

Draft

Fite Circle Digital Sign Project Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration

Prepared for:



Prepared by:

AECOM

June 2025

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Fite Circle Digital Sign Project Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration

Prepared for:

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June 2025

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Appendices

Appendices available for viewing or download on the City of Rancho Cordova’s website at:

<https://www.cityofranhocordova.org/departments/community-development/planning/planning-division-document-library>

Appendix A Sign Lighting Study

Appendix B Biological Resources CNDDDB Database Search and Focal Point Arborist Report

Acronyms and Abbreviations

AB	Assembly Bill
amsl	above mean sea level
ANSI	American National Standards Institute
APN	Assessor's Parcel Number
bgs	Below ground surface
BMPs	best management practices
BSA	biological study area
CAA	federal Clean Air Act
CAAQS	California ambient air quality standards
CAL FIRE	California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection
CalEEMod	California Emissions Estimator Model
Caltrans	California Department of Transportation
CARB	California Air Resources Board
CDFW	California Department of Fish and Wildlife
CEQA	California Environmental Quality Act
CEQA Guide	<i>Guide to Air Quality Assessment in Sacramento County</i>
CESA	California Environmental Species Act
CH ₄	methane
City	City of Rancho Cordova
CNDDDB	California Resources Agency Natural Diversity Database
CNPS	California Native Plant Society Rare Plant Inventory
CO	carbon monoxide
CO ₂	carbon dioxide
CO ₂ e	carbon dioxide-equivalents
Council	Cordova Community Council
CRPD	Cordova Recreation and Park District
CWA	Clean Water Act
dB	decibels
dBA	A-weighted decibels
DDT	dichlorodiphenyltrichloroethane
DOC	California Department of Conservation
DPM	diesel PM
Draft CAAP	Draft Climate Action and Adaptation Plan
DTSC	Department of Toxic Substances Control
EIR	environmental impact report
EPA	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
ESA	federal Environmental Species Act
EV	electric vehicle
fc	foot-candles
FCUSD	Folsom Cordova Unified School District
FEMA	Flood Emergency Management Agency
FHWA	Federal Highway Administration
FTA	Federal Transit Administration
GC	General Commercial

General Construction Permit	General Permit for Discharges of Storm Water Associated with Construction Activity Construction General Permit Order 2009-0009-DWQ
GHG	greenhouse gas
GWP	Global warming potential
HFCs	hydrofluorocarbons
Hz	hertz
in/sec	inches per second
IPaC	Information for Planning and Consultation
IS	initial study
ISA	International Society of Arboriculture
L _{dn}	Day-Night Noise Level
LED	light emitting diode
L _{eq}	Equivalent sound level
L _{max}	Maximum sound level
L _n	Statistical Descriptor
LRA	Local Responsibility Areas
MLD	Most Likely Descendent
MND	mitigated negative declaration
mph	miles per hour
MRZ	mineral resource zone
MT	metric tons
N ₂ O	nitrous oxide
NAAQS	national ambient air quality standards
NAHC	Native American Heritage Commission
NO _x	nitrogen oxides
NPDES	National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System
NWIC	Northwest Information Center
OEHHA	Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment
PFCs	perfluorocarbons
PM	particulate matter
PM ₁₀	PM equal to or less than 10 micrometers in diameter
PM _{2.5}	particulate matter less than 2.5 microns in diameter
PPV	peak particle velocity
RCNM	Roadway Construction Noise Model
RCPD	Rancho Cordova Police Department
RMS	root-mean-square
ROG	reactive organic gases
SACRT	Sacramento Regional Transit District
SB	Senate Bill
SCGA	Sacramento Central Groundwater Authority
SF ₆	sulfur hexafluoride
SFNA	Sacramento Federal Nonattainment Area
SMAQMD	Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District
SMARA	Surface Mining and Reclamation Act of 1975
SMFD	Sacramento Metropolitan Fire District
SMUD	Sacramento Municipal Utility District

SR	State Route
SSHCP	South Sacramento County Habitat Conservation Plan
State CEQA Guidelines	California Environmental Quality Act Guidelines
Superfund	Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act
SVAB	Sacramento Valley Air Basin
SWPPP	Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan
SWRCB	State Water Resources Control Board
TAC	toxic air contaminant
UDA	Urban Development Area
UL	Underwriters Laboratories
UL-E	Underwriters Laboratories Environmental
US 50	U.S. Highway 50
USACE	United States Army Corps of Engineers
USFWS	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
VdB	vibration decibel
VMT	vehicle miles traveled
µin/sec	microinch per second

1 INTRODUCTION

Section 21080(a) of the California Public Resources Code states that analysis of a project’s environmental impact is required for any “discretionary projects proposed to be carried out or approved by public agencies...” In this case, the City of Rancho Cordova (City) has determined that an initial study (IS) is required to determine whether there is substantial evidence that implementing the Fite Circle Digital Sign project would result in significant environmental impacts.

Pursuant to Section 15063 of the California Environmental Quality Act Guidelines (CEQA Guidelines) (Title 14, California Code of Regulations, Section 15000 et seq.), an initial study is a preliminary environmental analysis that is used by the lead agency as a basis for determining whether an environmental impact report (EIR), a mitigated negative declaration (MND), or a negative declaration is required for a project. The CEQA Guidelines suggest that an initial study contain, in brief form, a project description; a description of the environmental setting; an identification of environmental effects by checklist or other similar form; an explanation of environmental effects; a discussion of mitigation for significant environmental effects; an evaluation of the project’s consistency with existing, applicable land use controls; the names of persons who prepared the study; and identification of data sources used in the review of environmental impacts and the conclusions reached in the document.

Section 15070 of the CEQA Guidelines provides that a lead agency may prepare a mitigated negative declaration when (1) the initial study shows that there is no substantial evidence that the project may have a significant effect on the environment; or (2) the initial study identifies potentially significant effects, however incorporation of mitigation measures into the project would reduce all impacts to a less-than-significant level. Mitigation measures are identified to avoid, eliminate, or reduce potentially significant adverse impacts of the proposed project. Section 15064 specifies that, when an initial study identifies significant environmental impacts, the lead agency must prepare an EIR.

The analysis in this initial study concludes that the proposed project, with implementation of mitigation measures, would have no significant impacts. As such, further environmental review is not required by CEQA.

1.1 PROJECT REQUIRING ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

The Cordova Community Council (CCC) is proposing to construct a digital billboard sign with electronic display on the north side of U.S. Highway 50 (U.S. 50) near Fite Circle between Bradshaw Road and Routier Road in the City of Rancho Cordova. The sign would be located in one 2.1-acre parcel currently developed as a commercial business. The proposed digital sign would have a monopole that would support **TWO** electronic displays (one each angled east and west) to provide line-of-sight for U.S. 50 Highway motorists. The pole would be 60 feet above the ground surface. The face of each display would be 60 feet wide by 20 feet high, with a total display area of 1,200 square feet. The bottom digital display faces would be elevated approximately 40 feet above grade.

1.2 DOCUMENT ORGANIZATION

This initial study is organized into five chapters:

- ▶ **Chapter 1, “Introduction,”** provides summary information about the proposed project and describes the purpose and content of the initial study.
- ▶ **Chapter 2, “Project Description,”** provides the project location, project background, project objectives, detailed project description, and the needed permits and approvals.
- ▶ **Chapter 3, “Environmental Checklist,”** contains the completed initial study checklist. The checklist contains an assessment and discussion of impacts associated with each particular environmental issue. When the evaluation identifies potentially significant effects, as identified in the checklist, mitigation measures are provided to reduce such impacts to less-than-significant levels.
- ▶ **Chapter 4, “References,”** identifies the information sources used in preparing this initial study.
- ▶ **Chapter 5, “List of Preparers,”** identifies the individuals who contributed to this initial study.

Appendices contain technical information to supplement the mitigated negative declaration.

2 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The Cordova Community Council (CCC) is proposing to construct an advertising billboard sign with electronic display on the north side of U.S. 50 near Fite Circle between Bradshaw Road and Routier Road in the city of Rancho Cordova. This section provides the project location, project objectives, project description, and the required permits and approvals.

2.2 PROJECT LOCATION AND SETTING

The project site is located at 3127 Fite Circle in the city of Rancho Cordova. The project site is approximately 2.1 acres in total land area and encompasses Assessor's Parcel Number (APN) 077-0330-039 (Exhibit 2-1). The site is within the Folsom Boulevard Specific Plan Area. The City General Plan land use designation is Folsom Boulevard Planning Area, and the site is zoned Office Industrial Mixed Use within the Folsom Boulevard Specific Plan (OIMU-FB). The project site consists of a light industrial building with paved parking areas and drive aisles. The site is level and primarily covered with hardscape surfaces; several urban landscape trees are present adjacent to the east side of the building and along the northern property boundary. The proposed digital freeway sign would be installed within a paved parking area at the south end of the project site, as shown on Exhibit 2-2. The project site is situated within and is surrounded by an existing developed office and light industrial park to the north, east, and west. The site is bordered by U.S. 50 on the south side. South of U.S. 50, residential land uses are present.

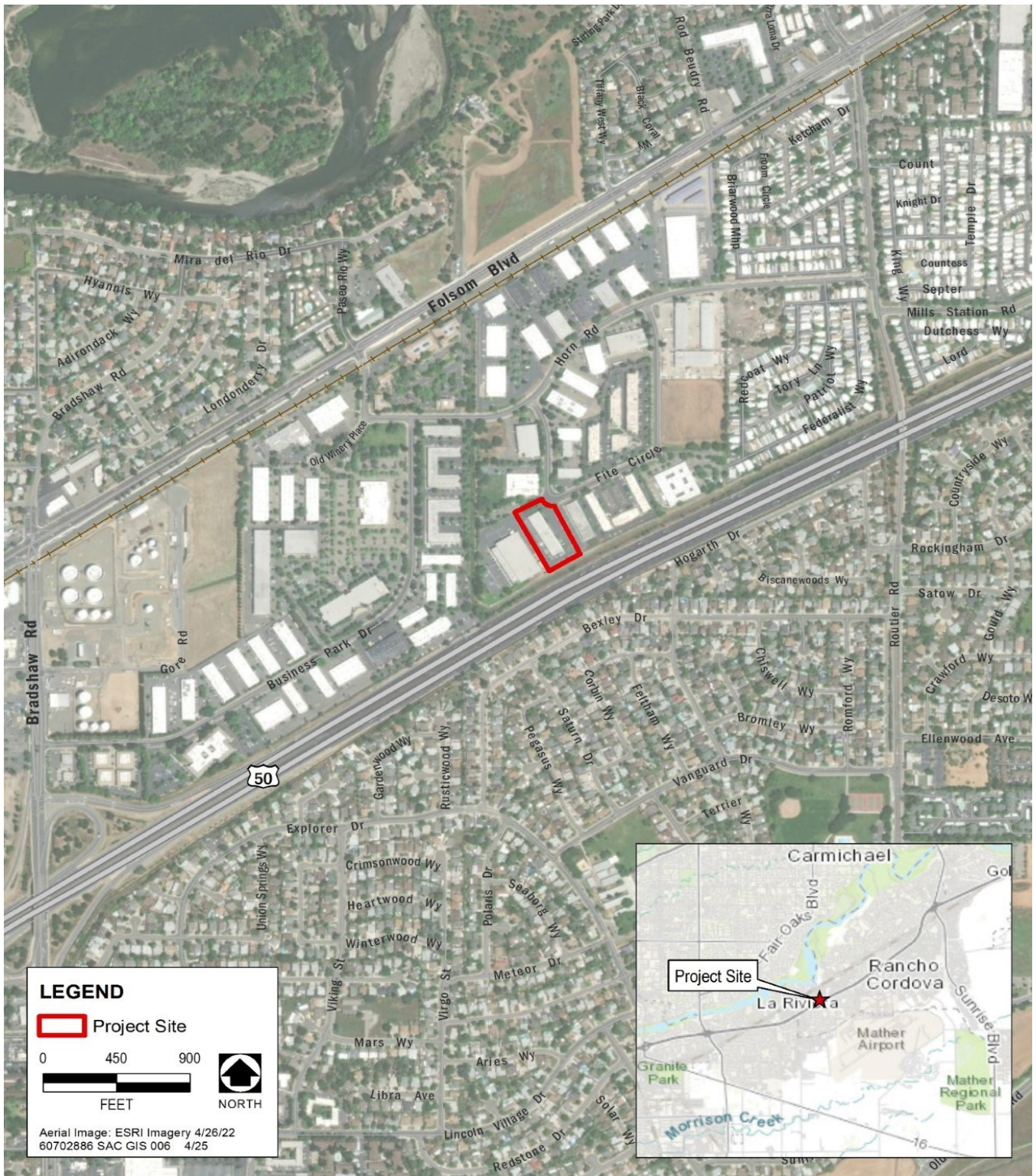
2.3 PROJECT OBJECTIVES

The CCC is seeking approval for a digital freeway billboard in order to promote City-wide events and other advertisements. The following project objectives have been identified:

- ▶ Develop a revenue source for the Cordova Community Council from the ownership of a digital billboard.
- ▶ Provide the City of Rancho Cordova and community groups with a medium for communicating to area residents.

2.4 PROJECT CHARACTERISTICS

The Council is proposing to construct a digital billboard sign at the southern end of the project site, as shown on Exhibit 2-2, approximately 110 feet north of the U.S. 50 right-of-way.



Source: AECOM 2025

Exhibit 2-1. Regional and Local Project Site Location



Source: RSC Engineering 2025, adapted by AECOM in 2025
Exhibit 2-2. Proposed Project Site Location

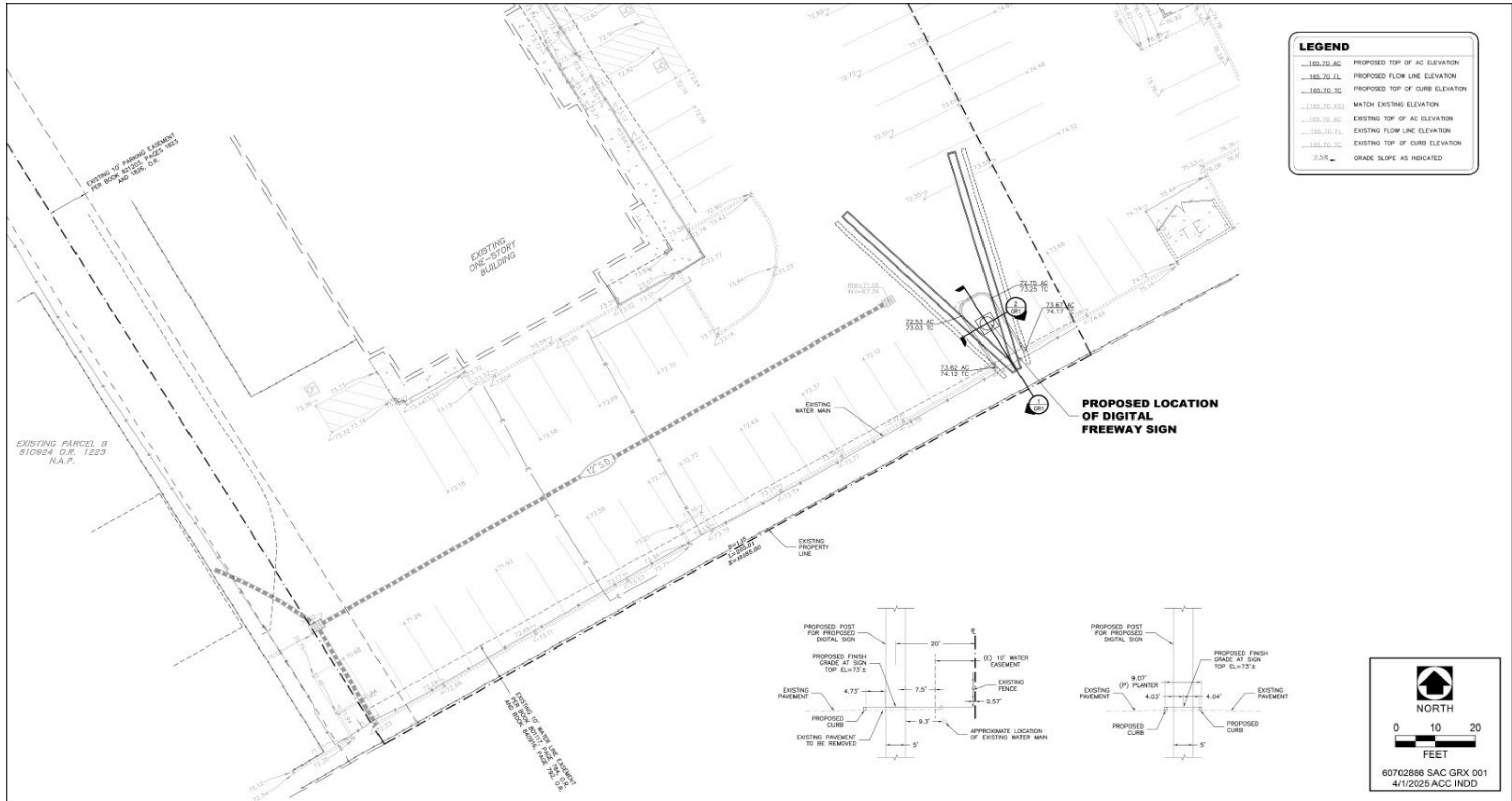
The proposed digital sign would have a monopole that would support two electronic displays (one each angled east and west) to provide line-of-sight for U.S. 50 motorists. The pole would be 60 feet above the ground surface. A 5-foot-diameter hole would be excavated to approximately 30 feet below the ground surface and backfilled with concrete to provide support for the pole. The face of each display would be 60 feet wide by 20 feet high, with a total display area of 1,200 square feet. The bottom digital display faces would be elevated approximately 40 feet above grade. The monopole structure support would have a steel ladder welded to the side of the pole with the bottom of the ladder approximately 30 feet off the ground. The sign would be accessed for any necessary maintenance either by a very tall specialty ladder or a bucket lift.

An approximately 1.5-foot-deep by 1-foot wide utility trench would be excavated from the proposed sign to the adjacent building on the project site for a new underground electrical line. The electrical line for the digital sign would be connected to the existing electrical panel at the building. Electrical service would be provided by the Sacramento Municipal Utility District (SMUD). An existing underground stormwater drainage line is located near the proposed digital sign within the existing parking lot; this stormwater drainage line would remain in its current location. No new or modified stormwater drainage, water supply, or wastewater conveyance facilities would be necessary for the proposed project. A site plan with schematic drawings of the proposed digital sign is shown on Exhibit 2-3.

Rancho Cordova Municipal Code Chapter 23.743 allows for consideration of digital freeway signs in certain specific locations within the city with a use permit and a digital freeway signs operating agreement. The project site is not within the City's existing Digital Freeway Signs Overlay area. Therefore, the proposed project also includes a Zoning Code amendment to the Digital Freeway Signs Overlay Area that would add an area between Bradshaw Road and Routier Road bounded by Highway 50 to the south, 9778 Business Park Drive to the west, Business Park Drive and Fite Circle to the North, and the edges of the industrial zoned property on Fite Circle to the east (see Exhibit 2-4). The proposed project also includes a request for some deviations from the standards of the Zoning Code requirements as part of the Operating Agreement, including the proposed display area of the digital sign, which would be 1,200 square feet per display face (i.e., 528 square feet larger than the current display size limit of 672 square feet). The increased display size has been requested by the project applicant because the sign would be installed 110 feet from the U.S. 50 right-of-way, which is a longer distance than is typical from the motorists who would be viewing the sign.

2.5 CONSTRUCTION

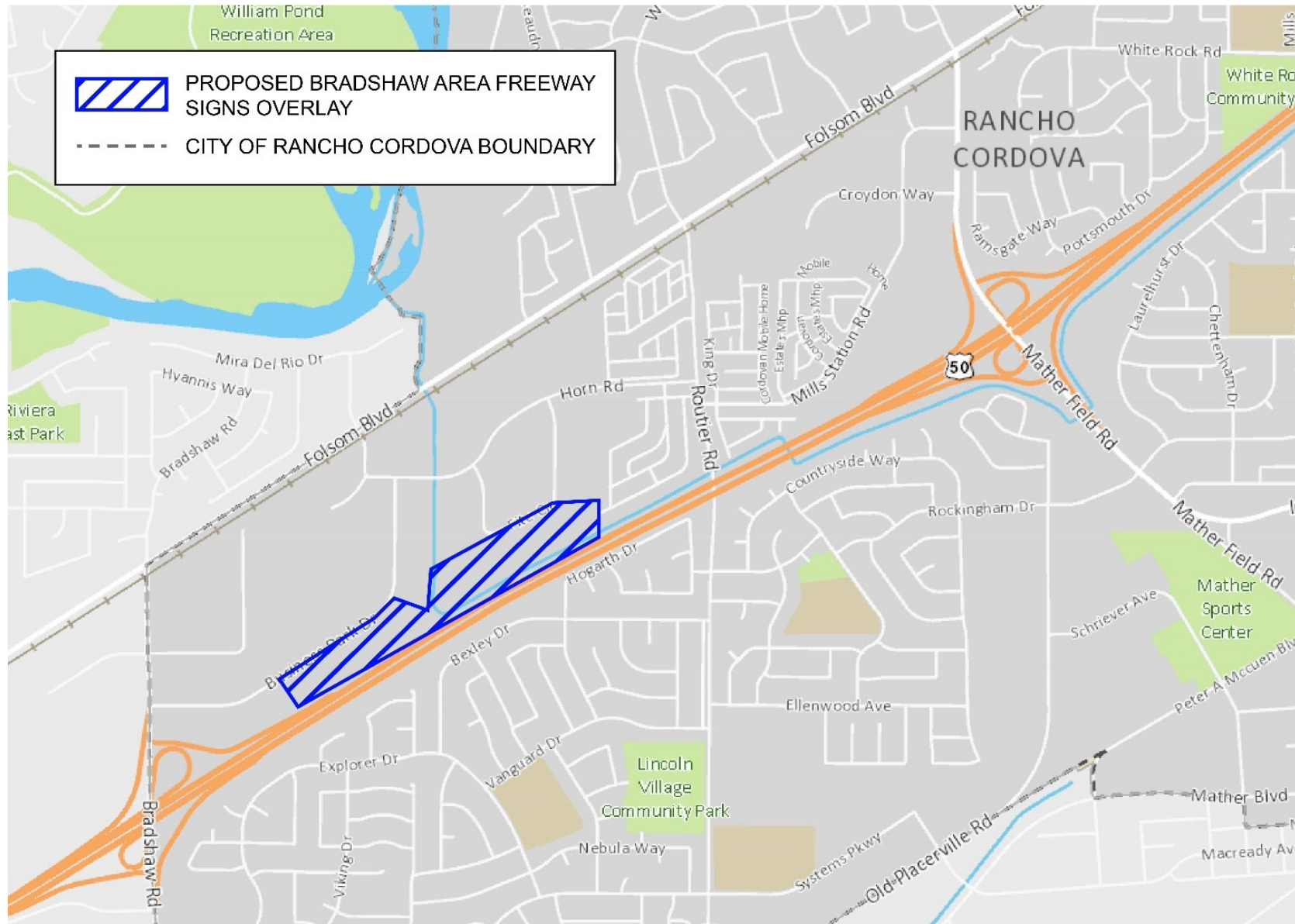
Access to the project site would be through the existing drive aisle on the south side of Fite Circle. Construction is anticipated to be completed over a two-week period, Monday through Friday, between 8 am and 5 pm. No nighttime or weekend construction work would occur. The construction staging area would be situated within the existing paved parking lot at the southern end of the project site, in the area immediately surrounding the proposed sign location (See Exhibit 2-2). Approximately 24 parking spaces within the parking lot would be temporarily inoperable during project construction. No trees would be removed from the project site.



