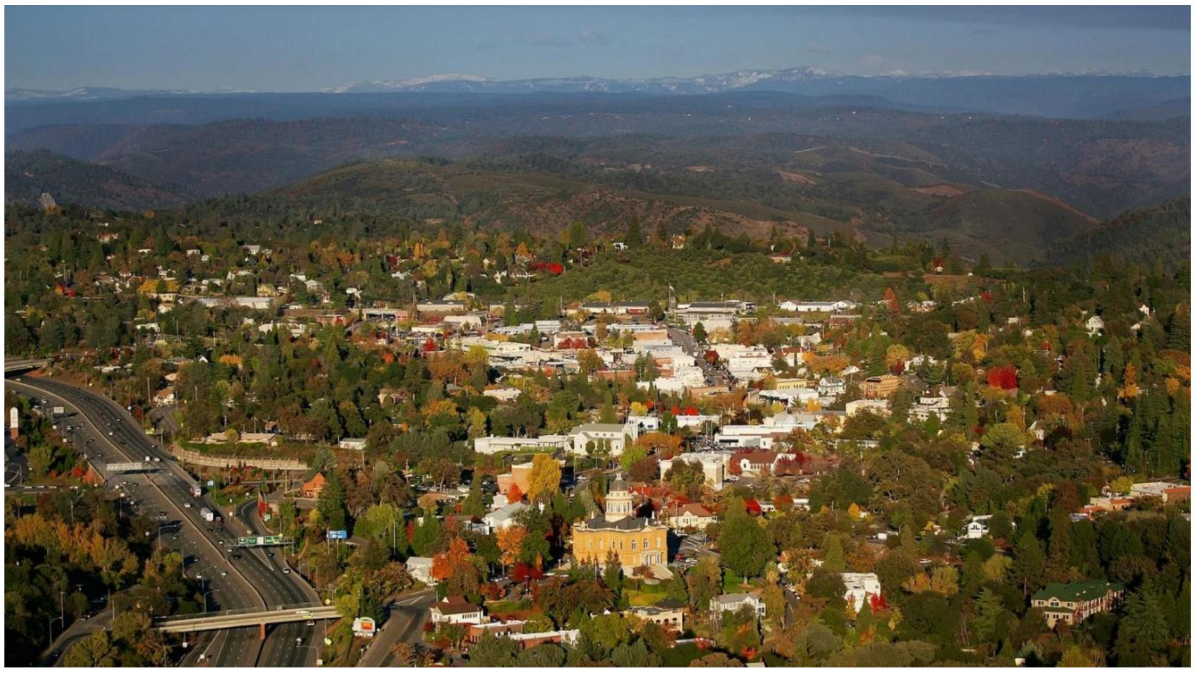


Envision Auburn 2045

Draft Environmental Impact Report

State Clearinghouse #2024110190

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

AAQS	ambient air quality standard
AB	Assembly Bill
ACF	Advanced Clean Fleets
ADA	Americans with Disabilities Act
ADT	average daily traffic
AFD	Auburn Fire Department
AFY	acre-feet per year
AIA	Airport Influence Area
ALUCP	Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan
AMC	Auburn Municipal Code
APD	Auburn Police Department
APTS	Auburn Placer Transfer Station
ARD	Auburn Recreation District
ATP	Active Transportation Plan
AUSD	Auburn Union School District
BCE	Before Common Era
BMP	Best Management Practice
BRSP	Baltimore Ravine Specific Plan
Btu/hr	British thermal units/per hour
°C	degrees Celsius
CAA	Clean Air Act
CAAQS	California Ambient Air Quality Standards
CAFÉ	Corporate Average Fuel Economy
CAL FIRE	California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection
CALGreen	Green Building Standards Code
Cal OES	California Office of Emergency Services
Cal OSHA	California Occupational Safety and Health Administration
CalRecycle	California Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery
Caltrans	California Department of Transportation
CARB	California Air Resources Board
CBC	California Building Code

CCR	California Code of Regulations
CDFW	California Department of Fish and Wildlife
CDP	Census-Designated Place
CDPH	California Department of Public Health
CE	Common Era
CEC	California Energy Commission
CESA	California Endangered Species Act
CEQA	California Environmental Quality Act
CFC	California Fire Code
CGS	California Geological Survey
CFGC	California Fish and Game Code
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
CH_4	methane
City	City of Auburn
CNEL	Community Noise Equivalent Level
CNDDB	California Natural Diversity Database
CNPS	California Native Plant Society
CO	carbon monoxide
CO_2	carbon dioxide
CO_2e	carbon dioxide equivalent
CPUC	California Public Utilities Commission
CRHR	California Register of Historical Resources
CSAP	Comprehensive Safety Action Plan
CUPA	Certified Unified Program Agency
CWA	Clean Water Act
dB	decibel
dBA	A-weighted sound pressure level
DOC	Department of Conservation
DOF	Department of Finance
DPM	diesel particulate matter
DTSC	Department of Toxic Substances Control
DWR	Department of Water Resources
EAP	Energy Action Plan

EIA	United States Energy Information Administration
EIR	Environmental Impact Report
EO	Executive Order
EPACT92	National Energy Policy Act of 1992
ESA	Endangered Species Act
FBC	Form-Based Code
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
FHSZ	Fire Hazard Severity Zone
FHWA	Federal Highway Administration
FMMP	Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program
FPMS	Fossil Prediction Map System
FRA	Federal Responsibility Area
FTA	Federal Transit Administration
GHG	greenhouse gas
GWh	gigawatt-hour
HABS	Historic American Building Survey
HCP	Habitat Conservation Plan
HMBP	Hazardous Materials Business Plan
HRA	Health Risk Assessment
HVAC	heating, ventilation, and air conditioning
Hz	hertz
I-80	Interstate 80
in/sec	inches per second
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
L_{dn}	Day-Night Average Level
L_{eq}	equivalent continuous sound level
LAFCo	Local Agency Formation Commission
LCI	Governor's Office of Land Use and Climate Innovation
LEV	low-emission vehicle
LHMP	Local Hazard Mitigation Plan
LRA	Local Responsibility Area
MBTA	Migratory Bird Treaty Act
MGD	million gallons per day

MT	metric ton
MMBtu	million British thermal units
MMT	million metric tons
MRZ	mineral resource zone
MS4	Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System
MTP/SCS	Metropolitan Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy
MWELO	Model Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance
NAAQS	National Ambient Air Quality Standards
NAHC	Native American Heritage Commission
NCCP	Natural Community Conservation Plan
NID	Nevada Irrigation District
NO_2	nitrogen dioxide
NOA	Notice of Availability
NOAA	National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NOD	Notice of Determination
NOP	Notice of Preparation
NO_x	nitrogen oxide
NPDES	National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System
NPPA	Native Plant Protection Act
NRHP	National Register of Historic Places
OEHHA	Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment
Official Register	Placer County Official Register of Cultural and Historic Resources
PBDB	Paleobiology Database
PCALUC	Placer County Airport Land Use Commission
PCAPCD	Placer County Air Pollution Control District
PCCP	Placer County Conservation Plan
PCE	Pioneer Community Energy
PCFD	Placer County Fire Department
PCSO	Placer County Sheriff's Office
PCSP	Placer County Sustainability Plan
PCT	Placer County Transit
PCTPA	Placer County Transportation Planning Agency
PCWA	Placer County Water Agency

PG&E	Pacific Gas and Electric Company
PHMSA	Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration
$PM_{2.5}$	particulate matter less than 2.5 microns in diameter
PM_{10}	particulate matter less than 10 microns in diameter
PPV	peak particle velocity
PRC	Public Resources Code
PRMMP	Paleontological Resources Mitigation and Monitoring Plan
PUHSD	Placer Union High School District
RCRA	Resource Conservation and Recovery Act
RHNA	Regional Housing Needs Allocation
ROG	reactive organic gases
RPS	Renewable Portfolio Standard
RTP	Regional Transportation Plan
RWQCB	Regional Water Quality Control Board
SAA	Streambed Alteration Agreement
SACOG	Sacramento Area Council of Governments
SAF Plan	State Alternative Fuels Plan
SAFE	Safer Affordable Fuel Efficient
SB	Senate Bill
SCS	Sustainable Communities Strategy
SDC	Seismic Design Category
SDWA	Safe Drinking Water Act
SEMS	Standardized Emergency Management System
SF_6	sulfur hexafluoride
SFNA	Sacramento Federal Nonattainment Area
SHMA	Seismic Hazards Mapping Act
SHMP	State of California Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan
SHS	State Highway System
SIP	State Implementation Plan
SMARA	Surface Mining and Reclamation Act
SO_2	sulfur dioxide
SOI	Sphere of Influence
SRA	State Responsibility Area

SR-49	State Route 49
SVAB	Sacramento Valley Air Basin
SVP	Society of Vertebrate Paleontology
SWPPP	Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan
SWRCB	State Water Resources Control Board
TAC	toxic air contaminant
TCR	tribal cultural resources
Technical Advisory	*Technical Advisory on Evaluating Transportation Impacts in CEQA*
UAIC	United Auburn Indian Community
UCMP	University of California Museum of Paleontology
UPRR	Union Pacific Railroad
U.S.	United States
USACE	United States Army Corps of Engineers
USDOT	United States Department of Transportation
USEPA	United States Environmental Protection Agency
USFWS	United States Fish and Wildlife Service
USGS	United States Geologic Survey
UST	underground storage tank
VDECS	Verified Diesel Emission Control Strategies
VOC	volatile organic compound
VMT	vehicle miles traveled
WUI	Wildland-Urban Interface
WWTP	Wastewater Treatment Plant
ZEV	zero emissions vehicle

Executive Summary

This document is an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) analyzing the environmental effects of the proposed Auburn 2045 General Plan Update (hereafter referred to as the "proposed project" or "project"). This section summarizes the characteristics of the proposed project, alternatives to the proposed project, and the environmental impacts and mitigation measures associated with the proposed project.

Project Synopsis

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Project Location

The City of Auburn is located within Placer County. Auburn encompasses approximately 7.2 square miles and serves as the county seat of Placer County. Although it is the county seat, Auburn is the fourth largest of the six incorporated cities in the county. Auburn is approximately 16 miles northeast of Roseville and 9 miles northeast of Loomis. The city is surrounded by unincorporated areas of North Auburn to the immediate north of the city limits and the unincorporated area of Bowman to the immediate northeast.

Auburn is accessible from Interstate 80, which transverses the City from southwest to northeast. State Route 49 also provides regional access to the city connecting Auburn to unincorporated communities nearby. The city is also served by a surface street system and includes approximately 2.5 miles of Class II and Class III bicycle facilities (County of Placer 2018). The city is served by Auburn Transit which connects with Placer County Transit, the Capital Corridor Train, and Nevada County Connects. Additionally, Auburn OnDemand rides, a city-wide ride share service, serves residents of the city (City of Auburn 2025). The nearest airport to the city is the Auburn Municipal Airport which is approximately 4.7 miles north of Downtown but within the city limits.

The proposed project applies to all land within the City limits, the City's Sphere of Influence (SOI), and the City's Planning Area. The SOI represents the probable future boundary and service area of the City, as adopted by the Placer County Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCo). Auburn's SOI encompasses approximately 25.6 square miles—substantially larger than the current city limits—and reflects past planning efforts that envisioned future annexation of surrounding unincorporated communities, including portions of North Auburn and Bowman.

Project Description

This EIR has been prepared to examine the potential environmental effects of the City of Auburn 2045 General Plan Update. The following is a summary of the full project description, which can be found in Section 2, *Project Description*.

The project is a comprehensive update to the City of Auburn's existing General Plan and includes the following components: an updated General Plan with revised elements addressing land use, historic preservation and community design, transportation, economic development, open space and conservation, noise, arts and culture, and community services and facilities; adoption of a proposed new Downtown/Old Town Form-Based Code; amendments to the Baltimore Ravine Specific Plan; Sphere of Influence amendments; and updates to the Auburn Municipal Code related to retail cannabis sales. Together, these components establish the City's long-range planning framework through the horizon year of 2045.

The project establishes an updated vision for Auburn's future development and conservation by providing a coordinated set of goals, policies, and implementation actions to guide growth within the city and its broader Planning Area. As such, the General Plan functions as Auburn's long-term "blueprint" for managing growth, infrastructure investment, and community development. The 2045 General Plan Update would assist the City in addressing important community issues, including population and employment growth, housing choice and affordability, mobility and transportation safety, public services and infrastructure needs, climate change adaptation and greenhouse gas reduction, natural resource protection, and community resilience. The project also establishes a foundation for coordinated social, physical, and economic development over the next two decades, while maintaining Auburn's historic character, small-town identity, and role as a regional center within Placer County.

Project Objectives

The primary objectives of the proposed project are to plan for Auburn's growth and conservation over a 20-year horizon, protect the Town's historic center and small-town character, manage natural resources and open spaces, reduce exposure to natural hazards, and support a more sustainable and prosperous future for all residents. Objectives specifically related to growth include focusing development in the Downtown/Old Town area, capitalizing on transit-oriented development opportunities near the Robert F. Conheim Auburn Train Station, and streamlining future development that aligns with the proposed project.

The 2045 General Plan establishes guiding principles to achieve these objectives. These principles reflect the City's core values and aspirations for the future, incorporating input from community members and City leaders who helped shape the Plan. The guiding principles effectively serve as the project objectives and are listed below:

- **Historic Legacy.** Preserve the historic buildings and places that shape Auburn's identity as a historic Sierra foothills town. Strongly encourage reinvestment in Old Town and Downtown, including restoration of vacant buildings and compatible mixed-use development.
- **Small Town Character.** Maintain Auburn's unique setting and scale, authentic historic core, walkable neighborhoods, compact form, and beautiful natural setting. Sustain the tradition of civic service, community engagement, and special events that give Auburn its hometown feel.
- **Smart Growth.** Support growth on infill sites within the city, as well as annexation of areas for new housing and employment. While Auburn is committed to protecting its past, it is also committed to smart and strategic growth.
- **Accessibility.** Improve Auburn's transportation system in ways that make it safer and easier to get around, especially on foot, bicycle, and public transit. Connect homes, shopping, recreation, and workplaces so that Auburn is more walkable, cohesive and accessible.

- **Economic Vitality.** Support existing businesses and attract new businesses that grow Auburn's economy. Leverage Auburn's location, transportation system, and natural setting to create a more vibrant and prosperous city. Provide a supportive environment for local artisans, entrepreneurs, and family-owned businesses as well as larger employers.
- **Housing Choice.** Maintain and enhance Auburn's neighborhoods. Create additional housing choices to meet the needs of existing and future Auburn residents, including younger families, our workforce, and those with special housing needs.
- **Environmental Stewardship and Sustainability.** Protect Auburn's environment and natural resources, including our air, water, soil, plants, and wildlife. Reduce greenhouse gas emissions through greener buildings and businesses, cleaner transportation, less dependence on fossil fuels, water and energy conservation, and reduction in solid waste.
- **Resilience and Public Safety**. Become a more resilient city that is prepared for natural disasters. Proactively mitigate climate-related hazards such as wildfires, flooding, drought, and extreme heat events. Maintain excellent police and fire services, low crime, and safe public spaces.
- **Aviation Hub.** Modernize Auburn Municipal Airport so it remains an essential part of Auburn's economy. Ensure that land use decisions on the airport perimeter reduce aviation hazards, protect airport operations, and sustain the airport business district.
- **Community Health.** Keep Auburn a healthy, active community. Community design and planning should support walking, cycling, physical activity, healthy living, and easy access to open space and outdoor recreation.
- **Responsible Fiscal Management.** Continue responsible fiscal management and a commitment to efficient, effective service delivery. Land use decisions should improve fiscal stability and create additional sources of tax revenue.
- **Interagency Relationships.** Collaborate with Placer County to address issues that cross the city's boundaries, including planning and development in North Auburn and Bowman. Work with the school districts, Auburn Area Recreation and Park District, and other special districts and agencies to provide high-quality schools, parks, infrastructure, and public services.

Alternatives

As required by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), this EIR examines alternatives to the proposed project. Studied alternatives include the following three alternatives. Based on the alternatives analysis, Alternative 1 was determined to be the environmentally superior alternative. If the No Project Alternative is the environmentally superior alternative, CEQA requires that an environmentally superior alternative among the remaining alternatives be identified (*CEQA Guidelines* Section 15126.6[e][2]). Based on this consideration, Alternative 3 would be the environmentally superior alternative.

- Alternative 1: No Project/Continuation of Existing General Plan
- Alternative 2: Designating 11500 Blocker Drive as Industrial
- Alternative 3: Employment-Focused Alternative

Refer to Section 6, *Alternatives*, for the complete alternatives analysis.

Areas of Known Controversy

The EIR scoping process did not identify any areas of known controversy for the proposed project. Responses to the Notice of Preparation of a Draft EIR and input received at the EIR scoping meeting held by the City are summarized in Section 1, *Introduction*.

Issues to be Resolved

The proposed project would result in significant and unavoidable cultural resources, construction noise, and transportation impacts. Additionally, the proposed project requires mitigation measures AQ-4, BIO-1, CUL-1, CUL-2, GEO-6, NOI-1a, NOI-1b, NOI-2, TCR-1a, and TCR-1b to avoid and reduce potential impacts to air quality, biological resources, cultural resources, paleontological resources, noise, and tribal cultural resources.

This EIR presents two potential project alternatives intended to reduce the potential environmental impacts of the proposed project. The No Project Alternative would reduce overall development but would not include updated policies and, as a result, would not avoid significant and unavoidable impacts and could result in greater impacts in some areas. Alternative 2 and Alternative 3 would result in impacts generally similar to the proposed project and would not avoid the significant and unavoidable impacts. Accordingly, none of the alternatives would eliminate all significant impacts, and decision-makers must weigh the project's benefits against the remaining impacts.

Issues Not Studied in Detail in the EIR

Section 1.3, *Scope and Content*, summarizes issues from the environmental checklist that were addressed in this EIR. All issue areas were studied in detail in this EIR.

Summary of Impacts and Mitigation Measures

Table ES-1 summarizes the environmental impacts of the proposed project, proposed mitigation measures, and residual impacts (the impact after application of mitigation, if required) associated with implementation of the proposed project. Impacts are categorized as follows:

- **Significant and Unavoidable.** An impact that cannot be reduced to below the threshold level given reasonably available and feasible mitigation measures. Such an impact requires a Statement of Overriding Considerations to be issued if the project is approved pursuant to Section 15093 of the *CEQA Guidelines*.
- **Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated.** An impact that can be reduced to below the threshold level given reasonably available and feasible mitigation measures. Such an impact requires findings under Section 15091 of the *CEQA Guidelines*.
- **Less than Significant.** An impact that may be adverse, but does not exceed the threshold levels and does not require mitigation measures. However, mitigation measures that could further lessen the environmental effect may be suggested if readily available and easily achievable.
- **No Impact:** The proposed project would have no effect on environmental conditions or would reduce existing environmental problems or hazards.

Table ES-1 Summary of Potential Environmental Impacts, Mitigation Measures, and Residual Impacts

Impact Statement	Mitigation Measures	Residual Impact
Aesthetics		
Impact AES-1. The project would not have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista, including views of topography east of the Planning Area. This impact would be less than significant.	No mitigation measures would be required.	Less than significant.
Impact AES-2. State Route 49 is an eligible state scenic highway in the Planning Area and locally designated scenic roadways are also present in the Planning Area. Impacts to scenic resources within these roadways would be reduced through implementation of Auburn General Plan policies. This impact would be less than significant.	No mitigation measures would be required.	Less than significant.
Impact AES-3. Implementation of the proposed project would change land use designations. However, scenic quality would be protected through implementation of goals and policies in the proposed General Plan as well as by applicable Auburn Municipal Code requirements that address visual character and quality of public views. This impact would be less than significant**.**	No mitigation measures would be required.	Less than significant.
Impact AES-4. Construction and operation of future development facilitated by the project would create new sources of light or glare that could adversely affect the visual environment. Implementation of CALGreen regulations and proposed General Plan policies would reduce light and glare impacts to less than significant.	No mitigation measures would be required.	Less than significant.
Agriculture and Forestry Resources		
Impact AG-1. Development facilitated by the project would not hinder or conflict with the continued operation of existing agriculture in the Planning Area. The General Plan would not change existing land use designations such that there would be a decrease of designated agricultural land within the Planning Area; therefore, impacts would be less than significant.	No mitigation measures would be required.	Less than significant.

Impact Statement	Mitigation Measures	Residual Impact
Impact AG-2. The project would not conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use or Williamson Act contracts. There would be no impact.	No mitigation measures would be required.	No impact.
Impact AG-3. The project would not conflict with existing zoning for forest land, timberland, or timberland production, nor result in the loss of forest land or convert forest land to non-forest uses. There would be no impact.	No mitigation measures would be required.	No impact.
Impact AG-4. The project would not result in the conversion of Farmland to non-agricultural use or forest land to non-forest use. This impact would be less than significant.	No mitigation measures would be required.	Less than significant.
Air Quality		
Impact AQ-1. Development facilitated by the project would be consistent with the 2023 Sacramento Regional Air Quality Plan and would not conflict with or obstruct implementation of air quality plans. Impacts would be less than significant.	No mitigation measures would be required.	Less than significant.
Impact AQ-2. Development facilitated by the project would not result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of criteria pollutants during construction or operations. Impacts would be less than significant.	No mitigation measures would be required.	Less than significant.
Impact AQ-3. Development facilitated by the project could result in exposure of sensitive receptors to air pollutants. However, with adherence to applicable regulations and proposed General Plan goals, policies, and actions, as well as implementation of standard design features and review requirements, such exposure would not result in substantial health risks. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.	No mitigation measures would be required.	Less than significant.
Impact AQ-4. Development facilitated by the project could create objectionable odors that could adversely affect a substantial number of people. Impacts related to odors would be less than significant with mitigation.	**AQ-4. Reduce Operational Odors**. Prior to discretionary approval by the City, if it is determined by the City that a development project has the potential to emit nuisance odors beyond the property line, the project applicant shall prepare an odor management plan and submit it to the City for review and approval. Facilities that have the potential to generate nuisance odors include, but are not limited to:	Less than significant with mitigation.

Impact Statement	Mitigation Measures	Residual Impact
	▪ Wastewater Treatment Plants, ▪ Sanitary Landfills, ▪ Composting/Green Waste Facilities, ▪ Recycling Facilities, ▪ Chemical Manufacturing Plants, ▪ Painting/Coating Operations, ▪ Agricultural Operations, ▪ Cannabis Operations, and ▪ Slaughterhouse/Food Packaging Plants. The odor management plan shall demonstrate compliance with the latest PCAPCD screening distances and guidelines. The odor management plan shall identify the best available control technologies for toxics (T-BACTs) that will be utilized to reduce potential odors to acceptable levels, including appropriate enforcement mechanisms. T-BACTs may include but are not limited to scrubbers (i.e., air pollution control devices) at the industrial facility. T-BACTs identified in the odor management plan shall be identified as mitigation measures in the documents prepared for the development project and/or incorporated into the project's site plan.	
Biological Resources		
Impact BIO-1. Development facilitated by the 2045 General Plan would be required to comply with proposed policies and actions protective of special-status species and their associated habitats. However, impacts to special-status bat species may occur as a result of roosting habitat removal. Impacts to special-status species would be less than significant with mitigation.	**BIO-1. Conduct Pre-construction Roosting Bats Surveys and Implement Avoidance Measures Prior to Removal**. The City shall require, as a standard condition of approval, the following requirements for roosting bat surveys and avoidance measures prior to removal of trees or structures: Prior to the removal or alteration of trees and structures that may serve as roosting habitat for special-status bat species, a qualified biologist shall conduct a focused survey of all trees and structures to be removed or impacted by construction activities to determine whether active roosts of special-status bats are present on site. Tree or structure removal shall be planned for either the spring or the fall and timed to ensure both suitable conditions for the detection of bats and adequate time for tree and/or structure removal to occur during seasonal periods of bat activity exclusive of the breeding season, as described below. Trees and/or structures containing suitable potential bat roost habitat features shall be clearly marked or identified. If no bat roosts are found, the results of the survey will be documented and submitted to the City within 30 days of the survey, after which no further action will be required.	Less than significant with mitigation.

Impact Statement	Mitigation Measures	Residual Impact
	If day roosts are present, the biologist shall prepare a site-specific roosting bat protection plan to be implemented by the contractor following the City's approval. The plan shall incorporate the following guidance as appropriate: ▪ When possible, removal of trees/structures identified as suitable roosting habitat shall be conducted during seasonal periods of bat activity, including the following: ▫ Between September 1 and about October 15, or before evening temperatures fall below 45 degrees Fahrenheit and/or more than 0.5 inch of rainfall within 24 hours occurs. ▫ Between March 1 and April 15, or after evening temperatures rise above 45 degrees Fahrenheit and/or no more than 0.5 inch of rainfall within 24 hours occurs. ▪ If a tree/structure must be removed during the breeding season and is identified as potentially containing a colonial maternity roost, then a qualified biologist shall conduct acoustic emergence surveys or implement other appropriate methods to further evaluate if the roost is an active maternity roost. Under the biologist's guidance, the contractor shall implement measures that consist of (or exceed) the following: ▫ If it is determined that the roost is not an active maternity roost, then the roost may be removed in accordance with the other requirements of this measure. ▫ If it is found that an active maternity roost of a colonial roosting species is present, the roost shall not be disturbed during the breeding season (April 15 to August 31). ▪ Tree removal procedures shall be implemented using a two-step tree removal process. This method is conducted over two consecutive days and works by creating noise and vibration by cutting non-habitat branches and limbs from habitat trees using chainsaws only (no excavators or other heavy machinery) on day one. The noise and vibration disturbance, together with the visible alteration of the tree, is very effective in causing bats that emerge nightly to feed to not return to the roost that night. The remainder of the tree is removed on day two. ▪ Prior to the demolition of vacant structures within the project site, a qualified biologist shall conduct a focused habitat assessment of all structures to be demolished. The habitat assessment shall be conducted enough in advance to ensure the commencement of building demolition can be scheduled during seasonal periods of bat activity (see above), if required. If no signs of day roosting activity are observed, no further actions will be required. If bats or signs of day roosting by bats are observed, a qualified biologist will prepare specific recommendations such as partial dismantling to cause bats to abandon the roost, or humane eviction, both to be conducted during seasonal periods of bat activity, if required.	

Impact Statement	Mitigation Measures	Residual Impact
	▪ If the qualified biologist determines a roost is used by a large number of bats (large hibernaculum), bat boxes shall be installed near the project site. The number of bat boxes installed will depend on the size of the hibernaculum and shall be determined through consultation with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife. If a maternity colony has become established, all construction activities shall be postponed within a 500-foot buffer around the maternity colony until it is determined by a qualified biologist that the young have dispersed. Once it has been determined that the roost is clear of bats, the roost shall be removed immediately.	
Impact BIO-2. Development facilitated by the 2045 General Plan could adversely impact riparian habitat, other sensitive natural communities, or protected wetlands in the Planning Area. Implementation of federal, State, and local regulations as well as proposed General Plan goals, policies, and actions would ensure riparian habitat, sensitive natural communities, and wetlands are not substantially impacted. Impacts would be less than significant.	No mitigation measures would be required.	Less than significant.
Impact BIO-3. Development facilitated by the 2045 General Plan would avoid impacts to wildlife movement corridors by conserving open space throughout the Planning Area, as directed by policies in the 2045 General Plan. Impacts would be less than significant.	No mitigation measures would be required.	Less than significant.
Impact BIO-4. Development facilitated by the 2045 General Plan would be required to comply with applicable local policies and ordinances protecting biological resources. Impacts would be less than significant.	No mitigation measures would be required.	Less than significant.
Impact BIO-5. Development facilitated by the 2045 General Plan would not conflict with an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or State habitat conservation plan. Impacts would be less than significant.	No mitigation measures would be required.	Less than significant.

Impact Statement	Mitigation Measures	Residual Impact
Cultural Resources		
Impact CUL-1. Development facilitated by the project could adversely affect known and previously unidentified historical resources in the Planning Area. Impacts to historical resources would be significant and unavoidable.	**CUL-1. Historical Resources Documentation.** If significant historical resources are identified on a development site and compliance with the Standards and/or avoidance is not possible, the City shall require project applicants to take appropriate site-specific mitigation measures. Mitigation measures may include documentation of the historical resource in the form of a Historic American Building Survey (HABS)-like report. The report shall comply with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Architectural and Engineering Documentation and shall generally follow the HABS Level III requirements, including digital photographic recordation, detailed historic narrative report, and compilation of historic research. The documentation shall be completed by a qualified architectural historian or historian who meets the PQS and submitted to the City prior to issuance of any permits for demolition or alteration of the historical resource.	Significant and unavoidable.
Impact CUL-2. Development facilitated by the project could adversely affect previously unidentified archaeological resources in the Planning Area. Impacts would be less than significant with mitigation.	**CUL-2. Archaeological Resources Data Recovery and Documentation**. Prior to approval of projects requiring ground disturbing activities, the City shall retain an archaeologist that meets the Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualification Standards in either indigenous or historic archaeology (qualified archaeologist as defined in Code of Federal Regulations, Title 36, Part 61) to oversee the preparation of an archaeological resources assessment. ▪ Archaeological Resources Assessments shall include a California Historical Resources Information System records search at the North Central Information Center with a minimum 0.5-mile radius and a Sacred Lands File search through the California Native American Heritage Commission. The records searches will characterize the results of previous cultural resource surveys and disclose any cultural resources that have been recorded and/or evaluated in and around the project site. A Phase I pedestrian survey of the project site shall be undertaken to locate any surface evidence of cultural materials. A geoarchaeological review (examination of California Historical Resources Information System and ethnographic data, historical, geological, and soil maps, aerial imagery, geotechnical reports) shall be conducted to assess the potential for the project to encounter unknown archaeological resources during construction. A qualified archaeologist shall identify known archaeological resources and classify the project as having high, medium, or low sensitivity for unknown archaeological resources. The assessment shall also include recommendations for additional studies and/or mitigation, as necessary, such as monitoring during construction-related ground disturbance. Construction monitoring shall be recommended when archaeological resources are present and/or the assessment identifies a moderate or high likelihood of archaeological resources being present.	Less than significant with mitigation.

Impact Statement	Mitigation Measures	Residual Impact
	▪ If the California Historical Resources Information System search or Phase I archaeological survey identifies resources that may be impacted by a project involving ground disturbance, the archaeological resources assessment shall also include Phase II testing and evaluation. If resources are determined significant (i.e., eligible for the California Register of Historical Resources [CRHR] and/or National Register of Historic Places [NRHP]) or unique, the City shall first consider whether avoidance and preservation in place is feasible. If resource avoidance and preservation in place is not feasible, appropriate site-specific mitigation measures shall be identified in the Phase II evaluation. ▪ For archaeological resources found eligible under CRHR Criterion 4/NRHP Criterion D (data potential) that cannot be avoided and will be impacted by project ground disturbance, mitigation shall include, but would not be limited to, a Phase III data recovery program. The data recovery program shall make provisions for adequately recovering the scientifically consequential information from and about the resource. The qualified archaeologist and City shall consult with appropriate Native American representatives regarding the data recovery program in determining treatment for prehistoric or Native American resources to ensure cultural values ascribed to the resource, beyond those that are scientifically important, are considered. For archaeological resources that are found eligible under CRHR Criteria 1/NRHP Criteria A (events), 2/B (persons), and/or 3/C (design/craftsmanship) that cannot be avoided and will be impacted, other appropriate mitigation shall be determined by a qualified archaeologist in consultation with the City and, if the resource is of indigenous origin, local interested tribes. Mitigation may include, but would not be limited to, development of interpretive or educational materials or preservation of all or portions of the archaeological site. ▪ Final disposition of any recovered artifacts or samples, which could include but would not be limited to curation or onsite reburial, shall occur as specified by the qualified archaeologist in consultation with the City and, if the resource is of indigenous origin, local interested tribes. Artifacts and samples include material recovered from all phases of work, including the Phase I survey, Phase II testing, Phase III data recovery, and construction monitoring.	
Impact CUL-3. Ground disturbing activities associated with development facilitated by the project may encounter human remains; however, compliance with Health and Safety Code and Public Resources Code (PRC) requirements would ensure that potential impacts to human remains would be less than significant.	No mitigation measures would be required.	Less than significant.

Impact Statement	Mitigation Measures	Residual Impact
Energy		
Impact E-1. Development facilitated by the project would not result in the wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources during construction or operation. Impacts would be less than significant.	No mitigation measures would be required.	Less than significant.
Impact E-2. The proposed project would not conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency. Impacts would be less than significant.	No mitigation measures would be required.	Less than significant.
Geology and Soils		
Impact GEO-1. Construction and occupancy of development facilitated by the project could result in exposure of people or structures to a risk of loss, injury, or death involving rupture of a known earthquake fault, strong seismic ground shaking, seismic-related ground failure, liquefaction, or landslides. However, required adherence to the California Building Code and Auburn Municipal Code, and implementation of the goals and policies of the proposed project and previously adopted Safety Element, would reduce the potential for loss, injury, or death following a seismic event to a less than significant level.	No mitigation measures would be required.	Less than significant.
Impact GEO-2. Development facilitated by the proposed project would include ground disturbance such as excavation and grading that would result in loose or exposed soil, increasing the potential for erosion and soil loss. Compliance with applicable regulations, including the Clean Water Act and Auburn Municipal Code, and implementation of the goals and policies of the proposed project would reduce the potential for erosion and loss of topsoil. This impact would be less than significant.	No mitigation measures would be required.	Less than significant.

Impact Statement	Mitigation Measures	Residual Impact
Impact GEO-3. Construction and occupancy of development facilitated by the proposed project could be located on geologic units that are unstable, resulting in landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction, or collapse. However, required adherence to the California Building Code and Auburn Municipal Code, and implementation of the goals, policies, and actions included in the 2045 General Plan would reduce potential impacts to a less than significant level.	No mitigation measures would be required.	Less than significant.
Impact GEO-4. Development facilitated by the project has the potential to be located on expansive soils. Compliance with the California Building Code and local amendments requiring site-specific geotechnical investigations, engineered foundation and drainage design, and other applicable standards and regulations would reduce direct and indirect risks to life or property occurring on expansive soils. Impacts would be less than significant.	No mitigation measures would be required.	Less than significant.
Impact GEO-5. Development facilitated by the proposed project has the potential to occur in areas requiring the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems. However, required adherence to local regulations and implementation of the proposed policies and actions of the General Plan Update would reduce impacts related to septic tanks and alternative wastewater disposal systems. Impacts would be less than significant.	No mitigation measures would be required.	Less than significant.
Impact GEO-6. Development facilitated by the project has the potential to impact paleontological resources. This impact would be less than significant with mitigation incorporated.	**GEO-6. Paleontological Resources Monitoring and Mitigation***.* Projects involving excavations within areas mapped as having FPMS 4 (High) and FPMS U (Unknown) sensitivity geologic units shall be required to draft and implement a Paleontological Resources Mitigation and Monitoring Plan (PRMMP) written by a Paleontological Principal Investigator as defined by the Society of Vertebrate Paleontology. Actions required by the PRMMP may include, but are not limited to, paleontological sensitivity training, construction monitoring, protocols for paleontological discoveries, and final reporting. The PRMMP shall be sent to and approved by the City of Auburn prior to the initiation of ground disturbance.	Less than significant with mitigation.

Impact Statement	Mitigation Measures	Residual Impact
Greenhouse Gas Emissions		
Impact GHG-1. Development facilitated by the project would generate greenhouse gas emissions; however, the emissions would not result in a significant impact on the environment. Additionally, the project would be consistent with local, regional, and State reduction plans and goals. Therefore, the project would not conflict with an applicable plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases. This impact would be less than significant.	No mitigation measures would be required.	Less than significant.
Hazards and Hazardous Materials		
Impact HAZ-1. Buildout of the proposed project could result in an incremental increase in the overall routine transport, use, and disposal of hazardous materials in the Planning Area. However, compliance with applicable regulations related to hazardous materials and compliance with the General Plan Update policies and policies in the 2021 Safety Element would minimize the risk related to the transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials. Impacts would be less than significant.	No mitigation measures would be required.	Less than significant.
Impact HAZ-2. Demolition, grading, or excavation associated with development facilitated by the project could uncover contaminated soils or result in accidental release of hazardous materials. However, compliance with applicable regulations related to hazardous materials and implementation of proposed General Plan policies would minimize the risk of hazards to the public or environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment. Impacts would be less than significant.	No mitigation measures would be required.	Less than significant.

Impact Statement	Mitigation Measures	Residual Impact
Impact HAZ-3. Buildout of the proposed project could result in hazardous emissions or handling of hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within 0.25 mile of an existing or proposed school. However, compliance with existing regulatory requirements and proposed general plan policies would minimize risks to schools and students, resulting in a less than significant impact.	No mitigation measures would be required.	Less than significant.
Impact HAZ-4. Buildout of the proposed project could facilitate development on hazardous materials sites. However, compliance with applicable regulations relating to site cleanup and General Plan Update policies would minimize hazards from development on contaminated sites. Impacts would be less than significant.	No mitigation measures would be required.	Less than significant.
Impact HAZ-5. The northern portion of the Planning Area are located inside an Airport Influence Area. However, development that would be facilitated by the project in that area would maintain compatible uses that adhere to noise and safety standards established by the Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan. Implementation of the goals, policies, and actions proposed by the General Plan Update would ensure the safe, continued operation of the Auburn Municipal Airport and would ensure that future development continues to comply with applicable standards. Impacts would be less than significant.	No mitigation measures would be required.	Less than significant.
Impact HAZ-6. Proposed General Plan Update policies would enhance the City and Placer County's emergency response and emergency evacuation planning capabilities. Therefore, the proposed project would not result in interference with adopted emergency response and emergency evacuation plans. Impacts would be less than significant.	No mitigation measures would be required.	Less than significant.

Impact Statement	Mitigation Measures	Residual Impact
Impact HAZ-7. The Planning Area contains Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones and associated risk of wildfires and Wildland-Urban Interface fires. Development facilitated by the project would adhere to regulations and development standards, which would reduce risk of loss, injury, and death involving wildland fires, and implementation of 2045 General Plan policies would enhance the City and County's capacity to address such risks. Therefore, impacts related to wildland fire hazards would be less than significant.	No mitigation measures would be required.	Less than significant.
Hydrology and Water Quality		
Impact HYD-1. Development facilitated by the project would have the potential to degrade surface or groundwater quality; however, project-level regulatory compliance and adherence to proposed General Plan policies and actions would ensure this impact is less than significant.	No mitigation measures would be required.	Less than significant.
Impact HYD-2. Much of the development facilitated by the project would be served by Placer County Water Authority via existing surface water sources. Though some new development may be groundwater dependent, proposed General Plan policies would promote sustainable water use and promote groundwater recharge. This would ensure a less than significant impact.	No mitigation measures would be required.	Less than significant.
Impact HYD-3. Development facilitated by the project could alter site-specific drainage patterns and introduce new impervious surface areas. Compliance with applicable regulations, including the regulations contained in the Auburn Municipal Code and the policies contained in the 2045 General Plan would ensure that this impact would be less than significant.	No mitigation measures would be required.	Less than significant.

Impact Statement	Mitigation Measures	Residual Impact
Impact HYD-4. Future development facilitated by the project in flood hazard zones could risk pollutant release due to inundation. With adherence to applicable regulations, the project would not risk release of pollutants due to inundation. Therefore, this impact would be less than significant.	No mitigation measures would be required.	Less than significant.
Impact HYD-5. The Planning Area is not subject to a sustainable groundwater management plan. Adherence to State and local regulations would ensure development under the proposed project would not interfere with the objectives and goals of the Basin Plan. This impact would be less than significant.	No mitigation measures would be required.	Less than significant.
Land Use and Planning		
Impact LU-1. The proposed project would not physically divide an established community and there would be no impact.	No mitigation measures would be required.	No impact.
Impact LU-2. The proposed project would not result in a significant environmental impact due to a conflict with a plan adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect. Impacts would be less than significant.	No additional mitigation measures for land use and planning would be required beyond those identified throughout this EIR.	Less than significant.
Mineral Resources		
Impact MIN-1. The Planning Area does not contain significant mineral resource zones or identified mineral resource sites. The proposed project maintains the Mineral Extraction (-ME) overlay and permitting requirements, ensuring extraction remains possible where compatible. This impact would be less than significant.	No mitigation measures would be required.	Less than significant.
Impact MIN-2. There are no designated mineral resource recovery sites within the Planning Area. The General Plan Update includes policies that would preserve opportunities for future mineral extraction. No impact would occur.	No mitigation measures would be required.	No impact.

Impact Statement	Mitigation Measures	Residual Impact
Noise		
Impact NOI-1. Construction of future development projects accommodated under the proposed Project would generate temporary noise in the vicinity of development sites. Depending on the scope of development facilitated by the proposed Project, construction may involve long durations, substantial soil movement, use of large, heavy-duty equipment, and/or pile driving near noise-sensitive land uses, which may produce noise levels that exceed the applicable construction noise limits. Implementation of Mitigation Measure NOI-1a and NOI-1b would reduce construction noise levels; however, because details of future project-specific construction activities are unknown at this time, temporary construction noise impacts would remain significant and unavoidable.	**NOI-1a. Project-Specific Construction Noise Study.** A Construction Noise Study, prepared by a qualified noise expert to meet the requirements herein, shall be required for development projects located within 500 feet of noise-sensitive land uses (i.e., residential, transient lodging, group homes, hospitals and extended medical facilities, places of worship, schools and other learning institutions, and libraries), and that have one or more of the following characteristics: ▪ Construction durations of 18 months or more (excluding interior finishing); ▪ Use of large, heavy-duty equipment rated at 300 horsepower or greater; ▪ The potential for pile driving; or ▪ Located within 1,000 feet of other construction projects with overlapping construction schedules. The Construction Noise Study shall characterize sources of construction noise, quantify noise levels at noise-sensitive uses and identify measures to reduce noise exposure during the construction period. The Construction Noise Study shall identify reasonably available noise reduction devices or techniques to reduce noise levels to acceptable levels and/or durations including through reliance on any relevant Federal, State, or local standards or guidelines or accepted industry practices. Noise reduction devices or techniques may include but not be limited to silencers, enclosures, sound barriers, and/or placement of restrictions on equipment or construction techniques (e.g., alternative installation methods to pile driving such as cast-in-place systems or pile cushioning). Each measure in the Construction Noise Study shall identify anticipated noise reductions at noise-sensitive land uses. **NOI-1b. Measures to Reduce Construction Noise**. If the results of the Project-Specific Construction Noise Study described in Mitigation Measure NOI-1a show that noise levels associated with an individual project are expected to exceed applicable thresholds, the City of Auburn shall require construction contractors to implement as many of the following measures as feasible prior to issuance of a demolition, grading, and/or building permit: ▪ **Shielding and Silencing.** Power construction equipment (including combustion engines), fixed or mobile, shall be equipped with noise shielding and silencing devices consistent with manufacturer's standards or the Best Available Control Technology. Equipment shall be properly maintained, and the project applicant or owner shall require any construction contractor to keep documentation on-site during any earthwork or construction activities demonstrating that the equipment has been maintained in accordance with manufacturer's specifications.	Significant and unavoidable.

Impact Statement	Mitigation Measures	Residual Impact
	▪ **Enclosures and Screening.** All outdoor fixed mechanical equipment shall be enclosed or screened from off-site noise-sensitive uses. The equipment enclosure or screen shall be impermeable (e.g., solid material with minimum weight of 2 pounds per square foot) and break the line-of-sight from the equipment and off-site noise-sensitive uses. ▪ **Construction Staging Areas.** Construction staging areas shall be located as far from noise-sensitive uses as reasonably possible and feasible in consideration of site boundaries, topography, intervening roads and uses, and operational constraints. ▪ **Smart Back-Up Alarms.** Mobile construction equipment shall have smart back-up alarms that automatically adjust the sound level of the alarm in response to ambient noise levels. Alternatively, back-up alarms shall be disabled and replaced with human spotters to ensure safety when mobile construction equipment is moving in the reverse direction. ▪ **Equipment Idling.** Construction vehicles and equipment shall not be left idling for longer than five minutes when not in use. ▪ **Workers' Radios.** All noise from workers' radios, including any on-site music, shall be controlled such that they are not audible at off-site noise-sensitive uses. ▪ **Use of Driven Pile Systems.** Driven (impact), sonic, or vibratory pile drivers shall not be used, except in locations where the underlying geology renders alternative methods infeasible, as determined by a soils or geotechnical engineer and documented in a soils report. ▪ **Temporary Noise Barriers.** Temporary sound barriers, such as walls or sound blankets, shall be positioned between construction activities and noise-sensitive uses when modeled noise levels from construction equipment exceed applicable standards and have a direct line of sight with noise sensitive receivers. Placement, orientation, size, and density of acoustical barriers shall be specified by a qualified acoustical consultant. ▪ **Noise Complaint Response.** Project applicants shall designate an on-site construction project manager who shall be responsible for responding to any complaints about construction noise. This person shall be responsible for responding to concerns of neighboring properties about construction noise disturbance and shall be available for responding to any construction noise complaints during the hours that construction is to take place. They shall also be responsible for determining the cause of the noise complaint (e.g., bad silencer) and shall require that reasonable measures be implemented to correct the problem. A toll-free telephone number and email address shall be posted in a highly visible manner on the construction site at all times and provided in all notices (mailed, online website, and construction site postings) for receiving questions or complaints during construction and shall also include procedures requiring that the on-site construction manager respond to callers and email messages.	

Impact Statement	Mitigation Measures	Residual Impact
	The on-site construction project manager shall be required to track complaints pertaining to construction noise, ongoing throughout demolition, grading, and/or construction and shall notify the City's Community Development Director of each complaint occurrence. Project applicants shall be required to comply with all requirements of Mitigation Measures NOI-1a and NOI-1b in addition to any additional requirements identified and recommended by the Construction Noise Study and shall maintain proof that notice of, as well as compliance with, the identified measures have been included in contractor agreements.	
Impact NOI-2. Construction of individual development projects facilitated by the proposed project could temporarily generate levels of groundborne vibration exceeding City vibration thresholds at nearby structures, however, Mitigation Measure NOI-2 would reduce construction vibration impacts to less-than-significant levels. Operational impacts Vibration would be less than significant.	Mitigation Measure NOI-1b, described under Impact NOI-1, would be required. In addition, the following mitigation measure is required to reduce potential adverse vibration impacts. **NOI-2. Construction Vibration Control Plan**. Prior to issuance of a building permit for an individual project involving the use of the following construction equipment within the specified distances of nearby building structures, the project applicant shall prepare a groundborne vibration analysis to assess and mitigate potential vibration impacts associated with construction activities: ▪ Use of a pile driver within: ▫ 135 feet of fragile/historic structures ▫ 100 feet of non-engineered timber and masonry buildings (e.g., most residential buildings) ▫ 75 feet of engineered concrete and masonry (no plaster) ▪ Use of a vibratory roller within: ▫ 40 feet of fragile/historic structures ▫ 25 feet of any other structure (residential, commercial, or industrial) ▪ Use of a dozer or other large earthmoving equipment within: ▫ 20 feet of fragile/historic structures ▫ 15 feet of any other structure (residential, commercial, or industrial) The vibration analysis shall be conducted by a qualified and experienced acoustical consultant or engineer. The vibration levels generated by construction equipment shall not exceed City vibration thresholds for architectural damage (i.e., 0.12 inches per second peak particle velocity [in/sec PPV] at fragile/historic structures, 0.2 in/sec PPV at non-engineered timber and masonry buildings, and 0.3 in/sec PPV for engineered concrete and masonry structures). If vibration levels would exceed these thresholds, alternative methods and equipment, such as drilling piles as opposed to pile driving, use of static rollers as opposed to vibratory rollers, and use of lower horsepower equipment as applicable, shall be	Less than significant.

Impact Statement	Mitigation Measures	Residual Impact
	employed. If necessary, such as when high-vibration equipment may be used within close proximity to a fragile/historic structure, construction vibration monitoring shall be conducted to ensure the City's vibration thresholds are not exceeded at nearby structures.	
Impact NOI-3. The project would not expose people residing or working in the Planning Area to excessive airport-related noise levels. Airport-related noise impacts would be less than significant.	No mitigation measures would be required.	Less than significant.
Population and Housing		
Impact POP-1. Implementation of the proposed project would facilitate the construction of new housing in the Planning Area. The 2045 General Plan would accommodate and plan for population growth and includes policies to manage growth and development. Impacts would be less than significant.	No mitigation measures would be required.	Less than significant.
Impact POP-2. Implementation of the project would not result in the displacement of substantial numbers of housing or people. The project would facilitate the development of new housing in accordance with state and local housing requirements, while preserving existing residential neighborhoods. Impacts would be less than significant.	No mitigation measures would be required.	Less than significant.
Public Services and Recreation		
Impact PS-1. Development facilitated by the project would not result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the construction of new or physically altered fire facilities to maintain acceptable service ratio response times or other objectives. Impacts would be less than significant.	No mitigation measures would be required.	Less than significant.
Impact PS-2. Development facilitated by the project would not result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the construction of new or physically altered police facilities to maintain acceptable service ratio response times or other objectives. Impacts would be less than less than significant.	No mitigation measures would be required.	Less than significant.

Impact Statement	Mitigation Measures	Residual Impact
Impact PS-3. Development facilitated by the project would not result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the construction of new or physically altered school facilities. Impacts would be less than significant.	No mitigation measures would be required.	Less than significant.
Impact PS-4. Development facilitated by the project would not result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered parks or recreation facilities to maintain acceptable service ratios and would not increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated. Impacts would be less than significant.	No mitigation measures would be required.	Less than significant.
Impact PS-5. Development facilitated by the project would not result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the construction of new or physically altered library or other public facilities to maintain acceptable service objectives, and the payment of property taxes funding library or other public facilities would be required. Impacts would be less than significant.	No mitigation measures would be required.	Less than significant.
Transportation		
Impact TRA-1. Development facilitated by the project would result in increased usage of the circulation system including transit, roadway, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities. However, implementation of proposed General Plan policies would ensure that development and use of the circulation system is consistent with adopted programs, plans, ordinances, and policies. therefore, impacts would be less than significant.	No mitigation measures would be required.	Less than significant.

Impact Statement	Mitigation Measures	Residual Impact
Impact TRA-2. Development facilitated by the project would decrease vehicle miles traveled (VMT) per service population for the Planning Area. However, VMT per service population would exceed 85 percent of the baseline VMT per service population for the Planning Area. No feasible mitigation is available to reduce this impact. Therefore, the proposed project would result in a significant and unavoidable VMT impact.	Although no feasible mitigation measures are available to reduce this impact to a less than significant level, the proposed General Plan includes numerous policies and actions that would reduce VMT and support long-term transportation sustainability. These include strategies to improve transit service, expand active transportation options, encourage workplace flexibility, promote mixed-use development, and improve jobs-housing balance.	Significant and unavoidable.
Impact TRA-3. The proposed project is a program-level plan that does not directly address project-level design features. Roadway improvements and site access measures would be designed and reviewed in accordance with City, County, and state standards. this impact would be less than significant.	No mitigation measures would be required.	Less than significant.
Impact TRA-4. The proposed project identifies circulation improvements and policies that would support emergency access throughout the city. This impact would be less than significant.	No mitigation measures would be required.	Less than significant.
Tribal Cultural Resources		
Impact TCR-1. Development projects within the Planning Area that involve ground disturbance activities may have the potential to impact tribal cultural resources. Adherence to PRC Section 21084.2 and the 2045 Auburn General Plan Update and proposed mitigation measures would reduce impacts to the extent feasible. Therefore, this impact would be less than significant with mitigation.	**TCR-1a. Identification and Protection of Tribal Cultural Resources.** Prior to individual development project approvals, the City shall enact the following steps related to the identification of tribal cultural resources to guide decision making regarding actions proposed for projects that have the potential result in significant impacts to tribal cultural resources. Enacting these policies and implementation actions shall include but not be limited to the following: ▪ For projects undergoing CEQA review, the City shall undertake Assembly Bill 52 consultation efforts with California Native American tribes that are traditionally and culturally affiliated with the geographic area of a proposed project to determine the sensitivity of the proposed project site for the presence of tribal cultural resources. Only Tribal Representatives from culturally affiliated tribes can identify, evaluate, and provide recommendations for identified tribal cultural resources. ▪ For projects not subject to CEQA, but that involve ground disturbance, the City shall request UAIC review the TCR sensitivity map and THRIS to assess the project's sensitivity for TCRs. If a project site is found to be highly sensitive for TCRs and/or a known TCR is	Less than significant with mitigation.

Impact Statement	Mitigation Measures	Residual Impact
	identified, the City shall consult with the UAIC and other traditionally and culturally affiliated tribes to determine the appropriate next steps and/or treatment. ▪ If, through the tribal consultation/coordination processes, a TCR survey is found to be warranted, Tribal Representatives from culturally affiliated tribes that act as a representative of their tribal government shall be provided the opportunity to conduct sensitivity surveys prior to site preparation or ground-disturbing activities to determine the presence or absence of any TCRs. Based on findings of the survey, additional assessments may be recommended by Tribal Representatives. ▪ Should TCRs be identified through the Assembly Bill 52 consultation or tribal coordination processes, the consulting tribe(s) may recommend measures for avoidance and/or treatment. Recommendations may include, but are not limited to, tribal monitoring at locations determined by Tribal Representatives to be sensitive for subsurface tribal cultural resource deposits, and any feasible measure to preserve in place, avoid, or minimize impacts to TCRs. ▪ If no TCRs are identified that may be directly or indirectly impacted by project activities and the sensitivity for buried TCRs is low, there would be no adverse effect to known TCRs and no further action is required. ▪ If a known indigenous archaeological site will be subject to testing/excavation because avoidance is infeasible, local Tribal Representatives shall be involved in determining the scope of the testing/excavation, including collection and analysis of artifacts. Tribes shall be provided the opportunity to review and comment on testing/excavation plans. The project applicant shall retain tribal monitors to observe the excavation activities. **TCR-1b. Implementation of Tribal Monitoring and Inadvertent Discovery Protocols During Project-Related Ground Disturbance.** If a proposed project site is found to be sensitive for the presence of potential TCRs through tribal consultation and/or coordination process the following procedures shall be implemented: ▪ A minimum of seven days prior to the start of project-related ground disturbing activities tribal monitors from the culturally affiliated tribes, through an agreement with the project applicant, shall be invited to monitor the vegetation grubbing, stripping, grading, or other ground-disturbing activities in the project area to determine the presence or absence of TCRs. ▪ Tribal Representatives and tribal monitors shall have the authority to identify sites or objects of significance to the tribes and to request that work be stopped, diverted, or slowed if such sites or objects are identified within the direct impact area; however, only a Native American Representative can recommend appropriate treatment of such sites or objects.	

Impact Statement	Mitigation Measures	Residual Impact
	▪ Should TCRs, including but not limited to features, anthropogenic/cultural soils, cultural belongings or objects (artifacts), shell, bone, shaped stones or bone, or ash/charcoal deposits are discovered by any person during construction activities, including ground disturbing activities, all work shall pause immediately within 100 feet of the find, or an agreed upon distance based on the specific project site and nature of the find (distance to be agreed upon between the City and culturally affiliated tribes). Work shall cease in and within the immediate vicinity of the find regardless of whether the construction is being actively monitored by a Tribal Monitor. Tribal Representatives and the City shall be immediately notified, and the Tribal Representatives, in coordination with the City, shall determine if the find is a TCR (pursuant to PRC Section 21074). The Tribal Representatives shall make recommendations for further evaluation and treatment as necessary. ▪ The City shall consult with the Tribal Representatives to identify the boundaries of the identified TCRs and identify appropriate preservation in place and avoidance measures, including redesign or adjustments to the existing construction process, and long-term management, if feasible. If avoidance is infeasible, culturally appropriate treatment may be, but is not limited to, processing materials for reburial, minimizing handling of cultural objects, leaving objects in place within the landscape, and returning objects to a location within the project area where they will not be subject to future impacts. A reburial location in proximity of the find where no future disturbance is anticipated shall be identified. Permanent curation of TCRs shall not take place unless approved in writing by the Tribal Representatives. Work may not resume until any treatment has been determined and completed. ▪ The construction contractor(s) shall provide secure, on-site storage for culturally sensitive soils or objects that are components of tribal cultural resources that are found or recovered during construction. Storage size shall be determined by the nature of the TCR and can range from a small lock box to a Conex box (shipping container). A secure (locked), fenced area can also provide adequate on-site storage if larger amounts of material must be stored. ▪ At the request of the Tribal Representatives, the construction contractor(s) and City shall facilitate the respectful reburial of the culturally sensitive soils or objects. This includes providing a reburial location that is consistent with the preferences of the Tribal Representatives, excavation of the reburial location, and assisting with the reburial, upon request.	

Impact Statement	Mitigation Measures	Residual Impact
Utilities and Service Systems		
Impact UTL-1. Development facilitated by the proposed project would increase demand for water, wastewater, electric power, telecommunications, and stormwater drainage; however, no additional relocation or construction of utility services would be required to service the proposed project beyond connections to existing utilities. The proposed project would result in a minimal increase in natural gas demand. Impacts would be less than significant.	No mitigation measures would be required.	Less than significant.
Impact UTL-2. The project would increase demand for water. Water supply for the project would be provided by the Placer County Water Agency and Nevada Irrigation District through existing and planned supply sources, including imported surface water and supplemental local sources. Given the capacity of these systems and the City's ongoing water management and conservation programs, sufficient water supplies are available to meet projected demand of the proposed project. Impacts would be less than significant.	No mitigation measures would be required.	Less than significant.
Impact UTL-3. Development facilitated by the project would increase demand for wastewater treatment. The timing, intensity, and location of an expansion of wastewater treatment facilities is unknown at this time, but an expansion would require additional CEQA review and compliance with existing building and zoning codes. As such, impacts related to expansion of wastewater treatment facilities as a result of the General Plan Update would be less than significant.	No mitigation measures would be required.	Less than significant.
Impact UTL-4. The project would not generate solid waste in excess of state or local standards, would not exceed the capacity of local infrastructure, and would not impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals. Impacts would be less than significant.	No mitigation measures would be required.	Less than significant.

Impact Statement	Mitigation Measures	Residual Impact
Wildfire		
Impact W-1. The 2045 General Plan policies, in combination with the existing 2021 Safety Element policies, address emergency and evacuation planning, emergency preparedness and response. Development facilitated by the project would be required to adhere to City and County emergency response, evacuation, and access requirements. Therefore, the proposed project would not impair an emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan. Impacts would be less than significant.	No mitigation measures would be required.	Less than significant.
Impact W-2. The 2045 General Plan includes policies to minimize wildfire risk. Development facilitated by the proposed project would adhere to the California Fire Code and be reviewed by the Auburn or Placer County Fire Departments, as appropriate, to ensure wildfire risk would not be exacerbated. Therefore, this impact would be less than significant.	No mitigation measures would be required.	Less than significant.
Impact W-3. Implementation of the 2045 General Plan would not require the installation or maintenance of substantial infrastructure that may exacerbate fire risk or result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment associated with fire risk. Therefore, this impact would be less than significant.	No mitigation measures would be required.	Less than significant.
Impact W-4. Development facilitated by the project would comply with City and County regulations related to project siting and engineering, and the 2045 General Plan includes wildfire resiliency policies to ensure development would not exacerbate risks from flooding or landslides due to wildfire. Therefore, this impact would be less than significant.	No mitigation measures would be required.	Less than significant.

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1 Introduction

This document is an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the Auburn 2045 General Plan Update and related long-range planning actions. The General Plan Update (hereafter referred to as the "proposed project" or "project") aims to guide future development and land use in Auburn. The project includes updates to land use designations, policies, and goals to accommodate anticipated growth while preserving Auburn's unique character. Key components of the project include revisions to zoning and development standards, transportation improvements, provisions for housing, and strategies for natural resource conservation, all tailored to support sustainable growth and community needs.

This section discusses (1) the project and EIR background; (2) the legal basis for preparing an EIR; (3) the scope and content of the EIR; (4) the lead, responsible, and trustee agencies; and (5) the environmental review process required under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The proposed project is described in detail in Section 2, *Project Description*.

1.1 Environmental Impact Report Background

The City of Auburn (City) distributed a Notice of Preparation (NOP) of the EIR for a 30-day agency and public review period starting on November 6, 2024, and ending on December 6, 2024. In addition, the City held an EIR Scoping Meeting on November 19, 2024. The meeting, held at 6:00 PM, was aimed at providing information about the proposed project to members of public agencies, interested stakeholders and residents/community members. The meeting was held at Auburn City Hall at 1225 Lincoln Way. The City received letters from five agencies in response to the NOP during the public review period. The NOP is presented in Appendix A of this EIR, along with the NOP responses received. Table 1-1 on the following page summarizes the content of the letters and verbal comments and where the issues raised are addressed in the EIR.

1.2 Purpose and Legal Authority

The proposed project requires the discretionary approval of the City Planning Commission; therefore, the project is subject to the environmental review requirements of CEQA. In accordance with Section 15121 of the *CEQA Guidelines* (California Code of Regulations, Title 14), the purpose of this EIR is to serve as an informational document that:

> "...will inform public agency decision makers and the public generally of the significant environmental effects of a project, identify possible ways to minimize the significant effects, and describe reasonable alternatives to the project."

This EIR has been prepared as a program level EIR pursuant to Section 15168 of the *CEQA Guidelines*. This Draft EIR is a program-level EIR and does not evaluate the impacts of specific, individual developments that may be allowed in the future under the proposed project. Each future project will conduct additional environmental review, as required by CEQA, to secure any necessary discretionary development permits. As part of this process, subsequent projects will be reviewed by the City for consistency with the General Plan and this Draft EIR.

Projects successive to this Draft EIR include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Approval and funding of major public projects and capital improvements.
- Issuance of permits and other approvals necessary for implementation of the proposed project.
- Property rezoning consistent with the proposed General Plan, including potential adoption of a Form Based Code for Downtown/Old Town Auburn and an ordinance which could accommodate one or more cannabis-related businesses.
- Development plan approvals, such as tentative maps, variances, conditional use permits, planned developments, and other land use permits.
- Permit issuances and other approvals necessary for public and private development projects.
- Development agreement processes and approvals.
- Annexation of land as described by the General Plan
- Expansion of the sphere of influence as described by the General Plan

The 2045 population and employment forecasts in this Draft EIR will serve as parameters for environmental analysis for future development projects within Auburn. In the event that proposed development in the city would exceed the buildout projections used in this Draft EIR, the Planning Director shall require environmental review for any subsequent development to address growth impacts that would occur as a result of development exceeding the General Plan projections and related Draft EIR assumptions. This does not preclude the City, as lead agency, from determining that an EIR would be required for any development under the relevant provisions of CEQA (e.g., PRC Section 21166 and related guidelines).

Table 1-1 NOP Comments and EIR Response

Commenter	Comment/Request	How and Where It Was Addressed
Agency Comments		
California Department of Conservation	Encourages the risks of potential ground shaking and surface fault rupture to be discussed in the EIR.	Comments are addressed in Section 4.7, *Geology and Soils*.
	Recommends the EIR address the potential risks of landslide and liquefaction hazards.	
California Department of Transportation	Requests the inclusion of planned roadway, intersection improvements, mitigation measures, peak hour level of service data, existing and planned truck routes, transportation impact fees, discussions of complete streets on State Route 49, and a VMT-focused transportation impact study.	Comments are addressed in Section 4.16, *Transportation*.
	Recommends analyzing gaps in Auburn's pedestrian and bicycle networks and conducting walk- and bike-shed analyses, destination accessibility analysis, and/or level of traffic stress analysis.	
	Requests mapping of all connections to State routes, including delineation of the State's right-of-way with bearings and distances.	
	States that any work along or within the State's right-of-way requires an encroachment permit from the California Department of Transportation.	

Commenter	Comment/Request	How and Where It Was Addressed
Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board	Encourages the EIR to discuss potential impacts to surface and groundwater quality.	Comments are addressed in Section 4.10, *Hydrology and Water Quality*.
	Summarizes permitting requirements that may be necessary for future development.	
California Department of Fish and Wildlife	Requests the project description describe the entire action of the project and the EIR include reasonable and feasible alternatives.	Comments are addressed in Section 2, *Project Description*, and Section 6, *Alternatives.*
	Requests the biological analysis to identify all habitat types within the project area, including adjoining habitats potentially impacted by the project. Requests a biological inventory of fish, amphibians, reptiles, birds, and mammals present or potentially present; recommends consulting California Natural Diversity Database and other relevant sources; and requests a complete inventory of rare, threatened, endangered, and sensitive species with seasonal and regional context for evaluating environmental impacts.	Comments are addressed in Section 2, *Project Description*, and Section 4.4, *Biological Resources.*
	Requests the EIR discuss direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts to biological resources, including impacts from lighting, noise, human activity, wildlife-human interactions, and changes to drainage patterns and water quality.	
	Requests mitigation measures to minimize or eliminate significant adverse impacts to biological resources, including white-tailed kit, bald eagle, golden eagle, California black rail, California red-legged frog, purple martin, yellow-breasted chat, loggerhead shrike, yellow warbler, olive-sided flycatcher, fisher, American badger, pallid bat, Townsend's big-eared bat, northwestern pond turtle, coast horned lizard, Crotch's bumble bee, western bumble bee, foothill yellow-legged frog, willow flycatcher, tricolored blackbird, habitat for tree roosting bats, and wildlife nursery sites.	
	Requests the EIR discuss any potential impacts to streams, wetlands, or riparian habitats.	
	Requests the EIR discuss any potential inconsistencies with the Placer County Conservation Program.	
County of Placer Health and Human Services	Provides intent to review discussions of groundwater wells and onsite sewage disposal in the County's jurisdiction.	Comments are addressed in Section 4.18, *Utilities and Service Systems*.

Commenter	Comment/Request	How and Where It Was Addressed
County of Placer Community Development Resource Agency	Requests that the EIR examine consistency with the Placer County General Plan and incorporate the findings from the Mobility and Infill Acceleration Study to address VMT reduction.	Comments are addressed throughout Section 4, *Environmental Impact Analysis*, with greater detail provided in Section 4.11, *Land Use and Planning*, and Section 4.16, *Transportation.*
	Requests that the EIR discuss wildfire risk, potential wildfire impacts, and wildfire hazard reduction strategies.	Comments are addressed in Section 4.19, *Wildfire.*
	Requests that the EIR discuss potential fire, law enforcement, schools, and utility infrastructure impacts.	Comments are addressed in Section 4.15, *Public Services and Recreation*, and Section 4.18, *Utilities and Service Systems*
	Requests that the EIR discuss potential biological resources impacts and impacts to the Placer County Conservation Program.	Comments are addressed in Section 4.4, *Biological Resources*
	Requests that the EIR discuss potential impacts to air quality, water resources, and greenhouse gas emissions.	Comments are addressed in Section 4.3, *Air Quality*, Section 4.10, *Hydrology and Water Quality*, and Section 4.8, *Greenhouse Gas Emissions*.
	Requests participation in the discussions of mitigation measures and alternatives.	The City has been meeting with Placer County Community Development Resource Agency on a bi-monthly basis since 2023 to discuss project status, including EIR progress. Project alternatives use the same land use designations on parcels outside city limits as the project. This Draft EIR, including mitigation measures and project alternative discussions, will be made available for review and comment by public agencies.

EIR = Environmental Impact Report; VMT = vehicle miles traveled

1.3 Scope and Content

In accordance with the *CEQA Guidelines*, a NOP of a Draft EIR was circulated to potentially interested parties on November 6, 2024. The NOP, included in Appendix A, indicates that all issues on the City's environmental checklist would be discussed in the EIR. These include:

- Aesthetics
- Agriculture and Forestry Resources
- Air Quality
- Biological Resources
- Cultural Resources
- Energy
- Geology and Soils
- Greenhouse Gas Emissions
- Hazards and Hazardous Materials

- Hydrology and Water Quality
- Land Use and Planning
- Mineral Resources
- Noise
- Population and Housing
- Public Services and Recreation
- Transportation
- Tribal Cultural Resources
- Utilities and Service Systems
- Wildfire
- Mandatory Findings of Significance

In preparing the EIR, use was made of pertinent City policies and guidelines, certified EIRs and adopted CEQA documents, and other background documents. A full reference list is contained in Section 7, *References*.

The alternatives section of the EIR (Section 6) was prepared in accordance with Section 15126.6 of the *CEQA Guidelines* and focuses on alternatives that are capable of eliminating or reducing significant adverse effects associated with the project while feasibly attaining most of the basic project objectives. In addition, the alternatives section identifies the "environmentally superior" alternative among the alternatives assessed. The alternatives evaluated include the CEQA-required "No Project" alternative and two alternative development scenarios for the project area.

The level of detail contained throughout this EIR is consistent with the requirements of CEQA and applicable court decisions. Section 15151 of the *CEQA Guidelines* provides the standard of adequacy on which this document is based; they state:

> An EIR should be prepared with a sufficient degree of analysis to provide decision-makers with information which enables them to make a decision which intelligently takes account of environmental consequences. An evaluation of the environmental effects of the proposed project need not be exhaustive, but the sufficiency of an EIR is to be reviewed in light of what is reasonably feasible. Disagreement among experts does not make an EIR inadequate, but the EIR should summarize the main points of disagreement among the experts. The courts have looked not for perfection, but for adequacy, completeness, and a good faith effort at full disclosure.

1.4 Lead, Responsible, and Trustee Agencies

The *CEQA Guidelines* define lead, responsible and trustee agencies. The City is the lead agency for the project because it holds principal responsibility for approving the project.

A responsible agency refers to a public agency other than the lead agency that has discretionary approval over the project. Responsible agencies include the Placer County Local Agency Formation Commission and Placer County itself, which will regulate future annexations. The EIR will also be submitted to these agencies for review and comment.

A trustee agency refers to a state agency having jurisdiction by law over natural resources affected by a project. The California Department of Fish and Wildlife is a trustee agency for the proposed project.

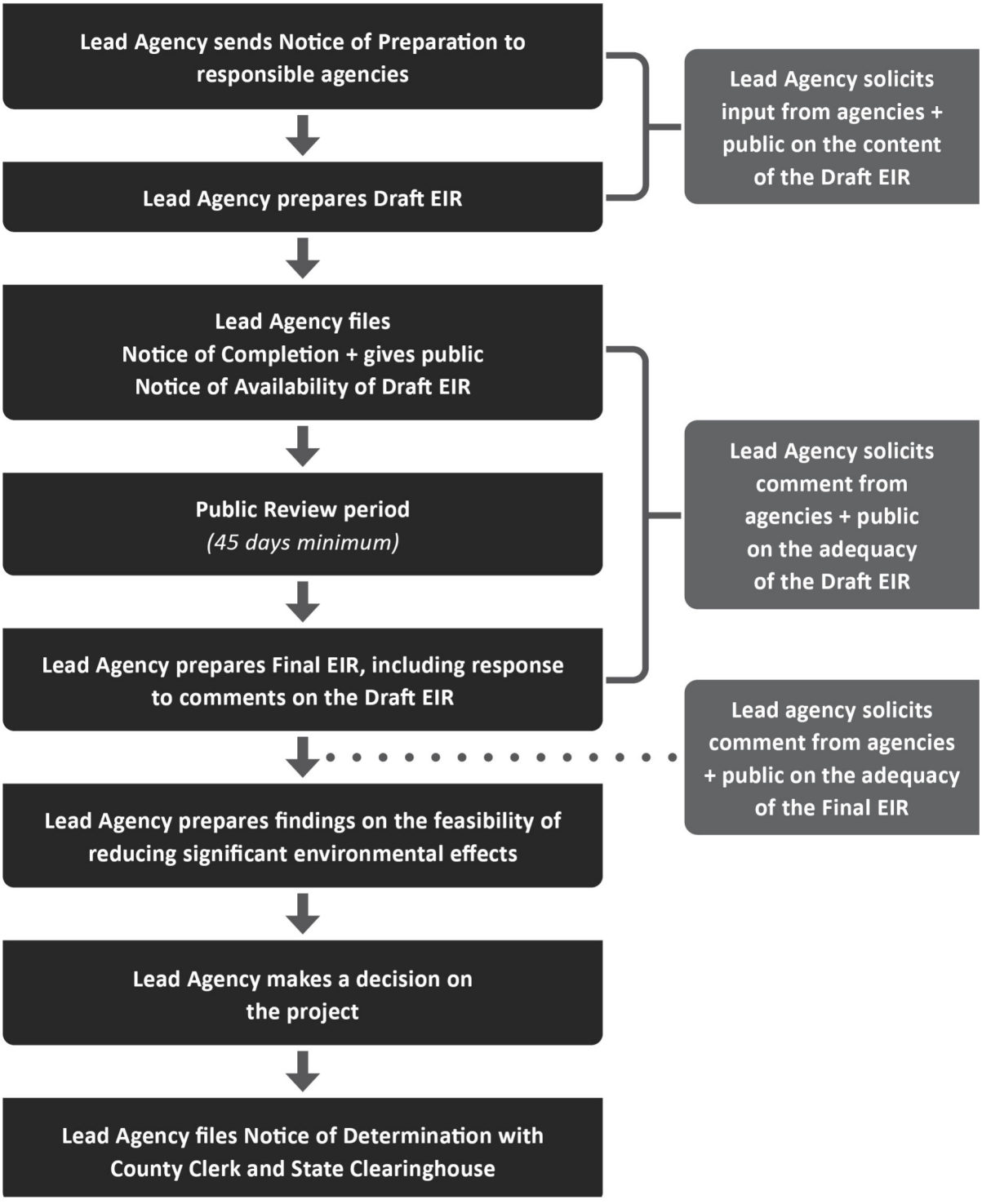
1.5 Environmental Review Process

The environmental impact review process, as required under CEQA, is summarized below and illustrated in Figure 1-1. The steps are presented in sequential order.

1. **Notice of Preparation.** After deciding that an EIR is required, the lead agency (City of Auburn) must file a NOP soliciting input on the EIR scope to the State Clearinghouse, other concerned agencies, and parties previously requesting notice in writing (*CEQA Guidelines* Section 15082; Public Resources Code [PRC] Section 21092 and 21092.2). The NOP must be posted in the County Clerk's office for 30 days (PRC Section 21092.3).
2. **Draft EIR.** The Draft EIR must contain: a) table of contents or index; b) summary; c) project description; d) environmental setting; e) discussion of significant impacts (direct, indirect, cumulative, growth-inducing and unavoidable impacts); f) a discussion of alternatives; g) mitigation measures; and h) discussion of irreversible changes.
3. **Notice of Completion and Notice of Availability (NOA).** The lead agency must file a Notice of Completion and NOA with the State Clearinghouse when it completes a Draft EIR. The lead agency must place the NOA in the County Clerk's office for at least 30 days (PRC Section 21092.3) and send a copy of the NOA to anyone requesting it (*CEQA Guidelines* Section 15087). Additionally, public notice of Draft EIR availability must be given through at least one of the following procedures: a) publication in a newspaper of general circulation; b) posting on and off the project site; and c) direct mailing to owners and occupants of contiguous properties (*CEQA Guidelines* Section 15087). The lead agency must solicit input from other agencies and the public and respond in writing to all comments received (PRC Section 21092.5). The minimum public review period for a Draft EIR is 30 days. When a project involves a state agency approval or is of sufficient statewide, regional, or areawide significance, the public review period must be 45 days (PRC Section 21091).
4. **Final EIR.** A Final EIR must include a) the Draft EIR; b) copies of comments received during public review; c) list of persons and entities commenting; and d) responses to comments.
5. **Certification of Final EIR.** Prior to making a decision on a proposed project, the lead agency must certify that: a) the Final EIR has been completed in compliance with CEQA; b) the Final EIR was presented to the decision-making body of the lead agency; and c) the decision making body reviewed and considered the information in the Final EIR prior to approving a project (*CEQA Guidelines* Section 15090).
6. **Lead Agency Project Decision.** The lead agency may a) disapprove the project because of its significant environmental effects; b) require changes to the project to reduce or avoid significant environmental effects; or c) approve the project despite its significant environmental effects, if the proper findings and statement of overriding considerations are adopted (*CEQA Guidelines* Sections 15042 and 15043).
7. **Findings/Statement of Overriding Considerations.** For each significant impact of the project identified in the EIR, the lead agency must find, based on substantial evidence, that either: a) the project has been changed to avoid or substantially reduce the magnitude of the impact; b) changes to the project are within another agency's jurisdiction and such changes have or should be adopted; or c) specific economic, social, or other considerations make the mitigation measures or project alternatives infeasible (*CEQA Guidelines* Section 15091). If an agency approves a project with unavoidable significant environmental effects, it must prepare a written Statement of Overriding Considerations that sets forth the specific social, economic, or other reasons supporting the agency's decision (*CEQA Guidelines* Section 15093).

8. **Mitigation Monitoring Reporting Program.** When the lead agency makes findings on significant effects identified in the EIR, it must adopt a reporting or monitoring program for mitigation measures that were adopted or made conditions of project approval to mitigate significant effects (*CEQA Guidelines* Section 15097).
9. **Notice of Determination (NOD).** The lead agency must file a NOD after deciding to approve a project for which an EIR is prepared (*CEQA Guidelines* Section 15094, PRC Sections 21108 and 21152). If the lead agency is a local agency, it must file the NOD with the County Clerk and State Clearinghouse. If the lead agency is a state agency, it only needs to file the NOD with the State Clearinghouse. The NOD must be posted for 30 days and sent to anyone previously requesting notice. Posting of the NOD starts a 30-day statute of limitations on CEQA legal challenges (PRC Section 21167[c]).

Figure 1-1 Environmental Review Process



2 Project Description

This Environmental Impact Report (EIR) evaluates the proposed City of Auburn 2045 General Plan (referred to as the "proposed project"). The proposed project consists of the General Plan and associated implementation components, including a proposed Form-Based Code (FBC) for the Downtown/Old Town area, expansion of the City's Sphere of Influence (SOI), amendments to the Baltimore Ravine Specific Plan, and amendments to the Auburn Municipal Code to allow cannabis retail businesses.

This section describes the key characteristics of the proposed project, including the lead agency, project location, project objectives, required approvals, and the anticipated level and types of development under the General Plan. It also provides an overview of the General Plan's contents and summarizes major changes from the 1993 General Plan, including updates to the Land Use Map.

2.1 Project Proponent/Lead Agency

The City of Auburn is both the project proponent and the lead agency for the proposed project. The City's Planning Department, which is located at 1225 Lincoln Way, Auburn, California, 95603, prepared this EIR with the assistance from Rincon Consultants, Fehr & Peers, and Barry Miller Consulting.

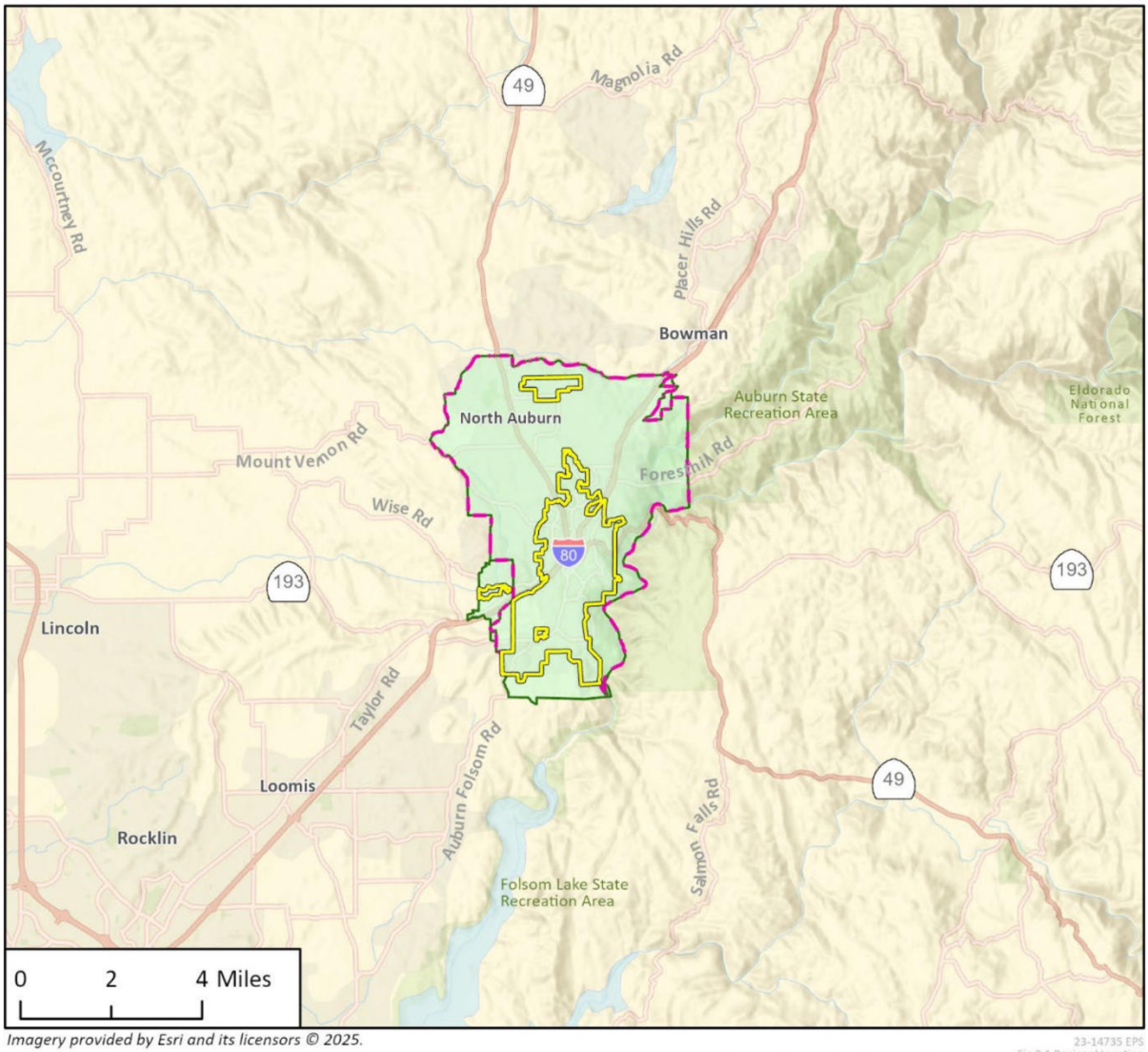
2.2 Project Location

The City of Auburn is located within Placer County. Auburn encompasses approximately 7.2 square miles and serves as the county seat of Placer County. Although it is the county seat, Auburn is the fourth largest of the six incorporated cities in the county. Auburn is approximately 16 miles northeast of Roseville and 9 miles northeast of Loomis. The city is surrounded by unincorporated areas of North Auburn to the immediate north of the city limits and the unincorporated area of Bowman to the immediate northeast. Figure 2-1 shows a regional map of the city's relationship to nearby cities, communities, and the state highway system.

Auburn is accessible from Interstate 80, which transverses the City from southwest to northeast. State Route (SR) 49 also provides regional access to the city connecting Auburn to unincorporated communities nearby. The city is also served by a surface street system and includes approximately 2.5 miles of Class II and Class III bicycle facilities (County of Placer 2018). The city is served by Auburn Transit which connects with Placer County Transit, the Capital Corridor Train, and Nevada County Connects. Additionally, Auburn OnDemand rides, a city-wide ride share service, serves residents of the city (City of Auburn 2025). The nearest airport to the city is the Auburn Municipal Airport which is approximately 4.7 miles north of Downtown but within the city limits.

The proposed project applies to all land within the City limits, the City's Sphere of Influence (SOI), and the City's Planning Area. The SOI represents the probable future boundary and service area of the City, as adopted by the Placer County Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCo). Auburn's SOI encompasses approximately 25.6 square miles—substantially larger than the current city limits—and reflects past planning efforts that envisioned future annexation of surrounding unincorporated communities, including portions of North Auburn and Bowman.

Figure 2-1 Regional Location



The Planning Area consists of 29.2 square miles. It includes all land within the city limits and SOI, as well as additional territory along the southwestern and southern boundaries outside the existing SOI. In accordance with California Government Code Section 65300, the Planning Area includes adjacent lands that may affect, or be affected by, future planning decisions. The City has determined that these additional areas bear a logical relationship to Auburn's future and should therefore be included in the General Plan planning framework. Figure 2-2 depicts the Planning Area boundaries, including city limits, the SOI, and the Planning Area.

2.3 Planning Process

As noted earlier, this EIR evaluates both the General Plan Update and the proposed Downtown/Old Town Form-Based Code (FBC). The FBC process began before the General Plan Update and was in draft form when General Plan work commenced. Because the two efforts are closely aligned and mutually supportive, the City chose to consider the FBC when the Draft General Plan was complete. This approach ensured consistency between the documents, allowed additional time for public review, and enabled minor refinements to the FBC prior to it being considered for adoption.

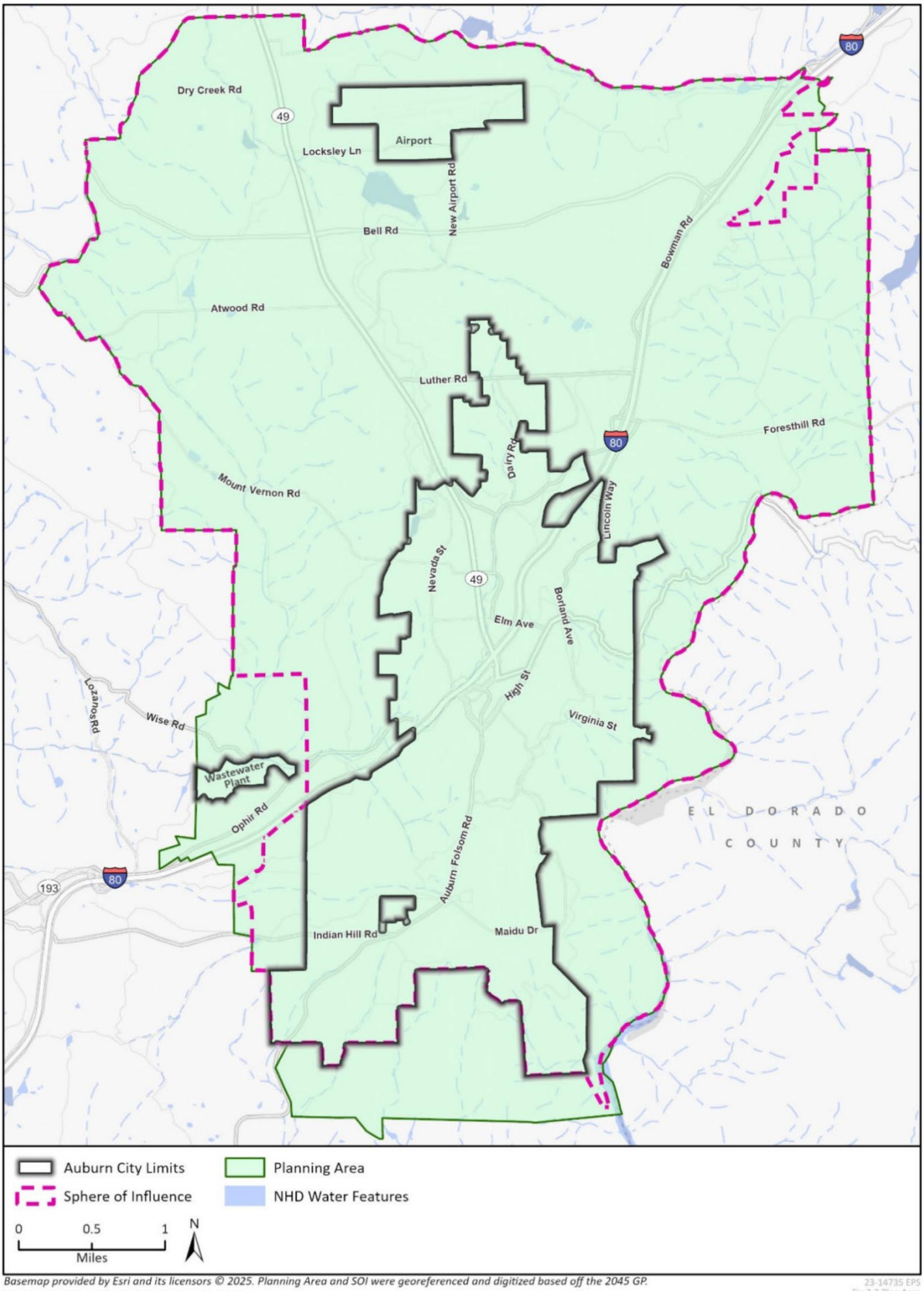
The FBC effort was launched in summer 2022 with a community engagement initiative called "Imagine Auburn." Over the following year, the City engaged more than 300 community members through workshops and public meetings. The outreach program included innovative techniques such as a Downtown-themed board game, a movable art installation, surveys, one-on-one interviews, and traditional town hall meetings. From October 2022 through April 2023, the City hosted three major public workshops ("Explore," "Create," and "Envision") designed to help participants imagine future possibilities and prioritize implementation strategies. The FBC engagement phase concluded in late 2023, setting the stage for the General Plan Update.

The General Plan Update formally began in September 2023. A project website (Auburn2045.org) was launched and the first round of community workshops was held. Similar to the FBC effort, the General Plan outreach incorporated interactive methods—including a "time machine" exercise and planning-focused board game—to encourage participation and make the process accessible and enjoyable. A community survey conducted in January 2024 received nearly 600 responses. The City also convened a 12-member Focus Group that met 14 times over an 18-month period ending in July 2025 to review draft policies and actions.

Throughout the process, staff presented updates to the City Council, Planning Commission, and other boards, commissions, and community organizations. Agencies such as the Auburn Unified School District and Auburn Recreation District also participated. A second round of public workshops was held in March 2025, followed by a final workshop in December 2025 prior to publication of the Plan and the start of adoption hearings.

Technical work on the General Plan proceeded concurrently. This included a comprehensive land use inventory for the entire Planning Area and data collection on transportation, natural resources, economic conditions, climate and greenhouse gas emissions, noise, and arts and culture. Ten technical background reports documenting existing conditions were prepared. During mid-2025, the new Land Use Map was developed and vetted with both the community and the City Council. Draft goals, policies, and implementation programs were released and reviewed with the Focus Group as they were completed.

Figure 2-2 Planning Area



Basemap provided by Esri and its licensors © 2025. Planning Area and SOI were georeferenced and digitized based off the 2045 GP. Additional data provided by Placer County, 2023.

23-14735 EPS
Fig 2.2 Plan Area

The Auburn Municipal Code amendments to allow cannabis retail uses were likewise informed by community outreach and public input. Community feedback consistently demonstrated strong support for retail cannabis within the City. In a City-sponsored survey, between 83 and 88 percent of participants indicated support, and more than 80 percent expressed a preference for the issuance of more than one retail cannabis permit over time. Concerns raised during outreach included potential traffic impacts, preventing youth access, and ensuring that operators met high standards for security and compliance. Respondents also expressed a preference for locating retail cannabis uses within commercially oriented areas, particularly along the Highway 49 corridor and within the Downtown area, where businesses are accessible and compatible with existing commercial activity.

2.4 Auburn 2045 General Plan Update

Every city and county in California is required to adopt a comprehensive, long-range general plan to guide its physical development. The general plan serves as the community's primary policy document for growth and development. It establishes guiding principles, goals, policies, and implementation programs, and provides the foundation for land use and planning decisions made by City staff, the Planning Commission, and the City Council. All development approvals and environmental decisions must be consistent with the General Plan.

State law requires that a general plan include seven mandatory elements: Land Use, Circulation, Housing, Conservation, Open Space, Noise, and Safety. In addition, jurisdictions with disadvantaged communities must address environmental justice either through a stand-alone Environmental Justice Element or through policies integrated into other elements. General plans typically include a 20- to 25-year planning horizon, although major updates often before the horizon year arrives. State law further requires that Housing Elements be updated every eight years.

Auburn's existing General Plan was prepared between 1989 and 1992 and adopted in 1993, with a planning horizon of 2010. While the Plan has been amended over time to address changing conditions and new State requirements, a comprehensive update is necessary to extend the planning horizon and respond to emerging issues and opportunities. The current plan does not reflect many statutory requirements adopted since 1993 or current best practices in planning. Additionally, the absence of a modern, forward-looking General Plan may hinder Auburn's ability to remain economically competitive and sustain its fiscal health.

The 2045 General Plan is a comprehensive update to the 1993 General Plan and articulates an updated vision for Auburn's future through the year 2045. The General Plan reflects 30 years of change in the community, including demographic shifts, new local priorities, and substantial changes in State planning law. It also addresses expected future trends related to the economy, transportation, housing, technology, and the workplace.

The City initiated the General Plan Update in late 2023. The General Plan Update does not include revisions to the Housing Element or Safety Element, which were updated in 2021 to meet State requirements. These elements are formatted as standalone documents. They remain part of the General Plan but are not part of the proposed project evaluated in this EIR. Both elements will remain internally consistent with the General Plan upon its adoption.

The Housing Element demonstrates how Auburn will accommodate its assigned share of regional housing needs for the 2021-2029 period. Auburn's Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA), assigned by the Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG) in 2019, requires capacity for at least 310 housing units, plus an appropriate buffer to ensure compliance. The next Housing Element

update will occur in 2028, covering the 2029-2037 period. The 2021 Safety Element update ensured that Auburn complies with SB 379, AB 1241, and other State legislation related to climate resilience and wildfire prevention and mitigation.

2.4.1 General Plan Contents

Comparison With 1993 General Plan

Table 2-1 compares the structure of the 2045 General Plan with the existing 1993 General Plan.

Table 2-1 Comparison of Existing (1993) General Plan and Proposed (2045) General Plan Organization

2045 General Plan	1993 General Plan	Comments
1. Introduction	I. Introduction	Intent remains the same
2. Framework and Guiding Principles	II. Goals III. Assumptions and Issues	Focus of Framework Chapter is on the forces driving change in Auburn, culminating in guiding principles. This is different than Goals/Assumptions.
3. Land Use Element	IV. Land Use Element	Meets statutory requirement for Land Use Element
4. Historic Preservation and Community Design Element	XI. Historic Element	Optional element. Focus expanded to address community design.
5. Transportation Element	V. Circulation Element	Meets statutory requirement for Circulation Element
6. Housing Element Crosswalk	VI. Housing Element	One page "crosswalk" that directs the reader to a standalone document. Previously, the entire element was embedded in the GP
7. Economic Development Element	X. Economic Element	Optional element
8. Open Space and Conservation Element	VII. Open Space and Conservation Element	Meets statutory requirement for Open Space Element and Conservation Element. Includes environmental justice policies.
9. Noise Element	VIII. Noise Element	Meets statutory requirement for Noise Element
10. Safety Element Crosswalk	IX. Safety Element	One page "crosswalk" that directs the reader to a standalone document. Previously, the entire element was embedded in the GP.
11. Arts and Culture Element	N/A	New optional element
12. Community Services and Facilities Element	N/A	New optional element
13. Implementation	XII. Implementation	Roll-up of all Plan actions

Key differences are summarized below:

- **New Framework and Guiding Principles Chapter.** The 2045 Plan introduces a "Framework and Guiding Principles" chapter, replacing the 1993 Plan's "Goals and Assumptions" chapters. While both serve to establish the foundation for the Plan, the new chapter focuses on the forces likely

to shape Auburn over the next 20 years—including demographic trends, economic shifts, technological change, and climate considerations.

- **Standalone Housing and Safety Elements with Crosswalks.** The 2045 Plan includes one-page crosswalks that summarize the Housing Element and the Safety Element, which remain standalone documents. These summaries explain the purpose and contents of those elements and the rationale for maintaining them separately. In contrast, the 1993 Plan incorporated the full Housing Element and the full Safety Element, making the document longer and more technical given state-mandated analysis requirements.
- **Expanded Community Design Focus.** The former "Historic" Element has been broadened to address both historic preservation and community design. While the 1993 Plan included limited design policies within the Land Use Element, it did not include a comprehensive discussion of urban design principles.
- **New Optional Elements.** The 2045 Plan adds two optional elements: "Arts and Culture" and "Community Services and Facilities". Topics included in the Community Services and Facilities Element were previously dispersed across other elements in the 1993 Plan, including land use (schools), safety (police and fire), and circulation (infrastructure).
- **Revised Chapter Sequencing.** The order of elements has been reorganized, moving Historic Preservation/Community Design and Economic Development earlier in the document. The sequence of elements does not imply that earlier topics are more important, as all elements have equal weight.
- **Environmental Justice Policies Integrated Across Elements.** The 2045 Plan meets State requirements for environmental justice but does not include a standalone Environmental Justice Element. Environmental justice policies are primarily located in the Open Space and Conservation Element and also appear in the Land Use and Community Services and Facilities Elements.

While the organization of the Plan has changed, the most significant updates involve the substance and scope of policies and actions. The 1993 Plan reflected planning practices of its time, with broad policies and fewer implementation measures. Over the past three decades, State law and CEQA practice have resulted in general plans becoming more detailed and prescriptive. The 2045 Plan contains a significantly expanded set of policies and actions, offering clearer and more specific guidance across a wider range of topics.

Consistent with the 1993 General Plan, each element of the 2045 Plan includes background information followed by goals, policies, and actions. A **goal** describes a desired future condition or outcome. A **policy** expresses the City's position or approach to a particular issue; policies using "must" or "shall" (or terms such as "require") are mandatory, while those using "should" or "may" (or terms such as "support" or "encourage") allow for case-by-case consideration within defined parameters. An **action** identifies a program, procedure, or initiative the City will undertake to carry out policies and achieve the Plan's goals.

2045 General Plan Elements

The 2045 General Plan would include ten elements, eight of which are summarized below. As noted earlier, descriptions of the Housing Element and Safety Element are not included, as those elements are standalone documents and are not part of this General Plan Update.

Land Use Element

The Land Use Element promotes compact, sustainable growth that strengthens Auburn's economy, protects its historic and natural resources, and supports a high quality of life. This Element emphasizes infill development and redevelopment—particularly in Downtown and Old Town—where housing, employment, and amenities can be integrated and supported by existing infrastructure and services. Key opportunity sites, including Baltimore Ravine, the "Domes" property, and the SR 49 corridor, are prioritized for high-quality, thoughtfully designed development.

Policies support objective development standards, adequate infrastructure, mixed-use and higher-density housing near transit and services, walkable neighborhoods, and opportunities for "missing middle" housing. Downtown and Old Town are envisioned as Auburn's cultural, civic, and economic center. Outside the core, this Element promotes revitalization of the SR 49 corridor, modernization of commercial and industrial areas, support for tourism and local business, protection of the Auburn Municipal Airport, and preservation of rural character through open-space and agricultural land use designations. This Element also encourages coordination with Placer County and regional agencies to ensure responsible growth and maintain Auburn's small-city identity.

The Land Use Element includes the General Plan Land Use Map and descriptions of all land use designations. It also outlines anticipated development patterns and growth areas over the 20-year planning horizon.

Historic Preservation and Community Design Element

The Historic Preservation and Community Design Element reinforces Auburn's identity as a historic Sierra Foothills community while supporting attractive, functional, and connected public spaces. Policies emphasize the preservation of historic sites and structures, protection of scenic vistas, enhancement of community gateways, cohesive signage and branding, and architecture that reflects Auburn's historic character. This Element also promotes improved pedestrian and bicycle access, stronger neighborhood connections, and continued investment in Downtown and Old Town as the city's primary gathering places.

Key strategies include enhancements to streetscapes, plazas, parklets, and outdoor public spaces, as well as guidance for high-quality building design, landscaping, materials, and sustainable construction practices. Historic preservation is a core focus, with policies supporting the identification and inventory of historic resources, adaptive reuse of historic buildings and landscapes, incentives for heritage tourism, and technical assistance and flexible standards to ensure that preservation efforts remain practical and effective. Together, these initiatives reinforce Auburn's unique character and sense of place.

Transportation Element

This Element promotes a balanced, safe, and sustainable transportation system that accommodates all travel modes and supports Auburn's land use pattern. Policies emphasize complete streets, connectivity, and accessibility for pedestrians, cyclists, transit users, and motorists, while prioritizing safety, cost-effective planning, and responsiveness to new mobility technologies. This Element addresses roadway efficiency, traffic operations, and system maintenance, with particular focus on Downtown, Old Town, and emergency access. It also requires new development to mitigate transportation impacts. Sustainable transportation strategies aim to reduce vehicle miles traveled by expanding transit, walking, biking, and mixed-use development opportunities. Bicycle and

pedestrian networks are strengthened through sidewalks, trails, Safe Routes to School, and improved connections to the Auburn State Recreation Area. Additional policies support public transit, parking management, goods movement, and continued use and enhancement of the Auburn Municipal Airport. Regional coordination ensures the transportation system aligns with county and state plans, secures funding, and enhances emergency preparedness.

Economic Development Element

This Element seeks to foster a diverse, resilient, and sustainable local economy that reflects community values, supports Auburn's long-term fiscal health, and enhances quality of life for all residents. It emphasizes attracting businesses that complement Auburn's historic character and outdoor-oriented identity; supporting entrepreneurship and creative industries; and revitalizing commercial districts, particularly Downtown and Old Town. Policies address emerging economic opportunities, including the expansion of the health-care sector, integration of local agriculture into the economy, and shifts in workplace structure. Tourism and hospitality — including outdoor recreation, cultural events, and heritage-based experiences — are prioritized, as is strategic development of the Auburn Municipal Airport and adjacent business park. This Element promotes a business-friendly environment through clear regulations, ongoing infrastructure investment, development-ready sites, public-private partnerships, and regional collaboration. It also supports unified branding and marketing to strengthen Auburn's identity.

Open Space and Conservation Element

This Element protects, manages, and connects natural areas in and around Auburn to support recreation, biodiversity, community character, and climate resilience. Key priorities include preserving open spaces, wildlife corridors, and sensitive habitats; protecting soil, mineral, water, and air resources; and supporting sustainable land use and infrastructure. Policies encourage stewardship, responsible development, water conservation, stormwater management, renewable energy, energy conservation, greenhouse gas reduction, sound urban forestry practices, and climate stability. Collaborative management, zoning, education, and monitoring are emphasized to balance environmental protection, public health, and community benefits while promoting long-term resilience and sustainability. This Element also addresses environmental justice by ensuring equitable access to clean air, water, safe housing, parks, and healthy food.

Noise Element

This Element aims to protect Auburn residents from harmful noise and vibration while supporting compatible economic and recreational activities. It establishes land use compatibility standards based on State guidelines, limits increases in ambient noise, and guides the siting of noise- and vibration-sensitive uses such as hospitals, schools, and residences. This Element addresses noise from Downtown nightlife, airport overflights, transportation corridors, construction activities, and mixed-use development. Policies provide strategies to mitigate future noise conflicts, including building setbacks, landscaping, and sound-insulating materials.

This Element also promotes ongoing noise management, including monitoring, enforcement, establishing quiet zones for trains, and noise-conscious procurement of City equipment. Implementation actions include requiring acoustical studies, adherence to State insulation standards, enforcing construction and vehicle noise controls, updating ordinances, and coordinating with local and regional agencies to ensure effective noise reduction and compatibility.

Arts and Culture Element

This new General Plan Element aims to make Auburn a vibrant cultural hub that honors its heritage, celebrates the present, and inspires future creativity. It emphasizes support for local artists, creative professionals, and cultural organizations through policies that establish arts districts, provide additional venues and public spaces, integrate arts into economic development, and encourage diverse programming. This Element prioritizes public art, including temporary and permanent installations, and fosters community participation in arts events, ensuring programming is culturally relevant. Indigenous and tribal cultural resources are recognized and protected, with robust consultation and monitoring processes. Implementing actions include maintaining a City Arts Commission, developing an Arts Master Plan, pursuing cultural district designation, supporting performing arts venues, facilitating public art and events, and complying with state regulations protecting tribal resources.

Community Services and Facilities Element

The Community Services and Facilities Element focuses on providing high-quality public facilities, services, and infrastructure. It emphasizes modern, well-maintained civic, police, and fire facilities; collaborative planning with school districts; and improved access to parks, trails, and recreational resources. This Element also addresses the need for resilient and sustainable water, sewer, stormwater, energy, and telecommunications systems. Policies promote inclusive civic engagement, community safety, and emergency preparedness, while supporting public-private partnerships. Implementing actions include strategic planning, storm drainage upgrades, waste reduction programs, and expansion of trail and recreation networks, all aimed at enhancing community well-being and economic opportunity across Auburn.

Land Use Map

The Land Use Map, also called the General Plan Map, is a key component of the General Plan. It identifies the allowable land uses and development intensities for all parcels within the Planning Area. Within the City limits, zoning must be consistent with the General Plan and support its objectives and policies. Outside the City limits, the Map provides guidance to Placer County regarding the City's vision and priorities; County zoning and development review processes consider these land use designations. Changes to the Land Use Map influence where and how future development may occur.

Proposed Land Use Map

The Land Use Map has been comprehensively updated as part of the General Plan Update. The revised Map introduces a new land use classification system that better aligns the City and County General Plans. Map changes support a future growth pattern consistent with State and regional planning goals, including compact development, expanded housing opportunities, avoidance of high-risk areas (including very high fire hazard severity zones), and a balance between job and housing growth. The updated Map also reflects development that has occurred over the past 30 years and incorporates categories that more accurately describe existing uses. Figure 2-3 shows the proposed land use map for the city, and Table 2-2 shows the total acreage designated under each land use category under the 2045 General Plan. Additionally, Appendix B includes the proposed land use changes by parcel throughout the Planning Area, along with an explanation of the rationale for each proposed designation change.

Figure 2-3 Proposed General Plan Land Use Designations

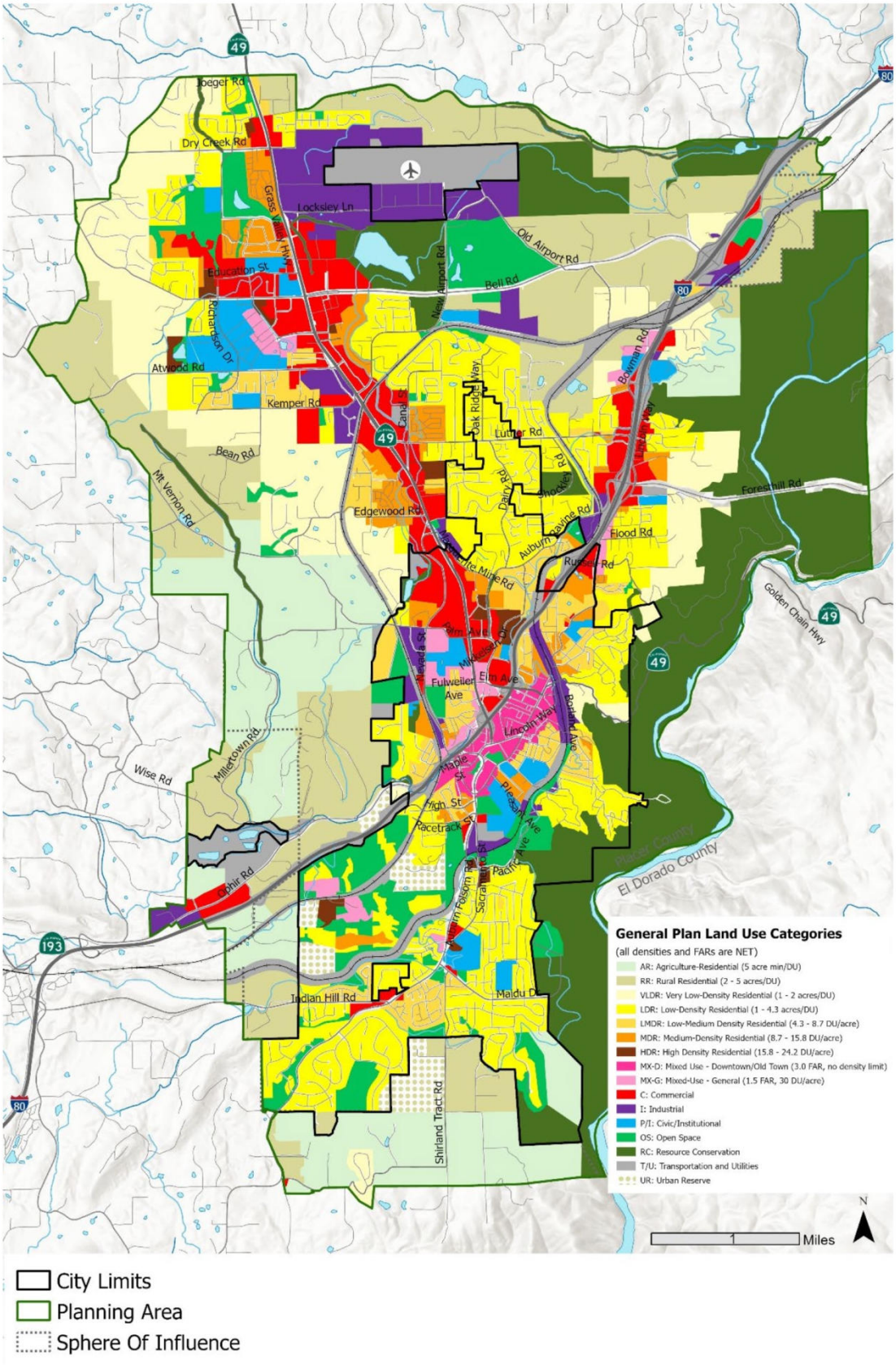


Table 2-2 Proposed 2045 Land Use Plan Acreage by Category

Land Use Category	Acres			Percent of Total
	City Limits	Unincorporated	Total	
Agriculture-Residential	79	1,678	1,758	9.6%
Rural Residential	13	2,626	2,639	14.5%
Very Low Density Residential	44	1,412	1,456	8.0%
Low Density Residential	1,308	1,098	2,406	13.2%
Low-Medium Density Residential	361	174	536	2.9%
Medium Density Residential	159	295	453	2.5%
High Density Residential	51	48	99	0.5%
Mixed Use – Downtown	126	0	126	0.7%
Mixed Use – General	94	63	157	0.8%
Commercial	181	598	780	4.3%
Industrial	188	473	661	3.6%
Public/Institutional	138	215	353	1.9%
Open Space	479	437	917	5.0%
Resource Conservation	284	3,078	3,362	18.4%
Transportation/Utilities	513	623	1,137	6.2%
Urban Reserve	102	102	204	1.1%
Right-of-Way (not a land use category)	469	751	1,220	6.7%
Total (may not add due to rounding)	**4,590**	**13,676**	**18,263**	**100%**

Comparison to the 1993 Land Use Map

The eight residential categories in the City's 1993 Plan are differentiated by the maximum density allowed in each category. Densities in the existing Plan are expressed based on gross acreage, rather than net acreage. Most of the categories do not state a "minimum" density or range, so there is a high degree of overlap between categories. Table 2-3 shows the 1993 General Plan categories and their proposed counterparts in the Draft 2045 General Plan.

The 1993 Plan also included two "overlay" zones, used to identify clustered development and public properties. These overlays are not shown on the new Plan, given the creation of a Public category and more precise mapping of private open space within planned unit developments.

For several of the categories in Table 2-3, the *Comments* column compares the City's categories to equivalent categories in the Placer County General Plan. One objective of the Plan Update was to achieve better alignment between the City and County land use categories. Placer County is also undergoing a General Plan Update and may adjust its categories through that process. This presents an opportunity for even closer alignment between the two plans, particularly for the low-, medium-, and high-density residential categories. The City's proposed commercial, industrial, and mixed-use categories are generally consistent with the County's designations.

Table 2-3 Comparison of Existing (1993) General Plan and Proposed (2045) General Plan Land Use Categories

1993 General Plan Land Use Category	Corresponding 2045 General Plan Land Use Category	Comments
Agricultural (1 DU/ 5 acres)	Ag-Res (1 DU/4.6 acres)	Proposed category aligns with Placer County "Rural Estate"
Rural Residential (1 DU/2 acres)	Rural Res (1 DU/2.2-4.6 acres)	Proposed category aligns with Placer County "Rural Residential"
Low Density Residential (1 DU/ac)	Very Low (1 DU/1.1-2.2 acres)	Proposed category aligns with Placer County "Rural Low"
Urban Low Density Residential (2-4 DU/acre)	Low (1-4.4 DU/acre)	Includes Placer County's "Low" and most of their "Low Medium" range (which allows up to 5 DUA)
Low Medium Density Residential (6 DU/acre)	Low Medium (4.4-8.7 DU/acre)	Aligns with top end of Auburn's R-1 zoning district, which allows for 5,000 square foot lots
Medium Density Residential (10 DU/acre)		
Medium Density/Mobile Home		
High Density Residential (15 DU/acre)	Medium Density Residential (8.7-15.8 DU/acre)	Aligns with top of Auburn's R-3 zoning district, which allows 1 unit per 2,750 SF of lot area.
Urban High Density Residential (20 DU/acre)	High Density Residential (15.8-24.2 DU/acre)(*)	Will require new R-4 zone (1 unit per 1,800 SF of lot area). Mostly mapped on parcels where this density already exists.
Mixed Use (3.0 FAR, 15 DU/acre)	Mixed Use-Downtown (3.0 FAR, no density cap)	Corresponds to Form Based Code area, which was previously designated as Commercial and High Density Residential
	Mixed Use-General (1.5 FAR, 30 DU/acre max)*	Other mixed-use sites, including Domes. Mapped in fewer locations than in 1993 Plan due to increased density allowance.
Commercial Office (3.0 FAR)	Commercial (1.5 FAR, 15.8 DU/acre max)	Office category has been merged into commercial. Allowance for housing added, at Med. Density.
Commercial (3.0 FAR)		
Industrial (2.0 FAR)	Industrial (2.0 FAR)	Carry forward as is
Open Space/ General	Open Space/General Resource Conservation	Four categories re-organized into two categories that are more practical for planning purposes.
Open Space Schools		
Open Space Private		
Open Space Fairgrounds		
Urban Reserve	Urban Reserve	Carry forward

(*) Max density in Baltimore Ravine is set by the Specific Plan and is 15 DU/A in Mixed Use areas and 20 DU/A in HDR areas

DU = dwelling units(s); FAR = floor-area ratio

The proposed Plan has seven residential categories, also differentiated by density. The lowest density category is Agricultural-Residential, which has a maximum density of one unit per 4.6 acres. The highest density category is High-Density Residential, which has a maximum density of 24 units per acre. The intervening categories include Rural Residential (one unit per 2.3-4.6 acres), Very Low

Density Residential (one unit per 1.1-2.3 acres), Low Density Residential (one unit per acre to 4.4 units per acre), Low-Medium Density Residential (4.4 to 8.7 units per acre), and Medium Density Residential (8.7 to 15.8 units per acre). These are net densities, meaning they exclude internal streets and easements. The densities have been set to align with City and County zoning designations. For example, Ag-Res corresponds to a 200,000 square foot minimum lot size while HDR corresponds to 1,800 square feet of lot area per dwelling unit. On raw land where an internal street system is proposed, a factor of 25 percent may be applied to estimate gross density and the number of allowable units.[1]

The proposed Plan includes two Mixed Use categories:

- **Mixed Use-Downtown (MX-D):** Applies to the proposed Form Based Code area, allows residential and commercial uses, encourages vertical mixed use, and permits Floor Area Ratios (FAR) up to 3.0.
- **Mixed Use-General (MX-G):** Applies outside Downtown, allows residential and commercial uses, with FAR up to 1.5. Residential densities may not exceed 30 units per net acre, except in the Baltimore Ravine Specific Plan Area, where the maximum remains 15 units per acre per the adopted Specific Plan. The allowance for 30 units per acre in other MX-G areas is a change from the 1993 Plan, which only allowed 15 units per acre; Placer County is considering a similar change to its Mixed Use designation.

The proposed Plan has one Commercial designation and one Industrial designation. The Commercial designation accommodates retail, office, and other general commercial uses, and conditionally allows housing up to 15 units per net acre. The 1993 Commercial-Office category has been merged into this designation. The Industrial designation accommodates industrial, light industrial, research and development, and heavy commercial uses, with FARs up to 2.0. Industrial uses are encouraged around the Auburn Municipal Airport, where residential development is unsuitable, and industrial uses can help support local economic activity.

Civic and open space designations include:

- **Public/Institutional:** A new category for schools, City and County facilities, large-scale religious institutions, the Gold Country Fairgrounds, and similar uses.
- **Open Space:** Includes parks, golf courses, cemeteries, and recreational areas.
- **Resource Conservation:** Covers the Auburn State Recreation Area and other open spaces with sensitive natural resources, steep terrain, or hazards.

Two additional categories are included in the proposed Plan:

- **Transportation/Utilities:** New category covering the airport, wastewater treatment plant, railroad rights-of-way, and the I-80 corridor.
- **Urban Reserve:** Carried over from the 1993 Plan, this category identifies land that could be considered for redesignation to urban/suburban categories in the next 20 years due to its location. However, these areas are currently rural residential and subject to very low densities, with a Plan Amendment required before urban uses are permitted.

[1] For example, a 25-acre parcel designated "Low Density Residential" could support 4.4 units per net acre. Since the parcel would first require subdivision, the number of allowable units would be calculated by subtracting 25 percent of the land area (for roads and easements, etc.) and dividing the remainder by 4.4. In this instance, the site could support 82 units on lots of 10,000 square feet or more. (25 – [0.25*25])/4.4 = 82 units. The net density is 4.4 units per acre and the gross density would be 3.3 units/acre.

Other General Plan Land Use Map Changes

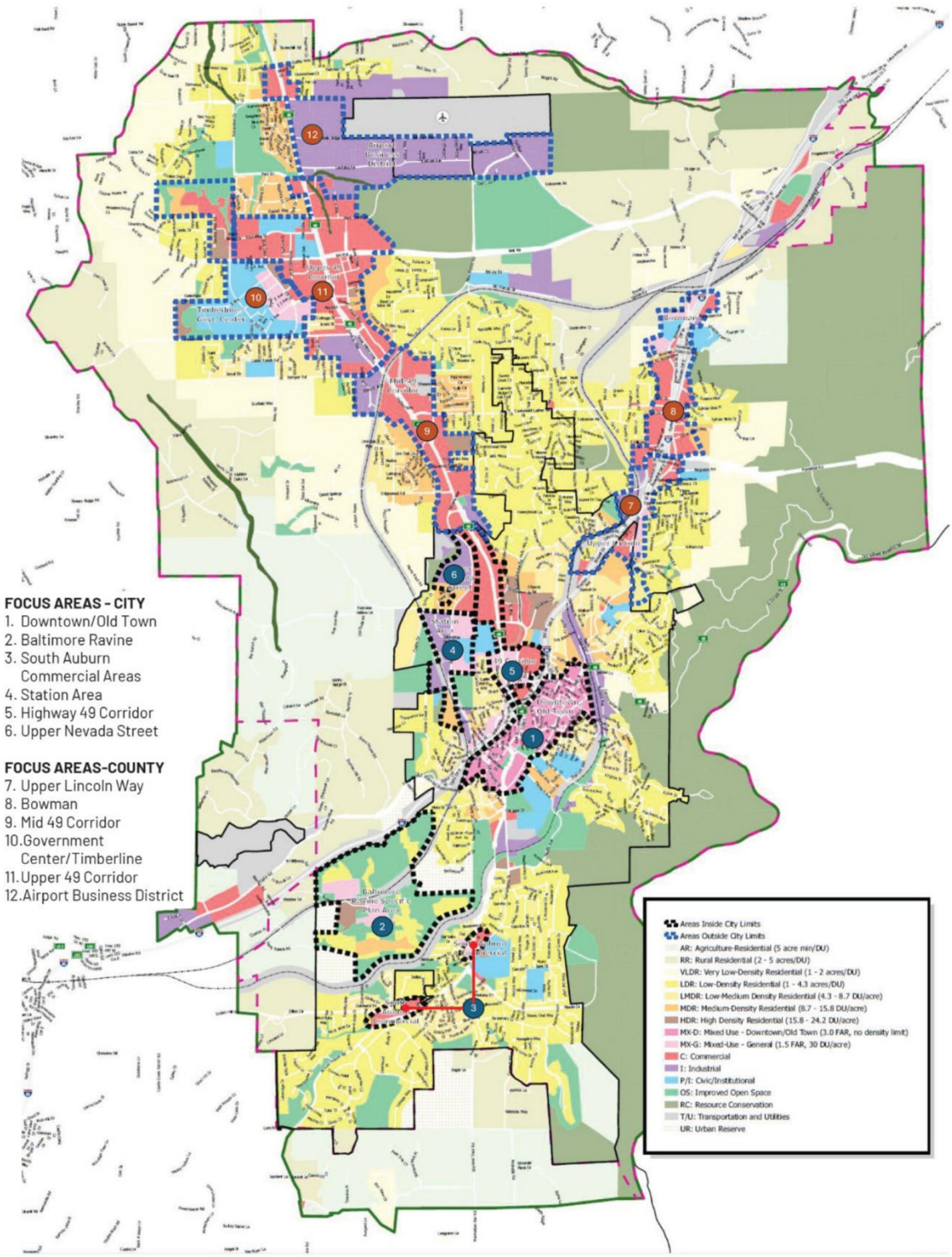
In addition to General Plan Land Use Map changes intended to accommodate growth, the project includes the following other types of map changes:

- **Correcting Scrivener's Errors.** A "scrivener's error" is a land use map designation that is incorrect. Given the age of the General Plan and the mapping technology available at the time, several inaccuracies have been corrected.
- **Mapping of Transportation and Utility Uses.** Parcels comprising Auburn Airport, the Union Pacific Right-of-Way, the Auburn Wastewater Treatment Plant, electrical substations, transfer stations, the Interstate 80 Right-of-Way, and similar uses have been redesignated as "Transportation/Utilities." These changes do not materially impact what is allowed on these properties and simply acknowledge existing and planned uses.
- **Mapping of Public/Quasi-Public Land Uses.** The proposed project introduces a Public/Quasi-Public designation, which includes government and quasi-public buildings and facilities, schools, County properties, large religious institutions, and similar facilities owned by public or nonprofit agencies. Most of these were previously mapped as Residential or Commercial, sometimes with a "public" overlay. These changes do not materially alter permitted uses and simply acknowledge existing and intended uses.
- **Mapping of Park and Open Space Land Uses.** Park and open space acreage in Auburn has expanded since 1993. The Placer Land Trust and other conservation organizations have acquired easements or fee simple ownership of hundreds of acres within the Planning Area. Much of this land was designated for urban uses on the 1993 Plan. There are also new parks and greenbelts in subdivisions built after 1993, Auburn Recreation District parks and recent land acquisitions, and uses such as the Ridge Golf Course that do not appear on the previous General Plan Map. The proposed project updates the map to include these areas.
- **Improving Accuracy.** Some map changes more accurately reflect existing uses in areas where no future change is anticipated. This is especially true for development that occurred between 1993 and 2025 without a General Plan Amendment. Examples include residential development on sites previously designated for commercial uses, and commercial development on sites previously designated for industrial uses.
- **Adjusting to Reflect Actual Uses and Densities.** Many of these changes are "housekeeping" amendments that align the 2045 Plan Map with existing conditions.
- **Adjusting to Reflect Less Intense Zoning and Larger Parcel Patterns.** In a few cases, current zoning better reflects General Plan objectives than the current General Plan Map. For example, some areas in unincorporated Auburn are in active agricultural use, zoned with a minimum lot size of 200,000 square feet (4.6 acres), but were designated Rural Residential (2.3-4.6 acres/unit) in the 1993 Plan. The 2045 Plan updates these areas to "Ag-Residential" (4.6-acre minimum) to support agriculture and maintain community separators in the Planning Area.

2.4.2 Growth and Development Areas: City of Auburn

Growth and development under the 2045 General Plan would be concentrated in the following areas within the city. This is reflected in the land use changes being proposed in these areas. Proposed changes to designations for the unincorporated parts of the Planning Area are also discussed in Section 2.4.1. Figure 2-4 shows the location of each area described below.

Figure 2-4 Growth and Development Areas



Source: Barry Miller, 2025.

Downtown/Old Town

The Downtown/Old Town District encompasses approximately 175 acres in Central Auburn, including Historic Old Town Auburn and the traditional Downtown along High Street and Lincoln Way (refer to Figure 2-4). This area would be redesignated from Commercial and High Density Residential to Mixed-Use Downtown under the proposed plan.

The new General Plan designation of Mixed Use–Downtown, combined with implementation of a proposed Form Based Zoning Code (FBC), is intended to encourage infill, redevelopment, and rehabilitation of vacant structures. Estimates prepared as part of the General Plan identify potential for about 480 residential units and 210,000 square feet of commercial space based on vacant and underutilized sites, though only a portion of this potential is expected to be realized by 2045.

Baltimore Ravine Specific Plan Area

Baltimore Ravine is the largest undeveloped area in the Auburn city limits. The area was historically used for mining and orchards and has a handful of rural residences today. It is crossed by two ravines, two railroad lines (including a 63-foot deep, 800-foot long cut), and several canals, and is hilly and forested. Access is via Rogers Lane/Perry Ranch Road, which connect to Werner Road and Ophir Road via an I-80 underpass. There is currently no access from Auburn Folsom Road or Indian Hill Road. Refer to Figure 2-4 for the location of Baltimore Ravine.

The 1993 General Plan designated this area as Urban Reserve, identifying it as Auburn's most significant development opportunity. In 2011, the City adopted the Baltimore Ravine Specific Plan (BRSP), covering 406 acres—roughly 10 percent of Auburn's land area—and providing a framework for long-term development. The Auburn General Plan Map was amended in 2011 to incorporate these designations.

As adopted, the BRSP divided the site into a 277-acre development area and four "study areas" totaling 129 acres. The Study Areas are not part of the Specific Plan, nor were they covered by the BRSP EIR. The Study Areas are currently subject to a two-acre minimum lot size requirement.

The BRSP development area includes planned residential, commercial, and mixed uses, along with park and open space. A total of 725 units are allowed by the Specific Plan, with densities ranging from 1 unit per acre to 20 units per acre. A village center with 90,000 square feet of commercial/office space is included, providing for local goods and services as well as business and professional space. The development area is divided into two subareas. Subarea 1 includes 130 acres and was planned for 270 low-medium density units, including open space and park areas. Subarea 2 includes 147 acres and was planned for 455 units, a commercial/mixed use area, and open space and park areas.

The proposed 2045 General Plan carries all of the BRSP designations in Subarea 1 forward. It amends the designations in a portion of Subarea 2 and Study Area 3 in order to be more responsive to development opportunities and property boundaries. The following modifications are proposed:

- Study Area 3, which is 29 acres, would no longer be designated as "Urban Reserve." About nine acres would be re-designated as Low Density Residential, and the remainder (about 20 acres) would be re-designated as Open Space.
- The 14-acre planned mixed use area located between I-80 and the UPRR in Subarea 2 (referred to as Areas 40 and 41 in the BRSP) would be reduced in size to 11 acres.

- The 13-acre planned Low Density Residential area east of the mixed use area (referred to as Area 7 in the BRSP) would be expanded to about 16 acres. Changes to the boundaries of this area, which lies entirely within one parcel, would be made to avoid impacts on the Fiddler Green Canal, which bisects the parcel.

The net effect of these changes would be to reduce the anticipated commercial square footage of the Baltimore Ravine development by about 20,000 square feet and increase the total number of residential units from 725 to 760. Plan Area 2 would also increase by 29 acres and the Study Areas would be reduced to 100 acres. Specific future projects in the BRSP area will require project-specific environmental review.

Train Station Area

The Station Area includes an approximately half-mile radius around the Auburn Train Station, including the County-owned Domes site and vacant property on Blocker Drive.

In 2023, the City received a grant to study transit-oriented mixed-use development opportunities on 17.5 acres owned by Placer County at the northeast corner of Fulweiler Avenue and Nevada Street (refer to Figure 2-4). The study focuses on a 10.5-acre parcel that includes the County "Domes" building, a historic landmark with five geodesic domes housing County offices. The site is across from the Auburn train station and includes underutilized land and parking areas.

A Draft Environmental Impact Report released in Fall 2025 explored two development options: one with 238 multi-family units and stacked flats (Option 1), the other with 310 units and removal of the Domes (Option 2). Both options also include small commercial areas and civic space. For purposes of the General Plan, Option 1 is assumed.

Historically, the Domes site was not considered to have development potential due to County ownership and its non-vacant status. Its current designation is Commercial with a Public Overlay, which is not intended to support multi-family housing. The new Mixed Use-General designation in the 2045 Plan would accommodate the proposed development program and facilitate adaptive reuse of the site.

South of the Station, 11500 Blocker Drive is a 14.3-acre vacant parcel along the west side of the UPRR tracks. The existing General Plan designation is Urban Low Density Residential, with an open space buffer along a riparian area on the western edge of the parcel. The City rezoned this property in the 1990s to allow industrial uses and/or residential uses; however, the General Plan was not amended concurrently. Given the proximity of the site to the railroad and train station/transit center, the 2045 General Plan proposes re-designating the site to "Medium-Density Residential," retaining the open space buffer along its western edge.

Also included in this area is vacant land at the southeast corner of Palm Avenue and Nevada Street currently used as overflow parking for a plant nursery. This area continues to be designated for Mixed Use, as it was in the 1993 General Plan.

Nevada Street Corridor

The Nevada Street corridor extends from the Station Area north to SR 49, a distance of about 0.8 miles (refer to Figure 2-4). The corridor includes a number of large vacant parcels and represents a critical economic opportunity for the City. It includes a 7-acre parcel that has been surplused by the Auburn Recreation District, a 2-acre vacant City property, and multiple vacant and underutilized

private properties along Nevada Street. The 2045 Plan continues to recognize the development potential identified in the 1993 Plan.

Key opportunities within this corridor, and proposed General Plan Map changes, include:

- **Mount Vernon Gateway.** There are two vacant properties and a rural residence at the northwest corner of Nevada Street and Palm Avenue/Mount Vernon Road. Collectively the three parcels comprise about 10 acres, including nine acres in public ownership designated as High Density Residential in the existing (1993) General Plan. The vacant parcels are designated as Medium Density Residential (MDR) in the 2045 Plan (the change is due to the realignment of density categories and is equivalent to the current designation). The one-acre private parcel retains its Commercial designation.
- **400 block Nevada Street Parcels.** There are two adjacent vacant parcels on the west side of Nevada Street at the northern City limits, collectively comprising 31.8 acres. The western portion of the parcels include canal easements and conservation easements. The existing General Plan designation is split, with Urban Low Density Residential on the western half and Mixed Use on the eastern half. The proposed General Plan designation for this site is Commercial, providing the flexibility to attract a major employer or revenue generating land use.
- **Northeast corner of Nevada Street at Palm Avenue**. This is an area of about 20 acres comprised of multiple parcels on the north side of Palm Avenue between Nevada Street and SR 49. The existing General Plan designation is Mixed Use, which allows housing up to 15 units per acre, as well as commercial uses. The proposed designation is Commercial, which is consistent with the current zoning and would continue to allow housing up to 15 units per acre. Although the designation retains the "status quo," policies in the General Plan emphasize commercial and revenue-generating land uses in this area rather than multi-family housing.

The proposed Collins subdivision is located just outside this Focus Area off of Mount Vernon Road. This is a recently approved (and annexed) single family residential subdivision comprised of 65 lots on 27.9 acres. The site is being re-designated from Urban Low Density Residential to Low-Medium Density Residential.

Grass Valley Highway (SR 49)

The General Plan identifies the Grass Valley Highway (SR 49) corridor between Interstate 80 and Marguerite Mine Road (refer to Figure 2-4) as having the opportunity for improvement. The prior (1993) General Plan designated this entire corridor as "Mixed Use." The proposed 2045 Plan carries this designation forward at the two shopping centers at Elm Avene/Fulweiler Avenue intersection, with a new maximum allowable density of 30 units per acre. Elsewhere along this corridor, the 2045 Plan redesignates some of the Mixed Use areas fronting SR 49 as "Commercial," recognizing the high volume of traffic and focus on fiscally positive land uses. Several development opportunities have been identified, and the Plan supports beautification and other improvements to make SR 49 a safer and more attractive gateway to the city.

South Auburn Commercial Corridor

The 2045 Plan continues to recognize the need for more convenient shopping and services in southern Auburn, an area that has seen significant residential growth over the last 30 years. Development opportunities along Auburn Folsom Road remain a priority, especially near intersections with Indian Hill Road, Maidu Drive, and Sacramento Street (refer to Figure 2-4).

Upper Lincoln Way

Upper Lincoln Way extends from Borland Avenue/SR 49 to the city limits beyond Russell Road (refer to Figure 2-4). This area includes a mix of residential, commercial, and public land uses and includes several vacant and underutilized sites. The 2045 General Plan applies a "Commercial" designation to eight acres of vacant land at the Russell Road interchange previously designated "Mixed Use" and zoned C-3 (Regional Commercial). Most of the map changes on Upper Lincoln Way are located outside (but adjacent to) the city limits and are discussed in the next section.

Other Areas

The 2045 Plan acknowledges potential changes in other city areas, including opportunity sites identified in the 2021-2029 Housing Element and scattered vacant properties. Most of these sites retain designations equivalent to their current status. Properties assumed to continue existing uses through 2045 include the Gold Country Fairgrounds, Mercy Retreat Center, and Alta Vista School campus, all designated Public/Institutional.

2.4.3 Growth and Development Areas: Unincorporated Auburn

As discussed previously, about three quarters of the Planning Area is unincorporated, with most of this area located within the Auburn Sphere of Influence. Land use policies for this area are established by Placer County, the majority of which are expressed in the Auburn Bowman Community Plan (ABCP).

In June 2021, Placer County received grant funding through the Sacramento Area Council of Government's (SACOG's) Regional Early Action Planning (REAP) to update the ABCP. Work began in 2021, with an Existing Conditions Report published in July 2022. A Working Draft Plan was unofficially released in August 2024. Adoption of this Plan has been deferred to align with a larger initiative to update the entire Placer County General Plan, scheduled for completion in 2027. The countywide Plan Update will move the horizon year forward to 2050 and result in an updated Land Use Map for the unincorporated sphere.

The Auburn 2045 General Plan used the Draft ABCP Land Use Map as a benchmark for land use designations in the sphere. Adjustments were made to reflect the City's land use classification system, including categories not present at the County level (e.g., Public/Institutional and Transportation/Utilities). Additional modifications align with City policies, such as discouraging higher-density residential development in areas near Auburn Airport where residential uses are restricted under the Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan.

The 2045 General Plan expresses Auburn's intent to pursue annexation of certain areas before the Plan's horizon year. These areas include the "central" segment of the SR 49 corridor (from Marguerite Mine Road to Kemper/New Airport Road), the Upper Lincoln Way area (from Russell Avenue to Foresthill Road) and the Bowman area (from Foresthill Road to Bell Road, including upper Auburn Ravine Road). All of these areas fall within the City sphere of influence and present opportunities for Auburn to achieve long-term fiscal stability, economic development, housing, transportation, and infrastructure improvements.

The text below provides a discussion of growth areas in the unincorporated sphere, including existing and proposed General Plan Map designations. These areas are shown on Figure 2-4.

Placer County Government Center Master Plan (PCGCMP) and Timberline

The updated Placer County Government Center Master Plan (PCGCMP) was adopted in 2019 and provides a framework for developing the County's 200-acre North Auburn campus. The Plan accommodates growth of County departments and services to meet a growing population and economy, while also incorporating private commercial, office, residential, and hotel development on vacant or underutilized sites. The existing Placer County General Plan designates the site as "Government Center Master Plan." The proposed City of Auburn 2045 General Plan represents the actual planned land uses under the PCGCMP using the 2045 Plan's land use classification system. These uses include commercial, mixed use, high-density residential, public/institutional, and open space. The 2045 Plan does not propose changes to the PCGCMP and incorporates the buildout forecasts and development program analyzed in the PCGCMP EIR.

Similarly, the 2045 Plan assumes continued buildout of the Timberline development, the largest residential project in the Planning Area in terms of unit count. The Timberline master plan anticipates a total of 858 units, with roughly 150 units completed as of November 2025, including assisted living apartments. The City's General Plan accommodates continued buildout consistent with prior approvals.

Together, the Government Center and Timberline projects account for approximately 50 percent of the residential capacity in the unincorporated portion of the Planning Area and 75 percent of the multi-family residential capacity. County and SACOG forecasts identify the Government Center campus as a major area for employment growth between 2025 and 2045, and the City's General Plan continues to facilitate that growth. The location of the PCGCMP and Timberline projects is provided in Figure 2-4.

SR 49 Corridor – Central

The Central SR 49 corridor extends from the Auburn city limits north to New Airport Road/Kemper Road. For the most part, the City's 2045 General Plan incorporates the existing County plan designations in this area. Areas previously designated "Professional Office" have been reclassified as "Commercial" in the City's plan, as the City does not have a separate "Office" category. The County's Canal Street housing site is shown as High-Density Residential (HDR), consistent with its recent rezoning by Placer County. Public and Transportation/Utility sites have also been identified on the City's proposed Map. While the 2045 Plan acknowledges growth potential in this corridor, such growth is already allowed under the existing Placer County General Plan and Auburn Bowman Community Plan.

SR 49 Corridor – Upper

The Upper SR 49 corridor extends from New Airport Road/Kemper Road to the northern edge of the Planning Area at Joeger Road. Both the Central and Upper corridors are part of Placer County's "Green Means Go" program, which is designed to focus growth in ways that reduce greenhouse gas emissions and limit urban sprawl. The proposed project largely mirrors the County's existing General Plan designations in this corridor. However, the proposed project avoids Mixed Use in this area to comply with Airport Land Use Compatibility (ALUC) standards and discourage new high-density housing in the overflight zone around Auburn Municipal Airport.

The 2045 Plan does recognize sites recently rezoned by the County for higher-density housing as HDR, and continues to accommodate substantial commercial and office development along the SR 49 corridor. The proposed project also supports continued development of vacant lands around

Sutter Faith Hospital as a medical office and health care hub. This growth is already allowed under the existing General Plan and is not changed by the proposed project.

Bowman/Upper Lincoln

Like the SR 49 corridor, the Bowman area has been designated a "Green Zone" under Placer County's Green Means Go program. Bowman (refer to **Error! Reference source not found.**), along with the adjacent Upper Lincoln Way corridor between Russell Road and Foresthill Road, contains a substantial supply of vacant land zoned for commercial uses. The proposed project retains commercial designations for much of this area. While the County's Draft Auburn Bowman Community Plan proposes converting some parcels to Mixed Use to accommodate denser multi-family housing, the proposed project emphasizes commercial uses, consistent with the existing designations and the City's economic development and fiscal goals.

Airport Business District

The area west and south of Auburn Municipal Airport is designated for industrial uses on both the City and County General Plans. The area contains a considerable supply of vacant and underutilized land with industrial zoning, presenting opportunities for job growth and services. There are development opportunities along Locksley Lane, Shale Ridge Lane, Rock Creek Road, New Airport Road, and Old Airport Road. The proposed project proposes continuation of the County's industrial designations in this area and does not modify the area's growth potential. City policies discourage County General Plan Map amendments that would allow residential uses, due to noise, aviation hazards, and other safety concerns associated with Auburn Airport. This area is shown in Figure 2-4.

Urban Reserves

Two areas outside the city limits are designated as "Urban Reserve" on the Draft 2045 Land Use Map. One is a 14-acre parcel between Ophir Road and Interstate 80 adjacent to the western city limits. The other is a 100-acre area along Shirland Tract Road south of the city, roughly half of which is owned by the Auburn Unified School District. These are both shown in Figure 2-3. The Urban Reserve designation does not change zoning or permit urban development; it simply identifies these areas as logical locations for long-term development, either within or beyond the 20-year horizon of the General Plan.

2.5 Buildout and 2045 Forecasts

CEQA Guidelines Section 15064(d) states that the lead agency "shall consider direct physical changes in the environment which may be caused by the project and reasonably foreseeable indirect physical changes in the environment which may be caused by the project." The 2025-2045 projections represent the City's estimation of "reasonably foreseeable" development over the next 20 years under the General Plan and form the basis for the EIR's environmental assessment.

To derive the 2025-2045 forecasts, the City considered regional forecasts from the six-county Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG) areas and a "buildout" estimate based on the proposed General Plan and existing land use conditions.

It is important to distinguish the difference between the "buildout" estimate and the 2045 forecasts. A buildout estimate assumes that every vacant or underutilized parcel designated for urban uses is developed according to its General Plan designation, often at maximum allowed

density or intensity. In most communities, this produces population and employment estimates that are higher than realistically achievable, as buildout does not account for economic conditions, real estate market trends, demographic changes, infrastructure constraints, or the share of regional growth a community is likely to capture.

Historically, Auburn's General Plans have anticipated much higher growth than actually occurred. For example, in 2025, the Planning Area population is just 53 percent of the 1993 Plan projection.

The 2045 Auburn General Plan EIR tempers buildout estimates by incorporating SACOG regional forecasts and actual densities and floor area ratios (FARs) observed in recent developments. These factors produce more realistic estimates than buildout alone, though they are still higher than growth rates observed over the past 15 years.

Methodology

Buildout estimates serve as the starting point for General Plan forecasts and incorporate:

- Projects under construction, approved, or pending approval.
- Housing unit and square footage yields from adopted Specific Plans, Area Plans, and concept plans, including Baltimore Ravine, the Domes property, and the Government Center Master Plan.
- City and County Housing Element sites, based on yields stated in the adopted Elements.
- Vacant and underutilized properties in the growth areas described in the General Plan, including Downtown/Old Town, Northwest Auburn, Upper Lincoln Way, and the Placer County "green zones" (Bowman and the SR 49 corridor).
- Other vacant parcels designated for residential, commercial, or industrial uses in the Draft 2045 Plan, identified through a comprehensive land use inventory of 12,000 parcels. Approximately 1,100 vacant parcels were identified.

For vacant and underutilized sites, presumed housing unit and square footage yields were based on actual development patterns rather than maximum zoning allowances. This distinction is particularly important for commercial and industrial uses. While the proposed project allows FARs of 1.5-2.0, most recent development—including projects built in the past decade—falls within a 0.2-0.4 FAR range. Factors such as height limits, parking requirements, construction costs, and market demand make buildings with FARs above 1.0 uncommon.

Buildout Estimates

Table 2-4 shows the maximum buildout estimates for the City of Auburn, the unincorporated Auburn Planning Area, and the Planning Area as a whole. The estimates only indicate the increment of additional growth possible, following the methodology listed above (i.e., this buildout estimate does not include existing development but instead provides the total amount of new development that could occur). Most of the growth shown in Table 2-4 is possible under the current General Plan as well as the proposed General Plan, particularly in the areas outside the city limits.

The buildout estimate for housing in Table 2-4 is more than four times the growth increment currently projected by SACOG, while the buildout estimate for non-residential uses is about 2.5 times larger than SACOG's projection. Completing an EIR based solely on buildout would therefore overstate anticipated growth.

Table 2-4 Total Potential Growth Based on Proposed General Plan Land Use Map (Maximum Buildout)

Land Use	City	Unincorporated	Planning Area Total
Additional Residential Units (Total)	**2,397**	**2,361**	**4,758**
Single Family Detached Units	631	607	1,238
Middle Housing Units	394	186	580
High Density Units	1,372	1,568	2,940
Additional Non-Residential Space			
Commercial/ Office (square feet)	820,650	1,693,320	2,513,970
Industrial (square feet)	329,550	1,244,200	1,573,750
Hotel (rooms)	80	221	301
Other (civic, etc.) (square feet)	11,500	30,000	41,500

The 2045 General Plan forecasts aim to strike a balance between the SACOG forecasts and the buildout estimates. To do this, assumptions were applied regarding the percentage of buildout likely to occur by 2045, using the Draft General Plan as guidance. These assumptions were applied on a parcel-by-parcel basis as follows:

- Within the City Limits
  - 100% buildout for approved projects and projects under construction.
  - 100% buildout for the Domes property and the Blocker Drive site.
  - 60% buildout for Downtown/Old Town.
  - 50% buildout for other Northwest Auburn employment sites.
  - 40% buildout for sites along Auburn Folsom Road, the SR 49 corridor, fronting Upper Lincoln Way, in the Baltimore Ravine Specific Plan, and Northwest Auburn residential sites.
  - 30% buildout for all other vacant parcels within the city limits.
- Outside the City Limits, but Within the Planning Area
  - 100% buildout for approved projects and projects under construction.
  - 80% buildout for the Timberline Master Planned Community (all senior housing).
  - 50% buildout for the Government Center Master Plan.
  - 40% buildout for Bowman and the County Housing Element rezone sites.
  - 30% buildout for the SR 49 corridor and airport area.
  - 20% buildout for all other vacant parcels in the unincorporated areas.

Applying these multipliers produces a more realistic estimate of growth by 2045. The resulting forecast is still higher than SACOG projections, but the projected increment is more realistic and achievable. Table 2-5 shows the results by land use type, representing the 2025-2045 General Plan Forecast. The total buildout estimated in Table 2-5 is the buildout assumed throughout this EIR.

Table 2-6 adds the projected growth increment to existing (“baseline”) figures to estimate the total housing units, jobs, and population in the City of Auburn and the Planning Area by 2045. Job estimates were derived by converting the non-residential square footage projections using standard employee-per-square-foot multipliers commonly applied in regional planning for commercial, office, industrial, hotel, and other land uses. Household estimates were calculated by multiplying the

number of additional housing units by 0.95, reflecting a 5 percent assumed vacancy rate. Population estimates were then generated by multiplying the estimated households by the average household size: 2.11 persons per household for Auburn and 2.40 persons per household for unincorporated Auburn, based on U.S. Census and California Department of Finance data.

Table 2-5 2025-2045 Growth Increment Based on Proposed General Plan Land Use Map (Realistic Buildout)

Land Use	City	Unincorporated	Planning Area Total
Additional Residential Units (Total)	**1,297**	**1,266**	**2,563**
Single Family Detached Units	287	208	495
Middle Housing Units	223	57	280
High Density Units	787	1,001	1,788
Additional Non-Residential Space			
Commercial/Office (sq. ft)	420,238	698,245	1,118,483
Industrial (sq. ft)	163,350	583,450	746,800
Hotel (rooms)	80	171	251
Other (civic, etc.)	11,500	15,000	26,500

Table 2-6 General Plan 2045 Forecasts for the Auburn Planning Area

	2025	2025-2045 Change	2045	% Growth
City of Auburn				
Employment	11,000	1,500	12,500	14%
Housing Units	6,450	1,300	7,750	20%
Households	6,150	1,230	7,380	20%
Population	13,300	2,600	15,900	20%
Unincorporated Auburn Planning Area				
Employment	12,100	2,900	15,000	24%
Housing Units	7,330	1,270	8,600	17%
Households	6,990	1,200	8,190	17%
Population	15,900	2,900	18,800	18%
Total for Auburn Planning Area (City + Unincorporated)				
Employment	23,100	4,400	27,500	19%
Housing Units	13,780	2,570	16,350	19%
Households	13,140	2,430	15,570	18%
Population	29,200	5,500	34,700	19%

Source: Baseline data is from SACOG TAZ data tables for 2019, adjusted through 2025 based on DOF data and Census ACS employment estimates. Growth increment from Barry Miller Consulting, 2025

Table 2-6 indicates that growth consistent with the proposed General Plan from 2025 to 2045 would result in a City population of about 15,900 by 2045, a 20 percent increase over current levels. Growth in the unincorporated area would produce a projected population of approximately 18,800 (an 18 percent increase) bringing the total Planning Area population to roughly 34,700.

Employment growth over the same period would result in 12,500 jobs within the City (a 14 percent increase) and 15,000 jobs in the unincorporated area (a 24 percent increase), for a total of 27,500 jobs in the Planning Area.

All of these projections exceed SACOG forecasts, which anticipate only 590 additional housing units and 950 additional jobs in the City between 2020 and 2050. The General Plan forecasts assume that proposed Land Use Map changes in key areas (such as Downtown/Old Town) along with new policies and programs, will enable Auburn to capture a larger share of regional growth. These changes are intended to facilitate housing and job growth in locations that have not realized their full potential in the past.

2.6 Form-Based Code

This Draft EIR also evaluates the potential impacts of adopting a proposed Form-Based Code (FBC) for Downtown and Old Town Auburn. The FBC was prepared in advance of the General Plan Update to modernize existing zoning, reduce ambiguities, shorten the entitlement process, expand Downtown housing and mixed-use development opportunities, improve walkability, and support investment in the Historic Auburn commercial core. The City will consider adoption of the FBC concurrently with, or immediately following, the General Plan adoption. Adoption of the FBC would replace the existing zoning in Downtown Auburn which currently consists primarily of the following districts:

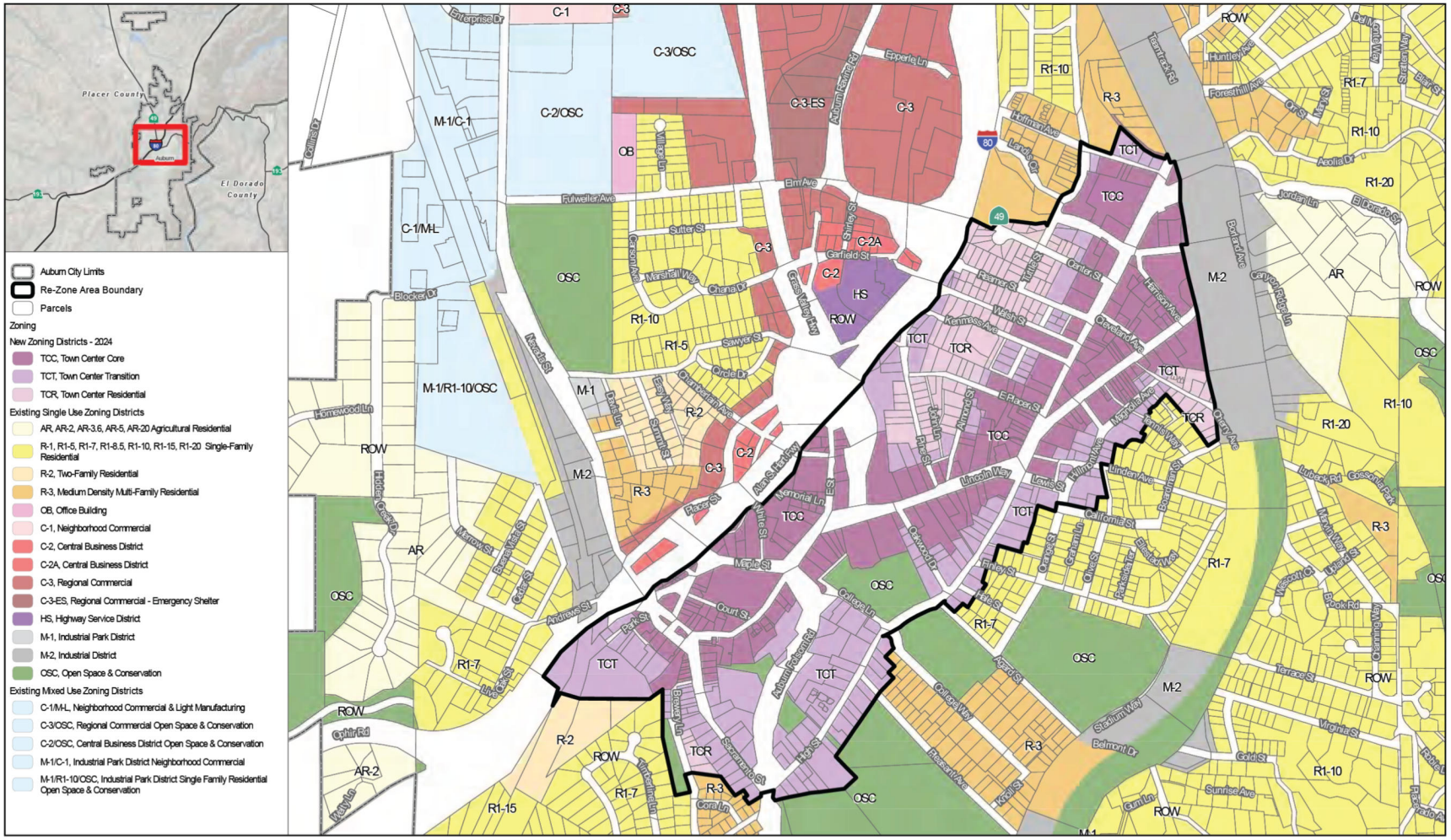
- C-2 (Central Business District Commercial), mapped in the Downtown area
- C-1 (Neighborhood Commercial), mapped in the Old Town area
- OB (Office Building), mapped along parts of High Street and the I-80 frontage
- R-3 (Medium Density Residential), mapped on residential blocks within the FBC area.
- Special mixed use zoning districts combining C-2 and open space, applied to City Hall, the historic County Courthouse, and the transition area between residential and commercial uses west of High Street.

These traditional zoning districts, largely unchanged since 1973, extensively regulate permitted uses within structures but do not reflect current land use dynamics or the contemporary real estate market. If adopted, the FBC would establish a base **Town Center** district with three overlay districts:

- **Town Center Core (TCC):** mapped in Old Town and Downtown commercial areas. Designed to foster a vibrant, walkable, transit-friendly urban environment with neighborhood-serving retail, food and services (including sidewalk cafes), active urban plazas, and artisan industrial businesses. Residential uses are encouraged above ground-floor commercial space.
- **Town Center Transition (TCT):** a walkable mixed-use environment with moderate-intensity residences, medium-to-large building footprints, and ground-floor retail, food, lodging, offices, and personal services within short walking distances of TCC zones.
- **Town Center Residential (TCR):** intended for primarily residential neighborhoods at low-to-moderate densities, located within walking distance of retail and services in TCT and TCC areas.

Figure 2-5 shows the boundaries of these areas.

Figure 2-5 Proposed Downtown/Old Town Auburn Form Based Code Districts



Source: Barry Miller 2025.

The FBC overlay districts emphasize the physical form and placement of buildings rather than the specific uses within them. This approach provides greater flexibility than the existing C-1 and C-2 zoning, which prohibits certain uses and requires complex conditional use permits for many activities. The FBC is particularly conducive to upper-story housing, which is challenging to develop under current regulations.

The FBC provides detailed guidance on building design, massing, and site planning, focusing on objective standards rather than subjective guidelines. Projects that meet these standards are eligible for streamlined approval. The FBC also addresses elements of the public realm that traditional zoning does not, such as public spaces, tree planting, landscaping, lighting standards, and parking location.

The FBC is organized into seven chapters:

1. **Introduction:** Explains the purpose, applicability, review procedures, required findings, temporary use permits, site plan review, and definitions.
2. **Establishment of Zones:** Establishes the Town Center base district and three overlay districts (TCC, TCT, TCR). Identifies allowable building types and sizes, lot placement, setbacks, allowable encroachments, parking requirements, and sign types. Standards are graphically illustrated for ease of use.
3. **Land Use Standards:** Includes simplified use tables specifying permit requirements for each district, providing greater flexibility than the existing zoning code.
4. **General Site Design Standards:** Covers screening, landscaping, parking, development on slopes, public frontage, and privacy. Standards address fence height, mechanical equipment screening, parking lot landscaping, acceptable trees, and allowances for shared or tandem parking.
5. **Building Types:** Provides guidance for new construction and the restoration or renovation of existing buildings, including historic structures. Six predominant building types are described, grouped into block form and house form typologies.
6. **Frontages:** Addresses the interface between buildings and streets, offering a menu of frontage types (stoops, shopfronts, porches) with dimensional standards and illustrations to promote attractive, walkable streets. Guidance on color and materials encourages designs compatible with Auburn's historic and natural context.
7. **Signage:** Specifies dimensional standards for all sign types, with photographic examples of wall signs, awning signs, window signs, directory signs, and more.

The intent of the FBC is not to permit larger or taller buildings or to expand the Downtown area into adjacent neighborhoods. Instead, it aims to:

- Streamline and clarify the development review process
- Define the City's expectations for building form and public spaces
- Protect the historic character of Downtown structures
- Enhance the walkable scale and vibrancy of Downtown streets

The FBC largely preserves the three-story scale typical of Downtown, with maximum building heights generally ranging from 40 to 50 feet in the TCT district.[2] Implementation of the FBC is

[2] State density bonus provisions apply, meaning that projects including affordable, senior, and special needs housing could be eligible for additional height.

intended to make Downtown and Old Town more dynamic, supporting reuse of vacant buildings and infill development while maintaining Auburn's historic character.

2.7 Sphere of Influence (SOI) Amendments

The sphere of influence (SOI) is a planning boundary outside the city limits that identifies the city's probable future boundary and service area. The SOI guides future growth, helps prevent urban sprawl, and ensures the efficient and orderly provision of public services. In California, the county LAFCo (Local Agency Formation Commission) approves sphere boundaries for each city and reviews them at least every five years. Factors considered in establishing a sphere include current and future land use, the need and capacity for services, and relevant communities of interest.

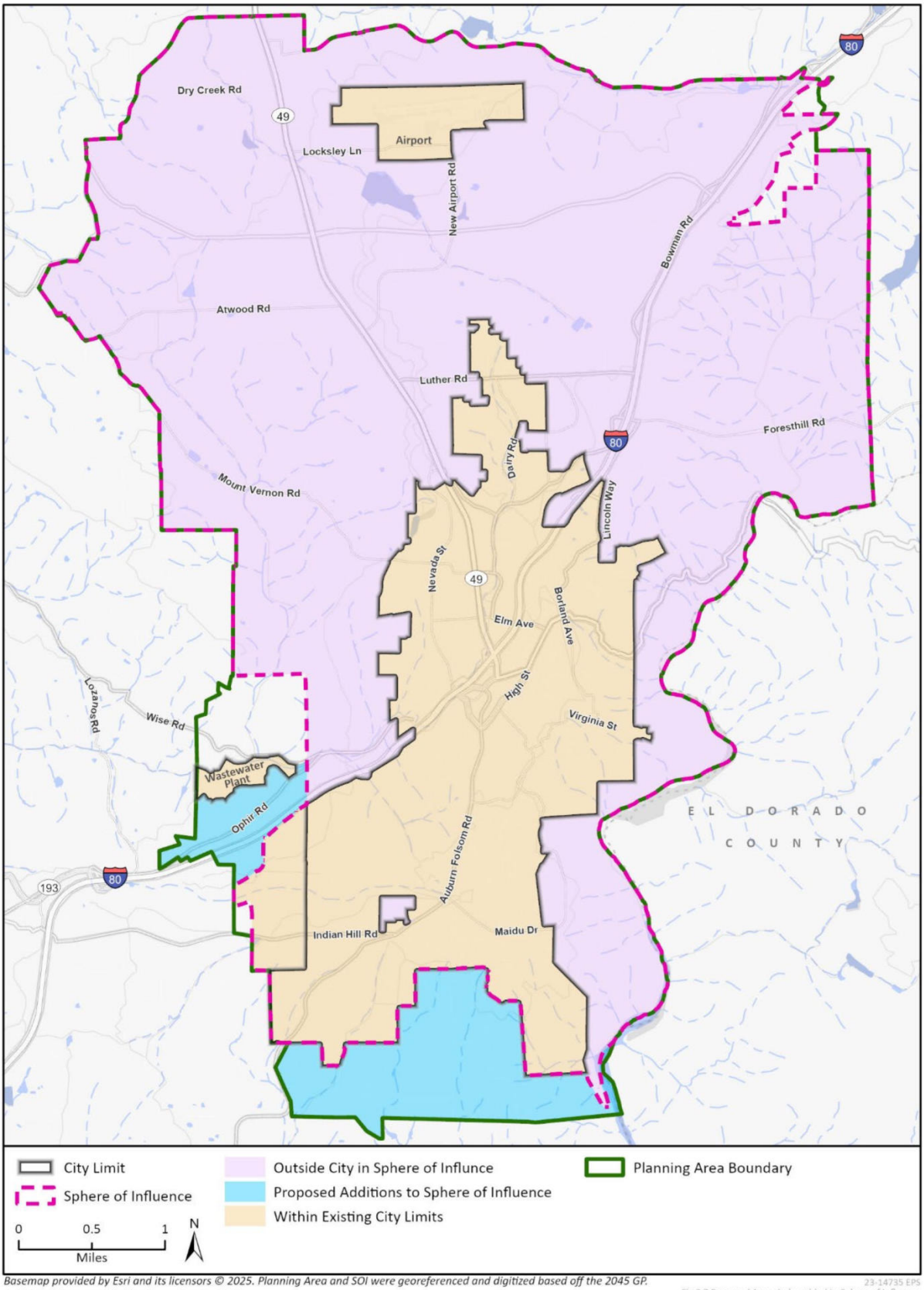
Auburn's current SOI is relatively large, partly due to joint city-county general plans prepared in the 1960s that envisioned annexation of what is now unincorporated North Auburn and Bowman. These areas remain important for Auburn's planning, service delivery, and the future of Auburn Airport. Because the Airport is an incorporated "island" within the city, it is appropriate to retain the SOI at its current extent to the north, northwest, and northeast of the city.

The 2045 General Plan proposes expanding the Auburn SOI in two locations:

1. **Along Ophir Road, west of Auburn and south of the City's Wastewater Treatment Plant (WTP):** Like the Airport, the WTP is an incorporated "island" not physically connected to the rest of the city. The lands between the City and this "island" are proposed for inclusion in the sphere.
2. **Immediately south of the City, extending roughly to the east-west segment of Shirland Tract Road:** The current SOI does not include land south of Auburn. This expansion area includes a proposed 100-acre Urban Reserve (nearly half owned by Auburn Unified School District) and surrounding rural residential and agricultural lands that are related to the City's planning and service objectives.

Figure 2-6 shows the proposed SOI expansion areas.

Figure 2-6 Proposed SOI Expansion Areas



Basemap provided by Esri and its licensors © 2025. Planning Area and SOI were georeferenced and digitized based off the 2045 GP. Additional data provided by Placer County, 2023.

23-14735 EPS
Fig 2.7 Proposed Areas to be added to Sphere of Influence

2.8 Auburn Municipal Code Amendments

The project includes proposed amendments to the Auburn Municipal Code to establish a regulatory framework for retail commercial cannabis activities within the City consistent with state law. If approved, these amendments would authorize the issuance of one retail cannabis permit to operate at one of 31 identified potential sites within the City. A second retail cannabis permit may be authorized in the future, subject to population thresholds but likely outside the planning horizon for the proposed General Plan. All identified sites are located within commercially-zoned areas, and all but two parcels are currently developed with commercial buildings. These parcels are shown in Figure 2-7.

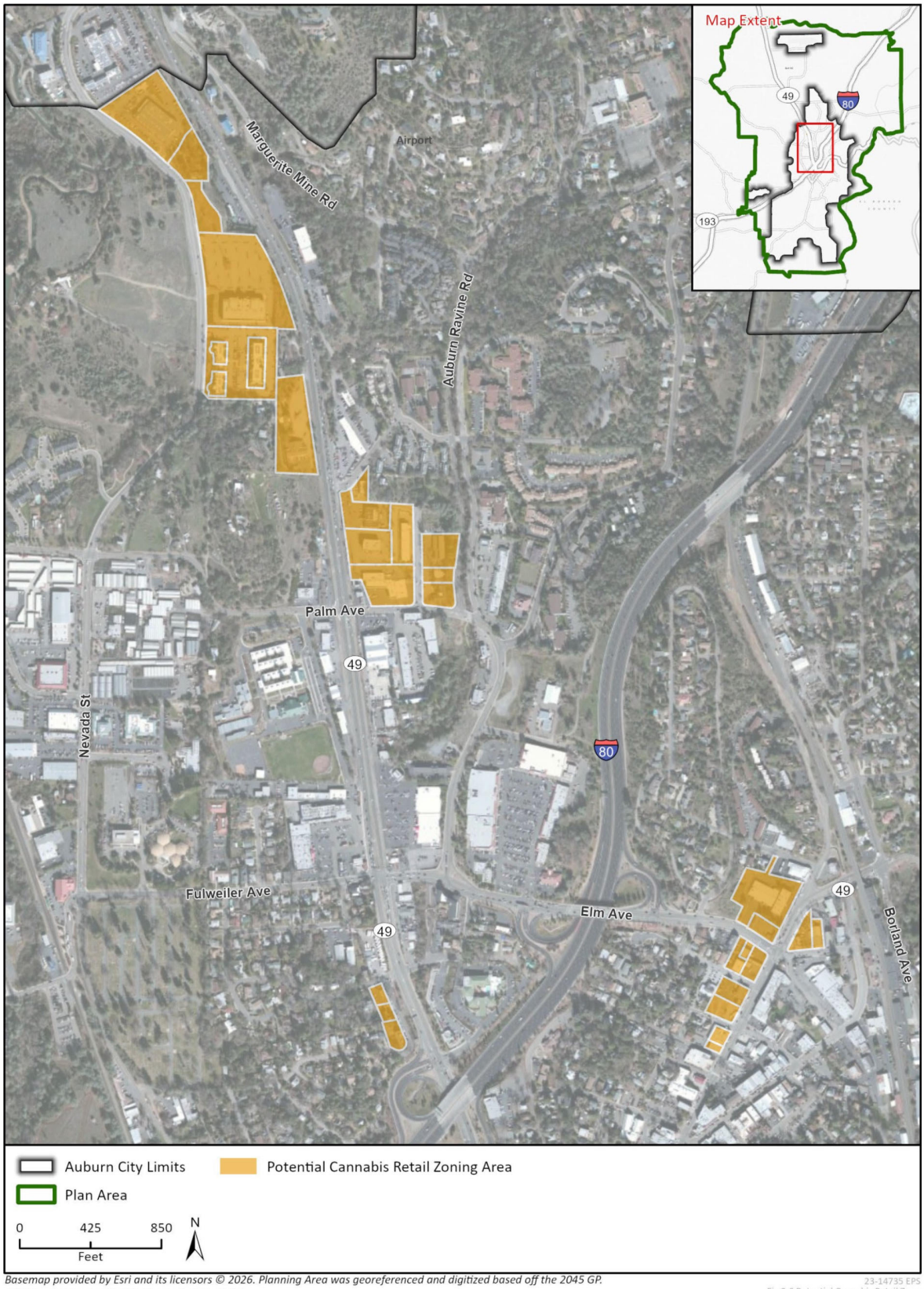
In response to community feedback and Auburn's compact geographic form, the City evaluated potential locations for cannabis uses using a parcel-level analysis based on Assessor's Parcel Numbers (APNs). This approach allows the City to identify specific parcels that may be eligible for cannabis uses, rather than broadly permitting such uses across entire zoning districts. Parcels were evaluated based on their location within established commercial corridors, compatibility with surrounding land uses, and their ability to meet separation requirements from sensitive receptors such as schools, parks, and residential neighborhoods. The parcel-based approach also provides flexibility for the City to adjust the list of eligible parcels in the future as land use conditions evolve.

The proposed amendments would establish two new zoning districts or overlays: Central Business District – Retail Cannabis (C-2-RC) and Regional Commercial – Retail Cannabis (C-3-RC). The districts would be largely governed by the existing C-2 District and C-3 District regulations, respectively. Future cannabis retail businesses would be required to obtain a retail cannabis permit issued by the City, a conditional use permit issued by the City, and a Type 10 Storefront Retailer license issued by the state. Retail cannabis permit applicants would be required to provide an odor control plan and would not be permitted within 200 feet of a public park, school (serving any grades between kindergarten and grade 12), day care center, or youth center.

The proposed regulatory framework includes a population-based licensing structure for retail cannabis businesses intended to balance market viability, community preferences, and the City's ability to provide effective oversight. Under this approach, the City would allow one retail cannabis permit for every 8,500 residents, with a maximum of two retail dispensaries open to the public. Based on Auburn's 2025 population of approximately 13,300 residents, the City could initially issue one retail cannabis permit. A second permit could be considered in the future if population growth supports additional retail operations under the established ratio. Cannabis retail businesses would expire twelve months after the date of issuance. A cannabis retail business may apply for a renewal of a retail cannabis permit prior to its expiration

Cannabis retail businesses would also be permitted to conduct cannabis delivery in accordance with state regulations administered by the California Department of Cannabis Control. All cannabis operations would be subject to applicable operational standards, appearance requirements, security requirements, recordkeeping and reporting requirements, local regulations and fees, and permitting procedures established by the City and state law.

Figure 2-7 Potential Cannabis Retail Zoning Areas



Basemap provided by Esri and its licensors © 2026. Planning Area was georeferenced and digitized based off the 2045 GP.
Additional data provided by Placer County, 2023.

23-14735 EPS
Fig 2.6 Potential Cannabis Retail Zone

The proposed ordinance revision would also allow for limited personal cannabis cultivation. Cannabis cultivation in residential zones would be limited by the following requirements:

- Cultivation occurs at residences where the residence is the primary residence of the authorized grower
- No more than six cannabis plants per residence
- Only one cultivation area per residence
- No exterior evidence of cannabis cultivation
- Kitchen, bathrooms, and primary bedrooms must maintain their intended uses and cannot be primarily used for cultivation
- Cultivation areas cannot constitute a nuisance, including through the creation of dust, heat, glare, noise, noxious gases, odor, smoke, traffic, vibration, or other impacts
- Cultivation areas must not constitute a hazard due to use or storage of materials, processes, products, or wastes
- No outdoor cultivation
- A cultivation permit is required and cannabis can only be cultivated by an authorized grower

The draft ordinance revisions are provided in Appendix C.

2.9 Project Objectives and Guiding Principles

The primary objectives of the proposed project are to plan for Auburn's growth and conservation over a 20-year horizon, protect the Town's historic center and small-town character, manage natural resources and open spaces, reduce exposure to natural hazards, and support a more sustainable and prosperous future for all residents. Objectives specifically related to growth include focusing development in the Downtown/Old Town area, capitalizing on transit-oriented development opportunities near the Robert F. Conheim Auburn Train Station, and streamlining future development that aligns with the proposed project.

The 2045 General Plan establishes guiding principles to achieve these objectives. These principles reflect the City's core values and aspirations for the future, incorporating input from community members and City leaders who helped shape the Plan. The guiding principles effectively serve as the project objectives and are listed below:

1. **Historic Legacy.** Preserve the historic buildings and places that shape Auburn's identity as a historic Sierra foothills town. Strongly encourage reinvestment in Old Town and Downtown, including restoration of vacant buildings and compatible mixed-use development.
2. **Small Town Character.** Maintain Auburn's unique setting and scale, authentic historic core, walkable neighborhoods, compact form, and beautiful natural setting. Sustain the tradition of civic service, community engagement, and special events that give Auburn its hometown feel.
3. **Smart Growth.** Support growth on infill sites within the city, as well as annexation of areas for new housing and employment. While Auburn is committed to protecting its past, it is also committed to smart and strategic growth.
4. **Accessibility.** Improve Auburn's transportation system in ways that make it safer and easier to get around, especially on foot, bicycle, and public transit. Connect homes, shopping, recreation, and workplaces so that Auburn is more walkable, cohesive and accessible.

5. **Economic Vitality.** Support existing businesses and attract new businesses that grow Auburn's economy. Leverage Auburn's location, transportation system, and natural setting to create a more vibrant and prosperous city. Provide a supportive environment for local artisans, entrepreneurs, and family-owned businesses as well as larger employers.
6. **Housing Choice.** Maintain and enhance Auburn's neighborhoods. Create additional housing choices to meet the needs of existing and future Auburn residents, including younger families, our workforce, and those with special housing needs.
7. **Environmental Stewardship and Sustainability.** Protect Auburn's environment and natural resources, including our air, water, soil, plants, and wildlife. Reduce greenhouse gas emissions through greener buildings and businesses, cleaner transportation, less dependence on fossil fuels, water and energy conservation, and reduction in solid waste.
8. **Resilience and Public Safety**. Become a more resilient city that is prepared for natural disasters. Proactively mitigate climate-related hazards such as wildfires, flooding, drought, and extreme heat events. Maintain excellent police and fire services, low crime, and safe public spaces.
9. **Aviation Hub.** Modernize Auburn Municipal Airport so it remains an essential part of Auburn's economy. Ensure that land use decisions on the airport perimeter reduce aviation hazards, protect airport operations, and sustain the airport business district.
10. **Community Health.** Keep Auburn a healthy, active community. Community design and planning should support walking, cycling, physical activity, healthy living, and easy access to open space and outdoor recreation.
11. **Responsible Fiscal Management.** Continue responsible fiscal management and a commitment to efficient, effective service delivery. Land use decisions should improve fiscal stability and create additional sources of tax revenue.
12. **Interagency Relationships.** Collaborate with Placer County to address issues that cross the city's boundaries, including planning and development in North Auburn and Bowman. Work with the school districts, Auburn Area Recreation and Park District, and other special districts and agencies to provide high-quality schools, parks, infrastructure, and public services

2.10 Required Discretionary Approvals

With recommendations from the City's Planning Commission, the Auburn City Council will need to take the following discretionary actions in conjunction with the proposed project:

- Certification of the Final EIR
- Approval of the proposed 2045 General Plan
- Adoption of the new Downtown/Old Town Form Based Code
- Approval of amendments to the Baltimore Ravine Specific Plan
- Approval of Auburn Municipal Code amendments

Additionally, the following approvals may be required from the Placer County LAFCo:

- Approval to amend the Sphere of Influence
- Approval of future annexations of land into the city

3 Environmental Setting

This section provides a general overview of the environmental setting for the proposed project. More detailed descriptions of the environmental setting for each environmental issue area can be found in Section 4, *Environmental Impact Analysis*.

3.1 Physical Setting

3.1.1 General Geographic Setting

The City of Auburn is located in western central Placer County along Interstate 80, approximately 21 miles northeast of the City of Sacramento. The city is located on the western slope of the Sierra Nevada Range at elevations between 1,000 and 1,400 feet. The City of Auburn encompasses approximately 4,830 acres, and approximately 20 percent (961 acres) is designated as single family residential by the General Plan (City of Auburn 1993). Land uses in the city include single and multi-family residential, commercial, industrial, and open space. Auburn is bordered by unincorporated areas of Placer County on all sides. To the north is the community of North Auburn, an unincorporated area. The Auburn State Recreation Area lies directly east and northeast of the city. The North Fork of the American River bisects the Auburn State Recreation Area and separates the Auburn Planning Area from El Dorado County to the east.

I-80 is a major east-west freeway that runs through the central portion of Auburn, California, providing a critical transportation corridor between the Sacramento metropolitan area to the west and the Sierra Nevada foothills to the east. The freeway generally offers three travel lanes in each direction through Auburn, with additional lanes in some areas for merging and access to local streets. I-80 serves as a vital link for both regional and long-distance travel, connecting Auburn to surrounding communities in Placer County and facilitating access to the broader Bay Area and Reno, Nevada. Figure 2-1 in Section 2, *Project Description*, shows Auburn's regional location.

3.1.2 Topography and Drainage

Auburn is located on the Sierra Nevada Range where the underlying geologic structure is primarily composed of metamorphic rocks. The landscape of Auburn is generally hilly and rugged with elevation changes due to its location in the Sierra Nevada foothills. The North Fork American River runs along the eastern portion of the city and ultimately flows into Folsom Lake.

3.1.3 Climate

The climate of Auburn is a Mediterranean climate, characterized by hot, dry summers and mild, wet winters, typical of the foothill regions in California's Sierra Nevada. Auburn receives most of its precipitation during the months of December through February. Temperatures in Auburn have average lows of 40 degrees Fahrenheit and highs of 92 degrees Fahrenheit (Weatherspark 2024).

3.2 Demographics

Auburn was incorporated in 1888 and grew steadily from incorporation through the early 1990s. Within the last decade, growth in Auburn is well behind that of Placer County and the State of California as a whole. Since 2010, the Auburn population has increased approximately 3.3 percent, resulting in an estimated city population of approximately 13,767 people in 2020, up from 13,330 in 2010 (California Department of Finance [DOF] 2021). Population has declined since 2020.

Families, defined by the U.S. Census Bureau as two or more people related by birth, marriage, or adoption residing in the same household make up over half (67.6 percent) of Auburn's population (U.S. Census Bureau 2024). The percentage of families has been declining since 2000, partially due to an increase in the City's senior population. As of 2024, household size in Auburn is 2.11 persons per household (DOF 2024). There are an estimated 6,425 housing units in Auburn as of 2024. These consist of 4,653 single family units and 1,772 multi-family units (DOF 2024).

Compared to Placer County as a whole, Auburn is less ethnically diverse; as of 2023, over 83 percent of the City is made up of white, non-Hispanic residents. The median household income in the City was $77,760 (U.S. Census Bureau 2024).

3.3 EIR Baseline

Section 15125 of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) *Guidelines* states that an EIR "should include a description of the physical environmental conditions in the vicinity of the project, as they exist at the time the notice of preparation is published." Section 15125 states that this approach "normally constitute[s] the baseline physical conditions by which a lead agency determines whether an impact is significant." This EIR evaluates impacts against existing conditions, at the time the Notice of Preparation was published, which was November 6, 2024. This EIR considers the potential impacts from buildout of the General Plan in 2045, compared to existing conditions.

3.4 Cumulative Development

In addition to the specific impacts of individual projects, CEQA requires EIRs to consider potential cumulative impacts of a proposed project. CEQA defines "cumulative impacts" as two or more individual impacts that, when considered together, are substantial or will compound other environmental impacts. Cumulative impacts are the combined changes in the environment that result from the incremental impact of development of the proposed project and other nearby projects. For example, construction noise impacts of two nearby projects may be less than significant when analyzed separately, but could have a significant impact when analyzed together. The cumulative impact analysis provides a reasonable forecast of future environmental conditions and gauges the effects of a series of projects.

CEQA requires cumulative impact analysis in EIRs to consider either a list of planned and pending projects that may contribute to cumulative effects or a forecast of future development potential. Currently planned and pending projects in Auburn and surrounding areas, within approximately one mile of the Planning Area, are listed in Table 3-1. These projects are considered in the cumulative analyses provided in Section 4, Environmental Impact Analysis.

Table 3-1 Cumulative Plans and Projects List

Project	Jurisdiction	Location	Project Details	Status
Collins Subdivision	City of Auburn	South side of Mt Vernon Road west of UPRR tracks	65-unit single family subdivision and annexation into City	Entitled but not constructed
Vienna Woods	City of Auburn	Incline Drive at Dairy Road	18 single family lots on 7.2 acres	Entitled but not constructed
New Office Building and Exterior Accessible Improvements	City of Auburn	1243 High Street	New office building and exterior accessible improvements	Approved
Roberts Tentative Parcel Map	City of Auburn	1726 Arroyo Drive	Tentative Parcel Map to subdivide one parcel totaling 3.9 +/- acres into two (2) single-family residential lots	Approved
Pasquale's Italian Ristorante Use Permit	City of Auburn	210 Washington Street	A new restaurant that will occupy an existing building serving the Old Town Auburn Area and provide outdoor dining to patrons	Approved
The Hero Journey Use Permit	City of Auburn	605 High Street, Suite 605A	Small group fitness facility	Approved
Auburn Station Infill project	City of Auburn	175 Fulweiler Avenue	Multi-family residential uses, office space, amphitheater, community space, retail/commercial	Conceptual Plan only; Final EIR completed
Baltimore Ravine Specific Plan	City of Auburn	Southwest Auburn	Specific Plan for a portion of 400-acre Urban Reserve, includes 725 units and 90,000 square feet of commercial	Adopted in 2011; no development to date
Auburn Municipal Airport Master Plan Update	City of Auburn	Auburn Municipal Airport	Blueprint for the airport's future layout, improvements, and expansion to meet the airport's operational demands over the next 20 years, including runway extensions and facility improvements.	Under way
Placer County Government Center Master Plan	Placer County	State Route 49 and Belle Road	Expansion and centralization of County facilities, including new government buildings, mixed-use development, and multi-family housing	Adopted
Auburn/Bowman Community Plan Update	Placer County	Areas north of Auburn to the Nevada County line	Identify critical infrastructure improvements, improve the clarity of the existing document, and remove implementation barriers to housing construction	Project is being rescoped and will be folded into Placer County General Plan Update

Sources: City of Auburn 2025; County of Placer 2025

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4 Environmental Impact Analysis

This section discusses the possible environmental effects of the Auburn General Plan Update and the related actions considered by this EIR for the specific issue areas that were identified through the scoping process as having the potential to experience significant effects. A "significant effect" as defined by the *CEQA Guidelines* Section 15382:

> means a substantial, or potentially substantial, adverse change in any of the physical conditions within the area affected by the project including land, air, water, minerals, flora, fauna, ambient noise, and objects of historic or aesthetic significance. An economic or social change by itself shall not be considered a significant effect on the environment. A social or economic change related to a physical change may be considered in determining whether the physical change is significant.

The assessment of each issue area begins with a discussion of the environmental setting related to the issue, which is followed by the impact analysis. In the impact analysis, the first subsection identifies the methodologies used and the "significance thresholds," which are those criteria adopted by the City and other agencies, universally recognized, or developed specifically for this analysis to determine whether potential effects are significant. The next subsection describes each impact of the proposed project, mitigation measures for significant impacts, and the level of significance after mitigation. Each effect under consideration for an issue area is separately listed in bold text with the discussion of the effect and its significance. Each bolded impact statement also contains a statement of the significance determination for the environmental impact as follows:

- **Significant and Unavoidable**. An impact that cannot be reduced to below the threshold level given reasonably available and feasible mitigation measures. Such an impact requires a Statement of Overriding Considerations to be issued if the project is approved per Section 15093 of the *CEQA Guidelines*.
- **Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated**. An impact that can be reduced to below the threshold level given reasonably available and feasible mitigation measures. Such an impact requires findings under Section 15091 of the *CEQA Guidelines*.
- **Less than Significant**. An impact that may be adverse but which does not exceed the threshold levels and therefore will not have a significant effect on the environment as described in Section 15092 of the *CEQA Guidelines*. Less than significant impacts do not require mitigation measures. However, mitigation measures that could further lessen the environmental effect may be suggested if readily available and easily achievable.
- **No Impact.** The proposed project would have no effect on environmental conditions or would reduce existing environmental problems or hazards as described in Section 15092 of the *CEQA Guidelines*.

