

1 INTRODUCTION

This Environmental Impact Report (EIR) evaluates the impacts of the *City of Roseville 2035 General Plan Update* (proposed General Plan Update), also referred to as “the proposed project.” This EIR was prepared in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) of 1970 (Public Resources Code Section 21000 *et seq.*) and the CEQA Guidelines (California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Section 15000 *et seq.*).

1.1 TYPE OF EIR

This proposed General Plan Update EIR is a program EIR, as described under the CEQA (Public Resources Code Section 21000 *et seq.*) and the CEQA Guidelines (California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Sections 15000 *et seq.*). According to the CEQA Guidelines (Section 15168[a]), a state or local agency may prepare a program EIR, rather than a project EIR, when a series of actions may be characterized as one large project and are related either:

- ▶ geographically;
- ▶ as logical parts of a chain of contemplated actions;
- ▶ in connection with the issuance of rules, regulations, plans, or other general criteria that govern the conduct of a continuing program; or
- ▶ as individual activities carried out under the same authorizing statutory or regulatory authority and having generally similar environmental effects that can be mitigated in similar ways.

In this case, this program EIR addresses the proposed General Plan Update, which is the proposed “project,” as defined by CEQA. This program EIR considers a series of actions related to implementation of the General Plan.

Although the required contents of a program EIR are the same as those of a project EIR, there are differences in level of detail. General Plans by their nature are broad, long-range, and conceptual. Program EIRs contain a more general discussion of impacts, alternatives, and mitigation measures than do project-level EIRs. This is appropriate since the proposed General Plan Update is a long-term guide for development and conservation throughout the City of Roseville’s (City’s) Planning Area.

1.2 PURPOSE OF THE EIR

The CEQA Guidelines charge public agencies with the responsibility of avoiding or minimizing environmental damage that could result from implementation of a project, where feasible. As part of this responsibility, public agencies are required to balance various public objectives, including economic, environmental, and social issues.

The purpose of an EIR is not to recommend approval or denial of a project. An EIR is an informational document used in the planning and decision-making process by the lead agency and responsible and trustee agencies. An EIR describes the significant environmental impacts of a project, identifies potentially feasible measures to mitigate significant impacts, and describes potentially feasible alternatives to the project that can reduce or avoid significant environmental effects. CEQA requires decision-makers to balance the benefits of a project against its unavoidable environmental effects in deciding whether to carry out a project.

The lead agency is the public agency with primary responsibility over the proposed project. In accordance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15051(b)(1), “[t]he lead agency will normally be the agency with general governmental powers, such as a city or county, rather than an agency with a single or limited purpose...” The City, as the lead agency, has prepared this EIR to evaluate the environmental impacts of implementation of the proposed General Plan Update. The EIR was prepared under the direction of the City and is provided for review by both the public and public agencies, as required by CEQA. The City Council must certify that the Final EIR has been completed in compliance with CEQA before adopting the proposed General Plan Update.

If significant environmental effects of the proposed project are identified, the lead agency must adopt “findings” indicating whether feasible mitigation measures or alternatives exist that can avoid or reduce those effects. If the environmental impacts are identified as significant and unavoidable, the lead agency may still approve the project if it determines that social, economic, legal, technological, or other benefits of the project outweigh the significant unavoidable impacts. The lead agency would then be required to prepare a “Statement of Overriding Considerations” that discusses the specific reasons for approving the project, based on information in the EIR and other information in the record.

In making its decision about the proposed project, the City considers the information in this EIR, comments received on the EIR, and responses to those comments, along with other available information and technical analyses.

1.3 USE OF THE GENERAL PLAN EIR FOR TIERING AND STREAMLINING

The analysis in this program EIR is considered the first tier of environmental review and creates the foundation upon which future, project-specific CEQA documents can build. Tiering refers to the concept of a multi-level approach to preparing environmental documents set forth in Public Resources Code Section 21083.3 and Section 15152 of the CEQA Guidelines. Project-level environmental analysis can be streamlined to limit the scope of site-specific approvals following the preparation of an EIR for a general plan.¹ This streamlining provision applies to site-specific approvals for projects that are consistent with the general plan.

