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Development Services – Planning
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NOTICE OF PREPARATION
Summer Flats Project
Draft Environmental Impact Report

Date: October 11, 2024

To: Public Agencies and Interested Parties

From: City of Elk Grove

Subject: Notice of Preparation of a Draft Environmental Impact Report for the Summer Flats Project (PLNG23-006)

The City of Elk Grove (City) will prepare a Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR), compliant with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), for the Summer Flats Project (Project). Because the City has determined that an EIR will be prepared for the Project, an Initial Study will not be prepared (CEQA Guidelines Section 15063[a]). In accordance with Section 15082 of the CEQA Guidelines, this Notice of Preparation (NOP) provides a Project description, location, and the probable environmental effects of construction and implementation of the Project. The NOP is circulated for a public review and comment period that begins on **October 11, 2024** and ends on **November 12, 2024.**

The City is soliciting comments regarding the scope and content of the EIR as they relate to other agencies' statutory responsibilities in connection with the Project, as well as comments from interested members of the public. The City will rely on responsible and trustee agencies to provide information relevant to the analysis of resources falling within the jurisdiction of such agencies. Specifically, input is required on:

1. **Scope of Environmental Analysis** – guidance on the scope of analysis for this EIR, including identification of specific issues that will require closer study due to the location, scale, and character of the Project;
2. **Mitigation Measures** – ideas for feasible mitigation, including mitigation that would avoid, offset, eliminate, or reduce potentially significant or significant impacts; and
3. **Alternatives** – suggestions for alternatives to the Project that could reduce or avoid potentially significant or significant impacts.

The City welcomes input during the review and comment period. If the City has not received a response (or a well-justified request for additional time) from a responsible or trustee agency by the end of the review period, the City may presume that the responsible or trustee agency has no response (CEQA Guidelines Section 15082[b][2]). Please provide any written comments that you would like the City to consider, along with the name of the appropriate contact person in your agency and their contact information, to the address shown below by **5:00 PM** on **November 12, 2024.**

City of Elk Grove Development Services Department
c/o Sarah Kirchgessner
8401 Laguna Palms Way
Elk Grove, CA 95758
Email: skirchgessner@elkgrovecity.org

SCOPING MEETING

CEQA provides for a lead agency to facilitate one or more scoping meetings, which provide additional opportunity for informing the scope and content of an EIR. The City will host a scoping meeting on **Wednesday, October 30, 2024**, at **6:00 PM.** Information related to the Project, including how to access Project documents and how to participate in the public review process, will be provided at the scoping meeting.

PROJECT LOCATION AND SETTING

The approximately 27.6-acre Project site (site) is located immediately northeast of the Waterman Road/Rancho Drive intersection, within the East Elk Grove Sub-Area of the Eastern Elk Grove Community Plan, in the City of Elk Grove, California (see Figure 1 and Figure 2). The site, comprised of three parcels identified by Assessor's Parcel Numbers (APNs) 127-0150-001, -002, and -009, is bounded by Waterman Road along the site's western boundary. The City of Elk Grove General Plan designates the site as Low Density Residential (LDR) and Resource Management and Conservation (RMC). The site is zoned Low Density Residential – Maximum Four Dwelling Units per Acre (RD-4) and Open Space (O).

The site currently consists of flat to gently sloping grassland, with an elevation ranging from 50 to 65 feet above mean sea level (amsl). Within the grassland are depressions that allow for pooling. Aboveground distribution power lines and utility poles, as well as barbed wire fencing, proceed in a north-to-south direction along Waterman Road, parallel to the site's western boundary. In addition, transmission towers and overhead power lines extend through the site in a north-to-south direction within easements located in the eastern half of the site. Although the interior of the site is devoid of trees, three trees occur along the western boundary.

SURROUNDING LAND USES

As previously discussed, the site is bounded by Waterman Road to the west. Adjacent to the north of the site is flat to gently sloping grassland owned by the Cosumnes Community Services District (CCSD), which is interspersed with depressions, similar to the landscape of the site. Wright Park is located on the CCSD property north of the site. Surrounding existing land uses include a single-unit residential neighborhood immediately to the east; scattered single-unit residences to the south; a Bel Air grocery store and smaller commercial businesses (El Jardin restaurant and Cold Stone Creamery) further to the south; and a single-unit residential neighborhood, the Hilltop Cemetery, and Jack E. Hill Park to the west, across Waterman Road. Table 1 summarizes the General Plan land use designations and zoning of the parcels surrounding the site.

Table 1 Surrounding General Plan Land Use Designations and Zoning		
Parcel Location	**General Plan Land Use Designations**	**Zoning**
North of the site	Parks and Open Space (P/OS)	O
East of the site	LDR	Low Density Residential – Maximum Five Dwelling Units per Acre (RD-5) and Low Density Residential – Maximum Seven Dwelling Units per Acre (RD-7)
South of the site	LDR, RMC, and P/OS	RD-4, O, and Parks and Recreation (PR)
West of the site	Estate Residential (ER) and Public Services (PS)	Low Density Residential – Maximum Three Dwelling Units per Acre (RD-3) and O