Following each environmental impact discussion is a list of mitigation measures (if required) and the residual effects or level of significance remaining after implementation of the measure(s). In cases where the mitigation measure for an impact could have a significant environmental impact in another issue area, this impact is discussed and evaluated as a secondary impact. The impact analysis concludes with a discussion of cumulative effects, which evaluates the impacts associated with the proposed project in conjunction with other planned and pending developments in the area listed in Section 3, *Environmental Setting*.

The Executive Summary of this EIR summarizes all impacts and mitigation measures that apply to the proposed project.

4.1 Aesthetics

This section evaluates the potential impacts to aesthetics that could arise from implementation of the proposed project. The analysis includes potential impacts to scenic resources, visual character and quality, and light and glare.

4.1.1 Setting

The following subsections discuss the existing setting of the Planning Area as it pertains to scenic vistas, scenic highways, scenic resources, visual character and quality, and light and glare.

a. Scenic Resources

Most communities identify scenic resources that contribute to community identity. Scenic resources can be natural or constructed features such as trees, rock formations, historic buildings, and public art. The existing Auburn General Plan designates the topography to the east of the city as a scenic resource that provides a transition between high mountain ranges to the east and recreational trails to the northeast. These visual resources contribute to the community's hometown feel, serving as a backdrop to the City's existing and continuous developments, which can be viewed by residents and commuters traveling on scenic routes such as Interstate 80 (I-80) and State Route 49 (SR-49; City of Auburn 1993).

Although most of the city's visual resources are natural, there are numerous historic landmarks within Auburn. Specifically, there are 30 designated historical resources and four designated Historic Districts, as described in Section 4.5, *Cultural Resources*. scenic resources, including landmarks within the city, are included in Table 4.1-1

Table 4.1-1 Key Scenic Character Resources

Type of Scenic Resources	Scenic Resource Name
Natural Features Topography and Landforms	Auburn Ravine, Rock Creek Lake, North Fork American River, Middle Fork American River, Confluence of North and Middle Fork, Old Auburn Cemetery, New Auburn Cemetery, Shockley Rd. Preserve, Alta Vista School Nature Area, Turkey Vulture Watch Site at Headquarter Hill
Natural Vistas	Overlook Park, Canyon View Preserve, Robie Point, Foresthill Bridge, No Hands Bridge, Black Hole of Calcutta, Shirland Canal Trails, Ashley Dog Park, Middle Fork American River Quarry Trail, Stagecoach Trail, Cardiac Trail, Clementine Dam, American River Canyon Outlook Park, State Route 49 from Borland Ave, Interstate 80 adjacent to Canyon View Preserve
Vegetation of Visual Significance	Aeolia Preserve, Auburn School Park Preserve, Canyon View Preserve, Stagecoach Preserve, Auburn Trail of Treasured Trees
Landmark	Foresthill Bridge, Courthouse, Ken Fox Statues, Auburn State Theater, Lake Clementine/Clementine Bridge, The Clock Tower, Historic Firehouse, Auburn Ravine Bridge, Chinese Cemetery, Bernhard Museum, The Gold Rush Museum, County Courthouse, Saint Luke's Episcopal Church, St. Joseph Catholic Church, Auburn Masonic Hall, Placer High School

Type of Scenic Resources	Scenic Resource Name
Beautification Efforts	Auburn Ravine Trail, Urban Canopy and Stream Restoration Project, Welcome to Auburn Signs, Old Town, Joe Elder Station Bus Stop, Auburn Bicentennial Park, Herschel Young Park, Fire House Parklet, Claude Chana Parklet, Auburn Streetscape Masterplan, Auburn Stars Plaque Program, Clocktower Parklet, , Auburn Public Library Outdoor Patio, , Endurance Zone Tiles, Central Square Streetscape Tiles, Central Square, Auburn Art Park, Mining Cart Scene Pocket Park, Utility box beautification project
Scenic Route	State Route 49, Interstate 80, Bell Road, Auburn Ravine Road, Foresthill Road, Indian Hill Road, Auburn Folsom Road, Borland/ Pacific Connector, Sacramento Street

Sources: City of Auburn 1994, 2024

b. Scenic Vistas and Views

A scenic vista provides views of an aesthetically valued landscape that benefits the public. The term "vista" generally implies an expansive view, usually from an elevated point or open area. This designation may be officially designated or unofficially defined by a set of criteria. The Planning Area contains several streams, creeks, parks, and preserves including Canyon View Preserve and North Fork American River, that provide the area with riparian habitats and scenic vegetation.

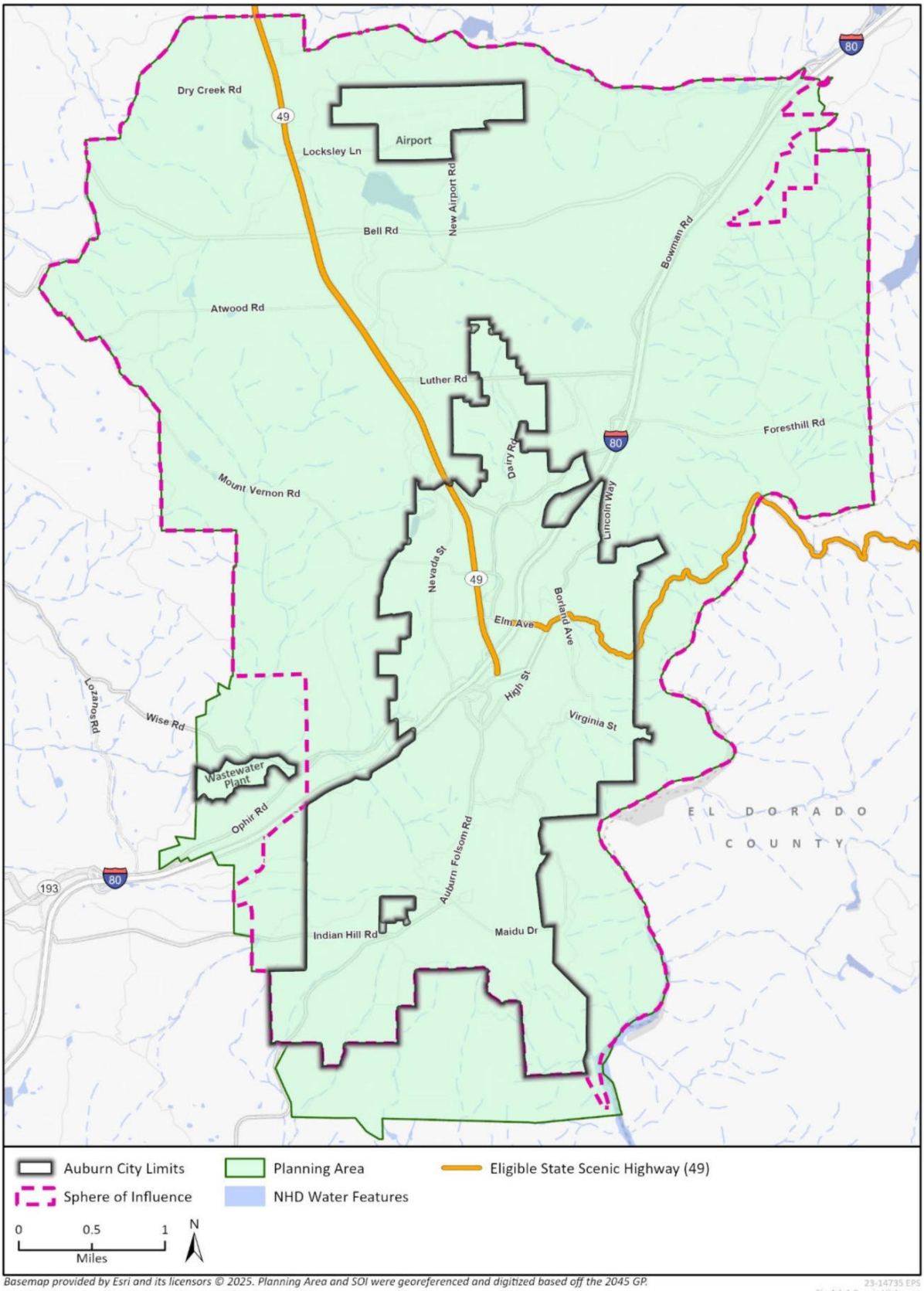
Canyon View Preserve is in the central northeastern portion of the Planning Area. The Preserve extends into the Placer County Resource Conservation easement northeast of Auburn. The American River flows along the eastern edge of the Planning Area and serves as both a key boundary as well as a visual resource that enhances the overall beauty of the area. Portions of the North Fork American River are visible along the eastern border of the Planning Area. Views of the American River and the American River Canyon are also visible from Foresthill Bridge and SR-49 (City of Auburn 2024).

c. Scenic Roadways

California's Scenic Highway Program designates scenic highways with the intention of protecting these corridors from change that would diminish the aesthetic value of adjacent lands. A highway is designated as an eligible scenic highway when the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) determines that the roadway corridor qualifies for official status. The status of an officially designated scenic highway changes when the local governing body applies to Caltrans for scenic highway approval, adopts a Corridor Protection Program, and receives notification that the highway has been officially designated (Caltrans 2025). Scenic highways must have an approved Corridor Protection Program and remain in compliance to maintain scenic highway status. According to the Caltrans State Scenic Highway Map and list of eligible and officially designated State Scenic Highways, SR-49 is eligible for designation as a State Scenic Highway but is not officially designated as such (Caltrans 2018). Notably, SR-49 is a discontinuous roadway, with a 0.14 miles gap as shown in Figure 4.1-1near Elm Avenue and Auburn Ravine Road (Caltrans 2018).

I-80 transverses east to west through the City of Auburn and Placer County, serving as primary transportation for freight vehicles and automobiles. I-80 is not an eligible or designated state scenic highway; however, Auburn recognizes I-80 as a scenic route starting near Dry Creek Road interchange through the entirety of the city (City of Auburn 1994).

Figure 4.1-1 Caltrans State Scenic Highway Map



Basemap provided by Esri and its licensors © 2025. Planning Area and SOI were georeferenced and digitized based off the 2045 GP.
Additional data provided by Placer County 2023, Caltrans 2025.

23-14735 EPS
Fig 4.1-1 Scenic Highways

Auburn's existing General Plan Conservation Element (City of Auburn 1994) identifies the following scenic routes: SR-49, I-80, Bell Road, Auburn Ravine Road, Foresthill Road, Indian Hill Road, Auburn Folsom Road, Borland-Pacific Connector, and Sacramento Street.

d. Visual Character and Quality

Auburn displays the city's historical and culturally significant past through infrastructure and urban art in prime commercial and landmark sites such as the Downtown Auburn area. The city is characterized by its natural recreational resources, open spaces, and scenic views of these resources from roadways within the Planning Area such as SR-49. Low density residences throughout the Planning Area contribute to the local small-town community atmosphere. Commercial uses are located along SR-49 north of I-80 and south of I-80 in historic Auburn. Open space and resource conservation land uses are concentrated in the eastern portion of the Planning Area and are primarily operated by the Placer County Resource Conservation District, such as Canyon View Preserve. The northern portion of the Planning Area includes industrial uses, including the Auburn Municipal Airport. The southern portion of the Planning Area includes undeveloped rural residential and agricultural land. Figure 4.1-2 and Figure 4.1-3 include photos that represent the visual character of the Planning Area.

e. Light and Glare Conditions

Light and glare from indoor or outdoor uses can reduce visibility of the night sky, create potential hazards to drivers, and be a nuisance to residential areas and open space areas or wildlife corridors. The Planning Area includes typical lighting conditions found in developed areas (e.g., roadway lighting, commercial parking lot and building lighting, residential buildings, headlights from motor vehicles). Sources of daytime glare include reflections from windows, architectural coatings, glass, and other reflective surfaces. Nighttime lighting and glare are produced by both stationary and mobile sources. Stationary sources of nighttime light include structure and parking lot illumination, decorative landscape lighting, lighted signs, and streetlights. The primary source of mobile nighttime lights is motor vehicle headlights.

In addition to commercial and residential lighting conditions the Planning Area contains several lighted sports fields, including LeFebvre Stadium, located at Placer High School; McCann Stadium, located at the Gold County Fairground; and Recreation Park, which provides lighting for recreational and athletic events.

Figure 4.1-2 Existing Visual Character (Photos 1 through 4)



Photo 1: View of downtown Auburn's mixed-use development taken from Lincoln Way, looking northeast.



Photo 2: View of rural residential land in the southern portion of the Planning Area, taken from Shirland Tract Rd. looking east onto Andregg Rd.



Photo 3: View of I-80 from the North Auburn CAL FIRE office on Rhodes View Drive looking southwest.



Photo 4: View of Canyon View Preserve signage and distant mountain landscapes taken from Lincoln Way looking southeast.

Figure 4.1-3 Existing Visual Character (Photos 5 through 8)



Photo 5: View of the Downtown Auburn Masonic Lodge historic landmark taken from High Street and Lincoln Way intersection looking northwest.



Photo 6: View of industrial uses adjacent to the Auburn Municipal Airport, taken from Shale Ridge Road looking southeast.



Photo 7: View of commercial uses, taken from a shopping center adjacent to Willow Creek Drive along Grass Valley Highway looking northwest.



Photo 8: View of the Twin Pines Trail from Dry Creek Road looking south.

4.1.2 Regulatory Framework

a. State Regulations

California Scenic Highways Program

The California Scenic Highway Program, established in 1963, identifies and designates certain highways throughout the State which require special conservation treatment in relation to surrounding land use development. Caltrans manages the State Scenic Highway Program and defines a scenic highway as any freeway, highway, road, or other public right-of-way, that traverses an area of exceptional scenic quality. Suitability for designations as a State scenic highway is based on the vividness, intactness, and unity of their view corridors, as described in Caltrans' Scenic Highway Guidelines (Caltrans 2008):

- *Vividness* is the extent to which the landscape is memorable. This is associated with the distinctiveness, diversity, and contrast of visual elements. A vivid landscape makes an immediate and lasting impression on the viewer.
- *Intactness* is the integrity of visual order in the landscape and the extent to which the natural landscape is free from visual intrusions (e.g., buildings, structures, equipment, grading).
- *Unity* is the extent to which development is sensitive to and visually harmonious with the natural landscape.

California Code of Regulations Title 24 – Building Lighting Characteristics

Title 24 of the California Code of Regulations (CCR), also known as the California Building Standards Code, consists of regulations to control building standards throughout the State. The California Electrical Code (Title 24, Part 3) and Green Building Standards Code (also referred to as the CALGreen Code; Title 24, Part 11) stipulate minimum light intensities for safety and security at pedestrian pathways, circulation ways, and paths of egress.

The CALGreen Code (24 CCR, Part 11, Paragraph 5.106.8, *Light Pollution Reduction*) provides that all nonresidential outdoor lighting must comply with the following:

- The minimum requirements in the California Energy Code for Lighting Zones 0 to 4 as defined in Chapter 10 of the California Administrative Code;
- Backlight ratings as defined in the Illuminating Engineering Society's Technical Memorandum on Luminaire Classification Systems for Outdoor Luminaires (IES TM-15-11);
- Uplight and Glare ratings as defined in the California Energy Code; and
- Allowable backlight, uplight, and glare ratings not exceeding those shown in Table 5.106.8 in Section 5.106.8 of the CALGreen Code, or a local ordinance lawfully enacted pursuant to Section 101.7 of the CALGreen Code, whichever is more stringent.

The 2025 updates to the CAL Green Code went into effect on January 1, 2026. These updates require non-residential buildings to maximize light emitting diode technology in indoor and outdoor lighting plans.

b. Local Regulations

Auburn Municipal Code

The Auburn Municipal Code includes ordinances that regulate design, lighting, and development standards within the city. Specifically, Title XV, Chapter 159, Zoning, implements the City's deisgn review process which is intended to ensure all development within the city is consistent with applicable design guidelines. Additionally, Title XV, Chapter 153 includes regulations for landscaping design.

Auburn General Plan 1993

The 1993 City of Auburn General Plan's includes the land use, conservation, and historic element to outline goals and policies for scenic resources, including the following:

Land Use Element Policies

- **Goal 1:** Guide development in a pattern that will minimize land use conflicts between adjacent land users.
  - **Policy 1.1:** Design industrial/commercial business uses to be compatible with adjacent land uses, including but not limited to, siting, height, orientation, materials, landscaping, circulation, grading, setbacks, proportions, and architecture.
  - **Policy 1.2:** Design multi-family residential projects to minimize impact on adjacent land uses.
- **Goal 2:** Encourage maintaining open rural character of the County areas beyond the City of Auburn Sphere of Influence so that Auburn is a distinct, readily identifiable foothill community. Encourage farmsteads, orchards, tree farms, grazing, and horse ranches.
- **Goal 3:** Guide development so that it takes advantage of Auburn's unique character including, but not limited to, terrain and vegetation.
  - **Policy 3.3:** Utilize the policies in the Open Space and Conservation Element to create and maintain a visual variety.
- **Goal 6:** Discourage extension of strip commercial development and encourage future commercial infill development.
  - **Policy 6.3**: Promote aesthetics suitable to the foothill environment.
  - **Policy 6.4:** Develop landscape maintenance and lighting districts in commercial zones.
- **Goal 7:** Provide a mix of commercial development to serve residents and visitors.
  - **Policy 7.2**: Neighborhood centers should be designed to minimize impacts on adjacent uses through the site design, access and parking, landscaping and lighting standards.
  - **Policy 7.3:** Preserve and enhance the tourist-oriented, historic commercial uses in the Downtown and Old Town Auburn areas.

Conservation Element Policies

- **Goal 1:** Preserve areas of natural vegetation, trees, topographic features, wildlife habitat, and riparian corridors.

- **Policy 1.1:** Identify, protect, and enhance natural riparian wildlife habitat and vegetation areas and encourage preservation and maintenance of these areas in as natural a state as possible.
- **Policy 1.8:** Encourage preservation and protection from urban encroachment in the rural/agricultural areas in the Auburn community outside the Plan area.

- **Goal 2.** Minimize adverse development impacts to the natural environment.
  - **Policy 2.6:** Encourage development of all building sites and residences in a manner minimizing disturbance to natural terrain and vegetation and maximizing preservation of natural beauty and open space.

- **Goal 6:** Protect visual resources.
  - **Policy 6.1:** Enhance and protect scenic resources visible from scenic routes in the Auburn area.
  - **Policy 6.2:** Encourage anti-litter beautification and cleanup programs along all routes.
  - **Policy 6.3:** Coordinate with Placer County and Caltrans the establishment of a beautification program for the Highway 49 corridor.
  - **Policy 6.4**: Maintain and promote heavily vegetated corridors along circulation routes. Roads and other public works project shall incorporate beauty as well as utility, safety, and economy.
  - **Policy 6.5:** Encourage and use existing City and County programs for protection and enhancement of scenic corridors, including, but not limited to, design review, sign control, landscaping and mounding, undergrounding utilities, scenic setbacks, density limitations, planned unit developments, grading and tree removal standards, open space easements, and land conservation contracts.
  - **Policy 6.6:** The City shall require that all landscape plantings are to be maintained continually in a healthy and attractive condition.

- **Goal 7:** Conserve, protect and enhance water supplies and adequately plan for the development and protection of these resources and their related resources for future generations.
  - **Policy 7.3:** Promote water conservation through development standards, building requirements, landscape design guidelines, and policies and programs.

Historic Element Policies

- **Goal 1:** Preserve all historic sites and enhance the character of the historic districts.
  - **Policy 1.1:** Implement the Historic Development Guidelines listed in the Historic Element.

City of Auburn Historic Preservation Architectural Guidelines

The City of Auburn's Historic Preservation Architectural Guidelines ensure the aesthetics, character, and compatibility of its two historic review districts, Downtown and Old Town. The guidelines define stylistic and architectural elements for the historic buildings and new, existing, and non-contributive structures within the planning area. Auburn's history and architectural character provide the foundation for preserving elements found in Old Town and Downtown buildings, with styles dating from the 1880s through 1940s.

Placer County Municipal Code

The Placer County Municipal Code establishes regionwide ordinances and regulatory standards for design, lighting, and new development on unincorporated land under the County's jurisdiction in the Planning Area. Specifically, Chapter 17 of the Placer Municipal Code includes development standards and design review guideline requirements that are applicable to new development within the county.

Placer County Design Guidelines Manual

The Placer County Design Guidelines Manual was last revised in September 2003, and contains regional design goals, objectives, and criteria. The manual addresses commercial, industrial, multi-family residential, and special district development guidelines. These guidelines indicate that lighting, exterior building alterations, fences and walls, and landscaping are some of the project components that are subject to design review. They also set requirements for lighting height, and limit upward facing lighting. The design guidelines encourage lighting to be directed away from residential areas or adjacent roadways. Building form is also regulated by these guidelines to ensure visual character is maintained.

Placer County General Plan

The Placer County General Plan includes land use, natural resources, and health and safety elements that establish goals and policies to preserve aesthetic resources within the County, as outlined below:

Land Use Element Policies

- **Goal 1.D:** To designate adequate commercial land for and promote development of commercial uses to meet the present and future needs of Placer County residents and visitors and maintain economic vitality.
  - **Policy 1.D.11:** The County shall require that existing and new downtowns/village centers and development within them be designed to integrate open spaces into urban fabric where possible, especially taking advantage of any natural amenities such as creeks, hillsides, and scenic views
- **Goal 1.K:** To protect the visual and scenic resources of Placer County as important quality-of-life amenities for County residents and a principal asset in the promotion of recreation and tourism.
  - **Policy 1.K.1.** The County shall require that new development in scenic areas (e.g., river canyons, lake watersheds, scenic highway corridors, ridgelines and steep slopes) is planned and designed in a manner which employs design, construction, and maintenance techniques that:
    a. Avoids locating structures along ridgelines and steep slopes;
    b. Incorporates design and screening measures to minimize the visibility of structures and graded areas;
    c. Maintains the character and visual quality of the area.
  - **Policy 1.K.3**. The County shall require that new development in rural areas incorporates landscaping that provides a transition between the vegetation in developed areas and adjacent open space or undeveloped areas.

- **Goal 1.L:** To develop a system of scenic routes serving the needs of residents and visitors to Placer County and to preserve, enhance, and protect the scenic resources visible from these scenic routes.
  - **Policy 1.L.3**. The County shall protect and enhance scenic corridors through such means as design review, sign control, undergrounding utilities, scenic setbacks, density limitations, planned unit developments, grading and tree removal standards, open space easements, and land conservation contracts.
  - **Policy 1.L.4.** The County shall provide for landscaping and/or landscaped mounding along designated scenic corridors where desirable to maintain and improve scenic qualities and screen unsightly views.
  - **Policy 1.L.6.** The County shall protect and maintain historical landmarks and historical monuments along scenic routes.
  - **Policy 1.L.8.** The County shall include aesthetic design considerations in road construction, reconstruction, or maintenance for all scenic routes under County jurisdiction.
  - **Policy 1.L.9.** The County shall support anti-litter, beautification, and cleanup programs along scenic routes.
  - **Policy 1.L.10.** The County shall coordinate scenic route programs among local, regional, and state jurisdictions, recognizing that scenic routes are a resource of more than local importance.

- **Goal: 1.O:** To promote and enhance the quality and aesthetics of development in Placer County.
  - **Policy 1.O.1**. Except as otherwise provided in the Design Guidelines of an approved Specific Plan, the County shall require all new development to be designed in compliance with applicable provisions of the Placer County Design Guidelines Manual.
  - **Policy 1.O.3.** The County shall require that all new development be designed to be compatible with the scale and character of the area. Structures, especially those outside of village, urban, and commercial centers, should be designed and located so that:
    a. They do not silhouette against the sky above ridgelines or hilltops;
    b. Roof lines and vertical architectural features blend with and do not detract from the natural background or ridge outline;
    c. They fit the natural terrain; and d. They utilize building materials, colors, and textures that blend with the natural landscape (e.g., avoid high contrasts).
  - **Policy 1.O.6.** Historically or architecturally significant buildings should be preserved and not be substantially changed in exterior appearance in ways that diminish their historical character, unless doing so is necessary to avoid or mitigate hazards, and other means of mitigation are infeasible. Such structures should be preserved and used as focal points of community design.
  - **Policy 1.O.7.** The County shall require that mixed-use areas include community focal points to serve as gathering and/or destination points. Examples of focal points include civic centers, parks, fountains, monuments, and street vistas. On-site natural features, such as wetlands and streams, can also function as focal points.
  - **Policy 1.O.9.** The County shall discourage the use of outdoor lighting that shines unnecessarily onto adjacent properties or into the night sky.

Natural Resources Element Policies

- **Goal 6.A:** To protect and enhance the natural qualities of Placer County's rivers, streams, creeks and groundwater.
  - **Policy 6.A.9:** The County shall require that natural watercourses be integrated into new development in such a way that they are accessible to the public and provide a positive visual element.
- **Goal 6.D:** To preserve and protect the valuable vegetation resources of Placer County.
  - **Policy 6.D.1:** The County shall encourage landowners and developers to preserve the integrity of existing terrain and natural vegetation in visually-sensitive areas such as hillsides, ridges, and along important transportation corridors.
  - **Policy 6.D.10:** The County shall encourage the planting of native trees, shrubs, and grasslands in order to preserve the visual integrity of the landscape, provide habitat conditions suitable for native wildlife, and ensure that a maximum number and variety of well adapted plants are maintained.
- **Goal 6.E:**To preserve and enhance open space lands to maintain the natural resources of the County.
  - **Policy 6.E.2:** The County shall require that new development be designed and constructed to preserve the following types of areas and features as open space to the maximum extent feasible:
    a. High erosion hazard areas;
    b. Scenic and trail corridors;
    c. Streams, riparian vegetation; d. Wetlands; Placer County General Plan
    d. Significant stands of vegetation;
    e. Wildlife corridors; and
    f. Any areas of special ecological significance.
  - **Policy 6.E.4:** The County shall coordinate with local, state, and federal agencies and private organizations to establish visual and physical links among open space areas. Where appropriate, these open space areas are to be connected by scenic corridors, wildlife corridors, and trails. Dedication of easements shall be encouraged, and in many cases, required as lands are developed and built.
- **Implementation Program 6.16:** The County shall develop and implement an open space and agricultural conservation program for the protection of natural resources to accomplish the following objectives:
  a. Maintain a viable agricultural segment of the economy;
  b. Conserve natural features necessary for access to a variety of outdoor recreation opportunities;
  c. Retain important scenic and historic areas;
  d. Preserve the diversity of plant and animal communities;
  e. Protect endangered and other special status plant and animal species; and,
  f. Separate urban areas into distinct communities, and ensure public safety.

4.1.3 Impact Analysis

a. Significance Thresholds and Methodology

Significance Thresholds

Based on Appendix G of the *CEQA Guidelines* a project may be deemed to have a significant impact on aesthetics if it would:

1. Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista;
2. Substantially damage scenic resources, including but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway;
3. In non-urbanized areas, substantially degrade existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings? (Public views are those that are experienced from a publicly accessible vantage point.) If the project is in an urbanized area, would the project conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality; or
4. Create a new source of substantial light or glare that would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area.

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the *CEQA Guidelines* focus on addressing effects to public views (defined as those experienced from publicly accessibly vantage points); therefore, public views are the focus of this discussion.

Methodology

Aesthetics impact assessments involve qualitative analysis that is subjective. Reactions to the same aesthetic conditions vary according to viewer taste and interests but are basically governed by the visual compatibility with the surroundings and existing development, coherence with design guidelines established by the jurisdiction, and use of high-quality materials that blend into the landscape. Ultimately, development decisions that prescribe aesthetic or design treatments for specific projects fall under the purview of the Auburn Planning Commission and appointed or elected bodies charged with overseeing development permits. As a programmatic document, this EIR presents an assessment of potential development facilitated by the project. Because the proposed General Plan is a long-term document intended to guide actions for many years into the future, this analysis relies on program-level and qualitative evaluation.

b. Project Impacts and Mitigation

Threshold 1:	Would the project have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?

Impact AES-1 THE PROJECT WOULD NOT HAVE A SUBSTANTIAL ADVERSE EFFECT ON A SCENIC VISTA, INCLUDING VIEWS OF TOPOGRAPHY EAST OF THE PLANNING AREA. THIS IMPACT WOULD BE LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT.

The City designates the topography east of the city as a scenic resource. This area includes the scenic vistas included in Table 4.1-1 such as Overlook Park, the Foresthill Bridge, the Canyon View Preserve areas, and areas near the confluence of the Middle Fork and North Fork of the American River. Views of these areas are visible from roadways in the Planning Area, including SR-49 and I-80.

While the proposed project itself does not include any development projects, it would facilitate development throughout the Planning Area through changes to land use designations. Future development facilitated by the project would not be concentrated in the eastern portion of the Planning Area, as there are limited land use designation changes proposed in this area. However, there could be future development along the I-80 corridor that could impact existing scenic vistas from I-80. Specifically, this could include the development of new structures that could obstruct existing views of the scenic topography visible from I-80. The proposed project includes the following policies and actions which are intended to protect and preserve these scenic resources: Policy LU-8.1: Rural Context, Policy LU-8.5: Rural Residential Uses, Policy CD-1.1: Interstate 80 Corridor; Policy CD-2.6: Undergrounding of Utilities, Policy OSC-1.1: Open Space Preservation, and Action CD-1C: Scenic Overlooks.

Implementation of these policies and actions would help preserve existing scenic resources, especially those along the eastern edge of the Planning Area by maintaining rural residential uses, which are typically less dense and therefore have smaller building footprints and lower heights that could obstruct existing views along the eastern edge of the city. Additionally, these policies would encourage the enhancement of existing scenic lookouts, preserve open space (which would allow existing views to be maintained by limiting development), and encourage the undergrounding of utility lines which would further reduce the installation of man-made features which could obstruct existing views. Additionally, future development would be subject to Title XV, Chapter 159 of the Auburn Municipal Code, which implements the City's design review process and Chapter 17 of the Placer County Municipal Code which sets development standards to set limits on things like building height and setbacks for development within the county Compliance with these regulations would ensure that existing scenic vistas within the Planning Area are preserved and impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures would be required.

Significance After Mitigation

Impacts would be less than significant without mitigation.

Threshold 2:	Would the project substantially damage scenic resources, including but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?

Impact AES-2 SR-49 IS AN ELIGIBLE STATE SCENIC HIGHWAY IN THE PLANNING AREA AND LOCALLY DESIGNATED SCENIC ROADWAYS ARE ALSO PRESENT IN THE PLANNING AREA. IMPACTS TO SCENIC RESOURCES WITHIN THESE ROADWAYS WOULD BE REDUCED THROUGH IMPLEMENTATION OF AUBURN GENERAL PLAN POLICIES. THIS IMPACT WOULD BE LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT.

As discussed in Section 4.1.1, *Setting*, SR-49, which traverses the Planning Area, is eligible for designation as a State Scenic Highway but is not officially designated as such (Caltrans 2018). Additionally, the existing Auburn General Plan designates the following roadways as scenic: SR-49, I-80, Bell Road, Auburn Ravine Road, Foresthill Road, Indian Hill Road, Auburn Folsom Road, Borland-Pacific Connector, and Sacramento Street.

Many of these roadways, such as I-80, SR-49, and Foresthill Road, provide views of the American River Canyon. Others, such as Sacramento Street, are scenic due to the presence of historic structures that are visible from the roadway. While the proposed project itself does not include any

development projects, it would facilitate development throughout the Planning Area through changes in land use designations. Future development facilitated by the project would impact existing scenic roadways if it is located near these roadways and would obstruct views from these roadways or otherwise damage scenic resources in the area around these roadways. Future development would be required to comply with Policy CD-1.1: Interstate 80 Corridor and Action CD-1B: Scenic Highway Improvements, included in the proposed project, to reduce impacts to scenic roadways within the Planning Area. This action requires the city to coordinate with Caltrans and Placer County to maintain and enhance the I-80 and SR-49 corridors, as well as rural sections of Bell Road, Mount Vernon Road, Dry Creek Road, Foresthill Road, and Ophir Road. This includes landscaping and lighting improvements, which would be done in a way that protects and enhances the scenic qualities of these roadways. Implementation of this policy would ensure scenic resources, such as existing views of natural landscapes and historic resources, within eligible state scenic roadways and locally designated scenic roadways are preserved. Impacts to scenic resources within designated scenic roadways would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures would be required.

Significance After Mitigation

Impacts would be less than significant without mitigation.

Threshold 3:	Would the project, in non-urbanized areas, substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings? (Public views are those that are experienced from a publicly accessible vantage point.) If the project is in an urbanized area, would the project conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality?

Impact AES-3 IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROPOSED PROJECT WOULD CHANGE LAND USE DESIGNATIONS. HOWEVER, SCENIC QUALITY WOULD BE PROTECTED THROUGH IMPLEMENTATION OF GOALS AND POLICIES IN THE PROPOSED GENERAL PLAN AS WELL AS BY APPLICABLE AUBURN MUNICIPAL CODE REQUIREMENTS THAT ADDRESS VISUAL CHARACTER AND QUALITY OF PUBLIC VIEWS. THIS IMPACT WOULD BE LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT.

Public Resources Code Section 21071(a) defines an urbanized area as an incorporated city that meets either of the following criteria:

- Has a population of at least 100,000 persons; or
- Has a population of less than 100,000 persons if the population of that city and not more than two contiguous incorporated cities combined equals at least 100,000 persons.

The City of Auburn does not meet either of these criteria because the city has a population of 13,300 people (refer to Table 2-6 in Section 2, *Project Description*) and there are no incorporated cities that share a border with Auburn; therefore, the Planning Area is considered a non-urbanized area and this analysis discusses whether the proposed project would substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the Planning Area and its surroundings.

The visual character of the Planning Area is characterized by natural recreational resources, open spaces, and scenic views of these resources from roadways such as SR-49 and I-80. Additionally, the City of Auburn contains historical areas, such as downtown, which contribute to the overall

character of the city. The visual character of existing development within the Planning Area is shown in Figure 4.1-2.

The proposed project would facilitate development on previously undeveloped parcels by changing the land use designations for some parcels within the Planning Area. These changes would be concentrated in 12 focus areas throughout the Planning Area, as shown in Figure 2-4 in Section 2, *Project Description*. As described in Sections 2.4.2 and 2.4.3 of Section 2, *Project Description*, land use changes in these focus areas would allow for new or increased areas of residential or mixed-use development. Generally, the land use changes would allow for similar levels of development in these areas, and they would be concentrated in the part of the Planning Area within Auburn city limits.

Since the 12 focus areas are concentrated along the SR-49 and I-80 corridors, development facilitated by the project could have impacts to existing public views from these roadways that contribute to the visual character of the Planning Area. Additionally, land use changes in the Downtown/Old Town Area could impact the existing character of Downtown Auburn. Future development could impact existing visual character if it is not similar in form to surrounding buildings, or if it obstructs public views due to height or alteration of natural landscapes.

In the Downtown/Old Town Area some parcels would be redesignated from Commercial and High Density Residential to Mixed Use Downtown. This designation would encourage vertical mixed use and would allow for both commercial and residential development. While new development in the Downtown/Old Town Area could be substantially different in form from the existing development, implementation of the form-based code, which is part of the proposed project, would regulate features such as building height to ensure new development is consistent with existing development in the area.

Additionally, future development throughout the 12 focus areas would be subject to the following policies and actions included in the proposed General Plan, which would preserve scenic views and resources: Policy LU-8.5: Rural Residential Uses, Policy CD-2.6: Undergrounding of Utilities, Policy OSC-1.1: Open Space Preservation, Policy LU-2.6: Compatible Infill, Action CD-1A: Visual Impact Studies, and Action CD-1: Scenic Overlooks.

As discussed under Impact AES-1, these General Plan policies would preserve public views and existing visual character by maintaining rural residential uses, which are typically less dense and therefore have smaller building footprints that would be less likely to obstruct existing views of scenic resources. Additionally, these policies would encourage the enhancement of existing scenic lookouts, preserve open space (which would allow existing views to be maintained by limiting development), and encourage the undergrounding of utility lines, which would further reduce the installation of man-made features which could obstruct existing views. These policies would also encourage compatible infill development, which would ensure development is concentrated in already developed areas and similar to the existing buildings surrounding the proposed development. In addition to the proposed General Plan policies listed above, future development would be subject to Title XV, Chapter 159, of the Auburn Municipal Code would reduce potential impacts to scenic character in the city by preserving setting development standards that set maximum building height and minimum setback requirements, which would ensure future development is similar in form to surrounding development and that obstruction of public views due to building mass or height is limited. Additionally, as described in Section 2, *Project Description*, the General Plan includes guiding principles to maintain Auburn's small-town character and encourage "smart growth", which focuses on infill development and annexation of new areas for housing and employment.

Compliance with applicable municipal code requirements, and implementation of proposed General Plan policies and actions would ensure that new development complements and enhances the existing visual character and quality in the Planning Area. Therefore, future development facilitated by the project would not substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views in the Planning Area, and the impact to visual character and quality would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures would be required.

Significance After Mitigation

Impacts would be less than significant without mitigation.

Threshold 4:	Would the project create a new source of substantial light or glare that would adversely affect daytime or nighttime views in the area?

IMPACT AES-4 CONSTRUCTION AND OPERATION OF FUTURE DEVELOPMENT FACILITATED BY THE PROJECT WOULD CREATE NEW SOURCES OF LIGHT OR GLARE THAT COULD ADVERSELY AFFECT THE VISUAL ENVIRONMENT. IMPLEMENTATION OF CALGREEN REGULATIONS AND PROPOSED GENERAL PLAN POLICIES WOULD REDUCE LIGHT AND GLARE IMPACTS TO LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT.

The Planning Area includes existing sources of light and glare, which are concentrated in the more developed portions of the Planning Area, such as within the Auburn city limits and along the SR-49 commercial corridor. Unincorporated portions of the Planning Area are primarily developed with rural residences, which produce lower levels of existing light and glare than commercial or high-density residential development. Future development facilitated by the project would introduce new sources of light or glare to the Planning Area. New sources of light (security lighting, parking lot lighting, ornamental lighting, pedestrian-scale lights, lighting from ground floor storefronts, signage, and additional vehicle headlights would increase overall lighting levels in areas where increased development would occur. Additionally, new sources of glare such as reflective building materials or signage or additional vehicles parked on the street could be present where new development would occur.

Construction lighting for future development would be temporary and would be limited to between 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Monday through Friday, 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Saturday, and 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. on Sundays and holidays, as codified in Section 93.09 of the Auburn Municipal Code. Therefore, nighttime lighting during construction of future development would be limited and would not extend past 6:00 p.m. on any day.

The Planning Area is generally characterized by existing residential, commercial, and other land uses that already generate moderate to high ambient levels of lighting. Nonetheless, a potentially significant lighting impact from light spillage associated with future development. Future development facilitated by the project would be required to adhere to the CALGreen Code Section 5.106.8, which stipulates new lighting must conform to standards that keep light generated on-site from leaving the site through the use of reflectors, shields, screen walls, and any other method which complies with the CALGreen Code's intent to limit light pollution. Additionally, future development within the unincorporated areas of the Planning Area would be subject to Placer County Design Guidelines which regulate lighting to reduce light and glare in residential areas and along roadways or Chapter 159 of the Auburn Municipal Code which includes regulations for

signage and development and maintenance of buildings which encourage lighting to be reflected away from residential uses and roadways. These regulations would ensure the form of new development, including building color and materials, is consistent with neighboring development so as not to induce substantial additional glare. Furthermore, future development facilitated by the project would adhere to the following proposed General Plan policies intended to limit light and glare from new development within the Planning Area: Policy LU-2.3: Buffering, Policy LU-2.6: Compatible Infill, Policy CD-2.7: Street Lighting, Policy T-3.8: Energy Efficiency, Policy OSC-5.8: Light Pollution, and Action LU-2C: Performance Standards and Use Permits.

Implementation of these policies would ensure new development facilitated by the proposed project would not generate substantial light or glare associated with street lighting or outdoor residential or commercial lighting from new development. Additional light and glare from vehicles would be similar in nature and magnitude to existing conditions due and would therefore not be substantial. Overall, impacts related to light and glare would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures would be required.

Significance After Mitigation

Impacts would be less than significant without mitigation.

4.1.4 Cumulative Impacts

The geographic scope for cumulative aesthetics impacts is generally described by development located within one mile of the Planning Area. This geographic scope is appropriate for aesthetics because these are areas where identified scenic resources are visible. Areas at a greater distance would be separated by intervening topography, vegetation, and buildings, obstructing views in all directions from the Planning Area, and lighting and glare generally only affect adjacent properties. The cumulative analysis considers the nearby past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future plans and projects listed in Table 3-1.

Cumulative development could result in impacts to scenic vistas. Buildout of cumulative projects would have limited, site-specific impacts on public viewsheds and scenic vistas throughout the Planning Area. Impacts would be limited by intervening features (i.e., topography, vegetation, and buildings), which already obscure views of scenic resources from public viewpoints. Cumulative plans and projects are anticipated to increase development primarily in areas already developed with other uses. Therefore, most of the cumulative projects would not result in substantial impacts to public viewsheds or scenic vistas given the proposed massing and heights of structures, or the proposed locations within developed areas with comparable structures. Projects not within already developed areas or which could otherwise affect scenic vistas due to location or proximity to public views, would be subject to applicable General Plan policies and applicable Municipal Code requirements. Therefore, cumulative impacts to scenic vistas would be less than significant.

In the cumulative geographic scope, SR-49 is eligible for listing as a state scenic highway, and there are several locally designated scenic routes such as I-80, Bell Road, Auburn Ravine Road, Foresthill Road, Indian Hill Road, Auburn Folsom Road, Borland-Pacific Connector, and Sacramento Street. Cumulative development would be required to adhere to applicable zoning and development regulations and applicable General Plan policies to mitigate environmental impacts to scenic natural or historic resources along these roadways, where feasible. Additionally, cumulative projects would

undergo design review to ensure it meets development standards which limit height and massing. Ensuring consistency with applicable height and massing standards for future development near these scenic roadways would reduce the potential for this development to obstruct or otherwise alter natural or historic scenic resources near these roadways. Cumulative impacts to scenic resources within a state scenic highway would be less than significant.

The visual character of the Planning Area is characterized by natural recreational resources, open spaces, and scenic views of these resources from roadways within the Planning Area such as SR-49 and I-80. Additionally, the City of Auburn has historical areas such as downtown, which contribute to the overall character of the city. The visual character of the Planning Area is protected through the City's Zoning Ordinance, development regulations, the Placer County Municipal Code, and General Plan policies. These regulations and policies would be applicable to cumulative development to ensure that development is consistent in form to neighboring development and that public views and visual character are preserved throughout the project's design process. Therefore, cumulative impacts related to visual character and the quality of public views would be less than significant.

Cumulative development would result in an increase in light and glare, and associated adverse effects to daytime or nighttime views. Cumulative projects would be required to undergo individual design review and would adhere to regulations that govern light and glare such as CALGreen, development standards included in the Auburn Municipal Code, and the Placer County Design Review Guidelines. Adherence to these regulations would ensure new lighting is downcast and does not shine into residential land uses or roadways. Additionally, they would ensure the form of new development, including building color and materials, is consistent with neighboring development so as not to induce substantial additional glare. Cumulative impacts related to substantial sources of light or glare and adverse effects to daytime or nighttime views would be less than significant.

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4.2 Agriculture and Forestry Resources

This section summarizes the setting for agricultural and forestry resources, including agricultural lands, timber land, and forest land; and analyzes the impacts of the project to agriculture and forestry resources.

4.2.1 Setting

a. Agricultural Resources

According to the California Department of Food and Agriculture, over a third of the country's vegetables and two-thirds of the country's fruits and nuts are grown in California. In 2022, California's farms and ranches received $55.9 billion in cash receipts for their output. This represents an 8.8 percent increase in cash receipts compared to 2021. California agricultural exports totaled $22.5 billion in 2021, an increase of 7.0 percent from 2020. Top commodities for export included almonds, dairy and dairy products, pistachios, walnuts, and wine (California Department of Food and Agriculture 2023).

Agriculture is an important part of the economy in Placer County. The total gross value of agricultural crops and products for 2022 was $88.8 million, which represents a 12 percent decrease compared to the 2021 value of $100.8 million (County of Placer 2022).

Important Farmland

The California Department of Conservation (DOC) develops Important Farmland Maps as part of its Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program (FMMP) and includes the following definitions for Important Farmland (DOC 2023):

1. **Prime Farmland.** Farmland with the best combination of physical and chemical features able to sustain long term agricultural production. This land has the soil quality, growing season, and moisture supply needed to produce sustained high yields. Land must have been used for irrigated agricultural production at some time during the four years prior to the mapping date.
2. **Farmland of Statewide Importance.** Farmland similar to Prime Farmland but with minor shortcomings, such as greater slopes or less ability to store soil moisture. Land must have been used for irrigated agricultural production at some time during the four years prior to the mapping date.
3. **Unique Farmland.** Farmland of lesser quality soils used for the production of the state's leading agricultural crops. This land is usually irrigated, but may include non-irrigated orchards or vineyards as found in some climatic zones in California. Land must have been cropped at some time during the four years prior to the mapping date.
4. **Farmland of Local Importance.** Land of importance to the local agricultural economy as determined by each county's board of supervisors and a local advisory committee. In some counties, Confined Animal Agriculture facilities are part of Farmland of Local Importance, but they are shown separately.
5. **Grazing Land.** Land on which the existing vegetation is suited to the grazing of livestock. This category was developed in cooperation with the California Cattlemen's Association, University of California Cooperative Extension, and other groups interested in the extent of grazing activities.

6. **Urban and Built-up Land.** Land occupied by structures with a building density of at least 1 unit to 1.5 acres, or approximately 6 structures to a 10-acre parcel. This land is used for residential, industrial, commercial, construction, institutional, public administration, railroad and other transportation yards, cemeteries, airports, golf courses, sanitary landfills, sewage treatment, water control structures, and other developed purposes.
7. **Other Land.** Land not included in any other mapping category. Common examples include low density rural developments; brush, timber, wetland, and riparian areas not suitable for livestock grazing; confined livestock, poultry, or aquaculture facilities; strip mines and borrow pits; and water bodies smaller than 40 acres. Vacant and nonagricultural land surrounded on all sides by urban development and greater than 40 acres is mapped as Other Land.

Figure 4.2-1 below shows the distribution of different important farmlands and Figure 4.2-1 Williamson Act Contract lands in the Planning Area. Additionally, Table 4.2-1 provides the acreage of each farmland type in the Planning Area.

Table 4.2-1 Summary of Important Farmland in the Planning Area

Important Farmland Type	Acreage
Prime Farmland	0
Farmland of Statewide Importance	63
Unique Farmland	128
Farmland of Local Importance	630
Grazing Land	1,903
Urban and Built-up Land	7,355
Other Land	7,990

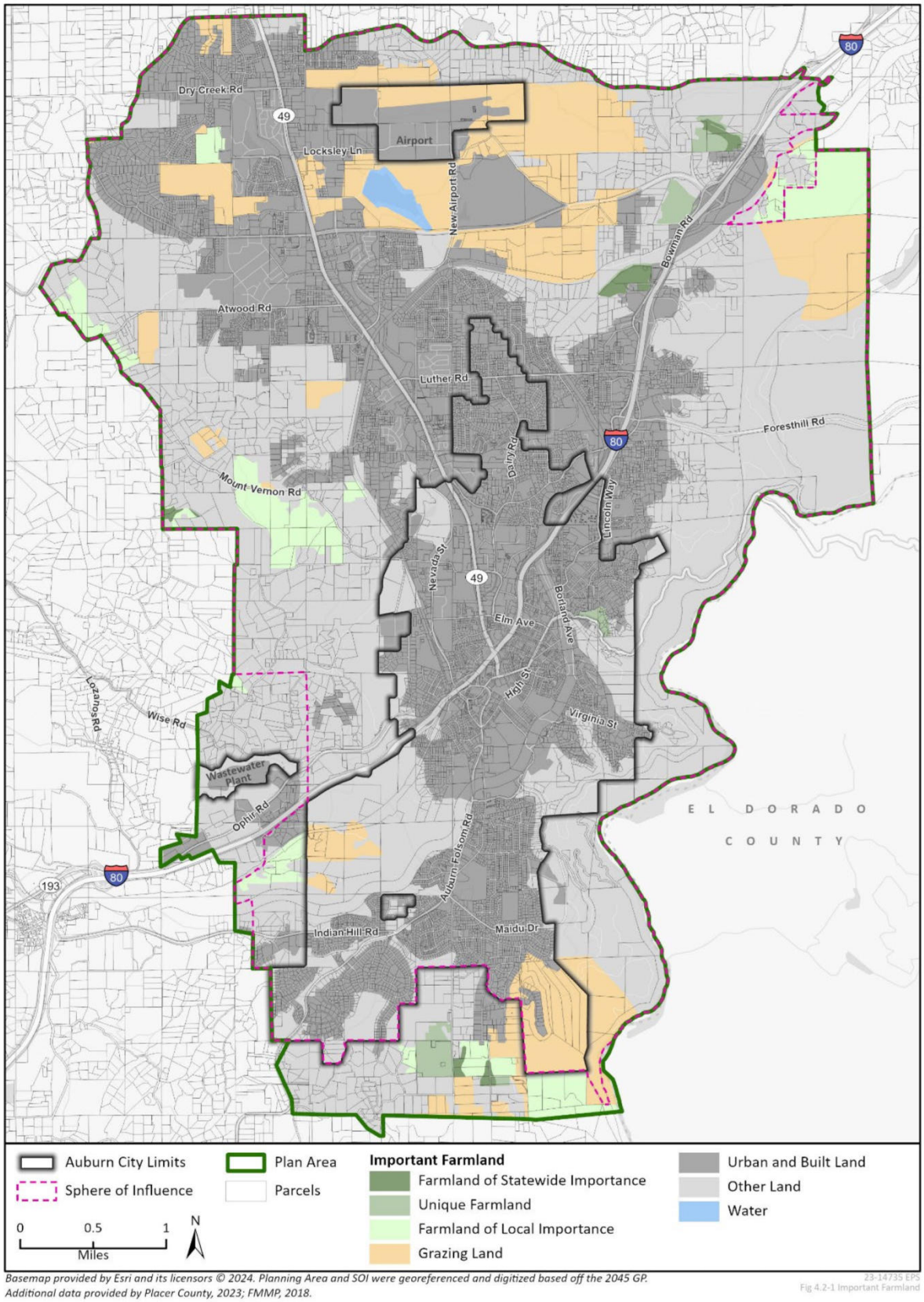
LAFCo and Farmland

Preserving prime agricultural land is a key statutory mandate of the Placer Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCo). As described in Section 1.5, *Lead, Responsible, and Trustee Agencies*, LAFCo is a Responsible Agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Federal, state, and local agencies, including Placer LAFCo, all operate under different laws and requirements, each setting out different definitions of prime farmland. The definition of agricultural lands and prime agricultural lands differ somewhat from the DOC definitions that are typically relied upon for CEQA analysis. Land that would not qualify as Prime under USDA or FMMP definitions of Prime, may qualify as Prime under the LAFCo definition. For example, grazing land meets the LAFCo definition of prime agricultural land. As shown on Figure 4.2-1, the Planning Area includes grazing lands.

Regional Trends

Conversion of farmland is the loss of farmland due to development or land use changes that do not support agricultural production. The FMMP, which is updated biennially, provides land use conversion information for decision makers to use in their planning for the present and future of California's agricultural land resources.

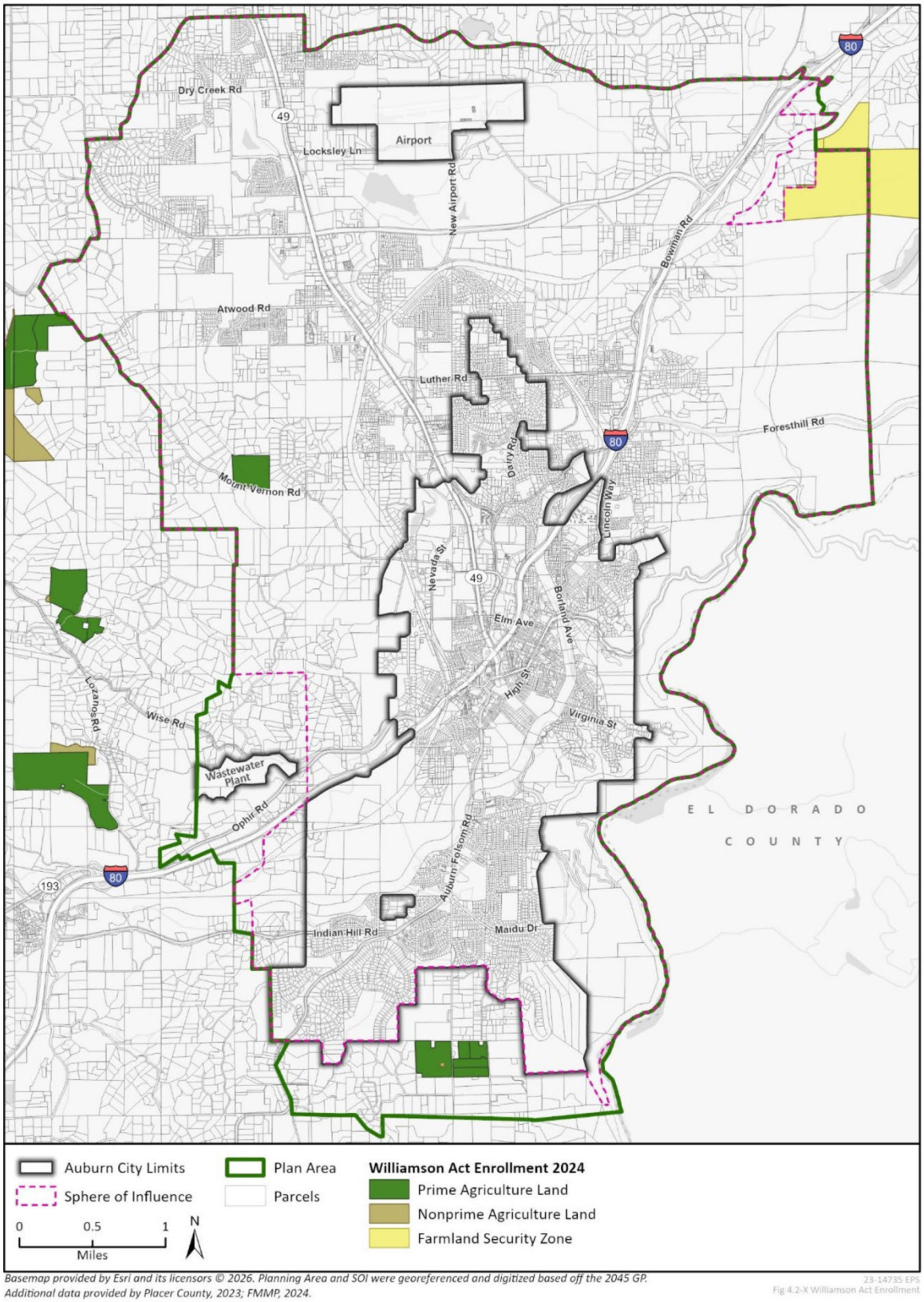
Figure 4.2-1 Important Farmland in the Planning Area



Basemap provided by Esri and its licensors © 2024. Planning Area and SOI were georeferenced and digitized based off the 2045 GP. Additional data provided by Placer County, 2023; FMMP, 2018.

23-14735 EPS
Fig 4.2-1 Important Farmland

Figure 4.2-2 Williamson Act Contracts in the Planning Area



Basemap provided by Esri and its licensors © 2026. Planning Area and SOI were georeferenced and digitized based off the 2045 GP.
Additional data provided by Placer County, 2023; FMMP, 2024.

23-14735 EPS
Fig 4.2-X Williamson Act Enrollment

According to the DOC, irrigated farmland in California showed a net decrease of 56,186 acres between 2016 and 2018, an amount substantially higher than between 2014 and 2016 (11,165 acres). Prime Farmland, the highest quality farmland, decreased by 38,683 net acres, coupled with a Farmland of Statewide Importance decrease of 30,052 net acres. Partially offsetting these losses was the addition of 12,549 net acres of irrigated crops on lesser quality soils (DOC 2019).

Irrigated land conversions due to idling are often associated with water resource limitations, market conditions, and salinity-related land idling. Land was removed from irrigated categories at a rate 19 percent lower than compared with the prior update (128,105 acres between 2014 and2016 compared to 152,627 acres between 2016 and 2018) (DOC 2019).

Table 4.2-2 shows the number of acres that have been converted in Placer County from 2016 to 2018, the most recent and granular data available. Notably, even within this timeframe, Auburn did not possess any Prime Farmland. As shown, the County lost 6,051 acres of agricultural land and gained 1,422 acres, resulting in a net decrease of 4,629 acres.

Table 4.2-2 Farmland Conversion in Placer County

Farmland Designation	Total Acreage Inventoried 2016	Total Acreage Inventoried 2018	Total Acreage Inventoried Acres Lost (-)	Total Acreage Inventoried Acres Gained (+)	Total Acreage Inventoried Total Acreage Changed	Total Acreage Inventoried Net Acreage Changed
Prime Farmland	7,431	7,354	120	127	247	7
Farmland of Statewide Importance	4,097	4,193	138	234	372	96
Unique Farmland	18,784	19,342	38	596	634	558
Farmland of Local Importance	94,733	89,443	5,755	465	6,220	-5,290
Important Farmland Subtotal	**125,045**	**120,332**	**6,051**	**1,422**	**7,473**	**-4,629**

Source: Department of Conservation 2021

b. Forestry Resources

Forest Land, Timberland, Timber Production Zones

Forestry resources include forestland, timberland, and timberland production zones. Definitions used for forestland and timberland are those found in the California Public Resources Code (PRC) and California Government Code. These codes define forestland, timberland, and timberland production zones as follows:

1. **Forest Land** is land that can support, under natural conditions, 10 percent native tree cover of any species, including hardwoods, and that allows for the preservation or management of forest-related resources such as timber, aesthetic value, fish and wildlife, biodiversity, water quality, recreational facilities, and other public benefits (PRC Section 12220[g]). Forest land includes timberland which has been withdrawn from timber production, such as units of the state park system, national parks, and wilderness areas (PRC Section 4789.2[f]).
2. **Timberland** means land, other than land owned by the federal government and land designated by the board as experimental forest land, which is available for, and capable of, growing a crop of trees of a commercial species used to produce lumber and other forest products, including Christmas trees. Commercial species are determined by the board on a district basis (PRC

Section 4526). Timberland is typically capable of growing an average annual volume of wood fiber of at least 15 cubic feet per acre (Government Code Section 51104[f]). Furthermore, Timberland is generally capable of maintaining a stand of trees in perpetuity and not withdrawn or otherwise devoted to uses other than timber production (PRC Section 4789.2[g]).

3. **Timberland Production Zones** indicates an area that has been zoned pursuant to Government Code Section 51112 or 51113 and is devoted to and used for growing and harvesting timber, or for growing and harvesting timber and compatible uses (Government Code Section 51104[g]). A compatible use is any use which does not significantly detract from the use of the property for, or inhibit, growing and harvesting timber, and includes any of the following, unless in a specific instance such a use would be contrary to growing or harvesting timber (Government Code Section 51104[h]):
    a. Management for watershed.
    b. Management for fish and wildlife habitat or hunting and fishing.
    c. A use integrally related to the growing, harvesting and processing of forest products, including but not limited to roads, log landings, and log storage areas.
    d. The erection, construction, alteration, or maintenance of gas, electric, water, or communication transmission facilities.
    e. Grazing.
    f. A residence or other structure necessary for the management of land zoned as timberland production.

Within the Planning Area, there are no official timberland, forest land, or timberland production zones zoning districts or land use designations. Several locations in the Planning Area are covered with many trees and can be considered timberland, including the southeastern portion of the Planning Area along the North Fork American River; the northwest portion of the Planning Area north of Foresthill Road and southeast of I-80, including some parcels east of I-80 between the northern Planning Area boundary and development immediately south of the railroad; and the southwestern central portion of the Planning Area west of Auburn Folsom Road, extending from Rogers Lane to Millertown Road.

4.2.2 Regulatory Setting

Various policies and regulations are enforced at the federal, state, and local level to protect agriculture, forestry, and timberland resources, as outlined below.

a. Federal Regulations

Farmland Protection Policy Act

The Farmland Protection Policy Act is intended to minimize the impact federal programs have on the unnecessary and irreversible conversion of farmland to non-agricultural uses. It assures that to the extent possible federal programs are administered to be compatible with state, local units of government and private programs and policies to protect farmland. Projects are subject to Farmland Protection Policy Act requirements if they may irreversibly convert farmland (directly or indirectly) to non-agricultural use and are completed by a federal agency or with assistance from a federal agency.

b. State Regulations

Farmland Conservation Program Act

The California Farmland Conservancy Program Act, also known as Senate Bill 1142, established the California Farmland Conservancy Program, which provides grants for agricultural conservation easements. An agricultural conservation easement aims to maintain agricultural land in active production by preventing development on the subject parcel and prohibiting practices that would damage or interfere with the agricultural use of the land. Because the easement is a restriction on the deed of the property, the easement remains in effect even when the land changes ownership. While other benefits may accrue because the land is not developed (scenic and habitat values, for example), the primary use of the land is agricultural. Easements funded by the California Farmland Conservancy Program must be of a size and nature suitable for viable commercial agriculture.

Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program

The FMMP prepares, updates, and maintains Important Farmland Series Maps (Maps) as defined in subdivision (f) of Section 65560 of the Government Code, and prepares and maintains an automated map and data base system to record and report changes in the use of agricultural lands every two years on even numbered calendar years. Agricultural land is rated according to soil quality and irrigation status; the best quality land is called Prime Farmland. In preparing FMMP maps, the Department considers all information collected or received on the amount of land converted to or from agricultural use, and between agricultural categories.

Right to Farm Act 1981

The Right to Farm Act (Civil Code Section 3482.5) is designed to protect commercial agricultural operations from nuisance complaints that may arise when an agricultural operation is conducting business in a "manner consistent with proper and accepted customs." The code specifies that established operations that have been in business for three or more years that were not nuisances at the time they began shall not be considered a nuisance as a result of new land use.

Williamson Act

The California Land Conservation Act of 1965, Sections 51200 et seq. of the California Government Code, commonly referred to as the "Williamson Act," enables local governments to restrict the use of specific parcels of land to agricultural or related open space use. Landowners enter into contracts with participating cities and counties and agree to restrict their land to agriculture or open space use for a minimum of 10 years. In return, landowners receive property tax assessments that are much lower than normal because they are based upon farming and open space uses as opposed to full market (speculative) value.

Land Evaluation and Site Assessment Model

The DOC also employs a land evaluation and site assessment model that incorporates that of the Federal model and adds factors to evaluate a given project's size, the soil resource quality at the project site, water resource availability, surrounding a soil resource quality, water resource availability, surrounding agricultural lands, and surrounding protected resource lands. These factors are rated, weighted, and combined into numeric score that provides the basis for determining a project's potential significance relative to agricultural land conversion.

c. Local Regulations

Auburn Municipal Code

Auburn Municipal Code Section 159.038 details the uses permitted in the Exclusive Agricultural District (A-1) and uses permitted but subject to approval of a use permit. Section 95.27(B)(4)(b) provides protection of active farming operations from nuisance complaints.

Auburn General Plan 1993

The current City of Auburn General Plan was adopted on November 29, 1993. Agricultural and forestry resources are addressed in the Element. It identifies and outlines goals and policies for agriculture and forestry resources, including the following:

Goal 1: Preserve areas of natural vegetation, trees, topographic features, wildlife habitat, and riparian corridors.

Policy 1.8 Encourage preservation and protection from urban encroachment the rural/agricultural areas in Auburn community outside the Plan area.

The proposed comprehensive update of the City's General Plan, *Envision Auburn 2045,* would provide revised and refined goals, policies, and implementation programs as appropriate.

Placer County Code

Placer County Code Section 17.52.020 details the uses permitted in the agriculture (-AG) combining district, and Section 17.08.010 details the uses permitted in the Agricultural Exclusive (AE) district. Article 17.64 establishes the County's Williamson Act Lands Program, which provides protections for agricultural lands and open space uses. Section 5.24.040 establishes the County's right-to-farm ordinance in order to protect agricultural uses from nuisance complaints.

Placer County General Plan

The current Placer County General Plan was updated in May 2013. It identifies and outlines goals and policies for agriculture and forestry resources, including the following:

Goal 7.A: To provide for the long-term conservation and use of agriculturally-designated lands.

Policy 7.A.1 The County shall protect agriculturally-designated areas from conversion to non-agricultural uses.

Policy 7.A.2 The County shall ensure that unincorporated areas within city spheres of influence that are designated for agricultural uses are maintained in large parcel sizes of 10-acre minimums or larger.

Policy 7.A.3 The County shall encourage continued and, where possible, increased agricultural activities on lands suited to agricultural uses.

Policy 7.A.7 The County shall maintain agricultural lands in large parcel sizes to retain viable farming units.

Policy 7.A.11 The County shall support appropriate efforts by public and private conservation organizations to use conservation easements as a tool for agricultural preservation.

Policy 7.A.12 The County shall actively encourage enrollments of agricultural lands in its Williamson Act program, including the use of Farmland Security Zones.

Goal 7.B: To minimize existing and future conflicts between agricultural and non-agricultural uses in agriculturally-designated areas.

Policy 7.B.1 The County shall identify and maintain clear boundaries between urban/suburban and agricultural areas and require land use buffers between such uses where feasible, except as may be determined to be unnecessary or inappropriate within a Specific Plan as part of the Specific Plan approval. These buffers shall occur on the parcel for which the development permit is sought and shall favor protection of the maximum amount of farmland.

Policy 7.B.2 The County shall weigh the economic benefits of surface mining against the value of preserving agriculture when considering mineral extraction proposals on land designated for agricultural use.

Policy 7.B.3 The County shall consider fencing subdivided lands adjoining agricultural uses as a potential mitigation measure to reduce conflicts between residential and agricultural uses. Factors to be considered in implementing such a measure include:

a. The type of agricultural operation (i.e., livestock, orchard, timber, row crops);
b. The size of the lots to be created;
c. The presence or lack of fences in the area;
d. Existing natural barriers that prevent trespass; and,
e. Passage of wildlife.

Policy 7.B.4 The County shall continue to enforce the provisions of its Right-to-Farm Ordinance and of the existing state nuisance law.

Goal 7.E: To conserve Placer County's forest resources, enhance the quality and diversity of forest ecosystems, reduce conflicts between forestry and other uses, and encourage a sustained yield of forest products.

Policy 7.E.1 The County shall encourage the sustained productive use of forest land as a means of providing open space and conserving other natural resources.

Policy 7.E.2 The County shall discourage development that conflicts with timberland management.

Policy 7.E.4 The County shall encourage qualified landowners to enroll in the Timberland Production Zone (TPZ) program.

4.2.3 Impact Analysis

a. Significance Thresholds and Methodology

Significance Thresholds

Based on Appendix G of the *CEQA Guidelines* a project may be deemed to have a significant impact on agricultural and forestry resources if it would:

1. Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland) as shown on maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to nonagricultural use;
2. Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use or a Williamson Act contract;
3. Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code Section 12220(g)); timberland (as defined by Public Resources Code Section 4526); or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code Section 51104(g));
4. Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use; or
5. Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use.

Methodology

Agricultural impacts were evaluated based upon review of DOC farmland classifications for the Planning Area, regulatory requirements that apply to the various agricultural lands within the Planning Area, and the potential of future development to create an agricultural/urban interface. Forestry and timberland impacts were evaluated based upon review of current land uses and General Plan land use designations. An adverse effect would occur if a proposed development would have an impact on existing, mapped agricultural or forest land.

a. Project Impacts and Mitigation

Threshold 1:	Would the project convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?

Impact AG-1 DEVELOPMENT FACILITATED BY THE PROJECT WOULD NOT HINDER OR CONFLICT WITH THE CONTINUED OPERATION OF EXISTING AGRICULTURE IN THE PLANNING AREA. THE GENERAL PLAN WOULD NOT CHANGE EXISTING LAND USE DESIGNATIONS SUCH THAT THERE WOULD BE A DECREASE OF DESIGNATED AGRICULTURAL LAND WITHIN THE PLANNING AREA; THEREFORE, IMPACTS WOULD BE LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT.

As noted in Figure 4.2-1, the Planning Area contains approximately 191 acres of Important Farmland. Important Farmland (i.e., Prime Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance, and Unique Farmland) is mapped within the Planning Area. In addition to FMMP classifications, certain lands within the Planning Area may meet the definition of "prime agricultural land" under the LAFCo definition, which is broader than the USDA or FMMP definitions and includes grazing and rangeland. There are 1,903 acres of Grazing Land in the Planning Area.

As shown in Figure 4.2-1, there are several parcels designated as Farmland of Statewide Importance within the Planning Area. Some of these parcels, those located along the southwestern border of the city, would undergo land use designation changes under the General Plan Update. However, these changes would not differ greatly from the existing designations on these parcels. Specifically, parcels would be changing from Rural Estate to Agricultural Residential and the allowable density would not increase. The change of these land use designations would not require a modification to the existing land use on site or encourage the removal of agricultural uses from these parcels. Furthermore, as described in Section 2.4.2, *Growth and Development Areas: City of Auburn*, and Section 2.4.3, *Growth and Development Areas: Unincorporated Auburn*, the proposed General Plan Update emphasizes buildout in urbanized portions of the Planning Area.

Grazing Land in the Planning Area includes land located near the airport and adjacent to the State Route 49 corridor. It should be noted that the designation of land as Grazing Land indicates that the land may be suitable for grazing, but does not indicate that grazing occurs on the land itself. The proposed project would continue existing Placer County land use designations in most of these areas, allowing for increased commercial land uses, and near the airport to allow for increased industrial uses. This may result in the future removal of available grazing land in the Planning Area.

The proposed project would include the following policies in the Economic Development Element, Land Use Element, and Open Space and Conversation Element, which encourage integration of agriculture, including grazing and rangeland uses into the local economy and preservation of rural character through agricultural land use designations: Goal ED-1: Economic Diversity and Resilience, Policy ED-1.10: Supporting Local Agriculture, Goal LU-8: Rural, Agricultural, and Open Space Areas, Policy LU-8.1: Rural Context, Policy LU-8.2: Agriculture and Community Character, Policy LU-8.3: Agricultural Viability, Policy LU-8.4: Agricultural Buffers, Goal OSC-2: Earth Resources, and Policy OSC-2.3: Agricultural Soil. Implementation of these goals and policies would preserve and strengthen Auburn's existing agricultural economy and encourage larger parcel patterns to maintain community separators in the Planning Area, including those lands that qualify as LAFCo prime agricultural land due to continued grazing or rangeland use.

The project would not modify land use designations to more intense development types on lands containing or adjacent to Important Farmland, and the project does not propose changes to existing zoning for agricultural uses. Future development facilitated by the project would be concentrated in areas already planned for low-density or infill residential and mixed urban uses that are consistent with existing zoning and with the proposed General Plan land use designations. These designations do not expand the urban footprint toward agricultural lands in the unincorporated county. Furthermore, Placer County maintains a Right-to-Farm Ordinance, codified in the Placer County Code, which applies to the unincorporated portion of the Planning Area and protects ongoing agricultural operations from nuisance claims. While the City of Auburn does not maintain a separate Right-to-Farm ordinance, the General Plan Update explicitly supports the County's continued administration of Right-to-Farm provisions (Policy LU-8.3[g]). Future development in the Planning Area would therefore be subject to disclosure requirements and compatibility measures where applicable, ensuring that agricultural operations are protected and conflicts minimized. Overall, impacts to Important Farmland and impacts related to the conversion of FMMP-mapped farmland or LAFCo prime agricultural land to nonagricultural use would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures would be required.

Significance After Mitigation

Impacts would be less than significant without mitigation.

Threshold 2:	Would the project conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use or a Williamson Act contract?

Impact AG-2 THE PROJECT WOULD NOT CONFLICT WITH EXISTING ZONING FOR AGRICULTURAL USE OR WILLIAMSON ACT CONTRACTS. THERE WOULD BE NO IMPACT.

Lands enrolled in Williamson Act contracts within the Planning Area are located outside city limits and are situated away from the Growth and Development Areas identified in Section 2.4.2, *Growth and Development Areas: City of Auburn*, and Section 2.4.3, *Growth and Development Areas: Unincorporated Auburn*. As described under Impact AG-1, the project would not modify land use designations to more intense development types on lands containing or adjacent to agricultural land, and the project does not propose changes to existing zoning for agricultural uses. These agricultural lands are not designated for future urban development under the Auburn General Plan Update and are geographically separated from the areas where new housing, mixed-use development, or infrastructure improvements may occur. The proposed project would not change the status of Williamson Act-enrolled parcels, and no changes to existing agricultural zoning, agricultural preserves, or agriculturally-contracted land boundaries would occur as a result of the project. Moreover, adjacent agricultural lands would remain in their existing condition and would not be directly or indirectly affected by the project.

Agricultural lands under Williamson Act contracts are located outside the City's jurisdictional boundary and are not within or adjacent to areas identified for future growth; therefore, no conflicts with the Williamson Act would occur. The project would not result in cancellation or nonrenewal of existing Williamson Act contracts, nor would it induce development pressure on nearby agricultural properties. Accordingly, no impact would occur.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures would be required.

Significance After Mitigation

No impact would occur.

Threshold 3:	Would the project conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code Section 12220(g)); timberland (as defined by Public Resources Code Section 4526); or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code Section 51104(g))?
Threshold 4:	Would the project result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?

Impact AG-3 THE PROJECT WOULD NOT CONFLICT WITH EXISTING ZONING FOR FOREST LAND, TIMBERLAND, OR TIMBERLAND PRODUCTION, NOR RESULT IN THE LOSS OF FOREST LAND OR CONVERT FOREST LAND TO NON-FOREST USES. THERE WOULD BE NO IMPACT.

As discussed above in Section 4.2.1b, there are no timber production zones or forest lands within the Planning Area. Several locations in the Planning Area have soil and climatic conditions conducive

to such use, but it is not economical given existing land uses and values (City of Auburn 2024). The proposed project would include the following goal and policy from the Open Space and Conversation Element, which encourages preservation and enhancement of forest resources: Goal OSC-1: Open Space, and Policy OSC-1.1: Open Space Preservation. In addition, Policy OSC-5.2: Habitat Protection calls for preservation of oak woodlands, riparian areas, and other sensitive habitats. The General Plan Update does not propose land use designation changes for existing forest land or timberland. Because no forest land or timberland areas are within the Planning Area, there would be no impact on conversion of forest land or conflicts with land zoned for forest land, timberland, or timberland production.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures would be required.

Significance After Mitigation

No impact would occur.

Threshold 5:	Would the project involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?

Impact AG-4 THE PROJECT WOULD NOT RESULT IN THE CONVERSION OF FARMLAND TO NON-AGRICULTURAL USE OR FOREST LAND TO NON-FOREST USE. THIS IMPACT WOULD BE LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT.

The project would not involve changes in the existing environment that, due to their location or nature, could result in the conversion of Farmland to non-agricultural use or the conversion of forest land to non-forest use. As discussed under Impact AG-1, given that (1) the project does not modify land use designations adjacent to agricultural lands, (2) the General Plan Update directs future growth toward existing urbanized areas rather than agricultural areas, (3) the project site is located within a predominantly developed setting, and (4) numerous General Plan policies emphasize agricultural preservation and land use compatibility, the project would not involve changes to the existing environment that could lead to the conversion of Farmland to non-agricultural use.

As discussed under Impact AG-3, there are no forest or timberland resources on or in the vicinity of the project site, and therefore, the project would not involve other changes in the existing environment which could result in conversion of forest land to non-forest use.

For the reasons stated above, impacts involving other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use, would be less than significant. No mitigation is required.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures would be required.

Significance After Mitigation

Impacts would be less than significant without mitigation.

4.2.4 Cumulative Impacts

The geographic scope for cumulative impacts to agriculture and forestry resources is the Planning Area and immediately adjacent land in unincorporated Placer County. This scope is appropriate because the project has the potential to convert adjacent agricultural land within the unincorporated county to a non-agricultural use. Furthermore, the FMMP assesses the acreage of Important Farmland converted to urban uses on a countywide basis. The cumulative analysis considers the nearby past, present, and reasonably future plans and projects listed in Table 3-1 in Section 3, *Environmental Setting,* in addition to the proposed plan.

Cumulative development would increase population, residential units, and commercial space in the region. This growth could gradually transform the region's agricultural land uses to non-agricultural uses to a certain extent, and cumulative impacts to agricultural land are considered to be significant. As described under Impact AG-1, implementation of the proposed project would not the result in the direct conversion of Important Farmland. Therefore, the project's contribution to conversion of Important Farmland pursuant to the FMMP of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use would not be cumulatively considerable.

Cumulative development would have the potential to create compatibility conflicts relating to the interface of agricultural uses and new urban development. However, the County of Placer Right to Farm Ordinance supports the continued use of farmlands within the unincorporated county for agricultural production and is intended to minimize potential conflict between agricultural and non-agricultural land uses. Therefore, cumulative impacts related to the conversion of Farmland to non-agricultural use due to changes in the existing environment would be less than significant.

4.3 Air Quality

This section analyzes the potential effects on air quality related to implementation of the project, including impacts due to construction and operational activities, and impacts to nearby sensitive receptors.

4.3.1 Setting

a. Climate and Topography

Air quality is affected by the rate and location of pollutant emissions and by climatic conditions that influence the movement and dispersion of pollutants. Atmospheric conditions, such as wind speed, wind direction, and air temperature gradients, along with local and regional topography, influence the relationship between air pollutant emissions and air quality.

The Planning Area is in the Sacramento Valley Air Basin (SVAB), which is bounded by the coast ranges on the west and the Sierra Nevada Mountains on the east. The weather is characterized by hot, dry summers and mild, wet winters.

The mountains surrounding the SVAB create a barrier to airflow, which leads to the entrapment of air pollutants when meteorological conditions are unfavorable for transport and dilution. Poor air movement occurs most frequently in fall and winter when high-pressure cells are present over the Planning Area and meteorological conditions are stable. The lack of surface winds during these periods, combined with the reduced vertical flow caused by less surface heating, reduces the influx of air and results in the concentration of pollutants. Surface concentrations of air pollutant emissions are highest when these conditions occur in combination with agricultural burning activities or temperature inversions, which hamper dispersion by creating a ceiling over the area and trapping air pollutants near the ground.

Winter daytime temperatures in the SVAB average in the low 50s, with nighttime temperatures averaging in the low 40s. Summer daytime temperatures typically range from the 50s, to over 100 degrees. More than half the total annual precipitation falls during the winter rainy season (November to February).

b. Air Pollutants of Primary Concern

Criteria air pollutants are defined as those pollutants for which the federal and state governments have established air quality standards for outdoor or ambient concentrations to protect public health with a determined margin of safety. Ozone is generally considered to be a regional pollutant because it affects air quality on a regional scale. Pollutants such as carbon monoxide (CO), nitrogen dioxide (NO_2), and sulfur dioxide (SO_2) are considered local pollutants because they tend to accumulate in the air locally. Coarse particulate matter (PM_{10}) and fine particulate matter ($PM_{2.5}$) are considered both regional and local pollutants.

Ozone

Ozone is a highly oxidative, unstable gas, produced by a photochemical reaction (triggered by sunlight) between nitrogen oxides (NO_x) and reactive organic gas (ROG)/volatile organic compounds

(VOC).[1] ROG are composed of non-methane hydrocarbons (with some specific exclusions), and NO_X is composed of different chemical combinations of nitrogen and oxygen, mainly nitric oxide and NO_2. NO_X is formed during the combustion of fuels, while ROG are formed during combustion and evaporation of organic solvents. As a highly reactive molecule, ozone readily combines with many different components of the atmosphere. Consequently, high levels of ozone tend to exist only while high ROG and NO_X levels are present to sustain the ozone formation process. Once the precursors have been depleted, ozone levels rapidly decline. Because these reactions occur on a regional rather than local scale, ozone is considered a regional pollutant. Groups most sensitive to ozone include children, the elderly, people with respiratory disorders, and people who exercise strenuously outdoors (United States Environmental Protection Agency [USEPA] 2024a). Depending on the level of exposure, ozone can:

- Cause coughing and sore or scratchy throat;
- Make it more difficult to breathe deeply and vigorously and cause pain when taking a deep breath;
- Inflame and damage the airways;
- Make the lungs more susceptible to infection;
- Aggravate lung diseases such as asthma, emphysema, and chronic bronchitis; and/or
- Increase the frequency of asthma attacks.

Carbon Monoxide

CO is a localized pollutant that is found in high concentrations only near its source. The major source of CO, a colorless, odorless, poisonous gas, is the incomplete combustion of petroleum fuels by automobile traffic. Therefore, elevated concentrations are usually only found near areas of high traffic volumes. Other sources of CO include the incomplete combustion of petroleum fuels at power plants and fuel combustion from wood stoves and fireplaces during the winter. When CO levels are elevated outdoors, they can be of particular concern for people with some types of heart disease. People with heart disease have restricted blood flow which results in a lack of oxygen to the heart muscle. These people are especially vulnerable to the effects of CO when exercising or under increased stress, when the heart needs more oxygen than usual. In these situations, short-term exposure to elevated CO may result in reduced oxygen to the heart accompanied by chest pain also known as angina (USEPA 2024b). At higher concentrations, CO exposure can be fatal (USEPA 2024c).

Nitrogen Dioxide

NO_2 is a by-product of fuel combustion; the primary sources are motor vehicles and industrial boilers and furnaces. The principal form of NO_x produced by combustion is nitric oxide, but nitric oxide reacts rapidly to form NO_2, creating the mixture of nitric oxide and NO_2, commonly called NO_x. NO_2 is a reactive, oxidizing gas and an acute irritant capable of damaging cell linings in the respiratory tract. Such exposures over short periods can aggravate respiratory diseases, particularly asthma, leading to respiratory symptoms (such as coughing, wheezing, or difficulty breathing), and increased hospital admissions and visits to emergency rooms. Longer exposures to elevated concentrations of NO_2 may contribute to the development of asthma and potentially increase susceptibility to respiratory infections. People with asthma, as well as children and the elderly are

[1] The California Air Resources Board (CARB) defines VOC and ROG similarly as, "any compound of carbon excluding carbon monoxide, carbon dioxide, carbonic acid, metallic carbides or carbonates, and ammonium carbonate," with the exception that VOC are compounds that participate in atmospheric photochemical reactions. For the purposes of this analysis, ROG and VOC are considered comparable in terms of mass emissions, and the term ROG is used in this EIR.

generally at greater risk for the health effects of NO_2 (USEPA 2024d). NO_2 absorbs blue light and causes a reddish-brown cast to the atmosphere and reduced visibility. It can also contribute to the formation of ozone/smog and acid rain.

Particulate Matter

Suspended atmospheric PM_{10} and $PM_{2.5}$ is comprised of finely divided solids and liquids such as dust, soot, aerosols, fumes, and mists. Both PM_{10} and $PM_{2.5}$ are directly emitted into the atmosphere as by-products of fuel combustion and wind erosion of soil and unpaved roads. Particulate matter is also created in the atmosphere through chemical reactions. The characteristics, sources, and potential health effects associated with PM_{10} and $PM_{2.5}$ can be very different. PM_{10} is generally associated with dust mobilized by wind and vehicles while $PM_{2.5}$ is generally associated with combustion processes as well as formation in the atmosphere as a secondary pollutant through chemical reactions. PM_{10} can cause increased respiratory disease, decreased lung function, cancer, premature death, irregular heartbeat, nonfatal heart attack. For $PM_{2.5}$, short-term exposures (up to 24-hours duration) have been associated with respiratory issues such as acute bronchitis and asthma attacks. In addition, $PM_{2.5}$ can cause premature mortality, increased hospital admissions for heart or lung issues, and restricted activity days. These adverse health effects have been reported primarily in infants, children, and older adults with preexisting heart or lung diseases (USEPA 2024e).

Sulfur Dioxide

SO_2 is included in a group of highly reactive gases known as “oxides of sulfur.” The largest sources of SO_2 emissions are from fossil fuel combustion at power plants and other industrial facilities. Smaller sources of SO_2 emissions include industrial processes such as extracting metal from ore and burning fuels with a high sulfur content by locomotives, large ships, and off-road equipment. Short-term exposures to SO_2 can harm the human respiratory system and make breathing difficult. People with asthma, particularly children, are sensitive to these effects of SO_2 (USEPA 2024f).

Toxic Air Contaminants

Toxic air contaminants (TAC) are a diverse group of air pollutants which may cause or contribute to an increase in mortality or an increase in serious illness, or which may pose a present or potential hazard to human health (CARB 2024a). TACs include both organic and inorganic chemical substances that may be emitted from a variety of common sources, including gasoline stations, motor vehicles, dry cleaners, industrial operations, painting operations, and research and teaching facilities. One of the main sources of TACs in California is diesel engine exhaust that contains solid material known as diesel particulate matter (DPM). More than 90 percent of DPM is less than one micron in diameter (about 1/70th the diameter of a human hair) and thus is a subset of $PM_{2.5}$. Because of their extremely small size, these particles can be inhaled and eventually trapped in the bronchial and alveolar regions of the lungs (CARB 2024b).

TACs are different than criteria pollutants because ambient air quality standards have not been established for TACs. TACs occurring at extremely low levels may still cause health effects and it is typically difficult to identify levels of exposure that do not produce adverse health effects. TAC impacts are described by carcinogenic risk and by chronic (i.e., long duration) and acute (i.e., severe but of short duration) adverse effects on human health.

TACs include both organic and inorganic chemical substances. While DPM is a main source, TACs may be emitted from a variety of common sources, including gasoline stations, motor vehicles, dry cleaners, industrial operations, painting operations, and research and teaching facilities. People exposed to toxic air pollutants at sufficient concentrations and durations may have an increased chance of developing cancer or experiencing other serious health effects.

c. Air Quality Standards and Attainment

The federal and state governments have authority under the Federal and State Clean Air Act (CAA) to regulate emissions of airborne pollutants and have established ambient air quality standards (AAQS) for the protection of public health. An air quality standard is defined as "the maximum amount of a pollutant averaged over a specified period of time that can be present in outdoor air without harming public health" (CARB 2019a). The USEPA is the federal agency designated to administer air quality regulation, while CARB is the state equivalent in California. Federal and state AAQS have been established for six criteria pollutants: ozone, CO, NO_2, SO_2, PM_{10}, $PM_{2.5}$, and lead. AAQS are set at a level intended to protect public health, including the health of at-risk populations such as children and elderly (USEPA 2015). In addition to the federal criteria pollutants, the California Ambient Air Quality Standards (CAAQS) also specify standards for visibility-reducing particles, sulfates, hydrogen sulfide, and vinyl chloride (CARB 2019b). Table 4.3-1 lists the current National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) as well as the CAAQS for regulated pollutants.

Table 4.3-1 Federal and State Ambient Air Quality Standards

Pollutant	Averaging Time	NAAQS	CAAQS
Ozone	1-Hour	–	0.09 ppm
	8-Hour	0.070 ppm	0.070 ppm
Carbon Monoxide	8-Hour	9.0 ppm	9.0 ppm
	1-Hour	35.0 ppm	20.0 ppm
Nitrogen Dioxide	Annual	0.053 ppm	0.030 ppm
	1-Hour	0.100 ppm	0.18 ppm
Sulfur Dioxide	Annual	–	–
	24-Hour	–	0.04 ppm
	1-Hour	0.075 ppm	0.25 ppm
PM_{10}	Annual	–	20 µg/m³
	24-Hour	150 µg/m³	50 µg/m³
$PM_{2.5}$	Annual	9 µg/m³	12 µg/m³
	24-Hour	35 µg/m³	–
Lead	30-Day Average	–	1.5 µg/m³
	3-Month Average	0.15 µg/m³	–

NAAQS = National Ambient Air Quality Standards; CAAQS = California Ambient Air Quality Standards; ppm = parts per million; µg/m³ = micrograms per cubic meter; PM_{10} = particulate matter smaller than 10 microns in diameter; $PM_{2.5}$ = particulate matter smaller than 2.5 microns in diameter

Source: CARB 2016; USEPA 2024g

USEPA and CARB designate air basins or portions of air basins and counties as being in "attainment" or "nonattainment" for each of the criteria pollutants. Areas that do not meet the AAQS standards are classified as nonattainment areas. The NAAQS (other than ozone, PM_{10}, $PM_{2.5}$, and those based

on annual averages or arithmetic mean) are not to be exceeded more than once per year. The NAAQS for ozone, PM_{10}, and $PM_{2.5}$ are based on statistical calculations over one- to three-year periods, depending on the pollutant. The CAAQS are not to be exceeded during a three-year period. The attainment status for Placer County is included in Table 4.3-2.

Table 4.3-2 Attainment Status of Criteria Pollutants in Placer County

Pollutant		State Designation	Federal Designation
Ozone	1-Hour	Nonattainment	--
	8-Hour	Nonattainment	Nonattainment
PM_{10}	Annual	Nonattainment	Attainment
	24-Hour	Nonattainment	--
$PM_{2.5}$	Annual	Attainment	Unclassified
	24-Hour	--	Nonattainment
CO	8-Hour	Attainment	Attainment
	1-Hour	Attainment	Attainment
NO_2	Annual	Attainment	Attainment
	1-Hour	Attainment	Unclassified
SO_2	Annual	Attainment	Attainment
	24-Hour	Attainment	Attainment
	1-Hour	Attainment	Attainment
Lead	30-Day Average	Attainment	--
	3-Month Average	--	Attainment

Sources: PCAPCD 2017

Pursuant to the CAA, USEPA designates areas as attainment, nonattainment, or maintenance for each criteria pollutant based on whether the NAAQS have been achieved. Whether an area meets the state and federal standards is based on air quality monitoring data. Areas that are unclassified have insufficient monitoring data for a specific pollutant to determine attainment or nonattainment status, although unclassified areas are typically treated as attainment for a specific pollutant. Since attainment and nonattainment designation is pollutant-specific, an area may be classified as nonattainment for one pollutant and attainment for another. Similarly, because the state and federal standards differ, an area could be classified as attainment for the federal standards of a pollutant and as nonattainment for the state standards of the same pollutant. The region is designated as a nonattainment area for the federal and state ozone standards, the state PM_{10}, and federal $PM_{2.5}$ standards. The region is designated unclassified or attainment for all other ambient air quality standards (Placer County Air Pollution Control District [PCAPCD] 2017).

d. Current Ambient Air Quality

The Planning Area is within the PCAPCD. PCAPCD is responsible for achieving and maintaining the state and federal AAQS within its jurisdiction. PCAPCD operates a network of air quality monitoring stations throughout the SVAB. Monitoring stations aim to measure ambient concentrations of pollutants and determine whether ambient air quality meets the state and federal standards. One monitoring station is located within the Planning Area at 11645 Atwood Road. This station measures

8-hour ozone, hourly ozone, and $PM_{2.5}$. The Roseville-North Sunrise Boulevard Station, located at 151 North Sunrise Boulevard in Roseville, is the closest air monitoring station to the Planning Area that measures PM_{10} and NO_2. This station is approximately 15 miles southeast of the Planning Area. Table 4.3-3 indicates the number of days each federal and state standard was exceeded at the 11645 Atwood Road and Roseville-North Sunrise Boulevard air monitoring stations.

Table 4.3-3 Ambient Air Quality Data

Pollutant	2022	2023	2024
8 Hour Ozone (ppm), 8-Hour Average[1]	0.080	0.067	0.082
Number of days of federal exceedances (>0.070 ppm)	13	0	24
Ozone (ppm), Worst Hour[1]	0.096	0.074	0.103
Number of days of state exceedances (>0.09 ppm)	1	0	1
Nitrogen Dioxide (ppm) - Worst Hour[2]	0.036	0.041	0.036
Number of days of state exceedances (>0.18 ppm)	0	0	0
Number of days of federal exceedances (>0.10 ppm)	0	0	0
Particulate Matter 10 microns, μg/m³, Worst 24 Hours[2]	0.082	0.048	0.044
Number of days of state exceedances (>50 μg/m³)	4	0	0
Number of days above federal standard (>150 μg/m³)	0	0	0
Particulate Matter <2.5 microns, μg/m³, Worst 24 Hours[1]	0.213	0.025	0.016
Number of days above federal standard (>35 μg/m³)	8	0	0

[1] Measurements were taken from the 11645 Atwood Road Station

[2] Measurements taken from the Roseville – North Sunrise Boulevard Station.

Source: CARB 2024c

e. Sensitive Receptors

Sensitive receptors are defined as facilities or land uses that include members of the population that are particularly sensitive to the effects of air pollutants, such as children, the elderly, and people with illnesses. Land uses may include residences, schools, childcare centers, playgrounds, retirement homes, convalescent homes, hospitals, and medical clinics. The Sutter Auburn Faith Hospital is located in the Planning Area at 11815 Education Street in Auburn. Additionally, residences, schools, childcare centers, playgrounds, retirement homes, and medical clinics are located within and near the Planning Area.

4.3.2 Regulatory Setting

a. Federal Regulations

Federal Clean Air Act

The Federal CAA governs air quality in the United States. The CAA is administered by USEPA at the federal level, CARB at the State level, and by the Air Quality Management Districts at the regional and local levels. The CAA of 1970 and the CAA Amendments of 1971 required the USEPA to establish the NAAQS, with states retaining the option to adopt more stringent standards or to include other

specific pollutants. On April 2, 2007, the Supreme Court found that CO_2 is an air pollutant covered by the CAA; however, no NAAQS have been established for CO_2.

The USEPA is responsible for enforcing the federal CAA and establishing NAAQS. NAAQS are required under the 1977 CAA and subsequent amendments. The USEPA regulates emission sources that are under the exclusive authority of the federal government, such as aircraft, ships, and certain types of locomotives. The agency has jurisdiction over emission sources outside State waters (e.g., beyond the outer continental shelf) and establishes various emission standards, including those for vehicles sold in states other than California. Automobiles sold in California must meet the stricter emission standards established by CARB.

USEPA Emission Standards for New Off-Road Equipment

In 1994, USEPA established emission standards for hydrocarbons, NO_X, CO, and PM to regulate new pieces of off-road equipment. These emission standards came to be known as Tier 1. Since that time, increasingly more stringent Tier 2, Tier 3, and Tier 4 (interim and final) standards were adopted by USEPA, as well as by CARB. Each adopted emission standard was phased in over time. New engines built in and after 2015 across all horsepower sizes must meet Tier 4 final emission standards. In other words, newly manufactured engines cannot exceed the emissions established for Tier 4 final emissions standards.

b. State Regulations

California Clean Air Act

The California CAA allows the state to adopt ambient air quality standards and other regulations provided that they are at least as stringent as federal standards. CARB, a part of the California Environmental Protection Agency (CalEPA), is responsible for the coordination and administration of both federal and state air pollution control programs within California, including setting the CAAQS. CARB also conducts research, compiles emission inventories, develops suggested control measures, and provides oversight of local programs. CARB establishes emissions standards for motor vehicles sold in California, consumer products (such as hairspray, aerosol paints, and barbecue lighter fluid), and various types of commercial equipment. It also sets fuel specifications to further reduce vehicular emissions. CARB also has primary responsibility for the development of California's State Implementation Plan (SIP), for which it works closely with the federal government and the local air districts.

California State Implementation Plan

The State Implementation Plan (SIP) is a collection of documents that set forth the State's strategies for achieving the NAAQS. In California, the SIP is a compilation of new and previously submitted plans, programs (such as monitoring, modeling, and permitting), district rules, State regulations, and federal controls. CARB is the lead agency for all purposes related to the SIP under State law. Local air quality management districts and other agencies, such as the California Department of Pesticide Regulation and the California Bureau of Automotive Repair, prepare SIP elements and submit them to CARB for review and approval. CARB then forwards the SIP revisions to the USEPA for approval and publication in the Federal Register. The items included in the California SIP are listed in Title 40, Code of Federal Regulations, Section 52.220.

California Low-Emission Vehicle Program

CARB first adopted low-emission vehicle (LEV) program standards in 1990. These first LEV standards ran from 1994 through 2003. LEV II regulations, running from 2004 through 2010, represent continuing progress in emission reductions. As the State's passenger vehicle fleet continues to grow and more sport utility vehicles and pickup trucks are used as passenger cars rather than work vehicles, the more stringent LEV II standards were adopted to provide reductions necessary for California to meet federally mandated clean air goals outlined in the 1994 SIP. In 2012, CARB adopted the LEV III amendments to California's LEV regulations. These amendments, also known as the Advanced Clean Car Program, include more stringent emission standards for model years 2017 through 2025 for both criteria pollutants and greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions for new passenger vehicles.

California On-Road Heavy-Duty Vehicle Program

CARB has adopted standards for emissions from various types of new on-road heavy-duty vehicles. Title 13, California Code of Regulations, Section 1956.8 contains California's exhaust emission standards for on-road heavy-duty engines and vehicles, and test procedures. CARB has also adopted programs to reduce emissions from in-use heavy-duty vehicles including the Heavy-Duty Diesel Vehicle Idling Reduction Program, the Heavy-Duty Diesel In-Use Compliance Program, the Public Bus Fleet Rule and Engine Standards, and the School Bus Program and others.

California Airborne Toxics Control Measure for Asbestos

CARB has adopted Airborne Toxics Control Measures for sources that emit a particular TAC. If there is a safe threshold for a substance at which there is no toxic effect, the control measure must reduce exposure below that threshold. If there is no safe threshold, the measure must incorporate Best Available Control Technology to minimize emissions. In July 2001, CARB approved an Air Toxic Control Measure for construction, grading, quarrying and surface mining operations to minimize emissions of naturally occurring asbestos. The regulation requires application of best management practices to control fugitive dust in areas known to have naturally occurring asbestos and requires notification to the local air district prior to commencement of ground-disturbing activities. The measure establishes specific testing, notification and engineering controls prior to grading, quarrying, or surface mining in construction zones where naturally occurring asbestos is located on projects of any size. There are additional notification and engineering controls at work sites larger than one acre in size. These projects require the submittal of a "Dust Mitigation Plan" and approval by the air district prior to the start of a project.

Construction sometimes requires the demolition of existing buildings where construction occurs. Buildings often include materials containing asbestos. Asbestos is also found in a natural state, known as naturally occurring asbestos. Exposure and disturbance of rock and soil that naturally contain asbestos can result in the release of fibers into the air and consequent exposure to the public. Asbestos most commonly occurs in ultramafic rock that has undergone partial or complete alteration to serpentine rock (serpentinite) and often contains chrysotile asbestos. In addition, another form of asbestos, tremolite, can be found associated with ultramafic rock, particularly near faults. Sources of asbestos emissions include unpaved roads or driveways surfaced with ultramafic rock, construction activities in ultramafic rock deposits, or rock quarrying activities where ultramafic rock is present.

Naturally occurring asbestos (NOA) is known to be present in Placer County. In 2006, the California Department of Conservation published Special Report 190, which mapped the relative likelihood of NOA occurrence within the county. As shown in this report, the City of Auburn is in an area less likely to have NOA than other areas of the county, particularly the eastern county. However, NOA may still be encountered within the Planning Area. (California Department of Conservation 2006)

Verified Diesel Emission Control Strategies

CARB has developed Verified Diesel Emission Control Strategies (VDECS), which are devices, systems, or strategies used to achieve the highest level of pollution control from existing off-road vehicles, to help reduce emissions from existing engines. VDECS are designed primarily for the reduction of DPM emissions and have been verified by CARB. There are three levels of VDECS, the most effective of which is the Level 3 VDECS. Tier 4 engines are not required to install VDECS because they already meet the emissions standards for lower-tired equipment with installed controls. USEPA and CARB tiered off-road emission standards only apply to new engines.

Tanner Air Toxics Act and Air Toxics Hot Spots Information and Assessment Act

TACs in California are primarily regulated through the Toxic Air Containment Identification and Control Act of 1983 (Assembly Bill [AB] 1807), also known as the Tanner Act, and the Air Toxics Hot Spots Information and Assessment Act of 1987 (AB 2588), also known as the Hot Spots Act. Under AB 1807, CARB identifies substances in ambient air that may cause or contribute to adverse human health effects, including cancer and noncancer impacts. Once a substance is identified as a TAC, CARB may adopt airborne toxic control measures (ATCMs) or other regulatory actions to reduce emissions from stationary and mobile sources. CARB has identified more than 21 priority TACs and has adopted USEPA list of hazardous air pollutants (HAPs) as TACs for purposes of California regulation.

AB 2588, commonly known as the Hot Spots Act, requires certain stationary sources to report TAC emissions and, where applicable, to prepare health risk assessments to evaluate potential cancer and noncancer risks to nearby receptors. Facilities posing elevated health risks may be subject to public notification and risk reduction requirements. CARB, local air districts, and the Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA) collectively implement the Hot Spots program to assess and manage localized TAC exposure risks.

c. Regional and Local Regulations

Auburn Municipal Code

Auburn Municipal Code Sections 71.75 - 71.99 establish limitations on engine idling to reduce air pollution from motor vehicle exhaust; Sections 100.15 - 100.18 outline regulations regarding burning including permits and approved “burn day” hours.

Auburn General Plan 1993

The current City of Auburn General Plan was adopted on November 29, 1993. Air quality is addressed in the Land Use Element. It identifies and outlines goals and policies for air quality, including the following:

Goal 4: Enhance air quality.

Policy 4.1 Review proposed development projects for their potential adverse impacts on air quality

Policy 4.2 Continue to participate in regional solutions to air quality problems.

The General Plan includes several implementation programs to meet its goals and policies that have since been largely integrated into City's municipal code, outlined above.

Placer County Municipal Code

Placer County's Municipal Code Article 10.14 establishes limitations on engine idling to reduce air pollution from motor vehicle exhaust; Article 10.20 establishes the County's trip reduction program to implement measures that will work towards attainment of ambient air quality standards; and Article 8.16 establishes recollection and storage practices to reduce odors related to waste management.

Placer County General Plan

The Placer County General Plan, which was last updated in May 2013, provides guidance in land use and development policies for implementation by the PCAPCD. The following General Plan policies from the Air Quality section of the Natural Resources Element are related to air quality:

Policy 6.F.5 The County shall encourage project proponents to consult early in the planning process with the County regarding the applicability of Countywide indirect and areawide source programs and transportation control measures (TCM) programs. Project review shall also address energy-efficient building and site designs and proper storage, use, and disposal of hazardous materials.

Policy 6.F.6 The County shall require project-level environmental review to include identification of potential air quality impacts and designation of design and other appropriate mitigation measures or offset fees to reduce impacts. The County shall dedicate staff to work with project proponents and other agencies in identifying, ensuring the implementation of, and monitoring the success of mitigation measures.

Policy 6.F.7 The County shall encourage development to be located and designed to minimize direct and indirect air pollutants.

Policy 6.F.9 In reviewing project applications, the County shall consider alternatives or amendments that reduce emissions of air pollutants.

Policy 6.F.10 The County may require new development projects to submit an air quality analysis for review and approval. Based on this analysis, the County shall require appropriate mitigation measures consistent with the PCAPCD's 1991 Air Quality Attainment Plan (or updated edition).

Policy 6.F.11 The County shall apply the buffer standards described on page 20 in Part I of this Policy Document and meteorological analysis to provide separation between possible emission/nuisance sources (such as industrial and commercial uses) and residential uses

Placer County Air Pollution Control District

The Placer County Air Pollution Control District (PCAPCD) is the regulatory agency responsible for developing and adopting an Air Quality Management Plan to bring Placer County into compliance with federal and state clean air standards. PCAPCD includes portions of the Sacramento Valley, Mountain, and Lake Tahoe Air Basins. PCAPCD is also responsible for adopting and enforcing rules and regulations concerning air pollutant sources, issuing permits to businesses to ensure compliance with air quality regulations, inspecting stationary sources of air pollutants, responding to citizen complaints, monitoring ambient air quality and meteorological conditions, conducting public education campaigns, and many other activities (PCACPD 2023a). The following PCAPCD regulations, summarized below, pertain to air quality emissions:

Rule 202 **Visible Emissions:** A person shall not discharge into the atmosphere from any single source of emissions whatsoever any air contaminant for a period or periods aggregating more than three (3) in any one (1) hour which is:

a. As dark or darker in shade as that designated as No. 1 on the Ringelmann Chart, as published by the United States Bureau of Mines, or
b. Of such opacity as to obscure an observer's view to a degree equal to or greater than does smoke described in Subsection (A) above.

Rule 205 **Nuisance:** A person shall not discharge from any source whatsoever such quantities of air contaminants or other material which cause injury, detriment, nuisance or annoyance to any considerable number of persons or to the public, or which endanger the comfort, repose, health or safety of any such persons or the public, or which cause to have a natural tendency to cause injury or damage to business or property.

Rule 217 **Cutback and Emulsified Asphalt Paving Materials:** A person shall not discharge to the atmosphere volatile organic compounds (VOC's) caused by the use or manufacture of Cutback or Emulsified asphalts for paving, road construction or road maintenance, unless such manufacture or use complies with the provisions of this Rule.

Rule 218 **Architectural Coating:** To limit the quantity of volatile organic compounds in architectural coatings supplied, sold, offered for sale, applied, solicited for application, or manufactured for use within the District.

Rule 225 **Wood Burning Appliances:** To limit emissions of particulate matter entering the atmosphere from the operation of a wood burning appliance.

Rule 228 **Fugitive Dust:** To reduce the amount of particulate matter entrained in the ambient air, or discharged into the ambient air, as a result of anthropogenic (manmade) fugitive dust sources by requiring actions to prevent, reduce, or mitigate fugitive dust emissions.

Rule 231 **Industrial, Institutional, and Commercial Boilers, Steam Generators, and Process Heaters:** To limit the emission of NO_x from industrial, institutional and commercial, boilers, steam generators and process heaters.

Rule 242 **Stationary Internal Combustion Engines:** To limit the emission of NO_x and CO from stationary internal combustion engines

Rule 246 **Natural Gas-fired Water Heaters:** To limit the emission of NO_x from natural gas-fired water heaters with a rated heat input capacity less than 75,000 British Thermal Units per hour (Btu/hr).

Rule 247 **Natural Gas-fired Water Heaters, Small Boilers and Process Heaters:** To limit the emissions of NO) from the use of natural gas-fired water heaters, small boilers and process heaters with a rated heat input capacity of greater than or equal to 75,000 Btu/hr and less than 5 million Btu/hr in Placer County.

Rule 303 **Prescribed Burning Smoke Management:** To establish standards and administrative requirements under which agricultural burning, including prescribed burning, may occur in a reasonably regulated manner that manages the generation of smoke and reduces the emission of particulates and other air contaminants from such burning.

Rule 304 **Land Developments Burning Smoke Management:** To establish standards and administrative requirements under which land development burning, may occur in a reasonably regulated manner that manages the generation of smoke and reduces the emission of particulates and other air contaminates from such burning.

Rule 501 **General Permit Requirements:** To provide an orderly procedure for the review of new stationary sources of air pollution and modification and operation of existing sources through the issuance of permits. Stationary sources which would emit more than 2 pounds in any 24 hour period of any pollutants would be subject to the District's permit requirement.

Minimum dust control requirements during construction, in accordance with PCAPCD Rule 228, would include the following:

- 401.1 – Unpaved areas subject to vehicle traffic must be stabilized by being kept wet, treated with a chemical dust suppressant, or covered. In geographic ultramafic rock units, or when naturally occurring asbestos, ultramafic rock, or serpentine is to be disturbed, the cover material shall contain less than 0.25 percent asbestos as determined using the bulk sampling method for asbestos in Section 502.
- 401.2 – The speed of any vehicles and equipment traveling across unpaved areas must be no more than 15 miles per hour unless the road surface and surrounding area is sufficiently stabilized to prevent vehicles and equipment traveling more than 15 miles per hour from emitting dust exceeding Ringelmann 2 or visible emissions from crossing the 2045 General Plan boundary line.
- 401.3 – Storage piles and disturbed areas not subject to vehicular traffic must be stabilized by being kept wet, treated with a chemical dust suppressant, or covered when material is not being added to or removed from the pile.
- 401.4 – Prior to any ground disturbance, including grading, excavating, and land clearing, sufficient water must be applied to the area to be disturbed to prevent emitting dust exceeding Ringelmann 2 and to minimize visible emissions from crossing the boundary line.
- 401.5 – Construction vehicles leaving the site must be cleaned to prevent dust, silt, mud, and dirt from being released or tracked off site.
- 401.6 – When wind speeds are high enough to result in dust emissions crossing the boundary line, despite the application of dust mitigation measures, grading and earthmoving operations shall be suspended.

- 401.7 – No trucks are allowed to transport excavated material off-site unless the trucks are maintained such that no spillage can occur from holes or other openings in cargo compartments, and loads are either; 4
  - 401.7.1 Covered with tarps; or
  - 401.7.2 Wetted and loaded such that the material does not touch the front, back, or sides of the cargo compartment at any point less than six inches from the top and that no point of the load extends above the top of the cargo compartment.
- 402 – A person shall take actions such as surface stabilization, establishment of a vegetative cover, or paving, to minimize wind-driven dust from inactive disturbed surface areas.

Additionally, under Rule 228, projects that would disturb greater than one acre of the site's surface must submit a Dust Control Plan (DCP) to the District for approval prior to the start of earth-disturbing activities. A DCP is also required if established as a Condition of Approval of a discretionary permit.

Placer County Regional Transportation Plan

The 2040 Regional Transportation Plan (2040 RTP) was developed under the direction of Placer County Transportation Planning Agency (PCTPA). Each of the six cities within Placer County, including the City of Auburn, are members of PCTPA. While predominately rural areas such as Placer County are not subject to the same requirements as urban regions, discussion of the issue in the 2040 RTP provides the opportunity to identify existing and future efforts that will contribute to the emission reduction targets. The 2040 RTP contains many goals and policies to reduce vehicle trips and improve air quality, most notably in the areas of non-motorized transportation, transportation systems management, Integrated Land Use, Air Quality, and Transportation Planning (PCTPA 2019). Specific policies include the following:

- Encourage jurisdictions to build complete street improvement projects, which incorporate bicycle, pedestrian, and transit facilities.
- Support regional Transportation Demand Management (TDM) programs as a strategy for education and promotion of alternative travel modes for all types of trips toward reducing Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) by 10 percent.
- Encourage jurisdictions to design neighborhoods and communities to reduce VMT and enable shorter length trips to be made using alternative modes.
- Prioritize and recommend transportation projects that provide cost effective movement of people and goods while minimizing vehicle emissions.
- Continue to promote projects that can be demonstrated to reduce air pollution and greenhouse gases, maintain clean air and better public health, through programs and strategies, to green the transportation system.
- Work with PCAPCD in developing plans that meet the standards of the California CAA and the Federal CAA Amendments, and also lead to reduced greenhouse gas emissions.
- Work with the Sacramento Area Council of Governments to evaluate the impacts of each transportation plan and program on the timely attainment of ambient air quality standards, and regional greenhouse gas emission reduction targets.

4.3.3 Impact Analysis

a. Significance Thresholds and Methodology

Significance Thresholds

Based on Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines a project may be deemed to have a significant impact on air quality if it would:

1. Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan;
2. Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is nonattainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard;
3. Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations; or
4. Result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people.

This analysis uses the PCAPCD 2017 CEQA Handbook (PCAPCD Guidelines) to evaluate air quality (PCAPCD 2017). The plan-level thresholds specified in the Guidelines were used to determine whether the proposed project impacts exceed the thresholds identified in *CEQA Guidelines* Appendix G.

Construction Emissions Thresholds

PCAPCD's Guidelines do include the individual project-level thresholds for construction-related and long-term operational emissions of air pollutants. These thresholds represent the levels at which a project's individual emissions of criteria air pollutants or precursors would result in a cumulatively considerable contribution to the SVAB's existing air quality conditions. However, the PCAPCD does not provide quantitative plan-level thresholds for construction. Construction specifics such as the duration of each phase and subphase, equipment, material import/export, among others, are not known at this time. For these reasons, construction emissions are discussed qualitatively to evaluate potential air quality impacts of development facilitated by the 2045 General Plan.

Operational Emissions Thresholds

PCAPCD's *2017 CEQA Handbook* does not provide plan level operational significance thresholds for criteria air pollutants. As such, operational plan-level significance was determined by demonstrating consistency with current air quality plan control measures, and evaluating VMT or vehicle trips generated by the 2045 General Plan compared to the projected population increase. If the increase in VMT or vehicle trips from development facilitated by the 2045 General Plan is less than or equal to the projected population increase, it would be determined that impacts would be less than significant. If a plan can demonstrate consistency with both criteria, as outlined above, then operational impacts from the 2045 General Plan would be less than significant.

Odors

The impact analysis qualitatively evaluates the types of land uses facilitated by the 2045 General Plan to evaluate whether major sources of anticipated odors would be present and, if so, whether those sources would likely generate objectionable odors. According to the PCAPCD Guidelines, certain facilities such as sanitary landfills, paint and/or coating operations, and wastewater

treatment facilities might have the potential to cause significant odor impacts. The following are the common land use types that typically generate significant odor impacts:

- wastewater treatment plants,
- sanitary landfills,
- composting/green waste facilities,
- recycling facilities,
- chemical manufacturing plants,
- painting/coating operations,
- agricultural operations, and
- slaughterhouse/food packaging plants.

If a land use project proposes any of the above type of land uses, which have the potential to cause significant odor impacts, the odor impacts should be identified and discussed in the environmental document so mitigation measures may be identified. New development projects such as residential subdivisions or other sensitive receptors may also have the potential to be affected when located downwind of the above types of land uses. In this case, the PCAPCD recommends that odor issues are discussed early in the site design process so that any potential odor impacts could be mitigated. Additionally, the PCAPCD Guidelines provide screening distances to sensitive receptors for land use projects that could potentially be a source of odor.

None of the land uses identified as odor sources in the PCAPCD Guidelines are planned as part of the project; however, the proposed cannabis ordinance would allow cannabis retail businesses which could contribute to odor impacts. The significance thresholds for odor impacts are qualitative in nature. Specifically, PCAPCD recommends that a significance determination for odor impact be made on a case-by-case basis with all the parameters considered, including distance, the downwind/upwind situation, dominant wind direction, and a facilities odor compliant history. After this assessment, if a project is found to be a potential odor source that could impact nearby sensitive receptors, a project would be considered to have a significant impact on receptors.

Methodology

Consistency with Air Quality Plan

The applicable air quality plans for the City of Auburn in Placer County include the 2014 *Placer County Reasonably Available Control Technology (RACT) SIP Analysis* and the *2023 Sacramento Regional Plan for the 2015 8-Hour Ozone Standard* (2023 Plan) for the Sacramento Federal Nonattainment Area (SFNA), which is an update to previous ozone plans for the SFNA in 2009, 2013, and 2017 (PCAPCD 2014, 2023a). The 2023 Plan contains updated contingency control measure strategies, which build upon the transportation control measures (TCMs) provided by SACOG and local control measures contained in the 2017 Plan (CARB 2017), as well as results of the reasonably available control measure (RACM) analysis control measures aimed at reducing air pollution and protecting the climate in the SFNA region. Additionally, the PCAPCD's *2023-2028 District Strategic Plan* (Strategic Plan), adopted in 2023, identifies high-level measures to support these ozone attainment plans, by reducing emissions and ambient concentrations of air pollutants; and by protecting public health through a reduction in exposure to the air pollutants that pose the greatest health risk (PCAPCD 2023b).

For consistency with planning efforts at the State level, the control strategies in these plans and additional measures outlined in the 2023 Plan are used. The 2045 General Plan would be consistent with the air quality plans (2009, 2013, 2017, and 2023) if it would support the goals, including applicable control measures, outlined in the 2023 Plan and not disrupt or hinder implementation of the 2023 Plan. Consistency with the 2023 Plan is the basis for determining plan significance because the 2023 Plan updates and builds upon prior adopted plans, including the 2009, 2013, and 2017 plans, and incorporates applicable RACTs identified in the PCAPCD 2014 RACT Plan. Therefore, a finding of consistency with the 2023 Plan demonstrates consistency with the underlying policies, control strategies, and emission-reduction measures contained in these earlier plans.

The PCAPCD's Strategic Plan is also acknowledged; however, it is a high-level policy document intended to guide PCAPCD programs and priorities and does not establish project-level requirements or specific control measures for achieving ozone reductions. As such, it is identified for informational purposes, but a detailed consistency analysis is not applicable.

Construction Emissions

Construction-related emissions from development facilitated by the project are limited in duration but may still cause adverse air quality impacts. Construction would generate emissions from three primary sources: the operation of construction vehicles (e.g., scrapers, loaders, dump trucks, etc.); ground disturbance during site preparation and grading, which creates fugitive dust; and the application of asphalt, paint, or other oil-based substances.

At this time, the pace, location, and duration associated with construction of development facilitated by the project are not sufficiently detailed to quantify a specific emission impact, and thus it would be speculative to do so. Rather, construction criteria pollutant and TAC emissions impacts from development facilitated by the project are discussed qualitatively.

Operational Emissions

Long-term operational criteria pollutant and TAC emissions from development facilitated by the project are discussed qualitatively and significance determinations are made based on consistency with the plans by comparing the 2045 General Plan to the *2023 Sacramento Regional Plan for the 2015 8-Hour Ozone Standard* goals, policies, and control measures (PCAPCD 2023a). In addition, operational vehicle miles traveled (VMT) generated by the 2045 General Plan were compared to baseline conditions. The threshold utilized here for criteria air pollutants and precursors requires an assessment of the rate of increase of VMT and population. If the 2045 General Plan VMT increase is less than or equal to the plan's projected population increase, impacts would be considered to be less than significant. Although overall travel demand may increase due to growth, the incorporation of multimodal transportation options, along with land use and operational efficiencies, would lower average VMT per resident or employee compared to existing conditions, consistent with state and regional air quality objectives. These thresholds ensure that plans are consistent with state law and support goals to achieve carbon neutrality and improve air quality. If development facilitated by the 2045 General Plan does not meet either criterion, then impacts would be potentially significant.

b. Project Impacts and Mitigation Measures

Threshold 1:	Would the project conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?

Impact AQ-1 DEVELOPMENT FACILITATED BY THE PROJECT WOULD BE CONSISTENT WITH THE 2023 SACRAMENTO REGIONAL AIR QUALITY PLAN AND WOULD NOT CONFLICT WITH OR OBSTRUCT IMPLEMENTATION OF AIR QUALITY PLANS. IMPACTS WOULD BE LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT.

Under PCAPCD's methodology, a determination of consistency with *CEQA Guidelines* thresholds should demonstrate that a project:

- Supports the primary goals of the *2023 Sacramento Regional Plan for the 2015 8-Hour Ozone Standard*;
- Includes applicable control measures from the *2023 Sacramento Regional Plan for the 2015 8-Hour Ozone Standard*;
- Does not disrupt or hinder implementation of any control measures established under the applicable air quality plans.

The following includes a discussion of consistency with these criteria for the 2045 General Plan. The 2023 Plan for the SFNA provides Contingency Control Measures for this region, as well as local measures by air district, as applicable. Table 4.3-4 identifies applicable control measures specific to the PCAPCD and discusses consistency with the 2023 Plan.

Table 4.3-4 2023 Air Quality Plan Contingency Control Measures Consistency Analysis

Control Measures	Consistency
Stationary/Area Sources	
Internal Combustion Engines (Rule 242). Internal combustion (IC) engines are used in a wide variety of applications, including electrical power generation, liquid pumping, gas compression, mobile equipment, and vehicles. Emissions of NO_X can be reduced using combustion controls, which modify the combustion characteristics, or using post-combustion controls, such as nonselective catalytic reduction (NSCR) and selective catalytic reduction (SCR). It applies to any stationary internal combustion engine rated at more than 50 brake horsepower. **Local New Source Review (Rule 502).** This rule sets requirements for reviewing permit applications for new and modified sources for Best Available Control Technology (BACT), emission offsets, emission calculation procedures, and other administrative permitting requirements. **Architectural Coatings (Rule 218).** Reduce the VOC limits on architectural coatings similar to the rules adopted by South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD) and San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District (SJVAPCD) and the 2019 and 2020 CARB Stationary Control Measures.	**Consistent.** Stationary sources are regulated directly by PCAPCD, which routinely adopts/revises rules or regulations to implement the Stationary Source control measures to reduce stationary source emissions. Additionally, area sources are also regulated directly by PCAPCD, which routinely adopts/revises rules or regulations to implement the area source control measures to reduce emissions from activities such as paving and architectural coating applications. New stationary or area sources associated with development facilitated by the project Plan would be required to comply with PCAPCD's regulations and PCAPCD would ensure consistency with Rules 242, 502, and 218.

Control Measures	Consistency
Transportation	
SACOG's Transportation Control Measures (TCM): ▪ **Trip Reduction Strategies.** Measures that reduce the number of vehicle trips, including: Incentives for carpooling and vanpooling; Telecommuting and flexible work schedules; Employer-based trip reduction programs; and School transportation demand strategies. ▪ **VMT Reduction Strategies.** Measures that reduce the length of trips or shift trips to cleaner modes, including: Improvements to public transit networks; Bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure enhancements; Transit-oriented development and land-use strategies; Parking management and pricing strategies ▪ **Spare the Air Program.** This TCM includes measures and incentives for individual users to reduce pollutant emissions through the reduction of single-occupancy vehicle use and promotion of alternative forms of transportation such as biking and walking.	**Consistent**: The Transportation Element includes proposed policies that encourage trip reduction programs. The following proposed goals and policies aim to reduce VMT through implementation of policies such as: Policy T-1.2: Complete Streets, Policy T-1.3: Connectivity, Policy T-1.4: Mitigation of Development Impacts, Policy T-3.1: Reducing Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT), Policy T-3.4: Zero Emission Vehicles, Policy T-3.5: Shared Mobility, Policy T-3.6: Pedestrian-Friendly Design, and Policy OSC-4.7: Transportation Control Measures (TCMs).
Energy & Building Electrification	
Residential & Small Water Heaters (Rule 246 and 247). Water heaters and small boilers predominantly burn natural gas and are used to heat water and generate steam. These units are used in a variety of applications, including in homes, restaurants, retail stores, schools, hotels, and office buildings. Residential & Small Water Heaters control measure regulates NO_X emissions from water heaters, boilers, and process heaters. The control measure applies to any person who manufactures, distributes, offers for sale, sells, or installs any type of water heater fired with gaseous or nongaseous fuels for use in SFNA. **Furnaces (Residential).** Residential heating accounts for a large fraction of residential energy consumption. The majority of residential furnaces uses natural gas as fuel, which produces NO_x during the combustion process. In the 2022 State SIP Strategy, CARB committed to develop and adopt by 2025 a zero-emission standard for space heaters, which includes furnaces, in California starting in 2030.	**Consistent.** These measures are intended to decrease energy use as a means of reducing adverse air quality emissions. Development facilitated by the project would comply with 2025 Building Energy Efficiency Standards (or most recent version of the California Building Code) requirements that commercial buildings be electric-ready and standards for expanded solar and battery storage and residential development under three stories include rooftop photovoltaic panels. The Building Energy Efficiency Standards are updated every three years and development facilitated by the 2045 General Plan would be subject to the 2025 California Building Standards and/or future updates to the standards. The 2045 General Plan also proposes to implement the following policies, which would encourage energy efficiency and reduction: Policy CD-3.5: Sustainable Design, Policy OSC-4.3: Mitigating Air Pollution Through Design, Policy OSC-6.1: Renewable Energy, Policy OSC-6.2: Energy Conservation, Policy OSC-6.3: Passive Solar Design, Policy OSC-6.4: Microgrids, and Policy OSC-6.5: Green Building.

Source: City of Auburn 2025; PCAPCD 2023a

PCAPCD has identified examples of how a project or plan may disrupt or delay local government implementation of these control measures, such as a project that may preclude an extension of a transit line or bike path, or that propose excessive parking beyond parking requirements. Development facilitated by the project would not disrupt or delay local government implementation of control measures. Overall, the 2045 General Plan would be consistent with the three criteria for evaluating consistency with the air quality plans. As such, the 2045 General Plan would not conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan, and this impact would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation is required.

Significance After Mitigation

Impacts would be less than significant without mitigation.

Threshold 2:	Would the project result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard?

Impact AQ-2 DEVELOPMENT FACILITATED BY THE PROJECT WOULD NOT RESULT IN A CUMULATIVELY CONSIDERABLE NET INCREASE OF CRITERIA POLLUTANTS DURING CONSTRUCTION OR OPERATIONS. IMPACTS WOULD BE LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT.

Construction

Future development and mobility improvements facilitated by the project would involve constructions activities that result in air pollutant emissions. Specifically, construction activities such as demolition, grading, construction worker travel, delivery and hauling of construction supplies and debris, and fuel combustion by on-site construction equipment would generate pollutant emissions. These construction activities would create emissions of dust, fumes, equipment exhaust, and other air contaminants, particularly during site preparation and grading. The extent of daily emissions, particularly ROGs and NO_X emissions generated by construction equipment, would depend on the quantity of equipment used and the hours of operation for each project. The extent of $PM_{2.5}$ and PM_{10} emissions would depend upon the following factors: 1) the amount of disturbed soils; 2) the length of disturbance time; 3) whether existing structures are demolished; 4) whether excavation is involved; and 5) whether transporting excavated materials offsite is necessary. Dust emissions can lead to both nuisance and health impacts.

The PCAPCD 2017 CEQA Air Quality Guidelines have no plan-level significance thresholds for construction air pollutant emissions that would apply to development facilitated by the project. However, the guidelines include project-level thresholds for construction emissions. If an individual project's construction emissions fall below the project-level thresholds, the project's impact on regional air quality would be individually and cumulatively less than significant. The PCAPCD has also identified feasible fugitive dust control measures for construction activities. The PCAPCD Recommended Construction Mitigation Measures (Appendix C of the PCAPCD Guidelines) are also recommended for all projects.[2] In addition, the PCAPCD and CARB have regulations that address the handling of hazardous air pollutants such as lead and asbestos, which could be aerially disbursed during demolition activities. PCAPCD rules and regulations address both the handling and transport of these contaminants. Construction of development facilitated by the project would temporarily increase air pollutant emissions, possibly creating localized areas of unhealthy air pollution concentrations or air quality nuisances.

[2] The mitigation measures presented in Appendix C of the PCAPCD Guidelines are intended as general guidance and illustrate the types of measures that may be considered for land use projects. These measures may not be applicable to all projects. This appendix is designed to serve as a "menu" of potential mitigation options.

PCAPCD's Rule 228 establishes standards to be met by activities generating fugitive dust (PCAPCD 1979). This Rule applies to the entire County of Placer (including the City of Auburn) and addresses fugitive dust generated by construction and grading activities, and by other land use practices including recreational uses. Rule 228's minimum dust control practices must be used for all construction and grading activities and would reduce fugitive dust emissions from construction activities by requiring future development facilitated by the project to implement construction control measures in accordance with PCAPCD standards. PCAPCD Rule 228 establishes minimum construction dust control measures to limit particulate emissions from earth-disturbing activities, including stabilizing unpaved areas, disturbed soils, and material stockpiles through watering, covering, or chemical suppressants. The rule limits vehicle speeds on unpaved surfaces, requires pre-watering before ground disturbance, mandates cleanup of construction vehicles leaving the site, and imposes load-covering and spill-prevention requirements for material transport. Grading and earthmoving activities must be suspended during high wind conditions if dust emissions cannot be contained within site boundaries, and inactive disturbed areas must be stabilized to minimize wind-driven dust. Projects that disturb more than one acre may also be required to submit a District-approved Dust Control Plan prior to initiating earth-disturbing activities, if imposed as a condition of approval.

Even with adherence to applicable construction control measures, individual project construction from development facilitated by the project may exceed established significance thresholds. However, proposed General Plan Policy OSC-4.2 states that individual projects must evaluate air quality conditions and the potential for health impacts as part of the development review process. This would require new development projects to submit an air quality analysis for review and approval and require appropriate mitigation measures consistent with the applicable PCAPCD air quality attainment plan. With adherence to proposed General Plan Policy OSC-4.2 and construction control measures, cumulative construction impacts associated with violating an air quality standard or contributing substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation in terms of criteria air pollutant emissions would be less than significant.

Operation

The greatest source of criteria pollutants in the Planning Area is and will continue to be transportation sources, specifically mobile emissions from roadway traffic. The 2045 General Plan addresses this condition by emphasizing land use and transportation strategies that reduce reliance on single-occupant vehicle travel and overall VMT. Goal T-1 (A Balanced Transportation Network) calls for a transportation system that connects the city and accommodates all modes of travel, while Goal T-3 (Sustainable Transportation) seeks to minimize environmental impacts and reduce pollutant emissions. Implementing these goals would reduce the number and length of vehicle trips, thereby decreasing emissions of criteria pollutants such as ozone precursors, particulate matter, and carbon monoxide. In addition, Goal OSC-4 (Air Resources) directly prioritizes air quality protection through transportation-related emission reduction strategies.

Policies under Goal T-1 focus on improving system efficiency and expanding travel options to reduce vehicle trips and congestion. Policy T-1.1.2 (Complete Streets) requires that street improvement projects be planned, designed, and maintained to safely accommodate pedestrians, bicyclists, transit users, and motorists of all ages and mobility levels, supporting mode shift away from automobile travel. Policy T-1.3 (Connectivity) promotes a connected street network that avoids dead ends and circuitous travel, making walking, bicycling, and direct travel routes more feasible and reducing unnecessary vehicle miles. Policy T-1.4 (Mitigation of Development Impacts) requires

developers to mitigate project-related transportation impacts through tools such as impact fees, street and intersection improvements, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, and trip reduction measures. Collectively, these policies reduce traffic congestion, shorten travel distances, and increase non-auto travel, leading to lower mobile-source emissions.

Policies supporting Goal T-3 (Sustainable Transportation) and Goal OSC-4 (Air Resources) further reduce transportation-related air pollutant emissions through targeted measures. Policy T-3.1 (Reducing Vehicle Miles Traveled) focuses on reducing average per-capita VMT by shortening commute distances, improving non-automobile travel options, and promoting a balanced mix of land uses so residents can live, work, and shop within their community. Policy T-3.4 (Zero Emission Vehicles) encourages electric and other zero-emission vehicles, including City fleet adoption and expanded charging infrastructure, which directly reduces tailpipe emissions. Policy T-3.5 (Shared Mobility) supports car-sharing and bike-sharing in multi-family and mixed-use developments to reduce vehicle ownership and parking demand, while Policy T-3.6 (Pedestrian-Friendly Design) encourages project designs that facilitate walking, bicycling, and transit use, particularly in Downtown/Old Town and within 0.5 mile of the Auburn Train Station. In addition, Policy OSC-4.7 (Transportation Control Measures) supports actions such as improving pedestrian and bicycle networks, creating complete streets, supporting rail and bus service improvements, encouraging ridesharing, carpooling, and telecommuting, reducing vehicle idling through smart signals, using intelligent transportation systems to reduce congestion, and providing zero-emission vehicle infrastructure. Together, these coordinated goals and policies would substantially reduce vehicle trips and emissions, supporting cleaner air and improved public health in the Auburn Planning Area.

As shown in Section 4.2.1, *Setting*, the SVAB is designated as a nonattainment area for the federal and state ozone standards, state PM_{10}, and federal $PM_{2.5}$ standards. The SVAB is in attainment of all other federal and state standards. The threshold utilized here for criteria air pollutants and precursors requires an assessment of the rate of increase of VMT and service population.

Table 4.3-5 summarizes the net increase in service population versus VMT. The 2045 General Plan is projected to accommodate a service population increase of 9,316 persons by the year 2045.[3] This is a 20 percent increase compared to the existing service population of 45,737 persons. The 2045 General Plan would result in an estimated daily VMT of 3,278,814 miles in the year 2045, which is an increase of 359,238 miles or 12 percent compared to baseline conditions (2,919,576 miles). The anticipated increase in VMT would result from development facilitated by the project.

Table 4.3-5 Net Increase in Population Versus VMT

Scenario	Existing	2045 Buildout	Net Increase
Service Population	45,737	55,053	9,316 (+20%)
VMT	2,919,576	3,278,814	359,238 (+12%)

Because the VMT associated with buildout of the 2045 General Plan would increase by approximately 12 percent, it would not exceed the forecasted population rate of increase of approximately 20 percent. VMT increases at a lower percentage because development facilitated by the project would change land uses to concentrate growth and residences to jobs and services to reduce singular vehicle trips and encourage alternative models of travel. Therefore, impacts

[3] It should be noted that the population increase provided in Section 2, *Project Description*, is not the service population (defined as residents plus employees) that is used for the VMT analysis.

concerning criteria pollutants generated from operation of the 2045 General Plan would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation is required.

Significance After Mitigation

Impacts would be less than significant without mitigation.

Threshold 3:	Would the project expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?

Impact AQ-3 DEVELOPMENT FACILITATED BY THE PROJECT COULD RESULT IN EXPOSURE OF SENSITIVE RECEPTORS TO AIR POLLUTANTS. HOWEVER, WITH ADHERENCE TO APPLICABLE REGULATIONS AND PROPOSED GENERAL PLAN GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS, AS WELL AS IMPLEMENTATION OF STANDARD DESIGN FEATURES AND REVIEW REQUIREMENTS, SUCH EXPOSURE WOULD NOT RESULT IN SUBSTANTIAL HEALTH RISKS. THEREFORE, IMPACTS WOULD BE LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT.

Construction

Development facilitated by the project is anticipated to result in diesel particulate matter (DPM) exhaust emissions from off-road, heavy-duty diesel equipment associated with site preparation (e.g., excavation, grading, clearing), building construction, and other construction activities. The potential cancer risk from inhaling DPM, as discussed below, outweighs the potential non-cancer[4] health impacts.

Generation of DPM from construction typically occurs in a single area for a short period. Future construction would occur over approximately 19 years (assuming a buildout year of 2045), but use of diesel-powered construction equipment in any one area would likely occur for no more than a few years for an individual project and would cease when construction is completed in that area. It is impossible to quantify risk from development facilitated by the project without identified specific project details and locations.

The dose to which the receptors are exposed is the primary factor used to determine health risk. Dose is a function of the concentration of a substance or substances in the environment and the extent of exposure that person has with the substance. Dose is positively correlated with time, meaning that a longer exposure period would result in a higher exposure level for the Maximally Exposed Individual. The risks estimated for a Maximally Exposed Individual are higher if a fixed exposure occurs over a longer period. According to the California Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA), health risk assessments, which determine the exposure of sensitive receptors to toxic emissions, should be based on a 70-year exposure period; however, such assessments should be limited to the period/duration of activities associated with the development (OEHHA 2015). PCAPCD uses an exposure period of 30 years (PCAPCD 2017).

The maximum PM_{10} and $PM_{2.5}$ emissions from development facilitated by the project would likely occur during demolition, site preparation and grading activities, which would only occur for a portion of the overall estimated timeframe of 19 years for buildout. These individual construction

[4] Non-cancer risks include premature death, hospitalizations and emergency department visits for exacerbated chronic heart and lung disease, including asthma, increased respiratory symptoms, and decreased lung function.

activities typically last for approximately two weeks to two years, depending on the extent of grading and excavation required (e.g., projects with subterranean parking structures or geological constraints require additional grading as compared to those without). PM_{10} and $PM_{2.5}$ emissions would decrease for the remaining construction period because construction activities such as building construction and architectural coatings would require less intensive construction equipment. While the maximum DPM emissions associated with demolition, site preparation, and grading activities would only occur for a portion of the overall construction period, these activities represent the worst-case condition for the total construction period.

Development facilitated by the project would be required to be consistent with the *2023 Sacramento Regional Plan for the 2015 8-Hour Ozone Standard*, PCAPCD regulatory requirements and control strategies, and the CARB In-Use Off-Road Diesel Vehicle Regulation, which are intended to reduce emissions from construction equipment and activities. Additionally, development facilitated by the project would be required to adhere to the proposed Policy OSC-4.2, which requires that projects evaluate air quality conditions and the potential for health impacts as part of the development review process. This proposed Policy requires air quality studies and mitigation measures when sensitive uses such as housing, schools, or health care facilities are planned on sites with air quality concerns. Additionally, development facilitated by the project would be required to adhere to Actions OSC-4B (Construction Impacts), OSC-4C (Health Risk Assessments), and OSC-4D (Construction Health Risk Assessment). Action OSC-4B uses the development review process to ensure construction projects implement dust control measures to minimize airborne dust and particulate matter, such as covering stockpiles and truck beds and limiting grading during windy conditions. Action OSC-4C requires Health Risk Assessments, when appropriate, to evaluate potential health risks and identify design strategies—such as setbacks, landscaping, filtration systems, and HVAC design—to reduce those risks to acceptable levels. Action OSC-4C requires preparation of a construction Health Risk Assessment (HRA) before grading or building permits are issued for projects near sensitive receptors, with long construction durations, or using higher-emission equipment. If construction emissions would exceed air district significance thresholds, the construction HRA would recommend the project incorporate mitigation measures—such as cleaner equipment or alternative fuels—to reduce impacts to less than significant levels. Additionally, PCAPCD best available control measures and best management practices provided in Section 4.3.2, *Regulatory Setting*, would reduce construction-related TACs from development facilitated by the project.

According to OEHHA, construction of individual projects lasting longer than two months or placed within 1,000 feet of sensitive receptors could potentially expose nearby sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations, which could result in potentially significant risk impacts. There is the potential that development facilitated by the project could last more than two months or be within 1,000 feet of sensitive receptors. However, adherence to proposed Policy OSC-4.2 and proposed Actions OSC-4B and OSC-4Cwould ensure that development facilitated by the project would be evaluated and properly mitigated if found to exceed project-level thresholds. As such, development facilitated by the project would not exceed PCAPCD's thresholds of an increased cancer risk of greater than 10.0 in a million and an increased non-cancer risk of greater than 1.0 Hazard Index (Chronic or Acute). Therefore, TAC construction emission impacts from development facilitated by the project would be less than significant.

Operation

The PCAPCD CEQA Guidelines include methodology for jurisdictions to evaluate the potential impacts from placing sensitive receptors in proximity to major air pollutant sources. For assessing community risk and hazards for siting a new receptor, sources within a 1,000-foot radius of a project site are typically considered. Sources are defined as freeways or high-volume roadways with 10,000 vehicles or more per day and permitted sources (PCAPCD 2017).

Development facilitated by the project could accommodate a net increase of approximately 2,570 additional residential units and approximately 2.9 million square feet of commercial, retail, hotel, industrial, warehouse, and office uses. Development facilitated by the project, in accordance with land use and zoning regulations, would not site land uses that typically generate TACs, such as industrial land uses near residential land uses. Additionally, if the proposed commercial, retail, warehouse, research and development, and industrial uses site a new stationary TAC source, like an emergency generator, then said stationary source would be required to receive an air permit from the PCAPCD. The permitting process would ensure that the stationary source does not present a health risk to existing nearby sensitive receptors.

Furthermore, there are several high-volume roadways in Placer County and the City of Auburn, including SR 49, Interstate 80, Bell Road, and Auburn Folsom Road, which contribute to elevated concentrations of criteria pollutants and TACs. Development facilitated by the project may result in sensitive receptors being located near these high-volume roadways and stationary emission sources. To minimize associated health risks, the proposed General Plan includes Goal OSC-4 (Air Resources). Policy OSC-4.1 (Air Quality Standards) calls for the City to work with PCAPCD, Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District, CARB, and the USEPA to reduce air pollution and ensure air quality standards are met, supporting coordinated regional and local emission reduction efforts that improve ambient air quality conditions near major roadways and sensitive land uses.

Policies under Goal OSC-4 focus on project-level review and design strategies that reduce exposure to air pollutants. Policy OSC-4.2 (Air Quality Impacts) requires evaluation of air quality conditions and the potential for health impacts during the development review process and mandates air quality studies and mitigation measures when sensitive uses such as housing, schools, or health care facilities are proposed on sites with air quality concerns. Policy OSC-4.3 (Mitigating Air Pollution Through Design) promotes the use of design and construction techniques, including air filtration systems, low-emission building materials, green roofs, landscaping buffers, and similar measures, to reduce exposure to air pollutants in new development. Policy OSC-4.4 (Particulate Matter) seeks to reduce particulate matter emissions from roads, parking lots, construction sites, and other sources. These policies collectively reduce both pollutant concentrations and individual exposure levels, thereby minimizing TAC-related health risks for sensitive receptors located near high-volume roadways.

Implementation of Goal OSC-4 is further supported through specific actions and complementary land use policies that prevent incompatible siting of emission sources. Action OSC-4A (Air Quality Plan Implementation) supports the implementation of air quality plans prepared by the PCAPCD and Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District. Action OSC-4C (Health Risk Assessments) allows the City to require Health Risk Assessments, where appropriate, to evaluate potential health hazards and identify design solutions such as landscaping, setback standards, filtration systems, and HVAC design to reduce risks to acceptable levels. Action OSC-4C requires an operational HRA for certain industrial, warehousing, or commercial projects with substantial diesel

truck activity, unless it can be demonstrated that an HRA is not required. If risks are identified, projects must implement feasible mitigation measures—such as reducing idling, electrifying operations, upgrading vehicles, or establishing truck routes—to reduce health risks to acceptable levels prior to project approval. Action OSC-4C also requires an operational HRA for new sensitive receptors located near major sources of toxic air contaminants, such as high-volume roadways. If health risk thresholds are exceeded, the project must include measures (e.g., mechanical air filtration) to reduce exposure to acceptable levels.

In addition, Goal LU-2 (Land Use Compatibility) is supported by Policy LU-2.3 (Buffering), which requires natural features, landscaping, and setbacks to buffer incompatible adjacent uses, and Policy LU-2.4 (Land Use Conflicts), which seeks to minimize conflicts between industrial or heavy commercial uses and sensitive uses by avoiding incompatible siting patterns. Goal LU-6 (Commercial and Industrial Areas) further supports air quality protection through Policy LU-6.9 (Sustainable Industries), which prioritizes clean, environmentally sustainable industries and requires mitigation where impacts such as air emissions are unavoidable. Collectively, these goals, policies, and implementing actions minimize TAC exposure, reduce air emissions, and protect public health throughout the Planning Area.

The primary mobile source of TACs from development facilitated by the project would likely be truck idling and use of off-road equipment. New warehousing operations could generate substantial DPM emissions from off-road equipment use and truck idling. In addition, some warehousing and industrial facilities may include use of transport refrigeration units for cold storage. Such potential future uses could generate an increase in DPM that would contribute to cancer and non-cancer health risk at nearby sensitive receptors. However, with adherence to the General Plan proposed goals, policies, and actions described above, health risk impacts from development facilitated by the project, including industrial and commercial land uses under the 2045 General Plan, would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation is required.

Significance After Mitigation

Impacts would be less than significant without mitigation.

Threshold 4:	Would the project result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people?

Impact AQ-4 DEVELOPMENT FACILITATED BY THE PROJECT COULD CREATE OBJECTIONABLE ODORS THAT COULD ADVERSELY AFFECT A SUBSTANTIAL NUMBER OF PEOPLE. IMPACTS RELATED TO ODORS WOULD BE LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT WITH MITIGATION.

Construction of development and mobility improvements facilitated by the project would require the operation of construction equipment and asphalt paving, which could generate oil, diesel fuel, and asphalt odors. The odors would be limited to the construction period and would be temporary. Therefore, odors emitted from the construction of development facilitated by the project would be less than significant.

Land uses typically producing objectionable odors include agricultural uses, wastewater treatment plants, food manufacturing plants, chemical plants, composting, refineries, landfills, and confined animal facilities. development facilitated by the project would include commercial, retail, hotel, industrial, warehouse, and office uses. Most of these land uses typically do not produce objectionable odors; however, certain commercial and industrial uses, such as a proposed cannabis store, would have the potential to generate nuisance odors. Therefore, individual development facilitated by the project could generate potentially significant objectionable odors unless analyzed and mitigated. The proposed cannabis ordinance would require each business to obtain permits that ensure compliance with odor emissions regulations. Specifically, Sections 159.553 (Retail Cannabis Permit Required), 159.557 (Personal Cannabis Cultivation), and 159.559 (Operating Requirements) include specific criteria to ensure that any permitted retail cannabis business will not conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing compliance with odor emissions. However, development facilitated by the 2045 General Plan may still result in adverse impacts related to operational odor, and this impact would be potentially significant.

Other odors from development facilitated by the project include odors associated with vehicle and engine exhaust and idling; however, odors from vehicles are not stationary and are dispersed throughout the roadway network and would result in less than significant impacts.

Mitigation Measures

AQ-4 Reduce Operational Odors

Prior to discretionary approval by the City, if it is determined by the City that a development project has the potential to emit nuisance odors beyond the property line, the project applicant shall prepare an odor management plan and submit it to the City for review and approval. Facilities that have the potential to generate nuisance odors include, but are not limited to:

- Wastewater Treatment Plants,
- Sanitary Landfills,
- Composting/Green Waste Facilities,
- Recycling Facilities,
- Chemical Manufacturing Plants,
- Painting/Coating Operations,
- Agricultural Operations,
- Cannabis Operations, and
- Slaughterhouse/Food Packaging Plants.

The odor management plan shall demonstrate compliance with the latest PCAPCD screening distances and guidelines. The odor management plan shall identify the best available control technologies for toxics (T-BACTs) that will be utilized to reduce potential odors to acceptable levels, including appropriate enforcement mechanisms. T-BACTs may include but are not limited to scrubbers (i.e., air pollution control devices) at the industrial facility. T-BACTs identified in the odor management plan shall be identified as mitigation measures in the documents prepared for the development project and/or incorporated into the project's site plan

Significance After Mitigation

Mitigation Measure AQ-4 requires projects with the potential to generate nuisance odors to prepare an odor management plan for City review and approval prior to discretionary approval. The plan must demonstrate compliance with applicable air district guidelines and identify best available control technologies to reduce odors to acceptable levels. Required odor control measures must be incorporated into project approvals and/or site plans. Therefore, impacts would be reduced to less than significant with Mitigation Measure AQ-4.

4.3.4 Cumulative Impacts

The geographic scope of the cumulative air quality analysis is the regional air basin, specifically the SVAB. This geographic scope is appropriate because emissions in one location affect the air quality of the entire air basin. The cumulative analysis considers the nearby past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future plans and projects listed in Table 3-1 (refer to Section 3, *Environmental Setting*), in addition to development facilitated by the project. The SVAB is designated as a nonattainment area for the federal and state ozone standards, state PM_{10}, and federal $PM_{2.5}$ standards. The region is designated unclassified or attainment for all other ambient air quality standards.

Cumulative development in the region would result in construction- and operation-related emissions of criteria air pollutants and their precursors, including particulate matter and ozone precursors (ROG and NO_X). Although the region currently exceeds standards for ozone, PM_{10}, and $PM_{2.5}$, cumulative air quality impacts would be considered less than significant assuming consistency with regional air quality plans. As described under Impact AQ-1, development facilitated by the project would be consistent with the overall goals of the 2014 *Placer County Reasonably Available Control Technology (RACT) SIP Analysis* and the 2023 *Sacramento Regional Plan for the 2015 8-Hour Ozone Standard* (2023 Plan) for the SFNA control measures as development would comply with the latest Title 24 regulations and would increase density in urban areas in proximity to transit, allowing for greater use of alternative modes of transportation. Development facilitated by the project does not contain elements that would disrupt or hinder implementation of any 2023 Plan control measures. In addition, as discussed above, development facilitated by the project would support the 2023 Plan's Contingency Control Measures for the SFNA, as well as local measures applicable to the PCAPCD. Therefore, development facilitated by the project would not result in a considerable contribution to cumulative impacts related to conflicts with or obstruction of implementation of the applicable air quality plans.

Construction- and operational-related criteria pollutant emissions from cumulative development within the area could contribute to increases in regional and localized air pollutant concentrations. Construction emissions would be temporary and short-term in nature and are subject to comprehensive federal, state, and local regulatory requirements, including implementation of standard construction best management practices and applicable air district rules designed to minimize particulate matter and other construction-related emissions, particularly near sensitive receptors. Operational emissions from cumulative development would occur over the long term but are similarly regulated through vehicle emission standards, land use planning requirements, and adopted air quality management programs that are intended to reduce regional emissions over time. With application of these regulatory and policy frameworks, cumulative impacts related to both construction- and operational-generated criteria pollutant emissions would be less than significant.

Cumulative development within the region could increase emissions of TACs and CO, which have the potential to expose sensitive receptors to elevated pollutant concentrations, particularly in areas near major roadways, industrial uses, or other substantial emission sources. Such cumulative exposures could result in significant health risks; therefore, this cumulative impact is considered to be significant. Impacts would be cumulatively considerable if an individual project's impact would be significant. As identified under Impact AQ-3, the potential cumulative air quality and health risk effects associated with future development cannot be precisely quantified because they depend on variables that are presently unknown, including the timing, location, size, intensity, and specific emission characteristics of individual future projects, as well as future background air quality conditions. However, development facilitated by the project would not have a significant impact from CO hotspots or TACs with implementation of proposed General Plan goals, policies, and actions. As such, development facilitated by the project would not expose sensitive receptors to a cumulatively considerable amount of pollutant concentrations from CO hotspots or TACs and would not have a considerable contribution to this cumulative impact.

Cumulative development could result in new sources of odor associated with commercial activities, light industrial operations, solid waste handling, wastewater facilities, cannabis operations, or increased traffic. Construction emissions would disperse rapidly with distance, and therefore construction projects in close proximity to one another would not result in combined odors above those analyzed. Additionally, odor-generating uses would be subject to existing federal, state, and local regulations, including nuisance provisions enforced by the PCAPCD and local land use compatibility policies designed to separate sensitive receptors from potential odor sources, all of which would minimize the potential for substantial odor effects. Cumulative odor impacts associated with reasonably foreseeable future development would be less than significant.

4.4 Biological Resources

This section provides an overview of existing conditions related to biological resources, including special-status plant and wildlife species, nesting birds and raptors, sensitive plant communities, jurisdictional waters and wetlands, wildlife movement, regionally protected resources (e.g., from county-wide Habitat Conservation Plans [HCPs] and Natural Community Conservation Plans [NCCPs]), and locally protected resources, such as protected trees. It also addresses the impacts of the project on these resources.

4.4.1 Setting

a. Physical Characteristics

The Planning Area is located in Placer County in the foothills of the Sierra Nevada Mountains. Auburn is characterized by a typical Mediterranean climate, generally dry in the summer with mild, wet winters. Average summer temperatures in degrees Fahrenheit in the area are in the high 80s, with highs in the low 90s and morning lows in the high 50s (Western Regional Climate Center 2016). Average winter temperatures are in the 50s, with daytime highs in the low 60s and morning lows in the high 30s. Most rainfall occurs between November and March, with an average annual rainfall of approximately 34.4 inches. The wettest months of the year are December, January, February, and March with an average rainfall of 5.7, 6.7, 6.0, and 5.4 inches, respectively (Western Regional Climate Center 2016).

Terrain within the Planning Area varies widely as elevation changes significantly, increasing from the west to the east. The elevation ranges from approximately 1,000 to 1,400 feet above mean sea level (City of Auburn 2024). Land use within the Planning Area consists of mainly urban built-out land, and some agricultural land use, including grazing land.

b. Watershed and Drainages

The Planning Area is located within the Sacramento River Hydrologic Region (Department of Water Resources [DWR] 2021). Within the Sacramento River Hydrologic Region, the Planning Area overlaps the following subwatersheds: Dutch Ravine-Auburn Ravine, Folsom Reservoir-North Fork American River, Deadman Canyon-Coon Creek, Orr Creek, Clipper Creek-North Fork American River, and Todd Creek-Middle Fork American River. The National Wetlands Inventory (United States Fish and Wildlife Service [USFWS] 2024a) and National Hydrography Dataset (United States Geologic Survey [USGS] 2024) depict numerous creeks, streams, and waterbodies within the Planning Area, including Rock Creek, Dry Creek, Halsey Afterbay, Wise Canal, Baltimore Ravine, Fiddler Green Canal, Shirland Canal, Clipper Creek, the North Fork American River, and Rock Creek Lake. Additionally, many drainages occur within the Planning Area (USFWS 2024a; USGS 2024).

c. Habitat Types

Vegetation communities and land cover types are mapped using data from the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection's (CAL FIRE) Fire and Resource Assessment Program (CAL FIRE 2024) in cooperation with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW 2024a) Vegetation Classification and Mapping Program. The cross-references of these two datasets were used to show the California Wildlife Habitat Relationships (CDFW 2024b) common classification schemes. Because of the scale of vegetation data at the Planning Area level, the vegetation

communities and land covers presented in Figure 4.4-1 depict a broad illustration of the distribution of California Wildlife Habitat Relationships categories (e.g. tree, shrub, herbaceous) found within the Planning Area.

Vegetation community characterizations for this analysis are primarily based on the classification systems presented in the 2008-second edition of the *A Manual of California Vegetation, Online Edition* (Sawyer et al. 2009). Plant species nomenclature and taxonomy follows the treatments within the Jepson eFlora (Jepson Flora Project 2024).

Douglas Fir

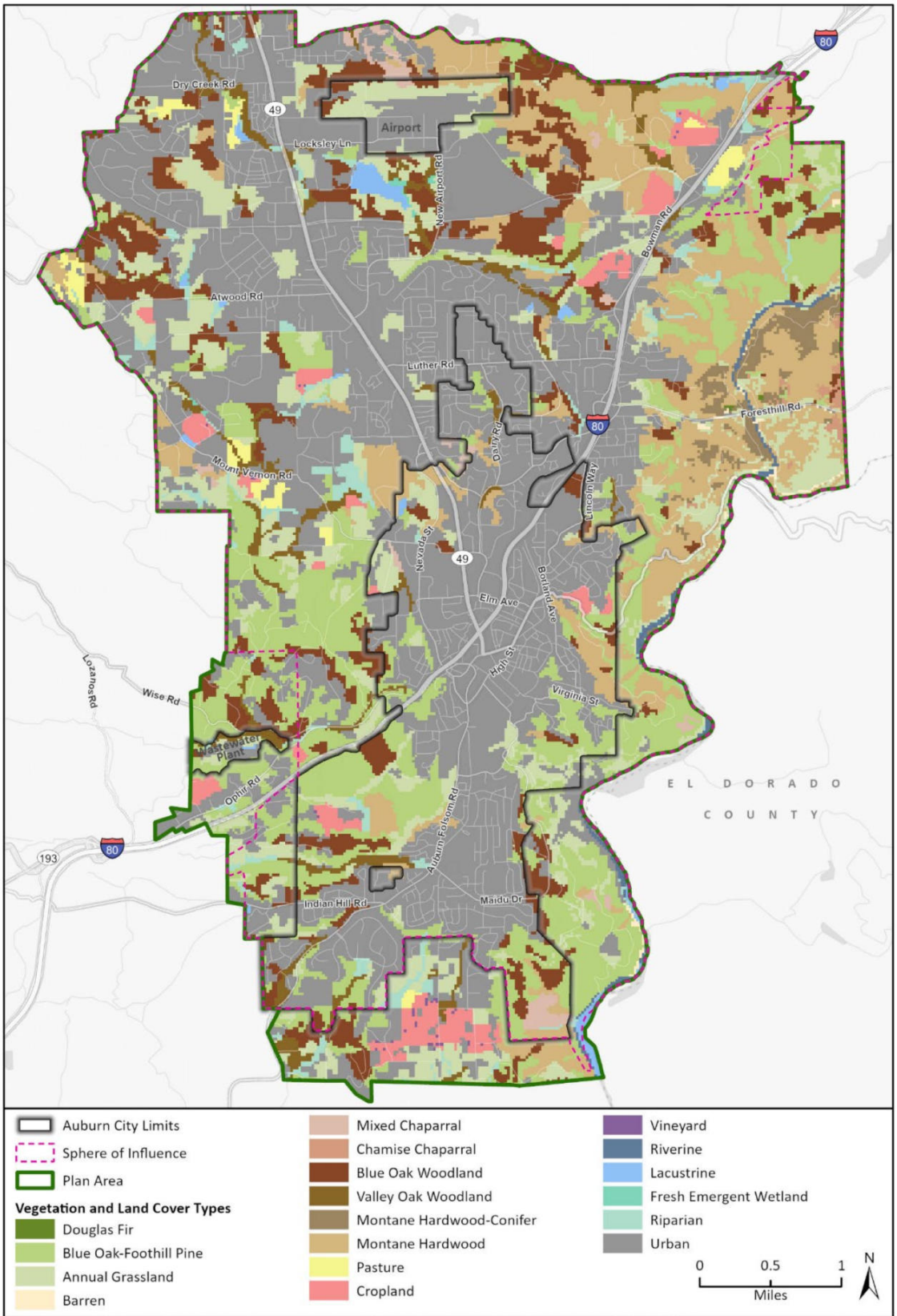
This vegetation community occurs at elevations of 1,000 to 4,000 feet and can occur at higher elevations with plentiful precipitation. On wet sites, shrub layers are well established with copious cover of vegetation, however, at higher elevations shrub habitats will decline and herbaceous layers can reach about 100 percent coverage. On steeper and drier slopes, the shrub and herb layers are nearly non-existent. Douglas fir (*Pseudotsuga menziesii*) spacing and canopy is dependent on the age of the tree, where young trees will have closely and uniformed spacing, whereas older trees will become more patchy. After logging or intense fire, Douglas fir is regenerated by seeding, although good seed years are irregular. Frequent fires have made old growth stands of Douglas fir rare, where in the absence of disturbance, trees can live to 1,250 years. Douglas fir forest typically corresponds to the *Pseudotsuga menziesii* - (*Notholithocarpus densiflorus - Arbutus menziesii*) Forest and Woodland Alliance as described by Sawyer et al. (2009).

Blue Oak-Foothill Pine

This vegetation community is typically diverse in structure both vertically and horizontally and is composed primarily of a mix of hardwoods, conifers, and shrubs. Shrub distributions tend to be clumped, with interspersed patches of annual grassland. Woodlands of this type generally tend to only have small accumulations of dead and downed woody material, compared with other tree vegetation communities in California. Blue oak (*Quercus douglasii*) and foothill pine (*Pinus sabiniana*) typically comprise the overstory of this vegetation community, with blue oak usually most abundant. Interior live oak (*Quercus wislizeni)* sometimes dominates the overstory, especially in rocky areas and on north-facing slopes at higher elevations.

At lower elevations, where blue oaks make up most of the canopy, the understory tends to be primarily annual grasses and forbs. At higher elevations, where foothill pines and even interior live oaks sometimes comprise the canopy, the understory usually includes patches of shrubs in addition to the annual grasses and forbs. Shrub species that can be associated with this vegetation community include various buckbrush (*Ceanothus* spp.) species and manzanita (*Arctostaphylos* spp.). Other species found in this vegetation community can include California coffeeberry (*Rhamnus californicus*), poison-oak (*Toxicodendron diversilobum*), and silver lupine (*Lupinus albifrons*). This vegetation community is generally located in the foothills of the Central Valley, between 500 and 3,000 feet in elevation. Blue oak-foothill pine typically corresponds to the *Quercus douglasii* Woodland Alliance or *Pinus sabiniana* Woodland Alliance as described by Sawyer et al. (2009).

Figure 4.4-1 Vegetation Communities and Land Cover Types



Basemap provided by Esri and its licensors © 2026. Planning Area and SOI were georeferenced and digitized based off the 2045 GP.
Additional data provided by Placer County, 2023; CALFIRE, FRAP, 2015.

23-14735 EPS
Fig X Vegetation and Land Cover Types

Annual Grassland

Annual grassland within the Planning Area is characterized as non-native, and includes a dense to sparse cover of annual grasses (CDFW 2024b). This community is often associated with numerous species of showy-flowered, native annual forbs ("wildflowers"), especially in years of favorable rainfall. Germination occurs with the onset of the late fall rains; growth, flowering, and seed-set occur from winter through spring. With a few exceptions, most vegetation is dead through the summer-fall dry season, persisting as seeds. Dominant plant species include wild oats (*Avena* spp.), yellow star thistle (*Centaurea solstitialis*), mustard (*Brassica* spp.), fennel (*Foeniculum vulgare*), and bromes (*Bromus* spp.). Annual grassland is a common natural community and most closely resembles the *Avena* spp. - *Bromus* spp. Herbaceous Semi-Natural Alliance as described by Sawyer et al. (2009).

Barren

This non-vegetated land cover type occurs where no vegetation is present and includes bare soil. Barren areas may occur due to extreme temperature (either heat or cold), near vertical slopes, impermeable substrate, constant disturbance by either human or natural forces, or on soil either lacking in organic matter or excessively saline (CDFW 2024b). There are no corresponding natural alliances for this land cover type in Sawyer et al. (2009).

Mixed Chaparral

Mixed chaparral is a homogeneous brushland type dominated by woody shrubs that have thick, stiff, and waxy evergreen leaves. Mixed chaparral is typically found on drier sites at higher elevations on north-facing slopes. Sometimes mixed chaparral can be found intermixed with annual grassland. Shrub height and cover vary with age since last burn, precipitation, aspect, and soil type. At maturity, mixed chaparral habitat is typically dense and nearly impenetrable or impassable. Leaf litter and standing dead material may accumulate in stands that have not burned for several decades. Mixed chaparral can correspond to multiple alliances, depending upon the species composition. These alliances can include, but are not limited to, *Ceanothus cuneatus* Shrubland Alliance and the *Arctostaphylos glauca* Shrubland Alliance (Sawyer et al. 2009).

Chamise Chaparral

Chamise chaparral consists of nearly pure stands of chamise (*Adenostoma fasciculatum*), or with a mixture of other shrubs. Chemise chaparral is largely fire dependent, with a single layer shrub canopy, lacking tree and ground cover. Herbaceous cover is dominant for 1 to 3 years after a fire, and shrubs increase in height and cover but canopies generally do not overlap for 3 to 15 years. Between 10 to 30+ years, short lived shrubs die, the canopy closes, and dead material begins to accumulate (CDFW 2024b). Chemise chaparral can correspond to multiple alliances, depending upon the species composition. These alliances can include, but are not limited to, the *Adenostoma fasciculatum* Shrubland Alliance (Sawyer et al. 2009).

Blue Oak Woodland

Blue oak woodlands are typically comprised of scattered trees and an open sparse canopy, but may be more dense at high quality sites. Common species in the canopy are blue oak (*Quercus douglasii*) and interior live oak (*Quercus wislizeni*) (CDFW 2024b). Blue oak woodlands most closely match the *Quercus douglasii* Forest & Woodland Alliance as described by Sawyer et al. (2009).

Valley Oak Woodland

Valley oak woodlands occur in savanna habitats to forest-like stands with partially closed canopies, comprised mostly of winter-deciduous, broad-leaved species. The understory is usually open, however in the absence of grazing a shrub layer comprised of poison-oak, toyon (*Heteromeles arbutifolia*), and coffeeberry may develop (CDFW 2024b). Valley oak woodlands most closely match the *Quercus lobata* Woodland Alliance as described by Sawyer et al. (2009).

Montane Hardwood-Conifer

Montane hardwood conifer generally occurs in mountainous terrain with narrow valleys. This community tends to merge with many other natural communities including but not limited to, montane hardwood, mixed conifer, montane chaparral, and mixed chaparral. Montane hardwood conifer habitat contains a large number of endemic species such as Ponderosa pine (*Pinus ponderosa*), incense cedar (*Calocedrus decurrens*), California black oak (*Quercus kelloggii*) and has vegetational and floristic diversity. This community provides habitat for a variety of wildlife species, and mature forests are valuable to nesting birds. In northern California, montane hardwood conifer sites typically have less rainfall and fog than redwood or mixed conifer habitats. Montane hardwood conifer can correspond to multiple alliances, depending upon the species composition. These alliances can include, but are not limited to, *Pinus ponderosa* Forest and Woodland Alliance and the *Pinus ponderosa - Calocedrus decurrens - Pseudotsuga menziesii* Forest and Woodland Alliance (Sawyer et al. 2009).

Montane Hardwood

This community is typically composed of a pronounced hardwood tree layer, with an infrequent and poorly developed shrub stratum, and a sparse herbaceous layer. The montane hardwood habitat ranges throughout California mostly west of the Cascade-Sierra Nevada crest. In the vicinity of the Planning Area, the canyon live oak (*Quercus chrysolepis*) alliance is the representative montane hardwood community (Sawyer et al. 2009). Canyon live oak and associates are found on a wide range of slopes, especially those that are moderate to steep. Soils are for the most part rocky, alluvial, coarse textured, poorly developed, well drained, and ultrabasic.

Pasture

Pasture vegetation is a mix of perennial grasses and legumes, which are plants that bear fruit grown in pods. This land cover type resembles annual grassland habitats. The height of vegetation varies, according to season and livestock stocking levels. Old or poorly drained pastures may have patches of weeds more than two feet in height. The mix of grasses and legumes varies according to management practices such as seed mixture, fertilization, soil type, irrigation, weed control, and the type of livestock on the pasture (CDFW 2024b). There are no corresponding natural alliances for this land cover type in Sawyer et al. (2009).

Cropland

Croplands consist of a wide variety of agricultural plants, including corn, strawberry, tomato, cotton, alfalfa, hay, rice, and other grains. Most cropland types in California are annuals and are managed by a crop rotation system. Crop fields may be seasonally flooded, irrigated, and disked (CDFW 2024b). There are no corresponding natural alliances for this land cover type in Sawyer et al. (2009).

Vineyard

Vineyards typically include rows of a single species supported on wood and wire trellises. Wine grapes are the most commonly cultivated vineyard species, but may also include boysenberries, raspberries, Olallieberries, and kiwi fruit (CDFW 2024b). There are no corresponding natural alliances for this land cover type in Sawyer et al. (2009).

Riverine

This aquatic land cover type includes intermittent or continually running water, such as in rivers and streams, and is typically associated with a riparian corridor. Riverine systems have a bed and bank and may include flood plains, and emergent vegetation (CDFW 2024b). Riverine is typically used to describe open water, but also includes emergent vegetation such as *Schoenoplectus* (*acutus, californicus*) Herbaceous Alliance (Sawyer et al. 2009).

Lacustrine

This aquatic land cover type includes inland depressions or dammed riverine channels containing standing water, from small ponds to large lakes and reservoirs. Plant life in lacustrine systems is largely restricted to phytoplankton, including diatoms, desmids, and filamentous green algae suspended in the open water column, however sparse emergent vegetation may occur along the shoreline (CDFW 2024b). Floating non-native vegetation such as *Ludwigia* (*hexapetala, peploides*) - *Eichhornia crassipes* Herbaceous Semi-Natural Alliance may also be present in lacustrine habitats (Sawyer et al. 2009).

Freshwater Emergent Wetland

Freshwater emergent wetlands are generally dominated by hydrophytic perennial monocots. Soils within this vegetation community are typically saturated or inundated for many weeks each year (CDFW 2024b). This vegetation community may resemble the *Schoenoplectus californicus* Herbaceous Alliance and *Typha* (*angustifolia, domingensis, latifolia*) Herbaceous Alliance as described by Sawyer et al. (2009).

Riparian

Riparian habitat occurs along upper creek banks and extends into floodplains and is composed of a mix of native trees and shrubs (valley oak, alder, sycamore, willows) and horticultural and invasive species (catalpa, privet, oleander, Himalayan blackberry, and periwinkle). The understory varies depending on the location of the riparian habitat (creek bank or floodplain; CDFW 2024b). Riparian habitats can include multiple alliances, depending upon the species composition. These alliances can include, but are not limited to, *Platanus racemosa* - *Quercus agrifolia* Woodland Alliance and the *Quercus lobata* Riparian Forest & Woodland Alliance (Sawyer et al. 2009).

Urban

The urban land cover type includes fully developed areas that are part of a developed urban core. This includes residential, commercial, recreational, and industrial development (CDFW 2024b). There are no corresponding natural alliances for this land cover type in Sawyer et al. (2009).

d. Special-Status Species

This section discusses the potential for the Planning Area to support the presence of special-status species and sensitive biological resources. Special-status species are defined as those plants and animals listed, proposed for listing, or candidates for listing as threatened or endangered by the USFWS or the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) under the federal Endangered Species Act (ESA); those listed or candidates for listing as rare, threatened, or endangered by the CDFW under the California Endangered Species Act (CESA); and animals designated as "Species of Special Concern" by CDFW or "Fully Protected" under the California Fish and Game Code (CFGC), and CDFW Special Plants, specifically those with a California Rare Plant Rank of 1A, 1B, and 2, as assigned by the California Native Plant Society's (CNPS) online Inventory of Rare and Endangered Plants of California (CNPS 2024). Additionally, rookery sites for species that nest colonially, such as bat maternity roosts, are also treated as special status.

Data used to characterize the biological resources in and adjacent to the Planning Area included a query of CDFW's California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDB; CDFW 2024c), USFWS Information for Planning and Consultation (USFWS 2024b), and the CNPS Inventory of Rare and Endangered Plants of California (CNPS 2024). The query of these data sources was conducted for the *Auburn, California* USGS 7.5-minute topographic quadrangle and surrounding eight quadrangles (*Colfax, Coloma, Greenwood, Lake Combie, Wolf, Pilot Hill, Rocklin*, and *Gold Hill*). The Critical Habitat Mapper (USFWS 2024c), eBird (2024), and Bumble Bee Watch (The Xerces Society 2024) were also queried. The potential for each special-status species to occur in the Planning Area was evaluated according to the following criteria:

- **Not Expected.** Habitat in and adjacent to the Planning Area is clearly unsuitable for the species requirements (foraging, breeding, cover, substrate, elevation, hydrology, plant community, site history, disturbance regime).
- **Low Potential.** Few of the habitat components (foraging, breeding, cover, substrate, elevation, hydrology, plant community, site history, disturbance regime) meeting the species requirements are present, and/or the majority of habitat in and adjacent to the Planning Area is unsuitable or of very poor quality. The species is not likely to be found in the Planning Area.
- **Moderate Potential**. Some of the habitat components (foraging, breeding, cover, substrate, elevation, hydrology, plant community, site history, disturbance regime) meeting the species requirements are present, and/or only some of the habitat in or adjacent to the Planning Area is unsuitable. The species has a moderate probability of being found in the Planning Area.
- **High Potential.** All the habitat components (foraging, breeding, cover, substrate, elevation, hydrology, plant community, site history, disturbance regime) meeting the species requirements are present and/or most of the habitat in or adjacent to the Planning Area is highly suitable. The species has a high probability of being found in the Planning Area.
- **Present.** Species is known within the Planning Area or has been recorded (e.g., CNDDB, other reports) in the Planning Area recently (within the last 5 years).

Special-Status Plant Species

Based on the database and literature review, 11 special-status plant species are known to occur or have the potential to occur within the vicinity of the Planning Area (Appendix D). Based on the size of the Planning Area and general level of development, nine special-status plants have a moderate potential to occur within undeveloped areas, primarily within woodland and chaparral habitats, in

natural areas adjacent to the North Fork American River, creeks, open water, and wetlands. These species include:

- big-scale balsamroot (*Balsamorhiza macrolepis*, 1B.2)
- Stebbins' morning-glory (*Calystegia stebbinsii*, federally endangered, state candidate endangered)
- chaparral sedge (*Carex xerophila*, 1B.2)
- Pine Hill ceanothus (*Ceanothus roderickii*, federally endangered, state candidate rare)
- Red Hills soaproot (*Chlorogalum grandiflorum*, 1B.2)
- El Dorado bedstraw (*Galium californicum* ssp. *sierrae,* federally endangered, state candidate rare)
- Boggs Lake hedge-hyssop (*Gratiola heterosepala*, state candidate endangered)
- Layne's ragwort (*Packera layneae*, federally threatened, state candidate rare)
- El Dorado County mule ears (*Wyethia reticulata*, 1B.2)

Two special-status plant species have been documented within the Planning Area and are presumed present: Jepson's onion (*Allium jepsonii*, 1B.2) and oval-leaved viburnum (*Viburnum ellipticum*, 2B.3).

Special-Status Wildlife Species

Based on the database and literature review, 15 special-status wildlife species evaluated have some potential to occur within the Planning Area (Appendix D). Of these, five have a low potential to occur due to limited habitat suitability and lack of known occurrences in the vicinity of the Planning Area, including;

- western bumble bee (*Bombus occidentalis*, state candidate endangered)
- vernal pool fairy shrimp (*Branchinecta lynchi*, federally threatened)
- bald eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*, federally delisted, state endangered)
- California black rail (*Laterallus jamaicensis coturniculus*, state threatened)
- bank swallow (*Riparia riparia*, state threatened)

Seven wildlife species have a moderate potential to occur in the Planning Area due to the presence of suitable natural habitat and known species ranges, including;

- valley elderberry longhorn beetle (*Desmocerus californicus dimorphus*, federally threatened)
- steelhead – Central Valley Distinct Population Segment (*Oncorhynchus mykiss irideus* pop. 11, federally threatened)
- foothill yellow-legged frog – North Sierra Distinct Population Segment (*Rana boylii* pop. 3, state threatened)
- osprey (*Pandion haliaetus*, watch list)
- purple martin (*Progne subis*, California species of special concern)
- pallid bat (*Antrozous pallidus*, California species of special concern)
- Townsend's big-eared bat (*Corynorhinus townsendii*, California species of special concern)

Two species have a high potential to occur due to the presence of suitable natural habitat and known occurrences in the vicinity of the Planning Area: white-tailed kite (*Elanus leucurus*, fully protected) and American peregrine falcon (*Falco peregrinus anatum*, federally delisted, state delisted). Additionally, one species has been documented within the Planning Area and is presumed present: western pond turtle (*Emys marmorata*, federally proposed threatened).

Other Protected Species

Non-game migratory birds protected under CFGC Section 3503 have the potential to breed throughout the Planning Area. Native avian species common in valley oak woodland, ornamental trees/shrubs, ruderal, and riparian areas have the potential to breed and forage throughout the Planning Area. Species of birds common to the area that typically occur in the region, such as California scrub-jay, black phoebe, Anna's hummingbird, house finch, American crow, Brewer's blackbird, American bushtit, and other common California native bird species are likely to utilize the Planning Area for nesting.

e. Sensitive Natural Communities and Critical Habitat

Sensitive Natural Communities

Plant communities are considered sensitive biological resources if they have limited distributions, have high wildlife value, include sensitive species, or are particularly susceptible to disturbance. CDFW ranks sensitive communities as "threatened" or "very threatened" and keeps records of their occurrences in CNDDB. Sensitive natural communities included in the CNDDB follow the original methodology according to "Preliminary Descriptions of the Terrestrial Natural Communities of California" (Holland 1986). The methodology for determining sensitivity continues to be revised and is now based on the *Manual of California Vegetation* (Sawyer et al. 2009). The *Manual of California Vegetation* communities considered sensitive by CDFW are published in the California Sensitive Natural Communities List. Vegetation alliances are ranked 1 through 5 based on NatureServe's Heritage Methodology (Faber-Langendoen et al. 2016), with those alliances ranked globally (G) or statewide (S) as 1 through 3 considered sensitive. Some alliances with the rank of 4 and 5 have also been included in the 2023 sensitive natural communities list under CDFW's revised ranking methodology (CDFW 2023).

One sensitive natural community is known to occur within the nine-quadrangle search area: Northern Volcanic Mud Flow Vernal Pool; however, this community occurs on the Central Valley floor, and not within the Planning Area (CDFW 2024c).

Many natural alliances associated with the vegetation communities mapped in the Planning Area by the Fire and Resource Assessment Program, Vegetation Classification and Mapping Program, and described in the California Wildlife Habitat Relationships, are likely to be considered sensitive. For example, many associations within the *Pseudotsuga menziesii* (Douglas fir) Forest and Woodland Alliance as described by Sawyer et al. (2009), are listed on the California Sensitive Natural Communities List as sensitive.

Critical Habitat

Critical habitat is a term used in ESA and is defined as a specific geographic area (or areas) that contain features essential for the conservation of a threatened or endangered species and that may require special management and protection. Critical habitat may include an area that is not currently occupied by the species but that will be needed for its recovery. These areas provide

notice to the public and land managers of the importance of these areas to the conservation of a listed species. Special protections and/or restrictions are possible in these areas when federal funding, permits, licenses, authorizations, or actions occur or are required.

The Planning Area is not located within any federally designated Critical Habitat (USFWS 2024c).

f. Jurisdictional Waters and Wetlands

As discussed above, the Planning Area contains riverine, lacustrine, freshwater emergent wetlands, and riparian habitats. The Planning Area is also likely to include ephemeral, intermittent, and seasonal waters and wetlands not mapped in agency databases. The above-described features are potentially subject to United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB), and CDFW oversight. The USACE is expected to assert jurisdiction under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (CWA) over stream, lake, and wetland features to the ordinary high water mark, and to the edge of those wetlands with all three criteria that define federal wetlands: hydric soils, hydrophytic vegetation, and wetland hydrology. The RWQCB also has jurisdiction over waters of the U.S. under Section 401 of the CWA. The RWQCB may also assert jurisdiction over waters of the State under the Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act.

The CDFW has jurisdiction over lakes, streams, and associated riparian areas under the CGFC Section 1600 et seq. The CDFW has traditionally regulated activities within the bed and bank of lakes and streams, extending to the top of bank or edge of the riparian dripline, under its Lake and Streambed Alteration Program. The CDFW may also regulate activities conducted adjacent to but outside these areas, if the activity results in a substantial alteration of the stream or lakebed downslope of the activity, such as through placement of materials that wash into a water body.

g. Wildlife Movement Corridors

Wildlife movement corridors, or habitat linkages, are generally defined as connections between habitat patches that allow for physical and genetic exchange between otherwise isolated animal populations. Such linkages may serve a local purpose, such as providing a linkage between foraging and denning areas, or they may be regional in nature. Some habitat linkages may serve as migration corridors, wherein animals periodically move away from an area and then subsequently return. Others may be important as dispersal corridors for young animals. A group of habitat linkages in an area can form a wildlife corridor network.

The California Essential Habitat Connectivity project commissioned by the California Department of Transportation and CDFW identifies “Natural Landscape Blocks” which support native biodiversity and the “Essential Connectivity Areas” which link them (Spencer et al. 2010). Natural Landscape Blocks and Essential Connectivity Areas occur along the east side of the Planning Area, generally mapped along the North Fork American River, connecting the valley floor with the Sierra Mountain ranges to the east. However, the Planning Area itself is largely developed. Given the natural habitats associated with the North Fork American River, undeveloped areas provide a regional corridor for wildlife movement.

4.4.2 Regulatory Setting

a. Federal Regulations

Federal Endangered Species Act

ESA protects federally listed wildlife species from harm or take, which is broadly defined as "to harass, harm, pursue, hunt, shoot, wound, kill, trap, capture, collect, or attempt to engage in any such conduct." Take can also include habitat modification or degradation that directly results in death or injury of a listed wildlife species. An activity can be defined as take even if it is unintentional or accidental. Listed plant species are provided less protection than listed wildlife species. Listed plant species are legally protected from take under ESA only if they occur on federal lands.

USFWS and NMFS have jurisdiction over federally listed, threatened, and endangered species under ESA. The USFWS also maintains lists of proposed and candidate species. Species on these lists are not legally protected under ESA, but may become listed in the near future and are often included in their review of a project.

Clean Water Act

Areas meeting the regulatory definition of waters of the U.S. are subject to the jurisdiction of the USACE under provisions of Section 404 of the CWA. Waters of the U.S. include waters, such as intrastate lakes, rivers, streams, mudflats, sandflats, playa lakes, natural ponds, territorial seas, and wetlands (33 Code of Federal Regulations, Part 328). Wetlands are generally identified by examining the vegetation, soils, and hydrology of an area using the "Routine Determination Method, On-Site Inspection Necessary (Section D)" outlined in the USACE Manual (Environmental Laboratory 1987). In non-tidal waters, USACE jurisdiction extends to the ordinary high water mark, which is defined in Code of Federal Regulations Title 33, Part 328.3, as "the line on the shore established by the fluctuations of water and indicated by physical characteristics, such as a clear, natural line impressed on the bank, shelving, changes in the character of the soil, destruction of terrestrial vegetation or the presence of litter and debris." This guidance is based on the identification of the ordinary high water mark through examination of physical evidence of surface flow in the stream channel; there is no hydrologic definition of the ordinary high water mark. Construction activities that directly impact waters of the U.S., such as grading and fill placement, require a Section 404 permit from the USACE. Section 401 of the CWA requires an applicant requesting a federal license or permit for an activity that may result in any discharge into waters of the U.S. to provide state certification that the proposed activity will not violate state and federal water quality standards. In California, CWA Section 401 Water Quality Certification (Section 401 Certification) is issued by the RWQCBs and by the State Water Resources Control Board for multi-region projects.

Migratory Bird Treaty Act

The Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) of 1918 implements four international conservation treaties that the U.S. entered into with Canada in 1916, Mexico in 1936, Japan in 1972, and Russia in 1976. It is intended to ensure the sustainability of populations of all protected migratory bird species. The law has been amended with the signing of each treaty, as well as when any of the treaties were amended, such as with Mexico in 1976 and Canada in 1995. The MBTA prohibits the take (including killing, capturing, selling, trading, and transport) of protected migratory bird species without prior authorization by the USFWS.