Section 15152 of the CEQA Guidelines provides that where a first-tier EIR has “adequately addressed” the subject of cumulative impacts, such impacts need not be revisited in second- and/or third-tier documents. According to Section 15152(f)(3), significant effects identified in a first-tier EIR have been adequately addressed, for purposes of later approvals, if the lead agency determines that such effects have been either:

- A) “mitigated or avoided as a result of the prior [EIR] and findings adopted in connection with that prior [EIR]”; or
- B) “examined at a sufficient level of detail in the prior [EIR] to enable those effects to be mitigated or avoided by site-specific revisions, the imposition of conditions, or by other means in connection with the approval of the later project.”

This program EIR will help determine the need for subsequent environmental documentation, as well as dictate the scope of project level CEQA review. According to Section 15168(d) of the CEQA Guidelines, a program EIR

¹ This section of the Public Resources Code also refers to consistency with community plans and zoning, but the above discussion is tailored to this General Plan EIR.

can be used to simplify the task of preparing future environmental documents on later activities in the program. A program EIR can:

- 1) “Provide the basis in an Initial Study for determining whether the later activity may have any significant effects.
- 2) Be incorporated by reference to deal with regional influences, secondary effects, cumulative impacts, broad alternatives, and other factors that apply to the program as a whole.
- 3) Focus an EIR on a later activity to permit discussion solely of new effects which had not been considered before.”

As discussed further below, the City will also use the proposed General Plan Update EIR to streamline future environmental review and approval of private and public projects, as well as implementation actions, such as updates to zoning, the City’s CEQA Implementing Procedures, the Capital Improvement Program, and other implementing documents and plans that are consistent with the proposed General Plan Update. The City will make use of existing streamlining provided by CEQA, and will make use of emerging streamlining techniques, as appropriate.

1.3.1 DETAILED AND RIGOROUS ANALYSIS AND COMPREHENSIVE MITIGATION STRATEGIES

While many general plan program EIRs include only generalized analysis of conceptual land use change estimates, the City elected to include an enhanced level of analysis for this General Plan Update and EIR. The proposed General Plan Update EIR uses detailed land use programming and identification of the location and types of future public facilities and infrastructure as its basis of analysis, in order to maximize the value of the General Plan EIR to future projects that promote the proposed General Plan Update’s objectives. Part of this focus is on vacant and underutilized properties that represent infill opportunity areas – for housing, services, and other land uses allowed under the General Plan – that are appropriate for development between the present and 2035. This EIR includes quantified estimates in certain impact areas, such as transportation, air quality, greenhouse gas emissions, noise, and other topics, based on reasonable assumptions as to the amount, type, and character of land use changes under the proposed General Plan Update. This enhanced level of analysis will serve to streamline and expedite later projects that are consistent with, and implement the policies and measures of, the proposed General Plan Update. Note that throughout this EIR, the phrase “land use changes” refers to the physical changes to land that will occur as the City continues to develop. It does not refer to changes in the City’s land use plan or land use designations, because none are proposed as a part of this proposed General Plan Update.

1.3.2 INTENT TO USE CEQA GUIDELINES SECTION 15183 EXEMPTIONS

The City intends to make full use of the streamlining allowed under Public Resources Code 21083.3 and CEQA Guidelines 15183. Under this provision, CEQA only applies to issues “peculiar to the site.” Lead agencies can use programmatic EIRs for a general plan to analyze the impacts of projects that are consistent with the plan, and greatly limit later project-level analysis to project-specific or site-specific issues. CEQA Guidelines Section 15183(f) provides that impacts are not peculiar to the project if uniformly applied development policies or standards substantially mitigate that environmental effect.

Public agencies can use uniformly applied policies or standards to mitigate effects of future projects, precluding the need to analyze these effects, unless new information arises that changes the impact analysis (Public Resources Code Section 21083.3[d]). The General Plan Update process was used to identify policies and implementation measures that can constitute uniformly applied standards and substantially limit the scope of analysis for proposed projects that are consistent with the General Plan as updated by the proposed General Plan Update project. This EIR includes references to General Plan policies and implementation measures, where appropriate, to address environmental impacts. As discussed throughout this EIR, the uniformly applied development policies (in the form of General Plan policies and implementation measures), would substantially mitigate each environmental effect, when applied to future projects.