Figure 1
Regional Vicinity Map

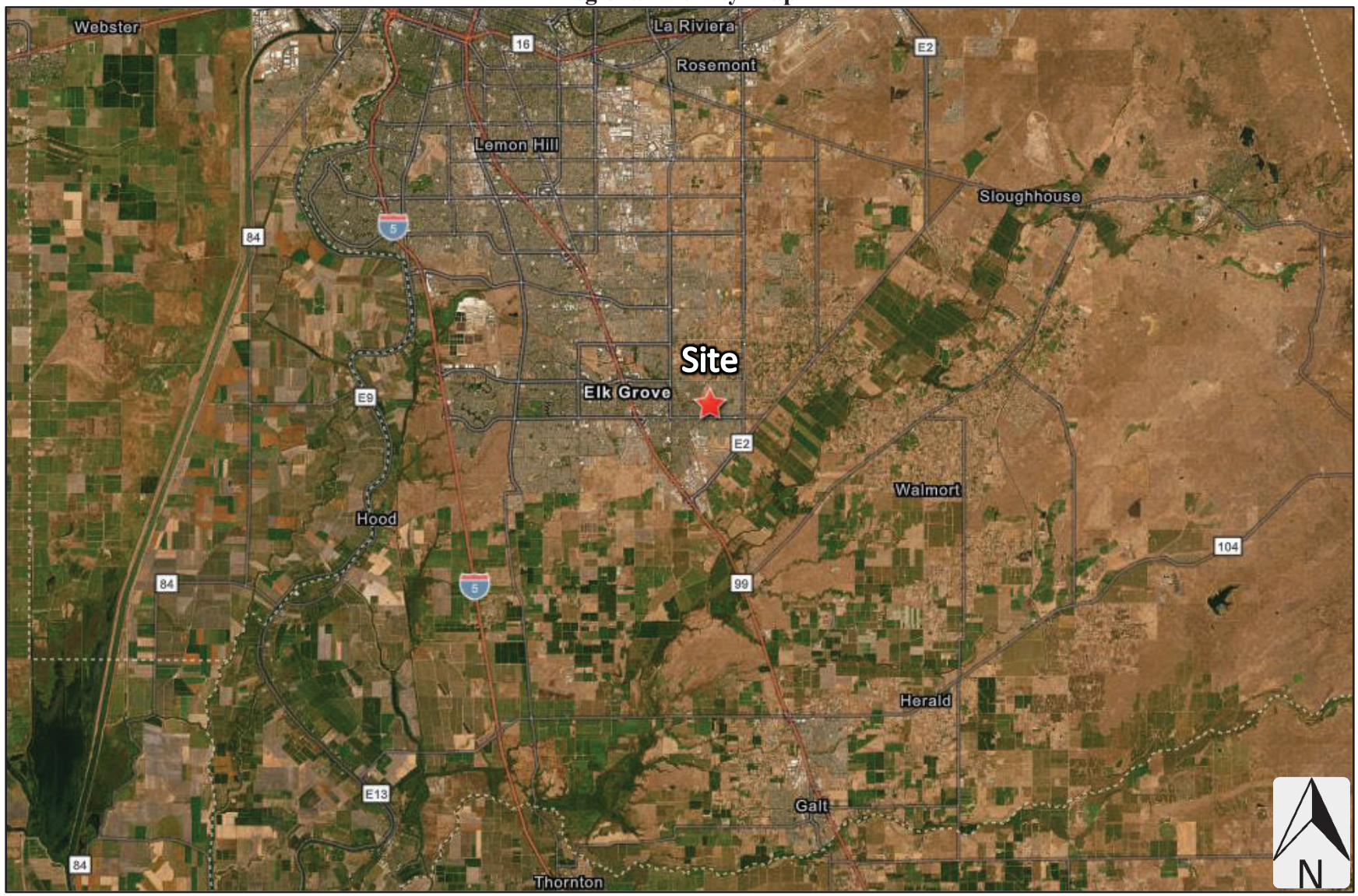


Figure 2
Project Site Boundaries



PROJECT DESCRIPTION

PROJECT COMPONENTS

The proposed project would consist of a subdivided single-unit residential community, comprised of 120 residential lots, as well as new internal roadways and frontage improvements, associated utility improvements, 14.7 acres of open space, an open space trail and pedestrian paseo, and new landscaping. The Applicant is requesting City approval of a General Plan Amendment, Community Plan Amendment, Rezone, Small Lot Tentative Subdivision Map, Subdivision Design Review, and Master Home Plan Design Review. The Project includes a Design Exception for two (2) dead end stub streets. The proposed project components, including the required discretionary approvals, are described in further detail below.

General Plan Amendment, Community Plan Amendment, And Rezone

The site is currently designated LDR and RMC by the City of Elk Grove. In accordance with Elk Grove Municipal Code Section 23.16.120, the Project would require City approval of a General Plan Amendment and Community Plan Amendment to redesignate the site Medium Density Residential (MDR) and RMC (see Figure 3). Similarly, in accordance with Elk Grove Municipal Code Section 23.16.110, the Project would require City approval of a Rezone to modify the site's zoning designations from RD-4 and O to Medium Density Residential – Maximum 12 Dwelling Units per Acre (RD-12) and O (see Figure 4).

Small Lot Tentative Subdivision Map

The Project would include a Small Lot Tentative Subdivision Map, prepared in accordance with Elk Grove Municipal Code Section 22.20.010, to subdivide the site into a total of 132 lots located in two general areas. The western portion of the site would include a 9.6-acre single-unit residential community, comprised of 120 single-unit residential lots, and 10 landscape lots totaling 1.8 acres (see Figure 5). The proposed residences would be constructed in accordance with four layouts (i.e., Plans 1, 2, 3, and 4), with each structure featuring two floors (see Figure 6 and Figure 7 for typical structure plans).

The eastern portion of the site would include two open space lots, containing 13 acres and 1.7 acres, respectively. The two open space lots and proposed landscaping are discussed further under the Open Space and Landscaping subheading below.