The list of migratory bird species protected by the law, in regulations at Title 50, CFR Section 10.13, is primarily based on bird families and species included in the four international treaties. A migratory bird species is included on the list if it meets one or more of the following criteria:

1. It occurs in the United States or U.S. territories as the result of natural biological or ecological processes and is currently, or was previously listed as, a species or part of a family protected by one of the four international treaties or their amendments.
2. Revised taxonomy results in it being newly split from a species that was previously on the list, and the new species occurs in the United States or U.S. territories as the result of natural biological or ecological processes.
3. New evidence exists for its natural occurrence in the United States or U.S. territories resulting from natural distributional changes and the species occurs in a protected family.

In 2004, the Migratory Bird Treaty Reform Act limited the scope of the MBTA by stating the MBTA applies only to migratory bird species that are native to the United States or U.S. territories, and that a native migratory bird species is one that is present as a result of natural biological or ecological processes. The Migratory Bird Treaty Reform Act requires the USFWS to publish a list of all nonnative, human-introduced bird species to which the MBTA does not apply, and an updated list was published in 2020. The 2020 update identifies species belonging to biological families referred to in treaties the MBTA implements but are not protected because their presence in the United States or U.S. territories is solely the result of intentional or unintentional human-assisted introductions.

Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act

The Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act, Title 16, United States Code Sections 668 – 668d, prohibits anyone, without a permit issued by the USFWS, from "taking" bald or golden eagles, including their parts (including feathers), nests, or eggs. The Act provides criminal penalties for persons who "take, possess, sell, purchase, barter, offer to sell, purchase or barter, transport, export or import, at any time or any manner, any bald eagle ... [or any golden eagle], alive or dead, or any part, nest, or egg thereof." The Act defines "take" as "pursue, shoot, shoot at, poison, wound, kill, capture, trap, collect, molest or disturb."

"Disturb" means "to agitate or bother a bald or golden eagle to a degree that causes, or is likely to cause, based on the best scientific information available, 1) injury to an eagle, 2) a decrease in its productivity, by substantially interfering with normal breeding, feeding, or sheltering behavior, or 3) nest abandonment, by substantially interfering with normal breeding, feeding, or sheltering behavior."

In addition to immediate impacts, this definition also covers impacts that result from human-induced alterations initiated around a previously used nest site during a time when eagles are not present, if, upon the eagle's return, such alterations agitate or bother an eagle to a degree that interferes with or interrupts normal breeding, feeding, or sheltering habits, and causes injury, death, or nest abandonment.

b. State Regulations

Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act

The State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) and nine RWQCBs have jurisdiction over "waters of the State," which are defined as any surface water or groundwater, including saline waters, within the boundaries of the State pursuant to the Porter-Cologne Act (California Water Code Section 13050(e)). The SWRCB has issued general Waste Discharge Requirements regarding discharges to "isolated" waters of the State (Water Quality Order No. 2004- 0004-DWQ, Statewide General Waste Discharge Requirements for Dredged or Fill Discharges to Waters Deemed by the USACE to be Outside of Federal Jurisdiction). In the City of Auburn, the Central Valley RWQCB implements this general order for isolated waters not subject to federal jurisdiction and is also responsible for the issuance of water quality certifications pursuant to Clean Water Act Section 401 for waters subject to federal jurisdiction.

Construction Stormwater General Permit

The General Permit for Stormwater Discharges Associated with Construction and Land Disturbance Activities, Order No. 2022-0057-DWQ, NPDES No. CAS000002 (Construction Stormwater General Permit), adopted by SWRCB, regulates construction activity that includes clearing, grading, and excavation resulting in soil disturbance of at least one acre of total land area. The Construction Stormwater General Permit authorizes the discharge of stormwater to surface waters from construction activities. The Construction Stormwater General Permit requires that all developers of land where construction activities will occur over more than one acre do the following:

- Complete a Risk Assessment to determine pollution prevention requirements pursuant to the three risk levels established in the Construction Stormwater General Permit;
- Eliminate or reduce non-stormwater discharges to storm sewer systems and other waters of the United States;
- Develop and implement a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) that specifies Best Management Practices (BMPs) that will reduce pollution in stormwater discharges to the Best Available Technology/Economically Achievable/Best Conventional Pollutant Control Technology standards;
- Perform inspections and maintenance of all BMPs; and
- Conduct stormwater sampling, if required based on risk level.

Typical BMPs contained in SWPPPs are designed to minimize erosion during construction, stabilize construction areas, control sediment, and control pollutants from construction materials.

California Endangered Species Act

CESA (CFGC Section 2050 et seq.) prohibits take of state listed threatened or endangered. Take under CESA is defined as "Hunt, pursue, catch, capture, or kill, or attempt to hunt, pursue, catch, capture, or kill" (CFGC Section 86). This definition does not prohibit indirect harm by way of habitat modification, except where such harm is the proximate cause of death of a listed species. Where incidental take would occur during construction or other lawful activities, CESA allows the CDFW to issue an Incidental Take Permit upon finding, among other requirements, that impacts to the species have been minimized and fully mitigated. Unlike the federal ESA, CESA's protections extend

to candidate species during the period (typically one year) while the California Fish and Game Commission decides whether the species warrants CESA listing.

Native Plant Protection Act

CDFW also has authority to administer the Native Plant Protection Act (NPPA; CFGC Section 1900 et seq.). The NPPA requires the CDFW to establish criteria for determining if a species, subspecies, or variety of native plant is endangered or rare, and prohibits the take of listed plant species. Effective in 2015, CDFW promulgated regulations (Title 14, California Code of Regulations Section 786.9) under the authority of the NPPA, establishing that the CESA's permitting procedures would be applied to plants listed under the NPPA as "Rare." With this change, there is little practical difference for the regulated public between plants listed under CESA and those listed under the NPPA.

Fully Protected Species Laws

CDFW enforces Sections 3511, 4700, 5050, and 5515 of the CFGC, which prohibit take of species designated as fully protected. CDFW is not allowed to issue an Incidental Take Permit for fully protected species; therefore, impacts to these species must be avoided. The exception is situations where a NCCP is in place that authorizes take of the fully protected species.

Avian Protection Laws

CFGC Sections 3503, 3503.5, and 3513 describe unlawful take, possession, or destruction of native birds, nests, and eggs. Section 3503.5 of the CFGC protects all birds-of-prey and their eggs and nests against take, possession, or destruction of nests or eggs. Section 3513 makes it a state-level offense to take any bird in violation of the federal MBTA.

Protection of Lakes and Streambeds

CFGC Section 1602 states that it is unlawful for any person to "substantially divert or obstruct the natural flow of, or substantially change or use any material from the bed, channel, or bank of, any river, stream, or lake" without first notifying CDFW of that activity. Thereafter, if CDFW determines and informs the entity that the activity will not substantially adversely affect any existing fish or wildlife resources, the entity may commence the activity. If, however, CDFW determines that the activity may substantially adversely affect an existing fish or wildlife resource, the entity may be required to obtain a Streambed Alteration Agreement (SAA) from CDFW, which will include reasonable measures necessary to protect the affected resource(s), before the entity may conduct the activity described in the notification. Upon receiving a complete Notification of Lake/Streambed Alteration, CDFW has 60 days to present the entity with a Draft SAA. Upon review of the Draft SAA by the applicant, any problematic terms are negotiated with CDFW and a final SAA is executed.

The CDFW has not defined the term "stream" for the purposes of implementing its regulatory program under Section 1602, and the agency has not promulgated regulations directing how jurisdictional streambeds may be identified, or how their limits should be delineated. However, four relevant sources of information offer insight as to the appropriate limits of CDFW jurisdiction as discussed below.

- **The plain language of Section 1602 of the CFGC** establishes the following general concepts: "river," "stream," and "lake," "natural flow," "bed," "bank," and "channel"

- **Applicable court decisions**, in particular *Rutherford v. State of California* (188 Cal App.3d 1276 [1987]), which interpreted Section 1602's use of "stream" to be as defined in common law. The Court indicated that a "stream" is commonly understood to:
  - Have a source and a terminus
  - Have banks and a channel
  - Convey flow at least periodically, but need not flow continuously and may at times appear outwardly dry
  - Represent the depression between the banks worn by the regular and usual flow of the water
  - Include the area between the opposing banks measured from the foot of the banks from the top of the water at its ordinary stage, including intervening sand bars
  - Include the land that is covered by the water in its ordinary low stage
  - Include lands below the OHWM
- **CDFW regulations** defining "stream" for other purposes, including sport fishing (14 California Code of Regulations 1.72) and streambed alterations associated with cannabis production (14 California Code of Regulations 722[c][21]), which indicate that a stream:
  - Flows at least periodically or intermittently
  - Flows through a bed or channel having banks
  - Supports fish or aquatic life
  - Can be dry for a period of time
  - Includes watercourses where surface or subsurface flow supports or has supported riparian vegetation
- **Guidance documents**, including Methods to Describe and Delineate Episodic Stream Processes on Arid Landscapes for Permitting Utility-Scale Solar Power Plants (Brady and Vyverberg 2013), which suggest the following:
  - A stream may flow perennially or episodically
  - A stream is defined by the course in which water currently flows, or has flowed during the historic hydrologic course regime (approximately the last 200 years)
  - Width of a stream course can reasonably be identified by physical or biological indicators
  - A stream may have one or more channels (single thread vs. compound form)
  - Features such as braided channels, low-flow channels, active channels, banks associated with secondary channels, floodplains, islands, and stream-associated vegetation, are interconnected parts of the watercourse
  - Canals, aqueducts, irrigation ditches, and other means of water conveyance can be considered streams if they support aquatic life, riparian vegetation, or stream-dependent terrestrial wildlife
  - Biologic components of a stream may include aquatic and riparian vegetation, all aquatic wildlife including fish, amphibians, reptiles, invertebrates, and terrestrial species which derive benefits from the stream system
  - The lateral extent of a stream can be measured in different ways depending on the particular situation and the type of fish or wildlife resource at risk

The tenets listed above, among others, are applied to establish the boundaries of streambeds in various environments. The importance of each factor may be weighted based on site-specific considerations and the applicability of the indicators to the streambed at hand.

c. Local Regulations

Auburn Municipal Code

Title V, Chapter 53 of the City's Municipal Code (Stormwater Management and Discharge Control) establishes the City's regulatory framework for preventing pollution of stormwater and protecting the quality of surface waters consistent with the federal Clean Water Act and the City's Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System permit. This chapter prohibits non-stormwater discharges to the City's storm drain system except where expressly allowed, regulates illicit connections and threatened discharges, and authorizes the City to require implementation of BMPs to reduce pollutants in stormwater runoff. Chapter 53 applies to existing discharges as well as new development and redevelopment projects, requiring projects to implement on-site stormwater management measures and runoff controls as necessary.

Title XV, Chapter 161 of the City's Municipal Code (Tree Preservation) protects any native tree with a trunk that is a minimum of 6 inches in diameter (18.8 inches in circumference) at breast height, or, any native tree with multiple trunks that includes at least one trunk with a minimum diameter at breast height of 6 inches or with trunks that have an aggregate diameter at breast height of at least 20 inches. Native trees include any of the following trees (or hybrids thereof): *Quercus lobata* (valley oak or California white oak), *Quercus douglasii* (blue oak), *Quercus wislizenii* (interior live oak), *Quercus chrysolepis* (canyon live oak), *Quercus kelloggii* (California black oak), *Quercus x morehus* (oracle oak), *Aesculus californica* (California buckeye), *Arbutus menziesii* (madrone), *Calocedrus decurrens* (incense cedar), *Cercis occidentalis* (western redbud), *Pinus ponderosa* (Ponderosa pine), and *Pseudotsuga menziesii* (Douglas fir).

Auburn General Plan 1993

The Auburn General Plan was adopted on November 29, 1993. The General Plan's Open Space/Conservation Element contains the following goals and policies related to biological resources:

Goal 1: Protect areas of natural vegetation, trees, topographic features, wildlife habitat, and riparian corridors.

Policy 1.1	Identify, protect and enhance natural, riparian wildlife habitat and vegetation areas and encourage preservation and maintenance of these areas in as natural state as possible.
Policy 1.3	Conserve the quality of habitats which support fish and wildlife species so as to maintain populations at sustainable levels.
Policy 1.4	Protect, restore, and enhance habitats for native animals and protect threatened and endangered species.
Policy 1.7	As necessary, require field studies as part of project review. These studies shall document the possible occurrence of special status plant and wildlife species and provide a method for their protection, monitoring, replacement, or for otherwise mitigating development near the sensitive habitats.

Goal 2: Minimize adverse development impacts to the natural environment.

Policy 2.2 Continue to implement the grading ordinance of the City of Auburn to protect against sedimentation and soil erosion.

Policy 2.6 Encourage development of all building sites and residences in a manner minimizing disturbance to natural terrain and vegetation and maximizing preservation of natural beauty and open space.

Goal 7: Conserve, protect and enhance water supplies and adequately plan for the development and protection of these resources and their related resources for future generations.

Policy 7.1 Protect water quality and watershed by discouraging activities including, but not limited to, the use of hazardous materials around wetland and groundwater recharge areas.

Policy 7.2 Support regional, state and federal agencies in their efforts to exact high levels of water quality.

Policy 7.4 Adopt an ordinance to protect and enhance waterways, stream channels, and intermittent streams.

Policy 7.5 Where feasible, keep waterways in their natural state.

Policy 7.6 Encourage appropriate setbacks for building sites from natural waterways.

Placer County Code

Article 19.50 of the Placer County Code of Ordinances (Woodland Conservation) establishes development and natural resource protection standards applicable to projects that involve land disturbance, vegetation removal, and site development within unincorporated Placer County. Protected trees are defined as any native tree species with a diameter at breast height of six inches or greater (except foothill pine trees, *Pinus sabiniana*) or multiple trunk trees with an aggregate diameter of 10 inches or greater. Article 19.50 prohibits the removal of landmark trees, trees located in designated Tree Preservation Zones, and trees within riparian areas.

Placer County General Plan

The Placer County General Plan was updated in 2013. The General Plan's Natural Resources Element contain the following goals and policies related to biological resources:

Goal 6.A: To protect and enhance the natural qualities of Placer County's rivers, streams, creeks and groundwater.

Policy 6.A.1 The County shall require the provision of sensitive habitat buffers which shall, at a minimum, be measured as follows: 100 feet from the centerline of perennial streams, 50 feet from centerline of intermittent streams, and 50 feet from the edge of sensitive habitats to be protected, including riparian zones, wetlands, old growth woodlands, and the habitat of special status, threatened or endangered species (see discussion of sensitive habitat buffers in Part I of this Policy Document). Based on more detailed information supplied as a part of the review for a specific project or input from state or federal regulatory agency, the County may determine that such setbacks are not applicable in a particular instance of should be modified based on

the new information provided. The County may, however, allow exceptions, such as in the following cases:

1. Reasonable use of the property would otherwise be denied;
2. The location is necessary to avoid or mitigate hazards to the public;
3. The location is necessary for the repair of roads, bridges, trails, or similar infrastructure; or,
4. The location is necessary for the construction of new roads, bridges, trails, or similar infrastructure where the County determines there is no feasible alternative and the project has minimized environmental impacts through project design and infrastructure placement.

Policy 6.A.2 The County shall require all development in the 100-year floodplain to comply with the provisions of the Placer County Flood Damage Prevention Ordinance.

Policy 6.A.3 The County shall require development projects proposing to encroach into a stream zone or stream setback to do one or more of the following, in descending order of desirability:

a) Avoid the disturbance of riparian vegetation;
b) Replace all functions of the existing riparian vegetation (on-site, in-kind);
c) Restore another section of stream (in-kind); and/or
d) Pay a mitigation fee for in-kind restoration elsewhere (e.g., mitigation banks).

Policy 6.A.4 Where stream protection is required or proposed, the County should require public and private development to:

a) Preserve stream zones and stream setback areas through easements or dedications. Parcel lines (in the case of a subdivision) or easements (in the case of a subdivision or other development) shall be located to optimize resource protection. If a stream is proposed to be included within an open space parcel or easement, allowed uses and maintenance responsibilities within that parcel or easement should be clearly defined and conditioned prior to map or project approval;
b) Designate such easement or dedication areas (as described in a. above) as open space;
c) Protect stream zones and their habitat value by actions such as: 1) providing an adequate stream setback, 2) maintaining creek corridors in an essentially natural state, 3) employing stream restoration techniques where restoration is needed to achieve a natural stream zone, 4) utilizing riparian vegetation within stream zones, and where possible, within stream setback areas, 5) prohibiting the planting of invasive, non-native plants (such as *Vinca major* and eucalyptus) within stream zones or stream setbacks, and 6) avoiding tree removal within stream zones;
d) Provide recreation and public access near streams consistent with other General Plan policies;

e) Use design, construction, and maintenance techniques that ensure development near a creek will not cause or worsen natural hazards (such as erosion, sedimentation, flooding, or water pollution) and will include erosion and sediment control practices such as: 1) turbidity screens and other management practices, which shall be used as necessary to minimize siltation, sedimentation, and erosion, and shall be left in place until disturbed areas; and/or are stabilized with permanent vegetation that will prevent the transport of sediment off site; and 2) temporary vegetation sufficient to stabilize disturbed areas.

f) Provide for long-term stream zone maintenance by providing a guaranteed financial commitment to the County which accounts for all anticipated maintenance activities.

Policy 6.A.5 The County shall continue to require the use of feasible and practical best management practices (BMPs) to protect streams from the adverse effects of construction activities and urban runoff and to encourage the use of BMPs for agricultural activities.

Policy 6.A.10 The County shall discourage grading activities during the rainy season, unless adequately mitigated, to avoid sedimentation of creeks and damage to riparian habitat.

Policy 6.A.11 Where the stream zone has previously been modified by channelization, fill, or other human activity, the County shall require project proponents to restore such areas by means of landscaping, revegetation, or similar stabilization techniques as a part of development activities.

Goal 6.B: To protect wetland communities and related riparian areas throughout Placer County as valuable resources.

Policy 6.B.1 The County shall support the "no net loss" policy for wetland areas regulated by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife. Coordination with these agencies at all levels of project review shall continue to ensure that appropriate mitigation measures and the concerns of these agencies are adequately addressed.

Policy 6.B.2 The County shall require new development to mitigate wetland loss in both federal jurisdictional and non-jurisdictional wetlands to achieve "no net loss" through any combination of the following, in descending order of desirability: (1) avoidance; (2) where avoidance is not possible, minimization of impacts on the resource; or (3) compensation, including use of a mitigation and conservation banking program that provides the opportunity to mitigate impacts to special status, threatened, and endangered species and/or the habitat which supports these species in wetland and riparian areas. Non-jurisdictional wetlands may include riparian areas that are not federal “waters of the United States” as defined by the Clean Water Act.

Policy 6.B.3 The County shall discourage direct runoff of pollutants and siltation into wetland areas from outfalls serving nearby urban development. Development shall be designed in such a manner that pollutants and siltation will not significantly adversely affect the value or function of wetlands.

Policy 6.B.4 The County shall strive to identify and conserve remaining upland habitat areas adjacent to wetlands and riparian areas that are critical to the survival and nesting of wetland and riparian species.

Policy 6.B.5 The County shall require development that may affect a wetland to employ avoidance, minimization, and/or compensatory mitigation techniques. In evaluating the level of compensation to be required with respect to any given project, (a) on-site mitigation shall be preferred to off-site, and in-kind mitigation shall be preferred to out-of-kind; (b) functional replacement ratios may vary to the extent necessary to incorporate a margin of safety reflecting the expected degree of success associated with the mitigation plan; and (c) acreage replacement ratios may vary depending on the relative functions and values of those wetlands being lost and those being supplied, including compensation for temporal losses. The County shall continue to implement and refine criteria for determining when an alteration to a wetland is considered a less-than significant impact under CEQA.

Goal 6.D: To preserve and protect the valuable vegetation resources of Placer County.

Policy 6.D.2 The County shall require developers to use native and compatible non-native species, especially drought-resistant species, to the extent possible in fulfilling landscaping requirements imposed as conditions of discretionary permits or for project mitigation.

Policy 6.D.3 The County shall support the preservation of outstanding areas of natural vegetation, including, but not limited to, oak woodlands, riparian areas, and vernal pools.

Policy 6.D.4 The County shall ensure that landmark trees and major groves of native trees are preserved and protected. In order to maintain these areas in perpetuity, protected areas shall also include younger vegetation with suitable space for growth and reproduction.

Policy 6.D.9 The County shall require that development on hillsides be limited to maintain valuable natural vegetation, especially forests and open grasslands, and to control erosion.

Policy 6.D.10 The County shall encourage the planting of native trees, shrubs, and grasslands in order to preserve the visual integrity of the landscape, provide habitat conditions suitable for native wildlife, and ensure that a maximum number and variety of well adapted plants are maintained.

Policy 6.D.14 The County shall require that new development avoid ecologically-fragile areas (e.g., areas of special status, threatened, or endangered species of plants, and riparian areas). Where feasible, these areas should be protected through public or private acquisition of fee title or conservation easements to ensure protection.

Goal 6.E: To preserve and enhance open space lands to maintain the natural resources of the County.

Policy 6.E.1 The County shall support the preservation and enhancement of natural land forms, natural vegetation, and natural resources as open space to the maximum extent feasible. The County shall permanently protect, as open space, areas of natural resource value, including wetlands, riparian corridors, unfragmented woodlands, and floodplains.

Policy 6.E.2 The County shall require that new development be designed and constructed to preserve the following types of areas and features as open space to the maximum extent feasible:

a) High erosion hazard areas;
b) Scenic and trail corridors;
c) Streams, riparian vegetation;
d) Wetlands;
e) Significant stands of vegetation;
f) Wildlife corridors; and
g) Any areas of special ecological significance.

4.4.3 Impact Analysis

a. Significance Thresholds and Methodology

Significance Thresholds

Based on Appendix G of the *CEQA Guidelines* a project may be deemed to have a significant impact on biological resources if it would:

1. Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive or special-status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service;
2. Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, and regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or US Fish and Wildlife Service;
3. Have a substantial adverse effect on State or federally protected wetlands (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means;
4. Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites;
5. Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance; or
6. Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or State habitat conservation plan.

Methodology

The analysis of impacts related to biological resources is based on review of available literature online record searches of the following databases: the CDFW CNDDB (2024c), the CNPS *Online Inventory of Rare, Threatened and Endangered Plants of California* (2024), the USFWS National Wetlands Inventory (2024a), USFWS *Critical Habitat Mapper* (2024c), and USFWS Information for Planning and Consultation System (2024b). Data used for this analysis are summarized in Section 4.4.1. Rincon biologists evaluated impacts on biological resources based on the likelihood that special-status species, sensitive habitats, wildlife corridors, and protected trees are present within the Planning Area, and the likely effects of construction or operation on these resources. For the purposes of this EIR, the word "substantial" as used in the significance thresholds below is defined by the following three principal components:

- Magnitude and duration of the impact (e.g., substantial/not substantial),
- Uniqueness of the affected resource (rarity), and
- Susceptibility of the affected resource to disturbance.

b. Project Impacts and Mitigation

Threshold 1:	Would the project have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?

Impact BIO-1 DEVELOPMENT FACILITATED BY THE 2045 GENERAL PLAN WOULD BE REQUIRED TO COMPLY WITH PROPOSED POLICIES AND ACTIONS PROTECTIVE OF SPECIAL-STATUS SPECIES AND THEIR ASSOCIATED HABITATS. HOWEVER, IMPACTS TO SPECIAL-STATUS BAT SPECIES MAY OCCUR AS A RESULT OF ROOSTING HABITAT REMOVAL. IMPACTS TO SPECIAL-STATUS SPECIES WOULD BE LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT WITH MITIGATION.

Construction

As depicted in Figure 4.4-1, most of the Planning Area is developed and does not provide habitat for special-status species reported or known to occur in or near to Auburn. Areas that may provide habitat for special-status species are primarily located in the open space and undeveloped areas of the Planning Area, including local parks and riparian areas. The Planning Area is not located within any federally designated Critical Habitat for special-status species (USFWS 2024c).

Five special-status wildlife species have a low potential to occur (western bumble bee, vernal pool fairy shrimp, bald eagle, California black rail, and bank swallow), seven special-status wildlife species have a moderate potential to occur (valley elderberry longhorn beetle, steelhead, foothill yellow-legged frog, osprey, purple martin, pallid bat, and Townsend's big-eared bat), two special-status wildlife species have a high potential to occur (white-tailed kite and American peregrine falcon), and one special-status wildlife species (western pond turtle) has been documented within the Planning Area. Generally, these species are associated with waterways and riparian habitats along creeks and riverine features as well as open space. As such, special-status wildlife species would most likely be found in the northeastern, southeastern, and west-central portions of the Planning Area, which contain broader expanses of open space, vegetation, and riparian areas.

Nine special-status plant species have a moderate potential to occur (big-scale balsamroot, Stebbins' morning glory, chaparral sedge, Pine Hill ceanothus, Red Hills soaproot, El Dorado bedstraw, Boggs Lake hedge-hyssop, Layne's ragwort, and El Dorado County mule ears), and two special-status plant species (Jepson's onion and oval-leaved viburnum) have been documented within the Planning Area. These species would be expected to occur within open space areas of the Planning Area.

The 2045 General Plan would primarily facilitate infill development and redevelopment within the existing Auburn city limits, including Downtown/Old Town, the Baltimore Ravine Specific Planning Area, and other designated growth areas such as the Nevada Street corridor and State Route 49 commercial corridor. These areas are largely urbanized and currently developed with residential, commercial, and industrial uses, and therefore provide limited habitat for special-status species described in Section 4.4.1. However, portions of the Planning Area include open space, riparian corridors, and undeveloped lands, particularly along the North Fork American River, Baltimore Ravine, and other creek systems, that support native vegetation communities such as blue oak woodland, annual grassland, and riparian habitat. Lighting (especially along riparian corridors) and nighttime noise associated with buildout of the 2045 General Plan could disrupt wildlife behavior when adjacent to open space or undeveloped lands. However, the 2045 General Plan would designate these riparian areas, parks, and natural open spaces as Open Space or Resource Conservation land uses, which would prevent substantial development within these sensitive habitats. These designations would conserve areas that provide potential habitat for special-status species.

The 2045 General Plan would increase the amount of Open Space or Resource Conservation land use designations, including those applied to riparian corridors, parks, and natural areas along the North Fork American River, Baltimore Ravine, and other creeks and drainages within the Planning Area. Therefore, the General Plan would not facilitate permanent development within riparian vegetation or sensitive natural communities in these areas. Because most development anticipated under the 2045 General Plan would occur as infill or redevelopment within the existing city limits or in previously urbanized parts of North Auburn and Bowman, existing roads, water, and sewer infrastructure are already in place, minimizing the need for extensive new utility construction. However, increased allowable densities and mixed-use development in these areas could require utility upgrades or localized infrastructure improvements. Construction of such facilities could involve work near riparian corridors or drainage features, resulting in potential temporary impacts to riparian and aquatic habitats, which may support special-status species. Additionally, development facilitated by the 2045 General Plan could affect isolated native trees and landscaped pockets within the urbanized area, which may provide nesting habitat for migratory birds protected under the MBTA and CFGC.

Development facilitated by the 2045 General Plan would be subject to the provisions of the various federal and State natural resources regulations and their respective permitting processes. Additionally, the 2045 General Plan contains goals and policies that call for the preservation and protection of natural resources. The following proposed goals, policies, and actions would reduce impacts on special-status species and their habitats: Goal OSC-1: Open Space, Policy OSC-1.1: Open Space Preservation, Policy OSC-1.2: Greenbelts and Connected Open Spaces, Policy OSC-1.6: Open Space Dedication, Policy OSC-1.7: Utilities in Open Space Areas, Policy OSC-1.8: Long-Term Preservation, Policy OSC-3.1: Creeks and Ravines, Policy OSC-3.2: Stream Restoration, Policy OSC-3.3: Maintenance of Natural Waterways, Goal OSC-5: Plant and Animal Resources, Policy OSC-5.1: Wildlife Corridors, Policy OSC-5.2: Habitat Protection, Policy OSC-5.3: Wetlands, Policy OSC-5.4:

Special Status Species, Policy OSC-5.5: Control of Invasive Plants, Action OSC-5A: Biological Resource Studies, Action OSC-5B: Mitigation of Habitat Impacts, and Action OSC-5C: Bird Protection.

Policy OSC-1.1 calls for preservation of open spaces surrounding Auburn and North Auburn, including the American River Canyon and rural lands, while Policy OSC-1.2 promotes greenbelts and wildlife corridors linking parks, ravines, canals, and the State Recreation Area. Policies OSC-1.6 and OSC-1.8 encourage permanent protection of open space and sensitive habitats through conservation easements, deed restrictions, and buffers, particularly in areas such as Baltimore Ravine. Policy OSC-1.7 discourages large utility infrastructure in open space areas to avoid harm to biological resources. These policies would protect special-status species by conserving large blocks of open space, riparian corridors, and natural landforms. These policies would maintain foraging, nesting, roosting, and dispersal habitat for species such as western bumble bee, white-tailed kite, American peregrine falcon, osprey, purple martin, bald eagle, and other birds that depend on open grasslands, large trees, and connected natural areas. These policies would also protect open-space plant communities that support special-status plant species.

Goal OSC-5 focuses on plant and animal resources. Policy OSC-5.1 protects wildlife corridors, including the migratory route along the North Fork American River, while OSC-5.2 requires conservation of riparian areas, oak woodlands, and other habitats recognized by State and federal agencies. Policy OSC-5.3 preserves wetlands such as Wise Forebay and Rock Creek Preserve, ensuring agency review and compensatory mitigation when impacts cannot be avoided. Policy OSC-5.4 mandates protection of special-status species, including those listed under ESA and CESA, candidate species, and those recognized by CNPS or the CFGC. Implementation of these policies would protect habitat used by special-status birds (including white-tailed kite, American peregrine falcon, osprey, purple martin, bald eagle, California black rail, and bank swallow), aquatic and semi-aquatic species (including steelhead, foothill yellow-legged frog, western pond turtle, and vernal pool fairy shrimp), invertebrates and pollinators (including valley elderberry longhorn beetle and western bumble bee), and special-status plant species associated with open space, riparian, wetland, grassland, and oak woodland habitats.

Goal OSC-3 and related policies further protect riparian systems. Policy OSC-3.1 requires setbacks from the top of bank along creeks and ravines to preserve riparian habitat and reduce erosion and flood hazards. Policy OSC-3.2 promotes stream restoration and daylighting, while Policy OSC-3.3 encourages maintenance of natural waterways to prevent siltation and habitat degradation. These policies would benefit special-status species such as steelhead, foothill yellow-legged frog, western pond turtle, California black rail, bank swallow, and other species that rely on stream corridors, wetlands, or riverine habitat.

Actions OSC-5A, OSC-5B, and OSC-5C implement these policies by requiring biological resource studies for projects in sensitive areas, identifying conditions of approval to avoid or mitigate habitat impacts, and including standard bird protection measures consistent with CDFW and the MBTA. Together, these policies and actions ensure that potential impacts to sensitive habitats and species are identified early and mitigated during project review. Implementation of these measures would substantially reduce or avoid direct impacts to special-status species and their habitat within the Planning Area.

Special-status bats such as pallid bat and Townsend's big-eared bat are California species of special concern and have potential to occur within the Planning Area. Pallid bats are found in grasslands, shrublands, woodlands, and forests, and may roost in trees or buildings. Townsend's big-eared bats are found in a wide variety of habitats and may roost in abandoned buildings or large trees. Bats prefer open areas or areas under a tree canopy for foraging, and often roost near water. Although

the Planning Area is largely developed, large trees, abandoned structures, and buildings in Auburn may provide suitable roosting habitat for special-status bat species. Disturbance of maternity roosts by construction activities, resulting in roost destruction or abandonment, would be a potentially significant impact to bat species and would potentially constitute violations of the California Fish and Game Code. Such adverse effects on special-status bats would be a potentially significant impact.

Operation

Given that potential impacts to special-status species would occur during construction either directly or indirectly related to habitat modification, the 2045 General Plan would have no operational impacts related to special-status species.

Mitigation Measures

BIO-1 Conduct Pre-construction Roosting Bats Surveys and Implement Avoidance Measures Prior to Removal

The City shall require, as a standard condition of approval, the following requirements for roosting bat surveys and avoidance measures prior to removal of trees or structures:

Prior to the removal or alteration of trees and structures that may serve as roosting habitat for special-status bat species, a qualified biologist shall conduct a focused survey of all trees and structures to be removed or impacted by construction activities to determine whether active roosts of special-status bats are present on site. Tree or structure removal shall be planned for either the spring or the fall and timed to ensure both suitable conditions for the detection of bats and adequate time for tree and/or structure removal to occur during seasonal periods of bat activity exclusive of the breeding season, as described below. Trees and/or structures containing suitable potential bat roost habitat features shall be clearly marked or identified. If no bat roosts are found, the results of the survey will be documented and submitted to the City within 30 days of the survey, after which no further action will be required.

If day roosts are present, the biologist shall prepare a site-specific roosting bat protection plan to be implemented by the contractor following the City's approval. The plan shall incorporate the following guidance as appropriate:

- When possible, removal of trees/structures identified as suitable roosting habitat shall be conducted during seasonal periods of bat activity, including the following:
  - Between September 1 and about October 15, or before evening temperatures fall below 45 degrees Fahrenheit and/or more than 0.5 inch of rainfall within 24 hours occurs.
  - Between March 1 and April 15, or after evening temperatures rise above 45 degrees Fahrenheit and/or no more than 0.5 inch of rainfall within 24 hours occurs.
- If a tree/structure must be removed during the breeding season and is identified as potentially containing a colonial maternity roost, then a qualified biologist shall conduct acoustic emergence surveys or implement other appropriate methods to further evaluate if the roost is an active maternity roost. Under the biologist's guidance, the contractor shall implement measures that consist of (or exceed) the following:
  - If it is determined that the roost is not an active maternity roost, then the roost may be removed in accordance with the other requirements of this measure.

    - If it is found that an active maternity roost of a colonial roosting species is present, the roost shall not be disturbed during the breeding season (April 15 to August 31).

- Tree removal procedures shall be implemented using a two-step tree removal process. This method is conducted over two consecutive days and works by creating noise and vibration by cutting non-habitat branches and limbs from habitat trees using chainsaws only (no excavators or other heavy machinery) on day one. The noise and vibration disturbance, together with the visible alteration of the tree, is very effective in causing bats that emerge nightly to feed to not return to the roost that night. The remainder of the tree is removed on day two.
- Prior to the demolition of vacant structures within the project site, a qualified biologist shall conduct a focused habitat assessment of all structures to be demolished. The habitat assessment shall be conducted enough in advance to ensure the commencement of building demolition can be scheduled during seasonal periods of bat activity (see above), if required. If no signs of day roosting activity are observed, no further actions will be required. If bats or signs of day roosting by bats are observed, a qualified biologist will prepare specific recommendations such as partial dismantling to cause bats to abandon the roost, or humane eviction, both to be conducted during seasonal periods of bat activity, if required.
- If the qualified biologist determines a roost is used by a large number of bats (large hibernaculum), bat boxes shall be installed near the project site. The number of bat boxes installed will depend on the size of the hibernaculum and shall be determined through consultation with CDFW. If a maternity colony has become established, all construction activities shall be postponed within a 500-foot buffer around the maternity colony until it is determined by a qualified biologist that the young have dispersed. Once it has been determined that the roost is clear of bats, the roost shall be removed immediately.

Significance After Mitigation

Implementation of Mitigation Measure BIO-1 would be required for future development projects facilitated by the 2045 General Plan where trees, abandoned structures, or other habitat for roosting bats is present and construction activities may occur during seasonal periods of bat activity. Following implementation of Mitigation Measure BIO-1, construction impacts related to special-status species would be less than significant.

Threshold 2:	Would the project have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?
Threshold 3:	Would the project have a substantial adverse effect on state or federally protected wetlands (including but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?

Impact BIO-2 DEVELOPMENT FACILITATED BY THE 2045 GENERAL PLAN COULD ADVERSELY IMPACT RIPARIAN HABITAT, OTHER SENSITIVE NATURAL COMMUNITIES, OR PROTECTED WETLANDS IN THE PLANNING AREA. IMPLEMENTATION OF FEDERAL, STATE, AND LOCAL REGULATIONS AS WELL AS PROPOSED GENERAL PLAN GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS WOULD ENSURE RIPARIAN HABITAT, SENSITIVE NATURAL COMMUNITIES, AND WETLANDS ARE NOT SUBSTANTIALLY IMPACTED. IMPACTS WOULD BE LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT.

Construction

Riparian habitat, riverine features, and freshwater emergent wetlands have been recorded throughout the Planning Area, primarily along Rock Creek, Dry Creek, Halsey Afterbay, Wise Canal, Baltimore Ravine, Fiddler Green Canal, Shirland Canal, Clipper Creek, the North Fork American River, and Rock Creek Lake. Development facilitated by the 2045 General Plan that would be located near or be bisected by waterways and other tributaries and drainages throughout the Planning Area would be potentially subject to USACE, CDFW, and RWQCB permitting requirements.

Most development anticipated under the 2045 General Plan would occur on infill sites within the existing city limits or in unincorporated North Auburn that are already developed and are not proximate to wetlands or waterways. Because these areas are urbanized and currently developed, they are unlikely to contain jurisdictional wetlands or other surface waters and associated riparian vegetation zones. However, the infill development facilitated by the 2045 General Plan would increase density in some areas, which could require upgraded utilities or stormwater drainage. The construction of these upgraded facilities could require work, including dredge or fill, within potentially jurisdictional wetlands and streams and could require ground disturbance in riparian habitats associated with these wetlands and streams. Pursuant to Action OSC-5A (Biological Resource Studies) and through the City's discretionary project review process, proposed development with the potential to affect wetlands, streams, or riparian vegetation would be required to conduct an aquatic resources delineation to identify the extent and jurisdiction of protected aquatic resources. Therefore, future proposed development in areas identified as containing potentially jurisdictional waters and/or wetlands, streambed/banks, or riparian vegetation would be subject to the permit requirements of the USACE, RWQCB, and CDFW, pursuant to Section 404 and 401 of CWA, the Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act, and/or CFGC Section 1600 *et seq*. Actual jurisdictional areas would be determined by the State and federal authorities at the time that permits are requested.

Reasonably foreseeable development within or adjacent to sensitive habitats could result in direct impacts through the removal of vegetation, filling of wetland habitat, runoff of pollutants into riparian habitats or wetlands, compaction of soils, and/or indirectly through dust and vegetation thinning. The issuance of a grading permit for ministerial and discretionary projects requires obtaining other permits required by State or federal agencies. These include but are not limited to streambed alteration permits from the CDFW and permits for grading in the vicinity of wetlands and certain watercourses from the USACE and RWQCB. These permit clearances may also be required as

conditions of approval for grading work to commence. Approval of permits also requires findings that the proposed grading will not result in erosion, stream sediment, or other adverse off-site effects to riparian habitat.

Future development on sites one acre or larger would require implementation of the Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan Best Management Practices, in accordance with the NPDES Construction General Permit. This would reduce the potential for eroded soil and any contaminants attached to that soil to contaminate a waterbody following a storm event. Additionally, Auburn Municipal Code Title V, Chapter 53 (Stormwater Management and Discharge Control) requires implementation of source control best management practices, regulation of stormwater discharges, runoff treatment, and on-site stormwater management for new development and redevelopment to minimize flooding, erosion, and water quality impacts. Impacts related to drainage and pollution are further discussed in Section 4.10, *Hydrology and Water Quality*.

The 2045 General Plan contains goals, policies, and actions that would further reduce impacts on riparian and wetland habitats: Goal OSC-3: Water Resources, Policy OSC-3.1: Creeks and Ravines, Policy OSC-3.2: Stream Restoration, Policy OSC-3.3: Maintenance of Natural Waterways, Policy OSC-3.4: American River Watershed Management, Policy OSC-3.6: Water Quality Standards, Policy OSC-3.7: Urban Runoff, Policy OSC-3.8: Low Impact Development, Action OSC-3A: Auburn Ravine Restoration, Action OSC-3B: Stream and Waterway Protection, and Action OSC-3D: Best Management Practices for Construction.

Implementation of Policies OSC-3.1 through OSC-3.8 and Actions OSC-3A, OSC-3B, and OSC-3D would reduce direct impacts to waters, wetlands, and riparian areas during construction and operation by minimizing modifications to creeks, embankments, and other waterways in the Planning Area. Policy OSC-3.1 would require setbacks from the top of bank to preserve riparian habitat and reduce erosion and flood hazards, while Policies OSC-3.2 and OSC-3.3 would promote stream restoration and maintenance of natural waterways. Policy OSC-3.4 would commit the City to protecting the American River watershed in partnership with regional agencies, and Policy OSC-3.6 would ensure compliance with State and federal water quality standards. Policies OSC-3.7 and OSC-3.8 would require stormwater management and low impact development practices to reduce urban runoff and preserve natural drainage patterns.

Actions OSC-3A and OSC-3B would support restoration and protection of streams and riparian areas, while Action OSC-3D would require BMPs during construction to prevent erosion and water quality degradation. If potentially jurisdictional waters occur on any site identified for development under the 2045 General Plan, an aquatic resources delineation and permits from USACE, RWQCB, and CDFW would be required to address potential impacts.

Adherence to State and federal regulations in addition to the Auburn Municipal Code, and implementation of proposed 2045 General Plan goals, polices, and actions would minimize potential construction-related impacts to riparian habitats, sensitive natural communities, and wetlands. Construction impacts from development facilitated by the project would be less than significant.

Operation

Given that potential impacts to riparian habitats, sensitive natural communities, and wetlands would occur during construction either directly via fill or indirectly related to habitat modification, the 2045 General Plan would have no operational impacts related to riparian habitats, sensitive natural communities, or wetlands.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation is required.

Significance After Mitigation

Impacts would be less than significant without mitigation.

Threshold 4:	Would the project interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?

Impact BIO-3 DEVELOPMENT FACILITATED BY THE 2045 GENERAL PLAN WOULD AVOID IMPACTS TO WILDLIFE MOVEMENT CORRIDORS BY CONSERVING OPEN SPACE THROUGHOUT THE PLANNING AREA, AS DIRECTED BY POLICIES IN THE 2045 GENERAL PLAN. IMPACTS WOULD BE LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT.

Construction

Natural Landscape Blocks and Essential Connectivity Areas occur along the east side of the Planning Area, generally mapped along the North Fork American River, connecting the valley floor with the Sierra Mountain ranges to the east. Wildlife movement corridors in the Planning Area are generally limited to riparian corridors and creeks and areas of open space. Creeks and waterways may be used by migratory fish, and riparian corridors and other undeveloped and open space areas may provide corridors for wildlife movement. The 2045 General Plan would increase the amount of Open Space and Resource Conservation land use designations and would not facilitate permanent development within potential wildlife movement corridors. Wildlife movement within areas of open space would not be substantially affected by development facilitated by the 2045 General Plan for this reason.

Proposed 2045 General Plan Goals OSC-1 (Open Space) and OSC-3 (Water Resources) address the preservation and restoration of habitats that may serve as open space and wildlife corridors. Under these goals, several policies require development setbacks along creeks and protection of riparian areas, wetlands, and other areas that function as fish and wildlife movement corridors. These policies would help to preserve important local wildlife corridors as new development is permitted throughout the Planning Area. In addition, Policy OSC-5.1: Wildlife Corridors expressly calls for protection of wildlife corridors, including corridors along streams and ravines as well as along the American River.

Considering the 2045 General Plan would not facilitate development in open space areas, including stream corridors, and contains policies to reduce impacts to stream corridors and protect wildlife movement corridors and open space, construction of development facilitated by the project would result in less than significant impacts related to wildlife movement corridors.

Operation

Given that potential impacts to wildlife movement corridors would occur during construction either directly via fill or indirectly related to open space development, the 2045 General Plan would have no operational impacts related to wildlife movement corridors.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation is required.

Significance After Mitigation

Impacts would be less than significant without mitigation.

Threshold 5:	Would the project conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?

Impact BIO-4 DEVELOPMENT FACILITATED BY THE 2045 GENERAL PLAN WOULD BE REQUIRED TO COMPLY WITH APPLICABLE LOCAL POLICIES AND ORDINANCES PROTECTING BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES. IMPACTS WOULD BE LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT.

Construction

Development facilitated by the 2045 General Plan could occur on parcels that contain mature trees and/or have mature street trees along their boundaries. Removal or alteration of these trees would be subject to the City's Tree Preservation Ordinance codified in Auburn Municipal Code Title XV, Chapter 161 (Tree Preservation). This chapter addresses the preservation of trees throughout the City of Auburn and establishes provisions for the identification and protection of native trees, regulated activities that may occur within the critical root zone of protected trees, and activities that would necessitate a tree permit.

For portions of the Planning Area within unincorporated Placer County, the removal or alteration of native trees would be subject to Placer County Code of Ordinances Article 19.50 (Woodland Conservation), which regulates activities affecting protected trees, native vegetation, and environmentally sensitive lands, and requires discretionary review and permitting for tree removal and grading activities that exceed established thresholds.

The following proposed 2045 General Plan policy and action would help protect trees and other vegetation in the Planning Area:

- **Policy OSC-5.7: Tree Protection.** Encourage the preservation of healthy mature trees in new development and on existing properties. Discourage the removal of "protected" trees as defined by the City's Tree Preservation Ordinance and require replacement trees if removal is necessary.
- **Action OSC-5D: Tree Preservation Ordinance.** Update the Auburn Tree Preservation Ordinance, which sets criteria for identifying protected trees, outlines procedures and evaluation requirements for removing them, specifies rules for construction, requires mitigation for tree removal, and establishes penalties for violations. The Update should balance tree preservation goals with fire-wise land management practices, including promoting defensible space and allowing selective thinning in high-risk areas.

Implementation of this policy and action would reinforce the required protection of trees specified in the Auburn Municipal Code. Development facilitated by the project would be required to comply with Auburn Municipal Code requirements and 2045 General Plan policies. Therefore, construction of development facilitated by the project would result in less than significant impacts related to conflicts with local biological resources policies and ordinances.

Operation

Given that potential impacts to trees would occur during construction, the 2045 General Plan would have no operational impact related to consistency with local biological resources policies and ordinances.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation is required.

Significance After Mitigation

Impacts would be less than significant without mitigation.

Threshold 6:	Would the project conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?

Impact BIO-5 DEVELOPMENT FACILITATED BY THE 2045 GENERAL PLAN WOULD NOT CONFLICT WITH AN ADOPTED HCP, NCCP, OR OTHER APPROVED LOCAL, REGIONAL, OR STATE HABITAT CONSERVATION PLAN. IMPACTS WOULD BE LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT.

Construction and Operation

The Planning Area overlaps the boundaries of the Placer County Conservation Plan (PCCP) (CDFW 2024d). The PCCP covers western Placer County and specific areas in Sutter County; it explicitly excludes the City of Auburn from the HCP/NCCP and permitting framework. Within the incorporated City limits of Auburn, no adopted HCP/NCCP applies; consequently, the 2045 General Plan would not conflict with an HCP/NCCP.

Portions of the Planning Area outside City limits (i.e., unincorporated areas within Auburn's Sphere of Influence) are subject to the PCCP. The PCCP is implemented only within jurisdictions that retain permitting authority and does not supersede municipal land use policies. Instead, it functions as a regional conservation framework administered by the Placer Conservation Authority, with coordination among local jurisdictions and State and federal wildlife agencies. As such, Auburn's General Plan policies may align with and support PCCP conservation objectives in overlapping areas without conflict.

For example, the PCCP establishes broad guiding principles to protect natural plant communities and wildlife habitats and establishes a conservation reserve system that includes all natural communities. 2045 General Plan goals and policies, including Goal OSC-1: Open Space, Policy OSC-1.1: Open Space Preservation, Policy OSC-1.2: Greenbelts and Connected Open Spaces, Policy OSC-1.6: Open Space Dedication, Policy OSC-1.7: Utilities in Open Space Areas, Policy OSC-1.8: Long-Term Preservation, Goal OSC-5: Plant and Animal Resources, Policy OSC-5.1: Wildlife Corridors, Policy OSC-5.2: Habitat Protection, Policy OSC-5.3: Wetlands, and Policy OSC-5.4: Special Status Species, would further the PCCP's guiding principles by conserving large blocks of open space, riparian corridors, and natural landforms as well as mandating protection of special-status species.

If the City annexes portions of the Sphere of Influence that are currently within the PCCP's Planning Area, PCCP coverage would no longer apply to such newly incorporated City lands. In that event, the City would coordinate with the Placer Conservation Authority and wildlife agencies to ensure

continued consistency with regional conservation objectives and to address permitting pathways for covered species and aquatic resources under State and federal laws.

Because no adopted HCP/NCCP applies within the City of Auburn, and because the 2045 General Plan's policies are consistent with and supportive of regional conservation objectives in overlapping unincorporated areas where PCCP does apply, the 2045 General Plan would not conflict with an adopted HCP, NCCP, or other approved conservation plan. Impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation is required.

Significance After Mitigation

Impacts would be less than significant without mitigation.

4.4.4 Cumulative Impacts

The geographic scope of the cumulative biological resources analysis is defined as the nine USGS 7.5-minute quadrangles containing and surrounding the City of Auburn. This cumulative impact area encompasses portions of Placer and El Dorado counties and captures regional habitat connectivity, watershed features, and wildlife movement patterns that extend beyond municipal and county boundaries. This approach is appropriate because sensitive habitats and wildlife populations occur across a continuous landscape, and species movement is not constrained by jurisdictional limits. The cumulative analysis considers the nearby past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future plans and projects listed in Table 3-1 (refer to Section 3, *Environmental Setting*) located outside Auburn, in addition to the proposed plan.

Most of the cumulative plans and projects would be located in urbanized areas that have limited existing potential to support special-status wildlife and plant species. Cumulative plans and projects listed in Table 3-1 consist predominantly of commercial and residential development and master plan buildout; however, portions of the cumulative impact area include isolated pockets of natural or semi-natural habitat that may support special-status species. While cumulative development is expected to occur primarily within disturbed or developed areas consistent with existing land use plans, special-status species and nesting birds have the potential to occur within or near some cumulative project sites due to the presence of suitable habitat. Accordingly, standard pre-construction surveys and, where necessary, avoidance and minimization measures as required by mitigation measure BIO-1, would be required for cumulative projects with the potential to impact nesting birds and protected bat species. While there are isolated pockets of natural habitat that can support special-status wildlife and plant species, the urban and built-up nature of the cumulative impact area precludes the possible adverse cumulative impacts to biological resources related to special-status species. Therefore, the cumulative impact related to special-status species would be less than significant.

The cumulative impact area contains protected aquatic features and smaller riparian areas distributed across a mix of urbanized and non-urbanized settings. These features are often small and discontinuous, but some are connected by creek and ravine corridors that support sensitive natural communities. Cumulative development could incrementally affect wetlands, other waters, and riparian vegetation through ground disturbance or vegetation removal. Cumulative development is expected to occur primarily in already developed or previously disturbed locations, but some projects could occur at the urban edge or near natural or semi-natural habitats where

sensitive communities are present. Therefore, cumulative conditions include potential for incremental loss or degradation of wetlands and riparian habitat. However, cumulative projects would require project-level compliance with applicable federal and State permitting (e.g., Clean Water Act Sections 401 and 404, Porter-Cologne Act, and CFGC Section 1600) to avoid and minimize adverse effects on aquatic and riparian resources. These permit requirements would avoid, minimize, and where necessary mitigate impacts on sensitive aquatic and riparian communities. Therefore, the cumulative impact related to sensitive natural communities and associated riparian habitat would be less than significant.

The cumulative impact area contains a variety of creeks and open space areas that act as potential movement corridors for fish and wildlife, such as in riparian areas along riverine features (e.g., North Fork American River). Cumulative projects would adhere to applicable open space and creek setback requirements, which would reduce potential cumulative impacts to fish and wildlife movement corridors. Therefore, the cumulative impact related to wildlife movement corridors would be less than significant.

Cumulative development may require the removal of or encroachment on protected trees. For cumulative projects located within the City of Auburn, tree removal or impacts to protected trees would be subject to the City's tree permit requirements, which may require preparation of a report by a certified arborist to identify tree species, size, condition, and potential impacts. For cumulative projects located in unincorporated areas of Placer County, tree removal or encroachment would be subject to applicable County tree permit and development review procedures, which may also require an arborist report where warranted by the scope of removal or the need to determine mitigation. For cumulative projects located in unincorporated El Dorado County, tree removal affecting protected oak resources would be subject to the County's Oak Resources Conservation Ordinance, which may require documentation prepared by a certified arborist or registered professional forester to identify oak resources and establish mitigation requirements. As such, cumulative development would be required to adhere to applicable tree ordinances and regulations set by the County of Placer, County of El Dorado, or City of Auburn, depending on the location of each individual cumulative project. Therefore, the cumulative impact related to protected trees would be less than significant.

The cumulative impact area includes portions of western Placer County that are subject to the PCCP, as well as areas outside the PCCP Plan Area. Cumulative development has the potential to occur both within and outside PCCP-covered lands. Accordingly, cumulative conditions include the potential for development activity to intersect with areas regulated by an adopted HCP/NCCP and to require consistency with PCCP conservation objectives. For cumulative projects located the PCCP Plan Area, compliance with PCCP permitting, conservation measures, and mitigation requirements would be required to maintain consistency with the PCCP. For cumulative projects located outside the PCCP Plan Area, consistency with federal and State wildlife laws would continue to be addressed through project-level compliance with the federal ESA, CESA, and other applicable regulatory programs. The existence of a legally adopted regional conservation program (i.e., the PCCP), coupled with mandatory compliance pathways under State and federal law, would minimize the potential for cumulative development to conflict with the PCCP or undermine its conservation objectives. Therefore, the cumulative impact related to potential conflicts with an adopted HCP/NCCP would be less than significant.

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4.5 Cultural Resources

This section provides an overview of existing conditions related to cultural resources, including historical resources, archeological resources, and human remains. It also evaluates the effects of the project on cultural resources. Tribal cultural resources are addressed in a separate section, which appears later in this document (refer to Section 4.17, *Tribal Cultural Resources*).

4.5.1 Setting

a. Indigenous History

The Planning Area is situated on the border of the Sacramento Valley subregion of the Central Valley archaeological region and the Northern Sierra subregion of the Sierra Nevada archaeological region, as defined by Moratto (1984a, 1984b). The Sacramento Valley subregion spans from the Sacramento River Delta to the Siskiyou Mountains, and the Northern Sierra subregion spans from the Feather River in Plumas County to the American River drainage in El Dorado County. The Planning Area is located within Placer County, to the west of the Sierra Nevada Mountain foothills and west of the Middle Fork and North Fork of the American River. Resources from the Sierra Nevada region are sparce due to the lack of suitable contexts, radiocarbon dating of sites within the region, and poorly understood typology (Stevens 2005).

California prehistory chronology is generally divided into three broad time periods: the Paleoindian Period (circa 11,550 to 8550 before common era [BCE]), the Archaic Period (8550 BCE to common era [CE] 1100) and the Emergent Occupation Period (CE 1000 to European Contact) (Fredrickson 1973, 1974), which has been updated and adjusted by Rosenthal et al. (2007) to further separate the Archaic Period into Lower (8550 to 5550 BCE), Middle (5550 to 550 BCE), and Upper (550 BCE to CE 1100). The indigenous chronological sequence for the Central Valley Sacramento Valley and Sierra Nevada Northern Sierra subregions presented below is based on Rosenthal et al. (2007), Moratto (1984a, 1984b), and Hull (2007).

Paleoindian Period (11,550 to 8550 BCE)

The Paleoindian period defines the earliest human occupation within California, including the Central Valley archaeological region. The earliest known human occupation sites in California are identified at the Channel Islands, off the coast of Santa Barbara County. Additional known sites dating to this period have been identified in the Southern San Joaquin Valley at Tulare Lake (Garfinkel 2015); however, sites dating to the Paleoindian period with the Sierra Nevada foothill region are scarce likely due to erosional and depositional processes that have destroyed or obscured cultural remains from this period (Hull 2007). Moratto (1984a) has refuted most evidence dating occupation sites to the Paleoindian Period based on inaccurate or poorly executed radiocarbon dating; however, later uncalibrated dates have provided age ranges toward the end of the last ice age, between 13,802 and 9370 BCE at sites within the Southern San Joaquin Valley (Garfinkel 2015). This period is represented by fluted projectile points similar to Clovis points, concave base points, and associated stone tools such as leaf-shaped knives and ovate domed and elongate keeled scrapers, and crescents that may represent subsistence focus on hunting of extinct megafauna (Garfinkel 2015, Rosenthal et al. 2007).

Lower Archaic (8550 to 5550 BCE)

Climate change at the end of the Pleistocene caused significant periods of alluvial deposition beginning around 9050 BCE. These new alluvial deposits created a clear stratigraphic boundary between the Late Pleistocene and Holocene sediments. The Lower Archaic, like the Paleoindian Period, is represented only by limited isolated finds. During this period Northern Sierra groups were sparce, high-altitude, mobile, seasonal hunter gatherers relying on large, stemmed dart points, heavy core tools, large bifaces, and flakes crescents (Miller and Walton 2016). Lower Archaic artifacts within the Sacramento Valley subregion include one isolated flaked stone crescent, recovered on an alluvial fan west of Orland (Rosenthal et al. 2007).

Middle Archaic (5550 to 550 BCE)

The Middle Archaic began with substantial climate change to much warmer, drier conditions. As climate became warmer and drier, new wetlands created new habitats, and rising sea levels led to the creation of the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta, resulting in new deposits. Fans and floodplains stabilized after an initial period of deposition in 5550 BCE. The Sacramento Valley subregion contains an increase in sites dating to the Middle Archaic (Rosenthal et al. 2007). Although archaeological sites dating to this period within the Northern Sierra subregion are scarce, the eldest strata of the Spring Garden Ravine site (CA-PLA-101, a large occupation midden site), located near the Planning Area, dates to this period (Moratto 1984b, Jurich et al. 2008). The Spring Garden Ravine site is one of the documented archaeological resources identified within the Northern Sierra subregion and documents three well-defined strata, including the Middle Archaic, the Upper Archaic, and a transitional period between the Middle and Upper Archaic.

The Middle Archaic record has revealed a pattern of organized subsistence strategies and increased residential stability within the Sacramento Valley subregion. The Northern Seirra subregion exhibits a closer association with the Mendocino Pattern of an upland adaptive strategy featuring high-residential mobility (Rosenthal et al. 2007). These archaeological sites exhibit smaller projectile points with district unifacial flaked stone tools. During this time, the mortar and pestle became more widespread, suggesting a shift toward more intensive subsistence practices. Fishing technologies, such as bone gorges, hooks, and spears, also appear during the Middle Archaic suggesting a new focus on fishing (Rosenthal et al. 2007). While many other regions of California had an intensive reliance on the acorn at this time, archaeobotanical analysis for the Sacramento Valley subregion suggests there was a lower ratio of acorn to small seeds during this time (Wohlgemuth 1996, 2016).

Several other technologies became apparent during this time. Baked-clay impressions of twined basketry, pottery, and other baked clay objects have been found at several sites. Personal adornment items also became more frequent. Exchange with outside groups is evidenced by the presence of obsidian, shell beads and ornaments (Moratto 1984a, Rosenthal et al. 2007, Burns et al. 2012).

During this time, basalt was the dominant lithic material for creating corner notched dart points and large stemmed points within the Northern Sierra subregion (Hull 2007) as basalt was locally available and provided the inhabitants with an abundant resource. Strata from CA-PLA-101 provides evidence for a higher use of basalt for projectile points, atlatl weights, bowl mortars, and core tools, similar to the Tahoe region's Martis Complex (Jurich et al. 2008).

Upper Archaic (550 BCE to CE 1100)

The Upper Archaic began with the onset of the Late Holocene, marked by a cooler, wetter climate. The environmental conditions of the Upper Archaic were characterized by the return of lakes that had disappeared during the Middle Archaic and a renewed fan and floodplain deposition. The Upper Archaic is better represented in the archaeological record than earlier periods. Cultural diversity was more pronounced and is marked by contrasting material cultures throughout the valley (Rosenthal et al. 2007). The Sacramento Valley subregion exhibits the distinctive Shasta Complex in the larger Central Valley Augustine Pattern, characterized by settlements near streams, semisubterranean dwellings, a hunting-gathering subsistence, acorn processing in hopper mortars, and paucity of charmstones (Moratto 1984a).

During this period, numerous specialized technologies were developed such as bone tools, implements, manufactured goods such as *Olivella* and *Haliotis* beads and ornaments, well-made ceremonial blades, and ground-stone plummets. Arrow points were increasingly made of obsidian and chert with a decrease in the use of basalt within the Northern Sierra and Sacramento Valley subregions, and focused on contracting stem arrow points instead of darts. Burials were often in flexed positions, typically on the side or supine, and could include cremation (Moratto 1984a, 1984b; Rosenthal et al. 2007; Hull 2007).

Upper Archaic Period economies varied by region throughout the Central Valley. The Sacramento Valley subregion economies saw an intense increase in acorn reliance during this time (Wohlgemuth 1996, 2016), leading to an increase in bedrock mortar technology. Lower to-mid-elevation zones show signs of bedrock mortar technology emergence as a dominant tool for processing acorns, seeds, and other foods. Though other food storage and processing technologies are rarely recorded at lower elevation of the Sierra Nevada range from this time, the use and proportions of bedrock mortars are common among the various elevations. According to Hull (2007), the depth and shape of the mortar is related to function and not prolonged use, suggesting that functional mortar types (i.e., pecked, carved, and deep) served specific purposes; a shallow mortar for starting acorn processing while a deeper mortar may have been utilized for final processing and storing. Additionally, strata from CA-PLA-101 dating to the Upper Archaic Period, shows the use of silicate stone tools with influences in technology from the nearby Sacramento Valley subregion (Jurich et al. 2008). Evidence of small and large corner-notched, contracting-stemmed, and side-notched projectile points also shows that obsidian became more common and a highly valued trade item during this period (Hull 2007, Jurich et al. 2008).

Emergent Occupation Period (CE 1000 to Contact)

The stable climatic conditions of the Upper Archaic continued into the Emergent Occupation Period, which is associated with two cultural patterns: the Augustine Pattern in the southern Sacramento Valley subregion, and the Sweetwater and Shasta Complexes in the northern Sacramento Valley subregion.

After CE 1000, many of the technologies observed during the Archaic were replaced by cultural traditions recorded at European contact. The bow and arrow replaced the atlatl as the preferred hunting method sometime between CE 1000 and 1300 (Rosenthal et al. 2007). By CE 1500, the Northern Sierra subregion saw an extensive increase in the use of bedrock mortar features (Jurich et al. 2008).

Increased social complexity is evidenced by more variation in burial types and offerings and larger residential communities. Grave offerings such as shell beads, ornaments, and ritually "killed" mortars and pestles are often found in burials. Pottery was frequently obtained through trade with groups to the east. Cosumnes brownware is specific to the Sacramento Valley subregion and is represented at several sites in Sacramento County (Rosenthal et al. 2007).

As with the Archaic Period, Emergent Occupation Period economies varied geographically. In the Sacramento Valley subregion, large populations settled along the Sacramento River where fish weirs were constructed (Rosenthal et al. 2007). Most Emergent Occupation Period residential sites contain diverse assemblages of mammal and bird remains and large amounts of fish bone. Approximately 1,000 years ago, the mortar and pestle became the dominant tool type and small seeds increased in archaeological deposits over time (Rosenthal et al. 2007).

Changes within the Northern Sierra subregion included the increase in small corner-notched, small contracting-stemmed, and Desert Side-notched projectile points, as well as the emergency of settlement patterns including primary and secondary habitation villages (Jurich et al. 2008). The Northern Sierra subregion also saw a shift in habitation, technology, subsistence, and trade due to volcanic activity throughout the Sierra Nevada. Such volcanic activity led to environmental stress followed by population decline from the western slope of the Sierra Nevada to the lower elevations of the Central Valley, including the Sacramento Valley subregion up to CE 1250 (Hull 2007). Further research within the Northern Sierra subregion may provide additional understanding of settlement patterns, environmental stressors, and use of the Sierra Nevada.

b. Post-Contact Setting

Post-Contact history for the state of California is generally divided into three periods: the Spanish Period (1769–1822), Mexican Period (1822–1848), and American Period (1848–present). Although Spanish, Russian, and British explorers visited the area for brief periods between 1529 and 1769, the Spanish Period in California begins with the establishment in 1769 of a settlement at San Diego and the founding of Mission San Diego de Alcalá, the first of 21 missions constructed between 1769 and 1823. Independence from Spain in 1821 marks the beginning of the Mexican Period, and the signing of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo in 1848, ending the Mexican-American War, signals the beginning of the American Period when California became a territory of the United States.

Spanish Period (1769 to 1822)

By the 18th century, Spain developed a three-pronged approach to secure its hold on the territory and counter against other foreign explorers. The Spanish established military forts known as presidios, as well as missions and pueblos (towns) throughout Alta California. The 1769 overland expedition by Captain Gaspár de Portolá marks the beginning of California's Historic period, occurring just after the King of Spain installed the Franciscan Order to direct religious and colonization matters in assigned territories of the Americas. Portolá established the Presidio of San Diego as the first Spanish settlement in Alta California in 1769. Franciscan Father Junípero Serra also founded Mission San Diego de Alcalá that same year, the first of the 21 missions that would be established in Alta California by the Spanish and the Franciscan Order between 1769 and 1823.

Construction of missions and associated presidios was a major emphasis during the Spanish Period in California to integrate the Native American population into Christianity and communal enterprise. The mission and presidio relied on native labor. As native food sources became less reliable and as disease ravaged native communities, the missions presented an option and became a new type of community (California Missions Foundation 2024) Incentives were also provided to bring settlers to

pueblos or towns; just three pueblos were established during the Spanish Period, only two of which were successful and remain as California cities (San José and Los Angeles).

Spanish settlement in Alta California was confined to the coastal region. Following Pedro Fages' exploration of the Central Valley during his San Francisco Bay expedition in 1772, there were periodic efforts to explore the area for suitable missions, but none were established and Spanish expeditions in the valley were largely limited to recovering stolen cattle until expeditions led by Lieutenant Gabriel Moraga in 1806 and 1808 (Bean 1968). Moraga's expeditions explored the area's main rivers – American, Calaveras, Consumnes, Feather, Merced, Mokelumne, Sacramento, San Joaquin, and Stanislaus. Moraga is credited with naming the lower Sacramento River and valley region, Sacramento, or Holy Sacrament in Spanish. In 1813, he led a third expedition to the lower portion of the Central Valley and is also credited with naming the San Joaquin River. In 1817, Luis Arguello led an expedition into the California interior and traveled up the Sacramento River past present-day Sacramento to the mouth of the Feather River, before returning to the coast.

Spain began making land grants in 1784, typically to retiring soldiers, although the grantees were only permitted to inhabit and work the land. The land titles technically remained property of the Spanish king (Livingston 1914).

Mexican Period (1822 to 1848)

Several factors kept growth within Alta California to a minimum, including the threat of foreign invasion, political dissatisfaction, and unrest among the indigenous population. After more than a decade of intermittent rebellion and warfare, New Spain won independence from Spain in 1821. In 1822, the Mexican legislative body in California ended isolationist policies designed to protect the Spanish monopoly on trade, and decreed California ports open to foreign merchants (Dallas 1955).

Extensive land grants were established in the interior during the Mexican Period, in part to increase the population inland from the more settled coastal areas where the Spanish had first concentrated their colonization efforts. The secularization of the missions following Mexico's independence from Spain resulted in the subdivision of former mission lands and establishment of many additional ranchos. Commonly, former soldiers and well-connected Mexican families were the recipients of these land grants, which now included the title to the land.

The largest land grants in the Sacramento Valley were awarded to John Sutter, a German Swiss immigrant who became a Mexican citizen. In 1839, he established a cattle ranch and farm called New Helvetia, headquartered at Sutter's Fort at the divergence of the Sacramento and American Rivers (Bean 1968). During the same period, fur trappers began to explore the area. The first American trapper to come to California, Jedidiah Smith, explored the Sierra Nevada before arriving in the Sacramento Valley in 1827, and traveled along the American and Consumnes rivers as well as through the San Joaquin Valley. Other trappers soon followed, and diseases introduced by trappers, military raids, and the settlement of non-native groups decimated native populations in the Sacramento and San Joaquin valleys.

American Period (1848 to Present)

The United States went to war with Mexico in 1846. On January 31, 1847, Yerba Buena was renamed to San Francisco by U.S Navy Lieutenant Washington. The war ended in 1848 with the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, ushering California into its American Period. The same year, gold was discovered at Sutter's Mill on the American River. By 1849, nearly 90,000 people had ascended upon the gold fields. California officially became a state with the Compromise of 1850, which also

designated Utah and New Mexico (with present-day Arizona) as US territories (Library of Congress 2024).

Local History

Auburn was one of the earliest mining towns in California and was known for its good placer mining, or the process of mining a stream bed for mineral deposits (Bean 1968). Auburn was ideally situated along the roads coming out of Sacramento and continuing to gold camps. Gold was first discovered in the Auburn area in 1848 by French gold miners on their way to Coloma. It was first known as Woods Dry Diggings, then North Fork Dry Diggings before officially becoming Auburn in August 1849. Mining attracted a diverse population, with fortune seekers from around the world, including Chinese immigrants.

By 1849, Auburn's surface gold was stripped and there were few gold miners left as most fortune seekers had left the camp for the North Fork and Middle Fork of the American River. The winter of 1849, however, was a turning point. Miners in the river canyons scrambled to build more substantive shelters for the season, while many more fled to the nearest settlement: Auburn (City of Auburn 2024). The miners were essentially stranded due to the inclement weather and rains that made roads to Sacramento virtually impassible. Merchants and hotelkeepers were quick to react to the influx of miners seeking shelter and several large public hotels were built.

Soon, a secondary economy around banking, lodging, and provisions emerged in Auburn to accommodate miners and commercial and residential development continued. The choice to make the city the County Seat, a position it still holds, was an additional factor of its growth. Placer County was organized from parts of neighboring Sutter and Yuba counties in 1851. As a result, the population began to change from mostly miners to a population that included a professional class of lawyers, bankers, and shopkeepers (City of Auburn 1993). The City was incorporated in 1860; disincorporated in 1868; and reincorporated in 1888. As Auburn grew, social and cultural institutions were established, including schools, churches, fraternal organizations, and cemeteries. In the 1870s, though regional anti-Chinese sentiment grew, Auburn's Chinese population remained relatively undisturbed (City of Auburn 2024).

The construction and development of the railroad in the mid-1860s played a significant role in the region's development. The Central Pacific Railroad was incorporated in 1861 to build the western portion of the First Transcontinental Railroad and in 1865, the transcontinental railroad from Sacramento arrived in Auburn. The tracks, however, were laid out to the east of town, resulting in the development of a new Downtown. As the new Downtown grew, the original town, or Old Town remained an active retail area while Downtown became the city's significant commercial area.

As gold mining declined, the area's industries shifted. With the railroad, the area's agricultural industry grew, mainly fruits and nuts because the rail line provided access to large market east of the Sierra Nevada. In Auburn, the industries of limestone mining and lumber cultivation also contributed to its continued commercial and residential growth in the following decades. In 1934, the federal government opened an airport in Auburn for mail service. The city purchased the airport for general services in 1947, after mail service had ended. Between 1930 and 1940, the city's population more than doubled from 2,661 to 5,013 residents. In 1944, the United States Army established the DeWitt General Hospital northwest of the city to care for troops returning from war, which closed in 1972. In the mid-1960s, Interstate 80 was constructed, connecting Sacramento to the west and Lake Tahoe to the east, further contributing to Auburn's postwar growth. In the 1990s, the population expanded to over 10,000 residents. Today Auburn has a population of approximately 13,737 (U.S. Census 2022). In recent years, Auburn has become a popular tourist destination for its

historic buildings and access to outdoor activities like the Auburn State Recreation Area. It is also and is known as the "Endurance Capital of the World," for hosting several endurance sporting events, like the Equestrian Ride and the Western States 100-Mile Endurance Run.

4.5.2 Regulatory Setting

a. Federal Regulations

National Register of Historic Places

Although the project does not have a federal nexus, properties which are listed in or have been formally determined eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) are automatically listed in the California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR). The following is therefore presented to provide applicable regulatory context. The NRHP was authorized by the National Historic Preservation Act (Title 54, United States Code Section 302101) and is the nation's official list of cultural resources worthy of preservation. The NRHP recognizes the quality of significance in American, state, and local history, architecture, archaeology, engineering, and culture is present in districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects. Per Title 36, Code of Federal Regulations Section 60.4, a property is eligible for listing in the NRHP if it meets one or more of the following criteria:

Criterion A: Is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.

Criterion B: Is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.

Criterion C: Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of installation, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction.

Criterion D: Has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

In addition to meeting at least one of the above designation criteria, resources must also retain integrity. The National Park Service recognizes seven aspects or qualities that, considered together, define historic integrity. To retain integrity, a property must possess several, if not all, of these seven qualities, defined as follows:

Location: The place where the historic property was constructed or the place where the historic event occurred.

Design: The combination of elements that create the form, plan, space, structure, and style of a property.

Setting: The physical environment of a historic property.

Materials: The physical elements that were combined or deposited during a particular period of time and in a particular pattern or configuration to form a historic property.

Workmanship: The physical evidence of the crafts of a particular culture or people during any given period in history or prehistory.

Feeling: A property's expression of the aesthetic or historic sense of a particular period of time.

Association: The direct link between an important historic event or person and a historic property.

Certain properties are generally considered ineligible for listing in the NRHP, including cemeteries, birthplaces, graves of historical figures, properties owned by religious institutions, relocated structures, or commemorative properties. Additionally, a property must be at least 50 years of age to be eligible for listing in the NRHP. The National Park Service states that 50 years is the general estimate of the time needed to develop the necessary historical perspective to evaluate significance (National Park Service 1997: 41). Properties which are less than 50 years must be determined to have "exceptional importance" to be considered eligible for NRHP listing.

b. State Regulations

California Environmental Quality Act

California PRC Section 21084.1 requires lead agencies to determine if a project could have a significant impact on historical or unique archaeological resources. As defined in PRC Section 21084.1, a historical resource is a resource listed in, or determined eligible for listing in, the CRHR, a resource included in a local register of historical resources or identified in a historical resources survey pursuant to PRC Section 5024.1(g), or any object, building, structure, site, area, place, record, or manuscript that a lead agency determines to be historically significant. PRC Section 21084.1 also states resources meeting the above criteria are presumed to be historically or culturally significant unless the preponderance of evidence demonstrates otherwise. Resources listed in the NRHP are automatically listed in the CRHR and are, therefore, historical resources under CEQA. Historical resources may include eligible built environment resources and archaeological resources of the precontact or historic periods.

CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5(c) provides further guidance on the consideration of archaeological resources. If an archaeological resource does not qualify as a historical resource, it may meet the definition of a "unique archaeological resource" as identified in PRC Section 21083.2. PRC Section 21083.2(g) defines a *unique archaeological resource* as an artifact, object, or site about which it can be clearly demonstrated that, without merely adding to the current body of knowledge, there is a high probability that it meets any of the following criteria: 1) it contains information needed to answer important scientific research questions and that there is a demonstrable public interest in that information, 2) has a special and particular quality such as being the oldest of its type or the best available example of its type, or 3) is directly associated with a scientifically recognized important indigenous or historic event or person.

If an archaeological resource does not qualify as a historical or unique archaeological resource, the impacts of a project on those resources will be less than significant and need not be considered further (*CEQA Guidelines* Section 15064.5[c][4]). *CEQA Guidelines* Section 15064.5 also provides guidance for addressing the potential presence of human remains, including those discovered during the implementation of a project.

According to CEQA, an impact that results in a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource is considered a significant impact on the environment. A substantial adverse change could result from physical demolition, destruction, relocation, or alteration of the resource or its immediate surroundings such that the significance of the historical resource would be materially impaired (*CEQA Guidelines* Section 15064.5 [b][1]). *Material impairment* is defined as demolition or alteration in an adverse manner of those characteristics of a historical resource that convey its historical significance and that justify its inclusion in, or eligibility for inclusion in, the CRHR or a local register (*CEQA Guidelines* Section 15064.5[b][2][A]).

If it can be demonstrated that a project will cause damage to a unique archaeological resource, the lead agency may require reasonable efforts be made to permit any or all of these resources to be preserved in place or left in an undisturbed state. To the extent that resources cannot be left undisturbed, mitigation measures are required (PRC Section 21083.2[a][b]).

Section 15126.4 of the *CEQA Guidelines* stipulates an EIR shall describe feasible measures to minimize significant adverse impacts. In addition to being fully enforceable, mitigation measures must be completed within a defined time period and be roughly proportional to the impacts of the project. Generally, a project which is found to comply with the Secretary of the Interior's *Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating, Restoring, and Reconstructing Historic Buildings* (the Standards) is considered to be mitigated below a level of significance (*CEQA Guidelines* Section 15126.4 [b][1]). For historical resources of an archaeological nature, lead agencies should also seek to avoid damaging effects where feasible. Preservation in place is the preferred manner to mitigate impacts to archaeological sites; however, data recovery through excavation may be the only option in certain instances (*CEQA Guidelines* Section 15126.4[b][3]).

California Register of Historical Resources

The CRHR was established in 1992 and codified by PRC Sections 5024.1 and Title 14, California Code of Regulations Section 4852. The CRHR is an authoritative listing and guide to be used by state and local agencies, private groups, and citizens in identifying the existing historical resources of the state and to indicate which resources deserve to be protected, to the extent prudent and feasible, from substantial adverse change (PRC Section 5024.1[a]). The criteria for eligibility for the CRHR are consistent with the NRHP criteria but have been modified for state use in order to include a range of historical resources that better reflect the history of California (PRC Section 5024.1[b]). Unlike the NRHP however, the CRHR does not have a defined age threshold for eligibility; rather, a resource may be eligible for the CRHR if it can be demonstrated sufficient time has passed to understand its historical or architectural significance (California Office of Historic Preservation 2006). Furthermore, resources may still be eligible for listing in the CRHR even if they do not retain sufficient integrity for NRHP eligibility (California Office of Historic Preservation 2006). Generally, the California Office of Historic Preservation recommends resources over 45 years of age be recorded and evaluated for historical resources eligibility (California Office of Historic Preservation 1995: 2).

A property is eligible for listing in the CRHR if it meets one of more of the following criteria:

Criterion 1: Is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of California's history and cultural heritage.

Criterion 2: Is associated with the lives of persons important to our past.

Criterion 3: Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region, or method of construction, or represents the work of an important creative individual, or possesses high artistic values.

Criterion 4: Has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

California Health and Safety Code

Section 7050.5 of the California Health and Safety Code states that in the event of discovery or recognition of any human remains in any location other than a dedicated cemetery, there shall be no further excavation or disturbance of the site or any nearby area reasonably suspected to overlie

adjacent remains until the coroner of the county in which the remains are discovered has determined if the remains are subject to the Coroner's authority. If the human remains are of Native American origin, the coroner must notify the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) within 24 hours of this identification.

c. Local Regulations

Auburn Municipal Code

The Historic Preservation Ordinance of the City (Sections 159.490-159.507) authorizes the City Council to designate historic resources and provides the authority to establish the Historic Design Review Commission. A property may be added to a Historic Design Review District or declared as a Historic Resource if it satisfies the requirements set forth below. Additionally, the Historic Preservation Ordinance outlines procedures for obtaining design review permits and design requirements for the treatment of historic properties.

- **Historic Resource**. The ordinance defines a historic resource as buildings, structures, signs, features, sites, places, areas, or other improvements of scientific, aesthetic, educational, cultural, archaeological, architectural, or historical value to citizens of the city and designated as such by the City Council pursuant to the provisions in the Historic Preservation Ordinance.
- **Historic Design Review District Designation**. A Historic Design Review District can be established if it meets the following requirements:
  A. The Historic Design Review District shall be identified on a map, attached as an exhibit hereto and maintained on file in the Community Development Department and incorporated herein by reference.
  B. The District map may be amended by resolution of Council.
  C. The District may be amended to include any such individual site, improvement or structures as may be added, from time to time, as a result of the granted application by a property owner for designation of that property as a Historic Resource (HR).
  D. The requirements of this subchapter shall be mandatory for all properties within the District.
- **Historic Design Review Permit**. Projects located within the Historic Design Review District, or properties situated outside the district that have been designated a historic resource are subject to design review, as follows:
  1. Historic Design Review Permit (HRDP) required. A HRDP shall be required for the following types of projects:
     a. Construction of all new commercial, office, industrial, and multi-family residential buildings or structures.
     b. Alterations, remodeling, or additions to existing structures.
     c. Replacement of building materials with different building materials (including re-roofing of buildings).
     d. Painting of buildings if the color(s) used are not similar to the existing colors.
     e. Sign permits.
     f. Modifications to existing Historic Design Review Permits.

- **Design Criteria**. The City Council adopted the Historic Preservation Architectural Design Guidelines to provide applicants with guidance on appropriate treatment for historic buildings. The criteria for application, as outlined below, were designed with the intent to be flexible guidelines.
  A. The design criteria shall be used for the preservation and enhancement of historical and architectural sites, structures and improvements through the renovation, restoration or maintenance of those sites, structures, and improvements. The restoration of a structure to its exact former appearance shall be encouraged, but not required.
  B. If a structure or improvement is not deemed to be a historical, architectural, or aesthetic contributor to the Historic Design Review District, but is at least 50 years old, the application of the design criteria shall be used to ensure that modifications or alterations to that structure or improvement do not increase its "non-contributory" character. The design criteria shall be applied to applications for such structures or improvements in order to encourage the renovation, restoration or maintenance of such structures, and to minimize their non-contributory nature and become "contributing" to the District.
  C. If a structure or improvement was built less than 50 years ago, the application of the design criteria shall be used to ensure that modifications or alterations to that structure or improvement do not increase its "non-contributory" character, but rather to blend in with or become more compatible with the surrounding structures or improvements.
  D. The design criteria shall be applied to new construction to achieve design and usage which is compatible and in harmony with the surrounding structures in the District.

- **Declaration of Historic Buildings and Places**. The Council may, by resolution, establish guidelines for the declaration of historical sites, areas, buildings, and structures within the city and designate all such locations and structures as having special historical significance in a separate register of historical building (such as the Auburn Register of Historic Buildings and Places) to be maintained by the Community Development Department. All sites, areas, buildings or structures on the register shall be subject to the requirements of this chapter.

Auburn General Plan 1992

The current City of Auburn General Plan was adopted on November 29, 1993. Historical and cultural resources are addressed in the Historic Element. It identifies and outlines goals and policies for cultural and historical resources, including the following:

Goal 1: Preserve all historical sites and enhance the character of the historic districts.

Policy 1.1 Implementation of the Historic Development Guidelines listed in the Historic Element.

Policy 1.2 Preserve existing Indian and Chinese cemeteries and other historic sites.

The General Plan includes several implementation programs to meet its goals and policies that have since been largely integrated into City's municipal code, outlined above. The proposed comprehensive update of the City's General Plan, *Envision Auburn 2045,* would provide revised and refined goals, policies, and implementation programs as appropriate.

Placer County Code

The Placer County Code (Chapter 15.60 Cultural Resources Preservation) authorizes the County Board of Supervisors, though the Placer County Historical Advisory Board, to identify cultural resources and designate them to the Placer County Official Register of Cultural and Historic Resources (Official Register). Criteria for inclusion in the Official Register includes those properties determined eligible for listing in the NRHP (A) or CRHR (B) or it meets the criteria for Local Significance (C), as follows:

1. The proposed resource materially benefits the historic character of the community;
2. The unique location of singular physical characteristic of the resource or district proposed for designation represents an established and familiar visual feature of the community, area, or county;
3. The district is a geographically definable area, urban or rural, possessing a significant concentration of continuity of site, buildings, structures, or objects unified by past events, or aesthetically by plan or physical development;
4. The preservation of a resource is essential to the integrity of the district; and/or
5. The resource or district proposed for designation is connected with a business or otherwise, which was once common but is now rare.

Any cultural resource meeting one or more of the criteria for A, B, or C shall also retain sufficient integrity such that the resource possesses aspects of integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

Placer County General Plan

The Placer County General Plan goals and policies relating to the protection of cultural resources that are applicable to the proposed projects are presented below.

Goal 5.D.1: To identify, protect, and enhance Placer County's important historical, archaeological, paleontological, and cultural sites and their contributing environment.

Policy 5.D.2 The County shall solicit the cooperation of the owners of cultural and paleontological resources, encourage those owners to treat these resources as assets rather than liabilities, and encourage the support of the general public for the preservation and enhancement of these resources.

Policy 5.D.3 The County shall solicit the views of the Native American Heritage Commission, State Office of Historic Preservation, North Central Information Center, and/or the local Native American community in cases where development may result in disturbance to sites containing evidence of Native American activity and/or to sites of cultural importance.

Policy 5.D.4: The County shall coordinate with the cities and municipal advisory councils in the County to promote the preservation and maintenance of Placer County's paleontological and archaeological resources.

Policy 5.D.5 The County shall use, where feasible, incentive programs to assist private property owners in preserving and enhancing cultural resources.

Policy 5.D.6 The County shall require that discretionary development projects identify and protect from damage, destruction, and abuse, important historical, archaeological, paleontological, and cultural sites and their contributing environment. Such assessments shall be Draft EIR incorporated into a County-wide cultural resource database, to be maintained by the Division of Museums.

Policy 5.D.7 The County shall require that discretionary development projects are designed to avoid potential impacts to significant paleontological or cultural resources whenever possible. Unavoidable impacts, whenever possible, shall be reduced to a less than significant level and/or shall be mitigated by extracting maximum recoverable data. Determinations of impacts, significance, and mitigation shall be made by qualified archaeological (in consultation with recognized local Native American groups), historical, or paleontological consultants, depending on the type of resource in question.

Policy 5.D.8: The County shall, within its power, maintain confidentiality regarding the locations of archaeological sites in order to preserve and protect these resources from vandalism and the unauthorized removal of artifacts.

Policy 5.D.9 The County shall use the State Historic Building Code to encourage the preservation of historic structures.

Policy 5.D.11 The County shall support the registration of cultural resources in appropriate landmark designations (i.e., National Register of Historic Places, California Historical Landmarks, Points of Historical Interest, or Local Landmark). The County shall assist private citizens seeking these designations for their property.

Policy 5.D.12 The County shall consider acquisition programs (i.e., Placer Legacy Open Space and Agricultural Conservation Program) as a means of preserving significant cultural resources that are not suitable for private development. Organizations that could provide assistance in this area include, but are not limited to, the Archaeological Conservancy, the Native American community, and local land trusts.

4.5.3 Known and Potential Cultural Resources

a. Known Cultural Resources

To identify cultural resources which could be impacted by the project, a review of the NRHP, CRHR, California Office of Historic Preservation Built Environment Resource Directory, and a search of NAHC's Sacred Lands File, and local inventories was conducted. Archaeological resources are confidential and therefore are not included in the discussion here.

Known historical resources are properties that have been listed, determined, or previously recommended eligible for listing in the NRHP, the CRHR, the Placer County Official Register of Cultural and Historic Resources, and the City of Auburn Historic Resources List, known as the Auburn Register of Historic Buildings and Places (Figure 4.5-1). Review of the NRHP identified 12 individually listed buildings/structures and two multi-resource historic districts in the Plan Area as outlined below in Table 4.5-1. Properties listed in the NRHP are automatically listed in the CRHR.

Table 4.5-1 Properties Listed in the NRHP

Property Name	APN	Address	NRHP Reference Number
Auburn City Hall and Fire House	002-190-034-000	1103 High Street/949 Lincoln Way	11000935
Auburn Fire House No. 1	002-250-003-000	El Dorado Street & Lincoln Way	11000936
Auburn Fire House No. 2	004-012-006-000	Lincoln Way & Commercial Street	11000937
Auburn Grammar School	002-180-016-000	1225 Lincoln Way	11000938
Auburn Masonic Temple	002-145-014-000	948 Lincoln Way	11000939
Auburn Public Library	002-144-004-000	175 Almond Street	11000153
Irene Burns House	002-161-007-000	405 Linden Avenue	13000141
Earl Crabbee Gymnasium – Placer High School	004-043-002-000	Agard Street	100001384
Oddfellows Hall	002-172-013-000	1256 Lincoln Way	11000940
Placer County Bank	002-100-024-000	874 Lincoln Way	11000941
El Toyon	003-200-031-000	211 Brook Road	10000118
Mountain Quarries Bridge (No Hands Bridge)	N/A	North Fork of American River	04000014
Historic Districts			
Old Auburn Historic District	Various	Bounded by Maple, Commercial, Court, Washington, Spring, and Sacramento Streets	70000138
Dewitt General Hospital	051-120-010-000	1 Street and Bell Avenue	16000003

Source: National Register of Historic Places and Placer County Division of Museums

In addition to those properties listed in the NRHP, the CRHR also includes properties that are listed as State Historic Landmarks No. 770 and above. State Historic Landmarks preceding No. 770 are subject to additional review in order to confirm eligibility for listing in the CRHR, and are not considered historical resources for the purposes of CEQA (PRC Section 5024.1[d][2]). The City of Auburn includes three State Historic Landmarks, as outlined in Table 4.5-2.

Table 4.5-2 Properties Listed as California Historical Landmarks

Property Name	Address	CHL No.
City of Auburn	Maple Street and Lincoln Way	404
First Transcontinental Railroad – Auburn	639 Lincoln Way	784-4
Mountain Quarries Bridge (No Hands Bridge)*	North Fork of American River	1051

Source: California Office of Historic Preservation

* Also listed in the National Register of Historic Places

Placer County and the City of Auburn also maintain local lists of historical resources. Placer County maintains the Placer County Official Register of Cultural and Historic Resources, which includes all of the properties listed in the NRHP, listed above in Table 4.5-3.The City of Auburn maintains the Auburn Register of Historic Buildings and Places. It includes three categories of historic places – Historic Buildings, Points of Historic Interest, and Historic Land Sites.

Table 4.5-3 Properties Listed in the City of Auburn Register of Historic Buildings and Places

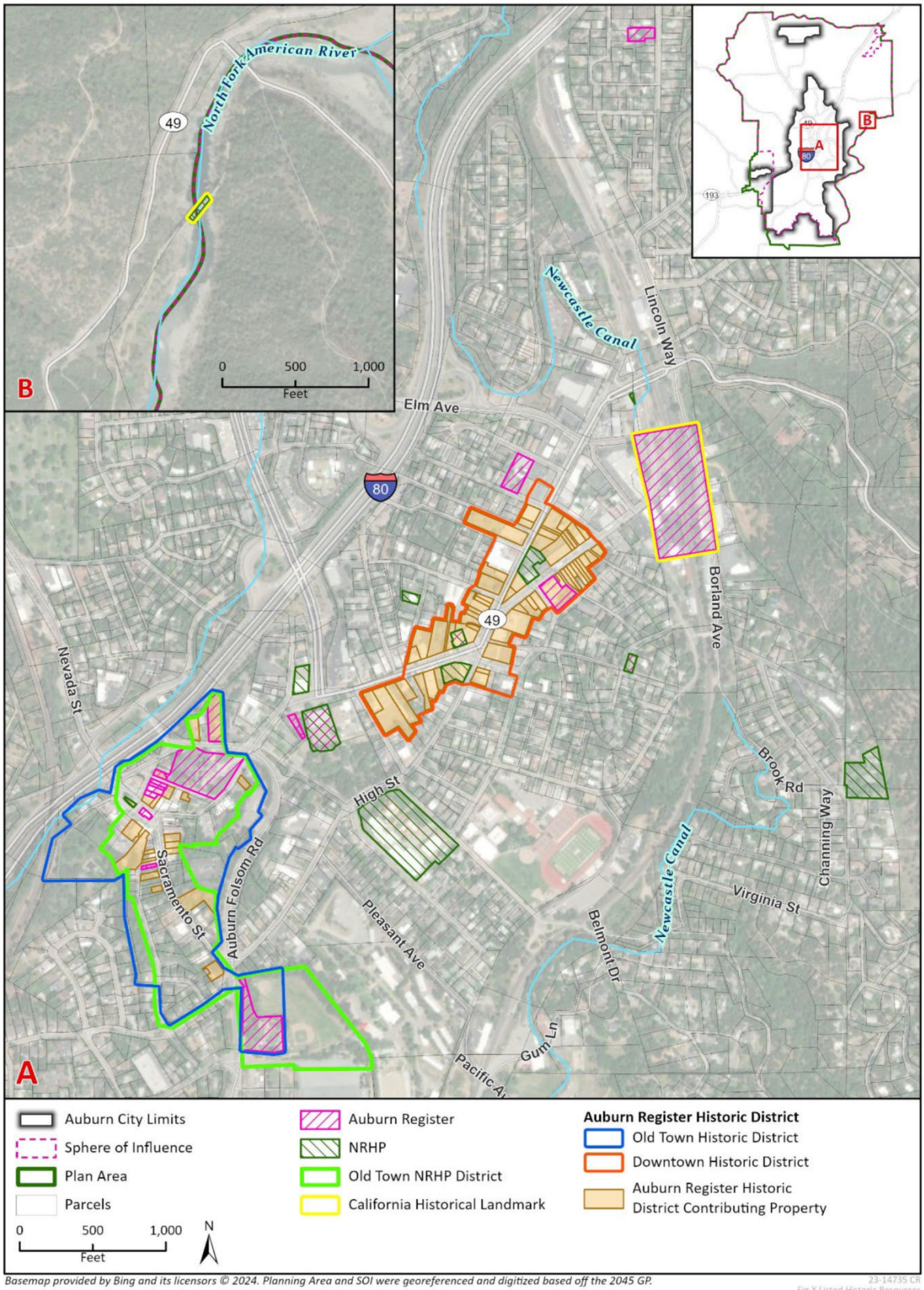
Property Name	APN	Address
Historic Buildings		
Latitudes	002-223-001-000	130 Maple Street
Irene Burns Home*	002-161-007-000	405 Linden Avenue
Vogler House	002-180-013-000	1293 Lincoln Way
East Auburn Depot	002-081-002-000	601 Lincoln Way
Auburn Grammar School*	002-180-016-000	1225 Lincoln Way
Auburn Hotel	002-154-043-000	853 Lincoln Way
Tuttle Mansion	002-075-016-000	144 Reamer Street
Points of Historic Interest		
Auburn Grammar School*	002-180-016-000	1225 Lincoln Way
Auburn Masonic Temple*	002-145-014-000	956 Lincoln Way
Historic Land Sites		
County Courthouse	002-224-015-000	101 Maple Street
Lawyer's Row	002-224-011-000	299 Commercial Street
Commercial Street	002-225-018-000 002-225-008-000 002-225-017-000 002-225-019-000 003-032-053-000	301-351 Commercial Street
Old Post Office	004-013-001-000	1583 Lincoln Way
Chinese Joss House	004-032-001-000	200 Sacramento Street
Traveler's Rest & Winery	004-120-013-000	277-291 Auburn Folsom Road

Source: City of Auburn Historic Design Review Commission

* Also listed in the NRHP

In addition to the Auburn Register of Historic Buildings and Places, the City has designated two historic districts – the Old Town Historic District and Downtown Historic District, also known as Uptown. The Old Town Historic District is generally bound by Interstate 80 to the west, Maple Street to the north, Auburn Folsom Road to the east, and Brewery Lane to the south. The Downtown Historic District generally flanks both sides of High Street from Cleveland Avenue to the north and Oakwood Drive to the south. Each designated historic district is within a larger design review district, known as the Downtown and Old Town Design Review Districts. While the historic districts contain the most significant concentration of historic buildings, the design review districts include other historic and older buildings that are subject to historic design review by the HDRC. These are not locally-designated properties, but could be historical resources, pending further analysis. A full list of properties within the historic districts is available in Appendix E.

Figure 4.5-1 Known Historical Resources



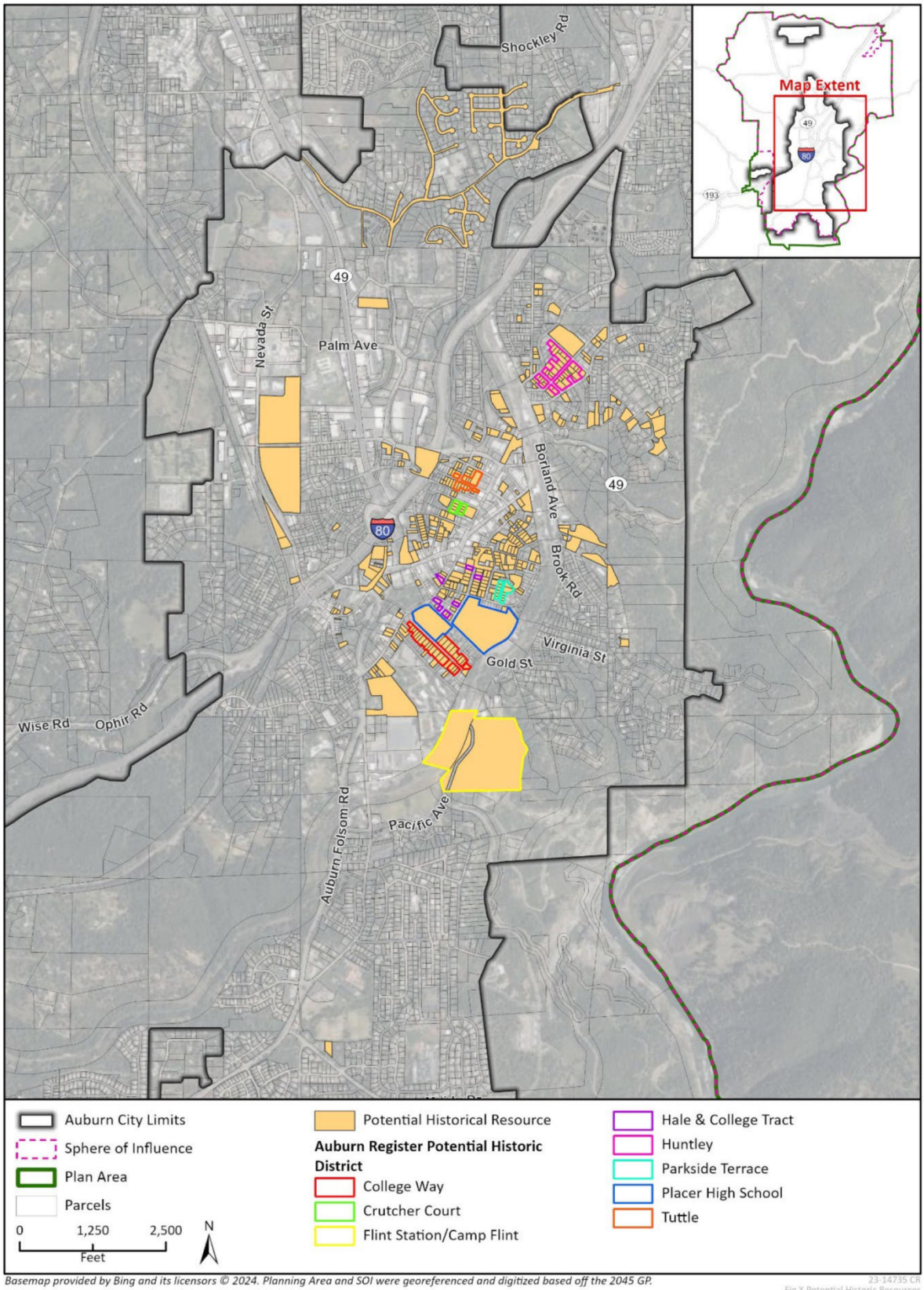
Basemap provided by Bing and its licensors © 2024. Planning Area and SOI were georeferenced and digitized based off the 2045 GP.
Additional data provided by Placer County, 2023; USGS NHD 2023.

23-14735 GR
Fig X Listed Historic Resources

b. Potential Cultural Resources

The City has identified and mapped potential historical resources as the result of several historic survey efforts. These properties have been identified as having potential historic value, but are not officially designated and include districts and individual properties (Figure 4.5-2). They could be considered historical resources, pending further analysis. There are seven potential historic districts that were identified and include the following: Historic College Way District; Historic Crutcher Court District; Historic Flint Station/Camp Flint Area; Historic Huntley District; Historic Parkside Terrace District; and Historic Placer High School District. Potential historic districts are outlined in Appendix E. Additionally, the City identified over 250 potential historical resources, which are not currently individually listed or included in a listed or identified potential historic district. A review of the Built Environment Resource Directory revealed 13 additional properties that were identified as potential historical resources, pending further analysis. A full list of these potential historical resources is available in Appendix E. Additionally, any property over 45 years of age which has not been previously evaluated could potentially be a historical resource, pending further analysis.

Figure 4.5-2 Potential Historical Resources



Basemap provided by Bing and its licensors © 2024. Planning Area and SOI were georeferenced and digitized based off the 2045 GP. Additional data provided by Placer County, 2023; USGS NHD 2023.

23-14735 CR
Fig X Potential Historic Resources

4.5.4 Impact Analysis

a. Significance Thresholds and Methodology

Significance Thresholds

In accordance with Appendix G of the *CEQA Guidelines*, the proposed project could have a potentially significant impact if it were to result in one or more of the following:

1. Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to Section 15064.5;
2. Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to Section 15064.5; or
3. Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of dedicated cemeteries.

According to *CEQA Guidelines* Section 15126.4(b)(3), public agencies should, whenever feasible, seek to avoid damaging effects on any historical resource of an archaeological nature. The following factors shall be considered for a project involving such an archaeological site:

A. Preservation in place (avoidance) is the preferred manner of mitigating impacts to archaeological sites. Preservation in place maintains the relationship between artifacts and the archaeological context. Preservation may also avoid conflict with religious or cultural values of groups associated with the site.
B. Preservation in place may be accomplished by, but is not limited to, the following:
    1. Planning construction to avoid archaeological sites.
    2. Incorporation of sites within parks, greenspace, or other open space.
    3. Covering the archaeological sites with a layer of chemically stable soil before building tennis courts, parking lots, or similar facilities on the site.
    4. Deeding the site into a permanent conservation easement.
C. When data recovery through excavation is the only feasible mitigation, a data recovery plan, which makes provision for adequately recovering the scientifically consequential information from and about the historical resource, shall be prepared and adopted prior to any excavation being undertaken. Such studies shall be deposited with the California Historical Resources Regional Information Center. Archaeological sites known to contain human remains shall be treated in accordance with the provisions of Section 7050.5 of the Health and Safety Code.
D. Data recovery shall not be required for an historical resource if the lead agency determines that testing or studies already completed have adequately recovered the scientifically consequential information from and about the archaeological or historical resource, provided that the determination is documented and that the studies are deposited with the California Historical Resources Regional Information Center.

Methodology

The significance of a cultural resource and subsequently the significance of any impact is determined by among other things, consideration of whether that resource can increase our knowledge of the past. The determining factors are site content and degree of preservation. A finding of archaeological significance follows the criteria established in the *CEQA Guidelines*. *CEQA*

Guidelines Section 15064.5 (Determining the Significance of Impacts to Archaeological Resources) states:

> (a)(3) […] Generally, a resource shall be considered by the lead agency to be "historically significant" if the resource meets the criteria for listing on the CRHR (Public Resources Code Section 5024.1, Title 14, California Code of Regulations Section 4852).
>
> (a)(4) The fact that a resource is not listed in, or determined to be eligible for listing in the CRHR, not included in a local register of historical resources (pursuant to section 5020.1(k) of the Public Resources Code), or identified in an historical resources survey (meeting the criteria in section 5024.1(g) of the Public Resources Code) does not preclude a lead agency from determining that the resource may be an historical resource as defined in Public Resources Code sections 5020.1(j) or 5024.1.
>
> (b) A project with an effect that may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an historical resource is a project that may have a significant effect on the environment.

A substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource means demolition, destruction, relocation, or alteration of the resource or its immediate surroundings such that the significance of the historical resource would be materially impaired. Generally, impacts to historical resources can be mitigated to below a level of significance by following the Secretary of the Interior's Guidelines for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating, Restoring, and Reconstructing Historic Buildings or the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings (*CEQA Guidelines* Section 15064.6[b]). In some circumstances, documentation of an historical resource by way of historic narrative photographs or architectural drawings will not mitigate the impact of demolition below the level of significance (*CEQA Guidelines* Section 15126.4[b][2]).

Preservation in place is the preferred form of mitigation for archaeological resources as it retains the relationship between artifact and context, and may avoid conflicts with groups associated with the site (*CEQA Guidelines* Section 15126.4[b][3][A]).

b. Project Impacts and Mitigation

Threshold 1:	Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to Section 15064.5?

Impact CUL-1 DEVELOPMENT FACILITATED BY THE PROJECT COULD ADVERSELY AFFECT KNOWN AND PREVIOUSLY UNIDENTIFIED HISTORICAL RESOURCES IN THE PLANNING AREA. IMPACTS TO HISTORICAL RESOURCES WOULD BE SIGNIFICANT AND UNAVOIDABLE.

As discussed in Section 4.5.3, *Known and Potential Cultural Resources*, review of the databases of NRHP, CRHR, and Built Environment Resource Directory, in addition to a review of local and county-level databases and previous surveys, indicate there are 30 designated historical resources and four designated historic districts in Auburn, shown in Figure 4.5-1, in addition to over 250 potential historical resources and seven potential historical districts which have been identified by the City, shown in Figure 4.5-2. Additionally, any property over 45 years of age which has not been previously evaluated could potentially be a historical resource, pending further analysis. There are no specific development plans which affect these properties; however, the proposed project could facilitate future development on parcels containing buildings which meet the age threshold for potential historical resources pursuant to CEQA and have not been subject to previous evaluation.

Development facilitated by the project could result in material impairment of historical resources, which *CEQA Guidelines* Section 15064.5(b)(2)(A) defines as the demolition or alteration of those characteristics of a historical resource that convey its historical significance and that justify its inclusion in, or eligibility for inclusion in, the CRHR or a local register. The Community Design and Preservation Element of the General Plan Update includes the following proposed goals, policies, and actions, which would minimize impacts to historical resources within the City of Auburn: Goal CDP-4: Historic Resources, Policy CDP-4.1: Historic Structures, Policy CDP-4.2: Adaptive Reuse, Policy CDP-4.3: Inventorying Historic Resources, Policy CDP-4.4: Preservation Incentives, Policy CDP-4.5: Historic Landscapes, Policy CDP-4.6: Heritage Tourism, Policy CDP-4.7: Education and Awareness of Historic Resources, Action CDP-4A: Historic Design Review, Action CDP-4B: Auburn Historic Survey Update, Action CDP-4C: Historic Resource Evaluations for Individual Properties, Action CDP-4D: Property Owner Assistance, and Action CDP-4E: Historic Building Code.

In addition to the Community Design and Preservation Element of the General Plan, the proposed project also includes the Form-Based Code (FBC) for Auburn's Downtown/Old Town area. As described in Section 2.6, *Form-Based Code*, the FBC would replace the existing zoning in Downtown Auburn to enhance the walkable scale of Downtown streets while also protecting the historic character of Downtown structures. Chapter 05.020, *Building Types, General Guidelines*, of the proposed FBC includes several general guidelines that address the treatment of historical resources, including encouraging the retention of historic building materials, implementing façade designs that echo the proportional relationship of older buildings, and ensuring newly constructed buildings and additions would not impair historical resources. Additional relevant guidelines include Chapter 05.100, *Large House Building Types*, that outlines provisions to ensure that multifamily buildings fit the character and scale of existing historic neighborhoods and Chapter 05.110, *Small House Building Types*, ensures that new small houses have compatible massing with historic neighborhoods. Chapter 06.160, *Color and Material*, provides exterior color and material guidelines that provide guidance on choosing historically appropriate paint colors and exterior materials. Finally, Chapter 7 promotes the retention of historic signage, where present.

The goals, policies, and actions in the General Plan Update would mitigate impacts to historical resources to a substantial extent, including requiring the identification of historical resources as outlined in Action CDP-4C and assessing impacts to historical resources as part of the Historic Design Review outlined in Action CDP-4A. Additionally, the provisions of the FBC that are relevant to historical resources would promote the preservation of existing buildings, while encouraging new development that is sensitive to the historic character of Auburn's Downtown/Old Town area. Although these procedures may mitigate impacts to the maximum extent feasible, they may allow, in some cases, for the demolition of a resource or other alterations that materially impair the features that convey its historical significance. As such, impacts on historical resources are considered to be potentially significant.

Mitigation Measures

CUL-1 Historical Resources Documentation

If significant historical resources are identified on a development site and compliance with the Standards and/or avoidance is not possible, the City shall require project applicants to take appropriate site-specific mitigation measures. Mitigation measures may include documentation of the historical resource in the form of a Historic American Building Survey (HABS)-like report. The report shall comply with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Architectural and Engineering Documentation and shall generally follow the HABS Level III requirements, including digital

photographic recordation, detailed historic narrative report, and compilation of historic research. The documentation shall be completed by a qualified architectural historian or historian who meets the PQS and submitted to the City prior to issuance of any permits for demolition or alteration of the historical resource.

Significance After Mitigation

Goals, policies, and actions in the proposed General Plan, requirements of the proposed FBC, and Mitigation Measure CUL-1 would reduce impacts to historical resources to the greatest extent feasible. However, even with implementation of these goals, policies, and actions, historical resources could still be materially impaired by future development carried out under the proposed project. While HABS-like documentation required by Mitigation Measure CUL-1 would reduce these impacts to the greatest extent feasible, in cases where compliance with the Standards or avoidance is not possible, legal precedent has established that such a measure cannot mitigate impacts to a level of less than significant, because the loss of historical fabric cannot be readily compensated for by commemorative mitigation. Therefore, impacts would be significant and unavoidable.

Threshold 2:	Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to Section 15064.5?

Impact CUL-2 DEVELOPMENT FACILITATED BY THE PROJECT COULD ADVERSELY AFFECT PREVIOUSLY UNIDENTIFIED ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCES IN THE PLANNING AREA. IMPACTS WOULD BE LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT WITH MITIGATION.

The Planning Area has known archaeological sensitivity and, as a result, the potential to encounter unidentified archaeological resources is moderate to high. Therefore, construction activities involving ground disturbance into native soils in any areas within the Planning Area could unearth, damage, or destroy previously unknown indigenous or historic-period archaeological resources. Undeveloped areas have a higher probability of containing previously unidentified archaeological resources, given the Planning Area's known sensitivity and the probable lack of previous ground-disturbing activities in those areas. The Arts and Culture Element of the 2045 Auburn General Plan Update contains the following goals, policies, and actions which would minimize impacts to archaeological resources within the City of Auburn: Goal AC-3: Indigenous and Tribal Cultural Resources, Policy AC-3.1: Indigenous and Tribal Cultural Resource Protection, Policy AC-3.2: Tribal Consultation, Policy AC-3.3: TCR Documentation, Action AC-3A: Inventorying Tribal Resources, Action AC-3B: AB 52 and SB 18 Compliance, and Action AC-3C: Cultural Resource Surveys and Monitoring.

Many portions of the Planning Area have been previously developed for various purposes and uses. Nonetheless, there is the potential for both historic and indigenous archaeological resources to exist on the ground surface and below the ground surface throughout the Planning Area, which could be disturbed by grading and excavation activities associated with future development facilitated by the project. Proposed General Plan goals, policies, and actions would mitigate impacts to archeological resources to the extent feasible, including requiring the preparation of cultural resources reports and monitoring, as outlined in Action AC-3C. Although these procedures may mitigate impacts to the maximum extent feasible, there is still potential, in some cases, to damage or destroy archaeological resources, especially if they occur in less disturbed sediments. Consequently, impacts would be potentially significant.

Mitigation Measures

CUL-2 Archaeological Resources Data Recovery and Documentation

Prior to approval of projects requiring ground disturbing activities, the City shall retain an archaeologist that meets the Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualification Standards in either indigenous or historic archaeology (qualified archaeologist as defined in Code of Federal Regulation, Title 36, Part 61) to oversee the preparation of an archaeological resources assessment.

- Archaeological Resources Assessments shall include a California Historical Resources Information System records search at the North Central Information Center with a minimum 0.5-mile radius and a Sacred Lands File search through the California Native American Heritage Commission. The records searches will characterize the results of previous cultural resource surveys and disclose any cultural resources that have been recorded and/or evaluated in and around the project site. A Phase I pedestrian survey of the project site shall be undertaken to locate any surface evidence of cultural materials. A geoarchaeological review (examination of California Historical Resources Information System and ethnographic data, historical, geological, and soil maps, aerial imagery, geotechnical reports) shall be conducted to assess the potential for the project to encounter unknown archaeological resources during construction. A qualified archaeologist shall identify known archaeological resources and classify the project as having high, medium, or low sensitivity for unknown archaeological resources. The assessment shall also include recommendations for additional studies and/or mitigation, as necessary, such as monitoring during construction-related ground disturbance. Construction monitoring shall be recommended when archaeological resources are present and/or the assessment identifies a moderate or high likelihood of archaeological resources being present.
- If the California Historical Resources Information System search or Phase I archaeological survey identifies resources that may be impacted by a project involving ground disturbance, the archaeological resources assessment shall also include Phase II testing and evaluation. If resources are determined significant (i.e., eligible for the CRHR and/or NRHP) or unique, the City shall first consider whether avoidance and preservation in place is feasible. If resource avoidance and preservation in place is not feasible, appropriate site-specific mitigation measures shall be identified in the Phase II evaluation.
- For archaeological resources found eligible under CRHR Criterion 4/NRHP Criterion D (data potential) that cannot be avoided and will be impacted by project ground disturbance, mitigation shall include, but would not be limited to, a Phase III data recovery program. The data recovery program shall make provisions for adequately recovering the scientifically consequential information from and about the resource. The qualified archaeologist and City shall consult with appropriate Native American representatives regarding the data recovery program in determining treatment for prehistoric or Native American resources to ensure cultural values ascribed to the resource, beyond those that are scientifically important, are considered. For archaeological resources that are found eligible under CRHR Criteria 1/NRHP Criteria A (events), 2/B (persons), and/or 3/C (design/craftsmanship) that cannot be avoided and will be impacted, other appropriate mitigation shall be determined by a qualified archaeologist in consultation with the City and, if the resource is of indigenous origin, local interested tribes. Mitigation may include, but would not be limited to, development of interpretive or educational materials or preservation of all or portions of the archaeological site.

- Final disposition of any recovered artifacts or samples, which could include but would not be limited to curation or onsite reburial, shall occur as specified by the qualified archaeologist in consultation with the City and, if the resource is of indigenous origin, local interested tribes. Artifacts and samples include material recovered from all phases of work, including the Phase I survey, Phase II testing, Phase III data recovery, and construction monitoring.

Significance After Mitigation

Implementation of Mitigation Measure CUL-2 would require data recovery and documentation of significant archaeological resources if encountered during construction of individual development projects. This action would ensure that potential impacts to archaeological resources would be reduced to less than significant.

Threshold:	Would the project disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?

Impact CUL-3 GROUND DISTURBING ACTIVITIES ASSOCIATED WITH DEVELOPMENT FACILITATED BY THE PROJECT MAY ENCOUNTER HUMAN REMAINS; HOWEVER, COMPLIANCE WITH HEALTH AND SAFETY CODE AND PRC REQUIREMENTS WOULD ENSURE THAT POTENTIAL IMPACTS TO HUMAN REMAINS WOULD BE LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT.

Human burials outside of formal cemeteries can occur in indigenous archaeological contexts. While no known burial sites have been identified within the Planning Area, excavations during construction activities could have the potential to disturb these resources, which could include Native American burial sites. Although it is unlikely that human remains are present, it is possible that the Planning Area contains previously unidentified human remains.

Construction of future development and mobility improvements facilitated by the project, such as improvements to roadways, and bicycle and pedestrian facilities have the potential to disturb human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries. As noted in Section 4.5.2, *Regulatory Setting*, human burials have specific provisions for treatment Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5 and PRC Sections 5097.5, 5097.94 and 5097.98.

If human remains are found during ground disturbing activities, California Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5 states that no further disturbance shall occur until the County Coroner has made a determination of origin and disposition pursuant to PRC Section 5097.98. In the event of an unanticipated discovery of human remains, the County Coroner shall be notified immediately. If the human remains are determined to be prehistoric, the Coroner will notify the NAHC, which will determine and notify a most likely descendant (MLD). The MLD shall complete the inspection of the site within 48 hours of being granted access to the site and may recommend scientific removal and nondestructive analysis of human remains and items associated with Native American burials.

Development facilitated by the project would be required to comply with PRC Section 5097.98 and California Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5. This compliance would ensure that potential impacts to human remains would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures would be required.

Significance After Mitigation

Impacts would be less than significant without mitigation.

4.5.5 Cumulative Impacts

The geographic scope of the cumulative cultural resources analysis is the Planning Area and immediately adjacent areas within the county. This geographic scope is appropriate because cultural resources can be regional or site-specific. The cumulative analysis considers the nearby past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future plans and projects listed in Table 3-1 (refer to Section 3, *Environmental Setting*), in addition to the proposed plan.

Cumulative development has the potential to impact historical resources. Cumulative development could cause the alteration, removal, or demolition of built-environment historical resources. Therefore, cumulative impacts to historical resources are significant. Although the proposed project includes the implementation of goals, policies, and actions and mitigation measure CUL-1,.that would reduce impacts to these resources to the maximum extent feasible, development facilitated by the project could nonetheless cause the damage or destruction of built environment historical resources. As such, the project's contribution to cumulative historical resource impacts would be cumulatively considerable.

Cumulative development in the region would continue to disturb areas with the potential to contain archaeological resources. While there is the potential for significant cumulative impacts to archaeological resources, it is anticipated that potential impacts associated with individual projects would be addressed and mitigated on a case-by-case basis and would be subject to local and State regulations regarding the protection of such resources. With adherence to existing regulations, in addition to Mitigation Measure CUL-2, the proposed project's impacts to archaeological resources would be less than significant and, would not compound regional impacts to archaeological resources in conjunction with the cumulative projects. Therefore, the project would not result in a considerable contribution to cumulative impacts.

Cumulative projects would be required to comply with PRC Section 5097.98 and the California Health and Safety Code (Sections 7050.5, 7051, and 7054), with regard to potential impacts to human remains. Compliance with these code sections would ensure cumulative impacts to human remains are less than significant.

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4.6 Energy

This section evaluates the effects of the proposed project on energy and its potential to result in the inefficient, wasteful, and unnecessary consumption of energy.

4.6.1 Setting

Energy relates directly to environmental quality as energy use can adversely affect air quality and other natural resources. Fossil fuels are burned to create electricity to power buildings and vehicles, which creates heat and air pollution. A discussion of transportation energy use relates to the fuel efficiency of cars and trucks, and the availability and use of public transportation, including the choice of different travel modes (automobile, carpool, and public transit) and the miles traveled by these modes. Construction and routine operation and maintenance of infrastructure also consume energy, as does development, typically in the form of natural gas and electricity.

a. Energy Supply

Petroleum

California

California is one of the top producers of petroleum in the nation, with drilling operations occurring throughout the state. A network of crude oil pipelines connects production areas to oil refineries in the Los Angeles area, the San Francisco Bay area, and the Central Valley. California oil refineries also process Alaskan and foreign crude oil received in ports in Los Angeles, Long Beach, and the San Francisco Bay area. Crude oil production in California and Alaska is in decline, and California refineries have become increasingly dependent on foreign imports (California Energy Commission [CEC] 2024a). Led by Iraq and Saudi Arabia, foreign suppliers produce over half of the crude oil refined in California (CEC 2024a, 2024b). According to the United States Energy Information Administration (EIA), California's field production of crude oil totaled approximately 307 thousand barrels per day in 2023 (EIA 2024a).

Placer County and City of Auburn Petroleum Supplies and Usage

Petroleum fuels are generally purchased by individual users such as residents and employees. While no petroleum refineries are located in the Planning Area (EIA 2023a), 11 gasoline stations are present in the city; additional fueling stations are located in unincorporated areas of the Planning Area and surrounding Placer County. Similarly, no orphaned or operating oil wells exist in the city (DOC 2024).

Alternative Fuels

A variety of alternative fuels are used to reduce petroleum-based fuel demand. The use of these fuels is encouraged through various statewide regulations and plans, such as the Low Carbon Fuel Standard and Senate Bill (SB) 32. Conventional gasoline and diesel may be replaced, depending on the capability of the vehicle, with transportation fuels including hydrogen, biodiesel, and electricity. Currently, there are 62 hydrogen refueling stations in California; however, none are in the Planning Area. Currently, 10 biodiesel refueling stations are in California; none of which are in the Planning Area (DOE 2024).

Natural Gas

Natural gas continues to play an important and varied role in California. The state's natural gas production gross withdrawals for 2023 was 131,235 million cubic feet (EIA 2024b).

No orphaned or active natural gas wells, or natural gas production facilities are located within the Planning Area (DOC 2024). According to the National Pipeline Mapping System, one hazardous liquid pipeline along the eastern portion of the Planning Area and one natural gas transmission pipeline along the western portion of the Planning Area, both generally oriented north-south (National Pipeline Mapping System [NPMS] 2024).

Electricity

California

In 2022, approximately 36.4 percent of California's electricity was sourced from natural gas, 54.2 percent from non-greenhouse gas (GHG) and renewable sources, and the remaining 9.4 percent was sourced from coal, oil, other, and unspecified sources. Specifically, 54.2 percent of California's 2022 retail electric sales that were served by non-GHG and renewable resources included sources from nuclear, large hydroelectric, biomass, geothermal, small hydroelectric, solar, and wind energy (CEC 2024c).

City of Auburn

Until 2018, Auburn was served solely by Pacific Gas & Electric Company (PG&E) to meet power demands; however, in 2018, PG&E customers in Auburn, Colfax, Lincoln, Rocklin, Loomis, and most of unincorporated Placer County were automatically enrolled with the Pioneer Community Energy's (PCE) community choice energy model. The PCE model enables communities to choose clean-sourced electric power at a cost equivalent to PG&E while retaining PG&E's role in maintaining power lines and providing customer service. Available PG&E programs, such as the California Alternative Rates for Energy Program and Family Electric Rate Assistance Program, are also accessible to PCE customers (PCE 2024a). PCE provides the option to opt into their Green100 renewable energy rate option which provides customers with 100 percent renewable energy. Renewable sources may include geothermal, wind, solar, hydroelectric, and biomass energy production (PCE 2024b). In conjunction with the utility companies, the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) is involved in energy conservation programs.

While PCE assumes responsibility for electric power procurement and the purchase of clean, carbon-free electricity for homes and businesses in the Placer County area, PG&E retains responsibility for providing customer billing, receiving payments, performing power line maintenance, and resolving outages (PCE 2017). The power system that PG&E is responsible for maintaining is one of the nation's largest and includes 106,681 circuit miles of electric distribution lines and 18,466 circuit miles of interconnected transmission lines (PG&E 2024b).

Electric Vehicles

Electricity can be used to power electric and plug-in hybrid electric vehicles directly from the power grid. Electricity used to power vehicles is generally provided by the electricity grid and stored in the vehicle's batteries. Fuel cells are being explored to use electricity generated onboard the vehicle to power electric motors. Currently, 27 electric vehicle charging stations are in the Planning Area (PG&E 2024a).

b. Energy Consumption

Total energy consumption in the United States (U.S.) in 2021 was approximately 97.75 quadrillion Btu (EIA 2024c). In 2021, petroleum provided approximately 36 percent of that energy, with other sources of energy coming from natural gas (approximately 32 percent), total renewable sources (approximately 12 percent), coal (approximately 11 percent), and nuclear power (approximately 8 percent). On a per capita basis in 2021, California was ranked the fourth lowest state in terms of total per capita energy consumption (189 million Btu [MMBtu] per person), or about 35 percent less than the U.S. average per capita consumption of 295 MMBtu per person (EIA 2021a).

Electricity and Natural Gas

Most of the electricity generated in California is from natural gas-fired power plants, which represented approximately 36.4 percent of total electricity generated in 2022 (CEC 2024c). In 2022, California produced approximately 71 percent of the electricity it used and imported the rest from outside the state. California consumed a total of 287,220 gigawatt-hours (GWh) of electricity in 2022, with 203,257 GWh produced in-state (CEC 2024c). Placer County as a whole consumed approximately 99.4 million therms of natural gas in 2022 in both residential and non-residential uses (CEC 2022a). Placer County also consumed approximately 3,089 GWh of electricity in 2022 from residential and non-residential uses (CEC 2022b).

The main electricity and natural gas provider for the City of Auburn is PG&E. In 2022, nearly 40 percent of all customers' electricity came from renewable resources including biopower, geothermal, small hydroelectric, solar and wind power (PG&E 2024b). In 2025, the City of Auburn used approximately 91.0 GWh of electricity in the residential sector and 66 GWh of electricity in the non-residential sector (PG&E 2022).

Petroleum

Energy consumed by the transportation sector accounts for roughly 42.4 percent of California's energy demand, amounting to approximately 2,915.8 trillion Btu in 2022 (EIA 2022). Petroleum-based fuels are used for approximately 98.1 percent of the state's transportation activity (EIA 2021b). Most gasoline and diesel fuel sold in California for motor vehicles is refined in California to meet state-specific formulations required by the California Air Resources Board (CARB). California's transportation sector, including on-road and rail transportation, consumed approximately 2,785 trillion Btu of petroleum fuels in 2021 (EIA 2023b).

As shown in Table 4.6-1, approximately 195 million gallons of fuel were consumed in Placer County in 2022, of which approximately 169 million gallons were gasoline and approximately 26 million gallons were diesel fuel (CEC 2022c). This equates to approximately 0.53 million gallons of fuel per day or 1.3 gallons of fuel per person per day, based on a 2022 countywide population of 407,539 people (California Department of Finance [DOF] 2024). The City of Auburn consumed 27,746,188 gallons of gasoline in 2022, as shown in Table 4.6-2 (CEC 2022d).

Table 4.6-1 Annual and Daily Transportation Energy Consumption in Placer County

Fuel Type	2022 Annual Fuel Use (million gallons)	2022 Daily Fuel Use (million gallons)	2022 Daily Fuel Use (millions of Btu)	2022 Daily per Capita Fuel Use (thousands of Btu)
Gasoline	169	0.46	50,832	125
Diesel	26	0.07	0.01	<1
Total	**195**	**0.53**	**50,832**	**125**

Notes: Btu = British thermal units. 2022 countywide population of 407,539 (DOF 2024) was used to calculated per capita energy use.

Source: CEC 2022c

Table 4.6-2 Annual and Daily Gasoline Consumption in the City of Auburn

2022 Annual Fuel Use (million gallons)	2022 Daily Fuel Use (million gallons)	2022 Daily Fuel Use (millions of Btu)	2022 Daily per Capita Fuel Use (thousands of Btu)[1]
27.75	0.076	8,346	617

Notes: Btu = British thermal units. 2022 citywide population of 13,523 (DOF 2024) was used to calculate per capita fuel use.

1 Auburn's per capita fuel use is reported as being much higher than Placer County's because Auburn is reported as the point of sale ("consumption") for a major fuel distributor located in the city. Much of that fuel is actually being consumed elsewhere in the state.

Source: CEC 2022d

c. Energy and Fuel Efficiency

Though the demand for gasoline and diesel fuel is rising because of population growth and limited mass transit, the increase in demand is partially offset by efficiency improvements. Land use policies that encourage infill and growth near transit centers (e.g., following SB 375, the Sustainable Communities and Climate Protection Act of 2008), improvements to fuel efficiency, and gradual replacement of the vehicle fleet with new, more fuel-efficient cars will all reduce fuel use. In the future, increasing gasoline prices may apply downward pressure to gasoline demand in the state.

4.6.2 Regulatory Setting

a. Federal Regulations

Energy Policy Conservation Act and Corporate Average Fuel Economy

The Energy Policy Conservation Act (Corporate Average Fuel Economy [CAFE]) of 1975 established nationwide fuel economy standards to conserve oil. Pursuant to this Act, the National Highway Traffic and Safety Administration, part of the U.S. Department of Transportation, is responsible for revising existing fuel economy standards and establishing new vehicle fuel economy standards.

The CAFE program was established to determine vehicle manufacturer compliance with the government's fuel economy standards. Compliance with CAFE standards is determined based on each manufacturer's average fuel economy for the portion of their vehicles produced for sale in the U.S.

National Energy Policy Act of 1992

The National Energy Policy Act of 1992 (EPACT92) calls for programs that promote efficiency and the use of alternative fuels. EPACT92 requires certain federal, state, and local governments and private operators to stock vehicle fleets with a percentage of light duty alternative fuel vehicles each year.

In addition, EPACT92 has financial incentives: federal tax deductions will be allowed for businesses and individuals to cover the incremental cost of alternative fuel vehicles. EPACT92 also requires states to consider a variety of incentive programs to help promote alternative fuel vehicles.

Energy Policy Act of 2005

The Energy Policy Act of 2005 provides renewed and expanded tax credits for electricity generated by qualified energy sources, such as landfill gas; provides bond financing, tax incentives, grants, and loan guarantees for clean renewable energy and rural community electrification; and establishes a federal purchase requirement for renewable energy.

Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007

The Energy Independence and Security Act is designed to improve vehicle fuel economy and help reduce U.S. dependence on oil. It expands the production of renewable fuels, reducing dependence on oil, and confronting global climate change. Specifically, it does the following:

1. Increases the supply of alternative fuel sources by setting a mandatory Renewable Fuel Standard that requires fuel producers to use at least 36 billion gallons of biofuel in 2022, which represents a nearly five-fold increase over current levels; and
2. Reduces U.S. demand for oil by setting a national fuel economy standard of 35 miles per gallon by 2020 – an increase in fuel economy standards of 40 percent over those in 2007.

The Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007 also set energy efficiency standards for lighting (specifically light bulbs) and appliances. Development would also be required to install photosensors and energy-efficient lighting fixtures consistent with the requirements of Title 42, United States Code Section 17001 et seq.

Corporate Average Fuel Economy Standards

The Corporate Average Fuel Economy (CAFE) standards are Federal rules established by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) that set fuel economy and GHG emissions standards for all new passenger cars and light trucks sold in the United States. The CAFE standards are projected to have an estimated 34.5 miles per gallon for light-duty vehicles in model year 2031 (NHTSA 2026). It is, however, legally infeasible for individual municipalities to adopt more stringent fuel efficiency standards. The CAA (Title 42, United States Code [USC] Section 7543[a]) states that "no state or any political subdivision therefore shall adopt or attempt to enforce any standard relating to the control of emissions from new motor vehicles or new motor vehicle engines subject to this part."

As of March 2020, NHSTA and United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) finalized the rulemaking process to establish the Safer Affordable Fuel Efficient (SAFE) Vehicles Rule for Model Years 2021-2026 Passenger Cars and Light Trucks (SAFE Vehicles Rule). The SAFE Vehicles Rule would amend the existing CAFE standards such that the requirements for model years 2021 through 2026 are lowered to the 2020 standards of 43.7 miles per gallon (mpg) and 204 grams of CO_2 per mile for passenger cars and 31.3 mpg and 284 grams of CO_2 per mile for light duty trucks (83 Federal Register 42989 August 24, 2018 Table I-1 and Table I-2).

Construction Equipment Fuel Efficiency Standard

USEPA sets emission standards for construction equipment. The first federal standards (Tier 1) were adopted in 1994 for all off-road engines over 50 horsepower (hp) and were phased in by 2000. A new standard was adopted in 1998 that introduced Tier 1 for all equipment below 50 hp and established the Tier 2 and Tier 3 standards. The Tier 2 and Tier 3 standards were phased in by 2008 for all equipment. The current iteration of emissions standards for construction equipment are the Tier 4 efficiency requirements are contained in 40 Code of Federal Regulations Parts 1039, 1065, and 1068.

Energy Star Program

In 1992, USEPA introduced Energy Star© as a voluntary labeling program designed to identify and promote energy-efficient products to reduce GHG emissions. The program applies to major household appliances, lighting, computers, and building components such as windows, doors, roofs, and heating and cooling systems. Under this program, appliances that meet specifications for maximum energy use established under the program are certified to display the Energy Star© label. In 1996, USEPA joined with the Energy Department to expand the program, which now also includes qualifying commercial and industrial buildings, as well as homes (USEPA 2026).

b. State Regulations

California Energy Plan

The CEC is responsible for preparing the California Energy Plan, which identifies emerging trends related to energy supply, demand, conservation, public health and safety, and the maintenance of a healthy economy. The 2008 California Energy Plan calls for the state to assist in the transformation of the transportation system to improve air quality, reduce congestion, and increase the efficient use of fuel supplies with the least environmental and energy costs. To further this policy, the plan identifies several strategies, including assistance to public agencies and fleet operators in implementing incentive programs for zero-emission vehicles and addressing their infrastructure needs, as well as encouragement of urban designs that reduce vehicle miles travelled (VMT) and accommodate pedestrian and bicycle access.

Assembly Bill 2076: Reducing Dependence on Petroleum

Pursuant to AB 2076 (Chapter 936, Statutes of 2000; codified as Public Resources Code Sections 25720 - 25721), the CEC and CARB prepared and adopted in 2003 a joint agency report, Reducing California's Petroleum Dependence. Included in this report are recommendations to increase the use of alternative fuels to 20 percent of on-road transportation fuel use by 2020 and 30 percent by 2030; significantly increase the efficiency of motor vehicles; and reduce per capita vehicle miles traveled (VMT). One of the performance-based goals of AB 2076 is to reduce petroleum demand to 15 percent below 2003 demand. Furthermore, in response to the CEC's 2003 and 2005 Integrated Energy Policy reports, the Governor directed the CEC to take the lead in developing a long-term plan to increase alternative fuel use.

Integrated Energy Policy Report

SB 1389 (Chapter 568, Statutes of 2002) requires the CEC to conduct assessments and forecasts of all aspects of energy industry supply, production, transportation, delivery and distribution, demand,

and price to develop energy policies that conserve resources, protect the environment, ensure energy reliability, enhance the state's economy, and protect public health and safety. The most recent assessment, the *2023 Integrated Energy Policy Report*, highlights the implementation of California's innovative policies and the role they have played in establishing a clean energy economy and provides more detail on several key energy policies, including decarbonizing buildings, increasing energy efficiency savings, and integrating more renewable energy into the electricity system (CEC 2023).

California Renewables Portfolio Standard and Senate Bill 100

Established in 2002 under SB 1078, and accelerated by SB 107 (2006), SB X 1-2 (2011), and SB 100 (2018), California's Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS) obligates investor-owned utilities, energy service providers, and community choice aggregators to procure 33 percent total retail sales of electricity from renewable energy sources by 2020, 60 percent by 2030, and 100 percent by 2045. SB 100 also states "that it is the policy of the state that eligible renewable energy resources and zero-carbon resources supply 100 percent of retail sales of electricity to California end-use customers and 100 percent of electricity procured to serve all state agencies by December 31, 2045." The CPUC and the CEC are jointly responsible for implementing the program. Electricity in the City of Auburn is currently provided by default through PCE. PCE and PG&E programs are available to customers, including programs that deliver 100 percent renewable energy.

Senate Bill 350: Clean Energy and Pollution Reduction Act of 2015

The Clean Energy and Pollution Reduction Act of 2015 (SB 350) requires the amount of electricity generated and sold to retail customers per year from eligible renewable energy resources to be increased to 50 percent by December 31, 2030. The Act also requires doubled energy efficiency savings in electricity and natural gas for retail customers through increased efficiency and conservation by December 31, 2030.

Assembly Bill 1493: Reduction of Greenhouse Gas Emissions

AB 1493 (Chapter 200, Statutes of 2002), known as the "Pavley bill," amended Health and Safety Code sections 42823 and 43018.5 and requires CARB to develop and adopt regulations that achieve maximum feasible and cost-effective reduction of GHG emissions from passenger vehicles, light-duty trucks, and other vehicles used for noncommercial personal transportation in California.

Implementation of new regulations prescribed by AB 1493 required the State of California to apply for a waiver under the federal Clean Air Act. Although the USEPA initially denied the waiver in 2008, USEPA approved a waiver in June 2009, and in September 2009, CARB approved amendments to its initially adopted regulations to apply the Pavley standards that reduce GHG emissions to new passenger vehicles in model years 2009 through 2016. According to CARB, implementation of the Pavley regulations is expected to reduce fuel consumption while also reducing GHG emissions (CARB 2020).

Energy Action Plan

The first Energy Action Plan (EAP) emerged in 2003 from a crisis atmosphere in California's energy markets. The State's three major energy policy agencies (CPUC, CEC, and the Consumer Power and Conservation Financing Authority [established under deregulation and now defunct]) came together to develop one high-level, coherent approach to meeting California's electricity and natural gas needs. It was the first time that energy policy agencies formally collaborated to define a common

vision and set of strategies to address California's future energy needs. They emphasized the importance of the impacts of energy policy on California's environment.

In the October 2005 EAP II, the CEC, and CPUC updated their energy policy vision by adding some important dimensions to the policy areas included in the original EAP, such as the emerging importance of climate change, transportation-related energy issues, and research and development activities. The CEC adopted an update to the EAP II in February 2008 that supplements earlier EAPs and examines the State's ongoing actions in the context of global climate change.

Assembly Bill 1007: State Alternative Fuels Plan

AB 1007 (Chapter 371, Statutes of 2005) required the CEC to prepare a State plan to increase the use of alternative fuels in California. The CEC prepared the State Alternative Fuels Plan (SAF Plan) in partnership with CARB and in consultation with other State, federal, and local agencies. The SAF Plan presents strategies and actions California must take to increase the use of alternative, nonpetroleum fuels in a manner that minimizes costs to California and maximizes the economic benefits of in-state production. The SAF Plan assessed various alternative fuels and developed fuel portfolios to meet California's goals to reduce petroleum consumption, increase alternative fuel use, reduce GHG emissions, and increase in-state production of biofuels without causing a significant degradation of public health and environmental quality.

Bioenergy Action Plan, Executive Order S-06-06

Executive Order (EO) S-06-06, April 25, 2006, establishes targets for the use and production of biofuels and biopower, and directs State agencies to work together to advance biomass programs in California while providing environmental protection and mitigation. The EO establishes the following target to increase the production and use of bioenergy, including ethanol and biodiesel fuels made from renewable resources: produce a minimum of 20 percent of its biofuels in California by 2010, 40 percent by 2020, and 75 percent by 2050. EO S-06-06 also calls for the State to meet a target for use of biomass electricity. The 2011 Bioenergy Action Plan identifies those barriers and recommends actions to address them so that the State can meet its clean energy, waste reduction, and climate protection goals. The 2012 Bioenergy Action Plan updates the 2011 Plan and provides a more detailed action plan to achieve the following goals:

1. Increase environmentally and economically sustainable energy production from organic waste
2. Encourage development of diverse bioenergy technologies that increase local electricity generation, combined heat and power facilities, renewable natural gas, and renewable liquid fuels for transportation and fuel cell applications
3. Create jobs and stimulate economic development, especially in rural regions of the State
4. Reduce fire danger, improve air and water quality, and reduce waste

Title 24, California Code of Regulations (CCR)

California Code of Regulations (CCR), Title 24, Part 6, is California's Energy Efficiency Standards for Residential and Non-Residential Buildings. The CEC established Title 24 in 1978 in response to a legislative mandate to create uniform building codes to reduce California's energy consumption and provide energy efficiency standards for residential and nonresidential buildings. The standards are updated on an approximately three-year cycle to allow consideration and possible incorporation of new efficient technologies and methods. In July 2025, the CEC updated Title 24 standards with more stringent requirements effective January 1, 2026, referred to herein as the 2025 standards. All

buildings for which an application for a building permit is submitted on or after January 1, 2026, must follow the 2025 standards. Energy efficient buildings require less electricity; therefore, increased energy efficiency reduces fossil fuel consumption and decreases GHG emissions. The building efficiency standards are enforced through the local plan check and building permit process. Local government agencies may adopt and enforce additional energy standards for new buildings as reasonably necessary due to local climatologic, geologic, or topographic conditions, provided that these standards exceed those provided in Title 24.

California Green Building Standards Code (2019), CCR Title 24, Part 11

California's green building code, referred to as CALGreen, was developed to provide a consistent approach to green building within the State. CALGreen lays out the minimum requirements for newly constructed residential and nonresidential buildings to reduce GHG emissions through improved efficiency and process improvements. It also includes voluntary tiers to further encourage building practices that improve public health, safety, and general welfare by promoting a more sustainable design.

c. Regional and Local Regulations

Sacramento Area Council of Governments 2050 MTP/SCS

The 2050 Metropolitan Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (MTP/SCS, commonly referred to as the Blueprint) is Sacramento Area Council of Governments' (SACOG's) state-mandated long-range transportation and land-use plan, integrating multimodal transportation investments with regional growth projections to support sustainable development across the six-county Sacramento region. The 2050 MTP/SCS aligns transportation, housing, and land-use planning to meet CARB's per-capita GHG reduction targets under SB 375 and prioritizes strategies that reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMT), lower transportation-related energy consumption, and promote efficient land-use patterns. The plan emphasizes infrastructure maintenance, smart land-use development, and expanded transit, active transportation, and congestion-management policies to enhance mobility while minimizing energy demand associated with regional travel. Collectively, the 2050 MTP/SCS provides a framework for regional planning agencies, local jurisdictions, and transportation providers to coordinate investments and policies that foster energy efficiency, reduce reliance on fossil-fuel-based transportation, and support compliance with statewide climate and energy mandates.

Auburn Municipal Code

Auburn's Municipal Code Chapter 150.055, Energy Code, mandates the implementation of the California Building Standards Code, Title 24, Part 6, of the California Energy Code, which has requirements for building design to reduce energy consumption. Some of the measures in the California Energy Code include the use of certain building materials to ensure a greater degree of energy efficiency during building operation and construction and energy efficiency standards for appliances, lighting amenities, and water fixtures, among other project components.

Auburn Municipal Code Chapter 150.085, Green Building Code, adopts California Building Standards Code, Title 24, part 11, Green Building Standards Code or "CALGreen." CALGreen lays out the minimum requirements for newly constructed residential and nonresidential buildings to reduce GHG emissions through improved efficiency and process improvements. The California Energy Code and CALGreen are further discussed under Section 4.6.2(b), *State.*

Auburn General Plan 1993

The City of Auburn General Plan Housing Element was most recently updated in 2021 and includes goals and policies that address energy efficiency. Goals and policies from the City General Plan are provided below.

Goal 4: The City will encourage energy efficiency in both new and existing housing.

Policy 4.1 The City shall promote the development of energy and resource-efficient housing types.

Policy 4.2 The city shall encourage innovative and cost-effective building technologies.

Placer County General Plan

The Placer County General Plan includes goals and policies that would reduce energy use in the county:

Natural Resources Element

Goal 6F: To protect and improve air quality in Placer County

Policy 6.F.5 The County shall encourage project proponents to consult early in the planning process with the County regarding the applicability of Countywide indirect and areawide source programs and transportation control measures (TCM) programs. Project review shall also address energy-efficient building and site designs and proper storage, use, and disposal of hazardous materials.

Circulation Element

Goal 3.C: To maximize the efficient use of transportation facilities so as to: 1) reduce travel demand on the County's roadway system; 2) reduce the amount of investment required in new or expanded facilities; 3) reduce the quantity of emissions of pollutants from automobiles; and 4) increase the energy-efficiency of the transportation system.

Health and Safety Element

Policy 8.I.3.9 The County shall work with Pioneer Community Energy, Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E), and any other applicable utility providers to promote programs that reduce energy demand. (PCSP, EH-15, 20, 27)

Housing Element

Program G-1 **mPOWER Placer**. The County shall continue to encourage investments in energy efficiency through the mPower Placer program for commercial and multi-family properties, which provides special assessment financing for energy efficiency and renewable energy projects. The County shall continue to pursue resolution to conflicting directives from the Federal Home Finance Agency to ensure that homeowners have the same opportunities as commercial property owners.

Program G-2 **Energy Efficient Homes**. The County shall continue to provide handouts to the public regarding the efficient use of energy in the home and ways to improve the energy efficiency of new construction. The County shall also advertise weatherization and other energy efficiency programs. The County shall promote these programs by posting information on the County website.

4.6.3 Impact Analysis

a. Significance Thresholds and Methodology

Significance Thresholds

In accordance with Appendix G of the *CEQA Guidelines,* a significant energy impact would occur if new development facilitated by the proposed project would:

1. Result in potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during project construction or operation; or
2. Conflict with or obstruct a State or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency.

Methodology

Public Resources Code Section 21100(b)(3) states that an EIR shall include "mitigation measures proposed to minimize significant effects on the environment, including, but not limited to, measures to reduce the wasteful, inefficient, and unnecessary consumption of energy." The physical environmental impacts associated with the use of energy, including the generation of electricity and burning of fuels, are discussed in Section 4.3, *Air Quality*, and Section 4.8, *Greenhouse Gas Emissions*. Energy consumption is analyzed herein in terms of construction and operational energy.

Construction energy demand for the proposed project is evaluated qualitatively because project-specific information regarding construction is unavailable for individual projects proposed under the General Plan Update. Construction energy demand accounts for anticipated energy consumption during construction of development facilitated by the project, such as fuel consumed by construction equipment, construction workers' vehicles traveling to and from construction sites, and vendor and haul truck deliveries to construction sites. Construction activities would temporarily create a higher demand for energy supplies. The extent of energy demand generated by construction equipment would depend on the quantity of equipment used and the hours of operation for each project.

The California Emissions Estimator Model (CalEEMod) version 2022.1.1.40 was used to approximate the operational natural gas and electricity consumption from development facilitated by the project. This analysis then determined whether energy consumed during operation for full buildout of the project would be wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary. Operational energy demand accounts for the anticipated energy consumption from development facilitated by the project, such as fuel consumed by cars, trucks, and public transit; natural gas consumed for on-site power generation and heating building spaces; and electricity consumed for building power needs, including, but not limited to, lighting, water conveyance, and air conditioning. The estimate of total daily VMT associated with the proposed project is based on VMT data provided in Section 4.16, *Transportation*.

b. Project Impacts and Mitigation

Threshold 1:	Would the project result in a potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during project construction or operation?

Impact E-1 DEVELOPMENT FACILITATED BY THE PROJECT WOULD NOT RESULT IN THE WASTEFUL, INEFFICIENT, OR UNNECESSARY CONSUMPTION OF ENERGY RESOURCES DURING CONSTRUCTION OR OPERATION. IMPACTS WOULD BE LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT.

Construction

Construction and demolition activities associated with the implementation of the proposed project would require energy resources primarily in the form of fuel consumption to operate heavy equipment, light-duty vehicles, machinery, and generators. Temporary power may also be provided for construction trailers and electric construction equipment. Construction of development facilitated by the project would also use building materials that would require energy use during the manufacturing and/or procurement of that material. However, as noted in the California Natural Resources Agency's Final Statement of Reasons, "a full 'lifecycle' analysis that would account for energy used in building materials and consumer products will generally not be required" (California Natural Resources Agency 2009). Therefore, this analysis does not provide a full lifecycle assessment of energy impacts for project construction but considers impacts only of construction itself. It is reasonable to assume that manufacturers of building materials such as concrete, steel, lumber, or other building materials would employ energy conservation practices in the interest of minimizing the cost of doing business. It also is reasonable to assume that traditional building materials, such as drywall and standard-shaped structural elements, would have been manufactured regardless of the proposed project and, if not used in the Planning Area, would be used for a different project outside the Planning Area. Therefore, the consumption of energy required for the manufacturing of building and construction material is not considered wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary in relation to the proposed project.

Energy use during demolition and construction would be temporary in nature, and construction equipment used would be typical of construction projects in the region. In addition, the contractors that would typically be employed for development facilitated by the project would be required to comply with the provisions of Title 13, California Code of Regulations Sections 2449 and 2485, which prohibit diesel-fueled commercial motor vehicles and off-road diesel vehicles from idling for more than five minutes, which would minimize unnecessary fuel consumption. Construction equipment would be subject to the USEPA Construction Equipment Fuel Efficiency Standard (discussed in detail in Section 4.6.2[a], *Federal*), which would minimize inefficient fuel consumption. These construction equipment standards (i.e., Tier 4 efficiency requirements) are contained in 40 Code of Federal Regulations Parts 1039, 1065, and 1068. Electrical power would be consumed during demolition and construction activities, and the demand, to the extent required, would be supplied from existing electrical infrastructure in the region. Electricity service in the City of Auburn is provided through PCE, which procures electricity on behalf of the City, and PG&E, which provides transmission, distribution, and customer service; PG&E has reported that nearly 40 percent of the electricity it delivers comes from renewable energy resources, and PCE offers customers the option to receive up to 100 percent renewable electricity through its Green100 program. In addition, pursuant to applicable regulatory requirements such as CALGreen, the proposed project would be required to comply with construction waste management practices to divert a minimum of 65 percent of

construction and demolition debris. These practices would result in efficient use of energy necessary to implement development facilitated by the project. Finally, the proposed Economic Development Element includes Policy ED-7.7, *Green Businesses,* which would encourage businesses that use sustainable technology to incorporate green business criteria.

Adherence to regional and local regulations would reduce energy impacts during construction. As a result, the use of energy to implement the proposed project would not be wasteful or inefficient. Therefore, demolition and construction activities associated with the proposed project would not result in potentially significant environmental effects due to the wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy, and impacts would be less than significant.

Operation

Operational energy demand from development facilitated by the project would include fuel consumed by passenger vehicles; natural gas consumed for heating and cooking in residential and non-residential buildings; and electricity consumed by residential and non-residential buildings including, but not limited to lighting, water conveyance, and air conditioning.

As shown in Table 4.6-3, vehicle trips related to development facilitated by the project would require approximately 74,447,414 gallons of gasoline and 15,439,375 gallons of diesel fuel, or 10,141,201 millions of Btu (MMBtu) of petroleum fuels annually (see Appendix G for energy calculation sheets). Gasoline and diesel fuel demands would be met by existing gasoline stations in the vicinity of the Planning Area. Additionally, the proposed General Plan Update includes Transportation Element Goal T-3 (Sustainable Transportation) and Policies T-3.1 (Reducing VMT), T-3.3 (Strategies to Reduce VMT), and T-3.4 (Zero Emission Vehicles), which promote reductions in transportation fuel consumption and associated GHG emissions by prioritizing VMT-based impact evaluation and encouraging multimodal travel and zero-emission vehicles. These policies support more energy-efficient transportation patterns by reducing reliance on single-occupant vehicle travel through mixed-use land use, transit, walking, bicycling, and transportation demand management strategies.

Table 4.6-3 Proposed Project Operational Energy Usage

Source	Energy Consumption	
Vehicle Trips		
Diesel	15,439,375 gallons	1,967,903 MMBtu
Gasoline	74,447,414 gallons	8,173,298 MMBtu
Built Environment		
Electricity	43,392,618 kWh	148,056 MMBtu
Natural Gas Usage	95,320,707 kBtu	95,321 MMBtu

See Appendices D and G for CalEEMod default values for fleet mix and average distance of travel and energy calculation sheets.

MMBtu = million British Thermal Units; kBtu = thousand British Thermal Units; kWh =: kilowatt-hour

Additionally, the General Plan Update includes Open Space and Conservation Element Goal OSC-6 (Climate Stability) and Policies OSC-6.1 (Renewable Energy), OSC-6.2 (Energy Conservation), OSC-6.3 (Passive Solar Design), OSC-6.4 (Microgrids), OSC 6.5 (Green Building), OSC-6.6 (Urban Forest), and OSC-6.11 (Green Businesses), which encourage development that reduces energy consumption and GHG emissions through renewable energy use, energy-conserving building standards, and advanced energy technologies. Together, these policies increase long-term energy efficiency and climate

resilience by incorporating passive design strategies, supporting green building and business practices, expanding the urban tree canopy, and improving the reliability and sustainability of local energy systems.

As discussed in Section 2, *Project Description,* the proposed project includes identified growth and development areas, each of which reflects a mix of infill development, redevelopment, commercial revitalization, and planned residential and mixed-use communities. These growth and development areas incorporate land use patterns and circulation features that enhance connectivity and improve the overall efficiency of local transportation networks. Several areas, including Downtown/Old Town and the Train Station Area, also present opportunities for transit-supportive or mixed-use development that can facilitate travel by modes other than exclusively single-occupancy vehicles. As discussed in Section 4.16, *Transportation*, the Planning Area VMT per service population in 2045 under the proposed project would be less than in 2045 under existing conditions. Furthermore, vehicles driven by future residents, employees, visitors, and patrons facilitated by the project would be subject to increasingly stringent federal and State fuel efficiency standards, thereby minimizing the potential for the inefficient consumption of vehicle fuels. As a result, vehicle fuel consumption resulting from the proposed project would generally not be wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary.

As shown in Table 4.6-3, in addition to transportation energy use, development facilitated by the project would require permanent grid connections for electricity and natural gas. Policy OSC-6.2 (Energy Conservation) and OSC-6.5 (Green Building) would result in less demand for natural gas by adopting and enforcing building codes that promote energy efficiency and conservation in construction new construction, as well as encouraging green construction methods. Development facilitated by the project would consume approximately 43,392,618 kilowatt-hours, or 148,056 MMBtu per year of electricity for lighting and large appliances, and approximately 95,321 MMBtu per year of natural gas for heating and cooking (see Appendix D for CalEEMod results). Electricity would be supplied by on-site solar generation, PG&E, or PCE. Natural gas would be supplied by PG&E. As discussed in Section 4.8, *Greenhouse Gas Emissions,* the 2019 Building Energy Efficiency Standards require installation of solar photovoltaic systems for single-family residences and multi-family buildings of three stories and less, which would supply much of the on-site electricity demand.

Construction of residential and non-residential buildings facilitated by the project would be required to comply with the California Building Energy Efficiency Standards for Residential and Non-residential Buildings and CALGreen (California Code of Regulations Title 24, Parts 6 and 11). The California Building Energy Efficiency Standards and CALGreen require the provision of electric vehicle supply equipment, water-efficient plumbing fixtures and fittings, recycling services, solar on low-rise residential development, solar-readiness on commercial development, and other energy-efficient measures that would reduce the potential for the inefficient use of energy.

Overall, the combination of federal, State, regional, and local regulations, and implementation of proposed General Plan policies would ensure that operation of development facilitated by the project would not result in potentially significant environmental effects due to the wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy, and impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures would be required.

Significance After Mitigation

Impacts would be less than significant without mitigation.

Threshold 2:	Would the project conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency?

Impact E-2 THE PROPOSED PROJECT WOULD NOT CONFLICT WITH OR OBSTRUCT A STATE OR LOCAL PLAN FOR RENEWABLE ENERGY OR ENERGY EFFICIENCY. IMPACTS WOULD BE LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT.

As discussed in Section 4.6.2, *Regulatory Setting,* multiple State, regional, and local plans establish requirements and targets for renewable energy development, energy efficiency, transportation energy reduction, and GHG reductions, including AB 2076, AB 1007, AB 1493, the California Renewable Portfolio Standard, the Integrated Energy Policy Report, the Energy Action Plan, Title 24/CALGreen, and the SACOG 2050 MTP/SCS. The City's adopted 1993 General Plan and the proposed General Plan Update also include conservation, renewable energy, and transportation policies intended to support these State and regional goals. As shown in Table 4.6-4 and Table 4.6-5, the proposed project would be consistent with State renewable energy regulations and energy efficiency plans and would not conflict with or obstruct their implementation.

Table 4.6-4 Consistency with State Renewable Energy and Efficiency Plans

Renewable Energy or Energy Efficiency Plan	Proposed Project Consistency
Assembly Bill 2076: Reducing Dependence on Petroleum. Pursuant to AB 2076, the CEC and CARB prepared and adopted a joint-agency report, *Reducing California's Petroleum Dependence,* in 2003. Included in this report are recommendations to increase the use of alternative fuels to 20 percent of on-road transportation fuel use by 2020 and 30 percent by 2030, significantly increase the efficiency of motor vehicles, and reduce per capita VMT. One of the performance-based goals of AB 2076 is to reduce petroleum demand to 15 percent below 2003 demand.	**Consistent**. The proposed General Plan includes Policy T-3.4 (Zero Emission Vehicles), which encourages the use of electric and other zero-emission vehicles and supports the development of zero-emission vehicle infrastructure within the city, including vehicle charging stations. By expanding access to alternative-fuel infrastructure and promoting the transition to electric and zero-emission vehicles, the project would help reduce petroleum demand. The project would not conflict with or obstruct implementation of AB 2076 and Reducing California's Petroleum Dependence.
2018 Integrated Energy Policy Report. Volume I highlights the implementation of California's innovative policies and the role they have played in establishing a clean energy economy. Volume II provides more detail on several key energy policies, including decarbonizing buildings, increasing energy efficiency savings, and integrating more renewable energy into the electricity system.	**Consistent.** The proposed project would include several components that promote the use of renewable energy and energy efficiency in new buildings. The Community Design and Preservation Element of the General Plan Update include Policy CD-3.5 (Sustainable Design), which encourages sustainable site and building design, including solar-oriented development, permeable paving, energy and water conservation, and on-site stormwater management, all of which reduce energy demand in new construction. Policies OSC-6.1 (Renewable Energy), OSC-6.2 (Energy Conservation), OSC-6.3 (Passive Solar Design), OSC-6.4 (Microgrids), and OSC-6.5 (Green Building) promote increased use of renewable energy, adoption and enforcement of Title 24 building efficiency standards, passive solar design, green building materials, and the exploration of microgrids and battery storage systems that support the integration of renewable energy into the local grid. Policies T-3.1 (Reducing VMT), T-3.2 (Use of VMT in Environmental Review), T-3.3 (Strategies to Reduce VMT), and T-3.4 (Zero Emission Vehicles) support VMT reduction, expansion of walking, biking, and transit options, and increased deployment of zero-emission vehicles and charging infrastructure, thereby reducing fossil-fuel consumption and transportation-related emissions. Policies T-1.9 (Balancing Objectives), T-3.6 (Pedestrian-Friendly Design), and T-3.8 (Energy Efficiency), promote pedestrian-friendly development and energy-efficient transportation facilities that further reduce GHG emissions. Therefore, the proposed project would not conflict with or obstruct implementation of the 2018 Integrated Energy Policy Report.
California Renewable Portfolio Standard. California's RPS obligates investor-owned utilities, energy service providers, and community choice aggregators to procure 33 percent total retail sales of electricity from renewable energy sources by 2020, 60 percent by 2030, and 100 percent by 2045.	**Consistent.** Electricity in the City of Auburn is provided by PCE and PG&E for transmission, distribution and (if a customer opts out of PCE) power procurement. PCE sources clean and carbon-free energy on behalf of customers in Auburn and offers an option to supply 100 percent renewable energy sources from resources such as geothermal, wind, solar, hydroelectric, and biomass. PG&E, which continues to deliver electricity and maintain infrastructure, reported nearly 40 percent of the electricity provided to its customers came from renewable resources in 2022 (PG&E 2024b). PG&E is required to generate electricity that would increase renewable energy resources to 60 percent by 2030 and 100 percent by 2045. In 2020, PG&E's power mix included 84 percent carbon-free sources. PG&E reached California's goal of 50 percent RPS by 2020 and is on track to meet the new 60 percent RPS by 2030. Because PCE and

Renewable Energy or Energy Efficiency Plan	Proposed Project Consistency
	PG&E would provide electricity service to the Planning Area, development facilitated by the proposed project would not conflict with or obstruct implementation of the California Renewable Portfolio Standard.
AB 1493: Reduction of Greenhouse Gas Emissions. AB 1493 requires CARB to develop and adopt regulations that achieve maximum feasible and cost-effective reduction of GHG emissions from passenger vehicles, light-duty trucks, and other vehicles used for noncommercial personal transportation in California.	**Consistent.** Vehicles used by future residents, employees, visitors, and patrons of development facilitated by the project would be subject to the regulations adopted by CARB pursuant to AB 1493. Therefore, the proposed project would not conflict with or obstruct implementation of AB 1493.
Energy Action Plan. In October 2005, the CEC and CPUC updated their energy policy vision by adding some important dimensions to the policy areas included in the original EAP, such as the emerging importance of climate change, transportation-related energy issues, and research and development activities. The CEC adopted an update to the EAP II in February 2008 that supplements the earlier EAPs and examines the state's ongoing actions in the context of global climate change. The nine major action areas in the EAP include energy efficiency, demand response, renewable energy, electricity adequacy/reliability/infrastructure, electricity market structure, natural gas supply/demand/infrastructure, transportation fuels supply/demand/infrastructure, research/development/demonstration, and climate change.	**Consistent.** The proposed project would include several components that promote the use of renewable energy and energy efficiency in new buildings. The General Plan Update Open Space and Conservation Element includes policies OSC-6.1 (Renewable Energy), OSC-6.3 (Passive Solar Design), and OSC-6.5 (Green Building) which promote increased use of renewable energy, building electrification, reduced energy consumption, green materials, battery storage, and "smart" energy systems that support reliability and GHG emission reduction. In addition, development facilitated by the proposed project would be required to comply with Auburn's Municipal Code Chapter 150.085, which mandates the implementation of Title 24 of the California Building Code. Compliance would include rooftop solar on all residential building types that are three stories or less in height. Electricity for the proposed project would be primarily provided by PCE and PG&E. Both of these entities source some or all their power from renewable sources depending on the consumer's choice. With adherence to these regulations and construction of these features, the proposed project would facilitate implementation of the nine major action areas in the Energy Action Plan. Therefore, the proposed project would not conflict with or obstruct implementation of the Energy Action Plan.
AB 1007: State Alternative Fuels Plans. The State Alternative Fuels Plan assessed various alternative fuels and developed fuel portfolios to meet California's goals to reduce petroleum consumption, increase alternative fuels use, reduce GHG emissions, and increase in-state production of biofuels without causing a significant degradation of public health and environmental quality.	**Consistent.** The Transportation Element of the proposed General Plan includes policies T-3.1 (Reducing VMT), T-3.3 (Strategies to Reduce VMT), and T-3.4 (Zero Emission Vehicles), which collectively support strategies to reduce VMT, expand zero-emission vehicle use, and require EV charging infrastructure in development. In addition, the Open Space and Conservation Element contain multiple policies that support reduced fuel consumption and increased use of alternative and renewable energy sources. Policies OSC-6.1 (Renewable Energy), OSC-6.2 (Energy Conservation), OSC-6.5 (Green Building), and OSC-6.11 (Green Businesses) encourage residents, businesses, and institutions to transition to renewable energy. Development facilitated under the General Plan Update would be required to comply with Auburn's Municipal Code Chapter 150.055 and 150.085, which include EV-ready requirements and other measures that reduce energy demand and support electrification. Therefore, the proposed project would not conflict with or obstruct implementation of AB 1007.

Renewable Energy or Energy Efficiency Plan	Proposed Project Consistency
Bioenergy Action Plan, Executive Order S-06-06. The EO establishes the following targets to increase the production and use of bioenergy, including ethanol and biodiesel fuels made from renewable resources: produce a minimum of 20 percent of its biofuels in California by 2010, 40 percent by 2020, and 75 percent by 2050.	**Consistent**. The General Plan Update includes Policy OSC-6.1 (Renewable Energy), which promotes efforts to increase the use of renewable energy resources, including biomass, which would support the production of biofuels in California. Vehicles used by future residents, employees, visitors, and patrons after development facilitated by the proposed project would be fueled by gasoline and diesel fuels blended with ethanol and biodiesel fuels as required by CARB regulations. Therefore, the proposed project would not conflict with or obstruct implementation of the Bioenergy Action Plan.
Title 24, California Code of Regulations – Part 6 (Building Energy Efficiency Standards) and Part 11 (CALGreen). The Building Energy Efficiency Standards move toward cutting energy use in new homes by more than 50 percent and will require installation of solar photovoltaic systems for single-family homes and multi-family buildings of three stories and less. The CALGreen Standards establish green building criteria for residential and nonresidential projects. The Standards include the following: increasing the number of parking spaces that must be prewired for electric vehicle chargers in residential development; requiring all residential development to adhere to the Model Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance; and requiring more appropriate sizing of HVAC ducts.	**Consistent**. Development facilitated by the proposed project would be required to comply with Auburn's Municipal Code Chapter 150.055, which mandates the implementation of Title 24 of the California Building Code. Therefore, the proposed project would not conflict with or obstruct implementation of the Title 24 standards.

Notes: AB = Assembly Bill; CEC = California Energy Commission; VMT = Vehicle Miles Traveled; PCE = Pioneer Community Energy; PG&E = Pacific Gas and Electric Company; RPS = Renewable Portfolio Standard; CARB = California Air Resources Board; EAP = Energy Action Plan; EO = Executive Order

Table 4.6-5 Consistency with SACOG's 2050 MTP/SCS

Strategy	Proposed Project Consistency
NextGen-1: Encourage context-responsive shared mobility programs (car share, bike share, scooter share, and microtransit) to increase mobility options for residents and bridge the first-mile/last-mile gap to fixed-route bus and rail.	**Consistent.** Goals T-1 (A Balanced Transportation Network), T-5 (Public Transportation), as well as Policies T-3.6 (Pedestrian-Friendly Design), and OSC-4.7 (Transportation Control Measures), focus on prioritizing on-demand shuttles or microtransit, car-share/scooter-share staging, enhanced sidewalks and bikeways, as well as accessibility to Auburn Station and activity centers. The policies aim to build a connected network that supports walking and biking while balancing congestion to prioritize a safe, equitable, multimodal system. These goals and policies are consistent with NextGen-1.
NextGen-3: Support a transition to zero-emission passenger, freight, and transit vehicles that is equitable and considers the diversity of regional needs and contexts, including rural, urban, and suburban communities as well as historically underrepresented communities.	**Consistent**. The General Plan Update's Transportation Element and Open Space and Conservation Element provide goals, policies, and programs that ensure a reliable and efficient transportation network and encourage the use of renewable energy. Policy T-3.4 (Zero Emission Vehicles) encourages EV/zero EV use, City fleet transit when feasible, and additional charging infrastructure and EV-ready development. Policies OSC-6.1 (Renewable Energy) and OSC-4.7 (Transportation Control Measures) focus on providing clean energy and reducing idling and vehicle emissions. These goals and policies are consistent with NextGen-3.
Invest-5: Encourage revenues generated from tolling to first be used to build and maintain the regional network of toll facilities and, where surplus revenue is available, on strategic transit services (e.g., express buses) or other mobility solutions that can reduce vehicle miles traveled, manage congestion, and provide multiple travel options along tolled corridors.	**Consistent.** Policy T-1.4 (Mitigation of Development Impacts) allows a range of mitigation tools, including impact fees and bicycle/pedestrian improvements, that complement corridor pricing strategies by funding multimodal enhancements. Policy T-3.1 (Reducing VMT), T-3.2 (Use of VMT in Environmental Review), and T-3.3 (Strategies to Reduce VMT) focuses on expanded transit, park-and-ride telework, and higher-density near transit that promote VMT reduction. These goals and policies are consistent with Invest-5.
Build-7: Support investment in bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure that provides safe access to schools, jobs, recreational opportunities, social gathering centers, and transit, and implements the Regional Trail Network.	**Consistent.** Goal T-4 (Bicycle and Pedestrian Circulation), and Policies T-4.1 (Bicycle and Pedestrian Improvements), T-4.6 (Connecting Neighborhoods), T-4.7 (Sidewalks), and T-3.7 (Environmental Impacts of Transportation) focus on the expansion and connectivity of multi-use paths, bike lanes/routes, and sidewalks. These goals and policies prioritize the bikeway and sidewalk gap closure, safe access to schools, station-area improvements, and trail connections, which are directly consistent with Build-7.

Source: SACOG 2025

As demonstrated in Table 4.6-4 and Table 4.6-5, the proposed project would be consistent with state and local plans for renewable energy and energy efficiency, including all the relevant energy conservation and efficiency strategies contained in SACOG'S 2050 MTP/SCS. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures are required.

Significance After Mitigation

Impacts would be less than significant without mitigation.

4.6.4 Cumulative Impacts

The geographic scope for energy consumption is Placer County. This geographic scope is appropriate because the smallest scale at which energy consumption information is readily available is the county level. The cumulative analysis considers the nearby past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future plans and projects listed in Table 3-1 (refer to Section 3, *Environmental Setting*), in addition to the proposed plan.

Cumulative development would increase demand for energy resources. However, new iterations of the California Building Energy Efficiency Standards and CALGreen would require increasingly more efficient appliances and building materials that reduce energy consumption in new development. In addition, vehicle fuel efficiency is anticipated to continue improving through implementation of the existing Pavley Bill regulations under AB 1493. Additionally, cumulative development would be consistent with the energy-related goals and policies of Statewide plans and regulations. Therefore, the cumulative impact to energy would be less than significant.

4.7 Geology and Soils

This section of the EIR analyzes the physical environmental effects related to seismic hazards, underlying soil characteristics, slope stability, erosion, and paleontological resources within Auburn from implementation of the proposed Auburn 2045 General Plan. It begins with a discussion of the existing setting and regulatory framework.

4.7.1 Setting

a. Regional Geology

The Planning Area is located in the Sierra Nevada Geomorphic Province, one of 11 major provinces in the state (California Geological Survey [CGS] 2002). The Sierra Nevada province is bounded to the east by the Basin and Range province, to the south by the Mojave Desert province, to the north by Cascade Range province, and to the west by the Great Valley province. The Sierra Nevada province is described as a tilted fault block with a nearly 400-mile length, featuring a rugged and high eastern face contrasting with a gentle western slope that disappears beneath sediments of the Great Valley province. The western slope contains deep river canyons, modified by glacial sculpturing in higher Sierra granites, creating scenic features like Yosemite Valley. The crest reaches its peak at Mt. Whitney with an elevation of 14,495 feet above sea level. The metamorphic bedrock includes gold-bearing veins in the northwest-trending Mother Lode. The northern boundary is marked by the disappearance of bedrock under the Cenozoic volcanic cover of the Cascade Range province (CGS 2002).

b. Local Geologic Setting

The Planning Area is located on the western flank of the Sierra Nevada, east of the North Fork of the American River. The Planning Area is underlain primarily by Mesozoic-aged sedimentary and volcanic rocks with varying degrees of metamorphic alteration, but small portions are underlain by Miocene- to Pliocene-aged Mehrten Formation (Bartow and Helley 1979, Gutierrez 2011, Strand and Koenig 1965).

c. Paleontological Resources

Paleontological resources, or fossils, are the remains and traces of prehistoric life (Society of Vertebrate Paleontology [SVP] 2025). Fossils are typically preserved in layered sedimentary rocks and the distribution of fossils is a result of the sedimentary history of the geologic units within which they occur. Fossils occur in a non-continuous and often unpredictable distribution within some sedimentary units, and the potential for fossils to occur within sedimentary units depends on several factors. Although it is not possible to determine whether a fossil will occur in any specific location, it is possible to evaluate the potential for geologic units to contain scientifically significant paleontological resources, and therefore evaluate the potential for impacts to those resources and provide mitigation for paleontological resources if they do occur during construction.

In the absence of other sensitivity criteria required by certain federal, state, or local regulatory agencies, the Society of Vertebrate Paleontology's Fossil Prediction Map System (FPMS) is used to assign paleontological sensitivity to geologic units (SVP 2025). FPMS assignments are based on rock units within which vertebrate or significant invertebrate fossils have been determined by previous studies to be present or likely to be present. Fossil occurrences are correlated with the geologic

units that contain them, so the history of a geologic unit in producing fossils can be used to predict its potential for producing fossils in the future. The FPMS is a 5-tier scale ranging from FPMS 1 (Very Low Potential) to FPMS 5 (Very High Potential) geologic units along with other rankings for geologic units with unknown potential or areas covered by water or ice. Following the literature review, a paleontological sensitivity classification was assigned to each geologic unit mapped within the project site. This criterion is based on rock units within which vertebrate or significant invertebrate fossils have been determined by previous studies to be present or likely to be present. The potential for impacts to significant paleontological resources is based on the potential for ground disturbance to directly impact paleontologically sensitive geologic units.

d. Geologic Units

The Planning Area includes eight (8) geologic units mapped at the surface (Figure 4.7-1): Mehrten Formation, Penryn Pluton, undivided Jurassic sedimentary rocks, undivided Jurassic igneous and metamorphic rocks, Jurassic metavolcanic rocks, gabbro, serpentinite, and undivided Paleozoic marine sedimentary rocks (Bartow and Helley 1979, Gutierrez 2011, Strand and Koenig 1965).

Mehrten Formation

The Mehrten Formation underlies several distinct parts of the Planning Area (Figure 4.7-1). The Mehrten Formation consists primarily of mudstone and claystone with minor amounts of sandstone, conglomerate, and tuff breccia and is Miocene to early Pliocene in age (Gutierrez 2011). The Mehrten Formation has produced numerous scientifically significant paleontological resources including horses (Equidae), dogs (Canidae), camels (Camelidae), other mammals, reptiles, fish, and plants (Paleobiology Database [PBDB] 2024, University of California Museum of Paleontology [UCMP] 2024). Given this fossil-producing history, the Mehrten Formation has FPMS 4 (High) paleontological sensitivity.

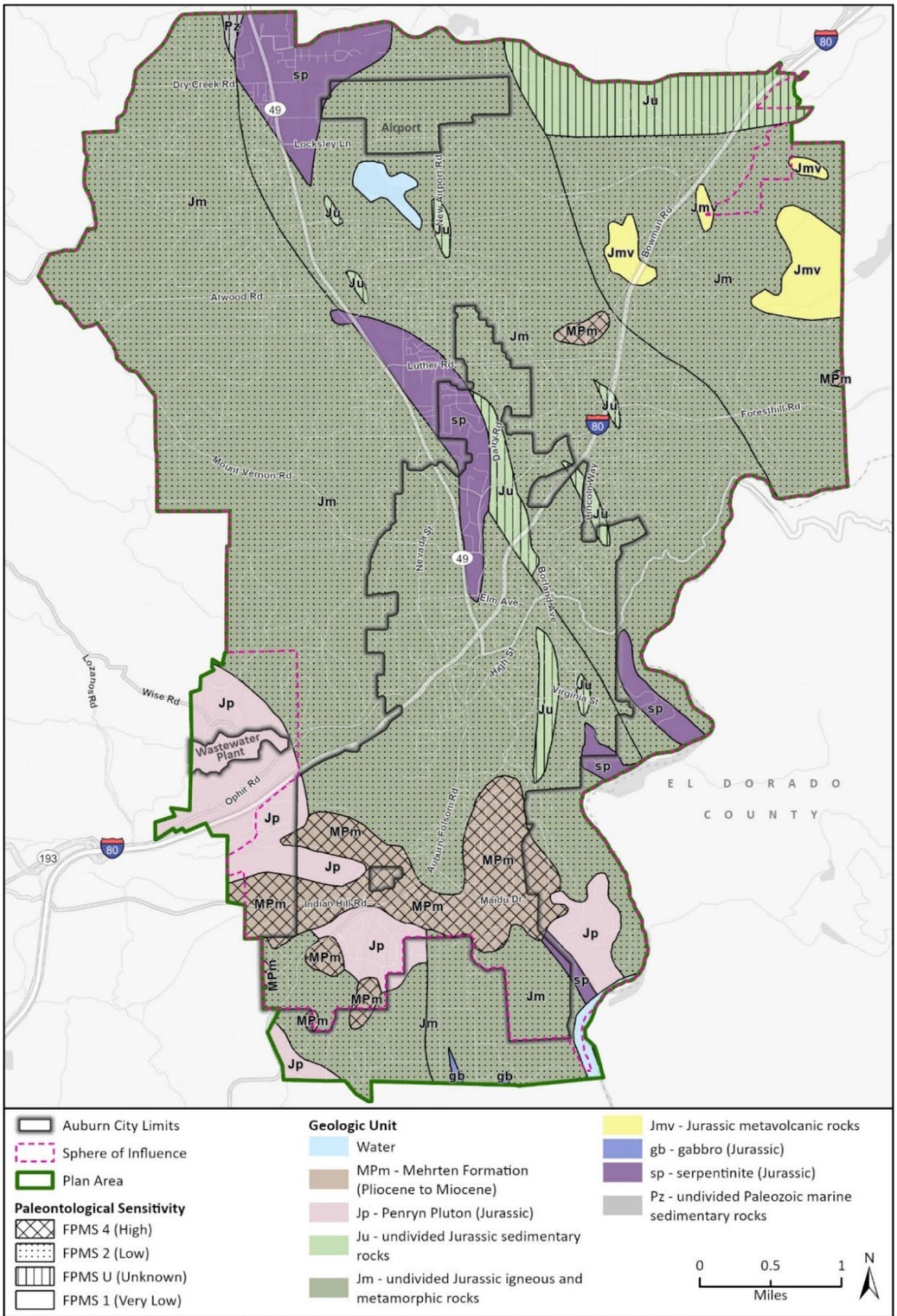
Penryn Pluton

The Penryn Pluton underlies several distinct parts of the southern Planning Area (Figure 4.7-1). The Penryn Pluton consists of intrusive igneous rocks, primarily quartz diorite, and is Late Jurassic in age (Gutierrez 2011). Intrusive igneous rocks form via the cooling of molten rock below Earth's surface and, therefore, are not likely to contain recognizable fossils. Therefore, the Penryn Pluton has FPMS 1 (Very Low) paleontological sensitivity.

Undivided Jurassic Sedimentary Rocks

Undivided Jurassic sedimentary rocks underlie several parts of the Planning Area (Figure 4.7-1). These rocks are Jurassic in age. They are not assigned to any known geologic unit but are generally considered part of the Foothill Mélange (Bartow and Helley 1979, Gutierrez 2011, Strand and Koenig 1965). Jurassic-aged sedimentary rocks are known to produce paleontological resources in the western Sierra Nevada, including in Placer County, but these fossils consist entirely of invertebrates (e.g., ammonites, bivalves, gastropods, and brachiopods; Imlay 1961, PBDB 2024, UCMP 2024). Rocks of similar age and type to undivided Jurassic sedimentary rocks of the Planning Area are known to preserve paleontological resources, but these rocks cannot be confidently correlated lithologically. Therefore, undivided Jurassic sedimentary rocks have FPMS U (Unknown) paleontological sensitivity.

Figure 4.7-1 Geologic Map and Paleontological Sensitivity of Planning Area



Undivided Jurassic Igneous and Metamorphic Rocks

Undivided Jurassic igneous and metamorphic rocks underlie the majority of the Planning Area (Figure 4.7-1). These rocks are Jurassic in age and are sometimes subdivided into different stratigraphic groupings such as the Copper Hill Volcanics and Foothill Mélange (Bartow and Helley 1979, Gutierrez 2011, Strand and Koenig 1965). Areas mapped as undivided Jurassic igneous and metamorphic rocks contain rocks of various origins with differing potentials to preserve paleontological resources. Intrusive igneous rocks (i.e., those that form by the cooling of molten rock below Earth's surface), high-grade (i.e., significantly altered) metamorphic rocks, and metavolcanic rocks, cannot preserve paleontological resources, so these rocks would not be likely to contain recognizable paleontological resources (SVP 2025). However, some extrusive igneous rocks (i.e., those that form by the cooling of rock above Earth's surface) and metasedimentary rocks can preserve paleontological resources, in rare instances, and Jurassic-aged sedimentary rocks in the region are known to preserve paleontological resources (Imlay 1961, PBDB 2024, UCMP 2024). Therefore, extrusive igneous rocks and metasedimentary rocks would be considered to have FPMS 2 (Low) paleontological sensitivity. Given the uncertainty regarding the distribution of these various rock types within the parts of the Planning Area mapped as undivided Jurassic igneous and metamorphic rocks, the entire area is considered to have FPMS 2 (Low) paleontological sensitivity.

Jurassic Metavolcanic Rocks

Jurassic metavolcanic rocks underlie several small parts of the northeastern part of the Planning Area (Figure 4.7-1). Metavolcanic rocks form via the alteration (i.e., metamorphosis) of igneous rocks by extreme heat and/or pressure. Igneous rocks only preserve paleontological resources in very rare circumstances (SVP 2025), and this metamorphic alteration would destroy any fossils contained therein. Therefore, Jurassic metavolcanic rocks have FPMS 1 (Very Low) paleontological sensitivity.

Gabbro

Gabbro underlies small portions of the southern part of the Planning Area (Figure 4.7-1). Gabbro is a type of intrusive igneous rock that forms by the cooling of molten rock below Earth's surface, and the gabbro within the Planning Area is part of the Jurassic-aged Foothill Mélange (Gutierrez 2011). Given the nature of its formation, gabbro cannot preserve paleontological resources and, therefore, has FPMS 1 (Very Low) paleontological sensitivity.

Serpentinite

Serpentinite underlies several areas throughout the Planning Area (Figure 4.7-1). Serpentinite is a metavolcanic rock that forms via the alteration (i.e., metamorphosis) of igneous rocks by extreme heat and/or pressure and the serpentinite within the Planning Area is part of the Jurassic-aged Foothill Mélange (Gutierrez 2011). Given the nature of its formation, serpentinite cannot preserve paleontological resources and, therefore, has FPMS 1 (Very Low) paleontological sensitivity.