Future CEQA documents may reference the same General Plan policies and implementation measures, where appropriate, to demonstrate less-than-significant impacts and that later project-level issues are not “peculiar to the parcel” if they have been substantially mitigated by General Plan policies and implementation measures (uniformly applied development policies). Please refer to Public Resources Code Section 21083.3 and CEQA Guidelines Section 15183 for a more detailed description of impacts that are peculiar to the parcel and the use of uniformly applied development standards and policies.

1.4 SCOPE OF THE EIR

1.4.1 GEOGRAPHIC SCOPE

The geographic scope that could be affected by a project varies depending on the issue topic. The geographic area associated with different environmental effects was used to define the area considered for impact analysis. For example, the geographic scope for air pollutant impact analysis, such as those related to emissions of ozone precursors, is very broad, encompassing large areas within the same air basin. In contrast, the geographic scope for stationary source noise impacts is relatively narrow, because noise attenuates substantially with distance, making impacts more localized. The environmental impact analyses throughout this EIR describe the environmental impacts of implementing the proposed General Plan Update throughout the City’s Planning Area.

This EIR analyzes impacts of buildout of the General Plan compared to existing conditions. The proposed General Plan Update is not a comprehensive rewrite of every element. This General Plan Update does not include any changes to land use designations, expansion to the City’s Planning Area, or other major physical changes to areas planned for development compared to the existing General Plan. Nonetheless, consistent with Section 15125(a)(1) of the CEQA Guidelines and the intent of the City to provide an enhanced level of analysis, the EIR analysis compares buildout of the General Plan with existing physical environment conditions within the Planning Area at the time the NOP was published.

1.4.2 TOPICAL SCOPE

Environmental review in compliance with CEQA is required as part of the City’s consideration of the proposed General Plan Update. The EIR has been prepared in compliance with CEQA, including the CEQA statutes, CEQA Guidelines, and judicial decisions interpreting CEQA and the CEQA Guidelines. This EIR includes an evaluation of all required environmental topic areas, as well as other CEQA-mandated sections, as presented below:

- ▶ Chapter 1.0. Introduction
- ▶ Chapter 2.0. Project Description

- ▶ Chapter 3.0. Executive Summary
- ▶ Chapter 4.0. Introduction to the Environmental Analysis
 - Section 4.1. Land Use and Agriculture
 - Section 4.2. Population, Employment, and Housing
 - Section 4.3. Transportation
 - Section 4.4. Air Quality
 - Section 4.5. Greenhouse Gas Emissions
 - Section 4.6. Noise and Vibration
 - Section 4.7. Geology, Soils, and Paleontological Resources
 - Section 4.8. Biological Resources
 - Section 4.9. Cultural and Tribal Cultural Resources
 - Section 4.10. Hazards, Hazardous Materials, and Wildfire
 - Section 4.11. Public Services and Recreation
 - Section 4.12. Utilities and Service Systems
 - Section 4.13. Hydrology and Water Quality
 - Section 4.14. Aesthetics
 - Section 4.15. Energy
- ▶ Chapter 5.0. Other CEQA Considerations
- ▶ Chapter 6.0. Alternatives
- ▶ Chapter 7.0. References Cited
- ▶ Chapter 8.0. List of Preparers

Other CEQA-mandated issues discussed within the context of this EIR are cumulative impacts, growth-inducing impacts, irreversible environmental effects, and significant and unavoidable adverse impacts (Chapter 5 of this EIR, “Other CEQA Considerations”). Chapter 6 of this EIR, “Alternatives,” includes an analysis of a range of reasonable alternatives to the proposed General Plan Update, as required by Section 15126.6 of the CEQA Guidelines. As described in more detail below, Chapter 6 analyzes the environmental impacts of the alternatives presented and compares them to the environmental impacts of the proposed General Plan Update. Chapter 7 of this EIR, “References Cited,” identifies the references and citations used in drafting the EIR, and Chapter 8 of this EIR, “List of Preparers,” lists the preparers of the EIR.

