

## **Notice of Preparation of a Draft Subsequent Environmental Impact Report**

**Date:** July 31, 2020

**To:** Responsible Agencies, Interested Parties and Organizations

**Subject:** Notice of Preparation of a Subsequent Environmental Impact Report for the Copper River Ranch Project in Fresno, CA (State Clearinghouse #2000021003)

**Lead Agency:** City of Fresno

**Contact:** Israel Trejo  
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**Notice is Hereby Given:** The City of Fresno (City) is the Lead Agency on the below-described Copper River Ranch Project (Project) and has prepared a Notice of Preparation (NOP) of a Subsequent Environmental Impact Report (SEIR), pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The NOP is intended to disclose environmental information and to solicit the views of the public, interested parties, and/or agencies as to the scope and content of the environmental information which is germane to you or your agency's statutory responsibilities in connection with the proposed project. Specifically, the City is requesting that commenters provide comments on the NOP, identify additional environmental topics (and/or special studies) that they believe need to be explored in the forthcoming SEIR, and to identify other relevant environmental issues related to the scope and content of the forthcoming SEIR.

**Project Title:** Copper River Ranch Project

**Project Environmental Background:** The Copper River Ranch Project was originally approved in 2003 by the Fresno City Council, and the area was annexed into the Fresno City limits. The Project has been in a state of development since 2004 and today, there are commercial and single family uses on the project site. The City of Fresno prepared and certified an Environmental Impact Report (No. 10126) for the Copper River Ranch Project (State Clearinghouse #2000021003), adopted in 2003. That EIR analyzed the impacts of the following:

- 2,837 residential units on 706 acres
- 250,000 square feet of Mixed-use office/commercial (60 acres)

The original Copper River Ranch Project has been building out / developed since that time in general conformance to what was analyzed in the 2003 EIR. However, as development has occurred, there have been some minor changes with regard to subdivision layouts, number of units, and some minor changes to locations of commercial/office. In addition, there are adjacent areas that were not studied as part of the 2003 EIR for which the Project Applicant proposes to develop in the future. As such, those areas, as well as the changes that have occurred within the existing Copper River Ranch footprint, will be analyzed in the forthcoming SEIR.

**Project Location:** The existing Copper River Ranch development area consists of approximately 706.5 acres situated generally between Friant Road, Copper Avenue, Willow Avenue and Silaxo Road. The proposed new areas of development would occur on approximately 109 acres adjacent and east of the existing Copper River Ranch footprint in the area indicated by the red boundary line shown in Figure 3.

**Project Description:** The Project Applicant is proposing to modify the existing General Plan designations to reflect both the actual built out conditions of Copper River Ranch today and to identify any proposed land use designations and zone districts that are planned for the future. The list of proposed changes to the existing land use designations, zoning, and tentative tract maps is shown in the following tables:

**Proposed Land Use Changes**

Parcel No.	Acres	Existing Land Use Designation	Proposed Land Use Designation	Existing Zoning	Proposed Zoning
1	10.16	Med DR	Low DR	RS5	RS3
2	4.53	Gen Comm	Low DR	GC	RS3
3	1.17	Comm Comm	Low DR	CC	RS3
4**	2.07	Golf Course	Med Low DR	OS	RS3
5	16.21	Med DR	Low DR	RS5	RS3
6	6.11	Med DR	Low DR	RS5	RS3
7**	9.22	Med DR	Low DR	RS5	RS4
8**	28.46	Med Low DR	Low DR	RS4	RS3
9	7.23	Med High DR	Med DR	RM1	RS5
10	3.47	Med High DR	Comm Comm	RM1	CC
11	7.11	Comm Comm	Urban Neighbor	CC	RM2
19	1.06	Comm Comm	Urban Neighbor	CC	RM2
20	0.93	Med DR	Urban Neighbor	RS5	RM2
<b>Total Acres:</b>	<b>97.73</b>				

\* See Figures 1 and 2 for parcel locations / \*\* Portions not within the original 2003 EIR study area.

**No Proposed Land Use Changes**

Parcel No.	Acres	Existing Land Use Designation	Existing Zoning
12	9.45	Comm Comm	CC
13	32.61	Med DR	RS5
14**	11.86	Med Low DR	RS4
15**	48.27	Med Low DR	RS4
16**	32.59	Med Low DR	RS4
17**	12.23	Med Low DR	RS4
<b>Total Acres:</b>	<b>147.01</b>		

\* See Figures 1 and 2 for parcel locations / \*\* Portions not within the original 2003 EIR study area.

