sewer lines, into areas that would not be currently provided with these services, would be expected to support new development. Similarly, the elimination or change to a regulatory obstacle, including existing growth and development policies, could result in new growth.

As of January 1, 2005, the population of the City of Rocklin was 50,494. The proposed project includes tentative subdivision maps to subdivide 622.3 acres into 33 large lots and 558 single-family residential lots. The California Department of Finance estimates that the number of persons per household in Rocklin is approximately 2.6. The proposed

project would therefore introduce approximately 1,451 new residents into the Clover Valley area, which is approximately three percent of the current Rocklin population.

The proposed Clover Valley LSLTSM project has been designed to reduce the land use intensities of the designations approved for the project site by the Rocklin City Council in 1997. At that time, the City Council approved the annexation of the project site to the City of Rocklin as well as adopted the site's General Plan designations and pre-zoning. This approval anticipated a total buildout of the project site that would include 933 single-family residences, two park sites, a commercial site, open space areas, and the necessary infrastructure to serve the entire site. The 1997 approval included certification of an EIR which analyzed the growth-inducing impacts of the annexation and ultimate development. The current proposal to establish large and small lot tentative subdivision maps, while not consistent with the land use designations and the adopted buildout level for the site, would result in a lesser intensity of development as originally approved for the site, with 558 units currently proposed.

The proposed infrastructure has been sized to meet both the needs of the proposed level of development and future growth areas to the north and south. As noted on the project plans, the proposed on-site sewer for the project has been designed to serve an additional 501 equivalent dwelling units (edu) to the north of the project site and 23 edu to the south. Land to the north of the project site is within the City sphere of influence and has low-density residential land use designations, and land to the south is within the City limits. The off-site sewer line extension is also designed to accommodate the same additional development. The project sewer system has been designed to be consistent with the SPMUD Master Plan. Because the SPMUD Master Plan includes additional development to the north, approval of the proposed project would bring new development closer to existing development, and may thus be considered growth-inducing. However, any development would be required to undergo discretionary approval by the City, including but not limited to annexation and tentative maps.

5.2 CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

CEQA Guidelines §15065(c) defines “cumulatively considerable” impacts as the result of incremental effects of an individual project when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects. The impacts due to cumulative development that would occur independent of, but during the same time frame as, the project under consideration, or in the foreseeable future must be analyzed, as required by CEQA Guidelines §15130.

CEQA Guidelines §15130 requires the analysis of impacts due to cumulative development that would occur independent of, but during the same time frame as, the project under consideration, or in the foreseeable future. By requiring an evaluation of cumulative impacts, CEQA attempts to minimize the potential that large-scale environmental impacts would be ignored due to the project-by-project nature of project-level analyses contained in EIRs. Under the changes made to the CEQA Guidelines in

1999, a significant cumulative impact occurs if the project's contribution is determined to be cumulatively considerable.

The proposed Clover Valley project, in conjunction with development in the vicinity of the project site and within the region, would contribute to cumulative environmental impacts. Cumulative impacts are analyzed in each of the technical chapters (Chapters 4.2 through 4.12) and are summarized below.

Land Use

The land use impacts analysis includes discussions of the existing and planned land uses in the project area and the proposed project's consistency with the land use designations. The current Small Lot Tentative Subdivision Map includes development with the 50-foot creek setback that is currently designated by the General Plan. The applicant is requesting a General Plan Amendment and rezone in order to address modifications to the open space and residential components of the proposed Small Lot Tentative Subdivision Map, the proposed amendments would increase the amount of dedicated open space and decrease the amount of residential development as well as re-orient the 5.0 acre commercial site and provide encroachments into the 50-foot creek setback area along Nature Trail Way at several locations.

Aesthetics

The cumulative context for visual impacts of the proposed project includes development in the City of Rocklin. As discussed in Impact 4.3I-12, the proposed project, in combination with other future development, would contribute to a significant and unavoidable alteration of the overall visual character of the region. Additionally, as discussed in Impact 4.3I-13, the proposed project would contribute to a significant and unavoidable cumulative impact from light and glare.

Transportation and Circulation

The Transportation and Circulation analysis discussed the cumulative traffic impacts within the City of Rocklin in 4.4I-4. The analysis found that with the payment of the appropriate traffic impact fees established by the City of Rocklin and the South Placer Regional Transportation Authority, and the implementation of the roadway improvement measures would reduce the impacts to a less-than-significant level; however, because a portion of Sierra College Boulevard and portions of the improvements are outside Rocklin's jurisdiction and in the Town of Loomis, the impact is considered significant and unavoidable.