Source: RCS Engineering 2025; adapted by AECOM in 2025

Exhibit 2-3. Proposed Digital Sign Site Plan and Schematics

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Source: Cordova Community Council 2025

Exhibit 2-4. Proposed City Digital Freeway Signs Overlay – Bradshaw

The prefabricated sign structures would be delivered by truck and assembled in the staging area. An auger would be used to bore the hole for the pole supporting the sign. A crane would be used to install the monopole in the hole and lift the sign parts in the air for attachment to the monopole. An excavator would be used to dig the trench for the underground utility line. A total of approximately 42 cubic yards of soil would be excavated from the project site, along with a small amount of asphalt pavement where the utility trench would be excavated. The excavated soil and asphalt would be transported to L & D Landfill, a disposal facility approximately 6 miles from the project site that is permitted to accept clean fill and construction debris for recycling. Excavated soil would not be stored at the project site; instead, the material would be immediately placed into trucks and transported to the receiving facility. The utility trench would be backfilled and regraded, and the surface would be repaved at the conclusion of construction activities.

2.6 OPERATION

The digital freeway sign would be operated 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year. The electronic messages would be static, with no movement. The minimum display time for each message would be 8 seconds. Brightness would be 0.3 candles above ambient light. The brightness would automatically adjust up or down based on ambient light conditions. Photo simulations of the proposed digital sign are provided in Section 3.1, “Aesthetics,” of this IS/MND.

During the first three months of operation, project start-up would require approximately 1 visit per week by one person. Regular operation of the sign would require a maximum of four visits per year by one person.

2.7 CITY DISCRETIONARY AND MINISTERIAL ACTIONS

Discretionary approvals and permits are required by the lead agency, the City of Rancho Cordova, for implementation of the proposed project and include:

- ▶ Amendment to Rancho Cordova Municipal Code Section 23.743.150 (Zoning Code, Digital Freeway Sign Overlay)
- ▶ Site Design Review
- ▶ Project submittal to the Airport Land Use Commission (i.e., the Sacramento Area Council of Governments) for a consistency determination with the Mather ALUCP
- ▶ Operating Use Agreement Amendment
- ▶ CEQA Document Certification
- ▶ Conditional Use Permit

In addition, the proposed project would require the following ministerial entitlements from the City of Rancho Cordova for construction:

- ▶ Demolition permit
- ▶ Building permit

3 ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST

PROJECT INFORMATION

1. Project Title: Fite Circle Digital Sign Project
2. Lead Agency: City of Rancho Cordova
3. Contact Person and Phone Number: Nick Sosa
Senior Planner
City of Rancho Cordova Planning Department
2729 Prospect Park Drive
Rancho Cordova, CA 95670
4. Project Location: 3127 Fite Circle in the City of Rancho Cordova
Assessor's Parcel Number: 077-0330-039
5. Project Sponsor: Cordova Community Council
6. General Plan Designation: Folsom Boulevard Planning Area
7. Zoning: Office Industrial Mixed Use within the Folsom Blvd. Specific Plan (OIMU-FB)
8. Description of Project: The digital billboard sign would be located in the paved parking lot of one 2.1-acre parcel currently developed as a commercial business. The proposed digital sign would have a monopole that would support two electronic displays (one each angled east and west) to provide line-of-sight for U.S. 50 motorists. The pole would be 60 feet above the ground surface. The face of each display would be 60 feet wide by 20 feet high, with a total display area of 1,200 square feet. The bottom digital display faces would be elevated approximately 40 feet above grade.
9. Surrounding Land Uses and Setting: The project site is situated within and is surrounded by an existing developed office and light industrial park to the north, east, and west. The site is bordered by U.S. 50 on the south side. South of U.S. 50, residential land uses are present.
- 10: Other public agencies whose approval may be required: None

ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS POTENTIALLY AFFECTED:

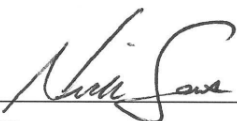
The environmental factors checked below would be potentially affected by this project, involving at least one impact that is a "Potentially Significant Impact" as indicated by the checklist on the following pages.

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aesthetics | <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture & Forestry Resources | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Air Quality |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Biological Resources | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Cultural Resources | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Geology & Soils |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Greenhouse Gas Emissions | <input type="checkbox"/> Hazards & Hazardous Materials | <input type="checkbox"/> Hydrology & Water Quality |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Land Use & Planning | <input type="checkbox"/> Mineral Resources | <input type="checkbox"/> Noise |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Population & Housing | <input type="checkbox"/> Public Services | <input type="checkbox"/> Recreation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation/Traffic | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Tribal Cultural Resources | <input type="checkbox"/> Utilities & Service Systems |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mandatory Findings of Significance | | |

DETERMINATION (To be completed by the Lead Agency)

On the basis of this initial evaluation:

- I find that the proposed project **COULD NOT** have a significant effect on the environment, and a **NEGATIVE DECLARATION** will be prepared.
- I find that although the proposed project **COULD** have a significant effect on the environment, there **WILL NOT** be a significant effect in this case because revisions in the project have been made by or agreed to by the project proponent. A **MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION** will be prepared.
- I find that the proposed project **MAY** have a significant effect on the environment, and an **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT** is required.
- I find that the proposed project **MAY** have a “potentially significant impact” or “potentially significant unless mitigated” impact on the environment, but at least one effect 1) has been adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and 2) has been addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis as described on attached sheets. An **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT** is required, but it must analyze only the effects that remain to be addressed.
- I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, because all potentially significant effects (a) have been analyzed adequately in an earlier **EIR** or **NEGATIVE DECLARATION** pursuant to applicable standards, and (b) have been avoided or mitigated pursuant to that earlier **EIR** or **NEGATIVE DECLARATION**, including revisions or mitigation measures that are imposed upon the proposed project, nothing further is required.




Signature

Nick Sosa

Name

City of Rancho Cordova

Agency



Date

Senior Planner

Title

EVALUATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

1. A brief explanation is required for all answers except “No Impact” answers that are adequately supported by the information sources a lead agency cites in the parentheses following each question. A “No Impact” answer is adequately supported if the referenced information sources show that the impact simply does not apply to projects like the one involved (e.g., the project falls outside a fault rupture zone). A “No Impact” answer should be explained where it is based on project-specific factors as well as general standards (e.g., the project will not expose sensitive receptors to pollutants, based on a project-specific screening analysis).
2. All answers must take account of the whole action involved, including off-site as well as on-site, cumulative as well as project-level, indirect as well as direct, and construction as well as operational impacts.
3. Once the lead agency has determined that a particular physical impact may occur, then the checklist answers must indicate whether the impact is potentially significant, less than significant with mitigation, or less than significant. “Potentially Significant Impact” is appropriate if there is substantial evidence that an effect may be significant. If there are one or more “Potentially Significant Impact” entries when the determination is made, an EIR is required.
4. “Negative Declaration: Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated” applies where the incorporation of mitigation measures has reduced an effect from “Potentially Significant Impact” to a “Less Than Significant Impact.” The lead agency must describe the mitigation measures, and briefly explain how they reduce the effect to a less than significant level (mitigation measures from “Earlier Analyses,” as described in (5) below, may be cross-referenced).
5. Earlier analyses may be used where, pursuant to the tiering, program EIR, or other CEQA process, an effect has been adequately analyzed in an earlier EIR or negative declaration. Section 15063(c)(3)(D). In this case, a brief discussion should identify the following:
 - a) Earlier Analysis Used. Identify and state where they are available for review.
 - b) Impacts Adequately Addressed. Identify which effects from the above checklist were within the scope of and adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and state whether such effects were addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis.
 - c) Mitigation Measures. For effects that are “Less than Significant with Mitigation Measures Incorporated,” describe the mitigation measures which were incorporated or refined from the earlier document and the extent to which they address site-specific conditions for the project.
6. Lead agencies are encouraged to incorporate into the checklist references to information sources for potential impacts (e.g., general plans, zoning ordinances). Reference to a previously prepared or outside document should, where appropriate, include a reference to the page or pages where the statement is substantiated.
7. Supporting Information Sources: A source list should be attached, and other sources used or individuals contacted should be cited in the discussion.
8. This is only a suggested form, and lead agencies are free to use different formats; however, lead agencies should normally address the questions from this checklist that are relevant to a project’s environmental effects in whatever format is selected.
9. The explanation of each issue should identify:
 - a) the significance criteria or threshold, if any, used to evaluate each question; and
 - b) the mitigation measure identified, if any, to reduce the impact to a less-than-significant level.

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3.1 AESTHETICS

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
I. Aesthetics. Would the project:				
a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a State scenic highway?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) In nonurbanized areas, substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings? If the project is in an urbanized area, would the project conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

3.1.1 SETTING

VISUAL CHARACTER OF THE PROJECT SITE AND SURROUNDING AREA

The proposed digital sign location is approximately 110 feet north of U.S. Highway 50, in the City of Rancho Cordova. The viewshed for motorists traveling east and west along U.S. 50 in the project vicinity consists of block-style commercial and light industrial buildings, with associated paved parking lots and landscaping. Views also include the 12 paved lanes of U.S. 50, and the white concrete barrier in the center that divides the eastbound and westbound traffic lanes, along with numerous motor vehicles on the roadway. Also present in the viewshed are large green and white freeway signs with thick grey metal poles that indicate the distance to upcoming exits, smaller freeway traffic safety signs, and tall overhead white poles for high mast lighting. The north side of U.S. 50 is bounded by chain link fencing. On the south side of U.S. 50, an approximately 15-foot-tall soundwall is present (composed of tan concrete blocks) that blocks views of adjacent residences to the south. However, the tops of tall landscape trees adjacent to these residences are visible above the soundwall. Visual simulations of the views from U.S. 50 including the proposed digital sign, for motorists traveling west and east, are presented in Exhibit 3.1-1 and Exhibit 3.1-2, respectively.

The project site is situated within an office and light industrial park, and is accessed via a drive aisle between paved parking lots between two light industrial buildings, south of Fite Circle. The area immediately surrounding the proposed digital sign to the north, east, and west is composed of light-industrial buildings that are approximately 15–20 feet tall. These buildings are generally of a rectangular block shape and are painted white, grey, or tan (see Exhibit 3.1-3; red arrow indicates proposed sign location). The buildings are surrounded by paved parking areas and landscaping that includes grass, shrubs, and tall urban street trees (both evergreen and deciduous).



Source: Cordova Community Council 2025

Exhibit 3.1-1 Visual Simulation of Proposed Digital Sign from U.S. 50 Looking Northwest



Source: Cordova Community Council 2025

Exhibit 3.1-2. Visual Simulation of Proposed Digital Sign from U.S. 50 Looking Northeast



Source: Google Earth 2022

Exhibit 3.1-3. Proposed Digital Sign Location from Fite Circle Looking South

The lower American River was designated a Wild and Scenic River under the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act in 1981 (County of Sacramento 2008). The project site is not visible from the American River due to the intervening distance (approximately 0.5 mile at the closest point), buildings, and tall landscape trees. Therefore, Wild and Scenic Rivers are not discussed further in this analysis.

SCENIC HIGHWAYS AND CORRIDORS

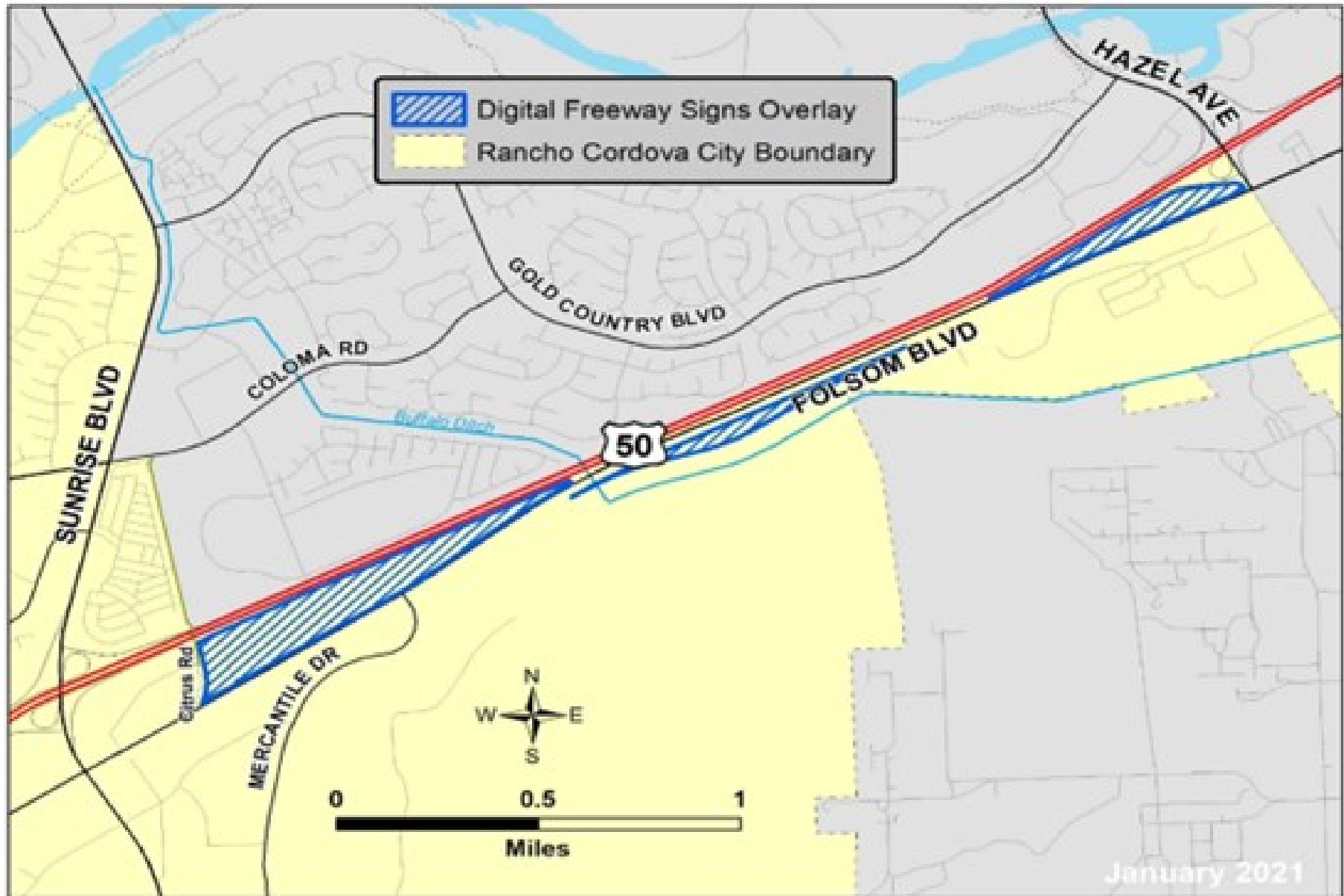
The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) manages the State's Scenic Highways Program. There are no designed or eligible State Scenic Highways located at or near the project site. The nearest designated State scenic highway, State Route (SR) 160, is approximately 12.5 miles southwest of the project site (Caltrans 2019).

LIGHT AND GLARE

The project site is in an urbanized environment and is surrounded by existing sources of light and glare. These sources include existing streetlights along U.S. 50, Fite Circle, Horn Road, Folsom Boulevard, and within other commercial and residential areas north and south of the project site; exterior lighting on commercial buildings surrounding the project site; parking lot lighting; illuminated building signage; and vehicular headlights on U.S. 50.

CITY OF RANCHO CORDOVA DIGITAL FREEWAY SIGN STANDARDS

The City of Rancho Cordova Municipal Code Section 23.743 contains signage standards that include prohibitions, regulations, and controls on the design, location, and maintenance of signs. Section 23.743.150 (Digital Freeway Signs Overlay) allows for consideration of digital freeway signs in certain, specific locations within the city with a use permit and a digital freeway signs operating agreement. The digital freeway signs overlay encompasses three specific geographies in the northeastern area of the city. These locations are shown on Exhibit 3.1-4. The proposed new digital sign would be situated approximately 3.8 miles west of the western end of the Digital Freeway Signs Overlay area shown on Exhibit 3.1-4.



Source: City of Rancho Cordova 2022

Exhibit 3.1-4. Existing City Digital Freeway Signs Overlay Area

Rancho Cordova Municipal Code Section 23.743.150 (C) includes the following development standards related to digital freeway signs:

- ▶ A digital freeway sign may consist of, at most, two digital display areas, each positioned to be visible only by opposing directions of traffic. Double-faced signs shall not have an interior angle between the face of the panels greater than 45 degrees.
- ▶ The maximum height shall be 60 feet.
- ▶ The maximum area of each digital display area is 672 square feet.
- ▶ No digital freeway sign shall be located within 2,500 feet of any other digital freeway sign within the city limits.
- ▶ The sign structure supporting and surrounding the digital display area shall be as small as feasibly possible so as to avoid any unnecessary height or width to the sign. The sign structure shall not add stylistic or architectural detailing to further call attention to the sign.
- ▶ Decorative pole covering is required for newly constructed digital freeway signs as well as any existing traditional billboard that is converted to a digital freeway sign. Such covering shall be simple and streamlined in material and design so as to not call further attention to the sign.
- ▶ Digital freeway signs shall display static messages only, and shall not have animation, movement, or the appearance or optical illusion of movement in or on any part of the sign structure, design, or pictorial segment of the sign. Each static message shall not include flashing or scintillating lighting, or varying light intensity.
- ▶ Each message on the sign must be displayed for a minimum of eight seconds.
- ▶ Digital freeway signs shall not operate at brightness levels of more than 0.3 foot-candles above ambient light, as measured using a foot-candle meter at a distance of 250 feet from the sign face. Each digital display area shall have a light sensing device that will adjust the brightness of the sign as ambient light conditions change throughout the day.
- ▶ The sign will not require substantial trimming or reduction of existing vegetation and landscaping. The sign will not obstruct or obscure on-site signs on the same or adjacent properties.
- ▶ The sign shall not create a visibility hazard to traffic on adjacent streets, freeways, or parking areas. The sign will not reduce parking availability as required by this title. The sign will not interfere with on-site vehicular circulation.
- ▶ The city shall be provided with access to a portion of the total available display time to allow the city to present messages of community interest. This access shall also include other appropriate agencies for the purpose of displaying public safety messages such as “Amber Alert” messages and emergency-disaster communications.
- ▶ The applicant must establish a quality and maintenance plan in order to ensure implementation of all above-listed development standards and to assure the proper maintenance and repair of the digital freeway sign as needed.

- ▶ For every one digital freeway sign installed, the applicant must permanently remove at least four legally existing billboard structures (each of which may have more than one billboard sign face) within the city prior to operation of the digital freeway sign. An existing billboard being refurbished as a digital freeway sign may count as one of the four required permanent removals.
- ▶ At the applicant's request, the city and applicant may enter into an operating agreement in conjunction with the issuance of a conditional use permit for a digital freeway sign. The city and applicant may use the operating agreement, on a case-by-case basis, to deviate from the development standards listed above or reduce the required billboard removals listed above. The council will only approve an operating agreement if it determines that the operating agreement achieves community benefits that are equivalent to those that would be achieved through strict compliance with subsection (C) as listed above.

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION OUTDOOR ADVERTISING STANDARDS

Outdoor advertising displays require a permit from Caltrans if they are within 660 feet from the edge of the right-of-way and viewed primarily by persons traveling on the main-traveled way of the freeway (California Code of Regulations, Title 4, Chapter 3.5, Division 6). Permit requirements include the following (among others) (Caltrans 2025):

- ▶ Must be outside the right of way of any highway.
- ▶ Must be outside of any stream or drainage channel.
- ▶ There must be an existing business activity within 1,000 feet of proposed display location on either side of the highway.
- ▶ Location of property where display is to be placed must be zoned industrial or commercial.
- ▶ Maximum height for the advertising display area is 25 feet in height and 60 feet in length, not to exceed an overall maximum of 1,200 square feet

3.1.2 DISCUSSION

Because the project site is located in an urban area (U.S. Census Bureau 2025), the discussion under checklist question c) will address the project's potential conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality.

a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?

No Impact. A scenic vista is a public viewpoint that provides expansive views of highly valued scenery or landscapes. The project site consists of a paved urban lot surrounded by commercial and light industrial buildings to the north, east, and west, and U.S. 50 to the south. The project site and the surrounding area do not contain scenic vistas, and there are no City-designated scenic vistas within the project viewshed (City of Rancho Cordova 2022). The proposed 60-foot-tall digital sign at the project site would not be visible from the American River due to the intervening distance (approximately 0.5 mile at the closest point), buildings, and tall landscape trees. Thus, there would be no impact.

b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a State scenic highway?

No Impact. The project site is not located along a designated or eligible State scenic highway and is not visible from the nearest State scenic highway (i.e., SR 160 approximately 12 miles to the southwest). Thus, there would be no impact.

c) If the project is in an urbanized area, would the project conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality?