**Scope of the Subsequent Environmental Impact Report:** Although the overall unit count will remain similar to the 2003 Copper River Ranch EIR, because of the addition of new project areas, lapse in time from previous EIR, and updates to the CEQA Guidelines, the proposed Project will require a Subsequent EIR (SEIR). Therefore, pursuant to Section 15162, an SEIR will be prepared and processed. The SEIR will address the following CEQA Guidelines Appendix G topics: Aesthetics, Agriculture/Forest Resources, Air Quality, Biological Resources, Cultural Resources, Energy, Geology/Soils, Greenhouse Gases, Hazards/Hazardous Materials, Hydrology/Water Quality, Land Use/Planning, Mineral Resources, Noise, Population/Housing, Public Services, Recreation, Transportation, Tribal Cultural Resources, Utilities/Service Systems and Wildfire. The SEIR will also review Project alternatives as well as cumulative impacts. To support the analysis in the SEIR, the following technical studies will be prepared: Air Quality / Greenhouse Gases / Energy Study, Traffic Impact Study, Noise Assessment, Biological Analysis, and Cultural Analysis.

**Document Availability and Public Review Timeline:** Due to the time limits mandated by State law, your response to the NOP must be sent *no later than 30 days* after receipt of this notice. The review period for the IS/NOP will be from July 31, 2020 to August 31, 2020. Due to closures of public facilities in response to COVID-19, electronic copies of the NOP can be accessed on the City's website at: <https://www.fresno.gov/darm/planning-development/plans-projects-under-review/>. A copy of the NOP can also be obtained by email via the email address below.

**Public Scoping Meeting:** In addition to the opportunity to submit written comments, one online public scoping meeting will be held by the City to inform interested parties about the proposed project, and to provide agencies and the public with an opportunity to provide comments on the scope and content of the SEIR. This meeting will be held at 6:00 p.m. on August 20, 2020, via a Zoom online meeting. The web address for the online meeting is: <https://zoom.us/j/98540845474>

**Submitting Comments:** Comments and suggestions as to the appropriate scope of analysis of the SEIR are invited from all interested parties. Written comments or questions concerning the EIR for the proposed Project should be directed to the City's Project Planner at the following address by 5:00 p.m. on August 31, 2020. Please include the commenter's full name and address. Please submit comments to:

Israel Trejo  
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City of Fresno – Planning and Development Department  
2600 Fresno Street, Room 3043  
Fresno, CA 93721  
(559) 621-8044  
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Figure 1 - Parcel Locations and General Plan Land Use Designations (1 of 2)