1.5 ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW PROCESS

The CEQA Guidelines have specific requirements for EIRs related to the description of the project, environmental setting, and impact analysis. Table 1-1 identifies the required elements of an EIR (with CEQA Guidelines sections referenced) and the corresponding chapters or sections in which each item is discussed in this document.

Table 1-1. Analyses Required by the CEQA Guidelines	
Required Description and Analysis	EIR Chapter or Section
Summary (Section 15123)	3
Project Description (Section 15124)	2
Description of the Existing Setting (Section 15125)	4
Environmental Impacts (Sections 15126 and 15143)	4
Alternatives (Section 15126.6)	6
Cumulative Impacts (Section 15355)	5
Growth-Inducing Impacts (Section 15126.2[e])	5
Irreversible Environmental Effects (Section 15126.2[d])	5
Significant Environmental Effects Which Cannot be Avoided (Section 15126.2[c])	5

1.6 NOTICE OF PREPARATION

To assist the City in determining the focus and scope of analysis for this EIR, pursuant to Section 15082 of the CEQA Guidelines, on August 26, 2019 the City filed a Notice of Preparation (NOP) and sent the NOP to each responsible and trustee agency, special service districts, organizations, and individuals with an interest in or jurisdiction over the project. The NOP is sent by the lead agency to inform the public, interested parties, responsible agencies, trustee agencies, and potentially affected federal, state, and local agencies that the lead agency plans to prepare an EIR. The NOP also seeks comments regarding the scope and content of the EIR. The City held a public scoping meeting for the project on September 17, 2019. Please see Appendix A for the NOP and responses.

The City received NOP comment letters from:

- ▶ California Department of Transportation
- ▶ California Department of Fish and Wildlife
- ▶ Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board
- ▶ City of Citrus Heights
- ▶ Governor’s Office of Planning and Research, State Clearinghouse
- ▶ Native American Heritage Commission
- ▶ Placer County
- ▶ Placer County Air Pollution Control District
- ▶ Reclamation District 1000

The NOP comment letters and comments at the scoping meeting suggest that the following topics related to adverse physical environmental impacts should be particular areas of focus for the City’s environmental analysis:

- ▶ Travel demand (vehicle miles traveled, or VMT)
- ▶ Direct, indirect, and cumulative biological resources effects
- ▶ Surface and groundwater quality
- ▶ Cultural resources and tribal cultural resources

- ▶ Greenhouse gas emissions
- ▶ Criteria air pollutant emissions
- ▶ Carbon monoxide concentrations
- ▶ Flooding and hydraulic impacts

1.7 NATIVE AMERICAN CONSULTATION

The City contacted the Native American Heritage Commission to obtain a list of Native American Tribal representatives that may have an interest in the proposed General Plan Update and sent a letter inviting input to each of these representatives and all Native American Tribal representatives that have requested consultation by the City. The United Auburn Indian Community responded to this invitation to provide input and provided recommendations, which have been incorporated into the proposed General Plan Update and General Plan Update EIR.

1.8 ORGANIZATION OF THE EIR

This EIR is organized as follows:

Chapter 1, “Introduction,” describes the type of EIR prepared for the proposed General Plan Update; the purpose, intended uses, and geographic and environmental scope of the EIR; the environmental review process; subsequent actions required; the EIR comment process; and other agencies expected to use this EIR.

Chapter 2, “Project Description,” describes the project location; project objectives; project purpose; the General Plan Update process; General Plan development estimates; and the relationship between the proposed General Plan Update and other agencies and plans.

Chapter 3, “Executive Summary,” provides an overview of the findings and conclusions of this EIR.

Chapter 4, “Environmental Impact Analysis,” evaluates the environmental effects of the proposed General Plan Update and identifies mitigation for potentially significant and significant effects.

Chapter 5, “Other CEQA Considerations,” describes the impacts of implementing the proposed General Plan Update in combination with the impacts of related past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future projects (the cumulative condition). Various policies in the proposed General Plan Update control the timing, location, and sequence under which the Planning Area could build out through the planning horizon year (2035). Chapter 6 also discusses the growth inducement potential of the proposed General Plan Update, significant irreversible environmental changes associated with the plan, and significant and unavoidable effects of the plan.