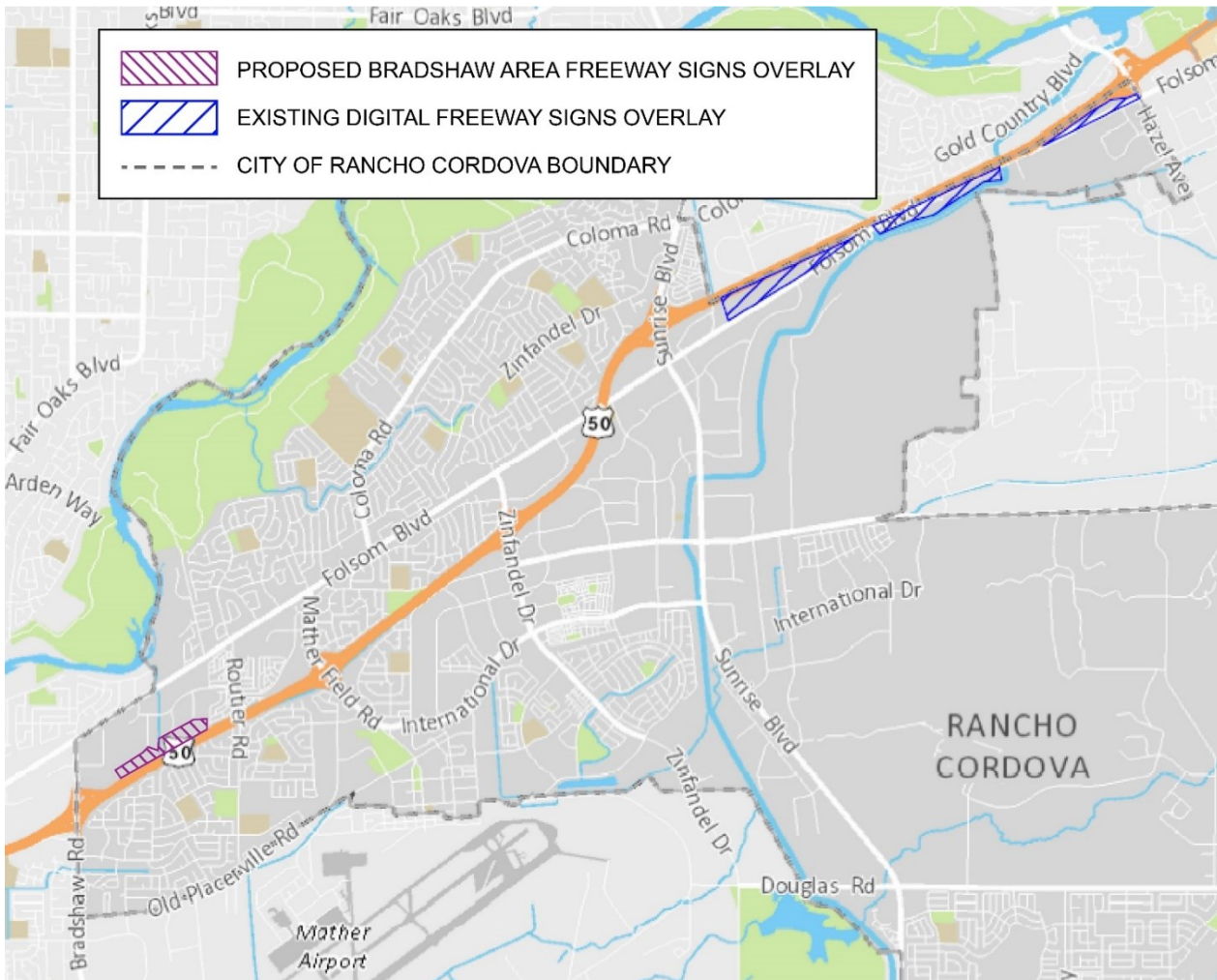
Less-than-Significant Impact. The proposed project consists of a 20- by 60-foot digital freeway sign with 1,200 square feet of display space. The total height of the sign plus the metal support pole would be 60 feet above the ground surface.

The project site is situated within the Folsom Boulevard Specific Plan Area and is designated as an Office Industrial Mixed-Use zone (City of Rancho Cordova 2013). The Specific Plan states that offices may be developed in an office park setting, but most office and light industrial development stands alone. Commercial and other support services may be integrated vertically and/or horizontally in this zone. The Specific Plan does not contain any standards related to signage; instead, it relies on the City Zoning Code for provisions related to signs. The project site is approximately 0.35-mile (1,800 feet) southeast of Folsom Boulevard, and there are several light industrial buildings and two-story commercial buildings, with associated tall landscape trees, between Folsom Boulevard and the proposed sign location. Given the distance and the intervening buildings and trees, it is unlikely that the sign would be visible to motorists traveling eastbound on Folsom Boulevard, and motorists traveling westbound would only have intermittent views between trees (and only the top of the sign would be visible). As shown in Exhibit 3.1-3, the proposed sign would be visible to motorists traveling on Fite Circle; however, the sign would only be visible from a side view with the two sign panels extending towards the viewer (like wings) and the center support pole. Although the sign structure would appear large to motorists on Fite Circle, these motorists would be limited to employees and customers at the local businesses, and the sign would be visually similar to other billboards in the project area.

The viewshed for motorists traveling east and west along U.S. 50 in the project vicinity consists of block-style commercial and light industrial buildings, with associated paved parking lots and landscaping, along with the 12 paved lanes of U.S. 50. Also present in the viewshed are large green and white freeway signs with thick grey metal poles that indicate the distance to upcoming exits, smaller freeway traffic safety signs, and tall overhead white poles for high mast lighting. Tall landscape trees in the viewshed serve to soften the visual effect of the adjacent urban development. The view is not scenic, and the visual quality is moderate. As shown in the visual simulations contained in Exhibit 3.1-1 and Exhibit 3.1-2, the proposed digital sign would be visually similar in size and slightly taller in height as compared to existing Caltrans distance/destination signs along U.S. 50, and would be visually similar to the existing surrounding commercial and light industrial development.

As described in detail in the Setting subsection above, Rancho Cordova Municipal Code Chapter 23.743 allows for consideration of digital freeway signs in certain, specific locations within the city with a use permit and a digital freeway signs operating agreement. As described in Municipal Code Section 23.743.010, “the City desires to enhance traffic safety in the community by ensuring that signage does not distract motorists or obstruct or otherwise impede traffic circulation, and to ensure aesthetic, architectural, and cosmetic compatibility with the surrounding community by limiting visual clutter of the streetscape, such as through the regulation of oversized

signs and excessive temporary signs.” The proposed project includes a Zoning Code amendment to the digital sign overlay area that would add the area north of U.S. 50 between Bradshaw Road and Routier Road (see Exhibit 3.1-5). The proposed project also includes a request for a deviation from the Zoning Code requirements due to the proposed display area of the digital sign, which would be 1,200 square feet (i.e., 528 square feet larger than the current size limit of 672 square feet). The increased display size is requested because the sign would be installed 110 feet from the U.S. 50 right-of-way, which is a greater distance than is typical from the motorists who would be viewing the sign. The overall size, display area, and location of the proposed digital sign would be consistent with Caltrans requirements (Caltrans 2025).



Source: Cordova Community Council 2025

Exhibit 3.1-5. Existing and Proposed City Digital Freeway Signs Overlay Areas

The proposed project would require site design review and a conditional use permit from the City of Rancho Cordova. In addition, the project would be required to meet the City’s existing digital freeway sign standards (Rancho Cordova Municipal Code Section 23.743.150) and to obtain variances as allowed through an operating agreement. The proposed digital freeway sign would not be located within 2,500 feet of any other digital freeway sign within the city limits. In addition, the billboards would not operate at brightness levels of more than 0.3 foot-candles above ambient light, automatically adjusting as ambient light conditions change. The digital billboard would have a display area of 1,200 square feet, which is greater than the 672 feet specified in the City’s digital freeway sign standards. However, the project proponent has requested a deviation from this standard, which is

allowed under the digital freeway signs operating agreement if approved by the City. Finally, the proposed project would be consistent with Caltrans permit requirements and applicable standards for outdoor advertising displays. No trees would be removed as part of the proposed project.

The proposed digital sign would be installed in an urbanized area comprised of commercial and light industrial development in an area of moderate visual quality, and the visual appearance of the proposed sign would be similar to other digital signs and billboards in the project area. With City approval of the proposed Zoning Code amendment for the expansion of the digital freeway signs overlay area to include the project site, and with City approval of the deviations from development standards for the larger sign display area, and considering the project's required compliance with City regulations governing the location and design for digital freeway signs, as well as a digital signs operating agreement, the proposed project would not conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality. Therefore, this impact would be less than significant.

d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?

Less-than-Significant Impact. The project site is situated in an urban area where nighttime lighting is present under existing conditions. Nighttime lighting sources surrounding the project site include overhead street and highway lights, building and parking lot security lighting, illuminated signage on buildings and marquees, and vehicle headlights. The operation of the proposed digital sign would introduce a new source of nighttime lighting. To ensure compliance with the Rancho Cordova Municipal Code, a lighting study for the proposed project was performed by Watchfire Signs (Watchfire 2025, Appendix A). Watchfire has adopted the brightness standards endorsed by both the International Sign Association and the Outdoor Advertising Association of America, which are based on accepted practices by the Illuminating Engineering Society of North America for evaluating and controlling "light trespass." The lighting study modeled the amount of nighttime lighting that would be generated by the proposed digital sign in foot candles¹ at distances up to 500 feet to the east and west, and at viewing angles ranging from 0 to 70 degrees. The greatest amount of light that would be generated would be 1.12 foot candles at a distance of 100 feet at a 0-degree viewing angle (i.e. directly in front of sign within the Project site's parking lot), in both east and west directions. The amount of light generated would decrease greatly with increasing distance and increasing viewing angle, in both east and west directions. At a distance of 250 feet from the sign face (U.S. Highway 50 travel lanes), the proposed digital sign would generate a maximum of approximately 0.2 foot candles (Watchfire 2025). Therefore, the proposed digital sign would be consistent with Rancho Cordova Municipal Code Section 23.743.150 (Digital Freeway Signs Overlay), which requires that the amount of light generated by a digital sign cannot increase the overall ambient light levels by more than 0.3 foot candles at a distance of 250 feet.

Furthermore, the billboard would incorporate light sensing technology that would automatically adjust the brightness of the sign as ambient light conditions change throughout the day so that the brightness level would remain at 0.3 foot-candles above ambient light at a distance of 250 feet from the sign face. In addition, the proposed digital sign would incorporate proprietary vertical louvers designed by Watchfire to reduce light intrusion emanating from the sides of the billboard. Finally, construction activities would occur during the day and would not require nighttime lighting or create other sources of light or glare. Therefore, for the reasons discussed above, the proposed digital sign would not result in a new source of substantial nighttime light or glare that would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the project vicinity. Therefore, this impact would be less than significant.

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3.2 AGRICULTURE & FORESTRY RESOURCES

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
II. Agriculture and Forestry Resources.				
<p>In determining whether impacts to agricultural resources are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to the California Agricultural Land Evaluation and Site Assessment Model (1997, as updated) prepared by the California Department of Conservation as an optional model to use in assessing impacts on agriculture and farmland. In determining whether impacts to forest resources, including timberland, are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to information compiled by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection regarding the state's inventory of forest land, including the Forest and Range Assessment Project and the Forest Legacy Assessment project; and forest carbon measurement methodology provided in Forest Protocols adopted by the California Air Resources Board.</p>				
Would the project:				
a) Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use or a Williamson Act contract?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) 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))?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d) Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
e) 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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

3.2.1 SETTING

Based on a review of the 2020 Important Farmland Map for Sacramento County produced by the California Department of Conservation (DOC) under the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program (FMMP), the project site is designated as Urban and Built-Up Land (DOC 2020). There is no Farmland at the project site or in the project vicinity, which is located in the urbanized area of the City of Rancho Cordova. The project site is within the boundaries of the Folsom Boulevard Specific Plan Area, and is designated as an Office Industrial Mixed Use

zone (City of Rancho Cordova 2013). The project site is surrounded by commercial, office, and light industrial buildings with associated paved parking lots and urban landscaping.

3.2.2 DISCUSSION

a) Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?

No Impact. The project site is designated as Urban and Built-Up Land under the FMMP (California Department of Conservation 2020). The project site and the surrounding lands are situated within an urbanized area, within the boundaries of an existing Office Industrial Mixed Use zone in the City of Rancho Cordova. There is no Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance within or near the project site. Thus, the proposed project would not result in the conversion of Important Farmland to non-agricultural use, and there would be no impact.

b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use or a Williamson Act contract?

No Impact. The project site and the surrounding lands are zoned for and are developed with office, commercial, and industrial uses. There are no Williamson Act contracts within or near the project site (Sacramento County 2024). Therefore, the proposed project would not conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use or a Williamson Act contract, and there would be no impact.

c) 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))?

No Impact. The project site is not zoned as forestland, timberland, or a Timberland Production Zone. Therefore, the proposed project would not conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forestry resources.

d) Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?

No Impact. The project site is a paved parcel within an urbanized area surrounded by existing commercial, office, and light industrial development. There is no forestland within or adjacent to the project site. Therefore, implementation of the proposed project would not result in conversion of forest land to non-forest use, and there would be no impact.

e) 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?

No Impact. Because no agricultural land uses or forestland are present within or adjacent to the project site, implementing the proposed project would not result in other changes in the physical environment that could cause the conversion of farmland to non-agricultural uses or cause conversion of forestland to non-forest uses. Thus, there would be no impact.

3.3 AIR QUALITY

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
III. Air Quality.				
Where available, the significance criteria established by the applicable air quality management or air pollution control district may be relied on to make the following determinations.				
Would the project:				
a) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) 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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

3.3.1 SETTING

The project site is located in the city of Rancho Cordova, which is within the Sacramento Valley Air Basin (SVAB). The Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District (SMAQMD) regulates air quality within the SVAB.

Air quality is defined as the concentration of pollutants in relation to their impact on human health. Ambient concentrations of air pollutants are determined by the amount of emissions released by pollutant sources and the ability of the atmosphere to transport and dilute such emissions. Natural factors that affect transport and dilution include terrain, wind, atmospheric stability, and the presence of sunlight. Therefore, existing air quality conditions in the project area are influenced by factors such as topography, meteorology, and climate, as well as the quantity emissions released by air pollutant sources.

The SVAB climate is characterized by hot, dry summers and cool, rainy winters. Typically, winds transport air pollutants northward out of the SVAB; however, during approximately half of the time from July to September, the wind pattern shifts southward, blowing air pollutants back into the SVAB and exacerbating the concentration of air pollutant emissions in the air basin. In addition, between winter storms, high pressure and light winds contribute to low-level temperature inversions and stable atmospheric conditions, resulting in the concentration of air pollutants.

Individual air pollutants at certain concentrations may adversely affect human or animal health, reduce visibility, damage property, and reduce the productivity or vigor of crops and natural vegetation. Six air pollutants have been identified by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the California Air Resources Board

(CARB) as being of concern both on a nationwide and statewide level: ozone; carbon monoxide; nitrogen dioxide; sulfur dioxide; lead; and particulate matter (PM), which is subdivided into two classes based on particle size – PM equal to or less than 10 micrometers in diameter (PM₁₀) and PM equal to or less than 2.5 micrometers in diameter (PM_{2.5}).

Health-based air quality standards have been established for these pollutants by EPA at the national level and by CARB at the state level. These standards are referred to as the national ambient air quality standards (NAAQS) and the California ambient air quality standards (CAAQS), respectively. The NAAQS and CAAQS were established to protect the public with a margin of safety from adverse health impacts caused by exposure to air pollution. Both EPA and CARB designate areas of California as “attainment,” “nonattainment,” “maintenance,” or “unclassified” for the various pollutant standards according to the federal Clean Air Act (CAA) and the California Clean Air Act, respectively. Because the air quality standards for these air pollutants are regulated using human and environment health-based criteria, they are commonly referred to as “criteria air pollutants.” With respect to regional air quality, the SMAQMD region is currently designated as nonattainment for the NAAQS and CAAQS for ozone, and nonattainment for the NAAQS for 24-hour PM_{2.5}, and the CAAQS for PM₁₀ (CARB 2023). The SMAQMD region is designated as an attainment area for all other criteria air pollutants (CARB 2023).

As part of the Sacramento Federal Ozone Nonattainment Area (SFNA) for ozone, and in accordance with requirements under the CAA, SMAQMD worked with the other local air districts within the Sacramento region (El Dorado County Air Quality Management District, Feather River Air Quality Management District, Placer County Air Pollution Control District, and Yolo-Solano Air Quality Management District) to develop the Sacramento Regional 2008 NAAQS 8-Hour Ozone Attainment and Reasonable Further Progress Plan (2008 NAAQS Ozone Attainment Plan) to describe and demonstrate how the SFNA is meeting requirements under the federal CAA in demonstrating reasonable further progress and attainment of the NAAQS for ozone (SMAQMD 2017). Some elements of the 2008 NAAQS Ozone Attainment Plan were updated in 2018 and included in the 2018 Updates to the California State Implementation Plan, which updated SIP elements for nonattainment areas throughout the state, as needed. These updates were adopted by ARB in October 2018. CARB adopted the Sacramento Regional 2015 Ozone NAAQS Attainment and Reasonable Further Progress Plan (SMAQMD 2023) on October 23, 2023, and submitted the plan to the EPA on November 7, 2023; the plan is pending EPA approval.

Similarly, the region prepared the PM_{2.5} Maintenance Plan and Redesignation Request (SMAQMD 2013) to address how the region attained and would continue to attain the 24-hour PM_{2.5} standard. In 2017, EPA found that the area attained the 2006 24-hour PM_{2.5} NAAQS by the attainment date of December 31, 2015. The PM_{2.5} Maintenance Plan and Redesignation Request will be updated and submitted in the future based on the clean data finding made by the EPA.

SMAQMD also prepared the PM₁₀ Implementation/Maintenance Plan and Redesignation Request for Sacramento County (SMAQMD 2010). EPA approved the PM₁₀ Plan, which allowed EPA to proceed with the redesignation of Sacramento County as attainment for the PM₁₀ NAAQS. The approval of the first Maintenance Plan showed maintenance from 2013 through 2023. A second plan must provide for maintenance of the NAAQS for 10 more years after expiration of the first 10-year maintenance period. EPA approved the Second 10-Year PM₁₀ Maintenance Plan for Sacramento County in April 2024 to demonstrate maintenance of the PM₁₀ standard through 2033.

SMAQMD has also published the *Guide to Air Quality Assessment in Sacramento County* (CEQA Guide), which provides air quality guidance for the preparation of CEQA documents and the SMAQMD’s CEQA thresholds of significance for construction and operational emissions (SMAQMD 2021). As documented in the CEQA Guide, the recommended construction and operational mass emissions thresholds for ozone precursors (e.g., nitrogen oxides [NO_x] and reactive organic gases [ROG]) correlate with the NO_x and ROG reductions from heavy-duty vehicles and land use project emission reduction requirements committed to in the ozone attainment plans. Similarly, the construction and operational mass emissions thresholds for PM correlate with the SMAQMD’s permitting offset trigger levels, which prevent deterioration of ambient air quality and ensure projects do not worsen the region’s attainment status for PM (SMAQMD 2015).

Table 3.3-1 lists the SMAQMD recommended thresholds of significance for criteria air pollutant emissions.

Table 3.3-1. SMAQMD CEQA Air Quality Thresholds of Significance

Phase	NO _x	ROG	PM ₁₀ ¹	PM _{2.5} ¹
Construction	85 pounds/day	N/A	80 pounds/day and 14.6 tons/year	82 pounds/day and 15 tons/year
Operational	65 pounds/day	65 pounds/day	80 pounds/day and 14.6 tons/year	82 pounds/day and 15 tons/year

Source: SMAQMD 2021.

Notes:

¹ The particulate matter thresholds apply to projects that impose the SMAQMD’s Best Available Control Technology or Best Management Practices, as feasible. Otherwise, the particulate matter thresholds would be zero (0) pounds per day. CEQA = California Environmental Quality Act; N/A = not applicable; NO_x = oxides of nitrogen; PM₁₀ = suspended particulate matter less than 10 microns in diameter; PM_{2.5} = fine particulate matter less than 2.5 microns in diameter; ROG = reactive organic gases; SMAQMD = Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality District.

3.3.2 DISCUSSION

a) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?

Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated. Air quality plans describe air pollution control strategies to be implemented by a city, county, or region. The primary purpose of an air quality plan is to bring an area that does not attain federal or State air quality standards into compliance with the requirements of the federal CAA and California CAA requirements. As described above, SMAQMD prepares plans to attain state and national ambient air quality standards in the SVAB. The 2017 and 2023 regional air quality management plans represent the most recent plans developed to describe and demonstrate how the SFNA is meeting requirements for ozone under the federal CAA in demonstrating reasonable further progress and attainment of the NAAQS for the 2008 8-hour ozone standard and 2015 8-hour ozone standard, respectively (SMAQMD 2017; SMAQMD 2023).

SMAQMD’s CEQA Guide is intended to provide a tool to identify proposed development projects that may have a significant adverse effect on air quality. According to the CEQA Guide, projects whose emissions are expected to meet or exceed the recommended significance criteria will have a potentially significant adverse impact on air quality, and therefore, potentially conflict with or obstruct implementation of the SMAQMD air quality plans. Project emissions that do not exceed these thresholds would not impact SMAQMD’s ability to reach attainment.

As discussed in detail below in Section 3.3.3(b), project construction emissions would not exceed the SMAQMD thresholds of significance based on the screening level and parameters outlined in the CEQA Guide. However, although construction emissions would not exceed SMAQMD thresholds, due to the nonattainment status of the SVAB with respect to ozone, PM₁₀, and PM_{2.5}, SMAQMD recommends that all construction projects implement the SMAQMD Basic Construction Emission Control Practices (SMAQMD 2021). SMAQMD’s Basic

Construction Emission Control Practices include such measures as watering the construction site twice daily, limiting vehicle speeds on unpaved roadways to 15 miles per hour, minimizing vehicle idling, covering haul trucks transporting soil, and cleaning paved roads. Without incorporation of SMAQMD's Basic Construction Control Practices, the project construction activities would be considered to potentially conflict with or obstruct implementation of the SMAQMD's air quality plans for PM and the impact is considered to be **potentially significant**.

Following construction activities, operation of the digital sign would be limited to electricity consumption, which would generate greenhouse gas emissions (discussed in Section 3.8, Greenhouse Gas Emissions) and would not generate criteria air pollutants. Therefore, operation of the project would not conflict with any applicable air quality plans.

Mitigation Measure AIR-1 would require implementation of SMAQMD's Basic Construction Control Practices.

