Notice of Preparation and Scoping Meeting
Jackson General Plan Update Environmental Impact Report

Date: November 23, 2022

To: State Clearinghouse, Agencies, Organizations and Interested Parties

Subject: Notice of Preparation and Scoping Meeting for the Jackson General Plan Update Environmental Impact Report

Scoping Meeting: **December 5, 2022, 6:30 p.m.**

Comment Period: **November 23, 2022 to December 27, 2022.**

The City of Jackson (City) will serve as Lead Agency in the preparation of a programmatic Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the City of Jackson General Plan Update (Plan).

The purpose of this notice is (1) to serve as a Notice of Preparation (NOP) of an EIR pursuant to the State CEQA Guidelines Section 15082, (2) to advise and solicit comments and suggestions regarding the scope and content of the EIR to be prepared for the proposed project, and (3) to notice the public scoping meeting. The proposed project is a long-term General Plan consisting of policies that will guide future development activities and City actions. No specific development projects are proposed as part of the Plan. Information regarding the project description, project location, and topics to be addressed in the Draft EIR is provided below. Additional project documents and information are available at the City of Jackson, Community Development Department, Planning Department located at 33 Broadway Jackson, CA 95642, and on-line at: www.ci.jackson.ca.us

For questions regarding this notice, please contact Farhad Mortazavi, City Planner by email planning@ci.jackson.ca.us

Notice of Preparation 30-Day Comment Period

The City, as Lead Agency, requests that responsible and trustee agencies, and the Office of Planning and Research, respond in a manner consistent with Section 15082(b) of the CEQA Guidelines. Pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21080.4, responsible agencies, trustee agencies and the Office of Planning and Research must submit any comments in response to this notice no later than 30 days after receipt. In accordance with the time limits established by CEQA, the NOP public review period will begin on November 23, 2022 and end on December 27, 2022.

In the event that the City does not receive a response from any Responsible or Trustee Agency by the end of the review period, the City may presume that the Responsible Agency or Trustee

Agency has no response to make (State CEQA Guidelines Section 15082(b)(2)). All Comments in response to this notice must be submitted in writing at the address below, or via email, by the close of the 30-day NOP review period, which is 5:00 PM on December 27, 2022:

Farhad Mortazavi
City of Jackson
33 Broadway Jackson, CA 95642
planning@ci.jackson.ca.us

Scoping Meeting

The City will hold a scoping meeting to provide an opportunity for agency representatives and the public to assist the City in determining the scope and content of the EIR.

The scoping meeting will be held on December 5**,** 2022 6:30 p.m. at:

City Hall Council Chambers
City of Jackson
33 Broadway Jackson, CA 95642

For comments before or after the meeting or additional information, please contact Farhad Mortazavi, City Planner, at 209-223-1646 x 111 or by email: *planning@ci.jackson.ca.us*

Project Location and Setting

Amador County is located in the Mother Lode of California, which includes the central and eastern portion of California and extends from the Central Valley/Sierra Nevada foothills east, almost to the state line. El Dorado County borders the County on the north, Calaveras County borders Amador County on the south, Sacramento and the San Joaquin Counties border on the west, and to the east is Alpine County. There are five incorporated cities in the County, which include the City of Ione, Amador City, the City of Plymouth, the City of Sutter Creek, and the City of Jackson (the County seat).

The City of Jackson, incorporated December 5, 1905. Jackson is located in the central portion of Amador County, at the intersection of State Routes 49 and 88 (SR 49/88) in the Sierra Nevada foothills. Figure-1 depicts the regional location of Jackson.

Project Description

The City of Jackson is preparing a comprehensive update to its existing General Plan. The City of Jackson's current General Plan has been periodically amended, including updates to the Housing Element in 2015, the Land Use and Circulation Element in 2008, updates to the Noise, and Open Space and Conservation Elements in 1987, and updates to the Safety Element in 1981.

The City's General Plan includes a broad goal policy framework that guides land use and planning decisions within the city. The overall purpose of the General Plan is to create a policy framework that articulates a vision for the City's long-term physical form and development, while preserving and enhancing the quality of life for residents and increasing opportunities for high-quality local job growth and housing options. The key components of the General Plan will include broad goals for the future of Jackson, and specific policies and actions that will help implement the stated goals.

The updated General Plan will guide the City's development and conservation through land use objectives and policy guidance. The City will implement the Plan by requiring development, infrastructure improvements, and other projects to be consistent with its policies and by implementing the actions included in the Plan, including subsequent project-level environmental review, as required under CEQA.