Undivided Paleozoic Marine Sedimentary Rocks

Undivided Paleozoic marine sedimentary rocks underlie a small portion of the northern part of the Planning Area (Figure 4.7-1). They are not assigned to any known geologic unit (Bartow and Helley 1979, Gutierrez 2011, Strand and Koenig 1965). Several invertebrate fossil localities are known from Paleozoic-aged marine sedimentary rocks in the northwestern Sierra Nevada (PBDB 2024, Stevens

2009, UCMP 2024). Rocks of similar age and type to undivided Paleozoic marine sedimentary rocks of the Planning Area are known to preserve paleontological resources, but these rocks cannot be confidently correlated lithologically. Therefore, undivided Paleozoic marine sedimentary rocks have FPMS U (Unknown) paleontological sensitivity.

e. Soil Groups

As shown on in Figure 4.7-2, the most abundant soil groups in the Planning Area are Inceptisols, including Auburn silt loam and Auburn-rock outcrop complex. Silt loam soils are characterized by a balanced mixture of sand, silt, and clay particles, giving it a smooth and fine-textured feel. Auburn rock outcrop complex refers to an area where rocks are exposed on the surface. These rocks can range from coarse-grained to fine-grained or a combination of both.

f. Seismic Hazards

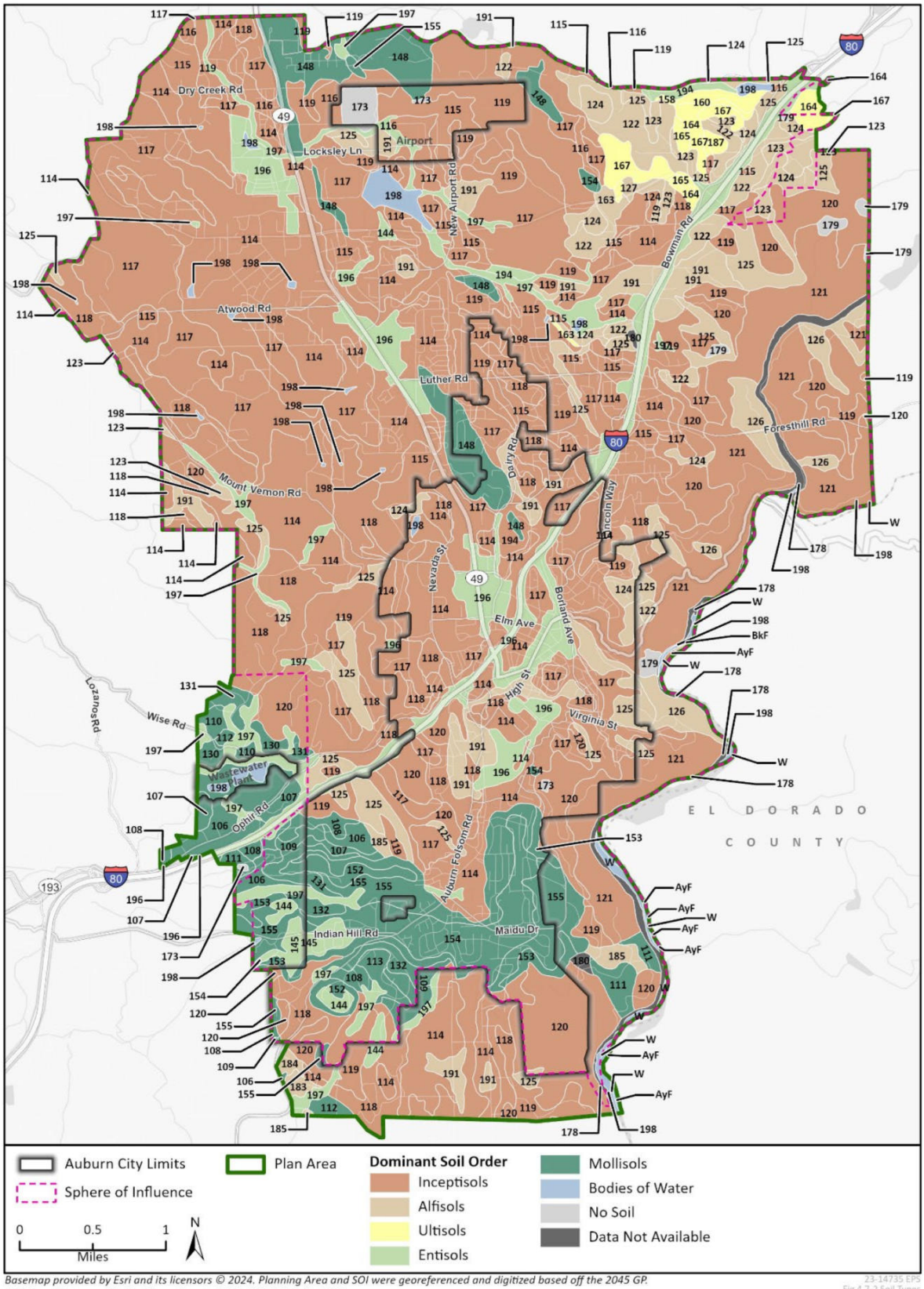
Historically, Placer County has not been particularly seismically active but it lies in between two seismically active regions in the United States. There have been no major earthquakes in the region but there have been minor earthquakes that occurred in the County in the past. The Midland Fault Zone was the source of an 1892 earthquake which caused minor damage in the city of Lincoln. In 1908, an earthquake estimated 4.0+ magnitude earthquake occurred was likely associated with the Bear Mountain Fault. In 1975, the Oroville earthquake occurred and was recorded at a magnitude of 5.7 and was felt strongly in Placer County and neighboring areas. From late 2003 to early 2004, 1,600 small earthquakes were caused by volcanic magma migrating 20 miles below the surface of the Sierra Nevada mountains. Placer County did not report any damage associated with these earthquakes. Earthquakes were also recorded in 2008, 2013, and 2014 in Placer County. However, no significant issues were reported as a result of these earthquakes. A magnitude 6.0 earthquake was recorded in 2021 that was followed by a swarm of aftershocks, measured at magnitude 4.0 or larger. The shaking was reported as “weak” to “light” and there were no significant reports of damage in Placer County (County of Placer 2021a). The type and magnitude of seismic hazards with the potential to affect the Planning Area are dependent on the distance to the epicenter of the earthquake, the nature of the fault, on which the earthquake is located, and the intensity and magnitude of the seismic event. Figure 4.7-3 shows the location of faults in the Planning Area and surrounding areas.

Faults

CGS establishes criteria for classification of faults as active, potentially active, or inactive. Active faults are those that show evidence of surface displacement within the last 11,700 years (Holocene period). Potentially active faults are those that demonstrate displacement within the past 1.6 million years (Quaternary period). Faults showing no evidence of displacement within the last 1.6 million years are considered inactive.

The Planning Area is not located on any active fault zone, as indicated by Figure 4.7-3 (CGS 2018). The nearest active fault is the Cleveland Hills fault, approximately 36 miles northwest of the city (City of Auburn 2021). Faults in the Planning Area are associated with the Foothills Fault system. Associated Foothills faults are not considered to be active based on their age.

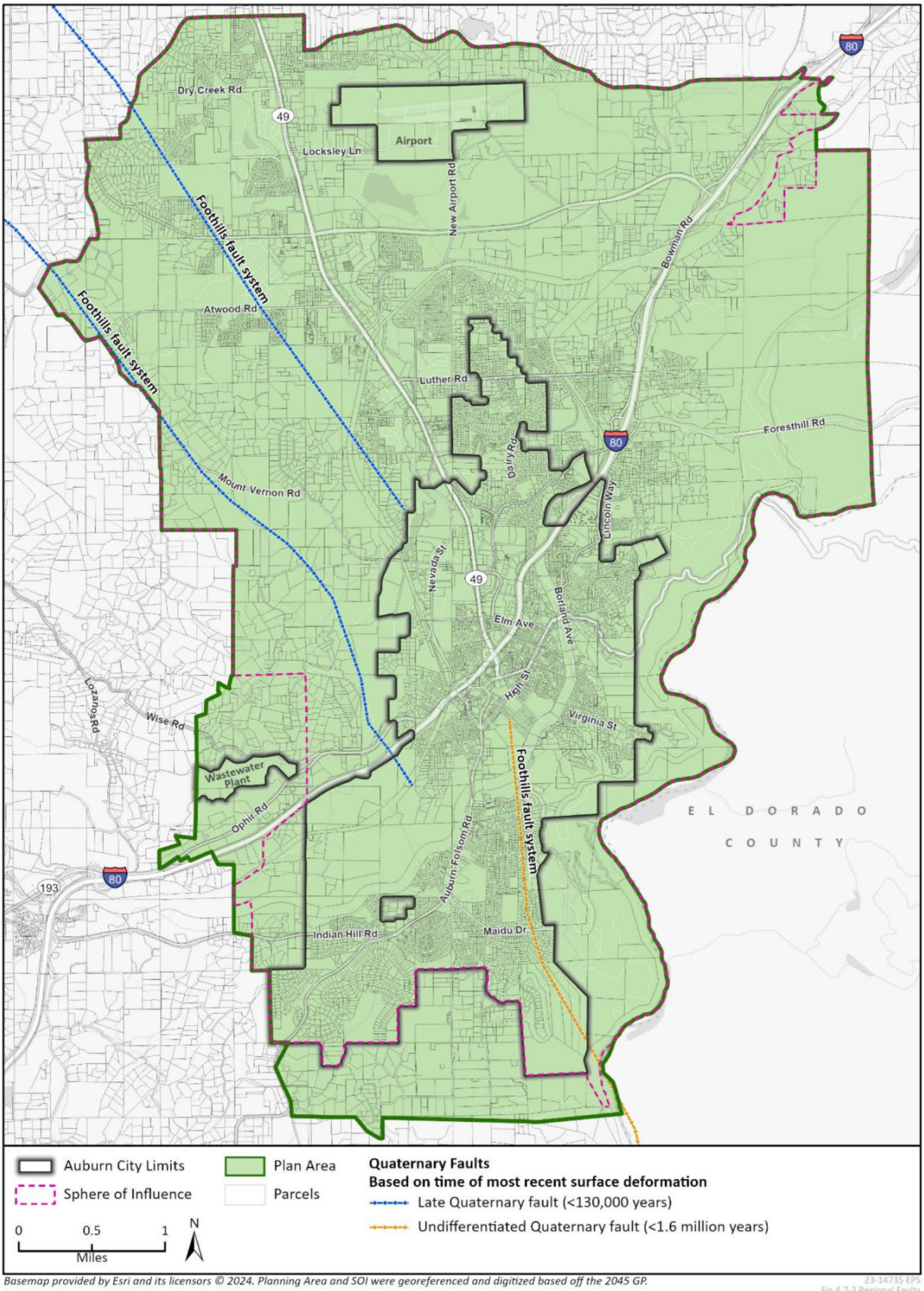
Figure 4.7-2 Soil Types



Basemap provided by Esri and its licensors © 2024. Planning Area and SOI were georeferenced and digitized based off the 2045 GP.
Additional data provided by Placer County, 2023; SSURGO Soils, 2023.

23-14735 EPS
Fig 4.7-2 Soil Types

Figure 4.7-3 Regional Fault Zones



Basemap provided by Esri and its licensors © 2024. Planning Area and SOI were georeferenced and digitized based off the 2045 GP.
Additional data provided by Placer County, 2023; DOC, 2015.

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Fig 4.7-3 Regional Faults

Ground Shaking and Surface Rupture

In general terms, an earthquake is caused when strain energy in rocks is suddenly released by movement along a plane of weakness. Faults generally produce damage in two ways: ground shaking and surface rupture. Seismically-induced ground shaking covers a wide area and is greatly influenced by the magnitude of the earthquake, the distance to the fault displacement, soil and bedrock conditions, and depth to groundwater. The energy released during an earthquake propagates in the form of seismic waves. The resulting strong ground motion from the seismic wave propagation can cause substantial damage to structures. Intensity is usually greater in areas underlain by unconsolidated material than in areas underlain by more competent rock. Earthquakes are characterized by moment magnitude, which is a quantitative measure of the strength of the earthquake based on strain energy released during the event.

The Planning Area does not lie within an Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zone as currently designated by the State of California and is not located on any known "active" faults. The closest Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zone is the Bangor Fault Zone, located approximately 45 miles north of Auburn. In some cases, fault movement propagates upward through subsurface materials and causes displacement at the ground surface as a result of differential movement. Surface rupture is limited to areas very near the fault. Surface rupture usually occurs along traces of known or potentially active faults, although many historic events have occurred on faults not previously known to be active.

Secondary Seismic Effects

In general, potential hazards resulting from the secondary effects of ground-shaking include liquefaction, subsidence, and earthquake-induced landslides.

Liquefaction

Soil liquefaction results from the temporary buildup of excess pore pressures, which can result in a condition of near zero effective stress and temporary loss of strength. Several factors influence a soil's potential for liquefaction during an earthquake. These factors include: magnitude and proximity of the earthquake; duration of shaking; soil types; grain size distribution; clay fraction content; density; angularity; effective overburden; location of groundwater table; cyclic loading; and soil stress history. Liquefaction is more likely in poorly-graded, saturated, low-density sands. With increasing overburden, density and increasing clay-content, the likelihood of liquefaction decreases. Although there is not sufficient California Geological Survey mapping of Earthquake Zones of Required Investigation associated with liquefaction, the City of Auburn has recognized the potential for liquefaction to occur within and around the City (County of Placer 2021a). Potential for liquefaction hazards within the Planning Area occur primarily in areas underlain by loose alluvial soils, such as those along valley floors and stream corridors, as the City's 2021 Safety Element identifies these soil types as being most susceptible to loss of strength during ground-shaking events (City of Auburn 2021).

Subsidence

Subsidence is the sinking of the ground surface caused by the compression of soil layers. This compression can be caused by deep-seated settlement of these soil layers, which in turn may be caused by human activities or natural effects such as extraction of groundwater, oil and gas withdrawal, oxidation of organics, and the placement of additional fill over compressible layers. Seismically-induced subsidence generally occurs in loose to medium density unconsolidated soils

above groundwater. These soil types can compress when subject to seismic shaking, causing subsidence. This subsidence can be exacerbated by increased loading, such as from the construction of structures on site. Because the Planning Area is not located in an area expected to experience high levels of ground-shaking, the risk of subsidence is considered to be low.

Landslides and Slope Instability

Seismic ground shaking can also result in landslides and other slope instability. Landslides occur when slopes become unstable and masses of earth material move downslope. Landslides are usually rapid events, often triggered during periods of rainfall or by earthquakes. Mudslides and slumps are a more shallow type of slope failure. They typically affect the upper soil horizons rather than bedrock features. Usually mudslides and slumps occur during or soon after periods of rainfall, but they can be triggered by seismic shaking.

The United States Geological Survey (USGS) Landslide Hazard Program Map shows that there are no areas of high susceptibility to landslide in the Planning Area (USGS 2024). Auburn has a low susceptibility to landslides, as it has minimal hillside areas and lacks steep bluffs. The risk of landslide in the Planning Area, however, is probable as there is evidence that minor landslides have occurred in the past, evidenced by past deposits in erosion gullies and recent landslide events. Minor landslides will likely continue to occur with heavy precipitation. Additionally, areas affected by recent fires show an increased landslide risk (County of Placer 2021a). In particular, landslide hazards are present along steep eastern slopes of Auburn, as mapped in Figure 5 of the City of Auburn's 2021 Safety Element, where unstable soils, erosion-prone terrain, and past wildlife-related vegetation loss coincide, increasing the likelihood of slope failure (City of Auburn 2021). In addition, the Placer County Local Hazard Mitigation Plan identifies other areas with the potential for landslide hazards in the broader Planning Area, including corridors such as SR-49 south of Auburn's city limits, Old Foresthill Road, Ophir Road, near Wise Road, and the canyon areas of the North and Middle Forks of the American River, which Placer County identify as recurring areas of slope instability (County of Placer 2021a).

g. Soil Hazards

Some of the soil hazards discussed above, such as subsidence, landslides, and slope instability, can be triggered by or occur independently of seismic events. Others, such as expansive soils and erosion, occur independently of seismic events.

Expansive Soils

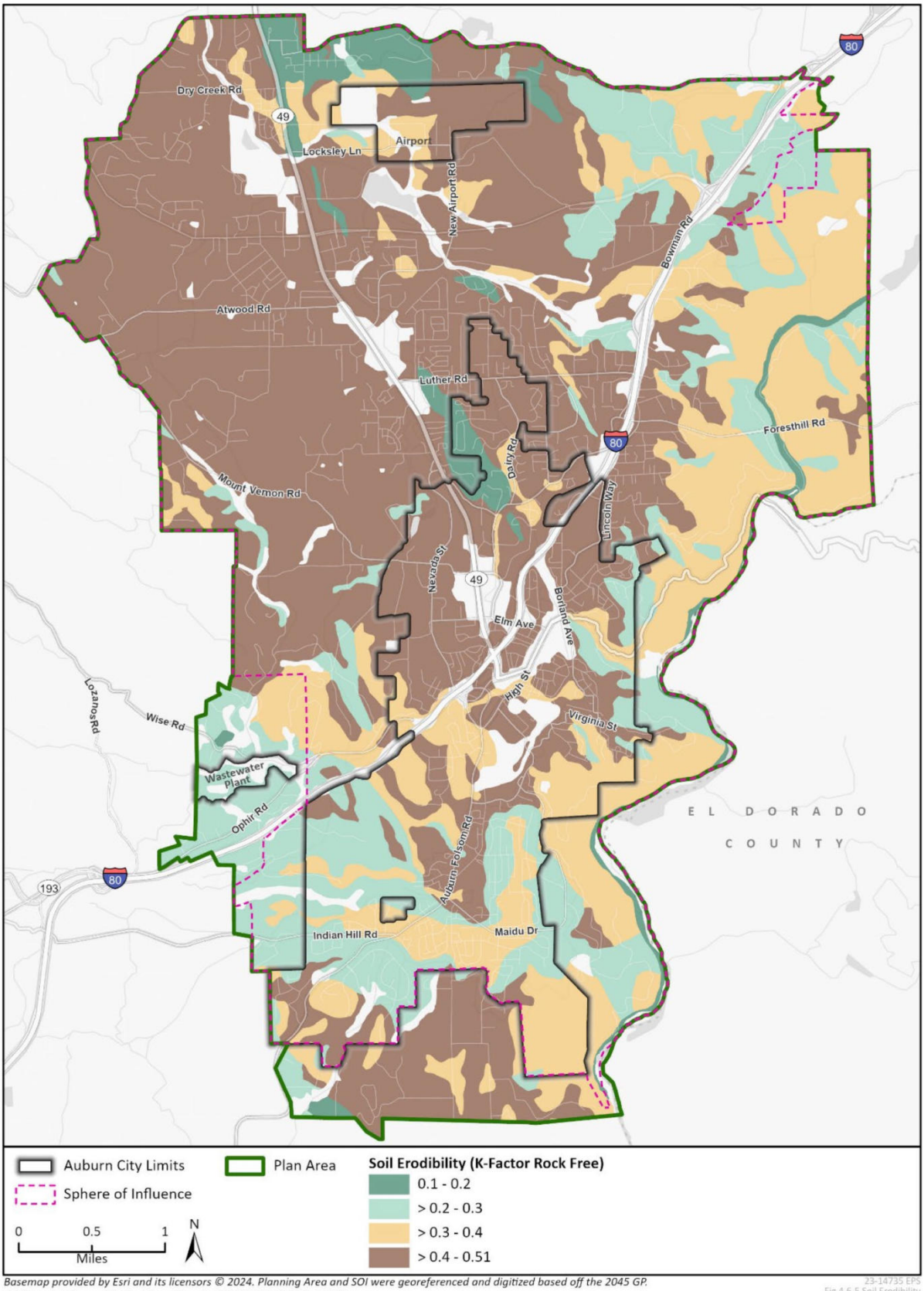
Expansive soils swell or heave with increases in moisture content and shrink with decreases in moisture content. These soils usually contain high clay content. Foundations for structures constructed on expansive soils require special design considerations. Because expansive soils can expand when wet and shrink when dry, they can cause foundations, basement walls and floors to crack, causing substantial structural damage. As such, structural failure due to expansive soils near the ground surface is a potential hazard. The soils in Auburn are primarily Inceptisols, which are not considered to have high clay content therefore, there are little to no expansive soils in Auburn (United States Department of Agriculture [USDA] 2026; Figure 4.7-2).

Soil Erosion

Erosion refers to the removal of soil by water or wind. Factors that influence erosion potential include the amount of water, rainfall, and wind; the length and steepness of the slope; and the amount and type of vegetative cover.

The Planning Area consists mainly of Auburn silt loam and Auburn rock outcrop complex, which have a K-factor value of 0.43, which is relatively high. As shown in Figure 4.7-4, the potential for soil erosion hazards to occur in Auburn are severe within the northern part the Planning Area and moderate within the southern half of the Planning Area. This is supported by the 1993 Auburn General Plan, which listed each of the soils in the Planning Area by their propensity to erode. The General Plan found that very high ratings have been given to Auburn rock outcrop complex in the American River Basin. Other soils with high erosion potential include the Auburn and Boomer series in the western portion of the Auburn and North Ravines and Dry Creek Basin, and Josephine and Mariposa of the Dry Creek Basin (City of Auburn 1993).

Figure 4.7-4 Soil Erosion Hazards



Basemap provided by Esri and its licensors © 2024. Planning Area and SOI were georeferenced and digitized based off the 2045 GP.
Additional data provided by Placer County, 2023; SSURGO Soils, 2023.

23-14735 EPS
Fig 4.6-5 Soil Erodibility

4.7.2 Regulatory Setting

a. Federal Regulations

Clean Water Act

Congress enacted the Clean Water Act (CWA), formerly the Federal Water Pollution Control Act of 1972, with the intent of restoring and maintaining the chemical, physical, and biological integrity of the waters of the United States. The CWA requires states to set standards to protect, maintain, and restore water quality through the regulation of point source and non-point source discharges to surface water. Those discharges are regulated by the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit process (CWA Section 402). NPDES permitting authority is administered by the California State Water Resources Control Board and its nine Regional Water Quality Control Boards (RWQCBs).

The Planning Area falls under the jurisdiction of the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board. Individual projects that disturb more than one acre of water would be required to obtain NPDES coverage under the California General Permit for Storm Water Discharges Associated with Construction and Land Disturbance Activities (Construction Stormwater General Permit). The Construction Stormwater General Permit requires the development and implementation of a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan describing Best Management Practices (BMP) the discharger would use to prevent and retain storm water runoff and to prevent soil erosion.

Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000

Congress passed the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 to amend the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act by invoking new and revitalized approaches to mitigation planning. Section 322 of the Act emphasized the need for state and local government entities to closely coordinate on mitigation planning activities and makes the development of a hazard mitigation plan a specific eligibility requirement for any local government applying for federal mitigation grant funds. Communities with an adopted and federally-approved hazard mitigation plan thereby become pre-positioned and more apt to receive available mitigation funds before and after the next declared disaster.

To implement the new Stafford Act provisions, FEMA published requirements and procedures for local hazard mitigation plans in the Code of Federal Regulations at Title 44, Chapter 1, Part 201.6. These regulations specify minimum standards for developing, updating, and submitting local hazard mitigation plans for FEMA review and approval at least once every five years.

National Environmental Policy Act

The National Environmental Policy Act, as amended, directs federal agencies to “preserve important historic, cultural, and natural aspects of our national heritage (Section 101[b][4]).” The current interpretation of this language includes scientifically important paleontological resources among those resources potentially requiring preservation.

b. State Regulations

California Building Code

The California Building Code (CBC) (Title 24, California Code of Regulations) is an area of law heavily regulated by the California Building Standards Commission who reviews and updates the Code every three years. (Health and Safety Code Section 18949.6). The CBC, Title 24, Part 2 provides building codes and standards for the design and construction of structures in California. The CBC is based on the International Building Code with the addition of more extensive structural seismic provisions. Chapter 16 of the CBC contains definitions of seismic sources and the procedure used to calculate seismic forces on structures. Section 1613 of the CBC further establishes the minimum seismic design requirements for buildings and structures, including the procedures used to determine earthquake loads in accordance with American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) Minimum Design Standards 7. Section 1613 requires that structures be designed and constructed to resist seismic forces based on site-specific ground-motion parameters, seismic design categories, and structural system limitations, to ensure that all new development incorporates seismic-resistant design consistent with statewide standards.

The purpose of the CBC is to establish minimum standards to safeguard the public health, safety, and general welfare through structural strength, means of egress, and general stability by regulating and controlling the design, construction, quality of materials, use and occupancy, location, and maintenance of all building and structures within its jurisdiction. In addition, the CBC contains necessary California amendments, which are based on the ASCE Minimum Design Standards 7-05. ASCE 7-05 provides requirements for general structural design and includes means for determining earthquake loads as well as other loads (flood, wind, etc.) for inclusion into building codes. The provisions of the CBC apply to the construction, alteration, movement, replacement, and demolition of every building or structure or any appurtenances connected or attached to such buildings or structures throughout California.

The earthquake design requirements of the CBC take into account the occupancy category of the structure, site class, soil classifications, and various seismic coefficients, which are used to determine a Seismic Design Category (SDC) for a project. The SDC is a classification system that combines the occupancy categories with the level of expected ground motions at the site and ranges from SDC A (very small seismic vulnerability) to SDC E/F (very high seismic vulnerability and near a major fault). Design specifications are then determined according to the SDC. Individual development projects would be required to comply with the CBC, including Part 2, Volume 2, Chapter 18, Soils and Foundations, which outlines the minimum standards for structural design and construction. This includes geotechnical evaluations, which among other requirements, includes a record of the soil profile, regulation of active faults in the area, recommendations for foundation type and design criteria that address issues, as applicable, such as (but not limited to) bearing capacity of soils, provisions to address expansive soils, settlement, and varying soil strength. If a building department or other appropriate enforcement agency, determines that recommended action(s) presented in the geotechnical evaluations are likely to prevent structural damage, the approved recommended action(s) must be made a condition to the building permit (Section 1803.1.1.3 of Chapter 18).

The CBC provides standards for various aspects of construction, including but not limited to excavation, grading, earthwork, construction, preparation of the site prior to fill placement, specification on fill materials and fill compaction and field testing, retaining wall design and construction, foundation design and construction, and seismic requirements. It includes provisions

to address issues such as (but not limited to) construction on expansive soils and soil strength loss. In accordance with California law, individual development projects would be required to provide project-level design and construction that complies with the provisions of the CBC.

California Public Resources Code

Section 5097.5 of the PRC states the following:

> No person shall knowingly and willfully excavate upon, or remove, destroy, injure or deface any historic or prehistoric ruins, burial grounds, archaeological or vertebrate paleontological site, including fossilized footprints, inscriptions made by human agency, or any other archaeological, paleontological or historical feature, situated on public lands, except with the express permission of the public agency having jurisdiction over such lands. Violation of this section is a misdemeanor.

As used in this section, "public lands" means lands owned by, or under the jurisdiction of, the State or any city, county, district, authority, or public corporation, or any agency thereof. Consequently, the City of Auburn is required to comply with PRC Section 5097.5 for its activities on publicly owned land.

Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Act

The Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Act of 1972 was passed into law following the destructive February 9, 1971, magnitude 6.6 San Fernando earthquake. The Act provides a mechanism for reducing losses from surface fault rupture on a statewide basis. The intent of the Act is to ensure public safety by prohibiting the siting of most structures for human occupancy across traces of active faults that constitute a potential hazard to structures from surface faulting or fault creep. This Act groups faults into categories of active, potentially active, and inactive. Historic and Holocene age faults are considered active, Late Quaternary and Quaternary age faults are considered potentially active, and pre-Quaternary age faults are considered inactive.

Seismic Hazards Mapping Act

The Seismic Hazards Mapping Act (SHMA) of 1990 was passed into law following the destructive October 17, 1989, magnitude 6.9 Loma Prieta earthquake. SHMA directs the CGS to delineate Seismic Hazard Zones. The purpose of SHMA is to reduce the threat to public health and safety and to minimize the loss of life and property by identifying and mitigating seismic hazards. Cities, Counties, and State agencies are directed to use seismic hazard zone maps developed by CGS in their land-use planning and permitting processes. SHMA requires that site-specific geotechnical investigations be performed prior to permitting most urban development projects within seismic hazard zones.

c. Local Regulations

Auburn Municipal Code

Auburn Municipal Code Section 150.001 adopts by reference the 2025 CBC. Chapter 155 includes regulations and policies regarding grading on private property. A grading permit is required for any grading activity in the city, with specific exemptions outlined such as minor projects meeting certain criteria, work conducted by public agencies, excavation for approved purposes like swimming pools or underground facilities, and emergency work. The section outlines regulations governing grading

activities, prohibiting the excessive movement of materials without a permit, obstruction of stormwater flow, grading within public rights-of-way without approval, and addressing hazards to public safety or property. The City Engineer is tasked with issuing grading permits if final grading plans meet the stipulations outlined in Chapter 155 or fulfill any imposed conditions. Soil or geologic investigation reports are mandated under certain circumstances, with specifications outlined for their content and approval process. Further provisions include the permittee's responsibilities regarding erosion control, and adjacent property safeguarding.

The control of erosion and sediment from grading operations is governed by several provisions: grading plans must prioritize long-term erosion and sediment control, with measures required during the rainy season unless explicitly demonstrated otherwise to the City Engineer's satisfaction; the exposure of erodible land should be minimized, natural features preserved, and limits of grading clearly marked to prevent damage; permanent erosion control measures and vegetation must be promptly installed with provisions for long-term maintenance; topsoil removal is prohibited unless approved, with overburden redistributed for seeding and planting; runoff must be controlled to prevent erosion and discharge into water bodies; and precautions against tracking or spilling earth materials onto public streets are required. Emergency conditions necessitating increased sediment discharge control prompt immediate action by the permittee, with restoration of altered facilities afterward, or abatement proceedings. Erosion and sediment control plans must comply with various criteria, including effective revegetation programs, prevention of increased sediment discharge, compliance with recommendations from involved professionals, and adherence to adopted standards and specifications, including those outlined in the Erosion and Sediment Control Guidelines for Developing Areas of the Sierra Foothills and Mountains.

Auburn General Plan 1993

The current City of Auburn General Plan was adopted on November 29, 1993. Geology and soils are addressed in the Open Space and Conservation Element. It identifies and outlines goals and policies for geology and soil resources, including the following:

Goal 2: Minimize adverse development impacts to the natural environment.

Policy 2.2 Continue to implement the grading ordinance of the City of Auburn to protect against sedimentation and soil erosion.

Goal 4: Provide for the conservation, utilization, and development of mineral, geologic, and soil resources in keeping with sound conservation and reclamation practices.

Policy 4.1 The City should identify all economically valuable resources, including mineral deposits, soils conducive to agricultural uses, and those open space areas which add to the overall attractiveness of the region.

Policy 4.2 Consider the limitations of geological formations in the design and siting of buildings, roads, and utilities.

The proposed comprehensive update of the City's General Plan, *Envision Auburn 2045,* would provide revised and refined goals, policies, and implementation programs as appropriate. Moreover, the General Plan Safety Element—adopted in 2021 and discussed in Section 4.7.3, *Impact Analysis*—includes specific policies to mitigate geologic hazards.

Placer County Code

Placer County Code Article 15.48 Part 2 outlines regulations regarding grading activities in the unincorporated areas of Placer County, covering aspects such as erosion control, grading permits, construction in public rights-of-way, and hazards. Grading activities must comply with specified conditions and may require permits based on factors such as the scale of grading, involvement of aquatic resources, and the location within sensitive areas. Exemptions are provided for certain minor projects and activities conducted by public agencies or for agricultural purposes.

Article 15.48 Part 5 stipulate requirements for geotechnical investigations accompanying grading permit applications under specific circumstances, such as cuts or fills exceeding 10 feet, presence of highly expansive soils, or known geological hazards like landslides. These investigations involve aspects of civil engineering and geology, requiring involvement from geotechnical engineers or engineering geologists. The investigations are based on observations, tests, and inspections to assess soil and rock properties, stability, drainage, and other factors relevant to grading projects. Reports from these investigations must be approved by the community development resource agency and may necessitate supplemental data. Recommendations from these reports are integrated into the final plans and specifications. Additionally, provisions are made for final geotechnical reports upon completion of rough grading work, including a comprehensive record of tests, professional opinions, and compliance declarations. Any deviations from anticipated soil or geological conditions during construction require revised reports for agency approval. Special inspections by private engineers may be required during critical stages of construction, with periodic progress reports mandated. Permittees are responsible for various aspects, including protection of utilities and adjacent properties, erosion and sediment control, hazardous materials management, and providing advance notice to the agency before commencing work. Compliance with these regulations ensures safe and environmentally responsible grading practices.

Article 15.48 Part 6 outlines regulations concerning excavation, fill placement, compaction, ground preparation, slope management, protection of adjacent structures, setbacks, drainage, erosion and sediment control, and vehicular ways in the context of grading operations. These regulations cover various aspects such as excavation safety, permissible slopes for excavations and fills, layering and stability of fills, compaction requirements, ground preparation, drainage design, erosion and sediment control measures, emergency conditions, erosion and sediment control plans, and requirements for vehicular ways. Compliance with these regulations is essential to ensure safe and environmentally responsible grading practices while minimizing risks to life, property, and the environment.

Section 15.60 states that paleontological resources or unique geologic features (falling under the definition of a ‘natural feature’) may be designated a cultural resource, and preserved as such, if the natural feature meets the criteria of the National Register of Historic Places, California Register of Historical Resources, or a ‘tribal cultural resource’ as defined by the California PRC Section 21074, or the natural feature is of ‘local significance.’

Placer County General Plan

The current Placer County General Plan updated in May 2013. Geology and soils are addressed in the Natural Resources Element. It identifies and outlines goals and policies for geology and soil resources, including the following:

Goal 6.D: To preserve and protect the valuable vegetation resources of Placer County.

Policy 6.D.9 The County shall require that development on hillsides be limited to maintain valuable natural vegetation, especially forests and open grasslands, and to control erosion.

Goal 6.E: To preserve and enhance open space lands to maintain the natural resources of the County.

Policy 6.E.2 The County shall require that new development be designed and constructed to preserve the following types of areas and features as open space to the maximum extent feasible:

a) High erosion hazard areas;
b) Scenic and trail corridors;
c) Streams, riparian vegetation;
d) Wetlands;
e) Significant stands of vegetation;
f) Wildlife corridors; and
g) Any areas of special ecological significance.

Paleontological resources are addressed in the Recreation and Cultural Resources Element with the following goals and policies:

Goal 5.D: To identify, protect, and enhance Placer County's important historical, archaeological, paleontological, and cultural sites and their contributing environment.

Policy 5.D.2 The County shall solicit the cooperation of the owners of cultural and paleontological resources, encourage those owners to treat these resources as assets rather than liabilities, and encourage the support of the general public of the preservation and enhancement of these resources.

Policy 5.D.4 The County shall coordinate with the cities and municipal advisory councils in the County to promote the preservation and maintenance of Placer County's paleontological and archaeological resources.

Policy 5.D.7 The County shall require that discretionary development projects are designed to avoid potential impacts to significant paleontological or cultural resources whenever possible. Unavoidable impacts, whenever possible, shall be reduced to a less than significant level and/or shall be mitigated by extracting maximum recoverable data. Determinations of impacts, significance, and mitigation shall be made by qualified archaeological (in consultation with recognized local Native American groups), historical, or paleontological consultants, depending on the type of resource in question.

Local (Multi-Jurisdictional) Hazard Mitigation Plan

The City of Auburn is a participant in the Placer County Multi-jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan. The Placer County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan, most recently updated in June 2021, incorporates hazard mitigation principles and practices into the routine government activities and functions of the County, twenty special or regional districts, and five municipalities (including

Auburn) participating in the Plan. The Plan recommends specific actions that are designed to protect people and community assets from losses to those hazards that pose the greatest risk, including earthquakes and landslides. Chapter 5, Mitigation Strategy, provides a blueprint for reducing potential losses. Such measures include local plans and regulations, structure and infrastructure projects, natural systems protection, education and awareness programs, and other activities (County of Placer 2021b). An update to the Hazard Mitigation Plan is presently underway.

4.7.3 Impact Analysis

a. Significance Thresholds and Methodology

Significance Thresholds

Based on Appendix G of the *CEQA Guidelines* a project may be deemed to have a significant impact on geology and soils if it would:

1. Directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:
    a. Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault,
    b. Strong seismic ground shaking,
    c. Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction, or
    d. Landslides;
2. Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil;
3. Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse;
4. Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial direct or indirect risks to life or property;
5. Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of wastewater; or
6. Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature.

Methodology

The impact analysis is based on an assessment of baseline conditions for the Planning Area, including topography, geologic and soil conditions, and seismic hazards, as described above under Section 4.7.1, *Setting*. The analysis identifies potential impacts based on the predicted interaction between the affected environment and construction, operation, and maintenance activities related to development facilitated by the proposed project. Impacts are described in terms of location, context, duration, and intensity, and mitigation measures are recommended, when necessary, to avoid or minimize impacts.

b. Project Impacts and Mitigation Measures

Threshold 1:	Would the project directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving: a. Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault, b. Strong seismic ground shaking, c. Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction, or d. Landslides?

Impact GEO-1 CONSTRUCTION AND OCCUPANCY OF DEVELOPMENT FACILITATED BY THE PROJECT COULD RESULT IN EXPOSURE OF PEOPLE OR STRUCTURES TO A RISK OF LOSS, INJURY, OR DEATH INVOLVING RUPTURE OF A KNOWN EARTHQUAKE FAULT, STRONG SEISMIC GROUND SHAKING, SEISMIC-RELATED GROUND FAILURE, LIQUEFACTION, OR LANDSLIDES. HOWEVER, REQUIRED ADHERENCE TO THE CBC AND AUBURN MUNICIPAL CODE, AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE GOALS AND POLICIES OF THE PROPOSED PROJECT AND PREVIOUSLY ADOPTED SAFETY ELEMENT, WOULD REDUCE THE POTENTIAL FOR LOSS, INJURY, OR DEATH FOLLOWING A SEISMIC EVENT TO A LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT LEVEL.

As described in Section 4.7.1, *Setting*, the Planning Area is not located on any active fault system, however there are inactive faults associated with the Foothills fault system that cross the Planning Area (CGS 2018). The nearest active fault is the Cleveland Hills fault, approximately 36 miles northwest of the city (City of Auburn 2021). Given this, the potential for surface fault rupture at development sites within the Planning Area is low, as surface rupture is typically constrained to the immediate proximity of the fault trace.

Although there are no active faults as delineated by Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning, seismic activity at the nearby Cleveland Hills fault or other regional faults could cause ground-shaking and associated secondary-seismic impacts, such as liquefaction or landslide, within the Planning Area. The Planning Area is expected to experience at least moderate shaking over the next century (City of Auburn 2021). As described in Section 4.7.1, *Setting*, liquefaction potential is present within the Planning Area predominantly where loose alluvial soils situated along valley floors and stream corridors coincide with saturated conditions, while landslide risk is most prevalent along the steep eastern slopes of Auburn and corridors with recurring slope-instability, with a heightened risk following intense storms or wildfires (City of Auburn 2021, County of Placer 2021a). Accordingly, development facilitated by the project would have the potential to experience strong seismic ground-shaking and secondary seismic impacts, although shaking intensity and secondary seismic effects at any specific site would vary with magnitude, distance, rupture characteristics, and local soils.

New development under the proposed project would be subject to Municipal Code and CBC engineering design and construction measures and requirements. Development designed in accordance with the CBC would be able to: 1) resist minor earthquakes without damage; 2) resist moderate earthquakes without structural damage, but with some non-structural damage; and 3) resist major earthquakes without collapse, but with some structural, as well as non-structural, damage. Compliance with the CBC would minimize potential structural damage and the exposure of

people to the risk of injury or death from structural failure. Foundations and other structures for features would be designed to resist and absorb damaging forces from strong ground shaking and liquefaction in accordance with CBC requirements. Specifically, Section 1613 of the CBC requires every structure and portion thereof, including nonstructural components that are permanently attached to structures and their supports and attachments, to be designed and constructed to resist the effects of earthquake motions. Moreover, Auburn Municipal Code Section 150.001 - 150.002 adopts by reference the 2025 CBC with local amendments, and Chapter 155 includes requirements pertaining to grading and erosion control. Specifically, Auburn Municipal Code Section 155.077 requires the preparation of a soil or geologic investigation report to accompany a grading permit application under certain conditions, for example, in areas of known or suspected geological hazards, including landslide hazards and hazards of ground failure associated with seismic-related ground shaking. Similarly, Article 15.48 Part 5 of the Placer County Municipal Code includes requirements for geotechnical investigations accompanying grading permit applications under specific circumstances, such as cuts or fills exceeding 10 feet, presence of highly expansive soils, or known geological hazards like landslides. Additionally, the proposed project would also include development on infill sites, which may result in the replacement of older buildings with newer structures built to current seismic standards that could better withstand the adverse effects of strong ground shaking.

The City of Auburn adopted an updated Safety Element in 2021, including policies to reduce geologic hazards. These policies and their associated actions would apply to the proposed project and subsequent projects in the city. Goal 6 is to minimize the risk of injuries, loss of life, property damage, and economic and social disruption resulting from seismic and geologic hazards in Auburn. Policy 6.1 is to identify areas within the City that are prone to damage, Policy 6.2 is to strengthen or relocate vulnerable structures, and Policy 6.3 is to plan for seismically resilient design features. Development in the city would be required to comply with relevant goals and policies in the adopted Safety Element

The proposed Land Use Element contains the following policies and actions intended to minimize the risks associated with seismic and geologic hazards in order to protect public health and safety, property, and the environment: Policy LU-1.5: Reducing Exposure to Natural Hazards, Policy LU-1.6: Higher Density Housing, and Action LU-2E: Transfer of Development Rights. Policy LU-1.5 and LU-1.6 and Action LU-2E would ensure that development associated with the proposed project would be directed away from areas of known geological or seismic hazards. Policy LU-1.5 would directly reduce exposure to seismic and geologic hazards by concentrating development away from areas known to contain landslide-prone slopes, unstable geologic formations, or other mapped hazards, and by requiring risk-reduction measures where development already exists in such areas. Policy LU-1.6 focuses on appropriate placement of higher density housing, thereby indirectly reducing seismic and geologic risk by avoiding higher density development in hillside or hazard-prone locations. Action LU-2E further supports seismic hazard avoidance by allowing the transfer of development rights from properties containing seismic or geologic hazard constraints to safer, more suitable areas, thereby reducing the likelihood of new development in locations subject to strong seismic ground shaking and associated effects, such as liquefaction and landslides.

In addition, the proposed Open Space and Conservation Element contains the following actions intended to minimize risks related to geology and soil hazards: Action OSC-2A: Grading Regulations, Action OSC-2B: Soils Reports, and Action OSC-7C: Code Enforcement. Actions OSC-2A and OSC-2B would reinforce the Auburn Municipal Code requirements that would ensure soils are analyzed for seismic and geologic hazards prior to development on respective sites, while Action OSC-7C would

ensure that development adheres to CBC requirements. Adherence to these policies and actions would reduce impacts related to seismic and secondary seismic hazards, such as those related to rupture of a known Alquist-Priolo earthquake fault, strong seismic ground-shaking, seismic-related ground failure, liquefaction, and landslides.

Development facilitated by the proposed project would be constructed in compliance with current seismic standards, which are designed to ensure that modern buildings are able to withstand the adverse effects of strong seismic ground shaking, liquefaction, and landslides. Potential structural damage and the exposure of people to the risk of injury or death from structural failure associated with liquefaction or landslides would be minimized by compliance with CBC engineering design and construction measures. Foundations and other structural support features would be required to be designed to resist or absorb damaging forces from liquefaction and landsliding. As required by Chapter 155 of the Auburn Municipal Code and Article 15.48 Part 5 of the Placer County Municipal Code, site-specific geotechnical investigations would identify liquefaction and landslide potential areas within individual development sites and include recommendations to reduce hazards associated with liquefaction and/or landslide. Accordingly, implementation of the General Plan Update policies and compliance with relevant Municipal Code sections would reduce the potential for loss, injury, or death associated with seismic and secondary seismic hazards, such as those related to rupture of a known earthquake fault, strong seismic ground-shaking, seismic-related ground failure, liquefaction, and landslides to less than significant levels.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures would be required.

Significance After Mitigation

Impacts would be less than significant without mitigation.

Threshold 2: Would the project result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?

Impact GEO-2 DEVELOPMENT FACILITATED BY THE PROPOSED PROJECT WOULD INCLUDE GROUND DISTURBANCE SUCH AS EXCAVATION AND GRADING THAT WOULD RESULT IN LOOSE OR EXPOSED SOIL, INCREASING THE POTENTIAL FOR EROSION AND SOIL LOSS. COMPLIANCE WITH APPLICABLE REGULATIONS, INCLUDING THE CLEAN WATER ACT AND AUBURN MUNICIPAL CODE, AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE GOALS AND POLICIES OF THE PROPOSED PROJECT WOULD REDUCE THE POTENTIAL FOR EROSION AND LOSS OF TOPSOIL. THIS IMPACT WOULD BE LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT.

As shown in Figure 4.7-4, the Planning Area has a relatively high potential for erosion risks. Development facilitated by the project would involve construction activities such as stockpiling, grading, excavation, paving, and other earth-disturbing activities. Loose and disturbed soils are more prone to erosion and loss of topsoil by wind and water. Given that these activities occur exclusively during site preparation and construction, no operational impacts would occur, and therefore the following analysis is limited to construction-related erosion and soil loss impacts.

Construction activities that disturb one or more acres of land surface are subject to the NPDES Construction Stormwater General Permit issued by the State Water Resources Control Board. Compliance with the permit requires each qualifying development project to file a Notice of Intent with the State Water Resources Control Board. Permit conditions require development of a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan, which must describe the site, the facility, erosion and sediment controls, runoff water quality monitoring, means of waste disposal, implementation of

approved local plans, control of construction sediment and erosion control measures, maintenance responsibilities, and non-stormwater management controls. Inspection of construction sites before and after storms is also required to identify stormwater discharge from the construction activity and to identify and implement erosion controls, where necessary.

Auburn Municipal Code Section 155 establishes the City's erosion and sediment control requirements, which regulate grading and land-disturbing activities on public and private property to minimize erosion and sedimentation. Section 155 requires soil stabilization for all disturbed areas and mandates erosion and sediment control measures consistent with state and local standards. Section 155.077 in particular requires that a soil or geologic investigation accompany grading permit application under any of the following circumstances:

a. When the proposed grading includes a cut or fill exceeding 10 feet in depth at any point; however, for vehicular ways, a soil investigation shall not be required unless the grading includes a proposed cut or fill that exceeds 10 feet in depth and the slope of the natural ground exceeds 30 percent;
b. When highly expansive soils are present;
c. In areas of known or suspected geological hazards, including landslide hazards and hazards of ground failure stemming from seismically induced ground shaking; and/or
d. When the proposed grading involves retaining walls exceeding 4 feet in height support a slope in excess of 30 percent.

Similarly, Placer County Municipal Code regulates grading in order to minimize risks related to erosion and loss of topsoil in unincorporated portions of the Planning Area. Specifically, Placer County Code Article 15.48 Part 2 outlines regulations regarding grading activities, covering aspects such as erosion control, grading permits, construction in public rights-of-way, and hazards. Pursuant to Article 15.48 Part 2, grading activities must comply with specified conditions and may require permits based on factors such as the scale of grading, involvement of aquatic resources, and the location within sensitive areas, although exemptions may apply for certain minor projects or activities conducted by public agencies or for agricultural purposes. Article 15.48 Part 5 includes requirements for geotechnical investigations accompanying grading permit applications under specific conditions, such as cuts or fills exceeding 10 feet, presence of highly expansive soils, or known geological hazards like landslides. Compliance with applicable Municipal Code requirements would reduce the potential for construction and soil disturbance under the proposed project to cause erosion or the loss of topsoil by ensuring proper management of loose and disturbed soil.

Additionally, the proposed Open Space and Conservation Element contains the following policies and actions intended to minimize the risks associated with soil erosion and the loss of topsoil: Policy OSC-2.1: Soil Conservation and Management, Policy OSC-2.2: Natural Terrain, Action OSC-2A: Grading Regulations, and Action OSC-2B: Soils Reports. Adherence to these policies and actions would reduce impacts related to erosion by requiring development facilitated by the proposed project to prepare a site-specific erosion control plan in order to prevent sedimentation and contamination of streams. Implementation of policies from the General Plan Update and compliance with state and local regulations would ensure that development under the proposed project would reduce impacts related to erosion and loss of topsoil to less than significant levels.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures would be required.

Significance After Mitigation

Impacts would be less than significant without mitigation.

Threshold 3:	Would the project be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction, or collapse?

Impact GEO-3 CONSTRUCTION AND OCCUPANCY OF DEVELOPMENT FACILITATED BY THE PROPOSED PROJECT COULD BE LOCATED ON GEOLOGIC UNITS THAT ARE UNSTABLE, RESULTING IN LANDSLIDE, LATERAL SPREADING, SUBSIDENCE, LIQUEFACTION, OR COLLAPSE. HOWEVER, REQUIRED ADHERENCE TO THE CBC AND AUBURN MUNICIPAL CODE, AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS INCLUDED IN THE 2045 GENERAL PLAN WOULD REDUCE POTENTIAL IMPACTS TO A LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT LEVEL.

As described in Section 4.7.1, *Setting*, the City of Auburn and Placer County have identified the potential for liquefaction within and around the Planning Area, with liquefaction risks occurring primarily in areas underlain by loose alluvial soils along valley floors and stream corridors (County of Placer 2021a, City of Auburn 2021). The risk of subsidence is considered to be low, as the Planning Area is not located in an area expected to experience high levels of ground-shaking (refer to Impact GEO-1). In addition, the potential for landslides to occur in the Planning Area is low (USGS 2024). However, past deposits in erosion gullies and recent landslide events indicate that minor landslides in the Planning Area are probable with heavy precipitation or in areas affected by recent fires (County of Placer 2021a). Lateral spreading is a liquefaction-related ground failure that primarily occurs on gentle slopes or flat terrain, and is often associated with areas adjacent to a free-face, such as stream banks. It is driven by the liquefaction of saturated, loose sediments during strong shaking (USGS 2023). Within the Planning Area, lateral spreading risks would be confined to localized settings where such conditions coincide, such as areas with loose alluvial deposits along stream corridors, and would not represent a hazard risk for most areas where development facilitated by the proposed project would occur. Similarly, the potential for seismically-induced collapse is low, as most soils in the Planning Area consist of bedrock or non-collapsible soil types, with collapse risks limited to unsaturated, metastable deposits that can lose volume abruptly when saturated, causing the potential for differential settlement (Caltrans 2024). While isolated areas may exhibit localized geologic hazards related to landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction, or collapse under certain conditions, soils and geologic units in the Planning Area are predominantly stable, and widespread instability risks are considered low.

As described above, localized portions of the Planning Area may exhibit potential for geologic hazards related to landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction, or collapse under certain conditions. Although widespread risk is low, development facilitated by the project may be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction, or collapse.

Development in the Planning Area would be required to be built to current seismic standards that could better withstand the adverse effects of strong ground shaking, including landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction, and collapse. Potential structural damage and exposure of people to the risk of injury or death from structural failure would be minimized through compliance with CBC engineering design and construction measures. Foundations and other structural support features would be required to be designed to resist or absorb damaging forces from strong ground shaking and liquefaction. Allowable increases in building height as a result of the General Plan

Update could require foundations and other structural support features to be more robust to support the additional height; however, compliance with CBC regulations would ensure that the buildings would meet seismic safety standards. Additionally, Auburn Safety Element Policy 6.3 calls for resilient design features for roads and trails in areas prone to landslides, and Action 6.2B calls for retrofits to protect against landslides.

In addition to compliance with mandatory CBC requirements that address safe building development, related to these hazards, the following General Plan Update goals and policies would further minimize potential adverse effects related to landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction, and collapse: Policy LU-1.5: Reducing Exposure to Natural Hazards. Policy LU-1.6: Higher Density Housing, and Action OSC-2B: Soils Reports. These policies would reduce potential seismic and geologic risks by directing growth away from areas prone to wildfires, flooding, landslides and other geologic hazards (Policy LU-1.5), limiting high density development to infill locations with fewer natural hazard constraints (Policy LU-1.6), and ensuring that development in areas with known instability or geologic hazards, or those proposed to rely on septic systems, undergo site-specific soils investigations to address hazards such as slope failure, liquefaction, or inadequate bearing capacity prior to development.

Implementation of 2045 General Plan policies and actions, in addition to compliance with applicable laws and regulations such as CBC requirements, would ensure that development facilitated by the project meets seismic safety standards and would reduce potential impacts related to unstable soils, including on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction, or collapse. Therefore, General Plan Update impacts related to an unstable geologic unit or unstable soil would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures would be required.

Significance After Mitigation

Impacts would be less than significant without mitigation.

Threshold 4:	Would the project be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial direct or indirect risks to life or property?

Impact GEO-4 DEVELOPMENT FACILITATED BY THE PROJECT HAS THE POTENTIAL TO BE LOCATED ON EXPANSIVE SOILS. COMPLIANCE WITH THE CALIFORNIA BUILDING CODE AND LOCAL AMENDMENTS REQUIRING SITE-SPECIFIC GEOTECHNICAL INVESTIGATIONS, ENGINEERED FOUNDATION AND DRAINAGE DESIGN, AND OTHER APPLICABLE STANDARDS AND REGULATIONS WOULD REDUCE DIRECT AND INDIRECT RISKS TO LIFE OR PROPERTY OCCURRING ON EXPANSIVE SOILS. IMPACTS WOULD BE LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT.

As shown in Figure 4.7-2, soils underlying the Planning Area primarily consist of Inceptisols, such as Auburn silt loam and Auburn-rock outcrop complex. Soils of this type are characterized by a balanced mixture of sand, silt, and clay particles, and range from coarse-grained to fine-grained or a combination of both. Auburn silt loam has low to moderate shrink-swell potential, while Auburn-rock outcrop complex exhibits negligible shrink-swell potential due to the minimal clay content (USDA 2018, 2026). Therefore, there are little to no expansive soils in Auburn. However, the area around Auburn includes highly expansive soils capable of shrinking and swelling with changing

ground moisture levels (City of Auburn 2021). As such, development facilitated by the proposed project in portions of the Planning Area outside of City limits may occur on expansive soils.

Development facilitated by the project could occur on expansive soils, as defined by Table 1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), and thus could be subject to damage or instability when the underlying soil shrinks or swells. As noted in Section 4.7.1, *Setting*, development on expansive soils can cause foundations, basement walls, and floors to crack, resulting in substantial structural damage. Accordingly, expansive soils can cause indirect effects such as the need to repair or replace damaged building components. The adverse effects of expansive soils can be avoided through proper subsoil preparation, drainage, and foundation design.

Pursuant to local amendments of the CBC in the Auburn Municipal Code, development facilitated by the project would be subject to minimum standards for foundation design and site drainage intended to reduce risks associated with expansive soils. Specifically, Auburn Municipal Code Section 150.001-150.002 adopt the 2022 CBC, and Section 150.077 further requires a soil or geologic investigation for grading permits under defined conditions, including when highly expansive soils are present, while Placer County Code Article 15.48 requires similar geotechnical investigations for development in unincorporated portions of the Planning Area.

These standards include requirements for engineered subgrade preparation and slab reinforcement to improve resistance to expansive soil conditions, as well as installation of rain gutters, downspouts, splash blocks, and properly graded concrete landings to direct stormwater away from foundations and slabs.

Compliance with the requirements of the CBC, as well as relevant city and county policies and ordinances, would reduce risks related to expansive soils. Therefore, impacts related to expansive soils would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures would be required.

Significance After Mitigation

Impacts would be less than significant without mitigation.

Threshold 5:	Would the project have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of wastewater?

Impact GEO-5 DEVELOPMENT FACILITATED BY THE PROPOSED PROJECT HAS THE POTENTIAL TO OCCUR IN AREAS REQUIRING THE USE OF SEPTIC TANKS OR ALTERNATIVE WASTEWATER DISPOSAL SYSTEMS. HOWEVER, REQUIRED ADHERENCE TO LOCAL REGULATIONS AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROPOSED POLICIES AND ACTIONS OF THE GENERAL PLAN UPDATE WOULD REDUCE IMPACTS RELATED TO SEPTIC TANKS AND ALTERNATIVE WASTEWATER DISPOSAL SYSTEMS. IMPACTS WOULD BE LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT.

Development facilitated by the proposed project would primarily occur within Auburn city limits on infill and redevelopment sites that are already or would be served by municipal wastewater infrastructure. Therefore, septic systems would not be required for most development facilitated by the project. As described in Section 2, *Project Description*, growth may occur outside city limits in unincorporated Placer County. Portions of the unincorporated Planning Area are served by Placer County Sewer Maintenance District 1, which provides sewer collection in North Auburn and conveys

wastewater to the City of Lincoln for treatment (County of Placer 2022). In addition, ongoing capital projects such as the SR-49 capacity improvement, would extend an existing sewer line along SR-49 to accommodate wastewater disposal needs of future development in the Planning Area (County of Placer 2023). However, as noted in Section 2, *Project Description*, growth facilitated by the proposed project may occur including in portions of the SOI and other rural areas with Agriculture-Residential or Rural Residential land use designations where individual on-site wastewater systems such as septic tanks may be necessary.

As described in Section 4.7.1, *Setting*, the predominant soils underlying the Planning Area are Inceptisols, such as Auburn silt loam and Auburn-rock outcrop complex. Auburn silt loam is generally well-drained with low to moderate shrink-swell potential, while Auburn-rock outcrop complex consists of shallow soils over bedrock with steeper slopes. These soil characteristics have different implications for on-site wastewater disposal. While Auburn silt loam is conditionally favorable for conventional septic system leach fields (subject to percolation rates, groundwater depth, and slope constraints determined on a site-specific bases), Auburn-rock outcrop complex is limited because shallow soil depth, rock outcrops, and slopes can preclude adequate leach field design without engineered alternatives.

Construction of development facilitated by the proposed project would be subject to CBC, Auburn Municipal Code, and Placer County Municipal Code regulations that would ensure soils are evaluated for their ability to support on-site wastewater disposal systems where proposed. Specifically, Auburn Municipal Code Section 155.077 requires a soil or geologic investigation for grading permits in areas with known or suspected geological hazards, including those that could affect soil permeability or stability relevant to septic system support. Similarly, Placer County Code Article 15.48 requires geotechnical investigations under conditions such as shallow soils, steep slopes, or other geological hazards, which would identify site limitations regarding septic system suitability. Such investigations would be required prior to permit issuance, and as such would ensure that any proposed on-site wastewater system is designed in accordance with localized soil conditions.

In addition to compliance with mandatory CBC and local requirements, the Community Services and Facilities Element of the General Plan Update contains the following goals, policies, and actions that would ensure proposed project development would be connected to available sewer infrastructure, and that such infrastructure is adequately maintained and coordinated between jurisdictions to meet current and future demand. Relevant provisions include: Goal CSF-4: Infrastructure, which emphasizes the provision of safe, reliable, and efficient public infrastructure; Policy CSF-4.2: Adequacy of City Infrastructure and Services, which requires applicants to demonstrate that proposed development can be served by local infrastructure systems; and Policy CSF-4.5: Sanitary Sewer System, which emphasizes coordinated sewer service provision between the City and Placer County, including the potential for consolidation or intertie improvements to expand service reliability and capacity. These policies direct growth toward portions of the Planning Area that can or could be served by municipal sewer systems, reducing the need for alternative wastewater disposal and reliance on septic tanks to support growth facilitated by the General Plan Update.

However, as described above, portions of the Planning Area outside of city limits with Agriculture-Residential or Rural Residential land use designations may not have access to municipal wastewater infrastructure. As such, the use of septic tanks or other on-site wastewater disposal systems may be necessary to support some future development in the Planning Area. Accordingly, the Open Space and Conservation Element of the General Plan Update contains policies and actions that would minimize impacts related to soil capabilities of supporting septic tanks or alternative wastewater

disposal systems where necessary. Relevant provisions include: Policy OSC-2.1: Soil Conservation and Management, which promotes development practices that protect soil integrity and prevent contamination; Action OSC-2A: Grading Regulations, which requires grading standards that protect soil stability and drainage characteristics relevant to the placement and functioning of on-site wastewater disposal systems; and Action OSC-2B: Soils Reports, which reinforces Auburn Municipal Code Section 155.077 and Placer County Code Article 15.48 by requiring site-specific soil analyses in areas with known hazards or where septic systems are proposed, ensuring that, where necessary, sites would be able to support the use of alternative wastewater disposal systems. Together, the proposed policy and associated actions would ensure that site conditions are evaluated and engineered to accommodate the safe treatment and disposal of wastewater prior to approval of septic system use.

Growth facilitated by the General Plan Update would be concentrated in areas that would be served by existing wastewater infrastructure and away from areas with known geologic hazards. Goal CSF-4 and associated policies and actions of the proposed Community Services and Facilities Element would ensure that future development would be adequately served by local infrastructure, including the sanitary sewer system, and that existing infrastructure is adequately maintained. Goal OSC-2 and associated policies and actions of the proposed Open Space and Conservation Element would ensure that, where existing infrastructure is not accessible, that site soils are appropriately evaluated and managed to determine whether they would be capable of supporting septic tanks or other on-site wastewater disposal systems prior to development.

Although development facilitated by the General Plan Update would be concentrated in areas served by existing or planned infrastructure, some growth may occur in areas requiring septic tanks or other alternative wastewater infrastructure. Soils within the Planning Area have a range of capabilities to support alternative wastewater infrastructure. However, adherence to state and local regulations, as well as implementation of the proposed goals, policies, and actions of the General Plan Update would minimize potential impacts related to the capability of soils to support septic tanks or alternative wastewater infrastructure where necessary. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures would be required.

Significance After Mitigation

Impacts would be less than significant without mitigation.

Threshold 6:	Would the project directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?

Impact GEO-6 DEVELOPMENT FACILITATED BY THE PROJECT HAS THE POTENTIAL TO IMPACT PALEONTOLOGICAL RESOURCES. THIS IMPACT WOULD BE LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT WITH MITIGATION INCORPORATED.

Consistent with SVP (2025) guidelines, the paleontological sensitivity of the eight geologic units underlying the Planning Area was evaluated using geologic maps, a literature review, and online fossil locality databases. The age and paleontological sensitivity of these geologic units are summarized in Table 4.7-1 and reflected in Figure 4.7-1.

Ground disturbing activities that occur within geologic units of very low or low potential would not be expected to result in significant impacts to paleontological resources. Ground-disturbing activities in previously undisturbed portions of geologic units with FPMS 4 (High) and FPMS U (Unknown) potential may result in significant impacts to paleontological resources. Impacts would be significant if construction activities result in the destruction, damage, or loss of scientifically important paleontological resources and associated stratigraphic and paleontological data. The activities may include grading, excavation, or any other activity that disturbs the surface or subsurface geologic formations with a FPMS 4 (High) or FPMS U (Unknown) paleontological sensitivity.

Table 4.7-1 Geologic Units in Planning Area and Paleontological Sensitivity

Geologic Unit	Age	Paleontological Sensitivity
Mehrten Formation	Miocene to early Pleistocene	FPMS 4 (High)
Penryn Pluton	Late Jurassic	FPMS 1 (Very low)
Undivided Jurassic Sedimentary Rocks	Jurassic	FPMS U (Unknown)
Undivided Jurassic Igneous and Metamorphic Rocks	Jurassic	FPMS 2 (Low)
Jurassic Metavolcanic Rocks	Jurassic	FPMS 1 (Very low)
Gabbro	Jurassic	FPMS 1 (Very low)
Serpentinite	Jurassic	FPMS 1 (Very low)
Undivided Paleozoic Marine Sedimentary Rocks	Paleozoic	FPMS U (Unknown)

Significant impacts to paleontological resources can only be determined once a specific project has been proposed because the effects are highly dependent on both the individual project site conditions and the characteristics of the proposed ground-disturbing activity. Ground-disturbing activities associated with construction of development facilitated by the project have the potential to damage or destroy paleontological resources that may be present on or below the ground surface in areas of FPMS 4 (High) or FPMS U (Unknown) paleontological sensitivity. Consequently, damage to or destruction of fossils could occur due to development facilitated by the project. Impacts would be potentially significant.

Mitigation Measures

GEO-6 Paleontological Resources Monitoring and Mitigation

Projects involving excavations within areas mapped as having FPMS 4 (High) and FPMS U (Unknown) sensitivity geologic units shall be required to draft and implement a Paleontological Resources Mitigation and Monitoring Plan (PRMMP) written by a Paleontological Principal Investigator as defined by the Society of Vertebrate Paleontology. Actions required by the PRMMP may include, but are not limited to, paleontological sensitivity training, construction monitoring, protocols for paleontological discoveries, and final reporting. The PRMMP shall be sent to and approved by the City of Auburn prior to the initiation of ground disturbance.

Significance After Mitigation

Implementation of Mitigation Measure GEO-6 would require preparation of a PRMMP which includes monitoring, discovery protocols, and resource preservation measures, which would reduce impacts to a less than significant level.

4.7.4 Cumulative Impacts

The geographic scope of the cumulative geology and soils analysis is the Planning Area and the surrounding vicinity. This geographic scope is appropriate because adverse effects associated with geology and soils impacts tend to be localized; therefore, an area generally within a 0.25-mile radius of individual sites would be the area most affected by activities in combination with the proposed project. In addition, adverse effects associated with paleontological resource impacts tend to be localized, because the integrity of any given resource depends on what occurs only in the immediate vicinity around that resource, such as disruption of soils. The cumulative analysis considers the nearby past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future plans and projects listed in Table 3-1 (refer to Section 3, *Environmental Setting*), in addition to the proposed project.

Cumulative development has the potential to experience strong to violent ground shaking from earthquakes. Cumulative projects would be subject to the provisions of the CBC, and policies applicable local agency general plans and municipal codes, which would reduce potential hazards associated with seismic ground shaking and ground failure, including liquefaction and landslides. Therefore, the cumulative impact related to seismic-related hazards would be less than significant.

Soil conditions, including erosion and loss of topsoil; unstable soils that could result in landslides, lateral spreading, and collapse; expansive soils; and the ability of soils to support septic tanks or alternative wastewater systems, are specific to individual sites and generally do not contribute to a cumulative effect. Some or all other cumulative projects may have similar conditions, but they similarly would not substantially contribute to cumulative effects. Cumulative development would be subject to applicable General Plan policies, municipal code requirements, and CBC requirements related to reducing soil-related hazards. Therefore, the cumulative impacts to soil erosion; unstable soils including liquefaction, subsidence, landslides, and collapse; expansive soils; and soil suitability for septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems would be less than significant.

Cumulative development could disturb areas that may contain paleontological resources. However, potential impacts associated with individual development projects would be addressed on a case-by-case basis and would be subject to local and State regulations regarding the protection of such resources. With compliance with existing policies and regulations, as well as Mitigation Measure GEO-6, future development would be required to avoid or mitigate the loss of these resources. Therefore, cumulative paleontological resource impacts would be less than significant.

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4.8 Greenhouse Gas Emissions

This section summarizes the setting for greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and climate change and analyzes the impacts related to GHG emissions and climate change due to the project.

4.8.1 Setting

a. Greenhouse Gases and Climate Change

Gases that absorb and re-emit infrared radiation in the atmosphere are called GHGs. The gases that are widely seen as the principal contributors to human-induced climate change include carbon dioxide (CO_2); methane (CH_4); nitrous oxides (N_2O); fluorinated gases such as hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs) and perfluorocarbons (PFCs); and sulfur hexafluoride (SF_6). Water vapor is excluded from the list of GHGs because it is short-lived in the atmosphere and its atmospheric concentrations are largely determined by natural processes, such as oceanic evaporation.

Different types of GHGs have varying global warming potentials (GWP). The GWP of a GHG is the potential of a gas or aerosol to trap heat in the atmosphere over a specified timescale (generally, 100 years). Because GHGs absorb different amounts of heat, a common reference gas (CO_2) is used to relate the amount of heat absorbed to the amount of the gas emitted, referred to as "carbon dioxide equivalent" (CO_2e), which is the amount of GHG emitted multiplied by its GWP. Carbon dioxide has a 100-year GWP of one. By contrast, methane has a 100-year GWP of 30, meaning its global warming effect is 30 times greater than CO_2 on a molecule per molecule basis (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change [IPCC] 2021).

GHGs are emitted by natural processes and human activities. Of these gases, CO_2 and CH_4 are emitted in the greatest quantities from human activities. Emissions of CO_2 are usually by-products of fossil fuel combustion, and CH_4 results from off-gassing associated with agricultural practices and landfills. Human-made GHGs, many of which have greater heat-absorption potential than CO_2, include fluorinated gases and SF_6 (United States Environmental Protection Agency [USEPA] 2024a).

Climate change is the observed increase in the average temperature of the Earth's atmosphere and oceans along with other substantial changes in climate (such as wind patterns, precipitation, and storms) over an extended period. The term "climate change" is often used interchangeably with the term "global warming," but climate change is preferred because it conveys that other changes are happening in addition to rising temperatures. The baseline against which these changes are measured originates in historical records that identify temperature changes that occurred in the past, such as during previous ice ages. The global climate is changing continuously, as evidenced in the geologic record which indicates repeated episodes of substantial warming and cooling. The rate of change has typically been incremental, with warming or cooling trends occurring over the course of thousands of years. The past 10,000 years have been marked by a period of incremental warming, as glaciers have steadily retreated across the globe. However, scientists have observed acceleration in the rate of warming over the past 150 years. The IPCC expressed in the Sixth Assessment Report that the rise and continued growth of atmospheric CO_2 concentrations is unequivocally due to human activities (IPCC 2021). Human influence has warmed the atmosphere, ocean, and land, which has led the climate to warm at an unprecedented rate in the last 2,000 years. It is estimated that between the period of 1850 through 2019, that a total of 2,390 gigatons of anthropogenic CO_2 was emitted. From 2015 to 2017, the global mean surface temperature averaged about 1.0°C above the baseline average for 1880–1900 (National Oceanic and

Atmospheric Administration 2020). (IPCC 2021). The accumulation of GHGs in the atmosphere regulates the earth's temperature. Without the natural heat-trapping effect of GHGs, the earth's surface would be about 33 degrees Celsius (°C) cooler (World Meteorological Organization 2024). However, since the late 1700s, estimated concentrations of CO_2, CH_4, and N_2O in the atmosphere have increased by 49 percent, 156 percent, and 23 percent, respectively, primarily due to human activity (IPCC 2021). GHG emissions from human activities, particularly the consumption of fossil fuels for electricity production and transportation, are believed to have elevated the concentration of these gases in the atmosphere beyond the level of concentrations that occur naturally.

b. Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory

Global Emissions Inventory

In 2015, worldwide anthropogenic GHG emissions totaled 47.1 billion metric tons (MT) of CO_2e, which is a 43 percent increase from 1990 GHG levels (USEPA 2024b). Specifically, 34,522 million metric tons (MMT) of CO_2e of CO_2, 8,241 MMT of CO_2e of CH_4, 2,997 MMT of CO_2e of N_2O, and 1,001 MMT of CO_2e of fluorinated gases were emitted in 2015. The largest source of GHG emissions were energy production and use (includes fuels used by vehicles and buildings), which accounted for 74 percent of the global GHG emissions. Agriculture uses and industrial processes contributed 12 percent and 6 percent, respectively. Waste sources contributed three percent and international transportation sources contributed two percent. These sources account for approximately 98 percent because there was a net sink of two percent from land-use change and forestry (USEPA 2024b).

United States Emissions Inventory

Total U.S. GHG emissions were 6,343 MMT of CO_2e in 2022; emissions decreased by one percent compared to the previous year. Since 1990, total U.S. emissions have increased by an average annual rate of 0.06 percent for a total increase of 1.8 percent between 1990 and 2019. The increase in total greenhouse gas emissions was driven largely by an increase in CO_2 emissions from fossil fuel combustion. In 2022, the industrial and transportation end-use sectors accounted for 30 percent and 29 percent, respectively, of nationwide GHG emissions while the commercial and residential end-use sectors accounted for 31 percent of nationwide GHG emissions, with electricity emissions distributed among the various sectors (USEPA 2024c).

California Emissions Inventory

Based on the California Air Resources Board (CARB) California Greenhouse Gas Inventory for 2000-2020, California produced 369.2 MMT of CO_2e in 2020, which is 35.3 MMT of CO_2e lower than 2019 levels. The 2019 to 2020 decrease in emissions is likely due in large part to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. The major source of GHG emissions in California is the transportation sector, which comprises 37 percent of the State's total GHG emissions. The industrial sector is the second largest source, comprising 20 percent of the State's GHG emissions while electric power accounts for approximately 16 percent (CARB 2023). The magnitude of California's total GHG emissions is due in part to its large size and large population compared to other states. However, a factor that reduces California's per capita fuel use and GHG emissions as compared to other states is its relatively mild climate. In 2016, California achieved its 2020 GHG emission reduction target of reducing emissions to 1990 levels as emissions fell below 431 MMT of CO_2e (CARB 2023).

Placer County Emissions Inventory

Based on the Placer County Sustainability Plan, the County generated around 1,203,260 MT of CO_2e in 2015 (County of Placer 2020). On-road transportation was the largest source accounting for 42 percent of the total. Residential energy usage represented 21 percent, while nonresidential energy use accounted for 12 percent. Agriculture and forest management accounted for 15 percent. Solid waste accounted for 7 percent of the total emissions. Off-road transportation accounted for 1 percent. The remaining 1 percent is primarily from wastewater treatment, with water conveyance and stationary sources representing about 0.1 percent of the total emissions (County of Placer 2020).

City of Auburn Emissions Inventory

A Resiliency & Sustainability Baseline Analysis prepared by Geneveive Marsh Design Group for the City of Auburn in September 2022 estimates greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions associated with passenger vehicle transportation, building energy, and water use. Based on this report, the City of Auburn generated a total 40,227 metric tons per year of passenger vehicle GHG emissions, a total 45,844 metric tons per year of building energy GHG emissions and 871 metric tons per year water GHG Emissions (City of Auburn 2022).

c. Potential Effects of Climate Change

Globally, climate change has the potential to affect numerous environmental resources though potential impacts related to future air temperatures and precipitation patterns. Scientific modeling predicts that continued GHG emissions at or above current rates would induce more extreme climate changes during the 21st century than were observed during the 20th century. Each of the past three decades has been warmer than all the previous decades in the instrumental record. The observed global mean surface temperature from 2015 to 2017 was approximately 1.0°C higher than the average global mean surface temperature over the period from 1880 to 1900 (National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration 2020). Furthermore, several independently analyzed data records of global and regional Land-Surface Air Temperature obtained from station observations jointly indicate that Land-Surface Air Temperature and sea surface temperatures have increased.

According to *California's Fourth Climate Change Assessment*, statewide temperatures from 1986 to 2016 were approximately 0.6 to 1.1°C higher than those recorded from 1901 to 1960. Potential impacts of climate change in California may include reduced water supply from snowpack, sea level rise, more extreme heat days per year, more large forest fires, and more drought years (State of California 2018). In addition to statewide projections, *California's Fourth Climate Change Assessment* includes regional reports that summarize climate impacts and adaptation solutions for nine regions of the state and regionally specific climate change case studies (State of California 2018). However, while there is growing scientific consensus about the possible effects of climate change at a global and statewide level, current scientific modeling tools are unable to predict what local impacts may occur with a similar degree of accuracy. A summary of some of the potential effects that could be experienced in California as a result of climate change follows.

Air Quality

Scientists project that the annual average maximum daily temperatures in California could rise by 2.4 to 3.2°C in the next 50 years and by 3.1 to 4.9°C in the next century (State of California 2018). Higher temperatures are conducive to air pollution formation, and rising temperatures could

therefore result in worsened air quality in California. As a result, climate change may increase the concentration of ground-level ozone. The magnitude of the effect of the increased concentration of ground-level ozone, and therefore its indirect effects, are uncertain. In addition, as temperatures have increased in recent years, the area burned by wildfires throughout the state has increased, and wildfires have occurred at higher elevations in the Sierra Nevada Mountains (State of California 2018). If higher temperatures continue to be accompanied by an increase in the incidence and extent of large wildfires, air quality could worsen. Severe heat accompanied by drier conditions and poor air quality could increase the number of heat-related deaths, illnesses, and asthma attacks throughout the state. However, if higher temperatures are accompanied by wetter, rather than drier conditions, the rains could tend to temporarily clear the air of particulate pollution, which would effectively reduce the number of large wildfires and thereby ameliorate the pollution associated with them (California Natural Resources Agency 2009).

Water Supply

Analysis of paleoclimatic data (such as tree-ring reconstructions of stream flow and precipitation) indicates a history of naturally and widely varying hydrologic conditions in California and the west, including a pattern of recurring and extended droughts. Uncertainty remains with respect to the overall impact of climate change on future precipitation trends and water supplies in California. Year-to-year variability in statewide precipitation levels has increased since 1980, meaning that wet and dry precipitation extremes have become more common (California Department of Water Resources 2018). This uncertainty regarding future precipitation trends complicates the analysis of future water demand, especially where the relationship between climate change and its potential effect on water demand is not well understood. The average early spring snowpack in the western U.S., including the Sierra Nevada Mountains, decreased by about 10 percent during the last century. During the same period, sea level rose over 0.15 meters along the central and southern California coasts (State of California 2018). The Sierra snowpack provides most of California's water supply as snow that accumulates during wet winters is released slowly during the dry months of spring and summer. A warmer climate is predicted to reduce the fraction of precipitation that falls as snow and the amount of snowfall at lower elevations, thereby reducing the total snowpack (State of California 2018). Projections indicate that average spring snowpack in the Sierra Nevada and other mountain catchments in central and northern California will decline by approximately 66 percent from its historical average by 2050 (State of California 2018).

Hydrology and Sea Level Rise

Climate change could affect the intensity and frequency of storms and flooding (State of California 2018). Furthermore, climate change could induce substantial sea level rise in the coming century. Rising sea level increases the likelihood of and risk from flooding. The rate of increase of global mean sea levels between 1993 to 2024, observed by satellites, is approximately 3.5 millimeters per year, double the 20th century trend of 1.6 millimeters per year (National Aeronautics and Space Administration 2024). Sea levels are rising faster now than in the previous two millennia, and the rise will probably accelerate, even with robust GHG emission control measures. While the Planning Area is not close to the Pacific coast, sea level rise may jeopardize California’s water supply due to saltwater intrusion and induce groundwater flooding and/or exposure of buried infrastructure (State of California 2018).

Agriculture

California has a $59 billion annual agricultural industry that produces over a third of the country's vegetables and two-thirds of the country's fruits and nuts (California Department of Food and Agriculture 2024). Higher CO_2 levels can stimulate plant production and increase plant water-use efficiency. However, if temperatures rise and drier conditions prevail, certain regions of agricultural production could experience water shortages of up to 16 percent, which would increase water demand as hotter conditions lead to the loss of soil moisture. In addition, crop yield could be threatened by water-induced stress and extreme heat waves, and plants may be susceptible to new and changing pest and disease outbreaks (State of California 2018). Temperature increases could also change the time of year that certain crops, such as wine grapes, bloom or ripen, and thereby affect their quality (California Climate Change Center 2006).

Ecosystems

Climate change and the potential resultant changes in weather patterns could have ecological effects on the global and local scales. Soil moisture is likely to decline in many regions because of higher temperatures, and intense rainstorms are likely to become more frequent. Rising temperatures could have four major impacts on plants and animals: timing of ecological events; geographic distribution and range of species; species composition and the incidence of nonnative species within communities; and ecosystem processes, such as carbon cycling and storage (Parmesan 2006; State of California 2018).

d. Local Effects of Climate Change

While the above discussion identifies the possible effects of climate change at a global and potentially statewide level, regional and local predictions are often based on downscaling statewide models. Observable effects of climate change have already been witnessed on the environment. The City of Auburn has specific vulnerabilities due to the changing climate (City of Auburn 2021). In particular, the main concerns include the following:

- **Increased wildfires**. Changing climate conditions are expected to increase the wildfire risk in and around Auburn. Warmer temperatures brought on by climate change can exacerbate drought conditions. Droughts can kill or dry out plants, creating more fuel for wildfires. Warmer temperatures are also expected to increase the number of pest outbreaks, such as the western pine beetle, creating more dead trees and increasing the fuel load. Due to warmer temperatures, the fire season is also likely to begin earlier in the year and extend later than it has historically.
- **Temperature increases**. Higher temperatures are expected to cause an increase in extreme heat days. Historically, Auburn experiences an average of four extreme heat days each year, which is any day where temperatures exceed 102°F. These extreme heat days are projected to occur 23 to 32 times each year by around 2050, and 35 to 56 times annually by the end of the century (City of Auburn 2021).
- **Landslides.** Climate change may result in precipitation extremes (i.e., wetter wet periods and drier dry periods). While total average annual rainfall may decrease only slightly, rainfall is predicted to occur in fewer, more intense precipitation events. Heavy rainfall or snowfall could cause an increase in the number of landslides or make landslides larger than normal. The combination of a generally drier climate in the future, which will increase the chance of drought

and wildfires, and the occasional extreme downpour is likely to cause more mudslides and landslides.

- **Flooding**. Climate change is expected to cause more years with extreme precipitation events. This means that more years are likely to see particularly intense storm systems that drop enough precipitation over a short enough period to cause flooding. Because of this, floods are expected to occur more often in and around Auburn and climate change may expand the parts of Auburn that are considered flood prone.
- **Agriculture and Forestry Pests and Disease.** Pests and organisms that cause or spread disease may be active for a longer period of time due to warmer temperatures. Changes in temperature and precipitation patterns could cause new pests and diseases to be active in and around Auburn. Such pests and diseases may not only affect human health but could harm local ecosystems and agricultural activities.
- **Drought.** Because of climate change, less precipitation is expected to fall as snow, leading to a smaller snowpack. More precipitation falling as rain and warmer temperatures over the course of the year are expected to cause the snowpack that does build up to melt faster. This may make water levels particularly low in late summer and early autumn, which are also often the hottest parts of the year.
- **Severe weather events**. Severe weather events, such as intense storms and high winds are expected to become more frequent and intense. Auburn may experience an increase in hazardous events, such as floods and landslides as a result.

4.8.2 Regulatory Setting

a. Federal Regulations

Federal Clean Air Act

The U.S. Supreme Court determined in *Massachusetts et al. v. Environmental Protection Agency et al.* ([2007] 549 U.S. 05-1120) that the USEPA has the authority to regulate motor vehicle GHG emissions under the federal Clean Air Act. The USEPA issued a Final Rule for mandatory reporting of GHG emissions in October 2009. This Final Rule applies to fossil fuel suppliers, industrial gas suppliers, direct GHG emitters, and manufacturers of heavy-duty and off-road vehicles and vehicle engines and requires annual reporting of emissions. In 2012, the USEPA issued a Final Rule that established the GHG permitting thresholds that determine when Clean Air Act permits under the New Source Review Prevention of Significant Deterioration and Title V Operating Permit programs are required for new and existing industrial facilities.

In *Utility Air Regulatory Group v. Environmental Protection Agency* (134 Supreme Court 2427 [2014]), the U.S. Supreme Court held the USEPA may not treat GHGs as an air pollutant for purposes of determining whether a source can be considered a major source required to obtain a Prevention of Significant Deterioration or Title V permit. The Court also held that Prevention of Significant Deterioration permits otherwise required based on emissions of other pollutants may continue to require limitations on GHG emissions based on the application of Best Available Control Technology.

b. State Regulations

CARB is responsible for the coordination and oversight of State and local air pollution control programs in California. There are numerous regulations aimed at reducing the state's GHG emissions. These initiatives are summarized below.

California Advanced Clean Cars Program

Assembly Bill (AB) 1493 (2002), California's Advanced Clean Cars program (referred to as "Pavley"), requires CARB to develop and adopt regulations to achieve "the maximum feasible and cost-effective reduction of GHG emissions from motor vehicles." On June 30, 2009, the USEPA granted the waiver of Clean Air Act preemption to California for its GHG emission standards for motor vehicles, beginning with the 2009 model year, which allows California to implement more stringent vehicle emission standards than those promulgated by the USEPA. Pavley I regulates model years from 2009 to 2016 and Pavley II, now referred to as "LEV (Low Emission Vehicle) III GHG," regulates model years from 2017 to 2025. The Advanced Clean Cars program coordinates the goals of the LEV, Zero Emissions Vehicles (ZEV), and Clean Fuels Outlet programs and would provide major reductions in GHG emissions. By 2025, the rules will be fully implemented, and new automobiles will emit 34 percent fewer GHGs and 75 percent fewer smog-forming emissions from their model year 2016 levels (CARB 2011).

Assembly Bill 1007 (State Alternative Fuels Plan)

AB 1007 (Chapter 371, Statutes of 2005) required the California Energy Commission (CEC) to prepare a state plan to increase the use of alternative fuels in California. The CEC prepared the State Alternative Fuels Plan (SAF Plan) in partnership with CARB and in consultation with other federal, State, and local agencies. The SAF Plan presents strategies and actions California must take to increase the use of alternative non-petroleum fuels in a manner that minimizes costs to California and maximizes the economic benefits of in-state production. The SAF Plan assessed various alternative fuels and developed fuel portfolios to meet California's goals to reduce petroleum consumption, increase alternative fuels use, reduce GHG emissions, and increase in-state production of biofuels without causing a significant degradation of public health and environmental quality. The SAF Plan provided a framework for subsequent legislation, including AB 118 (Chapter 750, Statutes of 2007), to be passed, which currently provides 690 million dollars in funding for medium- and heavy-duty battery-electric and hydrogen infrastructure, and 77 million dollars for hydrogen refueling infrastructure (California Energy Commission 2021).

California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006 (Assembly Bill 32 and Senate Bill 32)

The "California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006," (AB 32), outlines California's major legislative initiative for reducing GHG emissions. AB 32 codifies the statewide goal of reducing GHG emissions to 1990 levels by 2020 and requires CARB to prepare a Scoping Plan that outlines the main state strategies for reducing GHG emissions to meet the 2020 deadline. In addition, AB 32 requires CARB to adopt regulations to require reporting and verification of statewide GHG emissions. Based on this guidance, CARB approved a 1990 statewide GHG level and 2020 target of 431 MMT of CO_2e, which was achieved in 2016. CARB approved the Scoping Plan on December 11, 2008, which included GHG emission reduction strategies related to energy efficiency, water use, and recycling and solid waste, among others (CARB 2008). Many of the GHG reduction measures included in the Scoping Plan (e.g., Low Carbon Fuel Standard, Advanced Clean Car standards, and Cap-and-Trade) have been adopted since the Scoping Plan's approval.

CARB approved the 2013 Scoping Plan update in May 2014. The update defined the CARB's climate change priorities for the next five years, set the groundwork to reach post-2020 statewide goals, and highlighted California's progress toward meeting the "near-term" 2020 GHG emission reduction goals defined in the original Scoping Plan. It also evaluated how to align the state's longer term GHG

reduction strategies with other state policy priorities, including those for water, waste, natural resources, clean energy, transportation, and land use (CARB 2014).

On September 8, 2016, the governor signed Senate Bill (SB) 32 into law, extending the California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006 by requiring the state to further reduce GHG emissions to 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030 (the other provisions of AB 32 remain unchanged). On December 14, 2017, the CARB adopted the 2017 Scoping Plan, which provides a framework for achieving the 2030 target. The 2017 Scoping Plan relies on the continuation and expansion of existing policies and regulations, such as the Cap-and-Trade Program, and implementation of recently adopted policies and legislation, such as SB 1383 and SB 100. The 2017 Scoping Plan also puts an increased emphasis on innovation, adoption of existing technology, and strategic investment to support its strategies. As with the 2013 Scoping Plan update, the 2017 Scoping Plan does not provide project-level thresholds for land use development. Instead, it recommends that local governments adopt policies and locally appropriate quantitative thresholds consistent with statewide per capita goals of 6 MT of CO_2e by 2030 and 2 MT of CO_2e by 2050 (CARB 2017). As stated in the 2017 Scoping Plan, these goals may be appropriate for plan-level analyses (city, county, sub-regional, or regional level), but not for specific individual projects because they include all emissions sectors in the state.

CARB published the Final 2022 Scoping Plan for Achieving Carbon Neutrality (2022 Scoping Plan Update) in November 2022, as the third update to the initial plan that was adopted in 2008. The 2022 Scoping Plan Update is the most comprehensive and far-reaching Scoping Plan developed to date. It identifies a technologically feasible, cost-effective, and equity-focused path to achieve new targets for carbon neutrality by 2045 and to reduce anthropogenic GHG emissions to at least 85 percent below 1990 levels, while also assessing the progress California is making toward reducing its GHG emissions by at least 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030, as called for in SB 32 and laid out in the 2017 Scoping Plan (CARB 2022). The 2030 target is an interim but important stepping-stone along the critical path to the broader goal of deep decarbonization by 2045. The relatively longer path assessed in the 2022 Scoping Plan Update incorporates, coordinates, and leverages many existing and ongoing efforts to reduce GHGs and air pollution, while identifying new clean technologies and energy. Given the focus on carbon neutrality, the 2022 Scoping Plan Update also includes discussion for the first time of the natural and working lands sectors as sources for both sequestration and carbon storage, and as sources of emissions as a result of wildfires.

The 2022 Scoping Plan Update reflects existing and recent direction in the Governor's Executive Orders and State Statutes, which identify policies, strategies, and regulations in support of and implementation of the Scoping Plan. Among these include Executive Order B-55-18 and AB 1279 (the California Climate Crisis Act), which identify the carbon neutrality and GHG reduction targets for 2045 incorporated into the Scoping Plan.

Senate Bill 375

The Sustainable Communities and Climate Protection Act of 2008 (SB 375), signed in August 2008, enhances the state's ability to reach AB 32 goals by directing the CARB to develop regional GHG emission reduction targets to be achieved from passenger vehicles by 2020 and 2035. SB 375 aligns regional transportation planning efforts, regional GHG reduction targets, and affordable housing allocations. Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) are required to adopt a Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS), which allocates land uses in the MPO's Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). Qualified projects consistent with an approved SCS or Alternative Planning Strategy (categorized as "transit priority projects") can receive incentives to streamline CEQA processing.

The City of Auburn is within the Sacramento Council of Governments (SACOG), SACOG is an association of local governments in the six-county Sacramento Region. Its members include the counties of El Dorado, Placer, Sacramento, Sutter, Yolo, and Yuba; and the 22 cities within these counties, including the City of Auburn (SACOG 2025). SACOG's most recent RTP/SCS was adopted in November 2025. However, this arrangement is unique because Placer County has its own state designation as a Regional Transportation Planning Agency and is responsible for developing its own transportation plan. SACOG works in coordination with the Placer County Transportation Planning Agency to ensure consistency between the county-specific plan and the broader region-wide plan (SACOG 2025).

California Integrated Waste Management Act (Assembly Bill 341)

The California Integrated Waste Management Act of 1989, as modified by AB 341 in 2011, requires each jurisdiction's source reduction and recycling element to include an implementation schedule that shows: (1) diversion of 25 percent of all solid waste by January 1, 1995, through source reduction, recycling, and composting activities and (2) diversion of 50 percent of all solid waste on and after January 1, 2000.

Senate Bill 1383

Adopted in September 2016, SB 1383 (Lara, Chapter 395, Statues of 2016) requires CARB to approve and begin implementing a comprehensive strategy to reduce emissions of short-lived climate pollutants. SB 1383 requires the strategy to achieve the following reduction targets by 2030:

- Methane – 40 percent below 2013 levels
- Hydrofluorocarbons – 40 percent below 2013 levels
- Anthropogenic black carbon – 50 percent below 2013 levels

SB 1383 also requires the California Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery (CalRecycle), in consultation with the CARB, to adopt regulations that achieve specified targets for reducing organic waste in landfills.

Senate Bill 100

Adopted on September 10, 2018, SB 100 supports the reduction of GHG emissions from the electricity sector by accelerating the state's Renewables Portfolio Standard (RPS) Program, which was last updated by SB 350 in 2015. SB 100 requires electricity providers to increase procurement from eligible renewable energy resources to 33 percent of total retail sales by 2020, 60 percent by 2030, and 100 percent by 2045. The 2020 goal was met, with approximately 36 percent of electricity coming from renewable sources in March 2021 (CARB 2021).

Executive Order B-55-18

On September 10, 2018, the former Governor Brown issued Executive Order (EO) B-55-18, which established a new statewide goal of achieving carbon neutrality by 2045 and maintaining net negative emissions thereafter. This goal is in addition to the existing statewide GHG reduction targets established by SB 375, SB 32, SB 1383, and SB 100.

California Building Standards Code

The California Code of Regulations (CCR) Title 24 is referred to as the California Building Standards Code. It consists of a compilation of several distinct standards and codes related to building construction, including plumbing, electrical, interior acoustics, energy efficiency, and handicap accessibility for persons with physical and sensory disabilities. The current iteration is the 2019 Title 24 standards. The California Building Standards Code's energy-efficiency and green building standards are outlined below.

Part 6 – Building Energy Efficiency Standards/Energy Code

CCR Title 24, Part 6 is the Building Energy Efficiency Standards or California Energy Code. This code, originally enacted in 1978, establishes energy-efficiency standards for residential and non-residential buildings to reduce California's energy demand. New construction and major renovations must demonstrate their compliance with the current Energy Code through submittal and approval of a Title 24 Compliance Report to the local building permit review authority and the CEC. The 2019 Title 24 standards are the applicable building energy efficiency standards for the project because they became effective on January 1, 2020 (2018).

Part 11 – California Green Building Standards

The California Green Building Standards Code, referred to as CalGreen, was added to Title 24 as Part 11, first in 2009 as a voluntary code, which then became mandatory effective January 1, 2011 (as part of the 2010 California Building Standards Code). Current CalGreen includes mandatory minimum environmental performance standards for all ground-up new construction of residential and non-residential structures. It also includes voluntary tiers (Tiers I and II) with stricter environmental performance standards for these same categories of residential and non-residential buildings. Local jurisdictions must enforce the minimum mandatory CalGreen standards and may adopt additional amendments for stricter requirements.

The mandatory standards require:

- 20 percent reduction in indoor water use relative to specified baseline levels;[1]
- 65 percent construction/demolition waste diverted from landfills;
- Inspections of energy systems to ensure optimal working efficiency;
- Low-pollutant emitting exterior and interior finish materials such as paints, carpets, vinyl flooring, and particleboards;
- Dedicated circuitry to facilitate installation of electric vehicle charging stations in newly constructed attached garages for single-family and duplex dwellings; and
- Installation of electric vehicle charging stations at least three percent of the parking spaces for all new multi-family developments with 17 or more units.

[1] Similar to the compliance reporting procedure for demonstrating Energy Code compliance in new buildings and major renovations, compliance with the CalLGreen water-reduction requirements must be demonstrated through completion of water use reporting forms. Buildings must demonstrate a 20 percent reduction in indoor water use by either showing a 20 percent reduction in the overall baseline water use as identified in CalGreen or a reduced per-plumbing-fixture water use rate.

The voluntary standards require:

- Tier I: stricter energy efficiency requirements, stricter water conservation requirements for specific fixtures, 65 percent reduction in construction waste with third-party verification, 10 percent recycled content for building materials, 20 percent permeable paving, 20 percent cement reduction, and cool/solar reflective roof; and
- Tier II: stricter energy efficiency requirements, stricter water conservation requirements for specific fixtures, 75 percent reduction in construction waste with third-party verification, 15 percent recycled content for building materials, 30 percent permeable paving, 25 percent cement reduction, and cool/solar reflective roof.

Title 17, California Code of Regulations Section 95350 et seq.

In 2010, CARB adopted the *Regulation for Reducing Sulfur Hexafluoride Emissions From Gas Insulated Switchgear* (Title 17, CCR Section 95350 et seq.). The purpose of this regulation is to achieve GHG emission reductions by reducing SF_6 emissions from gas-insulated switchgear. Owners of such switchgear must not exceed maximum allowable annual emissions rates, reduced each year until 2020, after which annual emissions must not exceed 1 percent. Owners must regularly inventory gas-insulated switchgear equipment, measure quantities of SF_6, and maintain records of these for at least three years. Additionally, by June 1 each year, owners also must submit an annual report to CARB's Executive Officer for emissions that occurred during the previous calendar year.

In December 2021, CARB adopted amendments to the Regulation for Reducing Sulfur Hexafluoride Emissions from Gas Insulated Switchgear, to update the phase out of SF_6 in gas-insulated switchgear. The new phase out schedule begins in January 2025 with all switchgear needing to be SF_6 free by January 2033. Under this resolution, CARB has developed a timeline for phasing out SF_6 equipment in California and created incentives to encourage owners to replace SF_6 equipment. The California Office of Administrative Law approved this rulemaking in December 2021 and the Resolution went into effect January 1, 2022.

California Advanced Clean Trucks Program

In March 2021, CARB approved the Advanced Clean Trucks regulation, which requires manufacturers who certify Class 2b-8 chassis or complete vehicles with combustion engines to sell zero-emission trucks as an increasing percentage of their annual California sales from 2024 to 2035. In addition, the regulation requires company and fleet reporting for large employers and fleet owners with 50 or more trucks. By 2045, all new trucks sold in California must be zero-emission. Implementation of this regulation would reduce consumption of nonrenewable transportation fuels as trucks transition to alternative fuel sources.

California Advanced Clean Fleets Regulation

In April 2023, CARB approved the Advanced Clean Fleets (ACF) regulation. The ACF regulation is part of California's strategy to accelerate the adoption of medium- and heavy-duty ZEV. It complements the Advanced Clean Trucks regulation and aims to achieve public health, air quality, and climate goals. The ACF regulation applies to fleets performing drayage operations, those owned by State, local, and federal government agencies, and high priority fleets. The ACF regulation includes components such as a manufacturer sales mandate, drayage fleet registrations, requirements for drayage fleets to transition to zero-emission vehicles, and mandates for high priority and government fleets to purchase increasing percentages of ZEVs over time. The regulation provides

flexibility and exemptions for cases where zero-emission trucks are not yet available. The ACF regulation is expected to significantly increase the number of ZEVs on California roads, leading to emissions reductions and health benefits. The Advanced Clean Trucks and ACF regulations together are expected to result in about 510,000, 1,350,000, and 1,690,000 ZEVs in California in 2035, 2045, and 2050, respectively.

Executive Order B-48-18 (Zero-Emission Vehicles)

On January 26, 2018, Governor Brown signed Executive Order B-48-18 requiring all State entities to work with the private sector to have at least 5 million ZEVs on the road by 2030, as well as install 200 hydrogen fueling stations and 250,000 electric vehicle (EV) charging stations by 2025. It specifies that 10,000 of the EV charging stations should be direct current fast chargers. This order also requires all State entities to continue to partner with local and regional governments to streamline the installation of ZEV infrastructure. The Governor's Office of Business and Economic Development is required to publish a Plug-in Charging Station Design Guidebook and update the 2015 Hydrogen Station Permitting Guidebook to aid in these efforts. All State entities are required to participate in updating the 2016 ZEV Action Plan, along with the 2018 ZEV Action Plan Priorities Update, which includes and extends the 2016 ZEV Action Plan, to help expand private investment in ZEV infrastructure with a focus on serving low-income and disadvantaged communities.

Executive Order N-79-20 (Zero Emissions Vehicles Sales)

Governor Gavin Newsom signed Executive Order N-79-20 in September 2020, which sets a statewide goal that 100 percent of all new passenger car and truck sales in the state will be zero-emissions by 2035. It also sets a goal that 100 percent of statewide new sales of medium- and heavy-duty vehicles will be zero emissions by 2045, where feasible, and for all new sales of drayage trucks to be zero emissions by 2035. Additionally, the Executive Order targets 100 percent of new off-road vehicle sales in the state to be zero emission by 2035. CARB is responsible for implementing the new vehicle sales regulation.

Senate Bill 1020

SB 1020 signed into law on September 16, 2022, requires renewable energy and zero-carbon resources to supply 90 percent of all retail electricity sales by 2035, 95 percent by 2040, and 100 percent by 2045. All State agencies facilities must be served by 100 percent renewable and zero-carbon resources by 2030. SB 1020 also requires the California Public Utilities Commission, CEC, and CARB to issue a joint progress report outlining the reliability of the electrical grid with a focus on summer reliability and challenges and gaps. Additionally, SB 1020 requires the California Public Utilities Commission to define energy affordability and use energy affordability metrics to develop protections, incentives, discounts, or new programs for residential customers facing hardships due to energy or gas bills.

c. Regional and Local Regulations

Sacramento Council of Governments (SACOG) Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy

SACOG adopted its 2025 Metropolitan Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (MTP/SCS), also known as the *2025 Blueprint*, in November 2025 (SACOG 2025).[2] Under SB 375, CARB is responsible for issuing GHG targets to MPOs that aim to reduce vehicle emissions, consistent with state climate goals, by 2035 as compared to a 2005 baseline. For the 2025 MTP/SCS, CARB assigned SACOG a target of 19 percent per capita greenhouse gas reduction (SACOG 2025). The 2025 MTP/SCS policies to support that objective include the following:

NextGen-1: Encourage context-responsive shared mobility programs (car share, bike share, scooter share, and microtransit) to increase mobility options for residents and bridge the first-mile/last-mile gap to fixed-route bus and rail.

NextGen-3: Support a transition to zero-emission passenger, freight, and transit vehicles that is equitable and considers the diversity of regional needs and contexts, including rural, urban, and suburban communities as well as historically underrepresented communities.

Invest-5: Encourage revenues generated from tolling to first be used to build and maintain the regional network of toll facilities and, where surplus revenue is available, on strategic transit services (e.g., express buses) or other mobility solutions that can reduce vehicle miles traveled, manage congestion, and provide multiple travel options along tolled corridors.

Invest-8: Support locally-led efforts to raise funding for priority investments that are consistent with the goals, strategies, and investments included in the regional Metropolitan Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy

Sacramento Region Transportation Climate Adaptation Plan

SACOG completed the Sacramento Region Transportation Climate Adaptation Plan (2015) that considered the potential climate change impacts such as extreme temperatures, increased precipitation, runoff and flooding, increased wildfires, and landslides. The plan describes potential impacts the region could face over the next 100 years due to climate change, how different climate related events impact transportation and supporting infrastructure, how managing agencies can begin to prepare for these impacts through the planning, design, and maintenance phases of a project, and outlines the steps necessary to help make the region's transportation infrastructure more adaptable to climate risks (SACOG 2015).

Placer County Regional Transportation Plan

The 2040 Regional Transportation Plan (2040 RTP) was developed under the direction of Placer County Transportation Planning Agency (PCTPA). Each of the six cities within Placer County, including the City of Auburn, are members of PCTPA. The 2040 RTP Guidelines require that the issue of climate change and GHG emissions be addressed during the RTP process. While predominately rural areas such as Placer County are not subject to the same requirements as urban regions, discussion of the issue in the 2040 RTP provides the opportunity to identify existing and future

[2] SACOG. 2025. 2025 Blueprint Plan. https://www.sacog.org/planning/2025-blueprint/2025-blueprint-plan (accessed February 2026).

efforts that will contribute to the emission reduction targets. SACOG's MTP/SCS incorporates 2040 RTP projects which contribute to the regional goals of improving transportation choices to reduce GHG emissions. The 2040 RTP also contains many goals and policies to reduce vehicle trips and improve air quality, most notably in the areas of non-motorized transportation, transportation systems management, Integrated Land Use, Air Quality, and Transportation Planning (PCTPA 2019). Specific policies include the following:

- Encourage jurisdictions to build complete street improvement projects, which incorporate bicycle, pedestrian, and transit facilities.
- Support regional Transportation Demand Management (TDM) programs as a strategy for education and promotion of alternative travel modes for all types of trips toward reducing Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) by 10 percent.
- Encourage jurisdictions to design neighborhoods and communities to reduce VMT and enable shorter length trips to be made using alternative modes.
- Encourage jurisdictions to diversify their transportation energy infrastructure to accommodate future alternative fuels and fleets.
- Encourage and coordinate with local jurisdictions to plan for and implement a resilient transportation network that meets state and federal requirements for climate change.
- Prioritize and recommend transportation projects that provide cost effective movement of people and goods while minimizing vehicle emissions.
- Continue to promote projects that can be demonstrated to reduce air pollution and greenhouse gases, maintain clean air and better public health, through programs and strategies, to green the transportation system.
- Work with the PCAPCD in developing plans that meet the standards of the California Clean Air Act and the Federal Clean Air Act Amendments, and also lead to reduced greenhouse gas emissions.
- Work with the Sacramento Area Council of Governments to evaluate the impacts of each transportation plan and program on the timely attainment of ambient air quality standards, and regional greenhouse gas emission reduction targets.

The Placer County Air Pollution Control District

The PCAPCD is the regulatory agency responsible for developing and adopting an Air Quality Management Plan to bring Placer County into compliance with federal and state clean air standards. PCAPCD includes portions of the Sacramento Valley, Mountain, and Lake Tahoe Air Basins. PCAPCD is also responsible for adopting and enforcing rules and regulations concerning air pollutant sources, issuing permits to businesses to ensure compliance with air quality regulations, inspecting stationary sources of air pollutants, responding to citizen complaints, monitoring ambient air quality and meteorological conditions, conducting public education campaigns, and many other activities (PCACPD 2023).

Placer County Sustainability Plan

The Placer County Sustainability Plan (PCSP) was adopted by the County in 2020. The PCSP establishes goals, strategies, and actions to address GHG emissions from the energy, water, transportation, agriculture and forestry, and solid waste sectors. It also establishes an implementation program and a framework to monitor and report progress. The PCSP provides an

updated framework for addressing GHG emissions in the community and from County operations. A Vulnerability Assessment and Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory are included in the PCSP.

Auburn Municipal Code

Auburn Municipal Code Sections 71.75 - 71.99 establish limitations on engine idling to reduce air pollution and GHG emissions from motor vehicle exhaust.

Auburn General Plan 1993

The Auburn General Plan Circulation Element includes the following goals and policies related to transportation efficiency:

Goal 3: Encourage transportation alternatives to the single-occupant vehicle.

Policy 3.1 Match land use density to transit service routes and roadway capacity.

Policy 3.2 Modify and update transit routes and schedules to reflect changes in service demand.

Policy 3.3 Encourage and support programs which will increase ridesharing.

Policy 3.4 Support the establishment of inter-city rail service and other modes of transportation connecting the Bay Area, Sacramento, Roseville, Auburn, Colfax, and surrounding cities.

Policy 3.5 The City shall develop and implement an ongoing Trip Reduction Implementation Program applicable to major development projects and employers.

Policy 3.6 The City shall prepare a transit master plan for the City transit system.

Policy 3.7 Continue participation with the Placer County Transportation Commission (Congestion Management Agency).

Policy 3.8 Construct bicycle lanes, where possible, on all major arterials.

Placer County Municipal Code

Placer County Code Article 10.14 establishes limitations on engine idling to reduce air pollution and GHG emissions from motor vehicle exhaust.

Placer County General Plan

The Placer County General Plan (County of Placer 1994), which was last updated in May 2013, provides guidance in land use and development policies for implementation by the Placer County Air Pollution Control District (PCAPCD). General Plan policies and implementation measures from the Air Quality section of the Natural Resources Element are related to air quality and greenhouse gas emissions:

Policy 6.F.2 The County shall develop mitigation measures to minimize stationary source and area source emissions.

Implementation Program 6.17. The County shall coordinate with other local, regional, and state agencies, including the PCAPCD and the California Air Resources Board (ARB), in incorporating regional and County clean air plans into County planning and project review procedures. The County shall also cooperate with the PCAPCD and ARB in the following efforts:

a. Enforcing the provision of the California and federal Clean Air Acts, state and regional policies, and established standards for air quality;
b. Establishing monitoring stations to accurately determine the status of carbon monoxide, ozone, nitrogen dioxide, hydrocarbon and PM_{10} concentrations;
c. Developing and implementing clean fuel regulations for vehicle fleets; and,
d. Developing consistent procedures and thresholds for evaluating both project-specific and cumulative air quality impacts for proposed projects.

Implementation Program 6.22. In consultation with the PCAPCD, cities and special PCAPCDs, transit providers, and major employers in Placer County, the County shall adopt a program to encourage the widespread use of clean fuels. This program shall include the following components:

a. Vigorously pursuing replacement of existing County vehicles that burn gasoline and diesel fuel with vehicles that use clean fuels including, but not limited to, methanol, compressed natural gas (CNG), liquefied petroleum gas (LPG), and electric batteries;
b. Encouraging existing fueling stations in the County to provide clean fuels such as methanol and LPG; and
c. Encouraging bus service companies based in Placer County to use clean fuel buses in their daily operations.

4.8.3 Impact Analysis

a. Significance Thresholds and Methodology

Significance Thresholds

Based on Appendix G of the *CEQA Guidelines* a project may be deemed to have a significant impact on GHG emissions if it would:

1. Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment; or
2. Conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases.

Most individual projects do not generate sufficient GHG emissions to create a project-specific impact through a direct influence on climate change. However, physical changes caused by a project can contribute incrementally to cumulative effects that are significant, even if individual changes resulting from a project are limited. The issue of climate change typically involves an analysis of whether a project's contribution towards an impact is cumulatively considerable. "Cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of an individual project are significant when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, other current projects, and probable future projects (*CEQA Guidelines* Section 15064[h][1]). The 2017 PCAPCD CEQA Handbook provides two thresholds for determining the significance of GHGs. The two approaches are as follows:

1. Consistency with a qualified GHG reduction plan or climate action plan; or

2. Estimated GHG emissions are found to be below applicable thresholds. Specifically,
    a. Estimated construction GHG emissions found to be below the PCAPCD's bright-line GHG threshold of 10,000 MT CO_2e/year;
    b. Estimated operational GHG emissions found to be below: 1) the De Minimis Level of 1,100 metric tons carbon dioxide equivalents per year (MT CO_2e/yr); or 2) the per capita thresholds for residential and non-residential land use types in an urban setting of 4.5 MT CO_2e per capita (MT CO_2e/capita) and 26.5 MT CO_2e/1,000 square feet, respectively.

The significance thresholds under the second approach are not applicable to the project, but it may be applicable to development facilitated by the project. Quantitative GHG significance thresholds developed for individual, project-level CEQA review are not directly applicable to a programmatic EIR. Project-level thresholds summarized under the second approach, above, may be applied, as appropriate, during subsequent CEQA review of individual discretionary projects.

A programmatic EIR, such as this one, evaluates the broad policy framework, land use patterns, and implementation strategies of a plan or program, rather than specific development projects with defined emissions profiles. Accordingly, GHG impacts are appropriately assessed at the program level using a qualitative, plan-based approach that examines consistency with applicable state and regional climate goals, policies, and targets, and the extent to which the program would enable long-term reductions in GHG emissions. As such, GHG impacts are evaluated qualitatively using the first approach.

The City of Auburn does not have a qualified climate action plan. The Placer County Sustainability Plan (PCSP) is the GHG reduction plan and adaptation strategy for unincorporated Placer County; however, the PCSP is not a qualified climate action plan. According to the PCSP, while many community-wide GHG reduction plans prepared throughout the State allow for discretionary projects to tier from the environmental analysis prepared for a community-wide GHG emissions reduction plan, the PCSP does not serve this function. CARB's *2022 Scoping Plan for Achieving Carbon Neutrality* (2022 Scoping Plan) represents the State's comprehensive, science-based strategy for reducing GHG emissions consistent with statutory targets, including achieving carbon neutrality by 2045. Consistency with the 2022 Scoping Plan may be used to demonstrate that a plan, program, or project would not result in a cumulatively considerable contribution to climate change, consistent with *CEQA Guidelines* Section 15064.4(b)(2). In lieu of a community-wide qualified climate action plan, this EIR therefore evaluates GHG impacts by assessing the degree to which the proposed project aligns with the policies, strategies, and emissions-reduction pathways identified in the 2022 Scoping Plan.

Additionally, for informational purposes, operational emissions estimates from full build out of development facilitated by the project are quantified and summarized below.

Methodology

In developing the 2022 Scoping Plan, CARB analyzed what would be required to achieve California's long-term climate goal of carbon neutrality by 2045, thereby better representing what design elements new land use development projects need to incorporate to sufficiently contribute to achieving the State's goal. As GHG emissions from the land use sector come primarily from building energy use and from transportation, these are the areas that need to be evaluated to determine whether the project can or will be carbon neutral. With respect to building energy use, this can be achieved by replacing natural gas with electric power and by eliminating inefficient or wasteful electricity usage. These strategies would support California's transition away from fossil fuel-based

energy sources and would bring GHG emissions associated with building energy use from development facilitated by the project down to zero because SB 100 incrementally requires greater proportions of in-state sales of electricity to be generated from renewable and carbon-free sources, ultimately requiring 100 percent of in-state electricity sales to be generated from carbon-free sources by 2045. With respect to transportation, projects need to be designed to reduce project-generated VMT and to provide sufficient EV charging infrastructure to support the use of EVs.

b. Project Impacts and Mitigation

Threshold 1:	Would development facilitated by the 2045 General Plan generate GHG emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?
Threshold 2:	Would the 2045 General Plan conflict with an applicable plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?

Impact GHG-1 DEVELOPMENT FACILITATED BY THE PROJECT WOULD GENERATE GHG EMISSIONS; HOWEVER, THE EMISSIONS WOULD NOT RESULT IN A SIGNIFICANT IMPACT ON THE ENVIRONMENT. ADDITIONALLY, THE PROJECT WOULD BE CONSISTENT WITH LOCAL, REGIONAL, AND STATE REDUCTION PLANS AND GOALS. THEREFORE, THE PROJECT WOULD NOT CONFLICT WITH AN APPLICABLE PLAN, POLICY, OR REGULATION ADOPTED FOR THE PURPOSE OF REDUCING THE EMISSIONS OF GREENHOUSE GASES. THIS IMPACT WOULD BE LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT.

Construction

Construction of development facilitated by the project would result in GHG emissions, primarily from fuel consumption associated with heavy equipment, light-duty vehicles, machinery, and generators for lighting. Temporary grid power may also be provided to construction trailers or electric construction equipment that may result in indirect GHG emissions from energy generation. Construction contractors that would be required to comply with applicable CARB regulations, such as accelerated retrofitting, repowering, or replacement of heavy-duty diesel on-road and off-road equipment. Construction contractors are required to comply with the provisions of Title 13, CCR Sections 2449 and 2485, and CARB regulations, which prohibit diesel-fueled commercial and off-road vehicles from idling for more than five minutes, minimizing unnecessary GHG emissions. Construction equipment would be subject to the USEPA Construction Equipment Fuel Efficiency Standard, which would minimize inefficient fuel consumption and thus GHG emissions. These construction equipment standards (i.e., Tier 4 efficiency requirements) are contained in 40 Code of Federal Regulations Parts 1039, 1065, and 1068. Pursuant to applicable regulatory requirements of CALGreen, development facilitated by the project would comply with construction waste management practices to divert construction and demolition debris from landfills. These practices would result in efficient use of energy during construction and, therefore, would minimize unnecessary GHG emissions. Furthermore, in the interest of cost efficiency, construction contractors would not utilize fuel in a manner that is wasteful or unnecessary, which would also have the effect of minimizing GHG emissions. Additionally, in *Appendix C: Recommended Construction Mitigation Measures* in the 2017 PCAPCD CEQA Handbook, PCAPCD recommends construction mitigation measures for further reducing GHG emissions. These measures are evaluated on a project-by-project basis and, where appropriate, can be incorporated to further reduce a project's GHG emissions.

Pursuant to the 2017 PCAPCD CEQA Handbook, *Chapter 3: Analyzing Construction Emissions,* PCAPCD does not provide a construction-related climate impact threshold for Plan-level assessments. Additionally, specifics related to construction of development facilitated by the project are not known at this time and therefore could not be estimated. At the programmatic level, details such as construction phasing, duration, sequencing, equipment types, intensity of equipment use, haul routes, and material sourcing have not yet been defined. Without this information, it is not feasible to accurately quantify construction-related emissions or other construction-phase impacts. These details would be determined during subsequent project-level design and would be evaluated as part of future, site-specific CEQA review. As discussed in Section 4.3, *Air Quality,* General Plan Policies OSC-4.2 (Air Quality Impacts) and OSC-4.3 (Mitigating Air Pollution Through Design) require development projects under the General Plan to conduct an air quality assessment of construction emissions to compare to project-specific thresholds and apply mitigation measures if found to be potentially significant. These General Plan policies related to construction shall also apply to GHG impact assessments at the project level for comparison against PCAPCD brightline thresholds, discussed above. As such, construction of development facilitated by the 2045 General Plan would be less than significant.

Operation

Development facilitated by the project would result in GHG emissions during operation. The nature of GHG emissions would be typical of those associated with residential, commercial, retail, hotel, industrial, warehouse, and office uses. GHG emissions would result primarily from building energy usage and fuel consumption associated with vehicle trips. The proposed General Plan contains policies that aim to reduce operational GHG emissions in accordance with State 2030 GHG emissions reductions goals and provide substantial progress to the State's goal of carbon neutrality by 2045, as included below.

For transparency and context, Table 4.8-1 below presents an informational quantification of the realistic buildout assumption described in Section 2, *Project Description*, operational GHG emissions using reasonable, program-appropriate assumptions about future land use, population and employment growth, and associated activity levels. The estimate aggregates principal operational sources anticipated from development facilitated by the 2045 General Plan, including on-road transportation (vehicle miles traveled), building energy (electricity and natural gas or electrified end uses), area sources (e.g., landscaping equipment and refrigerants, as applicable), solid waste management, and water conveyance/wastewater treatment, based on regional travel modeling and standard emissions factors. Where relevant and supported by available data, the analysis incorporates state policy trajectories (e.g., grid decarbonization and zero-emission vehicle adoption) to avoid overstating emissions at buildout.

Because development would occur through future projects with yet-to-be-defined designs, technologies, and timing, this estimate is not used to determine significance; rather, it provides a reasonable order-of-magnitude profile to inform decision-makers and the public about the operational emissions context. Development facilitated by the project would be subject to additional review on an individual project-by-project basis, consistent with General Plan Policy OSC-4.2, which requires that air quality analyses be conducted to determine the construction and operational air quality impacts associated with project development. Alternatively, if projects are found to be consistent with 2045 General Plan GHG reduction measures, then the GHG impacts would be considered less than significant for operations. This is supported by the 2045 General Plan's Action OSC-6F, which allows future projects that are consistent with the General Plan Land

Use Diagram and growth assumptions to use the General Plan EIR GHG emissions analysis instead of conducting separate GHG studies. Under this action, these projects must clearly show they comply with the GHG reduction measures outlined in the EIR, including any required monitoring and reporting, and including measures that appear in other sections of the EIR, such as Section 4.3, *Air Quality* and Section 4.16, *Transportation*.

Consistent with 2045 General Plan Action OSC-6F (Streamlining of CEQA Analysis) and Policies OSC-4.2 (Air Quality Impacts) and OSC-4.3 (Mitigating Air Pollution Through Design), project-level CEQA review using detailed, site-specific information would be required by development projects in the Planning Area, where impacts would be assessed using applicable thresholds and mitigation at that time. Under these conditions, development facilitated by the project would be required to either demonstrate consistency with the measures outlined in the proposed General Plan or be required to estimate project-specific GHG emissions and compare them to the PCAPCD brightline thresholds, discussed above. The PCAPCD provides recommended mitigation measures that could be applied to reduce GHG impacts from discretionary projects (*Appendix F* of the 2017 PCAPCD CEQA Handbook). These measures focus primarily on building efficiency and renewable energy, such as requiring residential and non-residential buildings to meet higher CalGreen or LEED standards, install or be pre-plumbed for solar energy and solar water heating, etc. Additional measures focused on transportation, water conservation, and waste. While not required, these measures should be considered by development projects in the Planning Area when assessing GHG impacts associated with operation.

Table 4.8-1 Operational GHG Emissions (2045)

	GHG Emissions (MT CO_2e/year)
City of Auburn	
Mobile	153,021
Area	27
Energy	4,129
Water	270
Waste	504
Refrigerants	39
Existing Mobile (Baseline)	*(135,300)*
City Total	**22,690**
Unincorporated Auburn Planning Area	
Mobile	349,261
Area	38
Energy	6,616
Water	514
Waste	766
Refrigerants	91
Existing Mobile (Baseline)	*(310,868)*
Unincorporated Total	**46,418**
Total for Auburn Planning Area (City + Unincorporated)	
Mobile	502,282
Area	65

	GHG Emissions (MT CO_2e/year)
Energy	10,745
Water	784
Waste	1,270
Refrigerants	130
Existing Mobile (Baseline)	*(446,168)*
Project Total	**69,108**

MT = metric tons; CO_2e = carbon dioxide equivalents
Source: Appendix D

Consistency with Consistency with Plans and Policies

The principal plans and policies aimed at reducing GHG emissions in California are AB 32, the California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006, and the subsequent legislation, SB 32, as well as AB 1279 and EO B-55-18, which establish a statewide goal of achieving carbon neutrality by 2045 and maintaining net negative emissions thereafter. The quantitative goals of SB 32 are to reduce GHG emissions to 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030 and 80 percent below 1990 levels by 2050. Other regulations relevant to the proposed project include SB 375 and SB 1000.

The 2022 Scoping Plan lays out a path to achieve the reduction targets under SB 32 and carbon neutrality by 2045 under AB 1279 and EO B-55-18. Additionally, the regional vision of SACOG's 2025 MTP/SCS maximizes current voluntary local efforts to support the goals of SB 375. As such, if a project is consistent with the 2022 Scoping Plan, the 2025-2050 MTP/SCS, state and local regulatory requirements, interim GHG reduction goals and the 2045 carbon neutrality target, then the project would not conflict with applicable GHG reduction plans and policies and would result in a less than significant impact.

As assessment of the 2045 General Plan consistency with these plans and policies is provided below.

2022 Scoping Plan

CARB's 2022 Climate Change Scoping Plan outlines a pathway to achieving the 2030 reduction targets set under SB 32, which are considered interim targets toward meeting the long-term 2045 carbon neutrality goal established by EO B-55-18 and AB 1279. All the proposed Scoping Plan goals, policies, and measures described herein are intended to decrease energy use as a means of reducing adverse air quality and GHG emissions.

BUILDING DECARBONIZATION AND ENERGY EFFICIENCY

The 2022 Scoping Plan prioritizes building decarbonization as a core strategy for reducing both GHG emissions and criteria air pollutants by eliminating on-site fossil fuel combustion and lowering overall building energy demand. Consistent with this approach, development facilitated by the project would comply with the 2025 Building Energy Efficiency Standards (or the most recent version of the California Building Code), which require electric-ready commercial buildings, all-electric residential construction under three stories, and expanded provisions for on-site solar photovoltaic systems and battery storage.

This strategy is supported by the 2045 General Plan through Goal CD-3 (Quality Construction and Design) and Policy CD-3.5 (Sustainable Design), which encourage high-quality architecture, site planning, and sustainable design methods that reduce energy and resource consumption. Additional

support is provided by Goal OSC-6 (Climate Stability) and Policy OSC-6.2 (Energy Conservation), which require the adoption and enforcement of energy-efficient building codes and promote retrofitting and weatherization of existing buildings to reduce long-term operational energy demand, and Policy OSC-6.3 (Passive Solar Design), which promotes building orientation and subdivision design that leverages natural heating, cooling, and daylighting. Collectively, these goals and policies reduce building-related GHG emissions by lowering energy demand, eliminating reliance on fossil gas in new development, and integrating energy-efficient and passive design strategies consistent with the Scoping Plan's building electrification and decarbonization measures.

CLEAN ELECTRICITY AND ENERGY SUPPLY

The 2022 Scoping Plan outlines a statewide pathway to achieve 100 percent clean electricity by 2045, recognizing that building and transportation electrification must occur in parallel with rapid decarbonization of the electricity supply. Development under the project would be served by Pioneer Community Energy, a Community Choice Aggregation provider that complies with the State's Renewables Portfolio Standard and SB 100 requirements, while PG&E continues to maintain electrical grid and distribution infrastructure. This energy supply structure supports reduced GHG emissions associated with electricity consumption as electrification increases.

The proposed General Plan includes Goal OSC-6 (Climate Stability) and Policy OSC-6.1 (Renewable Energy), which encourage residents, businesses, and civic institutions to increase renewable energy use and prioritize green energy procurement. Policy OSC-6.4 (Microgrids) supports exploration of battery storage, microgrids, and smart energy systems to improve efficiency and reduce peak demand emissions, while Policy OSC-6.5 (Green Building) encourages energy-efficient construction materials and methods that further reduce lifecycle emissions associated with building construction and operation. Together, these policies support a progressively cleaner electricity supply that complements electrification of buildings and vehicles, directly aligning with the Scoping Plan's clean electricity and grid modernization strategies.

VMT REDUCTION AND TRANSPORTATION ELECTRIFICATION

Reducing vehicle miles traveled (VMT) and accelerating the transition to zero-emission vehicles (ZEVs) are central components of the 2022 Scoping Plan's transportation strategy. Implementation of the 2045 General Plan would reduce transportation-related GHG emissions by reshaping land use patterns, travel behavior, and transportation infrastructure to reduce per-capita VMT and increase the adoption of electric and low-carbon travel modes.

Transportation system coordination is established through proposed General Plan Goal T-1 (A Balanced Transportation Network), supported by Policy T-1.1 (Coordinating Transportation and Land Use) and Policy T-1.1.2 (Complete Streets), which ensure that transportation and land use decisions are mutually reinforcing and prioritize all modes of travel. Policy T-1.3 (Connectivity) and Policy T-1.4 (Mitigation of Development Impacts) reduce trip length and require project-level trip reduction and transportation improvements, while Policy T-1.9 (Balancing Objectives) explicitly prioritizes walking, bicycling, and active transportation when addressing congestion in order to support statewide GHG reduction goals.

More specifically, Goal T-3 (Sustainable Transportation) addresses climate impacts directly through Policy T-3.1 (Reducing Vehicle Miles Traveled), Policy T-3.2 (Use of VMT in Environmental Review), and Policy T-3.3 (Strategies to Reduce VMT), which collectively encourage compact, mixed-use development; transit-oriented growth; telecommuting; and trip-reduction programs. Policy T-3.4 (Zero Emission Vehicles) and Policy T-3.5 (Shared Mobility) further reduce transportation emissions

by promoting ZEV adoption, charging infrastructure, and shared transportation options. In combination, these policies reduce overall VMT, decrease reliance on single-occupant vehicles, and accelerate transportation electrification, consistent with the Scoping Plan's transportation decarbonization pathway.

ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION AND PUBLIC TRANSIT

In addition to electrification, the 2022 Scoping Plan emphasizes a mode shift toward walking, bicycling, transit, and microtransit as a means of reducing GHG emissions, air pollution, and energy use. The 2045 General Plan advances these strategies through Goal T-4 (Bicycle and Pedestrian Circulation) and Goal T-5 (Public Transportation). Policy T-4.1 (Bicycle and Pedestrian Improvements) and Policy T-4.6 (Connecting Neighborhoods) expand Auburn's sidewalk, trail, and bicycle networks, reduce travel distances, and improve access to key destinations, making non-automobile travel viable for daily trips. Goal T-5 (Public Transportation) is implemented through Policies T-5.1 (On-Demand Transit), T-5.2 (Inter-City Bus Transit), T-5.3 (Monitoring Transit Needs), T-5.4 (Rider-Friendly Improvements), and T-5.5 (Transit Amenities in New Development), as well as Policies T-5.6 through T-5.8, which enhance passenger rail service, station facilities, and first- and last-mile access. Collectively, these policies increase the attractiveness, accessibility, and reliability of low-carbon transportation modes, reduce dependence on private automobiles, and support the Scoping Plan's emphasis on VMT reduction through improved mobility options rather than roadway expansion.

COMMUNITYWIDE CLIMATE STABILITY

The 2022 Scoping Plan adopts an integrated, cross-sector approach to achieving carbon neutrality while improving public health and climate resilience. This approach is mirrored in the proposed General Plan through Goal OSC-6 (Climate Stability) and its supporting policies. In addition to renewable energy and energy conservation, Policy OSC-6.9 (Sustainable Infrastructure) promotes improvements to water, wastewater, and solid waste systems that reduce operational energy use and methane emissions. Policy OSC-6.10 (Environmental Education) and Policy OSC-6.11 (Green Businesses) encourage community awareness, behavioral change, and participation in sustainability programs that reduce waste, energy consumption, and emissions. Together, these policies address emissions across buildings, transportation, infrastructure, and community activities, reinforcing the Scoping Plan's holistic framework for long-term climate stability and public health protection.

While the 2045 General Plan would allow additional development in the city, building energy consumption and VMT (and thus GHG emissions) per capita would be reduced at buildout compared to existing conditions, given the above discussed goals and policies. Furthermore, as discussed above, the goals and policies under the 2045 General Plan would help the City achieve the state goal to reduce emissions to 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030 and on a pathway to carbon neutrality by 2045. The 2045 General Plan would therefore be consistent with the 2022 Scoping Plan as well as the EO B-55-18 and AB 1279 goal of carbon neutrality by 2045 and the 2030 reduction goal under SB 32.

As demonstrated above, the measures provided in the 2045 General Plan to reduce GHG emissions from transportation and building use are consistent with the similar measures in the 2022 Scoping Plan. Therefore, development facilitated by the project would not conflict with the 2022 Scoping Plan and would not conflict with interim GHG reduction targets or the statewide goal of carbon neutrality by 2045.

2025-2050 MTP/SCS

SACOG's 2025-2050 MTP/SCS, otherwise referred to as 2025 Blueprint Plan, outlines a long-term strategy through 2050 to improve transportation, reduce emissions, and promote equitable development. The 2045 General Plan consistency with the 2025-2050 MTP/SCS is discussed in Table 4.8-2. As shown therein, the proposed project would be consistent with the GHG emission reduction strategies contained in the 2025-2050 MTP/SCS.

Table 4.8-2 City of Auburn Consistency with Applicable SACOG 2025-2050 MTP/SCS Strategies

Reduction Strategy	Project Consistency
Next Generation of Mobility Solutions. ▪ Encourage context-responsive shared mobility programs (car share, bike share, scooter share, and microtransit) to increase mobility options for residents and bridge the first-mile/last-mile gap to fixed-route bus and rail. ▪ Cultivate regional understanding and support for alternatives to driving alone by improving regional travel planning tools, expanding transportation demand management programs, and facilitating pilots and demonstration projects. ▪ Support a transition to zero-emission passenger, freight, and transit vehicles that is equitable and considers the diversity of regional needs and contexts, including rural, urban, and suburban communities as well as historically underrepresented communities. ▪ Support the long-term fiscal health of transit by collaborating with transit providers to identify productivity and cost-effectiveness measures for transit ▪ Advance Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) to reduce congestion and improve multimodal reliability.	**Consistent**. The proposed project focuses development near transportation corridors and within biking and walking distance of existing residential and commercial development. The 2045 General Plan emphasizes land use patterns that facilitate multi-modal access to work, educational, and other destinations; plans growth near existing transit corridors; prioritizes infill and redevelopment of underutilized land to accommodate new growth and increase connectivity in existing neighborhoods; balances job and housing growth to reduce commuting; and encourages design and transportation options to reduce reliance on single-occupancy passenger automobiles. In addition, the proposed Transportation Element incorporates VMT reduction policies (Policies T-1.1, T-1.2, T-1.3, T-1.4, T-1.9) that would serve to encourage less reliance on single-occupancy passenger automobiles and reduce GHG emissions associated with VMT in the Planning Area, including a policy to facilitate transportation demand management programs.
Build Vibrant Places. ▪ Provide incentives, information, tools, technical assistance, and encouragement for legislative and regulatory reform and investment in Center & Corridor and Established Communities that increase housing options, jobs and services, and access to amenities. ▪ Identify and secure stable sources of funding and financing to continue the momentum of Green Means Go and accelerate the construction of a range of housing options that are affordable in low vehicle miles traveled (VMT) areas of the region. ▪ Encourage local policy reforms that facilitate missing middle housing, strategically allow for higher density housing, transition from discretionary to by-right development review, reduce government-mandated parking requirements, incentivize accessory dwelling units, and reduce displacement by protecting tenants and funding subsidized affordable housing. ▪ Evaluate and monitor progress toward both enacting the local housing policy reforms described in Vibrant-3 as well as housing construction relative to 2025 Blueprint outcomes.	**Consistent**. Development facilitated by the project would achieve the City's Regional Housing Needs Assessment allocation. Development would primarily be sited along major transportation corridors, encourage active transportation, and be in proximity to existing residential and commercial development, which would minimize GHG emissions associated with vehicle trips (Policies T-1.1, T-1.3, T-1.9, T-4.1, T-4.6). Therefore, the project would promote diverse housing choices that support the reduction of GHGs.

Reduction Strategy	Project Consistency
▪ Explore prioritizing infrastructure investments and transportation funding decisions where there is existing or demonstrated progress toward policy reforms referenced in Vibrant-3. ▪ Coordinate strategically phased growth in Developing Communities that expands the region's footprint in ways that minimize impacts on working lands and habitat and create complete communities with jobs, housing choices, connected streets, and convenient access to public transportation. ▪ Support the implementation of SACOG's Regional Housing Needs Plan by affirmatively furthering fair housing, taking proactive steps to overcome patterns of residential segregation, clearing barriers to housing in high opportunity areas, and supporting other activities identified by local governments in adopted housing elements	
Modernize Funding for Transportation Infrastructure. ▪ Engage in the state's effort to replace the statewide fuel tax with a modern funding mechanism, such as a road usage charge, that can adapt to and keep up with changing needs and conditions. ▪ Find and pursue reliable funding strategies to meet the maintenance needs of roads that support rural economies, natural resource–based industries, agriculture, farm-to-market routes, evacuation routes, and freight corridors. ▪ Partner with the Capital Area Regional Tolling Authority (CARTA), local agencies, and Caltrans to develop and operate a regional network of toll facilities to improve traffic management, transit reliability, and operations on the regional highway system. ▪ Identify and support funding strategies that are sensitive to changes in roadway demand during different parts of the day (peak/off-peak) and across different facility types with the objective of managing demand and providing travel choice. ▪ Encourage revenues generated from tolling to first be used to build and maintain the regional network of toll facilities and, where surplus revenue is available, on strategic transit services (e.g., express buses) or other mobility solutions that can reduce vehicle miles traveled, ▪ manage congestion, and provide multiple travel options along tolled corridors ▪ Prioritize using new taxes and fees, including road usage charges, on state of good repair of the region's transportation system and strategic system expansions that are aligned with the Blueprint's adopted land use ▪ Coordinate with the state, local governments, CARTA, and the public to ensure new sources of revenue avoid negatively impacting lower-income and rural households. Where the collection of these revenues requires information about travel behavior or usage of roadways, ensure collection methods are sensitive to privacy concerns ▪ Support locally-led efforts to raise funding for priority investments that are consistent with the goals, strategies, and investments included in the regional Metropolitan Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (2025 Blueprint)	**Consistent.** The project integrates strategies to facilitate equitable, more convenient transit use, such as continuing Auburn On-Demand Transit Service, increasing public transit access across the City, and improving EV charger access and alternative methods of transportation (e.g., bicycling, walking) near affordable housing. As such, the project would support the implementation of strategies aimed at promoting the economic development of the City while also actively reducing GHG emissions associated with existing and future growth (Policies T-4.1, T-4.6, T-5.1, T-5.2, T-5.3, T-5.4, T-5.5, T-5.8, OSC-6.1, OSC-6.4, OSC-6.7, OSC-6.8).

Reduction Strategy	Project Consistency
▪ Encourage public agencies to coordinate with SACOG when applying for federal and state grants and prioritize technical support for investments that are local and regional priorities and aligned with the 2025 Blueprint, megaregion priorities, and funding program– specific goals and requirements	

Source: SACOG 2025

Summary

The 2045 General Plan would be consistent with the 2022 Scoping Plan and 2025-2050 MTP/SCS (SB 375), as well as comply with federal, state, and local regulations, such as CalGreen and Title 24 Building Standards that further reduce GHG emissions in the state and help achieve these reduction targets. The proposed project would therefore not conflict with applicable GHG reduction plans or policies, nor would development facilitated by the project generate GHG emissions that may have a significant impact on the environment. Impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures would be required.

Significance After Mitigation

Impacts would be less than significant without mitigation.

4.8.4 Cumulative Impacts

GHG emissions and climate change are, by definition, cumulative impacts. Although GHG emissions have worldwide repercussions, the contribution of the project to cumulative impacts is addressed in light of the goals for reducing statewide emissions. Therefore, the geographic scope for considering cumulative impacts related to GHG emissions is the State of California. The cumulative analysis considers the nearby past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future plans and projects listed in Table 3-1 (refer to Section 3, *Environmental Setting*) located outside the city, in addition to the proposed plan.

Cumulative development would generate GHG emissions from construction, vehicle trips, electrical and water use, and other sources. The analysis of GHG emissions is cumulative in nature, as emissions affect the accumulation of GHGs in the Earth's atmosphere. No single project could generate enough GHG emissions to noticeably change the global average temperature; instead, the GHG emissions from past, present, and future projects and activities have contributed, currently are contributing, and would contribute to global climate change and its associated environmental impacts. Projects that fall below thresholds are considered to have a less than significant impact, both individually and cumulatively. As indicated under Impact GHG-1, development facilitated by the project would be consistent with State and regional GHG reduction plans and would not produce GHG emissions that may have a significant impact on the environment. As such, the project would not result in a considerable contribution to cumulative GHG emission impacts.

4.9 Hazards and Hazardous Materials

This section discusses the existing conditions and regulatory setting related to hazards and hazardous materials in the Planning Area and describes the environmental setting for hazardous materials and waste. It also addresses the potential impacts of the project on hazards and hazardous materials. Residences and other sensitive receptors, such as schools, are also discussed as their proximate location within the Planning Area affects sensitive receptor exposure to the potential hazards, as described below.

4.9.1 Setting

Hazardous materials are materials that pose a significant risk to public safety or human or environmental health. These include toxic chemicals, flammable or corrosive materials, petroleum products, and unstable or dangerously reactive materials. They can be released through human error, malfunctioning or broken equipment, or as an indirect consequence of other emergencies (e.g., if a flood damages a hazardous material storage tank). Hazardous materials can also be released accidentally during transportation, as a consequence of vehicle accidents.

The majority of hazardous materials in the community are being transported on truck routes along major roadways, such as Interstate 80 (I-80) and Highway 49, that pass through Auburn. The bulk of truck-carried hazardous materials that enter Placer County do so via I-80 and include a wide range of hazardous substances. Although I-80 is well maintained and a controlled access roadway, there are some steep and sharp turns that severely tax the brakes and handling ability of semi-trailer trucks (City of Auburn 2021).

In addition to highway traffic, other hazardous materials are transported through Auburn on the Union Pacific Railroad and major pipelines that run along the Union Pacific Railroad and along Borland Avenue. In the event of an emergency involving hazardous materials, there is potential for extreme risk to life and property. The Auburn Fire Department and California Highway Patrol are responsible for the management of emergencies involving hazardous materials.

Several state agencies monitor hazardous materials/waste facilities. Potential and known contamination sites are monitored and documented by the Department of Health Services and the RWQCB. A review of the leaking underground storage tank (UST) list produced by the RWQCB, and the Hazardous Waste and Substances Sites List produced by the California Environmental Protection Agency and contributed to by the Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) indicates no active hazardous waste sites in Auburn. If an imminent public health threat is posed by an outside factor, the City will support local regulating agencies in notifying the public. The transport of hazardous materials/wastes and explosives through the Planning Area is regulated by the California Department of Transportation. I-80 is open to vehicles carrying hazardous materials/wastes. City streets and unincorporated County roads are generally not designated as hazardous materials/waste transportation routes, but a permit may be granted on a case-by-case basis. Transporters of hazardous wastes are required to be certified by the California Department of Transportation and manifests are required to track the hazardous waste during transport. The danger of hazardous materials/waste spills during transport does exist and will potentially increase as transportation of these materials increases on I-80, Highway 49, and the railroad. The Auburn Police Department, the Auburn Fire Department, Placer County Office of Emergency Services, Placer County Division of Environmental Health, and California Highway Patrol are responsible for hazardous materials accidents at all locations within the Planning Area.

a. Existing Hazardous Sites

According to the DTSC EnviroStor, there are 18 identified potentially hazardous sites located within the Planning Area as shown in Figure 4.9-1. However, none of the identified sites are currently active. As outlined in Table 4.9-1, there are eight sites that have either been referred to the RWQCB or require additional action but are currently inactive.

Table 4.9-1 DTSC EnviroStor Sites Needing Further Action in the Planning Area

Site Name	Address	Site Number	Site Type	Status
Auburn Sanitary Landfill	12385 Shale Ridge Road	31490003	Evaluation	Refer: RWQCB
Black Forest Garage	140 Elm Avenue	31750001	Evaluation	Refer: RWQCB
Tanko Well Drilling	12150 Luther Road	31170001	Evaluation	Refer: RWQCB
Dewitt Center (Dewitt General Hospital)	West of Highway 49 between Bell and Atwood Road	71000014	Military Evaluation	Refer: RWQCB
Coherent, Inc.	2301 Lindbergh Street	71002356	Tiered Permit	Inactive – Needs Evaluation
Bohemia Subdivision	Canal Street – North of Luther Road	60000617	Voluntary Agreement	Inactive – Needs Evaluation
Kemper Woods Property	Property is located at the intersection of Kemper Road and Bean Road	60000296	Voluntary Agreement	Inactive – Action Required
Placer County Water Agency - Warner Road Property	10420 Ophir Road, west of the intersection of Werner Road	60000442	Voluntary Agreement	Inactive – Needs Evaluation

RWQCB = Regional Water Quality Control Board

Source: Department of Toxic Substances Control 2024a

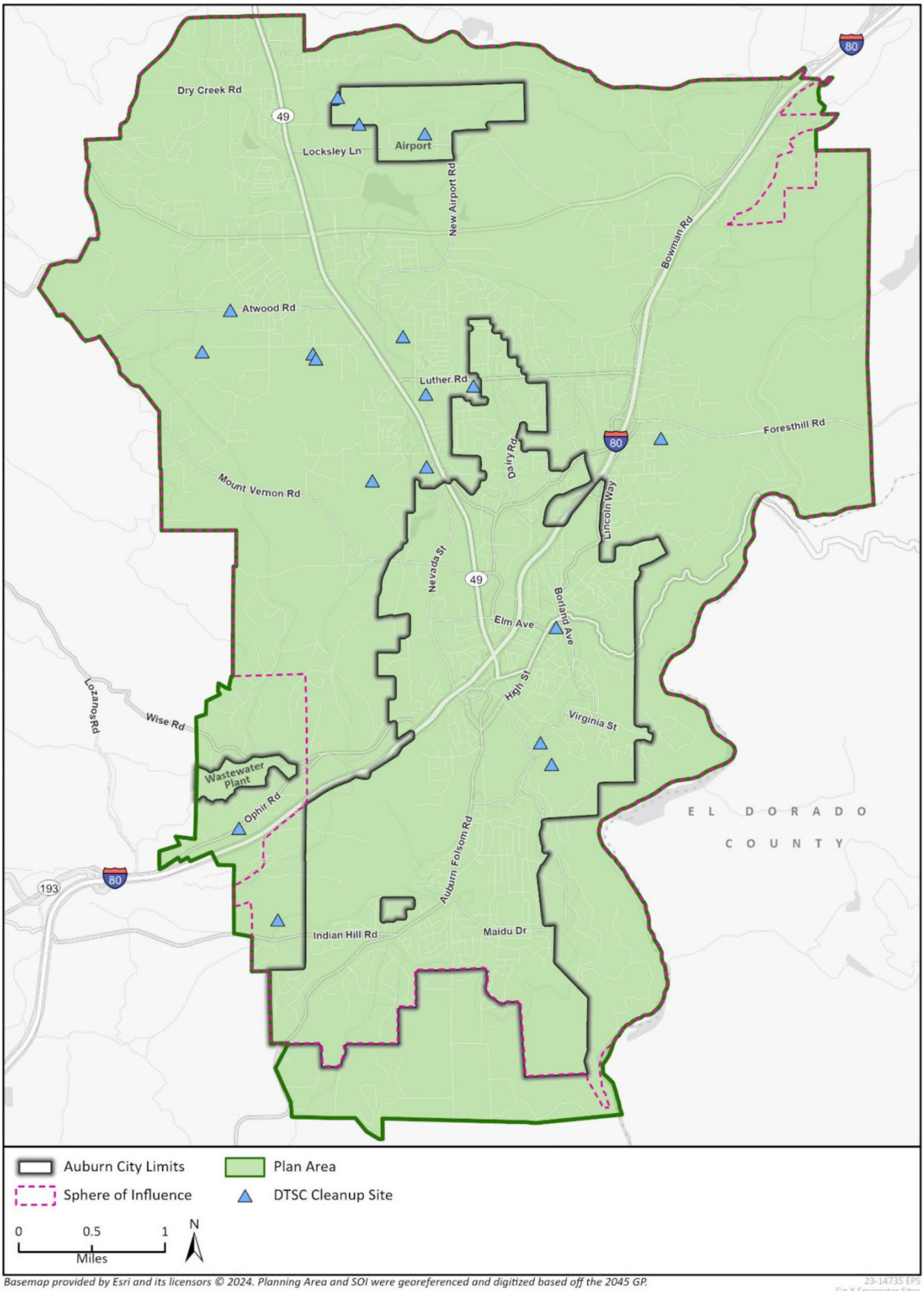
According to SWRCB GeoTracker tool, there are a total of 80 listed sites in the Planning Area as shown in Figure 4.9-2. However, 74 of these sites are closed. The six open cases (three of which are dry cleaners) are summarized in Table 4.9-2.

Table 4.9-2 SWRCB Open GeoTracker Sites in the Planning Area

Site Name	Address	Site Number	Site Type	Status
Auburn Cleaners	650 Auburn Folsom Road	T10000000081	Cleanup Program Site	Open – Site Assessment
Elm Dry Cleaners	365 Elm Avenue	SL0606150528	Cleanup Program Site	Open – Site Assessment
Former Clem's Cleaners	895 High Street	T10000021287	Cleanup Program Site	Open – Long Term Management – Land Use Restrictions
Former Redwood Bulk Oil Facility	203 Pleasant Avenue	SL0606140681	Cleanup Program Site	Open - Remediation
Kemper Woods Subdivision	Kemper Road & Bean Road	SL0606183784	Cleanup Program Site	Open - Remediation
Unknown PCE Auburn	925 Lincoln Way	T10000011784	Cleanup Program Site	Open – Site Assessment

Source: State Water Resources Control Board 2024

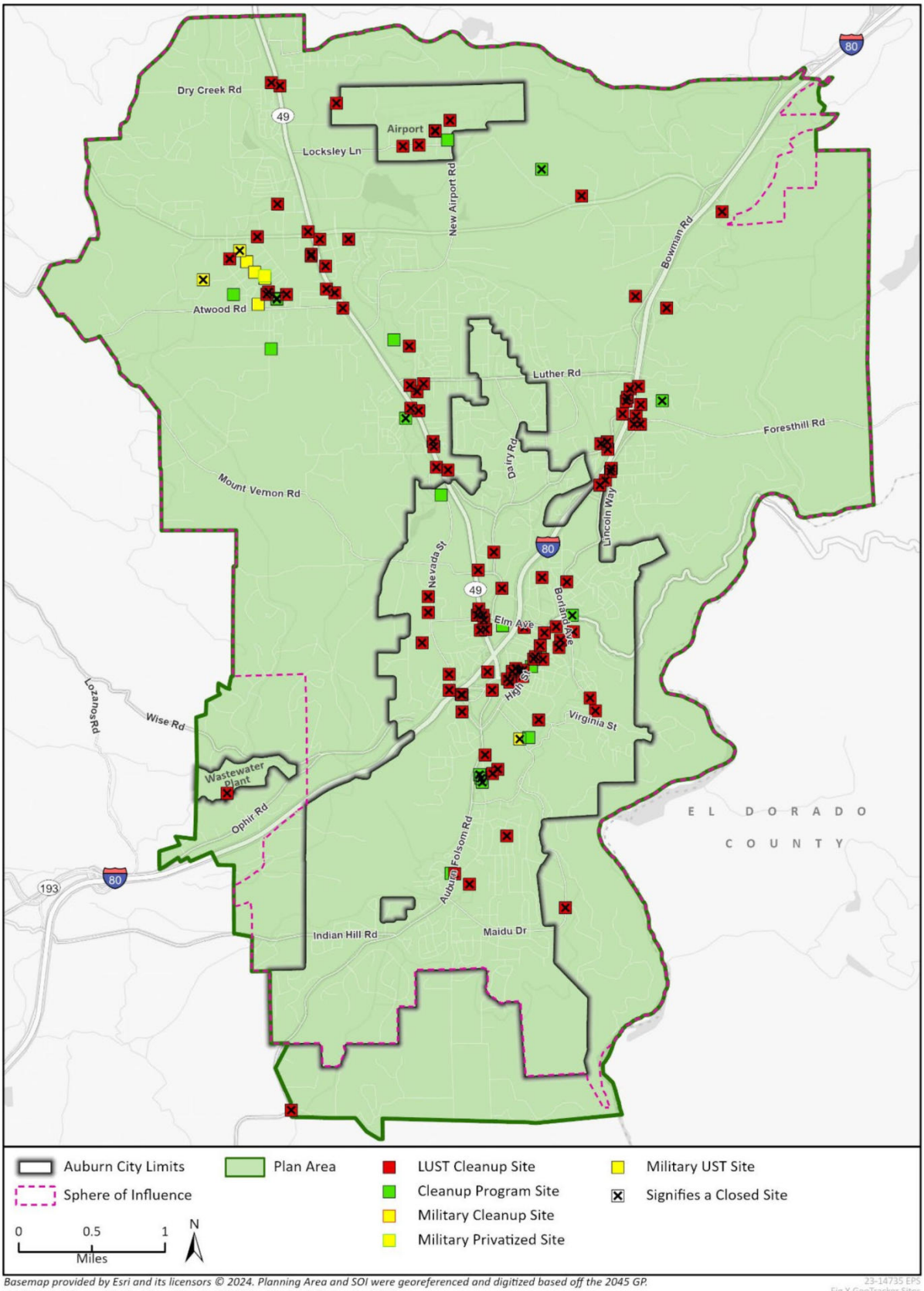
Figure 4.9-1 DTSC EnviroStor Sites in the Planning Area



Basemap provided by Esri and its licensors © 2024. Planning Area and SOI were georeferenced and digitized based off the 2045 GP.
Additional data provided by Placer County, 2023; GeoTracker & Envirostor, 2024.

23-14735 EPS
Fig X Envirostor Sites

Figure 4.9-2 SWRCB GeoTracker Sites in the Planning Area



Basemap provided by Esri and its licensors © 2024. Planning Area and SOI were georeferenced and digitized based off the 2045 GP.
Additional data provided by Placer County, 2023; GeoTracker & Envirostor, 2024.

23-14735 EPS
Fig X GeoTracker Sites

Additionally, there are no solid waste disposal sites or hazardous waste facilities within Auburn that are subject to corrective action under the Cortese List data resources. One Cease and Desist Order/Cleanup and Abatement Order is listed within the city; however, it pertains to a wastewater treatment facility that does not involve hazardous materials, and the Water Boards' database does not distinguish these orders from those issued for hazardous waste sites (California Environmental Protection Agency 2026).

b. Naturally-Occurring Asbestos

Naturally occurring asbestos (NOA) is known to be present in Placer County. In 2006, the California Department of Conservation published Special Report 190, which mapped the relative likelihood of NOA occurrence within the county. As shown in this report, the City of Auburn is in an area less likely to have NOA than other areas of the county, particularly the eastern county. However, NOA may still be encountered within the Planning Area. (California Department of Conservation 2006)

c. Schools

The *CEQA Guidelines* Appendix G checklist requires lead agencies to evaluate whether projects could pose a hazardous materials impact to schools within 0.25 mile of a project site. Schools within 0.25 mile of known hazardous materials sites in the Planning Area, as identified above, are listed in Table 4.9-3.

Table 4.9-3 Schools within 0.25-mile of a Known Hazardous Materials Site

School Name	School Address	Hazardous Materials Site Name	Type and Status
Placer County Pathways Charter and Placer County Special Education	360 Nevada Street	Nor-Cal Beverage Co Inc.	LUST Cleanup Site; Completed – Case Closed
		Toms Sierra Co.	LUST Cleanup Site; Completed – Case Closed
Bowman Charter	13777 Bowman Road	Bowman Elementary School	LUST Cleanup Site; Completed – Case Closed
		Auburn F.F.S.	LUST Cleanup Site; Completed – Case Closed
EV Cain Middle	150 Palm Avenue	Gold Rush Chevrolet	–LUST Cleanup Site; Completed – Case Closed
		49'ER BP	LUST Cleanup Site; Completed – Case Closed
		Chevron #9-4984	LUST Cleanup Site; Completed – Case Closed
		Toms Sierra Co.	LUST Cleanup Site; Completed – Case Closed
		Nor-Cal Beverage Co Inc.	LUST Cleanup Site; Completed – Case Closed
		Placer Equipment Rentals	LUST Cleanup Site; Completed – Case Closed
		Sanders Auto Sales & Service	LUST Cleanup Site; Completed – Case Closed
		Shell	LUST Cleanup Site; Completed – Case Closed

School Name	School Address	Hazardous Materials Site Name	Type and Status
Auburn Elementary	11400 Lariat Ranch Road.	Kemper Woods Subdivision	–Cleanup Program Site; Open – Remediation
		Dewitt General Hospital – DeWitt Heating Plant – BLDG #500	Military UST Privatized Site; Open - Inactive
Placer High and Maidu Virtual Charter Academy	275 Orange Street	Pacific Bell	LUST Cleanup Site; Completed – Case Closed
		Beacon #3687 (Former)	LUST Cleanup Site; Completed – Case Closed
		Placer High School	LUST Cleanup Site; Completed – Case Closed
		Reeves Motor Company	LUST Cleanup Site; Completed – Case Closed
		Hilda's Pastries	LUST Cleanup Site; Completed – Case Closed
		Ayres Property	LUST Cleanup Site; Completed – Case Closed
		J.C. Penny Building	LUST Cleanup Site; Completed – Case Closed
		Sierra Club Building	LUST Cleanup Site; Completed – Case Closed
		JANCO	LUST Cleanup Site; Completed – Case Closed
		Unknown PCE Auburn	Cleanup Program Site; Open – Site Assessment
Confluence Continuation High	332 Finley Street	Placer High School	LUST Cleanup Site; Completed – Case Closed
		Pacific Bell	LUST Cleanup Site; Completed – Case Closed
		Beacon #3687 (Former)	LUST Cleanup Site; Completed – Case Closed
		J.C. Penny Building	LUST Cleanup Site; Completed – Case Closed
		Sierra Club Building	LUST Cleanup Site; Completed – Case Closed
		Unknown PCE Auburn	Cleanup Program Site; Open – Site Assessment
		JANCO	LUST Cleanup Site; Completed – Case Closed

LUST = leaking underground storage tank; UST = underground storage tank

d. Summary of Historical Uses

Since 1970, Auburn has experienced one rail and two highway hazardous materials incidents. A propane gas spill last occurred along I-80 through Auburn in 1988. Historically, hazardous materials incidents in Auburn have been frequent but of a relatively minor nature compared to more urbanized and industrialized areas (City of Auburn 2021).

4.9.2 Regulatory Setting

Federal, state, and local government laws define hazardous materials as substances that are toxic, flammable/ignitable, reactive, or corrosive. Extremely hazardous materials are substances that show high acute or chronic toxicity, carcinogenicity, bioaccumulative properties, persistence in the environment, or that are water reactive. The following are federal, state, and local regulations that may apply to the proposed project.

a. Federal Regulations

Resource Conservation and Recovery Act

At the federal level, the USEPA has primary responsibility for enforcing laws and regulations that govern the use, storage, and disposal of hazardous materials and hazardous waste. The Resource Conservation and Recovery Act of 1976 (RCRA) defines when a hazardous substance is a hazardous waste based on a number of criteria and regulates hazardous wastes from generation of the waste through disposal. Title 49 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) contains lists of more than 2,400 hazardous materials and regulates the transport of those materials.

Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act

The Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act of 1980 (Title 42, United States Code Section 9601 et seq.), also known as Superfund, was established to hold multiple parties, including past and present owners, operators, transporters, and generators jointly, severally, and strictly liable for the remediation costs of a hazardously contaminated site.

Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act

The Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act amends the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act and increases state involvement and requires Superfund actions to consider state environmental laws and regulations. The Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act also established a regulatory program for USTs and the Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act.

Toxic Substances Control Act

The Toxic Substances Control Act (15 United States Code 2601 et seq.) regulates manufacturing, inventory, and disposition of industrial chemicals, including hazardous materials. It addresses the production, importation, use, and disposal of specific chemicals including polychlorinated biphenyls, asbestos-containing materials, and lead-based paint.

Hazardous Materials Transportation Act

The transportation of hazardous materials is regulated by the Hazardous Materials Transportation Act (Title 49, CFR Section 5101 et seq.), which is administered by the Office of Hazardous Materials Safety within the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA) of United States Department of Transportation (USDOT). The Hazardous Materials Transportation Act governs the safe transportation of hazardous materials by all modes. The DOT regulations that govern the transportation of hazardous materials are applicable to any person who transports, ships, or causes to be transported or shipped hazardous materials, or who is involved in any way with the manufacture or testing of hazardous materials packaging or containers. The DOT regulations govern

every aspect of the movement of hazardous materials including packaging, handling, labeling, marking, placarding, operational standards, and highway routing.

Occupational Health and Safety Administration Standard 1910.120

The Occupational Health and Safety Administration published Standard 1910.120, which in part requires that employers evaluate the potential health hazard that hazardous materials pose in the workplace and communicate information concerning hazards and appropriate protective measures to employees. Under the Occupational Health and Safety Administration Standard 1910.120, a health hazard is defined as "a chemical for which there is statistically significant evidence based on at least one study conducted in accordance with established scientific principles that acute or chronic health effects may occur in exposed employees."

Clean Air Act

The Clean Air Act (CAA) (Title 42, United States Code Section 7401 et seq.) authorizes the USEPA to regulate emissions of hazardous air pollutants and criteria air pollutants from stationary, mobile, and area sources that may pose risks to public health or the environment. Under the CAA, USEPA establishes National Ambient Air Quality Standards for pollutants that may endanger public health, including particulate matter and toxic air contaminants that can contain hazardous substances such as asbestos, lead, and volatile organic compounds. The CAA also establishes National Emission Standards for Hazardous Air Pollutants, which set requirements for handling, demolishing, or renovating structures that contain asbestos or other hazardous materials to prevent the release of airborne contaminants. Compliance with the CAA and its implementing regulations ensures that demolition, renovation, and operational activities do not result in hazardous air emissions that could affect workers, nearby sensitive receptors, or the broader environment.

b. State Regulations

California Department of Toxic Substances Control

The DTSC, a department within the California Environmental Protection Agency, is the primary State agency responsible for regulating hazardous waste, reducing hazardous waste generation, and overseeing cleanup of contaminated sites. DTSC implements the federal RCRA in California and administers the State's Hazardous Waste Control Law (Health and Safety Code, Division 20, Chapter 6.5), which is generally more stringent than federal requirements. DTSC also administers the Hazardous Substance Account Act (Health and Safety Code, Chapter 6.75), which provides the statutory framework for investigating and remediating contaminated properties, funding site cleanup, and overseeing response actions at hazardous substance release sites. Together with the Hazardous Waste Control Regulations (Title 22, CCR, Division 4.5), these laws establish criteria for identifying, packaging, labeling, handling, storing, transporting, treating, and disposing of hazardous waste; set permitting requirements for hazardous waste facilities; and identify materials prohibited from landfill disposal. DTSC conducts permitting, inspection, compliance, and corrective action programs to ensure hazardous waste generators and managers meet federal and State standards and to ensure contaminated sites are properly investigated and remediated.

DTSC shares enforcement responsibilities with the SWRCB, RWQCBs, and local agencies for oversight of contaminated sites. Under Government Code Section 65962.5 (the Cortese List), DTSC, SWRCB, and CalRecycle must compile and annually update inventories of contaminated or hazardous waste sites. Lead agencies must consult this list when reviewing development

applications to determine whether a project site is known or suspected to contain hazardous materials. Soil or groundwater excavated from contaminated properties may be classified as hazardous waste under Title 22 and may require remediation under the jurisdiction of DTSC or the RWQCB, depending on the nature of the contamination. Cleanup requirements are determined on a case-by-case basis.

California Occupational Safety and Health Administration

California Occupational Safety and Health Administration (Cal OSHA) establishes and enforces standards designed to protect workers from exposure to hazardous materials during construction and operational activities. Worker protection requirements related to hazardous materials are set forth in several sections of Title 8 of the CCR, including requirements for exposure monitoring, engineering controls, respiratory protection, training, and medical surveillance.

California Department of Public Health

The California Department of Public Health (CDPH) oversees statewide programs related to lead and asbestos exposure, including certification and accreditation requirements for inspectors, risk assessors, and abatement contractors. CDPH enforces the Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Act and administers the Lead-Related Construction Program, which establishes work practice standards for activities that disturb lead-based paint, including renovation, repair, and demolition. CDPH also maintains authority over public health standards related to asbestos in schools and public buildings under the Asbestos Abatement Certification Program. Through these programs, CDPH sets requirements for worker training, exposure prevention, waste handling, and reporting for projects involving lead or asbestos.

California Code of Regulations

Title 8, CCR Section 1532.1 establishes comprehensive requirements for construction activities that may generate exposure to lead, including testing, monitoring, containment, housekeeping, hygiene facilities, and specialized waste-handling procedures. The regulation prohibits worker exposure to lead concentrations exceeding 50 micrograms per cubic meter averaged over an eight-hour period, and requires employers to implement additional controls if work shifts exceed eight hours. Employers must conduct exposure assessments, provide respiratory protection where necessary, implement engineering controls when feasible, and offer medical surveillance for workers performing lead-related tasks. These requirements ensure that construction and demolition activities conducted under the proposed project minimize the potential for worker exposure to lead-based materials.

Title 8, CCR Section 1529 establishes health and safety requirements for workers involved in activities that disturb asbestos-containing materials. The regulation includes mandatory exposure assessments, methods of compliance, engineering controls, respiratory protection standards, regulated-area requirements, employee training, communication of hazards, and medical monitoring. Section 1529 applies to any construction, alteration, repair, maintenance, or demolition activity that may expose workers to airborne asbestos. These requirements ensure that contractors disturbing asbestos-containing material implement appropriate work practices to prevent hazardous asbestos fiber releases and protect worker health.

Proposition 65 – Safe Drinking Water and Toxic Enforcements Act

The California Safe Drinking Water and Toxic Enforcements Act of 1986 (Proposition 65), adopted in November 1986, established a prohibition on contaminating drinking water with chemicals known to cause cancer or reproductive harm, as outlined in the Health and Safety Code, Division 20, Chapter 6.6 Sections 25249.5 - 25249.14. It also requires businesses to provide warnings before causing exposure to chemicals known to cause cancer or reproductive toxicity and requires a list of such chemicals to be published and updated annually.

The La Follette Bill

The La Follette Bill (AB 3777) requires every business which handles specified amounts of acutely hazardous material, as defined in the bill, to file an acutely hazardous materials registration form with the local administering agency on or before September 1, 1987 and established guidelines for Hazardous Materials Management as outlined in the Health and Safety Code, Division 20, Chapter 6.95, Article 2, Sections 25531 - 25540. It requires owners or operators of each business in the state, which at any time, handles any acutely hazardous material in quantities equal to or greater than 500 pounds, 55 gallons, or 200 cubic feet under standard temperature and pressure for compressed gas to register with an administering agency.

The California Environmental Protection Agency is directly responsible for administrating the "Unified Program" that consolidates and coordinates the administrative requirements, permits, inspections, and enforcement activities for environmental and emergency management programs. The Unified Program is intended to provide relief to businesses complying with the overlapping and sometimes conflicting requirements of formerly independently managed programs and is implemented at the local government level by Certified Unified Program Agencies (CUPAs). A local CUPA is responsible for administering/overseeing compliance with the following programs, as required by state and federal regulations:

- Hazardous Materials Release Response Plans and Inventories (Business Plans)
- California Accidental Release Prevention Program
- UST Program
- Aboveground Petroleum Storage Act Requirements for Spill Prevention, Control and Countermeasure Plans
- Hazardous Waste Generator and Onsite Hazardous Waste Treatment (tiered permitting) Programs
- California Uniform Fire Code: Hazardous Material Management Plans and Hazardous Material Inventory Statements

Hazardous Waste Control Act

The Hazardous Waste Control Act (Health and Safety Code, Section 25100 et seq.) is similar to the Federal RCRA in that it regulates the identification, generation, transportation, storage, and disposal of materials deemed hazardous by the State of California.

Cortese List Statute

The Cortese List Statute (Government Code 65962.5) requires the DTSC to compile and maintain lists of potentially contaminated sites located throughout the state and includes the Hazardous Waste and Substances Sites List (Cortese List) (DTSC 2024b).

California Public Resources Code, Section 21151

California Public Resources Code Section 21151 requires the lead agency to consult with any school district with jurisdiction of a school within 0.25 mile of the project about potential impacts on the school if the project might reasonably be anticipated to create hazardous air emissions or handle an extremely hazardous substance or a mixture containing an extremely hazardous substance.

California Code of Regulations, Title 22, Risk-Based Screening Levels and Cleanup Goals

Toxicity criteria for all human health risk assessments, human health risk-based screening levels, and remediation (cleanup) goals are established in California Code of Regulations, Title 22, Chapter 50, Section 68400.5 and Title 22, Chapter 51, Sections 69020 – 69022. Section 68400.5 states that "for any release of hazardous waste or hazardous constituents, the human health risk assessment calculations, including, but not limited to, all cancer risk and non-cancer hazard screening levels and corrective action objectives, shall use the toxicity criteria specified in…Sections 69022, subdivision (a) and (b)." Pursuant to Section 69021, all human health risk assessments, human health risk-based screening levels, and remediation goals must use the Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment risk factors, oral slope factors, chronic reference exposure levels, and blood-lead values. These values are listed in Appendix I of Section 69021. For any contaminant of potential concern not listed in Appendix I, toxicity criteria provided in the USEPA Integrated Risk Information System database shall be used. For any contaminant of potential concern not listed in Appendix I or the Integrated Risk Information System database, toxicity criteria from another source may be used, provided that it applies the best available science and is health-based.

Health and Safety Code, Section 25395.95 (c), states that "on or before 60 days after the date an agency receives a response plan, the agency shall make a written determination that proper completion of the response plan constitutes appropriate care for purposes of subdivision (a) of Section 25395.67." The statute defines appropriate care in Health and Safety Code, Section 25395.67 as either of the following:

(a) The performance of a response action, with respect to hazardous materials found at a site, for which the agency makes the determination specified in paragraph (1) of subdivision (c) of Section 25395.96 and that meets all of the following conditions:
    (1) The response action is determined by an agency to be necessary to prevent an unreasonable risk to human health and safety or the environment, as defined in Section 25395.90.
    (2) The response action is performed in accordance with a response plan approved by the agency pursuant to Article 6 (commencing with Section 25395.90).
    (3) The approved response plan includes a provision of oversight and approval of the completed response action by the agency pursuant to Article 6 (commencing with Section 25395.90); or

(b) A determination that no further action is required pursuant to Section 25395.95.

c. Local Regulations

Auburn Municipal Code

Section 52.065 of the Auburn Municipal Code discusses prohibited waste discharges in the city. As discussed therein, no person may discharge or cause to be discharged to a public sewer which directly or indirectly connects to the city's sewerage. This includes any waste containing toxic or poisonous solids, liquids or gases in such quantities that, alone or in combination with other waste substances, may create a hazard for humans, animals or the local environment, interfere detrimentally with the wastewater treatment processes, cause a public nuisance or cause any hazardous condition to occur in the sewerage system.

Section 52.073 also establishes requirements for notification of accidental spills. In the event of such a release of a hazardous material, the responsible party must immediately notify emergency response officials of the occurrence. In the event of a release of non-hazardous materials, the City's Public Works Department must be notified no later than 5:00 p.m. of the next business day. If the discharge of prohibited materials emanates from a commercial or industrial establishment, the owner or operator of such establishment must also retain an on-site written record of the discharge and the actions taken to prevent its recurrence. These records are retained for at least 3 years.

Chapter 96 of the Auburn Municipal Code aims to protect residents from the potential impacts and discharge of hazardous substances and hazardous wastes in the city. This section outlines requirements for disclosure of use and hazards of hazardous materials, safe storage, and information sharing on hazardous materials with the public and law enforcement agencies. The Chapter establishes a system of disclosure for the purpose of providing the information essential to firefighters, law enforcement officers, health officials, planners, elected officials and residents in meeting their responsibilities for the health and welfare of the community in a way that the statutory privilege of trade secrecy is not abridged.

Section 96.03 states that the designation of hazardous materials is dependent on findings of the Fire Chief and the following criteria: the material, because of its quantity, concentration or physical or chemical characteristics, poses a significant present or potential hazard to human health and safety or to the environment if released into the community. Any material added to the list of hazardous materials are subject to Chapter 96. Section 96.04 describes the requirements for submitting disclosure forms and Section 96.05 describes the administrative process once those forms have been received. Upon the receipt of a disclosure form, the Licensing-Revenue Officer shall ensure that the name and address on the form are correct and shall forward the disclosure form to the Fire Department. The Fire Department shall keep a record of all persons who request access to the hazardous materials disclosure forms. The files are released pursuant to the Public Records Act, California Government Code Section 6250, on a right to know basis. This chapter, however, seeks to protect the actual location of the chemicals on the site from public disclosure pursuant to California Government Code Section 6255 because the disclosure poses a threat to the security of the facility.

Sections 100.50 and 100.58 of the Auburn Municipal Code adopt and modify, respectively, the California Fire Code and appendices. The amendments introduce more restrictive provisions to address the City’s exposure to wildfires. Relevant amendments include heightened regulation of the storage and use of flammable, combustible, and otherwise hazardous products, strengthened emergency access requirements to ensure improved mobility for first responders, expanded requirements for automatic fire sprinklers and fire alarm systems in certain occupancies, and incorporation of Wildland-Urban Interface standards.

City of Auburn Safety Element (2021)

The City updated their Safety Element in May 2021. The Element identifies and outlines goals and policies for hazards and hazardous materials, including the following:

Goal 1: Protect the life and property of residents, businesses, and visitors to Auburn from natural and human-made hazards and crime.

Policy 1.4 Continue to partner with Placer County and other cities within the County to regularly update and implement the currently-adopted Placer County Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (LHMP) and the currently-adopted Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP).

Goal 5: Reduced likelihood of hazardous materials release, exposure, and contamination in Auburn.

Policy 5.1 Maintain a record of all businesses and sites in Auburn with hazardous materials to be filed with the Auburn Fire Department and City Engineer.

Policy 5.2 Encourage commercial or industrial development using hazardous materials in areas away from residential uses and discourage commercial and industrial development using hazardous materials in areas of identified flood or wildfire risk.

Policy 5.3 Collaborate with other cities/towns, Placer County, and regional hazardous waste management organizations to limit the risk of hazardous materials release.

Policy 5.4 Reduce the risk of exposure to hazardous materials in Auburn.

Policy 5.5 Identify and establish specific travel routes for the transport of hazardous materials and wastes, with key considerations being capacity to safely accommodate additional truck traffic, avoidance of residential areas, and use of interstate or state-divided highways as preferred routes.

The proposed comprehensive update of the City's General Plan, *Envision Auburn 2045,* would not include additional updates to the Safety Element.

Placer County Code

Article 8.20 of the Placer County Code sets all requirements for underground storage of hazardous materials consistent with Section 25281 of the Health and Safety Code of California. The purpose of this Article is to adopt and implement provisions of Chapter 6.7 of Division 20 of the Health and Safety Code. Article 8.20 requires proper permitting for all USTs within the city. In addition, the section also outlines all cleanup responsibilities for any person responsible for storing hazardous substances.

In the event of any unauthorized release from a UST subject to the provisions of Chapter 6.7 (commencing with Section 25280) of Division 20 of the Health and Safety Code, the owner and the operator of such UST shall submit for department approval a plan for cleanup and site mitigation of the area within seven days of discovery of said release unless this time frame is waived by the department. Cleanup shall be instituted as per the approved plan, and the owner and the operator shall be jointly and separately liable for a fee to be paid to the department in an amount equivalent to the number of hours of the department's involvement in investigation, evaluation, and site mitigation of said release, times the miscellaneous rate established in Section 2.116.110. In

addition, the owner and the operator of any hazardous waste storage facility must pay a preliminary fee equivalent in an amount established in Section 2.116.110 upon submittal of a plan to mitigate the release.

According to Section 8.28.170, any business subject to the county's hazardous materials inventory and release response plan must ensure that the plan is in compliance with the provisions outlined in the Placer County Code.

Placer County General Plan

The current Placer County General Plan was updated in May 2013. Hazards and hazardous materials are addressed in the Health and Safety Element which was last updated in November 2021. It identifies and outlines goals and policies for geology and soil resources, including the following:

Goal 8.F: To minimize the risk of loss of life, injury, serious illness, damage to property, and economic and social dislocations resulting from the use, transport, treatment, and disposal of hazardous materials and hazardous materials wastes.

Policy 8.F.1 The County shall review all proposed development projects that manufacture, use, or transport hazardous materials for compliance with the County's Hazardous Waste Management Plan (CHWMP). Such projects shall provide a buffer zone, to be determined by the County, between the installation and property boundaries sufficient to protect public safety.

Policy 8.F.2 The County shall discourage the development of residences or schools near known hazardous waste disposal or handling facilities.

Policy 8.F.3 The County shall require that applications for discretionary development projects that will generate hazardous wastes or utilize hazardous materials include detailed information on hazardous waste reduction, recycling, and storage.

Policy 8.F.4 The County shall ensure that industrial facilities are constructed and operated in accordance with current safety and environmental protection standards.

Policy 8.F.5 The County shall strictly regulate the storage of hazardous materials and wastes and shall require secondary containment and period examination for all such materials.

Policy 8.F.6 The County shall require that any business that handles a hazardous material prepare a plan for emergency response to a release or threatened release of a hazardous material.

Policy 8.F.7 The County shall identify sites that are inappropriate for hazardous material storage, maintenance, use, and disposal facilities due to potential impacts on adjacent land uses and the surrounding natural environment.

Policy 8.F.8 The County shall ensure that the use and disposal of hazardous materials in the County complies with local, state, and federal safety standards

Policy 8.F.9 The County shall ensure that the mining and processing of toxic metals in the County is conducted in compliance with applicable environmental protection standards and minimizes impacts on adjacent lands and the surrounding natural environment

Policy 8.F.10 The County shall encourage the State Department of Health Services and the California Highway Patrol to review permits for radioactive materials on a regular basis and to promulgate and enforce public safety standards for the use of these materials, including the placarding of transport vehicles.

Policy 8.F.11 The County shall work with local fire protection and other agencies to ensure an adequate Countywide response capability to hazardous materials emergencies.

Local (Multi-Jurisdictional) Hazard Mitigation Plan

The City is a participant in the Placer County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan. The Placer County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan, most recently updated in June 2021, incorporates hazard mitigation principles and practices into the routine government activities and functions of the County, twenty special or regional districts, and five municipalities (including Auburn) participating in the Plan. The Plan recommends specific actions that are designed to protect people and community assets from losses to those hazards that pose the greatest risk, including hazards and hazardous materials. Chapter 5, Mitigation Strategy, provides a blueprint for reducing the potential losses. Such measures include local plans and regulations, structure and infrastructure projects, natural systems protection, education and awareness programs, and other activities (County of Placer 2021). An update to the 2026 Hazard Mitigation Plan is underway.

Placer County Air Pollution Control District

The Placer County Air Pollution Control District regulates emissions of asbestos and other hazardous air pollutants associated with demolition, renovation, and construction activities. The Placer County Air Pollution Control District enforces the statewide *Asbestos Airborne Toxic Control Measure for Construction, Grading, Quarrying, and Surface Mining Operations* (Title 17, CCR Section 93105), which requires asbestos surveys prior to demolition, notification to the District when asbestos-containing material will be disturbed, and implementation of dust-control measures to prevent the release of asbestos fibers. The District also administers Rule 228, *Fugitive Dust*, which applies to construction activities and requires dust-suppression practices that minimize airborne particulates that may contain hazardous materials such as naturally occurring asbestos. Compliance with these rules reduces the potential for exposure to airborne hazardous materials during ground-disturbing and demolition activities.

Placer County Environmental Health Division

As described in Section 4.9.2b, *State Regulations*, the La Follette Bill (AB 3777) requires the California Environmental Protection Agency to administer the Unified Program and designate CUPAs to oversee compliance with applicable hazardous waste programs in local jurisdictions. In Placer County, the Placer County Environmental Health Division is the designated CUPA. As the CUPA, the Placer County Environmental Health Division is responsible coordinating administrative activities such as permits, inspections, and enforcement for compliance with the applicable hazardous materials management programs described above (County of Placer 2026).

Placer County Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan

The Placer County Transportation Planning Agency is designated as the Airport Land Use Commission for Placer County. As the Airport Land Use Commission, the Placer County Transportation Planning Agency adopted the Placer County Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan

(ALUCP) in 2021 and later amended the plan in 2024. Chapter 4 of the ALUCP, which specifically addresses the Auburn Municipal Airport, defines the following:

- Compatibility Zones (Map AUB-4A) which regulate safety and noise criteria for development;
- Airspace Protection Surfaces (Map AUB-4B) which outlines height and obstruction review; and
- Basic Compatibility Criteria (Table AUB-4A) for residential, commercial, industrial, and public uses.

The ALUCP compatibility analysis must be applied to all new developments located within the Airport Influence Area (AIA).

4.9.3 Impact Analysis

a. Significance Thresholds and Methodology

Significance Thresholds

Based on Appendix G of the *CEQA Guidelines* a project may be deemed to have a significant impact on hazards and hazardous materials if it would:

1. Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials;
2. Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment;
3. Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within 0.25 mile of an existing or proposed school;
4. Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would create a significant hazard to the public or the environment;
5. For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing or working in the project area;
6. Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan; or
7. Expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving wildland fires.

Methodology

This section describes the potential environmental impacts of the proposed project relevant to hazards and hazardous materials. The impact analysis is based on an assessment of baseline conditions, including locations of hazardous materials use and storage, existing contaminated sites, and emergency response and evacuation plan requirements. This analysis identifies potential impacts based on the predicted interaction between the affected environment and construction, operation, and maintenance activities related to the development that would be facilitated by the proposed project. However, the precise increase in hazardous materials transported within the Planning Area as a result of buildout of the proposed project cannot be predicted because specific

development projects are not identified in the proposed project at a level of detail allowing such analysis. This analysis focuses on the potential nature and magnitude of risks associated with the accidental release, storage, transportation, and use of hazardous materials during operations of typical residential, industrial, and retail-commercial development projects.

b. Project Impacts and Mitigation

Threshold 1:	Would the project create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?

Impact HAZ-1 BUILDOUT OF THE PROPOSED PROJECT COULD RESULT IN AN INCREMENTAL INCREASE IN THE OVERALL ROUTINE TRANSPORT, USE, AND DISPOSAL OF HAZARDOUS MATERIALS IN THE PLANNING AREA. HOWEVER, COMPLIANCE WITH APPLICABLE REGULATIONS RELATED TO HAZARDOUS MATERIALS AND COMPLIANCE WITH THE GENERAL PLAN UPDATE POLICIES AND POLICIES IN THE 2021 SAFETY ELEMENT WOULD MINIMIZE THE RISK RELATED TO THE TRANSPORT, USE, OR DISPOSAL OF HAZARDOUS MATERIALS. IMPACTS WOULD BE LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT.

Land uses that typically involve the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials include industrial and manufacturing operations, warehouse and distribution facilities, vehicle-related uses (e.g., gas stations, fleet fueling, auto repair), and certain commercial businesses such as dry cleaners, medical and dental offices, laboratories, hardware and paint suppliers, retail cannabis, and restaurants using industrial cleaning agents. These uses are expected to occur within areas designated for industrial, commercial, and mixed-use development under the proposed project. As a result, buildout of the General Plan Update would introduce or expand land uses that commonly utilize hazardous materials as part of regular operations.

As shown in Table 2-2 in Section 2, *Project Description,* development facilitated by the proposed project would result in approximately 691 acres of industrially designated land, 749 acres of commercially designated land, and 283 acres of land designated for mixed-use development in the Planning Area. Industrial, commercial, and mixed-use development facilitated by the proposed project would incrementally increase the number of businesses storing, using, transporting, and/or disposing of hazardous materials within the Planning Area. Commercial and industrial land uses could use and store hazardous materials in proximity to residential uses. Specifically, mixed-use development facilitated by the proposed project would result in new residential units adjacent to commercial land uses that could use hazardous materials, such as growth and development areas including Downtown/Old Town, Baltimore Ravine Specific Plan Area, Train Station Area, Nevada Street Corridor, Grass Valley Highway, and Upper Lincoln Way. Therefore, development facilitated by the proposed project could potentially increase hazardous materials exposure for residents. The risk of exposure would also increase for workers, because the proposed project increases the number of jobs in the Planning Area through 2045, including industrial and commercial jobs that may require the use of hazardous materials. However, the risk of exposure for residents and employees would be reduced by applicable federal, State, and local regulations, as well as 2045 General Plan Update policies and policies in the 2021 Safety Element, as discussed below.

Hazardous Materials Transport

Construction of development facilitated by the project would result in the transport of hazardous materials such as fuels, oils, and solvents to individual sites throughout the Planning Area. Operation of industrial, manufacturing, vehicle-related uses, and certain commercial businesses facilitated by the proposed project would result in the routine transport and delivery of hazardous materials, such

as industrial chemicals and fuels. These materials would be transported into and throughout the Planning Area on I-80 and State Route 49; as well as on the Union Pacific Railroad (City of Auburn 2021). Additionally, gas and hazardous liquid would continue to travel through the Planning Area via established transmission pipelines (USDOT 2026). Although there are no designated hazardous materials/waste transportation routes in the Planning Area, a permit may be granted to do so on a case-by-case basis (City of Auburn 2021). As described in Section 4.9.1, *Setting*, the Auburn Police Department, the Auburn Fire Department, Placer County Office of Emergency Services, Placer County Division of Environmental Health, and California Highway Patrol would be responsible for any hazardous materials accidents that could occur along hazardous materials transportation routes identified in applicable permits.