Mitigation Measure AIR-1: Implement the SMAQMD Basic Construction Emission Control Practices.

Comply with Basic Construction Emission Control Practices identified by the SMAQMD and listed below or as they may be updated in the future:

- Water all exposed surfaces two times daily. Exposed surfaces include, but are not limited to soil piles, graded areas, unpaved parking areas, staging areas, and access roads.
- Cover or maintain at least two feet of free board space on haul trucks transporting soil, sand, or other loose material on the site. Any haul trucks that would be traveling along freeways or major roadways should be covered.
- Use wet power vacuum street sweepers to remove any visible track out mud or dirt onto adjacent public roads at least once a day. Use of dry powered sweeping is prohibited.
- Limit vehicle speeds on unpaved roads to 15 miles per hour (mph).
- All roadways, driveways, sidewalks, parking lots to be paved should be completed as soon as possible. In addition, building pads should be laid as soon as possible after grading unless seeding or soil binders are used.
- Minimize idling time either by shutting equipment off when not in use or reducing the time of idling to 5 minutes [required by California Code of Regulations, Title 13, sections 2449(d) and 2485]. Provide clear signage that posts this requirement for workers at the entrances to the site.
- Provide current certificate(s) of compliance for CARB's In-Use Off-Road Diesel-Fueled Fleets Regulation [California Code of Regulations, Title 13, sections 2449 and 2449.1].
- Maintain all construction equipment in proper working condition according to manufacturer's specifications. The equipment must be checked by a certified mechanic and determined to be running in proper condition before it is operated.

SIGNIFICANCE AFTER MITIGATION

With implementation of Mitigation Measure AIR-1, the proposed project would not conflict with or obstruct an applicable air quality plan. This impact would be **less than significant with mitigation incorporated**.

b) 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?

Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated. By its very nature, air pollution is largely a cumulative impact. The nonattainment status of regional pollutants is a result of past and present development within the SVAB, and this regional impact is cumulative rather than being attributable to any one source. A project's emissions may be individually limited, but cumulatively considerable when taken in combination with past, present, and future projects.

Construction of the project would generate temporary emissions of criteria air pollutants, including nitrogen oxides (NO_x), reactive organic gases (ROG), carbon monoxide (CO), PM₁₀, and PM_{2.5}. As shown in Table 3.3-1, SMAQMD has quantitative construction emissions thresholds for NO_x, PM₁₀, and PM_{2.5}; additionally, as outlined in the CEQA Guide, SMAQMD has developed a screening level to assist in determining if construction NO_x and PM emissions would exceed the SMAQMD significance thresholds. Construction of a project that does not exceed the screening level, meets all the screening parameters, and implements the SMAQMD Basic Construction Emission Control Practices is considered to have a less-than-significant impact on air quality (SMAQMD 2021). As documented in the CEQA Guide, projects that are 35 acres or less in size and do not include any of the parameters listed below generally will not exceed the SMAQMD construction NO_x and PM thresholds of significance.

- ▶ Include buildings more than 4 stories tall;
- ▶ Include demolition activities;
- ▶ Include major trenching activities;
- ▶ Have a construction schedule that is unusually compact, fast-paced, or involves more than 2 phases (i.e., grading, paving, building construction, and architectural coating) occurring simultaneously;
- ▶ Involve cut-and-fill operations (moving earth with haul trucks and/or flattening or terracing hills); and
- ▶ Require import or export of soil materials that will require a considerable amount of haul truck activity.

As described in Section 2, Project Description, the project site is approximately 2.1 acres, which is well below the screening level of 35 acres. Project construction activities would occur over a two week duration and would require minimal construction equipment, including an auger to bore the hole for the pole supporting the sign, a crane to install the monopole and lift the sign parts for attachment to the monopole, and an excavator to dig the utility trench. Exported material would be limited to a total of approximately 42 cubic yards of soil and a small amount of asphalt pavement where the utility trench would be excavated. Following construction, the area disturbed for the utility trench would be repaved.

The proposed project would not include buildings more than four stories tall, demolition activities, major trenching activities, or cut-and-fill operations. Additionally, the construction schedule is not unusually compact or fast-paced and construction activities would not occur simultaneously; rather, the two week construction duration is short because the proposed construction activities would be minimal and not require a compact schedule to complete. As described above, exported soil quantities would be minimal and would therefore not require a

considerable amount of haul truck activity. Therefore, the proposed project meets the parameters required to apply the screening level. As described above, in addition to meeting the screening level and parameters, projects are required to implement the SMAQMD Basic Construction Emission Control Practices to be considered as having a less than significant impact related to air quality. Therefore, without implementation of the SMAQMD Basic Construction Emission Control Practices as described in Mitigation Measure AIR-1, the contribution of construction-related emissions from the project would have the potential to be cumulatively considerable, resulting in a **potentially significant** impact.

Following construction activities, operation of the digital billboards would be limited to electricity consumption, which would generate indirect greenhouse gas emissions (discussed in Section 3.8, Greenhouse Gas Emissions) and would not generate criteria air pollutants. The minimal and infrequent vehicle trips associated with maintenance of the digital billboard would generate negligible criteria air pollutant emissions. Thus, operation of the project would not result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria air pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard.

SIGNIFICANCE AFTER MITIGATION

Implementation of Mitigation Measure AIR-1 would ensure that construction emissions would not exceed SMAQMD's thresholds of significance. The impact is considered **less than significant with mitigation incorporated**.

c) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?

Less than Significant. Some members of the population are especially sensitive to air pollutant emissions and should be given special consideration when evaluating air quality impacts from projects. For the purposes of a CEQA analysis, SMAQMD considers a sensitive receptor to be facilities that house or attract children, the elderly, and people with illnesses or others who are especially sensitive to the effects of air pollutants. Hospitals, schools, convalescent facilities, and residential areas are examples of sensitive receptors (SMAQMD 2021). The project site is situated within and is surrounded by an existing developed office and light industrial park to the north, east, and west. The project site is bordered by U.S. 50 on the south side. Sensitive receptors in the vicinity of the project site include single-family residential uses south of U.S. 50 in the project area, approximately 330 feet away.

Criteria Air Pollutants

As described in Section 3.3.2(b), construction-related activities would result in emissions of criteria air pollutants, but at levels that would not exceed the SMAQMD regional thresholds of significance based on evaluation against the SMAQMD screening level and parameters. The regional thresholds of significance were designed to identify those projects that would result in significant levels of air pollution and to assist the region in attaining the applicable state and federal ambient air quality standards, which were established using health-based criteria to protect the public with a margin of safety from adverse health impacts due to exposure to air pollution. As such, the criteria air pollutant emissions associated with construction of the project would not expose sensitive receptors to substantial criteria air pollutant concentrations. The digital billboard is electric, and operational activities would be limited to infrequent maintenance-related vehicle trips; therefore, operation of the project would not expose sensitive receptors to substantial criteria air pollutant concentrations. Therefore, this impact would be **less than significant**.

Toxic Air Contaminants

In addition to criteria air pollutants, construction of the project would also generate toxic air contaminant (TAC) emissions, specifically diesel PM (DPM), associated with heavy-duty construction equipment operations. The Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA) developed a Guidance Manual for Preparation of Health Risk Assessments (OEHHA 2015). Due to uncertainty in assessing cancer risk from very short-term exposures, OEHHA does not recommend assessing cancer risk for construction of projects lasting less than two months for the nearest residential receptor. Since the duration of construction activities for the project are anticipated to last approximately two weeks and would cease following completion of the project, the overall exposure period would not approach the requirements for assessing cancer risk (OEHHA 2015).

In addition, construction emissions would occur intermittently throughout the day, would not occur as a constant plume of emissions from the project site, and would vary on a day-to-day basis. Concentrations of mobile-source DPM emissions are typically reduced by approximately 60 percent at a distance of around 300 feet (100 meters) (Zhu and Hinds 2002). Furthermore, the project would implement Mitigation Measure AIR-1, which requires implementation of idling limits and maintaining equipment in proper working condition, which would reduce construction-related TAC emissions. Due to the intermittent and temporary nature of construction activities, and the dispersive properties of TACs, as well as the fact that PM emissions would not exceed the SMAQMD emission threshold, short-term construction would not expose sensitive receptors to DPM emission levels that would result in a health hazard. As described previously, the billboard would be powered by electricity and would therefore not generate TAC emissions during operation. The minimal and infrequent vehicle trips associated with maintenance of the digital billboard would generate negligible TAC emissions. As a result, this impact would be **less than significant**.

d) **Result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people?**

Less than Significant. The occurrence and severity of odor impacts depends on numerous factors, including the nature, frequency, and intensity of the source; wind speed and direction; and the presence of sensitive receptors. Typically, odors are generally regarded as an annoyance rather than a health hazard. However, manifestations of a person's reaction to foul odors can range from the psychological (i.e., irritation, anger, or anxiety) to the physiological, including circulatory and respiratory effects, nausea, vomiting, and headache. The ability to detect odors varies considerably among the population and overall is quite subjective.

Potential construction-related sources of other emissions, such as those leading to odors, include diesel construction equipment that emit exhaust. However, because of the amount and types of equipment, the temporary nature of these emissions, and the highly diffusive properties of diesel exhaust, nearby receptors would not be affected by diesel exhaust odors associated with construction of the project. Construction activities associated with the project would be minimal and the odors would be typical of most construction sites and temporary in nature. Operation of the project would remain similar to existing conditions and would not add any new odor sources. As a result, the project would not result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people. Therefore, this impact would be **less than significant**.

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3.4 BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
IV. Biological Resources. Would the project:				
a) 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 the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) 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 the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) 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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d) 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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
f) Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

3.4.1 SETTING

Field reconnaissance, database searches, and background literature review were conducted to characterize biological resources present or with the potential to occur within the project site. No protocol-level wildlife or botanical surveys have been conducted within the project site to date. The project applicant contracted a certified arborist to conduct a tree survey of the project work area in February 2025 that identified one 20” diameter at standard height (DSH) London Planetree landscape tree near the project work area (Focal Point 2025, Appendix B). An AECOM biologist conducted a site reconnaissance survey on May 7, 2025.

Prior to the site reconnaissance, records searches of the following databases were performed to identify special-status species, sensitive habitats, and wetlands or waters known to occur or with potential to occur within the project site and vicinity:

- California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDDB) standard 9-quadrangle (quad) search for the U.S. Geological Survey Carmichael quad, where the project site is located, and adjacent eight quads (CDFW 2025),

- ▶ California Native Plant Society Rare Plant Inventory standard 9-quad search (CNPS 2025),
- ▶ U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service’s Information for Planning and Consultation database identifying federally regulated sensitive resources with potential to occur and critical habitat within the project site (USFWS 2025a), and
- ▶ National Wetland Inventory (NWI) Wetlands Mapper (USFWS 2025b).

SITE DESCRIPTION

The project site is currently developed with a light industrial building, along with paved parking areas surrounded by narrow landscaping strips. Neighboring land uses include a developed office and light industrial park to the north, east, and west, and U.S. 50 to the south. The project site is mostly level and at an elevation of approximately 73 feet above mean sea level.

VEGETATION COMMUNITY AND HABITAT

The project site is classified as the urban land cover type. Landscape trees (e.g., incense cedar [*Calocedrus decurrens*], red oak [*Quercus rubra*], London plane [*Platanus x hispanica*]) line the parking area along the northern edge of the project site, and red-tip photinia (*Photinia x fraseri*) are scattered along the fence line at the southern edge of the project site. Four additional London plane are in small planting areas on the eastern side of the industrial building on the project site. English ivy (*Hedera helix*), turf grass, or fortnight lily (*Diets grandiflora*) underlies most landscaped areas within the project site.

The project site overall provides low habitat value for wildlife because of frequent disturbance and limited connectivity. Wildlife observed during the reconnaissance survey included mourning dove (*Zenaida macroura*), house finch (*Haemorhous mexicanus*), and lesser goldfinch (*Spinus psaltria*). These bird species or other similarly urban-adapted wildlife species may forage or nest within the project site. No burrows or nest sites were observed within or adjacent to the project site at the time of the reconnaissance survey. The potential for special-status species to occur in the project site is discussed in Section “Special-status Species,” below.

SPECIAL-STATUS SPECIES

Special-status species include plants and animals in the following categories:

- ▶ species listed by the State of California or the federal government as endangered, threatened, or rare;
- ▶ species proposed or candidate for state or federal listing as endangered or threatened;
- ▶ taxa (i.e., taxonomic categories or groups) that meet the criteria for listing, even if not currently included on any list, as described in California Code of Regulations Section 15380 of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines;
- ▶ species identified by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) as species of special concern;
- ▶ species listed as fully protected under the California Fish and Game Code; and

- ▶ taxa considered by CDFW to be “rare, threatened, or endangered in California” and assigned a California Rare Plant Rank (CRPR) of 1A, 1B, 2A, or 2B.

The CDFW system includes six rarity and endangerment ranks for categorizing plant species of concern, which are summarized as follows:

- ▶ CRPR 1A – Plants presumed to be extinct in California;
- ▶ CRPR 1B – Plants that are rare, threatened, or endangered in California and elsewhere;
- ▶ CRPR 2A – Plants presumed to be extinct in California, but more common elsewhere;
- ▶ CRPR 2B – Plants that are rare, threatened, or endangered in California, but more common elsewhere;
- ▶ CRPR 3 – Plants about which more information is needed (a review list); and
- ▶ CRPR 4 – Plants of limited distribution (a watch list).

All plants with a CRPR are considered “special plants” by CDFW. The term “special plants” is a broad term used to refer to all plant taxa inventoried in CDFW’s CNDDDB regardless of their legal or protection status. Plants ranked as CRPR 1A, 1B, 2A, and 2B may qualify as endangered, rare, or threatened species within the definition of CEQA Guidelines Section 15380. CDFW recommends that CRPR 1 and 2 species be addressed within the context of CEQA analyses and documentation. In general, CRPR 3 and 4 species do not meet the definition of endangered, rare, or threatened pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15380.

The term “California species of special concern” is applied by CDFW to animals not listed under the federal Endangered Species Act (ESA) or California Endangered Species Act (CESA), but that are nonetheless declining at a rate that could result in listing, or that historically occurred in low numbers, or have limited ranges, and known threats to their persistence currently exist. “Fully protected” was the first state classification used to identify and protect animal species that are rare or facing possible extinction. Most of these species were subsequently listed as threatened or endangered under CESA or ESA. The remaining fully protected species that are not officially listed under CESA or ESA are still legally protected under California Fish and Game Code, and qualify as endangered, rare, or threatened species within the definition of CEQA Guidelines Section 15380.

Database searches identified previously documented occurrences of 14 special-status plant species (Table 3.4-1 and Appendix B) and 50 special-status wildlife species in the vicinity of the project site (Table 3.4-2 and Appendix B). All 64 special-status species identified by the database searches are either unlikely to occur or have no potential to occur. No critical habitat or proposed critical habitat is located within or adjacent to the project site (USFWS 2025a).

WETLANDS AND WATERS

Any areas that meet the regulatory definition of “waters of the United States” are regulated under the jurisdiction of the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act. Waters of the U.S. include documented navigable waters of the United States; interstate waters; all other waters where the use, degradation, or destruction of the waters could affect interstate or foreign commerce; tributaries to any of these waters, and wetlands adjacent to these waters. Potentially jurisdictional waters of the U.S. are typically determined by conducting a wetland delineation according to USACE methods and guidelines. No potential wetland features or waters of the U.S. were identified within the project site during review of NWI data (USFWS 2025b) or observed on site during the reconnaissance survey.

An open drainage channel known as the Mather Drain borders the southern edge of the project site and conveys stormwater runoff to the nearest perennial waterway, the American River, approximately 0.4 mile north of the project site. The open channel is approximately 50 feet wide and consists of dirt and regularly mown non-native grasses for most of its length. NWI data indicate this channel is a manmade, temporarily flooded (i.e., surface water is present for brief periods during the growing system) riverine system (USFWS 2025b).

WILDLIFE MOVEMENT/CORRIDORS

The project site is located amid commercial and residential development; no wildlife movement corridors occur on the project site. The American River corridor, 0.4 mile north of the project site, has dense, continuous riparian and adjacent upland habitats that function as a movement corridor for many wildlife species. Any wildlife using this as a movement corridor are not likely to move onto the project site due to its poor habitat quality and lack of habitat connectivity.

3.4.2 DISCUSSION

- a) **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 the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?**

Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated. Scattered shrubs and trees in and around the project site provide suitable nesting habitat for common, urban-adapted migratory birds and raptors protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act and Section 3503.5 of the California Fish and Game Code. Project construction may disturb birds nesting within or adjacent to the project site, causing nest abandonment. Any potential impact on nesting birds would be **potentially significant**.

Mitigation Measure BIO-1: Conduct Preconstruction Nesting Bird Surveys and Implement Appropriate Avoidance Buffers, as Needed.

If construction will occur during the bird nesting season (typically February 1 to August 31), a qualified biologist will conduct a preconstruction survey for nesting birds no more than 2 weeks prior to the start of ground-disturbing construction activities. The survey will include all suitable habitat within the project site and a 100-foot buffer of the project site.

If nesting birds are located during the preconstruction nesting bird survey, an appropriate buffer will be established by a qualified biologist to protect the nest from project-related disturbances until the nest has fledged or is no longer active. An appropriate non-disturbance buffer will be determined based on the species, site conditions (e.g., existing level of disturbance), biologist observations, and professional judgement. Typical buffers are 50 feet for passerines and 250 feet for non-special-status raptors. Smaller buffers may be implemented if nest monitoring by a qualified biologist confirms project activities are not adversely affecting the nest; this typically requires a period of nest monitoring prior to initiation of project activities to establish baseline nest activity.

SIGNIFICANCE AFTER MITIGATION

Implementing Mitigation Measure BIO-1 would reduce the potentially significant impact on nesting birds **to less than significant with mitigation incorporated** by protecting birds that nest within or in the vicinity of the project site from construction-related disturbances if project construction occurs during the nesting season.

Database searches identified no other special-status species with the potential to be impacted by the project. Therefore, impacts of the proposed project on 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 Game or the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service would be **less than significant with mitigation incorporated**.

b) 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 the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?

No Impact. Sensitive natural communities include riparian habitat and other natural communities of special concern to resource agencies, areas protected under CEQA, or areas otherwise protected under local regulations and policies. No riparian habitat or other sensitive natural communities are present in or adjacent to the project site; ruderal non-native grasses cover the open drainage channel south of the project site. Therefore, implementation of the proposed project would have **no impact** on riparian habitat or other sensitive natural communities.

c) Have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?

No Impact. No wetland features are located within the project site. The drainage channel south of the project site would not be dredged, filled, or otherwise interrupted hydrologically during project construction. Excavation would be limited to a 5-foot-diameter signpost hole and an approximately 1.5-foot-deep by 2-foot-wide utility trench that would be excavated to connect the digital sign with existing electrical power at the adjacent building area within the project site, and excavated material would be immediately transported offsite for disposal at a facility permitted to accept clean fill. Therefore, implementation of the proposed project would have **no impact** on federally protected wetlands through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means.

d) 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?

No Impact. No established migratory routes for native species occur on the project site. The project site is small, disturbed, and isolated amid urban development. Furthermore, noise and visual disturbances from temporary construction and long-term operation of the digital sign are not expected to rise above levels of existing urban disturbances along movement corridors in the vicinity (e.g., the American River).

Implementation of the proposed project would not interfere with the movement of any native species, with established migratory corridors, or with use of native wildlife nursery sites; therefore, there would be **no impact** from the proposed project related to this issue.

e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?

No Impact. The Preservation and Protection of Private Trees, Title 19, Chapter 12 of the City of Rancho Cordova Municipal Code protects certain trees and requires an approved permit be obtained before a protected tree has major pruning (i.e., pruning in a way which reduces the overall canopy of the tree by 10 percent or more, or cutting of roots or branches greater than two inches diameter within a 12-month period) or is removed. The tree nearest project construction, a London plane (*Platanus x hispanica*), has a diameter at breast height of 20 inches and qualifies as a protected tree per Chapter 19.12.030. However, project construction would not require removal or major pruning of this or any other trees. Therefore, the proposed project would not conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, and there would be **no impact**.

f) Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?

No Impact. The project site is not located within the plan area of the South Sacramento Habitat Conservation Plan or any other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan. Therefore, implementation of the proposed project would not conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan or Natural Community Conservation Plan, and there would be **no impact** from the proposed project related to this issue.

Table 3.4-1. Special-Status Plant Species with the Potential to Occur in the Project Vicinity

Common and Scientific Name	Legal Status ¹		Distribution	Habitat Association and Elevation	Blooming Period ²	Potential for Occurrence within the Project Site ³	Rationale
	Federal	State/CRPR					
Spicate calycadenia <i>Calycadenia spicata</i>	–	–/1B.3	Amador, Butte, Calaveras, El Dorado, Fresno, Kern, Nevada, Placer, Sacramento, San Joaquin, Stanislaus, Tulare, Tuolumne, and Yuba counties	Adobe, clary, disturbed, dry, gravelly, rocky areas and openings in cismontane woodland and valley and foothill grassland. 130–4,595 feet amsl	May–September	No potential	Landsaped areas within the project site are regularly disturbed and do not provide habitats that support this species. This species was not observed during the site reconnaissance survey on May 7, 2025.
Peruvian dodder <i>Cuscuta obtusiflora</i> var. <i>glandulosa</i>	–	–/2B.2	Los Angeles, Merced, Sacramento (possibly extirpated), San Bernardino (presumed extirpated), Sonoma, and Sutter counties	Freshwater marshes and swamps. 50–920 feet amsl	July–October	No potential	Aquatic habitats required by this species are not present within the project site.
Dwarf downingia <i>Downingia pusilla</i>	–	–/2B.2	Fresno, Merced, Napa, Placer, Sacramento, San Joaquin, Solano, Sonoma, Stanislaus, Tehama, and Yuba counties	Mesic valley and foothill grassland and vernal pools. 5–1,460 feet amsl	March–May	No potential	Landsaped areas within the project site are regularly disturbed and do not provide habitats that support this species. This species was not observed during the site reconnaissance survey on May 7, 2025.
Boggs Lake hedgehyssop <i>Gratiola heterosepala</i>	–	SCE/1B.2	Fresno, Lake, Lassen, Madera, Mendocino, Merced, Modoc, Placer, Sacramento, San Joaquin, Shasta, Siskiyou, Solano, Sonoma, and Tehama counties	Clay soils in marsh and swamp margins and vernal pools. 35–7,790 feet amsl	April–August	No potential	Aquatic habitats required by this species are not present within the project site.