State law requires the City to adopt a comprehensive, long-term general plan for the physical development of its planning area. The Plan must include land use, circulation, housing, conservation, open space, noise, and safety elements, as specified in Government Code Section 65302, to the extent that the issues identified by State law exist in the City's planning area.

The Jackson General Plan includes a comprehensive set of goals, policies, and actions (implementation measures), as well as a revised Land Use Map (Figure 2).

- A **goal** is a description of the general desired result that the City seeks to create through the implementation of the General Plan.

- A **policy** is a specific statement that guides decision-making as the City works to achieve its goals. Once adopted, policies represent statements of City regulations. The General Plan's policies set out the standards that will be used by City staff, the Planning Commission, and the City Council in their review of land development projects, resource protection activities, infrastructure improvements, and other City actions. Policies are on-going and don't necessarily require specific action on behalf of the City.
- An **action** is an implementation measure, procedure, technique, or specific program to be undertaken by the City to help achieve a specified goal or implement an adopted policy. The City must take additional steps to implement each action in the General Plan. An action is something that can and will be completed.

The Plan has been prepared to address the requirements of State law and the relevant items addressed in Government Code Section 65300 et seq. The Jackson General Plan is intended to reflect the desires and vision of residents, businesses, and City Council.

The following objectives are identified for the proposed update to the General Plan:

- Develop a long-term vision for the City of Jackson
- Engage a broad spectrum of the community members
- Engage key stakeholders to perpetuate long-term involvement
- Establish a greater connection between the General Plan and current planning issues
- Educate the public on the City's existing conditions and the General Plan Update process
- Provide a range of high-quality housing options
- Attract and retain businesses and industries that provide high-quality and high-paying jobs
- Continue to maintain and improve multimodal transportation opportunities
- Maintain strong fiscal sustainability and continue to provide efficient and adequate public services
- Address new requirements of State law

Growth Projections

While no specific development projects are proposed as part of the General Plan Update, the General Plan will accommodate future growth in Jackson, including new businesses, expansion of existing businesses, and new residential uses. The Growth analysis assumes an approximately 20-year horizon, and 2040 is assumed to be the horizon year of the General Plan.

Table 1 below summarizes the range of growth, including residential units (single family and multifamily) and non-residential square footage (commercial, office, industrial, governmental,

public/quasi-public) that would be anticipated to occur under cumulative 2040 conditions. These figures are based on the land use designations for the City shown on the proposed Land Use Map (see Figure 2) known land use constraints, the ACTC travel model, and Department Of Finance countywide 2040 growth projections.

As shown in Table 1, the General Plan by 2040 would be anticipated to result in 681 dwelling units accommodating an additional 1,435 residents, and approximately 300,000 square feet of nonresidential development that would accommodate an additional 457 jobs within Jackson.

TABLE 1: GROWTH PROJECTIONS - PROPOSED GENERAL PLAN LAND USE MAP

	POPULATION	DWELLING UNITS	NONRESIDENTIAL SQUARE FOOTAGE	JOBS	JOBS PER HOUSING UNIT
EXISTING CONDITIONS					
	5,071	2,406	1,827,500	2,987	1.24
NEW GROWTH POTENTIAL					
General Plan – city limits and SOI	1,435	681	300,000	457	0.67
TOTAL GROWTH: EXISTING PLUS NEW GROWTH POTENTIAL					
General Plan – cumulative 2040	6,506	3,087	2,127,500	3,444	1.12

SOURCES: COUNTY ASSESSOR 2020; CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE 2020; U.S CENSUS ONTHEMAP; ESRI 2020, DE NOVO PLANNING GROUP 2022.

Growth projections should not be considered a precise prediction for growth, as the actual amount of development that will occur throughout the 20-year planning horizon of the General Plan is based on many factors outside of the City's control. Actual future development would depend on future real estate and labor market conditions, property owner preferences and decisions, site-specific constraints, and other factors. Additionally, it should be noted that historic growth rates have been much lower than the total growth allowed under the General Plan and that the General Plan Update did not included substantial map revisions that would result in growth allowed in excess of the what is allowed under the Existing General Plan Map. Furthermore, the California Department of Finance (DoF) projects that Amador County will grow from a population of 37,577 persons in 2020 to 39,743 persons by 2040. This represents a 5.7% increase in growth and the addition of 2,166 persons. Table 1 shows that new growth projected in the City of Jackson and its SOI could result in the addition of 1,435 persons. This represents a 28.3% population growth rate, which far exceeds the overall growth rate projected by the DoF for Amador County. The analyses that follow are therefore considered conservative as they are based on a much higher rate of growth within the City of Jackson versus what the DoF expected for Amador County as a whole.