The USDOT, PHMSA, regulates the transportation of hazardous materials, as described in CFR Title 49. CCR Title 13 additionally regulates the transportation of hazardous materials by designating appropriate hazard labels shipping preparation, vehicle loading, and hazardous materials registration, among other requirements. Documentation of compliance with hazardous materials regulations codified in CCR Titles 8, 22, and 26 is required for all hazardous materials and hazardous waste transport. In addition, individual contractors and property owners are required to comply with all applicable federal and State laws and regulations pertaining to the transport, use, disposal, handling, and storage of hazardous waste, including but not limited to, CFR Title 49. Adherence to applicable regulations and laws would reduce the potential hazards associated with the transport of hazardous materials, including accidental release of hazardous materials during transport.

Placer County General Plan Health and Safety Element Goal 8 and corresponding policies would minimize the risk of exposure to hazardous materials by requiring County review of development projects that manufacture, use, or transport hazardous materials for compliance with County regulations, regulating the storage of hazardous materials and wastes, and imposing specific regulations on businesses and development projects that will generate or use hazardous waste, such as requiring applications for projects that must include detailed information on hazardous waste reduction, recycling, and storage and ensuring facilities are constructed and operated in accordance with current safety and environmental standards.

In addition, Safety Element Policy 5.5 indicates the City will establish specific routes for the transport of hazardous materials, with key considerations being capacity to safely accommodate additional truck traffic, avoidance of residential areas, and use of interstate or state divided highways as preferred routes. Future development in the Planning Area would be required to comply with this policy.

In addition to mandatory compliance with laws and regulations, the following proposed goal, policy, and action of the Transportation Element of the General Plan Update would reduce potential hazards associated with the transport of materials: Goal T-7: Goods Movement and Aviation, Policy T-7.2: Freight Rail, and Action T-7A: Truck Route Maps and Regulations. This goal, policy, and action would reduce the potential hazard associated with the transport of hazardous materials in the Planning Area by ensuring that hazardous materials are transported along designated routes. Therefore, with adherence to federal, State, and local regulations, risks related to the transport of hazardous materials would be less than significant.

Hazardous Materials Use and Disposal

The overall quantity of hazardous materials used and requiring disposal in the Planning Area could incrementally increase during construction and demolition activities associated with buildout of the proposed project. Additionally, all new development that uses hazardous materials, including

industrial, manufacturing, warehouse/distribution, vehicle-related uses, and certain commercial uses, would be required to comply with the regulations, standards, and guidelines established by the USEPA, State of California, City, and Placer County related to storage, use, and disposal of hazardous materials. Furthermore, residential land uses are expected to generate small quantities of household hazardous waste, similar to existing residential uses in the Planning Area.

As described above in Section 4.9.2c, *Local Regulations*, the Placer County Environmental Health Division has been certified by the California Environmental Protection Agency as the CUPA for all areas of the county. As the CUPA, the Environmental Health Division performs inspections to prevent exposure to environmental health hazards for businesses and residents in Auburn.

Development of industrial land uses, as well as certain commercial uses such as gas stations, auto repair facilities, dry-cleaners, retail cannabis businesses, and other businesses that store or handle hazardous materials over threshold quantities, may involve operations that trigger Hazardous Materials Business Plan (HMBP) requirements. These facilities would be required to prepare and submit an HMBP to the Hazardous Materials Unit. The HMBP consists of general business information; basic information on the location, type, quantity and health risks of hazardous materials; and emergency response and training plans. Hazardous materials must be reported in a HMBP if they are handled in quantities equal or greater than 55 gallons of a liquid, 200 standard cubic feet of a compressed gas, or 500 pounds of a solid. Mandatory reporting in HMBPs would reduce the potential hazard to residents and the general public in mixed-use development from the use of hazardous materials in the Planning Area.

For employees that would work with hazardous materials, business-specific practices would be required to comply with federal and State laws to eliminate or minimize the potential consequence of hazardous materials exposure. For example, employees who work around hazardous materials are required to wear appropriate protective equipment, and safety equipment is routinely available in all areas where hazardous materials are used. California Building and Fire Code requirements detail standards for the safe management of materials that present a moderate explosion hazard, high fire or physical hazard, or health hazards. Compliance with all applicable federal, State, and local requirements related to the storage of hazardous materials would maximize containment through safe handling and storage practices.

Additionally, Policy 5.4 in the Auburn Safety Element indicates the City would reduce the risk of exposure to hazardous materials by requiring the proper storage and disposal to prevent leakage, potential explosions, fire, or the release of harmful fumes. Policy 5.2 indicates the City will encourage commercial and industrial development using hazardous materials to be located away from residential uses, and discourage the handling of such materials in areas of identified flood and wildfire risk. Future development in the Planning Area would be required to comply with these policies.

In addition to mandatory adherence to laws and regulations, and compliance with programs, the Open Space and Conservation Element, the Community Services and Facilities Element, and the Land Use Element of the proposed General Plan Update include the following goals and associated policies and/or actions that would reduce the potential for accidental exposure and hazards associated with the use and disposal of hazardous materials: Policy OSC-1.4: Use Conflicts, Policy OSC-2.1: Soil Conservation and Management, Action OSC-2B: Soils Reports, Goal OSC-7: Environmental Justice, Policy OSC-7.1: Safe and Healthy Homes, Policy OSC-7.2: Remediating Pollution Hazards, Policy CSF-5.3: Household Hazardous Waste, and Policy LU-2.4: Land Use Conflicts. Implementation of Policy OSC-1.4 would preserve the character of the Planning Area and its existing uses without conflicts that may introduce new hazards. Implementation of Policy OSC-

2.1 and associated actions would leverage Soils Reports and Health Risk Assessments to ensure that new development facilitated by the General Plan Update would not expose residents to soil or airborne contamination, while Goal OSC-7 and its policies would ensure that new housing developments would be environmentally healthy through code enforcement, interagency coordination, and the remediation of potential pollution hazards. Implementation of Goal CSF-5 and its policy would ensure that household hazardous waste is managed and disposed of safely, and Policy LU-2.4 would ensure that new development is sited in areas that would reduce exposure to hazards by minimizing land use conflicts relating to hazards associated with industrial activities.

Development facilitated by the project would adhere to relevant regulations governing the use and disposal of hazardous materials. In addition, such development would be implemented concurrently with the goals and policies outlined above, which would reduce the risk of future development creating a significant hazard to the public due to the use or disposal of hazardous materials. Therefore, impacts related to the use and disposal of hazardous materials would be less than significant.

Demolition and Redevelopment Activities

The proposed project would facilitate and encourage infill development and redevelopment within urbanized areas of the Planning Area. Redevelopment may include demolition of structures that, due to their age, may contain asbestos and/or lead-based paint. As a result, demolition or re-development of these structures to facilitate proposed project buildout could result in health hazard impacts to workers through exposure to lead and asbestos if not remediated prior to construction activities. In addition, construction activities, such as grading or excavation on sites with contaminated soil, groundwater, naturally occurring asbestos, or lead-based road striping, may result in the release of hazardous materials into the environment. Lead-based materials and asbestos exposure are regulated by the CDPH, the Placer County Air Pollution Control District, and Cal OSHA. Title 8, CCR Section 1532.1 requires testing, monitoring, containment, and disposal of lead-based materials such that exposure levels do not exceed Cal OSHA standards. Under this rule, construction workers may not be exposed to lead at concentrations greater than 50 micrograms per cubic meter of air averaged over an eight-hour period and exposure must be reduced to lower concentrations if the workday exceeds eight hours. Similarly, Title 8, CCR Section 1529 sets requirements for asbestos exposure assessments and monitoring, methods of complying with requirements related to exposure, personal protective equipment, communication of hazards, and medical examination of workers.

The control of asbestos during demolition or renovation of buildings is regulated under the Federal CAA. The Federal CAA requires a thorough inspection for asbestos where demolition will occur and specifies work practices to control emissions, such as removing all asbestos-containing materials, adequately wetting all regulated asbestos-containing materials, sealing the material in leak tight containers and disposing of the asbestos-containing waste material as expediently as practicable (USEPA 2025). Compliance with the CCR and Federal CAA, which is mandatory, would reduce the potential hazards and risks associated with release of lead and asbestos.

If groundwater contamination is identified during construction of future development, characterization of the vertical and lateral extent of the contamination and remediation activities would be required by the RWQCB or the Placer County Environmental Health Division prior to the commencement of any new construction activities that would disturb the subsurface. If contamination exceeds regulatory action levels, the developer would be required to undertake

remediation procedures prior to grading and development under the supervision of the RWQCB, depending upon the nature of any identified contamination.

Compliance with existing applicable regulations, programs, standards such as the Fire Code and Building Code, and implementation of General Plan Update goals, policies, and actions would minimize risks from routine transport, use, and disposal of hazardous materials. Oversight by the appropriate federal, State, and local agencies and compliance by new development with applicable regulations related to the handling and storage of hazardous materials would minimize the risk of the public's potential exposure to these materials. Therefore, impacts from a hazard to the public or the environment through routine transport, use or disposal of hazardous materials exposure to these materials would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures would be required.

Significance After Mitigation

Impacts would be less than significant without mitigation.

Threshold 2:	Would the project create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?

Impact HAZ-2 DEMOLITION, GRADING, OR EXCAVATION ASSOCIATED WITH DEVELOPMENT FACILITATED BY THE PROJECT COULD UNCOVER CONTAMINATED SOILS OR RESULT IN ACCIDENTAL RELEASE OF HAZARDOUS MATERIALS. HOWEVER, COMPLIANCE WITH APPLICABLE REGULATIONS RELATED TO HAZARDOUS MATERIALS AND IMPLEMENTATION OF PROPOSED GENERAL PLAN POLICIES WOULD MINIMIZE THE RISK OF HAZARDS TO THE PUBLIC OR ENVIRONMENT THROUGH REASONABLY FORESEEABLE UPSET AND ACCIDENT CONDITIONS INVOLVING THE RELEASE OF HAZARDOUS MATERIALS INTO THE ENVIRONMENT. IMPACTS WOULD BE LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT.

Development facilitated by the project would accommodate approximately 5,500 new residents in the Planning Area. Therefore, buildout of the proposed project would increase the number of people that could be exposed to a potential accidental release of hazardous materials. The proposed project would concentrate increased residential density in the growth and development areas described in Section 2, *Project Description*.

As described in Section 4.9.1, *Setting*, several locations within the Planning Area contain known or potentially contaminated soil or groundwater, including eight DTSC-identified sites requiring additional action and six open SWRCB hazardous materials sites. Additionally, NOA is known to be present in Placer County, including the Planning Area. Grading, excavation, or other ground-disturbing activities on or near these areas could encounter NOA, contaminated soils or contaminated groundwater and result in the release of hazardous materials into the environment. In addition, construction and demolition activities associated with development under the proposed project may involve the use, storage, or handling of hazardous materials, such as fuels, lubricants, solvents, or, in older structures, asbestos-containing materials and lead-based paint, which may result in accidental releases into the environment.

The disposal of hazardous materials unearthed during grading and excavation activities are regulated through the RCRA, which requires that any contaminated soil, groundwater, or debris that qualifies as hazardous waste be properly characterized, segregated, stored, transported by a registered hazardous waste hauler, and disposed of at a permitted treatment, storage, or disposal facility. Compliance with existing regulations would reduce the risk of upset and accidental conditions involving the release of hazardous materials during construction.

The potential for NOA to occur on individual sites is subject to requirements set by the Placer County Air Pollution Control District. Such requirements include the identification, by a project application, of NOA on a project site and the subsequent preparation of a Naturally-Occurring Asbestos Dust Mitigation Plan in order to comply with the requirements of the California Air Resources Board's Asbestos Air Toxic Control Measure for Construction, Grading, Quarrying, and Surface Mining Operations. These requirements would ensure adequate handling of NOA during future construction and ground disturbing activities in the Planning Area.

It is also possible that USTs in use prior to permitting and record keeping requirements may be present in the Planning Area. If an unidentified UST is uncovered or disturbed during future construction activities, its removal would be permitted by the Placer County Environmental Health Division. If such removal would potentially undermine the structural stability of existing structures, foundations, or impact existing utilities, the tank might be closed in place without removal. Tank removal activities could pose both health and safety risks, such as the exposure of workers, tank handling personnel, and the public to tank contents or vapors. Potential risks, if any, posed by USTs would be minimized by managing the tank according to existing standards contained in California Health and Safety Code, Division 20, Chapters 6.7 and 6.75 (UST Program) as enforced and monitored by the Environmental Programs Division.

The extent to which groundwater may be contaminated by a UST, if at all, depends on the type of contaminant, the amount released, the duration of the release, and depth to groundwater. If groundwater contamination is identified during construction of future development, characterization of the vertical and lateral extent of the contamination and remediation activities would be required by the RWQCB or the Placer County Environmental Health Division prior to the commencement of any new construction activities that would disturb the subsurface. If contamination exceeds regulatory action levels, the developer would be required to undertake remediation procedures prior to grading and development under the supervision of the RWQCB, depending upon the nature of any identified contamination.

In addition, mandatory compliance with local regulations would reduce the potential for significant hazards to the public or environment through upset and accident conditions involving hazardous materials. Auburn Municipal Code Section 52.023 establishes requirements for notification of accidental spills, which would ensure that the proper emergency response is coordinated in the event of hazardous materials being released or spilled during construction of proposed project buildout or operation of industrial development. Section 25281 of the Health and Safety Code of California includes procedures for cleanup and mitigation of unauthorized releases from a UST. Furthermore, the City's 2021 Safety Element and Placer County General Plan reinforce regulations governing hazardous materials releases. Goal 5 of the Auburn Safety Element, "Reduced likelihood of hazardous materials release, exposure, and contamination in Auburn", would reduce the potential for significant hazards to the public or environment through upset and accident conditions involving hazardous materials by encouraging commercial and industrial development using hazardous materials in areas away from residential uses and encouraging collaboration with other jurisdictions to manage and limit the risk of hazardous materials releases.

In addition to mandatory adherence to laws and regulations, the Open Space and Conservation Element, the Community Services and Facilities Element, and the Land Use Element of the proposed General Plan Update include the following policies and actions that would reduce the potential for creating a significant hazard to the public or the environment through upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials: Action OSC-2-B: Soils Reports, Action OSC-4C: Health Risk Assessments, Policy OSC-7.1: Safe and Healthy Homes, and Policy LU-1.6: Higher Density Housing. Policy LU-1.6 would ensure that higher density housing is sited in areas away from natural hazards, which would reduce the risk of construction activities associated with proposed project buildout releasing hazardous materials from contaminated soil or groundwater. Action OSC-2B would require site-specific soils reports in areas with known hazards, and Action OSC-4C would require Health Risk Assessments where appropriate to evaluate potential health hazards and determine solutions, both of which would reduce the risk of exposure to hazardous materials through upset and accident conditions by reducing the likelihood of development occurring on contaminated sites. Policy OSC-7.1 would reinforce existing hazardous materials regulations and development standards by requiring the rehabilitation of substandard housing and remediation of environmental health hazards such as poor indoor air quality, lead paint, asbestos, mold, and household waste. In addition, the previously cited policies in the Safety Element further reduce the likelihood of hazardous materials exposure caused by construction or accidental releases.

Compliance with existing applicable regulations and standards, and implementation of proposed General Plan goals, policies, and actions would minimize potential hazards from the accidental release of hazardous materials. Oversight by the appropriate federal, State, and local agencies and compliance by new development with applicable regulations related to the handling and disposal of hazardous materials would minimize the risk of the public's potential exposure to these materials. Therefore, impacts from a hazard to the public or the environment through upset and accident conditions involving hazardous materials would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation is required.

Significance After Mitigation

Impacts would be less than significant without mitigation.

Threshold 3:	Would the project emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within 0.25 mile of an existing or proposed school?

Impact HAZ-3 BUILDOUT OF THE PROPOSED PROJECT COULD RESULT IN HAZARDOUS EMISSIONS OR HANDLING OF HAZARDOUS OR ACUTELY HAZARDOUS MATERIALS, SUBSTANCES, OR WASTE WITHIN 0.25 MILE OF AN EXISTING OR PROPOSED SCHOOL. HOWEVER, COMPLIANCE WITH EXISTING REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS AND PROPOSED GENERAL PLAN POLICIES WOULD MINIMIZE RISKS TO SCHOOLS AND STUDENTS, RESULTING IN A LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT.

Existing schools within 0.25 mile of known hazardous materials sites in the Planning Area are listed in Table 4.9-3. In addition, the proposed project would facilitate residential, office, commercial, industrial, civic, and hotel development in the Planning Area. Residential, office, civic, and hotel uses typically do not emit substantial amounts of hazardous materials or substances. Since the proposed project does not include specific development projects, the quantity of hazardous materials

proposed for use by future commercial and industrial developments within the Planning Area is currently unknown.

As described under Impact HAZ-1 and Impact HAZ-2 construction activities associated with development facilitated by the project has the potential to create risks of hazardous materials exposure through the use, transport, disposal, or release of hazardous materials through demolition, grading, and excavation. However, compliance with applicable regulations during project buildout would ensure that hazardous materials used or released from construction activities would not pose a health risk to nearby schools. As described under Impact HAZ-1, hazardous materials transport, use, disposal, handling, and storage is regulated by the USDOT, PHMSA, CFR Title 49, and CCR Titles 8, 13, 22, and 26, all of which would reduce the potential for hazards such as accidental releases of hazardous materials.

In addition, demolition associated with redevelopment could occur near schools in the Planning Area. Demolition of older structures could expose workers and nearby residents to asbestos-containing materials and lead-based paint. Such exposures are regulated by the CDPH, the Placer County Air Pollution Control District, and Cal OSHA. Title 8, CCR Section 1532.1 requires testing, monitoring, containment, and disposal of lead-based materials such that exposure levels do not exceed Cal OSHA standards. These regulations require containment, wet-methods, engineering controls, and strict work-practice standards that prevent asbestos fibers and lead-contaminated dust from leaving the demolition site, thereby protecting sensitive receptors, such as students and staff at nearby schools, from off-site exposure.

In addition, commercial and industrial development facilitated by the project, which could occur within a 0.25-mile radius of existing schools in the Planning Area, could include uses that generate and emit hazardous materials or substances, such gas stations, dry cleaners, and auto-body shops. Accidental release or combustion of hazardous materials at new commercial and industrial developments could endanger residents or students in the surrounding community. Hazardous materials and waste generated from future development would not pose a health risk to nearby schools because businesses that handle or have on-site storage of hazardous materials would be required to comply with the provisions of the California Fire Code, Auburn Municipal Code (including Sections 52.023, 52.065, 100.50, 100.58 and Chapter 96), and the Hazardous Materials Unit CUPA requirements set forth in the California Health and Safety Code, Division 20, Chapter 6.95, Articles 1 and 2. As described under Impact HAZ-1, all businesses that handle more than a specified amount of hazardous materials are required to submit a HMBP to the Placer County Environmental Health Division. Additionally, as described under Impact HAZ-1, above, hazardous materials transport, use, disposal, handling, and storage is regulated by the USDOT, PHMSA, CFR Title 49, and CCR Titles 8, 13, 22, and 26, all of which would reduce the potential for hazards such as accidental releases of hazardous materials in the operation of proposed project buildout.

Additionally, Action 5.2A of the 2021 Auburn Safety Element specifically states that the City “shall discourage new uses of hazardous materials within identified flood and wildland fire risk areas or within a 0.25-mile radius. New hazardous material uses within a 0.25-mile radius of residences shall include a green buffer around property. Additional policies and actions in the Safety Element further reduce potential impacts. Future development in the Planning Area would be required to comply with this action.

Furthermore, the Open Space and Conservation Element, the Community Services and Facilities Element, and the Land Use Element of the proposed General Plan Update include the following goals and associated policies and/or actions that would reduce the potential for accidental exposure and hazards associated with the use and disposal of hazardous materials and protect schools from

hazards and hazardous materials: Policy CSF-1.2: Coordinated Planning, CSF-5.3: Household Hazardous Waste, Policy OSC-7.2: Remediating Pollution Hazards, Policy LU-2.4: Land Use Conflicts, Action LU-2A: Environmental Review Procedures, and Action LU-2B: Developmental Review. Policy CSF-1.2 would ensure that long-range citywide planning is coordinated across city departments and other jurisdictions such as Placer County and local school, water, and park districts, such that all planned developments are compatible with maintaining adequate and safe educational environments for Planning Area residents. Policy CSF-5.3 would ensure that hazardous wastes generated by nearby residential uses or in construction of proposed project buildout are disposed of properly, away from existing or planned schools. Policy OSC-7.2 would encourage coordination between the Placer County Community Development, Public Health, Fire, and Environmental Health Departments and discourage land use decisions that could create disproportionate health risks for lower income communities or specific neighborhoods, including their schools. Policy LU-2.4 would minimize the potential for conflicts between industrial/heavy commercial uses and nearby residential uses, schools, parks, health care facilities, and other sensitive uses, while Action LU-2A would reinforce CEQA regulations by requiring environmental review procedures for development proposals and implementing design review procedures for consistency with the General Plan, zoning regulations, building and fire code requirements, and potential impacts on adjacent properties and public services, including the provision and maintenance of schools.

Implementation of proposed goals, policies, and actions in the General Plan, as described above, would reduce the potential for accidental exposure and hazards associated with the use and disposal of hazardous materials and protect schools from hazards and hazardous materials. Therefore, impacts of the proposed project from the emission of hazardous materials with 0.25 mile of schools would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures would be required.

Significance After Mitigation

Impacts would be less than significant without mitigation.

Threshold 4:	Would the project be located on a site that is included on a list of hazardous material sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?

Impact HAZ-4 BUILDOUT OF THE PROPOSED PROJECT COULD FACILITATE DEVELOPMENT ON HAZARDOUS MATERIALS SITES. HOWEVER, COMPLIANCE WITH APPLICABLE REGULATIONS RELATING TO SITE CLEANUP AND GENERAL PLAN UPDATE POLICIES WOULD MINIMIZE HAZARDS FROM DEVELOPMENT ON CONTAMINATED SITES. IMPACTS WOULD BE LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT.

Existing sites that may potentially contain hazardous land uses in the Planning Area include large and small-quantity generators of hazardous waste, such as gas stations, landfills, and industrial uses. As shown in Figure 4.9-1 and Figure 4.9-2, there are a total of 18 potentially hazardous DTSC EnviroStor sites and 80 SWRCB GeoTracker sites in the Planning Area. Of these, none of the DTSC sites are currently active, although eight have been referred to by RWQCB or require additional action; and only six of the SWRCB sites are listed as open, as detailed in Table 4.9-1 and Table 4.9-2. Additionally, there are no solid waste disposal sites or hazardous waste facilities within Auburn that are subject to corrective action under the Cortese List data resources. One Cease and Desist

Order/Cleanup and Abatement Order is listed within the city; however, it pertains to a wastewater treatment facility that does not involve hazardous materials, and the Water Boards' database does not distinguish these orders from those issued for hazardous waste sites (California Environmental Protection Agency 2026).

There are proposed land use changes on the active or open sites as part of the General Plan Update. In the State Route 49 Corridor – Central growth and development area, the land use designation for the Canal Street area would change from Commercial to High Density Residential to accommodate a County Housing Site, which includes the Bohemia Subdivision site listed in Table 4.9-1. In the Downtown/Old Town District, land use designations would shift from Commercial and High Density Residential to Mixed-Use Downtown, affecting the areas that contain the Unknown PCE Auburn and Former Clem's Cleaners sites listed in Table 4.9-2.The General Plan Update would also apply High Density Residential, Open Space, Public/Institutional, and MX-G land use designations to portions of the Placer County Government Center Master Plan; however, these designations reflect the existing mix of uses already established in the adopted Government Center Plan and therefore do not represent a substantive change in planned land uses. These designations overlap with the DeWitt Center (DeWitt General Hospital) hazardous materials site, identified as a Military Evaluation site in Table 4.9-1.

Development facilitated by the project on or near these sites could expose the construction workforce and as well as future occupants to hazardous materials. Additionally, the remaining sites on which hazardous material cleanup was closed could still contain residual contamination. The residual contamination could pose risks depending on the type of use and ground disturbance (e.g., grading and excavation) proposed, especially in a scenario where the site had previously been cleaned for commercial use instead of residential use. Development in the Planning Area in areas identified in Table 4.9-1 and Table 4.9-2 or on closed sites where proposed land use changes would allow residential development would potentially expose residents and workers to hazardous materials. Future development on these sites, however, would be required to be preceded by investigation, remediation, and cleanup under the supervision of the Regional Water Quality Control Board, the Placer County Environmental Health Division, and/or DTSC, pursuant to the Hazardous Waste Control Law (Health and Safety Code, Chapter 6.5), the Hazardous Substance Release Response Cleanup Act (Health and Safety Code, Chapter 6.8), the UST Program (Health and Safety Code, Chapter 6.7), the Hazardous Substance Account Act (Health and Safety Code, Chapter 6.75), and the Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act, before construction activities could begin.

The 2021 Auburn Safety Element includes Policies 5.2 (encouraging commercial and industrial development away from residential areas) and 5.4 (reducing the risk of exposure to hazardous materials), as well as related actions to reduce risks. Future development in the Planning Area would be required to comply with this policy.

In addition to mandatory adherence to laws and regulations, and compliance with programs facilitated by agencies including DTSC and CDPH, the proposed General Plan Update includes the following goals and associated policies and/or actions that would reduce the potential risk from contaminated sites: Policy OSC-1.4: Use Conflicts, Policy OSC-2.1: Soil Conservation and Management, Action OSC-2B: Soils Reports, Goal OSC-7: Environmental Justice, Policy OSC-7.1: Safe and Healthy Homes, Policy OSC-7.2: Remediating Pollution Hazards, Policy CSF-5.3: Household Hazardous Waste, and Policy LU-2.4: Land Use Conflicts.

Compliance with existing State and local regulations as well as implementation of the General Plan Update policies would reduce impacts to less than significant levels.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures would be required.

Significance After Mitigation

Impacts would be less than significant without mitigation.

Threshold 5:	For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing or working in the project area?

Impact HAZ-5 THE NORTHERN PORTION OF THE PLANNING AREA ARE LOCATED INSIDE AN AIRPORT INFLUENCE AREA. HOWEVER, DEVELOPMENT THAT WOULD BE FACILITATED BY THE PROJECT IN THAT AREA WOULD MAINTAIN COMPATIBLE USES THAT ADHERE TO NOISE AND SAFETY STANDARDS ESTABLISHED BY THE ALUCP. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS PROPOSED BY THE GENERAL PLAN UPDATE WOULD ENSURE THE SAFE, CONTINUED OPERATION OF THE AUBURN MUNICIPAL AIRPORT AND WOULD ENSURE THAT FUTURE DEVELOPMENT CONTINUES TO COMPLY WITH APPLICABLE STANDARDS. IMPACTS WOULD BE LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT.

The Planning Area includes the Auburn Municipal Airport and surrounding area, located approximately 4.7 miles north of the city limits. The unincorporated territory within the Planning Area north of Auburn city limits overlaps the AIA established by the Placer County ALUCP (Placer County Transportation Planning Agency 2025).

The Placer County ALUCP establishes land use compatibility criteria for all lands within the Auburn Municipal Airport AIA, and establishes policies related to noise, safety, airspace, and overflight. Although unincorporated territory within the Planning Area, north of Auburn city limits, would be located within the AIA, most growth facilitated by the General Plan Update would occur within Auburn city limits, outside of the two-mile radius of the Auburn Municipal Airport and outside of Airport Compatibility Zones 1-6 established by the ALUCP. Airport noise contours do not extend south into Auburn, and no future growth areas lie within the 55 dB CNEL contour or higher (Placer County Transportation Planning Agency 2025: Map AUB-4A).

Although the North Auburn portion of the Planning Area, and specifically the Airport Business District, falls within the AIA and the outermost safety zones, the General Plan Update intentionally applies industrial and commercial land use designations in this area because these uses are compatible with the ALUCP and avoid introducing residential or other incompatible uses. Future development facilitated by the General Plan Update would continue to adhere to ALUCP requirements by design, ensuring that growth in the Airport Business District remains consistent with established airport safety and land use compatibility policies.

In addition, Goal 9 of the Auburn Safety Element states the City of Auburn shall "Minimize the exposure of the public to airport safety hazards through land use controls and policies for property in the vicinity of Auburn Municipal Airport; and limit urban encroachment around Auburn Municipal Airport in order to preserve the safety of flight operations and the continued viability of Auburn Municipal Airport." Policy 9.1 ensures that land use decisions are consistent with the ALUC Plan and Policy 9.2 ensures that airport plans are compatible with existing and planned uses around the airport. Future development in the Planning Area would be required to comply with this goal and policy.

In addition to mandatory adherence to laws and regulations, and compliance with requirements set forth by the ALUCP, the proposed Land Use Element of the General Plan Update includes the following goals, policies, and actions, which would reduce the potential risk of introducing a safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing or working in the Planning Area or otherwise interfering with the adopted ALUCP: Goal LU-7: Auburn Municipal Airport, Policy LU-7.2: port District, Policy LU-7.3: Land Use Consistency with Airport Plans, Policy LU-7.4: Airport Land Use Compatibility, Policy LU-7.5: Nonconforming Uses, Policy LU-7.6: Development Review in the Airport Influence Area, Policy LU-7.7: Noise-Sensitive Uses, Policy LU-7.8: Airport Land Use Safety, Policy LU-7.9: Reducing Aviation Hazards, Action LU-7C: Aircraft Overflight Combining Zone, Action LU-7D: Airport Area Development Review, Action LU-7E: Special Exception Approvals, Action LU-7F: Notification and Disclosure Requirements, and Action LU-7G: Airport District Master Plan.

Please refer to Section 4.13, *Noise*, for further discussion of the proposed project's impacts related to airport-related noise.

Therefore, because the General Plan Update intentionally maintains only ALUCP-compatible industrial and commercial uses within the AIA, and because future development would be required to comply with all applicable airport safety and noise compatibility policies, the project would not result in a safety hazard or excessive noise exposure for people residing or working in the Planning Area and would have a less than significant impact.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures would be required.

Significance After Mitigation

Impacts would be less than significant without mitigation.

Threshold 6:	Would the project impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?

Impact HAZ-6 PROPOSED GENERAL PLAN UPDATE POLICIES WOULD ENHANCE THE CITY AND PLACER COUNTY'S EMERGENCY RESPONSE AND EMERGENCY EVACUATION PLANNING CAPABILITIES. THEREFORE, THE PROPOSED PROJECT WOULD NOT RESULT IN INTERFERENCE WITH ADOPTED EMERGENCY RESPONSE AND EMERGENCY EVACUATION PLANS. IMPACTS WOULD BE LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT.

Development facilitated by the project would accommodate future population growth in the Planning Area. This could lead to increased congestion during emergency evacuations. However, the proposed Community Design and Preservation Element and Transportation Element of the General Plan Update includes the following goals, and policies: Policy CD-1.7: Neighborhood Connectivity, Goal T-2: Roadway Efficiency, Policy T-2.6: Emergency Response, Policy T-4.6: Connecting Neighborhoods, Policy T-6.2: On-Street Parking, Goal T-8: Regional Transportation Planning, Policy T-8.5: Evacuation Planning, Goal CSF-1: Public Facilities, Policy CSF-1.6: Resilience and Emergency Preparedness, Goal CSF-3: Police and Fire Services, Policy CSF-3.1: Public Safety Facilities, Policy CSF-3.3: Fire Prevention and Emergency Response, Policy CSF-3.5: Intergovernmental Coordination, and Policy CSF-3.6: Development Review.

Additionally, the 2021 Auburn Safety Element identifies properties with evacuation constraints and includes policy guidance to address these constraints. Safety Element Policy 1.2 requires new development in very high fire hazard severity areas and flood zones to develop emergency

preparedness plans, including plans for evacuation and emergency vehicle access. Policy 2.3 requires that the City adequately plan for any necessary evacuation efforts in response to hazards and emergency situations. Related actions require that the City maintain a list of all public and private roadways that provide the sole means of ingress and egress for neighborhoods, and further require all new development projects to have multiple points of ingress and egress to improve evacuation and emergency response access. Policy 2.6 requires the City to ensure adequate emergency vehicle access by instituting proper widths and clearances around structures while Policy 2.7 provides community businesses and residents with tools to adequately respond to emergency alerts and disasters.

These goals and policies would ensure effective and coordinated response to disasters, including events warranting evacuation by improving neighborhood connectivity, maintaining emergency-capable street networks, enhancing bicycle and pedestrian routes that can function as secondary evacuation paths, ensuring adequate emergency access and facility siting, coordinating regionally with law enforcement and fire agencies, and requiring development review to address emergency vehicle access and fire and life safety concerns.

The Planning Area is subject to the Placer County LHMP, which incorporates hazard mitigation principles and practices into routine government activities and recommends specific actions that are designed to protect people and community assets from losses to those hazards and hazardous materials (County of Placer 2021). The City adopted and incorporated by reference the LHMP as part of the City's General Plan Safety Element (City of Auburn 2021). Additionally, Placer County maintains its own Safety Element within the County General Plan that applies to unincorporated areas of the Planning Area, and this element incorporates the LHMP by reference, ensuring that the same emergency preparedness and hazard mitigation framework applies throughout the remainder of the Planning Area.

Although the LHMP is the primary adopted evacuation and emergency-response plan, the Planning Area is also guided by the Placer County CWPP, which provides community-level strategies for wildfire risk reduction, including vegetation management, fuel reduction, fire-safe development practices, and prioritization of evacuation-related improvements. The City's Safety Element references and relies upon the CWPP to address wildfire-related evacuation needs and risk-reduction measures in coordination with regional fire agencies.

Collectively, these policies ensure that future development would not conflict with existing evacuation routes or emergency response procedures and would improve overall preparedness and access during emergency events.

Implementation of the proposed General Plan Update goals, policies, and actions associated with emergency planning and response, in addition to compliance with applicable regulations, the Safety Element, LHMP, and CWPP, would ensure that implementation of the General Plan Update would result in less than significant impacts relating to implementation of adopted emergency response and evacuation plans.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures would be required.

Significance After Mitigation

Impacts would be less than significant without mitigation.

Threshold 7:	Would the project expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving wildland fires?

Impact HAZ-7 THE PLANNING AREA CONTAINS VERY HIGH FIRE HAZARD SEVERITY ZONES AND ASSOCIATED RISK OF WILDFIRES AND WILDLAND-URBAN INTERFACE FIRES. DEVELOPMENT FACILITATED BY THE PROJECT WOULD ADHERE TO REGULATIONS AND DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS, WHICH WOULD REDUCE RISK OF LOSS, INJURY, AND DEATH INVOLVING WILDLAND FIRES, AND IMPLEMENTATION OF 2045 GENERAL PLAN POLICIES WOULD ENHANCE THE CITY AND COUNTY'S CAPACITY TO ADDRESS SUCH RISKS. THEREFORE, IMPACTS RELATED TO WILDLAND FIRE HAZARDS WOULD BE LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT.

As described in Section 4.19, *Wildfire*, the Planning Area contains Very High FHSZ located within Local Responsibility Areas, State Responsibility Areas, and Federal Responsibility Areas, including a mix of urban and rural uses. Auburn is a densely populated area, and wildfires and Wildland-Urban Interface fires, in addition to structural fires, are an ongoing concern (City of Auburn 2021). As such, the proposed project could facilitate development in areas that could expose people or structures to a risk of loss, injury, or death involving wildland fires.

Development facilitated by the proposed project would be built to fire and building codes, including more stringent requirements associated with development in elevated FHSZ and Wildland-Urban Interface areas, as enforced by the City Fire Department and Placer County Fire Department. In addition, development facilitated by the project would be required to comply with applicable guidance and regulations of the Auburn Safety Element, Auburn Municipal Code, Placer County General Plan, CWPP, and Placer County Municipal Code related to wildfire risk. Standards include, but are not limited to, implementation of 100-foot minimum defensible space barriers around all buildings or structures or to the property line (whichever is nearer), removal of combustible vegetation within 30 feet of a building or structure, and prohibition of trees located within 10 feet of a chimney or stovepipe (County of Placer 2021).

Development facilitated by the project would also be required to adhere to State and federal regulations related to reducing wildfire risk. This includes approval of site-specific design plans to verify compliance with applicable codes including, but not limited to, the following:

- Title 24, CCR, Building Regulations
- Uniform Fire Code
- National Fire Codes of the National Fire Protection Association
- Title 19, CCR, Public Safety
- Title 8, CCR, Occupational Safety
- California Health and Safety Code

The CFC includes safety measures that minimize the threat of fire, including ignition-resistant construction with exterior walls of noncombustible or ignition resistant material from the surface of the ground to the roof system and sealing any gaps around doors, windows, eaves and vents to prevent intrusion by flame or embers. Development would also be required to meet California Building Code requirements, including CCR Title 24, Part 2, which includes specific requirements related to exterior wildfire exposure. CCR Title 14 sets forth the minimum development standards for emergency access, fuel modification, setback, signage, and water supply, which help prevent loss of structures or life by reducing wildfire hazards risk.

Additionally, the 2021 Auburn Safety Element includes policies to reduce exposure to wildland fires, including Policies 4.1 through 4.9. Collectively, these policies discourage development in VHFHSZs, prevent fuel accumulation around infrastructure, maintain adequate peak load fire flow, enforce building code and development standards, conserve healthy forest cover, and support partnerships with Placer County and other entities to reduce hazards. Future development in the Planning Area would be required to comply with these policies.

In addition, buildout facilitated by the project would occur concurrently with implementation of the 2045 General Plan policies, which are designed to enhance the City's ability to respond to fire risk: Policy T-8.5: Evacuation Planning, Policy CSF-1.6: Resilience and Emergency Preparedness, Policy CSF-3.3: Fire Prevention and Emergency Response, Policy CSF-3.5: Intergovernmental Coordination, Policy CSF-3.11: Reducing Wildfire Hazards, and Action CSF-3F: Mutual Aid. Furthermore, the proposed project includes policies that would minimize risk to project occupants by minimizing development in Very High FHSZs and other hazard zones where possible, implementing and maintaining fuel breaks and defensible space, enforcing the use of fire-resistant building and landscaping materials, managing vegetation to reduce potential wildfire fuels, minimizing public exposure to wildfire smoke, and ensuring the availability of emergency fire water: Policy LU-1.5: Reducing Exposure to Natural Hazards, Action LU-8D: Management of Common Open Space, Policy CD-3.4: Landscaping, Policy OSC-4.5: Wildfire Smoke, Policy OSC-5.5: Control of Invasive Plants, Action OSC-5D: Tree Preservation Ordinance, Action OSC-7B: Addressing Environmental Health Risks, Action CSF-3D: Fire Flows, Action CSF-3E: Water Usage and Fuel Reduction Plans, and Policy CSF-4.4: Water Supply, Storage, and Distribution.

Compliance with regulations and building standards would reduce the potential for development facilitated by the proposed project to expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving wildland fires. Additionally, implementation of the 2045 General Plan would include policies intended to minimize potential wildfire and wildland fire risks. Therefore, this impact would be less than significant. For further discussion of wildfire, refer to Section 4.19, *Wildfire*, of this EIR.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures would be required.

Significance After Mitigation

Impacts would be less than significant without mitigation.

4.9.4 Cumulative Impacts

The geographic scope of the cumulative hazards and hazardous materials analysis is the Planning Area and the surrounding vicinity. This geographic scope is appropriate because impacts related to hazards and hazardous materials tend to be localized, affecting individual sites and surrounding properties. The cumulative analysis considers the nearby past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future plans and projects listed in Table 3-1 (refer to Section 3, *Environmental Setting*) located outside the city, in addition to the proposed project.

In general, exposure to hazardous materials may cause localized adverse effects. A combination of federal, State, and local regulations limit or minimize the potential for exposure to hazardous materials. Cumulative development may involve the development of land uses that engage in routine transport, use, and disposal of hazardous materials. Additionally, cumulative development

may include demolition of structures that have the potential to contain hazardous building materials such as asbestos or lead-based paint. Federal, state, and local regulations, policies, and requirements would ensure that cumulative impacts related to the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials are less than significant.

Cumulative development could uncover contaminated soils or result in accidental release of hazardous materials during demolition, grading, or excavation activities. Similarly, cumulative development may result in the emission or handling of hazardous materials within 0.25 mile of a school. Federal, state, and local regulations, policies, and requirements would ensure that cumulative impacts related to reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment, and the emission or handling of hazardous materials within 0.25 mile of a school are less than significant.

Cumulative development may also be located on a hazardous materials site listed pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5. State-enforced cleanup actions by the DTSC, SWRCB, and/or RWQCB would ensure that cumulative development on such sites is remediated prior to construction or occupancy of development on such sites. Therefore, cumulative impacts related to Government Code Section 65962.5 hazardous materials sites would be less than significant.

While some cumulative development may occur within an airport land use plan, existing state and local requirements, including those specified in the relevant ALUCP, would ensure that potential cumulative impacts related to safety hazards or excessive noise would be less than significant.

Cumulative development would be required to comply with emergency access requirements as a condition of construction. Cumulative development would also be required to comply with the respective jurisdiction's regulations and policies regarding emergency access. With adherence to the access and building code requirements described above, cumulative impacts related to impairing or interfering with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan would be less than significant.

Cumulative development could occur in Very High FHSZs and/or in Wildland-Urban Interface zones. Development in such areas would be required to adhere to fire and building code design requirements, municipal code requirements, and applicable General Plan policies related to wildfire protection of new development through site-specific design features. This would ensure that cumulative impacts related to wildland fires would be less than significant.

4.10 Hydrology and Water Quality

This section evaluates the potential environmental effects related to hydrology and water quality associated with implementation of the Auburn 2045 General Plan. It discusses the regional and local watershed characteristics, including water quality, drainage and infiltration patterns, and flood hazards. The analysis includes a review of surface water, groundwater, flooding, stormwater, and water quality. Water supply and wastewater conveyance and treatment are discussed in Section 4.18, *Utilities and Service Systems*. Issues regarding wetlands and waters of the U.S. are discussed in Section 4.4, *Biological Resources*.

4.10.1 Setting

The City of Auburn is located approximately 120 miles northeast of the San Francisco Bay Area in Placer County and is considered part of the Sacramento metropolitan area. The City of Auburn is located northeast of Sacramento and southwest of Lake Tahoe. The City rests at an elevation of 1,300 feet nestled in the foothills of the Sierra Nevada Mountain Range and is situated on the edge of the Auburn State Recreation Area overlooking the North Fork of the American River Canyon (City of Auburn 2024a). There are four major streams and drainages in the Planning Area: Dry Creek, Rock Creek, North Fork American River, and Baltimore Ravine. These streams flow under roads and in proximity to numerous structures. Due to the interface of these streams with human improvements, drainage and flood control could become a major concern if the characteristics of these waterways were changed substantially. The most recent flooding event in February 2024 caused flooding of the Auburn Villa apartments and power outages. Flooding that occurred during the 1986 storm event caused culverts and road crossings to wash out and affected structures close to all streams in the planning area. Well known examples of flooding that occurred include the KOA campground near Rock Creek and Old Town Auburn near Auburn Ravine.

Auburn is characterized by a typical Mediterranean climate, generally dry in the summer with mild, wet winters. The Western Regional Climate Center maintains a weather monitoring station in the City of Auburn. According to data collected at this weather station, average summer temperatures in degrees Fahrenheit in the area are in the high 80s, with highs in the low 90s and morning lows in the high 50s (Western Regional Climate Center 2016). Average winter temperatures are in the 50s, with daytime highs in the low 60s and morning lows in the high 30s. Most rainfall occurs between November and March, with an average annual rainfall of approximately 34.4 inches. The wettest months of the year are December, January, February, and March with an average rainfall of 5.7, 6.7, 6.0, and 5.4 inches, respectively (Western Regional Climate Center 2016).

a. Surface Water

The California Department of Water Resources (DWR) divides surface watersheds in California into 10 Hydrologic Regions. The City of Auburn lies within the Sacramento River Hydrologic Region, a large coastal watershed in central California that consists of approximately 27,200 square miles (DWR 2021). The Hydrologic Region extends from Chipps Island in Solano County north to Goose Lake in Modoc County. The region is bounded by the Sierra Nevada on the east, the Coast Ranges on the west, the Cascade Trinity mountains in the north, and the Sacramento-San Joaquin River Delta on the south. This region includes the entire drainage basin of the State's largest river, the Sacramento River (DWR 2021).

The DWR further subdivides Hydrologic Regions into subregions, and further into basins, subbasins, watersheds, and subwatersheds. Within the Sacramento River Hydrologic Region, the Planning Area overlaps the following subwatersheds: Dutch Ravine-Auburn Ravine, Folsom Reservoir-North Fork American River, Deadman Canyon-Coon Creek, Orr Creek, Clipper Creek-North Fork American River, and Todd Creek-Middle Fork American River (Figure 4.10-1).The Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board governs basin planning and water quality within the Planning Area (RWQCB 2022).

The City of Auburn includes both undeveloped open space with natural drainage features and urban development with altered drainage systems, such as underground stormwater systems, canals, and drainage ditches. According to the United States Geological Survey National Map Viewer, the Auburn Ravine is the only stream that flows within the City of Auburn. Dry Creek flows north of the Auburn Municipal Airport and the North Fork American River flows adjacent to and within the eastern Planning Area (United States Geological Survey 2024). The locations of these surface waters are shown in Figure 4.10-2. Tributaries to Auburn Ravine, including Spanish Ravine and Baltimore Ravine, also flow through the city.

Water Quality

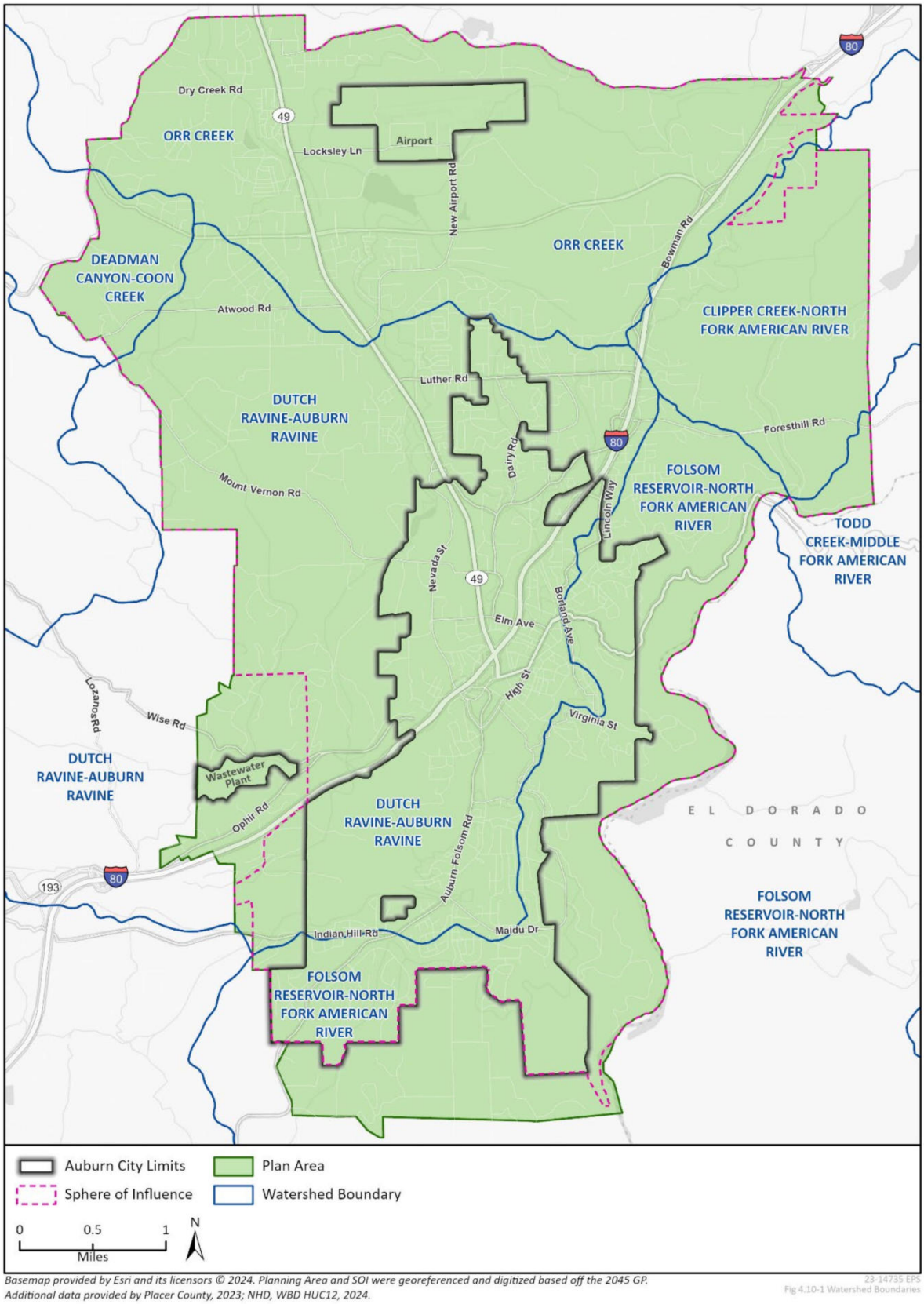
Water quality in the Planning Area is governed by the Central Valley RWQCB, which sets water quality standards in the Water Quality Control Plan for the Sacramento River and San Joaquin River Basins (Basin Plan; Central Valley RWQCB 2019). The Basin Plan identifies beneficial uses for surface water and groundwater and establishes water quality objectives to attain those beneficial uses. Beneficial uses are designated for some, but not all, individual waterbodies in the Central Valley Basin. The only surface waterbody in the vicinity of the Planning Area that has designated beneficial uses is the North Fork American River. The North Fork American River has the following beneficial uses: Municipal and Domestic Supply; Irrigation; Water Contact Recreation; Canoeing and Rafting; Non-Contact Water Recreation; Cold Fresh Water Habitat; Warm Fresh Water Habitat; Cold Spawning, Reproduction, and/or Early Development; and Wildlife Habitat (Central Valley RWQCB 2019).

The Clean Water Act 303(d) list is a register of impaired and threatened waters which the Clean Water Act requires all states to submit for United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) approval. The list identifies all waters where the required pollution control measures have so far been unsuccessful in reaching or maintaining the required water quality standards. Waters that are listed are known as “impaired.” According to the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB), the following surface waters within or adjacent to the Planning Area that are impaired include: Auburn Ravine, Rock Creek, and the North Fork American River. Auburn Ravine and Rock Creek are impaired with bacteria and other microbes, while the North Fork American River is impaired with mercury (USEPA 2024).

b. Groundwater

DWR’s Bulletin 118 is the State’s official compendium on groundwater, and it defines the boundaries and describes the hydrologic characteristics of California’s groundwater basins. DWR periodically updates Bulletin 118, which includes revising the basin boundaries as applicable. In the 2018 update of Bulletin 118, the Planning Area, along with much of the central and eastern portions of Placer County, is not underlain by a groundwater basin designated by DWR (DWR 2024).

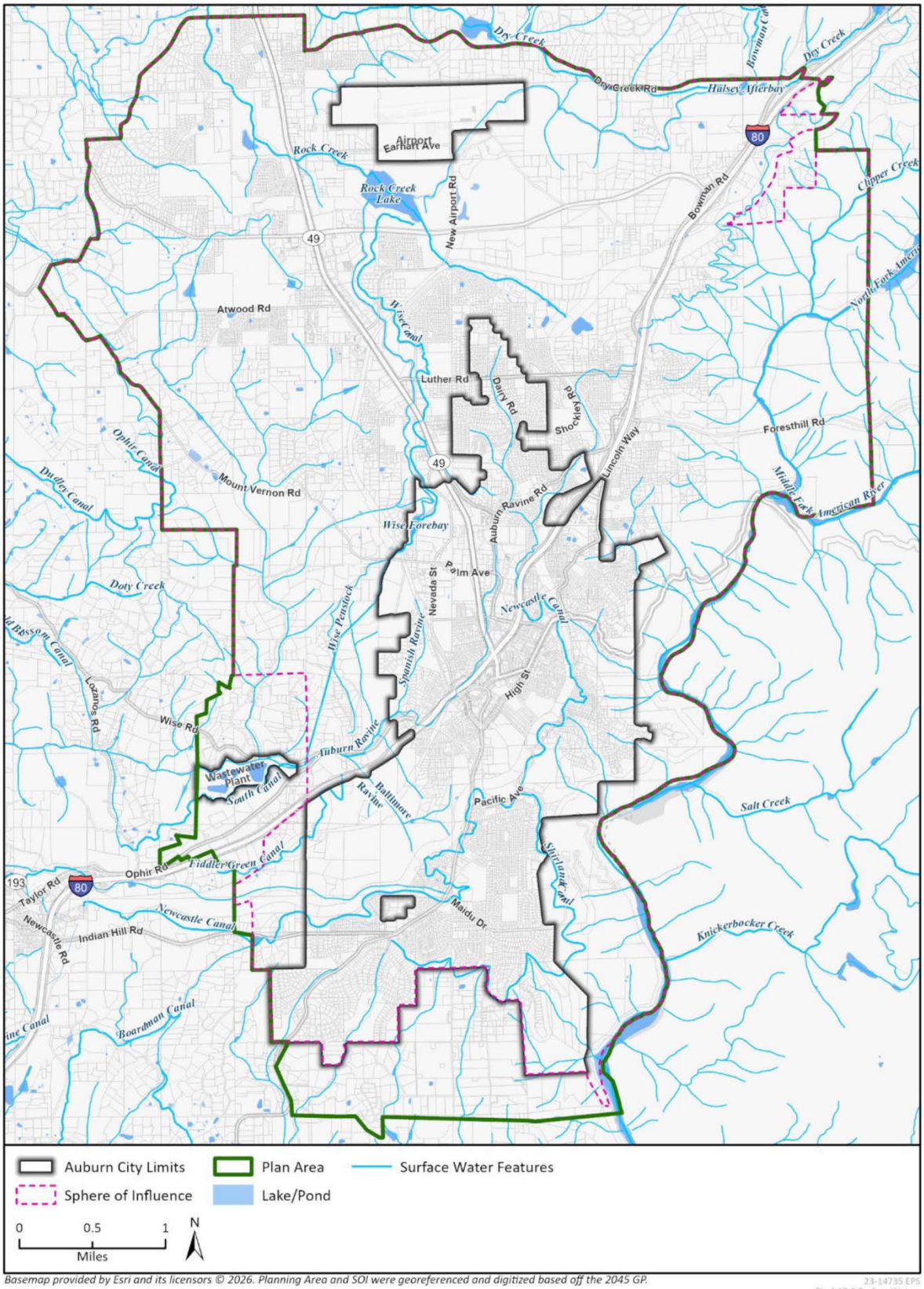
Figure 4.10-1 Subwatershed Boundaries



Basemap provided by Esri and its licensors © 2024. Planning Area and SOI were georeferenced and digitized based off the 2045 GP.
Additional data provided by Placer County, 2023; NHD, WBD HUC12, 2024.

23-14735 EPS
Fig 4.10-1 Watershed Boundaries

Figure 4.10-2 Surface Water Features



Basemap provided by Esri and its licensors © 2026. Planning Area and SOI were georeferenced and digitized based off the 2045 GP.
Additional data provided by Placer County, 2023; NHD, 2024; NWI, 2024.

23-14735 EPS
Fig 4.10-3 Surface Waters

c. Flood Hazards

Flood hazards can occur when the amount of rainfall exceeds the infiltration capacity of the surrounding landscape or the conveyance capacity of the stormwater drainage system. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) delineates regional flooding hazards as part of the National Flood Insurance Program. FEMA identifies flood hazard risks through its Flood Insurance Rate Map program. Higher flood risk zones are called Special Flood Hazard Areas; these areas have a 1 percent chance or greater of flooding in any given year (also called the 100-year flood). Although a 100-year flood will, on average, occur once every 100 years, the probability of a 100-year flood is 1 percent for any particular year. Two 100-year floods could occur in the same year or even in the same month, but the likelihood that two 100-year flood events would occur consecutively is very small.

According to FEMA's National Flood Hazard Layer Viewer, zones AE and AO along Interstate 80 and Highway 49 are the main listed flood hazard zones in the Planning Area (Figure 4.10-3). Zones AE and AO are designated 1 percent annual chance flood hazard and portions of both zones are designated regulatory floodways (FEMA 2024).

Risk of tsunami would be low for the Planning Area as the City is inland and more than 100 miles from the Pacific Ocean. The Planning Area contains small ponds and reservoirs, including the Rock Creek Reservoir; however, due to the limited seismic activity in the Planning Area (refer to Section 4.7, *Geology and Soils*), risk of seiche is low.

4.10.2 Regulatory Setting

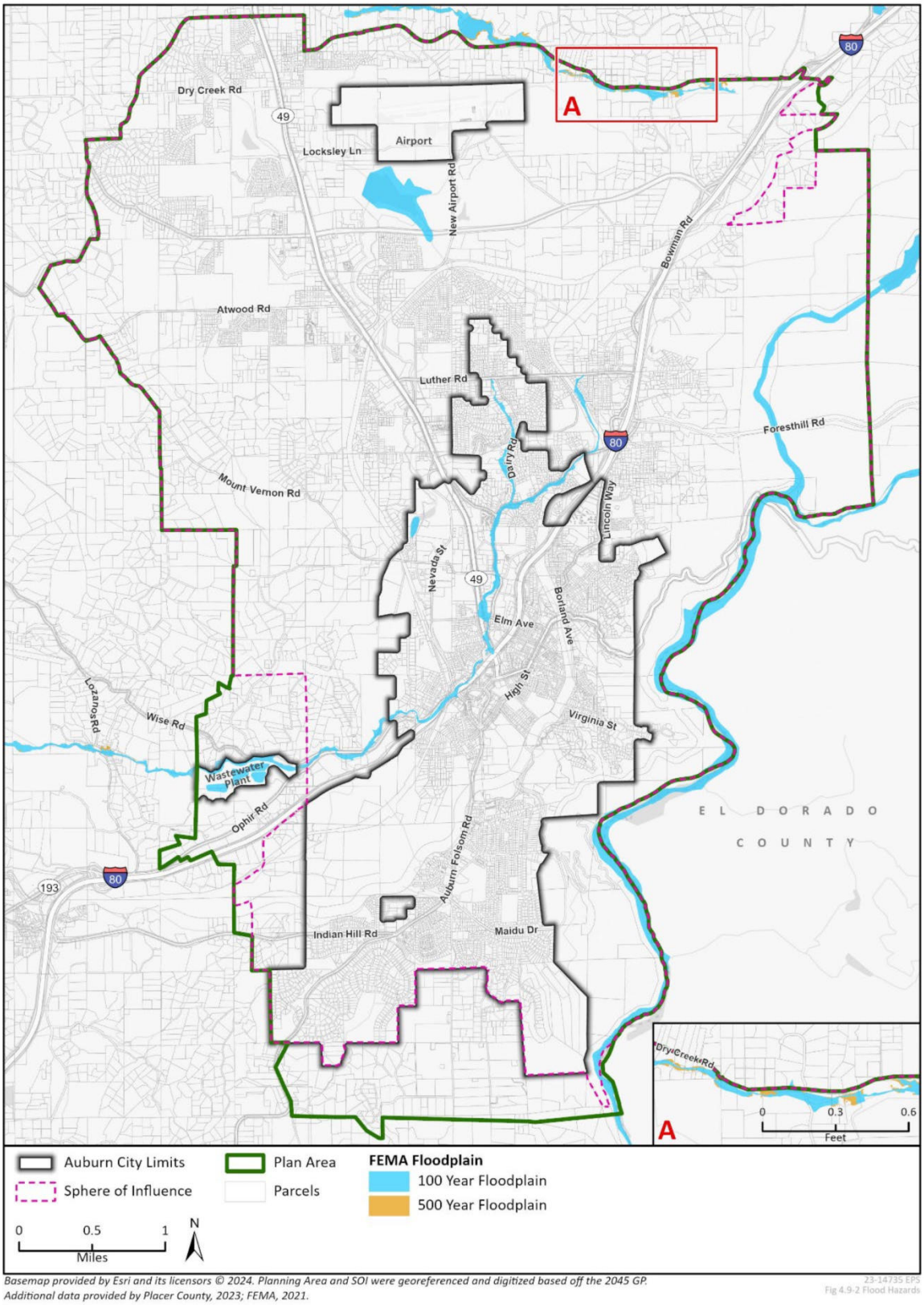
a. Federal Regulations

Clean Water Act

The Federal Water Pollution Prevention and Control Act of 1948 was the first major law to address water pollution in the United States. In 1972, the Federal Water Pollution Control Act was amended and became known as the Clean Water Act. The Clean Water Act established the basic structure for regulating discharges of pollutants into the waters of the United States. The Clean Water Act gave the USEPA the authority to implement federal pollution control programs, such as setting water quality standards for contaminants in surface water, establishing wastewater and effluent discharge limits for various industry contaminants in surface water, establishing wastewater and effluent discharge limits for various industry categories, and imposing requirements for controlling nonpoint-source pollution. At the federal level, the Clean Water Act is administered by the USEPA and United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE).

The federal Clean Water Act places the primary responsibility for the control of water pollution and for the planning of development and use of water resources with the states, although it does establish certain guidelines for the states to follow in developing their programs. At the state and regional levels in California, the Clean Water Act is enforced by the SWRCB and nine RWQCBs.

Figure 4.10-3 Flood Hazard Areas



Basemap provided by Esri and its licensors © 2024. Planning Area and SOI were georeferenced and digitized based off the 2045 GP.
Additional data provided by Placer County, 2023; FEMA, 2021.

23-14735 EPS
Fig 4.9-2 Flood Hazards

Section 303(d): Impaired Waters and Total Maximum Daily Loads

Section 303(d) of the Clean Water Act requires states to identify water bodies that do not meet water quality objectives and are not supporting beneficial uses. Each state must submit an updated biennial list, called the 303(d) list, to the USEPA. In addition to identifying the water bodies that are not supporting beneficial uses, the list also identifies the pollutant or stressor causing the impairment. Once a water body has been deemed impaired, a Total Maximum Daily Load must be developed for each pollutant causing an impairment. A Total Maximum Daily Load is an estimate of the total load of pollutants from point, nonpoint, and natural sources that a water body may receive without exceeding applicable water quality standards (often with a "factor of safety" included, which limits the total load of pollutants to a level well below that which could cause the standard to be exceeded). Once established, the Total Maximum Daily Load is allocated among current and future dischargers into the water body.

Section 401: Water Quality Certification

Section 401 of the Clean Water Act regulates discharges of fill and dredged material to waters of the United States. Under Section 401, the SWRCB and RWQCBs have regulatory authority over actions in waters of the United States through the issuance of water quality certifications, which are issued in conjunction with any federal permit (e.g., permits issued by the USACE under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act, described below). Section 401 provides the SWRCB and the RWQCBs with the regulatory authority to waive, certify, or deny any proposed activity that could result in a discharge to surface waters of the State. To waive or certify an activity, these agencies must find the proposed discharge would comply with State water quality standards, including those protecting beneficial uses and water quality. If these agencies deny the proposed activity, the federal permit cannot be issued.

Section 402: National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System

Section 402 of the Clean Water Act establishes the NPDES regulations for stormwater and other pollutant discharges. Section 402 prohibits discharge of pollutants to waters of the United States unless they are regulated by an NPDES permit. Stormwater discharges are regulated under a variety of NPDES permits, including municipal, agricultural, industrial, construction, and low-threat discharge permits.

In 1987, Congress amended the Clean Water Act to require the implementation of a two-phased program to address stormwater discharges. Phase I of the NPDES program, promulgated by the USEPA in November 1990, requires NPDES permits for stormwater discharges from MS4s[1] serving populations of 100,000 or greater, construction sites disturbing greater than five acres of land, and 10 categories of industrial activities.

The USEPA recognized that smaller construction projects (disturbing less than five acres) and small MS4s (serving populations smaller than 100,000) were also contributing substantially to pollutant discharges nationwide. Therefore, in order to further improve stormwater quality, the USEPA promulgated the NPDES Phase II program in January 2000, which requires NPDES permits for stormwater discharges from regulated small MS4s and for construction sites disturbing between one and five acres of land.

In California, the NPDES program is administered by SWRCB through the nine RWQCBs.

[1] An MS4 is a conveyance or system of conveyances designed or used to collect or convey stormwater (e.g., storm drains, pipes, ditches) that are owned by a state, city, town, or other public entity.

Section 404: Discharge of Dredge or Fill

Section 404 of the Clean Water Act requires a permit be issued by USACE before dredged or fill material may be discharged into waters of the United States, unless the activity is exempt from Section 404 regulations (e.g. farming activities, maintenance activities, construction of temporary sedimentation basins, construction and maintenance of forest roads or temporary mining roads). Waters of the United States generally include tidal waters, lakes, ponds, rivers, streams (including intermittent streams), and wetlands (with the exception of isolated wetlands).

When an application for a Section 404 permit is made, the Applicant must show it has:

- Taken steps to avoid impacts to wetlands or waters of the U.S. where practicable;
- Minimized unavoidable impacts on waters of the U.S. and wetlands; and
- Provided mitigation for unavoidable impacts.

National Flood Insurance Act/Flood Disaster Protection Act

The National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 and the Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973 were enacted by Congress to reduce the costs of disaster relief. The intent of these acts was to reduce the need for large, publicly-funded flood control structures and disaster relief efforts by restricting development in floodplains. FEMA administers the National Flood Insurance Program to provide subsidized flood insurance to communities that comply with FEMA regulations limiting development in a floodplain. FEMA issues Flood Insurance Rate Maps of communities participating in the National Flood Insurance Program. These maps delineate flood hazard zones in the community. Local agencies are responsible for administering their community's floodplain management regulations. The City of Auburn manages local storm drain facilities and is responsible for regional flood control planning within the city.

b. State Regulations

California Lake and Streambed Alteration Agreement

Sections 1600 – 1616 of the California Fish and Game Code require that any entity that proposes an activity that would divert or obstruct the natural flow of any river, stream or lake; change or use any material from the bed, channel, or bank of, any river, stream, or lake; or, deposit or dispose of debris, waste, or other material containing crumbled, flaked, or ground pavement where it may pass into any river, stream, or lake, must notify the California Department of Fish and Wildlife. The California Department of Fish and Wildlife requires a Lake or Streambed Alteration Agreement if it determines that the alteration may adversely affect fish and wildlife resources. The Agreement includes conditions necessary to protect those resources. The Agreement applies to any stream, including ephemeral streams and desert washes.

Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act

California's primary statute governing water quality and water pollution is the Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act of 1970 (Porter-Cologne Act). The Porter-Cologne Act grants the SWRCB and nine RWQCBs broad powers to protect water quality and is the primary vehicle for the implementation of the Clean Water Act in California. The Porter-Cologne Act grants the SWRCB and RWQCBs the authority and responsibility to adopt plans and policies, regulate discharges to surface water and groundwater, regulate waste disposal sites, and require cleanup of discharges of hazardous materials and other pollutants. The Porter-Cologne Act also establishes reporting

requirements for unintended discharges of any hazardous substance, sewage, oil, or petroleum product. Each RWQCB must adopt and implement a Water Quality Control Plan (Basin Plan) for its region in conformance with the policies set forth in the Porter-Cologne Act. The Planning Area is within the jurisdictional boundaries of the Central Valley RWQCB (Region 5).

Construction Stormwater General Permit

The *General Permit for Storm Water Discharges Associated with Construction and Land Disturbance Activities*, Order No. 2022-0057-DWQ, NPDES No. CAS000002 (Construction Stormwater General Permit), adopted by SWRCB, regulates construction activities that include clearing, grading, and excavation resulting in soil disturbance of at least one acre of total land area. The Construction Stormwater General Permit authorizes the discharge of stormwater to surface waters from construction activities and requires all developers of land where construction activities will occur over more than one acre to do the following:

- Complete a Risk Assessment to determine pollution prevention requirements pursuant to the three risk levels established in the Construction Stormwater General Permit;
- Eliminate or reduce non-stormwater discharges to storm sewer systems and other waters of the United States;
- Develop and implement a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) that specifies construction best management practices (BMPs) that will reduce pollution in stormwater discharges to the Best Available Technology/Economically Achievable/Best Conventional Pollutant Control Technology standards;
- Perform inspections and maintenance of all BMPs; and
- Conduct stormwater sampling, if required based on risk level.

To obtain coverage under the Construction Stormwater General Permit, a project applicant must electronically file all permit registration documents with SWRCB prior to the start of construction. Permit registration documents must include a Notice of Intent, Risk Assessment, site map, SWPPP, annual fee, and signed certification statement.

Typical BMPs contained in SWPPPs are designed to minimize erosion during construction, stabilize construction areas, control sediment, control discharges from groundwater dewatering, and control pollutants from construction materials. The SWPPP must also include a discussion of the program to inspect and maintain all BMPs.

The Construction Stormwater General Permit also contains post-construction requirements for projects not covered under a Phase I or Phase II MS4 Permit. The Construction Stormwater General Permit requires implementation of operational BMPs and low impact development features to reduce runoff and pollutants in stormwater discharge.

The Construction Stormwater General Permit also includes groundwater dewatering requirements for projects not covered under a De Minimis or Low Threat Discharge Permit. The dewatering requirements mandate dischargers to implement BMPs to control the volume and velocity of dewatering discharges. The Construction Stormwater General Permit also requires testing and treatment, if necessary, of groundwater discharge to verify the discharge meets or exceeds the effluent limitations specified in the permit.

California Drainage Law, Government Code 65302

Government Code Section 65302(a) requires cities and counties located within the state to review the Land Use, Conservation, and Safety elements of the general plan "for the consideration of flood hazards, flooding, and floodplains" to address flood risks. The code also requires cities and counties in the state to annually review the land use element within "those areas covered by the plan that are subject to flooding identified by floodplain mapping prepared by FEMA or the DWR."

c. Local Regulations

Auburn Stormwater Management Program

The City of Auburn has established a Stormwater Management Program to comply with state and federal regulations. The program aims to prevent stormwater pollution, enhance water quality in creeks and waterways, preserve their beneficial uses, and educate the public about BMPs for pollutant disposal. Through education, regulation of construction site runoff, investigation of non-stormwater discharges, and reduction of non-stormwater runoff from municipal operations, the City mitigates contamination in stormwater and non-stormwater discharges. Stormwater, which includes runoff from rain and other sources like overwatering lawns and washing cars, flows untreated into creeks, potentially carrying pollutants that harm local ecosystems. Prevention of stormwater pollution is emphasized as a collective responsibility.

Placer County Flood Control and Water Conservation District

The Placer County Flood Control and Water Conservation District maintains plans and programs to protect water quality and control flooding within the District. These include the following:

- The Auburn Bowman Community Plan Hydrology Study recommends BMPs to maintain adequate water quality in the District.
- The Dry Creek Watershed Control Plan provides a detailed hydrological analysis of the watershed, provides recommendations for feasible regional flood control projects, means to mitigate development projects, and recommends an updated facility plan and fee program.
- The Cross Canal Watershed Flood Control Plan contains policies within the mitigation plan to minimize flood impacts in the watershed.
- The Flood Prone Property Map identifies flood prone areas within the County.
- The Stormwater Management Manual contains goals and policies to achieve the County's stormwater management objectives.
- The Stream Channel Maintenance Program entails the annual removal of vegetation from selected creek channels to improve flood flows.

Auburn Municipal Code

Chapter 53 and Sections 158.280 – 158.286 of the City of Auburn Municipal Code (AMC) regulates stormwater management and discharge control. Relevant sections of Chapter 53 include:

- **Section 53.003** requires all new development and redevelopment projects to comply with the requirements of the City's MS4 Permit.
- **Section 53.010** prohibits discharge into the City's stormwater system or watercourses any materials, other than stormwater, containing any pollutants that cause or contribute to a violation of applicable water quality standards, including but not limited to pollutants or waters.

- **Section 53.017** requires compliance with the necessary NPDES stormwater discharge permits. Proof of compliance with said permit may be required in a form acceptable to the Director prior to or as a condition of a subdivision map, site plan, building permit, grading permit, or development or improvement plan; upon inspection of the facility; during any enforcement proceeding or action; or for any other reasonable cause.
- **Section 53.018** allows the City to adopt requirements identifying BMPs for any activity, operation, or facility which may cause or contribute to pollution or contamination of stormwater, the City's stormwater system, or waters of the U.S.
- **Section 158.280** requires subdivisions to construct adequate facilities for carrying stormwater to an adequate storm drainage facility approved by the City Engineer. The facilities shall be constructed in accordance with the standard specifications and meet the minimum standards set forth in this subchapter.
- **Section 158.281** requires that natural watercourses be carried through subdivisions through a dedicated right-of-way.
- **Section 158.283** requires that surface runoff within subdivisions be conveyed in gutters.
- **Section 158.286** requires that the storm drain system be designed in accordance with the uniform storm drain design standards developed by the City Engineer.

Chapter 155 of the City's Municipal Code regulates grading and excavation activities. Relevant sections of Chapter 155 include:

- **Section 155.021** specifies that grading may not obstruct, impede, or interfere with the natural flow of stormwaters, in such manner as to cause flooding where it would not otherwise occur, aggravate any existing flooding condition or cause accelerated erosion, except where said grading is in accordance with all applicable laws, including, but not limited to these permit requirements.
- **Section 155.023.B** specifies that the City Engineer may require the submission of plans or soil or geological reports, detailed construction recommendations, drainage study or other engineering data prior to and in connection with any corrective or proposed work or activity.

Sections 159.310 – 159.315 of the AMC contains provisions pertaining to the reduction of flood hazard. This section restricts hazardous land uses, ensures flood-resistant construction, controls alterations to natural floodplains, and prevents the construction of flood barriers that may exacerbate risks elsewhere. These regulations aim to protect life and property, minimize public expenditures on flood control, and maintain a stable tax base while ensuring that individuals occupying flood-prone areas bear responsibility for their actions.

Auburn General Plan 1993

The Auburn General Plan was adopted in 1993. The General Plan's Safety Element contains the following goals and policies related to hydrology and water quality:

Goal 1: Protect the life and property of residents, businesses, and visitors to Auburn from natural and human-made hazards and crime.

Policy 1.1 Site critical public facilities—including hospital and healthcare facilities, emergency shelters and resilience hubs, police and fire stations, and emergency communications facilities—outside of the identified 100- and 500-year floodplains, very high fire hazard severity zones, potential areas of subsidence, and landslide-

prone areas to the extent possible. If such facilities must be in mapped hazard zones, ensure that such critical facilities are protected from the risks of flood inundation, fire, subsidence, and landslides.

Policy 1.2 Require new development in the very high fire hazard severity zones, flood zones, and landslide-prone areas to develop Emergency Preparedness Plans, including confirming evacuation and emergency vehicle access, land management, visible home and street signage, community training and education, and defensive infrastructure and resource needs.

Policy 1.6 Identify and, as feasible, retrofit any City-owned buildings, roadways, and facilities in areas prone to flood, landslide/debris flows, or wildfire to maximize defensible space and outdoor fireproofing, improve drainage systems, stabilize nearby slopes, and take other actions to harden the property as needed.

Goal 3: Minimal injury, loss of life, property damage, and economic social disruption resulting from flooding and inundation hazards in Auburn.

Policy 3.1 Identify and regularly update as needed any areas of likely flood inundation in Auburn using Federal Emergency Management Agency-established floodplain mapping along with any local mapping available.

Policy 3.2 Encourage new residential, commercial, and critical facility development in areas outside of identified 100- or 500-year flood inundation zones.

Policy 3.3 Reinforce and protect any City-owned infrastructure from the threat of flood inundation.

Policy 3.4 Increase the use of permeable surfaces and rainwater catchment systems in developed areas to reduce flooding.

Policy 3.5 Maintain the highest feasible rating under the Community Rating System of the National Flood Insurance Program to reduce flood risks and cost of private property insurance.

The General Plan's Open Space and Conservation Element contains the following goal and policies related to hydrology and water quality:

Goal 7: Conserve, protect and enhance water supplies and adequately plan for the development and protection of these resources and their related resources for future generations.

Policy 7.1 Protect water quality and watershed by discouraging activities including, but not limited to, the use of hazardous materials around wetland and groundwater recharge areas.

Policy 7.2 Support regional, state and federal agencies in their efforts to exact high levels of water quality.

Policy 7.3 Promote water conservation through development standards, building requirements, landscape design guidelines, and policies and programs.

Policy 7.4 Adopt an ordinance to protect and enhance waterways, stream channels, and intermittent streams.

Policy 7.5 Where feasible, keep waterways in their natural state.

Policy 7.6 Encourage appropriate setbacks for building sites from natural waterways.

2021 Auburn General Plan Safety Element

The City of Auburn updated its Safety Element in 2021. Much of the language in the 1993 General Plan was carried forward. Goal 3 of the Element is to minimize injury, loss of life, property damage, and economic/social disruption resulting from flooding and inundation hazards. Like the 1993 General Plan, Policy 3.1 requires regular updates of floodplain maps. Policy 3.2 encourages development outside of flood plains and inundation zones. Policy 3.3 protects City owned infrastructure from flood hazards, including single access roads and trails. Actions under this policy reference maintenance of storm drains and improvements to wastewater infrastructure. Policy 3.4 calls for increased use of pervious surface, including implementation of the 2008 Stormwater Management Plan. Policy 3.5 calls for maintaining the highest feasible rating under the National Flood Insurance Program Community Rating System.

Placer County Municipal Code

Article 8.28 of the Placer County Code includes the County's stormwater quality ordinance which aims to ensure compliance with state and federal laws, safeguarding the health, safety, and welfare of county residents while enhancing and protecting the quality of local waters. It mandates the use of BMPs to minimize the adverse effects of polluted runoff and implements design standards to meet legal requirements. The ordinance prohibits illicit discharges, empowers the adoption of stormwater management regulations, and establishes authority for enforcing these measures to reduce stormwater pollution and erosion from development projects.

Section 13.08.120 of the Placer County Code states that the enforcement agency may designate areas where groundwater quality problems are known to exist and where a well will penetrate more than one aquifer. The enforcement agency may require in these designated areas special well seal(s) to prevent mixing of water from several aquifers.

Article 15.48 of the Placer County Code includes the County's grading, erosion, and sediment control ordinance. This ordinance includes general requirements, plans and specifications, geotechnical investigations and inspections, and design standards pertaining to drainage systems, grading activities, and related components of the development process.

Article 15.52 of the Placer County Code includes the County's flood damage prevention ordinance. Included in this ordinance are regulations and policies to reduce flood hazards. This includes policies standards for construction, utilities, subdivisions, manufactured homes, recreational vehicles, and floodways.

Placer County General Plan

The Placer County General Plan was updated in 2013. The General Plan's Public Facilities and Services and Natural Resources Elements contain the following goals and policies related to hydrology and water quality:

Goal 4.E: To manage rainwater and stormwater at the source in a sustainable manner that least inconveniences the public, reduces potential water-related damage, augments water supply, mitigates storm water pollution, and enhances the environment.

Policy 4.E.1 The County shall encourage the use of natural stormwater drainage systems to preserve and enhance natural features.

Policy 4.E.4 The County shall ensure that new storm drainage systems are designed in conformance with the Placer County Flood Control and Water Conservation District's Stormwater Management Manual and the County Land Development Manual.

Policy 4.E.5 The County shall continue to implement and enforce its Grading, Erosion and Sediment Control Ordinance and Flood Damage Prevention Ordinance.

Policy 4.E.7 The County shall prohibit the use of underground storm drain systems in rural and agricultural areas, unless no other feasible alternatives are available for conveyance of stormwater from new development or when necessary to mitigate flood hazards.

Policy 4.E.10 The County shall strive to improve the quality of runoff from urban and suburban development through use of appropriate site design measures including, but not limited to vegetated swales, infiltration/sedimentation basins, riparian setbacks, oil/grit separators, rooftop and impervious area disconnection, porous pavement, and other best management practices (BMPs).

Policy 4.E.11 The County shall require new development to adequately mitigate increases in stormwater peak flows and/or volume. Mitigation measures should take into consideration impacts on adjoining lands in the unincorporated area and on properties in jurisdictions within and immediately adjacent to Placer County.

Policy 4.E.12 The County shall encourage project designs that minimize drainage concentrations and impervious coverage and maintain, to the extent feasible, natural site drainage conditions.

Policy 4.E.13 The County shall require that new development conforms with the applicable programs, policies, recommendations, and plans of the Placer County Flood Control and Water Conservation District.

Policy 4.E.14 The County shall require projects that have significant impacts on the quantity and quality of surface water runoff to allocate land as necessary for the purpose of detaining post-project flows, evapotranspiring, infiltrating, harvesting/using, and biotreating stormwater, and/or for the incorporation of mitigation measures for water quality impacts related to urban runoff.

Policy 4.E.15 The County shall require that new development in primarily urban development areas incorporate low impact development measures to reduce the amount of runoff, to the maximum extent practicable, for which retention and treatment is required.

Policy 4.E.16 The County shall identify and coordinate mitigation measures with responsible agencies for the control of storm drainage systems, monitoring of discharges, and implementation of measures to control pollutant loads in urban storm water runoff (e.g., California Regional Water Quality Control Board, Placer County Environmental Health Division, Placer County Department of Public Works, CDRA Engineering and Surveying Division, Placer County Flood Control and Water Conservation District).

Policy 4.E.18 The County shall, wherever feasible, require that proponents of new projects encase, or otherwise protect from contamination, domestic water supply canals where they pass through developments with lot sizes of 2.3 acres or less; where subdivision roads are constructed within 100 feet upslope or upstream from canals; and within all commercial, industrial, institutional, and multi-family developments.

Policy 4.E.20 The County shall continue to implement and enforce its Stormwater Quality Ordinance.

Goal 6.A: To protect and enhance the natural qualities of Placer County's rivers, streams, creeks and groundwater.

Policy 6.A.2 The County shall require all development in the 100-year floodplain to comply with the provisions of the Placer County Flood Damage Prevention Ordinance.

Policy 6.A.3 The County shall require development projects proposing to encroach into a stream zone or stream setback to do one or more of the following, in descending order of desirability:

a) Avoid the disturbance of riparian vegetation;
b) Replace all functions of the existing riparian vegetation (on-site, in-kind);
c) Restore another section of stream (in-kind); and/or
d) Pay a mitigation fee for in-kind restoration elsewhere (e.g., mitigation banks).

Policy 6.A.4 Where stream protection is required or proposed, the County should require public and private development to:

a) Preserve stream zones and stream setback areas through easements or dedications. Parcel lines (in the case of a subdivision) or easements (in the case of a subdivision or other development) shall be located to optimize resource protection. If a stream is proposed to be included within an open space parcel or easement, allowed uses and maintenance responsibilities within that parcel or easement should be clearly defined and conditioned prior to map or project approval;
b) Designate such easement or dedication areas (as described in a. above) as open space;
c) Protect stream zones and their habitat value by actions such as: 1) providing an adequate stream setback, 2) maintaining creek corridors in an essentially natural state, 3) employing stream restoration techniques where restoration is needed to achieve a natural stream zone, 4) utilizing riparian vegetation within stream zones, and where possible, within stream setback areas, 5) prohibiting the planting of invasive, non-nativ plants (such as Vinca major and eucalyptus) within stream zones or stream setbacks, and 6) avoiding tree removal within stream zones;
d) Provide recreation and public access near streams consistent with other General Plan policies;
e) Use design, construction, and maintenance techniques that ensure development near a creek will not cause or worsen natural hazards (such as erosion, sedimentation, flooding, or water pollution) and will include erosion

and sediment control practices such as: 1) turbidity screens and other management practices, which shall be used as necessary to minimize siltation, sedimentation, and erosion, and shall be left in place until disturbed areas; and/or are stabilized with permanent vegetation that will prevent the transport of sediment off site; and 2) temporary vegetation sufficient to stabilize disturbed areas.

f) Provide for long-term stream zone maintenance by providing a guaranteed financial commitment to the County which accounts for all anticipated maintenance activities.

Policy 6.A.5 The County shall continue to require the use of feasible and practical best management practices (BMPs) to protect streams from the adverse effects of construction activities and urban runoff and to encourage the use of BMPs for agricultural activities.

Policy 6.A.6 The County shall require development projects to comply with the municipal and construction stormwater permit requirements of the Federal Clean Water Act National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Phase I and II programs and the State General Municipal and Construction permits. Municipal requirements affecting project design and construction practices are enacted through the County's Stormwater Quality Ordinance. Separate construction permits may be required by and obtained through the State Water Resources Control Board.

Policy 6.A.7 All new development and redevelopment projects shall be designed so as to minimize the introduction of pollutants into stormwater runoff, to the maximum extent practicable, as well as minimize the amount of runoff through the incorporation of appropriate Best Management Practices.

Policy 6.A.8 The County shall support implementation of Low Impact Development site design and Watershed Process Management requirements for new and redevelopment projects in accordance with the NPDES Phase I and II programs, and applicable NPDES permits.

Policy 6.A.13 The County shall protect groundwater resources from contamination and further overdraft by pursuing the following efforts:

a) Identifying and controlling sources of potential contamination;
b) Protecting important groundwater recharge areas;
c) Encouraging the use of surface water to supply major municipal and industrial consumptive demands;
d) Encouraging the use of treated wastewater for groundwater recharge; and
e) Supporting major consumptive use of groundwater aquifer(s) in the western part of the County only where it can be demonstrated that this use does not exceed safe yield and

Policy 6.A.15 The County shall encourage the protection of floodplain lands and, where appropriate, acquire public easements for purposes of flood protection, public safety, wildlife preservation, groundwater recharge, access and recreation.

Policy 6.D.9 The County shall require that development on hillsides be limited to maintain valuable natural vegetation, especially forests and open grasslands, and to control erosion.

Policy 6.E.2 The County shall require that new development be designed and constructed to preserve the following types of areas and features as open space to the maximum extent feasible:

a) High erosion hazard areas;
b) Scenic and trail corridors;
c) Streams, riparian vegetation;
d) Wetlands;
e) Significant stands of vegetation;
f) Wildlife corridors; and
g) Any areas of special ecological significance.

Sacramento River Basin and San Joaquin River Basin Water Quality Control Plan

The Central Valley RWQCB which sets water quality standards for the Sacramento River and San Joaquin River Basins through its Water Quality Control Plan (Basin Plan). The Basin Plan identifies beneficial uses for surface water and groundwater and establishes water quality objectives to attain those beneficial uses. The Basin Plan designates beneficial uses of water in the region and establishes narrative and numerical water quality objectives, serving as the basis for regulatory programs and outlining an implementation plan for achieving water quality objectives. The only surface waterbody in the vicinity of the Planning Area that has designated beneficial uses is the North Fork American River. Identified beneficial uses of this water body include municipal and domestic supply, irrigation, recreation, fresh water habitat, spawning, and wildlife habitat (Central Valley RWQCB 2019).

4.10.3 Impact Analysis

a. Significance Thresholds and Methodology

Significance Thresholds

Based on Appendix G of the *CEQA Guidelines* a project may be deemed to have a significant impact on hydrology and water quality if it would:

1. Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or ground water quality;
2. Substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin;
3. Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner which would:
    a. Result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site;

b. Substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on-or off-site;
c. Create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff; or
d. Impede or redirect flood flows.

4. In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk release of pollutants due to project inundation; or
5. Conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan.

Methodology

This section describes the potential environmental impacts of the proposed project relevant to hydrology and water quality. The impact analysis is based on an assessment of baseline conditions for the Planning Area, including climate, topography, watersheds and surface waters, groundwater, and floodplains, as described above under Section 4.9.1, *Setting*. This analysis identifies potential impacts based on the predicated interaction between the affected environment and construction, operation, and maintenance activities related to the development that would occur under the proposed project, and recommends mitigation measures, when necessary, to avoid or minimize impacts.

b. Project Impacts and Mitigation Measures

Threshold 1:	Would the project violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or ground water quality?

Impact HYD-1 DEVELOPMENT FACILITATED BY THE PROJECT WOULD HAVE THE POTENTIAL TO DEGRADE SURFACE OR GROUNDWATER QUALITY; HOWEVER, PROJECT-LEVEL REGULATORY COMPLIANCE AND ADHERENCE TO PROPOSED GENERAL PLAN POLICIES AND ACTIONS WOULD ENSURE THIS IMPACT IS LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT.

Construction

Development facilitated by the project would include construction activities such as grading and earth moving that may intermittently expose uncompacted soils to wind and rain, contributing to increased soil erosion and resulting in degraded water quality as related sediments reach regional surface waters. Additionally, construction activities would involve materials with the potential to pollute surface waters and groundwater in the event of accidental upset or release, including paints, solvents, and fuels. Pursuant to the Clean Water Act, construction activities that disturb one or more acres of land are subject to the most current NPDES Construction General Permit, which requires the development of a SWPPP developed by a certified Qualified SWPPP Developer. The SWPPP includes project-specific BMPs to control erosion, sediment release, and otherwise reduce the potential for discharge of pollutants from construction into stormwater. Typical BMPs may include but are not limited to: installation of silt fences, erosion control blankets, and anti-tracking pads at site exits to prevent off-site transport of soil materials. AMC Section 53.017 requires compliance with the necessary NPDES stormwater discharge permits as a condition of a subdivision map, site plan, building permit, grading permit, or development or improvement plan; upon inspection of the facility; during any enforcement proceeding or action; or for any other reasonable cause. AMC Section 158.280 requires subdivisions to construct adequate facilities for carrying

stormwater to an adequate storm drainage facility approved by the City Engineer and AMC Section 158.286 requires that the storm drain system be designed in accordance with the uniform storm drain design standards developed by the City Engineer. For development outside of City boundaries but within the Planning Area, Placer County Code Section 15.48.580 would apply, which requires all drainage facilities to be designed and engineered to prioritize the retention, detention, and infiltration of water on-site and be consistent with, where applicable, the West Placer and East Placer Storm Water Quality Design Manuals. Any surface and subsurface waters not able to be retained, detained, and/or infiltrated on-site would be carried to the nearest adequate street, storm drain, natural watercourse, or other juncture.

In addition, development facilitated by the project would be subject to 2045 General Plan proposed Policy CSF-4.7: Stormwater Management, which would promote stormwater management programs designed to minimize pollutant discharges.

Compliance with the NPDES Construction General Permit, SWPPP, and City or County regulations would ensure BMPs are implemented during construction facilitated by the project to minimize potential impacts to surface water quality. Impacts related to the construction of future development facilitated by the project would be less than significant.

Operation

Operation of the project could impact surface and groundwater quality if development facilitated by the project would involve the use of potential surface water pollutants, such as hazardous materials or wastewater, which could discharge into stormwater infrastructure or surface waters, or infiltrate into groundwater. Operation of future development facilitated by the project would be required to comply with the provisions of California's Phase II Small MS4 Storm Water Permit. In addition, AMC Section 53.003 requires all new development and redevelopment projects to comply with the requirements of the City's MS4 Permit. AMC Section 53.010 prohibits discharge into the City's stormwater system or watercourses of materials other than stormwater containing pollutants that cause or contribute to a violation of applicable water quality standards, including but not limited to pollutants or waters. AMC Section 53.018 allows the City to adopt requirements identifying BMPs for any activity, operation, or facility which may cause or contribute to pollution or contamination of stormwater, the City's stormwater system, or waters of the U.S. If development facilitated by the project were to be categorized under Standard Industrial Classification codes, it would be subject to the Industrial General Permit, which requires development of a site-specific operational SWPPP. Implementation of the operational SWPPP would reduce the risk of water degradation on site and off site from soil erosion and other pollutants related to project operation because an operational SWPPP requires the design, installation, and maintenance of post-construction stormwater controls. The operational SWPPP identifies the site-specific sources of pollutants and describes the BMPs implemented at the facility to prevent dry weather runoff and to reduce pollutants in storm water discharges.

In addition, development facilitated by the project would be subject to 2045 General Plan Policy CSF-4.9: Green Infrastructure, Policy T-3.7: Environmental Impacts of Transportation, Policy OSC-3.9: Wastewater and Environmental Quality, Policy OSC-3.12: Education and Advocacy, and Policy CSF-4.7: Stormwater Management. These policies encourage sustainable practices, including the retention of stormwater on site and the preservation of natural drainage ways and riparian areas; reduce the effects of roads, railroads, and other transportation projects on water quality; reduce the water quality impacts of wastewater; promote awareness of water quality issues and support

organizations and events that protect, clean up, and restore local waterways; and seek to minimize pollutants fated to local waterways.

Implementation of permit requirements and 2045 General Plan policies would minimize impacts related to water quality and ensure development facilitated by the project would not violate water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or groundwater quality. Therefore, this impact would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures would be required.

Significance After Mitigation

Impacts would be less than significant without mitigation.

Threshold 2:	Would the project substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin?

Impact HYD-2 MUCH OF THE DEVELOPMENT FACILITATED BY THE PROJECT WOULD BE SERVED BY PLACER COUNTY WATER AUTHORITY VIA EXISTING SURFACE WATER SOURCES. THOUGH SOME NEW DEVELOPMENT MAY BE GROUNDWATER DEPENDENT, PROPOSED GENERAL PLAN POLICIES WOULD PROMOTE SUSTAINABLE WATER USE AND PROMOTE GROUNDWATER RECHARGE. THIS WOULD ENSURE A LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT.

As described above in Section 4.10.1, *Setting*, the City, along with much of the central and eastern portions of Placer County, is not underlain by a groundwater basin designated by DWR, indicating the Planning Area does not overlie a medium or high priority basin for which maintaining sustainable management is of concern (DWR 2024).

Construction activities, as facilitated by the project, are unlikely to substantially affect available groundwater stores except in the event of dewatering. In the event that grading, excavation, or other earth moving activities associated with facilitated development encounter the water table, some groundwater would need to be dewatered and discharged off-site. This would be most likely to occur where the water table is high. Otherwise, groundwater demand associated with general construction activities would be minimal if any.

Much of the development facilitated by the project would be served by Placer County Water Authority (PCWA), which primarily draws from surface water sources, treated water, and local reservoirs. Specifically, PCWA sources water ultimately from the American River and the Yuba River via existing PCWA water rights and the Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E) contract supply which has been acquired by PCWA. Existing PG&E contract rights represent 125,000 acre-feet of supply and PCWA holds consumptive rights to 120,000-acre feet via the Middle Fork American River Project alone, to be stored primarily in the Hell Hole and French Meadows reservoirs. This combination of sources provides a reliable water supply for Placer County (PWCA 2024). Therefore, development facilitated by the project that occurs within the existing PCWA service area would not be provided groundwater and would thus not substantially deplete existing groundwater supply or impede sustainable groundwater management.

Many rural residential areas in the northern and western portions of the Planning Area rely on groundwater to meet domestic needs (City of Auburn 2024b). Development occurring in these areas would either depend on groundwater or be required to connect to the municipal water supply system if development is unable to be supported by on-site wells. Specific actions contained within the 2045 General Plan seek to promote sustainable water management, including Action CSF-4B which supports regular updates of PCWA's Urban Water Management Plan; and Action CSF-4C which requires new residential subdivisions of a certain size to connect to a community water supply and sewage disposal system prior to occupancy. Implementation of these actions would ensure that development facilitated by the project where groundwater is the primary source of water would not substantially deplete groundwater supplies.

Development facilitated by the project could introduce new impervious surfaces through the construction of paved areas, which could impede or lessen existing groundwater recharge. Specific 2045 General Plan policies CD-3.5: Sustainable Design, and OSC-3.8: Low Impact Development, would promote groundwater recharge by encouraging sustainable design methods and the retention of stormwater on site for new development facilitated by the project. Implementation of the proposed 2045 General Plan would also require introduction of low-impact development site design measures, which would assist in groundwater recharge. These design features could include, but are not limited to limiting impervious surfaces, routing runoff to bioretention facilities for groundwater storage, or including pervious pavements in project design. Implementation of these policies would ensure that groundwater recharge is not impeded by development facilitated by the project. In addition, Policy 3.4 in the 2021 Safety Element promotes permeable surfaces and rainwater catchment systems to support groundwater recharge.

The project would not substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin. This impact would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures would be required.

Significance After Mitigation

Impacts would be less than significant without mitigation.

Threshold 3:	Would the project substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner which would: a. Result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site; b. Substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or off-site; c. Create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff; or d. Impede or redirect flood flows?

Impact HYD-3 DEVELOPMENT FACILITATED BY THE PROJECT COULD ALTER SITE-SPECIFIC DRAINAGE PATTERNS AND INTRODUCE NEW IMPERVIOUS SURFACE AREAS. COMPLIANCE WITH APPLICABLE REGULATIONS, INCLUDING THE REGULATIONS CONTAINED IN THE AUBURN MUNICIPAL CODE AND THE POLICIES CONTAINED IN THE 2045 GENERAL PLAN WOULD ENSURE THAT THIS IMPACT WOULD BE LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT.

Development facilitated by the project would involve earth moving activities with the potential to alter site-specific drainage patterns and could result in increased impervious surface area throughout the Planning Area relative to existing conditions. Such changes to site specific drainage patterns could result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site; increase the rate or amount of surface runoff; create runoff that exceeds the capacity of stormwater drainage systems; contribute to polluted runoff; or impede or redirect flood flows. The AMC, Placer County Code, and state and federal regulations contain a variety of regulations regarding stormwater management, grading, and project design, which act to reduce erosion and potential subsequent adverse effects throughout the Planning Area, as summarized below.

AMC Section 155.023.B specifies that the City Engineer may require the submission of plans or soil or geological reports, detailed construction recommendations, drainage study or other engineering data prior to and in connection with any corrective or proposed work or activity. For development occurring within the Planning Area but outside of City boundaries, Article 15.48 of the Placer County Code would apply. This ordinance includes general requirements, plans and specifications, geotechnical investigations and inspections, and design standards pertaining to drainage systems, grading activities, and related components of the development process. As stated in Section 4.10.2, *Regulatory Setting*, for all projects throughout the Planning Area subject to the NPDES Construction General Permit, a SWPPP would be required and would act to further reduce any potential effects that could result from future development. A SWPPP includes project-specific BMPs to control erosion, sediment release, and otherwise reduce the potential for discharge of pollutants from construction into stormwater. These requirements would ensure that the potential effects related to erosion and siltation are minimized for development facilitated by the project.

AMC Section 158.280 requires subdivisions to construct adequate facilities for carrying stormwater to an adequate storm drainage facility approved by the City Engineer. AMC Section 158.283 requires that surface runoff within subdivisions be conveyed in gutters. AMC Section 158.286 requires that the storm drain system be designed in accordance with the uniform storm drain design standards developed by the City Engineer. AMC Section 155.021 and 155.023.B require developments to limit off-site runoff and associated flooding, including through the preparation of a drainage study. For development occurring within the Planning Area but outside of City boundaries, Articles 8.28 and 15.52 of the Placer County Code would apply, requiring the reduction of off-site flooding as a result

of new development. These code requirements would ensure that the potential effects related to surface runoff and flooding are minimized for development facilitated by the project.

AMC Section 53.003 requires compliance with the City's MS4 Permit, which aims to protect the water quality of surface water and groundwater and prohibit non-stormwater discharge into the municipal stormwater system. Similarly, AMC 53.010 prohibits discharge of pollutants into the City's stormwater system. AMC Section 53.018 also allows the City to require BMPs for any activity, operation, or facility which may cause or contribute to pollution or contamination of stormwater, the City's stormwater system, or waters of the U.S. For development occurring within the Planning Area but outside of City boundaries, Article 8.28 of the Placer County Code mandates the use of BMPs to minimize the adverse effects of polluted runoff and implements design standards to meet legal requirements. The ordinance prohibits illicit discharges, empowers the adoption of stormwater management regulations, and establishes authority for enforcing these measures to reduce stormwater pollution and erosion from development projects. These code requirements would ensure that the potential effects related to stormwater drainage and polluted runoff are minimized for development facilitated by the project.

AMC Section 158.281 requires that natural watercourses be carried through subdivisions through a dedicated right-of-way. AMC Section 155.021 specifies that grading may not obstruct, impede, or interfere with the natural flow of stormwater, in such manner as to cause flooding where it would not otherwise occur, aggravate any existing flooding condition or cause accelerated erosion, except where said grading is in accordance with all applicable laws, including, but not limited to these permit requirements. Furthermore, the AMC restricts development within designated flood hazard areas. For development occurring within the Planning Area but outside of City boundaries, Article 15.52 of the Placer County Code includes the County's flood damage prevention ordinance. Included in this ordinance are regulations and policies to reduce flood hazards. This includes policies standards for construction, utilities, subdivisions, manufactured homes, recreational vehicles, and floodways. These code requirements ensure that the potential effects related to flood flows would be minimized for development facilitated by the project.

Furthermore, the 2045 General Plan includes Policy OSC-3.1: Creeks and Ravines, Policy OSC-3.8: Low Impact Development, Policy CSF-4.6: Stormwater Facility Improvements, and Policy CSF-4.8: Development Impacts on Storm Drainage, for storm and flood control. These policies require setbacks from existing waterways, encourage design practices that minimize runoff, act to improve the City's storm drain system, and ensure new development assesses its impact on the City's storm drain system. In addition, Policy 3.4 in the 2021 Safety Element promotes permeable surfaces.

With adherence to the proposed General Plan policies listed above, as well as compliance with applicable regulations contained in the City's Municipal Code, development facilitated by the project would not result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site; would not increase the rate or amount of surface runoff, which would result in flooding on- or off-site; would not substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the sites in a manner which would contribute runoff water, which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems; and would not impede or redirect flood flows. The policies and regulations would ensure that the City maintains its stormwater system, protects against flood hazards, and preserves creeks and streams when entitling development projects. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures would be required.

Significance After Mitigation

Impacts would be less than significant without mitigation.

Threshold 4:	In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, would the project risk release of pollutants due to project inundation?

Impact HYD-4 FUTURE DEVELOPMENT FACILITATED BY THE PROJECT IN FLOOD HAZARD ZONES COULD RISK POLLUTANT RELEASE DUE TO INUNDATION. WITH ADHERENCE TO APPLICABLE REGULATIONS, THE PROJECT WOULD NOT RISK RELEASE OF POLLUTANTS DUE TO INUNDATION. THEREFORE, THIS IMPACT WOULD BE LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT.

As described in Section 4.10.1, *Setting*, risk of tsunami would be low for the Planning Area as the City is inland and more than 100 miles from the Pacific Ocean. The Planning Area contains small ponds and reservoirs, including the Rock Creek Reservoir; however, due to the limited seismic activity in the Planning Area (refer to Section 4.7, *Geology and Soils*), risk of seiche is low.

Notable FEMA-designated flood zones AE and AO exist along Interstate 80 and Highway 49, surrounding existing surface waters, and generally along the northern and eastern extent of the Planning Area (Figure 4.10-3). Zones AE and AO are designated 100-year flood hazard zones and portions of both zones are designated regulatory floodways (FEMA 2024).

Development facilitated by the project in flood hazard zones could risk pollutant release during inundation. However, AMC Section 159.310 – 159.315 restricts hazardous land uses, ensures flood-resistant construction, controls alterations to natural floodplains, and prevents the construction of flood barriers that may exacerbate risks elsewhere. These requirements would reduce flood hazard risks in the city. Lots partially situated in special flood hazard areas (such as the 100-year floodplain) are required to locate structures and site improvements outside of the special flood hazard area as determined by a California Registered Civil Engineer, unless specifically exempted by the Floodplain Administrator. Furthermore, the 2045 General Plan would include Policy LU-1.5: Reducing Exposure to Natural Hazards, which directs future growth away from flood plains promoting sustained flood control.

In addition, Goal 3 of the 2021 Safety Element includes policies and actions to minimize flood hazards, including policies to regularly update FEMA maps, encourage development to locate outside of flood plain areas, protect City infrastructure from flooding, maintain storm drains, use permeable surfaces and rainwater catchment systems, and maintain the highest feasible rating under the National Flood Insurance Program.

While the 2045 General Plan does not propose new land uses which would produce or store substantial quantities of pollutants relative to existing uses, a number of uses both existing and proposed throughout the Planning Area could pose risk of unplanned pollutant release in the event of inundation. These could include potential additional industrial uses, such as the existing Sutherland Industrial Park. However, future development facilitated by the project within flood hazard zones would adhere applicable regulatory requirements regarding project siting and design. With adherence to applicable regulations, the project would not risk release of pollutants due to inundation. Therefore, this impact would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures would be required.

Significance After Mitigation

Impacts would be less than significant without mitigation.

Threshold 5:	Would the project conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan?

Impact HYD-5 THE PLANNING AREA IS NOT SUBJECT TO A SUSTAINABLE GROUNDWATER MANAGEMENT PLAN. ADHERENCE TO STATE AND LOCAL REGULATIONS WOULD ENSURE DEVELOPMENT UNDER THE PROPOSED PROJECT WOULD NOT INTERFERE WITH THE OBJECTIVES AND GOALS OF THE BASIN PLAN. THIS IMPACT WOULD BE LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT.

As described above, the Planning Area is not underlain by a groundwater basin designated by DWR and is therefore not formally managed under a designated groundwater sustainability agency or by a specific groundwater sustainability plan. Therefore, implementation of the project would not conflict with an applicable sustainable groundwater management plan.

Water quality in the Planning Area is governed by the Central Valley RWQCB, which sets water quality standards in the Water Quality Control Plan for the Sacramento River and San Joaquin River Basins (Basin Plan). The Basin Plan identifies beneficial uses for surface water and groundwater and establishes water quality objectives to attain those beneficial uses (Central Valley RWQCB 2019). The Basin Plan designates beneficial uses of water in the region and establishes narrative and numerical water quality objectives, serving as the basis for regulatory programs and outlining an implementation plan for achieving water quality objectives. The only surface waterbody in the vicinity of the Planning Area that has designated beneficial uses is the North Fork American River. At the federal level, the Clean Water Act 303(d) list provides a register of impaired and threatened waters which the Clean Water Act requires all states to submit for USEPA approval. Identified impaired surface waters within the Planning Area include Auburn Ravine, Rock Creek, and the North Fork of the American River (USEPA 2024).

Future development facilitated by the project would have the potential to impact these waterbodies, either through physical infringement, the introduction of new pollutant streams, or by generating increased utilization of these resources. However, as previously discussed under Impact HYD-3, development facilitated by the project would be required to implement applicable State and local regulatory requirements, including the provisions of the Construction General Permit, the Industrial General Permit, and AMC Section 53.010, which prohibits discharge into the City's stormwater system or watercourses of materials other than stormwater containing pollutants that cause or contribute to a violation of applicable water quality standards. Additionally, the proposed General Plan includes Policy OSC-3.7: Urban Runoff, which requires new development to comply with Auburn's Stormwater Management Program and preserve the beneficial uses of local rivers and streams. Additionally, Safety Element Policy 3.4 supports the use of permeable pavement and Policy OSC-3.10 protects groundwater from the adverse effects of urban uses, even in areas without an underlying aquifer.

Adherence to State and local regulations, including those contained within the Basin Plan itself, and the 2045 General Plan goals and policies, development under the proposed project would not interfere with the objectives and goals of the Basin Plan. Therefore, development facilitated by the project would not conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan and impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures would be required.

Significance After Mitigation

Impacts would be less than significant without mitigation.

4.10.4 Cumulative Impacts

The geographic scope of the cumulative hydrology and water quality impacts is the Dutch Ravine-Auburn Ravine, Folsom Reservoir-North Fork American River, Deadman Canyon-Coon Creek, Orr Creek, Clipper Creek-North Fork American River, and Todd Creek-Middle Fork American River watersheds. This geographic scope is appropriate because potential hydrology and water quality related impacts would have potential to affect any downstream waterbody or source throughout the watersheds that contain the Planning Area. The cumulative analysis considers the nearby past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future plans and projects listed in Table 3-1 (refer to Section 3, *Environmental Setting*), in addition to the proposed project.

Cumulative development generally consists of commercial, industrial, civic, and residential projects. Cumulative development would generally increase impermeable surface area in the applicable watersheds, which could potentially increase peak flood flows, alter drainage patterns, reduce groundwater recharge, and increase pollutants in the regional stormwater. Cumulative development would be required to adhere to all applicable State and local regulations designed to control erosion, ensure avoidance or appropriate design within designated flood zones, and protect water quality, including the applicable City or County Code, NPDES Construction General Permit, applicable MS4 Permits, and applicable General Plan policies. All construction sites larger than one acre in size would be required to prepare implement project-specific SWPPPs (as required by the CWA) with BMPs to minimize or avoid water quality degradation from construction and other ground-disturbing activities. Cumulative plans and projects would also be subject to requirements of the Clean Water Act and the policies of the applicable planning document. Additionally, cumulative development would be subject to the provisions of the Basin Plan. The underlying groundwater basin is not subject to a sustainable groundwater management plan, though existing applicable regulations ensure sufficient water supplies are confirmed prior to finalized implementation of cumulative development. With proper regulatory compliance, cumulative development would not violate water quality or waste discharge requirements, substantially decrease groundwater supplies, substantially alter drainage patterns, risk the release of pollutant release due to inundation, or obstruct an established water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan. Cumulative impacts to hydrology and water quality would be less than significant.

4.11 Land Use and Planning

This section summarizes existing and planned land uses in the Planning Area and analyzes the impacts on land use and planning due to the project. The physical environmental effects associated with the project, many of which pertain to issues of land use compatibility (e.g., aesthetics, air quality, noise) are evaluated in other sections of this EIR.

4.11.1 Setting

a. Existing Land Use Patterns

The Planning Area includes the following components:

- Current City Limits: The City limits encompass approximately 7.2 square miles. The existing uses within City limits, including the sphere of influence, are discussed in further detail below.
- Sphere of Influence (SOI): The SOI represents the probable future boundary and service area of the City, as adopted by the Placer County Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCo) Auburn's SOI encompasses approximately 25.6 square miles—substantially larger than the current city limits—and reflects past planning efforts that envisioned future annexation of surrounding unincorporated communities, including portions of North Auburn and Bowman
- Planning Area: The Planning Area is 29 square miles and is larger than the Sphere of Influence. In addition to all land within the Sphere, it includes areas south, southwest, and northeast of the sphere.

The General Plan Update proposes expanding the Auburn SOI in two locations:

- Along Ophir Road, west of Auburn and south of the City's Wastewater Treatment Plant, and
- Immediately south of the City, extending roughly to the east-west segment of Shirland Tract Road

Residential uses are the predominant land use within the Planning Area, with rural residential, low-density single-family neighborhoods, and medium- and high-density housing accounting for approximately 38 percent of the land area within the Planning Area. Open Space land uses make up the next largest category at 25 percent of the Planning Area with uses such as Improved Open Space (2 percent), Other Open Space (3 percent), Resource Conservation land uses (16 percent), and Agriculture (4 percent). Transportation and Utility uses account for approximately 18 percent of the Planning Area, and approximately 10 percent of the Planning Area is made up of vacant land. Employment-based land uses collectively occupy approximately 5 percent of the Planning Area, including Office (1 percent), Commercial (2 percent), and Industrial (2 percent) uses, while Civic/Institutional land uses make up approximately 3 percent of the Planning Area.

Residential

Residential uses are the predominant land use in the Planning Area. Housing units consist of low-density residential units (17 percent of land area use), medium-density residential (2 percent), multi-family housing (1 percent), and rural residential (19 percent). Most low-density (i.e. single-family) residential uses are located along Auburn Folsom Road, Dairy Road, and Luther Road. Higher-density housing such as apartments and mobile home parks are generally located near major corridors such as Highway 49 and in older parts of the city near Downtown. Rural residential uses

are primarily located on the west side of the city and in the unincorporated Shirland Tract area, though some exist within City Limits.

Commercial

Commercial land uses in the Planning Area include retail stores, restaurants, hotels, automobile dealerships, and service businesses. These uses are concentrated along the Highway 49 corridor and in Downtown/Old Town Auburn. Highway 49 serves as a regional commercial strip, with large shopping centers and national chains interspersed with local businesses. Downtown Auburn also includes smaller parcels with historic buildings, primarily serving residents and visitors.

Industrial

Industrial uses in the Planning Area include light manufacturing, contractor yards, and warehouse/distribution facilities, among others. These land uses occupy approximately 2 percent of the Planning Area and are primarily located near the Union Pacific Railroad corridor and south and west of the Auburn Municipal Airport.

Civic/Institutional

Institutional uses in the Planning Area include government offices, schools, hospitals, and places of worship. Major facilities include the Placer County Government Center (DeWitt Center), Placer High School, and Sutter Auburn Faith Hospital.

Open Space

Excluding vacant land that is planned and zoned for development, open space makes up one quarter of the Planning Area. This includes property used for agriculture, recreation, or resource conservation. Agriculture parcels are typically larger than 10 acres each, and in total span approximately 765 acres of the Planning Area. These properties are concentrated on the west side of the Planning Area, along Mount Vernon Road, along the northern edge of Bowman, and in the Shirland Tract south of the city. The Improved Open Space classification applies to open land that has been improved for recreational or functional purposes such as public parks and cemeteries. Land classified as Improved Open Space comprises approximately 454 acres of the Planning Area, including the 170-acre Ridge Golf Course and 86-acre Auburn Recreation District's Regional Park, as well as Overlook Park, Recreation Park, Ashley Park, Railhead Park, Auburn Cemeteries, and several private RV parks in North Auburn and Bowman. The Other Open Space classification refers to large undeveloped parcels that are not zoned for development, not improved for recreation or other purposes, not in active agricultural use, and not part of the State Recreation Area or a Land Trust Holding. Other Open Space land uses account for approximately 621 acres of the Planning Area. The Resource Conservation Area classification applies to federally owned lands in the Auburn State Recreation Area, land acquired by the Auburn Recreation District for conservation purposes, and Placer Land Trust Properties. Resource Conservation Area land uses comprise approximately 3,000 acres of the Planning Area and are primarily located on the eastern side of the Planning Area, providing a buffer between the City of Auburn and the wilderness area on the east side of the river in El Dorado County.

Vacant

Vacant land comprises approximately 10 percent of the Planning Area, with significant concentrations in the Baltimore Ravine Specific Plan (BRSP) area and scattered parcels throughout the city. In some cases, these sites represent opportunities for future development.

4.11.2 Regulatory Setting

a. State Regulations

Planning and Zoning Law

Zoning authority originates from city and county police power and from the State's Planning and Zoning Law (Government Code 65000 et seq.), which sets minimum requirements for local zoning ordinances (Government Code 65800 et seq.). The city or county zoning code is the set of detailed requirements that implement the general plan policies at the level of the individual parcel. The zoning code presents standards for different uses and identifies which uses are allowed in the various zoning districts of the jurisdiction. Since 1971, State law has required the City or County zoning code to be consistent with the jurisdiction's general plan (Government Code 65860 et seq.).

General Plan Law (California Government Code Section 65300 et seq.)

California Government Code Section 65300 et seq. regulates the substantive requirements of general plans. State law requires each City and County to adopt a general plan "for the physical development of the county or city, and any land outside its boundaries which bears relation to its planning." The California Supreme Court has called the general plan the "constitution for future development." The general plan expresses the community's development goals and embodies public policy relative to the distribution of future land uses, both public and private. As also discussed by the Supreme Court in *Lesher Communications, Inc. v. City of Walnut Creek* (1990) 52 Cal.3rd 531, a general plan is "simply a statement of policy to govern future regulations." "General plans ordinarily do not state specific mandates or prohibitions. Rather, they state policies, and set forth goals" (*Napa Citizens v. Citizens for Honest Government v. Napa County Board of Supervisors* [2001] 91 Cal.App.4th 342,378). "California courts permit vague standards because they are sensitive to the need of government in large urban areas to delegate broad discretionary power to administrative bodies if the community's zoning business is to be done without paralyzing the legislative process" (*Sacramentan's for Fair Planning v. City of Sacramento* [2019] 3rd App. Dist. Case No. C086182 Cal.App.5th). As also discussed in the Governor's Office of Planning and Research General Plan Guidelines, "given the long-term nature of a general plan, its diagrams and text should be general enough to allow a degree of flexibility in decision-making as times change" (Office of Planning and Research 2017: 380). Government Code Section 65301 allows the general plan to "be adopted in any format deemed appropriate or convenient by the legislative body, including the combining of elements."

Assembly Bill 130

Effective June 30, 2025, AB 130 introduces substantial reforms to streamline housing development under CEQA. The bill establishes a statutory CEQA exemption for qualifying infill housing projects located in urban areas up to 20 acres, provided they meet specific criteria such as adjacency to urban uses and avoidance of historic or environmentally sensitive sites. This exemption is designed to reduce environmental review burdens for projects that align with local zoning and planning

standards. AB 130 also makes permanent several provisions of the Permit Streamlining Act, including timelines for application completeness and project approval, and limits the number of public hearings for qualifying housing projects. Additionally, the bill codifies elements of the Housing Accountability Act and SB 330, including protections for vested rights and restrictions on growth control measures. A notable provision is the statewide freeze on residential building code updates from October 1, 2025, through June 1, 2031, which aims to reduce regulatory uncertainty and development costs. AB 130 also enhances the role of the California Department of Housing and Community Development in overseeing RHNA methodologies, further aligning local planning efforts with state housing goals.

Senate Bill 131

SB 131, effective June 30, 2025, complements AB 130 by focusing on CEQA streamlining for infrastructure and public-serving projects. It introduces a new review pathway for “near miss” projects—those that narrowly fail to qualify for a CEQA exemption due to a single disqualifying condition. Under this provision, CEQA review is limited to the environmental effects of that specific condition, and such projects are exempt from analyzing alternatives or growth-inducing impacts. SB 131 also creates or expands CEQA exemptions for a range of project types, including advanced manufacturing facilities on industrial-zoned land, broadband infrastructure in public rights-of-way, updates to climate adaptation plans, High-Speed Rail maintenance facilities, and local rezoning actions that implement Housing Element commitments. Additionally, the bill mandates biennial updates to *CEQA Guidelines* to improve clarity and address ambiguities. These changes reflect a broader policy shift toward facilitating development while maintaining targeted environmental protections, and they are expected to significantly impact the planning and approval processes for both housing and infrastructure projects across California.

Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Local Government Reorganization Act of 2000

The Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Local Government Reorganization Act (Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Act) of 2000 (Government Code Section 56000 et seq.) establishes the process through which local agency boundaries are established and revised. Each county must have a LAFCo, which is the agency that has the responsibility to create orderly local government boundaries, with the goal of encouraging "planned, well-ordered, efficient urban development patterns," the preservation of open-space lands, and the discouragement of urban sprawl. While LAFCos have no direct land use power, LAFCos control boundary changes and their actions determine which local government will be responsible for planning new areas. LAFCos address a wide range of boundary actions, including the creation and modifications of spheres of influence for cities and special districts, annexations, reorganizations, incorporations, and the detachment of areas from special districts. A city’s or special district’s sphere of influence is an indication of an agency’s future boundaries and service area.

Sustainable Communities and Climate Protection Act (SB 375)

The Sustainable Communities and Climate Protection Act (SB 375) supports the State's climate goals by helping reduce greenhouse gas emissions through coordinated transportation, housing, and land use planning. Under the Act, CARB set targets for 2020 and 2035 for each of the 18 metropolitan planning organization regions in 2010 and updated them in 2018. Each of the regions must prepare a Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS), as an integral part of its regional transportation plan, that contains land use, housing, and transportation strategies that, if implemented, would allow the

region to meet CARB's targets. The Act establishes some incentives to encourage implementation of the development patterns and strategies included in an SCS. Developers can get relief from certain environmental review requirements under the CEQA if their new residential and mixed-use projects are consistent with a region's SCS that meets the CARB targets (Public Resources Code Sections 21155, 21155.1, 21155.2, 21159.28.).

b. Regional Regulations

c. Sacramento Area Council of Governments 2050 Metropolitan Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy

The 2050 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP)/SCS, referred to as the Blueprint, was approved by the Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG) Board in November 2025.The Blueprint is a comprehensive planning effort that coordinates land use patterns and transportation investments with the objective of developing an integrated, multimodal transportation system. The Blueprint is built on a set of integrated policies, strategies, and investments to maintain and improve the transportation system to meet the diverse needs of the region through 2050. The Plan describes where and how the region can accommodate the projected 278,000 new dwelling units and 263,000 new jobs between 2025 and 2050 and details the regional transportation investment strategy through 2050.

The Plan includes a land use vision, a transportation vision, and a strategy for integrating land use and transportation to create a more sustainable, resilient region. To better analyze land use patterns and consider scenario alternatives, SACOG uses local land use plans for the MTP/SCS, including adopted and proposed general plans, specific plans, master plans, and corridor plans.

Sacramento Regional 2018 Triennial Air Quality Attainment Plan

The Planning Area is subject to the Sacramento Regional 2018 Triennial Air Quality Attainment Plan, adopted on December 7th, 2018. This plan provides the regional air quality planning framework and identifies control measures designed to attain and maintain compliance with applicable state and federal ambient air quality standards for criteria air pollutants within the Sacramento region, including the City of Auburn (Northern Sacramento Valley Planning Area 2018). Please refer to Section 4.3 *Air Quality* for further discussion on the Sacramento Regional 2018 Triennial Air Quality Attainment Plan.

Placer County Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan

The Planning Area is subject to the Placer County Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan, adopted by the Placer County Transportation Planning Agency, which provides land use compatibility criteria and policies to promote compatible development in the vicinity of public-use airports, including Auburn Municipal Airport, Blue Canyon Airport, and Lincon Regional Airport, by addressing safety, noise, airspace protection, and aircraft overflight concerns (Placer County Transportation Planning Agency 2025). Please refer to Section 4.9, *Hazards and Hazardous Materials* for further discussion on the Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan.

d. Local Regulations

Zoning Law of the City of Auburn

The Zoning Law of the City of Auburn is the primary tool used by the City to carry out the goals, objectives, and policies of the Auburn General Plan by classifying and regulating the uses of land and structures within the city, consistent with the General Plan. The City's Subdivision Ordinance, Chapter 158 of the Auburn Municipal Code, provides standards for the processing of subdivision requests, including new tract maps, parcel maps, and lot line adjustments. The Zoning Law, Chapter 159 of the Auburn Municipal Code, describes various types of zoning districts and land use classifications, land use regulations, development standards, and environmental performance standards. The Zoning Law applies to all land uses and development within the City of Auburn. The purpose of the Zoning Law is to protect and to promote the public health, safety, comfort, convenience, prosperity, and general welfare of residents, and businesses in the city. More specifically, the purpose of the Zoning Law of the City of Auburn is to implement the principles and standards of the Auburn Area General Plan and, more specifically, to protect the character and social and economic stability of the agricultural, residential, commercial, industrial, and recreational areas of the city and to ensure orderly development.

The city is divided into 21 zoning districts and 8 combining districts that implement the Auburn General Plan, as shown in Table 4.11-1. Section 65860(c) of the Government Code requires that when a General Plan is amended in a way that makes the Zoning Ordinance inconsistent with the General Plan, "the zoning ordinance shall be amended within a reasonable time so that it is consistent with the general plan as amended."

Table 4.11-1 City of Auburn Zoning Districts

Symbol	Name of Zoning District
Residential Zones	
R-1	Single-Family Residential
R-2	Two-Family Residential (Duplex)
R-3	Medium Density Multiple-Family Residential
R-4	High Density Multiple-Family Residential
Commercial Zones	
C-1	Neighborhood Commercial
C-2	Central Business
C-2A	Central Business – A
C-3	Regional Commercial
C-3-ES	Regional Commercial – Emergency Shelter
OB	Office Building
HS	Highway Service
Other Zones	
M-1	Industrial Park
M-2	Industrial
M-L	Light Manufacturing
A-1	Exclusive Agricultural
AR	Agricultural Residential

Symbol	Name of Zoning District
S	Special Public Service
AI-DC	Airport Industrial Design Control
OSC	Open Space and Conservation
DC	Auburn Dam Overlook Civic Design Control
DH	Auburn Historic
Combining Districts	
-5	Combining (minimum lot area 5,000 square feet)
-7	Combining (minimum lot area 7,000 square feet)
-8.5	Combining (minimum lot area 8,500 square feet, minimum lot frontage 25 feet)
-10	Combining (minimum lot area 10,000 square feet)
-15	Combining (minimum lot area 15,000 square feet)
-1A	Combining (minimum lot area 1 acre)
-2A	Combining (minimum lot area 2 acres)
-P	Combining (1 parking space per 600 square feet required for new construction; 1 parking space per 1,200 square feet for reconstruction)
ME	Mineral Extracting Combining District

Source: Chapter 159 of the Zoning Law of the City of Auburn

Auburn General Plan 1993

The current Auburn General Plan was adopted by the City of Auburn in November 1993 (City of Auburn 1993). The General Plan includes broad goals and policies aimed at promoting a mix of land uses and a balance of jobs; encouraging development that helps the City achieve a target jobs/housing ratio; encouraging regional commercial and visitor-serving commercial development that would enhance the identity of the City and attract visitors; providing for a variety of housing that complements the employment opportunities in the community; and encouraging consolidation of under-performing and under-utilized properties. Two of the General Plan Elements—Safety and Housing—were comprehensively updated in 2021 in response to State laws and requirements specifically applicable to Housing Elements.

Goals and policies from the City General Plan are provided below. The following policies in the City's Land Use, Safety, Housing, Circulation, Conservation and Open Space, and Noise Elements would mitigate or avoid environmental impacts:

Land Use Element

Goal 3: Guide development so that it takes advantage of Auburn's unique character including, but not limited to, terrain and vegetation.

Policy 3.1 Minimize disturbance to terrain by limiting "pads" on steep slopes to reduce cut and fill.

Policy 3.2 Minimize disturbance to terrain by encouraging that roads follow the existing topography.

Goal 4: Enhance air quality.

Policy 4.1 Review proposed development projects for their potential adverse impacts on air quality.

Goal 7: Provide a mix of commercial development to serve residents and visitors.

Policy 7.2 Neighborhood centers should be designed to minimize impacts on adjacent uses through site design, access and parking, landscaping and lighting standards.

Goal 9: Develop a land use pattern which can be adequately served with community facilities (such as schools, libraries, and community recreation), urban services, and transportation facilities.

Policy 9.2 Allow residential development only in those areas where adequate public facilities are available or will be provided with development.

Goal 12: Provide for an adequate and safe educational environment.

Policy 12.3 The City shall allow development only if adequate school facilities exist or will be available in a timely manner.

Safety Element (2021)

Goal 1: Protect the life and property of residents, businesses, and visitors to Auburn from natural and human-made hazards and crime.

Policy 1.2 Require new development in the very high fire hazard severity zones, flood zones, and landslide-prone areas to develop Emergency Preparedness Plans, including confirming evacuation and emergency vehicle access, land management, visible home and street signage, community training and education, and defensive infrastructure and resource needs.

Goal 2: Coordinated emergency and disaster preparedness, response, mitigation, and recovery.

Policy 2.4 Maintain a reasonable response time and appropriate staffing among emergency response services for all sections of the community.

Policy 2.6 Ensure adequate emergency vehicle access throughout Auburn by instituting proper road widths and clearances around structures in the city.

Goal 3: Minimal injury, loss of life, property damage, and economic social disruption resulting from flooding and inundation hazards in Auburn.

Policy 3.2 Encourage new residential, commercial, and critical facility development in areas outside of identified 100- or 500-year flood inundation zones.

Goal 4: Minimal risk of injuries, property damage, and economic loss resulting from urban and wildland fires in Auburn.

Policy 4.2 Encourage new residential and commercial development in areas outside of CAL FIRE-identified very high fire hazard severity zones and discourage new residential and commercial development in very high fire hazard severity zones.

Policy 4.7 Conserve healthy conifer cover in forested areas to protect ecosystem services, including carbon sequestration, soil retention, and water supply, while maintaining responsible fuel-reduction practices.

Goal 5: Reduced likelihood of hazardous materials release, exposure, and contamination in Auburn.

Policy 5.2 Encourage commercial or industrial development using hazardous materials in areas away from residential uses and discourage commercial and industrial development using hazardous materials in areas of identified flood or wildfire risk.

Goal 9: Minimize the exposure of the public to airport safety hazards through land use controls and policies for property in the vicinity of Auburn Municipal Airport; and limit urban encroachment around Auburn Municipal Airport in order to preserve the safety of flight operations and the continued viability of Auburn Municipal Airport.

Policy 9.2 Require future airport development plans to be compatible with existing and planned land uses that surround Auburn Municipal Airport.

Circulation Element

Goal 1: Provide and maintain a comprehensive, safe, and efficient transportation system.

Policy 1.1 The City should maintain a peak hour level of service "D" at City-maintained intersections and a peak hour/daily level of service "D" on City-maintained roadways as measured by the most recent Highway Capacity Manual and adopted by the City Council.

Goal 2: Create a continuous, interrelated street network that is user-friendly for both vehicular and pedestrian traffic including, but not limited to, avoiding walled projects, dead end streets, and barricades.

Policy 2.1 Post appropriate speed limits on streets within residential areas to minimize noise impacts and eliminate the need for the construction of sound walls.

Conservation and Open Space Element

Goal 1: Preserve areas of natural vegetation, trees, topographic features, wildlife habitat, and riparian corridors.

Policy 1.1 Identify, protect and enhance natural, riparian wildlife habitat and vegetation areas and encourage preservation and maintenance of these areas in as natural a state as possible.

Policy 1.3 Conserve the quality of habitats which support fish and wildlife species so as to maintain populations at sustainable levels.

Policy 1.4 Protect, restore and enhance habitats for native animals and protect threatened and endangered species.

Policy 1.7 As necessary, require field studies as part of project review. These studies shall document the possible occurrence of special status plant and wildlife species and provide a method for their protection, monitoring, replacement or for otherwise mitigating development near sensitive habitats.

Goal 6: Protect visual resources.

Policy 6.1 Enhance and protect scenic resources visible from scenic routes in the Auburn area.

Goal 7: Conserve, protect and enhance water supplies and adequately plan for the development and protection of these resources and their related resources for future generations.

Policy 7.1 Protect water quality and watersheds by discouraging activities including, but not limited to, the use of hazardous materials around wetland and groundwater recharge areas.

Noise Element

The 1993 General Plan Noise Element includes policies to avoid and mitigate noise conflicts in the community. Existing General Plan noise policies are discussed in Section 4.13, *Noise*.

Baltimore Ravine Specific Plan

The BRSP was adopted in February 2011 (City of Auburn 2011). The BRSP Area is located in the southwest area of the City of Auburn, approximately two miles from the downtown district along Interstate 80. The Specific Plan's Area 1 is located north of the Union Pacific Railroad Westbound tracks and the Future Plan Area 2 is located between the Plan Area 1 boundary and the Interstate 80 Highway. The BRSP provides for a mix of residential and non-residential uses to guide development of a new series of neighborhoods in southwestern Auburn. The primary land uses designated in the specific plan are open space for both parks and preserves, residential land uses, and mixed use land uses.

Placer County General Plan

The current County General Plan was updated by the Placer County Board of Supervisors in May 2013. The County General Plan includes broad goals and policies aimed at promoting a mix of land uses and a balance of jobs; encouraging development that helps the County achieve a target jobs/housing ratio; encouraging regional commercial and visitor-serving commercial development that would enhance the identity of the County and attract visitors; providing for a variety of housing that complements the employment opportunities in the community; and encouraging consolidation of under-performing and under-utilized properties. Goals from the County General Plan Land Use, Transportation and Circulation, Public Facilities and Services, Recreation and Cultural Resources, Natural Resources, and Health and Safety Elements are provided below.

Goal 1.B: To provide adequate land in a range of residential densities to accommodate the housing needs of all income groups expected to reside in Placer County.

Goal 1.D: To designate adequate commercial land for and promote development of commercial uses to meet the present and future needs of Placer County residents and visitors and maintain economic vitality.

Goal 1.E: To designate adequate land for and promote development of industrial uses to meet the present and future needs of Placer County residents for jobs and maintain economic vitality.

Goal 1.H: To designate adequate agricultural land and promote development of agricultural uses to support the continued viability of Placer County's agricultural economy.

Goal 1.I: To establish and maintain interconnected greenbelts and open spaces for the protection of native vegetation and wildlife and for the community's enjoyment.

Goal 1.J: To encourage commercial mining operations within areas designated for such extraction, where environmental, aesthetic, and adjacent land use compatibility impacts can be adequately mitigated.

Goal 1.K: To protect the visual and scenic resources of Placer County as important quality-of-life amenities for County residents and a principal asset in the promotion of recreation and tourism.

Goal 1.O: To promote and enhance the quality and aesthetics of development in Placer County.

Goal 3.A: To provide for the long-range planning and development of the County's roadway system to ensure the safe and efficient movement of people and goods.

Goal 3.D: To provide a safe, comprehensive, and integrated system of facilities for non-motorized transportation.

Goal 4.A: To ensure the timely development of public facilities and the maintenance of specified service levels for these facilities.

Goal 4.C: To ensure the availability of an adequate and safe water supply and the maintenance of high quality water in water bodies and aquifers used as sources of domestic supply.

Goal 4.D: The County shall require wastewater conveyance and treatment facilities that are sufficient to serve the Placer County General Plan proposed density of residential, commercial, and public/institutional uses in a way which protects the public and environment from adverse water quality or health impacts.

Goal 4.E: To manage rainwater and stormwater at the source in a sustainable manner that least inconveniences the public, reduces potential water-related damage, augments water supply, mitigates storm water pollution, and enhances the environment.

Goal 5.D: To identify, protect, and enhance Placer County's important historical, archaeological, paleontological, and cultural sites and their contributing environment

Goal 6.A: To protect and enhance the natural qualities of Placer County's rivers, streams, creeks and groundwater.

Goal 6.C: To protect, restore, and enhance habitats that support fish and wildlife species so as to maintain populations at viable levels.

Goal 6.D: To preserve and protect the valuable vegetation resources of Placer County.

Goal 6.F: To protect and improve air quality in Placer County.

Goal 8.A.1: To minimize the loss of life, injury, and property damage due to seismic and related geological hazards.

Goal 8.C.1: To minimize the risk of loss of life, injury, and damage to property and watershed resources resulting from unwanted fires.

Auburn Bowman Community Plan

The Auburn Bowman Community Plan lays out the vision of creating a healthy and sustainable community that maintains a balance between jobs, housing, and community space. Since the Plan's passage in 1994, population, housing, and job growth have outpaced development in the Auburn Bowman area. While the current Auburn Bowman Community Plan has the capacity for additional housing development, this development cannot currently be realized due to existing sewer and water infrastructure capacity (City of Auburn 1998). An update is currently underway as part of the broader Countywide General Plan Update. Select goals from the Auburn Bowman Community Plan are provided below.

- **Goal 1:** Encourage new development in the Auburn area to contribute to the creation of mixed-use compact, readily identifiable, foothill town.
- **Goal 2:** Locate urban and suburban development in areas where urban services commercial facilities and transportation facilities are readily available.
- **Goal 3:** Encourage the construction of new housing to meet future needs anticipated in current population projections for all economic segments of the population.
- **Goal 4:** Provide for residential development which creates functional attractive cohesive neighborhoods which are closely tied to adjoining neighborhoods.
- **Goal 5:** Provide a sufficient mix of neighborhood regional and highway commercial facilities to serve the residents of the Auburn/Bowman region as well as those visiting the area.
- **Goal 7:** Transform the strip commercial area in north Auburn into a more diverse mixed-use area whenever opportunities exist these opportunities must be identified and implemented as development occurs.
- **Goal 11:** Encourage that land adjacent to the Auburn airport is developed in accordance with the Auburn airport comprehensive land use plan while including accommodation of the proposed expansion of the airport.
- **Goal 12:** Preserve and protect from urban encroachment the rural/agricultural areas designated in the land use plan.

4.11.3 Impact Analysis

a. Significance Thresholds and Methodology

Significance Thresholds

Based on Appendix G of the *CEQA Guidelines* a project may be deemed to have a significant impact on land use and planning if it would:

1. Physically divide an established community; or
2. Cause a significant environmental impact due to a conflict with any land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect.

Methodology

The consistency analysis describes existing regional and local plans and policies and is intended to fulfill the requirements of *CEQA Guidelines* Section 15125(d). The emphasis of the analysis is on the project's inconsistency and potential conflicts between the project and existing applicable land use plans adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect, and whether any inconsistencies would cause significant environmental effects. The project is considered consistent with the provisions of the identified regional and local plans if it meets the general intent of the applicable plans and does not conflict with directly applicable policies. A given project need not be in perfect conformity with each and every policy nor does state law require precise conformity of a proposed project with every policy or land use designation. Courts have also acknowledged that general and specific plans attempt to balance a range of competing interests, and that it is nearly, if not absolutely, impossible for a project to be in perfect conformity with each and every policy set forth in the applicable plan. Additionally, in reaching such consistency conclusions, the City may also consider the consequences of denial of a project, which can result in other policy inconsistencies. For example, Government Code Section 65589.5 explains that the potential consequences of limiting the approval of housing can include reduced mobility, urban sprawl, excessive commuting, and air quality deterioration.

For an impact to be considered significant, an inconsistency would also have to result in a significant adverse change in the environment not already addressed in the other resource chapters of this EIR. The analysis below provides a discussion of the most relevant policies from the various planning documents. However, the City's consistency conclusions are based upon the planning documents as a whole.

b. Project Impacts and Mitigation

Threshold 1:	Would the project physically divide an established community?

Impact LU-1 THE PROPOSED PROJECT WOULD NOT PHYSICALLY DIVIDE AN ESTABLISHED COMMUNITY AND THERE WOULD BE NO IMPACT.

Most of the Planning Area is currently developed. As described in Section 4.14, *Population and Housing*, the proposed project would accommodate approximately 2,570 additional residential units. In addition, as described in Section 2, *Project Description*, the proposed project would accommodate approximately 1.89 million square feet of additional non-residential floor space. This growth is projected to occur both within existing City limits and unincorporated Placer County/the City's SOI. The General Plan Update would involve implementation of proposed policies and land use designations that identify the type and intensity of uses permissible in the Planning Area. Intensity and density standards are established for each land use classification. The intent of the land use designations is to adequately classify and distinguish the various land uses needed within the Planning Area.

The Land Use Element of the General Plan Update contains the following proposed goals and policies, which would maintain the existing communities within the Planning Area, and would ensure that established communities would not be divided by development facilitated by the

project: Goal LU-1: Sustainable Growth, Policy LU-1.1: Complete Community, Policy LU-1.2: Infill Focus, Policy LU-1.3: Key Opportunity Areas, Policy LU-1.4: Protecting Municipal Assets, Policy LU-1.6: Higher Density Housing, Policy LU-1.7: Development Standards and Review Procedures, Policy LU-1.8: Growth and Infrastructure, Policy LU-1.9: Housing Sites, Action LU-1A: General Plan Map, Action LU-1B: Zoning Update, Goal LU-2: Land Use Compatibility, Action LU-2A: Environmental Review Procedures, Goal LU-3: Neighborhoods, Policy LU-3.1: Neighborhood Character, and Policy LU-3.6: Neighborhood Identity.

These policies would maintain existing communities within the Planning Area and would ensure that established communities would not be divided. Policy LU-1.1 would ensure that the Planning Area is a complete and balanced community for residents to live, work, shop, and play. Policy LU-1.2 would support infill development, which would help reduce the amount of new developments that could potentially divide established communities, while Policy LU-1.3 specifically identifies areas for these infill opportunities. Policy LU-1.4 would ensure that established communities have unimpeded access to municipal assets and services that their communities require to thrive. Policy LU-1.6 would ensure that new high density housing developments are located in walkable areas with access to public services, which ensures that existing communities would not be harmed by new development, and would ensure the creation of complete communities for new developments. Policies LU-1.7, LU-1.8, and LU-1.9 would ensure that new developments are aligned with surrounding communities and that existing and new developments would have adequate connectivity and access to necessary services. Actions LU-1A and LU-1B would similarly ensure that new land uses and developments do not divide established communities, as new General Plan Map land designations and zoning classifications would require developments to align with surrounding character, while Action LU-2A would ensure that new developments undergo the environmental review process which would require developers to reduce or mitigate potential impacts related to the division of established communities. Policy LU-3.1 and Policy LU-3.6 would strengthen and support the character of the Planning Area's communities and maintain their identities, through actions such as improved pedestrian paths and sidewalks which would enhance connectivity between rather than divide communities.

The Community Design and Preservation Element, the Transportation Element, and the Open Space and Conservation Element of the General Plan Update contain additional goals, policies, and actions that would maintain the existing communities within the Planning Area, and would ensure that established communities would not be divided by development facilitated by the project: Goal CD-1: Sense of Place, Policy CD-1.6: Citywide Connectivity, Policy CD-1.7: Neighborhood Connectivity, Goal T-1: A Balanced Transportation Network, Policy T-1.1.2: Complete Streets, Policy T-1.3: Connectivity, Goal OSC-1: Open Space, and Policy OSC-1.2: Greenbelts and Connected Open Spaces.

Policies from the Community Development and Preservation Element, Transportation Element, and Open Space and Conservation Element would reinforce the goals of the Land Use Element by improving neighborhood connectivity through major infrastructure and active transportation opportunities. Furthermore, the General Plan Update does not include any major improvements or infrastructure developments that would be located within an established community and therefore would not divide an established community. The proposed project would not physically divide the City of Auburn, the broader Planning Area, or their established communities.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures would be required.

Significance After Mitigation

There would be no impact and no mitigation would be required.

Threshold 2:	Would the project cause a significant environmental impact due to a conflict with any land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?

Impact LU-2 THE PROPOSED PROJECT WOULD NOT RESULT IN A SIGNIFICANT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT DUE TO A CONFLICT WITH A PLAN ADOPTED FOR THE PURPOSE OF AVOIDING OR MITIGATING AN ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECT. IMPACTS WOULD BE LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT.

Several regionally and locally adopted land use plans, policies, and regulations apply to the project. These include the SACOG 2050 MTP/SCS, the BRSP, the Placer County General Plan, the Sacramento Regional 2018 Triennial Air Quality Plan, and the Placer County Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan. Consistency of the proposed project with the Sacramento Regional 2018 Triennial Air Quality Plan is discussed in Section 4.3, *Air* Quality, and consistency with the Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan is discussed in Section 4.9, *Hazards and Hazardous Materials*. Project consistency with applicable policies of SACOG 2050 MTP/SCS are identified in Table 4.11-2, below.

Table 4.11-2 Project Consistency with the SACOG 2050 MTP/SCS

SACOG 2050 MTP/SCS Policies	Project Consistency
1: Build vibrant places for today's and tomorrow's residents.	
Vibrant-1. Provide incentives, information, tools, technical assistance, and encouragement for legislative and regulatory reform and investment in Center & Corridor and Established Communities that increase housing options, jobs and services, and access to amenities.	**Consistent.** The proposed project would direct development and investment toward established Center and Corridor areas with existing infrastructure and services, supporting increased housing options, employment opportunities, and access to amenities. By concentrating future growth within these areas, the proposed project promotes efficient land use patterns and supports mixed-use and higher-density development that enhances community vitality. The following General Plan Update policies support this consistency determination: Policy LU-1.2: Infill Focus, Policy ED-2.2: Mixed-Use Development; and Policy ED-5.7: Economic Development Incentives. With implementation of the proposed goals and policies in the General Plan Update, the project would be consistent with Vibrant-1.
Vibrant-2. Identify and secure stable sources of funding and financing to continue the momentum of Green Means Go and accelerate the construction of a range of housing options that are affordable in low vehicle-mile-traveled (VMT) areas of the region.	**Consistent.** The General Plan Update ties land use and development patterns to funding strategies and infrastructure investment frameworks that support continued implementation of programs such as Green Means Go. By prioritizing infill development in low VMT areas and aligning housing growth with available financing tools, the proposed project would facilitate the delivery of a range of housing types, including affordable options, in accessible, transit-supported locations. The following General Plan Update goals and policies support this consistency determination: Policy LU-1.8: Growth Infrastructure; and Goal LU-1: Sustainable Growth. With implementation of the proposed goals and policies in the General Plan Update, the project would be consistent with Vibrant-2.

SACOG 2050 MTP/SCS Policies	Project Consistency
Vibrant-3. Encourage local policy reforms that facilitate missing middle housing, strategically allow for higher density housing, transition from discretionary to by-right development review, reduce government-mandated parking requirements, incentivize accessory dwelling units, and reduce displacement by protecting tenants and funding subsidized affordable housing. **Vibrant-4.** Evaluate and monitor progress toward both enacting the local housing policy reforms described in Vibrant-3 as well as housing construction relative to 2025 Blueprint outcomes. **Vibrant-5.** Explore prioritizing infrastructure investments and transportation funding decisions where there is existing or demonstrated progress toward policy reforms referenced in Vibrant-3.	**Consistent.** The General Plan Update facilitates missing middle housing, strategically allows higher densities, streamlines development review processes, reduces parking requirements, and incentivizes accessory dwelling units, while incorporating measures to reduce displacement and support affordable housing. It also establishes monitoring and reporting mechanisms to track progress on housing production and policy effectiveness in alignment with regional goals. In addition, the proposed project prioritizes infrastructure and transportation investments in areas demonstrating progress toward these housing-supportive reforms, ensuring efficient use of resources and reinforcing infill and low VMT development patterns. The following General Plan Update goals and policies support this consistency determination: Goal LU-1: Sustainable Growth; Policy LU-1.8: Growth and Infrastructure and Goal LU-3: Neighborhoods. With implementation of the proposed goals, policies, and actions in the General Plan Update, the project would be consistent with Vibrant-3, -4, and -5.
Vibrant-6: Coordinate strategically phased growth in Developing Communities that expands the region's footprint in ways that minimize impacts on working lands and habitat and create complete communities with jobs, housing choices, connected streets, and convenient access to public transportation.	**Consistent.** The General Plan Update directs new growth to areas where it can be supported by connected street networks, multimodal transportation options, and access to jobs, services, and a range of housing choices. The General Plan Update promotes efficient expansion of the urban footprint while preserving environmental resources and enhancing community livability. The following General Plan Update goals and policies support this consistency determination: Goal LU-1: Sustainable Growth; Policy LU-1.8: Growth and Infrastructure; and Goal T-1: Balanced Transportation Network. With implementation of the proposed goals, policies, and actions in the General Plan Update, the project would be consistent with Vibrant-6.
Vibrant-7: Support the implementation of SACOG's Regional Housing Needs Plan by affirmatively furthering fair housing, taking proactive steps to overcome patterns of residential segregation, clearing barriers to housing in high opportunity areas, and supporting other activities identified by local governments in adopted housing elements.	**Consistent.** The General Plan Update includes strategies to expand housing opportunities across a range of income levels, encourage development in resource-rich areas, and address historic patterns of segregation through inclusive land use and housing policies. Additionally, the General Plan aligns with and reinforces programs identified in the City's adopted Housing Element, supporting proactive measures to increase housing supply and affordability. The following General Plan Update goals and policies support this consistency determination: Goal LU-1: Sustainable Growth; Goal LU-3: Neighborhoods; Policy LU-9.8: Regional Coordination, and Policy ED-2.2: Mixed-Use Development. With implementation of the proposed goals, policies, and actions in the General Plan Update, the project would be consistent with Vibrant-7.
Vibrant-8: Encourage growth in industries that will grow the region's economy, such as business services, agriculture, manufacturing, and research, by supporting economic development efforts and strategies that boost economic mobility.	**Consistent.** The General Plan Update encourages a mix of employment opportunities through designated employment areas, mixed-use development, and investment in infrastructure that supports business growth and workforce access. The General Plan Update helps create complete communities with expanded opportunities for residents and a resilient regional economy. The following General Plan Update goals and policies support this consistency determination: Policy ED-1.1: Economic Development and Job Growth; Policy ED-2.2: Mixed-Use Development; and Policy T-1.1.2: Complete Streets. With implementation of the proposed goals, policies, and actions in the General Plan Update, the project would be consistent with Vibrant-8.

SACOG 2050 MTP/SCS Policies	Project Consistency
Vibrant-9: Protect and enhance important tribal cultural resources in the SACOG region by partnering with cities, counties, federal and state agencies, tribal governments, and community leaders to build a practice of early communication, collaboration, and consultation with tribal governments in local and regional transportation and land use planning processes.	**Consistent.** The General Plan Update encourages culturally sensitive planning practices and recognizes the importance of preserving tribal heritage through proactive engagement and resource protection measures. The General Plan Update would ensure that development and infrastructure decisions respect and protect important cultural resources. The following General Plan Update goals and policies support this consistency determination: Goal AC-3: Indigenous Tribal Cultural Resources; Policy LU-1.7: Development Standards and Review Procedures; and Policy LU-9.8: Regional Coordination. With implementation of the proposed goals, policies, and actions in the General Plan Update, the project would be consistent with Vibrant-9.
2: Foster the next generation of mobility solutions.	
NextGen-1: Encourage context-responsive shared mobility programs (car share, bike share, scooter share, and microtransit) to increase mobility options for residents and bridge the first-mile/last-mile gap to fixed-route bus and rail.	**Consistent.** The General Plan Update promotes multimodal connectivity and first-mile/last-mile solutions that enhance access to transit services and reduce reliance on single-occupant vehicles. The General Plan Update aims to improve connectivity between residential areas, employment centers, and transit corridors. The following General Plan Update proposed goals, policies, and actions support this consistency determination: Goal T-5: Public Transportation; Policy T-5.1: On-Demand Transit; Policy T-5.3: Monitoring Transit Needs; and Action T-6D: Bicycle Parking Requirements. With implementation of the proposed goals, policies, and actions in the General Plan Update, the project would be consistent with NextGen-1.
NextGen-2: Cultivate regional understanding and support for alternatives to driving alone by improving regional travel planning tools, expanding transportation demand management programs, and facilitating pilots and demonstration projects.	**Consistent.** The proposed project promotes alternatives to single-occupant vehicle travel by supporting improved travel planning tools, and pilot programs that encourage multimodal travel behavior. The proposed project includes policies that expand access to transit, active transportation, and shared mobility options, while fostering public awareness and use of these alternatives through coordinated programs and demonstration efforts. The following policies from the General Plan Update support transportation demand management outcomes: Goal T-5: Public Transportation; Policy T-5.1: On-Demand Transit; and Policy T-1.1.2: Complete Streets. With implementation of the proposed goals and policies in the General Plan Update, the project would be consistent with NextGen-2.
NextGen-3: Support a transition to zero-emission passenger, freight, and transit vehicles that is equitable and considers the diversity of regional needs and contexts, including rural, urban, and suburban communities as well as historically underrepresented communities.	**Consistent**. The proposed project promotes zero emission vehicle adoption and charging through policies and targets growth where charging investments can serve more users per site. The following General Plan Update policies prioritize zero emission vehicle adoption: Policy T-3.4: Zero Emission Vehicles, Policy ED-3.7: Tourism Infrastructure and Amenities, and Policy OSC-4.7: Transportation Control Measures. With implementation of the proposed policies in the General Plan Update, the project would be consistent with NextGen-3.

SACOG 2050 MTP/SCS Policies	Project Consistency
NextGen-4: Support the long-term fiscal health of transit by collaborating with transit providers to identify productivity and cost-effectiveness measures for transit.	**Consistent.** The proposed project encourages efficient transit service through multimodal connectivity, improved access to transit facilities, and planning for increased ridership in areas with concentrated growth. In addition, the General Plan Update emphasizes coordination with regional agencies and transit operators to align service improvements, funding strategies, and system performance with community needs, supporting cost-effective and productive transit operations. The following General Plan Update policies support this consistency determination: Goal T-5: Public Transportation; Policy T-5.1: On-Demand Transit, Policy T-5.2: Inter-City Bus Transit, Policy T-5.3: Monitoring Transit Needs, Policy T-5.4: Rider-Friendly Improvements, Policy T-5.5: Transit Amenities in New Development, Action T-5B: Sacramento to Roseville Third Track Advocacy, and Action T-5D: Grant Funding for Transit Services. With implementation of the proposed policies and actions in the General Plan Update, the project would be consistent with NextGen-4.
NextGen-5: Advance Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) to reduce congestion and improve multimodal reliability.	**Consistent.** The proposed project includes policies that support improvements in local infrastructure that would facilitate more seamless travel. The following General Plan Update policies and actions support this consistency determination: Policy T-3.5: Shared Mobility, Policy T-5.7: Station Improvements, Policy T-5.8: Access to Auburn Station, Action T-5C: Shuttles, and Policy LU-4.3: Connecting Old Town and Downtown. With implementation of the proposed policies and actions in the General Plan Update, the project would be consistent with NextGen-5.
3: Modernize the way we pay for transportation infrastructure.	
Invest-3: Partner with the Capital Area Regional Tolling Authority (CARTA), local agencies, and Caltrans to develop and operate a regional network of toll facilities to improve traffic management, transit reliability, and operations on the regional highway system. **Invest-7:** Coordinate with the state, local governments, CARTA, and the public to ensure new sources of revenue avoid negatively impacting lower-income and rural households. Where the collection of these revenues requires information about travel behavior or usage of roadways, ensure collection methods are sensitive to privacy concerns.	**Consistent.** The proposed project emphasizes the importance of coordinating with external partners including Caltrans, Placer County, and regional agencies to address congestion, manage pass-through traffic on Interstate 80 and Highway 49, and improve mobility and system efficiency. In addition, the proposed project includes policies and actions support this consistency determination: Goal T-1: Balanced Transportation Network, Goal T-2: Roadway Efficiency, Goal T-5: Public Transportation, and Goal T-8: Regional Transportation Planning. With implementation of the proposed policies and actions in the General Plan Update, the project would be consistent with Invest-3 and Invest-7.
4: Build and maintain a safe, resilient, and multimodal transportation system.	
Build-1: Prioritize maintenance of existing transportation infrastructure to manage or reduce the growing maintenance funding gap by focusing flexible revenues, including SACOG's Regional Funding Round, on state of good repair improvements that support a safe, equitable, and resilient transportation system.	**Consistent.** As described under Invest-3 and Invest-7, above, the proposed project's Transportation Element prioritizes maintenance and complete streets retrofits ahead of capacity expansion, consistent with Build-1's emphasis on state-of-good repair improvements. The General Plan Update policies and actions described above demonstrate the proposed project's consistency with Build-1.

SACOG 2050 MTP/SCS Policies	Project Consistency
Build-3: Focus new roadway capacity on major bottlenecks that exist today and/or on expansion projects that incentivize compact development opportunities within Established and Center & Corridor communities.	**Consistent.** The proposed project targets expansion in specific areas, such as the Highway 49 corridor and Baltimore Ravine to relieve constraints and support infill in other areas such as Downtown and surrounding the Auburn Train Station. The following General Plan Update policies align with Build 3: Policy LU-1.3: Key Opportunity Areas, Goal LU-4: Downtown/Old Town, and Policy LU-5.1: Highway 49 Corridor. With implementation of the proposed goals and policies in the General Plan Update, the project would be consistent with Build-3.
Build-4: Support and help accelerate implementation of high-capacity transit and the Regional Transit Network to deliver responsive, fast, and reliable transit services cost-effectively, prioritizing communities with supportive land use policies**.**	**Consistent.** The proposed project supports development patterns and infrastructure investments that enhance transit access, reliability, and efficiency. In addition, the General Plan includes policies and actions pertaining to these objectives, including Goal LU-1: Sustainable Growth, Goal T-5: Public Transportation, Goal T-1: Balanced Transportation Network, and Goal T-3: Sustainable Transportation, and Guiding Principle 3: Smart Growth. With implementation of the proposed goals and policies in the General Plan Update, the project would be consistent with Build-4.
Build-6: Increase the resiliency of the multimodal transportation network and the emergency preparedness of the transportation sector to reduce the impacts of extreme weather and natural disasters.	**Consistent.** The proposed project recognizes the increasing risks from wildfires, extreme weather, and other hazards, and supports transportation system improvements that enhance reliability and emergency response. In addition, the General Plan includes policies and actions pertaining to these objectives, including Goal T-1: Balanced Transportation Network, Goal T-2: Roadway Efficiency, and Goal T-3: Sustainable Transportation, Goal OSC-6: Climate Stability, and Guiding Principle 8: Resilience and Public Safety. With implementation of the proposed goals and policies in the General Plan Update, the project would be consistent with Build-6.
Build-7: Support investment in bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure that provides safe access to schools, jobs, recreational opportunities, social gathering centers, and transit, and/or implements the Regional Trail Network.	**Consistent.** The proposed project emphasizes complete streets, intersection improvements, and safe routes to school projects. The following General Plan Update policies and action would directly align with the goal of providing safe access to schools, jobs, recreational opportunities: Policy T-1.1.2: Complete Streets, Policy T-4.2: Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety, Policy T-4.10: School Access, and Action T-4I: Safe Routes to School. With implementation of the proposed policies and actions in the General Plan Update, the project would be consistent with Build-7.
Build-8: Develop multimodal corridors that improve access to major economic assets and job centers and facilitate the reliable movement of freight.	**Consistent.** The proposed project includes goals and policies that would enhance connectivity to major economic assets and job centers, such as the following: Goal LU-5: Highway 49 Corridor, Policy T-5.3: Monitoring Transit Needs, Policy T-5.5: Transit Amenities in New Development, Policy T-5.7: Station Improvements, and Policy T-5.8: Access to Auburn Station. With implementation of the proposed goals, policies, and actions in the General Plan Update, the project would be consistent with Build-8.

Source: Sacramento Area Council of Governments 2025

As described in Table 4.11-2, above, the proposed project would be consistent with and directly support the policies established by the SACOG 2050 MTP/SCS.

Consistency with the Placer County General Plan

The proposed project is overall consistent with the Placer County General Plan goals and policies described in Section 4.11.2d, *Regulatory Setting*, above. Consistency with the General Plan Land Use, Transportation and Circulation, Public Facilities and Services, Natural Resources, and Health and Safety Elements is summarized in Table 4.11-3 below.

Table 4.11-3 Consistency with the Placer County General Plan Elements

General Plan Policies	Project Consistency
Goal 1.B: To provide adequate land in a range of residential densities to accommodate the housing needs of all income groups expected to reside in Placer County.	**Consistent.** The proposed project designates a range of residential densities and focuses on higher-density housing in Downtown/Old Town and in the area surrounding the Auburn Train Station, which is supported by objective design and review standards. The proposed project would condition residential density on site and infrastructure constraints, including requirements for well-connected street and pedestrian systems, and integrating public and private open space into residential development, as outlined in Policy LU-1.6: Higher Density Housing, Policy LU-1.7: Development Standards and Review Procedures, Policy T-1.3: Connectivity, Policy T-4.7: Sidewalks, Policy T-4.8: Sidewalk Gaps and Urban Trails Network, Policy CDP-2.4: Plazas and Civic Spaces, Policy CDP-2.5: Usable Outdoor Spaces, and Policy CDP-3.8: Private Open Space and Storage.
Goal 1.D: To designate adequate commercial land for and promote development of commercial uses to meet the present and future needs of Placer County residents and visitors and maintain economic vitality.	**Consistent.** The proposed projects land use map and policy frameworks reserve and strengthen Commercial and Mixed-Use land use designations along Highway 49 and key opportunity areas, with planned improvements relating to complete streets and bicycle parking. Key policies from the proposed projects aligning with the Placer County General Plan include the following: Policy T-1.1.2: Complete Streets, Policy T-6.6: Bicycle Parking, Policy LU-3.6: Neighborhood Identity, Goal LU-5: Highway 49 Corridor, Policy LU-6.2: Neighborhood Centers, and Policy LU-6.4: Commercial and Mixed Use.
Goal 1.E: To designate adequate land for and promote development of industrial uses to meet the present and future needs of Placer County residents for jobs and maintain economic vitality.	**Consistent.** The proposed project proposes industrial uses near the Airport Business District and the UPRR and emphasizes buffering from sensitive uses and truck-route access, as demonstrated by the following actions and policies from the General Plan Update: Policy LU-2.3: Buffering and Action LU-6D: Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR) ROW.
Goal 1.H: To designate adequate agricultural land and promote development of agricultural uses to support the continued viability of Placer County's agricultural economy. **Goal 1.I**: To establish and maintain interconnected greenbelts and open spaces for the protection of native vegetation and wildlife and for the community's enjoyment.	**Consistent.** The proposed project emphasizes conservation of rural, agricultural, and open space land uses at the perimeter of Auburn, as well as SOI coordination, as supported by the following goals and policies of the proposed project: Goal OSC-1: Open Space, Policy OSC-1.1: Open Space Preservation, Policy OSC-1.2: Greenbelts and Connected Open Spaces, Policy OSC-1.4: Use Conflicts, Policy OSC-1.5: Stewardship, Policy OSC-1.6: Open Space Dedication, Goal LU-2: Land Use Compatibility, Policy LU-2.1: Protecting Important Natural Features, Goal LU-8: Rural, Agricultural, and Open Space Areas, Policy LU-8.1: Rural Context, and Policy LU-8.4: Agricultural Buffers.

General Plan Policies	Project Consistency
Goal 1.K: To protect the visual and scenic resources of Placer County as important quality-of-life amenities for County residents and a principal asset in the promotion of recreation and tourism. **Goal 1.O:** To promote and enhance the quality and aesthetics of development in Placer County.	**Consistent.** The proposed project would implement historic preservation and adaptive reuse policies in Downtown/Old Town Auburn, including Policy LU-8.5: Residential Rural Uses, Action CDP-1B: Scenic Highway Improvements, Action CDP-1C: Scenic Overlooks, Policy CDP-3.3: Materials and Textures, and Policy OSC-1.1: Open Space Preservation.
Goal 3.A: To provide for the long-range planning and development of the County's roadway system to ensure the safe and efficient movement of people and goods. **Goal 3.D:** To provide a safe, comprehensive, and integrated system of facilities for non-motorized transportation.	**Consistent.** The proposed project includes policies relating to project-level mitigation and impact fees, a connected multimodal network, and active transportation investments, as supported by Policy T-1.3: Connectivity, Policy T-1.4: Mitigation of Development Impacts, Action T-1A: Capital Improvement Program, Action T-1B: Traffic Fees, and Action T-4A: Active Transportation Planning.
Goal 4.A: To ensure the timely development of public facilities and the maintenance of specified service levels for these facilities. **Goal 4.C:** To ensure the availability of an adequate and safe water supply and the maintenance of high quality water in water bodies and aquifers used as sources of domestic supply. **Goal 4.D:** The County shall require wastewater conveyance and treatment facilities that are sufficient to serve the Placer County General Plan proposed density of residential, commercial, and public/institutional uses in a way which protects the public and environment from adverse water quality or health impacts. **Goal 4.E:** To manage rainwater and stormwater at the source in a sustainable manner that least inconveniences the public, reduces potential water-related damage, augments water supply, mitigates storm water pollution, and enhances the environment.	**Consistent.** The proposed project includes policies intended to ensure adequate services and improvements. The relevant goals and policies of the proposed projects are as follows: Goal CSF-1: Public Facilities, Policy CSF-1.1: Quality Facilities, Policy CSF-1.7: Funding, Goal CSF-3: Police and Fire Services, Policy CSF-3.2 Law Enforcement, Policy CSF-3.3: Fire Prevention and Emergency Response, Goal CSF-4: Infrastructure, Policy CSF-4.4: Water Supply, Storage, and Distribution, Policy CSF-4.5: Sanitary Sewer System, and Policy CSF-4.7: Stormwater Management.
Goal 5.D: To identify, protect, and enhance Placer County's important historical, archaeological, paleontological, and cultural sites and their contributing environment.	**Consistent.** The proposed project includes policies intended to ensure protection of historical, archaeological, paleontological, and cultural resources. The relevant goals and policies of the proposed project include the following: Goal CDP-4: Historic Resources, Policy CDP-4.1: Historic Structures, Policy CDP-4.2: Adaptive Reuse, Policy CDP-4.4: Preservation Incentives, Policy CDP-4.7: Education and Awareness of Historic Resources, Action CDP-4A: Historic Design Review, Action CDP-4B: Auburn Historic Survey Update, Action CDP-4C: Historic Resource Evaluations for Individual Properties, Action CDP-4E: Historic Building Code, Goal AC-3: Indigenous and Tribal Cultural Resources, Policy AC-3.1: Indigenous and Tribal Cultural Resource Protection, Policy AC-3.2: Tribal Consultation, Policy AC-3.3: TCR Documentation, Action AC-3A: Inventorying Tribal Resources, Action AC-3B: AB 52 and SB 18 Compliance, and Action AC-3C: Cultural Resource Surveys and Monitoring,

General Plan Policies	Project Consistency
Goal 6.A: To protect and enhance the natural qualities of Placer County's rivers, streams, creeks and groundwater. **Goal 6.C:** To protect, restore, and enhance habitats that support fish and wildlife species so as to maintain populations at viable levels. **Goal 6.D:** To preserve and protect the valuable vegetation resources of Placer County. **Goal 6.F:** To protect and improve air quality in Placer County.	**Consistent.** The proposed project includes policies intended to ensure protection of natural resources. The relevant goals and policies of the proposed project include the following: Policy LU-2.1: Protecting Important Natural Features, Goal OSC-3: Water Resources, Policy OSC-3.1: Creeks and Ravines, Policy OSC-3.10: Groundwater, Action OSC-3D: Best Management Practices for Construction, Goal OSC-4: Air Resources, Policy OSC-4.1: Air Quality Standards, Policy OSC-4.2: Air Quality Impacts, Goal OSC-5: Plant and Animal Resources, Policy OSC-5.1: Wildlife Corridors, Policy OSC-5.2: Habitat Protection, Policy OSC-5.3: Wetlands, and Policy OSC-5.4: Special Status Species.
Goal 8.A.1: To minimize the loss of life, injury, and property damage due to seismic and related geological hazards. **Goal 8.C.1:** To minimize the risk of loss of life, injury, and damage to property and watershed resources resulting from unwanted fires.	**Consistent.** The proposed project emphasizes compact infill development, multimodal access, resource protection, public safety, and service adequacy in a way that does not conflict with Placer County policies adopted to avoid or mitigate environmental impacts. Rather, the proposed project directly supports the goals and policies adopted by the County. The proposed project aims to protect residents from geological hazards, floods, and fires. The relevant goals and associated policies of the proposed project are as follows: Policy LU-1.5: Reducing Exposure to Natural Hazards, Action OSC-3B: Stream and Waterway Protection, Policy CSF-1.6: Resilience and Emergency Preparedness, Policy CD-2.6: Undergrounding of Utilities, Policy CD-3.4: Landscaping, and Policy T-8.5: Evacuation Planning.

Consistency with the Baltimore Ravine Specific Plan

As described in Section 4.11.2d, Regulatory Setting, the BRSP establishes a phased mixed-use, predominantly residential community with extensive open space, circulation improvements, affordable housing developments. As noted in the Draft Land Use Element, the proposed General Plan modifies the BRSP to provide more flexibility for phasing. It also redesignates several properties in response to parcel boundaries and natural features. The net effect of these changes is to increase the development potential of the specific plan area by 35 units (from 725 units to 760 units) and decrease the commercial potential by an estimated 20,000 square feet (from 90,000 to 70,000). Action LU-1C of the Land Use Element requires an update of the BRSP to address infrastructure costs, access, and land ownership, including a more realistic financing and construction strategy to support the area's future development.

Other aspects of the General Plan support future BRSP entitlements and the development framework proposed by the 2011 Plan, as amended by the General Plan. The General Plan Update contains policies that support the BRSP's intent to phase improvements, provide multimodal connectivity, and protect natural resources and visual character. Therefore, the General Plan Update would not conflict with the BRSP.

Summary of Project Consistency with Applicable Plans

As described above, the proposed project is generally aligned with all applicable land use plans, if not directly in support of those plans. Therefore, the General Plan Update would not cause significant environmental impact due to a conflict with any land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect. Impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

No additional mitigation measures for land use and planning would be required beyond those identified throughout this EIR. .

Significance After Mitigation

Impacts would be less than significant without mitigation, beyond those identified throughout this EIR.

4.11.4 Cumulative Impacts

The geographic scope of the cumulative land use and planning analysis is Placer County. This geographic scope is appropriate because the county limits represent the planning area for incorporated cities, including Auburn and nearby cities, and unincorporated county lands. The cumulative analysis considers the nearby past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future plans and projects listed in Table 3-1 (refer to Section 3, *Environmental Setting*) located outside the city, in addition to the proposed plan.

Cumulative development would result in the development of residential, retail, commercial, industrial, civic, and hotel uses. The cumulative plans and projects do not propose the type of large or linear construction that could reduce mobility within an existing community and the surrounding area and would occur in an urban environment. Therefore, the cumulative impact related to potential to divide an existing community would not be significant.

Land use decisions for both the proposed plan and for the other cumulative plans and projects listed in Table 3-1 are made by the appropriate jurisdiction. Each jurisdiction would ensure that cumulative development is consistent with the applicable General Plan and Municipal Code, which ensure logical and orderly land use development and require discretionary review to ensure that projects do not result in land use environmental impacts due to inconsistency with the applicable General Plan and other regulations. For these reasons, cumulative impacts would be less than significant.

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4.12 Mineral Resources

The analysis in this section addresses the potential for the proposed project to result in the loss of mineral resources to the region.

4.12.1 Setting

Mineral resources are extremely valuable because of their limited supply and their usefulness in modern construction and industrial processes. Mining has occurred in Placer County, including in the City of Auburn, since 1849 when prospectors discovered gold, which led to a cascading effect of additional gold discoveries in the area. Valuable mineral resources that were historically extracted include silver, copper, lead, zinc, chromite, tungsten (scheelite) and manganese. Mined industrial minerals include quartz, limestone, asbestos, clay, and mineral paint. Construction aggregate mining also occurs in the vicinity of the city (DOC 1995: 49). The nearest active mining operation (Cool Cave Quarry) is located approximately 3 miles east of city limits (CGS 2018a).

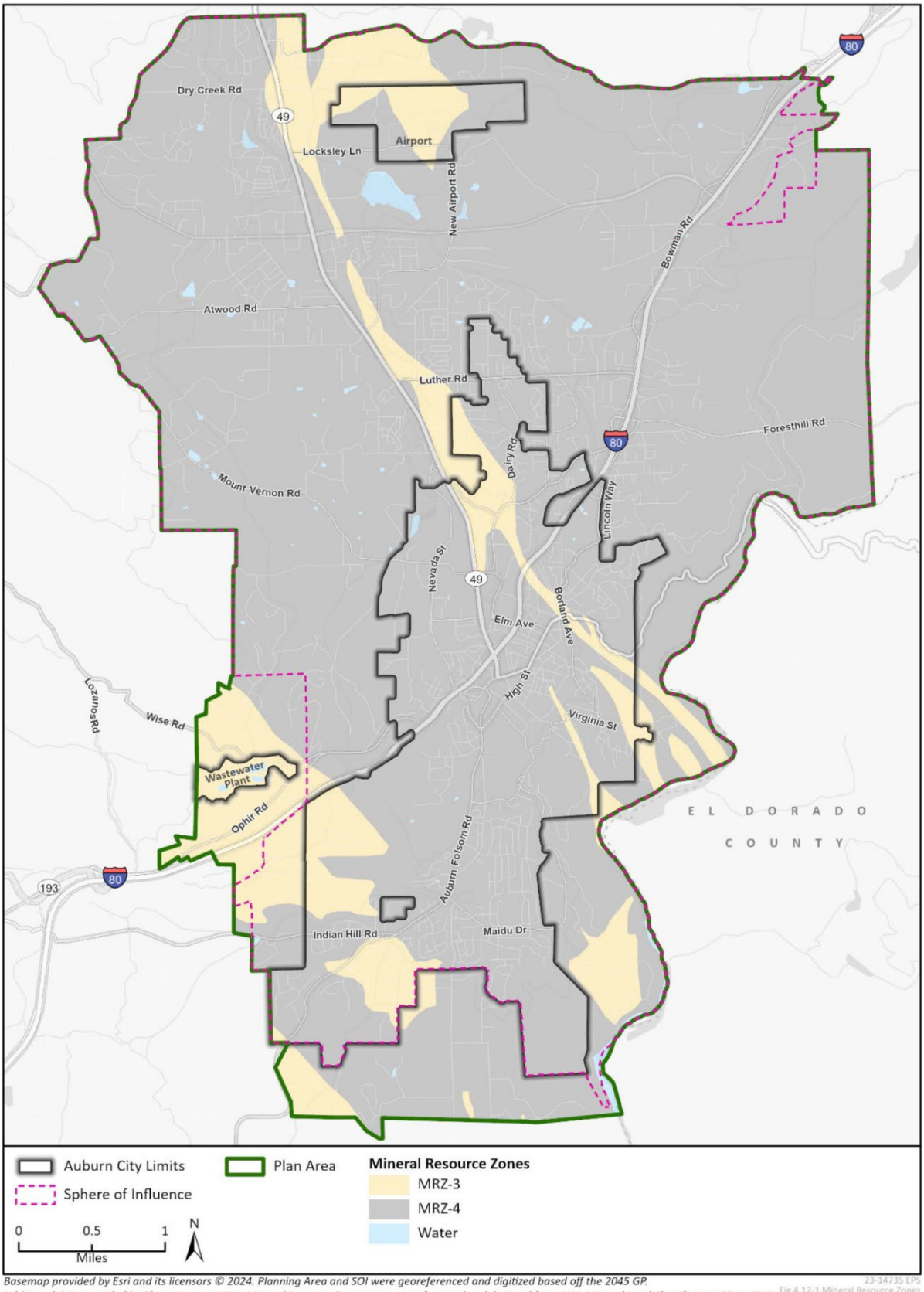
The CGS maps and regulates the locations of potential mineral resources in California consistent with the Surface Mining and Reclamation Act of 1975 (SMARA). To protect these potential mineral resources, CGS has classified the regional significance of mineral resources into mineral resource zones (MRZs) and mapped them. MRZs are a type of classification of State lands into four geographic zones based on resource significance (see Table 4.12-1 for details about SMARA and MRZs). According to the available CGS data, there is evidence of significant mineral resources at or adjacent to the Planning Area, as indicated in Figure 4.12-1.The Planning Area is within an area that has been mapped under SMARA as MRZ 3 and MRZ 4 (CGS 2018b). MRZ 3 is an area of undetermined mineral resource significance and MRZ 4 is an area of unknown mineral resources potential. Most historic mining operations in these mineral resource areas were mining for gold with a few instances of Copper, Zinc, and Gold mining as well (CGS 1984).

Table 4.12-1 Descriptions of California Mineral Land Classification System Categories

Mineral Resource Zone Category	Category Description	Level of Mineral Significance
MRZ-1	Unlikely to have reserves	Areas of No Mineral Resource Significance
MRZ-2	Demonstrated Reserves	Areas of Identified Mineral Resource Significance
MRZ-3	Known Mineral Occurrence	Areas of Undetermined Mineral Resource Significance
MRZ-4	No Known Mineral Occurrence	Areas of Unknown Mineral Resource Significance

Source: DOC 2024.

Figure 4.12-1 Mineral Resources in the Planning Area



Basemap provided by Esri and its licensors © 2024. Planning Area and SOI were georeferenced and digitized based off the 2045 GP.
Additional data provided by Placer County, 2023; Mineral Resource Zones were georeferenced and digitized from CGS, Mineral Land Classification Map, 2018.

23-14735 EPS
Fig 4.12-1 Mineral Resource Zones

4.12.2 Regulatory Setting

a. Federal Regulations

U.S. Department of the Interior's Minerals Availability System

This system identifies between 15 and 17 rare Earth minerals as critical resources for United States Department of Defense applications or resources which are critical to national security. It recommends the development of a comprehensive approach to help ensure a secure supply of each resource and identifies risks as well as timeframes for actions.

Oil, Gas, and Geothermal Resources

The California Geologic Energy Management Division (CalGEM)[1] provides oversight of the oil, natural gas, and geothermal industries, and regulates the drilling, operation, and permanent closure of energy resource wells. CalGEM's online mapping application, WellFinder, was reviewed to determine the presence of any oil, gas, or geothermal resources in or near the Planning Area. Well Finder data indicates there are no resources within or adjacent to the Planning Area (CalGEM 2026).

b. State Regulations

Surface Mining and Reclamation Act

SMARA (PRC Sections 2710 – 2796) and its implementing regulations (Title 14, CCR Sections 3500 et seq.) establish a comprehensive state policy for the conduct of surface mining operations and for reclaiming mined lands to a usable condition that is readily adaptable for alternative land uses. SMARA encourages the production, conservation, and protection of the state's mineral resources and recognizes that "the state's mineral resources are vital, finite, and important natural resources and the responsible protection and development of these mineral resources is vital to a sustainable California" (PRC Section 2711). Under SMARA, the term "minerals" includes "any naturally occurring chemical element or compound, or groups of elements and compounds, formed from inorganic processes and organic substances, including, but not limited to, coal, peat, and bituminous rock, but excluding geothermal resources, natural gas, and petroleum" (Title 14, CCR Section 3501).

CGS maps and regulates the locations of potential mineral resources in California consistent with SMARA. To protect these potential mineral resources, the CGS has classified the regional significance of mineral resources into MRZs and mapped them. Table 4.12-1 presents descriptions of the MRZ categories. As noted above, the Planning Area is within an area that has been mapped under SMARA as MRZ 3 and MRZ 4 (CGS 2018b).

c. Local Regulations

Auburn Municipal Code

Section 159.345 of the Auburn Municipal Code regulates mining and reclamation of mined lands in the city. This subchapter establishes regulations in accordance with the California Surface Mining and Reclamation Act of 1975. Surface mining operations are permitted only in designated zoning districts with explicit authorization. Requirements include obtaining a conditional use permit, submitting a reclamation plan, and complying with environmental quality guidelines. The

[1] Formerly known as the California Division of Oil, Gas, and Geothermal Resources.

regulations also address procedures for review, approval standards for reclamation plans, performance bonds, public records, periodic inspections, amendments, variances, and the obligations of successors in interest.

Auburn General Plan 1993

The current Auburn General Plan was adopted on November 29, 1993 (City of Auburn 1993). Mineral resources are addressed in the Open Space/Conservation Element. It identifies and outlines goals and policies for cultural and historical resources, including the following:

Goal 4: Provide for the conservation, utilization, and development of mineral, geologic and soil resources in keeping with sound conservation and reclamation practices.

Policy 4.1 The City should identify all economically valuable resources, including mineral deposits, soils conducive to agricultural uses, and those open space areas which add to the overall attractiveness of the region.

The General Plan further notes that although there are known mineral resources, there are no current surface mining operations within the City's sphere of influence. The General Plan indicates that such uses would be incompatible with existing and planned urban development.

The proposed comprehensive update of the City's General Plan, *Envision Auburn 2045,* would provide revised and refined goals, policies, and implementation programs as appropriate.

Placer County Code

Section 17.52.110 of the Placer County Code outlines the purpose and requirements of the mineral reserve combining district, aiming to identify lands with valuable mineral resources and facilitate their extraction while minimizing adverse environmental impacts. It specifies that land use permits within the district must ensure compatibility with mineral extraction operations and adhere to development standards outlined in Section 17.56.270 for surface mining and reclamation.

Section 17.56.270 outlines the requirements and procedures for surface mining operations, emphasizing adherence to reclamation plans and regulations to minimize adverse effects. It also mandates periodic inspections, financial assurances for reclamation plans, and outlines penalties for violations to ensure compliance with state regulations.

Placer County General Plan

The County General Plan does not contain any goals or policies related to mineral resources.

4.12.3 Impact Analysis

a. Significance Thresholds and Methodology

Based on Appendix G of the *CEQA Guidelines* a project may be deemed to have a significant impact on mineral resources if it would:

1. Result in a loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and residents of the state; or
2. Result in the loss of availability of a locally-important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan, or other land use plan.

b. Project Impacts and Mitigation

Threshold:	Would the project result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state?

Impact MIN-1 THE PLANNING AREA DOES NOT CONTAIN SIGNIFICANT MINERAL RESOURCE ZONES OR IDENTIFIED MINERAL RESOURCE SITES. THE PROPOSED PROJECT MAINTAINS THE MINERAL EXTRACTION (-ME) OVERLAY AND PERMITTING REQUIREMENTS, ENSURING EXTRACTION REMAINS POSSIBLE WHERE COMPATIBLE. THIS IMPACT WOULD BE LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT.

Known, regionally significant mineral resources are typically indicated by MRZ-2 classification, which identifies areas with demonstrated mineral reserves of economic importance (DOC 2024). The Planning Area is mapped as MRZ-3 and MRZ-4, listed as areas of undetermined and unknown mineral resource significance, respectively. Historic mining occurred in Auburn primarily for gold, with limited extraction of copper and zinc; however, these activities ceased in the early 1850s, and no mining operations exist within the city or its sphere of influence.

The 1993 General Plan determined that mining would be incompatible with planned urban development and therefore did not designate any mineral extraction areas. The General Plan Update continues this approach by not introducing new land use designations for mining but includes policies and actions that would maintain the Mineral Extraction (-ME) overlay zone as listed below. The City's zoning map identifies one large parcel with the -ME overlay which is located in the southwestern portion of the city adjacent to I-80. No reduction or expansion of this designation is proposed.

- **Policy OSC-2.4:** Work with Placer County and other relevant agencies to allow mineral resource extraction in the Auburn Planning Area, including permitting procedures and measures to minimize adverse impacts.
  - **Action OSC-2C**: Maintain the "-ME" overlay zone to identify areas with current or past mining operations, as well as undeveloped areas likely to contain important mineral deposits according on State Division of Mines and Geology maps, provided there are no incompatible surface land uses. As required by existing -ME regulations, any new or expanded mineral extraction in these areas must undergo environmental review and obtain a conditional use permit.