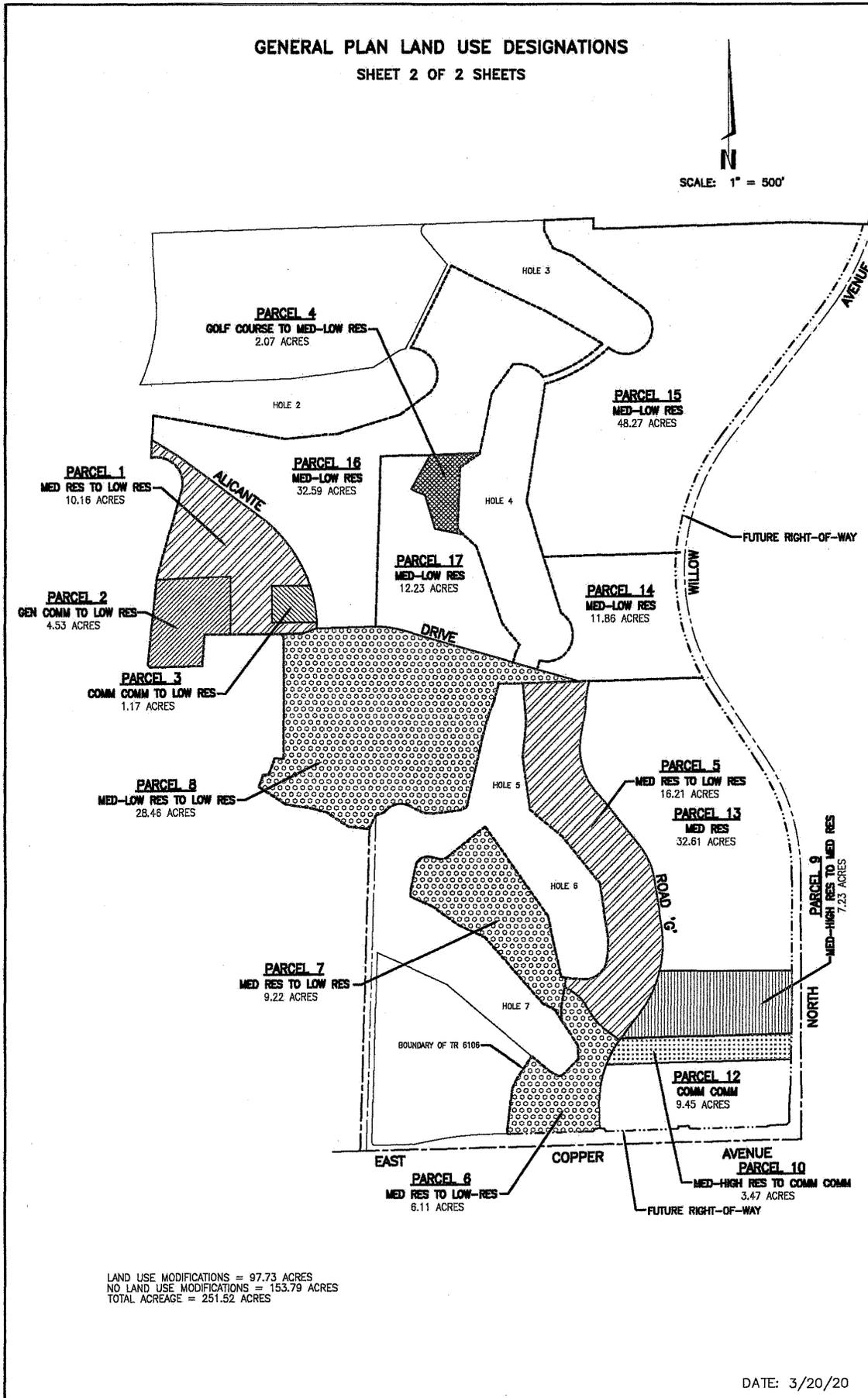


Figure 2 - Parcel Locations and General Plan Land Use Designations (2 of 2)

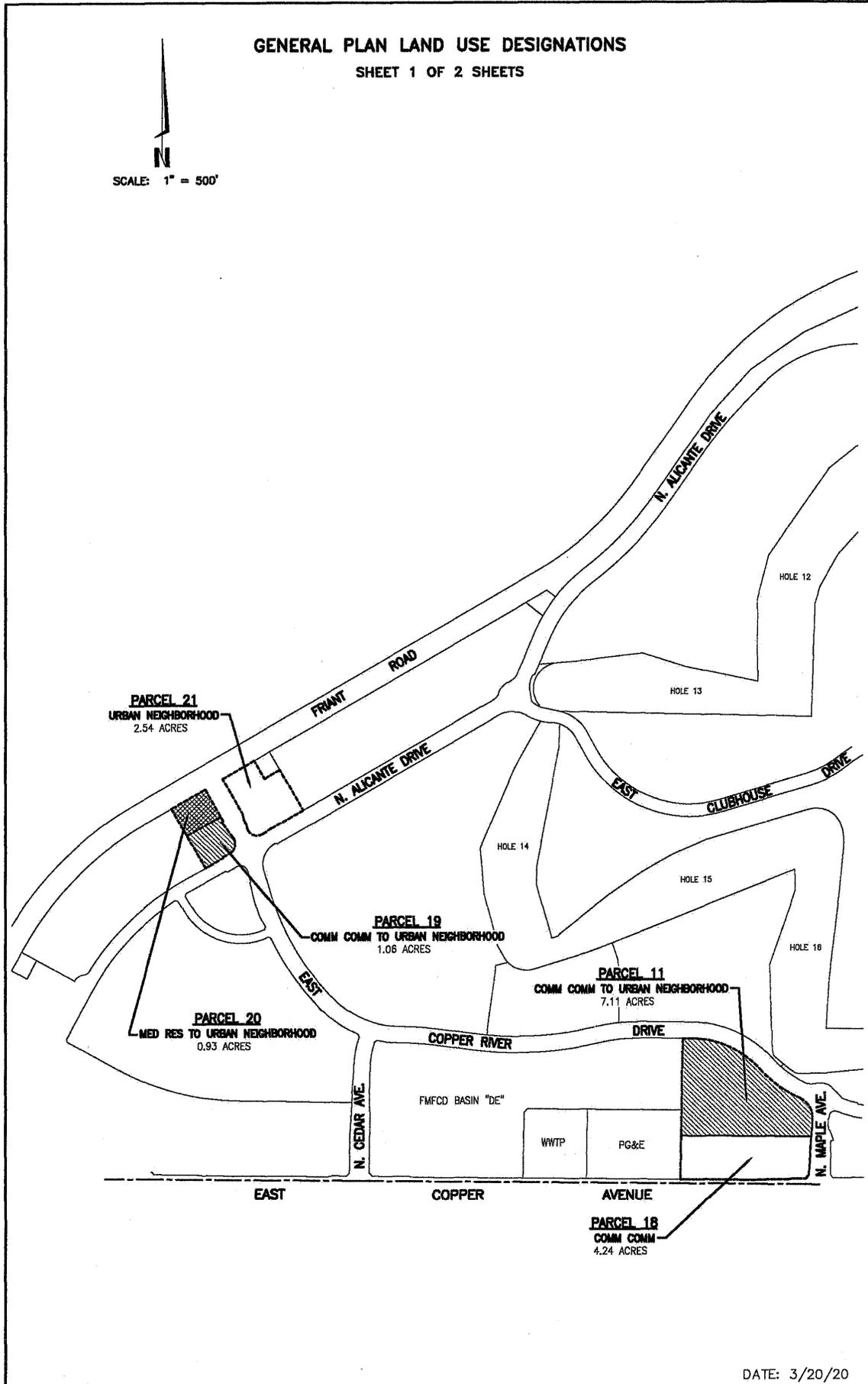


Figure 3 – Tract Maps and Project Boundaries