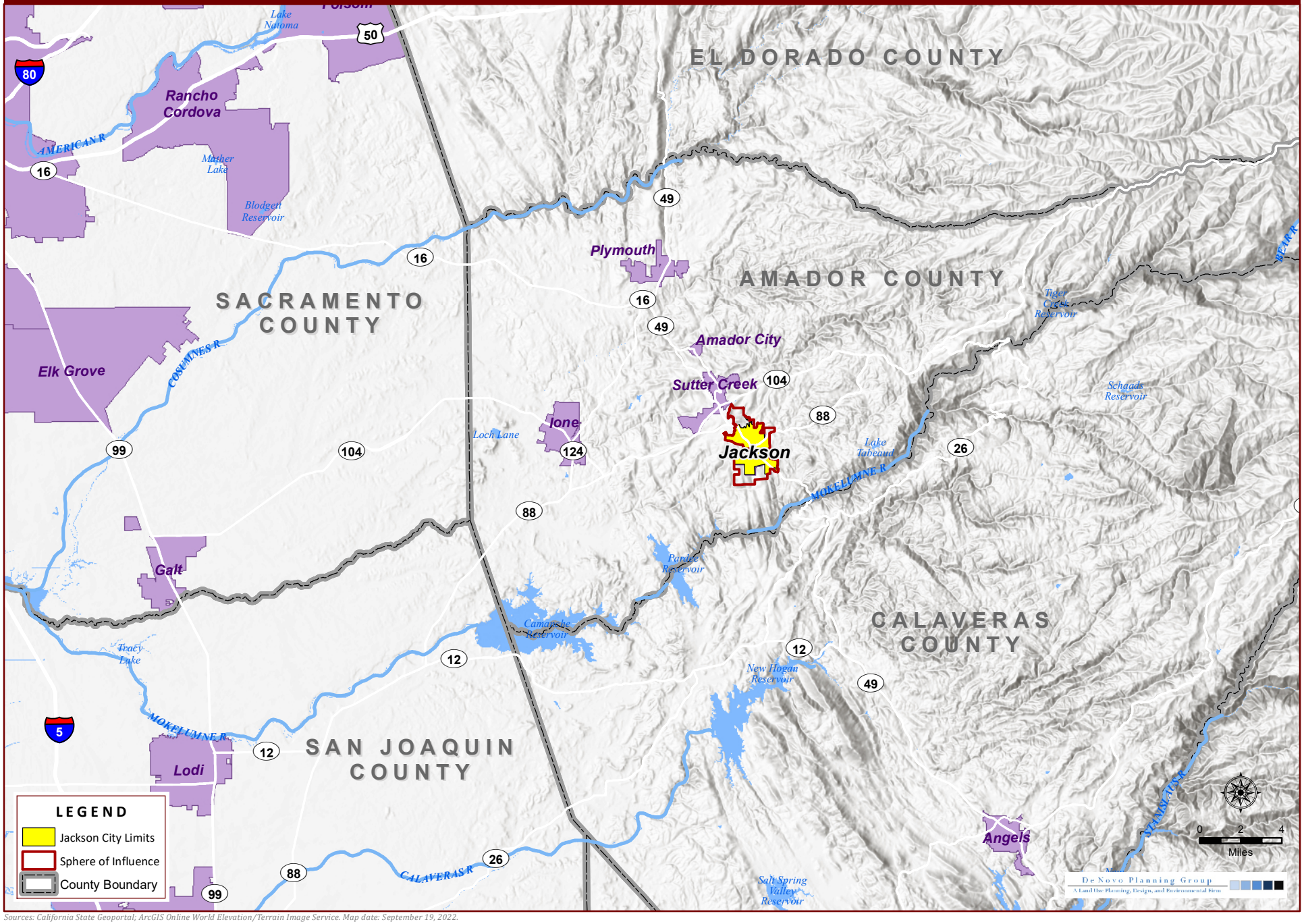
Program EIR Analysis

The City, as the Lead Agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), will prepare a Program EIR for the Jackson General Plan Update. The EIR will be prepared in accordance with CEQA, the CEQA Guidelines (Guidelines), relevant case law, and City procedures. No Initial Study will be prepared pursuant to Section 15063(a) of the CEQA Guidelines.