Common and Scientific Name	Legal Status ¹		Distribution	Habitat Association and Elevation	Blooming Period ²	Potential for Occurrence within the Project Site ³	Rationale
	Federal	State/CRPR					
Woolly rose-mallow <i>Hibiscus lasiocarpus</i> var. <i>occidentalis</i>	–	–/1B.2	Butte, Colusa, Contra Costa, Glenn, Sacramento, San Joaquin, Solano, Sutter, and Yolo counties	Freshwater marshes and swamps. 0–395 feet amsl	June–September	No potential	Aquatic habitats required by this species are not present within the project site.
Ahart’s dwarf rush <i>Juncus leiospermus</i> var. <i>ahartii</i>	–	–/1B.2	Butte, Calaveras, Placer, Sacramento, Tehama, and Yuba counties	Mesic areas in valley and foothill grassland. 100–750 feet amsl	March–May	No potential	Landscaped areas within the project site are regularly disturbed and do not provide habitats that support this species. This species was not observed during the site reconnaissance survey on May 7, 2025.
Alkali-sink goldfields <i>Lasthenia chrysantha</i>	–	–/1B.1	Fresno, Kern, Kings, Madera, Merced, Sacramento, Solano, Stanislaus, and Tulare counties	Alkaline areas in vernal pools. 0–655 feet amsl	February–April	No potential	Suitable vernal pool habitat is not present within the project site.
Legenere <i>Legenere limosa</i>	–	–/1B.1	Alameda, Lake, Monterey, Napa, Placer, Sacramento, San Joaquin, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Shasta, Solano, Sonoma, Stanislaus (presumed extirpated), Tehama, and Yuba counties	Vernal pools. 5–2,885 feet amsl	April–June	No potential	Suitable vernal pool habitat is not present within the project site.
Heckard’s pepper-grass <i>Lepidium latipes</i> var. <i>heckardii</i>	–	–/1B.2	Glenn, Merced, Sacramento, Solano, and Yolo counties	Alkaline flats in valley and foothill grassland. 5–655 feet amsl	March–May	No potential	Landscaped areas within the project site are regularly disturbed and do not provide habitats that support this species. This species was not observed during the site reconnaissance survey on May 7, 2025.
Pincushion navarretia <i>Navarretia myersii</i> ssp. <i>myersii</i>	–	–/1B.1	Amador, Calaveras, Madera, Merced, Placer, and Sacramento counties	(Often) acidic vernal pools. 65–1,085 feet amsl	April–May	No potential	Suitable vernal pool habitat is not present within the project site.

Common and Scientific Name	Legal Status ¹		Distribution	Habitat Association and Elevation	Blooming Period ²	Potential for Occurrence within the Project Site ³	Rationale
	Federal	State/CRPR					
Slender Orcutt grass <i>Orcuttia tenuis</i>	FT	SE/1B.1	Butte, Lake, Lassen, Modoc, Plumas, Sacramento, Shasta, Siskiyou, and Tehama counties	(Often) gravelly areas in vernal pools. 115–5,775 feet amsl	May–September (October)	No potential	Suitable vernal pool habitat is not present within the project site.
Sacramento Orcutt grass <i>Orcuttia viscida</i>	FE	SE/1B.1	Sacramento County	Vernal pools. 100–330 feet amsl	April–July (September)	No potential	Suitable vernal pool habitat is not present within the project site.
Sanford’s arrowhead <i>Sagittaria sanfordii</i>	–	–/1B.2	Butte, Del Norte, El Dorado, Fresno, Kings, Los Angeles, Madera, Marin, Mariposa, Merced, Napa, Orange, Sacramento, San Bernardino, San Joaquin, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Shasta, Solano, Sutter, Tehama, Tulare, Ventura (presumed extirpated), and Yuba counties	Shallow freshwater marshes and swamps. 0–2,135 feet amsl	May–October (November)	No potential	Aquatic habitats required by this species are not present within the project site.
Saline clover <i>Trifolium hydrophilum</i>	–	–/1B.2	Alameda, Contra Costa, Lake, Mendocino, Monterey, Napa, Sacramento, San Benito, San Joaquin, San Luis Obispo, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Santa Cruz, Solano, Sonoma, and Yolo counties	Marshes and swamps, mesic or alkaline areas in valley and foothill grassland, and vernal pools. 0–985 feet amsl	April–June	No potential	Landscaped areas within the project site are regularly disturbed and do not provide habitats that support this species. This species was not observed during the site reconnaissance survey on May 7, 2025.

Notes for Table 3.4-1:

amsl = above mean sea level;

CRPR = California Rare Plant Rank.

¹ Status explanations:

– = no listing.

Federal

FE = listed as endangered under the federal Endangered Species Act.

FT = listed as threatened under the federal Endangered Species Act.

State

SE = state listed as endangered under the California Endangered Species Act.

SCE = state candidate for listing as endangered under the California Endangered Species Act.

California Native Plant Society California Rare Plant Ranks:

1B = plant species considered rare, threatened, or endangered in California and elsewhere.

2B = plant species considered rare, threatened, or endangered in California but more common elsewhere.

California Rare Plant Rank Extensions:

1 = seriously endangered in California (>80% of occurrences are threatened and/or have high degree and immediacy of threat).

2 = fairly endangered in California (20–80% of occurrences are threatened and/or have moderate degree and immediacy of threat).

3 = not very threatened in California (<20% of occurrences are threatened and/or have low degree and immediacy of threat or no current threats known).

² Parentheticals indicate uncommon extensions to blooming periods.

³ Potential for occurrence categories defined:

No Potential = The project site is located outside the species' geographic or elevational range, or no suitable habitat for the species is present within or immediately adjacent to the project site.

Sources: CDFW (2025), CNPS (2025)

Table 3.4-2. Special-Status Wildlife Species with the Potential to Occur in the Project Vicinity

Common and Scientific Name	Legal Status ¹		Habitat Requirements	Potential for Occurrence in the Project Site ²	Rationale
	Federal	State			
Crustaceans					
Conservancy fairy shrimp <i>Branchinecta conservation</i>	FE	–	Relatively large vernal pools with highly turbid freshwater.	No potential	Suitable vernal pool habitat is not present within or adjacent to the project site.
Vernal pool fairy shrimp <i>Branchinecta lynchi</i>	FT	–	Vernal pools in valley and foothill grassland; small, clear-water sandstone-depression pools and grassed swale, earth slump, or basalt-flow depression pools.	No potential	Suitable vernal pool habitat is not present within or adjacent to the project site.
Vernal pool tadpole shrimp <i>Lepidurus packardi</i>	FE	–	Vernal pools in valley and foothill grassland; pools commonly found in grass-bottomed swales of unplowed grasslands. Some pools are mud-bottomed and highly turbid.	No potential	Suitable vernal pool habitat is not present within or adjacent to the project site.
Insects					
Valley elderberry longhorn beetle <i>Desmocerus californicus dimorphus</i>	FT	–	Associated with riparian scrub, elderberry savannah. Host plant is blue elderberry (<i>Sambucus mexicana</i>). Prefers to lay eggs in elderberries 2–8 inches in diameter.	No potential	No blue elderberry, the host plant for the species, is located within or adjacent to the project site.
Monarch butterfly <i>Danaus plexippus</i>	FPT	–	Requires milkweed (<i>Asclepias</i> spp.) for breeding. Breeds and forages in open, agricultural, wet, or developed areas with flowering plants. In California, overwinters in groves of blue gum (<i>Eucalyptus globulus</i>), Monterey pine (<i>Pinus radiata</i>), and Monterey cypress (<i>Hesperocyparis macrocarpa</i>).	Unlikely	The project site is outside the species overwintering range and does not contain milkweed, the host plant for the species. The species may pass through the project site during migration.
Crotch's bumble bee <i>Bombus crotchii</i>	–	SCE	In California, inhabits open grassland and scrub habitats. Historically common in the Central Valley of California but now appears to be absent from most of it, especially in the center of its historic range. Nests have not been well documented.	Unlikely	No suitable nesting habitat is present within the project site, and limited flowering plants are available for foraging within or adjacent to the project site. The nearest CNDDDB-documented occurrences are in higher-quality habitat along the American River, approximately 1 mile from the project site (CDFW 2025).

Common and Scientific Name	Legal Status ¹		Habitat Requirements	Potential for Occurrence in the Project Site ²	Rationale
	Federal	State			
Amphibians and Reptiles					
California tiger salamander, central California DPS <i>Ambystoma californiense</i>	FT	ST	Vernal pools and other seasonal wetlands (e.g., in ditches) with adequate inundation period and large tracts of adjacent uplands, primarily grasslands, with burrows and other refugia. Not known to breed in streams or rivers.	No potential	There is no suitable upland or aquatic breeding habitat for this species within or adjacent to the project site. Furthermore, no CNDDDB-documented occurrences occur within 10 miles of the project site.
Western spadefoot <i>Spea hammondi</i>	FPT	SSC	Predominantly a grassland species, although some populations can be found in pine-oak woodlands of the valley foothills. Requires shallow, temporary pools or streams during the breeding season. Where natural vernal pools are absent, may use artificial ponds or stock tanks. Most of the year, resides in burrows at depths of up to 3 feet.	No potential	There is no suitable upland or aquatic breeding habitat within or adjacent to the project site. The nearest CNDDDB-documented occurrences are in or near higher-quality vernal pool habitat approximately 3 miles south of the project site.
Northwestern pond turtle <i>Actinemys marmorata</i>	FPT	SSC	Closely associated with permanent or nearly permanent water in a variety of aquatic habitats. Forages in ponds, marshes, slow-moving streams, sloughs, and drainage ditches; nests in nearby uplands with low, sparse vegetation. Basking sites such as partially submerged logs, rocks, floating vegetation mats, or open mud banks are required for thermoregulation. Hibernation may occur in aquatic habitats or in burrows of adjacent uplands.	No potential	No suitable aquatic habitat occurs within or adjacent to the project site. The nearest perennial waterway is the American River, 0.4 mile north of the project site. The project site and surrounding areas do not provide suitable upland habitat due to their frequent disturbance.
Coast horned lizard <i>Phrynosoma blainvillii</i>	–	SSC	Occurs in open areas with sandy soil and low vegetation in valley foothill hardwood, conifer, riparian, and grassland habitats.	Unlikely	Annual grasses adjacent to the project site are frequently disturbed and offer low-quality habitat. The nearest CNDDDB-documented record is greater than 10 miles from the project site (CDFW 2025).
Giant gartersnake <i>Thamnophis gigas</i>	FT	ST	Open water associated with slow-moving streams, sloughs, ponds, marshes, inundated floodplains, rice fields, and irrigation/drainage ditches within the Central Valley; also requires emergent herbaceous wetland vegetation for escape and foraging habitat, grassy banks and openings in waterside vegetation for basking, and higher elevation upland habitat for cover and refuge from flooding during the inactive season.	No potential	No suitable aquatic habitat occurs within or adjacent to the project site. The nearest CNDDDB-documented records are greater than 10 miles from the project site (CDFW 2025).

Common and Scientific Name	Legal Status ¹		Habitat Requirements	Potential for Occurrence in the Project Site ²	Rationale
	Federal	State			
Fishes					
Pacific lamprey <i>Entosphenus tridentatus</i>	–	SSC	Occurs in well-oxygenated, cool, riverine habitat with a mixture of deep pools and cover. Spawns over gravel and cobble in slow-water areas (e.g., pools, runs) of permanent streams.	No potential	No suitable aquatic habitat occurs within or adjacent to the project site.
Western river lamprey <i>Lampetra ayresii</i>	–	SSC	Occurs in well-oxygenated, cool, riverine habitat with a mixture of deep pools and cover. Spawns over gravel and cobble in slow-water areas (e.g., pools, runs) of permanent streams.	No potential	No suitable aquatic habitat occurs within or adjacent to the project site.
Green sturgeon, southern DPS <i>Acipenser medirostris</i>	FT	SSC	Occurs mostly in inshore waters to 200 feet, primarily in the seawater and mixing zones of bays and estuaries. In estuaries, concentrates in deep areas with soft bottoms and move into intertidal areas to feed at high tides.	No potential	No suitable aquatic habitat occurs within or adjacent to the project site.
Chinook salmon, Sacramento River winter-run ESU <i>Oncorhynchus tshawytscha, population 7</i>	FE	SE	Occurs in well-oxygenated, cool, riverine habitat. Habitat types are riffles, runs, and pools.	No potential	No suitable aquatic habitat occurs within or adjacent to the project site.
Chinook salmon, Central Valley spring-run ESU <i>Oncorhynchus tshawytscha, population 11</i>	FT	ST	Occurs in well-oxygenated, cool, riverine habitat. Habitat types are riffles, runs, and pools.	No potential	No suitable aquatic habitat occurs within or adjacent to the project site.
Chinook salmon, Central Valley fall/late fall-run ESU <i>Oncorhynchus tshawytscha, population 13</i>	–	SSC	Occurs in well-oxygenated, cool, riverine habitat. Habitat types are riffles, runs, and pools.	No potential	No suitable aquatic habitat occurs within or adjacent to the project site.
Steelhead, Central Valley DPS <i>Oncorhynchus mykiss irideus, population 11</i>	FT	SSC	Cool, clear streams with abundant cover, well-vegetated banks, and relatively stable flows. Pool and riffle complexes and gravelly streambeds for spawning.	No potential	No suitable aquatic habitat occurs within or adjacent to the project site.

Common and Scientific Name	Legal	Status ¹	Habitat Requirements	Potential for Occurrence in the Project Site ²	Rationale
	Federal	State			
Delta smelt <i>Hypomesus transpacificus</i>	FT	SE	During spawning migration, occurs in freshwater channels and sloughs of the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta. Typically occur in shallow water (less than 10 feet) where salinity ranges from 2 to 7 parts per thousand.	No potential	No suitable aquatic habitat occurs within or adjacent to the project site.
Longfin smelt, San Francisco Bay-Delta DPS <i>Spirinchus thaleichthys, population 2</i>	FE	ST	Spawns over sandy or gravel substrates. Occurs in nearshore waters to estuaries and lower portions of freshwater streams.	No potential	No suitable aquatic habitat occurs within or adjacent to the project site.
Hardhead <i>Mylopharodon conocephalus</i>	–	SSC	Requires relatively undisturbed habitats of larger streams with high water quality (clear and cool). Prefers pools and runs with deep, clear water with slow velocities and sand-gravel-boulder substrates.	No potential	No suitable aquatic habitat occurs within or adjacent to the project site.
Sacramento splittail <i>Pogonichthys macrolepidotus</i>	–	SSC	Occurs in estuaries, freshwater marshes, and slow-moving river sections. Requires flooded vegetation for spawning and foraging for young.	No potential	No suitable aquatic habitat occurs within or adjacent to the project site.
Birds					
Western yellow-billed cuckoo <i>Coccyzus americanus occidentalis</i>	FT	SE	Nests in dense, wooded riparian habitat, often with scrubby vegetation.	No potential	The project site is outside the species' current distribution, and no suitable habitat is present within or adjacent to the project site.
Vaux's swift <i>Chaetura vauxi</i>	–	SSC	Nests in old-growth forests with hollow trees. Roosts communally in hollow trees or chimneys during migration. Forages in fields and open areas in forests.	No potential	No suitable habitat is present within or adjacent to the project site. Additionally, the project site is outside the species' breeding range.
Lesser sandhill crane <i>Antigone canadensis canadensis</i>	–	SSC	Breeds in Arctic wetlands, often at edges with shrubby or forested upland habitats. Roosts in shallow freshwater and forages in agricultural areas or wetlands.	No potential	No suitable aquatic or foraging habitat is present within or adjacent to the project site. Additionally, the project site is outside the species' breeding range.
Greater sandhill crane <i>Antigone canadensis tabida</i>	–	FP	Breeds in wetlands, often at edges with shrubby or forested upland habitats, in in the northern United States. Roosts in shallow freshwater and forages in agricultural areas or wetlands.	No potential	No suitable aquatic or foraging habitat is present within or adjacent to the project site. Additionally, the project site is outside the species' breeding range.
California least tern <i>Sternula antillarum browni</i>	FE	SE/FP	Nests on beaches, mudflats, and sand dunes, often near river mouths and estuaries.	No potential	The project site is outside the species' current known range along the San Francisco Bay.

Common and Scientific Name	Legal Status ¹		Habitat Requirements	Potential for Occurrence in the Project Site ²	Rationale
	Federal	State			
Black tern <i>Chlidonias niger</i>	–	SSC	Nests in emergent vegetation in large freshwater marshes. During the nonbreeding season, forages in a variety of waterbodies (e.g., oceans, flooded fields, estuaries) along coastlines.	No potential	No suitable aquatic habitat is present within or adjacent to the project site.
Least bittern <i>Ixobrychus exilis</i>	–	SSC	Breeds in tall aquatic vegetation in freshwater and brackish marshes. Winter in saltwater and freshwater wetlands in southern, coastal United States and Mexico.	No potential	No suitable aquatic habitat is present within or adjacent to the project site.
American white pelican <i>Pelecanus erythrorhynchos</i>	–	SSC	Breeds on islands in freshwater lakes or wetlands, primarily in the northern Great Plains. Forages in lakes, rivers, and wetlands in breeding range and during migration.	No potential	No suitable aquatic habitat is present within or adjacent to the project site. Additionally, the project site is outside the species' breeding range.
White-tailed kite <i>Elanus leucurus</i>	–	FP	Nests in shrubs (in Sacramento San-Joaquin Delta) and trees adjacent to grasslands oak woodland, and edges of riparian habitats. Roosts communally.	Unlikely	While the large-stature trees at the project site could support nesting, successful nests for this species are typically greater than 300 feet from roadways and surrounded by natural vegetation, and the project site is within 300 feet of Fite Circle and U.S. 50. No suitable foraging habitat is present within the project site. The nearest CNDDDB records are along the American River, 1 mile or farther from the project site (CDFW 2025).
Golden eagle <i>Aquila chrysaetos</i>	–	FP	Nests on cliffs or large trees with an expansive view of the surrounding area. Requires open areas for foraging	No potential	There is no suitable nesting or foraging habitat within or adjacent to the project site.
Northern harrier <i>Circus hudsonius</i>	–	SSC	Meadows, grasslands, open rangelands, desert sinks, fresh and saltwater emergent wetlands. Nests on ground, usually at marsh edge. Mostly nests in emergent wetland or along rivers or lakes, but may nest in grasslands, grain fields, or on sagebrush flats several miles from water.	No potential	There is no suitable nesting or foraging habitat within or adjacent to the project site. No CNDDDB-documented records occur within 10 miles of the project site (CDFW 2025).
Bald eagle <i>Haliaeetus leucocephalus</i>	FD	SE/FP	Nests and winters along ocean shores, lake margins, and rivers. Nests in tall trees within 1 mile of permanent water.	Unlikely	The nearest large river suitable for bald eagle foraging or nesting is 0.4 mile from the project site.

Common and Scientific Name	Legal Status ¹		Habitat Requirements	Potential for Occurrence in the Project Site ²	Rationale
	Federal	State			
Swainson's hawk <i>Buteo swainsoni</i>	–	ST	Breeds in grasslands with scattered trees, juniper-sage flats, riparian areas, savannahs, and agricultural or ranch lands with groves or lines of trees. Requires adjacent suitable foraging areas, such as grasslands, or alfalfa or grain fields supporting rodent populations.	Unlikely	While the large-stature trees at the project site could support nesting, successful nests for this species are typically closer to suitable foraging areas. No suitable grassland foraging habitat is present within or adjacent to the project site. No suitable foraging habitat is present within the project site.
Burrowing owl <i>Athene cunicularia</i>	–	SCE/ SSC	Nests and forages in grasslands, agricultural fields, and low scrub habitats, especially where ground squirrel burrows are present; occasionally inhabit artificial structures and small patches of disturbed habitat.	Unlikely	No suitable habitat is present within the project site, and the ruderal grass along the channel south of the project site is regularly mown. No potentially suitable burrows were observed during the site reconnaissance survey on May 7, 2025. The nearest CNDDDB-documented occurrence is approximately 1 mile south of the project site.
Long-eared owl <i>Asio otus</i>	–	SSC	Nests in forests near open meadows. Roosts in dense vegetation. Forages in open areas in grasslands, shrublands, or woodlands.	Unlikely	The project site is outside the species' breeding range. The species could use large-stature trees within the project site for roosting but is more likely to roost in less-disturbed areas with high-quality foraging habitat in the vicinity. No CNDDDB-documented records occur within 5 miles of the project site (CDFW 2025).
Short-eared owl <i>Asio flammeus</i>	–	SSC	Large, open areas, including grasslands, wetlands, and agricultural fields.	No potential	Suitable habitat is not present within or adjacent to the project site.
Loggerhead shrike <i>Lanius ludovicianus</i>	–	SSC	Open areas (e.g., agricultural fields, pastures, grassland) with occasional shrubs or small trees. Often perch on fence lines, utility poles, or thorny shrubs.	No potential	Grass areas within the vicinity of the project site are not expansive enough to provide suitable loggerhead shrike habitat. Additionally, no CNDDDB-documented records occur within 10 miles of the project site (CDFW 2025).
Bank swallow <i>Riparia riparia</i>	–	ST	Breeds in open lowland areas near bodies of water. Build nests, often in large colonies, in vertical banks and bluffs. These colonies are usually made in fairly loose soils that are easy for the birds to burrow into.	No potential	No suitable nesting or foraging habitats are present within or adjacent to the project site.
Purple martin <i>Progne subis</i>	–	SSC	In the west, breeds colonially along woodland edges, in forest clearings, and in desert with large cacti. Forages in a variety of habitats, including urban areas, parks, and wetlands.	Unlikely	No suitable nesting habitat is present within or adjacent to the project site. The species may forage in urban areas, but no CNDDDB-documented records occur within 5 miles of the project site (CDFW 2025).