Figure 3
General Plan Amendment

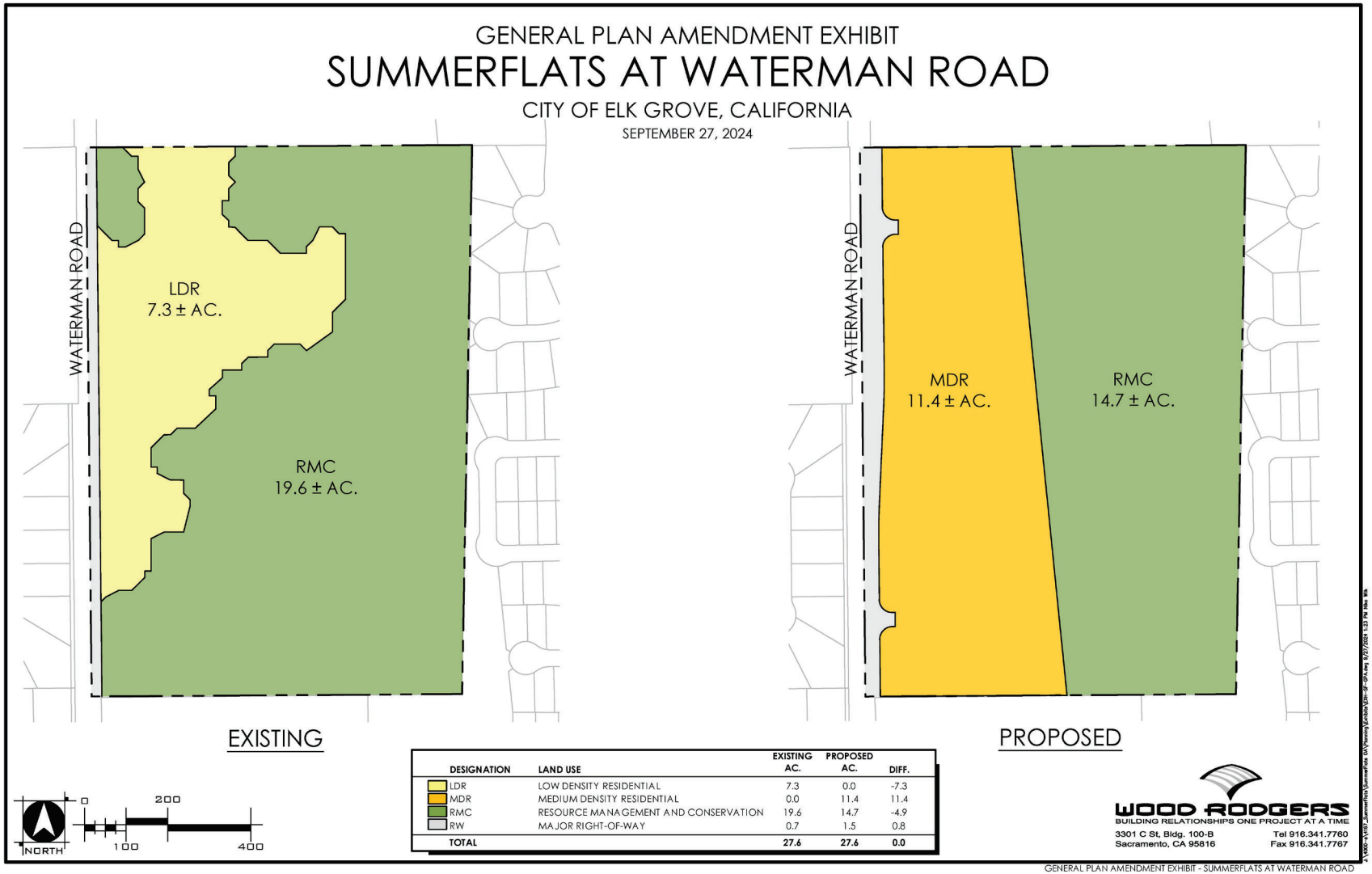


Figure 4
Rezone

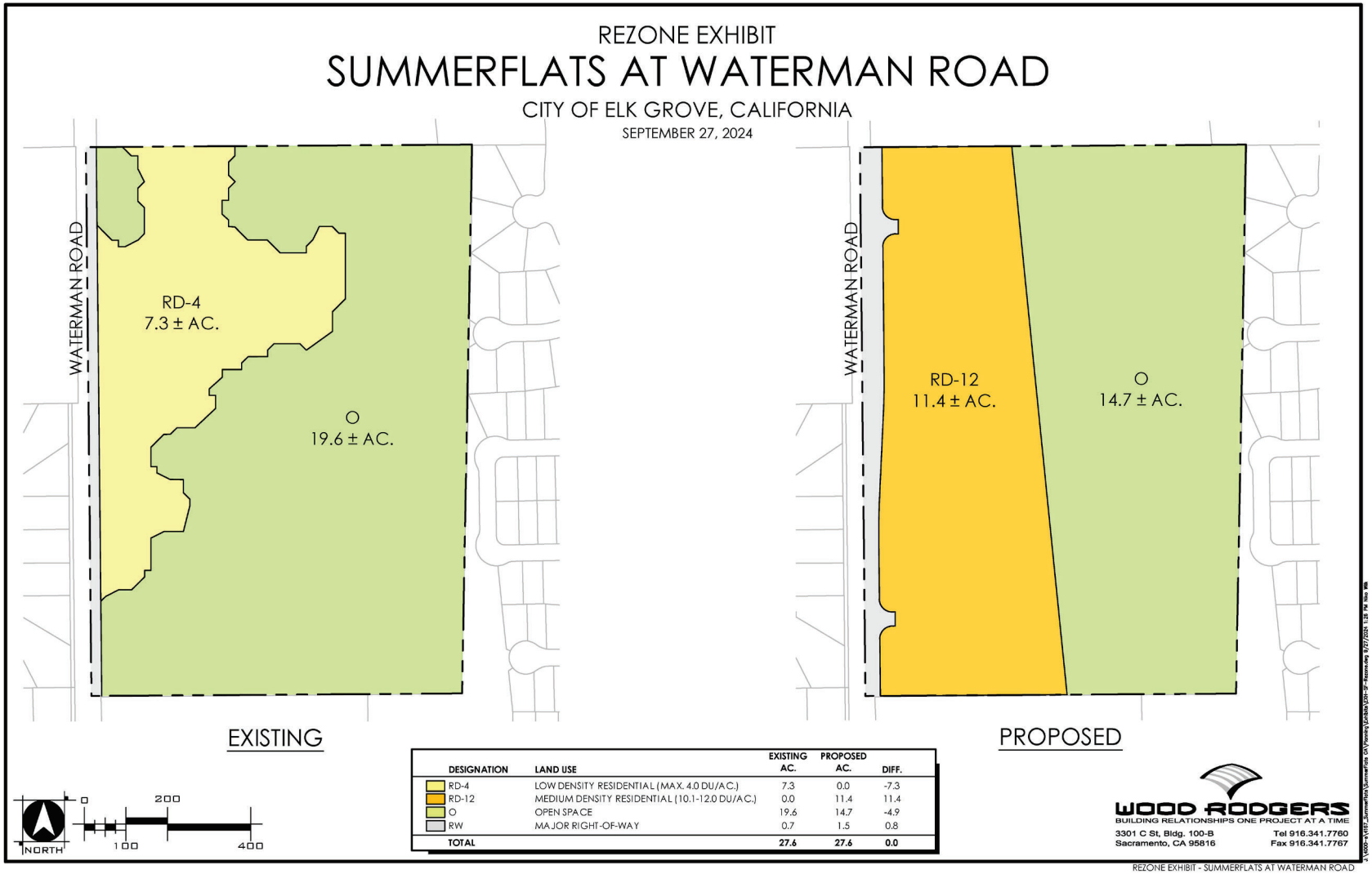


Figure 5
Small Lot Tentative Subdivision Map

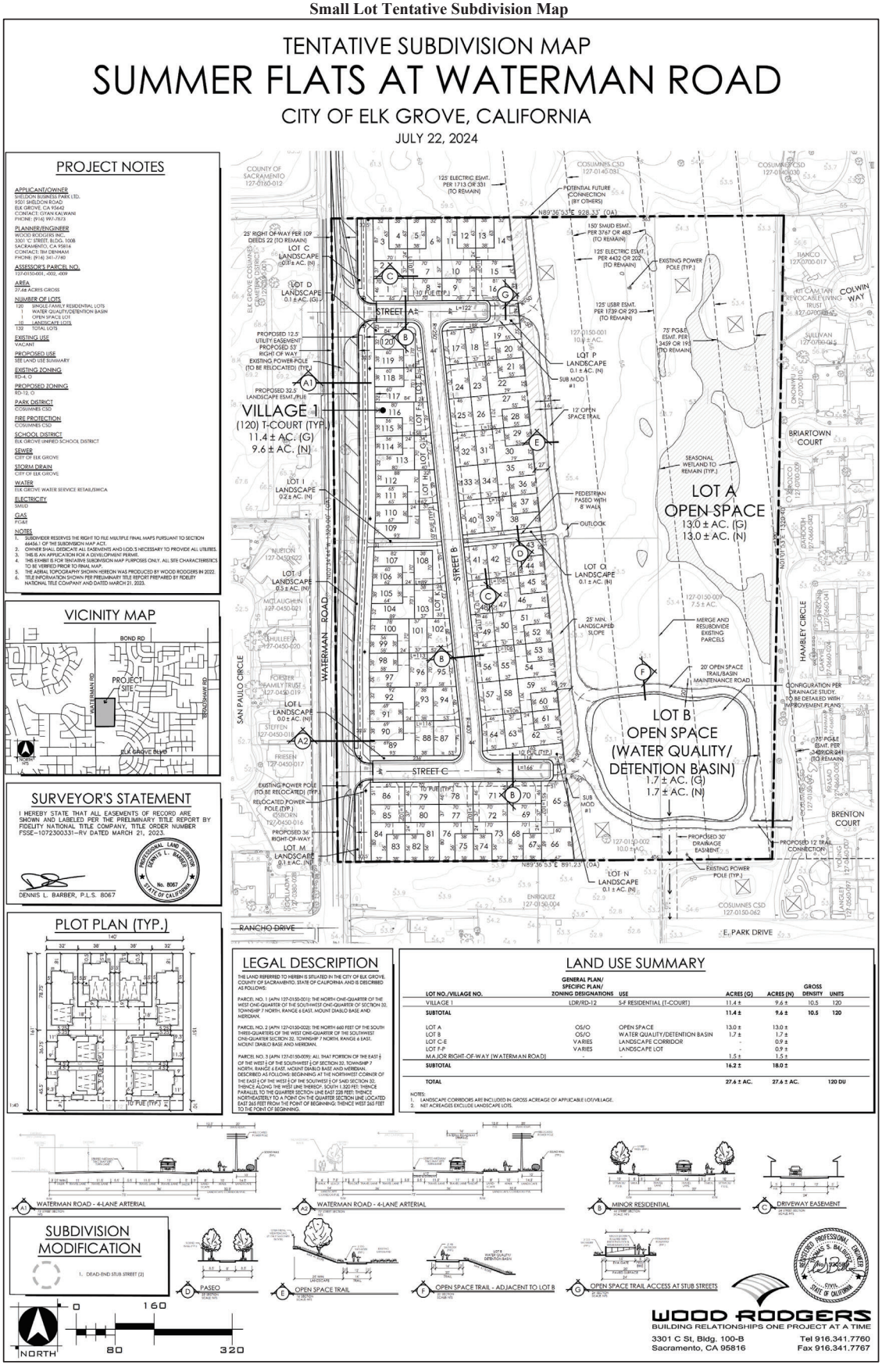
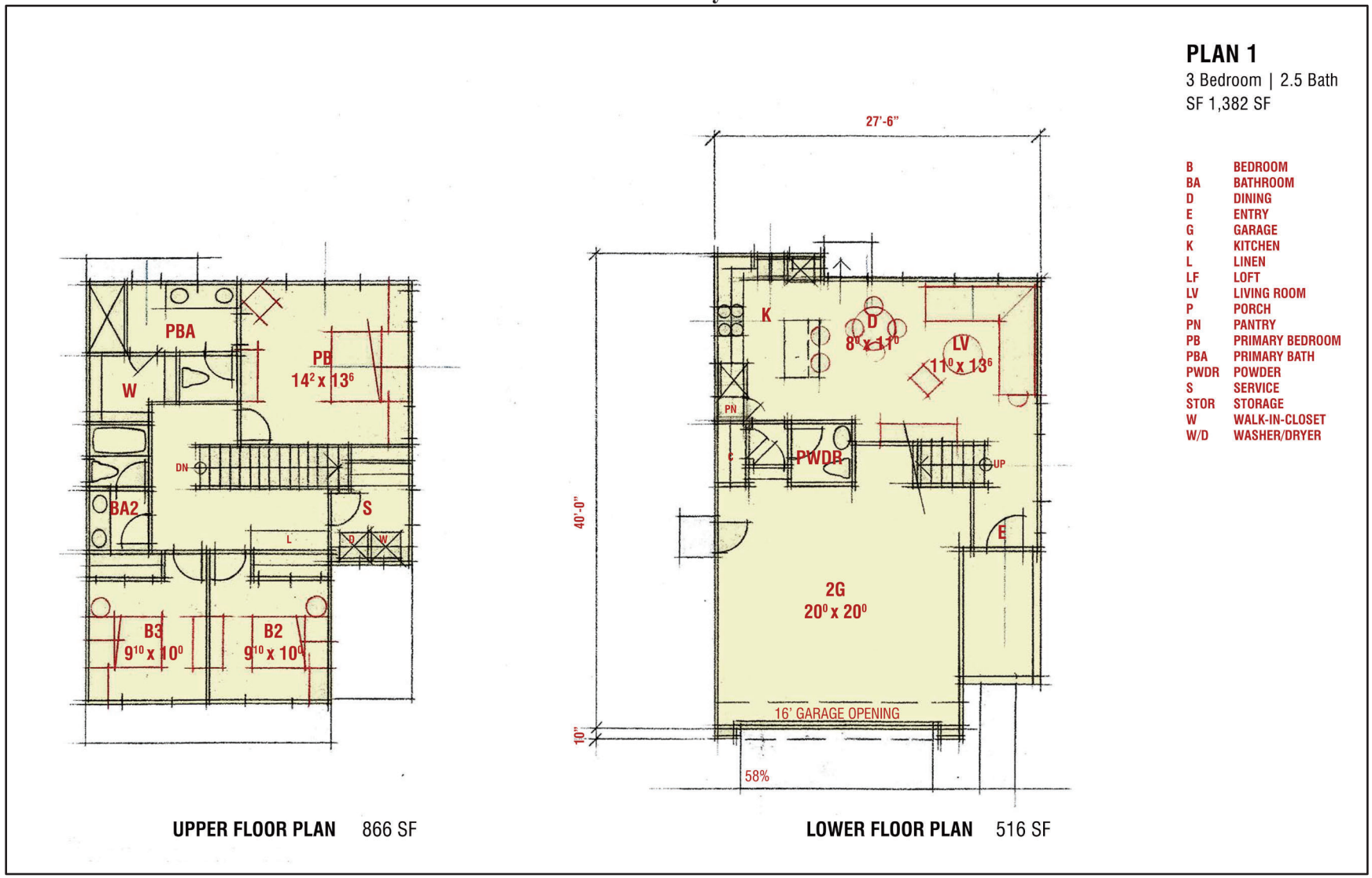


Figure 6
Plan 1 Elevations



Figure 7
Plan 1 Layout



Access, Circulation, and Parking

Access to the site would be provided by way of two newly constructed streets (i.e., Streets A and C), which would extend eastward into the site from Waterman Road (see Figure 5). In addition, Street B would be constructed within the site in a north-to south direction to connect to Street A to the north and Street C to the south, with the three streets combining to form a looped interior road system that would provide access to all proposed residences.

Streets A, B, and C would each consist of a 44-foot-wide right-of-way (ROW), comprised of two 14-foot-wide vehicle lanes, a three-foot-wide curb and gutter on each side of the road, and two attached five-foot-wide sidewalks. Additionally, the Project includes frontage improvements along Waterman Road to expand the road's existing 50-foot-wide ROW. The proposed Waterman Road ROW expansion would range in width from 72 to 73 feet and consist of the following: four vehicle travel lanes, two in each direction; an 11-foot-wide median/two-way left-turn lane; five-foot-wide shoulders; and attached curbs and gutters. The proposed frontage improvements would also include a 32.5-foot-wide landscape corridor, featuring a 10-foot-wide multi-use path in between eight-foot-wide and 14.5-foot-wide landscape strips.