New or expanded mineral extraction within the -ME overlay zone, which applies to one parcel in the Planning Area, would require environmental review and a condition use permit pursuant to Auburn Municipal Code Section 159.376, ensuring compliance with SMARA and local standards.

Because the Planning Area does not contain known mineral resources, and because the General Plan Update preserves regulatory requirements protective of mineral extraction where feasible and would not remove allowances for mineral extraction from any parcels in the Planning Area, the project would not result in the loss of availability of any known mineral resource of regional or statewide value. Therefore, no known mineral resource areas would be converted to incompatible uses and opportunities for extraction remain subject to environmental review. This impact would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures would be required.

Significance After Mitigation

This impact would be less than significant without mitigation.

Threshold:	Would the project result in the loss of availability of a locally important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan, or other land use plan?

Impact MIN-2 THERE ARE NO DESIGNATED MINERAL RESOURCE RECOVERY SITES WITHIN THE PLANNING AREA. THE GENERAL PLAN UPDATE INCLUDES POLICIES THAT WOULD PRESERVE OPPORTUNITIES FOR FUTURE MINERAL EXTRACTION. NO IMPACT WOULD OCCUR.

The current General Plan does not designate mineral resource recovery sites, and there are no locally important resource recovery sites identified within the Planning Area. As stated under Impact MIN-1, the General Plan Update would maintain the -ME overlay zone, which would serve as a planning tool to identify areas with existing or historic mining operations and areas likely to contain mineral deposits according to CGS mapping. This overlay ensures that future mineral extraction proposals remain possible where surface land uses are compatible, subject to environmental review and conditional use permit requirements.

By retaining the -ME overlay and associated permitting procedures, the General Plan Update does not eliminate locally designated mineral recovery sites and preserves local mechanisms to allow for mineral resource extraction. Therefore, the project would not result in the loss of availability of a locally important mineral resource recovery site. No impact would occur.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures would be required.

Significance After Mitigation

No impact would occur without mitigation.

4.12.4 Cumulative Impacts

The geographic scope of the cumulative mineral resources analysis is the Planning Area and the surrounding vicinity. This geographic scope is appropriate because impacts related to mineral resources are generally localized, and the availability of mineral deposits depends on site-specific geologic conditions. The cumulative analysis considers the nearby past, present, and reasonably future plans and projects listed in Table 3-1 in Section 3, *Environmental Setting*, in addition to the proposed plan.

Cumulative plans and projects, including development facilitated by the General Plan Update, would occur in areas not known to contain mineral resources. No cumulative projects would eliminate access to MRZ-2 zones or other mapped mineral resource areas because none exist within the Planning Area and surrounding vicinity. Furthermore, future development would be subject to local policies and State regulations, including SMARA, which require environmental review and permitting for any proposed mineral extraction. These requirements preserve opportunities for resource recovery where feasible and prevent significant cumulative loss of mineral resources. Because the Planning Area and surrounding vicinity do not contain known mineral resource sites and regulatory mechanisms remain in place to allow extraction where compatible, cumulative

development would not result in the loss of availability of mineral resources of regional or local importance. Cumulative impacts related to mineral resources would be less than significant.

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4.13 Noise

This section evaluates potential noise and groundborne vibration impacts that may result from implementation of the project during construction and operation. Specifically, this analysis describes the environmental and regulatory setting, the criteria used to evaluate significance of potential noise impacts (including the exposure of noise-sensitive receivers to substantial or incompatible noise levels), methods used to evaluate potential impacts, and mitigation required to reduce potential impacts. Noise calculations associated with this analysis are included in Appendix H of this EIR.

4.13.1 Setting

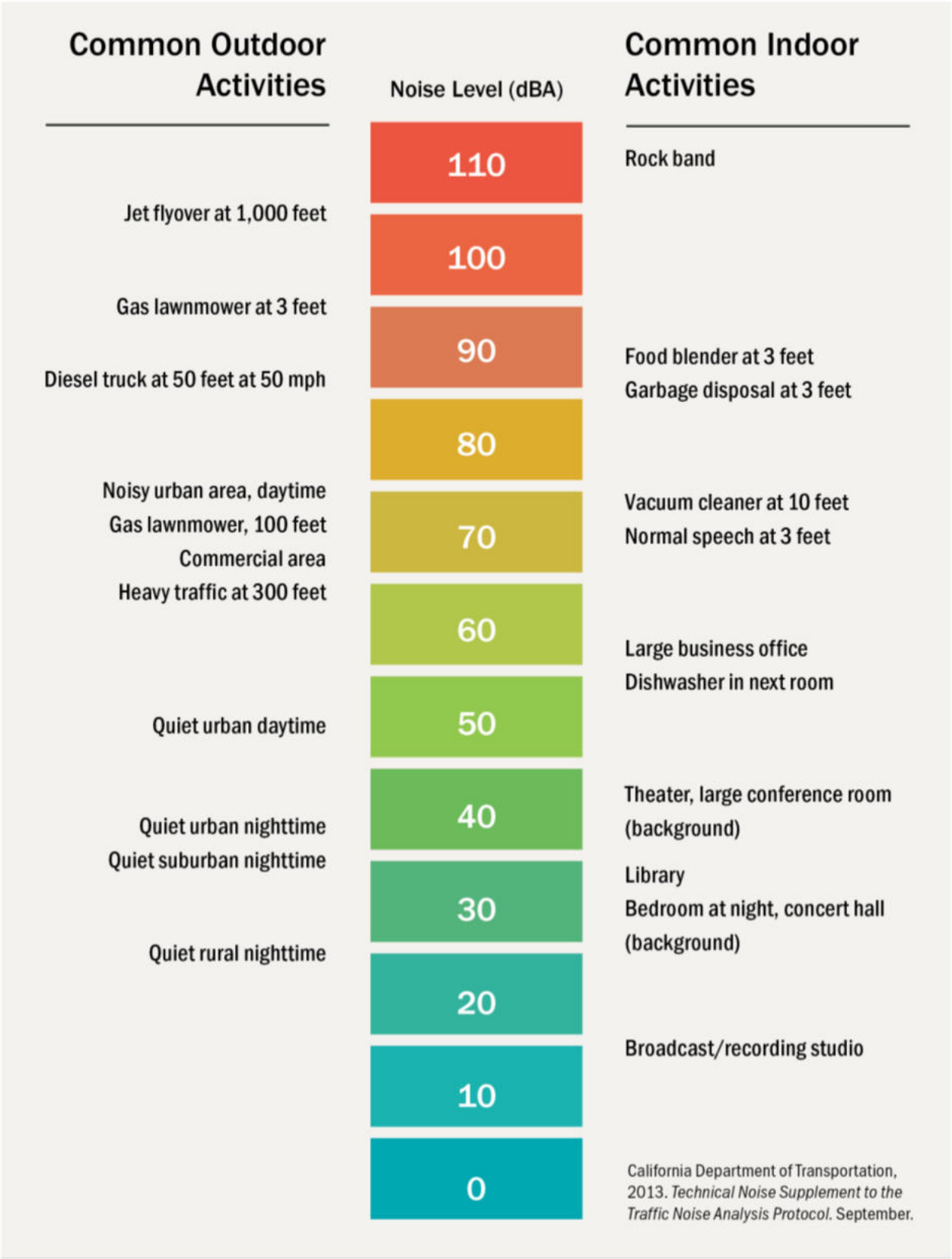
a. Fundamentals of Sound and Noise

Sound is a vibration, created by a moving or vibrating source, that transmits through a medium (such as a gas, liquid, or solid) and is capable of being detected by the hearing organs. Discussions of sound typically refer to the air pressure disturbances that result from these vibrations as they travel through the air from the source to a receiver's ear. Noise is defined as sound that is loud, unpleasant, unexpected, or undesired and may therefore be classified as a more specific group of sounds. The effects of noise on people can include general annoyance, interference with speech communication, sleep disturbance, and, in the extreme, hearing impairment (California Department of Transportation [Caltrans] 2013).

Noise levels are commonly measured in decibels (dB) using the A-weighted sound pressure level (dBA). The A-weighting scale is an adjustment to the actual sound pressure levels so that they are consistent with the human hearing response, which is most sensitive to frequencies around 4,000 hertz (Hz) and less sensitive to frequencies around and below 100 Hz (Kinsler, et al. 1999). Decibels are measured on a logarithmic scale that quantifies sound intensity in a manner similar to the Richter scale used to measure earthquake magnitudes. A doubling of the energy of a noise source, such as the doubling of vehicle traffic volumes, results in a noise level increase of 3 dB, whereas dividing the energy in half results in a 3 dB decrease (Crocker 2007). Figure 4.13-1 shows typical indoor and outdoor noise sources and their corresponding noise levels in dBA.

Human perception of noise has no simple correlation with sound energy, i.e., the perception of sound is not linear in terms of dBA or in terms of sound energy. Two sources, each containing the same sound energy, do not "sound twice as loud" as one source. It is widely accepted that the average healthy human ear can detect changes (either increases or decreases) of 3 dBA, which is recognized as being barely perceptible to most people. Similarly, a change of 5 dBA is readily perceptible and a change of 10 dBA sounds twice (or half) as loud (Crocker 2007).

Figure 4.13-1 Typical Noise Levels



The level and frequency content of sound changes as it travels from the source to a receiver. The most obvious change is the decrease in level as the distance from the source increases. The manner by which sound is reduced with distance depends on factors such as the type of source (e.g., a point or line source), the path the sound travels, site conditions, and the presence of intervening structures or other obstacles. Noise from a point source (e.g., construction equipment, industrial machinery, ventilation units) typically is reduced at a rate of 6 dBA per each doubling of distance away from the source. Noise from a line source (e.g., roadway, pipeline, railroad) typically is reduced at a rate of 3 dBA per each doubling of distance away from the source (Caltrans 2013). The propagation of noise is also affected by the absorption characteristics of the ground: a hard site, such as a parking lot or smooth body of water, provides no absorption/attenuation and the changes in noise levels with distance result simply from the geometric spreading of the source (i.e., 3 or 6 dBA reduction per doubling of distance for a point source or line source, respectively). Conversely, a soft site, such as soft dirt, grass, or scattered bushes and trees, may provide additional absorption/attenuation, potentially reducing noise levels an additional 1.5 dBA per doubling of distance away from the source (Caltrans 2013). Noise levels may also be reduced by intervening structures. The amount of reduction provided by the "shielding" of these features depends on the size of the structure/s, the location of the structure/s relative to the noise source and receivers, and the frequency content of the noise levels. Natural terrain features, such as hills and dense woods, and man-made features, such as buildings and walls, can significantly alter noise levels. Generally, any large structure blocking the line of sight between a noise source and receiver will provide at least a 5-dBA reduction in source noise levels at the receiver (Federal Highway Administration [FHWA] 2011). The presence of building structures can substantially reduce noise levels from the exterior to the interior as well. The FHWA's guidelines indicate that modern building construction generally provides an exterior-to-interior noise level reduction of 20 to 35 dBA with closed windows.

The impact of noise is not a function of loudness alone. The time of day at which noise occurs and the duration of the noise are also important factors when considering potential noise impacts. Most noise that lasts for more than a few seconds is variable in its amplitude, i.e., the noise level continuously fluctuates over time. Consequently, a variety of noise descriptors have been developed. One of the most frequently used noise metrics is the equivalent continuous sound level (L_{eq}), which considers both duration and the sound power level of the source. The L_{eq} is defined as the single steady A-weighted level equivalent to the same amount of energy as that contained in the actual fluctuating levels over time.

The sound level that is exceeded "n" percent of time during a given sample period in the percentile noise level (L_n). For example, the L_{50} level is the statistical indicator of the time-varying noise signal that is exceeded 50 percent of the time (during each sampling period); that is, half of the sampling time, the changing noise levels are above this value and half of the time they are below it. This is called the "median sound level." The L_{10} level, likewise, is the value that is exceeded 10 percent of the time (i.e., near the maximum) and this is often known as the "intrusive sound level." The L_{90} is the sound level exceeded 90 percent of the time and is often considered the "effective background level" or "residual noise level."

Noise that occurs at night tends to be more disturbing than that which occurs during the day. Community noise is usually measured using the Day-Night Average Level (L_{dn}), which is the 24-hour average noise level with a +10 dBA penalty for noise occurring during nighttime hours (10:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m.) hours. It is also measured using the Community Noise Equivalent Level (CNEL), which is the 24-hour average noise level with a +5 dBA penalty for noise occurring during evening hours (7:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.) and a +10 dBA penalty for noise occurring during nighttime hours (10:00

p.m. to 7:00 a.m.) (Caltrans 2013). Noise levels described by the L_{dn} and CNEL usually differ by about 1 dBA. The relationship between the peak-hour L_{eq} value and the L_{dn}/CNEL depends on the distribution of traffic during the day, evening, and night. Table 4.13-1 briefly defines measurement descriptors and other sound terminology used in this section.

Table 4.13-1 Sound Terminology

Term	Definition
Sound	A vibratory disturbance created by a vibrating object which, when transmitted by pressure waves through a medium such as air, can be detected by a receiving mechanism such as the human ear or a microphone.
Noise	Sound that is loud, unpleasant, unexpected, or otherwise undesirable.
Ambient Noise	The composite of noise from all sources near and far in a given environment.
Decibel (dB)	A unitless measure of sound on a logarithmic scale, which represents the squared ratio of sound-pressure amplitude to a reference sound pressure. The reference pressure is 20 micropascals, representing the threshold of human hearing (0 dB).
A-Weighted Decibel (dBA)	An overall frequency-weighted sound level that approximates the frequency response of the human ear.
Equivalent Noise Level (L_{eq})	The average sound energy occurring over a specified time period. In effect, L_{eq} is the steady-state sound level that in a stated period would contain the same acoustical energy as the time-varying sound that actually occurs during the same period.
Ambient Noise	The composite of noise from all sources near and far in a given environment.
Maximum and Minimum Noise Levels (L_{max} and L_{min})	The maximum or minimum instantaneous sound level measured during a measurement period.
Day-Night Level (L_{dn})	The energy average of the A-weighted sound levels occurring during a 24-hour period, with 10 dB added to the A-weighted sound levels occurring between 10:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m. (nighttime).
Community Noise Equivalent Level (CNEL)	The energy average of the A-weighted sound levels occurring during a 24-hour period, with 5 dB added to the A-weighted sound levels occurring between 7:00 p.m. and 10:00 p.m. and 10 dB added to the A-weighted sound levels occurring between 10:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m.

Source: Data compiled by Rincon in 2023.

b. Fundamentals of Vibration

Groundborne vibration of concern in environmental analysis consists of the oscillatory waves that move from a source through the ground to adjacent structures. The number of cycles per second of oscillation makes up the vibration frequency, described in terms of hertz (Hz). The frequency of a vibrating object describes how rapidly it oscillates. The normal frequency range of most groundborne vibration that can be felt by the human body is from a low of less than 1 Hz up to a high of about 200 Hz. Typically, groundborne vibration generated by human activities attenuates rapidly with distance from the source of the vibration.

While people have varying sensitivities to vibrations at different frequencies, in general they are most sensitive to low-frequency vibration. Vibration in buildings, such as that from nearby construction activities, may cause windows, items on shelves, and pictures on walls to rattle. Vibration of building components can also take the form of an audible low-frequency rumbling noise, referred to as groundborne noise. Groundborne noise is usually only a problem when the originating vibration spectrum is dominated by frequencies in the upper end of the range (60 to 200

Hz), or when foundations or utilities, such as sewer and water pipes, physically connect the structure and the vibration source (Federal Transit Administration [FTA] 2018).

Vibration energy spreads out as it travels through the ground, causing the vibration level to diminish with distance away from the source. High-frequency vibrations diminish much more rapidly than low frequencies, so low frequencies tend to dominate the spectrum at large distances from the source. Discontinuities in the soil strata can also cause diffractions or channeling effects that affect the propagation of vibration over long distances (Caltrans 2020). When a building is impacted by vibration, a ground-to-foundation coupling loss will usually reduce the overall vibration level. However, under rare circumstances, the ground-to-foundation coupling may amplify the vibration level due to structural resonances of the floors and walls.

Vibration amplitudes are usually expressed in terms of peak particle velocity (PPV). The PPV is normally described in inches per second (in/sec). PPV is defined as the maximum instantaneous positive or negative peak of a vibration signal. PPV is often used in monitoring of blasting vibration and other construction activity because it is related to the stresses that are experienced by buildings (Caltrans 2020). Assessment of vibrations from transportation and construction sources is typically done according to the impact criteria established in the FTA Transit Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment Manual (FTA 2018). These criteria outline limits at which potential minor architectural (i.e., non-structural) damage may occur to structures of various construction types and are shown in Table 4.13-2.

Table 4.13-2 FTA Vibration Impact Criteria for Potential Building Damage

Building Category	PPV (in/sec)
I. Reinforced concrete, steel, or timber (no plaster)	0.5
II. Engineered concrete and masonry (no plaster)	0.3
III. Nonengineered timber and masonry buildings	0.2
IV. Buildings extremely susceptible to vibration damage	0.12

PPV = peak particle velocity; in/sec = inches per second

Source: FTA 2018

c. Noise-Sensitive Land Uses

Noise exposure goals for various types of land uses reflect the varying noise sensitivities associated with those uses. Noise-sensitive land uses are typically those which may be adversely affected and/or disturbed by excessive levels of noise. Noise-sensitive land uses are generally defined as residential (single- and multi-family); transient lodging (hotels and motels); group homes, hospital and extended medical facilities; churches; schools and other learning institutions; and libraries. Existing noise-sensitive land uses within the City of Auburn include residences, hotels, motels, schools, libraries, places of worship, hospitals, and outdoor recreation areas.

d. Existing Noise Conditions and Sources

The existing noise environment in the city of Auburn is predominantly characterized by transportation sources such as vehicles, freight and passenger trains, and aircraft overflights. Vehicle noise affects large areas of the city along major transportation corridors, particularly communities near Interstate 80 (I-80) and State Route (SR) 49. In addition, freight trains traveling on the Union Pacific Railroad and passenger trains traveling on Amtrak's Capitol Corridor line generate noise at receptors in close proximity to the rail tracks. Aircraft overflights to and from the Auburn

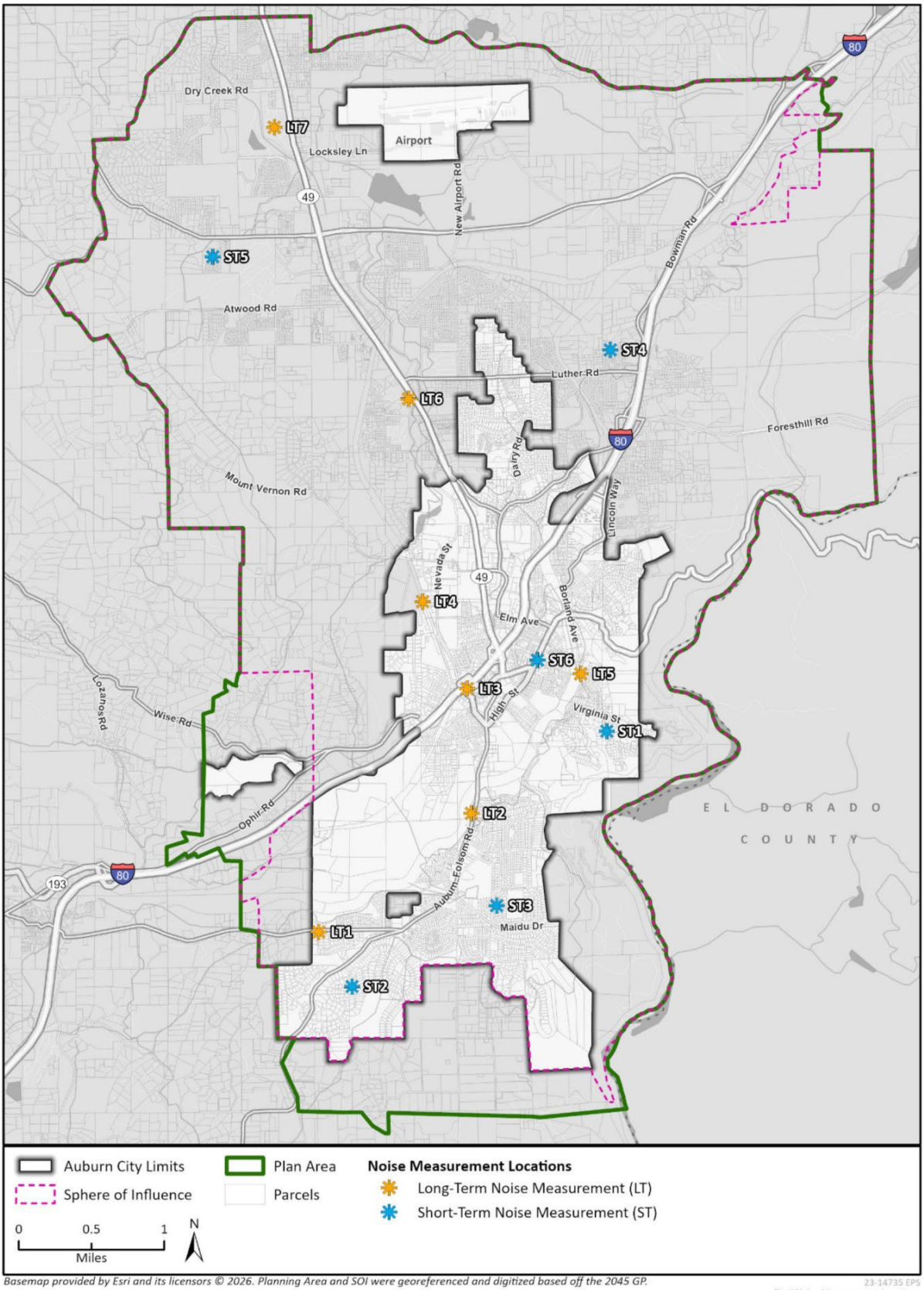
Municipal Airport, as well as aircraft on flight paths from other airports which may pass over the city, are another source of noise in the city. Noise levels produced by these sources combine and contribute to the City's noise environment; however, the highest levels of noise are produced by roadways throughout the city. There are no major industrial or military noise sources in the city; local business may generate moderate levels of noise through regular daily operations, machinery, deliveries, and similar activities.

In order to characterize the existing roadway noise environment throughout the city, ambient noise measurements were collected at various locations near major roadways throughout the city by Bollard Acoustical Consultants (measurement data included as Appendix H), which were then used to validate noise contours of roadways throughout the city.

Ambient Noise Measurements

To document existing ambient noise levels throughout the city, seven long-term (LT) and six short-term (ST) noise measurements were collected between August 21 and 30, 2024 by Bollard Acoustical Consultants (measurement data included as Appendix H). Noise measurements were collected using Larson Davis Models 820 and 830 American National Standards Institute (ANSI) Type 1 sound level meters and a Larson Davis SoundTrack LxT ANSI Type 2 sound level meter. Approximate noise measurement locations are shown in Figure 4.13-2. Each LT measurement consisted of an approximately seven-day continuous measurement, with noise levels collected every hour. Each ST measurement consisted of a morning (between 8:00 and 10:30 a.m.), evening (between 4:00 and 6:30 p.m.), and nighttime (between 10:00 and 11:30 p.m.) measurement. Each daytime and evening measurement duration was 15 minutes each, while each nighttime measurement duration was 5 minutes. Long-term and short-term noise measurement data are shown in Table 4.13-3 and Table 4.13-4, respectively.

Figure 4.13-2 Approximate Noise Measurement Locations



Basemap provided by Esri and its licensors © 2026. Planning Area and SOI were georeferenced and digitized based off the 2045 GP. Additional data provided by Placer County, 2023.

23-14735 EPS
Fig X Noise Measurement Locations

Table 4.13-3 Long-Term Noise Measurement Data

Measurement Location	Location Description	Measured Noise Level (dBA CNEL)							
Measurement Date		**Thursday, 8/22/2024**	**Friday, 8/23/2024**	**Saturday, 8/24/2024**	**Sunday, 8/252024**	**Monday, 8/26/2024**	**Tuesday, 8/27/2024**	**Wednesday, 8/28/2024**	**Thursday, 8/29/2024**
LT1	Along Indian Hill Road, approximately 0.5 miles west of intersection of Indian Hill Road and Auburn Folsom Road	63.8	62.5	62.5	61.0	62.9	62.7	62.6	62.8
LT2	Along Auburn Folsom Road, approximately 0.67 miles southeast of Interstate 80	--	--	69.4	74.2	74.5	76.8	77.4	70.2
LT3	Along Interstate 80, approximately 40 feet from Maple Street	77.8	77.5	78.5	75.4	77.0	77.0	76.6	76.6
LT5	Near Union Pacific Railroad, approximately 120 feet from tracks and 400 feet southeast of crossing under Brook Road	67.8	59.4	53.1	49.4	61.4	56.5	--	--
LT6	At the Animal Medical Center, approximately 100 feet west of State Route 49 centerline	65.9	66.1	66.1	64.9	67.8	66.7	68.3	--
LT7	At Rock Creek Mobile Home Park, approximately 600 feet west of State Route 49 centerline	53.3	52.0	51.9	52.8	52.9	53.5	--	--
Measurement Date		**Friday, 9/6/2024**	**Saturday, 9/7/2024**	**Sunday, 9/8/2024**	**Monday, 9/9/2024**	**Tuesday, 9/10/2024**			
LT4	Along portion of Union Pacific Railroad, approximately 85 feet from tracks and 0.2 miles northwest of at-grade crossing over Blocker Drive	77.6	76.3	76.0	75.6	76.4	--	--	--

dBA = A-weighted decibel; CNEL = Community Noise Equivalent Level

Source: Noise level measurements collected by Bollard Acoustical Consulting (2024). Full sound level measurement data are included in Appendix H.

Table 4.13-4 Short-Term Noise Measurement Data

Measurement Location	Location Description	Date	Time of Day	Sample Times	L_{eq} (dBA)	L_{min} (dBA)	L_{max} (dBA)	L_{10} (dBA)	L_{50} (dBA)	L_{90} (dBA)
ST1	Residence at 200 Placerado Avenue	Thursday, 8/29/2024	Morning	8:50 – 9:05 a.m.	46.7	35.8	64.4	49.2	41.0	37.8
			Evening	4:49 – 5:04 p.m.	48.4	33.5	69.9	46.8	37.7	35.0
			Nighttime	10:06 – 10:11 p.m.	32.8	29.9	45.5	34.7	32.2	30.8
ST2	Residence at 1485 Ridgeview Circle	Thursday, 8/29/2024	Morning	8:20 – 8:35 a.m.	44.8	38.5	62.9	46.2	42.7	40.4
			Evening	3:58 – 4:13 p.m.	48.1	32.6	64.8	50.5	41.4	35.9
			Nighttime	11:21 – 11:26 p.m.	36.1	27.7	44.1	38.4	36.1	30.2
ST3	Residence at 475 Perkins Way	Thursday, 8/29/2024	Morning	7:57 – 8:12 a.m.	48.1	38.7	71.8	46.7	43.0	40.9
			Evening	4:20 – 4:35 p.m.	45.6	37.4	63.2	45.3	42.4	39.9
			Nighttime	11:09 – 11:14 p.m.	41.5	29.1	59.2	35.6	32.4	30.2
ST4	Northeast of intersection of Channel Hill Lane and Channel Hill Road	Thursday, 8/29/2024	Morning	9:40 – 9:55 a.m.	41.3	34.6	55.3	43.9	37.8	36.1
			Evening	5:38 – 5:53 p.m.	48.4	37.6	64.8	51.9	41.9	38.9
			Nighttime	10:34 – 10:39 p.m.	44.8	42.6	51.9	46.0	44.6	43.5
ST5	Along Olympic Way, adjacent to Auburn Grace Community Church	Thursday, 8/29/2024	Morning	10:09 – 10:24 a.m.	55.9	45.9	78.5	53.5	47.4	46.5
			Evening	6:04 – 6:19 p.m.	48.3	43.4	64.8	48.1	45.7	43.9
			Nighttime	10:50 – 10:55 p.m.	45.7	42.9	50.8	47.1	45.4	44.0
ST6	Auburn Clock Tower	Thursday, 8/29/2024	Morning	9:13 – 9:28 a.m.	58.1	44.5	71.7	62.0	54.6	47.4
			Evening	5:11 – 5:26 p.m.	58.4	47.5	71.7	61.6	55.9	50.1
			Nighttime	10:19 – 10:24 p.m.	52.2	40.9	61.9	56.7	44.7	41.9

dBA = A-weighted decibel; L_{eq} = equivalent continuous sound level; L_{min} = minimum sound level; L_{max} = maximum sound level; L_{10} = sound level exceeded for 10% of the measurement period; L_{50} = sound level exceeded for 50% of the measurement period; L_{90} = sound level exceeded for 90% of the measurement period

Source: Noise measurements completed by Bollard Acoustical Consulting (2024). Detailed sound level measurement data are included in Appendix H.

Roadway Noise Contours

Roadways with the highest roadway vehicle volumes, speeds, and heavy truck volumes produce the highest noise levels. The roadways in Auburn with the highest roadway vehicle volumes and, thus, the highest noise levels, include I-80, SR 49, Bell Road, Foresthill Road, Elm Avenue, and Auburn Folsom Road. Traffic noise levels associated with roadways within the project study area were calculated using a version of the FHWA traffic noise prediction model (FHWA-RD-77-108), which takes into account average daily traffic (ADT) volumes, speeds, automobile and truck percentages, and time of day splits (daytime, evening, and nighttime) to determine the resulting roadway noise level using traffic data provided by Fehr & Peers (included as Appendix I). Table 4.13-5 presents existing ADT volumes and associated noise levels along roadways in the Planning Area. Detailed traffic noise calculations are included as Appendix H.

Table 4.13-5 Existing Roadway Vehicle Noise Levels Along Study Roadway Segments

Roadway	Segment	Existing ADT	Existing Roadway Vehicle Noise Level at 50 feet (dBA CNEL)
SR 49 (Grass Valley Hwy)	North of Bell Rd	43,043	79.0
SR 49 (Grass Valley Hwy)	Bell Rd to Willow Creek Dr	40,678	78.5
SR 49 (Grass Valley Hwy)	Willow Creek Dr to New Airport Rd	40,537	78.5
SR 49 (Grass Valley Hwy)	New Airport Rd to Luther Rd	48,731	79.2
SR 49 (Grass Valley Hwy)	Luther Rd to Edgewood Rd	44,375	78.9
SR 49 (Grass Valley Hwy)	Edgewood Rd to Nevada St	44,336	78.9
SR 49 (Grass Valley Hwy)	Nevada St to Palm Ave	37,093	78.4
SR 49 (Grass Valley Hwy)	Palm Ave to Elm Ave	35,251	78.3
SR 49 (Grass Valley Hwy)	Elm Ave to I-80	34,317	78.2
Grass Valley Hwy	I-80 to Lincoln Way	17,998	74.3
Locksley Ln/Earhart Ave	SR 49 to New Airport Rd	4,280	66.8
New Airport Road	Earhart Ave to Bell Rd	10,182	69.8
New Airport Road	Bell Rd to SR 49	3,369	62.8
Bell Road	West of SR 49	13,966	72.1
Bell Road	SR 49 to New Airport Rd	20,535	76.1
Bell Road	New Airport Rd to Bowman Rd	26,392	77.4
Bell Road	Bowman Rd to I-80	27,181	77.5
Luther Road	SR 49 to Dairy Rd	8,026	66.6
Luther Road	Dairy Rd to Bowman Rd	6,949	66.2
Bowman Road	North of Luther Rd	5,652	66.1
Bowman Road	Luther Rd to Auburn Ravine Rd	8,510	65.1
Lincoln Way	North of Foresthill Rd	9,621	67.7
Dairy Road	Luther Rd to Auburn Ravine Rd	3,297	60.5
Edgewood Road	West of SR 49	2,645	59.6
Marguerite Mine Road	SR 49 to Auburn Ravine Rd	2,779	61.9
Auburn Ravine Road	Dairy Rd to Bowman Rd	6,293	63.4

Roadway	Segment	Existing ADT	Existing Roadway Vehicle Noise Level at 50 feet (dBA CNEL)
Auburn Ravine Road	Bowman Rd to Lincoln Way	14,317	70.0
Foresthill Road	East of Lincoln Way	8,432	73.1
Auburn Ravine Road	Dairy Rd to Palm Ave	5,439	63.6
Auburn Ravine Road	Palm Ave to Elm Ave	6,631	64.6
Nevada Street	SR 49 to Palm Ave	4,746	64.0
Nevada Street	Palm Ave to Fulweiler Ave	10,653	66.6
Nevada Street	Fulweiler Ave to I-80	9,063	66.0
Mount Vernon Road	West of Nevada St	3,141	64.5
Palm Avenue	Nevada St to SR 49	3,255	60.8
Palm Avenue	SR 49 to Auburn Ravine Rd	4,652	62.4
Russell Road	West of Lincoln Way	2,884	59.9
Lincoln Way	North of Russell Rd	6,291	63.5
Lincoln Way	South of Russell Rd	5,606	62.9
Lincoln Way	North of SR 49	9,621	65.4
Fulweiler Avenue	Nevada St to SR 49	6,206	62.9
Elm Avenue	SR 49 to I-80	10,076	70.2
Elm Avenue (SR 49)	I-80 to High St	18,404	71.1
High St/El Dorado St (SR 49)	Elm Ave to Borland Ave	13,434	69.9
High Street	Elm Ave to Lincoln Way	5,880	62.7
Lincoln Way	High St to Elm Ave	1,724	57.3
Maple Street	I-80 to Lincoln Way/Auburn Folsom Rd	6,789	63.6
Lincoln Way	Auburn Folsom Rd to Grass Valley Hwy	13,950	66.9
Lincoln Way	Grass Valley Hwy to High St	8,046	64.0
High Street	Lincoln Way to College Way	5,124	62.1
High Street	Auburn Folsom Rd to College Way	5,008	62.3
Auburn Folsom Road	Lincoln Way to High St	16,375	70.2
Auburn Folsom Road	High St to Sacramento St	18,678	70.8
Auburn Folsom Road	Sacramento St to Pacific Ave.	13,634	69.3
Auburn Folsom Road	Pacific Ave to Maidu Dr	13,049	69.2
Auburn Folsom Road	Maidu Dr to Indian Hill Rd	11,906	68.8
Auburn Folsom Road	South of Indian Hill Rd	8,059	68.2
Ophir Road	West of Wise Rd	2,611	64.9
Ophir Road	Wise Rd to I-80	3,567	66.2
Sacramento Street	Lincoln Way to Auburn Folsom Rd	2,126	58.7
Sacramento Street	Auburn Folsom Rd to Pacific Ave	3,110	60.6
Sacramento Street	Pacific Ave to Auburn Folsom Rd	2,957	60.1
Pacific Avenue	East of Sacramento St	1,446	56.8
Maidu Drive	East of Auburn Folsom Rd	5,785	66.3

Roadway	Segment	Existing ADT	Existing Roadway Vehicle Noise Level at 50 feet (dBA CNEL)
Indian Hill Road	West of Auburn Folsom Rd	6,285	68.0
I-80 Eastbound	East of Bell Rd	24,827	78.6
I-80 Westbound	East of Bell Rd	25,293	78.7
I-80 Eastbound	At Auburn Ravine Rd/Foresthill Rd	26,726	78.9
I-80 Westbound	At Auburn Ravine Rd/Foresthill Rd	26,260	78.9
I-80 Eastbound	West of Ophir Rd	34,070	80.0
I-80 Westbound	West of Ophir Rd	39,157	80.6

ADT = average daily traffic; dBA = A-weighted decibel; CNEL = Community Noise Equivalent Level

Source: Roadway ADT data provided by Fehr & Peers in 2024 (included as Appendix I). Rincon calculated roadway vehicle noise levels using the FHWA traffic noise prediction model methodology (calculations included as Appendix H).

Figure 4.13-3 shows the existing 60, 65, and 70 dBA CNEL noise contours[1] associated with major roadways and highways in the Planning Area.

Railroad Noise Levels

Portions of the Union Pacific Railroad run through the city limits and generate noise at receptors located along the railroad tracks. Based on long-term noise measurement data collected near portions of the Union Pacific Railroad (i.e., noise measurement locations LT4 and LT5), distances to noise contours associated with these portions of the Union Pacific Railroad were estimated based on the assumption that noise propagation from the railroad would be characteristic of a "line" source of noise, which decreases at a rate of 3 dBA per doubling of distance away from the source.

Over the measurement period, the maximum noise level measured at LT4 (situated approximately 85 feet from the tracks of the westernmost railroad segment relative to the City limits) was 68 dBA CNEL, while the maximum noise level measured at LT5 (situated approximately 120 feet from the tracks of the easternmost segment relative to the City limits) was 78 dBA CNEL. Estimated distances to railroad noise contours are presented in Table 4.13-6.

Table 4.13-6 Estimated Railroad Noise Levels

Measurement Location	Railroad Segment	Maximum Measured Noise Level (dBA CNEL)[1]	Distance from Tracks (feet)	Approximate Distance to Railroad Noise Contour (feet)		
				60 dBA CNEL	65 dBA CNEL	70 dBA CNEL
LT4	Westernmost segment (relative to City limits)	78	85	5,400	1,700	540
LT5	Easternmost segment (relative to City limits)	68	120	750	240	75

dBA = A-weighted decibel; CNEL = Community Noise Equivalent Level

[1] Source: Bollard Acoustical Consulting 2024; Appendix H

[1] Noise contours are lines drawn about a noise source, such as roadways, highways, or airports, indicating levels of noise exposure generated by the noise source.

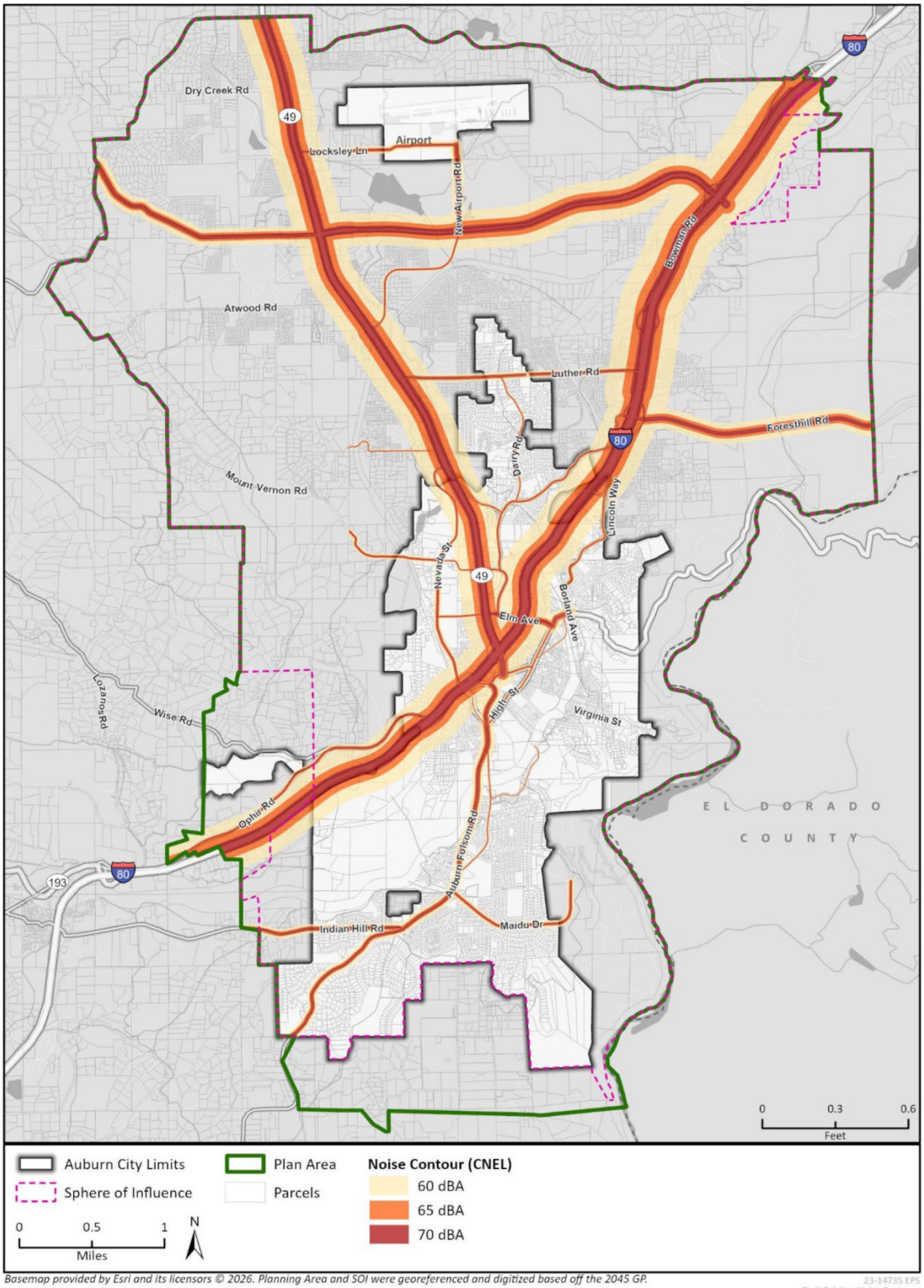
Airport Noise Levels

The Auburn Municipal Airport is located at the northern portion of the city, situated approximately one mile east of the centerline of SR 49 and 0.8 mile north of the centerline of Bell Road. Aircraft operations to and from this airport generate noise upon receptors located near the airport and along the flight path. Forecasted 55, 60, and 65 dBA CNEL noise contours for the year 2039 established as part of the Placer County Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan (Placer County Transportation Planning Agency 2025) are shown in Figure 4.13-4.

e. Vibration Sources

Sources of vibration in the city, similar to those contributing to the noise environment, are also primarily motor vehicles along roadways. Heavy truck traffic and bus operations on roadways generate groundborne vibration, which varies depending on vehicle type, weight, and pavement conditions. In addition, commercial or industrial activities may generate vibration from the use of heavy equipment. More permanent, but intermittent, vibration may also be generated by railroad and airport operations, which would affect communities adjacent to these facilities. Vibration may also be generated by construction equipment (e.g., earth-moving equipment and pile driving); however, these sources are temporary and vary on a project-by-project basis.

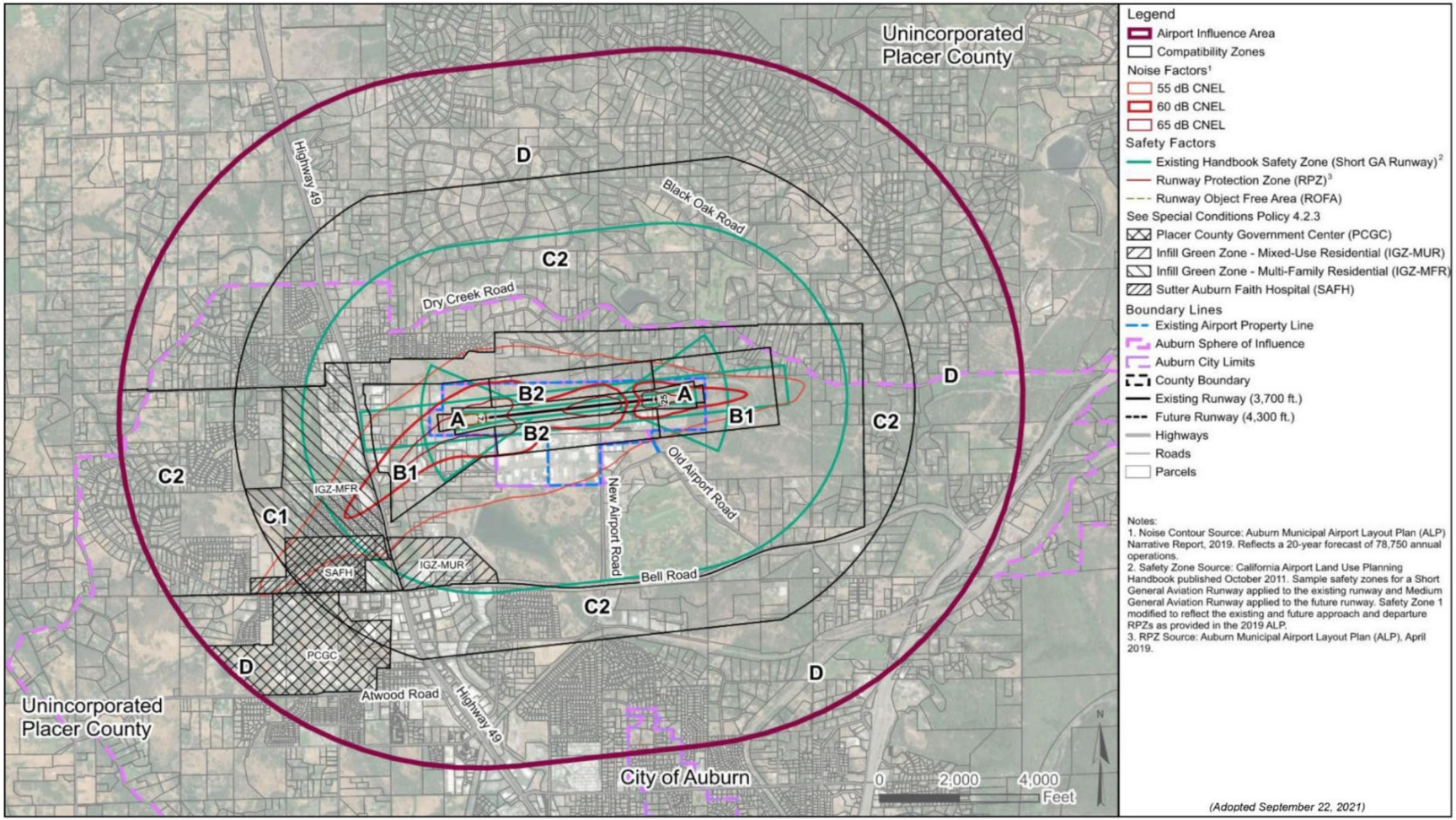
Figure 4.13-3 Existing Roadway Noise Contours



Basemap provided by Esri and its licensors © 2026. Planning Area and SOI were georeferenced and digitized based off the 2045 GP.
Additional data provided by Placer County, 2023.

23-14735 EPS
Fig X Existing Noise Contours

Figure 4.13-4 Auburn Municipal Airport Noise Contours



: Mead & Hunt, Inc., 4.2026.

4.13.2 Regulatory Setting

a. Federal Regulations

United States Department of Housing and Urban Development

The United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) has set exterior and interior noise goals in Title 24 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 51. HUD specifies desirable maximum exterior and interior noise standards of 65 and 45 dBA L_{dn}, respectively, for residential units developed under HUD funding. These levels are also generally accepted by the State of California. It is assumed that standard construction of residential dwellings typically provides a minimum exterior-to-interior noise reduction of 20 dBA with the windows closed.

Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970

Under the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) has adopted regulations designed to protect workers against the effects of occupational noise exposure. These regulations list permissible noise level exposure as a function of the amount of time during which the worker is exposed. The regulations further specify a hearing conservation program that involves monitoring noise to which workers are exposed, ensuring that workers are made aware of overexposure to noise, and periodically testing the workers' hearing to detect any degradation.

Aircraft Noise Standards

The Federal Aviation Administration Advisory Circular Number 150 5020 2, "Noise Assessment Guidelines for New Helicopters," recommends the use of a cumulative noise measure, the 24-hour equivalent sound level, or $L_{eq}(24)$, so that the relative contributions of the heliport and other sound sources in the community can be compared. The $L_{eq}(24)$ is similar to the L_{dn} used in assessing the impacts of fixed-wing aircraft. The helicopter $L_{eq}(24)$ values are obtained by logarithmically adding the sound exposure level values over a 24-hour period.

Public Law 96 193 also directs the Federal Aviation Administration to identify land uses that are "normally compatible" with various levels of noise from aircraft operations. Because of the size and complexity of many major hub airports and their operations, Federal Aviation Regulation Part 150 identifies a large number of land uses and their attendant noise levels.

b. State Regulations

California General Plan Guidelines

State law requires general plans to include a Noise Element under Government Code Section 65302(f). The California General Plan Guidelines, published by the Governor's Office of Planning and Research, indicate acceptable, specific land use types in areas with specific noise exposure. The guidelines also offer adjustment factors that may be used to arrive at noise acceptability standards that reflect the noise control goals of the community, the community's sensitivity to noise, and the community's assessment of the relative importance of noise pollution. These guidelines are advisory, and local jurisdictions have the authority to set specific noise standards based on local conditions.

California Building Code

California Code of Regulations Title 24, Building Standards Administrative Code, Part 2, Chapter 12, and the California Building Code codify the State noise insulation standards. These noise standards apply to new construction in California to control interior noise levels as they are affected by exterior noise sources and interior noise sources from separate areas. The regulations specify that interior noise levels shall not exceed 45 dB CNEL/L_{dn} in any habitable room, as well as specifying sound transmission class requirements for walls, floors, and ceilings around sleeping units.

California Green Building Code

California Green Building Standards Code 2025 (CALGreen) Section 5.507.4, Acoustical Control, regulates construction of non-residential uses within the 65 dBA CNEL/L_{dn} contour of an airport, freeway, expressway, railroad, industrial noise source, or other fixed source. According to Section 5.507.4.1.1 "buildings exposed to a noise level of 65 dB L_{eq}(1-hr) during any hour of operation shall employ sound-resistant assemblies as determined by a prescriptive method (CALGreen Section 5.507.4.1) or performance method (CALGreen Section 5.507.4.2).

Projects may demonstrate compliance through the prescriptive method if wall and roof-ceiling assemblies exposed to the noise source meet a composite sound transmission class (STC) rating of at least 50 or a composite outdoor/indoor transmission class (OITC) rating of no less than 40, with exterior windows of a minimum STC of 40 or OITC of 30. Projects may demonstrate compliance through the performance method if wall and roof-ceiling assemblies exposed to the noise source are constructed to provide an interior noise environment that does not exceed 50 dB L_{eq}(1-hr) in occupied areas during hours of operations.

Airport Noise Standards

California Code of Regulations Title 21, Subchapter 6, Airport Noise Standards, establishes 65 dBA CNEL as the acceptable level of aircraft noise for persons living in the vicinity of airports. Noise-sensitive land uses in locations where the aircraft exterior noise level exceeds 65 dBA CNEL are generally incompatible, unless an aviation easement for aircraft noise has been acquired by the airport proprietor, or the residence is a high-rise with an interior CNEL of 45 dBA or less in all habitable rooms and an air circulation or air conditioning system, as appropriate. Assembly Bill (AB) 2776 requires any person who intends to sell or lease residential properties in an airport influence area to disclose that fact to the person buying the property.

c. Local Regulations

Auburn Municipal Code

Chapter 93 of the City of Auburn Municipal Code (AMC) contains regulations pertaining to loud and unusual noises with the intent of securing and promoting the public health, comfort, convenience, safety, welfare, prosperity, peace, and quiet of the City and its inhabitants. Section 93.09 of the AMC declares the following acts as loud, disturbing, and unnecessary noises that are considered unlawful violations of the AMC:

- The sounding of any horn or signaling device on any automobile, motorcycle, streetcar or other vehicle on any street or public place of the city, except as a danger warning.
- The using, operating, or permitting to be played, used, or operated of any radio receiving set, musical instrument, phonograph or other machine or device for the producing or reproducing of

sound with louder volume than is necessary for convenient hearing for the persons who are in the room, vehicle or chamber in which the machine or device is operated.

- The using, operating or permitting to be played, used or operated of any radio receiving set, musical instrument, phonograph, loudspeaker, sound amplifier or other machine or device for the producing or reproducing of sound which is cast upon the public streets.
- Yelling, shouting, hooting, whistling or singing on the public streets, particularly between the hours of 11:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m.
- The keeping of any animal or bird which, by causing frequent or long continued noise, shall disturb the comfort or repose of any persons in the vicinity.
- The blowing of any locomotive steam whistle or steam whistle attached to any stationary boiler.
- The discharge into the open air of the exhaust of any steam engine, stationary internal combustion engine, motor boat or motor vehiclewithout a muffler or similar device.
- The use of any automobile, motorcycle or vehicle so out of repair, so loaded or in a manner as to create loud and unnecessary grating, grinding, rattling or other noise.
- The creation of a loud and excessive noise in connection with the loading or unloading of any vehicle or the opening and destruction of bales, boxes, crates and containers.
    - Construction or repair of buildings, except during the following hours:
        - Monday through Friday: 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. For the period of June 1 through September 30 of each year the permissible hours for masonry and roofing work hereunder shall be from 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.
        - Saturdays: 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
        - Sundays and observed holidays: 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.
    - Any noise from the above activities, including from any equipment used therewith, shall not produce noise levels in excess of the following:
        - Saturdays: 80 dBA when measured at a distance of 25 feet
        - Sundays and observed holidays: 70 dBA when measured at a distance of 25 feet.
- The creation of any excessive noise on any street adjacent to any school, institution of learning, church or court while they are in use.
- The shouting and crying of peddlers, hawkers and vendors.
- The use of any drum or other instrument or device for the purpose of attracting attention to any performance, show, or sale by the creation of noise.
- The transportation of rails, pillars or columns of iron, steel or other materials over and along the streets and other public places upon carts, drays, cars or trucks or in any other manner.
- The operation between the hours of 10:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m. of any pile driver, steam shovel, pneumatic hammer, derrick, steam or electric hoist or other appliance the use of which is attended by loud or unusual noise.
- The operation without a muffler of any noise-creating blower or power fan or any internal combustion engine the operation of which causes noise due to the explosion of operating gases or fluids.

City of Auburn General Plan 1993

The City of Auburn General Plan was adopted in 1993 and goals, policies, and programs that are relevant to noise are included primarily within the Noise Element. The Noise Element aims to limit the exposure of the community to excessive noise levels by guiding decisions concerning land use and location of new roads and transportation facilities. The City's land use compatibility standards in terms of CNEL/L_{dn} for new development are summarized in Table 4.13-7. The standards shown in Table 4.13-7 provide planners with a tool to gauge the compatibility of land uses relative to existing and future noise levels. The City's exterior noise standards for non-transportation (i.e., stationary noise sources) are shown in Table 4.13-8.

Table 4.13-7 Land Use Compatibility Guidelines for Development

Land Use Category	Community Noise Exposure (CNEL or L_{dn}, dBA)		
	Acceptable[1]	Conditionally Acceptable[2]	Unacceptable[3]
Residential, Theaters, Auditoriums, Music Halls, Meeting Halls, Churches	<60	60–70	>70
Transient Lodging – Motels, Hotels	<60	60–75	>75
Schools, Libraries, Museums, Hospitals, Nursing Homes	<60	60–75	>75
Playgrounds, Neighborhood Parks	<70	70–75	>75
Office Buildings, Retail Commercial	<65	65–75	>75

[1] Acceptable = Specified land use is satisfactory. No noise mitigation measures are required.

[2] Conditionally Acceptable = Use should be permitted only after careful study and inclusion of protective measures as needed to satisfy the policies of the Noise Element.

[3] Unacceptable = Development is usually not feasible in accordance with the goals of the Noise Element.

Source: Land Use Compatibility Guidelines for Development table of City of Auburn General Plan Noise Element (City of Auburn 1993).

Table 4.13-8 Noise Level Performance Standards for New Projects Affected by or Including Non-Transportation Sources

Noise Level Descriptor	Daytime (7:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.)	Nighttime (10:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m.)
Hourly L_{eq} (dB)	50	45
Maximum Level (dB)	70	60

[1] Each of the noise levels specified above shall be lowered by five dB for simple tone noises, noises consisting primarily of speech or music, or for recurring impulsive noises. These noise level standards do not apply to residential units established in conjunction with industrial or commercial uses (e.g., caretaker dwellings).

Source: Table VIII-1 of City of Auburn General Plan Noise Element (City of Auburn 1993).

Placer County Code

Chapter 9, Article 9.36 of the Placer County Code contains regulations to prohibit unnecessary, excessive, and offensive sounds generated within the County. Section 9.36.060 states it is unlawful for any person at any location to create any sound, or to allow the creation of any sound, on property owned, leased, occupied or otherwise controlled by such person that:

1. Causes the exterior sound level when measured at the property line of any affected sensitive receptor to exceed the ambient sound level by five dBA; or
2. Exceeds the sound level standards as set forth in [Table 4.13-9], whichever is the greater.

Table 4.13-9 Placer County Code Sound Level Standards

Sound Level Descriptor	Daytime (7:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.)	Nighttime (10:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m.)
Hourly L_{eq}, dB	55	45
Maximum Level, (L_{max}) dB	70	65

[1] Each of the sound level standards specified herein shall be reduced by five dB for simple tone noises, consisting of speech and music. However, in no case shall the sound level standard be lower than the ambient sound level plus five dB.

Source: Chapter 9, Article 9.36, Section 9.36.060(A), Table 1 of the Placer County Code.

Section 9.36.030(A) of the Placer County Code contains an exemption for noise produced during construction, stating that sound or noise emanating from construction (e.g., construction, alteration, or repair activities) between the hours of 6:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m. Monday through Friday, and between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m. Saturday and Sunday is exempt from the noise regulations established in the County Code provided that all construction equipment shall be fitted with factory installed muffling devices and that all construction equipment shall be maintained in good working order.

Placer County General Plan

The Placer County General Plan was adopted in 1994 and updated in May 2013. The County's General Plan includes goals and policies that address noise generated in the County. Applicable goals and policies contained within the County's General Plan are as follows:

Policy 1.E.1 The County shall only approve new industrial development that has the following characteristics:

a. Adequate infrastructure and services;
b. Convenient connections to the regional transportation network, including connections to existing transit and other non-automobile transportation;
c. Sufficient buffering from residential areas to avoid impacts associated with noise, odors and the potential release of hazardous materials;
d. Minimal significant adverse environmental impacts; and,
e. Minimal adverse effects on scenic routes, recreation areas, and public vistas.

Goal 9.A: To protect County residents from the harmful and annoying effects of exposure to excessive noise.

Policy 9.A.1 New development of noise-sensitive uses shall not be permitted where the noise level due to non-transportation noise sources will exceed the noise level standards of [Table 4.13-10] as measured immediately within the property line of the new development, unless effective noise mitigation measures have been incorporated into the development design to achieve the standards specified in [Table 4.13-10].

Table 4.13-10 Placer County Allowable Noise Levels (New Projects Affected by or Including Non-Transportation Noise Sources)

Zone District of Receptor	Allowable Noise Level (dBA L_{dn})	
	Property Line of Receiving Use	Interior Spaces[1]
Residential Adjacent to Industrial	60	45
Other Residential	50	45
Office/Professional, Neighborhood Commercial, General Commercial, Shopping Center	70	45
Transient Lodging	65	45
Heavy Commercial, Limited Industrial, Highway Service, Industrial Park	75	45
Industrial, Airport	--	45
Industrial Reserve, Unclassified, Forestry, Timberland Preserve, Open Space, Mineral Reserve	--	--
Farm, Agriculture Exclusive	See Footnote 2	--
Recreation and Forestry	70	--

Notes:

- Except where noted otherwise, noise exposures will be those which occur at the property line of the receiving use.
- Where existing transportation noise levels exceed the standards of this table, the allowable L_{dn} shall be raised to the same level as that of the ambient level.
- If the noise source generated by, or affecting, the uses shown above consists primarily of speech or music, of if the noise source is impulsive in nature, the noise standards shown above shall be decreased by 5 dB.

Footnotes:

1 Interior spaces are defined as any locations where some degree of noise-sensitivity exists. Examples include all habitable rooms of residences, and areas where communication and speech intelligibility are essential, such as classrooms and offices.

2 Normally, agricultural uses are noise insensitive and will be treated in this way. However, conflicts with agricultural noise emissions can occur where single-family residences exist within agricultural zone districts. Therefore, where effects of agricultural noise upon residences located in these agricultural zones is a concern, an L_{dn} of 70 dBA will be considered acceptable outdoor exposure at a residence.

Source: Table 9-1 of Placer County General Plan Noise Element (Placer County 1994).

Policy 9.A.2 Noise created by new proposed non-transportation noise sources shall be mitigated so as not to exceed the noise level standards of [Table 4.13-10] as measured immediately within the property line of lands designated for noise-sensitive uses: provided, however, the noise created by occasional events occurring within a stadium on land zoned for university purposes may temporarily exceed these standards as provided in an approved Specific Plan.

Policy 9.A.3 The County shall continue to enforce the State Noise Insulation Standards (California Code of Regulations, Title 24) of the California Building Code and Placer County Code Article 9.36, Noise.

Policy 9.A.4 Impulsive noise produced by blasting should not be subject to the criteria listed in [Table 4.13-10]. Single event impulsive noise levels produced by gunshots or blasting shall not exceed a peak linear overpressure of 122 dB, or a C-weighted Sound Exposure Level (SEL) of 98 dBC. The cumulative noise level from impulsive sounds such as gunshots and blasting shall not exceed 60 dB L_{Cdn} or $CNEL_C$ on any given day. These standards shall be applied at the property line of a receiving land use.

Policy 9.A.5 Where proposed non-residential land uses are likely to produce noise levels exceeding the performance standards of [Table 4.13-10] at existing or planned noise-sensitive uses, the County shall require submission of an acoustical analysis as part of the environmental review process so that noise mitigation may be included in the project design. The requirements for the content of an acoustical analysis are listed in [Table 4.13-11].

Table 4.13-11 Placer County Requirements for an Acoustical Analysis

An acoustical analysis prepared pursuant to Policy 9.A.5 shall:
1. Be the responsibility of the applicant.
2. Be prepared by a qualified person experienced in the fields of environmental noise assessment and architectural acoustics.
3. Include representative noise level measurements with sufficient sampling periods and locations to adequately describe local conditions and the predominant noise sources.
4. Estimate existing and projected cumulative (20 years) noise levels in terms of L_{dn} or CNEL and/or the standards of [Table 4.13-10], and compare those levels to the policies in this section. Noise prediction methodology must be consistent with the Placer County Acoustical Design Manual.
5. Recommend appropriate mitigation to achieve compliance with the policies and standards of this section, giving preference to proper site planning and design over mitigation measures which require the construction of noise barriers or structural modifications to buildings which contain noise-sensitive land uses. Where the noise source in question consists of intermittent single events, the report must address the effects of maximum noise levels in sleeping rooms in terms of possible sleep disturbance.
6. Estimate noise exposure after the prescribed mitigation measures have been implemented.
7. Describe a post-project assessment program which could be used to evaluate the effectiveness of the proposed mitigation measures.

Source: Table 9-2 of Placer County General Plan Noise Element (Placer County 1994).

Policy 9.A.6 The feasibility of proposed projects with respect to existing and future transportation noise levels shall be evaluated by comparison to [Table 4.13-12].

Policy 9.A.8 New development of noise-sensitive land uses shall not be permitted in areas exposed to existing or projected levels of noise from transportation noise sources, including airports, which exceed the levels specified in [Table 4.13-12] unless the project design includes effective mitigation measures to reduce noise in outdoor activity areas and interior spaces to the levels specified in [Table 4.13-12].

Policy 9.A.9 Noise created by new transportation noise sources, including roadway improvement projects, shall be mitigated so as not to exceed the levels specified in [Table 4.13-12] or the performance standards in [Table 4.13-12] at outdoor activity areas or interior spaces of existing noise sensitive land uses.

Table 4.13-12 Placer County Maximum Allowable Noise Exposure (Transportation Noise Sources)

	Outdoor Activity Areas[1]	Interior Spaces	
Noise Sensitive Land Uses	L_{dn}/CNEL, dB	L_{dn}/CNEL, dB	L_{eq}, dB[2]
Residential, Transient Lodging, Hospitals, Nursing Homes	60[3]	45	--
Theaters, Auditoriums, Music Halls	--	--	35
Churches, Meeting Halls	60[3]	--	40
Office Buildings, Schools, Libraries, Museums	--	--	45

Noise Sensitive Land Uses	Outdoor Activity Areas[1]	Interior Spaces	
	L_{dn}/CNEL, dB	L_{dn}/CNEL, dB	L_{eq}, dB[2]
Playgrounds, Neighborhood Parks	70	--	--

[1] Where the location of outdoor activity areas is unknown, the exterior noise level standard shall be applied to the property line of the receiving land use

[2] As determined for a typical worst-case hour during periods of use.

[3] Where it is not possible to reduce noise in outdoor activity areas to 60 dB L_{dn}/CNEL or less using a practical application of the best-available noise reduction measures, an exterior noise level of up to 65 dB L_{dn}/CNEL may be allowed provided that available exterior noise level reduction measures have been implemented and interior noise levels are in compliance with this table.

Source: Placer County General Plan Noise Element, Table 9-3 (Placer County 1994).

Policy 9.A.10 Where noise-sensitive land uses are proposed in areas exposed to existing or projected exterior noise levels exceeding the levels specified in [Table 4.13-12] or the performance standards of [Table 4.13-10], the County shall require submission of an acoustical analysis as part of the environmental review process so that noise mitigation may be included in the project design. At the discretion of the County, the requirement for an acoustical analysis may be waived provided that all of the following conditions are satisfied:

a. The development is for less than five single-family dwellings or less than 10,000 square feet of total gross floor area for office buildings, churches, or meeting halls;

b. The noise source in question consists of a single roadway or railroad for which up-to-date noise exposure information is available. An acoustical analysis will be required when the noise source in question is a stationary noise source or airport, or when the noise source consists of multiple transportation noise sources;

c. The existing or projected future noise exposure at the exterior of buildings which will contain noise-sensitive uses or within proposed outdoor activity areas (other than outdoor sports and recreation areas) does not exceed 65 dB L_{dn} (or CNEL) prior to mitigation. For outdoor sports and recreation areas, the existing or projected future noise exposure may not exceed 75 dB L_{dn} (or CNEL) prior to mitigation;

d. The topography in the project area is essentially flat; that is, noise source and receiving land use are at the same grade; and

e. Effective noise mitigation, as determined by the County, is incorporated into the project design to reduce noise exposure to the levels specified in [Table 4.13-10] or [Table 4.13-12]. Such measures may include the use of building setbacks, building orientation, noise barriers, and the standard noise mitigations contained in the Placer County Acoustical Design Manual. If closed windows are required for compliance with interior noise level standards, air conditioning or a mechanical ventilation system will be required.

Policy 9.A.11 The County shall require one or more of the following mitigation measures where existing noise levels significantly impact existing noise-sensitive land uses, or where the cumulative increase in noise levels resulting from new development significantly impacts noise-sensitive land uses:

a. Rerouting traffic onto streets that have available traffic capacity and that do not adjoin noise-sensitive land uses;
b. Lowering speed limits, if feasible and practical;
c. Programs to pay for noise mitigation such as low cost loans to owners of noise-impacted property or establishment of developer fees;
d. Acoustical treatment of buildings; or,
e. Construction of noise barriers.

Policy 9.A.12 Where noise mitigation measures are required to achieve the standards of [Table 4.13-10] and [Table 4.13-12], the emphasis of such measures shall be placed upon site planning and project design. The use of noise barriers shall be considered as a means of achieving the noise standards only after all other practical design-related noise mitigation measures have been integrated into the project.

Goal 9.B: To ensure that areas designated for industrial uses pursuant to Goal 1.E. and Policy 1.E.1. are protected from encroachment by noise-sensitive land uses.

Policy 9.B.1 The County shall require that new noise-sensitive land uses established next to existing industrial areas be responsible for self-mitigating noise impacts from industrial activities.

Policy 9.B.2 The County shall apply noise standards in a manner consistent with encouraging the retention, expansion, and development of new businesses pursuant to Goal 1.N. and Policy 1.N.2.

Policy 9.B.2 Because many industrial activities and processes necessarily produce noise which will likely be objectionable to nearby non-industrial land uses, existing and potential future industrial noise emissions shall be accommodated in all land use decisions.

4.13.3 Impact Analysis

a. Significance Thresholds and Methodology

Significance Thresholds

Based on Appendix G of the *CEQA Guidelines* a project may be deemed to have a significant impact on noise if it would:

1. Generate a substantial temporary or permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the project in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies;
2. Generate excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels; or
3. For a project located within the vicinity of a private airstrip or an airport or public use airport, expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels.

Construction Noise

Section 93.09 of the AMC only permits construction activities to occur between 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. on Mondays through Fridays, between 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. on Saturdays, and between 10:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. on Sundays and observed holidays. Furthermore, Section 93.09(J) of the AMC states that any noise produced by construction activities occurring on Saturdays shall not exceed 80 dBA when measured at a distance of 25 feet away and activities occurring on Sundays or observed holidays shall not exceed 70 dBA when measured at a distance of 25 feet away. Significant construction noise impacts would occur if construction activities were to be conducted outside of the City's allowable hours and/or generate noise levels exceeding the specified noise levels for activities occurring on weekends and holidays.

The City has not established a noise level threshold for assessing construction noise impacts during weekdays, therefore noise limits established by the FTA in the *Transit Noise and Vibration Assessment Manual* were used. For construction activities occurring on weekdays (i.e., Mondays through Fridays), significant construction noise impacts would occur if daytime construction noise levels were to exceed 80 dBA L_{eq} (8-hour) at residential land uses.

Operational Noise

OPERATIONAL STATIONARY NOISE

The City's existing General Plan contains exterior noise standards applicable to new proposed stationary operational noise sources, presented in Table 4.13-8. Development facilitated by the project would result in a significant impact if it would introduce new stationary noise sources that would generate noise levels exceeding the limits shown in Table 4.13-8.

TRAFFIC NOISE

A project would normally have a significant effect on the environment related to noise if its implementation would substantially increase the ambient noise levels above a certain threshold for adjoining areas (i.e., cause a noise level increase due to an increased number of project-related vehicle trips on surrounding roadways). The City does not have established quantitative thresholds for evaluating noise impacts resulting from traffic increases; however, the proposed project includes the following draft policy from the proposed General Plan Noise Element, which specifies performance standards related to increases in ambient noise levels:

Policy.N-1.2: Limiting Noise-Increases. Use the following performance standards to limit the impacts of new projects on ambient noise levels:

New development shall not increase noise levels by more than 3 dB L_{dn} in predominantly residential areas, or by more than 5 dB L_{dn} in predominantly non-residential areas.

Land Use Compatibility

The City's General Plan establishes acceptable noise levels for various land uses, which are presented in Table 4.13-7. Noise impacts related to land use compatibility would be significant if new development facilitated by the project were to be exposed to ambient noise levels exceeding the respective noise compatibility standard for that land use, shown in Table 4.13-7.

Groundborne Vibration

The City does not specify quantitative vibration thresholds; therefore, the limits recommended by the FTA in the *Transit Noise and Vibration Assessment Manual* were used to determine whether development associated with buildout of the proposed General Plan would result in significant vibration impacts. These vibration limits represent thresholds at which minor architectural (i.e., non-structural) damage may occur to buildings of various construction types. Based on FTA thresholds, significant vibration impacts would occur if fragile/historic building structures were to be exposed to vibration levels exceeding 0.12 in/sec PPV, residential building structures were to be exposed to vibration levels exceeding 0.2 in/sec PPV, and/or commercial/engineered building structures were to be exposed to vibration levels exceeding 0.3 in/sec PPV.

Airport Noise

Exposure to airport noise would be considered significant if new noise-sensitive uses facilitated by the proposed project would be located within the noise contours of the Auburn Municipal Airport identified in the Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan, shown in Figure 4.13-4 (Placer County Transportation Planning Agency 2025) and expose noise-sensitive uses to noise levels exceeding the applicable "Conditionally Acceptable" land use compatibility guidelines presented in Table 4.13-7.

Methodology

The following sections describe the methodology used to evaluate the significance of potential noise and vibration impacts during construction and operation of the proposed project.

Construction Noise

Construction of development facilitated by the project would generate temporary levels of increased noise at receptors located near construction sites. Construction equipment can be considered to operate in two modes: stationary and mobile. Stationary equipment operates in a single location for one or more days at a time, with either fixed-power operation (e.g., pumps, generators, and compressors) or variable-power operation (e.g., pile drivers, rock drills, and pavement breakers). Mobile equipment moves around a construction site with power applied in cyclic fashion, such as bulldozers, graders, and loaders. Each phase of construction has its own noise characteristics due to specific equipment mixes; some will have higher continuous noise levels while others may have intermittent, higher instantaneous noise levels. Therefore, construction noise levels may fluctuate depending on the type of equipment being used, construction phase, and/or equipment location. Typically, grading activities generate the highest noise levels because grading involves the largest equipment and covers the greatest area.

Variation in power imposes difficulty in characterizing the noise source level from construction equipment. Power variation is accounted for by describing the noise level at a reference distance from the equipment operating at full power and adjusting it based on the duty cycle[2] of the activity to determine the L_{eq} of the operation (FHWA 2006). It is very common for a programmatic analysis such as this to utilize a conservative standard reference distance of 50 feet. Conversely, project-specific noise analyses typically use more specific distances based on more detailed project information. Note that it is typically uncommon for multiple pieces of heavy equipment to be operating together so close to a nearby property line for extended periods of time.

[2] A "duty cycle" is the fraction, or period, of time during which a piece of equipment is active.

Construction of development facilitated by the project is assumed to include typical heavy-duty equipment such as bulldozers, excavators, front-end loaders, dump trucks, graders, etc. It is assumed that diesel engines would power all construction equipment. Construction equipment would not all operate at the same time or location due to the different tasks performed by each piece of equipment and mobile nature of construction equipment throughout the course of a workday. In addition, construction equipment would not be in constant use during the 8-hour operating day. Construction noise levels were estimated generally using the FHWA Roadway Construction Noise Model (RCNM; FHWA 2006). RCNM predicts construction noise levels for a variety of construction operations based on empirical data and the application of acoustical propagation formulas.

Impact devices such as pile drivers may be used to drive foundation piles into the ground and may be used during construction of development facilitated by the project. Although use of pile drivers is uncommon during construction for the type of development facilitated by the project, this analysis considers the potential for use of this equipment as a conservative analysis as some ground types or subterranean parking facilities may require their use. These types of equipment would typically operate separately from other equipment. Maximum noise levels associated with the types of heavy equipment most likely to be utilized during development associated with the project are shown in Table 4.13-13 below.

Table 4.13-13 Maximum Noise Levels Produced by Typical Construction Equipment

Equipment	Estimated Maximum Noise Level (dBA L_{max})	
Distance from Equipment	**50 feet**	**100 feet**
Air Compressor	80	74
Backhoe	80	74
Concrete Mixer	85	79
Concrete Saw	90	84
Dozer	85	79
Dump Truck	84	78
Excavator	85	79
Grader	85	79
Jackhammer	85	79
Loader	80	74
Paver	85	79
Pickup Truck	55	49
Pile-driver (Impact)	95	89
Pile-driver (Sonic)	95	89
Roller	85	79
Scarifier	85	79
Scraper	85	79

dBA = A-weighted decibels; L_{max} = maximum sound level

Source: FHWA 2006

Operational Noise

OPERATIONAL STATIONARY NOISE

The primary on-site noise sources associated with operation of development facilitated by the project, and those discussed in this analysis, would include those associated with standard operation of residential and commercial land uses. These sources could include, but are not limited to, landscape and building maintenance activities, stationary mechanical equipment (e.g., pumps, heating, ventilation, and air conditioning [HVAC] units, and other mechanical equipment), garbage collection activities, and other stationary sources such as conversations between people and amplified music.

OPERATIONAL TRAFFIC NOISE

In addition to on-site operational noise, development accommodated under the proposed project would generate off-site noise in the form of additional vehicle trips, thereby increasing noise levels on roadways within the Planning Area. Noise increases associated with traffic volume increases were calculated based on traffic data provided by Fehr & Peers using a version of the FHWA traffic noise prediction model (FHWA-RD-77-108), which takes into account average daily traffic (ADT) volumes, speeds, automobile and truck percentages, and time of day splits (daytime, evening, and nighttime). Traffic data and noise calculations are provided in Appendix H.

Land Use Compatibility

Agencies subject to CEQA generally are not required to analyze the impact of existing environmental conditions on a project's future users or residents. In *California Building Industry Association v. Bay Area Air Quality Management District (2015) 62 Cal. 4th 369*, the California Supreme Court explained that an agency is only required to analyze the potential impacts to future residents if the project would exacerbate those existing environmental hazards or conditions. CEQA analysis is therefore concerned with a project's impact on the environment, rather than with the environment's impact on a project and its users or residents. Therefore, bringing a population into an area where noise currently exists is not a significant environmental impact under CEQA unless doing so would exacerbate noise conditions. Nonetheless, an analysis of potential noise impacts related to land use compatibility is provided for informational purposes.

Groundborne Vibration

Operation of the proposed project is not expected to include any substantial sources of vibration (e.g., heavy duty industrial operations). Therefore, construction activities would have the greatest potential to generate groundborne vibration affecting sensitive receptors and/or structures adjacent to a construction site, especially for construction sites located near a historic site or structure. Because groundborne vibration could cause architectural damage to structures and is measured in an instantaneous period, vibration impacts are typically modeled based on the distance from the location of vibration-intensive construction activities, which is conservatively assumed to be the edge of a project site, to the edge of the nearest sensitive off-site structure. Construction vibration levels that could occur due to buildout of the proposed project are based on reference vibration levels published by the FTA, shown Table 4.13-14.

Table 4.13-14 Typical Vibration Levels Produced by Various Construction Equipment

Equipment	Vibration Level at 25 Feet (in/sec PPV)
Impact Pile Driver	1.514 (upper range)
	0.644 (typical)
Sonic Pile Driver	0.734 (upper range)
	0.170 (typical)
Vibratory Roller	0.210
Hoe Ram	0.089
Large Bulldozer	0.089
Caisson Drilling	0.089
Loaded Truck	0.076
Jackhammer	0.035
Small Bulldozer	0.003

Source: FTA 2018

a. Project Impacts and Mitigation

Threshold 1: Would the project result in generation of a substantial temporary or permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the project in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?

Impact NOI-1 CONSTRUCTION OF DEVELOPMENT FACILITATED BY THE PROJECT WOULD GENERATE TEMPORARY NOISE IN THE VICINITY OF INDIVIDUAL DEVELOPMENT SITES. DEPENDING ON THE SCOPE OF INDIVIDUAL DEVELOPMENTS, CONSTRUCTION MAY INVOLVE LONG DURATIONS, SUBSTANTIAL SOIL MOVEMENT, USE OF LARGE, HEAVY-DUTY EQUIPMENT, AND/OR PILE DRIVING NEAR NOISE-SENSITIVE LAND USES, WHICH MAY PRODUCE NOISE LEVELS THAT EXCEED THE APPLICABLE CONSTRUCTION NOISE LIMITS. IMPLEMENTATION OF MITIGATION MEASURE NOI-1A AND NOI-1B WOULD REDUCE CONSTRUCTION NOISE LEVELS; HOWEVER, BECAUSE DETAILS OF FUTURE PROJECT-SPECIFIC CONSTRUCTION ACTIVITIES ARE UNKNOWN AT THIS TIME, TEMPORARY CONSTRUCTION NOISE IMPACTS WOULD REMAIN SIGNIFICANT AND UNAVOIDABLE.

Construction Noise

Future construction activities associated with development facilitated by the project would require the use of a variety of noise-generating equipment that would result in temporary increases in ambient noise levels on an intermittent basis. Noise levels generated by construction would vary depending on the types of equipment used, the durations of use, distance between the noise source and surrounding receptors, and presence or absence of barriers or other nearby noise-attenuating buildings/structures. Maximum noise levels at 50 and 100 feet from various equipment types that may be used during construction are presented above in Table 4.13-13. The loudest noise levels are typically generated by impact devices (e.g., pile drivers) and heavy-duty offroad equipment (e.g., cranes, dozers, excavators, and graders). Construction noise would occur intermittently throughout the course of a day and, in some cases, multiple pieces of equipment may operate simultaneously, thus generating combined noise levels that are incrementally higher than the individual equipment noise levels shown in Table 4.13-13.

Sensitive receptors located throughout the Planning Area could be exposed to noise associated with construction activities from development facilitated by the project. As discussed in Section 4.13.1, existing sensitive receptors in the Planning Area include residences, transient lodging (i.e., motels and hotels), schools, libraries, places of worship, hospitals, and outdoor recreation areas. Because specific development projects have not yet been determined at individual sites, this analysis conservatively assumes the potential for construction activities to occur within 50 feet of sensitive receptors throughout the course of a typical construction day. As shown in Table 4.13-13, sensitive receptors located within 50 feet of the listed typical construction equipment may be exposed to maximum noise levels ranging between 76 and 88 dBA L_{max} and may be exposed to maximum noise levels up to 101 dBA L_{max} if pile drivers are used. Note that these noise levels represent the operation of individual pieces of equipment; however, a typical construction day would likely consist of multiple pieces of equipment operating simultaneously. Therefore, for the purposes of this analysis, an example scenario consisting of three pieces of equipment (i.e., an excavator, dozer, and jackhammer) operating simultaneously over the course of an eight-hour workday was evaluated. This scenario was based on equipment typically used during demolition and grading phases, which often represent the loudest phases of construction. The combined noise level at 50 and 100 feet generated by simultaneous operation of these three pieces of equipment are would be 85 dBA L_{eq} and 79 dBA L_{eq}, respectively (see Appendix J for RCNM outputs).

As stated previously, construction noise levels would vary depending on the types of equipment used, the durations of use, and the distance from construction activity to nearby receptors. Engine noise reduction technology, including silencers, continues to improve, but heavy construction equipment still generates noise exceeding ambient levels that could cause intermittent annoyance to nearby receptor properties. Noise associated with construction of development under the proposed project could exceed the 80 dBA L_{eq} (8-hour) daytime significance thresholds at residential land uses for activities occurring on weekdays and/or the City's construction noise thresholds for weekends (80 dBA at a distance of 25 feet from construction activities on Saturdays and 70 dBA at a distance of 25 feet from construction activities on Sundays and holidays).

Compliance with Section 93.09 of the AMC would restrict the timing of construction activities to between the hours of 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. on Mondays through Fridays, between 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. on Saturdays, and between 10:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. on Sundays and observed holidays. In addition, implementation of and adherence to the following proposed policies and actions from the proposed General Plan Noise Element would reduce construction noise levels to the extent feasible: Policy N-3.2 (Truck Noise), Policy N-3.5 (Construction Noise), and Action N-3F (Construction Noise Reduction). Implementation of these proposed policies and actions would reduce potential construction noise impacts associated with future projects facilitated by the project. However, project-level details are not currently available for future projects that would be facilitated by the project, therefore, it is not possible to determine exact noise levels, locations, or time periods for construction of such projects or construction noise impacts at adjacent properties. Construction noise levels associated with future development under the proposed project may exceed applicable construction noise limits; therefore, temporary noise impacts associated with construction of development under the proposed project would be potentially significant.

Stationary Operational Noise

Stationary and other sources of noise in the City include those associated with the standard operation of residential and commercial land uses. These sources could include, but are not limited to, landscape and building maintenance activities, stationary mechanical equipment (e.g., pumps,

HVAC units, emergency generators), garbage collection activities, and other stationary sources such as people's voices and amplified music. Noise generated by residential uses are generally short-term and intermittent in nature. The project would provide for an increase in residential and commercial development throughout the city.

The primary sources of stationary operational noise associated with development facilitated by the project are expected to be HVAC and/or other mechanical equipment. A typical residential HVAC system (e.g., a Carrier 24ABA4030) produces a sound pressure level of 68 dBA at a distance of 3.28 feet (1 meter) away, while a typical commercial HVAC system (e.g., a Carrier WeatherMaker 50FCQM28) produces a sound pressure level of 78 and 3.28 feet (1 meter) away. Depending on the placement of HVAC units relative to nearby receptors, noise generated by HVAC equipment may exceed the City's noise standards shown in Table 4.13-8. Individual projects would be required to locate HVAC equipment (and/or other mechanical equipment) far enough from sensitive receptors and/or shield equipment such that noise levels do not exceed the City's noise standards.

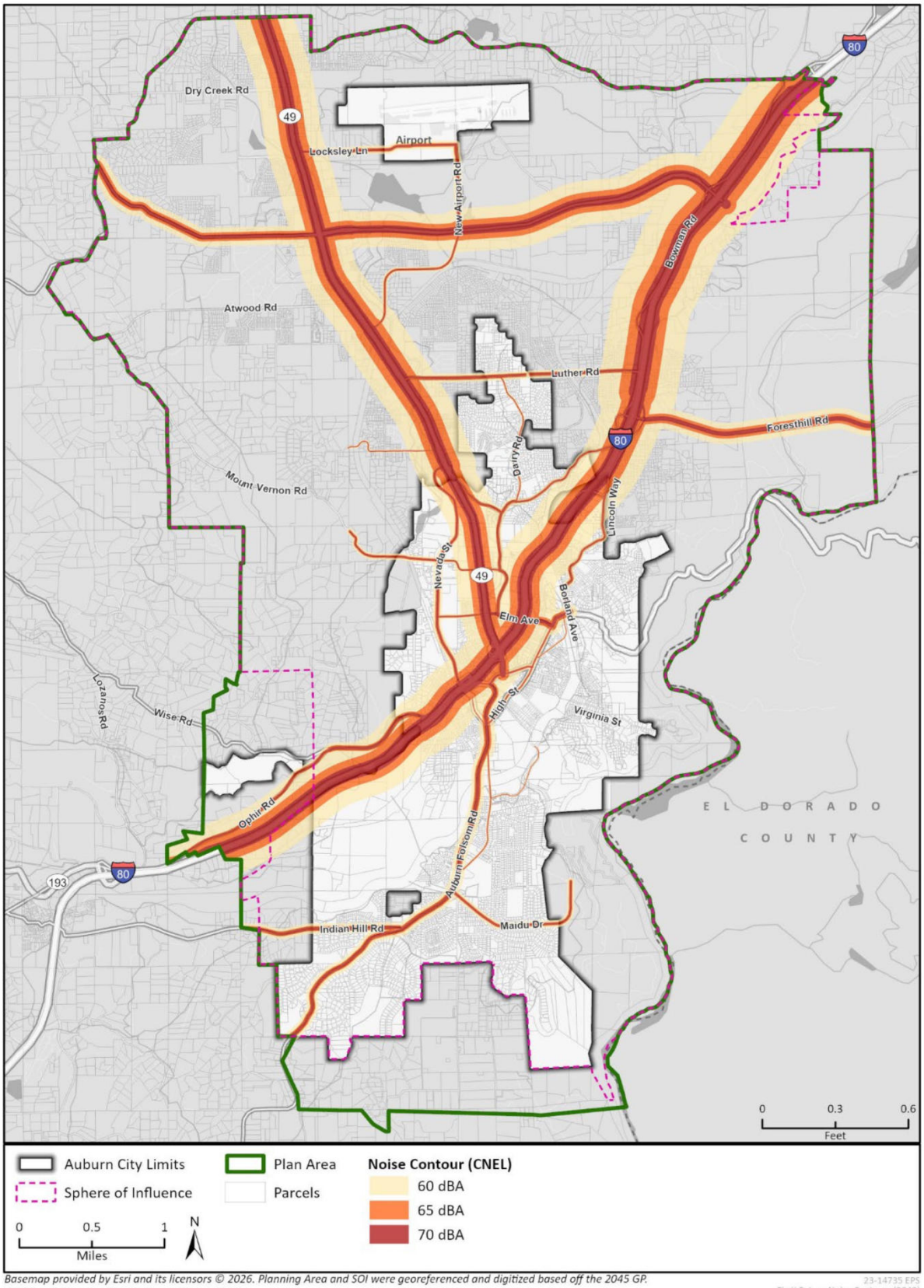
The proposed General Plan and Form Based Code both encourage mixed use development, particularly new residential development in the Downtown and Old Town Business Districts. This could result in a larger number of residents living proximate to noise sources such as bars, restaurants, and entertainment venues. Policy N-2.3 and Action N-2B proactively address the potential for noise conflicts and require disclosure agreements to advise future residents of potential commercial noise exposure as well as site planning and building design to reduce the potential for conflicts.

Additionally, the following proposed policies and actions from the proposed General Plan Noise Element would minimize potential adverse noise-related impacts from stationary operational noise sources: Policy N-1.2 (Limiting Noise Increases), Policy N-2.5 (Business Noise Reduction Measures), and Policy N-3.6 (Community Noise and Enforcement). Policy N-1.2 establishes thresholds for acceptable noise increases and limit new noise impacts upon existing surrounding uses. Policy N-2.5 encourages businesses to replace excessively noisy equipment and establish operating procedures (e.g., hours of operation, acoustical performance requirements, etc.) to minimize noise impacts on nearby properties. Policy N-3.6 protects residents from nuisance and high ambient noise by ensuring that the City's noise enforcement codes are upheld. Implementation of these proposed policies and actions would ensure that stationary operational noise from future development projects is analyzed and mitigated to acceptable levels prior to project approval. Therefore, stationary operational noise impacts associated with development facilitated by the project would be less than significant.

Mobile Operational Noise (Traffic)

Implementation of the project would result in additional development, which would generate new vehicle trips that could incrementally increase operational traffic noise throughout the city. Figure 4.13-5 shows future roadway noise contours projected for the year 2045 based on traffic volume forecasts provided by Fehr & Peers (included as Appendix I). As shown in Figure 4.13-5, the 60, 65, and 70 dBA CNEL noise contours are presented for each study roadway segment in the Planning Area. Existing and future ADT volumes, as well as other traffic data used in the analysis, for each study area roadway segment are included in Appendix I. Table 4.13-15 presents both existing (year 2024) and future (year 2045) noise levels at 50 feet from each roadway segment and the estimated traffic noise increases on each study area roadway segment.

Figure 4.13-5 Future (Year 2045) Traffic Noise Contours



Basemap provided by Esri and its licensors © 2026. Planning Area and SOI were georeferenced and digitized based off the 2045 GP.
Additional data provided by Placer County, 2023.

23-14735 EPS
Fig X Future Noise Contours (2040)

Table 4.13-15 Traffic Noise Increases Along Study Area Roadway Segments

Roadway	Segment	Noise Level 50 Feet from Roadway Centerline (dBA CNEL)		Applicable Noise Increase Threshold (dBA L_{dn})	Noise Increase (dBA L_{dn})	Significant Increase (Yes/No)?
		Existing (2024)	Future (2045)			
SR 49 (Grass Valley Hwy)	N/O Bell Rd	79.0	79.8	3.0	0.8	No
SR 49 (Grass Valley Hwy)	Bell Rd to Willow Creek Dr	78.5	79.5	5.0	1.0	No
SR 49 (Grass Valley Hwy)	Willow Creek Dr to New Airport Rd	78.5	79.4	5.0	1.0	No
SR 49 (Grass Valley Hwy)	New Airport Rd to Luther Rd	79.2	80.1	5.0	0.9	No
SR 49 (Grass Valley Hwy)	Luther Rd to Edgewood Rd	78.9	80.0	3.0	1.1	No
SR 49 (Grass Valley Hwy)	Edgewood Rd to Nevada St	78.9	80.0	5.0	1.1	No
SR 49 (Grass Valley Hwy)	Nevada St to Palm Ave	78.4	78.9	5.0	0.4	No
SR 49 (Grass Valley Hwy)	Palm Ave to Elm Ave	78.3	78.9	5.0	0.6	No
SR 49 (Grass Valley Hwy)	Elm Ave to I-80	78.2	78.6	3.0	0.4	No
SR 49 (Grass Valley Hwy)	I-80 to Lincoln Way	74.3	74.9	5.0	0.6	No
Locksley Ln/Earhart Ave	SR 49 to New Airport Rd	66.8	67.3	5.0	0.5	No
New Airport Road	Bell Rd to SR 49	62.8	64.1	3.0	1.3	No
Bell Road	W/O SR 49	72.1	72.5	3.0	0.4	No
Bell Road	SR 49 to New Airport Rd	76.1	76.7	5.0	0.7	No
Bell Road	New Airport Rd to Bowman Rd	77.4	78.0	5.0	0.6	No
Bell Road	Bowman Rd to I-80	77.5	78.1	5.0	0.6	No
Luther Road	SR 49 to Dairy Rd	66.6	67.4	3.0	0.8	No
Luther Road	Dairy Rd to Bowman Rd	66.2	66.9	3.0	0.7	No
Bowman Road	N/O Luther Rd	66.1	66.3	3.0	0.2	No
Bowman Road	Luther Rd to Auburn Ravine Rd	65.1	65.8	5.0	0.7	No
Lincoln Way	N/O Foresthill Rd	67.7	67.7	3.0	0.0	No
Dairy Road	Luther Rd to Auburn Ravine Rd	60.5	60.5	3.0	0.0	No
Edgewood Road	W/O SR 49	59.6	59.7	3.0	0.1	No
Marguerite Mine Road	SR 49 to Auburn Ravine Rd	61.9	66.1	5.0	4.2	No

Roadway	Segment	Noise Level 50 Feet from Roadway Centerline (dBA CNEL)		Applicable Noise Increase Threshold (dBA L_{dn})	Noise Increase (dBA L_{dn})	Significant Increase (Yes/No)?
		Existing (2024)	Future (2045)			
Auburn Ravine Road	Dairy Rd to Bowman Rd	63.4	64.0	3.0	0.6	No
Auburn Ravine Road	Bowman Rd to Lincoln Way	70.0	70.2	5.0	0.2	No
Foresthill Road	E/O Lincoln Way	73.1	73.2	5.0	0.1	No
Auburn Ravine Road	Dairy Rd to Palm Ave	63.6	66.2	3.0	2.6	No
Auburn Ravine Road	Palm Ave to Elm Ave	64.6	66.8	5.0	2.2	No
Nevada Street	SR 49 to Palm Ave	64.0	67.0	5.0	3.0	No
Nevada Street	Palm Ave to Fulweiler Ave	66.6	67.9	5.0	1.3	No
Nevada Street	Fulweiler Ave to I-80	66.0	67.4	5.0	1.4	No
Mount Vernon Road	W/O Nevada St	64.5	65.5	5.0	1.0	No
Palm Avenue	Nevada St to SR 49	60.8	63.2	5.0	2.4	No
Palm Avenue	SR 49 to Auburn Ravine Rd	62.4	63.0	5.0	0.5	No
Russell Road	W/O Lincoln Way	59.9	61.5	5.0	1.6	No
Lincoln Way	N/O Russell Rd	63.5	64.2	3.0	0.7	No
Lincoln Way	S/O Russell Rd	62.9	64.3	3.0	1.4	No
Lincoln Way	N/O SR 49	65.4	66.1	3.0	0.7	No
Fulweiler Avenue	Nevada St to SR 49	62.9	63.7	3.0	0.8	No
Elm Avenue	SR 49 to I-80	70.2	70.5	5.0	0.3	No
Elm Avenue (SR 49)	I-80 to High St	71.1	72.3	3.0	1.3	No
High St/El Dorado St (SR 49)	Elm Ave to Borland Ave	69.9	71.1	5.0	1.2	No
High Street	Elm Ave to Lincoln Way	62.7	63.1	5.0	0.4	No
Lincoln Way	High St to Elm Ave	57.3	57.5	5.0	0.3	No
Maple Street	I-80 to Lincoln Way/Auburn Folsom Rd	63.6	63.6	5.0	0.0	No
Lincoln Way	Auburn Folsom Rd to Grass Valley Hwy	66.9	67.6	5.0	0.7	No
Lincoln Way	Grass Valley Hwy to High St	64.0	64.1	5.0	0.1	No
High Street	Lincoln Way to College Way	62.1	62.5	3.0	0.4	No

Roadway	Segment	Noise Level 50 Feet from Roadway Centerline (dBA CNEL)		Applicable Noise Increase Threshold (dBA L_{dn})	Noise Increase (dBA L_{dn})	Significant Increase (Yes/No)?
		Existing (2024)	Future (2045)			
High Street	Auburn Folsom Rd to College Way	62.3	62.9	3.0	0.6	No
Auburn Folsom Road	Lincoln Way to High St	70.2	70.7	3.0	0.5	No
Auburn Folsom Road	High St to Sacramento St	70.8	71.3	3.0	0.5	No
Auburn Folsom Road	Sacramento St to Pacific Ave.	69.3	70.1	5.0	0.9	No
Auburn Folsom Road	Pacific Ave to Maidu Dr	69.2	70.2	3.0	1.0	No
Auburn Folsom Road	Maidu Dr to Indian Hill Rd	68.8	69.9	3.0	1.1	No
Auburn Folsom Road	S/O Indian Hill Rd	68.2	69.4	3.0	1.2	No
Ophir Road	W/O Wise Rd	64.9	67.1	5.0	2.3	No
Ophir Road	Wise Rd to I-80	66.2	69.4	5.0	3.2	No
Sacramento Street	Lincoln Way to Auburn Folsom Rd	58.7	58.7	3.0	0.0	No
Sacramento Street	Auburn Folsom Rd to Pacific Ave	60.6	60.6	5.0	0.0	No
Sacramento Street	Pacific Ave to Auburn Folsom Rd	60.1	60.1	3.0	0.0	No
Pacific Avenue	E/O Sacramento St	56.8	56.9	5.0	0.0	No
Maidu Drive	E/O Auburn Folsom Rd	66.3	66.3	3.0	0.0	No
Indian Hill Road	W/O Auburn Folsom Rd	68.0	68.6	3.0	0.6	No
I-80 Eastbound	East of Bell Rd	78.6	79.6	5.0	1.0	No
I-80 Westbound	East of Bell Rd	78.7	79.7	5.0	1.0	No
I-80 Eastbound	At Auburn Ravine Rd/Foresthill Rd	78.9	80.1	5.0	1.2	No
I-80 Westbound	At Auburn Ravine Rd/Foresthill Rd	78.9	80.1	5.0	1.2	No
I-80 Eastbound	West of Ophir Rd	80.0	81.3	5.0	1.3	No
I-80 Westbound	West of Ophir Rd	80.6	81.9	5.0	1.3	No

dBA = A-weighted decibels; L_{dn} = day-night average sound level

Source: Appendix I; Caltrans 2019.

As shown in Table 4.13-15, future roadway traffic noise increases on all roadway segments within the study area would not exceed the City's noise increase thresholds of 3 dB L_{dn} and 5 dB L_{dn} for predominantly residential and non-residential areas, respectively. Traffic noise increases along these roadway segments in predominantly residential areas would range between 0 and 2.6 dBA L_{dn} and in predominantly non-residential areas, would range between 0.0 and 4.2 dBA L_{dn} Traffic noise impacts associated with the project would be less than significant.

Additionally, the following proposed actions and policies would address noise impacts related to transportation sources: Action N-1A (Acoustical Studies), Policy N-2.4 (Street and Highway Improvement Projects), Action N-2C (Pavement Standards), Policy N-3.1 (Motor Vehicle Noise), and Policy N-3.2 (Truck Noise). Action N-1A requires acoustical studies for projects which may be exposed to noise levels above applicable noise compatibility standards and mitigation measures, as appropriate, to reduce noise levels to below acceptable levels. Policy N-2.4 and Action N-2C encourage the use of noise reduction measures for roadway projects to reduce excessive noise created by vehicle movements in the Planning Area. Policy N-3.1 and Action N-3B enforce speed limits and California Vehicle Code standards to reduce noise emission from vehicles. Policy N-3.2 designates truck routes to direct truck traffic away from residential areas to reduce excessive levels of truck noise impacts upon sensitive receptors.

The above policies and actions would ensure that traffic noise increases along all roadway segments within the study area would not exceed respective noise thresholds. Traffic noise impacts associated with the proposed project would be less than significant.

Land Use Compatibility

Implementation of the proposed project would expose future development to ambient noise levels predominantly associated with vehicular traffic sources. According to the existing traffic noise contour map shown in Figure 4.13-3, land uses along major arterial roadways are exposed to noise levels of up to 70 dBA CNEL and higher. Table 4.13-7 presents a range of acceptable noise levels for various land use types corresponding to the noise sensitivity of each use. Depending on the type and location of development facilitated by the project, new development could be exposed to noise levels above the "Acceptable" range for those uses depending on the proximity of new development to roadways and other existing noise sources.

State building code standards prescribe an interior noise standard of 45 dBA CNEL for proposed residential uses. Generally, any large structure blocking the line of sight between a noise source and receiver (e.g., a concrete block wall on a property's boundary) will provide at least a 5-dBA reduction in source noise levels at the receiver (FHWA 2011). Building construction methods and materials can also substantially reduce occupants' exposure to noise. The FHWA's guidelines indicate that modern building construction generally provides an exterior-to-interior noise level reduction of 20 to 35 dBA with closed windows (FHWA 2011). Modern residential buildings in California are typically constructed with storm windows, single- or double-glazed, that achieve the required energy savings on heating and cooling, which also provide an exterior-to-interior noise level reduction of at least 20 dBA. Based on a noise exposure level of 70 dBA CNEL or higher and a noise attenuation of at least 20 dBA, it is possible that interior noise levels within new housing development could exceed 45 dBA CNEL. Nonetheless, the following proposed policies and actions from the General Plan Noise Element would collectively govern excessive noise exposure to new land uses: Policy N-1.1 (Land Use Compatibility Standards for Noise), Policy N-1.2 (Limiting Noise Increases), Policy N-1.3 (Noise-Sensitive Uses), Action N-1A (Acoustical Studies), Action N-1B

(Insulation Standards), Policy N-2.1 (Noise Reduction Through Design), Policy N-2.3 (Mixed-Use Noise Compatibility), and Action N-2B (Mixed-Use Disclosure Agreements).

Furthermore, Policy N-1.1 (Land Use Compatibility Standards for Noise) would establish new noise compatibility standards for various land uses, presented in Table 4.13-16.

Table 4.13-16 Proposed Noise Compatibility Guidelines for Auburn

Land Use Category	Community Noise Exposure (CNEL or L_{dn}, dBA)			
	Normally Acceptable[1]	Conditionally Acceptable[2]	Normally Unacceptable[3]	Clearly Unacceptable[4]
Residential – Low Density Single-Family, Duplex, Mobile Homes	<60	60–70	70–75	>75
Residential – Multiple Family	<65	65–70	70–75	>75
Transient Lodging, Motels, Hotels	<65	65–70	70–80	>80
Schools, Libraries, Churches, Hospitals, Nursing Homes	<65	65–70	70–80	>80
Auditoriums, Concert Halls, Amphitheaters	N/A	<70	>70	N/A
Sports Arenas, Outdoor Spectator Sports	N/A	<75	>75	N/A
Playgrounds, Neighborhood Parks	<70	70–75	>75	N/A
Golf Courses, Riding Stables, Water Recreation, Cemeteries	<70	70–80	>80	N/A
Office Buildings, Businesses, Commercial and Professional	<70	70–75	>75	N/A
Industrial, Manufacturing, Utilities, Agricultural	<70	70–80	>80	N/A

CNEL = Community Noise Equivalent Level; L_{dn} = Day-Night Average Sound Level; dBA = A-weighted decibels

[1] Normally Acceptable = Specified land use is satisfactory based upon the assumption that any buildings involved are of normal conventional construction, without any special noise insulation requirements.

[2] Conditionally Acceptable = New construction or development should be undertaken only after a detailed analysis of the noise reduction requirements is made and the needed noise insulation features are included in the design. Conventional construction, but with closed windows and fresh air supply systems or air conditioning will normally suffice.

[3] Normally Unacceptable = New construction or development should generally be discouraged. If new construction does proceed, a detailed analysis of the noise reduction requirements must be made and needed noise insulation features included in the design.

[4] Clearly Unacceptable = New construction or development of the specified land use generally should not be undertaken.

Source: Chart N-1, Proposed Noise Compatibility Guidelines

The above policies and actions would ensure that noise generated development facilitated by the project would not exceed applicable noise compatibility standards. Noise impacts related to land use compatibility would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

Proposed Action N-3F (Construction Noise Reduction) would require best management practices (BMPs) to reduce noise generated during construction. In accordance with proposed Action N-3F, the following mitigation measures are required to reduce construction-related noise impacts to sensitive receivers near subsequent development projects.

NOI-1a Project-Specific Construction Noise Study

A Construction Noise Study, prepared by a qualified noise expert to meet the requirements herein, shall be required for development projects located within 500 feet of noise-sensitive land uses (i.e., residential, transient lodging, group homes, hospitals and extended medical facilities, places of worship, schools and other learning institutions, and libraries), and that have one or more of the following characteristics:

- Construction durations of 18 months or more (excluding interior finishing);
- Use of large, heavy-duty equipment rated at 300 horsepower (hp) or greater;
- The potential for pile driving; or
- Located within 1,000 feet of other construction projects with overlapping construction schedules.

The Construction Noise Study shall characterize sources of construction noise, quantify noise levels at noise-sensitive uses and identify measures to reduce noise exposure during the construction period. The Construction Noise Study shall identify reasonably available noise reduction devices or techniques to reduce noise levels to acceptable levels and/or durations including through reliance on any relevant Federal, State, or local standards or guidelines or accepted industry practices. Noise reduction devices or techniques may include but not be limited to silencers, enclosures, sound barriers, and/or placement of restrictions on equipment or construction techniques (e.g., alternative installation methods to pile driving such as cast-in-place systems or pile cushioning). Each measure in the Construction Noise Study shall identify anticipated noise reductions at noise-sensitive land uses.

NOI-1b Measures to Reduce Construction Noise

If the results of the Project-Specific Construction Noise Study described in Mitigation Measure NOI-1a show that noise levels associated with an individual project are expected to exceed applicable thresholds, the City of Auburn shall require construction contractors to implement as many of the following measures as feasible prior to issuance of a demolition, grading, and/or building permit:

- **Shielding and Silencing.** Power construction equipment (including combustion engines), fixed or mobile, shall be equipped with noise shielding and silencing devices consistent with manufacturer's standards or the Best Available Control Technology. Equipment shall be properly maintained, and the project applicant or owner shall require any construction contractor to keep documentation on-site during any earthwork or construction activities demonstrating that the equipment has been maintained in accordance with manufacturer's specifications.
- **Enclosures and Screening.** All outdoor fixed mechanical equipment shall be enclosed or screened from off-site noise-sensitive uses. The equipment enclosure or screen shall be impermeable (e.g., solid material with minimum weight of 2 pounds per square foot) and break the line-of-sight from the equipment and off-site noise-sensitive uses.
- **Construction Staging Areas.** Construction staging areas shall be located as far from noise-sensitive uses as reasonably possible and feasible in consideration of site boundaries, topography, intervening roads and uses, and operational constraints.
- **Smart Back-Up Alarms.** Mobile construction equipment shall have smart back-up alarms that automatically adjust the sound level of the alarm in response to ambient noise levels. Alternatively, back-up alarms shall be disabled and replaced with human spotters to ensure safety when mobile construction equipment is moving in the reverse direction.

- **Equipment Idling.** Construction vehicles and equipment shall not be left idling for longer than five minutes when not in use.
- **Workers' Radios.** All noise from workers' radios, including any on-site music, shall be controlled such that they are not audible at off-site noise-sensitive uses.
- **Use of Driven Pile Systems.** Driven (impact), sonic, or vibratory pile drivers shall not be used, except in locations where the underlying geology renders alternative methods infeasible, as determined by a soils or geotechnical engineer and documented in a soils report.
- **Temporary Noise Barriers.** Temporary sound barriers, such as walls or sound blankets, shall be positioned between construction activities and noise-sensitive uses when modeled noise levels from construction equipment exceed applicable standards and have a direct line of sight with noise sensitive receivers. Placement, orientation, size, and density of acoustical barriers shall be specified by a qualified acoustical consultant.
- **Noise Complaint Response.** Project applicants shall designate an on-site construction project manager who shall be responsible for responding to any complaints about construction noise. This person shall be responsible for responding to concerns of neighboring properties about construction noise disturbance and shall be available for responding to any construction noise complaints during the hours that construction is to take place. They shall also be responsible for determining the cause of the noise complaint (e.g., bad silencer) and shall require that reasonable measures be implemented to correct the problem. A toll-free telephone number and email address shall be posted in a highly visible manner on the construction site at all times and provided in all notices (mailed, online website, and construction site postings) for receiving questions or complaints during construction and shall also include procedures requiring that the on-site construction manager respond to callers and email messages. The on-site construction project manager shall be required to track complaints pertaining to construction noise, ongoing throughout demolition, grading, and/or construction and shall notify the City's Community Development Director of each complaint occurrence.

Project applicants shall be required to comply with all requirements of Mitigation Measures NOI-1a and NOI-1b in addition to any additional requirements identified and recommended by the Construction Noise Study and shall maintain proof that notice of, as well as compliance with, the identified measures have been included in contractor agreements.

Significance After Mitigation

Construction Noise

Implementation of Mitigation Measures NOI-1a and NOI-1b, as well as implementation of proposed goals, policies, and actions from the City's General Plan, would reduce potential noise impacts during construction activities. However, as exact details of future project-specific construction activities are unknown at this time, construction noise could still exceed applicable significance thresholds or potentially need to occur during the more sensitive nighttime hours, resulting in noise impacts during nighttime hours. Although implementation of Mitigation Measures NOI-1a and NOI-1b would reduce construction noise impacts, it cannot be guaranteed that construction noise impacts would be reduced to below the applicable construction noise threshold of 80 dBA L_{eq} (8-hour) and the City' s weekend construction noise thresholds at noise-sensitive receptors in all cases or that nighttime construction work may not be needed at times. Therefore, construction noise impacts associated with development facilitated by the project would remain significant and unavoidable.

Operational Noise

Operational noise impacts would be less than significant without mitigation.

Threshold 2:	Would the project result in generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?

Impact NOI-2 CONSTRUCTION OF INDIVIDUAL DEVELOPMENTS FACILITATED BY THE PROJECT COULD TEMPORARILY GENERATE LEVELS OF GROUNDBORNE VIBRATION EXCEEDING CITY VIBRATION THRESHOLDS AT NEARBY STRUCTURES, HOWEVER, MITIGATION MEASURE NOI-2 WOULD REDUCE CONSTRUCTION VIBRATION IMPACTS TO LESS-THAN-SIGNIFICANT LEVELS.

Construction

Construction of development facilitated by the project could intermittently generate groundborne vibration at nearby structures, potentially resulting in architectural (or at high levels, structural) damage depending on the equipment types expected to be used and the distances between equipment and nearby structures. Table 4.13-17 lists groundborne vibration levels associated with typical construction equipment types at various distances to present how vibration levels vary with distance from the source.

Table 4.13-17 Vibration Levels Associated with Typical Construction Equipment at Various Distances

Equipment		Approximate Vibration Level (in/sec PPV)			
		25 feet from Source	50 feet from Source	100 feet from Source	200 feet from Source
Pile Driver (impact)	Upper range	1.518	0.537	0.190	0.067
	Typical	0.644	0.228	0.081	0.028
Pile Driver (sonic)	Upper range	0.734	0.260	0.092	0.032
	Typical	0.170	0.060	0.021	0.008
Vibratory Roller		0.210	0.074	0.026	0.009
Hoe Ram		0.089	0.031	0.011	0.004
Large[1] Bulldozer		0.089	0.031	0.011	0.004
Caisson Drilling		0.089	0.031	0.011	0.004
Loaded Trucks		0.076	0.027	0.010	0.003
Jackhammer		0.035	0.012	0.004	0.002
Small[2] Bulldozer		0.003	0.001	<0.001	<0.001

in/sec = inches per second PPV = peak particle velocity

[1] "Large" in this context refers to equipment rated at 100 horsepower (hp) or greater.

[2] "Small" in this context refers to equipment rated less than 100 hp.

Source: FTA 2018

As shown in Table 4.13-17, the greatest vibration impacts would result from the use of pile drivers and vibratory rollers. Depending on the type of pile driver used, vibration levels from pile drivers could range between 0.17 and 1.518 in/sec PPV at a distance of 25 feet from the source and between 0.021 and 0.190 in/sec PPV at a distance of 100 feet from the source. Vibration levels from use of a vibratory roller could range between 0.21 and 0.026 in/sec PPV at a distance of 25 feet and

100 feet from the source, respectively. As discussed above, the applicable vibration threshold for historic structures is 0.12 in/sec PPV, the threshold for residential structures is 0.2 in/sec PPV, and the threshold for engineered (i.e., commercial and industrial) structures is 0.3 in/sec PPV.

Vibration levels from typical equipment, such as bulldozers, loaded trucks, and jackhammers, would not exceed applicable vibration thresholds at historic structures, residential structures, or engineered structures located 25 feet or greater from the equipment. However, vibration levels from pile driving equipment and vibratory rollers may exceed vibration thresholds at this same distance depending on the equipment used and type of structure affected.

At this stage of planning, project-level details are not available for individual development projects that would be carried out under the proposed project; therefore, it is not possible to determine exact vibration impacts at specific structures at this time. However, depending on the distance between construction equipment and affected structures as presented in Table 4.13-17, vibration levels generated during construction of individual projects may exceed applicable vibration thresholds at nearby structures, resulting in potentially significant vibration impacts.

Operation

Development facilitated by the project may include new sources of operational vibration, such as heavy industrial uses. The primary source of operational vibration throughout the city is the Union Pacific Railroad, which runs primarily from northeast/southwest through the City. Commercial development facilitated by the project would include new commercial and industrial uses, which may result in new sources of operational vibration such as manufacturing or heavy industrial uses. Depending on the location of proposed commercial and industrial uses relative to other nearby building structures, operational vibration levels may exceed applicable vibration thresholds. The following proposed policy and action from the General Plan Noise Element would reduce operational sources of vibration to the extent feasible: Policy N-1.7 (Vibration-Sensitive Uses) and Action N-1C (Vibration Impacts). Policy N-1.7 requires vibration impact assessments for vibration-sensitive land uses (e.g., housing, hospitals, schools) exposed to vibration resulting from construction, highways, railroads, and industrial uses. Action N-1C requires conditions of approval or construction standards for vibration impacts, which would reduce the potential for excessive vibration impacts upon vibration-sensitive uses.

Implementation of the Policy N-1.7 and Action N-1C would ensure that operational vibration from future development projects is analyzed and mitigated to acceptable levels prior to project approval. Therefore, operational vibration impacts associated with development facilitated by the project would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

Mitigation Measure NOI-1b, described under Impact NOI-1, would be required, which may also reduce vibration levels generated during construction depending on which measures are incorporated. In addition, the following mitigation measure is required to reduce potential adverse vibration impacts.

NOI-2 Construction Vibration Analysis and Control Plan

Prior to issuance of a building permit for an individual project involving the use of the following construction equipment within the specified distances of nearby building structures, the project

applicant shall prepare a construction vibration analysis and control plan to assess and mitigate potential vibration impacts associated with construction activities:

- Use of a pile driver within:
  - 135 feet of fragile/historic structures
  - 100 feet of non-engineered timber and masonry buildings (e.g., most residential buildings)
  - 75 feet of engineered concrete and masonry (no plaster)
- Use of a vibratory roller within:
  - 40 feet of fragile/historic structures
  - 25 feet of any other structure (residential, commercial, or industrial)
- Use of a dozer or other large earthmoving equipment within:
  - 20 feet of fragile/historic structures
  - 15 feet of any other structure (residential, commercial, or industrial)

The vibration analysis shall be conducted by a qualified and experienced acoustical consultant or engineer and include a control plan to limit vibration levels generated by construction equipment so as not to exceed City vibration thresholds for architectural damage (i.e., 0.12 in/sec PPV at fragile/historic structures, 0.2 in/sec PPV at non-engineered timber and masonry buildings, and 0.3 in/sec PPV for engineered concrete and masonry structures). If vibration levels would exceed these thresholds, alternative methods and equipment, such as drilling piles as opposed to pile driving, use of static rollers as opposed to vibratory rollers, and use of lower horsepower equipment as applicable, shall be employed. If necessary, such as when high-vibration equipment may be used within close proximity to a fragile/historic structure, construction vibration monitoring shall be conducted to ensure the City's vibration thresholds are not exceeded at nearby structures.

Significance After Mitigation

Construction

Implementation of Mitigation Measure NOI-2 would require a vibration analysis for construction activities conducted within specified distances of various types of structures. The vibration analysis would determine alternative methods of construction or types of equipment necessary to reduce vibration levels generated at nearby structures. In addition, Mitigation Measure NOI-2 would require vibration monitoring to ensure that vibration levels do not exceed City thresholds. Implementation of Mitigation Measure NOI-2 would reduce construction vibration impacts to less-than-significant levels.

Operation

Operation vibration impacts would be less than significant without mitigation.

Threshold 3:	For a project located within the vicinity of a private airstrip or an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?

Impact NOI-3 THE PROJECT WOULD NOT EXPOSE PEOPLE RESIDING OR WORKING IN THE PLANNING AREA TO EXCESSIVE AIRPORT-RELATED NOISE LEVELS. AIRPORT-RELATED NOISE IMPACTS WOULD BE LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT.

The Auburn Municipal Airport is located approximately 0.75-mile north of Bell Road and 0.6-mile east of Grass Valley Highway (SR 49). As shown in Figure 4.13-4, above, the easternmost extent of the 65 dBA CNEL noise contour associated with the airport is contained within the airport property and the westernmost extent is approximately located at the intersection of SR 49 and Locksley Lane. The easternmost extent of the 60 dBA CNEL noise contour extends approximately 1,000 feet east of the airport property and the westernmost extent is approximately located at Sapphire Drive. Airport noise levels at the nearest land uses to the south are approximately 60 dBA CNEL and below, with the 55 dBA CNEL noise contour extending as far south as the intersection of Garfield Drive and Sultana Drive.

The nearest uses in the vicinity of the airport include commercial and industrial uses to the south and residential uses to the north. Development facilitated by the project would include industrial uses within the 65 dBA CNEL noise contour; industrial and resource conservation uses within the 60 dBA CNEL noise contour; and rural residential, medium-density residential, commercial, industrial, and resource conservation uses within the 55 dBA CNEL noise contour of the airport. According to the City's land use compatibility guidelines (Table 4.13-7), a noise level of 60 dBA CNEL falls under the "Acceptable" threshold for noise-sensitive land uses such as residential development. The "Acceptable" threshold continues to increase (ranging between 65 and 70 dBA CNEL) for all other land use types such as offices, commercial retail, playgrounds, and neighborhood parks. Land uses developed in proximity to the airport would be consistent with the noise guidelines contained in the Auburn Municipal Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan, including those related to the Green Means Go program, which prioritizes development of infill housing and establishes conditionally compatible "Infill Green Zones" permitting infill development near the airport where such development may otherwise be prohibited. Therefore, development facilitated by the project would not expose people residing or working in the Planning Area to excessive airport-related noise levels. Airport-related noise impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation is required.

Significance After Mitigation

Impacts would be less than significant without mitigation.

4.13.4 Cumulative Impacts

The geographic scope for cumulative noise impacts is the Planning Area, plus a 0.25-mile radius around the Planning Area. This geographic scope is appropriate because noise attenuates quickly with distance, and this represents a conservative geographic extent within which noise impacts may occur.

While unlikely, if construction of multiple, proximate cumulative projects were to occur simultaneously, noise from individual construction projects could combine to create significant cumulative impacts at sensitive receptors. Although this scenario is unlikely due to how quickly noise attenuates with distance, there is potential for cumulative construction noise impacts to be significant. As discussed in Impact NOI-1, Mitigation Measures NOI-1(a) and NOI-1(b), as well as goals and policies from the City's General Plan Noise Element, would reduce noise generated by construction associated with future individual development facilitated by the project. While mitigation measures would be implemented to the extent feasible, construction of development facilitated by the project may result in a considerable contribution to potentially significant cumulative impacts related to substantial temporary increases in ambient noise levels.

Cumulative operational noise would result in potential increases in noise from stationary and mobile (traffic) sources. However, operational noise generated by existing and future land uses would be subject to the restrictions from the applicable Municipal Code, County Code, and General Plan. Compliance with these regulations would minimize the permanent increase in ambient noise levels generated by operational activities associated with cumulative development. Cumulative noise generated along roadways within the City would not exceed any of the City's significance thresholds for traffic noise impacts. Therefore, cumulative operational noise impacts would be less than significant.

Vibration generated by human activities, such as construction, is localized and rapidly attenuates with distance. It is possible that construction activities associated with cumulative development may occur at the same time as other development projects. However, it is unlikely that vibration-generating equipment used during construction of multiple development projects would operate close enough to each other such that cumulative vibration impacts at the same receptors or structures would occur. Therefore, cumulative construction vibration impacts would be less than significant.

Cumulative development may introduce new land uses near the Auburn Municipal Airport, and the Auburn Municipal Airport is currently undergoing updates to its Master Plan, which will serve as the blueprint for the airport's future layout, improvements, and expansion to meet the airport's operational demands over the next 20 years. With adoption of the future Auburn Municipal Airport Master Plan Update and necessary future Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan update, potential environmental effects (including noise) resulting from implementation of the Master Plan associated with runway extensions/facility improvements will be coordinated with the Placer County Transportation Planning Agency at that time. This may result in adjusted airport noise contour maps; however, proposed land uses in the immediate vicinity of the airport would include primarily industrial and resource conservation uses, with a limited amount of residential development. According to the current noise contours associated with the airport, noise levels in the immediate areas surrounding the airport would be 60 dBA CNEL and below, which is the "Acceptable" threshold for noise-sensitive land uses such as residential development, transient lodging, schools, libraries, hospitals, and nursing homes according to the City's land use compatibility guidelines. Cumulative development located near the Auburn Municipal Airport would also be subject to the Placer County Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan which regulates the compatibility of land uses in the immediate vicinity of the airport. Therefore, cumulative airport-related noise impacts would be less than significant.

4.14 Population and Housing

This section evaluates the potential population growth and potential displacement of housing impacts associated with implementation of the Auburn 2045 General Plan.

4.14.1 Setting

Population, housing, and employment data are available on a city, county, regional, and state level. This EIR uses data collected and provided at the city level from the Auburn Demographics White Paper (Barry Miller Consulting 2024) in an effort to focus the analysis specifically on the Planning Area.

a. Population

The Auburn Demographics White Paper tracks population growth in Auburn from 1900 to 2023. Auburn was the largest city in Placer County in 1900 with a population of 2,000. The City grew slowly and by 1940, it reached a population of 5,000. After a slight decline in the 1940s, the City continued to grow through the 1970s and reached a population of 7,500 in 1980. From there, the City grew rapidly in the 1980s and 1990s with more than 5,000 new residents during this period. Growth slowed from 2000 to 2020 with about 1,100 new residents. The 2020 Census counted 13,758 residents in Auburn (Barry Miller Consulting 2024).

Unincorporated North Auburn and the rest of the Planning Area were rural prior to 1970. The population in North Auburn Census-Designated Place (CDP) grew from 2,000 to 7,600 in the 1970s. Since 1980, the North Auburn CDP has followed the population growth in the City of Auburn and the 2020 Census counted 13,452 residents in North Auburn CDP (Barry Miller Consulting 2024).

b. Housing

A household consists of all the people who occupy a housing unit. A household differs from a dwelling unit because the number of dwelling units includes both occupied and vacant dwelling units. Not all of the population lives in households. A portion lives in group quarters, such as board and care facilities, while others are homeless in at least a temporary capacity.

Housing Units

Table 4.14-1 shows the growth in number of housing units in the City of Auburn and North Auburn CDP for the years 2000, 2010, and 2020. For the City of Auburn, between 2000 and 2010, 440 housing units were added to the City's housing inventory, an average annual increase in the housing stock of approximately 44 housing units. Between 2010 and 2020, 316 housing units were added to the City's housing inventory, an average annual increase of approximately 32 units. For North Auburn CDP, between 2000 and 2010, approximately 263 housing units were added to the City's housing inventory, an average annual increase in the housing stock of approximately 26 housing units. Between 2010 and 2020, 405 housing units were added to the City's housing inventory, an average annual increase of approximately 40 units (Barry Miller Consulting 2024).

Table 4.14-1 Number of Households, 2000-2020

Year	Auburn	% Change	North Auburn CDP	% Change
2000	5,319	-	4,817	-
2010	5,759	+8.3%	5,080	+5.5%
2020	6,075	+5.5%	5,485	+8.0%

CDP = Census-Designated Place

Source: Barry Miller Consulting 2024

Household Size

Small households (one to two persons per household [pph]) traditionally reside in units with zero to two bedrooms; family households (three to four pph) normally reside in units with three to four bedrooms. Large households (five or more pph) typically reside in units with four or more bedrooms. However, the number of units in relation to the household size may also reflect preference and economics. Many small households obtain larger units, and some larger households live in small units for economic reasons.

Table 4.14-2 compares the size of households in the City of Auburn, North Auburn CDP, and Placer County in 2010 and 2022. As shown therein, the average household size in Auburn decreased, while the average household size in North Auburn CDP and in the County increased slightly. Between 2010 and 2022, the City of Auburn and North Auburn CDP have maintained a lower average household size than the County.

Table 4.14-2 Household Size in Auburn, North Auburn, and Placer County

	City of Auburn		North Auburn CDP		Placer County	
Year	Household Size (pph)	Growth Percentage	Household Size (pph)	Growth Percentage	Household Size (pph)	Growth Percentage
2010	2.27	–	2.36	-	2.60	–
2022	2.10	-7.5%	2.43	+3.0%	2.63	+1.2%

CDP = Census-Designated Place; pph = persons per household

Sources: Barry Miller Consulting 2024

c. Employment-Housing Ratio

The employment-household ratio in a jurisdiction is an overall indicator of job availability within the area. A balance of jobs and housing is considered beneficial as it has the potential to provide residents an opportunity to work locally and avoid employment commutes to other places in the region. The existing (as of March 2024) labor force in Auburn is estimated to be 6,400 persons, while employment in North Auburn CDP is estimated to be 6,100 persons. The City unemployment rate was 3.4 percent in the city, or approximately 200 persons, compared to a County unemployment rate of 3.7 percent. Given that there were 6,235 households in the city in 2022, the average number of employed residents per household is 1.01 (Barry Miller Consulting 2024).

d. Projections

Table 4.14-3 presents 2025 and 2045 estimates and projections regarding population, housing, and employment for the Planning Area. The projected growth for 2045 is based on SACOG growth

projections, which are expressed in the South Placer Transportation Authority traffic model. The increment of growth initially estimated by SACOG for 2016-2040 was used to estimate the change in population, households, and employment that would occur over the 20-year planning horizon from 2025 to 2045, assuming the current General Plan remained in place. The projections for anticipated 2045 conditions estimate that, in the absence of the changes being made under the General Plan, the population in the Planning Area would grow by 2,476 residents, and there would be an estimated addition of 949 housing units and 3,981 jobs compared to 2025 levels.

Table 4.14-3 Planning Area Population, Housing, and Employment Projections

	2025	2045	2025-2045 Change	% Growth
Population	28,958	31,434	+2,476	+8.6%
Housing Units	13,281	14,227	+949	+7.1.%
Households	12,771	13,680	+909	+7.1%
Employment	20,866	24,847	+3,981	+19.1%

Note: 2025 and 2045 levels were calculated using South Placer Regional Transportation Authority traffic model inputs, which were derived from SACOG MTP/SCS 2040 forecasts

Source: Auburn General Plan Demographics White Paper (Barry Miller Consulting 2024)

4.14.2 Regulatory Setting

a. State Regulations

California Relocation Assistance Act

The California Relocation Assistance Act of 1971 (Government Code Section 7260 et seq.) applies to State and local program that receive State funding. This Act requires notification, counseling, social services, and financial assistance for persons displaced by transportation and land redevelopment projects. These procedural protections and benefits apply when the project causing the displacement has received State funding during any phase of the program or project.

Housing Element Statutes

State housing element statues (Government Code Sections 65580 - 65589.11) mandate that local governments adequately plan to meet the existing and projected housing needs of all economic segments of the community. The law recognizes that in order for the private market to adequately address housing needs and demand, local governments must adopt land use plans and regulatory systems that provide opportunities for, and do not unduly constrain, housing development. As a result, State housing policy rests largely upon the effective implementation of local general plans and in particular, housing elements. Additionally, Government Code Section 65588 dictates that housing elements must be updated at least once every eight years. Cities and counties are further required to plan for their fair share of the region's housing needs, which is determined through a process called the Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA).

Assembly Bill 130

Effective June 30, 2025, AB 130 introduces substantial reforms to streamline housing development under CEQA. The bill establishes a statutory CEQA exemption for qualifying infill housing projects located in urban areas up to 20 acres, provided they meet specific criteria such as adjacency to

urban uses and avoidance of historic or environmentally sensitive sites. This exemption is designed to reduce environmental review burdens for projects that align with local zoning and planning standards. AB 130 also makes permanent several provisions of the Permit Streamlining Act, including timelines for application completeness and project approval, and limits the number of public hearings for qualifying housing projects. In addition, the bill codifies elements of the Housing Accountability Act and SB 330, including protections for vested rights and restrictions on growth control measures. A notable provision is the statewide freeze on residential building code updates from October 1, 2025, through June 1, 2031, which aims to reduce regulatory uncertainty and development costs. AB 130 also enhances the role of the California Department of Housing and Community Development in overseeing RHNA methodologies, further aligning local planning efforts with state housing goals.

Senate Bill 131

SB 131 complements AB 130 by focusing on CEQA streamlining for infrastructure and public-serving projects. It introduces a new review pathway for "near miss" projects—those that narrowly fail to qualify for a CEQA exemption due to a single disqualifying condition. Under this provision, CEQA review is limited to the environmental effects of that specific condition, and such projects are exempt from analyzing alternatives or growth-inducing impacts. SB 131 also creates or expands CEQA exemptions for a range of project types, including advanced manufacturing facilities on industrial-zoned land, broadband infrastructure in public rights-of-way, updates to climate adaptation plans, High-Speed Rail maintenance facilities, and local rezoning actions that implement Housing Element commitments. In addition, the bill mandates biennial updates to *CEQA Guidelines* to ensure regulations are current, mitigate litigation, and streamline housing and infrastructure development. These changes reflect a broader policy shift toward facilitating development while maintaining targeted environmental protections, and they are expected to significantly impact the planning and approval processes for both housing and infrastructure projects across California.

b. Regional and Local Regulations

SACOG Metropolitan Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy

As discussed in Section 4.11, *Land Use and Planning,* the City of Auburn is located within the SACOG planning area. The 2050 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP)/SCS, referred to as the Blueprint, was approved by the SACOG Board in November 2025. The Blueprint is a comprehensive planning effort that coordinates land use patterns and transportation investments with the objective of developing an integrated, multimodal transportation system. The Blueprint is built on a set of integrated policies, strategies, and investments to maintain and improve the transportation system to meet the diverse needs of the region through 2050. The Plan describes where and how the region can accommodate the projected 278,000 new dwelling units and 263,000 new jobs between 2025 and 2050 and details the regional transportation investment strategy through 2050.

The Plan includes a land use vision, a transportation vision, and a strategy for integrating land use and transportation to create a more sustainable, resilient region. To better analyze land use patterns and consider scenario alternatives, SACOG uses local land use plans for the MTP/SCS, including adopted and proposed general plans, specific plans, master plans, and corridor plans.

SACOG Regional Housing Needs Assessment

California's Housing Element law requires that each county and city develop local housing programs to meet their "fair share" of future state-wide housing growth needs for all income groups, as determined by the California DOF. The regional councils of government, including SACOG, are then tasked with distributing the State-projected housing growth need for their region among their city and county jurisdictions by income category. This fair share allocation is referred to as the RHNA process. The RHNA represents the minimum number of housing units each community is required to plan for through a combination of: 1) zoning "adequate sites" at suitable densities to provide affordability; and 2) housing programs to support production of below-market rate units. Auburn's allocation from the 2021-2029 RHNA, distributed among the four income categories is shown in Table 4.14-4.

Table 4.14-4 Regional Housing Needs Assessment 2021 – 2029

	City of Auburn		Placer County	
Income Group	**RHNA Allocation**	**Percent of Total**	**RHNA Allocation**	**Percent of Total**
Very Low	68	22%	2,017	27%
Low	41	13%	1,215	16%
Moderate	60	19%	1,242	17%
Above Moderate	141	45%	2,945	40%
Total	**310**	**100%**	**7,419**	**100%**

Note: Totals may not add up due to rounding.

Source: Sacramento Area Council of Governments 2020

As noted under Government Code Section 65589.5(a), the legislature has concluded that "the lack of housing, including emergency shelters, is a critical problem that threatens the economic, environmental, and social quality of life in California." As further acknowledged by the legislature, the lack of housing can result in reduced mobility, urban sprawl, excessive commuting, and air quality deterioration. The General Plan contains state mandated policies and analysis to ensure that the City "facilitate[s] the improvement and development of housing to make adequate provision for the housing needs of all economic segments of the community" (Government Code Section 65580[d]). More specifically, the Legislature's stated intent is "to assure that counties and cities recognize their responsibilities in contributing to the attainment of the state housing goal…to assure that counties and cities will prepare and implement housing elements which…will move toward attainment of the state housing goal" (Government Code Section 65581).

City of Auburn General Plan

The Economic Element of the City's General Plan includes the following goals and policies related to employment growth.

Goal 1: Provide a land development pattern, planning process, and regulatory atmosphere conducive to maintaining and increasing employment opportunities for City residents and fostering new economic development.

Policy 1.2 Actively encourage new industries that will employ city residents.

Policy 1.4 Attempt to increase the number of persons who both work and live in the city.

City of Auburn Housing Element

The City adopted the 2021-2029 Housing Element in May 2021. The updated 2021-2029 Housing Element includes a detailed technical analysis of housing needs, resources, and constraints; and a review of the current Housing Element goals, policies, and programs, which were used to develop new policies and implementation programs. The following goals, and the associated policies, are intended to preserve affordable units and prevent displacement in Auburn as follows:

Goal 1: The City shall provide a range of housing choices that meets the needs of all Auburn residents in terms of type, density, and cost.

Policy 1.1 The City shall maintain an adequate supply of land in appropriate land use designations and zoning categories to accommodate the projected growth in the number of households.

Policy 1.4 The City shall identify areas where infrastructure exists or propose to support residential development.

Policy 1.5 The City shall support preexisting nonconforming residential uses if the single reason that these uses are nonconforming is based on density (number of units), and if the continued existence of these units will not have a major impact on the neighborhood.

Policy 1.6 The City shall encourage the development of accessory dwelling units in accordance with state law, while maintaining the single-family character of the neighborhood.

Goal 2: The City will encourage the maintenance, improvement, and rehabilitation of the City's existing housing stock and residential neighborhoods.

Policy 2.2 The City shall encourage private rehabilitation of housing.

Goal 3: The City will conserve the existing stock of affordable rental housing and offer incentives for the construction of new affordable housing.

Policy 3.1 The City will preserve low-income housing by monitoring "at-risk" subsidized housing when subsidies are in jeopardy of expiring.

Placer County General Plan

The Land Use Element of the County's General Plan includes the following goals and policies related to employment growth.

Goal 1.M: To work toward a jobs-housing balance.

Policy 1.M.2 The County shall encourage large residential projects to be phased or timed to occur simultaneously with development that will provide primary wage-earner jobs.

Policy 1.M.3 The County shall encourage the creation of primary wage-earner jobs, or housing which meets projected income levels, in those areas of Placer County where an imbalance between jobs and housing exists.

Goal 1.N: To maintain a healthy and diverse local economy that meets the present and future employment, shopping, recreational, public safety, and service needs of Placer County residents and to expand the economic base to better serve the needs of residents.

Policy 1.N.2 The County shall encourage the retention, expansion and development of new businesses, especially those that provide primary wage-earner jobs, by designating adequate land and providing infrastructure in areas where resources and public facilities and services can accommodate employment generators.

The Auburn-Bowman Community Plan, which applies countywide policies at a more localized level, includes similar goals and policies related to employment growth.

Placer County Housing Element

The County adopted the 2021-2029 Housing Element in May 2021 and revised the Housing Element in March 2024. The following goals, and the associated policies, are intended to preserve affordable units and prevent displacement in Placer County as follows:

Goal A: New Residential Construction: To provide new housing opportunities to meet the needs of existing and future Placer County residents in all income categories.

Policy HE-A-1 Maintain Adequate Sites. The County shall maintain an adequate supply of appropriately zoned land with public services to accommodate housing needs of existing and future residents.

Policy HE-A-5 Infill Development. The County shall promote and maintain balanced growth by encouraging compatible residential development on infill sites within established communities where urban services are in place.

Policy HE-A-6 Facilitate Multifamily Development. The County shall facilitate the development of higher-density multifamily development in locations where adequate infrastructure and public services are available by permitting residential uses in commercial zones, allowing flexible development standards, and providing other incentives.

Goal D: Preserving the Existing Housing Stock: To improve the County's existing stock of affordable housing and preserve all at-risk units within the unincorporated County.

Policy HE-D-1 Preserve Existing Housing Stock. The County's code enforcement officers shall continue to work with property owners to preserve the existing housing stock and require the abatement of unsafe housing conditions while giving property owners adequate time to correct deficiencies.

Policy HE-D-2 Rehabilitating Units. The County shall allow dwellings to be rehabilitated that do not meet current lot size, setback, or other current zoning standards, so long as the nonconformity is not increased and there is no threat to public health and/or safety.

Policy HE-D-3 Demolition of Multifamily Units. The County shall allow the demolition of existing multifamily units only when a structure is found to be substandard and unsuitable for rehabilitation and shall adhere to State law requiring tenant notice and landlord relocation assistance in cases of demolition of multifamily housing.

Policy HE-D-4 Mobile Home Conversions. The County shall adhere to the requirements of State law regarding mobile home conversions and shall discourage the conversion of mobile home parks to other types of housing and to other land uses except where the living conditions within such parks are such that an alternative land use will better serve the community and/or the residents of the mobile home park or the conversion results in the replacement of such affordable housing.

Policy HE-D-6 Preserve At-risk Housing. The County shall strive to preserve all deed-restricted affordable dwelling units in the unincorporated County that are at risk of converting to market-rate.

4.14.3 Impact Analysis

a. Significance Thresholds and Methodology

Significance Thresholds

Based on Appendix G of the *CEQA Guidelines,* a project may be deemed to have a significant impact on population and housing if it would:

1. Induce substantial unplanned population in an area either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure); or
2. Displace substantial number of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere.

For the purposes of this analysis, substantial population growth is defined as growth exceeding SACOG's population forecasts for Auburn. Substantial displacement would occur if implementation of the project would displace more residences than what would be accommodated through growth facilitated by the project.

Methodology

Population and housing trends were evaluated by reviewing the most current data available from the US Census Bureau, the California DOF, SACOG, and the Demographic Analysis White Paper for the General Plan. Impacts related to population are generally social or economic in nature. Under CEQA, a social or economic change generally is not considered a significant effect on the environment unless the changes are directly linked to a physical change.

b. Project Impacts and Mitigation

Threshold:	Would the project induce substantial unplanned population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)?

Impact POP-1 IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROPOSED PROJECT WOULD FACILITATE THE CONSTRUCTION OF NEW HOUSING IN THE PLANNING AREA. THE 2045 GENERAL PLAN WOULD ACCOMMODATE AND PLAN FOR POPULATION GROWTH AND INCLUDES POLICIES TO MANAGE GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT. IMPACTS WOULD BE LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT.

As described in Section 2.5, *Buildout and 2045 Forecasts*, the environmental analysis contained in this EIR uses a conservative assumption of potential buildout facilitated by the proposed project, not a precise prediction of future growth. Actual buildout will depend on multiple factors, including local economic conditions, market demand, and financing considerations. Additionally, the proposed General Plan itself does not directly result in new development and growth but rather facilitates the future development of land in the Planning Area consistent with proposed land uses.

The proposed project would accommodate approximately 2,570 additional residential units in the Planning Area by the year 2045 (see Table 2-6 in Section 2, *Project Description).* This additional housing would lead to an increase of approximately 5,500 residents in the Planning Area by 2045, with a total population of 34,700 people in the Planning Area, which is greater than SACOG's 2045 population forecast of 31,434 for the Planning Area (SACOG 2025).

However, the population growth associated with the project would not be considered unplanned for several reasons. Buildout under the General Plan Update consists of projected growth facilitated by several approved plans and projects, as well as a defined set of growth and development areas capable of supporting additional housing. The identified growth and development areas are described in detail in Sections 2.4.2 and 2.4.3, and include:

1. Downtown/Old Town
2. Baltimore Ravine Specific Plan Area
3. Train Station Area
4. Nevada Street Corridor
5. Grass Valley Highway (State Route 49)
6. South Auburn Commercial Corridor
7. Upper Lincoln Way
8. Placer County Government Center Master Plan and Timberline
9. State Route 49 Corridor – Central and Upper
10. Bowman/Upper Lincoln
11. Airport Business District

Future development in these areas would be subject to applicable City reviews and approvals. These growth and development areas accommodate most of the projected growth under the proposed General Plan. Furthermore, the State requires that all local governments adequately plan to meet the housing needs of their communities. Given that the State is currently in an ongoing housing crisis due to an insufficient housing supply, the additional residential units accommodated by the proposed project would further assist in addressing the existing housing crisis and meeting the

housing needs of the City's communities. Policies 1.1 and 1.4 from the 6th Cycle Housing Element, adopted in May 2021, support the goals to direct future development within areas that already have appropriate land use designations and existing or planned infrastructure, thereby directing development toward infill and urbanized areas to minimize the impacts of new growth.

In addition, General Plan guiding principles, such as Smart Growth and Housing Choice, along with proposed Land Use policies, including Policy LU-1.1: Complete Community, Policy LU-1.2: Infill Focus, Policy LU-1.3: Key Opportunity Areas, and Policy LU-1.8: Growth and Infrastructure, collectively demonstrate that growth under the project is planned, orderly, and consistent with State housing mandates. As indicated by these proposed policies, the proposed project directs growth into identified growth and development areas and ensures that infrastructure improvements occur only where facilities exist or are planned and emphasizes the development of infill housing. Additionally, the project would not indirectly induce growth, as roadway or infrastructure extensions are not proposed as part of the General Plan Update. Therefore, development facilitated by the proposed project would not directly or indirectly induce unplanned growth in the Planning Area or surrounding areas. Impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures would be required.

Significance After Mitigation

Impacts would be less than significant without mitigation.

Threshold:	Would the project displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?

Impact POP-2 IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROJECT WOULD NOT RESULT IN THE DISPLACEMENT OF SUBSTANTIAL NUMBERS OF HOUSING OR PEOPLE. THE PROJECT WOULD FACILITATE THE DEVELOPMENT OF NEW HOUSING IN ACCORDANCE WITH STATE AND LOCAL HOUSING REQUIREMENTS, WHILE PRESERVING EXISTING RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOODS. IMPACTS WOULD BE LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT.

Substantial displacement would occur if allowed land uses would displace more residences than would be accommodated through growth facilitated by the project. The project would accommodate new development in the Planning Area as listed above in Impact POP-1 and in Section 2.4, *Auburn 2045 General Plan Update.* At full buildout, the proposed project would result in approximately 2,570 new housing units developed by 2045. The types of housing units anticipated under the proposed project would generally fall into the following categories of development projects: single-family residential, multi-family residential, accessory dwelling units, and/or mixed-use development on vacant sites, and redevelopment of existing non-vacant sites that would allow for residential use.

Future redevelopment of parcels in the Planning Area containing existing housing units may result in the removal of existing residences. However, because the General Plan Update is anticipated to add approximately 2,570 housing units to the Planning Area by 2045 compared to existing conditions, anticipated future development would result in a net increase in housing in the City. The proposed project supports compact growth patterns and expanded housing opportunities, consistent with State and regional planning goals, as described under Impact POP-1. Housing Element Policies 1.5, 2.2, and 3.1 further minimize the potential displacement by prioritizing the preservation, improvement, and expansion of existing housing stock. In addition, proposed Land Use policies LU-

1.9 (Housing Sites) and LU-3.3 (Missing Middle Housing) promote infill development and the redevelopment of underutilized areas. These development patterns would minimize residential displacement.

Furthermore, the California Relocation Assistance Act of 1971 would apply to potential future development facilitated by the General Plan and requires notification, counseling, social services, and financial assistance for persons displaced by transportation and land redevelopment projects. These procedural protections and benefits apply when the project causing the displacement has received State funding during any phase of the program or project. Through this program as well as the project objectives and policies stated above, the General Plan Update would not result in the net loss or displacement of housing and would not require the construction of replacement housing elsewhere. Impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures would be required.

Significance After Mitigation

Impacts would be less than significant without mitigation.

4.14.4 Cumulative Impacts

The geographic scope of the cumulative population and housing analysis is the Planning Area and adjacent jurisdictions. This geographic scope is appropriate because projections at this level are used to estimate the need for public services and other government facilities and programs. The cumulative analysis considers the nearby past, present, and reasonably future plans and projects listed in Table 3-1 in Section 3, *Environmental Setting,* in addition to the proposed plan.

Cumulative plans and projects would increase the population of Auburn and areas of unincorporated Placer County near Auburn. However, cumulative development would be subject to applicable plans, specifically the Placer County General Plan, city General Plans, and local Specific Plans or Area Plans, all of which contain policies and proposed development patterns concentrating growth in defined areas, supporting infill and redevelopment, and ensuring that necessary infrastructure and services are available for future development. Because the proposed plan and applicable cumulative plans are designed for planned and orderly growth and residential development would be completed in accordance with State law, cumulative development would not directly or indirectly induce substantial unplanned growth. As such, while other cumulative development would facilitate direct population growth, cumulative projects would result in a less than significant cumulative impact associated with direct population growth.

Cumulative development would result in the construction of additional residential units that would exceed the number of existing units removed as part of redevelopment. Therefore, cumulative development would not result in a net loss of housing, and cumulative impacts related to the displacement of housing would be less than significant.

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4.15 Public Services and Recreation

This section describes existing public services and recreational facilities in the project area and assesses the potential impacts to public services, including fire protection, police, schools, libraries, parks, and recreational facilities, resulting from implementation of the proposed project.

4.15.1 Setting

a. Fire Protection Services

Auburn is serviced by the Auburn Fire Department (AFD), responsible for fire protection and emergency services within City limits. AFD services include wildfire prevention, inspections, fire and hazardous materials response, emergency medical services, and urban search and rescue. AFD operates three fire stations. However, two of the three fire stations are presently closed. Fire stations and associated equipment include:

- Station 1 (Martin Park Fire Station), 485 High Street – Unstaffed; includes two engines.
- Station 2 (Gietzen Station), 226 Sacramento Street – Fully staffed and operational 24 hours per day; includes two engines and a light rescue vehicle.
- Station 3 (Maidu Station), 901 Auburn Folsom Road – Staffed with a Battalion Chief; includes one engine and one water tender.

In 2024, AFD employed 20 full-time equivalent personnel, including 2 administrative full-time equivalent, 18 operations full-time equivalent, and one administrative volunteer, with four positions frozen. The Department does not maintain a formal staffing ratio standard; however, in early 2024, AFD had approximately 1.29 firefighters per 1,000 residents, slightly below the national average of 1.54 to 1.81 firefighters per 1,000 residents (National Fire Protection Association 2022).

Auburn's adopted performance target is to respond to fire and emergency medical incidents within five minutes or less for 90 percent of calls, while the National Fire Protection Association standards recommend responding to structure fires within six minutes for 90 percent of calls. Placer County Fire Department (PCFD) guidelines for local fire districts is four minutes in urban areas, six minutes in suburban areas, and ten minutes in rural areas. According to the 2025 Annual Report, AFD had an average Code 3 (emergency response) travel time of 3:52 (City of Auburn 2025a). Fire service capability is classified by the Insurance Services Office, assigning numeric ratings based on facilities, water supply, alarms and communications, equipment, and staffing (City of Auburn 2025b). In 2024, AFD held an Insurance Services Office rating of "2/2Y." Under this split classification, "2" applies to properties within five road miles of a fire station and within 1,000 feet of a creditable water source, while "2Y" applies to properties within five road miles of a station but beyond 1,000 feet of a creditable water supply. The "Y" designation reflects enhanced fire suppression capabilities despite water supply limitations.

Over the past decade, AFD has experienced a sustained increase in service demand, with annual call volumes rising from approximately 1,833 calls in 2015 to 2,462 calls in 2024, representing a 34-percent increase despite relatively stable population levels (City of Auburn 2025c).

AFD participates in the Western Placer County Cooperative Fire Services Response Agreement, where all western Placer County fire agencies have agreed to support each other on incidents using the closest available resource. Furthermore, AFD participates in the California Fire and Rescue

Mutual Aid System and operates under a Mutual Threat Zone Agreement with CAL FIRE under which any wildland fire occurring within or adjacent to either the City of Auburn or CAL FIRE jurisdiction triggers a joint initial response from both agencies. Table 4.15-1 summarizes the type and number of incidents AFD responded to in 2024.

Table 4.15-1 Auburn City Fire Department Incidents, 2024

Type of Incident	Number of Incidents	Percent of Total (%)
Fire	98	4.0
Rescue & EMS	1,477	60.0
Hazardous Condition	49	2.0
Service Calls	222	9.0
Weather / Disasters	25	1.0
False Alarms	123	5.0
Good Intent	468	19.0
Total All Incidents	**2,462**	

Source: City of Auburn 2024

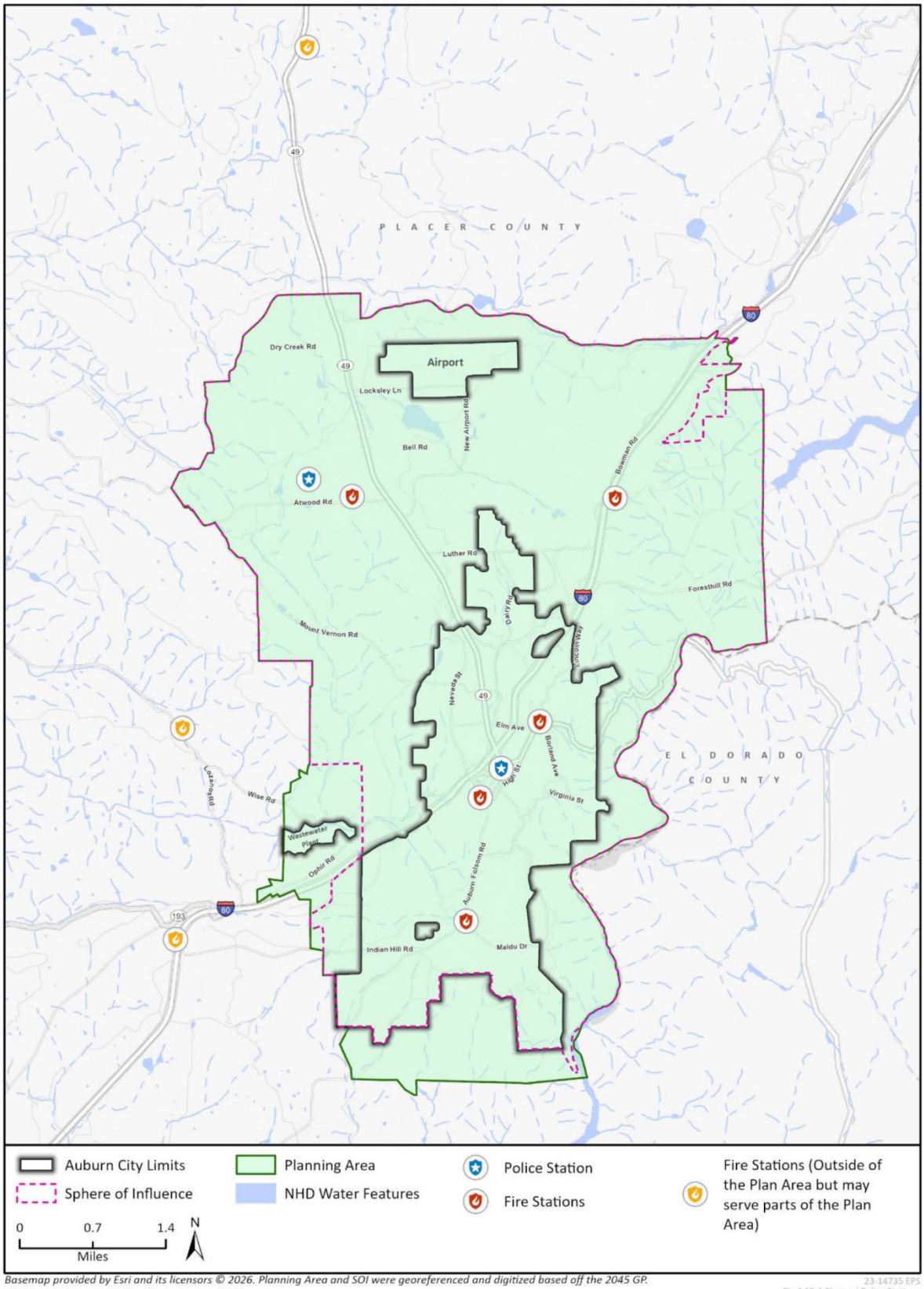
Outside the Auburn city limits, fire protection is provided by the PCFD and the Nevada-Yuba Placer Unit of CAL FIRE (CAL FIRE 2025). The County has four fire stations in the unincorporated Auburn Area (see Figure 4.15-1):

- Station 10 (CAL FIRE regional headquarters), 13760 Lincoln Way – staffed 24 hours a day.
- Station 180 (County Government Center), 11645 Atwood – staffed 24 hours a day 6
- Station 182, (outside the Planning Area near Ophir), 9305 Wise Road – may serve parts of the Mount Vernon and Ophir Road areas
- Station 181 (outside the Planning Area on Highway 49), Lone Star – may serve some of the Dry Creek area
- Station 41 (outside the Planning Area near I-80), 9350 Old State Highway, Newcastle – may serve the unincorporated southern portion of Planning Area

b. Police Services

The Auburn Police Department (APD) provides law enforcement services to the City of Auburn. APD headquarters is located at 1215 Lincoln Way in Downtown Auburn. APD headquarters are staffed by three command staff, six management staff, nine professional staff, and an additional 13 sworn staff members. Moreover, there are approximately 18 volunteers, assisting with live scanning and fingerprinting, special events, record retention, and the Drug Take Back program.

Figure 4.15-1 Fire and Police Stations in the Planning Area



Basemap provided by Esri and its licensors © 2026. Planning Area and SOI were georeferenced and digitized based off the 2045 GP.
Additional data provided by Placer County, 2025.

23-14735 EPS
Fig 4.15-1 Fire and Police Stations

APD is responsible for routine patrol activities, traffic enforcement, 9-1-1 dispatch, criminal investigations, stolen property and evidence management, records, homelessness response, code enforcement, and related law enforcement services. Furthermore, APD utilizes an Automated License Plate Reader system, allowing law enforcement to proactively locate stolen vehicles, gather investigative information to solve serious or violent crimes, and locate missing or wanted persons. Furthermore, APD utilizes Community-Oriented Policing model that prioritizes, but is not limited to involvement in a Community Advisory Council, a Community Action Team, and attending community business meetings and work with the business community to assess and address public safety issues. APD participates in the development review process, including licensing of new businesses and applying Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design principles during the review of proposed projects. A dedicated Code Enforcement Officer works with Planning and other City departments to investigate and abate illegal construction, dangerous structures, debris, fence violations, abandoned vehicles, and other public nuisances.

APD has an internal communication center that fields all incoming calls and dispatches police to calls for service. In 2024, APD received 27,444 total calls, including 3,586 9-1-1 calls, 2,023 emergency calls, and 21,835 non-emergency calls (City of Auburn 2025b). Calls requiring response are categorized as Priority 1, 2, or 3, and although APD has not adopted a formal response-time standard, the Department tracks response performance by call priority. In 2024, average response times were 4 minutes, 42 seconds for Priority 1 calls (701 calls), 4 minutes, 56 seconds for Priority 2 calls (3,430 calls), and 9 minutes, 17 seconds for Priority 3 calls (2,834 calls). As with most jurisdictions, response times vary depending on officer availability and patrol car location at the time of dispatch.

Placer County Sheriff's Office (PCSO) provides law enforcement services to the unincorporated areas of the Planning Area. PCSO also provides a number of services within the City limits, including but limited to Coroner's Office investigations, courtroom security at the historic Courthouse, and the care of unclaimed animals. Furthermore, the Placer County Probation Department coordinates with the APD on investigations and case management.

c. Schools

Auburn Union School District (AUSD) (grades K-8) and the Placer Union High School District (PUHSD) (grades 9-12) serve all areas within the Auburn city limits as well as most of the unincorporated Planning Area. Additionally, parts of the unincorporated parts of the Planning Area are served by the Ackerman Elementary School District, and small portions of other elementary school districts. Table 4.15-2 includes a list of all K-12 schools that serve the Planning Area.

Small portions of the Planning Area on the western edge are within the Newcastle Union School District and the Loomis Union School District. These areas are rural residential in character, with a small number of homes within the Auburn Planning Area. In addition, the northeastern edge of the Planning Area along Dry Creek Road is in the Placer Hills Union School District and a small area of federal land east of the city limits is in the Foresthill School District. The Auburn General Plan does not anticipate land use changes or density increases in these areas, therefore impacts to these school districts are not discussed in this chapter.

According to Auburn General Plan 2045 Existing Conditions; Community Services Report enrollment in the AUSD has declined from 2,060 students in 2014–2015 to 1,452 students in 2023–2024, an approximately 30 percent decrease in less than a decade. The decline accelerated during the COVID-19 pandemic, with a cumulative 400-student decrease between 2019–2020 and 2023–2024. On a school-by-school basis, district realignment of boundaries and grade levels affected enrollment

numbers. The closure of Alta Vista and Rock Creek Schools resulted in a 91-percent enrollment increase at Auburn Elementary and a 51-percent increase at Skyridge between 2023 and 2024. Prior to district realignment and closures, both Skyridge Elementary and Auburn Elementary had experienced gradual decreased enrollment (City of Auburn 2025c).

Table 4.15-2 Schools Located in Planning Area

School	Grade Level	Current Enrollment (2023-2024, 2024-2025)[1, 2]
Auburn Unified School District		
E.V. Cain School	TK-8	472
Auburn Elementary School	K-5	547
Skyridge Elementary School	K-8	427
Ackerman Charter School District		
Bowman School	TK-8	603
Placer Union High School District		
Colfax High	9-12	628
Del Oro High	9-12	1,622
Foresthill High	9-12	194
Placer High	9-12	1,303
Maidu Virtual Charter Academy	Alternative School	115
Confluence Continuation High	Alternative School	100

[1] City of Auburn 2025c

[2] 2023-2024 enrollment numbers for Auburn Unified School District, 2024-2025 enrollment numbers for Ackerman Charter School District and Placer Union High School District

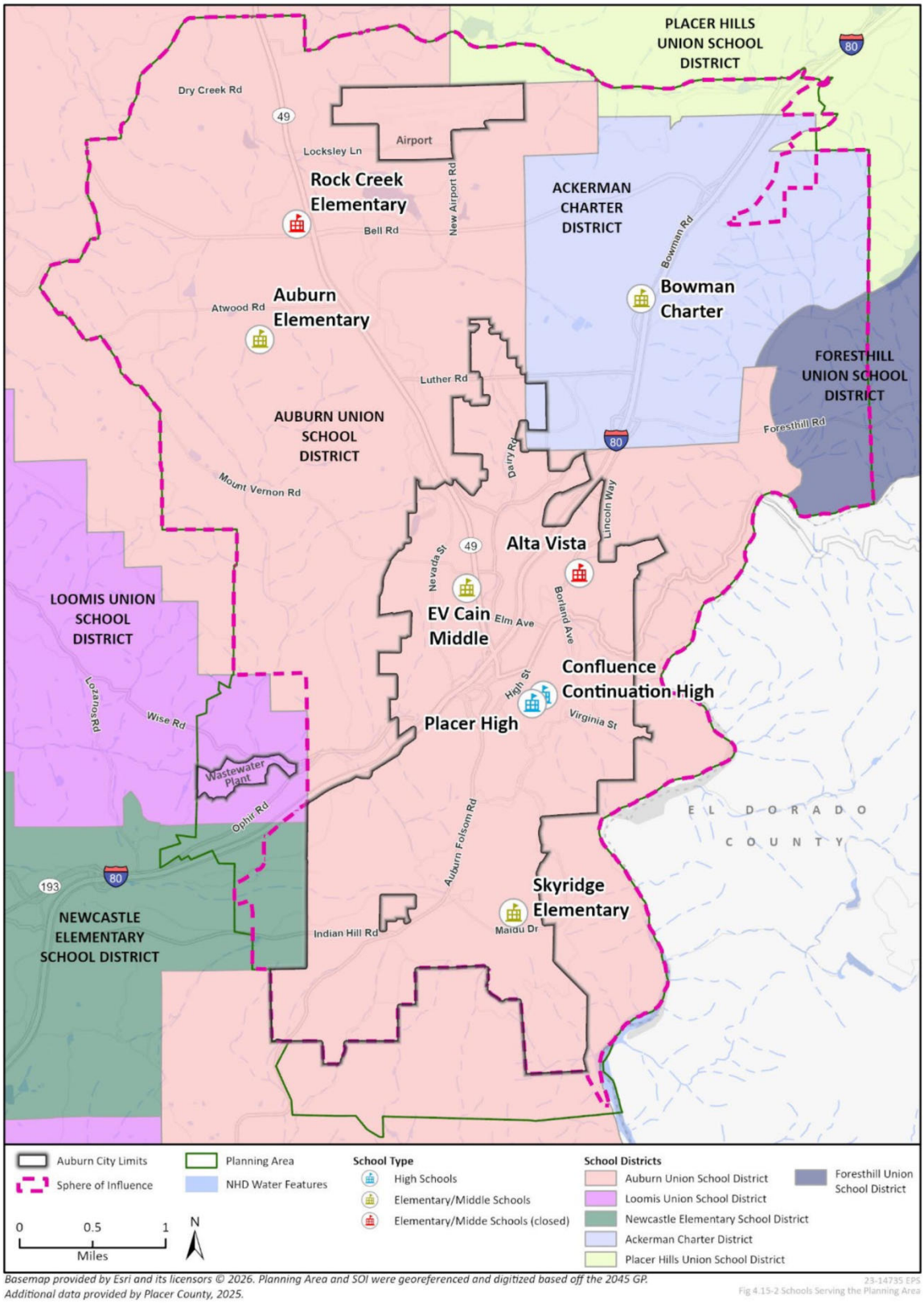
TK = transitional kindergarten

PUHSD enrollment decreased 4 percent between 2014–2015 (4,137 students) and 2023–2024 (3,975 students), with year-to-year fluctuations (increases from 2019–2021 and decreases during 2015–2019 and 2021–2023). At the local level, Placer High School followed a similar pattern; 1,386 students in 2014–2015, 1,306 students in 2017–2018, 1,389 students in 2021–2022, and 1,303 students in 2023–2024, with smaller yearly changes than observed in AUSD's TK–8 student population (City of Auburn 2025c).

Under Education Code Section 17620 (AB 2926) and Government Code Section 65995, California school districts may levy development impact fees to construct or reconstruct school facilities. Fees must be supported by a fee justification study demonstrating a reasonable relationship between new development and the need for additional school capacity. The State Allocation Board updates the maximum Level 1 fees every two years. As of January 24, 2024, the maximum Level 1 fees are $5.17 per square foot for residential and $0.84 per square foot for commercial/industrial development. Because separate districts serve TK–8 and 9–12 in Auburn, Level 1 fees are split between AUSD and PUHSD based on grade capacity: AUSD receives 60 percent and PUHSD receives 40 percent of the residential Level 1 fee.

The location of schools in the Planning Area is shown in Figure 4.15-2.

Figure 4.15-2 Schools Serving the Planning Area



Basemap provided by Esri and its licensors © 2026. Planning Area and SOI were georeferenced and digitized based off the 2045 GP.
Additional data provided by Placer County, 2025.

23-14735 EPS
Fig 4.15-2 Schools Serving the Planning Area

d. Public Libraries

Placer County Library was established as a county department in 1937, serving the city of Auburn and unincorporated Placer County. Placer County Library operates nine library facilities, including the Auburn Public Library, located within Auburn city limits at 350 Nevada Street.

The Placer County Library prepared a Strategic Plan for 2020–2025, outlining goals for service delivery, operations, and future facility needs (Placer County 2019). In 2022, Placer County Library conducted a comprehensive Library Services Study (Study) assessing funding, governance, staffing, operations, and facility conditions (Placer County 2022). The Study found strong community support for the library system but noted that additional funding, staffing, and partnerships would be required to maintain the existing network of branches.

The Auburn Public Library is one of the largest facilities in the Placer County system, totaling 21,000 square feet, of which approximately 16,000 square feet is dedicated to public services. The building also houses systemwide administrative and operational functions, including fiscal support, mobile library services, and materials management. Amenities include community meeting rooms, an outdoor patio, restrooms, and adjacent on-site parking. The Study found the facility to be efficiently organized with good sight lines and spatial layout.

In early 2025, the Auburn Public Library temporarily closed for renovation and modernization, with reopening anticipated in Summer 2026. Planned improvements include accessibility upgrades, enhanced electrical and HVAC systems, installation of an elevator, fire sprinklers, lighting and technology upgrades, and building safety enhancements. During construction, library services have been relocated to 2980 Richardson Drive in North Auburn.

According to the Library Services Study, the Auburn Library operated with 8.75 full-time equivalent employees in 2020 and recorded a circulation of 339,855 items, representing approximately 20 percent of countywide staffing and 37 percent of total countywide circulation. The Placer County Library's Strategic Plan identifies ongoing systemwide challenges, including the need for public-private partnerships, technology improvements, expanded stakeholder support, enhanced volunteer engagement, and provision of safe, flexible, 21st-century library spaces.

e. Parks and Recreation

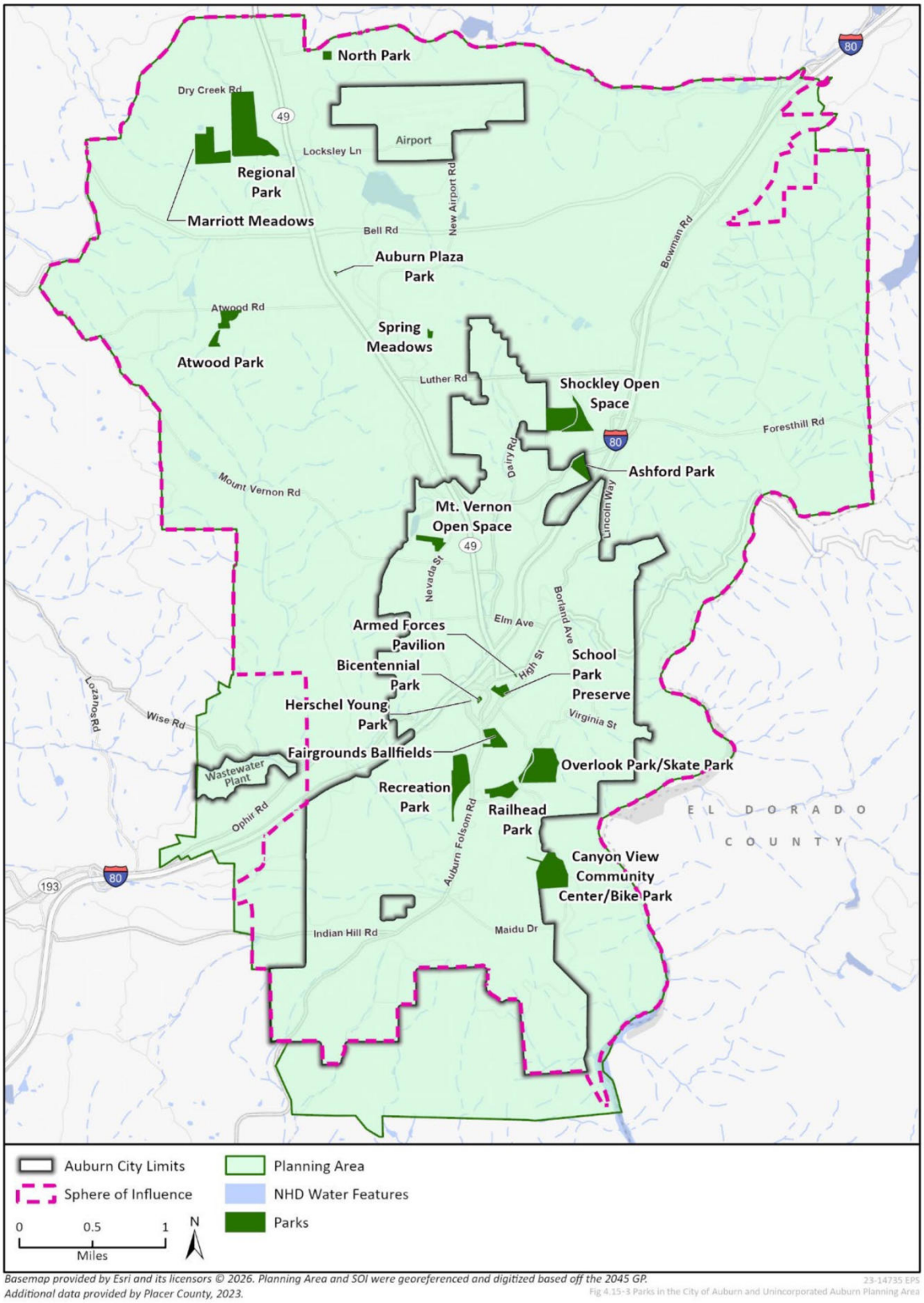
Park and recreational services in the city of Auburn and the unincorporated parts of the Planning Area are provided by the Auburn Recreation District (ARD), which operates a system of parks and recreation facilities (City of Auburn 1993) and the Placer County Resources Conservation District. ARD serves a 55-square mile area with an estimated population of 42,000 residents. Recreation services in the Auburn area are primarily provided by the ARD; however, ownership of parkland within the service area is varied. Several ARD parks are located on federal land, some facilities are owned by the City, and one site is situated on private property subject to a conservation easement held by the Placer County Resource Conservation District. Within City limits, School Park Preserve, Bicentennial Park, and Auburn Ravine Trail Park are owned and operated by the City of Auburn. Placer County Parks Department oversees parks and recreational facilities in the unincorporated areas surrounding the city. Furthermore, Auburn State Recreation Area is operated by the State of California on federal land under the jurisdiction of the Bureau of Reclamation.

Figure 4.15-3 and Table 4.15-3 identify park facilities and types in the City of Auburn and the unincorporated parts of the Planning Area. The types of parks in the Planning Area include regional parks, community parks, neighborhood parks, pocket parks, and special use parks. The General Plan 2045 Community Services Report categorizes these parks and open spaces as follows:

- **Regional Parks** draw visitors from throughout Placer County and offer unique amenities. These include facilities such as Hidden Falls Regional Park (outside the Planning Area boundary) and Regional Park on Richardson Drive in North Auburn. Regional Parks are typically large and have the most diverse range of facilities and amenities
- **Community Parks** primarily serve residents from Auburn and attract users from around town. Community parks are typically 10 acres or larger and may include a variety of facilities such as recreation centers, swimming pools, tennis courts, restrooms, and multi-use athletic fields.
- **Neighborhood Parks** serve a more limited geographic area than community parks. They are within walking distance of many users, with a service area radius of one-half mile and a service area population of 2,000 to 5,000 residents. Neighborhood parks are typically between one and ten acres in size and include a range of facilities such as softball fields, playgrounds and tot lots, lawn areas, picnic areas, and basketball courts. Ashford Park is an example.
- **Pocket Parks** are less than an acre in size and draw from a smaller service area than neighborhood parks, such as a quarter-mile radius. Facilities in these parks are usually limited to small landscaped areas, benches, picnic tables, and places to sit and enjoy nature. In Auburn, this type of park commonly appears in neighborhoods and subdivisions, sometimes with a children's play structure and picnic area.
- **Special Use Parks** include parks that serve a unique purpose or activity. Such parks play an important role in meeting community-wide cultural and recreational needs or showcasing special community features.

Auburn Municipal Code does not establish a parkland acreage standard for residents in Auburn, although a standard of 5 acres per 1,000 was established by the 1993 General Plan.

Figure 4.15-3 Parks in the Planning Area



Basemap provided by Esri and its licensors © 2026. Planning Area and SOI were georeferenced and digitized based off the 2045 GP.
Additional data provided by Placer County, 2023.

23-14735 EPS
Fig 4.15-3 Parks in the City of Auburn and Unincorporated Auburn Planning Area

Table 4.15-3 Parks in the City of Auburn and Unincorporated Auburn Planning Area

#	Facility	Acres	Park Type
Parks in the City of Auburn[1]			
1	Recreation Park/ James Field	22.1	Community Park
2	Ashford Park/ Ashley Dog Park	7.3	Neighborhood Park
3	Railhead Park[2]	9.1	Neighborhood Park
4	Nevada St./Mt Vernon Open Space	6.9	Neighborhood Park
5	Overlook Park / State Park	33.4	Special Use
6	Gold Country Fairgrounds (Ballfields only)	8.8	Special Use
7	Bicentennial Park	0.6	Special Use
8	Auburn Ravine Trail Park	0.9	Special Use
9	School Park Preserve	4.3	Special Use
10	Herschel Young Park	0.1	Special Use
11	Armed Forces Pavilion & Community Garden	0.4	Special Use
	Subtotal	**93.9[3]**	
Parks in the Unincorporated Auburn Planning Area[1]			
12	Regional Park	62.0	Regional Park
13	Atwood Park	10.9	Neighborhood Park
14	North Park	2.7	Neighborhood Park
15	Spring Meadows	0.5	Neighborhood Park
16	Auburn Plaza	0.2	Pocket Park
17	Canyon View Community Center/ Bike Park[2]	38.0	Special Use
	Subtotal	**114.30[4]**	
	Total	**208.20**	

[1] Excludes passive open space areas, school facilities, plazas/monuments, and State Recreation Area

[2] Federally owned land, maintained by ARD

[3] 6.87 acres/ 1,000 residents, based on a population of 13,625 from Department of Finance

[4] 7.14 acres / 1,000 residents, based on a population of 16,000 from unincorporated area

Source: City of Auburn 2025c

4.15.2 Regulatory Setting

a. Federal Regulations

Disaster Mitigation Act

Section 104 of the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 (Public Law 106-390) requires a state mitigation plan as a condition of disaster assistance. There are two different levels of state disaster plans: Standard and Enhanced. States that develop an approved Enhanced State Plan can increase the amount of funding available through the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program. The Act also requires local communities to develop and maintain hazard mitigation plans as a condition for receiving certain types of federal disaster assistance. The Placer County Local Hazard Mitigation Plan is discussed under c. *Regional and Local Regulations.*

National Fire Plan

The National Fire Plan was developed in August 2000, following a landmark wildland fire season. Its intent is to actively respond to severe wildland fires and their impacts to communities, while ensuring sufficient firefighting capacity for the future. The plan addresses firefighting, rehabilitation, hazardous fuels reduction, community assistance, and accountability.

b. State Regulations

California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection Strategic Plan 2024

The CAL FIRE Strategic Plan 2024 is the state's road map for reducing the risk of wildfire. The most recent version of the plan was finalized in January 2024 and directs each CAL FIRE Unit to address and meet incremental requirements to achieve six specific goals, including improving core capabilities, enhancing internal operations, ensuring health and safety, and building an engaged workforce (CAL FIRE 2024).

California Fire Code (Title 24, Part 9, California Code of Regulations)

The California Fire Code incorporates the Uniform Fire Code with necessary California amendments. This Code prescribes regulations consistent with nationally recognized good practices for the safeguarding, to a reasonable degree, of life and property from the hazards of fire explosion. It also addresses dangerous conditions arising from the storage, handling, and use of hazardous materials and devices; conditions hazardous to life or property in the use or occupancy of buildings or premises; and provisions to assist emergency response personnel.

California State Hazard Mitigation Plan

The purpose of the State of California Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan (SHMP) is to significantly reduce deaths, injuries, and other losses attributed to natural and human-caused hazards in California. The SHMP provides guidance for hazard mitigation activities emphasizing partnerships among local, state, and federal agencies as well as the private sector. The California Office of Emergency Services prepares the SHMP, and in it identifies risks and includes a vulnerability analysis and a hazard mitigation strategy. The SHMP is federally required under the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 for the state to receive federal funding.

California Health and Safety Code (Sections 13000 et seq.)

This code establishes state fire regulations, including regulations for building standards (also set forth in the California Building Code), fire protection and notification systems, fire protection devices such as extinguishers and smoke alarms, high-rise building and childcare facility standards, and fire suppression training.

Assembly Bill 747 (2019)

Assembly Bill (AB) 747 (2019) requires local hazard mitigation plans and safety elements of general plans to be reviewed and updated, as necessary, to identify evacuation routes and their capacity, safety, and viability under a range of emergency scenarios. AB 747 authorizes a city or county that has adopted a local hazard mitigation plan, emergency operations plan, or other document that fulfills commensurate goals and objectives to use that information in the safety element of the

general plan to comply with this requirement by summarizing and incorporating by reference that other plan or document in the safety element.

Senate Bill 99 (2019)

Senate Bill (SB) 99 (2019) requires that, during the next housing element revision, safety elements of general plans be reviewed and updated to identify residential developments in any hazard area that do not have at least two evacuation routes.

California Constitution Article XIII, Section 35

Section 35 of Article XIII of the California Constitution was adopted by the voters in 1993 under Proposition 172. Proposition 172 directed the proceeds of a 0.5 percent sales tax to be expended exclusively for local public safety services, including police services. California Government Code Sections 30051 - 30056 provide rules to implement Proposition 172. Agencies are required to use Proposition 172 to supplement their local funds for police, as well as other public safety services. Section 35 at subdivision (a)(2) provides: "The protection of public safety is the first responsibility of local government and local officials have an obligation to give priority to the provision of adequate public safety services."

California Code of Regulations (Title 5)

Title 5, California Code of Regulations (Education) governs all aspects of education in the state, and allows school districts to prepare developer fees.

The School Facilities Act of 1986 (AB 2926) was enacted and added to California Government Code (CGC; CGC Section 65995) in 1986. It authorizes school districts to collect development fees, based on demonstrated need, and to generate revenue for school districts for capital acquisitions and improvements. It also established maximum fees which may be collected under this and any other school fee authorization.

AB 2926 was expanded and revised in 1987 through the passage of AB 1600, which added Section 66000 *et seq.* to the CGC. Under this statute, payment of statutory fees by developers serves as exclusive mitigation under CEQA to satisfy the impact of development on school facilities.

School Facilities Bond Act: California Senate Bill 50

As part of the further refinement of the legislation enacted under AB 2926, the passage of the School Facilities Bond Act (SB 50) in 1998 defined the needs analysis process in CGC Sections 65995.5 through 65998. Under the provisions of SB 50, school districts may collect fees to offset the costs associated with increasing school capacity because of development. SB 50 generally provides for an equal state and local school facilities match and three levels of statutory impact fees. The application level depends on whether state funding is available; whether the school district is eligible for state funding; and whether the school district meets certain additional criteria involving bonding capacity, year-round schools, and the percentage of moveable classrooms in use.

CGC Sections 65995 through 65998 implement AB 2926, as amended by SB 50. In accordance with Section 65995(h), the payment of statutory fees is "deemed to be full and complete mitigation of the impacts of any legislative or adjudicative act, or both, involving, but not limited to, the planning, use, or development of real property, or any change in governmental organization or reorganization…on the provision of adequate school facilities."

Pursuant to CGC Section 65995(i), "a State or local agency may not deny or refuse to approve a legislative or adjudicative act, or both, involving, but not limited to, the planning, use, or development of real property, or any change in governmental organization or reorganization as defined in section 56021 or 56073 on the basis of a person's refusal to provide school facilities mitigation that exceeds the amounts authorized pursuant to this section or pursuant to section 65995.5 or 65995.7, as applicable."

California Education Code Section 17620(a)(1) states the governing board of any school district is authorized to levy a fee, charge, dedication, or other requirement against any construction within the boundaries of the district, for the purpose of funding the construction or reconstruction of school facilities.

Quimby Act

The Quimby Act (CGC Section 66477) was established by the California Legislature in 1965 to provide parks for growing communities in California. The Act authorizes cities to adopt ordinances addressing park land and/or fees for residential subdivisions for the purpose of providing and preserving open space and recreational facilities and improvements. The Act requires the provision of 3 acres of park area per 1,000 persons residing in a subdivision, unless the amount of existing neighborhood and community park area exceeds that limit, in which case the county or city may adopt a higher standard not to exceed 5 acres per 1,000 residents. The Act also specifies acceptable uses and expenditures of such funds. Revenues generated through the Quimby Act cannot be used for the operation and maintenance of parks.

c. Local Regulations

Auburn Municipal Code

Section 100.50 of the Auburn Municipal Code adopts the California Fire Code by reference with local amendments pertaining to fire service features, fire protection systems, and fire apparatus access. These provisions are either identical to or more stringent than the requirements of the California Building Code. Section 100.58 outlines Auburn's supplemental standards to ensure adequate fire protection capacity, emergency access, and infrastructure for new development and existing structures.

City of Auburn Safety Element (2021)

The City updated the General Plan Safety Element in May 2021. The Element identifies and outlines goals and policies for public services including the following:

Goal 2: Coordinated emergency and disaster preparedness, response, mitigation, and recovery.

Policy 2.4	Maintain a reasonable response time and appropriate staffing among emergency response services for all sections of the community.
Policy 2.5	Support citizen engagement and training in emergency management and response.
Policy 2.8	Ensure City facilities are capable of providing and sustaining essential services during times of emergencies and disasters

Goal 8: Improved public safety and reduced crime levels in Auburn.

Policy 8.1 Maintain police response times sufficient to rapidly respond to 911 calls

Policy 8.2 Ensure that new development projects use environmental design to reduce the risk of crime

Policy 8.3 Continue to promote citizen engagement in crime in existing crime reduction programs.