Common and Scientific Name	Legal Status ¹		Habitat Requirements	Potential for Occurrence in the Project Site ²	Rationale
	Federal	State			
Grasshopper sparrow <i>Ammodramus savannarum</i>	–	SSC	Typically occurs in grasslands, prairies, hayfields, and open pastures with little to no scrub cover and often with some bare ground. Nests on the ground, often at the base of a clump of grass within an extensive patch of tall grasses or sedges.	No potential	No suitable habitat is present within or adjacent to the project site. Grass in the area is regularly disturbed and maintained at heights too low for the species. No CNDDDB-documented records occur within 10 miles of the project site (CDFW 2025).
Song sparrow, Modesto population <i>Melospiza melodia</i>	–	SSC	Nests in dense vegetation near water, typically in emergent freshwater marshes. Forages opportunistically on the ground.	No potential	No suitable aquatic habitat is present within or adjacent to the project site. No CNDDDB records documented within the past 50 years occur within 10 miles of the project site (CDFW 2025).
Yellow-breasted chat <i>Icteria virens</i>	–	SSC	Nests in dense shrubby vegetation, typically along rivers. Winters in shrubsteppe, savanna, mangrove, or tropical scrub habitats in Mexico and Central America.	No potential	No suitable habitat is present within or adjacent to the project site.
Yellow-headed blackbird <i>Xanthocephalus xanthocephalus</i>	–	SSC	Nests in emergent vegetation in wetlands and shallow areas of marshes, ponds, and rivers.	No potential	No suitable habitat is present within or adjacent to the project site.
Tricolored blackbird <i>Agelaius tricolor</i>	–	ST/ SSC	Nests colonially in large, dense stands of freshwater marsh, riparian scrub, and other shrubs and herbs. Forages in grasslands and agricultural fields. Wintering populations concentrate in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta and the central coast in open rangeland.	No potential	No suitable habitat is present within or adjacent to the project site.
Yellow warbler <i>Setophaga petechia</i>	–	SSC	Thickets or second-growth riparian, often willow, habitats.	No potential	No suitable habitat is present within or adjacent to the project site.
Mammals					
Pallid bat <i>Antrozous pallidus</i>	–	SSC	Roosts in rock crevices, tree hollows, mines, caves, and a variety of anthropogenic structures, including vacant and occupied buildings. Buildings, mines, and natural caves are utilized as roosts. Occurrence is primarily in arid habitats.	Unlikely	Potential roosting habitat is available in the trees at the project site. Suitable roosting and foraging habitats are not present within the project site. The nearest CNDDDB-documented record is approximately 10 miles northeast of the project site (CDFW 2025).
Western red bat <i>Lasiurus frantzii</i>	–	SSC	Roosts in tree foliage in riparian areas.	No potential	No suitable habitat is present within or adjacent to the project site. No CNDDDB-documented records occur within 10 miles of the project site (CDFW 2025).

Common and Scientific Name	Legal Status ¹		Habitat Requirements	Potential for Occurrence in the Project Site ²	Rationale
	Federal	State			
American badger <i>Taxidea taxus</i>	–	SSC	Primarily occurs in dry, open areas of shrub, forest, and herbaceous habitats. Requires friable soils to dig large burrows for dens.	Unlikely	Habitat in the vicinity of the project site is low-quality with low connectivity. The nearest CNDDDB-documented record is approximately 2.5 miles south of the project site (CDFW 2025).

Notes:

CNDDDB = California Natural Diversity Database;

DPS = Distinct Population Segment;

ESU = Evolutionarily Significant Unit.

¹ Status explanations:

– = no listing.

Federal

FD = delisted under the federal Endangered Species Act.

FE = listed as endangered under the federal Endangered Species Act.

FPT = proposed for listing as threatened under the federal Endangered Species Act.

FT = listed as threatened under the federal Endangered Species Act.

State

FP = Fully Protected.

SCE = state candidate for listing as endangered under the California Endangered Species Act.

SE = listed as endangered under the California Endangered Species Act.

SSC = state species of special concern.

ST = listed as threatened under the California Endangered Species Act.

Sources: CDFW (2025), USFWS (2025)

² Potential for occurrence categories defined:

Unlikely = The project site is located within the species' range, and only poor quality habitat occurs on or adjacent to the project site, or the project site is characterized by features that limit the likelihood of a species' occurrence; the project site is not expected to support these species. The species may or may not have been recorded within 5 miles of the project site.

No Potential = The project site is located outside the species' geographic or elevational range or no suitable habitat for the species is present within or immediately adjacent to the project site.

3.5 CULTURAL RESOURCES

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
V. Cultural Resources. Would the project:				
a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to § 15064.5?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to § 15064.5?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

3.5.1 SETTING

The project site consists of a tilt-up concrete light industrial building with paved parking area and drive aisles at 3127 Fite Circle in the city of Rancho Cordova. The building was constructed in 1981 and is not currently listed as a historical resource. Historically, the project site was part of a 35-acre farmstead planted with hay fields. The farmstead was still extant in 1980, but this property and the neighboring properties to the east were sold at this time. The former farmlands were rezoned as light industrial and the first buildings in the newly planned industrial park, including the building at 3127 Fite Circle, were constructed in 1981 (NETR 2025; USGS 1980).

The project site lies within the ethnographic territory of the Nisenan, who primarily occupied lands east of the Sacramento River. See Section 3.18, “Tribal Cultural Resources” for ethnohistoric context for the project site (Wilson and Towne 1978: 387).

3.5.2 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

BACKGROUND RESEARCH

Records Search

AECOM requested a records search on April 30, 2025 of pertinent cultural resources information curated by the North Central Information Center (NCIC) of the California Historic Resources Information System at California State University, Sacramento. The records search response on April 30, 2025 (NCIC File No. SAC-25-83) included reviews of previously conducted studies and known cultural resources within a 0.25-mile radius of the project site.

The records search assesses the cultural sensitivity of the area by verifying the documentation of known cultural resources at, or adjacent to, the project site and thus assesses the likelihood of the presence of unrecorded cultural resources. This assessment is based on the historical references and the distribution of previously recorded resources in the vicinity of the project site and developing a context for the identification and preliminary evaluation of cultural resources that may be present within the project site.

No previously recorded cultural resources were identified within or adjacent to the project site. Two previously recorded built environment cultural resources were identified within a 0.25-mile radius of the project site. The Sacramento Valley Railroad, California’s first passenger railroad (P-34-000455) which parallels Folsom Boulevard and the Old Mills Winery (P-34-003387) (see Table 3.5-1). Two previous cultural studies were conducted within a 0.25-mile radius of the project site (see Table 3.5-2) (NCIC File No. SAC-25-83).

Table 3.5-1. Known Cultural Resources within 0.25 miles of Project Site

Primary Number	Resources Name and Description	Distance from Project Site
P-34-000455	Sacramento Valley Railroad, completed in 1856.	0.25 miles north from the project site
P-34-003387	Old Mills Winery at 9857 Horn Road, Sacramento. Includes several 1927-constructed winery buildings with modern infill.	Southern parcel boundary is 0.17 miles northwest from the project site

Notes: NRHP = National Register of Historic Places
Source: NCIC 2025; Data compiled by AECOM 2025.

Table 3.5-2. Previous Studies Conducted within 0.25 miles of the Project Site

NCIC Report No	Report Title	Author and Date
06092	Archaeological and Architectural Inventory and Determination of Eligibility and Effect of the Butterfield to Mather Field Light Rail Extension and Brighton Bridge Double Tracking Project	Jones & Stokes Associates, Inc. 1995
14291	Section 106 Review of Federally Funded Residential Rehabilitation Project at 3146 Redcoat Lane, City of Rancho Cordova, Sacramento County	Heisler, Stefan 2023

Notes: NCIC = North Central Information Center; All reports are on file at the NCIC
Source: NCIC 2025; Data compiled by AECOM 2025

The Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) was contacted on April 30, 2025 to request a Sacred Lands File search for known cultural and tribal cultural resources within or near the project site. Results of the search returned by the NAHC on May 1, 2025, and was negative for Native American cultural resources in the project vicinity.

Because the full extent of the project site is paved and no native soils are visible, a pedestrian survey for surface archaeological resources was not conducted. In addition, the 1981-constructed building on the project site does not meet the recommended minimum age threshold of 50 years for potential historical significance as a CEQA historical resource.

3.5.3 DISCUSSION

a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to § 15064.5?

No Impact. No historical resources have been identified on the project site. Typically, for a building to be considered of historic age for potential historical significance requires an age of at least 50 years. The light industrial building on the project site was built in 1981 and is not of historic age. It has not been previously evaluated as a historical resource, but it does not meet the recommended age threshold for potential historical significance. There is nothing in the historic record that indicates this building has exceptional importance that

would meet the threshold of a historical resource for CEQA. In addition, even if this 1981-constructed building was found to be a historical resource, installation of the digital billboard structure would not affect this building because the monopole location is approximately 200 feet to the southeast of the building. Therefore, the proposed project would result in no impact on historical resources.

b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to § 15064.5?

Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated. The proposed project would involve ground disturbance to install a monopole to support the electronic billboard. An auger would be used to bore a 5-foot-diameter hole to approximately 30 feet below the ground surface and backfilled with concrete to provide support for the pole. An approximately 1.5-foot-deep by 1-foot-wide utility trench would be excavated from the proposed sign to the adjacent building on the project site for a new underground electrical line. No significant archaeological resources have been identified on the project site. Based on the results of the records search and disturbed native soils from decades of farming, there is low potential that buried archaeological resources would be encountered during ground-disturbing activities for the proposed project. Despite the limited extent of ground disturbance, if archaeological resources were encountered during these ground-disturbing activities, this impact could be **potentially significant**.

Mitigation Measure CUL-1: Accidental Damage and Discovery Protocols

The project applicant or its contractor shall retain a qualified archaeologist to undertake the tasks specified within this mitigation measure. In the event that suspected precontact or historic-period archaeological resources are encountered during debris removal, demolition, excavation, and/or grading of the site, all activity within a 50-foot radius of the find shall be stopped, the project applicant or designee shall be notified, and the qualified archaeologist shall examine the find. Project personnel shall not collect or move any cultural material. The archaeologist shall evaluate the find(s) to determine if it meets the definition of a historical, unique archaeological, and/or tribal cultural resource and follow the further procedures outlined below:

- If the finds do not meet the definition of a historical resource or unique archaeological resource, no further study or protection is necessary prior to resuming project implementation.
- If the find(s) does meet the definition of a historical resource or unique archaeological resource, then it should be avoided by project activities. If avoidance is not feasible, as determined by the City of Rancho Cordova, the qualified archaeologist in consultation with the City, shall make appropriate recommendations regarding the treatment and disposition of such finds, and significant impacts to such resources shall be mitigated in accordance with the recommendations of the archaeologist prior to resuming construction activities within a 50-foot radius.
- If human remains are encountered, project work shall stop in the vicinity of the remains and, as required by law, the Sacramento County Coroner would be notified immediately. An archaeologist also would be contacted to evaluate the find. If the human remains were determined of Native American origin, the coroner would need to notify the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) within 24 hours of that determination. Pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 5097.98, the NAHC, in turn, would immediately contact a Most Likely Descendent (MLD). The MLD would have 48 hours to inspect the site and recommend treatment of the remains. The project applicant and

City shall coordinate with the MLD in good faith to find a respectful resolution to the situation and entertain all reasonable options regarding the descendants' preferences for treatment.

- Recommendations for treatment and disposition of finds could include, but are not limited to, the collection, recordation, and analysis of any significant cultural materials, or the turning over of tribal cultural resources to tribal representatives for appropriate treatment. A report of findings documenting any data recovery shall be submitted to the Northwest Information Center (NWIC).

SIGNIFICANCE AFTER MITIGATION

Because this mitigation measure requires stopping work within the area of any potential find(s), and requires that a qualified archaeologist inspect the find and, in consultation with the City, make recommendations for avoiding or reducing impacts, implementation of Mitigation Measure CUL-1 would reduce impacts of the proposed project to undiscovered archaeological resources to **less than significant with mitigation incorporated**.

c) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?

Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated. Although a low potential would exist, the possibility of encountering human remains cannot be discounted. However, this impact would be reduced to a less-than-significant level with implementation of Mitigation Measure CUL-1 because this mitigation measure requires stopping work within the area of any potential find(s), and requires that a qualified archaeologist inspect the find and, in consultation with the City, make recommendations for avoiding or reducing impacts.

3.6 ENERGY

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
VI Energy. Would the project:				
a) Result in potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during project construction or operation?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

3.6.1 SETTING

Electric services in the project area are provided by the Sacramento Municipal Utility District (SMUD). SMUD has served Sacramento County since 1946 and is the nation’s sixth-largest community-owned electric utility (SMUD 2023). SMUD delivers electricity to an approximately 900 square-mile area within Sacramento County, serving 1.5 million people. SMUD’s primary power sources are hydroelectric, natural gas, geothermal, and wind (SMUD 2023). Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E) provides natural gas within the city of Rancho Cordova. The project would not require natural gas for operations, so PG&E’s capacity to supply natural gas is not discussed further in this Initial Study.

3.6.2 DISCUSSION

a) Result in potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during project construction or operation?

Less than Significant. Energy efficiency is a possible indicator of environmental impacts. The actual adverse physical environmental effects of energy use and the efficiency of energy use are detailed throughout this IS/MND in the environmental topic-specific sections. For example, the use of energy associated with electricity consumption leads to indirect greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, the impacts of which are addressed in Section 3.8, Greenhouse Gas Emissions. There is no physical environmental effect associated with energy use that is not addressed in the environmental topic-specific sections of this IS/MND.

Project activities would increase energy consumption for the two week construction duration in the form of fossil fuels (e.g., gasoline, diesel fuel). Transportation energy use during construction would be associated with the transport and use of construction equipment (off-road), delivery and haul trucks (on-road), and construction employee passenger vehicles (on-road). Construction-related energy consumption would be limited to the short duration of construction (two weeks) and would cease upon completion of construction activities. Project operations would result in energy consumption from the use of electricity to operate the billboards and minor fuel consumption related to the infrequent maintenance-related vehicle trips. As described in Section 2, Project Description, the billboard would be operated 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year, and the brightness of the billboard would automatically adjust up or down based on ambient light conditions.

Due to the short and temporary nature of construction, the anticipated equipment and minor construction work required for this project type, the project would not include unusual characteristics that would necessitate the use of construction equipment that is less energy-efficient than the equipment used at comparable construction sites. In addition, construction contractors are required, in accordance with Mitigation Measure AIR-1 and the CARB Airborne Toxic Control Measure for Diesel-Fueled Commercial Motor Vehicle Idling, to minimize the idling time of construction equipment and trucks by shutting equipment off when it is not in use and limit idling time to a maximum of 5 minutes. Per Mitigation Measure AIR-1, construction contractors would also be required to maintain and properly tune all construction equipment in accordance with manufacturers' specifications. These required practices would limit wasteful and unnecessary energy consumption.

Operational energy consumption would also be minor and limited to electricity to power the billboard (33,945 kilowatt-hours per year (KWH/year) and minor fuel consumption associated with infrequent maintenance-related vehicle trips (see Section 3.8.2). Because the project will connect to an existing subsurface electrical line and panel that provides service to the project property's building, no ancillary electrical transformers or infrastructure is needed for this project that could increase electricity consumption or generate unnecessary energy consumption. Therefore, energy consumption associated with construction and operation of the project would not be inefficient, wasteful, or unnecessary and this impact would be **less than significant**.

b) Conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency?

No Impact. The project would not use land that was otherwise slated for renewable energy production and does not otherwise conflict with any state or local renewable energy plans. As described previously, the project's operational energy demand would be limited to electricity consumption from the operation of the digital billboard and minor fuel consumption associated with infrequent maintenance-related vehicle trips. In addition, on-road and off-road equipment used during construction and maintenance of the digital billboard would comply with applicable off-road equipment and on-road vehicle regulations, which impose limits on idling and fuel use specifications and ensure fuel is used efficiently. The digital billboards would also be equipped with light emitting diode (LED) lights that are Underwriters Laboratories Environmental (UL-E) Green Leaf certified (Watchfire Signs 2025). Underwriters Laboratories (UL) and UL-E, working with the California Energy Commission and sign industry representatives, developed the program to assist sign manufacturers with testing and certifying products for their compliance with a variety of energy efficiency requirements, including those within Title 24 of the California Energy Commission's Building Energy Efficiency Standards (Watchfire Signs 2011). Therefore, the project would not conflict with or obstruct any state or local plans for renewable energy or energy efficiency and there would be **no impact**.

3.7 GEOLOGY AND SOILS

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
VII. Geology and Soils. Would the project:				
a) Directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:				
i) 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? (Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
ii) Strong seismic ground shaking?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
iv) Landslides?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) 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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) 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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative waste water disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of waste water?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
f) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

3.7.1 SETTING

GEOLOGY AND PALEONTOLOGICAL RESOURCES

The project site is situated in the southeastern Sacramento Valley, within the Great Valley Geomorphic Province. The Great Valley is a forearc basin composed of thousands of feet of sedimentary deposits that has undergone periods of subsidence and uplift over millions of years. Overlying the thick sequence of sedimentary rock units that form the deeply buried bedrock units in the mid-basin areas of the valley are shallower Holocene (11,700 years Before Present [B.P.] to Present Day) and Pleistocene-age (2.8 million years B.P. to 11,700 years B.P.)

alluvial deposits. At the project site, this alluvium is composed of sediments from the Sierra Nevada to the east that were carried by water and deposited on the valley floor.

Based on a review of geologic mapping prepared by Gutierrez (2011), the native deposits at the project site consist of the Riverbank Formation. This formation is of late Pleistocene age (approximately 130,000–450,000 years B.P.) (Helley and Harwood 1985). The Riverbank Formation is composed of weathered reddish gravel, sand, and silt comprising older alluvial fans and terraces of the American River and other major rivers and streams in the Sacramento Valley (Helley and Harwood 1985).

A records search of the U.C. Berkeley Museum of Paleontology (UCMP) was performed by AECOM in March 2025; there are no recorded fossil localities within the project site (UCMP 2025). Nine recorded vertebrate fossil localities have been recorded in the Sacramento area from sediments referable to the Riverbank Formation, including a Teichert Gravel Pit approximately 5 miles south of the project site. These localities have yielded the remains of a Rancholabrean-age mammoth, bison, camel, coyote, horse, Harlan's ground sloth, mammoth, antelope, deer, rabbit, woodrat, fish, mole, mice, squirrel, snake, and gophers, dire wolf, frog, Pacific pond turtle, and the family Anatidae (i.e., ducks, geese, and swans) (Jefferson 1991, UCMP 2025, Kolber 2004, Hilton et al. 2000, Helley and Harwood 1985). Numerous additional vertebrate fossil localities exist from the Riverbank Formation and similar unnamed Rancholabrean-age alluvial sediments in Yolo, San Joaquin, Merced, Stanislaus, Fresno, and Madera counties (UCMP 2025).

Based on paleontological sensitivity guidelines published by the Society of Vertebrate Paleontology (2010), because of the large number of vertebrate fossils that have been recovered from the Riverbank Formation it is considered to be of high paleontological sensitivity.

SEISMICITY

Geologists have determined that the greatest potential for surface fault rupture and strong seismic ground shaking is from active faults; that is, faults with evidence of activity during the Holocene epoch (i.e., the last 11,700 years). The southeastern end of the Sacramento Valley, where the project site is located, historically has not been seismically active (U.S. Geological Survey 2025). The Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Act (Alquist-Priolo Act) was created to help reduce the loss of life and property from an earthquake by prohibiting the construction of structures designed for human occupancy across the traces of active faults. The project site is not located within or near a fault designed under the Alquist-Priolo Act, or any other known active or potentially active fault (California Geological Survey [CGS] 2022, Jennings and Bryant 2010). Earthquake shaking hazards have been calculated by the Working Group on California Earthquake Probabilities by projecting earthquake rates based on earthquake history and fault slip rates, the same data used for calculating earthquake probabilities. The probabilistic *Earthquake Shaking Potential for California* (Branum et al. 2016) indicates that the project site is rated with a low potential shaking hazard intensity (i.e., an estimated peak horizontal ground acceleration of approximately 0.35g). Regions in the low intensity categories are distant from known, active faults and are projected to experience lower levels of shaking less frequently.

The Geotechnical Investigation Report for the proposed project site conducted by Mid-Pacific Engineering, Inc (MPE 2025) indicates that the closest active fault mapped by the USGS is the Great Valley 4a, Trout Creek fault, located approximately 37 miles west of the project site.

Free groundwater was not encountered during the MPE field borings at the site to a depth of 7.5 feet bgs (MPE 2025). The groundwater table is relatively deep: approximately 95 feet below the ground surface (California Department of Water Resources [DWR] 2023). Furthermore, the site is composed of stable, Pleistocene-age deposits (Gutierrez 2011); and the project site and the surrounding area are flat.

SOILS

The project site consists of a paved parking lot that is part of an office/light industrial park developed in the 1980s. Therefore, it is anticipated that below the asphalt pavement, compacted, graded material is present that likely consists of a mixture of native soils and imported fill material to a depth of approximately 3 feet.

A review of U.S. Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) soil survey data indicates that the project site is composed of the Urban land-Natomas complex, 0 to 2 percent slopes soil type (NRCS 2024). Urban soils have been altered or obscured by urban works and structures; buildings and pavement cover more than 85 percent of the surface of this soil type. Therefore, Urban Land is not rated by the NRCS in terms of soil characteristics. The Natomas soil that is part of the soil complex at the project site is composed of loam, has a low shrink-swell potential, and a moderate surface water runoff potential (NRCS 2024)

Near-surface earth materials encountered in two on-site soil borings advanced on March 26, 2025 for the Geotechnical Investigation Report for this project (MPE 2025) consisted primarily of stiff, silty clay to an approximate depth of three feet below ground surface (bgs). Below this depth, silty gravel with sand layer, traced cobble was encountered. The gravelly layer was dense to very dense. Drilling auger refusals were encountered at depths of approximately 6 and 7.5 feet bgs.

3.7.2 DISCUSSION

- a) **Directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:**
 - i) **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? (Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42.)**

No Impact. Surface rupture is an actual cracking or breaking of the ground along a fault during an earthquake and is generally limited to a linear zone a few yards wide. The project site is not located within an Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zone, nor is the site located within or immediately adjacent to the trace of any other known fault; therefore, surface fault rupture at the project site is unlikely. The geotechnical investigation report for the project site concluded that the potential for ground rupture at the site in the event of a seismic event is unlikely. Thus, there would be **no impact**.

- ii) **Strong seismic ground shaking?**

Less than Significant. The proposed project would install two digital advertising billboards on a vacant parcel located in a relatively low intensity ground-shaking zone. These structures would be required to follow the seismic standards of the most recent version of the California Building Code, which requires measures to ensure that structures can withstand the maximum expected ground shaking without catastrophic failure. Therefore, the

proposed project would not directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving strong seismic ground shaking.