The EIR will analyze potentially significant impacts associated with adoption and implementation of the General Plan. In particular, the EIR will focus on areas that have development potential. The EIR will evaluate the full range of environmental issues contemplated under CEQA and the CEQA Guideline. At this time, the City anticipates that EIR sections will be organized in the following topical areas:

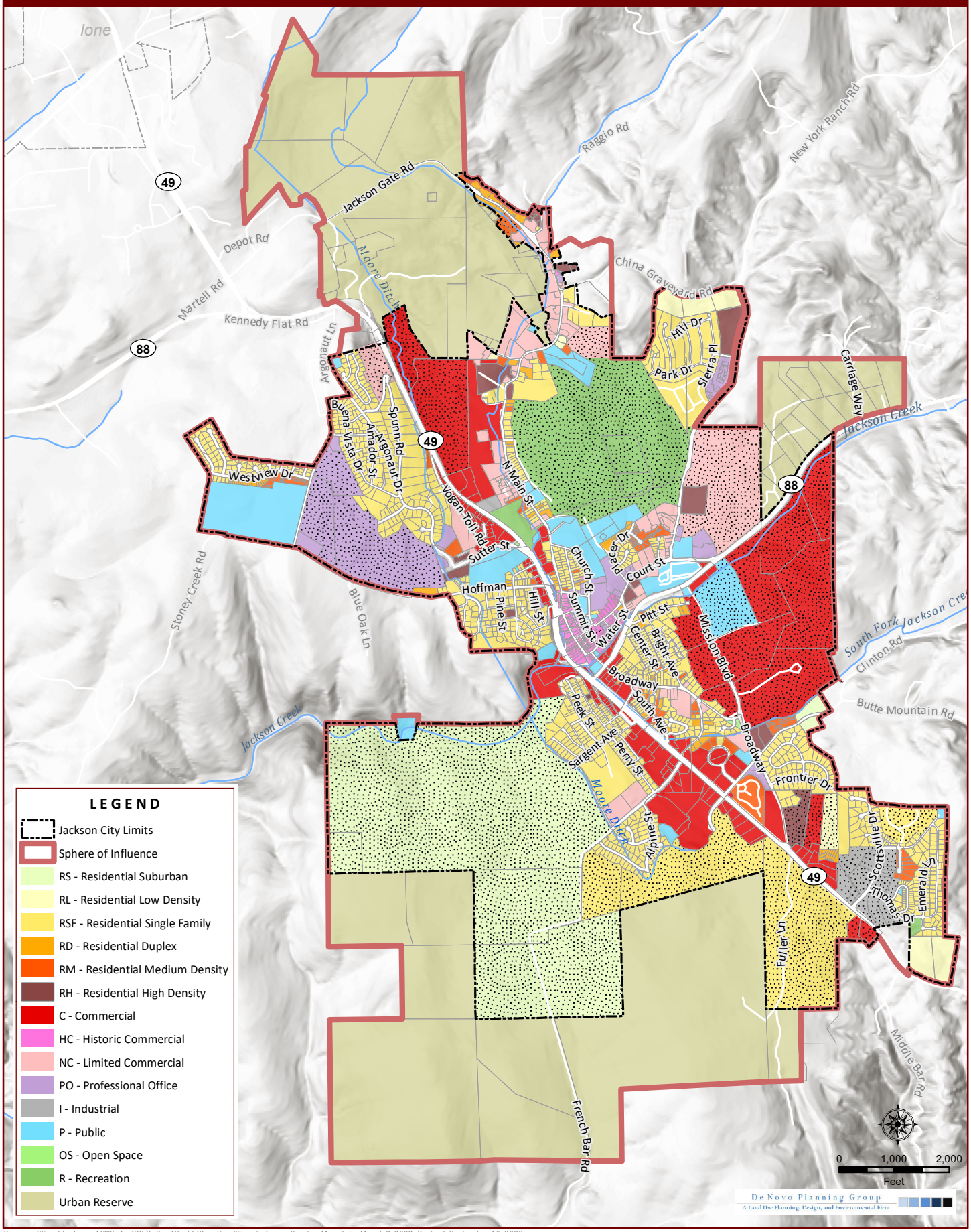
- Aesthetic Resources
- Agriculture and Forestry Resources
- Air Quality
- Biological Resources
- Cultural and Tribal Cultural Resources
- Geology, Soils, and Mineral Resources
- Greenhouse Gases, Climate Change, and Energy
- Hazards and Hazardous Materials
- Hydrology and Water Quality
- Land Use and Planning
- Noise
- Population and Housing
- Public Services and Recreation
- Transportation
- Utilities/Service Systems
- Wildfire
- Mandatory Findings of Significance/Cumulative Impacts
- Alternatives

Figure-1. Regional Location Map



Sources: California State Geoportal; ArcGIS Online World Elevation/Terrain Image Service. Map date: September 19, 2022.

Figure 2. General Plan Land Uses



Sources: City of Jackson; ACTC; ArcGIS Online World Elevation/Terrain Image Service. Map date: March 2, 2022. Revised: September 15, 2022.