Utilities

The site is located within the Sacramento County Water Agency (SCWA) Zone 40 service area; SWCA is the wholesale water supplier and the Elk Grove Water District is the retail water purveyor. An existing 16-inch water line is located within Waterman Road (see Figure 8). From the existing water line, new eight-inch water lines would extend into the site within the new roads, to which each proposed residence would connect by way of new laterals.

With respect to wastewater, the Project would be provided sanitary sewer conveyance services by Sacramento Area Sewer District (SacSewer). Similar to the proposed water infrastructure, new eight-inch sewer lines would extend into the site within the new roads, to which each proposed residence would connect through new laterals. The new sewer lines would ultimately connect to an existing eight-inch sewer line in Waterman Road.

With respect to storm drainage facilities, the Project would be provided storm drain services by the City of Elk Grove Public Works Department. Stormwater runoff from new impervious surfaces within the developed site would be directed to drain inlets within paved areas and convey through new 12- to 24-inch storm drain lines installed within Streets A, B, and C to a new water quality basin in the southeastern portion of the site within Lot B (see Figure 9 and Figure 10). Following treatment in the water quality basin, flows would be discharged to an existing drainage ditch through a new outfall constructed at the southern end of the water quality basin.

Figure 8
Summer Flats Preliminary Sewer and Water Exhibit

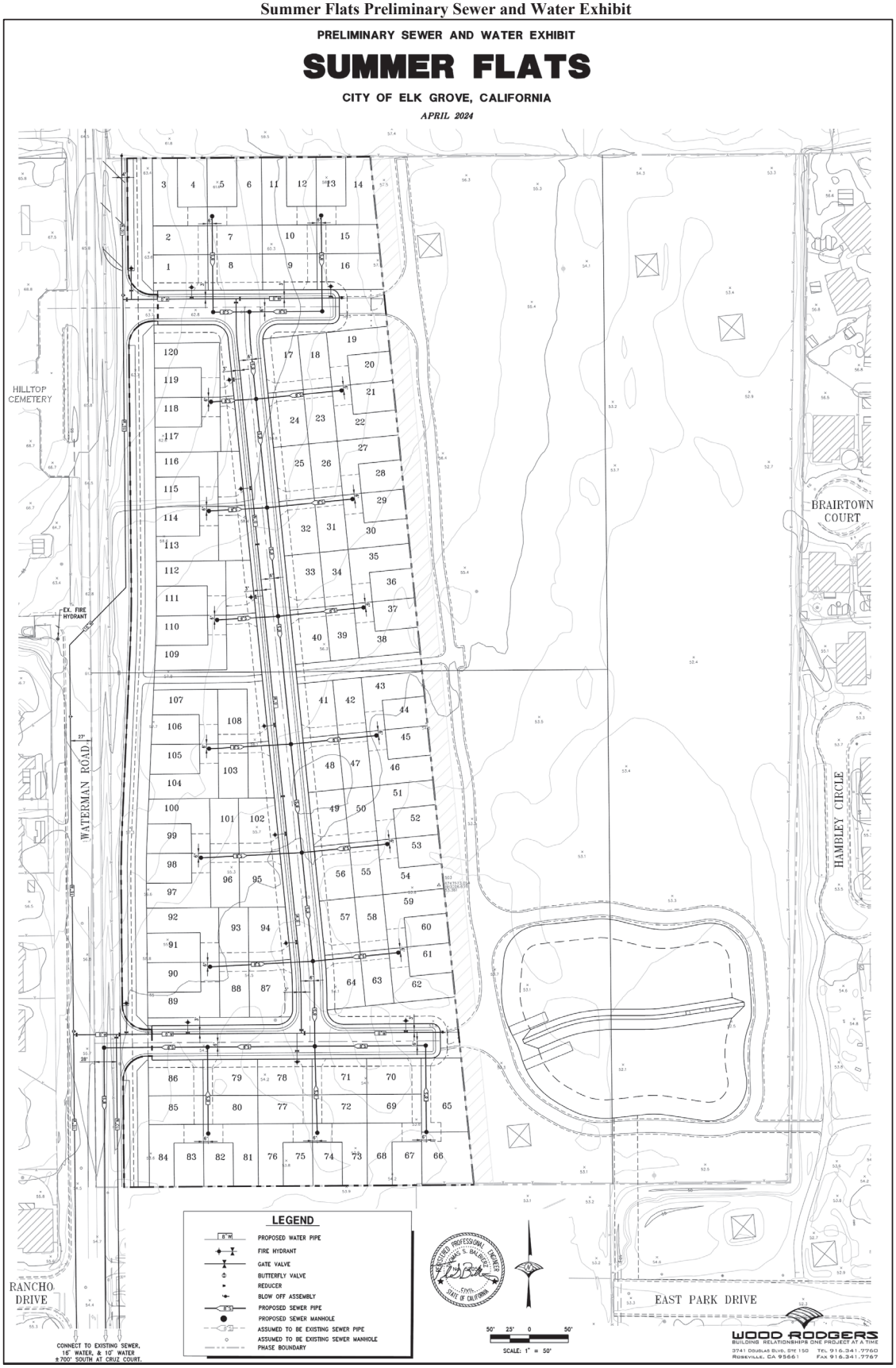


Figure 9
Preliminary Grading and Drainage Exhibit

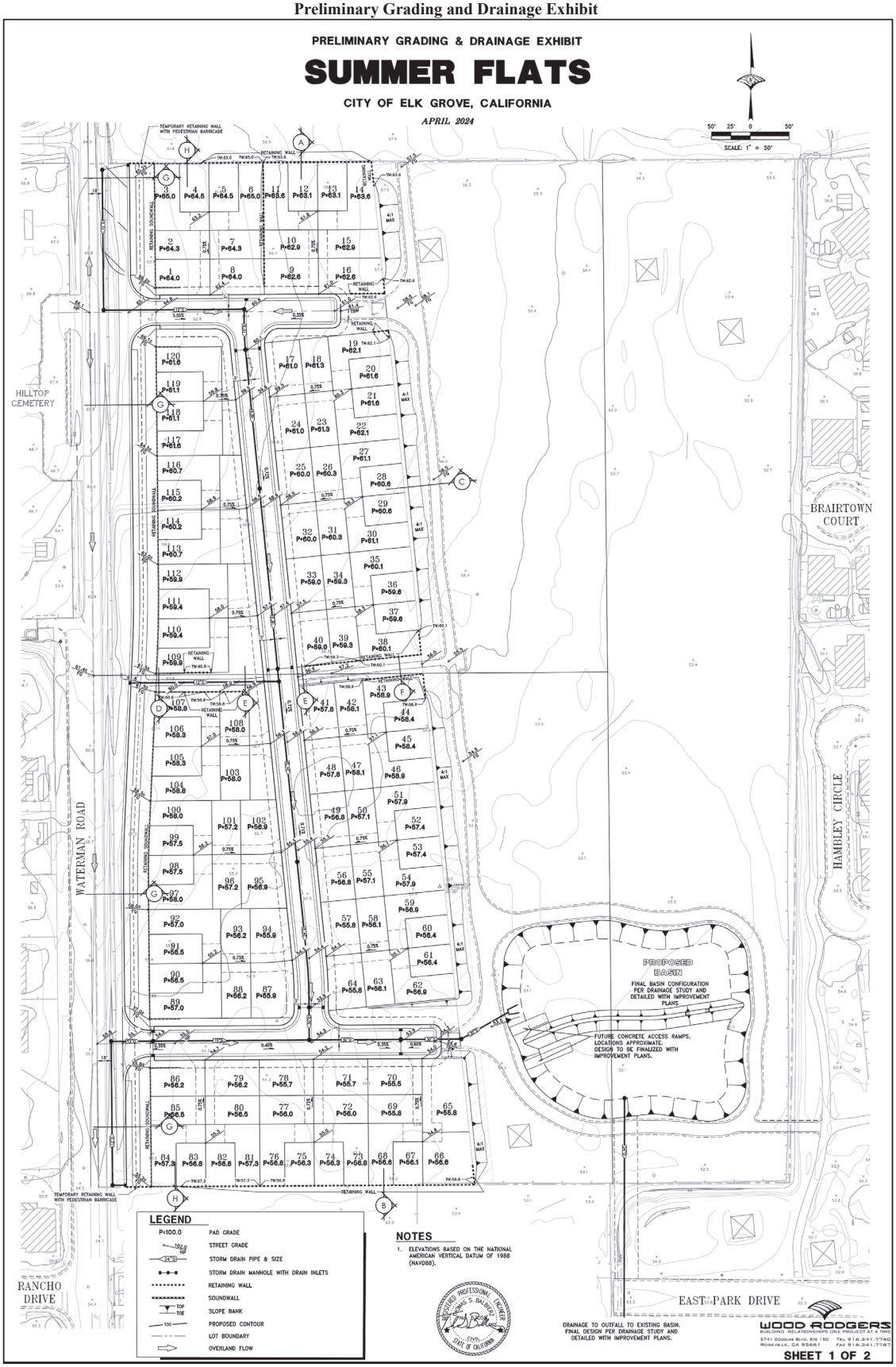
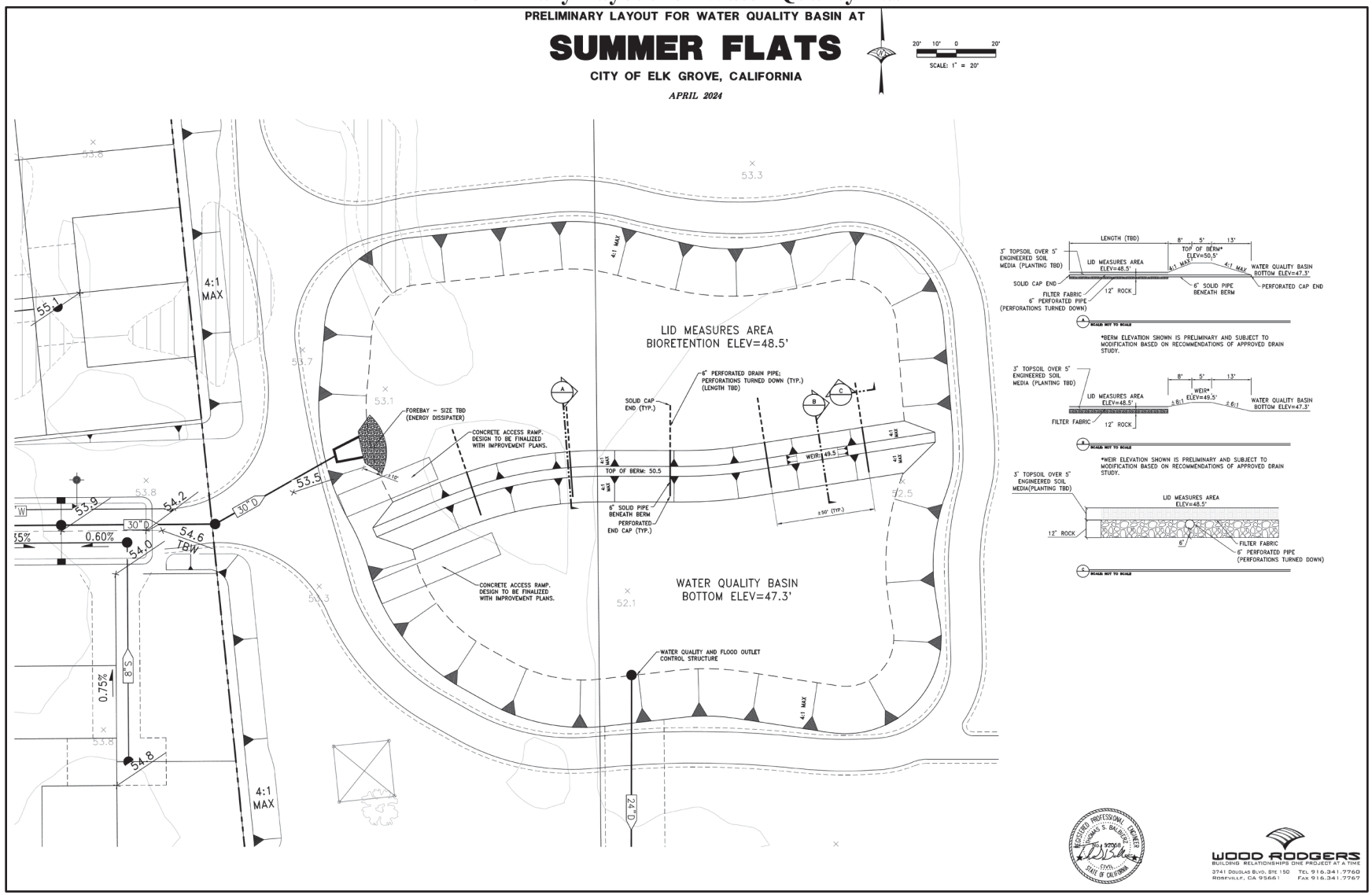


Figure 10
Preliminary Layout for Water Quality Basin



The site is within the service area of Sacramento Municipal Utility District (SMUD) for electricity service and Pacific Gas & Electric Company (PG&E) for natural gas service. The existing overhead utility lines, which include both 12 kilovolt (kV) and 69kV power lines, will remain and will provide electricity service to the Project.

Open Space and Landscaping

The Project would include a 13-acre open space lot (Lot A), which would retain the existing transmission towers and overhead power lines currently in place (see Figure 11). Lot B (1.7-acres) contains the proposed water quality basin. A new meandering 10-foot-wide multi-use path would be installed in the lot and primarily proceed in a north-to-south direction to the east of the proposed residences. The path would pivot towards the east along the southern site boundary and include a potential connection to an existing multi-use path to the east of the site.