Air Quality

The cumulative context for air quality includes anticipated development in the Placer County Air Pollution Control District's region. As stated in Impact 4.5I-3, the proposed project would generate air pollutants and would contribute to an existing air quality

problem in Placer County. Implementation of the proposed project would cumulatively contribute to existing and future air emissions that exceed the Placer County APCD's standards. The cumulative impact was determined to be significant and unavoidable.

Noise

The cumulative context for the proposed project includes the areas surrounding the proposed project site, as well as areas in close proximity to major thoroughfares, which would see an increase in vehicular traffic as a result of the proposed project. Cumulative Impact 4.6I-7 identifies a cumulative increase in traffic noise levels as less-than-significant. Cumulative Impact 4.9I-8 identifies impacts of cumulative plus project traffic noise at proposed residences within the Clover Valley development as less-than-significant after mitigation, which includes sound walls of a specified height at impacted roadway segments.

Cultural and Paleontological Resources

The cumulative context of the proposed project includes the City of Rocklin and Placer County. Cumulative Impact 4.7I-5 states that regional loss of cultural and paleontological resources in Placer County due to cumulative development in the Clover Valley Creek watershed in conjunction with development of the proposed project would result in a less than significant impact.

Biological Resources

The cumulative context for Biological Resources is the City of Rocklin as well as other undeveloped areas in Placer County. As stated in Impact 4.8I-13, the proposed project, combined with the urbanization of the City of Rocklin and Placer County, would result in a cumulative loss of native plant communities, wildlife habitat values, special-status species and their potential habitat, and wetland resources. This cumulative impact was determined to be significant and unavoidable.

Geology

The continuing buildout of developments in the City of Rocklin and surrounding areas would be expected to increase the need for surface grading and excavation and therefore the potential for impacts related to soil erosion, unforeseen hazards, and exposure of people and property to earthquakes. However, as indicated by Impact 4.9I-9, geological hazards related to the alteration of project site topography and development of a project site are generally project-site specific. Therefore, cumulative geological impacts associated with the development of the proposed projects would be less-than-significant.

Hazards

Cumulative impacts associated with hazards are often site-specific and generally do not affect and are not affected by cumulative development. All hazardous impacts on-site

resulting from the proposed project would be reduced to less-than-significant when coupled with the implementation of the recommended mitigation measures. Because the hazards associated with the project would be contained on the project site and the affects would be mitigated, the cumulative impacts would be less-than-significant.

Hydrology and Water Quality

The cumulative context for hydrology and water quality consists of buildout in the areas surrounding the Dry Creek Watershed. As indicated in Impact 4.11I-10, the construction of the proposed project, in combination with other development that could occur within the Dry Creek Watershed, would not result in increased flooding impacts downstream of Clover Valley Creek because the addition of detention basins at Bear Clover Way and Summit Drive would limit the downstream flows.

As stated in Impact 4.11I-11, implementation of the proposed project, in combination with other development, could cumulatively increase urban pollutants in stormwater runoff, which would adversely affect water quality. Primary sources of water pollution include runoff from roadways, runoff from landscaped areas, non-stormwater connections to the drainage system, accidental spills, and illegal dumping. This cumulative impact was determined to be less-than-significant assuming implementation of mitigation measures 4.11MM-6b, 4.11MM-6c and 4.11MM-6f, which provide for the implementation of Best Management Practices during construction as well as operation and maintenance of oil/grit/sediment structures, and 4.4MM-6e, which provides for water quality testing and remediation.

Public Services and Utilities

The discussion of cumulative impacts for Public Services and Utilities (4.12-10) states that the proposed project would result in an increased demand for public services and utilities in the City of Rocklin, though these cumulative impacts would be reduced to less-than-significant after mitigation is applied.

5.3 SIGNIFICANT IRREVERSIBLE ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS

The State CEQA Guidelines mandate that an EIR address any significant irreversible environmental changes, which would be involved if the proposed project is implemented (CEQA Guidelines, §15126.2[c]). An impact would fall into this category if any of the following would occur:

- The project would involve a large commitment of nonrenewable resources;
- The primary and secondary impacts of a project would generally commit future generations to similar uses (e.g. a highway provides access to a previously remote area);
- The project involves uses in which irreversible damage could result from any potential environmental accidents associated with the project; or

- The phasing of the proposed consumption of resources is not justified (e.g., the project involves a wasteful use of energy).