The site-specific geotechnical report by MPE was submitted to the City for review as part of the applicant's permit application. The project applicant is required by the CBC and the City to implement the engineering and design recommendations related to seismic, soils, and other geologic considerations at the project site that are contained in the geotechnical report. Results of the Geotechnical Investigation Report indicate that the project site is not within a current earthquake fault zone or another area known to possess a significant geologic risk to site development. MPE anticipates conventional grading practices may be used for most site earthwork activities, and that a drilled, cast-in-place concrete pier may be used for support of the proposed billboard (MPE 2025). Therefore, impacts from strong seismic ground shaking would be **less than significant**.

iii) **Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?**

Less than Significant Impact. The project site is composed of stable, late Pleistocene-age deposits consisting of the Riverbank Formation (Gutierrez 2011). The depth to groundwater at the project site is relatively deep—approximately 95 feet below the ground surface (DWR 2023), and there is a low potential for strong seismic ground shaking (Branum et al. 2016). The Geotechnical Investigation Report indicates that due to the existence of very dense gravelly materials, it is MPE's opinion that seismically induced ground subsidence will be negligible. The Geotechnical Investigation Report also indicates that the project site is not located within a State Designated Seismic Hazard Zone for liquefaction, and due to the absence of groundwater and the existence of very dense gravelly soils, liquefaction potential at this site is low. Thus, there would be a **less-than-significant** impact for seismic ground failure and liquefaction.

iv) **Landslides?**

No Impact. The project site and the surrounding area are flat. Thus, there is no potential for landslides, and there would be **no impact**.

b) **Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?**

Less-than-Significant Impact. Based on a review of NRCS soil data, the project site consists of the Urban land-Natomas complex, 0 to 2 percent slopes soil type. Urban Land is not rated by the NRCS, but the Natomas loam soil type is rated with a moderate water erosion hazard (NRCS 2024).

Project-related construction would involve minor earthmoving activities associated with excavation of a 5-foot-diameter hole that would be bored approximately 30 feet below the ground surface, for the pole that would support the digital sign. Also, an approximately 1.5-foot-deep utility trench would be excavated to connect the digital sign with existing electrical power at the adjacent building. A total of approximately 42 cubic yards of soil would be excavated and removed from the project site. Because project-related construction would disturb less than 1 acre of land, a State Water Resources Control Board Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan is not required. Furthermore, because the proposed project would involve excavation and disposal of less than 350 cubic yards of material, a grading and erosion control permit from the City is not required per Rancho Cordova Municipal Code Section 16.44.060. Because the proposed project would involve such a small amount of excavation, and the excavated material would be immediately placed into trucks and transported off the project site for disposal at a

facility permitted to accept clean fill, substantial soil erosion would not occur, and this impact would be less than significant.

c) 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?

Less-than-Significant Impact. NRCS soil survey data indicates that the project site is composed of the Urban land-Natomas complex, 0 to 2 percent slopes soil type (NRCS 2024). The area where project-related construction would occur is composed of asphalt pavement likely underlain by engineered compacted soil that was designed to provide foundational support for the existing parking lot. Native Natomas loam soil is expected to be present at depths below approximately 3 feet. The NRCS has not rated the Natomas loam soil type with any substantial limitations for construction (NRCS 2024). Furthermore, the Natomas loam soil is derived from the Riverbank Formation, which is a stable, well-cemented, Pleistocene-age rock formation.

The site-specific Geotechnical Investigation Report submitted to the City for review as part of the applicant's permit application includes engineering and design recommendations related to seismic, soils, and other geologic considerations at the project site to minimize and reduce construction impacts including excavation trench backfill placement and compaction considerations, and sign pole drilled pier foundation caving prevention methods. Therefore, any unstable soil that is present during project construction would be addressed through implementation of recommendations contained in the Geotechnical Investigation Report. Thus, this impact would be **less than significant**.

d) 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?

Less-than-Significant Impact. NRCS soil survey data indicates that the project site is composed of the Urban land-Natomas complex, 0 to 2 percent slopes soil type (NRCS 2024). The area that would be excavated for the digital sign support post and the utility trench consists of a paved parking lot that is part of an office/light industrial park developed in the 1980s. It is anticipated that below the asphalt pavement, compacted, graded material is present that likely consists of a mixture of native soils and imported fill material (Urban Land). Because this material was emplaced for use as a parking lot foundation, likely to a depth of approximately 3 feet, the soil is not likely to be expansive. Below that depth, native Natomas loam soil is assumed to be present. NRCS soil survey data indicate that the Natomas loam soil has a low shrink-swell potential (NRCS 2024). The project-specific Geotechnical Investigation Report indicates that based on limited thickness of clay soils encountered during the field investigation and the proposed pier foundation for the digital sign that expansive soils should not be a significant factor in sign development, provided further the recommendations of this report are followed. Therefore, if any expansive soil is present (which is unlikely) construction in expansive soil would be addressed through implementation of recommendations contained in the geotechnical report. Thus, this impact would be **less than significant**.

- e) **Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative waste water disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of waste water?**

No Impact. The proposed project consists of a digital sign, which does not require or include wastewater treatment. Temporary, portable restrooms would be provided for construction workers during the construction phase. Thus, there would be no impact.

- f) **Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?**

UNIQUE GEOLOGIC FEATURES

No Impact. A unique geologic feature consists of a major natural element that stands out in the landscape, such as a large and scenic river, gorge, waterfall, volcanic cinder cone, lava field, or glacier. These features are considered outstanding examples that are regarded as the best of their kind. The project site and the surrounding land is flat and is surrounded by office and light industrial buildings, paved parking areas, and associated urban landscaping. The proposed 60-foot-tall digital sign at the project site would not be visible from the American River due to the intervening distance (approximately 0.5 mile at the closest point), buildings, and tall landscape trees. There are no unique geologic features at the project site or within the project viewshed; thus, there would be **no impact**.

UNIQUE PALEONTOLOGICAL RESOURCES

Less-than-Significant with Mitigation Incorporated. As described in Section 3.7.1 above, a review of geologic mapping indicates that the project site is composed of the Riverbank Formation (Gutierrez 2011), which is considered to be of high paleontological sensitivity due to the number of vertebrate fossils that have been recovered from this formation in the Sacramento and San Joaquin Valleys. The surface area that would be excavated for the digital sign support post and the utility trench consists of a paved parking lot that is part of an office/light industrial park developed in the 1980s. It is anticipated that below the asphalt pavement, compacted, graded material is present that likely consists of a mixture of native soils and imported fill material to a depth of approximately 3 feet below the surface. Below this material, native Riverbank Formation deposits are assumed to be present. The proposed utility trench for the underground electrical line from the digital sign to the existing building would not be deep enough to encounter native Riverbank Formation materials. Project-related construction would include minor earthmoving activities associated with excavation of a 5-foot-diameter hole that would be bored approximately 30 feet below the ground surface, presenting an extremely low probability of encountering an intact vertebrate fossil specimen in the paleontologically sensitive Riverbank Formation. However, construction-related earthmoving activities at the project site could result in accidental damage to or destruction of unique paleontological resources, and this impact is considered **potentially significant**.

Mitigation Measure GEO-1: Avoid Impacts to Unique Paleontological Resources

To minimize the potential for destruction of or damage to previously unknown unique, scientifically important paleontological resources during earthmoving activities at the project site, the project applicant shall do the following:

- Prior to the start of earthmoving activities, retain either a qualified archaeologist or paleontologist to inform all construction personnel involved with earthmoving activities regarding the possibility of

encountering fossils, the appearance and types of fossils likely to be seen during construction, and proper notification procedures should fossils be encountered.

- If paleontological resources are discovered during earthmoving activities, the construction crew shall immediately cease work in the vicinity of the find and notify the project applicant and the City. The project applicant shall retain a qualified paleontologist to evaluate the resource and prepare a recovery plan. The recovery plan may include, but is not limited to, a field survey, construction monitoring, sampling and data recovery procedures, museum curation for any specimen recovered, and a report of findings. Recommendations in the recovery plan that are determined by the project applicant and the City to be necessary and feasible shall be implemented before construction activities can resume at the site where the paleontological resource or resources were discovered.

SIGNIFICANCE AFTER MITIGATION

Implementation of Mitigation Measure GEO-1 would reduce project-related impacts on unique paleontological resources to **Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated** because construction workers would be alerted to the possibility of encountering paleontological resources and, in the event that resources were discovered, fossil specimens would be recovered and recorded and would undergo appropriate curation.

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3.8 GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
VIII.Greenhouse Gas Emissions. Would the project:				
a) Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

3.8.1 SETTING

Greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions play a critical role in determining the earth’s surface temperature. A portion of the solar radiation that enters earth’s atmosphere is absorbed by the earth’s surface, and a smaller portion of this radiation is reflected back toward space. Infrared radiation (i.e., thermal heat) is absorbed by GHGs; as a result, infrared radiation released from the earth that otherwise would have escaped back into space is instead “trapped,” resulting in a warming of the atmosphere. This phenomenon, known as the “greenhouse effect,” is responsible for maintaining a habitable climate on Earth.

GHGs are present in the atmosphere naturally, are released by natural sources, and are formed from secondary reactions taking place in the atmosphere. The following are GHGs that are widely seen as the principal contributors to human-induced global climate change: carbon dioxide (CO₂), methane (CH₄), nitrous oxide (N₂O), hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs), perfluorocarbons (PFCs), and sulfur hexafluoride (SF₆).

Global warming potential (GWP) is a concept developed to compare the ability of each GHG to trap heat in the atmosphere relative to CO₂. The GWP of a GHG is based on several factors, including the relative effectiveness of a gas to absorb infrared radiation and length of time (i.e., lifetime) that the gas remains in the atmosphere (“atmospheric lifetime”). The GWP of each gas is measured relative to CO₂, the most abundant GHG. GHGs with lower emissions rates than CO₂ may still contribute to climate change because they are more effective at absorbing outgoing infrared radiation than CO₂ (i.e., high GWP). The concept of CO₂-equivalents (CO₂e) is used to account for the different GWP potentials of GHGs to absorb infrared radiation.

3.8.2 THRESHOLDS OF SIGNIFICANCE

On September 18, 2023, the City of Rancho Cordova adopted the Final Climate Action and Adaptation Plan (CAAP). The purpose of the CAAP is to identify strategies and measures the City can take to reduce GHG emissions to levels that align with the State’s goals and set forth strategies to adapt and promote resilience to the impacts of climate change (City of Rancho Cordova 2024). To reduce communitywide emissions in alignment with statewide targets, the CAAP establishes a 2030 target of achieving a GHG emissions level of 36 percent below 2019 levels (438,300 metric tons [MT] CO₂e annually); and a 2045 goal of achieving a GHG emissions level of 81 percent below 2019 levels (129,300 MT CO₂e annually). To achieve the 2030 target and to make substantial progress toward the 2045 goal, the CAAP proposes a Strategy Framework consisting of 14 GHG

reduction strategies, 34 GHG emission reduction measures, and supporting actions in the following sectors: On-Road Transportation, Building Energy, Off-Road Vehicle and Equipment, Water and Solid Waste, and Carbon Sequestration. In June 2024, the CAAP was updated to clarify that the CAAP is not a qualified GHG reduction plan as defined under CEQA Guidelines §15183.5(b).

Therefore, for the purposes of determining whether the project’s construction related and operational GHG emissions would result in a cumulatively considerable contribution to the cumulative impact of climate change, this analysis follows the guidance prepared by SMAQMD in its *Guide to Air Quality Assessment in Sacramento County* (CEQA Guide) (SMAQMD 2021). Table 3.8-1 lists the SMAQMD adopted thresholds of significance for GHG emissions.

Table 3.8-1. SMAQMD GHG Emissions CEQA Thresholds of Significance

Phase	Threshold
Construction	1,100 MT CO ₂ e per year
Operational	1,100 MT CO ₂ e per year and implementation of Tier 1 BMPs: BMP 1: no natural gas: projects shall be designed and constructed without natural gas infrastructure. BMP 2: Electric Vehicle (EV) ready: projects shall meet the current CalGreen Tier 2 standards, except all EV capable spaces shall be instead EV ready.

Source: SMAQMD 2021.

Notes:

BMP = best management practices; CalGreen = California Green Building Standards; CEQA = California Environmental Quality Act; CO₂e = carbon dioxide equivalents; GHG = greenhouse gas emissions; MT = metric tons

Since the project includes the installation of one digital, electrical sign and operational activities would be limited to electricity consumption, BMP 1 and 2, which prohibit natural gas infrastructure and require the installation of electric vehicle (EV)-ready spaces for land uses that generate vehicle trips, respectively, would not be applicable. Therefore, determining whether the project’s construction related and operational GHG emissions may result in a cumulatively considerable contribution to the cumulative impact of climate change, is based on SMAQMD’s threshold of 1,100 MT CO₂e per year (SMAQMD 2021).

3.8.2 DISCUSSION

a) Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?

Less than Cumulatively Considerable Impact. The proposed project would generate GHG emissions during construction and operation from mobile exhaust emissions (i.e., direct GHG emissions) and energy source emissions from the generation of electricity to power the billboard (i.e., indirect GHG emissions).

Construction-related exhaust GHG emissions would be generated temporarily from off-road construction equipment, material delivery and haul trucks, and construction worker vehicles. As described in Section 2, Project Description, construction would occur over a 2-week duration and construction equipment would be limited to an auger, crane, and excavator. Material delivery and haul truck trips would only be required to deliver equipment and the monopole and to export approximately 42 cubic yards of soil and a small quantity of asphalt. SMAQMD has developed screening levels based on size of development at which 1,100 MT CO₂e per year would not be exceeded (SMAQMD 2021). Additionally, SMAQMD determined that projects below the GHG operational screening levels would not exceed the construction GHG threshold of significance if the project meets the

parameters in Chapter 3 of the CEQA Guide for the construction NO_x and PM screening level. Therefore, for projects that are smaller than the land use sizes in the GHG operational screening levels table, implement the SMAQMD's Tier 1 operational GHG BMPs, and also meet the air quality screening parameters outlined in Chapter 3 of the CEQA Guide regarding construction, construction and operational emissions may be considered less-than-cumulatively considerable. The SMAQMD operational screening levels table does not include a land use type that is directly applicable to the proposed project; however, the retail and commercial land use categories are considered a proxy for this evaluation because they are related to building square footage. The building size screening levels for retail and commercial uses range from 12,000 square feet to 65,000 square feet. As the proposed project would only construct a monopole and digital billboard and would not approach this level of development size, the proposed project would meet the GHG operational screening levels. As described above, the SMAQMD Tier 1 operational GHG BMPs are not applicable to the proposed project. Additionally, as described in Section 3.3, Air Quality, the proposed project would also meet the construction-related air quality screening parameters outlined in Chapter 3 of the CEQA Guide. Therefore, the project's construction GHG emissions result in a **less than cumulatively considerable** contribution to the cumulative impact of climate change.

Operational activities associated with the proposed project would result in GHG emissions strictly from energy source emissions from the proposed project's electricity demand and mobile source emissions as a result of billboard maintenance visits (e.g., once per week for the first 3 months of project operation, and then a maximum of 4 times per year). Daily electricity consumption is estimated to be approximately 93 kilowatt-hours. As described in Section 2, Project Description, the billboards would be operated 365 days a year and electricity would be supplied by SMUD. As such, the annual electricity consumption is estimated to be 33,945 kilowatt-hours per year. Based on SMUD's 2023 GHG intensity factor of 260 pounds CO₂e per megawatt-hour (SMUD 2023), this results in emissions of 4.0 MT CO₂e per year, which is well below the SMAQMD threshold of 1,100 MT CO₂e per year. Mobile source emissions generated by maintenance-related visits would similarly be minimal.

Therefore, the project's construction and operational GHG emissions would result in a **less than cumulatively considerable** contribution to the cumulative impact of climate change.

b) Conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases.

Less than Cumulatively Considerable Impact. The City of Rancho Cordova CAAP contains strategies and measures the City can take to reduce GHG emissions to levels that align with the State's goals and set forth strategies to adapt and promote resilience to the impacts of climate change. There are several CAAP strategies related to energy, most of which are related to energy use in commercial and residential buildings. None of the CAAP strategies and measures would be directly applicable to operation of the proposed digital billboard. Therefore, this analysis is based on an evaluation of statewide plans, policies, or regulations adopted for the purpose of reducing GHG emissions.

In accordance with State law, CARB developed the State's Climate Change Scoping Plan (2008) and Scoping Plan updates (2014, 2017, and 2022) to outline the State's strategy to reduce California's GHG emissions per Assembly Bill (AB) 32, Senate Bill (SB) 32, and AB 1279. CARB's Scoping Plan updates include measures that would indirectly address GHG emissions from construction activities, including the phasing in of cleaner technology for diesel engine fleets and the development of a Low Carbon Fuel Standard. Policies formulated under the mandate of AB 32 that apply to construction-related activities, either directly or indirectly, are assumed

to be implemented statewide and would affect the project should those policies be implemented before construction begins.

As described previously, the long-term generation of GHG emissions associated with the project would be limited to electricity consumption and infrequent maintenance-related vehicle trips. California established a Renewables Portfolio Standard, which requires retail sellers of electricity to meet specific goals of providing their energy supply from renewable sources. Per SB 100, electricity retailers are required to provide at least 60 percent of their supply from renewable sources by 2030. SB 100 also added the requirement that all state's electricity must come from carbon-free resources by 2045. Therefore, these requirements would continue to reduce the carbon content of electricity generation and would reduce GHG emissions associated with the project's electricity consumption.

Furthermore, the SMAQMD quantitative thresholds of significance for GHGs were developed with the intent to ensure at least 90 percent of new GHG emissions would be reviewed and assessed for mitigation, thereby contributing to GHG emissions reductions goals set forth by AB 32 and SB 32. As described in Section 3.8.3(a), the project would not exceed GHG emission thresholds established by SMAQMD, and the project would not include natural gas infrastructure or generate vehicle trips outside of maintenance-related vehicle trips. Due to the project's consistency with the above-described plans, as well as not exceeding thresholds of significance, the project would not conflict with applicable plans, policies, or regulations adopted for the purposes of reducing GHG emissions. This impact would result in a **less than cumulatively considerable** contribution to the cumulative impact of climate change.

3.9 HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
IX. Hazards and Hazardous Materials.				
Would the project:				
a) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and/or accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d) Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code §65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
e) 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 for people residing or working in the project area?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
g) Expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving wildland fires?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

3.9.1 HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

AECOM performed a search of publicly available databases maintained under Public Resources Code Section 65962.5 (i.e., the “Cortese List”) to determine whether any known hazardous materials are present either in or within 0.25 mile of the project site. These searches included the EnviroStor database maintained by the California Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC 2025), and the GeoTracker database maintained by the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB 2025). In addition, AECOM performed a search of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency’s (U.S. EPA 2024) National Priorities List (Superfund) database.

The project site is not on the Cortese List (DTSC 2025, SWRCB 2025). The nearest open, active hazardous materials site is the L.P. Bradshaw Terminal approximately 0.75 mile west of the project site, which is a liquid petroleum facility owned by SFPP (a subsidiary of Kinder Morgan). Groundwater sampling data indicate that the contaminated groundwater plume from this site does not extend off-site towards the east (in the direction of the project site) (SWRCB 2025).

The nearest Superfund site is the former Mather Air Force Base (now operated by Sacramento County as Mather Airport), approximately 1 mile to the southeast (U.S. EPA 2024). The contaminated groundwater plumes from this site are limited to areas on and immediately adjacent to the former Air Force base; contaminated groundwater does not extend north underneath or near the project site (U.S. Air Force 2020).

On May 7, 2025 AECOM personnel also conducted an on-site reconnaissance survey of the outdoor areas of the proposed project parcel to assess potential releases of hazardous materials. This AECOM survey did not observe any evidence of a potential hazardous materials release to the ground on the project site property.

SCHOOLS

There are no schools within 0.25 mile of the project site. The nearest school is the General A.M. Winn Elementary School approximately 0.35 mile south of the project site, within the Lincoln Village residential area.

AIRPORTS

The runways at the publicly owned Sacramento Mather Airport are approximately 1.5 miles southeast of the project site. Mather Airport has a control tower, two asphalt/concrete runways that are approximately 11,300 and 6,081 feet long, respectively, along with two helipads. The runways and helipads are lighted. Mather Airport was formerly a military facility (Mather Air Force Base), which was decommissioned and is now a County-owned and operated public use airport. In 2018, there were 52 aircraft based at the field, and there were approximately 272 flights per day averaged over the 12-month period. Mather Airport accommodates large transport planes and high-performance military jets (AirNav 2024).

The project site is situated within the boundaries of the Mather Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan (ALUCP), in Review Area 1 (Environmental Science Associates 2022). Review Area 1 is composed of areas within the noise contours and safety zones for the airport. The project site is not situated within the airport's 60-dB Community Noise Equivalent Level (CNEL) or greater noise contours. The project site is situated within Safety Zone 6 (Airport Traffic Pattern Zone), which is the least hazardous of the airport safety zones.

Federal Aviation Administration Regulations (U.S. Code Title 14) Part 77, "Safe, Efficient Use, and Preservation of the Navigable Airspace," has been adopted as a means of monitoring and protecting the airspace required for safe operation of aircraft and airports. Part 77 recognizes that certain safety hazards to aircraft and airport operations may occur where a land use would, among other criteria, generate disorienting or strobing lights, create excessive glare, or generate electronic interference. Part 77 also sets forth restrictions on the height of structures in proximity to airports. The Mather ALUCP incorporates the Federal Aviation Administration Part 77 regulations.

WILDLAND FIRE HAZARDS

State Responsibility Areas (SRAs) are areas where the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) is the primary emergency response agency responsible for fire suppression and prevention. Land where the primary responsibility for firefighting falls within the purview of a local agency are referred to as Local Responsibility Areas (LRAs). The project site is within an LRA, and is served by the Sacramento Metropolitan Fire District.

Public Resources Code Sections 4201–4204 and Government Code Sections 51175–51189 require identification of fire hazard severity zones within the state of California. Fire hazard severity zones are measured qualitatively, based on vegetation, topography, weather, crown fire potential (a fire’s tendency to burn upward into trees and tall brush), and ember production and movement within the area in question. CAL FIRE delineates three potential wildfire hazard ratings: moderate, high, and very high. These classifications indicate “hazard” not “risk.” CAL FIRE’s fire “hazard” rating is based on the physical conditions that create a likelihood for wildfire in combination with expected fire behavior, over a 30- to 50-year period (without considering measures such as home hardening, recent wildfires that have burned vegetation, or fuel reduction efforts). Based on the most recent (2025) fire hazard severity zone ratings issued by CAL FIRE for LRAs, the project site and the surrounding area are not classified, meaning that the fire hazard is low (i.e., they are not within moderate, high, or very high fire hazard severity zones) (CAL FIRE 2025).