In addition, as previously, discussed, the proposed frontage improvements would include a landscape corridor, featuring a multi-use path parallel to Waterman Road. A pedestrian paseo, which would extend in an east-to-west direction would include new landscaping trees and would connect the street-side paths to the open space path. All landscaping planted within the community would be consistent with the requirements set forth by Elk Grove Municipal Code Section 23.54.040.

Subdivision Design Review and Master Home Plan Design Review

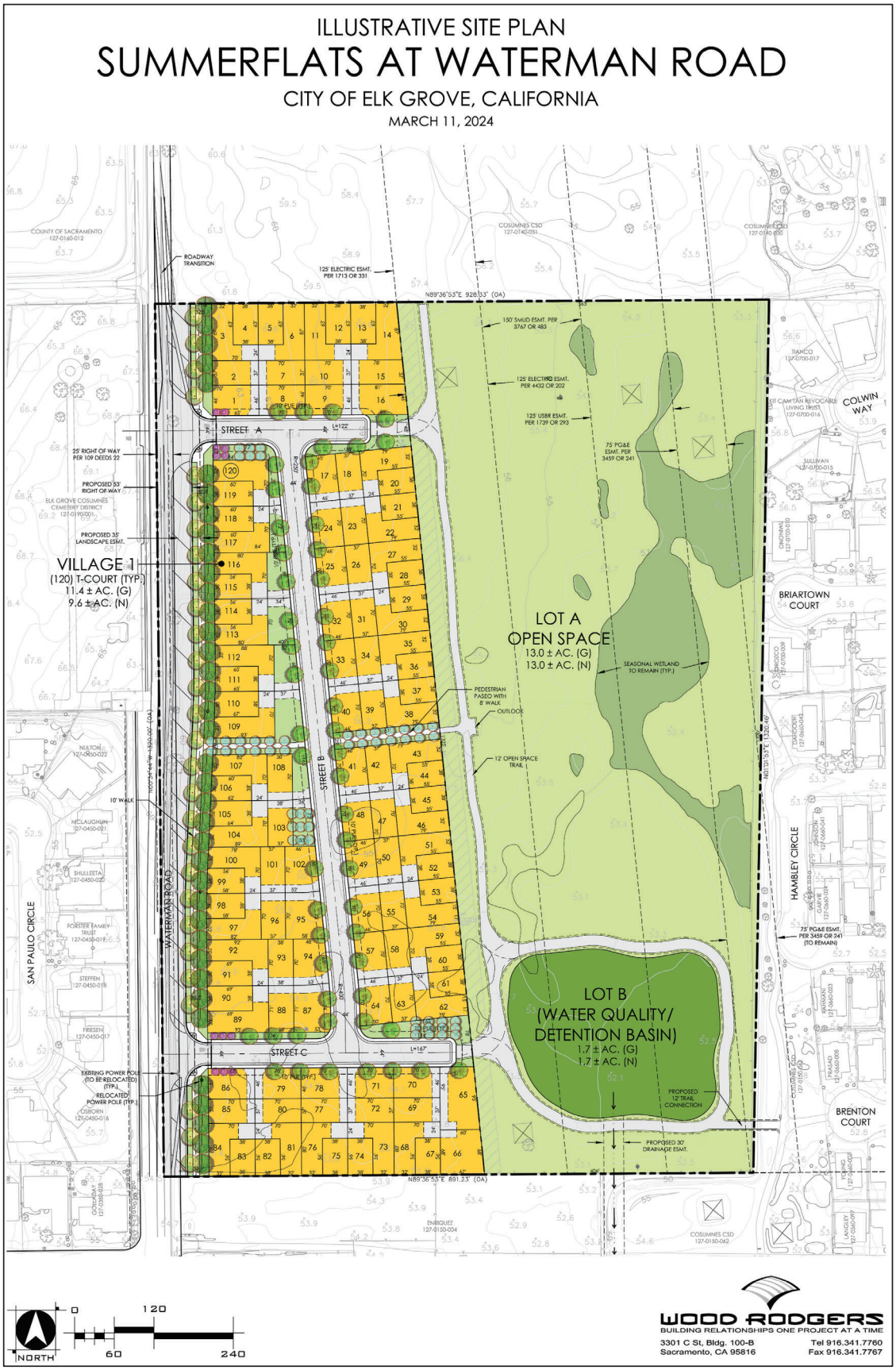
As established by Elk Grove Municipal Code Section 23.29.020, the purpose of the Design Review process is to promote the orderly and harmonious growth of the City; to encourage development in keeping with the desired character of the City; to ensure physical, visual, and functional compatibility between uses; and to help prevent the depreciation of land values by ensuring proper attention is given to site and architectural design. A Subdivision Design Review is required for any Tentative Subdivision Map. The Project also includes Master Home Design Review for the approval of the Master Homes Plans.

PROJECT APPROVALS

The City of Elk Grove has discretionary authority and is the lead agency for the Project. The Project would require City approval of the following discretionary actions:

- General Plan Amendment/Community Plan Amendment from LDR (7.3 acres) and RMC (19.6 acres) to MDR (11.4 acres) and RMC (14.7 acres);
- Rezone from RD-4 (7.3 acres) and O (19.6 acres) to RD-12 (11.4 acres) and O (14.7 acres);
- Small Lot Tentative Subdivision Map;
- Subdivision Design Review;
- Design Exception for two (2) dead end stub streets; and
- Master Home Plan Design Review.

Figure 11
Illustrative Site Plan



REVIEW OR APPROVALS BY OTHER AGENCIES

A number of other agencies will serve as Responsible and Trustee Agencies, pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15381 and Section 15386, respectively. This EIR will provide environmental information to the aforementioned agencies and other public agencies, which may be required to grant approvals or coordinate with other agencies, as part of Project implementation. The agencies could include, but may not be limited to, the following:

- Cosumnes Community Service District (CCSD);
- Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) – Central Valley Region (National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System [NPDES] Construction General Permit and Phase I MS4 General Permit);
- SacSewer;
- Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District (SMAQMD);
- SCWA/EGWD; and
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) (Section 404 Nationwide Permit).

APPROACH TO ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

As required by CEQA, the EIR will describe existing conditions and evaluate the potential environmental effects of the proposed Summer Flats Project and a reasonable range of alternatives, including the No Project Alternative. The EIR will also address direct, indirect, cumulative, and growth inducing effects. The EIR will identify feasible mitigation measures, if available, to reduce significant and potentially significant impacts. Consistent with Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, the City anticipates that the EIR will contain the following chapters:

- Aesthetics
- Air Quality, Greenhouse Gas Emissions, and Energy
- Biological Resources
- Cultural and Tribal Cultural Resources
- Geology and Soils
- Hazards and Hazardous Materials
- Hydrology and Water Quality
- Land Use and Planning/Population and Housing
- Noise
- Public Services and Utilities
- Transportation
- Effects Not Found to be Significant
- Statutorily Required Sections
- Alternatives Analysis

POTENTIAL ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS

Each chapter of the EIR will include identification of the thresholds of significance, identification of Project-level and cumulative impacts, and the development of mitigation measures and monitoring strategies, as required. The proposed EIR will reference the City of Elk Grove General Plan, the City's General Plan EIR, and the City's Municipal Code, where applicable. In addition to the foregoing documents, project-specific technical studies are being prepared by technical experts.