Auburn General Plan 1993

The current Auburn General Plan, adopted in 1993, includes policies that aim to reduce impacts to public services, schools, and open space. Policies applicable to the project include:

Goal 9: Develop a land use pattern which can be adequately served with community facilities (such as schools, libraries, and community recreation), urban services, and transportation facilities.

Policy 9.1 The City will continue to seek new and maintain existing sources of funding to develop, operate and maintain community facilities, urban services and transportation facilities.

Policy 9.2 Allow residential development only in those areas where adequate public facilities are available or will be provided with development.

Goal 10: Establish a rate of development that allows public service providers to keep pace with growth.

Policy 10.1 Utilize development standards and annexation to promote open space and to manage the rate, location, and type of growth

Goal 12: Provide for an adequate and safe educational environment.

Policy 12.1 The City shall work closely with the school districts to ensure that school sites are dedicated or reserved for purchase by the districts.

Policy 12.2 The City shall work closely with the school districts to establish adequate funding sources for new school facilities.

Policy 12.3 The City shall allow development only if adequate school facilities exist or will be available in a timely manner.

Policy 12.4 The City shall forward all development projects to the school district and consider all responses as part of the development review process.

Policy 12.6 The City, school districts, and the Auburn Recreation District shall work closely together so that joint park/school sites shall be developed wherever possible.

Placer County General Plan

The current Placer County General Plan was updated in May 2013. Public safety and emergency management are addressed in the Health and Safety Element which was updated as recently as October 2021. It identifies and outlines goals and policies for public safety, including the following:

Goal 8.E.1: To ensure the maintenance of an Emergency Management Program to effectively prepare for, respond to, recover from, and mitigate the effects of natural, human-made, or technological disasters.

Policy 8.E.1.6 The County shall continue to coordinate emergency preparedness, response, recovery, and mitigation activities with special districts, service agencies, voluntary organizations, cities within the County, surrounding cities and counties, and state and federal agencies.

Policy 8.E.1.7 The County shall monitor the effectiveness of public safety, preparedness, and hazard mitigation policies under changing climate conditions. The County shall regularly update all appropriate planning documents, including the Public Health and Safety Element and the Local Hazard Mitigation Plan, to continue to protect the community as local conditions change

Goal 8.E.2: To protect public health and safety through safe location of structures necessary for the protection of public safety and/or the provision of emergency services.

Policy 8.E.2.2 The County shall, within its authority, ensure that emergency dispatch centers, emergency operations centers, communications systems, vital utilities, and other essential public facilities necessary for the continuity of government be designed and retrofitted in a manner that will allow them to remain operational during and following an earthquake or other disaster.

Local (Multi-Jurisdictional) Hazard Mitigation Plan

The City is a participant in the Placer County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan. Originally adopted in 2005 and most recently updated in 2021, the Hazard Mitigation Plan is a county-wide, FEMA-approved planning document developed in coordination with the California Governor's Office of Emergency Services, FEMA, special districts, and all participating jurisdictions, including the City of Auburn. The Hazard Mitigation Plan identifies natural hazards affecting Placer County, evaluates associated risks, and establishes long-term mitigation strategies aimed at reducing future losses. Auburn is one of the participating municipalities incorporated into the plan's risk assessment and mitigation framework. The Hazard Mitigation Plan provides hazard profiles, vulnerability assessments, and a countywide Mitigation Strategy (Chapter 5), which outlines actions related to local plans and regulations, infrastructure projects, natural systems protection, and community preparedness programs. Implementation of these strategies helps ensure that Auburn continues to integrate hazard mitigation principles into daily government operations and future development review processes. An update of the Hazard Mitigation Plan is currently underway.

4.15.3 Impact Analysis

a. Significance Thresholds and Methodology

Significance Thresholds

Based on Appendix G of the *CEQA Guidelines*, the proposed project would have a significant impact on public services and recreation if it would:

1. Result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the need for or provision of new or physically altered government facilities, the construction of which could cause significant

environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times, or other objectives for:

a. fire protection,
b. police protection,
c. schools,
d. parks,
e. other public facilities;

2. Increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated; or
3. Include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment.

Additionally, for impacts to be considered significant, development of these public services would also have to result in a significant physical environmental impact not already analyzed and disclosed in the other resource chapters of this EIR.

Methodology

The emphasis of the public services and recreation analysis is on the existing conditions of fire, police, schools, library, and other public services; the existing conditions of recreational facilities; and the potential impact of buildout facilitated by the project on these services and facilities.

b. Project Impacts and Mitigation

Threshold 1.a:	Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered fire protection facilities, or the need for new or physically altered fire protection facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives?

Impact PS-1 DEVELOPMENT FACILITATED BY THE PROJECT WOULD NOT RESULT IN SUBSTANTIAL ADVERSE PHYSICAL IMPACTS ASSOCIATED WITH THE CONSTRUCTION OF NEW OR PHYSICALLY ALTERED FIRE FACILITIES TO MAINTAIN ACCEPTABLE SERVICE RATIO RESPONSE TIMES OR OTHER OBJECTIVES. IMPACTS WOULD BE LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT.

As discussed in Chapter 2, *Project Description*, development facilitated by the project would result in a population increase of approximately 5,500 new residents, growing the Planning Area from its current estimated population of 29,200 to approximately 34,700 residents by 2045. This increase in population and associated housing would incrementally increase demand for fire protection and emergency medical services provided by the AFD and mutual-aid agreements with western Placer County fire agencies. To accommodate long-term growth, AFD may need to adjust staffing levels, equipment deployment, or facility capacity. If future service demands necessitate the construction or expansion of fire facilities, the placement and design of such improvements cannot be determined at this programmatic stage. Any future construction of new or expanded fire stations would be subject to separate environmental review under CEQA, allowing for project-specific mitigation measures to be identified and applied as appropriate.

Fire protection services in Auburn are funded through a combination of local property taxes, development fees, and other public-safety revenue sources that expand incrementally as development occurs. In addition, all new construction facilitated by the project would be required to comply with applicable federal, state, and local regulations, including the California Fire Code, as adopted and locally amended through Auburn Municipal Code Section 100.50. These amendments include enhanced requirements for fire apparatus access, hydrant spacing, on-site fire flow, emergency responder communication, and site identification. Compliance with these standards ensures that new structures include adequate access, fire service features, and water supply to support effective emergency response.

Future development would also undergo review for consistency with the existing City of Auburn Safety Element (2021) which is not being updated as part of the proposed project. Relevant policies in the existing Safety Element include Policy 2.4, calling for maintaining reasonable response times and adequate staffing; Policy 2.8, ensuring City facilities remain functional during disasters; and Goal 8, supporting improved public safety and reliable emergency response throughout Auburn. The Safety Element policies reinforce the multi-jurisdictional nature of fire protection services in the Auburn area and support the County's commitment to maintaining operational capacity during and after disaster events. Similarly, the Placer County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan (2021) identifies long-term mitigation strategies for wildfire, seismic, and other hazards and integrates Auburn into countywide planning efforts for risk reduction and emergency response readiness.

Additionally, the proposed project would include the following goals and policies of the Community Services and Facilities Element to support public safety services to residents: Goal CSF-3: Police and Fire Services, Policy CSF-3.1: Public Safety Facilities, Policy CSF-3.3: Fire Protection, Policy CSF-3.4: Community-Based Approach, and Policy CSF-3.7: Cost Recovery. These policies focus on maintaining high-quality service levels, enhancing fire protection, promoting community-based public safety programs; however, they do not propose or commit the City to any specific construction of police or fire facilities. Improvements in service delivery can be achieved through operational measures such as staff training, equipment upgrades, deployment adjustments, and community engagement strategies, which do not require physical development. While the policies acknowledge the potential long-term need for modernization or additional facilities, any such project would undergo separate, site-specific CEQA review at the time improvements are proposed. Additionally, the cost-recovery requirements ensure that any future facilities are planned comprehensively, appropriately sized, and environmentally compliant. Accordingly, with adherence to the California Fire Code, implementation of Auburn Municipal Code Chapter 15.36A, and consistency with applicable proposed goals and policies of the City of Auburn Safety Element development facilitated by the project would not result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of, or need for, new or physically altered fire protection facilities. Therefore, this impact would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation is required.

Significance After Mitigation

Impacts would be less than significant without mitigation.

Threshold 1.b: Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered police protection facilities, or the need for new or physically altered police protection facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives?

Impact PS-2 DEVELOPMENT FACILITATED BY THE PROJECT WOULD NOT RESULT IN SUBSTANTIAL ADVERSE PHYSICAL IMPACTS ASSOCIATED WITH THE CONSTRUCTION OF NEW OR PHYSICALLY ALTERED POLICE FACILITIES TO MAINTAIN ACCEPTABLE SERVICE RATIO RESPONSE TIMES OR OTHER OBJECTIVES. IMPACTS WOULD BE LESS THAN LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT.

Development facilitated by the project would increase the number of individuals in the Planning Area with associated increases in activity at development associated with the proposed project. As a result, demand for police protection services would increase through the year 2045, which could in turn require the construction of new facilities to accommodate subsequent personnel, equipment, and vehicles. As future development occurs in the Planning Area, the City, APD and PCSO would evaluate operations and deployment of services to efficiently use resources and maintain acceptable service ratios and response times. The existing ratio of police officers to residents in the Planning Area was approximately 0.62 officers per 1,000 residents in 2024[1]. Development facilitated by the project would add approximately 5,500 new residents in the Planning Area, resulting in a total population of 34,700 and a ratio of police officers to residents of approximately 0.61 per 1,000 residents.[2.] While the ratio of officers to residents would decrease slightly with implementation of the proposed General Plan, the change would be minimal and would not necessitate the construction of additional facilities to serve the Planning Area.

As described in 4.15, *Setting*, APD currently employs a strong community-oriented policing model—including its Community Action Team, Community Advisory Council, bike and foot patrols, engagement with local businesses, and specialized programs such as Project Lifesaver and ALPR technology—all of which increase service efficiency and effectiveness without relying on significant facility expansion. Furthermore, police protection in Auburn would be guided by applicable proposed policies in the Auburn 2045 Draft General Plan including: Goal CSF-3: Police and Fire Services, Policy CSF-3.2: Law Enforcement, Policy CSF-3.5: Intergovernmental Coordination, Policy CSF-3.8: 9-1-1 System, and Policy CSF-3.10: Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design. Implementation of these goals and policies would promote adequate dispatch services and overall community safety. While APD may require additional staff to maintain existing service ratios and response times, the addition would be small due to the relatively small decrease in existing officer service ratios and would not warrant the construction of a new facility. Therefore, the project would not require provision of new or physically altered police protection facilities. Impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures would be required.

[1] APD has 20 sworn offers and PCSO has 250 sworn officers. The existing service population of PCSO is 423,561 residents and the existing service population for APD is 13,300 residents. (20 APD oficers+250 PCSO officers) / (423,561 + 13,300 residents) = 0.62 officers per 1,000 residents.

[2] 270 officers divided by a total service area population of 442,361 (436,861 existing residents + 5,500 additional residents) = 0.61 officers per 1,000 residents

Significance After Mitigation

Impacts would be less than significant without mitigation.

Threshold 1.c:	Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered schools, or the need for new or physically altered schools, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios or other performance objectives?

Impact PS-3 DEVELOPMENT FACILITATED BY THE PROJECT WOULD NOT RESULT IN SUBSTANTIAL ADVERSE PHYSICAL IMPACTS ASSOCIATED WITH THE CONSTRUCTION OF NEW OR PHYSICALLY ALTERED SCHOOL FACILITIES. IMPACTS WOULD BE LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT.

Development facilitated by the project would result in a projected increase of 2,570 new housing units and 5,500 new residents, which would bring the total number of housing units in the Planning Area to 16,350 units and 34,700 residents. The increase in population would result in an increase in the number of students who would attend AUSD and PUHSD schools. As discussed in Section 4.15.1, *Setting*, there are 6,011 students currently enrolled in AUSD and PUHSD schools. AUSD uses a student generation rate of 0.3 students per dwelling unit in grades K through 5 and 0.2 students per dwelling unit in grades 6 through 8. PUHSD uses a student generation rate of 0.1049 students per single-family unit and 0.1041 students per multi-family unit for grades 9 through 12 (City of Auburn 2025c). The proposed project would facilitate the development of approximately 780 single-family units and approximately 1,790 multi-family units, resulting in a total student generation of 1,553 students.[3]

Although AUSD and PUHSD enrollment has been declining in recent years, the addition of 1,553 students would exceed historic enrollment at the school districts. As future development occurs, the City and school districts will evaluate school operations and services to maintain acceptable service ratios and remain within the capacity of schools. Furthermore, future residential, commercial, and related development in the Planning Area would be required to pay state-mandated impact mitigation fees to provide funding for additional schools to serve the area, pursuant to SB 50. Pursuant to Section 65995(h) of the California Government Code, the payment of statutory fees "is deemed to be full and complete mitigation of the impacts of any legislative or adjudicative act, or both, involving, but not limited to, the planning, use, or development of real property, or any change in governmental organization or reorganization." The mandatory payment of impact mitigation fees would serve as full and complete mitigation for future development. Therefore, future development facilitated by the project would not result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of or need for new or physically altered schools, the construction of which would cause significant environmental impacts. This impact would be less than significant.

[3] 0.3 grade K-5 students per dwelling unit * 2,570 total dwelling units = 771 grade K-5 students
0.2 grade 6-8 students per dwelling unit * 2,570 total dwelling units = 514 grade 6-8 students
0.1049 grade 9-12 students per single-family dwelling unit * 780 single-family dwelling units = 82 grade 9-12 students
0.1041 grade 9-12 students per multi-family dwelling unit * 1,790 multi-family dwelling units = 186 grade 9-12 students
268 total grade 9-12 students
1,553 total students generated (all grades)

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures would be required.

Significance After Mitigation

Impacts would be less than significant without mitigation.

Threshold 1.d:	Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered parks, or the need for new or physically altered parks, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios or other performance objectives?
Threshold 2:	Would the project increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?
Threshold 3:	Does the project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?

Impact PS-4 DEVELOPMENT FACILITATED BY THE PROJECT WOULD NOT RESULT IN SUBSTANTIAL ADVERSE PHYSICAL IMPACTS ASSOCIATED WITH THE PROVISION OF NEW OR PHYSICALLY ALTERED PARKS OR RECREATION FACILITIES TO MAINTAIN ACCEPTABLE SERVICE RATIOS AND WOULD NOT INCREASE THE USE OF EXISTING NEIGHBORHOOD AND REGIONAL PARKS SUCH THAT SUBSTANTIAL PHYSICAL DETERIORATION OF THE FACILITY WOULD OCCUR OR BE ACCELERATED. IMPACTS WOULD BE LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT.

As described in Section 4.15.1, *Setting* the Planning Area contains approximately 208 acres of parks, open space, playfields, and recreational facilities. As described in Table 2-6 of *Project Description*, the 2025 population of 29,200 residents provides an existing park-to-population ratio of approximately 7.1 acres per 1,000 residents[4]. Development facilitated by the project would introduce approximately 5,500 new residents, resulting in a future (2045) population of 34,700 residents within the Auburn Planning Area. Under this future population scenario, the park-to-population ratio would be approximately 6.0 acres per 1,000 residents[5]. Although this represents a decrease from existing conditions, the future ratio would still reflect a generally adequate supply of parkland relative to community needs and does not indicate a deficiency in available recreational acreage.

The increase in population would incrementally increase demand for public parks and recreational facilities; however, the existing and planned park acreage is sufficient to continue serving the community without requiring the construction of new or substantially expanded park facilities. The project would not result in substantial physical deterioration of existing parks, as the increased demand associated with population growth would not exceed the City's ability to maintain recreational resources through routine operations, ongoing maintenance, and planned capital improvements.

[4] 208 acres of park space divided by 29,200 residents is approximately 7.1 acres of space per 1,000 residents
[5] 208 acres of park space divided by 34,700 residents is approximately 6.0 acres of space per 1,000 residents

Future residential development in the Planning Area is also subject to park impact fees or land dedication requirements under applicable City regulations and State Quimby Act provisions. These requirements ensure that new development contributes proportionally to the provision and maintenance of parks and recreational facilities. Compliance with these regulations would ensure that growth facilitated by the project maintains adequate parkland and recreational service levels for the expanded population.

The project does not include specific proposals for new or expanded parks or recreational facilities at this time. Any future proposals for new or expanded parkland or recreational amenities would be subject to City review and, if applicable, environmental review under CEQA. Therefore, development facilitated by the project would not result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of, or need for, new or physically altered parks or recreational facilities. This impact would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation is required.

Significance After Mitigation

Impacts would be less than significant without mitigation.

Threshold 1.e: Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered public facilities, or the need for new or physically altered public facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives?

Impact PS-5 DEVELOPMENT FACILITATED BY THE PROJECT WOULD NOT RESULT IN SUBSTANTIAL ADVERSE PHYSICAL IMPACTS ASSOCIATED WITH THE CONSTRUCTION OF NEW OR PHYSICALLY ALTERED LIBRARY OR OTHER PUBLIC FACILITIES TO MAINTAIN ACCEPTABLE SERVICE OBJECTIVES, AND THE PAYMENT OF PROPERTY TAXES FUNDING LIBRARY OR OTHER PUBLIC FACILITIES WOULD BE REQUIRED. IMPACTS WOULD BE LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT.

Development facilitated by the project would introduce approximately 5,500 new residents to the Planning Area, which would be expected to proportionally increase library service utilization. While new library cardholders generated by the project would visit the library, check out items, and participate in library events, increased demand for library services would not necessarily compel the construction of a new or expanded library facility in the city. The Auburn Public Library is currently undergoing renovation and modernization improvements. Development facilitated by the project would generate the payment of property taxes, which would in part fund necessary future improvements to the library. Additionally, the proposed project would include the following goal and policy of the Community Services and Facilities Element to support public facilities to residents: Goal CSF-1: Public Facilities, and Policy CSF-1.4: Public Library. Consistent with Goal CSF-1, which promotes public facilities that foster civic pride, and Policy CSF-1.4, which supports continued modernization and adaptation of the Auburn Public Library, the project would rely on existing and planned resources rather than necessitating new construction. This impact would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures would be required.

Significance After Mitigation

Impacts would be less than significant without mitigation.

4.15.4 Cumulative Impacts

Fire Protection

The geographic scope for cumulative fire protection impacts is the combined service area of the AFD and cooperating fire agencies, including nearby stations providing automatic-aid and mutual-aid support. This scope is appropriate because development facilitated by the project would increase demand on fire protection and emergency medical response within the Auburn city limits and nearby unincorporated communities served by Placer County. The cumulative analysis considers the nearby past, present, and reasonably future plans and projects listed in Table 3-1 in Section 3, Environmental Setting, in addition to the proposed plan.

Cumulative development in the Auburn area would incrementally increase demand for fire protection services. A cumulative impact would occur if growth required construction of new or expanded fire facilities resulting in physical environmental impacts. Cumulative development would comply with the California Fire Code and be funded through taxes and fees that increase with growth. Accordingly, cumulative impacts to fire protection services would be less than significant.

Police Protection

The geographic scope for cumulative police protection impacts is the APD and PCSO service areas. This geographic scope is appropriate because development facilitated by the project would increase the demand for police protection services from the APD and PCSO. The cumulative analysis considers the nearby past, present, and reasonably future plans and projects listed in Table 3-1 in Section 3, Environmental Setting, in addition to the proposed plan.

Cumulative growth within the APD and PCSO service area would increase demand for police services. A cumulative impact would occur if this growth necessitated new or expanded police facilities with adverse physical impacts. Cumulative projects would primarily facilitate infill development within areas already served by existing facilities and would not substantially increase service demands beyond planned levels. Therefore, the cumulative impact to police services would be less than significant.

Schools

The geographic scope for cumulative school service impacts includes the boundaries of the AUSD for grades TK to 8 and the PUHSD for grades 9 to 12. This scope is appropriate because development facilitated by the project would affect student generation in these two districts. The cumulative analysis considers the nearby past, present, and reasonably future plans and projects listed in Table 3-1 in Section 3, Environmental Setting, in addition to the proposed plan.

Cumulative development within the AUSD and PUHSD boundaries would increase student enrollment; however, both districts are experiencing long-term enrollment declines, which would partially offset growth associated with cumulative projects. In addition, future development would

be required to pay statutory school impact fees pursuant to Government Code Section 65995, constituting mitigation for the school facility impacts of new development under CEQA. As a result, cumulative development would not result in significant adverse physical impacts associated with the need for new or expanded school facilities, and cumulative impacts to schools would be less than significant.

Parks and Recreation

The geographic scope for cumulative parks and recreation impacts is the region surrounding the Planning Area, including City of Auburn parks, Auburn Recreation District facilities, and nearby recreational amenities in unincorporated Placer County. This scope is appropriate because new residents would use park and recreational facilities both within and outside city boundaries. The cumulative analysis considers the nearby past, present, and reasonably future plans and projects listed in Table 3-1 in Section 3, Environmental Setting, in addition to the proposed plan.

Cumulative development would increase use of parks and recreational facilities. A cumulative impact would occur if growth resulted in substantial deterioration of facilities or required new facilities with environmental impacts. Existing parkland supply, combined with park impact fees and dedication requirements, would accommodate cumulative growth. Accordingly, cumulative impacts to parks and recreation facilities would be less than significant.

Libraries

The geographic scope for cumulative library impacts is Placer County. This geographic scope is appropriate because development facilitated by the project would increase the demand on County library services. The cumulative analysis considers the nearby past, present, and reasonably future plans and projects listed in Table 3-1 in Section 3, Environmental Setting, in addition to the proposed plan.

Cumulative population growth in Placer County would increase demand for library services. A cumulative impact would occur if growth required construction of new or expanded library facilities with physical environmental impacts. Cumulative development would not result in unexpected population growth, and would be served by existing libraries. It is not anticipated that cumulative development would necessitate new or expanded facilities. Therefore, cumulative impacts to libraries would be less than significant.

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4.16 Transportation

This section evaluates the potential impacts to the transportation system related to implementation of the project, including vehicle, transit, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities.

4.16.1 Environmental Setting

This section describes the existing baseline conditions for the transportation system in the Planning Area. This includes an overview of the roadway network, transit system, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, goods movement, and aviation facilities in the Planning Area.

a. Community Travel Characteristics

The automobile is the most widely used mode of transportation in Auburn. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, 2018-2022 American Community Survey, about 79 percent of City of Auburn residents that work commute by car, truck, van, or motorcycle. About 4 percent of Auburn commuters walk to work. The share of commuters that bike or use public transportation to work is about one percent for each mode. Additionally, about 15 percent of employed Auburn residents work at home (U.S. Census Bureau 2026).

Approximately 75 percent of workers living in Auburn traveled to work in 29 minutes or less, 21 percent traveled to work in 30 to 59 minutes, and 4 percent traveled to work in 60 minutes or more. The 2018-2022 American Community Survey travel data estimates the average travel time to work is 19 minutes. Commute times for Auburn workers are less than Placer County and the Sacramento-Roseville Combined Statistical Area, where 61 percent travel to work in 29 minutes or less and the average travel time to work is about 28 minutes (U.S. Census Bureau 2024).

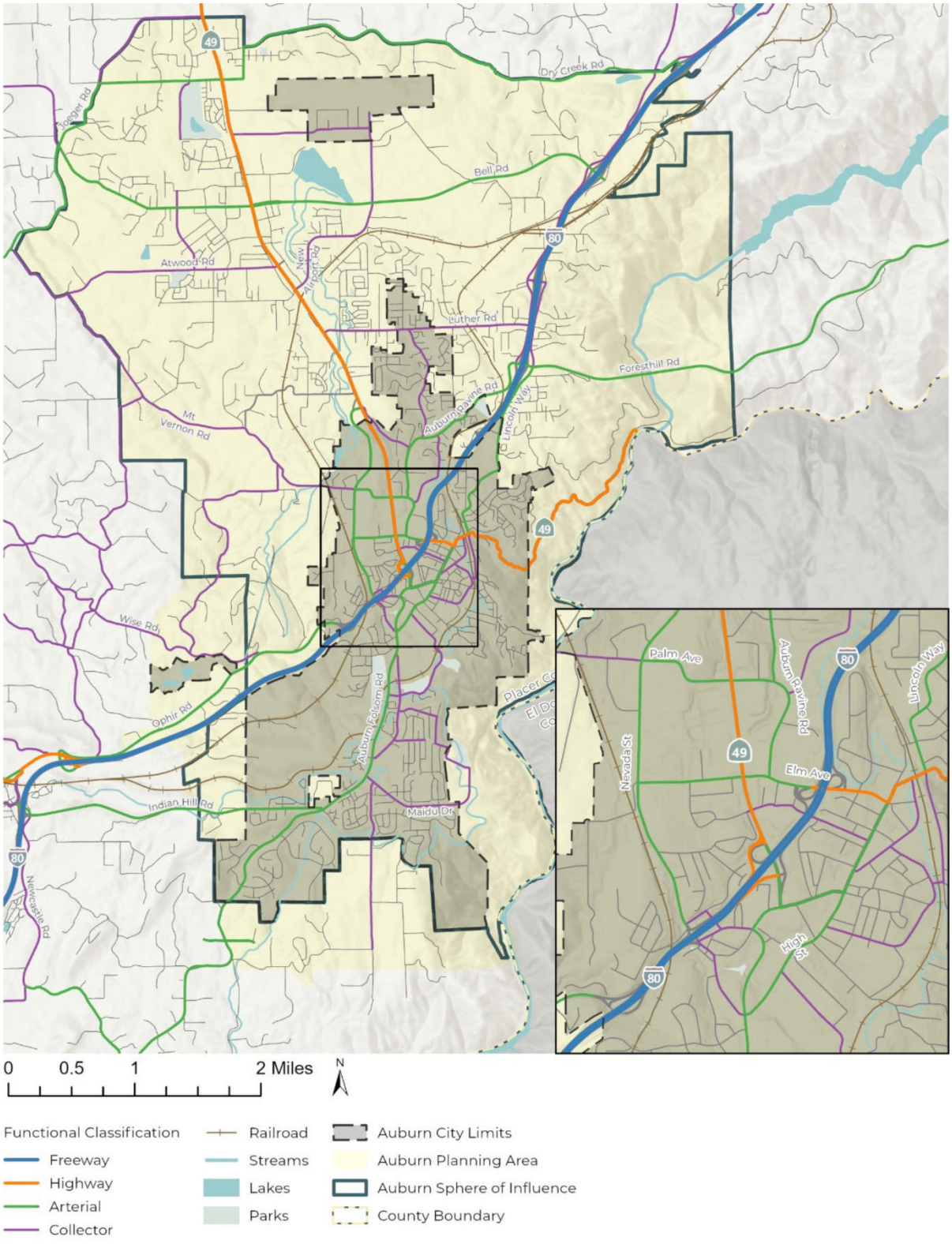
b. Roadway System

The existing roadway network in the Planning Area consists of state operated highways (both access-controlled freeways and conventional highways), arterials, collectors, and local streets. While sidewalks, bicycle facilities, and transit stops are located along portions of the roadway network, most roadways in the Planning Area primarily serve vehicular travel. Quantification of personal vehicle travel is expressed as vehicle miles traveled (VMT) for purposes of environmental impact analysis as explained in Section 4.16.3, *Impact Analysis*.

Roadway Functional Classifications

The Circulation Element of the current Auburn General Plan identifies a hierarchy of roadways for vehicle travel. Each category in this classification system is described below. Figure 4.16-1 presents a map of major roadways by functional classification, as shown in the current Auburn General Plan.

Figure 4.16-1 Roadway Functional Classification – 1993 Auburn General Plan



Freeways

Interstate 80 (I-80) is the only freeway in Auburn. It is an east-west interstate freeway that serves as a central spine for Placer County, connecting Auburn to the greater Sacramento region and San Francisco Bay Area to the west and to neighboring foothill communities and the Sierra Nevada to the east. I-80 is a major route on the Federal Interstate System that extends from the San Francisco Bay Area, across Northern California, into Nevada, and ultimately across the country to the New York City metropolitan area. In the City of Auburn, I-80 is a six-lane freeway with interchanges at Maple Street, Nevada Street, Grass Valley Highway, and Elm Avenue, with auxiliary lanes between off-ramps and on-ramps, and a posted speed limit of 65 miles per hour.

State Highways

State Route (SR) 49 is a north-south state highway that connects communities in the Sierra Nevada foothills. North of Auburn, SR 49 travels across the Bear River into Nevada County toward Lake of the Pines, Grass Valley, and Nevada City; while southeast of Auburn, SR 49 descends into the American River Canyon and into El Dorado County toward the communities of Cool, Coloma, and Placerville. In the City of Auburn, SR 49 is generally a four-lane conventional highway with signalized intersections at arterial streets. In unincorporated North Auburn, SR 49 widens to six lanes from south of Luther Road to north of Bell Road and serves as the primary commercial corridor for the area. The posted speed limit on SR 49 in the Planning Area is generally 45 miles per hour.

Arterials

Arterial roadways are major streets that primarily serve through traffic. These roadways are fed by local and collector roadways, and also provide linkages to the state highway system. The public use these roadways as primary circulation routes for through traffic, and they generally carry higher volumes of traffic than local streets and collector roadways. Auburn Folsom Road, Elm Avenue, High Street, and Nevada Street are examples of arterial streets in the City of Auburn.

Collectors

Collector roadways are intended to “collect” traffic from local streets and carry it to roadways higher in the street classification hierarchy (e.g., arterials). The public uses these roadways as secondary circulation routes, and they generally carry light to moderate traffic volumes. Access to abutting land is normally permitted, but may be subject to restrictions based on traffic volumes and the type of land use. Examples of collector streets in the City of Auburn include Dairy Road, Sacramento Street, Pacific Avenue, and Maidu Drive.

Local Streets

Local roads provide direct access to abutting land and access to the collector street system. The public uses these streets for local circulation. They are typically low-speed, low-volume streets that carry little, if any, through traffic. Local roads are located throughout the city in residential, commercial, and industrial areas.

Traffic Volumes

Figure 4.16-2 presents baseline average daily traffic volumes on major roadways in the Planning Area. The average daily traffic volumes presented in Figure 4.16-2 represent the average 24-hour volumes from multiple days of traffic counts that were collected in October 2023 and May 2024. Traffic counts were collected when schools were in session and weather conditions were fair.

c. Transit Service

The following describes the existing passenger rail and bus transit service provided in the Planning Area. This section outlines the major transit agencies and services provided.

Passenger Rail Service

The Capitol Corridor Joint Powers Authority provides passenger rail service in Auburn. Capitol Corridor is an intercity passenger train system that connects cities in the San Francisco Bay Area with the Sacramento region. Capitol Corridor serves 18 stations along a 170-mile rail corridor across 8 Northern California counties: Placer, Sacramento, Yolo, Solano, Contra Costa, Alameda, San Francisco, and Santa Clara (Capitol Corridor Joint Powers Authority 2017).

The Auburn-Conheim Multimodal Station located at 277 Nevada Street serves as the starting point for one morning westbound train and the terminus for one evening eastbound train of the Capitol Corridor service. The Sacramento Valley Station in downtown Sacramento serves as the eastern terminus for all other Capitol Corridor trains.

In addition to Capitol Corridor, Amtrak provides passenger rail service across the United States. Amtrak's California Zephyr service passes through Auburn as it travels between the San Francisco Bay Area and Chicago, Illinois. Although the California Zephyr does not stop at the Auburn Station, travelers may access the California Zephyr passenger rail service at the Colfax, Roseville, or Sacramento train stations. Riders traveling from the Auburn Station may also use Capitol Corridor to connect to the California Zephyr train via the Sacramento Valley Station in Sacramento.

Bus Transit Service

Auburn Transit and Placer County Transit (PCT) are the primary bus transit service providers in the Auburn Planning Area. In addition, Nevada County Connects operates fixed-route service between the Auburn Station transit center and Grass Valley, with stops in North Auburn. Figure 4.16-3 shows the bus transit services in the Planning Area. The following section describes the bus transit service offered by each transit operator in the area.

Auburn Transit

Auburn Transit operates the Auburn OnDemand transit service in and around the City of Auburn. Auburn OnDemand is a City provided ride share service that allows riders to set origins and destinations anywhere within Auburn city limits and select parts of surrounding unincorporated Placer County (see Figure 4.16-3 for the Auburn OnDemand service area). Auburn Transit connects with PCT, Nevada County Connects, and Capitol Corridor trains at the Auburn-Conheim Multimodal Station on Nevada Street. Rides for Auburn OnDemand service are booked through the GO South Placer app or by calling the transit dispatcher (City of Auburn 2026).

Figure 4.16-2 Baseline Average Daily Traffic Volumes

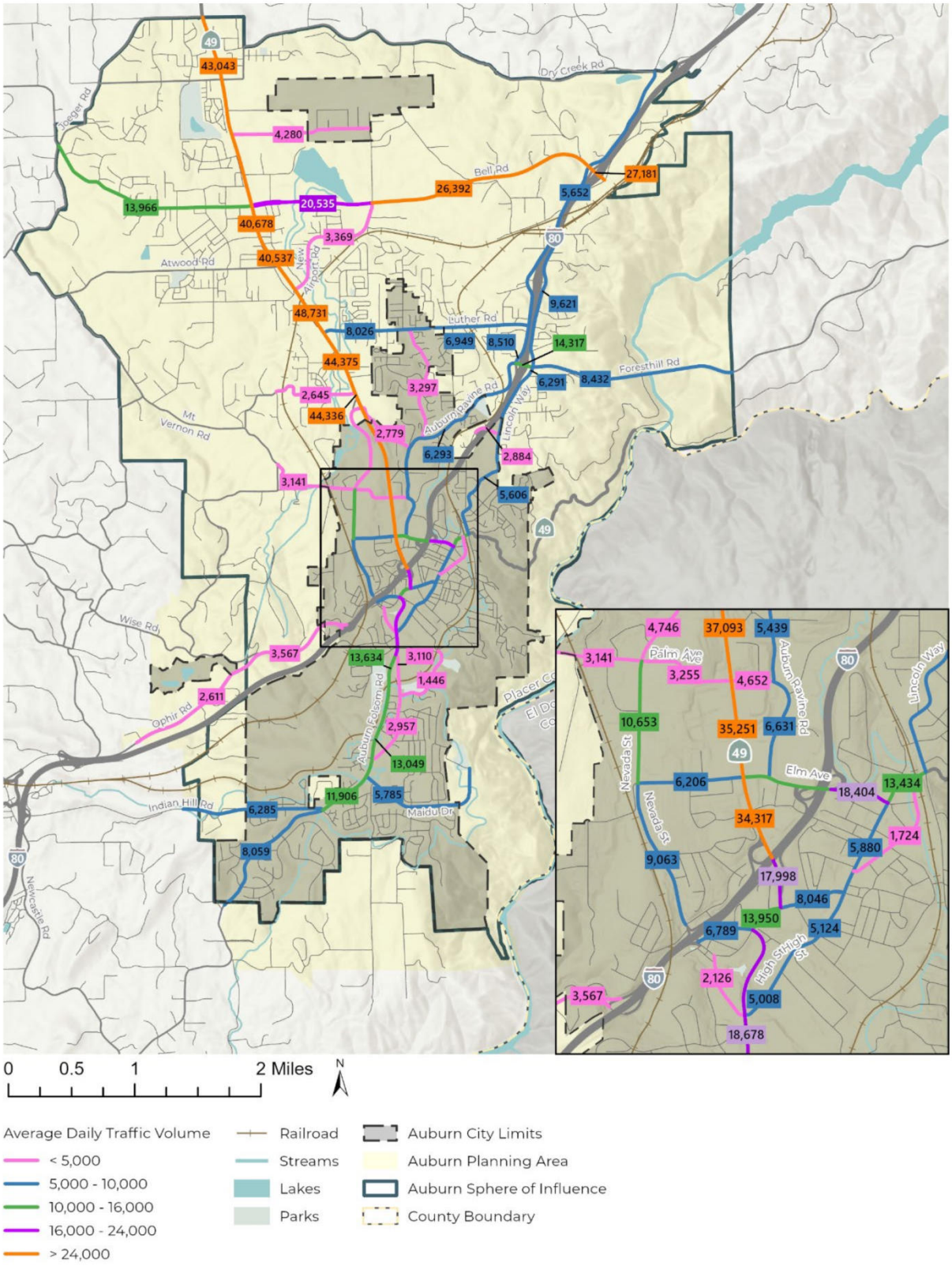
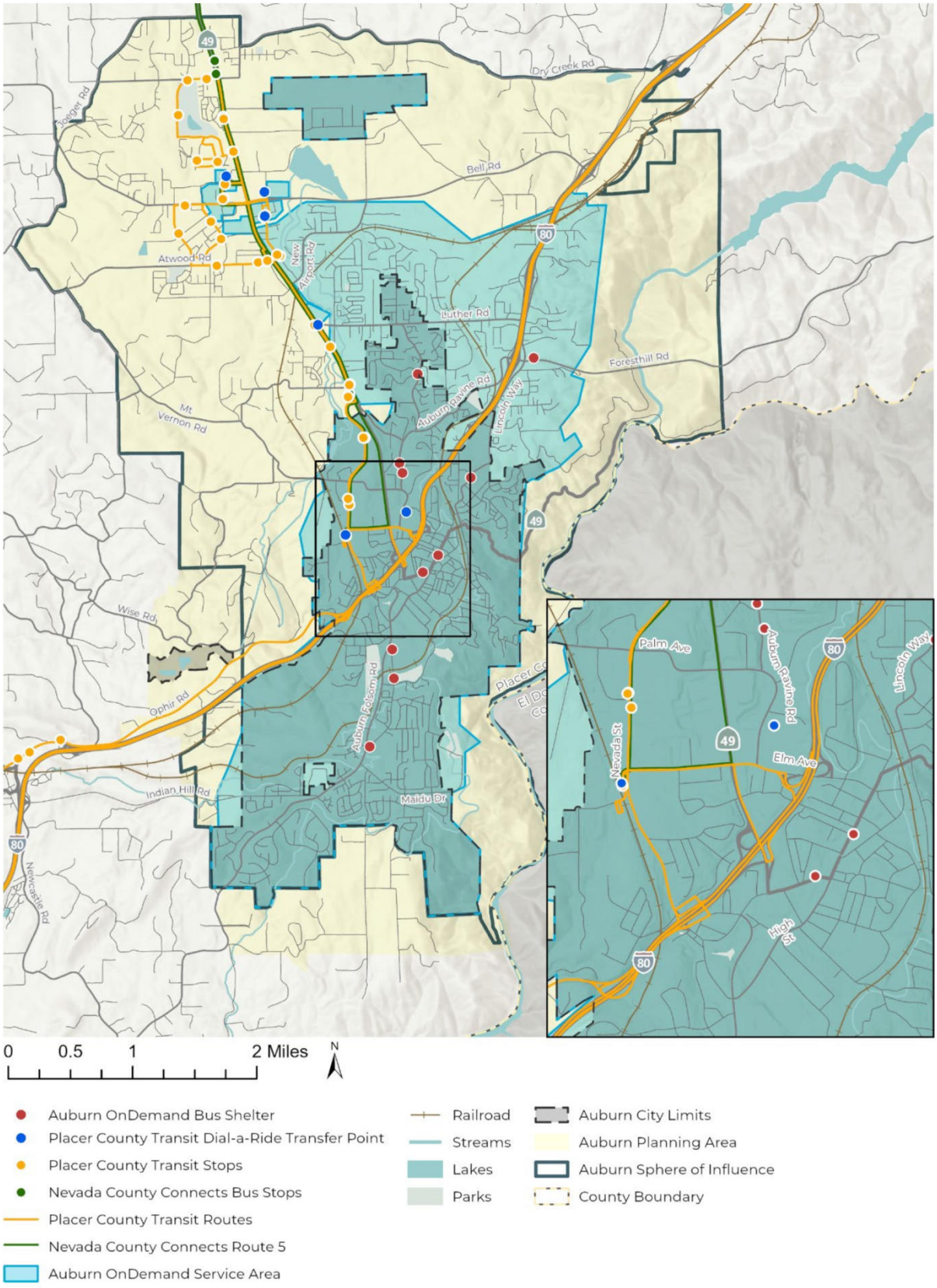


Figure 4.16-3 Existing Transit Facilities



Placer County Transit

PCT operates seven fixed route bus transit routes and dial-a-ride service in the cities of Colfax, Lincoln, Rocklin, and the Town of Loomis, as well as intermediate destinations. This includes the following fixed-route bus services in the Auburn Planning Area:

- **Route 10: Auburn to Light Rail** – an express service connecting the Auburn Station transit center on Nevada Street to the Watt/I-80 light rail station in Sacramento with stops at Sierra College in Rocklin and the Galleria and Louis/Orlando transit centers in Roseville. It provides hourly service Monday through Friday from 5:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m., and on Saturday from 8:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.
- **Route 30: Highway 49** – a local service that primarily serves the Nevada Street corridor in the City of Auburn, and the SR 49 corridor in unincorporated North Auburn. It provides hourly service Monday through Friday from 4:35 a.m. to 9:40 p.m., and on Saturday from 7:30 a.m. to 7:40 p.m.
- **Route 40: Alta/Colfax** – a deviated fixed-route servicing 0.75 mile off I-80 from the Auburn Station transit center, Colfax Amtrak station, and the Alta store. It operates twice daily Monday through Friday.
- **Route 50: Taylor Road Shuttle** – a deviated fixed-route servicing 0.75 mile off Taylor Road from the Auburn Station transit center to Sierra College in Rocklin. It provides bi-hourly service Monday through Saturday.
- **Route 60: Placer Commuter Express** – a weekday commuter bus service operating along the I-80 corridor to Downtown Sacramento, with a stop at the Auburn Station transit center. Currently, this bus operates two trips to Downtown Sacramento in the morning and two trips from Downtown Sacramento in the evening Monday through Friday.

PCT also provides Placer Commuter Express service, a weekday commuter bus that transports riders from stops along the I-80 corridor to downtown Sacramento; as well as an app-based on-demand service (GO South Placer) that serves the Auburn, Rocklin/Loomis, Lincoln, and Granite Bay dial-a-ride zones (PCT 2026a).

Nevada County Connects

Nevada County Connects provides local and regional fixed-route bus service to the cities, towns, and unincorporated areas of Western Nevada County, including Nevada City, Grass Valley, Penn Valley, Rough and Ready, Lake Wildwood, Alta Sierra, Lake of the Pines, and the regional hub at the Auburn Amtrak station (Nevada County Connects 2026).

Nevada County Connects Route 5 offers fixed-route service between the Auburn Station transit center and Grass Valley, with several stops in North Auburn. As of Fall 2024, Route 5 provides four weekday (Monday through Friday) round-trips between Auburn Station and Grass Valley (two in the morning and two in the afternoon), ranging from about two to six hours apart.

Accessible Transportation

Creating access for those of all ages and abilities is of key importance. The concept of accessible transportation can be interpreted in multiple ways, but for the purposes of transit planning, the focus is specifically on those with disabilities and the elderly. Individuals in these populations, though differing in need, are often not well served by standard or traditional transportation

networks and facilities. To serve these individuals, organizations in the area currently provide the following:

- Auburn Transit buses are fitted with lifts so the vehicles are accessible to riders with disabilities.
- Priority seating is available near the front of the bus.
- Service animals are allowed on Auburn Transit buses, and one attendant may ride free.
- Riders with disabilities qualify for reduced fees.
- PCT and Auburn Transit offer on-demand paratransit transportation service for persons who are unable to independently use fixed route bus service due to a disability or health related condition some or all the time.
- Some social service programs and non-profit organizations offer specialized transportation services for their clients, in some cases operating their own vehicle fleets.

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requires that paratransit (curb-to-curb) service be available to persons who, because of a disability, are unable to use the fixed route bus system. The paratransit services offered by PCT and Auburn Transit fulfill this requirement. In order to use ADA paratransit services, one must first be certified as eligible. Eligibility Application Instructions and Request for Certification forms can be found online (PCT 2026b).

The City of Auburn also maintains an ADA Transition Plan to guide making physical improvements to facilitate accessibility in the public right-of-way, City parking lots, and City owned parks for persons with disabilities.

d. Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities

This section describes the network of bicycle and pedestrian facilities to support bicycling and walking in the Planning Area. The description of these facilities is obtained from the Auburn Active Transportation Plan (ATP), which was adopted by the Auburn City Council in May 2026. The Auburn ATP provides a comprehensive plan to support human-powered travel in and around Auburn through the thoughtful identification and prioritization of new or upgraded active transportation facilities as well as programs and policies to enhance the comfort and safety of bicycling, walking, and rolling in Auburn.

Auburn features parks, open space, and attractions that are destinations for walking, bicycling, and hiking. The adjacent Auburn State Recreation Area (ASRA) is a regional destination for outdoor recreation, including hiking, mountain biking, and water recreational activities along the American River. The area of the ASRA directly east of the City of Auburn consists of paved roadways accessible to the public, as well as paved and unpaved paths and trails open to non-motorized recreation (i.e., hiking and mountain biking). These publicly accessible paved and unpaved facilities in the ASRA present opportunities for active transportation and were considered in the development of the planned bicycle and pedestrian facilities in the Auburn ATP.

Bikeway Classifications

There are four types of bikeways as defined by Chapter 1000 of the Caltrans Highway Design Manual (2020). These four bikeway types are described below.

- **Class I Bikeway (Bike Path)** provides a completely separated facility designed for the exclusive use of bicycles and pedestrians.

- **Class II Bikeway (Bike Lane)** provides on-road striped lanes with signs and pavement markings and legends with restricted travel to motor vehicles and pedestrians. Through travel by motor vehicles or pedestrians is prohibited, but crossflows by pedestrians and motorists is permitted.
- **Class III Bikeway (Bike Route)** provides on-street routes designated by signs or permanent markings and shared with pedestrians and motorists.
- **Class IV Bikeway (Separated Bikeway)** is a bikeway for the exclusive use of bicycles similar to a Class II facility, but includes a separation between the bike facility and through vehicular traffic. Separation facilities may include flexible posts, inflexible physical barriers, or on-street parking. Class IV facilities may be designed to serve either one-way or two-way bicycle traffic.

Existing Bicycle Facilities

Figure 4.16-4 shows the existing bicycle facilities in the Planning Area. As shown, there are no Class I or Class IV bikeways in Auburn. Within Auburn city limits, on-street bike lanes (Class II) are present along SR 49 north of Elm Avenue, Nevada Street, and Indian Hill Road. High Street from Elm Avenue to Auburn Folsom Road is identified as a Class III bike route and features sharrow pavement markings to heighten driver awareness for the presence of cyclists. Although bicyclists are generally prohibited on state freeways by Caltrans, signage on I-80 identifies the shoulders for the approximately 1,000-foot segment between the Ophir Road ramps and Maple Street/Nevada Street ramps as a bike route. This is to provide a facility for bicyclists traveling between the Class II on-street bike lanes on Ophir Road and Old Town Auburn. Due to the high-speed vehicle traffic on I-80, this facility would be uncomfortable for most bicyclists.

Auburn Endurance Capital Bicycle Routes

On April 14, 2003, the Auburn City Council declared the City of Auburn as the "Endurance Capital of the World," in reference to two endurance events that conclude in Auburn: the Tevis Cup, a 100-mile equestrian endurance ride and the Western States 100-mile endurance run.

The City created the Auburn Endurance Capital Committee to highlight Auburn as a destination for endurance and outdoor activities, promote healthy lifestyle habits, and showcase the athletic and outdoor sporting events that occur in and around Auburn. The Endurance Capital Committee website includes a webpage dedicated to road cycling in Auburn, which includes a signed bike route for cyclists to follow through the Auburn area. The Endurance Capital bike route is identified with signage that feature the Endurance Capital logo.

Planned Bicycle Network

The Auburn ATP approved in 2026 identifies a planned comprehensive bicycle network intended to improve connectivity to key destinations, close gaps in the existing network, and enhance the safety and comfort of bicyclists in the Auburn area. The planned bikeway network also considered connections to the existing and planned bikeway system for the area surrounding the Planning Area, as identified in the Placer Countywide ATP.

Figure 4.16-5 shows the planned bicycle network in the Planning Area that is presented in the Auburn ATP.

Figure 4.16-4 Existing Bicycle Facilities

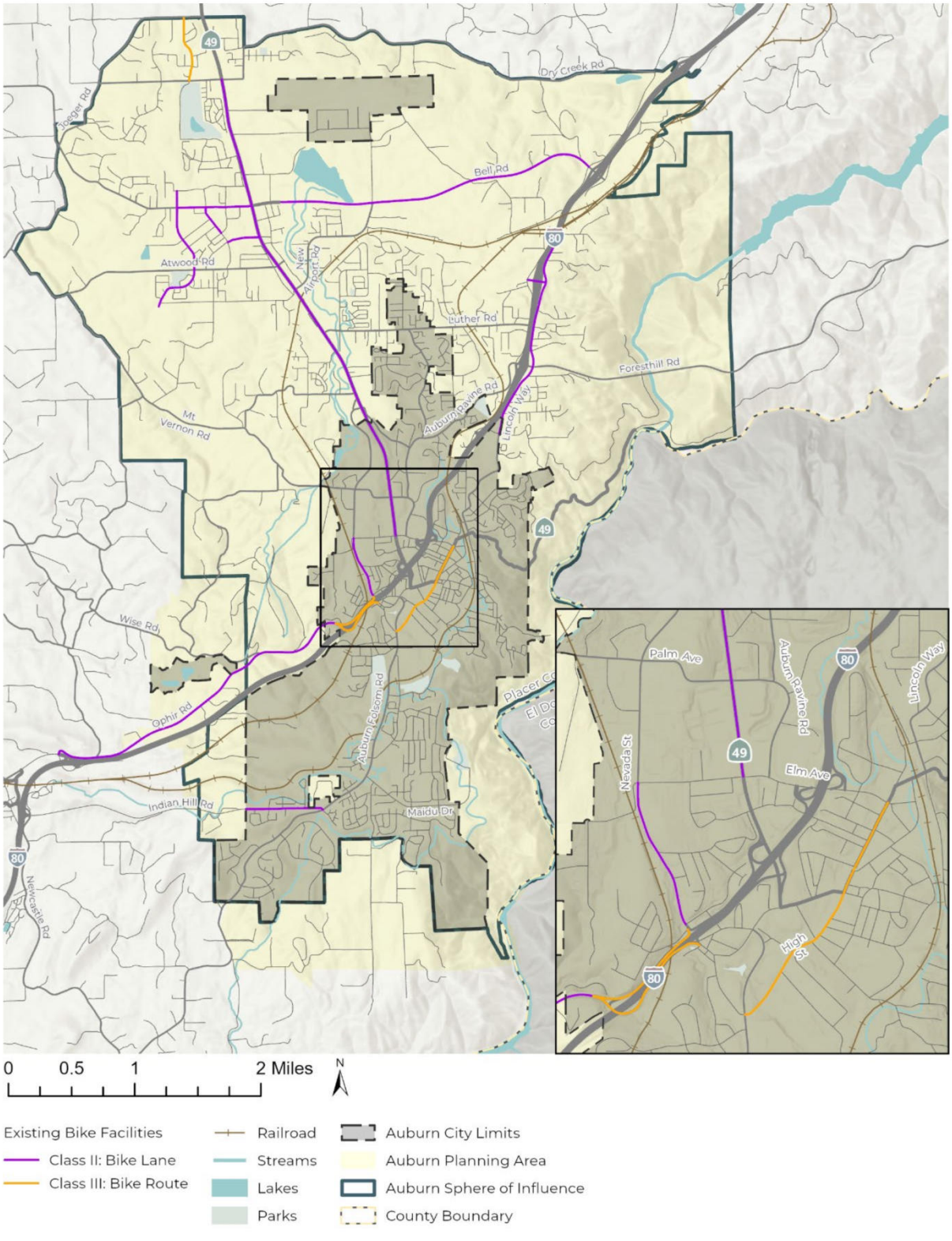
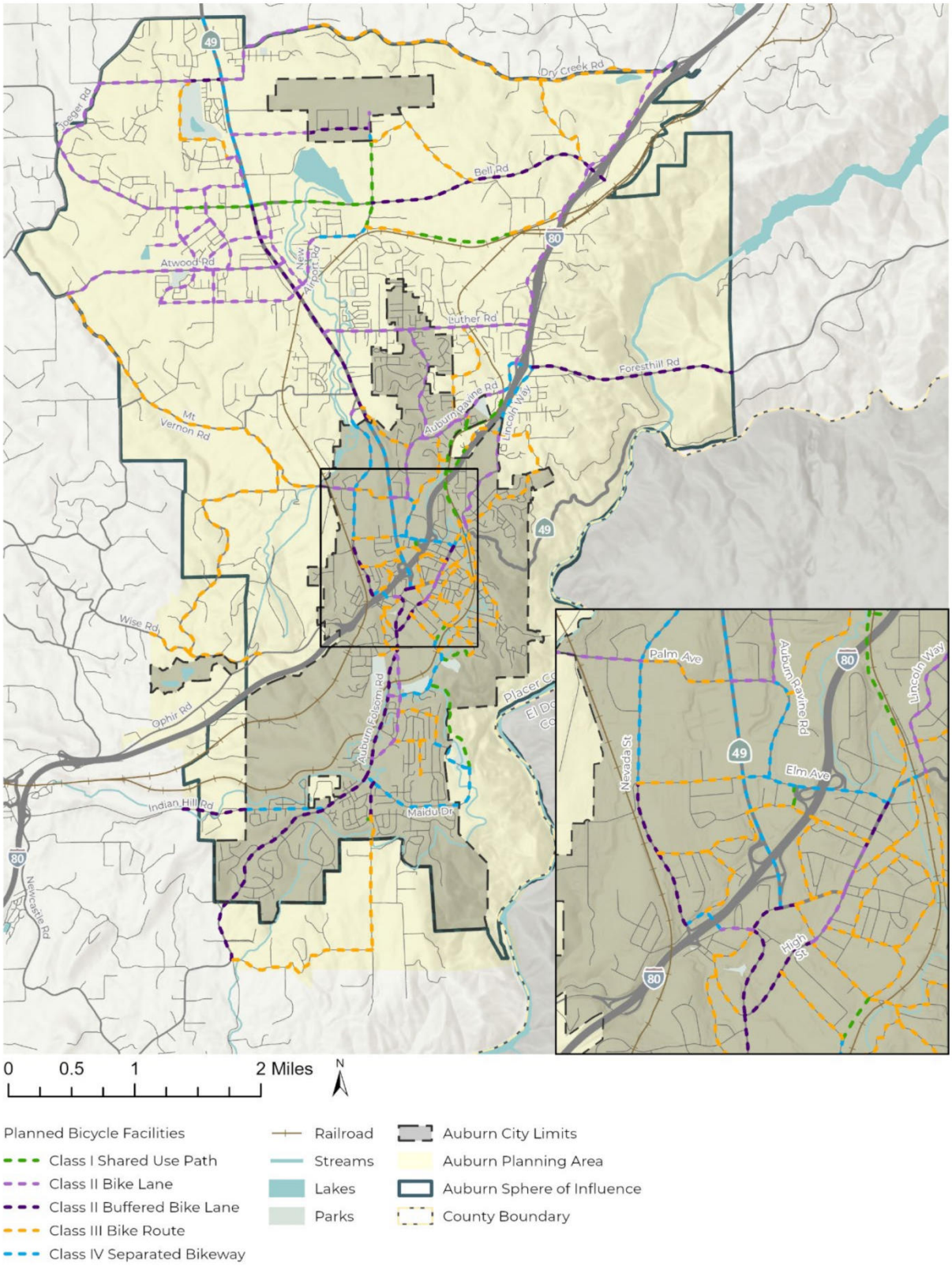


Figure 4.16-5 Planned Bicycle Facilities – Auburn Active Transportation Plan



Existing Pedestrian Facilities

Walking as a mode of transportation is generally confined to shorter local trips and is supported by sidewalks along roadways and crosswalks at intersections. Figure 4.16-6 shows the existing sidewalks and crosswalks in the Planning Area. Figure 4.16-6 also shows gaps in the sidewalk system by identifying local roadways without sidewalks within the City limits.

Most streets in southern Auburn and Downtown Auburn provide a sidewalk on at least one side of the street. However, the sidewalk network has many gaps in central and northern parts of the city. In central Auburn, arterials and collectors generally feature sidewalks, particularly in Downtown Auburn. However, many local roadways in older residential areas outside of Downtown have no sidewalks, particularly in the neighborhoods east of the railroad and in the neighborhood north of I-80 between Nevada Street and SR 49. A similar pattern exists in northern parts of the city, with many local streets, as well as arterial and collector streets such as Auburn Ravine Road, Dairy Road, and Marguerite Mine Road, missing sidewalks on one or both sides of the roadway.

The Auburn ATP generally recommends new sidewalks to fill these existing gaps in the pedestrian network. These planned sidewalks would better support walking within Auburn by improving connectivity to destinations and enhancing the safety and comfort of pedestrian travel.

e. Freight and Goods Movement

Industry and commercial enterprises in Auburn are served by a goods movement system that includes roadway and freight rail networks. The majority of goods movement in Placer County is provided by truck transportation, while rail freight service on the Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR) also provides an important means for transporting goods.

Figure 4.16-7 shows the truck routes and railroad lines in the Planning Area. These are each described in further detail below.

Truck Routes

All freeways and state highways in Placer County are designated as state truck routes. I-80 is the principal east-west transportation corridor and is considered part of the national freight network as an interstate highway. As an interstate facility, the federal Surface Transportation Assistance Act allows large trucks to operate on I-80. These trucks may be longer than California legal trucks. I-80 serves as an important truck route as the only east-west freeway crossing the Sierra Nevada and Cascades between Bakersfield in the south and Portland in the north.

SR 49 north of I-80 is designated as a “Terminal Access” route by Caltrans, which also permit Surface Transportation Assistance Act trucks. In addition to these two state highways. Figure 4.16-7 shows the local arterial roadways that are identified as truck routes in the current Auburn General Plan. This includes Auburn Folsom Road, Nevada Street, and Indian Hill Road.

Railroad

Auburn is on the main east-west UPRR line that connects the Pacific Coast with the interior of the country. The UPRR is the largest Class I freight railroad in the United States. The route from Sacramento through Auburn and Placer County and across the Sierra Nevada is a major transcontinental rail corridor, with the railyard in Roseville west of Auburn serving as the largest railyard west of the Mississippi River. In Auburn, the UPRR consists of two tracks: one passing on the east side of Downtown Auburn and one that travels along the west side of the city.

Figure 4.16-6 Existing Pedestrian Facilities

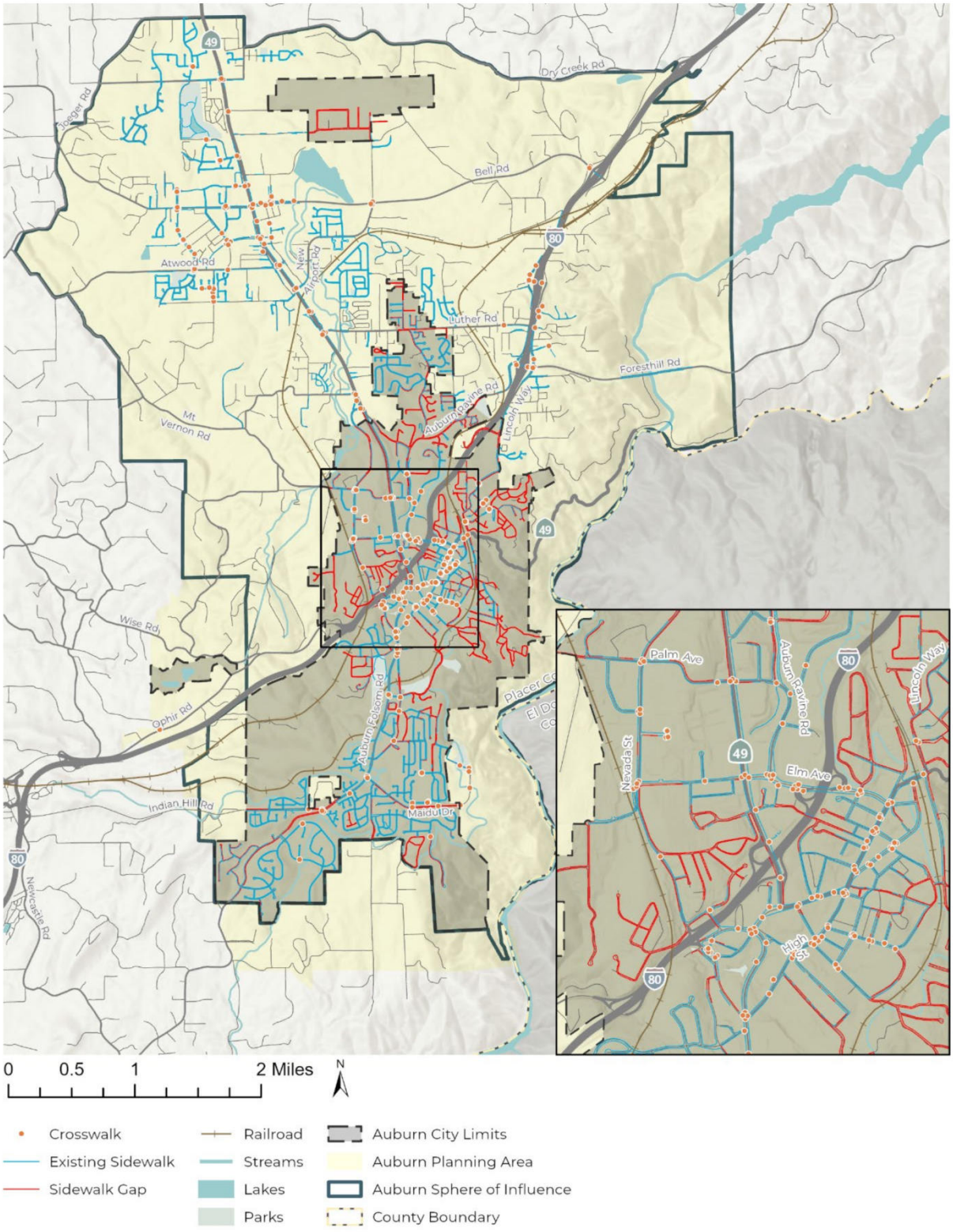
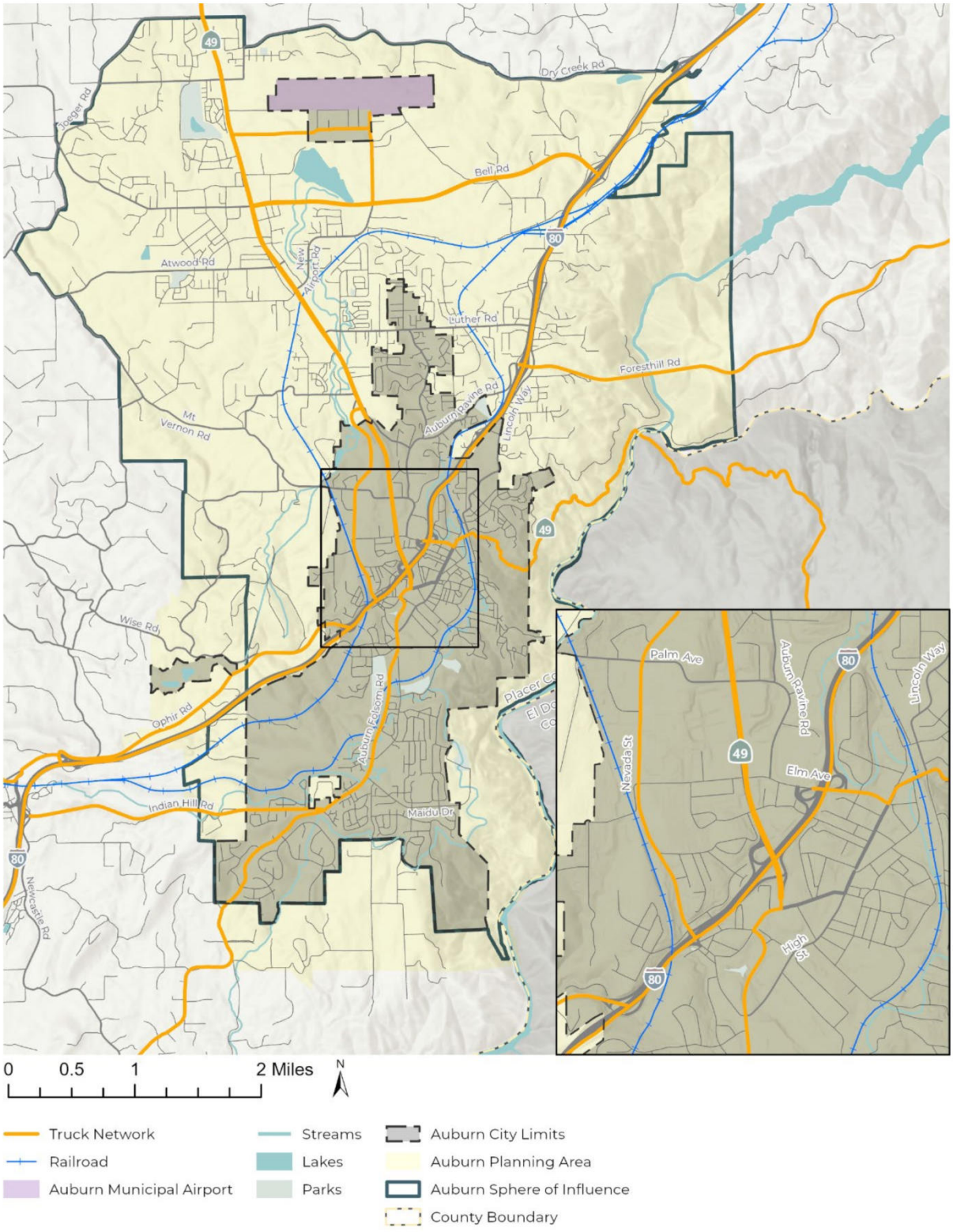


Figure 4.16-7 Existing Freight Facilities and Auburn Municipal Airport



f. Aviation Facilities

Auburn Municipal Airport is a general aviation facility owned by the City of Auburn and operated by the City's Community and Economic Development Department. The airport is located within an exclave of the City of Auburn about one mile north of the main city limits, north of Bell Road and east of SR 49, as shown in Figure 4.16-7.

The Auburn City Council adopted a master plan for Auburn Municipal Airport in July 2007. Since publication of the master plan, several revisions have been made to the accompanying Airport Layout Plan. Most of these revisions reflect completed and minor proposed construction projects. The most recent Airport Layout Plan (Placer County Transportation Planning Agency 2019) calls for increasing the runway length from the current 3,700 feet to 4,300 feet by adding to each end. This design change directly affects the airport's compatibility zone boundaries and prompted an update to the County's Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan (ALUCP). The Placer County Board of Supervisors adopted an ordinance in November 2023, referred to as the Auburn Airport Aircraft Overflight Rezone Project, to rezone 332 parcels of land to comply with the approved ALUCP (Placer County Airport Land Use Commission 2023). The City is currently reviewing the master plan for the Auburn Municipal Airport and considering extending the runway up to 5,000 feet.

The City of Auburn is also considering future operations of vertical take-off and landing vehicles at the airport as part of a regional transportation network. Recently, private companies have begun to explore the possibility of deploying electric vertical take-off and landing aircraft for transporting people and delivering goods (e.g., "drone" deliveries) as an alternative mode for travel within or between nearby metropolitan areas. This could lead to new types of facilities, such as "vertiports" where passengers board and alight vertical take-off and landing vehicles. As an emerging technology, it is uncertain how this travel technology will impact people's future travel behavior, and potential corresponding effects on land use patterns and other planning considerations (e.g., noise, aesthetics, land use/zoning compatibility).

4.16.2 Regulatory Setting

a. Federal Regulations

U.S. Department of Transportation

The U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) is the executive department that oversees and administers the transportation programs of the federal government. The DOT's goals as outlined in its fiscal year 2026-2030 Strategic Plan include: safety as the DOT's top priority; investing in high-quality transportation infrastructure capacity; supporting innovation in transportation technology; and improving department efficiency.

The DOT oversees several agencies that administer federal statues for various branches of transportation including:

- The Federal Aviation Administration, which is responsible for regulating civil aviation, including the safety, operation, and development of public-use airports, such as the Auburn Municipal Airport.
- The Federal Highway Administration, which is responsible for the federally funded roadway system, including the interstate highway network and portions of the primary State highway network.

- The Federal Railroad Administration, which is responsible for implementing and enforcing rail safety regulations governing railroad operations, track and signal systems, equipment standards, and hazardous materials transport throughout the United States.
- Federal Transit Administration, which provides financial and technical assistance to local public transportation systems.
- The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, which is responsible for motor vehicle and highway transportation safety standards and regulations.

These agencies support state and local governments in the design, construction, and maintenance of transportation systems through various programs and projects.

Americans with Disabilities Act

The ADA of 1990 provides comprehensive rights and protections to individuals with disabilities. The goal of the ADA is to assure equality of opportunity, full participation, independent living, and economic self-sufficiency for people with disabilities. Title II, Subtitle B of the ADA includes requirements applicable to both public and private ground transportation providers, including the public transit services operating in Auburn (U.S. Department of Justice 2026).

The United States Access Board, an independent Federal agency created in 1973 to ensure accessibility for people with disabilities, created the Public Right-of-Way Accessibility Guidelines. The Guidelines were adopted by U.S. DOT in December 2024 as part of its ADA standards for new construction and alterations of transit stops in the public right-of-way. The Guidelines contain guidelines and technical requirements to ensure that pedestrian facilities located in the public right-of-way are readily accessible to and usable by pedestrians with disabilities (U.S. Access Board 2026).

b. State Regulations

Senate Bill 743 and Related Regulatory Framework

Senate Bill (SB) 743 (2013) required the Governor's Office of Land Use and Climate Innovation (LCI; formerly the Office of Planning and Research) to amend the CEQA Guidelines to establish new metrics for determining the significance of transportation impacts. In the amended CEQA Guidelines, LCI selected VMT as the preferred transportation impact metric and recommended its use statewide. The California Natural Resources Agency certified and adopted the amended CEQA Guidelines in December 2018. The amended CEQA Guidelines state that "generally, VMT is the most appropriate measure of transportation impacts" and require the use of VMT statewide as of July 1, 2020. SB 743 also amended the Public Resources Code with a new section that states automobile delay, as described by level of service or similar measures of vehicular capacity or traffic congestion, shall not be considered a significant impact on the environment.

Concurrently with the release of the amended CEQA Guidelines, LCI also released a non-binding *Technical Advisory on Evaluating Transportation Impacts in CEQA* (Technical Advisory), which outlines potential VMT analysis methodologies and thresholds of significance for lead agencies to consider. These methodologies and thresholds were based on evidence compiled by LCI related to achievement of the State's greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions reductions targets as specified in Assembly Bill (AB) 32 (see described below). Specifically, the Technical Advisory recommends a threshold of 15 percent below existing VMT per capita for residential and office projects; and a no net increase in total VMT for retail projects. For large land plans, such as a general plan, the Technical Advisory states such plans "may have a significant impact on transportation if proposed

new residential, office, or retail land uses would in aggregate exceed the respective thresholds" recommended in the advisory.

Additionally, the LCI Technical Advisory suggests that lead agencies may screen out VMT impacts for certain projects based on project size, location, transit availability, or use. Specifically relevant for the analysis of the proposed Cannabis Ordinance, the Technical Advisory notes that "local-serving retail development tends to shorten trips and reduce VMT. Thus, lead agencies generally may presume such development creates a less-than-significant transportation impact" (LCI 2018).

Assembly Bill 130

AB 130 was signed into law on June 30, 2025. The legislation introduces a new fee-based option for mitigating VMT impacts under CEQA. AB 130 establishes the Transit-Oriented Development Implementation Fund, administered by the California Department of Housing and Community Development. Starting July 1, 2026, lead agencies may mitigate significant VMT impacts to less than significant by funding or facilitating VMT-reducing projects or through contributions to the Transit-Oriented Development Implementation Fund. The bill adds Section 21080.44 to the Public Resources Code, authorizing lead agencies to mitigate significant transportation impacts by facilitating or funding VMT-reducing projects, including through contributions to the Transit-Oriented Development Implementation Fund. However, lead agencies retain discretion to require additional mitigation measures if necessary.

Sustainable Communities and Climate Protection Act

The Sustainable Communities and Climate Protection Act, or SB 375 (2008), directs metropolitan planning organizations to develop a Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS) that demonstrates how regions across the state will incentivize land use and transportation changes that reduce vehicle travel and help the state meet its GHG emission reduction targets set by AB 32 and SB 32. The SCS must include action items and financing decisions to achieve the GHG reduction target established by CARB, and serves as a companion document to the metropolitan planning organization's regional (or metropolitan) transportation plan.

California Air Resources Board

CARB prepares Scoping Plans that are statewide climate frameworks prepared under AB 32 and updated approximately every five years. The 2017 CARB Scoping Plan informed many local SB 743 VMT significance thresholds adopted in the 2018–2021 period, including LCI's Technical Advisory described above.

In addition, CARB identified specific guidance for VMT thresholds in the *2017 Scoping Plan-Identified VMT Reductions and Relationship to State Climate Goals* (CARB 2019). This document provides recommendations for VMT reduction thresholds that would be necessary to achieve the state's GHG reduction goals and acknowledges that the SCS targets alone are not sufficient to meet climate goals. CARB concluded that a 14.3-percent reduction in total VMT per capita and a 16.8 percent reduction in light-duty VMT per capita (compared to 2015-2018 conditions) was needed to meet state climate goals.

In December 2022, CARB adopted the 2022 Scoping Plan, which identifies more ambitious statewide planning targets to reduce per-capita VMT by at least 25 percent below 2019 levels by 2030 and 30 percent by 2045 as part of achieving carbon neutrality by 2045.

California Complete Streets Act

The California Complete Streets Act of 2008, or AB 1358, requires the circulation element "to plan for a balanced, multimodal transportation network that meets the needs of all users of streets, roads, and highways," including "motorists, pedestrians, bicyclists, children, persons with disabilities, seniors, movers of commercial goods, and users of public transportation."

In December 2010, LCI issued guidance to reflect the requirements of AB 1358. Specifically, the LCI Guidelines identify policy areas pertaining to multimodal transportation networks (i.e., complete streets) for local agencies to consider in developing updated circulation elements that are compliant with the AB 1358 requirements (LCI 2010).

Senate Bill 932

SB 932 (2022) requires the circulation element to incorporate the principles of the Federal Highway Administration's Safe System Approach by "including policies that aim to eliminate fatal and serious injuries for all road users through a holistic view of the roadway system, including provisions that account for human error, recognize vulnerable road users, and promote redundant and proactive safety measures." The bill requires cities and counties begin to implement the modified circulation element within two years of adoption.

Assembly Bill 98

AB 98 (2024) requires cities and counties to update the circulation element of their general plans to identify and establish specific travel routes for the transport of goods, materials, or freight that avoid residential areas and concentrations of sensitive receptors, as defined in the legislation. AB 98 establishes specific standards for truck routes, including the posting of conspicuous signage to identify truck routes, truck parking locations, and appropriate idling facility locations. AB 98 requires cities to make truck routes publicly available and share maps of truck routes with warehouse operators, fleet operators, and truck drivers.

Assembly Bill 747 and Senate Bill 99

AB 747 (2019) requires the safety element of local general plan be reviewed and updated to identify evacuation routes and their capacity, safety, and viability under a range of emergency scenarios. Alternatively, the safety element may be updated to reference an adopted local hazard mitigation plan, emergency operations plan, or similar document that fulfills commensurate goals with the required evacuation route information.

Similarly, SB 99 (2019) requires review and update of the safety element to include information to identify residential developments in hazard areas that do not have at least two emergency evacuation routes. In essence, this legislation assists in identifying neighborhoods and households within a hazard area that have limited accessibility. This is intended to identify opportunities to improve connectivity and evacuation capacity for local agencies.

California Department of Transportation

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) is the state agency responsible for the design, construction, maintenance, and operation of the California State Highway System (SHS), as well as the segments of the Interstate Highway System that lie within California. Caltrans District 3 is responsible for the operation and maintenance of most highway and interstate segments within the Planning Area, including I-80 and SR 49. As the owner and operator of these facilities, Caltrans

reviews local development projects subject to CEQA to assess potential impacts on the SHS. The following technical guidance and Caltrans policies are relevant to the CEQA transportation impact analysis and/or SHS facilities in the Planning Area.

- **Vehicle Miles Traveled-Focused Transportation Impact Study Guide** (Caltrans 2020a) addresses Caltrans review of VMT impact analysis for land use projects and land use plans. Caltrans seeks to reduce single-occupancy vehicle trips, provide a safe transportation system, reduce per capita VMT, increase accessibility to destinations via cycling, walking, carpooling, and transit, and reduce GHG emissions. The Guide reiterates that automobile delay is no longer considered a significant impact on the environment within CEQA transportation analysis and that Caltrans has shifted focus from level of service to VMT. With respect to VMT significance thresholds, Caltrans refers to guidance provided in the LCI Technical Advisory.
- **Local Development Review Safety Review Practitioner's Guidance** (Caltrans 2024) provides updated guidance to Caltrans Districts, lead agencies, developers, and consultants conducting safety review for proposed land use projects and plans that would affect the SHS. The guidance recommends that safety analyses include a review of three primary elements related to transportation safety—design standard compliance, collision history, and collision risk (consistent with the Federal Highway Administration's Systemic Approach to Safety). The guidance does not establish specific analysis methods or significance thresholds for determining safety impacts under CEQA. The document states that "significance of impacts should be determined with careful judgment on the part of a public agency and based, to the greatest extent possible, on scientific and factual data consistent with Caltrans' CEQA guidance contained in Caltrans' Standard Environmental Reference, Chapter 36, "Environmental Impact Report," the CEQA guidelines found in Title 14, California Code of Regulations Section 15064(f), "Determining the Significance of the Environmental Effects Caused by a Project.", the California Association of Environmental Professionals CEQA Statue & Guidelines document, and the Highway Design Manual" (page 8). Finally, the guidance states that Caltrans District traffic safety staff will use available data to determine if the proposed project may influence or contribute to significant impacts to the SHS.
- **Deputy Directive-64-R2: Complete Streets - Integrating the Transportation System** (Caltrans 2014) is a Caltrans policy directive to provide for the needs of all travelers. Deputy Directive 64-R2 states, "Caltrans views all transportation improvements as opportunities to improve safety, access, and mobility for all travelers in California and recognizes bicycle, pedestrian, and transit modes as integral elements of the transportation system." The policy acknowledges that "bicycle, pedestrian, and transit travel is facilitated by creating 'complete streets' beginning early in system planning and continuing through project delivery and maintenance and operations."
- **Director's Policy 37** (Caltrans 2021) commits Caltrans to providing "comfortable, convenient, and connected complete streets facilities for people walking, biking, and taking transit or passenger rail unless an exception is documented and approved" for "locations with current and/or future pedestrian, bicycle, or transit needs." The policy "establishes Caltrans' organizational priority to encourage and maximize walking, biking, transit, and passenger rail as a strategy to not only meet state climate, health, equity, and environmental goals but also to foster socially and economically vibrant, thriving, and resilient communities. To achieve this vision, Caltrans will maximize the use of design flexibility to provide context-sensitive solutions and networks for travelers of all ages and abilities."

- **Highway Design Manual, Seventh Edition** (Caltrans 2020b) establishes uniform policies and procedures to carry out the State highway design functions for use on the SHS. However, it is not intended, nor does it establish a legal standard for these functions. The standards, procedures, and requirements in the Highway Design Manual are for the information and guidance of Caltrans officers and employees.

c. Regional Regulations

Sacramento Area Council of Governments 2025 Blueprint

The 2025 Blueprint, formally the Metropolitan Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (MTP/SCS), serves as the Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG) plan for transportation investment that will support the region's growth through 2050.

At its core, the Blueprint is organized around a Triple Bottom Line Framework built on three interconnected goals: equity, economy, and environment. It seeks a future where historically underserved communities have meaningful access to transportation and economic opportunity, where the regional economy diversifies into sectors like precision manufacturing, business services, and research and development, and where land use decisions reduce vehicle emissions, protect agricultural land, and help the region adapt to climate change.

On land use, the Blueprint provides a general idea of future land use patterns and identifies transportation investments that will support housing and job growth that primarily occurs in existing cities, suburbs, and small towns. It emphasizes revitalizing commercial corridors, expanding missing-middle housing options, and creating complete communities where residents can access jobs, services, and recreation without depending solely on a car.

The transportation vision centers on a safe, equitable, and multimodal system. It prioritizes maintaining and optimizing existing roadways, expanding transit and active transportation options, and reducing VMT to meet state GHG reduction targets under SB 375. The plan was developed through extensive public outreach across all six counties, including focus groups, community surveys, pop-up workshops, and direct engagement with local elected boards.

2044 Placer County Regional Transportation Plan

The 2044 Placer County Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) provides a vision of the regional transportation goals, objectives, policies, and strategies. The RTP includes an assessment of the current modes of transportation and potential of new travel options, forecasts future needs for travel and goods movement in Placer County, and identifies planned transportation improvements to support these future travel needs.

Placer County Sustainability Plan

The Placer County Sustainability Plan outlines strategies to reduce transportation related GHG emissions. Reduction in transportation related GHG emissions help reduce air pollutants, support improvements to public health, potentially reduce congestion, and improve communities. The following strategies related to this TIS are listed below.

Strategy T-3 Encourage new development to provide a mix of land uses and to be located contiguous to existing developed areas and infrastructure to support connectivity and to reduce trip lengths.

Strategy T-4 Partner with surrounding regional transit agencies to improve connectivity to regional transportation systems.

Strategy T-5 Partner with incorporated communities and regional agencies to develop bikeways and trails between communities.

Strategy T-9 Increase on-demand micro transit opportunities in the county to provide reliable transit between underserved areas and major transportation hubs.

Strategy T-10 Promote infill development that combines multiple land use types.

Strategy T-11 Encourage active transportation use by increasing street and roadway safety through infrastructure improvements.

Strategy T-12 Consider the feasibility of implementing bike share programs in developed areas of the county, in concert with incorporated communities and regional agencies.

Placer Countywide Active Transportation Plan

The Placer Countywide ATP identifies an accessible and cohesive multimodal transportation network that is context sensitive and improves the safety and comfort of walking, biking, and rolling around Placer County. The ATP builds on the 2018 Regional Bikeway Plan with an actionable roadmap to prioritize projects, meet local and regional needs, and tap into funding opportunities for active transportation investments. The ATP goals include a safer, more connected, equitable, sustainable, and easier to implement active transportation network for Placer County, including connecting unincorporated areas of Placer County with incorporated cities, such as Auburn.

Placer County Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan

The Placer County Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan (ALUCP) is intended to promote compatibility between three public use airports in Placer County and future land use development in the surrounding areas. The plan accomplishes this function through establishment of a set of compatibility criteria applicable to new development around each airport. Additionally, the ALUCP serves as a tool for use by the Placer County Airport Land Use Commission (PCALUC) in fulfilling its duty to review plans, regulations and major land use actions of local agencies for consistency with the ALUCP criteria.

Airport development plans, including plans for any new heliport anywhere in the county, are also subject to review by the PCALUC. However, neither the ALUCP nor the PCALUC have authority over existing land uses or over the operation of the airports. The Airport Influence Area for each of the airports extends roughly 1.5 to 4 miles from the airport runways. These influence areas encompass lands within unincorporated Placer County and the Cities of Auburn and Lincoln (Placer County Airport Land Use Commission 2023).

d. Local Regulations

Auburn General Plan 1993

The current Auburn General Plan provides an overall framework for development of the City and protection of its natural and cultural resources. The goals and policies contained in the Auburn General Plan are applicable throughout the City.

Development in Auburn is guided by the goals and policies of the General Plan. Transportation studies must address General Plan requirements to demonstrate that projects are consistent with the plan. An inconsistency with the General Plan is ground for rejecting a project or requiring an amendment to the plan.

Auburn Active Transportation Plan

The Auburn ATP serves as the City's roadmap to enhance the safety and comfort of bicycling, walking, and rolling in and around Auburn. The Auburn ATP identifies a comprehensive network of recommended bicycle and pedestrian facilities to support human-powered travel. The ATP also identifies the top priority active transportation projects as well as programs and policies to support active transportation in Auburn.

Auburn Comprehensive Safety Action Plan

The Auburn Comprehensive Safety Action Plan (CSAP) is a citywide plan to guide strategic investment and policies that result in a safer and more equitable multimodal transportation system. The CSAP embraces the Federal Highway Administration Safe System Approach, acknowledging that human errors are inevitable but crashes that result in severe injuries and fatalities are avoidable. The CSAP documents priority safety corridors—streets with the highest share of serious injury and fatal crashes—and identifies potential countermeasures to address the most significant factors that contribute to these crashes. The CSAP also affirms the City of Auburn's commitment to reducing fatal and serious injury crashes, with an ultimate goal of zero of these severe crashes by 2045.

Baltimore Ravine Specific Plan

The Baltimore Ravine Specific Plan establishes the regulatory framework for the future development of 277 acres of a larger 406-acre Urban Reserve land area in southwestern Auburn. The Specific Plan was prepared in accordance with General Plan policy by outlining a process to re-designate Urban Reserve parcels to developable land uses, and by providing regulations to guide future development in the Specific Plan, which includes plans for land uses, circulation systems, parks, open space areas, public services, and utility systems. It also includes development standards and design guidelines for streetscapes, community identity features, hillside development, and other unique aspects of the planned development.

Placer County Municipal Code

The Placer County Municipal Code sets forth article 10.20 Trip Reduction Program to reduce traffic congestion in Placer County by reducing both the number of vehicular trips and the VMT that might otherwise be generated by home-to-work commuting.

Placer County General Plan

The Placer County General Plan (updated May 2013) contains a transportation and circulation element that sets policy expectations for the county's transportation network in correlation with the land use element. The following policies are relevant for the CEQA transportation impact analysis for vehicle travel, transit, active transportation, and safety.

Policy 3.A.2 Streets and roads shall be dedicated, widened, and constructed according to the roadway design and access standards generally defined in Section I of this Policy Document and, more specifically in community plans, specific plans, and the

County's Highway Deficiencies Report (SCR 93). Exceptions to these standards may be considered due to environmental, geographical, historical, or other similar limiting factors. An exception may be permitted only upon determination by the Public Works Director that safe and adequate public access and circulation are preserved.

Policy 3.B.1 The County shall work with transit providers to plan and implement additional transit services within and to the County that are timely, cost-effective, and responsive to growth patterns and existing and future transit demand.

Policy 3.C.1 The County shall promote the use of transportation systems management (TSM) programs that divert automobile commute trips to transit, walking, and bicycling.

Policy 3.D.5 The County shall continue to require developers to finance and install pedestrian walkways, equestrian trails, and multi-purpose paths in new development, as appropriate.

Policy 3.D.7 The County shall, where appropriate, require new development to provide sheltered public transit stops, with turnouts.

Policy 3.D.11 The County shall work to achieve equality of convenience and choice among all modes of transportation – pedestrian, cycling, transit and motor vehicles, through a balanced and interconnected transportation system.

Policy 3.D.12 Provide safe and comfortable routes for walking, cycling, and where feasible, public transportation, to encourage use of these modes of transportation, enable convenient and active travel as part of daily activities, reduce pollution, and meet the needs of all users of the roadway system.

Implementation Program 3.21The County shall require that bikeways recommended in the Bikeways/Trails Master Plan be developed when roadway projects are constructed and when street frontage improvements are required of new development.

Implementation Program 3.25Any roadway in Placer County which is to be newly constructed or substantially reconstructed must be designed and constructed to:

a. Provide for the safety and convenience of all users and all ages and of all abilities: pedestrians, bicyclists, transit users, and motorists; and
b. Address the needs of all users both along roadway corridors and crossing the corridors.

Placer County Design Standards

Placer County maintains design standards for the transportation network related to engineering and planning. These standards are compiled in the following documents.

- Placer County Land Development Manual (Section 4 Streets)
- Placer County Engineering Design Plates (Plates 100 to 127 Roads)

The design standards are used to construct a transportation network that has consistent features. This consistency provides common expectations for users to minimize potential conflicts and to establish clear right-of-way practices.

Auburn Bowman Community Plan

The Auburn Bowman Community Plan was originally adopted in 1994 and is in the process of being updated as of 2026. The draft Community Plan Update includes goals and objectives regarding transportation planning with the following underlying principles:

- Manage growth and change while protecting diverse neighborhoods that range in character from traditional, suburban, to rural.
- Provide transportation and mobility in a socially, economically, and environmentally responsible way.
- Create a vibrant community including revitalization of older commercial corridors.

The goals and policies that are relevant to this EIR are listed below.

M-1. Provide a safe and efficient multimodal transportation system that supports the social, physical, and economic well-being of the people and environment of the Plan area.

M-2. Ensure the community is served by a complete street system that is safe, attractive, and balances the needs of all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, transit users, and mobility-challenged persons or persons with various physical abilities and vehicles.

M-3. Encourage and enable the use of public and private transit for local and regional travel by providing efficient and convenient public transportation opportunities to meet the needs of Plan area residents, reduce traffic congestion, and improve air quality.

M-4. Reduce automobile dependency by providing a safe, convenient transit system, pedestrian linkages, and a network of safe and accessible bikeways.

M-BP-d Complete sidewalk gaps on unimproved properties.

M-BP-e Promote and facilitate bicycle and pedestrian connections between parks and trails in the Plan area and the active transportation networks of nearby communities.

4.16.3 Impact Analysis

a. Significance Thresholds and Methodology

Significance Thresholds

The City of Auburn, in its discretion, has determined to utilize criteria presented in Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines to evaluate the proposed General Plan's potential transportation impacts. Based on Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, a project may result in significant transportation impact under CEQA if it would:

1. Conflict with a program, plan, ordinance or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle and pedestrian facilities;
2. Conflict with or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3, subdivision (b);
3. Substantially increase traffic-related hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment); or
4. Result in inadequate emergency access.

This analysis applies the following thresholds to determine the significance of transportation impacts caused by the proposed project.

Public Transit

Impacts to public transit service and facilities would be significant if the proposed project would result in one or more of the following:

- An inconsistency or conflict with an adopted policy or ordinance related to public transit service or facilities;
- Disrupt an existing public transit service or facility; or
- Interfere with implementation of a planned public transit service or facility documented in an adopted plan.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Travel

Impacts to bicycle and pedestrian travel would be significant if the proposed project would result in one or more of the following:

- An inconsistency or conflict with an adopted policy or ordinance related to bicycle and pedestrian travel;
- Substantially disrupt an existing bicycle or pedestrian facility; or
- Interfere with the implementation of a planned bicycle or pedestrian facility documented in an adopted plan (e.g., Auburn or Placer Countywide ATP).

Geometric Design Features

A significant impact would occur if the proposed project causes an inconsistency with applicable design standards governing roadway geometrics (e.g., number and width of travel lanes), traffic controls, volume of traffic, mix of traffic, or speed of traffic.

Emergency Access

A significant impact would occur if the proposed project modifies the transportation network in a manner inconsistent with adopted emergency response plans.

Vehicle Miles Traveled

A significant VMT impact would occur if the proposed project results in a total VMT per service population that exceeds 85 percent of (i.e., 15 percent below) the baseline total VMT per service population, as generated by the Placer County travel forecasting model.

Methodology

The methodology for assessing impacts related to criteria 1, 3, and 4 from Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines is qualitative per the thresholds for *Public Transit*, *Bicycle and Pedestrian Travel*, *Geometric Design Features*, and *Emergency Access,* above. For these criteria, this assessment reviews the proposed changes to the transit, bicycle, and pedestrian networks in the General Plan Update as well as the proposed goals, policies, and actions and assesses whether the General Plan Update would cause an inconsistency or conflict with an adopted policy or ordinance (as evaluated in Impact TRA-1 below).

The analysis for criterion 2 from Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines is quantitative, as described in the threshold for *Vehicle Miles Traveled,* above. CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3(b) describes specific considerations for analyzing transportation impacts pursuant to SB 743. CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3(b) states that VMT is "generally" the most appropriate measure of transportation impacts. No particular methodology or metric is mandated by Section 15064.3(b). Instead, the choice of methodology and metric is left to the discretion of the lead agency, bearing in mind the criteria the legislature had in mind for determining the significance of transportation impacts in SB 743. These were expressed in PRC Section 21099(b)(1), which states: "[t]hose criteria shall promote the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, the development of multimodal transportation networks, and a diversity of land uses."

The City of Auburn has not adopted specific thresholds to assess the significance of VMT impacts. In their review of State climate planning documents and legislation (as summarized in the *Technical Advisory on Evaluating Transportation Impacts in CEQA*), LCI has generally recommended that VMT metrics be evaluated on the basis of "15 percent below baseline." For purposes of this EIR, the City has determined to follow the guidance in the LCI Technical Advisory, hence the threshold of 15 percent below the existing total VMT per service population. *County of Placer Transportation Study Guidelines* (County of Placer 2021) shows that Placer County also uses a 15 percent below baseline threshold for residential, employment, and lodging uses.

The LCI Technical Advisory recommends separate VMT metrics for residential and employment-focused projects. However, Auburn consists of a mix of residential, employment, and non-residential/non-employment land uses (e.g., retail and public service facilities). Furthermore, the proposed General Plan Update will influence the travel characteristics and patterns associated with all these land uses. Additionally, the Placer County travel forecasting model used for this VMT analysis does not readily separate trip making by land use, making analyzing separate VMT metrics by land use as recommended by LCI infeasible.

Therefore, this analysis analyzes VMT in the Planning Area using total VMT per service population. The total VMT per service population metric correlates the total VMT in the Planning Area for all vehicle trips against the number of people within the Planning Area. For purposes of this calculation, the service population consists of Auburn's residential population and total employment, as identified in the Placer County travel forecasting model inputs. The residential population and employment input data from the Placer County travel forecasting model for the Planning Area was compared to data from the U.S. Census Bureau to confirm accuracy.

The total VMT per service population metric relates to the environmental efficiency of the land use pattern and transportation system – a lower VMT per service population indicates that people are driving less and thus represents a more environmentally efficient land use pattern and transportation system.

In addition, this analysis considers whether the proposed project would add new roadway capacity that could possibly increase the convenience of vehicle travel, which could lead to additional vehicle travel (i.e., induced demand).

Travel Forecasting Model

This analysis quantifies weekday daily VMT using the Placer County travel forecasting model that was most recently comprehensively updated for the South Placer Regional Transportation Authority Fee Study in 2021. The travel forecasting model uses multiple inputs including land use information, roadway network capacities, and data on mode choice to produce estimated traffic volumes. The

version of the model used in this analysis includes a 2019 "base year" and 2045 "horizon year." The land use and transportation inputs for the year 2019 and year 2045 models are based on available land use information from local jurisdictions and reasonably foreseeable transportation infrastructure investments documented in SACOG's MTP/SCS.

In addition to the land use and transportation network information, the 2019 Base Year model was updated to include origin-destination data and trip length information from location-based services to provide additional detail about travel patterns and trip lengths within Placer County and for trips that go beyond the County boundary. A regional validation effort was completed as part of the South Placer Regional Transportation Authority fee study model development process to ensure that the model is reasonably replicating traffic volumes and travel patterns at the county/regional level.

AUBURN SUBAREA VALIDATION AND CALIBRATION

While the county/regional level validation effort completed for the South Placer Regional Transportation Authority Fee Study assessed whether the model reasonably replicates travel behavior at the regional level, the California Transportation Commission and Caltrans recommend local subarea model validation to verify a model also reasonably replicates traffic volumes and travel patterns for a local project application.

Therefore, this analysis conducted a subarea validation effort for the Planning Area. This subarea validation included a review of the model's land use information, roadway network speeds and capacities, and Traffic Analysis Zone centroid connectors to the roadway system. As appropriate, adjustments to baseline land use data were made to account for known changes between 2019 and 2024. The validation and calibration process also considered baseline weekday daily traffic volumes from the traffic counts collected on Auburn roadways in 2023 and 2024. Additional details on calibration of the model are provided in Appendix K.

VMT MODELING

The Placer County travel forecasting model serves as the basis for VMT estimates for this analysis. The following scenarios were run in the model to assess changes in VMT in the Planning Area:

- **Year 2024 (Existing):** base year land use and transportation system (using the subarea-calibrated travel demand model). As noted above, the model's original base year was 2019. This analysis reviewed and adjusted the baseline land use data to account for known changes between 2019 and 2024.
- **Proposed 2045 General Plan (Proposed Project):** Year 2045 Current General Plan model with land use and transportation network modifications as proposed under the project.

The VMT forecasts were developed using outputs from the subarea calibrated and validated Placer County travel forecasting model. After running the models to produce vehicle travel forecasts, the following VMT metrics were processed from model outputs:

- **Total VMT per service population**: Amount of VMT generated by all land uses in the Planning Area divided by the total number of residents and employees.

The VMT calculation method for this VMT is the "Origin-Destination" method, which accounts for the full trip length (i.e., all VMT) associated with trips that start or end within the Planning Area. This method includes all trips generated by land uses in the Planning Area while excluding "pass-

through" trips that travel through the Planning Area without stopping (e.g., trips on I-80 that travel through but do not start or end in the Planning Area).

b. Project Impacts and Mitigation Measures

Threshold 1:	Would the project conflict with a program, plan, ordinance or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle and pedestrian facilities?

Impact TRA-1 DEVELOPMENT FACILITATED BY THE PROJECT WOULD RESULT IN INCREASED USAGE OF THE CIRCULATION SYSTEM INCLUDING TRANSIT, ROADWAY, BICYCLE, AND PEDESTRIAN FACILITIES. HOWEVER, IMPLEMENTATION OF PROPOSED GENERAL PLAN POLICIES WOULD ENSURE THAT DEVELOPMENT AND USE OF THE CIRCULATION SYSTEM IS CONSISTENT WITH ADOPTED PROGRAMS, PLANS, ORDINANCES, AND POLICIES. THEREFORE, IMPACTS WOULD BE LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT.

Several state, regional, and local programs, plans, ordinances, and policies apply to the proposed project. These include Caltrans Directives related to the California Complete Streets Act (AB 1358), the 2025 SACOG Blueprint, and the Placer County General Plan. Table 4.16-1 assesses the consistency of the proposed project with Caltrans Directives. The 2025 SACOG Blueprint establishes four strategic priorities with associated policies and implementation actions that guide regional transportation and land use investment through 2050. Table 4.16-2 below illustrates the consistency of the proposed project with the applicable Blueprint policies. Finally, Table 4.16-3 assesses consistency with the Placer County General Plan.

Table 4.16-1 Project Consistency with Caltrans Directives

Caltrans Directives	Project Consistency
Caltrans Deputy Directive 64-R2 – Complete Streets – Integrating the Transportation System. Caltrans views all transportation improvements as opportunities to improve safety, access, and mobility for all travelers in California and recognizes bicycle, pedestrian, and transit modes as integral elements of the transportation system. Caltrans acknowledges that bicycle, pedestrian, and transit travel is facilitated by creating 'complete streets' beginning early in system planning and continuing through project delivery and maintenance and operations.	**Consistent.** The proposed General Plan Circulation Element includes a specific focus on complete streets for all users. Applicable goals and policies include: Goal T-1: Balanced Transportation Network, Policy T-1.2: Complete Streets, Policy T-4.1: Bicycle and Pedestrian Improvements, and Action T-1D: Street Standards. These goals, policies, and actions commit the City of Auburn to provide a balanced transportation network that accommodates all modes of travel.
Caltrans Director's Policy 37 (DP-37). Caltrans commits to providing comfortable, convenient, and connected complete streets facilities for people walking, biking, and taking transit or passenger rail unless an exception is documented and approved for locations with current and/or future pedestrian, bicycle, or transit needs. Caltrans' organizational priority is to encourage and maximize walking, biking, transit, and passenger rail as a strategy to not only meet state climate, health, equity, and environmental goals but also to foster socially and economically vibrant, thriving, and resilient communities.	**Consistent.** The proposed General Plan promotes context-sensitive transportation design that balances safety, mobility, and community character. Applicable policies include: Policy T-1.1: Coordinating Transportation and Land Use, Policy T-1.5: Safety, and Policy T-3.7: Environmental Impacts of Transportation. These policies commit the City of Auburn to work proactively to reduce collisions and traffic hazards on Auburn roadways, as well as reduce the environmental effects of transportation projects.

Source: Caltrans 2014, 2021

Table 4.16-2 Project Consistency with 2025 SACOG Blueprint

2025 SACOG Blueprint Policies	Project Consistency
Strategic Priority 2: Foster the Next Generation of Mobility Solutions	
NextGen-1: Encourage context-responsive shared mobility programs (car share, bike share, scooter share, and microtransit) to increase mobility options for residents and bridge the first-mile/last-mile gap to fixed-route bus and rail.	**Consistent.** The proposed General Plan supports shared mobility and on-demand transit services to complement fixed-route service and address first-mile/last-mile connectivity needs. Applicable policies include: Policy T-3.5: Shared Mobility, and Policy T-5.1: On-Demand Transit. These policies express the City of Auburn's support for carsharing, bike sharing, and local on-demand transit to meet the transportation needs of Auburn residents.
NextGen-2: Cultivate regional understanding and support for alternatives to driving alone by improving regional travel planning tools, expanding transportation demand management programs, and facilitating pilots and demonstration projects.	**Consistent.** The proposed General Plan promotes transportation demand management and alternatives to single-occupancy vehicle travel through targeted policies and programs. Applicable policies include: Policy T-3.1: Reducing Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT), Policy T-3.3: Strategies to Reduce VMT, and Action T-3B: Trip Reduction for New Projects. These policies and action demonstrate the City of Auburn's commitment to reducing average per capita vehicle miles traveled.
NextGen-3: Support a transition to zero-emission passenger, freight, and transit vehicles that is equitable and considers the diversity of regional needs and contexts, including rural, urban, and suburban communities as well as historically underrepresented communities.	**Consistent.** The proposed General Plan supports the transition to zero-emission vehicles by encouraging EV infrastructure in new development and acquisition of ZEVs for the City fleet. Applicable policies include: Policy T-3.4: Zero Emission Vehicles. This policy expresses the City of Auburn's support of electric and other zero emission vehicles.
NextGen-4: Support the long-term fiscal health of transit by collaborating with transit providers to identify productivity and cost-effectiveness measures for transit.	**Consistent.** The proposed General Plan supports cost-effective, responsive transit services through coordination with transit providers and periodic monitoring of service levels. Applicable policies include: Policy T-5.2: Inter-City Bus Transit, and Policy T-5.3: Monitoring Transit Needs. These policies commit the City of Auburn to coordinate with local transit operators to provide continue local transit services that connect Auburn to nearby communities and regional transit systems.
NextGen-5: Advance Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) to reduce congestion and improve multimodal reliability.	**Consistent.** The proposed General Plan supports the use of Intelligent Transportation Systems and intelligent signal systems to improve the efficiency of the existing street network without relying solely on capacity expansion. Applicable policies include: Policy T-1.7: Technology and Travel Behavior, Policy T-2.2: Traffic Flow, and Action T-2A: Intelligent Transportation Systems. These policies express the City of Auburn's support to deploy technology to provide efficient traffic flow through the city.
Strategic Priority 4: Build and Maintain a Safe, Equitable, and Resilient Multimodal Transportation System	
Build-1: Prioritize maintenance of existing transportation infrastructure to manage or reduce the growing maintenance funding gap by focusing flexible revenues on state of good repair improvements that support a safe, equitable, and resilient transportation system.	**Consistent.** The proposed General Plan prioritizes maintenance and efficient operation of the existing roadway system as a foundation for safe transportation. Applicable policies include: Policy T-1.6: Cost Considerations, Policy T-2.3: Road Maintenance, and Action T-1A: Capital Improvement Program. These policies and actions outline the City of Auburn's fiscal plans to maintain the City's transportation infrastructure.

2025 SACOG Blueprint Policies	Project Consistency
Build-5: Advance cost-effective safety improvements in high-crash locations to help the region make greater progress toward eliminating fatal transportation-related crashes.	**Consistent.** The proposed General Plan includes policies specifically targeting safety improvements at high-crash locations and for all modes of travel. Applicable policies include: Policy T-1.5: Safety, Policy T-4.2: Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety, and Action T-2C: Collision Data. These policies and actions commit the City of Auburn to work proactively to reduce collisions and traffic hazards on Auburn roadways, as well as monitor and evaluate traffic collision data to inform potential safety improvements, design changes, and enforcement needs.
Build-6: Increase the resiliency of the multimodal transportation network and the emergency preparedness of the transportation sector to reduce the impacts of extreme weather and natural disasters.	**Consistent.** The proposed General Plan explicitly addresses natural hazard resilience, evacuation route planning, and emergency vehicle access in recognition of Auburn's wildland-urban interface context. Applicable policies include: Policy LU-1.5: Reducing Exposure to Natural Hazards, Policy T-2.6: Emergency Response, and Policy T-4.6: Connecting Neighborhoods**.** These policies express the City of Auburn's intent to direct growth away from areas prone to natural hazards, provide a street network that accommodates emergency response, and increase connectivity.
Build-7: Support investment in bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure that provides safe access to schools, jobs, recreational opportunities, social gathering centers, and transit, and/or implements the Regional Trail Network.	**Consistent.** The proposed General Plan directly supports the Regional Trail Network and investment in bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure connecting Auburn's neighborhoods to key destinations, including the ASRA. Applicable goals and policies include: Goal T-4: Bicycle and Pedestrian Circulation, Policy T-4.1: Bicycle and Pedestrian Improvements, Policy T-4.3: Alignment with 'Endurance Capital' Branding, and Policy T-4.4: Access to the Auburn State Recreation Area (ASRA). These goals and policies demonstrate the City of Auburn's intent to improve bicycle and pedestrian facilities to make it safer and easier to walk or bicycle around Auburn and the region.
Build-8: Develop multimodal corridors that improve access to major economic assets and job centers and facilitate the reliable movement of freight.	**Consistent.** The proposed General Plan includes policies developing multimodal corridors and supporting the safe, efficient movement of goods by both road and rail. Applicable goals and policies include: Goal T-7: Goods Movement and Aviation, Policy T-4.1: Bicycle and Pedestrian Improvements, Policy T-7.1: Truck Routes, and Policy T-7.2: Freight Rail. These goals and policies express the City of Auburn's support for transportation facilities that support the movement of goods via truck and rail.

Source: SACOG 2025

Table 4.16-3 Project Consistency with Placer County General Plan

Placer County General Plan Policies	Project Consistency
Policy 3.A.2. Streets and roads shall be dedicated, widened, and constructed according to the roadway design and access standards. Exceptions may be considered due to environmental, geographical, historical, or other limiting factors.	**Consistent.** The Auburn 2045 General Plan requires new development to construct or fund improvements meeting applicable City and Placer County roadway design and access standards, reviewed through the development review process. Applicable policies include: Policy T-1.4: Mitigation of Development Impacts, Policy LU-1.8: Balancing Objectives, and Action T-1B: Traffic Fees. These policies and actions outline the City of Auburn's implementation actions to ensure transportation improvements are constructed to mitigate the impact of traffic generated by new land development.

Placer County General Plan Policies	Project Consistency
Policy 3.B.1. The County shall work with transit providers to plan and implement additional transit services that are timely, cost-effective, and responsive to growth patterns and transit demand.	**Consistent.** The Auburn 2045 General Plan includes policies supporting coordination with Auburn Transit, PCT, and Capitol Corridor to expand and improve transit service in response to growth. Applicable policies include: Policy T-5.2: Inter-City Bus Transit, and Policy T-5.3: Monitoring Transit Needs. These policies commit the City of Auburn to coordinate with local transit operators to provide continue local transit services that connect Auburn to nearby communities and regional transit systems.
Policy 3.C.1. The County shall promote the use of transportation systems management (TSM) programs that divert automobile commute trips to transit, walking, and bicycling.	**Consistent.** The Auburn 2045 General Plan promotes TDM measures and multimodal alternatives to driving, consistent with County TSM policy. Applicable policies include: Policy T-3.1: Reducing Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT), Policy T-3.3: Strategies to Reduce VMT, and Action T-3B: Trip Reduction for New Projects. These policies and action outline the City of Auburn's commitment and actions to reduce average per capita vehicle miles traveled.
Policies 3.D.5 and 3.D.12. The County shall require developers to install pedestrian walkways, equestrian trails, and multi-purpose paths in new development and shall provide safe and comfortable routes for walking, cycling, and transit.	**Consistent.** The Auburn 2045 General Plan requires new development to construct or fund pedestrian and bicycle facilities, consistent with County policy. Applicable policies include: Policy T-4.1: Bicycle and Pedestrian Improvements, Policy T-4.6: Connecting Neighborhoods, and Policy T-4.7: Sidewalks. These policies demonstrate the City of Auburn's intent to improve bicycle and pedestrian facilities to make it safer and easier to walk or bicycle around Auburn and the region.
Implementation Programs 3.21 and 3.25. The County shall require bikeways recommended in the Bikeways/Trails Master Plan to be developed when roadway projects are constructed, and shall require new or substantially reconstructed roadways to provide for the safety and convenience of all users of all ages and abilities.	**Consistent.** The Auburn 2045 General Plan requires bikeway and pedestrian improvements in conjunction with roadway projects and new development, consistent with the Placer County Regional Bikeway Plan. Applicable policies include: Policy T-4.1: Bicycle and Pedestrian Improvements, and Action T-1D: Street Standards. These policies and actions demonstrate the City of Auburn's intent to improve bicycle and pedestrian facilities to make it safer and easier to walk or bicycle around Auburn and the region.

Source: County of Placer 2013

With implementation of the goals and policies described above, the pedestrian and bicycle circulation system would become more convenient and accessible, the quality of service for users of existing and proposed facilities would improve, and safety for all roadway users would be enhanced.

Additionally, while the proposed cannabis retail business ordinance would authorize up to two retail cannabis businesses to operate in existing retail establishments, the proposed ordinance would not result in a potential conflict with the roadway or circulation system, or the plans and policies mentioned above. The proposed ordinance would enable the permitting of the retail cannabis business and each retail cannabis business would require a city issued retail cannabis license and certificate of occupancy to ensure compliance with all applicable codes, including the City of Auburn Municipal Code. Furthermore, the proposed ordinance requires a retail cannabis business to obtain permits that ensure compliance with the circulation system. Specifically, Sections 159.048 and 159.049 include development standards to ensure that any permitted retail cannabis business will not conflict with a program, plan, ordinance or policy addressing the circulation system.

Implementation of the proposed project would not result in conflicts with adopted policies, plans, ordinances, or programs for bicycle, pedestrian, transit, or roadway facilities. Therefore, this impact would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures are required.

Significance After Mitigation

Impacts would be less than significant without mitigation.

Threshold 2:	Would the project conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines section 15064.3, subdivision (b)?

Impact TRA-2 DEVELOPMENT FACILITATED BY THE PROJECT WOULD DECREASE VMT PER SERVICE POPULATION FOR THE PLANNING AREA. HOWEVER, VMT PER SERVICE POPULATION WOULD EXCEED 85 PERCENT OF THE BASELINE VMT PER SERVICE POPULATION FOR THE PLANNING AREA. NO FEASIBLE MITIGATION IS AVAILABLE TO REDUCE THIS IMPACT. THEREFORE, THE PROPOSED PROJECT WOULD RESULT IN A SIGNIFICANT AND UNAVOIDABLE VMT IMPACT.

Roadway Capacity Effects

The proposed General Plan includes small-scale operational improvements, such as targeted intersection improvements and Intelligent Transportation Systems signal optimization. However, the proposed General Plan does not include any large-scale capacity enhancing roadway improvements, such as road widening, which would substantially increase roadway lane miles in Auburn. Therefore, the transportation improvements identified in the proposed General Plan Update are not expected to increase VMT through the phenomenon of induced demand; and an analysis of induced demand effects on VMT in the Planning Area is not warranted.

VMT Generated by New Development

Land development facilitated by the proposed General Plan would contribute to an increase in VMT in the Planning Area. Table 4.16-4 presents the total VMT per service population for the Planning Area. The Placer County travel forecasting model produces VMT estimates for the base year (2024) and horizon year (2045) with the proposed project. The final row in Table 4.16-4 shows the percent change when comparing the VMT in 2045 with the proposed project to the 2024 baseline condition for the Planning Area.

Table 4.16-4 Planning Area total VMT per service population

		Service Population			Total VMT per Service Population
Scenario	Total VMT	Residents	Employees	Total	
Base Year	2,919,576	29,350	16,387	45,737	63.83
2045 with Proposed Auburn General Plan	3,278,814	35,777	19,276	55,053	59.56
Percent Change	+12.3%	+21.9%	+17.6%	+20.4%	-6.7%

Source: Fehr & Peers 2026

As shown in Table 4.16-4, the Total VMT per service population is forecast to decrease by approximately 6.7 percent with the proposed project compared to the base year condition. This reduction in total VMT per service population reflects the VMT efficiency of the land use pattern and transportation improvements associated with the proposed General Plan Update. However, the

significance thresholds used in this analysis indicate a significant impact would occur if the proposed project results in a total VMT per service population that is greater than 85 percent of the baseline condition (i.e., higher than 15 percent below baseline). Therefore, the proposed project's impact to VMT would be potentially significant because the 6.7 percent decrease in total VMT per service population is less than the 15 percent below baseline threshold.

As is typical with travel forecasting models, the VMT analysis using the Placer County travel forecasting model does not fully reflect the implementation of several VMT reduction-related goals and policies included in the proposed General Plan. These goals and policies may further reduce VMT throughout the City by incentivizing alternative modes of transportation, supporting compact mixed-use development, and establishing parking policies that promote more sustainable travel. Applicable goals, policies, and actions in the proposed General Plan include: Goal T-3: Sustainable Transportation, Policy T-3.1: Reducing Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT), Policy T-3.2: Use of VMT in Environmental Review, Policy T-3.3: Strategies to Reduce VMT, Action T-3A: VMT Guidance, and Action T-3B: Trip Reduction for New Projects. These proposed goals, policies, and actions would directly and indirectly reduce VMT by promoting alternatives to driving, encouraging compact development near transit, and requiring project-level mitigation where VMT thresholds are exceeded. The City recognizes that VMT reductions may be achieved incrementally through the implementation of individual projects and requires, through Policy T-3.1 and T-3.3, a coordinated set of strategies to reduce VMT in Auburn. Policy T-3.2 requires the use of VMT as the metric for evaluating transportation impacts during the environmental review process, which may lead to project-level VMT reduction measures to mitigate project-specific VMT impacts.

Table 4.16-5 describes candidate VMT reduction strategies, informed by VMT reduction measures identified in the California Air Pollution Control Officers Association's *2022 Handbook for Analyzing Greenhouse Gas Emission Reductions, Assessing Climate Vulnerabilities, and Advancing Health and Equity* that individual projects in Auburn can use to achieve additional reductions beyond those incorporated in the proposed General Plan Update.

Table 4.16-5 VMT Reduction Measures

Category	Description of VMT Reduction Measures
Land Use/Location	Land use measures such as project land use mix, density, location, and efficiency relative to other housing and jobs; diversity of uses within the project. Includes access and proximity to destinations, the Auburn Station, and active transportation infrastructure.
Trip Reduction Programs	Transit fare subsidies, parking cash-outs, paid parking, alternative work schedules/telework, rideshare programs, shuttle programs, bike-share programs, and end-of-trip facilities. Can be achieved through Transportation Demand Management (TDM) program measures required as conditions of approval for new development.
Parking or Road Pricing/ Management	Implementation of area or cordon pricing, contributions to transportation infrastructure improvements, designation of zero-emissions delivery areas, or management of on- and off-street parking supply and pricing to reduce single-occupancy vehicle use.
Neighborhood Design	Design features, including high-quality bicycle parking, traffic calming measures above jurisdictional requirements, creation of pedestrian-priority zones, and dedication of land for multimodal (non-automobile) facilities, consistent with Auburn 2045 General Plan Policies T-4.1 and T-4.2.
Transit	Improvements to the transit system, including expansion, service frequency, types of transit, access to stations, station safety and quality, bicycle parking, and last-mile connections. Can be achieved through TDM program measures. Consistent with Auburn 2045 General Plan Goal T-5 and Policies T-5.1 through T-5.5.

Category	Description of VMT Reduction Measures
In-Lieu Fees	A fee levied on new development that is used to fund non-vehicular transportation services connecting project residents to areas of employment or vice versa. Such services may be provided by the project applicant in cooperation with Auburn Transit or Placer County Transit.

Source: California Air Pollution Control Officers Association 2022; Fehr & Peers 2026

As shown in Table 4.16-4, the Total VMT per service population is forecast to decrease by about 6.7 percent with the proposed General Plan Update compared to the base year condition. Implementation of the goals, policies and implementation programs noted above would assist in further reducing Total VMT per service population, but the various strategies outlined in goals and policies would need to be comprehensively planned, funded, and designed to meet a specific performance target. Therefore, the impact to VMT is considered potentially significant.

Proposed Cannabis Retail Business Ordinance

For informational purposes, this EIR conducts an additional assessment of the proposed Cannabis Retail Business Ordinance. It should be noted that the VMT impact for the entire project, including the proposed Cannabis Retail Business Ordinance has been addressed above. The LCI Technical Advisory recommends that lead agencies analyze the effects of a retail project by assessing the change in total VMT because retail projects typically re-route travel from other retail destinations. The LCI Technical Advisory further notes that "adding retail opportunities into the urban fabric and thereby improving retail destination proximity…tends to shorten trips and reduce VMT. Thus, lead agencies generally may presume such development creates a less than significant transportation impact."

The California Department of Cannabis Control "Real CA Cannabis" database lists the nearest licensed cannabis businesses to the Planning Area as in Colfax, Cameron Park, Grass Valley, and Nevada City. The business in Colfax is the closest at about 16 miles from central Auburn. The businesses in Grass Valley, Nevada City, and Cameron Park are more than a 25-mile drive from central Auburn (California Department of Cannabis Control 2026). Existing cannabis customers living in the Auburn area must either drive to these businesses at least 15 miles away or rely on delivery services which must also drive a minimum of 15 miles to deliver cannabis products to customers in the City of Auburn.

A future cannabis business applying for a retail cannabis license through the proposed Ordinance would be able to serve these existing customers, resulting in shorter driving distances whether from an in-person visit to a dispensary in Auburn or from a delivery service originating from the Auburn location. To the extent that a new cannabis dispensary in Auburn would generate trips from outside Auburn, these trips may also be shorter in length than their current trip to existing licensed dispensaries. For example, a potential customer living in Lincoln would be about 25 miles to the closest existing cannabis business in Marysville or Sacramento but would be about 15 miles to a future cannabis business location in Auburn. When presented with similar retail opportunities, customers are likely to patronize the business that are most convenient to access. While other factors may influence convenience, travel distance and time are often the primary accessibility factor. This is reflective of the assertion made in the LCI Technical Advisory that new retail opportunities "tend to shorten trips and reduce VMT."

As a retail operation, future cannabis businesses that would apply for one of the licenses permitted under the proposed Ordinance are most likely to serve customers residing or otherwise already located in the Auburn area. This would likely draw customers who currently must travel outside the area or rely on deliveries from businesses outside the area to access cannabis products. Therefore, per the LCI Technical Advisory, development facilitated by the proposed Cannabis Ordinance is likely to lead to a reduction in VMT.

Mitigation Measures

To bring the impact related to Total VMT per service population to a less than significant level, Total VMT per service population from buildout of the proposed project would need to be reduced by approximately 8.3 percent to reach the significant impact threshold of 54.26 total VMT per service population (i.e., 15 percent below the 63.83 Total VMT per service population under base year conditions). Land use and transportation policies in the proposed Auburn 2045 General Plan are intended to reduce automobile dependency over time, reduce VMT, and support long-term transportation sustainability. Proposed policies include strategies to improve transit service, including transit-oriented development near the Auburn Station; expand active transportation options, including the bikeway network; implement VMT reduction strategies consistent with the 2025 SACOG Blueprint; encourage workplace flexibility; promote mixed-use development; and improve the jobs-housing balance. However, the magnitude of reduction achievable at the General Plan level, absent more specific project-level mitigation, would not reduce VMT per service population sufficiently to 15 percent below the baseline level. Disruptive changes to transportation, including transportation network companies (i.e., Uber, Lyft), increased delivery services, and autonomous vehicles, may increase Total VMT per service population beyond forecast levels. There are no reasonable or feasible mitigation measures that could increase the effectiveness or guarantee the effectiveness of 2045 General Plan Update policies. There are no additional feasible mitigation measures that could reduce this potentially significant impact.

Significance After Mitigation

Impacts related to induced travel demand and the proposed Cannabis Ordinance would be less than significant without mitigation.

The proposed General Plan is intended to reduce automobile dependency over time, through support for transit-oriented development near the Auburn Station, expansion of the bikeway network, and implementation of VMT reduction strategies consistent with the 2025 SACOG Blueprint. However, VMT per service population is forecasted to achieve a reduction of only 6.7 percent compared to the baseline condition, and no additional mitigation measures are available or feasible in this instance that can guarantee a further reduction in VMT per service population. Therefore, impacts would be significant and unavoidable.

This program-level analysis of VMT impacts does not preclude the finding of less than significant impacts for subsequent development projects that achieve applicable VMT thresholds of significance.

Threshold 3:	Would the project substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible use (e.g., farm equipment)?

Impact TRA-3 THE PROPOSED PROJECT IS A PROGRAM-LEVEL PLAN THAT DOES NOT DIRECTLY ADDRESS PROJECT-LEVEL DESIGN FEATURES. ROADWAY IMPROVEMENTS AND SITE ACCESS MEASURES WOULD BE DESIGNED AND REVIEWED IN ACCORDANCE WITH CITY, COUNTY, AND STATE STANDARDS. THIS IMPACT WOULD BE LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT.

The City of Auburn, Placer County, and Caltrans maintain standards that guide the construction of new transportation facilities to minimize design hazards for all users. Through the development review process, City and County staff evaluate development proposals, including projects that add traffic to streets not designed to current standards. Where needed, street improvements are identified and the project is conditioned to construct or provide funding for improvements that minimize or eliminate the hazard. Typical improvements include shoulder widening, adding turn pockets, adding sidewalks or crosswalks, realigning sharp curves, prohibiting certain turning movements, signalizing intersections, and increasing sight distance.

New and upgraded roadways needed to accommodate new development would be designed according to applicable federal, state, and local design standards, including the Placer County Land Development Manual, Placer County Engineering Design Plates (Plates 100–127), and applicable Caltrans standards for facilities on or adjacent to the State Highway System. Development and infrastructure projects in the Planning Area would be required to comply with the Auburn 2045 General Plan, the Auburn Municipal Code, and applicable state and local regulations. The Caltrans Local Development Review Safety Review Practitioner's Guidance (2024) and the Caltrans VMT-Focused Transportation Impact Study Guide (2020) provide additional direction for projects that may affect I-80 or SR 49.

The 2045 General Plan Update includes the following policies and actions that are intended to result in roadway designs that safely accommodate all users: Policy T-1.2: Complete Streets, Policy T-1.5: Safety, Policy T-1.8: Accessibility, Policy T-2.7: Private Streets, Policy T-2.8: Enforcement of Traffic Laws, Policy T-2.9: Traffic Calming, Action T-3C: Slow and Safe Streets, Policy T-4.2: Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety, Policy T-4.11: Trail Safety, and Action T-4J: Road Design for Bicycle Safety. With implementation of these policies and actions, development facilitated by the project would be required to comply with City design standards for roadway, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities, ensuring adequate safety features are included in new development plans. Additionally, the land use modifications associated with the proposed project would not introduce incompatible uses to local roadways, bikeways, or pedestrian facilities, as the land uses identified in the proposed General Plan are substantially similar to existing land uses within the city. The proposed project does not include changes to roadway design standards that would create geometric hazards. Accordingly, the proposed General Plan Update would not substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature or incompatible use.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures are required.

Significance After Mitigation

This impact would be less than significant without mitigation.

Threshold 4: Would the project result in inadequate emergency access?

Impact TRA-4 THE PROPOSED PROJECT IDENTIFIES CIRCULATION IMPROVEMENTS AND POLICIES THAT WOULD SUPPORT EMERGENCY ACCESS THROUGHOUT THE CITY. THIS IMPACT WOULD BE LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT.

As Auburn grows, more people will rely on the City's transportation network and that means the street system needs to keep pace with emergency response needs. The proposed General Plan directly addresses this through Goal T-2, which establishes a road network that facilitates safe, orderly, and efficient movement within Auburn and between Auburn and the region, and through several specific policies designed to maintain and improve emergency vehicle access citywide.

Most directly, Policy T-2.6 (Emergency Response) requires the City to ensure the street system is designed to accommodate emergency response vehicles and to facilitate evacuation in the event of an emergency, with particular attention to improving ingress and egress in areas that could be cut off during a natural disaster. Policy T-2.1 (Road Hierarchy) further supports this by adopting design standards for arterials, collectors, and local streets that include provisions for emergency vehicles alongside pedestrians, bicycles, and parking. Policy T-2.9 (Traffic Calming) reinforces these standards by explicitly prohibiting traffic calming measures that impede emergency vehicle access. Together, these policies establish a clear framework for designing streets that serve both everyday users and first responders.

The proposed General Plan also establishes neighborhood-level connectivity standards that benefit emergency access. New subdivisions are required to connect to adjacent development, and cul-de-sac and dead-end streets must include provisions for emergency vehicles or alternate routes of egress.

The proposed project is a program-level plan and does not directly determine project-level design. However, all development applications in Auburn are reviewed by City staff, including emergency responders, to verify compliance with applicable requirements, including Fire Code provisions for emergency access and response vehicle clearances. Given this established review process and the emergency access framework embedded in the proposed General Plan, impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures are required.

Significance After Mitigation

Impacts would be less than significant without mitigation.

4.16.4 Cumulative Impacts

The geographic scope for cumulative transportation impacts is the area covered by the Placer County travel forecasting model. This geographic scope is appropriate because traffic and VMT impacts are regional in nature. The cumulative analysis considers past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future plans and projects in the region, including growth under the 2025 Blueprint, the Placer County General Plan, and local city general plans.

LCI provides the following guidance regarding cumulative impacts analysis and VMT:

> When using an absolute VMT metric, i.e., total VMT (as recommended below for retail and transportation projects), analyzing the combined impacts for a cumulative impacts analysis may be appropriate. However, metrics such as VMT per capita or VMT per employee, i.e., metrics framed in terms of efficiency (as recommended below for use on residential and office projects), cannot be summed because they employ a denominator. A project that falls below an efficiency-based threshold that is aligned with long-term environmental goals and relevant plans would have no cumulative impact distinct from the project impact. Accordingly, a finding of a less-than-significant project impact would imply a less than significant cumulative impact, and vice versa.

Cumulative VMT, including the project's contribution toward cumulative impacts is presented in Table 4.16-4. As shown in Table 4.16-4, the cumulative VMT impact would be significant, and the project would have a considerable contribution to this significant cumulative impact.

Roadways constructed as part of the proposed project, in conjunction with other cumulative plans and projects in the region, would be designed and constructed to meet City of Auburn, Placer County, and Caltrans design standards as applicable. Cumulative development would similarly be required to comply with applicable regulations and design standards. Trucks necessary for construction would utilize designated truck routes. If cumulative development would redesign City streets in a way that substantially affected roadway safety, the relevant jurisdiction would require mitigation. Driveways and access improvements associated with cumulative development would be constructed in compliance with the California Fire Code and other applicable regulations. Therefore, cumulative impacts related to roadway safety and emergency vehicle access would be less than significant.

4.17 Tribal Cultural Resources

This section analyzes the proposed project's potential impacts on tribal cultural resources (TCR). TCRs are those resources identified by California Native American tribes in consultation with lead agencies during tribal consultation (also referred to as Assembly Bill [AB] 52/Senate Bill [SB] 18 consultation).

4.17.1 Setting

a. Ethnographic Setting

The Planning Area is located in the traditional territory of the Penutian-speaking Maidu, which includes the northern Sacramento Valley. The three geographical divisions of the Maidu are the Northeastern Maidu (Mountain Maidu), Northwestern Maidu (Konkow), and the Southern Maidu (Nisenan). The distinction between these three groups is primarily based on language and topographic area (Dixon 1905; Kroeber 1925; Bates and Bernstein 1982; Simmons et al. 1997). The Planning Area lies in the traditional Southern Maidu (Nisenan) territory; however, all three Maidu groups will be discussed here.

Maidu established permanent settlements on the tops of ridges separating streams, atop crests and knolls, or along terraces near or next to streams and rivers. Permanent settlements consisted of three types of dwelling structures, with the most common structure being a large, circular, semi-subterranean, earth-covered k'um. The k'um functioned not only as a dwelling but also as a dance hall and sweat house. The smaller conical hübo was made of bark and brush and more likely served as a single-family dwelling. In addition to the k'um and hübo, the Maidu established summer shelters made of boughs and branches with no walls, or one wall made to block the sun (Dixon 1905: 168–174; Kroeber 1925; Johnson 2005: 61–62).

Maidu territories were divided into separate villages or groupings of villages. Each village had a male leader or chief as well as an advisor and at least one shaman. Shamans serve as highly important leaders in Maidu culture who had the ability to heal the sick and interact with the spirits. Shamans served as the center of various ceremonies that involved feasting, dancing, or singing while playing a cocoon rattle (so'koti). The Maidu shamans are categorized as valley shamans, hill shamans, and mountain shamans. The valley shamans aid others by interacting with the spirits to relieve pain and bury the cause. Other rituals include non-shamanistic doctoring in the forms of dancing and singing over the troubled individual. The hill shamans inherited their abilities to communicate with the ancestors. The mountain shamans believed in inherited abilities from one shaman to another. Once a shaman passed away, a new shaman inherited his spiritual powers and leadership. The mountain shamans communicated with both human and animal spirits (Dixon 1905; Johnson 2005; Kroeber 1925).

Musical instruments were used in a variety of social and ceremonial events. These included the foot drum (ki'le) made from a large log, rattles (washo'sho) usually filled with pebbles or rice, a split-stick rattle clapper (pak'papa), a stringed instrument bow (mawu), flutes (ya'lu), and whistles (Densmore 1939).

Maidu food sources depended on a mix of fishing, gathering, and hunting. The Konkow and Nisenan relied heavily on salmon and lamprey eel, while the Mountain Maidu relied on trout. Nets for fishing were likely made of milkweed and wild hemp. The Konkow used seine-nets, which were tight knit

and used to enclose fish on all sides, whereas the Mountain Maidu used tighter fishnets to ensnare fish (Dixon 1905: 143). They hunted game animals, including deer and elk, in company groups, driven over cliffs, or cornered and shot or clubbed. Bear hunts were ceremonial and often conducted during the hibernation of the winter months. Small mammals, such as rabbits, racoons, birds, and waterfowl were caught in nets and clubbed or noosed. The Maidu gathered fruits and nuts, which made up a large portion of their diet, along with acorns which were a dietary staple that were ground into a pulp and cooked. Other local roots and bulbs were also gathered (Dixon 1905; Kroeber 1925).

Basketry was an important aspect of Maidu culture for practical and artistic purposes. Two techniques were used in basket weaving: coiling and twining. Materials varied, but most commonly, a tree known as red bud (*Cercis Canadensis*) was used for decorative baskets. Other materials were regionally specific. For instance, the briar root and bulrush root were used by the Konkow, while the Nisenan used the split branchlets of the Douglas fir. The Maidu also utilized tule for creating baskets, as well as mats, boats, and other tools (Dixon 1905; Kroeber 1925; Bates and Bernstein 1982).

Kroeber (1925) estimated that the population of the Maidu may have been as large as 4,000 to 9,000 individuals prior to contact with Euro-Americans; however, the malaria epidemic of northern California from 1830-1833 and the arrivals of miners in the 1850s decimated the Maidu population (Plumas County Museum 2023). During the 1860's, the remaining Maidu population, approximately 300 individuals, were forced onto a reservation in Mendocino County (Feather River Tribal Health 2023). The Maidu community keeps deep ties to the ancestral land and promotes stewardship of their cultural heritage and landscapes.

Tribal communities present within the Planning Area include United Auburn Indian Community (UAIC), a federally recognized tribe comprised of both Miwok and Maidu (Nisenan) Tribal members who are traditionally and culturally affiliated with the project area. The Tribe has a deep spiritual, cultural, and physical ties to their ancestral land and are contemporary stewards of their culture and landscapes. The Tribal community represents a continuity and endurance of their ancestors by maintaining their connection to their history and culture. It is the Tribe's goal to ensure the preservation and continuance of their cultural heritage for current and future generations.

4.17.2 Regulatory Setting

a. State Regulations

Assembly Bill 52 of 2014

As of July 1, 2015, AB 52 was enacted and expands CEQA by defining a new resource category, "tribal cultural resources". AB 52 establishes, "a project with an effect that may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource is a project that may have a significant effect on the environment" (PRC Section 21084.2). It further states the CEQA lead agency shall establish measures to avoid impacts that would alter the significant characteristics of a TCR, when feasible (PRC Section 21084.3).

PRC Section 21074 (a)(1)(A) and (B) define TCRs as "sites, features, places, cultural landscapes, sacred places, and objects with cultural value to a California Native American tribe" and that meets at least one of the following criteria, as summarized in *CEQA Guidelines* Appendix G:

1. Listed or eligible for listing in the CRHR, or in a local register of historical resources as defined in PRC Section 5020.1(k).
2. A resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of PRC Section 5024.1. In applying these criteria, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.

AB 52 also establishes a formal consultation process with California Native American tribes that must be completed before a CEQA document can be certified. Under AB 52, lead agencies are required to "begin consultation with a California Native American tribe that is traditionally and culturally affiliated with the geographic area of the proposed project." California Native American tribes to be included in the process are those that have requested notice of projects proposed within the jurisdiction of the lead agency.

Senate Bill 18 of 2004

California Government Code Section 65352.3 (adopted pursuant to the requirements of SB 18) requires local governments to contact, refer plans to, and consult with tribal organizations prior to making a decision to adopt or amend a general or specific plan. The tribal organizations eligible to consult have traditional lands in a local government's jurisdiction, and are identified, upon request, by the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC). As noted in the California Office of Planning and Research's Tribal Consultation Guidelines (2005); "The intent of SB 18 is to provide California Native American tribes an opportunity to participate in local land use decisions at an early planning stage, for the purpose of protecting, or mitigating impacts to, cultural places." SB 18 refers to PRC Section 5097.9 and 5097.993 to define cultural places as:

1. A Native American sanctified cemetery, place of worship, religious or ceremonial site, or sacred shrine (PRC Section 5097.9).
2. A Native American historic, cultural, or sacred site, that is listed or may be eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources pursuant to Section 5024.1, including any historic or prehistoric ruins, any burial ground, any archaeological or historic site (PRC Section 5097.993).

California Public Resources Code Section 5097.98

Section 5097.98 of the California PRC states that the NAHC, upon notification of the discovery of Native American human remains pursuant to Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5, shall immediately notify those persons (i.e., the Most Likely Descendant [MLD]) that it believes to be descended from the deceased. With permission of the landowner or a designated representative, the MLD may inspect the remains and any associated cultural materials and make recommendations for treatment or disposition of the remains and associated grave goods. The MLD shall provide recommendations or preferences for treatment of the remains and associated cultural materials within 48 hours of being granted access to the site.

b. Local Regulations

Auburn General Plan 1993

The current City of Auburn General Plan was adopted on November 29, 1993. Historical and Cultural Resources are addressed in the Historic Element. It identifies and outlines goals and policies for cultural and historical resources, including the following:

Goal 1: Preserve all historical sites and enhance the character of the historic districts.

Policy 1.2 Preserve existing Indian and Chinese cemeteries and other historic sites.

A comprehensive update of the City's General Plan, *Envision Auburn 2045,* will provide revised and refined goals, policies, and implementation programs as appropriate.

Placer County General Plan

The current Placer County General Plan was adopted on May 21, 2013. TCRs are addressed in the Recreation and Cultural Resources Element. It identifies and outlines goals and policies for TCRs, including the following:

Goal 5.D: To identify, protect, and enhance Placer County's important historical, archaeological, paleontological, and cultural sites and their contributing environment.

Policy 5.D.2 The County shall solicit the cooperation of the owners of cultural and paleontological resources, encourage those owners to treat these resources as assets rather than liabilities, and encourage the support of the general public for the preservation and enhancement of these resources.

Policy 5.D.3 The County shall solicit the views of the Native American Heritage Commission, State Office of Historic Preservation, North Central Information Center, and/or the local Native American community in cases where development may result in disturbance to sites containing evidence of Native American activity and/or to sites of cultural importance.

Policy 5.D.6 The County shall require that discretionary development projects identify and protect from damage, destruction, and abuse, important historical, archaeological, paleontological, and cultural sites and their contributing environment. Such assessments shall be incorporated into a Countywide cultural resource data base, to be maintained by the Division of Museums.

Policy 5.D.7 The County shall require that discretionary development projects are designed to avoid potential impacts to significant paleontological or cultural resources whenever possible. Unavoidable impacts, whenever possible, shall be reduced to a less than significant level and/or shall be mitigated by extracting maximum recoverable data. Determinations of impacts, significance, and mitigation shall be made by qualified archaeological (in consultation with recognized local Native American groups), historical, or paleontological consultants, depending on the type of resource in question.

Policy 5.D.12 The County shall consider acquisition programs (i.e. Placer Legacy Open Space and Agricultural Conservation Program) as a means of preserving significant cultural resources that are not suitable for private development. Organizations that could provide assistance in this area include, but are not limited to, the Archaeological Conservancy, the Native American community, and local land trusts.

4.17.3 Summary of Consultation

In accordance with AB 52 and SB 18, the City conducted AB 52 and SB 18 consultation as the lead agency. The City sent written communication regarding the project on December 20, 2023. Under AB 52 tribes have 30 days to request consultation which ended on January 19, 2024. Under SB 18 tribes have 90 days to request consultation which ended on March 19, 2024. The City sent written communication to the following seven Native American tribes (18 contacts total):

- Colfax-Todds Valley Consolidated Tribe
- Nevada City Rancheria Nisenan Tribe
- Shingle Springs Band of Miwok Indians
- Tsi Akim Maidu
- UAIC
- Washoe Tribe of Nevada and California
- Wilton Rancheria

Of the seven Native American tribal groups responses were received from three including the UAIC, the Shingle Springs Band of Miwok Indians, and the Washoe Tribe of Nevada and California. The following paragraphs summarize the responses received.

United Auburn Indian Community of the Auburn Rancheria

On January 18, 2024, Anna M. Starkey, Cultural Regulatory Specialist for the UAIC, responded via email requesting consultation for the project under AB 52 and SB 18. Ms. Starkey inquired about the details of the General Plan and the CEQA document being prepared. The City responded on the same day providing answers to Ms. Starkey's questions and expressed willingness to schedule a consultation meeting. On January 22, 2024, Ms. Starkey responded stating that a meeting is not needed at this time and requested review of the proposed General Plan table of contents. Ms. Starkey also stated the Tribe has provided comments to sections of the proposed General Plan and suggested a cultural sensitivity map be added to the TCR Chapter of the EIR. Ms. Starkey also provided the following recommendations:

- Evaluation and treatment of TCRs are considered on a project-by-project basis.
- The Cultural Resources Chapter and the TCR Chapter should not be combined and the two should be distinct from one another in that the cultural resources mitigation measures should not be included as TCR mitigation measures.
- The word, 'indigenous' should be used instead of prehistoric.
- Specific language regarding the UAIC's background research and modern tribal context be included in the TCR Chapter (this language was incorporated into this chapter).

On June 12, 2024, Ms. Starkey provided the results of background research conducted by UAIC for the identification of TCRs, which included a review of pertinent literature, historic maps, and a

records search using UAIC's Tribal Historic Information System (THRIS). UAIC's THRIS database is composed of UAIC's areas of oral history, ethnographic history, and places of cultural and religious significance, including UAIC's Sacred Lands that are submitted to the NAHC. The THRIS resources shown in this region also include previously recorded indigenous resources identified through the CHRIS as well as historic resources and survey data. The results are summarized in a cultural sensitivity map provided by Ms. Starkey that indicates the probability of encountering TCRs.

Shingle Springs Band of Miwok Indians

In a letter dated January 24, 2024, Kara Perry, the Director of Site Protection for the Shingle Springs Band of Miwok Indians, responded to the City stating that they are unaware of known cultural resources within the Planning Area. Ms. Perry did request that the City share all completed records searches and surveys conducted for the Planning Area.

Washoe Tribe of Nevada and California

In an email dated March 20, 2024, Bernadette Nieto, Tribal Administrator for the Washoe Tribe of Nevada and California, responded to the City stating that they defer to neighboring Native Nations with cultural affiliation.

4.17.4 Impact Analysis

a. Significance Thresholds and Methodology

Significance Thresholds

According to State CEQA Guidelines Appendix G, impacts related to TCRs would be significant if the proposed Project would:

1. Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in PRC Section 21074 as either a site, feature, place, cultural landscape that is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American tribe, and that is:
    a) Listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, or in a local register of historical resources as defined in PRC Section 5020.1(k), or
    b) A resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of PRC Section 5024.1. In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of PRC Section 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.

Methodology

The presence and significance of a potential TCR is determined through consultation between lead agencies and local California Native Americans. Impacts to TCRs are highly dependent on the nature of the resource but, in general, could occur if there is destruction or alteration of the resource and its surroundings, access restrictions to the resource, or other disturbances.

a. Project Impacts and Mitigation

Threshold 1:	Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource as defined in Public Resources Code Section 21074 that is listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, or in a local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code Section 5020.1(k)?
Threshold 2:	Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource as defined in Public Resources Code Section 21074 that is a resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1?

Impact TCR-1 DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS WITHIN THE PLANNING AREA THAT INVOLVE GROUND DISTURBANCE ACTIVITIES MAY HAVE THE POTENTIAL TO IMPACT TCRS. ADHERENCE TO PRC SECTION 21084.2 AND THE 2045 AUBURN GENERAL PLAN UPDATE AND PROPOSED MITIGATION MEASURES WOULD REDUCE IMPACTS TO THE EXTENT FEASIBLE. THEREFORE, THIS IMPACT WOULD BE LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT WITH MITIGATION.

No TCRs qualifying as historical resources or determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence to be significant were identified as part of the AB 52 consultation conducted. However, as part of input provided by the UAIC during the AB 52 process, the UAIC provided a TCRs sensitivity map indicating portions of the Planning Area have elevated sensitivity for the presence of TCRs. As such, implementation of future projects within the Planning Area may have the potential to impact TCRs. The Arts and Culture Element of the 2045 Auburn General Plan Update contains several goals and policies which would minimize impacts to TCRs within the City of Auburn. These include Goal AC-3, Policies AC-3.1, AC-3.2, AC-3.3, and Actions AC-3A, AC-3B, and AC-3C. Policy AC-3.1 requires the identification and treatment of TCRs in consultation with culturally affiliated tribes, ensuring protection of TCRs from disturbance resulting from development, grading, and similar activities. Policy AC-3.2 ensures the City engages representatives from the United Auburn Indian Community (UAIC), the Sierra Native Alliance, and other organizations in land use decisions that could affect the Auburn Rancheria or have potentially significant impacts on local TCRs. Policy AC-3.3 requires the use of respectful land accurate language. Action AC-3A ensures UAIC is involved in the preparation of background research on indigenous and tribal resources in and around Auburn. Action AC-3B ensures the City complies with statutory tribal consultation requirements. Action AC-3C requires projects in known sensitive areas to be assessed by qualified professionals and designed to avoid or minimize impacts as much as possible. These goals, policies, and actions ensure that indigenous and tribal resources are protected and tribal representatives are engaged in local decision making through tribal consultation, documentation of TCRs, and conduction cultural resource surveys and monitoring.

Development projects within the Planning Area that involve ground disturbance activities may have the potential to impact TCRs. Consequently, impacts could be potentially significant.

Mitigation Measures

TCR-1a Identification and Protection of Tribal Cultural Resources

Prior to individual development project approvals, the City shall enact the following steps related to the identification of tribal cultural resources to guide decision making regarding actions proposed for projects that have the potential result in significant impacts to tribal cultural resources. Enacting these policies and implementation actions shall include but not be limited to the following:

- For projects undergoing CEQA review, the City shall undertake Assembly Bill 52 consultation efforts with California Native American tribes that are traditionally and culturally affiliated with the geographic area of a proposed project to determine the sensitivity of the proposed project site for the presence of tribal cultural resources. Only Tribal Representatives from culturally affiliated tribes can identify, evaluate, and provide recommendations for identified tribal cultural resources.
- For projects not subject to CEQA, but that involve ground disturbance, the City shall request UAIC review the TCR sensitivity map and THRIS to assess the project's sensitivity for TCRs. If a project site is found to be highly sensitive for TCRs and/or a known TCR is identified, the City shall consult with the UAIC and other traditionally and culturally affiliated tribes to determine the appropriate next steps and/or treatment.
- If, through the tribal consultation/coordination processes, a TCR survey is found to be warranted, Tribal Representatives from culturally affiliated tribes that act as a representative of their tribal government shall be provided the opportunity to conduct sensitivity surveys prior to site preparation or ground-disturbing activities to determine the presence or absence of any TCRs. Based on findings of the survey, additional assessments may be recommended by Tribal Representatives.
- Should TCRs be identified through the Assembly Bill 52 consultation or tribal coordination processes, the consulting tribe(s) may recommend measures for avoidance and/or treatment. Recommendations may include, but are not limited to, tribal monitoring at locations determined by Tribal Representatives to be sensitive for subsurface tribal cultural resource deposits, and any feasible measure to preserve in place, avoid, or minimize impacts to TCRs.
- If no TCRs are identified that may be directly or indirectly impacted by project activities and the sensitivity for buried TCRs is low, there would be no adverse effect to known TCRs and no further action is required.
- If a known indigenous archaeological site will be subject to testing/excavation because avoidance is infeasible, local Tribal Representatives shall be involved in determining the scope of the testing/excavation, including collection and analysis of artifacts. Tribes shall be provided the opportunity to review and comment on testing/excavation plans. The project applicant shall retain tribal monitors to observe the excavation activities.

TCR-1b Implementation of Tribal Monitoring and Inadvertent Discovery Protocols During Project-Related Ground Disturbance

If a proposed project site is found to be sensitive for the presence of potential TCRs through tribal consultation and/or coordination process the following procedures shall be implemented:

- A minimum of seven days prior to the start of project-related ground disturbing activities tribal monitors from the culturally affiliated tribes, through an agreement with the project applicant,

shall be invited to monitor the vegetation grubbing, stripping, grading, or other ground-disturbing activities in the project area to determine the presence or absence of TCRs.

- Tribal Representatives and tribal monitors shall have the authority to identify sites or objects of significance to the tribes and to request that work be stopped, diverted, or slowed if such sites or objects are identified within the direct impact area; however, only a Native American Representative can recommend appropriate treatment of such sites or objects.
- Should TCRs, including but not limited to features, anthropogenic/cultural soils, cultural belongings or objects (artifacts), shell, bone, shaped stones or bone, or ash/charcoal deposits are discovered by any person during construction activities, including ground disturbing activities, all work shall pause immediately within 100 feet of the find, or an agreed upon distance based on the specific project site and nature of the find (distance to be agreed upon between the City and culturally affiliated tribes). Work shall cease in and within the immediate vicinity of the find regardless of whether the construction is being actively monitored by a Tribal Monitor. Tribal Representatives and the City shall be immediately notified, and the Tribal Representatives, in coordination with the City, shall determine if the find is a TCR (pursuant to PRC Section 21074). The Tribal Representatives shall make recommendations for further evaluation and treatment as necessary.
- The City shall consult with the Tribal Representatives to identify the boundaries of the identified TCRs and identify appropriate preservation in place and avoidance measures, including redesign or adjustments to the existing construction process, and long-term management, if feasible. If avoidance is infeasible, culturally appropriate treatment may be, but is not limited to, processing materials for reburial, minimizing handling of cultural objects, leaving objects in place within the landscape, and returning objects to a location within the project area where they will not be subject to future impacts. A reburial location in proximity of the find where no future disturbance is anticipated shall be identified. Permanent curation of TCRs shall not take place unless approved in writing by the Tribal Representatives. Work may not resume until any treatment has been determined and completed.
- The construction contractor(s) shall provide secure, on-site storage for culturally sensitive soils or objects that are components of tribal cultural resources that are found or recovered during construction. Storage size shall be determined by the nature of the TCR and can range from a small lock box to a Conex box (shipping container). A secure (locked), fenced area can also provide adequate on-site storage if larger amounts of material must be stored.
- At the request of the Tribal Representatives, the construction contractor(s) and City shall facilitate the respectful reburial of the culturally sensitive soils or objects. This includes providing a reburial location that is consistent with the preferences of the Tribal Representatives, excavation of the reburial location, and assisting with the reburial, upon request.

Significance After Mitigation

Implementation of Mitigation Measures TCR-1a and TCR-1b would require identification and protection of TCRs through consultation with tribes, review of TCR sensitivity (including surveys, if warranted), avoidance measures, tribal monitoring, appropriate treatment of TCRs, and through the establishment of appropriate inadvertent discovery protocols. These measures and actions would ensure that potential impacts to TCRs would be reduced to less than significant.

4.17.5 Cumulative Impacts

The geographic scope for cumulative impacts related to TCRs is the City of Auburn and unincorporated Placer County within the Planning Area. This geographic scope is appropriate because TCRs have the potential to extend across large areas.

Past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future projects, including the projects listed in Table 3-1 in Section 3, *Environmental Setting*, would result in ground disturbance in locations with the potential to contain TCRs, anticipated or unanticipated. As such, cumulative development could adversely impact TCRs. TCRs evaluations and AB 52 consultations would be completed by the appropriate jurisdiction on a case-by-case basis for all future development. Compliance with PRC Section 21084.2, the Auburn 2045 General Plan Update, and required mitigation measures would reduce potential impacts related to TCRs associated with future development to the extent feasible. Therefore, the project would not have a considerable contribution to this cumulative impact.

4.18 Utilities and Service Systems

4.18.1 Setting

The following section describes the existing setting with respect to water suppliers, wastewater treatment providers, stormwater drainage facilities, electricity and natural gas providers, telecommunications facilities, and solid waste facilities serving the Planning Area.

a. Water

Water Supply

The City primarily relies on the Placer County Water Agency (PCWA) to meet its water demand. PCWA's region has plentiful water resources as its service area is bordered by two rivers: the Yuba/Bear River to the north and the American River to the south. PCWA's jurisdiction extends into the watershed that provides mostly gravity fed water to the Agency's water infrastructure. The Agency obtains water from three primary sources. The majority of water delivered to treated and untreated customers in Western Placer County comes from the Agency's Western Water Supply Contract with the Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E), which allows delivery of up to 100,400 acre-feet per year from the Yuba and Bear Rivers through PG&E's Drum-Spaulding Project. In addition, in 1982 the Agency acquired water systems serving upper Western Placer County along the Interstate 80 corridor from Alta and Colfax down to the eastern boundary near Auburn along with the right to purchase up to 25,000 acre-feet annually from PG&E for use in that area, also supplied through the Drum-Spaulding Project. The Agency's third major source consists of up to 120,000 acre-feet of water available annually from appropriated water rights developed through the 1963 construction of the Middle Fork Project on the American River, with diversions possible through the American River Pump Station to Auburn Tunnel and from Folsom Reservoir (PCWA 2024a).

The northwest part of the unincorporated Planning Area, including most of the area outside the city limits and west of State Route 49, receives water from the Nevada Irrigation District (NID).Like PCWA, NID is a special district with manages reservoirs, canals, and treatment facilities. NID delivers water for irrigation, drinking, municipal and industrial purposes. In addition, some portions of the Planning Area are rural and rely on private wells for potable water and agriculture.

Water Treatment

Water supplied to the City of Auburn is treated at two primary facilities operated by PCWA: the Auburn and Bowman Water Treatment Plants. Treatment at these facilities uses conventional multi-stage processes, including coagulation, flocculation, sedimentation, filtration, and disinfection to ensure that water meets or exceeds all State and federal drinking water standards. The treatment process is designed to remove particulates, pathogens, and other contaminants from raw surface water sourced primarily from the Yuba and American Rivers. PCWA continuously monitors water quality at multiple stages of treatment and distribution to ensure public health and regulatory compliance.

Water Distribution

Once treated, water enters Auburn's distribution system, which is composed of a network of transmission mains, distribution pipelines, pump stations, and storage tanks. These components work together to maintain consistent water pressure and flow throughout the city, even during peak demand periods or emergency events such as firefighting. The system is designed with redundancy and flexibility in mind, allowing for operational adjustments and maintenance without disrupting service. PCWA regularly inspects and upgrades infrastructure to reduce water loss, improve efficiency, and extend the lifespan of critical assets.

Storage facilities play a vital role in balancing daily supply and demand as well as providing emergency reserves. Elevated and ground-level storage tanks are located throughout Auburn to ensure adequate pressure and volume. These tanks are especially important during high-demand summer months and in the event of power outages or natural disasters. The integration of storage with treatment and distribution infrastructure enhances the overall resilience of Auburn's water system, supporting both routine operations and long-term sustainability goals.

Water Demand

Water demand in Auburn, like much of Placer County, is shaped by seasonal patterns, land use, and population growth. The majority of water use in Auburn is residential, with peak demand occurring during the summer months due to outdoor irrigation. According to PCWA's 2024 Annual Report, the agency delivered approximately 13.8 billion gallons of treated water to a service population of 412,844 in Placer County, including the City of Auburn (PCWA 2024b). This equates to an average daily per capita use of about 330 gallons, though actual usage varies substantially between winter and summer months.

PCWA actively promotes water conservation to manage demand and ensure long-term sustainability. Programs include rebates for high-efficiency appliances, turf replacement incentives, and public education campaigns. These efforts are part of a broader strategy to balance supply and demand while maintaining service reliability during dry years and peak usage periods.

b. Wastewater

The City of Auburn owns its own wastewater treatment and collection system that serves the municipal boundaries of the city. The system is managed under contract by Operations Management International, which is responsible for the day-to-day operation and maintenance of the infrastructure. This includes ensuring compliance with environmental regulations and maintaining system efficiency. However, not all areas within the Auburn vicinity are served by the City's system. The Auburn Municipal Airport and the adjacent Industrial Park, for example, are served by Placer County's Sewer Maintenance District 1, which operates independently of the city's infrastructure (City of Auburn 2024). Auburn's wastewater system is governed by a Sewer System Management Plan, which outlines goals for system reliability, environmental protection, and regulatory compliance (City of Auburn 2022).

The City maintains over 85 miles of wastewater collection lines and over 1,500 manholes throughout the city (City of Auburn 2024). This network is essential for transporting wastewater from residences, businesses, and public facilities to the treatment plant. The system also includes 11 sewer lift stations, which are used to pump wastewater from lower elevations to higher elevations where gravity flow is not feasible (City of Auburn 2024). These lift stations are critical for maintaining consistent flow and preventing backups or overflows in the system.

Wastewater collected within the city is conveyed to the Auburn Wastewater Treatment Plant, located west of the city in the Ophir area. This facility provides tertiary treatment, which is the most advanced level of wastewater treatment. Tertiary treatment includes filtration and disinfection processes that remove nutrients, pathogens, and other contaminants, ensuring that the treated effluent meets or exceeds state and federal water quality standards. The treated water is discharged into Auburn Ravine Creek under a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit, which regulates both the volume and quality of the discharge to protect aquatic ecosystems and downstream users (City of Auburn 2024). The Auburn Wastewater Treatment Plant is permitted to discharge up to 1.65 million gallons per day (MGD) of treated effluent (City of Auburn 2024). This capacity is designed to accommodate current wastewater flows. The plant is engineered to handle fluctuations in flow due to seasonal variations, stormwater infiltration, and changes in population. The City monitors flow rates and treatment performance continuously to ensure compliance with regulatory standards and to maintain operational efficiency.

To ensure long-term reliability and capacity, Auburn has implemented a System Evaluation and Capacity Assurance Plan (City of Auburn 2022). This plan includes hydraulic modeling, flow monitoring, and capacity assessments to identify potential bottlenecks and plan for future growth. The City also maintains a Fats, Oils, and Grease Control Program, which targets commercial food establishments and residential sources to reduce blockages and sanitary sewer overflows. Public outreach and enforcement are key components of this program.

In unincorporated North Auburn and Bowman, the local sewerage system was regionalized by Placer County in 2016. Infrastructure in Sewer Maintenance District 1 is now managed by a joint authority between Placer County and the City of Lincoln. The North Auburn treatment plant has been decommissioned, and wastewater is transported via pipeline to the City of Lincoln. The County continues to maintain the local collection system, including lift stations. Placer County is actively planning improvements, including pipeline extensions and replacements, in response to growth.

c. Stormwater Drainage

Stormwater discharges in the City of Auburn originate primarily as surface water runoff from a variety of land uses, including residential, commercial, industrial, and open space areas. The quality and quantity of this runoff are influenced by factors such as local geology, land use patterns, seasonal weather variations, and the timing and intensity of precipitation events. During rainstorms, impervious surfaces like roads, rooftops, and parking lots prevent water from naturally infiltrating into the ground, leading to increased surface runoff. This runoff can carry pollutants such as oils, sediments, nutrients, and heavy metals into the stormwater system, posing risks to downstream water bodies and ecosystems.

The City of Auburn's stormwater infrastructure is a complex network designed to manage this runoff efficiently and minimize its environmental impact. Stormwater is generally directed to a series of public street catch basins located throughout Auburn. Water flow in these basins is correlated with stormwater runoff and generally limited to periods during and following precipitation events. The system includes over 1,000 catch basins, storm drains, culverts, detention basins, and outfalls that convey water to local creeks and wetlands (City of Auburn 2004). These facilities are primarily designed to handle flows during and immediately after storm events. The City's Public Works Department is responsible for maintaining this infrastructure, but implementation of the broader Stormwater Management Program involves coordination across multiple departments and regional partners. Auburn is also a co-author of the West Placer Storm

Water Quality Design Manual, which standardizes stormwater design practices across jurisdictions in the region (City of Auburn 2018).

To reduce pollutant loads and protect water quality, Auburn employs a combination of structural and non-structural Best Management Practices (BMPs). Structural BMPs include vegetated swales, bioretention basins, and hydrodynamic separators that filter and slow runoff before it reaches natural waterways. Non-structural BMPs focus on public education, construction site inspections, illicit discharge detection, and municipal housekeeping practices. The City's stormwater program is regulated under the State Water Resources Control Board's General Permit for Small Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems, which prohibits unauthorized discharges and requires ongoing monitoring and reporting (City of Auburn 2025).

Ultimately, stormwater in Auburn flows into local creeks including Auburn Ravine and Dutch Ravine, which are part of the larger Sacramento River watershed and eventually discharge into the Pacific Ocean. The City's Stormwater Management Plan emphasizes the importance of preserving beneficial uses of these waterways, including habitat, recreation, and water supply (City of Auburn 2004).

d. Electricity

State Electric Power Supply

In 2022, California's in-state electricity generation totaled 287,220 gigawatt-hours (California Energy Commission [CEC] 2022a). Primary fuel sources for the state's electricity generation in 2022 included natural gas, hydroelectric, solar photovoltaic, wind, nuclear, geothermal, biomass, and solar thermal. According to the 2020 Integrated Energy Policy Report, California's electric grid relies increasingly on clean sources of energy such as solar, wind, geothermal, hydroelectricity, and biomass. In addition, by 2025 the use of electricity sourced from out-of-state coal generation are intended to be eliminated. As this transition advances, the grid is also expanding to serve additional loads produced by building and vehicle electrification among other factors (United States Energy Information Administration 2022).

Local Electric Power Supply

Electric power in the City of Auburn is provided by PG&E and Pioneer Community Energy (PCE). In 2022, nearly 40 percent of customers' electricity came from renewable resources including biopower, geothermal, small hydroelectric, solar and wind power. In total, PG&E's energy supply is 49 percent non-emitting nuclear, 38 percent renewable, 8 percent large hydroelectric, and 5 percent from natural gas sources (PG&E 2024a).

PCE is a Joint Powers Authority formed by the communities of Rocklin, Lincoln, Auburn, Colfax, Loomis, and Placer County in July 2017 in order to provide Community Choice Aggregation service. Pioneer currently provides retail electric generation services and complementary energy programs to customers in PG&E service territory within the municipal boundaries of Rocklin, Lincoln, Auburn, Colfax, Loomis, Placerville, unincorporated Placer County and unincorporated El Dorado County. PCE provides 1,958 gigawatt-hours of electricity to 166,000 accounts in the area (PCE 2024). PCE's renewable energy purchases are 2.5 percent higher than the California Power Mix at 36.9 percent (PCE 2023). In addition to providing a base service with 39.4 percent of supply from renewable sources, PCE also offers a 100 percent renewable Green100 Power Mix for customers that opt into the program. PCE's power mix is summarized in Table 4.18-1 below.

Table 4.18-1 Local Electric Power Supply

Energy Resources	2023 Pioneer community Energy Base Service Power Mix (Percent)	2023 Pioneer Community Energy Green100 Power Mix (Percent)	2023 California Power Mix (Percent)
Eligible Renewable[1]	39.4	100	36.9
Biomass and Biowaste	2.7	0.0	2.1
Geothermal	4.5	0.0	4.8
Eligible Hydroelectric	7	25	1.8
Solar	13.7	50	17
Wind	11.5	25	11.2
Coal	0.0	0.0	1.8
Large Hydroelectric	4	0.0	11.7
Natural Gas	0.0	0.0	36.6
Nuclear	26.7	0.0	9.3
Other	0.0	0.0	0.1
Unspecified Power[2]	29.8	0.0	3.7
Total	**100**	**100**	**100**

[1] The eligible renewable percentage above does not reflect RPS compliance, which is determined using a different methodology.

[2] Unspecified power is electricity that has been purchased through open market transactions and is not traceable to a specific generation source.

Source: Pioneer Community Energy 2023

Electric Power Demand

As shown in Table 4.18-2, communitywide development in Placer County (the smallest scale at which electricity consumption data is readily available) consumed approximately 3,089 gigawatt-hours in 2022, which was approximately 1.1 percent of statewide electricity consumption (CEC 2022b). In comparison, the population of Placer County is approximately 1.1 percent of California's population (California Department of Finance 2024). Therefore, per capita electricity consumption in Placer County is equal to the statewide average.

Table 4.18-2 2022 Electricity Consumption

Energy Type	Placer County (gigawatt-hours)	California (gigawatt-hours)	Proportion of Statewide Population[1]	Proportion of Statewide Consumption[1]
Electricity	3,089	287,826	1.1%	1.1%

e. Natural Gas

Natural Gas Supply

California's natural gas consumption for 2022 was approximately 11.8 million British thermal units (CEC 2024). The state relies on out-of-state natural gas imports for nearly 90 percent of its supply (CEC 2023). The CEC estimates that approximately 45 percent of the natural gas burned across the state is used for electricity generation, and the remainder is consumed in the residential (21 percent), industrial (25 percent), and commercial (9 percent) sectors (CEC 2023).

Natural gas is provided to the City of Auburn by PG&E. PG&E has approximately 7,000 miles of gas transmission pipelines and 42,000 miles of distribution pipelines delivering natural gas services to 15 million people (PG&E 2024b). PG&E provides 970 billion cubic feet per year of natural gas, equating to approximately 2.6 billion cubic feet per day (PG&E 2024b).

Natural Gas Demand

In 2022, Placer County consumed a total of 99 million therms of natural gas (CEC 2022c). This equates to approximately 9898 cubic feet of natural gas. This is well below one percent of PG&E's total natural gas production and delivery.

f. Telecommunications

In California, approximately 98 percent of households have access to telecommunication infrastructure, including telephone and cable access (California Cable & Telecommunications Association 2021). Numerous private local, wireless, and cellular phone service providers serve Auburn including, but not limited to, T-Mobile, Frontier Internet, and Astound Broadband.

g. Solid Waste

The Auburn Placer Transfer Station (APTS) provides residential and commercial yard waste, recycling, and garbage collection to the communities of Rocklin, Auburn, Colfax, the Town of Loomis, and unincorporated Placer County. Waste from the City of Auburn is taken to the Recology APTS located at 12305 Shale Ridge Road. According to the facility's Solid Waste Facility Permit, the APTS has a maximum permitted throughput of 400 tons per day (California Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery [CalRecycle] 2019a). From there, waste is directed to the Western Regional Landfill located at 3195 Athens Road in Lincoln, California. According to CalRecycle, the Western Regional Landfill has a maximum permitted capacity of 1,900 tons per day and a maximum permitted capacity of 36,350,000 cubic yards. The landfill has an anticipated closure date of 1/1/2058 and a remaining capacity of 29,093,819 cubic yards (CalRecycle 2019b). The City promotes solid waste reduction through numerous diversion programs aimed at reducing the amount of solid waste going to landfills. These programs include greenwaste reduction, backyard and on-site composting/mulching, electronic disposal, recycling, economic incentives, and educational programs.

4.18.2 Regulatory Setting

a. Federal Regulations

Clean Water Act

The Federal Clean Water Act, enacted by Congress in 1972 and amended several times since, is the primary federal law regulating water quality in the United States and forms the basis for several State and local laws throughout the country. The Clean Water Act establishes the basic structure for regulating discharges of pollutants into the waters of the United States. The Clean Water Act gave the United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) the authority to implement federal pollution control programs, such as setting water quality standards for contaminants in surface water, establishing wastewater and effluent discharge limits for various industry contaminants in surface water, establishing wastewater and effluent discharge limits for various industry categories, and imposing requirements for controlling nonpoint-source pollution. At the federal level, the Clean

Water Act is administered by the USEPA and the USACE. At the state and regional levels in California, the act is administered and enforced by the SWRCB and the nine RWQCBs.

National Pollution Discharge Elimination System

The NPDES permit system was established in the CWA to regulate point source discharges into waters within the United States. Point sources are discrete conveyances such as pipes or manmade ditches. Individual homes connected to a municipal system are not required to obtain a permit under the NPDES; however, industrial, municipal, and other facilities must obtain permits if their discharges go directly to surface waters.

Safe Drinking Water Act

The Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA) regulates public water systems that supply drinking water (Title 42, United States Code Section 300(f) et seq.; Title 40, CFR Section 141 et seq.). The principal objective of the federal SDWA is to ensure that water from the tap is potable (safe and satisfactory for drinking, cooking, and hygiene). The main components of the federal SDWA are to:

- Ensure that water from the tap is potable
- Prevent contamination of groundwater aquifers that are the main source of drinking water for a community
- Regulate the discharge of wastes into underground injection wells pursuant to the Underground Injection Control program (see Title 40, CFR Section 144)
- Regulate distribution systems

Energy Star Program

ENERGY STAR is a joint federal program between the USEPA and the United States Department of Energy that was created in 1992 and authorized by the Energy Policy and Conservation Act. The ENERGY STAR program is designed to help customers, businesses, and industry adopt energy-efficient products and practices to reduce energy consumption and save money. The ENERGY STAR label identifies products and buildings, including homes, that meet high energy efficiency standards. The USEPA and United States Department of Energy are coordinating to expand the ENERGY STAR products program, the Home Performance with ENERGY STAR program, and the National Building Rating Program, also known as the Commercial Building Energy Asset Score program.

Resource Conservation and Recovery Act

40 CFR Part 258 (RCRA, Subtitle D) contains regulations for municipal solid waste landfills and requires states to implement their own permitting programs incorporating the federal landfill criteria.

b. State Regulations

California Safe Drinking Water Act

The California Safe Drinking Water Act (Health and Safety Code Section 116270 et seq.; Title 22, CCR Section 64400 et seq.) regulates drinking water more rigorously than the federal SDWA. Like the federal SDWA, California requires that primary and secondary maximum contaminant levels be established for pollutants in drinking water; however, some California maximum contaminant levels

are more protective of health. The California SDWA also requires the SWRCB to issue domestic water supply permits to public water systems.

The SWRCB enforces the federal and State SDWAs and regulates more than 7,500 permits for water systems across the state. Implementation of the federal SDWA is delegated to the State of California. The SWRCB Division of Drinking Water oversees the State's comprehensive Drinking Water Program. The Division of Drinking Water is the agency authorized to issue permits for water systems.

Sustainable Groundwater Management Act

In September 2014, the governor signed legislation requiring that California's critical groundwater resources be sustainably managed by local agencies. The Sustainable Groundwater Management Act gives local agencies the power to sustainably manage groundwater and requires groundwater sustainability plans to be developed for medium- and high-priority groundwater basins, as defined by the Department of Water Resources (DWR). Pursuant to California Water Code Section 10933, prioritizations are assigned by DWR to each groundwater basin based on the overlying population, the current and projected rates of population growth, the number of public supply wells that draw from the basin, the total number of wells that draw from the basin, the irrigated acreage overlying the basin, the degree to which people overlying the basin rely on groundwater as their primary source of water, documented impacts on the groundwater within the basin (e.g., overdraft, subsidence, saline intrusion, water quality degradation), and any other relevant information (e.g., adverse impacts to local habitat and streamflows).

California Building Standards Code

Title 24, CCR is referred to as the California Building Standards Code. It consists of a compilation of several distinct standards and codes related to building construction including plumbing, electrical, interior acoustics, energy efficiency, and handicap accessibility for persons with physical and sensory disabilities. The current iteration is the 2025 California Building Standards Code, which became effective in January 1, 2026. The California Building Standards Code's water conservation standards are outlined below.

Part 5 – California Plumbing Code

The California Plumbing Code is codified in Title 24, CCR Part 5. The Plumbing Code contains regulations including, but not limited to, plumbing materials, fixtures, water heaters, water supply and distribution, ventilation, and drainage. More specifically, Part 5, Chapter 4, contains provisions requiring the installation of low flow fixtures and toilets. Existing development will also be required to reduce its wastewater generation by retrofitting existing structures with water efficient fixtures (SB 407 [2009] Civil Code Sections 1101.1 et seq.).

Water Conservation in Landscaping Act

The Water Conservation in Landscaping Act, enacted in 2006, required the DWR to update the Model Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance (MWELO). In 2009, the Office of Administrative Law approved the updated MWELO, which required a retail water supplier or a county to adopt the provisions of the MWELO by January 1, 2010, or enact its own provisions equal to or more restrictive than the MWELO provisions. The MWELO is contained in Chapter 2.7 of the California Water Code.

Water Conservation Act of 2009 (Senate Bill X7 7 [2009])

State law (SB-X7 7) mandates the reduction of urban per capita water use and agricultural water use throughout the State by 20 percent by 2020. SB-X7 7 also requires that all water suppliers increase their water use efficiency.

Wastewater Treatment

Standards for wastewater treatment plant effluent are established using State and federal water quality regulations. After treatment, wastewater effluent is either disposed of or reused as recycled water. The RWQCBs set the specific requirements for community and individual wastewater treatment and disposal and reuse facilities through the issuance of Waste Discharge Requirements, required for wastewater treatment facilities under the California Water Code Section 13260.

Title 22, CCR Division 4, Chapter 3, Sections 60301 through 60355 are used to regulate recycled wastewater and are administered by the RWQCBs. Title 22 contains effluent requirements for four levels of wastewater treatment, from un-disinfected secondary recycled water to disinfected tertiary recycled water. Higher levels of treatment have higher effluent standards, allowing for a greater number of uses under Title 22, including irrigation of freeway landscaping, pasture for milk animals, parks and playgrounds, and vineyards and orchards for disinfected tertiary recycled water.

California Building Energy Efficiency Standards (2025), Title 24, Part 6

Title 24, CCR Part 6, is California's Energy Efficiency Standards for Residential and Non-residential Buildings. The CEC established Title 24 in 1978 in response to a legislative mandate to create uniform building codes to reduce California's energy consumption and provide energy efficiency standards for residential and non-residential buildings. The standards are updated on an approximately three-year cycle to allow consideration and possible incorporation of new efficient technologies and methods.

The most recent update, the 2025 Building Energy Efficiency Standards, was adopted by the CEC and became effective on January 1, 2026. The building efficiency standards are enforced through the local plan check and building permit process. Local government agencies may adopt and enforce additional energy standards for new buildings as reasonably necessary due to local climatologic, geologic, or topographic conditions, provided these standards exceed those provided in Title 24.

The 2025 update to the Building Energy Efficiency Standards under Title 24 applies to buildings for which an application for a building permit is submitted on or after January 1, 2026. The updated standards mainly established electric-ready requirements when natural gas is installed, expanded solar photovoltaic and battery storage standards, and strengthened ventilation standards to improve indoor air quality (CEC 2025).

California Green Building Standards Code (2022) Title 24, Part 11

The California Green Building Standards Code, commonly referred to as "CALGreen" originally went into effect on August 1, 2009 and outlines architectural design and engineering principles that are in sync with environmental resources and public welfare. CALGreen sets minimum standards for buildings, and since 2016, applies to new building construction and some alterations/additions within certain parameters. CALGreen establishes planning and design standards for sustainable site development, including water conservation measures and requirements that new buildings reduce water consumption by 20 percent below a specified baseline. CALGreen requires installation of 1.28

gallons-per-flush toilets and 0.5-gallon-per flush urinals for all non-residential projects as part of the prescriptive method of reducing indoor water use by the required 20 percent.

CALGreen lays out the minimum requirements for newly constructed residential and non-residential buildings to reduce greenhouse gas emissions through improved efficiency and process improvements. It also includes voluntary tiers to encourage building practices that improve public health, safety, and general welfare by promoting a more sustainable design. In addition, CALGreen includes several requirements related to solid waste diversion. New non-residential construction is required to achieve at least 65 percent construction and demolition waste diversion and provide recycling areas for paper, cardboard, glass, plastics, metal, and organic waste.

California Public Utilities Commission

The California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) regulates investor-owned electric and natural gas utilities operating in California. The energy work responsibilities of the CPUC are derived from the California State Constitution, specifically Article XII, Section 3 and other sections more generally, numerous State legislative enactments and various Federal statutory and administrative requirements. The CPUC regulates natural gas utility service for approximately 10.8 million customers that receive natural gas from SoCal Gas and other natural gas utilities across California (CPUC 2021a).

Energy Action Plan

In 2003, the CEC and CPUC set forth their energy policy vision in the Energy Action Plan. The CEC adopted an update to the Energy Action Plan in February 2008 that supplements the earlier Energy Action Plan and examines the state's ongoing actions in the context of global climate change. The nine major action areas in the Energy Action Plan include energy efficiency, demand response, renewable energy, electricity adequacy/reliability/ infrastructure, electricity market structure, natural gas supply/demand/infrastructure, transportation fuels supply/demand/infrastructure, research/development/demonstration, and climate change (CPUC 2008).

Senate Bill 350

The Clean Energy and Pollution Reduction Act of 2015 (SB 350) requires a doubling of the energy efficiency savings in electricity and natural gas for retail customers through energy efficiency and conservation by December 31, 2030.

2022 Scoping Plan for Achieving Carbon Neutrality

On November 16, 2022, the California Air Resources Board (CARB) adopted the 2022 Scoping Plan for Achieving Carbon Neutrality, which provides a framework for achieving the State's 2045 greenhouse gas emissions reduction target of 85 percent below 1990 levels. The 2022 Scoping Plan for Achieving Carbon Neutrality relies on the continuation and expansion of existing policies and regulations, such as the Cap-and-Trade Program, the 2017 Scoping Plan, and implementation of recently adopted policies and legislation. The 2022 Scoping Plan for Achieving Carbon Neutrality includes a wide variety of goals related to energy efficiency and renewable energy that are intended to help meet the State's 2045 target (CARB 2022).

California Renewable Portfolio Standard and Senate Bill 100

Approved by the governor on September 10, 2018, SB 100 accelerates the state's Renewable Portfolio Standard program, which was last updated by SB 350 in 2015. SB 100 requires electricity providers to increase procurement from eligible renewable energy resources to 33 percent of total retail sales by 2020, 60 percent by 2030, and 100 percent by 2045.

California Energy Efficiency Action Plan

The CEC is responsible for preparing the California Energy Efficiency Action Plan, which covers issues, opportunities, and savings estimates related to energy efficiency in California's building, industrial, and agricultural sectors. The 2025 California Building Energy Action Plan focuses on statewide decarbonization of existing buildings and outlines goals across technology, equity, financing, regulation, health, and data. The 2025 California Energy Efficiency Action Plan focuses on these major themes:

- Decarbonize existing buildings through efficient electrification
- Maximize equity and affordability
- Expand access to financing and market transformation tools

The 2025 California Energy Efficiency Action Plan offers several recommendations to advance these goals, including prioritizing funding for electrification and heat pump deployment, strengthening equity through targeted low-income and tribal programs, expanding access to low and no cost financing, improving energy efficiency to reduce energy burden, supporting technology innovation to lower installation and operating costs, enhancing the clean energy efficiency workforce with high-road training (CEC 2025).

California Public Utilities Commission

The CPUC develops and implements policies for the telecommunication industry. The Communications Division is responsible for licensing, registration and the processing tariffs of local exchange carriers, competitive local carriers, and non-dominant interexchange carriers. It is also responsible for registration of wireless service providers and franchising of video service providers. The Communications Division tracks compliance with commission decisions and monitors consumer protection and service issues and Commission reliability standards for safe and adequate service. The Communications Division is responsible for oversight and implementation of the six public purpose Universal Service Programs (CPUC 2021b).

Assembly Bill 939

AB 939 (PRC 41780) established the California Integrated Waste Management Act of 1989 (PRC Sections 42900 to 42927), which required all California cities and counties to reduce the volume of solid waste deposited in landfills by 50 percent by the year 2000. It also requires cities and counties to continue to maintain a solid waste diversion rate of 50 percent or higher for each subsequent year. The act is intended to promote the reduction, recycling, and reuse of solid waste generated to the maximum extent feasible.

Under the California Integrated Waste Management Act, California cities and counties are required to implement a source reduction and recycling element, subject to review and approval by the CalRecycle, which demonstrates how the jurisdiction will meet the mandated diversion goals. Each

jurisdiction's source reduction and recycling element must include specific components as defined in Public Resources Code Sections 41003 and 41303.

Assembly Bill 341 and Senate Bill 1383

The purpose of AB 341 of 2011 (Chapter 476, Statutes of 2011) is to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by diverting commercial solid waste to recycling efforts and to expand the opportunity for additional recycling services and recycling manufacturing facilities in California. In addition to Mandatory Commercial Recycling, AB 341 sets a statewide goal for 75 percent disposal reduction by the year 2020.

In addition, SB 1383 of 2016 (Chapter 395, Statutes of 2016) established the following goals: a 50 percent reduction in the level of the statewide disposal of organic waste from 2014 levels by 2020 and a 75 percent reduction in the level of the statewide disposal of organic waste from 2014 levels by 2025. This bill also authorized CalRecycle to adopt regulations, to take effect on or after January 1, 2022, to achieve these targets.

Assembly Bill 1826

AB 1826 of 2014 (Chapter 727, Statutes of 2014) requires businesses that generate a specified amount of organic waste per week to arrange for recycling services for that waste, and for jurisdictions to implement a recycling program to divert organic waste from businesses subject to the law, as well as report to CalRecycle on their progress in implementing an organic waste recycling program. As of 2020, businesses that generate two cubic yards or more of organic waste per week must engage in one of the following:

- Source separate organic waste from other waste and participate in a waste recycling service that includes collection and recycling of organic waste
- Recycle organic waste on-site, or self-haul organic waste off-site for recycling
- Subscribe to an organic waste recycling service that may include mixed waste processing that specifically recycles organic waste

Senate Bill 1016

SB 1016 of 2007 (Chapter 343, Statutes of 2007) requires that the 50 percent solid waste diversion requirement established by AB 939 be expressed in pounds per person per day. SB 1016 changed the CalRecycle review process for each municipality's integrated waste management plan. After an initial determination of diversion requirements in 2006 and establishing diversion rates for subsequent calendar years, the Board reviews a jurisdiction's diversion rate compliance in accordance with a specified schedule. As of January 1, 2018, the Board is required to review a jurisdiction's source reduction and recycling element and hazardous waste element once every two years.

c. Local Regulations

Auburn Municipal Code

Wastewater

Auburn Municipal Code Section 52.061 states that no user may contribute pollutants or wastewater that interfere with the operation of the publicly owned treatment works, regardless of whether they

are subject to national, state, or local pretreatment standards. These prohibitions apply to all users of the treatment works.

Auburn Municipal Code Section 52.065 outlines the regulations for discharging pollutants or wastewater into the city's sewerage system. It specifies that no person shall discharge substances that could cause fire, explosion, toxic hazards, or interfere with wastewater treatment processes. The chapter lists prohibited substances, including flammable materials, toxic chemicals, corrosive agents, solid or viscous substances, and excessive oils, among others. It also mandates that the Director of Public Works determines the acceptability of specific wastes and may set maximum. permissible concentrations for certain constituents in industrial wastewater, with periodic updates and directives to ensure compliance.

The City's Sewer System Management Plan lists the following sections that provide the City with legal authority to require and enforce various measures for ensuring proper and efficient operation, management and maintenance of the City's wastewater collection system: Sections 52.062, 52.063, 52.065, 52.035, 52.999, 52.056, 52.060, 52.054, 52.087, and 158.267.

Stormwater

Auburn Municipal Code Section 53.010 states that it is prohibited to discharge any materials containing pollutants into the City's Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) or watercourses, except for stormwater, if such discharge causes or contributes to a violation of water quality standards.

Auburn Municipal Code Section 53.018 states that the city may adopt requirements identifying BMPs for any activity, operation, or facility which may cause or contribute to pollution or contamination of stormwater, the city's MS4, or waters of the U.S.