The anticipated development of the proposed project would result in the irreversible conversion of approximately 622± acres of undeveloped land to urban use. However, approximately 366 acres within the site are expected to remain in open space. The site is currently undeveloped and has been designated in the General Plan for future residential uses.

The proposed Clover Valley LSLTSM project would likely result in or contribute to the following irreversible environmental changes:

- Conversion of existing undeveloped land to suburban land uses;
- Conversion of existing habitat and irreversible loss of wildlife;
- Irreversible commitment of municipal resources to the provision of services and operations of infrastructure for future suburban development;
- Irreversible consumption of goods and services associated with the future population;
- Irreversible consumption of energy and natural resources associated with the future population;
- Possible demand for and use of goods, services, and resources for this project to the exclusion of projects in other locations.

CEQA Guidelines §15126.2(c) states that irretrievable commitments of resources should be evaluated to assure that such current consumption is justified.

5.4 SIGNIFICANT AND UNAVOIDABLE IMPACTS

According to CEQA Guidelines, a Draft EIR must include a description of those impacts identified as significant and unavoidable should the proposed action be implemented.¹ Such impacts would be considered unavoidable when it has been determined that either no mitigation, or only partial mitigation, is feasible. This section identifies significant impacts that could not be eliminated or reduced to a less-than-significant level by mitigation measures imposed by the City. The City of Rocklin would make the final determination of the significance of impacts and of the feasibility of mitigation measures as part of its certification action.

Implementation of the proposed Clover Valley LSLTSM would result in the following significant and unavoidable impacts:

Aesthetics

The aesthetics discussion, Section 4.3 of this Draft EIR, identified the following as significant and unavoidable impacts:

- Degradation of the visual character or quality of the project site or off-site areas as a result of construction activities.
- Impacts to views from Sierra College Boulevard and in the Loomis area north of the summit and across Sierra College Boulevard.
- Impacts to wooded hillsides.
- Alteration of the overall visual character of the project site as a result of the proposed project in combination with existing and future development in the project area.
- Cumulative impacts related to increased light and glare on adjacent sensitive receptors due to project development in combination with existing and future development in the project area.

Although implementation of mitigation measure would reduce the magnitude of construction-related impacts to the visual quality of the project site, impacts to wooded hillsides, cumulative impacts regarding alteration of the overall visual character of the project, and cumulative impacts related to light and glare, the impacts would remain significant and unavoidable.

Transportation and Circulation

The transportation and circulation analysis, Section 4.4 of this Draft EIR, identified the following as a significant and unavoidable impact:

- Cumulative traffic impacts at Sierra College Boulevard and King Road.

The Transportation and Circulation analysis found that because the intersection of Sierra College Boulevard and King Road is in the Town of Loomis, and the City of Rocklin thus has no direct control over improvements at this intersection, the impact is significant and unavoidable.

Air Quality

The air quality analysis, Section 4.5 of this Draft EIR, identified the following as significant and unavoidable impacts:

- Impacts related to construction-generated pollutants.
- Cumulative impacts to air quality.

The air quality discussion found that the emissions and particulate matter from construction and grading could not be adequately mitigated. Therefore, project construction impacts would be significant and unavoidable. Additionally, because any development within the City of Rocklin would contribute to the region's existing non-attainment status, the long-term cumulative air quality impacts of the project would be considered significant and unavoidable. Implementation of mitigation measures would

be expected to reduce the magnitude of the impacts; however, the impacts would still be considered significant and unavoidable.

Biological Resources

The biological resources analysis, Section 4.8 of this Draft EIR, identified the following as significant and unavoidable impacts:

- Impacts related to loss of oak trees on the project site as a result of project implementation.
- Impacts resulting from the conversion of grassland wildlife habitat.
- Long-term operational impacts to riparian and aquatic habitats.
- Cumulative biological impacts to vegetation and wildlife of the proposed project in combination with other projects in the Rocklin Area.

Although implementation of mitigation measures would be expected to reduce the magnitude of impacts related to loss of oak trees, long-term operational impacts to riparian and aquatic habitats, and cumulative biological impacts, the impacts remain significant and unavoidable.

Geology

The geology analysis, Section 4.9 of this Draft EIR, identified the following as a significant and unavoidable impact:

- Impacts as a result of the alteration of topography.

Although implementation of mitigation measures identified in the chapter would reduce the magnitude of this impact, impacts resulting from alteration of the topography would remain significant and unavoidable.

Endnotes

¹CEQA Guidelines §15126.2[b].