The following environmental topic areas are preliminarily anticipated to be evaluated in the EIR:

- **Aesthetics** — The EIR will describe existing regional and Project area aesthetics and visual conditions. To the extent applicable, the chapter will describe Project-specific impacts on scenic vistas, visual character, or quality of the Project area, as well as effects of light and glare. Pursuant to Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, the analysis will focus on the Project's potential impacts and whether the Project would substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views.

- **Air Quality, Greenhouse Gas Emissions, and Energy** — The EIR will include an air quality impact analysis, including a quantitative assessment of short-term (i.e., construction) and long-term (i.e., operational) increases of criteria air pollutant emissions of primary concern (i.e., ROG, NO_X, and PM_{10}). The greenhouse gas emissions analysis will be required to demonstrate results consistent with the City's Climate Action Plan. This chapter will also evaluate whether the Project could result in any potentially significant effects related to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources during Project construction or operation. The discussion will incorporate any potential conflicts with State or local plans regarding renewable energy.

- **Biological Resources** — The Biological Resources chapter of the EIR will summarize potential effects on sensitive natural communities and special-status species. The chapter will feature a habitat assessment survey and a review of all special-status species with the potential to occur on-site. Mitigation measures for all identified impacts will be developed consistent with applicable laws and regulations.

- **Cultural and Tribal Cultural Resources** — The EIR will describe the potential effects to historical and archaeological resources from the Project. Any input from tribes who were alerted and consulted, as required by the passage of Assembly Bill 52, Senate Bill 18, and the associated amendments to Public Resources Code Section 21080.3.1, will be incorporated into the analysis of potential impacts to tribal cultural resources.

- **Geology and Soils** — The Geology and Soils chapter of the EIR will summarize the geological setting and describe the potential effects from soil erosion, earthquakes, liquefaction, expansive/unstable soils, as well as identify any known paleontological resources or unique geological features within the site. The chapter will be based primarily on a site-specific Geotechnical Report.

- **Hazards and Hazardous Materials** — The Hazards and Hazardous Materials chapter will include a description of any potential for existing or possible hazardous materials within the Project area. The chapter will also assess the potential for the Project to create a significant hazard to the public or environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials.

  Impacts of the environment on a project (as opposed to impacts of a project on the environment) are beyond the scope of required CEQA review. The California Supreme Court has held that, "CEQA does not generally require an agency to consider the effects of existing environmental

conditions on a proposed project's future users or residents. What CEQA does mandate… is an analysis of how a project might exacerbate existing environmental hazards." As such, the mere presence of possible hazardous materials at the site or in the vicinity, should such exist, would be considered an existing environmental condition and, thus, would not be considered an impact under CEQA. Rather, the Project could have the potential to result in an impact associated with possible hazardous materials should the Project exacerbate the existing conditions (e.g., contaminated soils become airborne during ground-disturbing activities and expose construction workers or future residents of the Project). The chapter will primarily be based on a site-specific Phase I Environmental Site Assessment.

- **Hydrology and Water Quality** — The EIR will summarize setting information and identify potential impacts on stormwater drainage, flooding, groundwater, and water quality, including stormwater runoff water quality. Mitigation measures for all identified impacts will be developed consistent with applicable laws and regulations.

- **Land Use and Planning/Population and Housing** — This chapter of the EIR will evaluate the consistency and compatibility of the Project with the plans and policies adopted by the City of Elk Grove. In addition, the chapter will include an evaluation of the potential for any significant unplanned population growth in the area, either directly or indirectly.

- **Noise** — The Noise chapter of the EIR will be based on a Project-specific Noise Study. The chapter will address potential noise impacts resulting from Project construction and operation, including existing and future traffic noise levels on the local road. Noise-sensitive land uses or activities in the Project vicinity will be identified and examined. Furthermore, ambient noise and vibration level measurements on, and in the vicinity of, the site will be conducted to quantify existing background noise and vibration levels for comparison to the predicted Project-generated levels. Noise exposure levels will then be compared to applicable significance criteria of the City of Elk Grove and CEQA.

- **Public Services and Utilities** — The EIR will evaluate whether the Project could significantly increase demands upon local service providers (e.g., fire, police, schools). In accordance with Appendix G, the focus of the analysis will be on whether the Project's demand would require physical alteration of, or need for new governmental facilities, to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times, or other performance objectives, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts.

  Additionally, the chapter will evaluate the Project's increase in water supply demand and wastewater generation to determine whether the existing water and sewer infrastructure systems can accommodate demands from the Project, or if system upgrades would be required. Evaluation of the proposed sewer and water improvements will also be included in the chapter. The chapter will also evaluate the receiving landfill's capacity to accommodate the increase in solid waste, the electricity usage, and the natural gas service associated with the Project.

- **Transportation** — The Transportation chapter of the EIR will be based on a Transportation Impact Analysis (TIA) prepared specifically for the Project, which will include an evaluation of potential

impacts related to vehicle miles traveled (VMT). The EIR chapter will also include an analysis of the Project's potential to conflict with the City's programs, policies, ordinances, or policies addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities.

- **Effects Not Found to be Significant** — Section 15128 of the CEQA Guidelines states that an EIR shall contain a brief statement indicating the reasons that various possible significant effects of a project were determined not to be significant and were, therefore, not discussed in detail in the EIR. Accordingly, the Effects Not Found to be Significant chapter of the EIR is anticipated to potentially include abbreviated discussions on agricultural and forestry resources, mineral resources, and wildfire.

- **Statutorily Required Sections** — Pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.2, the Statutorily Required Sections chapter of the EIR will address the potential for significant growth-inducing impacts of the Project, and whether removal of any impediments to growth would occur with the Project. Any significant and unavoidable impacts identified within the EIR will be included in this chapter, as well as a discussion of significant irreversible environmental changes. The chapter will generally describe the cumulative setting for the Project.

- **Alternatives Analysis** — In accordance with Section 15126.6 of the CEQA Guidelines, the EIR will include an analysis of a range of alternatives, including a No Project Alternative. The Project alternatives will be selected when more information related to Project impacts is available. The alternatives will be limited to those that would avoid or substantially lessen any of the significant effects of the Project, while potentially attaining most of the basic objectives of the Project. The Alternatives Analysis chapter will describe the Project alternatives and identify the environmentally superior alternative. The alternatives will be analyzed at a level of detail less than that of the Project; however, the analyses will include sufficient detail to allow a meaningful comparison of the impacts.