Auburn Municipal Code Section 53.020 states that any person engaged in activities or operations, or owning facilities or property that may result in pollutants entering stormwater, the City's MS4, or U.S. waters must implement BMPs to minimize such pollutants. Commercial or industrial establishments must provide and maintain facilities to prevent accidental discharge of prohibited materials or wastes into the City's MS4 or watercourses at their own expense. BMPs can be obtained from the Public Works Department.

Solid Waste

Auburn Municipal Code Chapter 50 establishes regulations for the disposal and management of garbage, rubbish, and waste within the city. It prohibits the unauthorized disposal of waste in public places, streets, alleys, vacant lots, or any other areas not designated for waste disposal. Specific requirements are outlined for the type and maintenance of receptacles used for garbage storage, ensuring they are watertight, covered, and appropriately placed to prevent access by rats and avoid public nuisances. Additionally, it sets guidelines for the lawful burning of rubbish, the collection and transport of waste by authorized personnel, and the fees associated with garbage collection services. Unauthorized waste collection and tampering with waste receptacles are also prohibited.

Auburn General Plan 1993

The current City of Auburn General Plan contains a variety of policies related to utilities and service systems. The policies have been organized by topic and element below. The following policies related to water and solid waste are included in the General Plan's Safety Element.

Policy 3.2 Continue to encourage and support the enforcement of state and federal environmental and pollution control laws by assisting state and federal agencies in the control of hazardous wastes, landfills, air pollution, and other issues.

Policy 3.4 Ensure that public and private water distribution and supply facilities have adequate water capacity to supply both daily and emergency fire-flow needs.

Placer County Code

Water

Placer County Code Section 13.04.030 outlines the requirements for water conservation measures across different types of uses.

Wastewater

Placer County Code Section 13.12.020 prohibits improper waste disposal in two main ways: First, it forbids depositing human or animal excrement, garbage, or objectionable waste in an unsanitary manner on public or private property within the county. Second, it prohibits discharging domestic sewage, industrial waste, or polluted waters into natural outlets unless appropriate treatment has been mandated by the engineer and health officer.

Stormwater

Placer County Code Section 8.28.090 states that it is illegal to discharge unauthorized substances into the storm drain system, as outlined in Section 8.28.090. However, even if certain exemptions apply according to that section, any discharge that the enforcement agency determines to cause violations of plan standards, convey pollutants to surface water, or pose risks to public health or safety will still be prohibited from entering the storm drain system.

Placer County Code Section 8.28.100 requires individuals or entities subject to NPDES stormwater discharge permits to adhere strictly to all permit provisions, as well as any related regulations or local ordinances like Placer County's grading and erosion prevention rules (Article 15.48). Compliance proof may be necessary for various stages of development projects, inspections, or enforcement actions.

Placer County Code Section 8.28.110 prohibits any discharge that could lead to or contribute to a violation of the county's NPDES stormwater discharge permit issued by the California State Water Resources Control Board or RWQCB. Those responsible for such discharges are legally obligated to defend, indemnify, and absolve the county of any liabilities arising from administrative or legal actions related to these discharges.

Solid Waste

Placer County Code Section 8.16.020 establishes comprehensive guidelines for solid waste management practices in Placer County. All solid wastes must be handled, stored, collected, treated, processed, and disposed of in compliance with state and local standards to prevent health hazards, public nuisances, or environmental impairments. Disposal should occur only at approved sites. Solid wastes should be managed to prevent the breeding of insects and rodents and to avoid supporting disease vectors. Operations handling solid wastes must avoid substantial contributions to air or land pollution, as well as fire hazards. Extremely hazardous wastes require proper licensing before disposal. Liquid wastes, sludges, and nonsewerable wastes cannot be disposed of at land

disposal sites without written approval from the relevant department. Solid wastes, except inert materials for flood and erosion control, are prohibited from placement within the 100-year floodplain of any watercourse. All solid waste handling systems must obtain proper licenses and permits before operation. Operational plans for solid waste management systems, including storage, processing, recovery, salvage, or disposal, must be approved and on file with relevant county departments. Infectious, chemical, or hazardous wastes require written approval from the director before being accepted at any landfill in Placer County. It is illegal to deposit any solid or liquid waste on public or private property, including highways, streets, waterways, or parcels of land, except at approved disposal sites within Placer County.

Placer County General Plan

The Public Facilities and Services Element of the Placer County General Plan contains the following goals and policies related to utilities:

Goal 4.C: To ensure the availability of an adequate and safe water supply and the maintenance of high quality water in water bodies and aquifers used as sources of domestic supply.

Policy 4.C.2 The County shall approve new development based on the following guidelines for water supply:

a) Urban and suburban development should rely on public water systems using surface supply.

b) Rural communities should rely on public water systems. In cases where parcels are larger than those defined as suburban and no public water system exists or can be extended to the property, individual wells may be permitted.

c) Agricultural areas should rely on public water systems where available, otherwise individual water wells are acceptable.

Policy 4.C.7 The County shall promote the use of reclaimed wastewater to offset the demand for new water supplies.

Goal 4.D: The County shall require wastewater conveyance and treatment facilities that are sufficient to serve the Placer County General Plan proposed density of residential, commercial, and public/institutional uses in a way which protects the public and environment from adverse water quality or health impacts.

Policy 4.D.1 The County shall limit the expansion of urban communities to areas where community and/or public wastewater treatment systems can be provided.

Policy 4.D.2 The County shall require developments outside of an existing sewer service area and needing new connections to public conveyance and treatment facilities to be annexed into the sewer service area providing service.

Policy 4.D.3 The County shall require proponents of new development within a sewer service area to provide written certification from the service provider that either existing services are available or needed improvements will be made prior to occupancy.

Policy 4.D.5 The County shall require developments needing new connections to pay their fair share of the cost for future public wastewater facilities which support development based on the Placer County General Plan. The fair share will be based on the demand for these facilities attributable to the new development.

Policy 4.D.6 The County shall discourage extension of sewer service outside of city spheres of influence and community plan areas, except in limited circumstances to resolve a public health hazard resulting from existing development, or where there is a substantial overriding public benefit.

Goal 4.E: To manage rainwater and stormwater at the source in a sustainable manner that leas inconveniences the public, reduces potential water-related damage, augments water supply, mitigates storm water pollution, and enhances the environment.

Policy 4.E.4 The County shall ensure that new storm drainage systems are designed in conformance with the Placer County Flood Control and Water Conservation District's Stormwater Management Manual and the County Land Development Manual.

Policy 4.E.12 The County shall encourage project designs that minimize drainage concentrations and impervious coverage and maintain, to the extent feasible, natural site drainage conditions.

Goal 4.G: To ensure the safe and efficient disposal or recycling of solid waste generated in Placer County.

Policy 4.G.2 The County shall promote maximum use of solid waste source reduction, recycling, composting, and environmentally-safe transformation of wastes.

Policy 4.G.8 The County shall encourage the development of regional and community-based recycling facilities in heavy commercial and industrial areas.

4.18.3 Impact Analysis

a. Significance Thresholds and Methodology

Significance Thresholds

According to Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, an impact related to utilities and service systems would be significant if the proposed project would:

1. Require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment or stormwater drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects;
2. Have insufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry, and multiple-dry years;
3. Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider which serves or may serve the project that it has inadequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments;
4. Generate solid waste in excess of state or local standards, or in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure, or otherwise impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals; or
5. Comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste.

Methodology

Impacts to utilities and service systems were assessed based on the proposed project's potential to result in increases in demand for water, wastewater services, stormwater drainage, solid waste services, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications services such that new, expanded, modified, or relocated facilities would be required. In addition, the proposed project's estimated demands on utilities and service systems were analyzed in relation to potential impacts to water supplies, wastewater treatment capacity, and solid waste disposal capacity, and the proposed project was evaluated for its adherence to applicable federal, state and local standards, statutes, and regulations related to solid waste.

b. Project Impacts and Mitigation

Threshold 1:	Would the project require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment or stormwater drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects

Impact UTIL-1 DEVELOPMENT FACILITATED BY THE PROPOSED PROJECT WOULD INCREASE DEMAND FOR WATER, WASTEWATER, ELECTRIC POWER, TELECOMMUNICATIONS, AND STORMWATER DRAINAGE; HOWEVER, NO ADDITIONAL RELOCATION OR CONSTRUCTION OF UTILITY SERVICES WOULD BE REQUIRED TO SERVICE THE PROPOSED PROJECT BEYOND CONNECTIONS TO EXISTING UTILITIES. THE PROPOSED PROJECT WOULD RESULT IN A MINIMAL INCREASE IN NATURAL GAS DEMAND. IMPACTS WOULD BE LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT.

Water and Wastewater

Growth and development facilitated by the proposed project would create additional demand for water. Most new development would occur within the City's existing urbanized areas, primarily as infill or redevelopment, and in targeted growth areas identified in the General Plan (e.g., Downtown/Old Town, Baltimore Ravine, and the Train Station Area). Because these areas are already served by existing municipal water systems, water infrastructure generally exists and is available to support new development. Water infrastructure, such as pipelines, could require upgrades for future development. Installation of upgraded infrastructure would result in ground disturbance. Generally, this ground disturbance would occur in previously disturbed or developed areas, reducing the potential for environmental impacts. Such facilities would be installed during individual project construction and generally within the disturbance area of such projects or the rights-of-way of previously disturbed roadways; therefore, the construction of these infrastructure improvements would not substantially increase the proposed project's disturbance area or otherwise cause significant environmental effects beyond those already identified throughout this EIR.

The City of Auburn has adopted policies and programs to manage water demand and wastewater capacity. For example, the Auburn Municipal Code requires new development to pay water and wastewater capacity fees proportional to its impact on the system, ensuring that adequate capacity is maintained pursuant to Government Code Section 66013. In addition, the proposed project includes policies and actions promoting water conservation, efficient infrastructure planning, and coordination with regional water providers. These measures, together combined with project-level compliance requirements, would help minimize additional water demand and ensure that water and wastewater systems remain adequate to serve future growth. To further support these

objectives, the proposed project would include the following goals and policies related to water and wastewater facilities: Goal OSC-3: Water Resources, Policy OSC-3.6: Water Quality Standards, Policy OSC-3.9: Wastewater and Environmental Quality, Policy OSC-3.10: Groundwater, Policy OSC-3.11: Water Conservation, Goal CSF-4: Infrastructure, Policy CSF-4.4: Water Supply, Storage, and Distribution, and Action CSF-4C: Standards for Water and Sewer Connections.

Implementation of the aforementioned municipal code sections and proposed general plan policies and actions listed above would ensure that water connections associated with the project would not cause significant environmental effects beyond those already identified throughout this EIR. As such, impacts related to potential new water and wastewater facilities would be less than significant.

Stormwater

Runoff associated with future development and mobility improvements under the proposed project would be regulated by the City of Auburn's stormwater management requirements and the Phase II MS4 Permit. Compliance with these regulations ensures that post-development site hydrology mimics pre-development conditions, maintaining proper stormwater drainage and minimizing operational impacts related to water quality or flooding.

The proposed project would not require new or expanded regional stormwater facilities beyond those installed as part of individual development projects in accordance with applicable regulatory requirements. These improvements such as on-site Low Impact Development features, detention basins, and green infrastructure would be incorporated during project construction and generally located within previously disturbed areas or public rights-of-way. Furthermore, the proposed project includes the following proposed policies and actions related to stormwater facilities: Policy OSC-3.7: Urban Runoff, Policy OSC-3.8: Low Impact Development, Action OSC-3C: MS4 Permit, Action OSC-3D: Best Management Practices for Construction, Policy CSF-4.6: Stormwater Facility Improvements, Policy CSF-4.7: Stormwater Management, Policy CSF-4.8: Development Impacts on Storm Drainage, and Policy CSF-4.9: Green Infrastructure.

Implementation of these policies and actions would ensure current and future development in the City of Auburn would comply with stormwater requirements that minimize and reduce impacts to the environment. Therefore, impacts related to potential new stormwater facilities would be less than significant.

Electricity/Natural Gas

The proposed project would require connections to existing electrical distribution systems to serve development facilitated by the proposed project. Electrical service would be provided in accordance with the rules and regulations of PG&E and under the authority of the CPUC. Based on the availability of existing electrical infrastructure, it is not anticipated that the construction of new electrical transmission and distribution lines would be required, and all sites would be able to connect to existing infrastructure. Furthermore, the proposed project includes the following proposed policies and actions related to electrical facilities: Policy OSC-6.1: Renewable Energy, Policy OSC-6.4: Microgrids, Policy OSC-6.5: Green Building, Policy OSC-6.6: Urban Forest, Action OSC-6C: Collaboration with Energy Providers, Action OSC-6D: Building Code Revisions, Policy CSF-4.3: Sustainable Infrastructure Design, Policy CSF-4.10: Energy Reliability, and Policy CSF-4.11: Renewable Energy.

If future development requires natural gas, it would connect to existing natural gas infrastructure to meet the needs of residents and tenants. Based on the availability of existing natural gas infrastructure throughout the Planning Area, construction of new natural gas pipelines would not be required, and development would be able to connect to existing infrastructure. Therefore, there would be adequate natural gas facilities to serve the development facilitated by the project and impacts related to potential new natural gas facilities would be less than significant.

Telecommunications

Implementation of the proposed project would require connections to existing utility infrastructure to meet the needs of future development. Based on the availability of existing telecommunications infrastructure, construction of new telephone and cable lines would not be required, and all sites would be able to connect to existing infrastructure. Development facilitated by the proposed project would be required to adhere to applicable laws and regulations related to the connection to existing telecommunication infrastructure. This approach is consistent with proposed Policy CSF-4.12, *Telecommunication Infrastructure*, which emphasizes providing safe, reliable, and efficient infrastructure that meets current and projected needs for the City of Auburn. Therefore, there would be adequate telecommunications facilities to serve the development facilitated by the proposed project and impacts related to potential new telecommunications facilities would be less than significant.

Conflicts with Existing Utilities

Existing underground utilities are located throughout the Planning Area. Because development facilitated by the proposed project may involve excavation for foundations, infrastructure connections, and other site improvements, construction could result in conflicts with underground utilities. However, in accordance with California Government Code Section 4216, applicants for development would be required to contact USA North 811 prior to excavation to identify and avoid existing underground utilities. Compliance with these requirements would minimize the potential for utility conflicts. Therefore, impacts on underground utilities would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measure

No mitigation measures would be required.

Significance After Mitigation

Impacts would be less than significant without mitigation.

Threshold 2:	Would the project have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry and multiple dry years?

IMPACT UTL-2 THE PROJECT WOULD INCREASE DEMAND FOR WATER. WATER SUPPLY FOR THE PROJECT WOULD BE PROVIDED BY THE PCWA AND NID THROUGH EXISTING AND PLANNED SUPPLY SOURCES, INCLUDING IMPORTED SURFACE WATER AND SUPPLEMENTAL LOCAL SOURCES. GIVEN THE CAPACITY OF THESE SYSTEMS AND THE CITY'S ONGOING WATER MANAGEMENT AND CONSERVATION PROGRAMS, SUFFICIENT WATER SUPPLIES ARE AVAILABLE TO MEET PROJECTED DEMAND OF THE PROPOSED PROJECT. IMPACTS WOULD BE LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT.

Development facilitated by the proposed project would create additional demand for water. Water demand projections for the proposed project were estimated using water use characteristics typical of development in Auburn, informed by PCWA's Western Water System service data and observed per-capita consumption trends. As noted in PCWA's 2024 Annual Report, the agency delivered 13.8 billion gallons of treated water to a service population of 412,844 in Placer County, including the City of Auburn (PCWA 2024b).

Local distribution pipelines or minor system extensions may be required to serve individual development sites. These improvements would generally occur within previously disturbed roadways or established utility corridors, minimizing the potential for environmental impacts. PCWA is responsible for regional water supply planning, and the 2020 Urban Water Management Plan (UWMP) demonstrates that the agency maintains a substantial surplus of supplies under all hydrologic conditions. By 2040, total projected system demand is approximately 226,988 AFY, compared with an available supply of 295,800 AFY resulting in a surplus of roughly 68,812 AFY. Under a single-dry-year and five-consecutive-year drought conditions, PCWA would maintain significant systemwide surpluses (ranging from approximately 24,000 to more than 100,000 AFY), indicating that PCWA's contracted surface water rights would provide reliable capacity during drought years (PCWA 2020).

Based on the 2020 UWMP, the PCWA's service area population is projected to increase from a population of approximately 108,000 residents in 2020 to about 192,000 residents by 2040. This represents an increase in population of approximately 84,000 residents (PCWA 2020). The General Plan Update would add approximately 5,500 residents to the Planning Area by 2045. This represents less than 7 percent of the growth already assumed in the 2020 UWMP. Therefore, the projected development under the General Plan Update would fall well within the demand projected by PCWA's forecasts. No new water supply entitlements or major treatment or conveyance facilities would be constructed to serve the proposed project. Local distribution improvements (e.g., minor pipeline extensions, connection upgrades) may be needed at individual development sites; however, these would occur within existing disturbed rights-of-way or utility corridors and would be subject to City and PCWA design standards and environmental review.

Because PCWA has sufficient water-supply capacity to serve projected growth, and because potential local distribution improvements would occur in disturbed areas and be subject to City and PCWA design and environmental requirements, implementation of the proposed project would not require the construction or expansion of new water-supply or treatment facilities that would result in significant environmental impacts. Therefore, the impact would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures are required.

Significance Without Mitigation

Impacts would be less than significant without mitigation.

Threshold 3:	Would the project result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider which serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments?

IMPACT UTL-3 DEVELOPMENT FACILITATED BY THE PROJECT WOULD INCREASE DEMAND FOR WASTEWATER TREATMENT. THE TIMING, INTENSITY, AND LOCATION OF AN EXPANSION OF WASTEWATER TREATMENT FACILITIES IS UNKNOWN AT THIS TIME, BUT AN EXPANSION WOULD REQUIRE ADDITIONAL CEQA REVIEW AND COMPLIANCE WITH EXISTING BUILDING AND ZONING CODES. AS SUCH, IMPACTS RELATED TO EXPANSION OF WASTEWATER TREATMENT FACILITIES AS A RESULT OF THE GENERAL PLAN UPDATE WOULD BE LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT.

Growth and development accommodated by the General Plan Update would increase wastewater generation in the City of Auburn. Potable water service in Auburn and much of the surrounding Planning Area is provided by the PCWA. Because wastewater generation is closely correlated with potable water use, projected increases in water demand supplied by PCWA can be used to estimate relative increases in wastewater flows.

No evidence indicates that the City's wastewater treatment system is experiencing capacity deficiencies, nor is there evidence that existing City wastewater facilities are nearing their permitted or design treatment limits. Additionally, development facilitated by the General Plan Update would occur in areas already served by the municipal wastewater collection system. While certain areas within the Planning Area, such as the Baltimore Ravine area, are currently undeveloped and lack internal roadways and utility rights-of-way, development in these areas would require the construction of internal circulation systems and associated infrastructure as part of project-level approvals. Wastewater-related infrastructure would be installed concurrent with development and generally within newly established or existing rights-of-way. These types of improvements do not involve construction of new off-site treatment infrastructure or the expansion of major regional facilities.

Additionally, the General Plan Update includes proposed policies within the Community Services and Facilities Element that ensure new development is connected to the municipal sanitary sewer system, require adequate wastewater treatment capacity prior to project approval, and support timely maintenance, rehabilitation, and facility upgrades. Policies also require coordination with the City during the development review process to confirm that sewer conveyance and treatment facilities can accommodate projected flows. The proposed project includes the following proposed policies and implementing actions related to wastewater: Policy CSF-4.1: Infrastructure Maintenance, Policy CSF-4.2: Adequacy of City Infrastructure and Services-, Policy CSF-4.5: Sanitary Sewer System, Action CSF-4C: Standards for Water and Sewer Connections, Action CSF-4D: Sewer Master Plan Updates, Action CSF-4E: Sewer Improvement Projects, and Action CSF-4F: Improvements to Storm Drainage System.

The Auburn Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) is an activated-sludge oxidation ditch facility, supported by wet-weather storage and treatment ponds that is permitted to discharge up to 1.65 MGD (City of Auburn 2024). Current flows at the WWTP are approximately 1.0 MGD (Central Valley RWQCB 2022), indicating approximately 0.65 MGD of available capacity at the WWTP. Based on the General Plan Update, projected wastewater generation associated with the General Plan Update's realistic buildout assumption is estimated to increase by approximately 0.55 to 0.60 MGD. This

estimate was calculated by applying standard California wastewater generation rates to the projected 2025 to 2045 development, which produces approximately 385,000 gallons per day from 2,570 new housing units and about 175,000 gallons per day from non-residential uses, for a combined increase of roughly 0.55 to 0.60 MGD. Even with this increase, total flows would remain within the plant's available treatment capacity. Therefore, projected increases in wastewater generation under the General Plan Update would be accommodated within the existing permitted capacity of the Auburn WWTP. Therefore, with capacity and mandatory compliance with General Plan policies, wastewater impacts under the proposed project would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures are required.

Significance Without Mitigation

Impacts would be less than significant without mitigation.

Threshold 4:	Would the project generate solid waste in excess of State or local standards, or in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure, or otherwise impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals?
Threshold 5:	Would the project comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste?

IMPACT UTL-4 THE PROJECT WOULD NOT GENERATE SOLID WASTE IN EXCESS OF STATE OR LOCAL STANDARDS, WOULD NOT EXCEED THE CAPACITY OF LOCAL INFRASTRUCTURE, AND WOULD NOT IMPAIR THE ATTAINMENT OF SOLID WASTE REDUCTION GOALS. IMPACTS WOULD BE LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT.

Implementation of the proposed project would generate additional solid waste. Construction of future development would create construction debris, such as scrap lumber and flooring materials. Operation of future development would create typical household wastes associated with residential, office, and commercial uses. Future industrial development would also generate solid waste.

As described in Section 4.13.1, *Setting*, solid waste generated within the City of Auburn is collected and transported to the APTS located at 12305 Shale Ridge Road. The APTS provides residential and commercial waste, recycling, and yard-waste services for communities in southern and central Placer County, including Auburn, Rocklin, Colfax, Loomis, and unincorporated Placer County areas. The facility operates under a Solid Waste Facility Permit that allows a maximum permitted throughput of 400 tons per day (CalRecycle 2019a). From APTS, residual waste is transferred to the Western Regional Landfill in Lincoln, which has a maximum permitted disposal capacity of 1,900 tons per day, a total permitted capacity of 36,350,000 cubic yards, and a remaining capacity of approximately 29,093,819 cubic yards. The WRLF has an anticipated closure date of January 1, 2058 (CalRecycle 2019b).

As described in Chapter 2, *Project Description*, the proposed project is expected to result in a net increase of approximately 2,570 new residential units and 5,500 additional residents within the Planning Area by 2045. Using CalRecycle's per-capita waste generation rate of approximately 4.4 pounds per person per day, this increase would generate approximately 12.1 tons of solid waste per day. This represents approximately 3 percent of the 400-tons per day permitted throughput of the APTS and an even smaller fraction of the 1,900-tons per day permitted capacity of the Western

Regional Landfill. Both facilities are expected to have adequate remaining capacity to accommodate the additional solid waste generated under General Plan buildout.

The City of Auburn and Placer County implement a range of diversion programs including recycling, organics/greenwaste collection, backyard composting support, electronic waste disposal, economic incentives, and public education to reduce landfill disposal. Placer County Code Section 8.16.020 establishes comprehensive regulations ensuring that solid waste handling, storage, processing, and disposal occur safely and only at approved facilities, and prohibits illegal dumping or disposal of hazardous, infectious, liquid, or nonsewerable wastes without proper authorization. Auburn Municipal Code Chapter 50 similarly governs local waste handling practices, mandating proper refuse containers, regulating waste collection, and prohibiting unauthorized disposal or tampering with waste receptacles.

New development under the proposed project would be required to comply with these local ordinances as well as statewide mandates, including, AB 939, SB 1383, and CALGreen requirements for construction and demolition debris diversion. Given the available permitted capacity at APTS and Western Regional Landfill and required compliance with all diversion, recycling, and organics-reduction programs, the proposed project would not result in the need for new or expanded solid-waste facilities. Furthermore, the General Plan Update includes proposed goals and policies and actions to support the provision of adequate service, reduction, and diversion of waste from landfills, and expansion of recycling programs for residents and businesses. Although the Western Regional Landfill currently has sufficient landfill capacity for the growth facilitated by the proposed project, the policies in the General Plan Update are consistent with Auburn's desire to promote sustainability and reduce the need for landfills. These proposed policies are provided in the Open Space and Conservation and Community Services and Facilities Element of the General Plan Update: Policy OSC-6.9: Sustainable Infrastructure- , Goal CSF-5: Solid Waste Management, Policy CSF-5.1: Meeting Future Waste Management Needs, Policy CSF-5.4: Solid Waste Education and Outreach, Action CSF-5B: Franchise Agreements, and Action CSF-5C: Municipal Operations.

These proposed goals, policies and implementation actions would ensure that solid waste is disposed of in an environmentally sound manner, and that State solid waste diversion goals and County recycling and composting requirements are met. Overall, local infrastructure would have the capacity to accommodate solid waste generated by development facilitated by the proposed project. With adherence to Placer County Code Section 8.16.020 and Auburn Municipal Code Chapter 50, the General Plan Update proposed goals, policies, and actions, impacts related to solid waste would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measure

No mitigation measures would be required.

Significance After Mitigation

Impacts would be less than significant without mitigation.

4.18.4 Cumulative Impacts

The geographic scope of each utility is dependent on the service area of the utility provider and/or utility infrastructure. Each geographic scope is included below. Overall, the cumulative analysis considers the nearby past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future plans and projects listed in Table 3-1 (refer to Section 3, *Environmental Setting*) located outside the city, in addition to the proposed plan.

Water

The geographic scope for cumulative water-supply impacts encompasses the PCWA service area. This geographic scope is appropriate because PCWA is responsible for supplying, treating, and delivering water to all customers within its service area, and regional development occurring within this boundary contributes to cumulative demand on the agency's water resources and infrastructure.

Cumulative development within PCWA's service territory would continue to increase regional water demands. PCWA's water supply portfolio consisting primarily of surface water from the Yuba River, American River, and Sacramento River, with supplemental groundwater has been evaluated in PCWA's planning documents, which demonstrate that the agency maintains adequate supplies to meet projected demands under normal, dry, and multiple-dry year conditions. PCWA's 2024 Annual Report identifies substantial entitlements, water rights, and operational flexibility, and notes that active conservation programs help to offset demand increases.

As discussed in Impacts UTL-1, development facilitated by the General Plan Update would increase water demand but would not exceed the capacity of existing and planned PCWA supply sources, treatment facilities, or distribution infrastructure. Therefore, the project's incremental water-demand contribution would not be cumulatively considerable, and cumulative impacts to water supply would be less than significant.

Wastewater

The geographic scope for cumulative impacts to wastewater facilities encompasses the entire area served by the City's wastewater collection and treatment system. This geographic scope is appropriate because the City is responsible for collecting, conveying, and treating wastewater generated by all land uses within its service boundary, and cumulative development throughout this area contributes to overall wastewater flows and system demand.

Cumulative development in the region would increase wastewater flows. The City's ongoing System Evaluation and Capacity Assurance Plan, inflow and infiltration reduction measures, and required capacity-fee payments ensure that system expansions or upgrades occur as needed to maintain adequate service levels. Any future need to increase treatment capacity would be subject to its own CEQA review and compliance with regulatory requirements. The wastewater increases associated with future General Plan development would not exceed available or planned capacity; therefore, the project's contribution to cumulative wastewater impacts would not be cumulatively considerable, and cumulative impacts would be less than significant.

Stormwater

The geographic scope for cumulative stormwater impacts is the City's stormwater collection area. This geographic scope is appropriate because the City is responsible for providing stormwater collection services to all residential, commercial, industrial, and fire protection uses within its service area.

Cumulative development would increase impervious surface area and stormwater runoff in the region. However, all development within Auburn and neighboring jurisdictions is required to comply with Low Impact Development standards, construction-phase BMPs, post-construction treatment requirements, and local grading and drainage ordinances. The City's Stormwater Management Program and West Placer Storm Water Quality Design Manual ensure that stormwater infrastructure is sized, designed, and maintained to accommodate incremental growth.

Because cumulative projects would implement similar stormwater regulations and controls, and because the General Plan Update does not require regional expansion of stormwater facilities beyond project-level improvements, cumulative impacts to stormwater systems would be less than significant, and the project's contribution would not be cumulatively considerable.

Electric Power and Natural Gas Transmission Facilities

The geographic scope for cumulative electricity and natural gas impacts is the PG&E and PCE service area. This geographic scope is appropriate because, as the local providers, PG&E and PCE are responsible for transmitting electricity (PCE) and natural gas (PG&E) to all land uses within its service area.

Cumulative development in the region would increase demand for electricity and, to a lesser extent, natural gas. PG&E is required to plan system upgrades under the oversight of the CPUC. Statewide energy-efficiency mandates such as CALGreen and the Building Energy Efficiency Standards would ensure that new development reduces energy consumption compared to existing baseline conditions.

The General Plan Update includes policies promoting renewable energy, energy conservation, microgrids, and all-electric buildings, which would further limit overall demand for natural gas and electricity. As a result, cumulative impacts on electric and natural gas transmission infrastructure would be less than significant, and the project's contribution would not be cumulatively considerable.

Telecommunication

The geographic scope for cumulative telecommunications impacts is Placer County. This geographic scope is appropriate because local providers are responsible for providing adequate telecommunication infrastructure to all land uses within the county.

Cumulative development would increase the need for data and communications infrastructure. However, telecommunications providers would expand their systems on a project-to-project basis and are regulated by federal and state agencies, including the CPUC, to ensure adequate service and reliability. Because the proposed project would connect to existing telecommunications infrastructure and would not require major new regional facilities, cumulative impacts would be less than significant, and the project would not contribute considerably to cumulative telecommunications impacts.

Solid Waste Facilities

The geographic scope for cumulative solid waste impacts encompasses all areas in the county that contribute solid waste to the Western Regional Landfill. This geographic scope is appropriate because, as the local provider, the Western Regional Landfill is responsible for accepting solid waste from all land uses within its service area.

Cumulative development would increase solid waste generation in the region. APTS has a permitted throughput of 400 tons/day, and Western Regional Landfill has a permitted disposal capacity of 1,900 tons/day with a remaining capacity exceeding 29 million cubic yards and an anticipated closure date of 2058. These facilities have adequate remaining capacity to accommodate cumulative regional disposal needs. State-mandated diversion programs such as AB 939, AB 341, SB 1383, and CALGreen requirements for construction and demolition recycling would further reduce landfill demand. The General Plan Update's solid-waste policies would improve diversion and recycling

rates over time. Given the available landfill capacity and mandatory compliance with state and local solid-waste requirements, cumulative impacts to solid-waste facilities would be less than significant, and the project's contribution would not be cumulatively considerable.

4.19 Wildfire

This section summarizes the wildfire risks in and near the Planning Area and analyzes the impacts related to wildfire risks due to the project.

4.19.1 Environmental Setting

a. Overview of Wildfire

A wildfire is an uncontrolled fire in an area of extensive combustible fuel, including vegetation and structures. Wildfires differ from other fires in that they take place outdoors in areas of grassland, woodlands, brushland, scrubland, peatland, and other wooded areas that act as a source of fuel, or combustible material. Buildings may become involved if a wildfire spreads to adjacent communities. The primary factors that increase an area's susceptibility to wildfire include slope and topography, vegetation type and condition, and weather and atmospheric conditions. Regions of dense dry vegetation, particularly in canyon areas and on hillsides, pose the greatest potential for wildfire risks. Additional factors that increase an urban area's susceptibility to wildfire are development patterns and density, building types, and building materials.

The indirect effects of wildfires can be catastrophic. In addition to stripping the land of vegetation and destroying forest resources, large, intense fires can harm the soil, waterways, and the land itself. Soil exposed to intense heat may lose its capability to absorb moisture and support life. Exposed soils erode quickly and enhance siltation of rivers and streams, thereby enhancing flood potential, harming aquatic life, and degrading water quality. Lands stripped of vegetation are also subject to increased debris flow hazards. Wildfires also have negative impacts on air quality. Exposure to smoke and particulate matter has immediate and long-term public health impacts; populations may suffer from eye irritations, respiratory problems, and complications to existing lung and heart conditions.

Wildfire has three basic elements: how and where its ignition occurred, how and why it moves across a landscape from its point of origin, and what the fire's nature is upon arrival at a location. In general, a fire's nature is defined by eight characteristics:

1. Direction of the advance of the fire front
2. Speed of the advance of the fire front (rate of spread)
3. Mechanism causing the advance
4. Duration at any one location
5. Structure-related consumption of fuels
6. Flame length
7. Intensity
8. Gaining control

A fire front's direction of travel is primarily determined by direction of prevailing winds, geographic aspect, and condition of the fuels in the advance direction of the fire. The speed of a fire front's advance is a result of conditions at the site of the currently burning material and of lands in the advance direction of the fire. As a fire advances, the overriding influences determining its speed are prevailing wind speed, terrain slope gradient, dominant fuel size classes, and fuel continuity.

Wildfires advance by two principal mechanisms—combustion resulting from radiant heating and remote ignition resulting from ember production. Fire stays at one location primarily due to the type and amount of fuel being consumed. Grass formations are dominated by low volumes of very "fine" fuels and, depending on the level of dryness, can be consumed, with the fire advancing, in a matter of minutes. On the other hand, tree-dominated vegetation has significantly greater volumes of available fuel and a far greater amount of larger-sized fuel components. Fires can remain at these locations for days, often weeks, and sometimes months (on heavily-wooded conifer sites).

Fires burn where fuels are available. Fires in grasslands burn at a level set by the height of the grass, while fires in brushlands can burn surface fuels and typically consume the stems and leafy crowns to the full height of the plants. Fires in tree-dominated vegetation have a much more complex pattern of movement based primarily on the continuity (or "connectedness") of the fuels. In these stands, there are typically three distinct layers of fuels, arranged vertically—surface, stems and trunks, and the crown, which is composed of branches, twigs, and leaves. The continuity of fuels is important to consider in both horizontal and vertical directions. If a fire enters a stand and is advancing only as a surface fire, it will continue this manner of advance if there is high horizontal fuel connectivity. However, if there is also a high degree of vertical continuity (provided by fuels referred to as "ladder fuels"), then a fire can move up into the crown as well as forward across the surface, involving fuels in the entire stand structure.

Flame lengths are generally determined by the type and volume of fuels burning, weather conditions, topography, heat released during combustion, the amount of time to total consumption, and the height of the species in the composition. Grassland produces flame lengths typically ranging from one to eight feet as they are composed of low volumes of fine materials that are consumed quickly and depending on fuel moisture, density, and weather conditions. Flame lengths are at their maximum when the material is dry and when weather conditions support rapid flame growth. Stands of brush can produce flame lengths from 4 to 15 feet. Native oak-dominated hardwood stands can generate 20- to 40-foot flame lengths, and stands of exotics, such as *Eucalyptus globulus* or *E. cinerea,* or dense conifer stands can generate flame lengths over 100 feet. Flame length is important because it sets the distance over which radiant heating-related combustion can occur.

The temperature achieved in a wildfire is directly related to the amount of cellulosic material available for consumption. Grasslands have very low amounts and attain lower temperatures but woodlands, characterized by large amounts of highly-concentrated cellulosic material, can attain temperatures on the order of 1,800 degrees Fahrenheit.

Gaining control over a wildfire's behavioral character is the objective of response efforts. Grassland fires, burning in low fuel volume, rapid consumption, and at a single level, are the easiest to bring under control. On the other end, fires that are burning in high fuel volumes, full spectrum size classes, and entire stand structure involvement can require days, weeks, or even months to bring under complete control.

Wildland-Urban Interface

The WUI is the area where human development meets wildland vegetation, and it is typically characterized by a mix of residential, commercial, and natural land uses. CAL FIRE uses a combination of housing density, FHSZ classification, and vegetation lifeform criteria for mapping WUIs as part of their Fire and Resource Assessment Program. The WUI is particularly vulnerable to wildfire because it combines the presence of human-built structures with the presence of combustible vegetation and other wildfire fuels. Pursuant to CAL FIRE, an area must meet all of the following criteria in order to be considered a WUI (CAL FIRE 2019a):

- Minimum housing density of one unit per 20 acres
- In a Moderate, High, or Very High FHSZ
- Not dominated by wildland vegetation (herbaceous, hardwood, conifer, shrub)

The Wildland Urban Intermix is a similar term commonly used interchangeably with WUI, although it is typically represented by areas with much higher vegetation density among built infrastructure. Pursuant to CAL FIRE, an area must meet all of the following criteria in order to be considered Wildland Urban Intermix (CAL FIRE 2019a):

- Areas not designated WUI
- Minimum housing density between one unit per 20 acres and one unit per five acres OR greater than one unit per five acres in areas dominated by wildland vegetation
- In a Moderate, High, or Very High FHSZ
- Includes improved parcels only

Influence zones have wildfire-susceptible vegetation up to 1.5 miles from an interface zone or intermix zone. The eastern portion of the city and Planning Area is within a Very High FHSZ and has a local designation as a WUI fire area. The most restrictive Building and Fire Code requirements are applied to building standards for projects in all locations within the city limits as a result of this designation (City of Auburn 2021).

b. Wildfire-Conducive Conditions

The Planning Area includes a mix of urban and rural uses. Auburn is a densely populated area, and wildfires and WUI fires, as opposed to structural fires, are an ongoing concern (City of Auburn 2021). While Auburn is relatively flat, densely forested areas surround Auburn in the eastern portion of the Planning Area, and rural hills border comprise the outer portions of the Planning Area to the north and west of the city. The climate of the Planning Area, with hot, dry summers, leads to dry vegetation that is readily combustible during fire season. Seasonal drought conditions exacerbate fire hazards. Steep slopes comprised of dense trees in the hills leading down to the North Fork of the American River can impede fire-fighting efforts. The unique topography and climate of the region contribute to the wildfire risk profile.

Vegetation

Vegetation is fuel to a wildfire, and it changes over time with seasonal growth and die-back. The relationship between vegetation and wildfire is complex, but generally some vegetation is naturally fire-resistant, while some vegetation is extremely flammable. For example, cured grass is much more flammable than standing trees. Grass is considered an open fuel, in which oxygen has free access to promote the spread of fire. Additionally, weather and climate conditions, such as drought, can lead to increasingly dry vegetation with low moisture content and, thus, higher flammability.

The city is surrounded by diverse vegetation, including grasslands, oak woodlands, and dense forested areas. In the Planning Area, native vegetation, such as chaparral, sage, and grassland provide fuel that allows fire to spread easily across large tracts of land (City of Auburn 2021). Vegetation cover in the Planning Area is described in Section 4.4, *Biological Resources*.

Slope, Elevation, and Aspect

Slope can determine how quickly a fire spreads. Fire typically burns faster uphill, because it can pre-heat the fuels above with rising hot air, and upward drafts are more likely to create fire spots. (National Park Service 2022). Areas containing steep, rugged terrain can also hinder access and the use of heavy firefighting equipment, posing additional difficulties for firefighting efforts (CAL FIRE 2022). Following severe wildfires, sloping terrain is also more susceptible to landslide or flooding from increased runoff during substantial precipitation events. Landslides and surficial slope failure are most likely to occur in areas with more than 25 percent slope (hillside areas) and along steep bluffs.

Elevation affects fire behavior by influencing the timing and amount of precipitation as well as exposure to prevailing winds. Aspect is the direction a slope faces, which determines how much radiated heat the slope will receive from the sun. Slopes facing south to southwest will receive the most solar radiation; thus, they tend to be warmer and the vegetation drier than on slopes facing a northerly to northeasterly direction, creating a higher potential for wildfire ignition and spread (University of California, Berkeley 2018).

The Planning Area features a mix of gentle to steep slopes across its terrain. The city center features flatter terrain, and the surrounding landscape includes rolling hills and moderately steep slopes that vary based on the proximity to natural features such as the American River Canyon and local mountainous areas. Steep slopes bring grass and brush within reach of upward flames while impeding the access of fire-fighting equipment (City of Auburn 2021).

Slope variations are significant factors influencing the susceptibility to erosion, drainage patterns, and potential wildfire risks in certain areas with steeper gradients.

Climate and Weather

Wind, temperature, and relative humidity are the most influential weather elements in fire behavior and susceptibility (National Parks Service 2022). Fire moves faster under hot, dry, and windy conditions. Wind may also blow embers ahead of a fire, causing its spread. Drought conditions lead to extended periods of excessively dry vegetation, increasing the fuel load and ignition potential.

According to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) 2000-2024 weather data, most precipitation within the Planning Area is received from November through March, with an average annual rainfall of approximately 35 inches (NOAA 2024a). May through September is the driest time of the year and coincides with what has traditionally been considered the fire season in California. However, increasingly persistent drought and climatic changes in California have resulted in drier winters, and fires during the autumn, winter, and spring months are becoming more common. Average temperatures in the Planning Area range from a low of approximately 35 degrees in December to a high of approximately 93 degrees in July (NOAA 2024b). The climate of the Planning Area keeps the grass dry and more readily combustible during fire season.

During the fire season (May through September), winds generally originate from the east; average wind speeds are approximately 5.7 miles per hour, with gusts averaging approximately 16 miles per hour (NOAA 2026). Between November and April, winds are more variable – with average wind speeds of approximately 5.7 miles per hour originating from the east and southeast, and gusts averaging approximately 19.4 miles per hour originating from the south and southeast (NOAA 2026).

Power Lines

Above-ground power lines have the potential to contribute to wildfire risk, especially when they are near or traverse wilderness areas. In some instances, high winds can blow nearby trees and branches into power lines, sparking fires. Wind can also snap wooden poles, causing live wires to fall onto nearby grass or other fuel, igniting it. While the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) estimates only about 10 percent of California's wildfires are triggered by power lines, the frequency and severity of these wildfires has spurred the agency to promulgate new requirements for power line safety practices (Atkinson 2018).

The Planning Area has an existing network of overhead transmissions lines that run northeast to southwest through Auburn (CEC 2024). PG&E is currently undergoing a project with the goal of undergrounding approximately 55 miles of power lines in Placer County in 2024, and an additional approximately 59 miles in 2025-2026 (PG&E 2024). Portions of this undergrounding project are located in or near the Planning Area.

c. Wildfire Hazard Designations

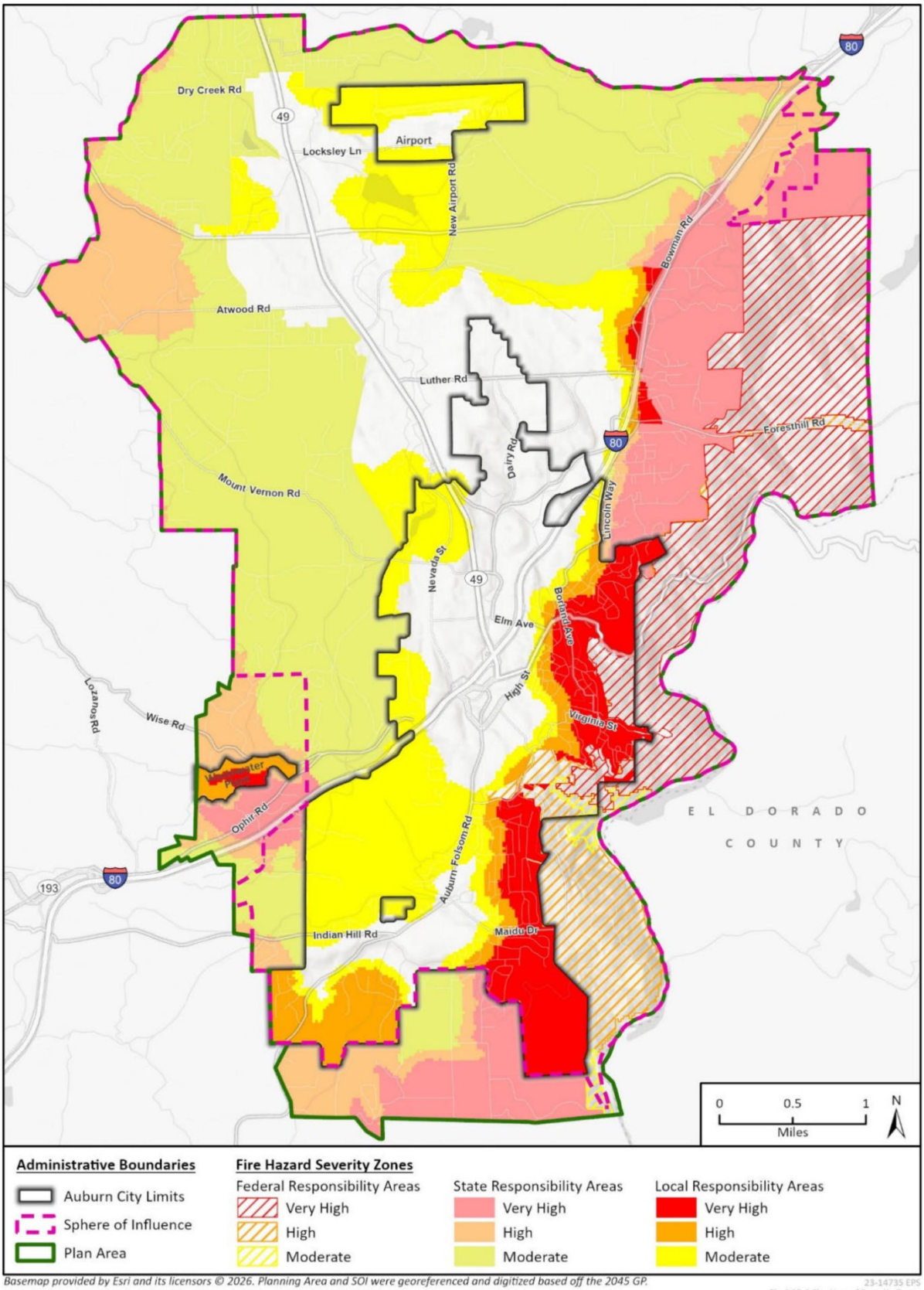
In California, the responsibility for wildfire prevention and suppression is shared by federal, state, and local agencies. Federal agencies are responsible for federal lands in Federal Responsibility Areas (FRA). The State of California has determined that some non-federal lands in unincorporated areas with watershed value are of statewide interest and have classified those lands as State Responsibility Areas (SRA), which are managed by CAL FIRE. All incorporated areas and other unincorporated lands are classified as Local Responsibility Areas (LRA).

While nearly all of California is subject to some degree of wildfire hazard, there are specific features that make certain areas more hazardous. CAL FIRE is required by law to map areas of significant fire hazards based on fuels, terrain, weather, and other relevant factors (PRC Sections 4201 - 4204; California Government Code Sections 51175 - 51189). As described previously, the primary factors that increase an area's susceptibility to fire hazards include slope, vegetation type and condition, and atmospheric conditions. CAL FIRE maps fire hazards as zones, referred to as FHSZs. There are three levels of severity – Moderate, High, and Very High. Updates to the CAL FIRE FHSZ maps are in progress and expected to be completed in 2024 (CAL FIRE 2023a).

Each of the FHSZs influence how people construct buildings and protect property to reduce risk associated with wildland fires. Under state regulations, areas within Very High FHSZs must comply with specific building and vegetation management requirements intended to reduce property damage and loss of life in those areas. However, none of the fire zones specifically prohibit development or construction. To reduce fire risk under state regulations, areas in Very High FHSZs must comply with specific building and vegetation management requirements intended to reduce property damage and loss of life in those areas.

Within Auburn's city limits, approximately 801 acres are designated as a Very High FHSZ in an LRA, and approximately 114 acres are designated as a Very High FHSZ in an FRA. In the southwestern, southern, and northeastern extents of the Planning Area approximately 1,649 acres are within a Very High FHSZ in an SRA, as established by the CAL FIRE (CAL FIRE 2024). CAL FIRE has identified much of the eastern portion within city limits and the northeastern portion of the Planning Area as Very High FHSZs. The interior portion of the Planning Area generally contains urbanized areas with decreased wildfire risk, but is otherwise comprised of SRA's and FRA's with Moderate, High, and Very High FHSZ's. The city boundary, sphere of influence, Planning Area, and CAL FIRE FHSZs are shown in Figure 4.14-1.

Figure 4.14-1 Fire Hazard Severity Zones in the Planning Area



Basemap provided by Esri and its licensors © 2026. Planning Area and SOI were georeferenced and digitized based off the 2045 GP. Additional data provided by Placer County, 2023; CALFIRE, 2008/2024/2025.

23-14735 EPS
Fig 4.19-1 Fire Hazard Severity Zones

Fire Prevention

The City of Auburn Fire Department provides fire protection within the Planning Area and participates in the Western Placer County Fire Chief's Association Cooperative Response Agreement, where fire agencies (including Placer County Fire Department, CAL FIRE, Newcastle Fire District, and Placer Hills Fire District) have an agreement support each other on incidents using the closest available resource concept. Additionally, a Mutual Threat Zone Agreement between CAL FIRE and the City of Auburn Fire Department is in place for wildland fires, which means that any wildland fire within or adjacent to Auburn or CAL FIRE jurisdiction will initiate a full response from the City of Auburn Fire Department and CAL FIRE upon initial dispatch. This agreement provides additional resources that include firefighting aircraft, hand crews, bulldozers, chief officers, and type three engines, from CAL FIRE into Auburn. Structural and wildfire protections outside Auburn city limits are provided by the individual fire agency that has jurisdiction. The Auburn Fire Department provides fire protection, emergency medical services, and disaster preparedness and response, and has one staffed fire station within the city (City of Auburn 2021).

Additionally, the Auburn City Fire Department, in coordination with the Bureau of Reclamation, CAL FIRE, and California State Parks, implemented an approximately 6-mile-long fuel modification project along the American River Canyon rim. This fuel reduction project, known as the American River Canyon Shaded Fuel Break, encompasses both public lands and private lands. The fuel reduction project, which decreased vegetative fuel loading on more than 350 acres of land, was completed in March 2022 (Placer Resource Conservation District 2024).

Fire History

There is no record of historical fires within the Auburn city limits. However, some historical fires have occurred near the Planning Area. In 2009, the 49 Fire burned 343 acres near Highway 49 and Rock Creek Road near Auburn. Several wildfires have occurred nearby in Placer County including the Ralston Fire which burned 8,400 acres near the Middle Fork of the American River in 2006; the American River Fire Complex Fire wherein a lightning storm resulted in 10 wildfires in Placer County in 2008; and the King Fire which burned an estimated 97,717 acres starting in El Dorado County, crossing into Placer County in 2014. Since 2016, wildfires and urban interface fires have occurred within or encroached into the city, especially in the heavily fueled areas to the east and south, prompting evacuations within city limits and threatening structures. The 2017 Stagecoach Fire broke out on the Upper Stagecoach Trail in the Auburn State Recreation Area, between Auburn and the American River; the 2020 Lincoln Way Fire was contained just short of the Auburn Woods Condominiums; and the 9-acre 2020 Perry Ranch Fire threatened multiple homes southwest of the city (County of Placer 2021a).

Fire Risk

The fire season in Placer County occurs from May to September each year. The threat of wildfire and potential losses are constantly increasing as human development and population increases, and the WUI areas expand. Due to its high fuel load and long, dry summers, most of Placer County, including the Planning Area, continues to be at an increased risk from wildfire (City of Auburn 2021).

4.19.2 Regulatory Setting

a. Federal Regulations

The Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000

The Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 requires a state-level mitigation plan as a condition of disaster assistance. There are two different levels of state disaster plans: "Standard" and "Enhanced." States that develop an approved Enhanced State Plan can increase the amount of funding available through the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program. The Act also established new requirements for local mitigation plans.

National Fire Plan

The National Fire Plan was developed in August 2000, following a historic wildfire season. Its intent is to establish plans for active response to severe wildfires and their impacts to communities while ensuring sufficient firefighting capacity. The plan addresses firefighting, rehabilitation, hazardous fuels reduction, community assistance, and accountability.

b. State Regulations

California Code of Regulations, Title 14

The CCR, Title 14, Division 1.5 provides fire safe regulations related to emergency access, address signage, and water standards. These regulations establish minimum wildfire protection standards for construction and development within the SRA and Very High FHSZs. The standards include basic emergency access and perimeter wildfire protection measures, signage and building numbering, water supply resources for emergency fire use, and vegetation modification. They also include a minimum setback of 30 feet for all buildings from property lines and/or the center of a road and provide defensible space requirements for areas within 30 feet of a structure (Zone 1) and between 30 and 100 feet from a structure (Zone 2).

California Fire Code

The California Fire Code (CFC) is Chapter 9 of CCR Title 24 and is based on the International Fire Code. The CFC establishes the minimum requirements consistent with nationally-recognized good practices to safeguard public health, safety, and general welfare from the hazards of fire, explosion, or dangerous conditions in new and existing buildings, structures, and premises and to provide safety and assistance to firefighters and emergency responders during emergency operations. The CFC uses a hazard classification system to determine what protective measures are required to ensure fire safety and protect lives. These measures may include construction standards, separations from property lines, and specialized equipment. To ensure these safety measures are met, the CFC employs a permit system based on hazard classification.

More specifically, CFC Chapter 8 addresses fire-related interior finishes; Chapter 9 addresses fire protection systems; and Chapter 10 addresses fire-related means of egress. CFC Chapter 49 also contains regulations for vegetation and fuel management to maintain clearances around structures. These requirements establish minimum standards to protect buildings in FHSZs in SRAs, LRAs, and wildland-urban interface fire areas.

California Building Code: Wildland-Urban Interface Building Standards

On September 20, 2007, the California Building Standards Commission approved the Office of the State Fire Marshal's emergency regulations amending CCR, Title 24, Part 2, known as the California Building Code (CBC), to include wildland-urban interface standards. The provisions of the CBC apply to the construction, alteration, movement, enlargement, replacement, repair, equipment, use and occupancy, location, maintenance, removal, and demolition of every building or structure or any appurtenances connected or attached to such building structures throughout California. The wildland-urban interface standards include provisions for ignition-resistant construction standards in the wildland-urban interface and use a hazard classification system to determine what protective measures are required to ensure fire safety and protect lives. Specifically, CBC Chapter 7A addresses materials and construction methods for exterior wildfire exposure.

California Strategic Fire Plan

The 2019 Strategic Plan prepared by CAL FIRE and the California Natural Resources Agency lays out central goals for reducing and preventing the impacts of fire in the state. The goals are meant to establish a natural environment that is more resilient and human-made assets that are more resistant to the occurrence and effects of wildland fire through local, state, federal, and private partnerships (CAL FIRE 2019b). In addition to the 2019 Strategic Plan for California, individual CAL FIRE units develop fire plans, which are strategic documents that establish a set of tools for each CAL FIRE unit for its local area. Updated annually, unit fire plans identify wildfire protection areas, initial attack success, assets and infrastructure at risk, pre-fire management strategies, and accountability in their unit's geographical boundaries. The unit fire plan identifies strategic areas for pre-fire planning and fuel treatment as defined by the people who live and work locally. The unit fire plans include contributions from local collaborators and stakeholders and are aligned with other plans applicable to the area.

California Office of Emergency Services

The California Office of Emergency Services (CalOES) prepares the State of California Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan. The plan identifies hazard risks and includes a vulnerability analysis and a hazard mitigation strategy. The plan is federally required under the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 for the State to receive Federal funding. The Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 requires a State mitigation plan as a condition of disaster assistance.

State Emergency Plan

The foundation of California's emergency planning and response is a statewide mutual aid system, designed to ensure adequate resources, facilities, and other support is provided to jurisdictions whenever their own resources prove to be inadequate to cope with an emergency situation.

The California Disaster and Civil Defense Master Mutual Aid Agreement (California Government Code Sections 8555 - 8561) requires signatories to the agreement to prepare operational plans to use in their jurisdiction and outside their area. These operational plans include fire and non-fire emergencies related to natural, technological, and war contingencies. The State of California, all state agencies, all political subdivisions, and all fire districts signed this agreement in 1950.

The State of California Emergency Plan describes how response to natural or human-caused emergencies occurs in California. The plan is a requirement of the California Emergency Services Act and describes methods for conducting emergency operations, the process for rendering mutual aid,

emergency services of government agencies, how resources are mobilized, how the public is informed, and how continuity of government is maintained during emergency. The State of California Emergency Plan further describes hazard mitigation (actions to reduce risk), as well as preparedness and recovery from disasters (CalOES 2017).

California Government Code Section 8568, the California Emergency Services Act, states "the State Emergency Plan shall be in effect in each political subdivision of the state, and the governing body of each political subdivision shall take such action as may be necessary to carry out the provisions thereof." The Act provides the basic authorities for conducting emergency operations following the proclamations of emergencies by the Governor or appropriate local authority, such as a City Manager. The provisions of the Act are further reflected and expanded on by appropriate local emergency ordinances. The Act further describes the function and operations of government at all levels during extraordinary emergencies.

All local emergency plans are extensions of the State of California Emergency Plan. The State Emergency Plan conforms to the requirements of California's Standardized Emergency Management System (SEMS), which is the system required by California Government Code Section 8607(a) for managing emergencies involving multiple jurisdictions and agencies. The SEMS incorporates the functions and principles of the Incident Command System, the Master Mutual Aid Agreement, existing mutual aid systems, the operational area concept, and multi-agency or inter-agency coordination. Local governments must use SEMS to be eligible for funding of their response-related personnel costs under state disaster assistance programs. The SEMS consists of five organizational levels that are activated as necessary, including: field response, local government, operational area, regional, and State. CalOES divides the state into several mutual aid regions. The Planning Area is located in Mutual Aid Region IV (CalOES 2024).

California Public Resource Code

The California PRC includes fire safety regulations for forest, range, and forage lands that restrict the use of equipment that may produce a spark, flame, or fire; require the use of spark arrestors on construction equipment that use an internal combustion engine; specify requirements for the safe use of gasoline-powered tools in fire hazard areas; and specify fire suppression equipment that must be provided on-site for various types of work in fire-prone areas. These regulations include the following:

- On days when a burning permit is required, flammable materials shall be removed to a distance of 10 feet from any equipment that could produce a spark, fire, or flame, and fire suppression equipment shall be available in the immediate area (PRC Section 4427)
- During the highest fire danger period from April 1 to December 1, no person except for an emergency crew member or those under or contracted with a publicly or privately-owned utility shall use tools powered by an internal combustion engine in any industrial operation located on or near any forest, brush, or grass-covered land, and appropriate fire suppression equipment shall be made immediately available (PRC Section 4428)
- On days when a burning permit is required, portable tools powered by gasoline-fueled internal combustion engines shall not be used within 25 feet of any flammable materials (PRC Section 4431)
- Earthmoving and portable equipment with internal combustion engines must be equipped with a spark arrester to reduce the potential for igniting a wildland fire (PRC Section 4442)

In addition, PRC Section 4290 establishes minimum wildfire protection standards in conjunction with building, construction, and development in SRAs and Very High FHSZs in LRAs. Under PRC Section 4290, the design and construction of structures, subdivisions, and developments in SRAs must provide for basic emergency access and specified perimeter wildfire protection measures. These measures provide for road standards for emergency access, signing and building numbering, water supply reserves, and fuel breaks and greenbelts and are known as the State Minimum Fire Safe Regulations.

Executive Order N-05-19

On January 9, 2019, Governor Gavin Newsom issued Executive Order N-05-19 to address wildfire in California. Executive Order N-05-19 directs CAL FIRE, in consultation with other state agencies and departments, to recommend immediate-, medium-, and long-term actions to help prevent destructive wildfires. In response, CAL FIRE created the Community Wildfire Prevention and Mitigation Report, which contains recommendations to reduce the damage from wildfires across the state. Specifically, they focus on reducing wildfire fuel (such as vegetation clearing), long-term community protection (creating defensible space in communities), wildfire prevention, and forest health (CAL FIRE 2023b).

Government Code Section 51182

According to California Government Code Section 51182, a person who owns, leases, controls, operates, or maintains an occupied dwelling or occupied structure in, upon, or adjoining a mountainous area, forest-covered land, brush-covered land, grass-covered land, or land that is covered with flammable material, or land that is in a Very High FHSZ shall, at all times, do all of the following:

1. Maintain defensible space of 100 feet from each side and from the front and rear of the structure.
2. Remove that portion of trees that extends within 10 feet of the outlet of a chimney or stovepipe.
3. Maintain trees, shrubs, or other plants adjacent to or overhanging a building free of dead or dying wood.
4. Maintain the roof of a structure free of leaves, needles, or other vegetative materials.
5. Prior to constructing a new dwelling or structure that will be occupied or rebuilding an occupied dwelling or occupied structure damaged by a fire in that zone, the construction or rebuilding of which requires a building permit, obtain a certification from the local building official that the dwelling or structure, as proposed to be built, complies with all applicable state and local building standards.

SB 1241 (2012)

SB 1241 requires cities and counties in SRAs and Very High FHSZs to address fire risk in the safety element of their general plans and requires the California Office of Planning and Research to develop guidelines in conjunction with CAL FIRE to ensure wildfire risk is adequately evaluated under CEQA. SB 1241 also resulted in amendments to the *CEQA Guidelines* in 2018 to include questions related to fire hazard impacts for projects located in or near lands classified as SRAs and Very High FHSZs. In adopting these amendments, the California Office of Planning and Research

recognized low-density, leapfrog development may create higher wildfire risks than high-density, infill development.

SB 1028 (2016)

SB 1028 (2016) requires each electrical corporation to construct, maintain, and operate its electrical lines and equipment in a manner that will minimize the risk of catastrophic wildfire posed by those components, and makes a violation of these provisions by an electrical corporation a crime under state law. The bill also requires each electrical corporation to annually prepare a wildfire mitigation plan submitted to CPUC for review. The plan must include a statement of objectives, a description of preventive strategies and programs that are focused on minimizing risk associated with electric facilities, and a description of the metrics the electrical corporation uses to evaluate the overall wildfire mitigation plan performance and assumptions that underlie the use of the metrics.

AB 2911 (2018)

Following the devastating 2017 fire season, AB 2911 was adopted to improve fire safety in subdivision developments. AB 2911 requires the State Board of Forestry and Fire Protection, in consultation with the State Fire Marshal, to survey local governments, including counties, cities, and fire districts, to identify existing subdivisions located in SRAs or Very High FHSZs that are without a secondary means of egress route and are at significant fire risk. Through this Subdivision Review Program, the State Board of Forestry and Fire Protection works with local governments and agencies on a project-by-project basis to develop recommendations to create secondary access to the subdivision, improvements to existing access roads, and other fire safety measures.

AB 747 (2019)

AB 747 requires local hazard mitigation plans and safety elements of general plans to be reviewed and updated, as necessary, to identify evacuation routes and their capacity, safety, and viability under a range of emergency scenarios. AB 747 authorizes a city or county that has adopted a local hazard mitigation plan, emergency operations plan, or other document that fulfills commensurate goals and objectives to use that information in the safety element of the general plan to comply with this requirement by summarizing and incorporating by reference that other plan or document in the safety element.

SB 99 (2019)

SB 99 requires that, during the next housing element revision, safety elements of general plans be reviewed and updated to identify residential developments in any hazard area that do not have at least two evacuation routes.

CPUC General Orders

General Order 95

CPUC General Order 95 applies to construction and reconstruction of overhead electric lines in California. The replacement of poles, towers, or other structures is considered reconstruction and requires adherence to all strength and clearance requirements of this order. Additionally, General Order 95 requires each utility company establish an auditable maintenance program. The CPUC has promulgated various rules to implement the fire safety requirements of General Order 95, including (CPUC 2012):

- Rule 18A: requires utility companies to take appropriate corrective action to remedy safety hazards.
- Rules 31.2: requires lines be inspected frequently and thoroughly.
- Rule 35: requires vegetation management activities be performed to establish necessary and reasonable clearances. These requirements apply to all overhead electrical supply and communication facilities that are covered by General Order 95, including facilities on lands owned and maintained by state and local agencies.
- Rule 38: establishes minimum vertical, horizontal, and radial clearances of wires from other wires.
- Rule 43.2.A.2: requires the wind loads established in Rule 43.2.A.1 be multiplied by a wind load factor of 1.1 for lines located in all parts of California where the elevation above sea level is 3000 feet or less.

General Order 165

General Order 165 establishes requirements for the inspection of electric distribution and transmission facilities that are not contained in a substation. Utilities must perform "Patrol" inspections, defined as a simple visual inspection of utility equipment and structures that are designed to identify obvious structural problems and hazards, at least once per year for each piece of equipment and structure. "Detailed" inspections, where individual pieces of equipment and structures are carefully examined, are required every five years for all overhead conductors and cables, transformers, switching/protective devices, and regulators/capacitors. By July 1 of each year, each utility subject to this General Order must submit an annual report of its inspections for the previous year under penalty of perjury (CPUC 2012).

General Order 166

General Order 166 Standard 1.E requires investor-owned utilities to develop a fire prevention plan that describes measures the electric utility will implement to generally mitigate the threat of power-line fires. Additionally, this standard requires investor-owned utilities to outline a plan to mitigate power-line fires when wind conditions exceed the structural design standards of the line during a Red Flag Warning in a high fire threat area. Fire prevention plans created by investor-owned utilities are required to identify specific parts of the utility's service territory where the conditions described above may occur simultaneously. Standard 11 requires utilities report annually to the CPUC regarding compliance with General Order 166 (CPUC 2012).

c. Regional and Local Regulations

Auburn Municipal Code

Auburn Municipal Code Section 100.50 adopts, by reference, the California Building Standards Code, Title 24, CCR Part 9 (California Fire Code). The California Fire Code contains regulations consistent with nationally-recognized and accepted practices for safeguarding life and property from hazards of fire and explosion; dangerous conditions arising from the storage, handling, and use of hazardous materials; and hazardous conditions in the use or occupancy of buildings. Additionally, Section 100.70 designates all territory within the jurisdictional boundaries of Auburn as wildland-urban interface fire area for the purposes of applying the building standards and other regulations contained in the California Building Standards Code as adopted and amended by the City. Sections

100.80 through 100.99 outline the City's Fire Safe Standards including roadway and emergency access requirements, fuel modification standards, and emergency water supply standards.

Auburn General Plan 1993

The current City of Auburn General Plan was adopted on November 29, 1993. Wildfire hazards are addressed in the Safety Element, which was updated in 2021. The Safety Element identifies and outlines goals and policies for wildfire safety and minimizing risks associated with wildfire, including:

Goal 1: Protect the life and property of residents, businesses, and visitors to Auburn from natural and human-made hazards and crime.

Policy 1.1 Site critical public facilities—including hospital and healthcare facilities, emergency shelters and resilience hubs, police and fire stations, and emergency communications facilities— outside of the identified 100- and 500-year floodplains, very high fire hazard severity zones, potential areas of subsidence, and landslide-prone areas to the extent possible. If such facilities must be in mapped hazard zones, ensure that such critical facilities are protected from the risks of flood inundation, fire, subsidence, and landslides.

Policy 1.2 Require new development in the very high fire hazard severity zones, flood zones, and landslide-prone areas to develop Emergency Preparedness Plans, including confirming evacuation and emergency vehicle access, land management, visible home and street signage, community training and education, and defensive infrastructure and resource needs.

Policy 1.3 Avoid harm, to the extent feasible, to new and existing development in areas of the City located within the very high fire hazard severity zone. During the development review process, rely on best available data and best practices, update information as it becomes available, and identify site and building design conditions to minimize risks to new development from fire hazards within these areas.

Policy 1.4 Continue to partner with Placer County and other cities within the County to regularly update and implement the currently-adopted Placer County Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (LHMP) and the currently-adopted Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP).

Policy 1.5 Enhance public education and awareness of natural and climate change-induced hazards and public understanding of disasters.

Policy 1.6 Identify and, as feasible, retrofit any City-owned buildings, roadways, and facilities in areas prone to flood, landslide/debris flows, or wildfire to maximize defensible space and outdoor fireproofing, improve drainage systems, stabilize nearby slopes, and take other actions to harden the property as needed.

Policy 1.7 Continue to coordinate with nearby jurisdictions and land managers to reduce the risk of hazardous events occurring in surrounding areas that may affect Auburn.

Goal 2: Coordinated emergency and disaster preparedness, response, mitigation, and recovery.

Policy 2.1 Encourage emergency response coordination and collaboration with the Placer County Flood Control District, the Central Valley Flood Protection Board, the Placer County Fire Department, the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

(CAL FIRE), all neighboring city/town governments in Placer County, the California Governor's Office of Emergency Services, and the California Highway Patrol, and the United States Federal Emergency Management Agency to enhance emergency management efforts.

Policy 2.2 Collaborate and coordinate with private utilities operating in Auburn to encourage a more resilient utility system and to reduce impacts from power shutoffs.

Policy 2.3 Prepare and adequately plan for any necessary evacuation efforts in response to hazards and emergency situations.

Policy 2.4 Maintain a reasonable response time and appropriate staffing among emergency response services for all sections of the community.

Policy 2.6 Ensure adequate emergency vehicle access throughout Auburn by instituting proper road widths and clearances around structures in the city.

Policy 2.8 Ensure City facilities are capable of providing and sustaining essential services during times of emergencies and disasters.

Goal 4: Minimal risk of injuries, property damage, and economic loss resulting from urban and wildland fires in Auburn.

Policy 4.1 Continually identify any areas of likely wildfire or urban fire risks or in Auburn.

Policy 4.2 Encourage new residential and commercial development in areas outside of CAL FIRE-identified very high fire hazard severity zones and discourage new residential and commercial development in very high fire hazard severity zones.

Policy 4.3 Prevent fuel accumulation around any City-owned infrastructure where fires are known to occur.

Policy 4.4 Maintain an adequate peak load water supply for fire suppression efforts in Auburn.

Policy 4.5 Continue to enforce and, as necessary, adopt new development standards, including relevant sections of the State Building Code, to reduce fire hazard risks for new and existing development in the wildland-urban interface to minimize property damage and loss of life.

Policy 4.6 Be prepared for climate change-intensified fire hazard events.

Policy 4.7 Conserve healthy conifer cover in forested areas to protect ecosystem services, including carbon sequestration, soil retention, and water supply, while maintaining responsible fuel reduction practices.

Policy 4.8 Continue to work with Placer County, state agencies, and federal agencies to support wildfire fuel management activities in areas devastated by bark beetle and other pests.

Policy 4.9 Continue to partner with Placer County and other entities within the County to regularly update and implement the Placer County Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP).

The General Plan includes several implementation programs to meet its goals and policies that have since been largely integrated into City's municipal code, outlined above. The proposed

comprehensive update of the City's General Plan, *Envision Auburn 2045,* would provide revised and refined goals, policies, and implementation programs as appropriate.

Placer County Code

Article 15.04 of the Placer County Code of Ordinances adopts, by reference, the California Fire Code (CFC) and all appendices except Appendix D, 2025 Edition. The CFC adopted in Section 15.04.510 is modified, amended and/or supplemented as set out in Sections 15.04.540 through 15.04.630. Article 15.04 also includes fire-related building and construction codes including those related to fire apparatus access roads, fire alarm and detection systems, access gates and roof regulations. Article 9.32 outlines fire hazards, and fire prevention measures including fire breaks and burning permits.

Placer County General Plan

The current Placer County General Plan was updated in May 2013 (County of Placer 2013). Fire protection is addressed in the Public Facilities and Protection Services Element and fire hazards are addressed in the Health & Safety Element. It identifies and outlines goals and policies for wildfire safety, including the following:

Goal 4.I: To protect residents of and visitors to Placer County from injury and loss of life and to protect property and watershed resources from fires.

Policy 4.I.1 The County shall encourage local fire protection agencies in Placer County to maintain the following minimum fire protection standards (expressed as Insurance Service Organization (ISO) ratings):

a. ISO 4 in urban areas
b. ISO 6 in suburban areas
c. ISO 8 in rural areas

Policy 4.I.5 The County shall work with local fire protection agencies and implement ordinances to control fire losses and fire protection costs through continued use of automatic fire detection, control, and suppression systems.

Policy 4.I.6 The County shall continue to promote standardization of operations among fire protection agencies and improvement of fire service levels.

Policy 4.I.9 The County shall ensure that all proposed developments are reviewed for compliance with fire safety standards by responsible local fire agencies per the Uniform Fire Code and other County and local ordinances.

Goal 8.C.1: To minimize the risk of loss of life, injury, and damage to property and watershed resources resulting from unwanted fires.

Policy 8.C.1.1 The County shall require that new development meet State, County, and local fire district standards for fire protection, including the California Building Standards Code, the International Wildland-Urban Interface Code, and the Placer County Municipal Code as applicable.

Policy 8.C.1.2 The County shall refer applicants of development projects in the unincorporated county to the appropriate local fire agencies for review for compliance with fire safety standards. If dual responsibility exists, then both agencies shall review and comment relative to their area of responsibility. If standards are different or

conflicting, the more stringent standards shall be applied. For new development located within high fire hazard areas, the County shall ensure that the local fire agency(s) fire safety requirements are incorporated into the project's design prior to implementation, in order to minimize the risk from fire hazards.

Policy 8.C.1.4 The County shall encourage and promote installation and maintenance of smoke detectors and fire safety improvements in existing residences and commercial facilities that were constructed prior to the requirement for their installation.

Policy 8.C.1.6 The County shall continue to implement State fire safety standards through enforcement of the applicable standards contained in the Placer County Land Development Manual.

Policy 8.C.1.7 The County shall require all new development projects with land classified as state responsibility areas (Public Resources Code Section 4102), land classified as Very High fire hazard severity zones (VHFHSZs; CGC Section 51177), or within areas defined as a "wildland urban interface" (WUI), to prepare a long-term comprehensive fuel reduction and management program, including provisions for multiple points of ingress and egress to improve evacuation and emergency response access and adequate water infrastructure for water supply and fire flow, and fire equipment access.

Policy 8.C.1.8 Prior to the approval of all tentative parcel maps and tentative subdivision maps in State Responsibility Areas (SRAs) or VHFHSZs, the County shall require as a condition of approval that the developer provide a Will Serve Requirements Letter (WSRL) form the applicable fire district demonstrating compliance with the SRA Fire Safe Regulations and the Fire Hazard Reduction Around Buildings and Structures Regulations, particularly those regarding road standards for ingress, egress, and fire equipment access.

Policy 8.C.1.9 For tentative parcel maps and tentative subdivision maps located in a High or Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone (FHSZ), the County shall require the undergrounding of new electric utilities, except in cases where the undergrounding of such utilities is infeasible or where alternative mitigation is more appropriate or provides the same level of benefit or protection. For all projects located in a Moderate FHSZ, or nonresidential projects in High or Very High FHSZ, the County shall consider all feasible fire preventative measures during environmental review. All projects shall conform to the utility requirements, as specified in applicable Community and Specific Plans, as well as all applicable design standards and guidelines.

Policy 8.C.1.11 The County shall encourage and support higher-density residential development within the WUI only if such projects are located on infill sites and implement all necessary mitigation options to provide sufficient wildfire protection as stated within the PCSP.

Policy 8.C.1.13 The County shall take emergency action as needed to stabilize burned slopes located above developed areas, important infrastructure, or key transportation corridors as soon as possible after a wildfire event.

Policy 8.C.1.15 The County shall work with local fire protection agencies, CAL FIRE, and the U.S. Forest Service to maintain existing fuel breaks and emergency access routes for effective fire suppression.

Policy 8.C.1.16 The County shall work with local fire agencies to develop high-visibility fire prevention programs, including those offering voluntary home inspections and promoting awareness of home fire prevention measures.

Policy 8.C.1.18 The County shall coordinate with the Placer County Fire Safe Alliance and local Fire Safe Councils to encourage new and existing planned developments in the WUI and other areas with elevated wildfire risk to join the Placer County Firewise Communities program.

Goal 8.C.2: To manage forests in a sustainable manner that will not endanger urban areas with wildfires.

Policy 8.C.2.4 The County shall establish increased fire-safe development standards for all new and existing development in the WUI to minimize property damage and loss of life.

Policy 8.E.1.2 The County shall continue to provide promotional programs that inform the general public of emergency preparedness and disaster response procedures.

Policy 8.E.1.4 The County shall provide alerts about potential, developing, and ongoing emergency situations through extensive alert and warning systems that convey information to all residents, in multiple languages and formats to ensure it is widely accessible.

Policy 8.I.5.2 The County shall work with communication providers to install redundant facilities, reducing the chance of service outages, with an emphasis on communication facilities that provide essential services. (PCSP SW-1).

Placer County Community Wildfire Protection Plan

The Placer County CWPP provides a comprehensive analysis of wildfire-related hazards and risks in the WUI areas covered by the Greater Auburn Area, Foresthill/Iowa Hill, Lincoln, and Placer Sierra Fire Safe Councils. The CWPP analyzes existing conditions throughout Placer County (i.e., topography, weather, vegetation, demographics) and fire behavior to provide recommendations to aid stakeholders in preventing and/or reducing the threat of wildfire, such as defensible space and fuels treatments, construction methods and materials, and preparedness planning. The CWPP complements local agreements and existing plans for wildfire protection to aid in implementing a seamless, coordinated effort in determining appropriate fire management actions. For each Fire Safe Council, the CWPP address five broad categories: public education; structural ignitability/defensible space; water supply; access/evacuation; and street and home addressing. The North Auburn and Greater Auburn Area Fire Safe Councils cover the Planning Area (County of Placer 2012). The Placer County CWPP is currently undergoing an updated, anticipated to be completed in 2027.

Placer County Local Hazard Mitigation Plan

The 2021 Placer County LHMP update identifies effective and feasible actions to reduce the risks posed by potential hazards in Placer County and the jurisdictions within the county, including the City of Auburn. The previously adopted 2016 version of the LHMP was incorporated by reference into the City of Auburn's 2021 Safety Element. The Auburn City Council adopted the 2021 Safety Element on May 24, 2021. The City of Auburn Jurisdictional Annex within the multi-jurisdictional LHMP assesses various risks from hazards such as climate change, drought, flooding, earthquakes and geologic hazards, extreme weather, pandemic diseases, and wildfire; lists mitigation actions; and describes the process of implementing, monitoring, and evaluating the plan. The city of

Auburn's vulnerability to wildfire is classified as "high" and the likelihood of future occurrence of wildfire is considered "likely" (County of Placer 2012a).

Placer County Emergency Preparedness and Evacuation Plan Guidance

An Emergency Preparedness and Evacuation Plan (EPEP) is a document that may be required for developments in Placer County that are in natural disaster hazard areas, or for projects in an area with only one road or bridge for emergency escape or fewer than two ways out. The County created an EPEP Guidance Document (2025) to assist developers in understanding when an EPEP is necessary, how to prepare an effective plan, and how to ensure compliance with the county's Health and Safety Element in an attempt to ensure that developers prepare their plans in a way that minimizes the impacts of local hazards, reduces the likelihood of injury or loss of life, and preserves critical infrastructure (County of Placer 2025, 2026).

4.19.3 Impact Analysis

a. Significance Thresholds and Methodology

Significance Thresholds

Based on Appendix G of the *CEQA Guidelines* a project may be deemed to have significant wildfire impacts if, located in or near SRAs or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, it would:

1. Substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan;
2. Due to slope, prevailing winds, and other factors, exacerbate wildfire risks, and thereby expose project occupants to pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire;
3. Require the installation or maintenance of associated infrastructure (such as roads, fuel breaks, emergency water sources, power lines or other utilities) that may exacerbate fire risk or that may result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment; or
4. Expose people or structures to significant risks, including downslope or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes.

Methodology

The assessment of impacts related to wildfire hazards and risks were evaluated using FHSZ mapping for Auburn, aerial imagery, and topographic data. Weather patterns related to prevailing winds and precipitation trends were evaluated as they relate to the spread and magnitude of wildfire. CEQA does not generally require an agency to consider the effects of existing environmental conditions on a proposed project's future users or residents. Consequently, impacts under the thresholds identified above would only be considered significant if the proposed project risks exacerbating those existing environmental conditions. As shown in Figure 4.14-1, the Planning Area contains Very High FHSZ located within LRAs, SRA, and FRAs; thus, the entirety of the Planning Area is considered "in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones" for the purposes of this analysis.

In addition, on October 10, 2022, the State's Office of the Attorney General issued guidance for analyzing wildfire impacts in a document titled *Best Practices for Analyzing and Mitigating Wildfire Impacts of Development Projects under the California Environmental Quality Act* (State's Office of

the Attorney General 2022). The analysis in this section uses the following guidance from State's Office of the Attorney General in considering the potential impacts of the project:

1. **Project Density**: Project density influences how likely a fire is to start or spread, and how likely it is that the development and its occupants will be in danger when a fire starts.
2. **Project Location**: Project placement in the landscape relative to fire history, topography, and wind patterns also influences wildfire risk.
3. **Water Supply and Infrastructure**: The analysis should consider the adequacy of water supplies and infrastructure to address firefighting within the project site.
4. **Evacuation and Emergency Access**: Local governments should consider placing developments close to existing road and evacuation infrastructure, and where appropriate, constructing additional roads to facilitate evacuations.
5. **Fire Hardening Structures**: Home hardening has been shown to be an extremely effective measure for preventing structure loss during a wildfire. Local governments should require developers to upgrade building materials and use installation techniques to increase the development's resistance to heat, flames, and embers beyond what is required in applicable building codes.

b. Project Impacts and Mitigation

Threshold 1:	If located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, would the project substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?

Impact W-1 THE 2045 GENERAL PLAN POLICIES, IN COMBINATION WITH THE EXISTING 2021 SAFETY ELEMENT POLICIES, ADDRESS EMERGENCY AND EVACUATION PLANNING, AND EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE. DEVELOPMENT FACILITATED BY THE PROJECT WOULD BE REQUIRED TO ADHERE TO CITY AND COUNTY EMERGENCY RESPONSE, EVACUATION, AND ACCESS REQUIREMENTS. THEREFORE, THE PROPOSED PROJECT WOULD NOT IMPAIR AN EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLAN OR EMERGENCY EVACUATION PLAN. IMPACTS WOULD BE LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT.

As shown in Figure 4.14-1, the Planning Area and the city of Auburn contain Very High FHSZs located within LRAs, SRA, and FRAs. The central portion of the Planning Area generally contains urbanized development with reduced wildfire risk designations. Development facilitated by the proposed project would result in new development within the Planning Area, which would introduce new residents or employees that would require emergency response and/or evacuation in the event of a wildfire.

The 2045 General Plan includes the following goals, policies, and actions to ensure safe and efficient evacuation and emergency response: Policy T-8.5: Evacuation Planning, Policy CSF-1.6: Resilience and Emergency Preparedness, Policy CSF-3.3: Fire Prevention and Emergency Response, Policy CSF-3.5: Intergovernmental Coordination, Policy CSF-3.11: Reducing Wildfire Hazards, and Action CSF-3F: Mutual Aid. These policies direct the City to ensure effective and coordinated response to disasters, which would include events warranting evacuation, and would ensure adequate emergency response, access, and evacuation within the Planning Area.

As detailed in Section 4.19.2(c), the Safety Element also provides goals and policies related to emergency response, access, and evacuation, which would apply to the parts of the Planning Area that are contained within Auburn city limits. Specifically, Auburn Safety Element Policy 1.2 requires

new development in the very high FHSZs, flood zones, and landslide-prone areas to develop Emergency Preparedness Plans, including confirming evacuation and emergency vehicle access; Policies 2.3 and 2.6 require emergency and evacuation planning and the provision of adequate emergency access throughout the City; and Policy 6.3 calls for incorporation of resilient design features for roads and trails with history of being damaged or blocked by landslide events. Development facilitated by the project would be implemented in accordance with the goals and policies of the City's Safety Element.

Placer County also provides guidance related to emergency access and evacuation, which applies to the parts of the Planning Area that fall outside Auburn city limits. The Placer County General Plan Health and Safety Element highlights I-80 and State Route 49 as providing "sufficient road capacity and freedom of traffic flow and have limited exposure to hazard-prone areas", and states that, "[a]lthough the County does not have a formally identified evacuation network, there are several routes that can meet evacuation needs from different neighborhoods and communities" (County of Placer 2021b). The Placer County General Plan Health and Safety Element and Public Facilities and Protection Services Element (County of Placer 2013) provide goals and policies related to emergency access and evacuation. As such, the County requires that new developments are reviewed by fire officials for compliance with local and State fire safety standards (Policies 4.I.9, 8.C.1.1, 8.C.1.2, and 8.C.1.6); additionally, all new development projects located within an SRA, Very High FHSZ, or WUI are to prepare long-term comprehensive fuel reduction and management programs, including provisions for evacuation and emergency response access as a condition of approval (Policies 8.C.1.7 and 8.C.1.8). Policies 8.E.1.2, 8.E.1.4, and 8.I.5.2 also behold the County to provide emergency alerts, warning systems, and redundant communication facilities and Policy 8.E.3.1 calls to establish an evacuation planning program to assist people to evacuate during hazardous events. Development facilitated by the proposed project would be implemented in accordance with the goals and policies of the County's General Plan.

Placer County's LHMP includes Mitigation Actions for unincorporated Placer County and individual cities (i.e., the Auburn Annex) to minimize potential impacts associated with wildfire hazards, which apply to portions of the Planning Area that are located outside Auburn and inside City limits, respectively. Unincorporated Placer County Mitigation Actions 24, 26, and 30 seek to provide fuel breaks and defensible space in the WUI and FHSZs, and Mitigation Actions 25 and 27 are aimed at improving public education and awareness programs (County of Placer 2021a). Development facilitated by the project would be required to adhere to regulations for maintaining defensible space and fuel breaks, as enforced by the City of Auburn Fire Department or Placer County Fire Department, consistent with this mitigation action. The LHMP also calls for evacuation planning, mapping, and warning systems, as well as evacuation signage and safety zones countywide through Mitigation Actions 6 and 7 (County of Placer 2021a). Auburn Annex Mitigation Action 2 encourages improving emergency and disaster preparedness communication and public outreach and Mitigation Action 4, which calls for the implementation of a WUI Planning and Risk Mitigation Project to develop an emergency response plan for catastrophic wildfire (County of Placer 2021a). Countywide warning systems and emergency evacuation planning would continue to be provided by Placer County, and the proposed actions of the 2045 General Plan would support the implementation of these efforts at the City level. Additionally, development facilitated by the project would be implemented in accordance with the guidance and recommendations of City and County evacuation planning and emergency access requirements, consistent with these mitigation actions. These mitigation actions would ensure that new residents facilitated by the project are prepared to react to a wildfire emergency and would have advance notice to evacuate. The

proposed project would support implementation of these actions through proposed goals and policies of the 2045 General Plan.

Furthermore, the Placer County CWPP provides recommendations for preparing a community evacuation plan, maintaining and clearing roads of vegetation and obstructions, and providing adequate access for emergency vehicles and apparatuses, in addition to guidelines for defensible space and fuels treatments, construction methods and materials, and preparedness planning within the Planning Area (County of Placer 2012). The proposed project would be consistent with these recommendations through implementation of the 2045 General Plan policies listed above.

The proposed project would also comply with the regulations of the Auburn Municipal Code, which requires that emergency access and fire apparatus roads have unobstructed access (Section 100.58), and that all public and private street and road networks provide safe access for emergency fire equipment and civilian evacuation concurrently (Section 100.84). In accordance with Section 100.82 of the Auburn Municipal Code, the Auburn Fire Department reviews and approves development projects to ensure that fire safety and emergency access standards are met and that development facilitated by the proposed project would not hinder emergency access or evacuation. Implementation of 2045 General Plan goals, policies, and actions associated with emergency planning and response, in addition to adherence to County LHMP Mitigation Actions and CWPP guidelines, City Municipal Code requirements, and City Fire Department review of development plans, would ensure that potential impacts from implementation of the proposed project on emergency response and evacuation would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures would be required.

Significance After Mitigation

Impacts would be less than significant without mitigation.

Threshold 2:	If located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, would the project due to slope, prevailing winds, and other factors, exacerbate wildfire risks and thereby expose project occupants to pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire?

Impact W-2 THE 2045 GENERAL PLAN INCLUDES POLICIES TO MINIMIZE WILDFIRE RISK. DEVELOPMENT FACILITATED BY THE PROPOSED PROJECT WOULD ADHERE TO THE CALIFORNIA FIRE CODE AND BE REVIEWED BY THE AUBURN OR PLACER COUNTY FIRE DEPARTMENTS, AS APPROPRIATE, TO ENSURE WILDFIRE RISK WOULD NOT BE EXACERBATED. THEREFORE, THIS IMPACT WOULD BE LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT.

As shown in Figure 4.14-1, the Planning Area and the city of Auburn contain Very High FHSZ located within LRAs, SRA, and FRAs. Increased wildfire risk is generally concentrated in the southern and eastern extents of the Planning Area, and decreased wildfire risk is anticipated in the developed, urban center of Auburn and the central portion of the Planning Area. The areas of high and very high FHSZs contain larger tracts of undeveloped open space and uninterrupted vegetation cover that can act as fire fuel. While no fires have historically occurred within Auburn, there have been numerous fires originating in the eastern and northeastern extents of the Planning Area. Wind-driven fires, such as the 2008 Gladding Fire and the 2009 49 Fire, have been notably fast-moving and destructive (destroying 16 and 66 structures, respectively) (City of Auburn 2021).

Prevailing winds in the Planning Area generally blow from the east during the fire season, moving east to west across the Planning Area (NOAA 2026). As wildfires typically originate in the eastern extents of the Planning Area, prevailing winds would move wildfires and the related smoke and air pollutants, westward, towards the urbanized areas of the Planning Area. However, fire tends to burn and spread most quickly uphill, and the steep sloping areas of the Planning Area trend uphill toward the east, away from the developed areas of the Planning Area. The 2045 General Plan includes policies to enhance the City's ability to respond to wildfire risk, as listed in Impact W-1. In addition, the 2045 General Plan includes policies that would minimize risk to project occupants by minimizing development in Very High FHSZs and other hazard zones where possible, implementing and maintaining fuel breaks and defensible space, enforcing the use of fire-resistant building and landscaping materials, managing vegetation to reduce potential wildfire fuels, minimizing public exposure to wildfire smoke, and ensuring the availability of emergency fire water : Policy LU-1.5: Reducing Exposure to Natural Hazards, Action LU-8D: Management of Common Open Space, Policy CD-3.4: Landscaping, Policy OSC-4.5: Wildfire Smoke, Policy OSC-5.5: Control of Invasive Plants, Action OSC-5D: Tree Preservation Ordinance, Action OSC-7B: Addressing Environmental Health Risks, Action CSF-3D: Fire Flows, Action CSF-3E: Water Usage and Fuel Reduction Plans, and Policy CSF-4.4: Water Supply, Storage, and Distribution.

The Auburn Fire Department, Placer County Fire Department, and CAL FIRE enforce fire and building codes related to development in elevated FHSZs and WUI areas. Development facilitated by the project would be required to comply with applicable guidance and regulations of the Auburn Safety Element, Auburn Municipal Code, Placer County General Plan, CWPP, and Placer County Municipal Code related to wildfire risk. Standards include, but are not limited to, implementation of 100-foot minimum defensible space barriers around all buildings or structures or to the property line (whichever is nearer), removal of combustible vegetation within 30 feet of a building or structure, and prohibition of trees located within 10 feet of a chimney or stovepipe (County of Placer 2012).

Development facilitated by the project would also be required to adhere to State and federal regulations related to reducing wildfire risk. This includes approval of site-specific design plans to verify compliance with applicable codes including, but not limited to, the following:

- Title 24, CCR, Building Regulations
- Uniform Fire Code
- National Fire Codes of the National Fire Protection Association
- Title 19, CCR, Public Safety
- Title 8, CCR, Occupational Safety
- California Health and Safety Code

The CFC includes safety measures that minimize the threat of fire, including ignition-resistant construction with exterior walls of noncombustible or ignition resistant material from the surface of the ground to the roof system and sealing any gaps around doors, windows, eaves and vents to prevent intrusion by flame or embers. Development would also be required to meet California Building Code requirements, including CCR Title 24, Part 2, which includes specific requirements related to exterior wildfire exposure. CCR Title 14 sets forth the minimum development standards for emergency access, fuel modification, setback, signage, and water supply, which help prevent loss of structures or life by reducing wildfire hazards risk.

Compliance with these regulations and building standards would reduce the potential for development facilitated by the proposed project to contribute to the exposure to pollutants of

persons in or near these developments. Additionally, implementation of the 2045 General Plan would include policies intended to minimize potential wildfire risks. Therefore, this impact would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation is required.

Significance After Mitigation

Impacts would be less than significant without mitigation.

Threshold 3:	If located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, would the project require the installation or maintenance of associated infrastructure (such as roads, fuel breaks, emergency water sources, power lines or other utilities) that may exacerbate fire risk or that may result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment?

Impact W-3 IMPLEMENTATION OF THE 2045 GENERAL PLAN WOULD NOT REQUIRE THE INSTALLATION OR MAINTENANCE OF SUBSTANTIAL INFRASTRUCTURE THAT MAY EXACERBATE FIRE RISK OR RESULT IN TEMPORARY OR ONGOING IMPACTS TO THE ENVIRONMENT ASSOCIATED WITH FIRE RISK. THEREFORE, THIS IMPACT WOULD BE LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT.

Minimal additional infrastructure, such as roads, fuel breaks, emergency water sources, power lines, or other utilities, would be required to accommodate development facilitated by the project. However, undeveloped areas such as Baltimore Ravine would require supporting infrastructure as part of future development, which would occur concurrently with project-level approvals. Development facilitated by the proposed project would require lateral infrastructure connections to existing utilities, resulting in negligible temporary or ongoing environmental impacts. Future development would be concentrated on infill areas of the Planning Area which are largely urbanized and currently developed with residential, commercial, and industrial uses, and are thereby devoid of large tracts of vegetation cover. Thus, the risk of wildfire would not be exacerbated.

Generally, overhead electrical lines pose the greatest potential wildfire risk. Existing electrical lines are maintained in accordance with CPUC requirements. Furthermore, electrical lines associated with future development would be undergrounded, pursuant to Chapter 160 of the Auburn Municipal Code and Policy 8.C.1.9 of the Placer County General Plan, as well as Policy CD-2.6: Undergrounding of Utilities in the 2045 General Plan. As such, the project would not exacerbate fire risk from the installation of electrical lines.

Furthermore, to minimize risks associated with emergency water sources and availability, the 2045 General Plan includes the following policies and actions: Action CSF-3D: Fire Flows, Action CSF-3E: Water Usage and Fuel Reduction Plans, Policy CSF-4.4: Water Supply, Storage, and Distribution, and Action CSF-4A: Water Infrastructure Improvements.

The 2045 General Plan also includes the following proposed policies and actions to ensure that buildout does not exacerbate risks associated with wildfires: Action LU-8D: Management of Common Open Space, Policy OSC-5.5: Control of Invasive Plants, Action OSC-5D: Tree Preservation Ordinance, Policy CSF-3.9: Fire Suppression Capacity, and Policy CSF-3.11: Reducing Wildfire Hazards.

Proposed 2045 General Plan policies and actions, and City and County Municipal Code requirements would ensure development would minimize fire risk through adherence to defensive space requirements, development standards, fire management best practices, and wildfire resilience standards. During site plan review of individual projects, the Auburn or Placer County Fire Departments would ensure new development provides adequate fuel breaks or buffer zones that minimize fire risk. The creation of fuel breaks or buffer zones would reduce the potential for severe or catastrophic wildfires, rather than exacerbate them.

No additional ongoing impacts to the environment would occur beyond those discussed throughout this document. Development facilitated by the project would generally require minimal additional utility infrastructure, and the CPUC, City, and County requirements, as well as policies included in the 2045 General Plan, would ensure development facilitated by the project would not result in substantial fire risk or temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment. Therefore, this impact would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures would be required.

Significance After Mitigation

Impacts would be less than significant without mitigation.

Threshold 4:	If located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, would the project expose people or structures to significant risks, including downslopes or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes?

Impact W-4 DEVELOPMENT FACILITATED BY THE PROJECT WOULD COMPLY WITH CITY AND COUNTY REGULATIONS RELATED TO PROJECT SITING AND ENGINEERING, AND THE 2045 GENERAL PLAN INCLUDES WILDFIRE RESILIENCY POLICIES TO ENSURE DEVELOPMENT WOULD NOT EXACERBATE RISKS FROM FLOODING OR LANDSLIDES DUE TO WILDFIRE. THEREFORE, THIS IMPACT WOULD BE LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT.

Vegetation on hillsides helps stabilize soil, slow water flow, and support percolation into the soil. Severe wildfires damage trees, the shrub canopy, vegetation, and soil. Once vegetation burns, a greater surface area of soil is exposed, and the lack of roots decreases the structural integrity of the soil. As a result, wildfire burn areas typically experience increased runoff after intense rainfall, which can put residences and structures downslope of a burned area at risk of localized floods and landslides. The Planning Area features a mix of gentle to steep slopes, with flatter terrain in the Auburn city center, and rolling hills and variably steep slopes in the surrounding landscape.

As described in Section 4.7, *Geology and Soils*, Auburn has a low susceptibility to landslides, as it has minimal hillside areas and lacks steep bluffs. The risk of landslide in the Planning Area, however, is probable as minor landslides have occurred in the past, evidenced by past deposits in erosion gullies and recent landslide events. Minor landslides will likely continue to occur with heavy precipitation, and areas affected by recent fires show an increased landslide risk (County of Placer 2021a). Furthermore, as detailed in Section 4.10, *Hydrology and Water Quality,* portions of the Planning Area are located within FEMA 100- and 500-year floodplains. Development facilitated by the project would be subject to Auburn or Placer County Municipal Codes and CBC engineering design and construction measures and requirements. Additionally, the 2045 General Plan includes the following policies and actions to minimize potential for landslides, post-fire debris flow, and downstream

flooding as a result of wildfire: Policy LU-1.5: Reducing Exposure to Natural Hazards, Policy LU-1.6: Higher Density Housing, Action LU-2E: Transfer of Development Rights, Policy CD-3.4: Landscaping, Policy CSF-1.6: Resilience and Emergency Preparedness, and Policy CSF-4.6: Stormwater Facility Improvements.

Development facilitated by the project would be required to adhere to the goals and policies of the Auburn Safety Element, including those requiring consideration of project siting and design for wildfire and flood resilience (Goals 1 and 4, Policies 1.1, 1.2, 1.6, 4.2, 4.7, 6.2, and 6.3). Furthermore, as described in Section 4.10, *Hydrology and Water Quality*, development in a flood hazard zone would be required to adhere to the standards of the California Building Code and City and County Municipal Codes, which provide design guidelines, construction standards, and encroachments. Development would also be required to comply with State and local regulations for controlling stormwater, including implementation of best management practices to minimize stormwater flows and adverse impacts of flooding following a wildfire. For example, Placer County Health and Safety Element also includes Policy 8.C.1.13, under which the County is required to take emergency action, as needed, to stabilize burned slopes as soon as possible following a wildfire event, and the City of Auburn Safety Element includes a similar slope stabilization action under Policy 6.2 (County of Placer 2021b, City of Auburn 2021).

Development facilitated by the project would be required to adhere to these State and local regulations and 2045 General Plan policies, which would ensure the proposed project would not expose people or structures to substantial flooding or landslides as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes. This impact would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures would be required.

Significance After Mitigation

Impacts would be less than significant without mitigation.

4.19.4 Cumulative Impacts

The geographic scope of the cumulative wildfire analysis is the entirety of Placer County and El Dorado County. This geographic scope is appropriate for wildfire because the direct (e.g., burned area, smoke hazards) and indirect (e.g., downstream flooding) effects of a wildfire can be experienced beyond the immediate burn area of a fire. The cumulative analysis considers the nearby past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future plans and projects listed in Table 3-1 (refer to Section 3, *Environmental Setting*) located outside the city, in addition to the proposed plan.

A combination of federal, State, and local regulations limit or minimize the potential for exposure to wildfires by reducing the amount of development in wildland urban interface areas, ensuring new development is developed according to California Building Code and California Fire Code requirements, and incorporating requirements for fire-safe construction into the land use planning. Cumulative development may occur in designated FHSZs; however, project construction would adhere to respective City and County fire codes and regulations designed to provide minimum standards to increase fire-resiliency in buildings, prevent the occurrence of fires, and to provide adequate fire-protection facilities to control the spread of fire which might be caused by recreational, residential, commercial, industrial or other activities conducted in a wildland urban interface area. Adherence to the local City or County regulations would ensure that California Fire

Code standards, including defensible space and fire-hardened building materials, are incorporated into project design and permit requirements. Therefore, the cumulative impact related to wildfire exposure risk would be less than significant.

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5 Other CEQA Required Discussions

This section discusses growth-inducing impacts, irreversible environmental impacts, and significant unavoidable impacts that would be caused by the proposed project.

5.1 Growth Inducement

Section 15126(d) of the *CEQA Guidelines* requires a discussion of a proposed project's potential to foster economic or population growth, including ways in which a project could remove an obstacle to growth. Growth does not necessarily create significant physical changes to the environment. However, depending upon the type, magnitude, and location of growth, it can result in significant adverse environmental effects. The proposed project's growth inducing potential is therefore considered significant if project-induced growth could result in significant physical effects in one or more environmental issue areas.

5.1.1 Population Growth

This environmental impact report (EIR) identifies a maximum buildout for the project, which is a conservative assumption developed for this analysis. Overall, maximum growth is dependent on multiple factors, including local economic conditions, market demand, and other financing considerations. The following conservative estimate of population growth is based on the project's realistic buildout scenario, which would accommodate approximately 2,570 additional housing units and 5,500 additional residents. Under the realistic buildout scenario, the project could result in an increase of approximately 1.89 million square feet of non-residential development and 250 hotel rooms, which would generate permanent employment opportunities in Auburn of approximately 4,400 new jobs. Through implementation of new and updated policies in the 2045 General Plan, the City would reduce significant physical effects on the environment resulting from population and economic growth. For example, as described in Section 4.15, *Public Services and Recreation*, and Section 4.18, *Utilities and Service Systems*, the implementation of proposed policies in the 2045 General Plan would ensure that there are sufficient public services and utilities to meet the demand associated with population and economic growth. As such, the impacts from population and economic growth would be less than significant.

In addition, the project would generate temporary employment opportunities during construction of future residential and nonresidential projects. As construction workers would be expected to be drawn from the existing regional work force, construction of future development projects would not be considered growth-inducing. Therefore, the project would not induce uncontrolled population or economic growth and associated environmental impacts.

5.1.2 Removal of Obstacles to Growth

Development facilitated by the project would require new utility connections, including connections to water, hydrants, sewers, electricity, telecommunications, or other utilities like stormwater facilities. However, these connections would generally occur within individual project footprints or rights-of-way that were previously disturbed, minimizing the impact of development on existing infrastructure and services. Development would use existing facilities and major infrastructure extensions would not occur in or be designed to serve areas beyond the Planning Area.

The proposed project would result in some land use designation changes to accommodate growth, consolidation of land use categories, and some additional land use categories. The proposed project resolves inconsistencies between existing land uses and land use designations in the General Plan and more accurately reflects existing uses. Additionally, the proposed land use changes intensify development potential in already urbanized areas where services are readily available. The project also includes the allowance of cannabis retail uses within the city; however, the project includes strict limitations on the extent of this use type.

The proposed General Plan expresses Auburn's intent to pursue annexation of certain areas before the Plan's horizon year. These areas include the "central" segment of the SR 49 corridor (from Marguerite Mine Road to Kemper/New Airport Road), the Upper Lincoln Way area (from Russell Avenue to Foresthill Road) and the Bowman area (from Foresthill Road to Bell Road, including upper Auburn Ravine Road). All of these areas fall within the City's sphere of influence (SOI) and present opportunities for Auburn to achieve long-term fiscal stability, economic development, housing, transportation, and infrastructure improvements. Additionally, the proposed General Plan proposes expanding the Auburn SOI in two locations: along Ophir Road, west of Auburn and south of the City's Wastewater Treatment Plant, and immediately south of the City, extending roughly to the east-west segment of Shirland Tract Road**.** Future development proposals within the SOI would be subject to annexation to the City of Auburn in compliance with procedures identified by the Placer County Local Agency Formation Commission, as well as additional environmental documentation.

In addition, as described in Section 2, *Project Description*, the proposed project includes adoption of a new Form-Based Code for Downtown and Old Town Auburn and amendments to the Baltimore Ravine Specific Plan.

While the project would remove an obstacle to growth through the proposed SOI expansion, necessary approvals for future development within the SOI (including annexation approval from the Placer County Local Agency Formation Commission) ensure that the project would not result in significant growth inducement.

5.2 Significant Irreversible Environmental Effects

CEQA Guidelines Section 15126(c) requires a discussion of significant irreversible environmental changes that would be involved in the project, should the project be implemented. This section addresses non-renewable resources, the commitment of future generations to the proposed uses, environmental accidents, and irreversible impacts associated with the project.

The project would irreversibly increase local demand for non-renewable energy resources such as petroleum products and potentially natural gas. However, increasingly efficient building design would offset this demand to some degree by reducing energy demands of future development. As described in Section 4.6, *Energy*, development facilitated by the project would be subject to the energy conservation requirements of the California Energy Code (Title 24, California Code of Regulations Part 6, *California's Energy Efficiency Standards for Residential and Nonresidential Buildings*) and the California Green Building Standards Code (Title 24, California Code of Regulations Part 11). The California Energy Code provides energy conservation standards for all new and renovated buildings, and the Green Building Standards Code requires solar access, natural ventilation, and stormwater capture. Furthermore, the project would implement several policies which would require efficient energy use and promote renewable energy programs. Consequently, development facilitated by the project would not use unusual amounts of energy or construction materials and impacts related to consumption of non-renewable and renewable resources would be

less than significant. Consumption of these resources would occur with any development in the region and is not unique to the project.

Growth facilitated by the project would require an irreversible commitment of fire protection, law enforcement, water supply, wastewater treatment, and solid waste disposal services. As discussed in Section 4.15, *Public Services and Recreation*, and Section 4.18, *Utilities and Service Systems*, potential impacts to public services and utilities and service systems would be less than significant following implementation of proposed General Plan policies, as well as future project-specific environmental review that would be required for any future facilities constructed in accordance with the project.

Furthermore, as discussed in Section 4.9, *Hazards and Hazardous Materials*, regulatory requirements, including those from the Placer County Environmental Health Division would minimize potential accidents related to the spills of hazardous materials. Therefore, the project would not lead to significant irreversible environmental changes due to environmental accidents.

The anticipated increase in vehicle trips associated with the project would incrementally contribute to local traffic, air quality emissions, and noise. As described in Section 4.16, *Transportation*, VMT-related impacts would be significant and unavoidable because 2045 VMT per capita would not meet the VMT reduction threshold established for the project. As described in Section 4.3, *Air Quality*, the project would not result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant, and adherence to proposed General Plan policies and actions would ensure the project would not result in people being exposed to substantial irreversible exposure to toxic air contaminants.

As described in Section 4.13, *Noise*, the project could result in substantial increases in noise and vibration due to construction. Although Mitigation Measures NOI-1a and NOI-1b would reduce noise through implementation of construction noise reduction measures, implementation of the project would result in an irreversible increase in noise due to construction noise.

5.3 Significant Unavoidable Impacts

CEQA Guidelines Section 15126(b) requires a discussion of the significant environmental effects which cannot be avoided if the project is implemented. These significant and unavoidable impacts are identified in Section 4, *Environmental Impact Analysis*, and summarized below. The project would have the following significant and unavoidable impacts:

- **Impact CUL-1**: Development facilitated by the project could adversely affect known and previously unidentified historical resources in the Planning Area. This impact would be significant and unavoidable.
- **Impact NOI-1**: Construction of development facilitated by the project would generate temporary noise in the vicinity of individual development sites. Depending on the scope of individual developments, construction may involve long durations, substantial soil movement, use of large, heavy-duty equipment, and/or pile driving near noise-sensitive land uses, which may produce noise levels that exceed the applicable construction noise limits. Implementation of Mitigation Measure NOI-1a and NOI-1b would reduce construction noise levels; however, because details of future project-specific construction activities are unknown at this time, temporary construction noise impacts would remain significant and unavoidable.
- **Impact TRA-2**: Development facilitated by the project would decrease VMT per service population for the Planning Area. However, VMT per service population would exceed 85 percent of the baseline VMT per service population for the Planning Area. No feasible mitigation

is available to reduce this impact. Therefore, the proposed project would result in a significant and unavoidable VMT impact.

6 Alternatives

As required by Sections 15126(f) and 15126.6 of the *CEQA Guidelines*, this EIR examines a range of reasonable alternatives to the proposed project that would attain most of the basic project objectives (stated in Section 2, *Project Description*) and would avoid or substantially lessen the significant adverse impacts.

6.1 Development of Alternatives

As required by the *CEQA Guidelines*, the selection of alternatives for this EIR included a screening process to determine a reasonable range of alternatives, which could reduce significant effects but also feasibly meet project objectives. Alternatives that do not clearly provide any environmental advantages compared to the proposed project, do not meet basic proposed project objectives, or are not feasible to implement have been eliminated from further consideration. Alternatives that were considered but rejected are discussed below in Section 6.1.3.

6.1.1 Project Objectives and Guiding Principles

As discussed in Section 2, *Project Description*, the guiding principles for the General Plan effectively serve as the objectives for the proposed project, and are as follows:

1. **Historic Legacy.** Preserve the historic buildings and places that shape Auburn's identity as a historic Sierra foothills town. Strongly encourage reinvestment in Old Town and Downtown, including restoration of vacant buildings and compatible mixed-use development.
2. **Small Town Character.** Maintain Auburn's unique setting and scale, authentic historic core, walkable neighborhoods, compact form, and beautiful natural setting. Sustain the tradition of civic service, community engagement, and special events that give Auburn its hometown feel.
3. **Smart Growth.** Support growth on infill sites within the city, as well as annexation of areas for new housing and employment. While Auburn is committed to protecting its past, it is also committed to smart and strategic growth.
4. **Accessibility.** Improve Auburn's transportation system in ways that make it safer and easier to get around, especially on foot, bicycle, and public transit. Connect homes, shopping, recreation, and workplaces so that Auburn is more walkable, cohesive and accessible.
5. **Economic Vitality.** Support existing businesses and attract new businesses that grow Auburn's economy. Leverage Auburn's location, transportation system, and natural setting to create a more vibrant and prosperous city. Provide a supportive environment for local artisans, entrepreneurs, and family-owned businesses as well as larger employers.
6. **Housing Choice.** Maintain and enhance Auburn's neighborhoods. Create additional housing choices to meet the needs of existing and future Auburn residents, including younger families, our workforce, and those with special housing needs.
7. **Environmental Stewardship and Sustainability.** Protect Auburn's environment and natural resources, including our air, water, soil, plants, and wildlife. Reduce greenhouse gas emissions through greener buildings and businesses, cleaner transportation, less dependence on fossil fuels, water and energy conservation, and reduction in solid waste.

8. **Resilience and Public Safety**. Become a more resilient city that is prepared for natural disasters. Proactively mitigate climate-related hazards such as wildfires, flooding, drought, and extreme heat events. Maintain excellent police and fire services, low crime, and safe public spaces.
9. **Aviation Hub.** Modernize Auburn Municipal Airport so it remains an essential part of Auburn's economy. Ensure that land use decisions on the airport perimeter reduce aviation hazards, protect airport operations, and sustain the airport business district.
10. **Community Health.** Keep Auburn a healthy, active community. Community design and planning should support walking, cycling, physical activity, healthy living, and easy access to open space and outdoor recreation.
11. **Responsible Fiscal Management.** Continue responsible fiscal management and a commitment to efficient, effective service delivery. Land use decisions should improve fiscal stability and create additional sources of tax revenue.
12. **Interagency Relationships.** Collaborate with Placer County to address issues that cross City boundaries, including planning and development in North Auburn and Bowman. Work with the school districts, Auburn Recreation District, and other special districts and agencies to provide high-quality schools, parks, infrastructure, and public services

6.1.2 Potentially Significant Impacts of the Project

As discussed throughout Chapter 4, *Environmental Impact Analysis*, and summarized in Table ES-1 in Section 5, *Other CEQA Required Discissions* and the Executive Summary, the proposed project would result in significant and unavoidable impacts to cultural resources, construction noise, and transportation. The project would require mitigation to reduce potentially significant impacts related to air quality, biological resources, geology and soils, and tribal cultural resources (TCR) to less than significant levels. Impacts related to cultural resources, construction noise, and transportation would remain significant and unavoidable even with implementation of feasible mitigation measures.

6.1.3 Alternatives Considered and Rejected

An alternative that was considered but ultimately rejected was a variation of the proposed project which included the General Plan Update and form-based code, but did not include the updated cannabis ordinance. This alternative was rejected, and therefore not included in the analysis, because it would not reduce any significant and unavoidable impacts or otherwise substantially reduce any other impacts.

6.1.4 Project Alternatives

Included in this analysis are three alternatives, including the CEQA-required "no project" alternative, that involve changes to the project that may reduce the project-related environmental impacts as identified in this EIR. Alternatives have been developed to provide a reasonable range of options to consider that would help decision makers and the public understand the general implications of revising or eliminating certain components of the proposed project.

CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6(a) states that "an EIR need not consider every conceivable alternative to a project. Rather it must consider a reasonable range of potentially feasible alternatives that will foster informed decision making and public participation." The selected alternatives are limited to those that would avoid or substantially lessen any of the significant effects of the proposed project, that the lead agency determines to be potentially feasible, and that

could feasibly attain most of the basic objectives of the proposed project. This section presents the selected alternatives and includes an evaluation for the environmental topics addressed in Sections 4.1 to 4.19, although at a more general level, to compare the merits of the alternatives to the proposed project (consistent with *CEQA Guidelines* Section 15126.6[d]).

This analysis presents three alternatives, including the required "no project" alternative and one alternative that involves changes to the proposed project that may reduce the project-related environmental impacts identified in this EIR. The following alternatives are evaluated in this EIR:

- Alternative 1: No Project/Continuation of Existing General Plan
- Alternative 2: Designating 11500 Blocker Drive as Industrial
- Alternative 3: Employment-Focused Alternative

Table 6-1 provides a summary comparison of the development characteristics of the proposed project and each of the alternatives considered. Detailed descriptions of the alternatives are included in the impact analysis for each alternative. The potential environmental impacts of each alternative are analyzed in Sections 6.2 through 6.4.

Table 6-1 Comparison of Alternatives[1]

	Proposed Project	Alternative 1: No Project/ Continuation of Existing General Plan	Alternative 2: Designating 11500 Blocker Drive as Industrial	Alternative 3: Employment-Focused Alternative
Additional Residences (units)	2,570	1,280	2,470	2,350
Additional Residents (persons)	5,500	2,740	5,220	5,030
Additional Non-Residential Uses (square feet)	1,891,783	1,762,375	2,000,783	2,156,558
Hotel (rooms)	250	250	250	250
Updated Policies in General Plan	Yes	No	Yes	Yes

Note: The estimates for additional dwelling units, residences, and non-residential square footage are a conservative estimate based on the realistic buildout scenario. Overall, growth will be dependent on multiple factors, including local economic conditions, market demand, and other financing considerations. These numbers are not meant to be a predictor of future growth.

6.2 Alternative 1: No Project/Continuation of Existing General Plan

6.2.1 Description

The *CEQA Guidelines* (Section 15126.6[e][2]) require that the alternatives discussion include an analysis of a No Project Alternative. Pursuant to CEQA, the No Project Alternative refers to the analysis of existing conditions and what would reasonably be expected to occur in the foreseeable future if the project were not approved, based on current plans and consistent with available infrastructure and community services. The No Project Alternative typically will proceed along one

[1] Alternative 1 (No Project) was developed as follows: (A) "baseline" data is from the existing South Placer Regional Transportation Authority (SPRTA) model, with adjustments to the 2019 traffic analysis zone (TAZ) totals to approximate 2024 conditions; and (B) the 21-year growth increment in the SPRTA model was applied to generate 2045 estimates. These estimates were then manually adjusted for TAZs in the City of Auburn to reflect current General Plan land use designations. This included Baltimore Ravine, recently approved development projects, and other properties that are designated for growth under the City's current General Plan but were not counted in the SPRTA model and are not included in SACOG forecasts.

of two lines: (1) when a project is a revision of an existing regulatory plan or policy, the No Project Alternative will be continuation of the existing plan or policy; or (2) if a project is a development project on identifiable property, the No Project Alternative is the circumstance under which the project does not proceed. In this case, the No Project Alternative represents the continuation of existing zoning and General Plan designations within the City, and the continuation of goals, policies, and programs from the existing General Plan.

The No Project Alternative would not implement the proposed General Plan policy framework for growth within the Planning Area. It should be noted that the proposed policy framework, in addition to limited and strategic land use designation changes (focused in the Downtown area), would encourage growth to occur within the Planning Area and intend to make such growth easier to achieve. Substantial growth could occur under the existing General Plan; however, it has not to date. Under the No Project Alternative, areas planned for growth, such as the Baltimore Ravine Specific Plan Area, could be developed under the existing plans and policies; however, planned growth under the No Project Alternative would be more difficult to achieve than under the proposed project, due to the lack of an updated policy framework.

The No Project Alternative would include the development of up to 1,280 residential units and 1,762,375 square feet of non-residential space, which is less buildout than the proposed project. It would not include updated General Plan policies.

The No Project Alternative would not accomplish the primary objective of the project, which is to plan for Auburn's growth and conservation over a 20-year horizon. In addition, the No Project Alternative would not include the updated General Plan policies and programs or the proposed form based code.

6.2.2 Impact Analysis

a. Aesthetics

Development under the No Project Alternative would continue the land use pattern that currently exists in the Planning Area. Development under the No Project Alternative would be required to comply with the same city of Auburn Municipal Code regulations and Placer County code regulations as the proposed project. This would ensure light and glare impacts would be similar to the proposed project. However, proposed goals and policies included as part of the proposed project that are intended to preserve scenic resources would not be part of this alternative. Therefore, aesthetic impacts, including impacts to scenic vistas, scenic highways, and public views, under the No Project Alternative would be less than significant but slightly greater compared to the proposed project.

b. Agriculture and Forestry Resources

The No Project Alternative would maintain existing land use and zoning designations, which would maintain the current amount of farmland, forest land, and timberland within the Planning Area. The No Project Alternative would not affect land under a Williamson Act Contract as it would not change any land use designations. There would be no impact to agriculture and forestry resources, and impacts would be slightly reduced compared to the proposed project.

c. Air Quality

Like the proposed project, the No Project Alternative would not preclude planned transit or bike pathways and would not disrupt regional planning efforts to meet federal and State air quality standards. Development under the No Project Alternative would be consistent with applicable 2017 Clean Air Plan control measures, although not to the extent as the proposed project, as the No Project Alternative would not include proposed General Plan proposed policies designed to reduce criteria pollutant emissions. Impacts regarding conflict with applicable air quality plans would be less than significant, albeit greater than the proposed project.

Buildout under the existing General Plan land use and zoning designations would involve a slightly reduced amount of construction emissions as compared to the proposed project due to the decreased buildout associated with the No Project Alternative. Like the proposed project, mitigation may be applied to individual projects that require CEQA review to comply with the Placer County Air Pollution Control District's current recommended basic control measures. The No Project Alternative would have similar overall construction-related impacts to air quality.

As stated in Section 4.3, *Air Quality,* the greatest source of criteria pollutants in the Planning Area is from transportation sources, specifically mobile emissions from roadway traffic. These emissions would be slightly reduced compared to the proposed project due to the decreased buildout associated with the No Project Alternative. The No Project Alternative would result in slightly reduced vehicle miles traveled (VMT) and VMT per capita as compared to the proposed project. However, the No Project Alternative would not include proposed General Plan policies which would reduce VMT impacts. Overall, operational air quality impacts for the No Project Alternative would also be less than significant, similar to the proposed project.

The No Project Alternative would result in slightly reduced levels of toxic air contaminants (TAC) near sensitive receptors when compared to the proposed project due to the decreased buildout associated with the No Project Alternative. However, as described in Section 4.3, *Air Quality*, the proposed project includes proposed General Plan goals and policies designed to promote clean air quality, protect public health and safety, and mitigate adverse air quality impacts. The No Project Alternative would not implement these policies. Similar to the proposed project, mitigation may be applied to individual projects that require CEQA review to prepare a construction health risk assessment. Although the amount of construction would be reduced due to reduced buildout, this alternative would not implement the proposed general plan policies that would reduce impacts. Therefore, the No Project Alternative would have similar overall construction-related TAC impacts to air quality as compared to the proposed project.

Like the proposed project, construction activities under the No Project Alternative would generate odors, which would be temporary and limited to the construction period. Generation of odors would be slightly reduced compared to the project due to the decreased development associated with the No Project Alternative. The No Project Alternative would not implement Mitigation Measure AQ-4, which would reduce operational odors from individual development projects. The No Project Alternative would have similar impacts related to odors as the proposed project, although slightly increased because it would not implement Mitigation Measure AQ-4 for odor control.

Overall, the No Project Alternative would have similar impacts to air quality as the proposed project but would not have the benefits associated with implementing the updated policies in the proposed General Plan. As such, for the purposes of this analysis, the impacts from the No Project Alternative would be greater to the impacts from the proposed project.

d. Biological Resources

The No Project Alternative would result in less buildout than the proposed project but would not include the proposed General Plan goals and policies. As described in Section 4.4, *Biological Resources*, there is potential habitat suitable for special-status species within the Planning Area. Similar to the proposed project, development under the No Project Alternative may still potentially impact special-status species or their habitat, including riparian habitat and wildlife corridors because it would still involve development throughout the Planning Area which could occur on previously undisturbed land or land that contains habitat or wildlife corridors. Furthermore, in contrast to the proposed project, the No Project Alternative would not include updated General Plan goals and policies, such as proposed policies OSC-5.1, OSC-5.2, and OSC-5.3, OSC 5.4, and OSC 5.5, which are designed to preserve and protect biological resources in the Planning Area. Similarly, the No Project Alternative would not implement Mitigation Measure BIO-1, which would ensure adequate protection of sensitive bat species prior to construction of individual development projects. Overall, the No Project Alternative would have similar impacts compared to the proposed project; however, the No Project Alternative would not have the benefits associated with implementing the updated policies in the proposed General Plan. As such, for the purposes of this analysis, biological resource impacts from the No Project Alternative would be greater than the impacts from the proposed project.

e. Cultural Resources

The No Project Alternative would result in less buildout than the proposed project but would not include the proposed General Plan goals and policies. Similar to the proposed project, the No Project Alternative would have the potential to impact historic and archaeological resources in the Planning Area through development of individual projects. However, the No Project Alternative would not include updated General Plan goals and policies designed to preserve and protect historic and archaeological resources in the Planning Area, such as proposed Goal CD-4 and its corresponding policies, which are intended to reduce impacts to cultural resources. Similarly, the No Project Alternative would not implement Mitigation Measure CUL-1 and Mitigation Measure CUL-2, which would require the documentation and protection of historical and archaeological resources. Overall, the No Project Alternative would have similar impacts compared to the proposed project; however, the No Project Alternative would not have the benefits associated with implementing the updated policies in the proposed General Plan and required mitigation measures associated with the proposed project. As such, for the purposes of this analysis, the impacts from the No Project Alternative would be greater than the impacts from the proposed project and would remain significant and unavoidable.

f. Energy

The No Project Alternative would result in less buildout across the Planning Area, which would reduce the amount of energy consumed during project construction and operation. Development under this alternative would be required to comply with the existing General Plan and municipal code policies which do encourage efficient use of energy, although not to the extent of the new proposed General Plan policies. Overall, impacts would be less than significant, similar to the proposed project.

g. Geology and Soils

The No Project Alternative would result in less buildout than the proposed project but would not include the proposed General Plan goals and policies. As discussed in Section 4.7, *Geology and Soils*, portions of the Planning Area are underlain by geologic units with high paleontological sensitivity. Additionally, there is potential for landslides, erosion, and slope instability in portions of the Planning Area. Under the No Project Alternative, development would still occur within the Planning Area and ground disturbance associated with this development could result in potentially significant impacts to paleontological resources, especially since Mitigation Measure GEO-6 would not be implemented under the No Project Alternative. The No Project Alternative would also have greater impacts related to seismic shaking, landslides, and erosion because this alternative would not implement proposed General Plan policies, including policies LU-1.5 and LU-1.6, and Action OSC-2B, which would reduce these impacts. Overall, the No Project Alternative would result in increased impacts to geology and soils, including paleontological resources, as compared to the proposed project.

h. Greenhouse Gas Emissions

The No Project Alternative would result in less buildout than the proposed project but would not include the proposed General Plan goals and policies. Temporary construction-related greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from grading and construction of new housing and non-residential development, as well as long-term impacts resulting from building operation (such as energy use, maintenance, and traffic) would be slightly reduced compared to the proposed project due to the smaller amount of development that could occur. However, the No Project Alternative would not include proposed General Plan goals and policies intended to reduce GHG emissions.

The existing Auburn General Plan and Placer County General Plan do not outline how the Planning Area would meet State-mandated goals to reduce emissions to 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030 and carbon neutrality by 2045. Therefore, the No Project Alternative would not be consistent with the California Executive Order B-55-18 goal of carbon neutrality by 2045 and would not include a qualified GHG reduction plan to guide progress towards State goals. Consequently, impacts related to generation of GHG emissions and consistency with State GHG reduction plans under the No Project Alternative would be potentially significant. As such, the No Project Alternative would result in greater impacts on GHG emissions compared to the proposed project.

i. Hazards and Hazardous Materials

The No Project Alternative would result in less buildout than the proposed project but would not include the proposed General Plan goals and policies. There are several hazardous waste sites identified within the Planning Area, and development under the No Project Alternative could be sited on or near these locations or involve the use or transport of hazardous materials. Development under the No Project Alternative would be subject to existing General Plan policies and municipal code requirements, which would reduce the likelihood of hazardous materials release or contamination within the Planning Area. Additionally, development would be subject to regulations set by the United States department of Transportation (USDOT) and the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA), which regulate the transportation of hazardous materials. While development under the No Project Alternative would be subject to existing national, state, regional, and local regulations, they would not be subject to proposed General Plan policies which further reduce impacts related to hazards and hazardous materials. As

such, impacts would be slightly greater than the proposed project, but overall would remain less than significant.

j. Hydrology and Water Quality

The No Project Alternative would result in less buildout than the proposed project but would not include the proposed General Plan goals and policies. Development under the No Project alternative would be required to comply with existing national, state, regional, and local regulations such as the Clean Water Act National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Permits, Auburn municipal Code (AMC), Placer County Code, and existing City of Auburn or Placer County General Plans. These regulations would reduce overall hydrology and water quality impacts; however, development under this alternative would not be subject to proposed General Plan policies. As such, impacts would be slightly greater than the proposed project, but overall would remain less than significant.

k. Land Use and Planning

Under the No Project Alternative, there would be no changes to land use designations, zoning, or policies in the General Plan. The No Project Alternative would not alter connectivity with adjacent areas or divide established communities. Like the proposed project, future development under existing zoning would be required to comply with regulatory goals and policies, including the Placer County Regional Transportation Plan and Placer County General Plan, as discussed in Impact LU-2 in Section 4.11, *Land Use and Planning*. Overall, impacts regarding land use and planning would be less than significant, similar to the proposed project.

l. Mineral Resources

Under the No Project Alternative, there would be no changes to land use designations, zoning, or policies in the General Plan. Therefore, there would be no change to the existing mineral extraction overlay zone within the Planning Area. Similar to the proposed project, impacts would be less than significant.

m. Noise

Buildout under the No Project Alternative would result in a reduced amount of development as compared to the proposed project. Therefore, lower levels of construction and associated construction noise and vibration would occur from the No Project Alternative, compared to the proposed project. Like the proposed project, construction noise under the No Project Alternative could temporarily increase noise levels, potentially affecting nearby noise-sensitive land uses and leading to a significant impact. Impacts associated with the No Project Alternative would be greater than the proposed project because it would not implement proposed general plan policies that would reduce construction noise impacts.

Noise generated by on-site stationary equipment for new development would be subject to the City's noise limits, like the proposed project. Adherence to Auburn Municipal Code noise limits for heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) units and other stationary noise sources associated with future development would ensure that operational stationary noise under the No Project Alternative is less than significant. However, the No Project Alternative would not include the proposed General Plan policies designed to reduce operational noise impacts such as policies N-1.2, N-3.2, N-3.5, and N-3.6 which would reduce construction and operational noise from new development within the Planning Area. Stationary source noise impacts due to the No Project

Alternative would be greater than the proposed project because the proposed General Plan goals and policies would not be implemented.

Implementation of the No Project Alternative would result in additional buildout compared to existing conditions, which would generate new vehicle trips that could incrementally increase the exposure of land uses along roadways to traffic noise. The No Project Alternative would result in an increase in VMT compared to existing conditions; however, VMT would still be lower than that of the proposed project due to the decreased buildout of the No Project Alternative.

Development facilitated by the No Project Alternative could temporarily generate groundborne vibration during construction, potentially affecting nearby land uses. Impacts associated with the No Project Alternative would be greater than the proposed project because it would not implement proposed general plan policies that would reduce vibration impacts. Operation of future development under the No Project Alternative would not involve substantial vibration or groundborne noise. Thus, impacts involving groundborne vibration and noise would be similar to the proposed project.

Development facilitated by the No Project Alternative could be sited near the Auburn Municipal Airport. Similar to the proposed project, development facilitated under this alternative would not result in significant airport noise exposure. Impacts would be less than significant, like the proposed project.

Overall, the No Project Alternative would result in lesser noise impacts due to less development being included in this alternative; however, this alternative would not have the benefits associated with implementing the updated policies in the proposed General Plan. As such, for the purposes of this analysis, the impacts from the No Project Alternative would be similar to the proposed project.

n. Population and Housing

Assuming a maximum buildout scenario, implementation of the No Project Alternative would accommodate a reduced number of housing units and residents as compared to the proposed project. The No Project Alternative would result in less population growth and would not induce substantial unplanned population growth. The displacement of people or housing units under the No Project Alternative would be minimal, as development in Auburn would continue in accordance with the existing General Plan. Overall, the No Project Alternative would have lesser impacts as compared to the proposed project with respect to population and housing.

o. Public Services and Recreation

Development allowed by existing land use and zoning regulations would occur under the No Project Alternative, which would result in an increase to emergency calls in the area, as well as an increase in additional demand for schools, parks, libraries, recreational facilities, or other public services. Assuming a maximum buildout scenario, the No Project Alternative would result in less population growth and thus less demand for public services and recreation facilities than the proposed project. Therefore, impacts to public services and recreation would be lesser than the proposed project.

p. Transportation

The No Project Alternative would result in development that follows the existing land use and zoning regulations. Goals and policies within the existing General Plan would apply under this alternative.

The existing General Plan includes goals and policies related to complete streets, adequate emergency access, and safety design; therefore, the No Project Alternative would have a less than significant impact regarding conflict with circulation programs, plans, ordinances, or policies. The No Project Alternative would also have a less than significant impact regarding substantially increased transportation hazards and inadequate emergency access. As such, the No Project Alternative would have similar impacts related to conflicts with circulation programs, plans, ordinances, or policies compared to the proposed project.

In addition, the No Project Alternative would result in less buildout as compared to the proposed project. Therefore, the No Project Alternative would have a lower total VMT and VMT per capita than the proposed project. Specifically, the No Project Alternative would have a 2045 total VMT of 3,235,114 miles and a 2045 VMT per capita of 58.33, which is slightly lower than the proposed project's 2045 total VMT of 3,278,814 miles and 2045 VMT per capita of 59.56. The No Project Alternative has a greater reduction in VMT per capita from existing conditions than the proposed project; however, the significant and unavoidable VMT impact would be lessened but not avoided. Overall, VMT impacts would be lesser than the proposed project, and would remain significant and unavoidable.

q. Tribal Cultural Resources

As discussed in Section 4.17, *Tribal Cultural Resources*, impacts on tribal cultural resources (TCR) are highly dependent on the individual project site conditions and the characteristics of the proposed activity, including level of ground disturbance. Under the No Project Alternative, existing land use designations and zoning would continue to define the type of development that occurs throughout the Planning Area. Development facilitated under the No Project Alternative may involve excavation, which could potentially impact previously unidentified TCRs. The No Project Alternative would not include updated General Plan policies designed to preserve and protect TCRs such as policies AC-3.1, AC-3.2, AC-3.3, and actions AC-3A, AC-3B, and AC-3C. Additionally, the No Project Alternative would not implement Mitigation Measures TCR-1a and TCR-1b, which would require appropriate tribal consultation and protection of TCRs. Overall, because these policies and mitigation measures would not be included in the No Project Alternative, impacts, the severity of the impact on TCRs for the No Project Alternative would be greater than the proposed project.

r. Utilities and Service Systems

Development facilitated under the No Project Alternative would create additional demand for services from water, wastewater, electricity, natural gas, telecommunication, and stormwater drainage facilities; however, this demand would be less than that of the proposed project due to the reduced amount of development associated with the No Project Alternative.

As discussed in Section 4.18, *Utilities and Service Systems*, the City's Public Works Department would have adequate water supply to service the City's anticipated growth under the proposed project. Considering that development under the No Project Alternative would be less than the proposed project, the No Project Alternative would also be accommodated by the City's existing water system. Although development under the No Project Alternative would increase water demand, the City would continue to have sufficient water supply during normal, dry, and multiple dry years, and impacts to water supply would be less than significant.

Development facilitated under the No Project Alternative would increase demand for wastewater treatment services. Considering the No Project Alternative would add a reduced number of residents as the proposed project, wastewater generation would be less than that of the proposed

project. However, overall wastewater impacts would be greater because the No Project Alternative would not include implementation of proposed General Plan policies which would help reduce impacts to the wastewater system.

Implementation of the No Project Alternative would generate solid waste from construction and operation of development (including typical residential, commercial, and office solid waste). As discussed in Section 4.18, *Utilities and Service Systems*, the Auburn Placer Transfer Station would have adequate capacity to serve the population growth under the proposed project. Considering the No Project Alternative would result in a reduced number of residents compared to the proposed project, the Auburn Placer Transfer Station would also accommodate population growth under this alternative. Like the proposed project, impacts involving solid waste under the No Project Alternative would be less than significant, similar to the proposed project.

Overall, impacts to utilities and service systems would be slightly reduced as compared to the proposed project, due to the decreased demand for services associated with the No Project alternative.

s. Wildfire

Under the No Project Alternative, development could still occur within or near fire risks in an LRA and SRA which are concentrated along the western, southern, and eastern edges of the Planning Area (see Figure 4.19-1 in Section 4.19, *Wildfire*). In addition, under the No Project Alternative, development could still occur near fire risks in an SRA, which are located east of the city limits. While overall buildout would be reduced, impacts associated with the No Project Alternative would be slightly greater than the proposed project because this alternative would not implement proposed general plan policies that are intended to reduce wildfire risk.

6.3 Alternative 2: Designating 11500 Blocker Drive as Industrial

6.3.1 Description

11500 Blocker Drive is a 14.3-acre vacant parcel located about 700 feet south of the train station along the west side of the Union Pacific Railroad tracks within the Planning Area. The existing General Plan designation of this site is Urban Low Density Residential, with an open space buffer along a riparian area on the western edge of the parcel. The City rezoned this property in the 1990s to allow industrial uses and/or residential uses; however, the General Plan was not amended concurrently. Given the proximity of the site to the railroad and train station/transit center, this alterative would designate this site as “Industrial,” allowing industrial, light industrial, research and development, and heavy commercial uses, with floor area ratios (FARs) up to 2.0. Industrial, research and development, and heavy commercial uses often require larger structures, parking areas, and loading facilities, which can result in a greater overall development footprint and increased site disturbance relative to residential uses. This would differ from the proposed project, which would designate this site as “Medium-Density Residential.” Under this alternative the impacts of industrial, light industrial, research and development, and heavy commercial uses are analyzed.

Other than the land use designation change to 11500 Blocker Drive, the General Plan would be implemented as proposed, similar to the proposed project. All proposed goals and policies would be implemented under this alternative.

Alternative 2 would include the development of up to approximately 2,470 residential units and 2,000,783 square feet of non-residential space across the Planning Area, in the same locations as the proposed project. Compared to the proposed project, this alternative would result in slightly fewer residential units but increase non-residential development due to the designation of 11500 Blocker Drive for industrial and employment-generating uses rather than residential. All updated General Plan policies and programs would be implemented under this alternative.

Alternative 2 would generally meet the primary objectives of the project by planning for Auburn's growth and conservation over a 20-year horizon and implementing updated policies and programs. However, because this alternative would shift land use at 11500 Blocker Drive from medium-density residential to industrial uses, it would less strongly achieve objectives related to housing choice and neighborhood-oriented development, while more strongly supporting objectives related to economic vitality, employment growth, and the City's role as an employment hub.

6.3.2 Impact Analysis

a. Aesthetics

Development under Alternative 2 would have similar aesthetics impacts as the proposed project since all parcels except for the parcel at 11500 Blocker Drive would have the same land use designations as under the proposed project. Under this alternative, 11500 Blocker Drive could be developed with industrial uses rather than residential uses as prescribed by the proposed project. As discussed in Section 4.1, *Aesthetics*, most scenic resources and scenic vistas within the Planning Area are concentrated along the eastern side of the Planning Area. There are historic buildings such as the Historic Auburn Courthouse and the Old Auburn Cemetery near 11500 Blocker Drive; however, there are no public views of these historic resources that would be blocked by future development at 11500 Blocker Drive. While the ridgeline at 11500 Blocker Drive is visible from some of these locations, due to intervening landscaping and topography, views of the historic sites themselves are largely obscured already from areas near 11500 Blocker Drive. Additionally, proposed General Plan policies LU-8.5, CD-2.6, OSC-1.1, and Action CD-1C would be applicable which would reduce impacts to scenic vistas.

Additionally, 11500 Blocker Drive is surrounded by primarily one-story residential and commercial development. Industrial uses at 11500 Blocker Drive could include larger and more intensive development than the small-scale surrounding uses, including multi-story buildings with FARs of up to 2.0. As a result, development at this site would likely appear more substantial in massing and scale compared to nearby existing structures. Additionally, similar to development under the proposed project, development at 11500 Blocker Drive would be subject to proposed General Plan policies and actions intended to preserve scenic resources, as well as regulations in the AMC, which set development guidelines to ensure development on this site is consistent with neighboring development and the allowable uses on the site and set lighting regulations to reduce light spillover. Additionally, implementation of General Plan policies LU-2.3, LU-2.6, CD-2.7, T-3.8, and OSC-5.8 would similarly reduce light spillover. Overall, impacts would be slightly increased compared to the proposed project due to the larger footprint of potential industrial development at 11500 Blocker Drive; however, impacts would remain less than significant, similar to the proposed project.

b. Agriculture and Forestry Resources

Development of Alternative 2 would have similar impacts related to agriculture and forestry resources as the proposed project, since all parcels except for 11500 Blocker Drive would have the

same land use designations as under the proposed project. 11500 Blocker Drive is not designated as farmland or timberland nor is it under a Williamson Act contract, and could be developed under both the proposed project and Alternative 2. Therefore, similar to the proposed project Alternative 2 would have less than significant agriculture and forestry impacts.

c. Air Quality

Development of Alternative 2 would have similar air quality impacts as the proposed project since all parcels except for the parcel at 11500 Blocker Drive would have the same land use designations as under the proposed project. Development of Alternative 2 would overall not disrupt regional planning efforts to meet federal and State air quality standards. This alternative would be consistent with applicable 2017 Clean Air Plan control measures, and impacts regarding conflict with applicable air quality plans would be similar to the proposed project.

As stated in Section 4.3, *Air Quality,* the greatest source of criteria pollutants in the Planning Area is from transportation sources, specifically mobile emissions from roadway traffic. Similar to the proposed project, Alternative 2 would implement proposed General Plan policies and actions that would reduce vehicle trips and VMT. As discussed under Section 6.3(p), *Transportation*, Alternative 2 would generate slightly less VMT than the proposed project. Therefore, Alternative 2 would result in slightly lower mobile emissions as compared to the proposed project. Criteria pollutant emission would be less than significant and slightly lower than the proposed project.

Buildout of industrial uses instead of residential uses at 11500 Blocker Drive could result in increased construction emissions and grading activities as compared to the proposed project. Like the proposed project, proposed General Plan policies and actions would be applicable to development at the 11500 Blocker Drive site to ensure that TAC emissions are reduced during both construction and operation. Additionally, Placer County Air Pollution Control District Recommended Construction Mitigation Measures would be implemented to reduce the generation of fugitive dust during construction. Overall, Alternative 2 would have less than significant impacts from TAC emissions, but emissions would be slightly increased compared to the proposed project.

Like the proposed project, construction and operational activities under Alternative 2 could generate odors. Similar to the proposed project, Mitigation Measure AQ-4 would be required to reduce operational odors. Similar to the proposed project, Alternative 2 would have a less than significant impact regarding creation of objectionable odors.

Alternative 2 would have slightly increased construction impacts due to the larger building footprint and increased construction activities required as part of an industrial development, and slightly decreased operation impacts due to the lower VMT generated by Alternative 2. Overall, impacts would be less than significant, similar to the proposed project.

d. Biological Resources

As described in Section 4.4, *Biological Resources*, there is potential habitat suitable for special-status species within the Planning Area. Similar to the proposed project, Alternative 2 could impact special-status species or their habitat, including riparian habitat that is to the west of 11500 Blocker Drive. Proposed General Plan policies intended to protect riparian habitat and special status species such as policies OSC-1.1, OSC-1.2, and OSC-5.2 would limit lighting near riparian habitat, encourage the preservation of open spaces, and encourage the protection of riparian corridors within the Planning Area to preserve habitat. As with the proposed project, these policies would be applicable to development on this site under Alternative 2. Similarly, Alternative 2 would also implement

Mitigation Measure BIO-1, which would ensure adequate protection of sensitive bat species prior to construction of individual development projects. Additionally, proposed policies OSC-3.1, OSC-3.2, and OSC-3.3 which promote the maintenance of natural waterways and set require setbacks to preserve riparian habitat would continue to be applicable to development at 11500 Blocker Drive. With implementation of these policies, impacts to biological resources would be less than significant, similar to the proposed project.

e. Cultural Resources

Under Alternative 2, impacts to cultural resources would generally be similar to those identified for the proposed project. Implementation of the General Plan would result in ground-disturbing activities throughout the Planning Area that could affect known and unknown archaeological resources, as well as historic resources where present. With respect to the 11500 Blocker Drive site specifically, development would not have the potential to impact historic resources since the site is currently undeveloped. However, impacts related to historic resources within the Planning Area cannot be fully mitigated and impacts would be significant and unavoidable, similar to the proposed project.

Similar to the proposed project, development throughout the Planning Area could impact unknown archaeological resources on site through groundbreaking activities. Development under this alternative would be subject to proposed General Plan policies and actions such as policies AC-3.1, AC-3.2, and AC-3.3 and actions AC-3A, AC-3B, and AC-3C. These would require cultural resource monitoring, TCR inventory and documentation, and tribal consultation for future development within the Planning Area, including development at 11500 Blocker Drive. Similarly, Alternative 2 would also implement Mitigation Measure CUL-1 and Mitigation Measure CUL-2, which would require the documentation and protection of historical and archaeological resources. Impacts related to archaeological resources and human remains would be less than significant, similar to the proposed project.

f. Energy

Development of Alternative 2 would have similar energy impacts compared to the proposed project since all parcels except for the parcel at 11500 Blocker Drive would have the same land use designations as under the proposed project. Development of industrial uses at the 11500 Blocker Drive site would be required to comply with California Code of Regulations (CCR) regulations which prohibit diesel-fueled commercial motor vehicles and off-road diesel vehicles from idling for more than five minutes, which would minimize unnecessary fuel consumption. Additionally, construction activities would be subject to U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) Construction Equipment Fuel Efficiency Standard (discussed in detail in Section 4.6.2[a], *Federal Regulations*), which would minimize inefficient fuel consumption. Additionally, proposed General Plan policies OSC-6.1, OSC-6.2, and OSC-6.5 would be applicable to reduce operational energy use. Overall, Alternative 2 would result in similar impacts as the proposed project and impacts would be less than significant.

g. Geology and Soils

Development of Alternative 2 would have similar geology and soils impacts as the proposed project, since all parcels except for the parcel at 11500 Blocker Drive would have the same land use designations as under the proposed project. Implementation of the updated General Plan would

allow for development throughout the Planning Area, resulting in potential exposure of people and structures to geologic hazards such as seismic ground shaking, liquefaction, and erosion.

As with the proposed project, compliance with existing regulatory requirements, including the California Building Code (CBC) and AMC as well as proposed General Plan policies LU-1.5, OSC-2A, and OSC-2B would reduce impacts to be less than significant.

With respect to the 11500 Blocker Drive site specifically, this parcel is not located within a fault rupture zone and is not particularly susceptible to landslides or expansive soils. Development at this site could be exposed to strong ground shaking and potential liquefaction, and construction-related activities could result in erosion; however, as with other areas in the Planning Area, adherence to applicable codes, standards, and General Plan policies would reduce these impacts to less than significant levels.

Development under Alternative 2 could result in the disturbance of unknown paleontological resources during ground-disturbing activities. Implementation of Mitigation Measure GEO-6 (Paleontological Resources Monitoring and Mitigation), along with compliance with applicable regulations and General Plan policies, would reduce impacts. Because the potential exists to uncover significant subsurface resources that cannot be fully anticipated or avoided, mitigation would be prescribed and impacts would be less than significant with mitigation, similar to the proposed project.

h. Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Development of Alternative 2 would have similar GHG emission impacts compared to the proposed project, since all parcels except for the parcel at 11500 Blocker Drive would have the same land use designations as under the proposed project. Construction throughout the Planning Area and construction of industrial uses at 11500 Blocker Drive would also be required to comply with the provisions of Title 13, CCR Sections 2449 and 2485, and California Air Resources Board regulations, which prohibit diesel-fueled commercial and off-road vehicles from idling for more than five minutes, minimizing unnecessary GHG emissions. Construction equipment would be subject to the USEPA Construction Equipment Fuel Efficiency Standard, which would minimize inefficient fuel consumption and thus GHG emissions. Industrial development may result in increased energy consumption and associated stationary-source emissions relative to residential uses; however, this alternative would also result in a marginal reduction in VMT compared to the proposed project, which could reduce mobile-source emissions. Similar to the proposed project, development under Alternative 2 would comply with proposed General Plan policies intended to reduce GHG emissions. Specifically, policy OSC-6.2 would require energy conservation and Policy OSC-6.5 would encourage green building practices which would reduce GHG emissions. Development under Alternative 2, including development of the 11500 Blocker Drive site, would also be required to comply with existing state regulations like the CalGreen code and CBC. Overall, GHG emissions associated with buildout of Alternative 2 would be similar to the proposed project.

i. Hazards and Hazardous Materials

Development of Alternative 2 would have similar hazards and hazardous materials impacts compared to the proposed project since all parcels except for the parcel at 11500 Blocker Drive would have the same land use designations as under the proposed project. 11500 Blocker Drive is not identified as a hazardous site, is not within 0.25 mile of a school, and is not within an airport land use plan.

Industrial uses at 11500 Blocker Drive would be subject to existing federal, state, regional, and local regulations such as those included in the CCR and Code of Federal Regulations. Additionally, similar to the proposed project, proposed General Plan policies CSF-5.3 and LU-2.4, and action LU-2A would continue to be implemented under Alternative 2, and would reduce impacts associated with hazardous materials during both construction and operation. Overall, impacts would be less than significant, similar to the proposed project.

j. Hydrology and Water Quality

Development of Alternative 2 would have similar hydrology and water quality impacts as the proposed project since all parcels except for the parcel at 11500 Blocker Drive would have the same land use designations as under the proposed project. Implementation of the updated General Plan would allow for development throughout the Planning Area, resulting in potential short-term construction-related impacts (e.g., erosion, sedimentation, and pollutant discharge) and long-term operational impacts associated with increased impervious surfaces and stormwater runoff. Similar to the proposed project, development throughout the Planning Area and development of industrial uses at 11500 Blocker Drive would be subject to regulations such as the NPDES Construction Stormwater General Permit General and AMC ordinances which regulate erosion and pollutant release during construction. Additionally, construction would be subject to proposed General Plan policy CSF-4.7, which regulates stormwater management. Additionally, development on site would be subject to Proposed General Plan policies CD-3.5 and OSC-3.8 would also be implemented under Alternative 2, which would promote groundwater recharge by encouraging sustainable design methods and the retention of stormwater on site. Operation of the project would be subject to the MS4 stormwater permit and AMC ordinances, similar to the proposed project.

With respect to the 11500 Blocker Drive site specifically, development under Alternative 2 may result in increased grading activities and the introduction of additional impervious surfaces as compared to the proposed project, due to the potential for industrial instead of residential uses. However, this site is not within a designated flood zone or tsunami hazard zone. Additionally, the site is not underlain by a groundwater basin designated by the California Department of Water Resources and is therefore not formally managed under a designated groundwater sustainability agency or by a specific groundwater sustainability plan. As with other areas in the Planning Area, adherence to applicable stormwater regulations, erosion control requirements, and General Plan policies would ensure that impacts remain less than significant.

Overall, impacts related to hydrology and water quality would be less than significant, although slightly increased compared to the proposed project due to the potentially larger footprint of an industrial development.

k. Land Use and Planning

Development of Alternative 2 would have similar land use and planning impacts as the proposed project, since all parcels except for the parcel at 11500 Blocker Drive would have the same land use designations as under the proposed project.

Development of Alternative 2 would not physically divide an established community or substantially alter connectivity within the Planning Area. Like the proposed project, future development under existing zoning would be required to comply with regulatory goals and policies, including the proposed General Plan goals and policies and Auburn Municipal Code. With respect to the 11500 Blocker Drive site specifically, development of industrial uses would occur on a currently undeveloped parcel and would not introduce new barriers between existing neighborhoods or

disrupt established circulation patterns. Overall, impacts regarding land use and planning would be less than significant, similar to the proposed project.

l. Mineral Resources

Development of Alternative 2 would have similar mineral resource impacts as the proposed project, since all parcels except for the parcel at 11500 Blocker Drive would have the same land use designations as under the proposed project.

No known mineral resources areas occur within the Planning Area, including the 11500 Blocker Drive site, nor is 11500 Blocker Drive within the mineral extraction overlay zone within the Planning Area. As a result, implementation of Alternative 2 would not result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region or the residents of the state. Therefore, impacts would be similar to the proposed project and less than significant.

m. Noise

Development of Alternative 2 would have similar noise impacts as the proposed project, since all parcels except for the parcel at 11500 Blocker Drive would have the same land use designations as under the proposed project.

Development of industrial uses at the 11500 Blocker Drive site would result in increased construction noise and vibration compared to the proposed project, due to the potentially larger footprint of an industrial development. This could affect nearby sensitive receptors such as residences adjacent to 11500 Blocker Drive. In compliance with the AMC, construction noise would be limited to the hours of 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. on Mondays through Fridays, between 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. on Saturdays, and between 10:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. on Sundays and observed holidays. Additionally, the proposed General Plan includes policies N-3.2 and Policy N-3.5, and Action N-3F, which would reduce construction noise. However, development of Alternative 2, including development at 11500 Blocker Drive, could exceed construction noise limits. Similar to the proposed project, mitigation measures NOI-1a and NOI-1b would be required to further reduce construction noise; however, this impact would remain significant and unavoidable, similar to the proposed project.

Operational noise would be reduced through implementation of proposed General Plan policies N-1.2, N-2.5, and N-3.6. While operational noise associated with Alternative 2 would be slightly higher than the proposed project at 11500 Blocker Drive, due to the nature of industrial uses as compared to residential uses, these policies would continue to reduce impacts to a less than significant level.

Development of industrial uses at 11500 Blocker Drive could result in construction and operational vibration. Implementation of proposed General Plan policies N-1.7 and N-1C and Mitigation Measure NOI-2 would reduce these impacts. Similar to the proposed project, vibration impacts associated with Alternative 2 would be less than significant with mitigation.

Overall, noise and vibration impacts would be slightly increased as compared to the proposed project. The significant and unavoidable construction noise impact under the proposed project would not be avoided under Alternative 2, and this alternative would not worsen the significant and unavoidable impact.

n. Population and Housing

Implementation of Alternative 2 would accommodate approximately 100 fewer housing units and approximately 280 fewer residents than the proposed project. Alternative 2 would result in slightly reduced population growth and would not induce substantial unplanned population growth. The displacement of people or housing units under Alternative 2 would be minimal, as development in the Planning Area would continue in accordance with the existing General Plan. Overall Alternative 2 would have similar impacts compared to the proposed project with respect to population and housing.

o. Public Services and Recreation

Similar to the proposed project, implementation of Alternative 2 would facilitate an increase in residential and non-residential development throughout the Planning Area, which would result in an increase to emergency calls in the area, as well as an increase in additional demand for schools, parks, libraries, recreational facilities, or other public services. Alternative 2 would result in approximately 280 fewer residents in the Planning Area than the proposed project and would therefore have a slightly lower demand for public services and recreation facilities. Thus, impacts to public services and recreation would be less than significant and similar to the proposed project.

p. Transportation

Similar to the proposed project, implementation of Alternative 2 would facilitate an increase in residential and non-residential development throughout the Planning Area. Alternative 2 would incorporate the same proposed General Plan policies as the proposed project and therefore would have a less than significant impact regarding conflicts with circulation programs, plans, ordinances, or policies.

Because Alternative 2 would alter the type of development at 11500 Blocker Drive as compared to the proposed project, it would result in decreased total VMT and decreased VMT per capita. Specifically, Alternative 2 would result in a 2045 total VMT of 3,274,649 miles and a 2045 VMT per capita of 59.51, compared to the proposed project's 2045 total VMT of 3,278,814 miles and 2045 VMT per capita of 59.56. Alternative 2 has a greater reduction in VMT per capita from existing conditions than the proposed project; however, the significant and unavoidable VMT impact would be lessened but not avoided. Overall, VMT impacts would be less than the proposed project, and would remain significant and unavoidable.

q. Tribal Cultural Resources

Development of Alternative 2 would have similar impacts to TCRs as the proposed project, since all parcels except for the parcel at 11500 Blocker Drive would have the same land use designations as under the proposed project.

As discussed in Section 4.17, *Tribal Cultural Resources*, impacts on TCRs are highly dependent on the individual project site conditions and the characteristics of the proposed activity, including level of ground disturbance. Similar to the proposed project, development under Alternative 2 would involve ground-disturbing activities throughout the Planning Area associated with future development, which could potentially impact previously unidentified TCRs depending on site-specific conditions. In particular, development of an industrial use at 11500 Blocker Drive would require ground disturbance which could potentially impact previously unidentified TCRs. Development on this site would be subject to proposed General Plan policies AC-3.1, AC-3.2, AC-3.3,

and actions AC-3A, AC-3B, and AC-3C, as well as Mitigation Measures TCR-1a and TCR-1b, which would reduce impacts to TCRs on individual development sites. Similar to the proposed project, impacts would be less than significant with mitigation.

r. Utilities and Service Systems

Development facilitated under Alternative 2 would create similar demand for electricity, natural gas, telecommunication, and stormwater drainage facilities as compared to the proposed project because this alternative would result in similar total development throughout the Planning Area. Because Alternative 2 would accommodate fewer residential units and residents, Alternative 2 would have slightly lower demand for water and wastewater services than the proposed project, as industrial uses are generally less water-intensive on a per-acre basis than residential uses (City of Los Angeles 2006). Development of an industrial use at 11500 Blocker Drive would be subject to the same existing regulations and proposed General Plan policies as the proposed project to reduce impacts to utilities. As discussed in Section 4.18, *Utilities and Service Systems*, the Auburn Placer Transfer Station would have adequate capacity to serve the population growth under the proposed project. Considering Alternative 2 would result in slightly less population growth than the proposed project, the Auburn Placer Transfer Station would also accommodate population growth under this alternative. Impacts to utilities and service systems would be less than significant, similar to the proposed project.

s. Wildfire

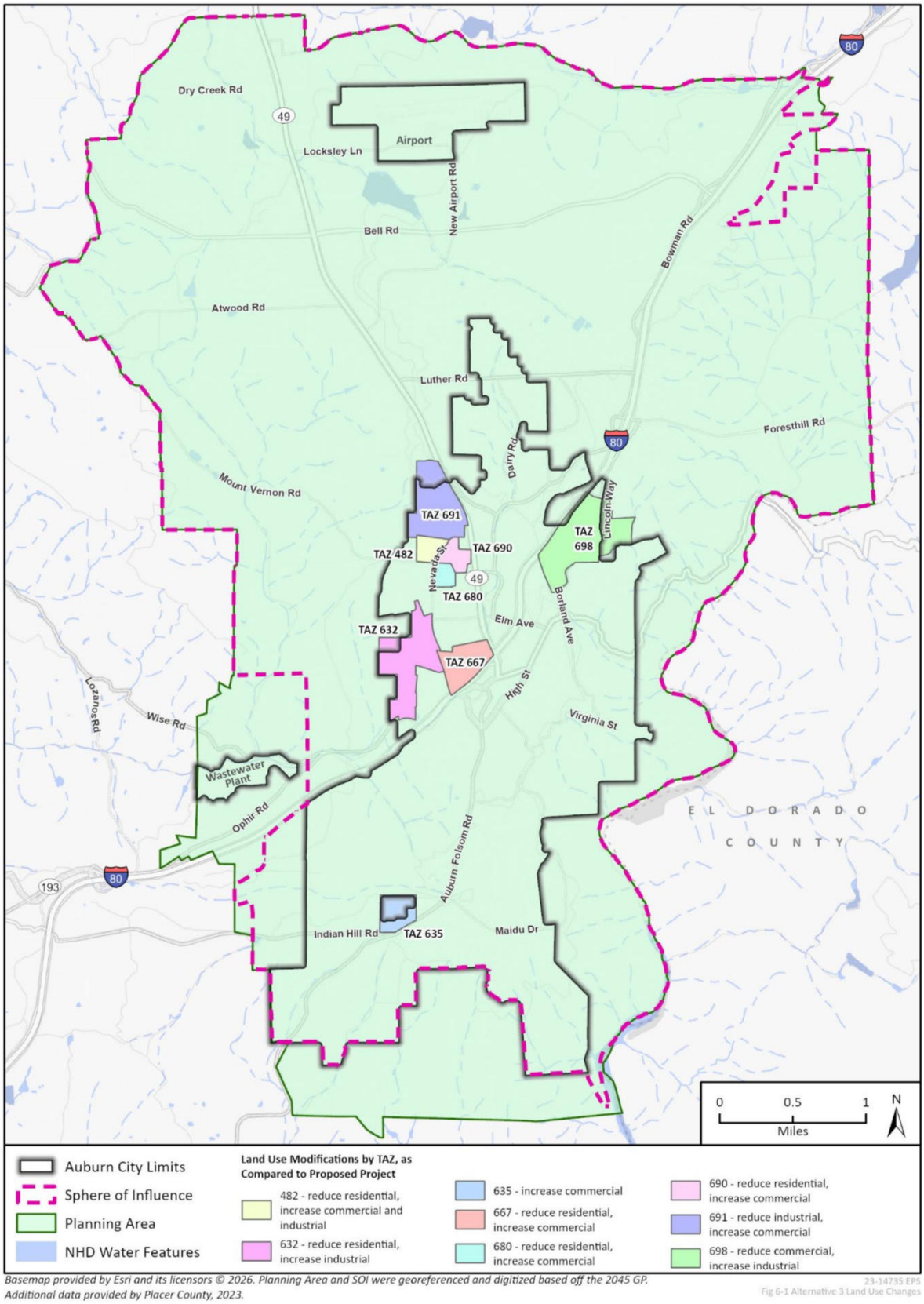
Development of Alternative 2 would have similar wildfire impacts as the proposed project since all parcels except for the parcel at 11500 Blocker Drive would have the same land use designations as under the proposed project. As with the proposed project, future development would be required to comply with applicable regulations and standards intended to reduce wildfire risk, including the California Fire Code (CFC), applicable building and fire protection regulations (including Chapter 7A of the CBC), and relevant State and local wildfire safety requirements, as well as proposed General Plan Policy LU-1.5, Action LU-8D, Policy CD-3.4, Policy OSC-4.5, Policy OSC-5.5, Action OSC-5D, Action CSF-3D, Action CSF-3E, and Policy CSF-4.4. With implementation of existing and proposed regulations, impacts would be less than significant, similar to the proposed project.

6.4 Alternative 3: Employment-Focused Alternative

6.4.1 Description

This alternative would be similar to the proposed project in that it would include the proposed General Plan goals and policies, but it would zone more area within the city as commercial/office space to promote employment focused development specifically within city limits. Figure 6-1 shows the locations in the Planning Area where proposed land uses differ from the proposed project, including areas of increased or decreased residential, commercial, and industrial land uses. For example, under this alternative the area north of Palm Avenue and east of Nevada Street (part of transportation analysis zone [TAZ] 691) would be zoned entirely as commercial/office space and would not include any residential zoning. Overall, this alternative assumes 270 new jobs more than the proposed project on sites within Auburn city limits and 214 fewer new housing units within Auburn City limits, relative to the proposed project. Rather than expanding or altering the development area, this alternative changes some land use designations from residential uses to non-residential uses.

Figure 6-1 Alternative 3 Land Use Scenario (Compared to Proposed Project)



Basemap provided by Esri and its licensors © 2026. Planning Area and SOI were georeferenced and digitized based off the 2045 GP. Additional data provided by Placer County, 2023.

23-14735 EPS
Fig 6-1 Alternative 3 Land Use Changes

Alternative 3 would generally meet the primary objectives of the project by planning for the City's growth and conservation over a 20-year horizon and implementing updated policies and programs. However, because this alternative would shift land use designations from residential to commercial and office uses in certain areas, it would less strongly achieve objectives related to housing choice and neighborhood-oriented development, while more strongly supporting objectives related to economic vitality, job creation, and strengthening Auburn's role as a regional employment center.

6.4.2 Impact Analysis

a. Aesthetics

As discussed in Section 4.1, *Aesthetics*, most scenic resources and scenic vistas within the Planning Area are concentrated along the eastern side of the Planning Area. Development under Alternative 3 could impact these resources if development is built which obstructs public views of these areas. Development under Alternative 3 would be subject to the same existing regulations and proposed General Plan policies as the proposed project such as policies LU-8.5, Policy CD-2.6, Policy OSC-1.1, and Action CD-1C, which would reduce impacts to scenic vistas. Development under Alternative 3 could also impact scenic roadways such as I-80 and SR-49; however, implementation of proposed General Plan Action CD-1B would reduce this impact.

Similar to the proposed project Alternative 3 would facilitate development on previously undeveloped parcels and would change the land use designation for some parcels within the Planning Area. However, unlike the proposed project, Alternative 3 would shift development patterns by increasing non-residential (commercial and office) uses and reducing residential development in certain areas. This could result in development that is larger in scale and massing in specific locations compared to residential uses, potentially increasing the visibility of built structures from certain viewpoints. Despite this shift, proposed General Plan policies would ensure public views and scenic character is preserved throughout the Planning Area. Additionally, development standards included in the Auburn Municipal Code (AMC) would be applicable to development under Alternative 3 to ensure it is consistent with its surroundings and preserves the existing character of the area.

Alternative 3 would introduce new source of light and glare within the Planning Area, similar to the proposed project. Proposed General Plan policies LU-2.3, LU-2.6, CD-2.7, T-3.8, and OSC-5.8 would reduce light spillover and overall light and glare impacts.

Overall, aesthetic impacts would be less than significant, similar to the proposed project.

b. Agriculture and Forestry Resources

Alternative 3 would not introduce new areas of development within the Planning Area but would instead rebalance land uses by shifting some parcels from residential to non-residential designations within areas already planned for development under the proposed project. As a result, Alternative 3 would not include land use designation changes that would necessitate the removal of agricultural operations from parcels nor would it substantially reduce the amount of farmland within the Planning Area as compared to the proposed project. Proposed General Plan policies LU-8.1, Policy LU-8.2, LU-8.3, LU-8.4, and OSC-2.3 would continue to be implemented under Alternative 2, and would preserve and strengthen Auburn's existing agricultural economy and encourage larger parcel patterns to maintain community separators in the Planning Area, including those lands that qualify as LAFCo prime agricultural land due to continued grazing or rangeland use. Overall, impacts would be less than significant, similar to the proposed project.

c. Air Quality

Alternative 3 would have slightly less residential development but slightly more non-residential development, which would ultimately balance out to result in similar air quality impacts compared to the proposed project. While reduced residential development may lower some area sources and construction-related emissions, the increase in employment-generating uses would result in increased vehicle trips and higher total VMT overall. As a result, Alternative 3 could generate slightly higher mobile source emissions compared to the proposed project; however, the overall increase would not be substantial. Future development under Alternative 3 would be subject to the same existing regulations as the proposed project and recommended Construction Mitigation Measures would be implemented to reduce the generation of fugitive dust during construction. Similar to the proposed project, Mitigation Measure AQ-4 would be required to reduce operational odors. Overall, air quality impacts would be less than significant with mitigation, and slightly greater than the proposed project.

d. Biological Resources

As described in Section 4.4, *Biological Resources*, there is potential habitat suitable for special-status species within the Planning Area. Like the proposed project, development under Alternative 3 could result in impacts to this habitat. However, development under Alternative 3 would be subject to the same existing regulations and proposed General Plan policies as the proposed project. Specifically, proposed General Plan policies OSC-5.1, OSC-5.2, OSC-5.3, OSC 5.4, and OSC 5.5 would be applicable to reduce impacts to biological resources. Similarly, Alternative 3 would also implement Mitigation Measure BIO-1, which would ensure adequate protection of sensitive bat species prior to construction of individual development projects. With implementation of these policies, impacts would be less than significant, similar to the proposed project.

e. Cultural Resources

Under Alternative 3, impacts to cultural resources would generally be similar to those identified for the proposed project. However, this alternative would involve a rebalancing of land uses by shifting some areas from residential to commercial and office uses, which could result in a slightly different distribution and intensity of ground-disturbing activities within the Planning Area. Development under Alternative 3 would have the potential to impact historic and cultural resources, similar to the proposed project. Development would be subject to proposed General Plan policies and actions such as policies AC-3.1, AC-3.2, and AC-3.3 and Actions AC-3A, AC-3B, and AC-3C. These would require cultural resource monitoring, TCR inventory and documentation and tribal consultation for future development within the Planning Area under Alternative 3. Similarly, Alternative 3 would also implement Mitigation Measure CUL-1 and Mitigation Measure CUL-2, which would require the documentation and protection of historical and archaeological resources. However, impacts related to the discovery of unknown cultural resources cannot be fully mitigated and impacts would be significant and unavoidable, similar to the proposed project.

f. Energy

Under Alternative 3, impacts related to energy would generally be similar to those identified for the proposed project. This alternative would involve a rebalancing of land uses by increasing commercial and office development and reducing future residential development, which could influence the types and patterns of energy use within the Planning Area. Overall energy demand would be comparable to the proposed project; however, the efficiency of energy use would be

governed by applicable regulations and policies rather than total consumption alone. Development under Alternative 3 would be subject to the same regulations as the proposed project such as CCR regulations which prohibit diesel-fueled commercial motor vehicles and off-road diesel vehicles from idling for more than five minutes. This would minimize unnecessary fuel consumption and reduce impacts associated with wasteful energy use. Additionally, construction activities would be subject to USEPA Construction Equipment Fuel Efficiency Standard (discussed in detail in Section 4.6.2[a], Federal), which would minimize inefficient fuel consumption. During operation, development would be required to comply with CalGreen and applicable provisions of Title 24 of the California Code of Regulations, which establish mandatory measures for energy efficiency in new construction. In addition, proposed General Plan policies OSC-6.1, OSC-6.2, and OSC-6.5 would encourage energy conservation, energy-efficient building design, and reduced reliance on nonrenewable energy sources. Overall, Alternative 3 would result in similar impacts as the proposed project and impacts would be less than significant.

g. Geology and Soils

As discussed in Section 4.7, *Geology and Soils*, portions of the city are underlain by geologic units with high paleontological sensitivity. Additionally, there is potential for landslides, erosion, and sloe instability in portions of the Planning Area. Under Alternative 3, ground disturbance could result in impacts related to geology and soils and paleontological resources. Development would be subject to the same existing regulations and proposed General Plan policies as the proposed project including ordinances in the Auburn Municipal Code, Placer County Code, CBC, and proposed General Plan policies LU-1.5, LU-1.6, OSC-2A, and OSC-2B. Additionally, Mitigation Measure GEO-6 would be applicable to development under Alternative 3. Overall, impacts to geology and soils would be similar to the proposed project.

h. Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Alternative 3 would result in similar buildout to the proposed project. Temporary construction-related GHG emissions from grading and construction of new housing and non-residential development, as well as long-term impacts resulting from building operation (such as energy use, maintenance, and traffic) would be similar to the proposed project due to the similar level of buildout. However, Alternative 3 would include a greater proportion of employment-generating uses, which would result in increased total VMT and VMT per capita as compared to the proposed project, and could increase mobile-source GHG emissions.

Additionally, development under Alternative 3 would comply with proposed General Plan policies such as OSC-6.2 intended to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Development would also be required to comply with CalGreen code and CBC regulations. Construction would be subject to CCR and California Air Resources Board regulations as well, similar to the proposed project. Compliance with these regulations would reduce impacts to be less than significant, similar to the proposed project.

i. Hazards and Hazardous Materials

Development of Alternative 3 would have similar hazards impacts compared to the proposed project since overall buildout would be similar. Development under Alternative 3 would be subject to the same existing and proposed regulations as the proposed project such as those included in the CCR and Code of Federal Regulations. Additionally, similar to the proposed project, proposed General Plan Policy CSF-5.3, Policy LU-2.4, and Action LU-2A would be applicable which would

reduce impacts associated with hazardous materials during both project construction and operation. Overall, impacts would be less than significant, similar to the proposed project.

j. Hydrology and Water Quality

Development of Alternative 3 would have similar impacts to hydrology and water quality compared to the proposed project due to the overall similar buildout. Development would include construction activities which would require grading and the introduction of new impervious surfaces within the Planning Area. This could result in impacts to groundwater recharge and water quality. To reduce these impacts, development under Alternative 3 would be subject to regulations such as the NPDES Construction Stormwater General Permit and AMC ordinances that regulate erosion and pollutant release during construction. Additionally, construction would be subject to proposed General Plan Policy CSF-4.7, which regulates stormwater management, and design of future developments would be subject to policies CD-3.5 and OSC-3.8, which promote groundwater recharge by encouraging sustainable design methods and the retention of stormwater on site for new development. Operation of development under Alternative 3 would be subject to the MS4 stormwater permit and AMC ordinances, similar to the proposed project.

Development under Alternative 3 would be subject to the same existing and proposed regulations to reduce flood impacts as well, such as AMC regulations and proposed General Plan Policy LU-1.5, which directs development away from flood plains.

Overall, impacts related to hydrology and water quality would be less than significant, similar to the proposed project.

k. Land Use and Planning

Alternative 3 would result in similar overall buildout compared to the proposed project. Development under this alternative would not alter connectivity with adjacent areas or divide established communities. Like the proposed project, future development would be required to comply with regulatory goals and policies, including the SACOG MTP/SCS and Placer County General Plan. Overall, impacts regarding land use and planning would be less than significant, similar to the proposed project.

l. Mineral Resources

Development of Alternative 3 would have similar mineral impacts compared to the proposed project due to the similar proposed development area. This alternative would not remove or alter existing mineral extraction overlay zone within the Planning Area. Therefore, similar to the proposed project, impacts would be less than significant.

m. Noise

Buildout of Alternative 3 would result in slightly less residential development and slightly more non-residential development as compared to the proposed project. Overall, similar levels of construction noise and vibration would occur which could affect nearby sensitive receptors. In compliance with the AMC, construction noise would be limited to the hours of 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. on Mondays through Fridays, between 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. on Saturdays, and between 10:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. on Sundays and observed holidays. Additionally, proposed General Plan Policy N-3.2, Policy N-3.5, and Action N-3F would help reduce construction noise at development sites. However, future development projects could exceed construction noise limits. Similar to the proposed project,

mitigation measures NOI-1a and NOI-1b would be required to further reduce construction noise; however, this impact would remain significant and unavoidable, similar to the proposed project.

Noise generated by on-site stationary equipment for new development would be subject to the City's noise limits, like the proposed project. Adherence to AMC noise limits for heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) units and other stationary noise sources associated with future development would ensure that operational stationary noise under Alternative 3 is less than significant. Additionally, proposed General Plan policies N-1.2, N-3.2, N-3.5, and N-3.6 would be implemented under Alternative 3 and would reduce construction and operational noise from new development within the Planning Area. Overall, impacts would be less than significant and similar to the proposed project.

Development under Alternative 3 would also be subject to airport-related noise associated with Auburn Municipal Airport. Similar to the proposed project, future development within areas affected by airport noise contours would be required to comply with applicable General Plan policies and land use compatibility standards intended to minimize noise exposure and ensure compatibility between sensitive land uses and airport operations.

Development facilitated under Alternative 3 could temporarily generate groundborne vibration during construction, potentially affecting nearby land uses. These impacts would be reduced through implementation of General Plan policies N-1.7 and N-1C, as well as Mitigation Measure NOI-2. With implementation of these measures, vibration impacts would be less than significant, similar to the proposed project.

n. Population and Housing

Implementation of Alternative 3 would result in a reduced population increase compared to the proposed project. Similar to the proposed project, Alternative 3 would not include substantial population growth nor would it displace existing residents. Overall, impact would be reduced compared to the proposed project and would be less than significant.

o. Public Services and Recreation

Similar to the proposed project, implementation of Alternative 3 would result in an increase in residential and non-residential development throughout the Planning Area, which would result in an increase to emergency calls in the area, as well as an increase in additional demand for schools, parks, libraries, recreational facilities, or other public services. Alternative 3 would result in less population growth than the proposed project; therefore, impacts to public services would be reduced. Overall impacts would be less than significant.

p. Transportation

Implementation of Alternative 3 would result in a similar development area compared to the proposed project. However, this alternative would shift the balance of land uses by increasing employment-generating uses and reducing residential development. Alternative 3 would incorporate the same proposed General Plan policies as the proposed project and therefore would have a less than significant impact regarding conflict with circulation programs, plans, ordinances, or policies.

Because Alternative 3 would result in a greater proportion of employment-generating uses and slightly reduced residential development, it would result in greater total VMT and greater VMT per capita than the proposed project. Specifically, Alternative 3 would result in a 2045 total VMT of

3,303,147 miles and a 2045 VMT per capita of 60.25 compared to the proposed project's 2045 total VMT of 3,278,814 and VMT per capita of 59.56. Alternative 3 has a smaller reduction in VMT per capita from existing conditions than the proposed project; therefore, the significant and unavoidable VMT impact would be worsened. Overall, VMT impacts would be greater than the proposed project and would be significant and unavoidable.

q. Tribal Cultural Resources

As discussed in Section 4.17, *Tribal Cultural Resources*, impacts on TCRs are highly dependent on the individual project site conditions and the characteristics of the proposed activity, including level of ground disturbance. Development under Alternative 3 could require excavation and ground disturbance which could potentially impact previously unidentified TCRs. Development would be subject to proposed General Plan Policy AC-3.1, Policy AC-3.2, Policy AC-3.3, Action AC-3A, Action AC-3B, and Action AC-3C, as well as Mitigation Measures TCR-1a and TCR-1b, which would reduce impacts to TCRs throughout the Planning Area. Similar to the proposed project, impacts would be less than significant with mitigation.

r. Utilities and Service Systems

Development facilitated by Alternative 3 would result in a slightly decreased residential buildout but a slightly increased non-residential buildout compared to the proposed project. Overall, these would offset each other to result in similar population growth and utility demand as the proposed project. Water and wastewater demand, which are closely tied to residential population, would be slightly reduced under Alternative 3, while electricity, natural gas, and telecommunications demand associated with employment-generating uses would be slightly increased. Overall, these differences represent a shift in the type and distribution of demand rather than a substantial change in overall utility requirements. Therefore, development under Alternative 3 would be adequately served by existing utility providers and impacts would be less than significant, similar to the proposed project.

s. Wildfire

Under Alternative 3, development could occur within or near fire risk areas in an LRA and SRA, which are concentrated along the western, southern, and eastern edges of the Planning Area. Development would be subject to the same existing regulations as the proposed project such as the CFC and CBC which include requirements to reduce fire risk during both construction and operation of new development. Additionally, development under Alternative 3 would be subject to proposed Genera Plan policies CSF-3.9 and CSF-3.11, which would further reduce wildfire impacts. Overall, Alternative 3 would result in less than significant wildfire impacts, similar to the proposed project.

6.5 Environmentally Superior Alternative

Table 6-2 indicates whether each alternative's environmental impact is greater than, less than, or similar to that of the proposed project for each of the issue areas studied. As shown Table 6-2, Alternative 1 (*No Project/Continuation of Existing General Plan*) would be the environmentally superior alternative because it would accommodate less development than the proposed project. If the No Project Alternative is the environmentally superior alternative, CEQA requires that an environmentally superior alternative among the remaining alternatives be identified (*CEQA Guidelines* Section 15126.6[e]). Based on this consideration, Alternative 3 would be the environmentally superior alternative.

Table 6-2 Impact Comparison of Alternatives

Issue	Proposed Project Impact Classification	Alternative 1: No Project/ Continuation of Existing General Plan	Alternative 2: Designating 11500 Blocker Drive as Industrial	Alternative 3: Employment-Focused Alternative
Aesthetics	Less than Significant	>	=	=
Agriculture and Forestry Resources	Less than Significant	<	=	=
Air Quality	Less than Significant with Mitigation	>	=	>
Biological Resources	Less than Significant with Mitigation	>	=	=
Cultural Resources	Significant and Unavoidable	>	=	=
Energy	Less than Significant	=	=	=
Geology and Soils	Less than Significant with Mitigation	>	=	=
Greenhouse Gas Emissions	Less than Significant	>	=	=
Hazards and Hazardous Materials	Less than Significant	>	=	=
Hydrology and Water Quality	Less than Significant	>	>	=
Land Use and Planning	Less than Significant	=	=	=
Mineral Resources	Less than Significant	=	=	=
Noise	Significant and Unavoidable	=	>	=
Population and Housing	Less than Significant	<	=	<
Public Services and Recreation	Less than Significant	<	=	<
Transportation	Significant and Unavoidable	<	<	>
Tribal Cultural Resources	Less than Significant with Mitigation	>	=	=
Utilities and Service Systems	Less than Significant	<	=	=
Wildfire	Less than Significant	>	=	=
Total		**< 5** **= 4** **> 10**	**< 1** **= 16** **> 2**	**< 2** **= 15** **> 2**

< Superior to the proposed project (reduced level of impact)

= Similar level of impact to the proposed project

> Inferior to the proposed project (increased level of impact)

Alternative 1 (*No Project/Continuation of Existing General Plan)* assumes that the existing general Plan land use designations and policies remain in place. Overall, this would result in a reduced buildout, which would lead to reduced impacts on population and housing, public services and recreation, transportation, and utilities and service systems. However, because this alternative would not include updated General Plan policies intended to reduce environmental impacts associated with future development, it would result in increased impacts to aesthetics, air quality, biological resources, cultural resources, geology and soils, GHG emissions, hazards and hazardous materials, hydrology and water quality, TCRs, and wildfire. The significant and unavoidable impact to cultural resources would be increased under Alternative 1. The significant and unavoidable impacts to construction noise and transportation would be reduced, but not avoided, under Alternative 1. Additionally, Alternative 1 would not fulfill the Project Objectives because it would not update the General Plan to be compliant with State law or remove barriers to sustainable development, VMT reduction, infill housing, and mixed use in the City's outdated zoning code.

Alternative 2 (*Designating 11500 Blocker Drive as Industrial*) would involve the same land use designations and General Plan policy updates as the proposed project, except it would designate 11500 Blocker Drive for industrial uses instead of medium density residential uses. This would result in similar impacts in many issue areas; however, it would result in increased hydrology and water quality, and noise impacts due to the larger footprint and increased construction and operation activities associated with industrial uses. Transportation impacts would be reduced under Alternative 2. The significant and unavoidable impact to cultural resources would not be reduced or increased under Alternative 2. The significant and unavoidable impacts to construction noise and transportation would be reduced, but not avoided, under Alternative 2. Alternative 2 would generally meet most project objectives, including those related to economic vitality, employment growth, and long-term planning; however, it would not fully achieve objectives related to housing choice and neighborhood-oriented development due to the reduction in residential development potential at the site.

Alternative 3 (*Employment-Focused Alternative)* would include the proposed General Plan policies and proposed form-based code but it would zone more area within the city as commercial/office space to promote employment focused development specifically within the city of Auburn. Overall, due to the slightly reduced population increase associated with this alternative, it would have reduced impacts to population and housing and public services and recreation, and increased impacts to transportation due to higher VMT. All other impacts would be similar to the proposed project. The significant and unavoidable impacts to cultural resources and construction noise would not be reduced or increased under Alternative 2. The significant and unavoidable impact to transportation would be increased under Alternative 3. Alternative 3 would generally meet the project objectives, particularly those related to economic vitality, fiscal sustainability, and job creation; however, it would not fully achieve objectives related to housing choice and the provision of a range of residential development opportunities.

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There are no references cited in this section.

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7.2 List of Preparers

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Samantha Kehr, Senior Biologist
Byran Valladares, GIS/Data Analyst
Gina Gerlich, GIS/Data Analyst
Luis Apolinar, Publishing Specialist
Yaritza Ramirez, Publishing Specialist

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Robert Hananouchi, AICP, Senior Associate
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