Chapter 6, “Alternatives,” provides a comparative analysis between the environmental impacts of the project alternatives and the proposed General Plan Update. The Alternatives chapter provides a summary of the relative environmental impacts of the project alternatives, including the No Project Alternative. This chapter also describes alternatives that were considered but eliminated from detailed consideration in the EIR and identifies the “environmentally superior” alternative.

Chapter 7, “References Cited,” lists the sources of information cited throughout the EIR.

Chapter 8, “List of Preparers,” lists the individuals who contributed to preparation of the EIR.

Appendices provide background and technical information.

1.9 SUBSEQUENT ACTIONS REQUIRED

Further actions or procedures required to allow implementation of the proposed General Plan Update may include revisions to zoning, subdivision maps, site plans, building permits, grading permits, and other actions. Future development project proposals, public investments, and other actions would also be subject to CEQA requirements, as appropriate.

In California, general plans are cities' and counties' guiding land use policy documents. Local agencies implement general plans in part through the adoption and enforcement of zoning codes, subdivision ordinances, and other regulations. General plan land use designations and planning policy provide a framework for zoning designations and development standards. Cities and counties' design regulations and guidelines are also governed by general plans. General plans contain policy that may be implemented by municipal code sections and ordinances that regulate grading, building permits, open space dedications, landscaping requirements, parkland dedication, off-street parking requirements, transportation infrastructure, signage, improvement standards, impact fees, and other planning-related codes and ordinances.

1.10 MITIGATION MEASURES

CEQA Guidelines Section 15370 defines mitigation to include:

- (a) "Avoiding the impact altogether by not taking a certain action or parts of an action.
- (b) Minimizing impacts by limiting the degree or magnitude of the action and its implementation.
- (c) Rectifying the impact by repairing, rehabilitating, or restoring the [affected] environment.
- (d) Reducing or eliminating the impact over time by preservation and maintenance operations during the life of the action.
- (e) Compensating for the impact by replacing or providing substitute resources or environments, including through permanent protection of such resources in the form of conservation easements."

During development of the proposed General Plan Update, the City took into account the potential impacts discussed in this EIR and included policies and implementation measures in the proposed General Plan Update that would reduce potential impacts. In some instances, additional feasible mitigation measures are proposed in the EIR to clarify proposed General Plan Update policies as they relate to environmental effects and to further reduce potentially significant impacts.

CEQA requires the adoption of a program for mitigation monitoring or reporting for all adopted mitigation measures. The mitigation monitoring plan must be designed to ensure compliance during project implementation (Public Resources Code Section 21081.6, CEQA Guidelines Section 15097). When the project is a general plan or other plan-level document, the monitoring plan may be the annual plan implementation report required by statute, such as a report on general plan status (CEQA Guidelines Section 15097[b]).

1.11 AVAILABILITY OF THE EIR

Copies of the proposed General Plan Update and this EIR are available through the City of Roseville Development Services Department. The City has circulated the document to public agencies, other public and private organizations, property owners, developers, and other interested individuals. Detailed information related to the proposed General Plan Update and this EIR are available at the City of Roseville City Hall and online at the General Plan Update Website: www.roseville.ca.us/GeneralPlan

Comments on the EIR are invited in writing or via email to:

Gina McColl, General Plan Update Project Manager
City of Roseville Planning Division
311 Vernon Street
Roseville, CA 95678
gmccoll@roseville.ca.us

Comments should be focused on the adequacy and completeness of the EIR, or should address questions about the environmental consequences of project implementation. “Adequacy” is defined as the thoroughness of the EIR in addressing significant adverse physical environmental effects, identifying mitigation measures for those impacts, and supplying enough information for public officials to make decisions about the merits of the project (CEQA Guidelines Section 15151).

After the close of the public review period, a Final EIR will be prepared containing all the comments received during the public review period, responses to those comments, and other information the City deems relevant. This document will be made available for review before the City certifies it as complete. The Draft EIR, any changes to the Draft EIR, and the responses to comments on the Draft EIR, together will comprise the Final EIR.

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