3.9.2 DISCUSSION

a) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?

Less-than-Significant Impact. Project construction would involve the use and transport of small amounts of hazardous materials (e.g., fuel, lubricants, and paint). Transportation of hazardous materials on area roadways is regulated by the California Highway Patrol and the California Department of Transportation, and use of these materials is regulated by DTSC, as outlined in CCR Title 22. The project’s construction contractors are required to use, store, and transport hazardous materials in compliance with applicable federal and State regulations during project construction and operation. Because the project would be required to implement and comply with existing hazardous material regulations, and because each of these regulations is specifically designed to protect the public health through improved procedures for the handling of hazardous materials, better technology in the equipment used to transport these materials, and a more coordinated quicker response to emergencies, this impact would be less than significant.

b) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and/or accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?

Less-than-Significant Impact. The proposed project involves a minimal amount of construction for installation of a digital sign and a utility trench for the necessary electrical connection. Construction would involve the use of small amounts of hazardous materials such as gasoline, diesel, and lubricants. However, none of these materials would be acutely hazardous, and their use is regulated by law at both the state and federal level. All users are required to read and follow the manufacturer’s labeling instructions for use, storage, and disposal of hazardous materials. Therefore, the proposed project would not create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and/or accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment, and this impact would be less than significant.

c) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?

No Impact. There are no existing or proposed schools within 0.25 mile of the project site. Therefore, the proposed project would not emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school, and there would be no impact.

d) Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code § 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?

No Impact. The project site is not listed on the hazardous waste and substances site list (Cortese list) pursuant to Government Code Section 65962. Furthermore, there are no open-active hazardous materials sites in the project vicinity that could affect the proposed project (SWRCB 2025, DTSC 2025, U.S. EPA 2025). Thus, the proposed project would not create a significant hazard to the public or the environment from construction in a hazardous materials site, and there would be no impact.

e) 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 for people residing or working in the project area?

Less-than-Significant Impact. The project site is approximately 1.5 miles northwest of the runways at Mather Airport, and is situated within the boundaries of the Mather ALUCP, in Review Area 1. The project site is not situated within the airport's 60-dB CNEL or greater noise contours. The project site is situated within Safety Zone 6 (Airport Traffic Pattern Zone). Based on a review of Mather ALUCP safety compatibility criteria for various land uses within Safety Zone 6, the proposed 60-foot-tall digital sign would be compatible with the ALUCP height restrictions (i.e., the equivalent of a three-story building). A crane would be used over a 1- to 2-day period to place the digital sign on the support pole; given the distance of the project site from the airport runways, and the fact that the project site is not within the airport runway approach or departure zones, temporary short-term use of the crane during construction would not represent an airport safety hazard. Furthermore, the proposed digital sign is required to comply with the City's Digital Freeway Signs Ordinance (Rancho Cordova Municipal Code Section 23.743) which expressly prohibits the use of flashing lights, and requires that ambient light emitted by the sign may not increase more than 0.3 footcandles above the existing light levels (as demonstrated by the project's lighting study prepared by Watchfire in 2025).

Because the proposed project includes an amendment to the City's zoning ordinance that would affect the allowable land uses (i.e., digital freeway signs would be allowed in a larger area along U.S. 50), and because the area affected by the proposed ordinance is within Review Area 1 of the Mather Airport Influence Area, project submittal to the Airport Land Use Commission (i.e., the Sacramento Area Council of Governments) for a consistency determination with the Mather ALUCP is required prior to City approval of the applicant's conditional use permit and Operating Use Agreement. Based on the above analysis, it is assumed that the proposed project would be found to be consistent with the ALUCP. Therefore, the proposed project would not result in a safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing or working in the project area, and this impact is considered less than significant.

f) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?

No Impact. Project-related construction would be minor in nature (drilling a hole and pouring concrete to support the sign post and trenching for an underground electrical line) and would occur during weekdays over a two-week period. The location where the proposed digital sign would be installed is adjacent to a paved parking area approximately 400 feet from the travel lanes on Fite Circle, and project-related construction would not require lane closures. No traffic control would be necessary. Regular operation of the sign would require no more than four daily visits by one person per year. Therefore, the proposed project would not impair implementation of or

physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan, and there would be no impact.

g) Expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving wildland fires?

No Impact. The project site is within an office/light industrial park in an urbanized area of the City of Rancho Cordova, and is surrounded by office and light industrial buildings and paved parking areas to the north, east, and west. U.S. 50, which consists of 12 travel lanes and is approximately 190 feet in total width of paved area, is immediately south of the project site. The project site and the surrounding areas are within an LRA, and have not been classified by CAL FIRE as either a moderate, high, or very high fire hazard severity zone (CAL FIRE 2025). The existing wildland fire risk conditions at the project site are low, and installation of the proposed digital sign would not exacerbate the existing fire risk conditions. Therefore, the proposed project would not expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving wildland fires, and there would be no impact.

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3.10 HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
X. Hydrology and Water Quality. Would the project:				
a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or ground water quality?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Substantially deplete groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) 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:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
i) Result in a substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site;	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
ii) Substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or off-site;	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
iii) 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	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
iv) Impede or redirect flood flows?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d) In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk release of pollutants due to project inundation?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
e) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

3.10.1 SETTING

SURFACE WATER RESOURCES AND STORMWATER DRAINAGE

The proposed digital sign would be installed in a paved parking lot within an existing office/light industrial park, approximately 40 feet north and 650 feet east of an open drainage channel (known as the Mather Drain) that is owned and maintained by the City of Rancho Cordova. This channel conveys stormwater runoff from the project site and surrounding areas north to the lower American River (City of Rancho Cordova 2024).

The project site includes an existing underground stormwater drainage system (RSC Engineering 2025). An inlet structure recessed into the parking lot pavement is located approximately 20 feet northwest of the new pole that would support the proposed digital sign. The inlet structure receives stormwater runoff from the surrounding hardscape areas (buildings and pavement) and conveys runoff through a 12-inch-diameter underground pipeline to a junction with another underground pipeline approximately 185 feet to the west. The combined flows from both

pipelines discharge into other underground stormwater conveyance lines within the existing office/light industrial park, which in turn discharge into an existing open channel owned and maintained by the City at a location approximately 650 feet northwest of the proposed digital sign (City of Rancho Cordova 2024). The open channel conveys stormwater runoff north for approximately 0.5 mile where it discharges into the lower American River. The open channel is approximately 50 feet wide and consists of dirt and grass for most of its length, but north of Folsom Boulevard the channel is lined with concrete.

SURFACE WATER QUALITY

As required by the Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act, the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board (Central Valley RWQCB) has designated beneficial uses for water body segments in its jurisdiction, along with water quality criteria necessary to protect these uses, as contained in the *Sacramento and San Joaquin River Basin Plan* (Central Valley RWQCB 2019). In addition, the federal Clean Water Act (CWA) Section 303(d) requires states to identify waters where the permit standards, any other enforceable limits, or adopted water quality standards are still unattained. The CWA also requires states to develop total maximum daily loads (TMDLs) to improve the water quality of impaired water bodies. TMDLs are the quantities of pollutants that can be safely assimilated by a water body without violating water quality standards. TMDLs are developed for impaired water bodies to maintain beneficial uses as designated in the applicable Basin Plan, achieve water quality objectives, and reduce the potential for future water quality degradation. National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permits for water discharges must take into account the pollutants for which a water body is listed as impaired.

The lower American River (from Nimbus Dam west to the confluence with the Sacramento River) is included in the SWRCB's 303(d) list for the following pollutants: water temperature, benzo[b]fluoranthene, chrysene, polychlorinated biphenyls, toxicity, pyrethroids, bifenthrin, cyfluthrin, cyhalothrin (lambda), indicator bacteria, and mercury (SWRCB 2024). Even if a specific water body is not included in the SWRCB's 303(d) list, any upstream tributary to a 303(d)-listed stream could contribute pollutants to the listed segment (for example, the Mather Drain). None of these pollutants currently have adopted TMDLs for the lower American River.

FLOODING

The project site is not located within a 100-year flood hazard zone (Federal Emergency Management Agency 2012). The project site is also not located within a 200-year floodplain and therefore is not subject the Urban Level of Flood Protection requirements contained in the Central Valley Flood Protection Plan (California Department of Water Resources [DWR] 2024).

3.10.2 DISCUSSION

a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or ground water quality?

Less-than-Significant Impact. Project-related construction activities would involve excavating a 5-foot-diameter hole to a depth of 30 feet for the pole that would support the proposed digital sign. Because groundwater is approximately 95 feet below the ground surface (DWR 2023), construction of the proposed project would not encounter groundwater. The proposed project would also require excavating an approximately 1.5-foot-deep utility trench from the proposed digital sign to the adjacent building for an underground electrical line. A total of

approximately 42 cubic yards of soil would be excavated and removed from the project site. Because project-related construction would disturb less than 1 acre of land, a State Water Resources Control Board Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan is not required. Furthermore, because the proposed project would involve excavation and disposal of less than 350 cubic yards of material, a grading and erosion control permit from the City is not required per Rancho Cordova Municipal Code Section 16.44.060. Construction activities would be concluded within a two-week time period, the construction areas would be re-graded flat, and the utility trench would be re-covered with asphalt pavement similar to existing conditions. Because the proposed project would involve such a small amount of excavation over a very short amount of time, and the excavated material would be immediately placed into trucks and transported off the project site for disposal at a facility permitted to accept clean fill, the project would not violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or ground water quality, and this impact would be less than significant.

b) Substantially deplete groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin?

No Impact. The proposed project involves installation and operation of a digital freeway sign. Groundwater would not be required for the proposed project. Project-related construction activities would involve excavating a 5-foot-diameter hole for the pole that would support the proposed digital sign to a depth of 30 feet (above the estimated groundwater depth of 95 feet bgs), which would be backfilled with concrete. The existing location where the hole would be drilled is already covered with asphalt pavement, which is impervious. Therefore, the proposed project would not add any new impervious surfaces. Thus, the proposed project would not substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that there the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin, and there would be no impact.

c) 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:

i) Result in a substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site;

Less-than-Significant Impact. As discussed in detail in criterion a) and b) above, the proposed project would occur in a flat area that is already covered with asphalt pavement and therefore would not add new impervious surfaces. Furthermore, the project would involve a very small amount of excavation over a two-week time period, and the excavated material would be immediately placed into trucks and transported off the project site for disposal at a facility permitted to accept clean fill. Finally, the construction areas would be graded flat similar to existing conditions, and the asphalt pavement would be replaced over top of the electrical utility trench. Therefore, the project would not substantially alter existing drainage patterns and would not result in substantial erosion or siltation on or off-site, and this impact would be less than significant.

ii) Substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or off-site;

No Impact. As described in detail in criterion b) above, the proposed project would not add any new impervious surfaces as compared to existing conditions and would not alter the existing drainage pattern at the project site. Therefore, the proposed project would not substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or offsite, and there would be no impact.

iii) 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

No Impact. As described above in Section 3.10.1, there is an existing stormwater drainage system at the project site. The proposed project has been designed to avoid disturbance to the existing underground stormwater drainage conveyance line and the recessed infall in the existing parking lot near the proposed digital sign (RSC Engineering 2025). Because the project construction area is already covered with asphalt pavement, installation of the 5-foot-diameter pole to support the digital sign would not add any new impervious surfaces. The construction areas would be graded flat at the conclusion of construction and the utility trench would be recovered with asphalt pavement, similar to existing conditions. Therefore, the proposed project would not 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, and there would be no impact.

iv) Impede or redirect flood flows?

No Impact. The project site is not located in a flood hazard zone (FEMA 2012, DWR 2025). Thus, the proposed project would not impede or redirect flood flows, and there would be no impact.

d) In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk release of pollutants due to project inundation?

No Impact. The project site is not located in a flood hazard zone (FEMA 2012, DWR 2025). Because the project site is approximately 83 miles from the Pacific Ocean, there is no hazard from a tsunami. The American River is approximately 0.5 mile north of the project site at the closest point; however, the project region is not seismically active and there are U.S. Army Corps of Engineers levees on both of side of the American River that have been designed to protect the surrounding developed from flood events, including the very low potential for seismic seiches. Thus, there would be no impact.

e) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan?

Less-than-Significant Impact. For the reasons described in criteria a) and b) above, the proposed project would not conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan, and this impact would be less than significant.

3.11 LAND USE AND PLANNING

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
XI. Land Use and Planning. Would the project:				
a) Physically divide an established community?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) 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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

3.11.1 SETTING

The project site is situated in the City of Rancho Cordova within the Folsom Boulevard Specific Plan Area, which extends south from Folsom Boulevard to the north side of U.S. 50. The project site and the surrounding area to the north, east, and west are zoned and designated as Office Industrial Mixed Use within the Folsom Boulevard Specific Plan (OIMU-FB) (City of Rancho Cordova 2013, 2025). The Specific Plan states that offices may be developed in an office park setting, but most office and light industrial development stands alone. Commercial and other support services may be integrated vertically and/or horizontally in this district. The Specific Plan does not contain any standards related to signage; instead, it relies on the City Zoning Code for provisions related to signs.

Rancho Cordova Municipal Code Section 23.743.150 (Digital Freeway Signs Overlay) allows for consideration of digital freeway signs in certain specific locations within the city with a use permit and a digital freeway signs operating agreement. The digital freeway signs overlay encompasses three specific geographies in the northeastern area of the city (see Exhibit 3.1-4 in Section 3.1, “Aesthetics”).

3.11.2 DISCUSSION

a) Physically divide an established community?

No Impact. The proposed project consists of installing and operating a digital freeway sign within an established office/light industrial park in the Folsom Boulevard Specific Plan area. The proposed digital sign would not physically divide an established community, and thus there would be no impact.

b) 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?

Less-than-Significant Impact. The proposed digital freeway sign would be consistent with the land use and zoning designations at the project site and the surrounding office and light industrial district, which is within the Folsom Boulevard Specific Plan area. However, the proposed new digital sign would be situated approximately 3.8 miles west of the western end of the City’s existing Digital Freeway Signs Overlay area. The project includes a proposed amendment to Rancho Cordova Municipal Code Section 23.743.150 to expand the area where digital freeway signs may be installed, to include an area north of U.S. 50 from Bradshaw Road to Routier Road (see Exhibit 3.1-5 in Section 3.1, “Aesthetics”). The proposed project would also require site design review and a conditional use permit from the City. The project would comply with City’s existing digital freeway sign

standards except for the display size. The digital billboard would have a display area of 1,200 square feet, which is greater than the 672 feet specified in the City's digital freeway sign standards. However, the project proponent has requested a deviation from this standard, which is allowed through the digital freeway signs operating agreement if approved by the City. The proposed digital billboard would be consistent with all of the other requirements contained in Rancho Cordova Municipal Code Section 23.743.150 (see Section 3.1, "Aesthetics").

Because the proposed project includes an amendment to the City's zoning ordinance that would affect the allowable land uses (i.e., digital freeway signs would be allowed in a larger area along U.S. 50), and because the area affected by the proposed ordinance is within Review Area 1 of the Mather Airport Influence Area, project submittal to the Airport Land Use Commission (i.e., the Sacramento Area Council of Governments) for a consistency determination with the Mather Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan (ALUCP) is required prior to City approval. As described in detail in Section 3.9, "Hazards and Hazardous Materials," based on a review of Mather ALUCP safety compatibility criteria for various land uses, the proposed digital sign would be compatible with the ALUCP land use and safety standards.

Consistency issues between implementation of the proposed project and related land use plans and policies are related to land use regulations, which are, in part, based on avoiding or otherwise restricting uses that would adversely affect resources of the development site or adjacent land uses. Specific impacts and project consistency issues associated with other resource and issue areas are addressed in each topic area section of this IS/MND, as appropriate. These topic area sections (e.g., air quality, biological and cultural resources, hazards, noise, and transportation) provide a detailed analysis of other relevant physical environmental effects that could result from implementation of the proposed project, and identify mitigation measures, as necessary, to reduce impacts. Implementation of the proposed project would not conflict with adopted City General Plan or Folsom Boulevard Specific Plan policies and land use designations, or City zoning following adoption of the proposed Rancho Cordova Municipal Code amendment, and therefore would not generate any adverse physical impacts beyond those identified and addressed in detail in the environmental topic area sections of this IS/MND. Thus, this impact is considered less than significant.

3.12 MINERAL RESOURCES

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
XII.Mineral Resources. Would the project:				
a) 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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) 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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

3.12.1 SETTING

The loss of access to regionally important mineral deposits as a result of land uses that preclude mining is one of the issues that the California Surface Mining and Reclamation Act of 1975 (SMARA) was framed to address. Under SMARA, the State Mining and Geology Board may designate certain mineral deposits as being regionally significant to satisfy future needs. The Board’s decision to designate an area is based on a classification report prepared by the California Geological Survey (CGS) and on input from agencies and the public. CGS’ priority for mineral land classification studies is based on areas that are most likely to urbanize in the future, with the goal of establishing an awareness of the availability of important resources by communicating with the appropriate lead agencies regarding the presence, location, and significance of mineral deposits within a particular region.

The project site is situated within the designated Greater Sacramento Area Production-Consumption Region for Portland cement concrete-grade aggregate, which includes all designated lands within the marketing area of the active aggregate operations supplying the Greater Sacramento urban centers (O’Neal and Gius 2018). In compliance with SMARA, CGS has established the classification system shown in Table 3.12-1 to denote both the location and significance of key extractive resources.

Table 3.12-1. California Division of Mines and Geology Mineral Land Classification System

Classification	Description
MRZ-1	Areas where available geologic information indicates that little likelihood exists for the presence of significant concrete aggregate resources.
MRZ-2	Areas where geologic information indicates the presence of significant concrete aggregate resources, except where noted as Construction Aggregate.
MRZ-3	Areas containing known or inferred concrete aggregate resources of undetermined mineral resource significance
MRZ-4	Areas where available geologic information is inadequate to assign to any other mineral resource zone category

Note: MRZ = Mineral Resource Zone
 Source: O’Neal and Gius 2018

The MRZ-2 classification generally indicates there is a high likelihood that regionally important deposits of mineral resources are present. The project site is classified as MRZ-2 for concrete grade aggregate resources. The nearest aggregate mineral resource sector that has been classified by CGS as regionally significant is adjacent to and south of Mather Airport, approximately 2 miles southeast of the project site.

The draft environmental impact report for the City of Rancho Cordova General Plan (City of Rancho Cordova 2006) indicates that the City's locally important mineral resource recovery sites include the areas designated by CGS as MRZ-2, as well as local existing aggregate mining operations (some of which have also been classified by CGS as regionally significant aggregate mineral resource sectors). Because the project site is classified as MRZ-2, it is located within a locally important mineral resource recovery site designated under the City General Plan.

3.12.2 DISCUSSION

a) **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?**

Less-than-Significant Impact. Aggregate resources, which are used primarily for construction, are present in the City in areas comprised of ancestral channels of the American River. Former dredger mine tailings in these areas provide a particularly valuable source of construction aggregate. There are no active aggregate mining operations in the project vicinity, on the north side of U.S. 50. However, sand and gravel are currently mined in the project region, including the City of Rancho Cordova near White Rock Road approximately 4 miles southeast of the project site. Sand and gravel are also mined in the unincorporated County, approximately 2–3 miles south of the project site near Kiefer Boulevard and State Route 16. Construction aggregates are an important, fundamental building material used as a building foundation and road base material. In terms of volume and price, there is presently no economically viable substitute for aggregate products. The demand for aggregate products in the region has increased with the region's population and corresponding physical growth.

All of the land within the existing, fully developed office and light industrial park located between U.S. 50 and Folsom Boulevard, which includes the project site, is classified by CGS as MRZ-2. The office/industrial park was developed in the mid-1980s. The MRZ-2 classification also includes U.S. 50 and the approximately 600-acre residential community south of the project site—immediately south of U.S. 50 and north of Mather Airport. These residences were developed from the 1960s through the 1980s. The MRZ-2 classification for these areas was applied by CGS based on geologic mapping, which indicates that these areas are composed of the Pleistocene-age Riverbank Formation (Upper Unit) (Gutierrez 2011). Most of the areas classified as MRZ-2 and the designated regionally important aggregate mineral sectors classified by CGS in the project region are also mapped as the Riverbank Formation (Gutierrez 2011, O'Neal and Gius 2018, Helley and Harwood 1985). However, as noted above, the project site and the immediately surrounding areas on all sides are part of the urbanized area of Rancho Cordova, and were developed in the 1960s through the 1980s. Therefore, any aggregate mineral resources that may have been present in these areas became inaccessible for mining due to urban development 40–60 years ago. The proposed digital sign would be installed in a portion of the developed office/industrial park north of U.S. 50 at the end of a paved drive aisle and two paved parking areas that provide access and parking for the adjacent light industrial buildings. There is no opportunity for mineral resource mining anywhere in the project vicinity or at the project site. Therefore, installation of the proposed digital sign, which would include a support pole in a 5-foot-diameter hole approximately 30 feet deep, and a 1.5-foot-deep utility line trench to connect to an existing electric panel, would not 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, and this impact would be less than significant.

b) 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?

Less-than-Significant Impact. The City’s locally important mineral resource recovery sites (City of Rancho Cordova 2006) are the same as the regionally important mineral sites designated by CGS. Therefore, for the same reasons discussed in Impact 3.12-1 above, the proposed project would not result in the loss of availability of locally important mineral resource recovery sites, and this impact would be less than significant.

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3.13 NOISE

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
XIII. Noise. Would the project result in:				
a) 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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) For a project 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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

3.13.1 SETTING

SOUND, NOISE, AND ACOUSTICS

Sound is the mechanical energy of a vibrating object transmitted by pressure waves through a liquid or gaseous medium (e.g., air). Noise is defined as sound that is unwanted (i.e., loud, unexpected, or annoying). Acoustics is the physics of sound.

The amplitude of pressure waves generated by a sound source determines the perceived loudness of that source. A logarithmic scale is used to describe sound pressure level in terms of decibels (dB). The threshold of human hearing (near-total silence) is approximately 0 dB. A doubling of sound energy corresponds to an increase of 3 dB. In other words, when two sources at a given location are each producing sound of the same loudness, the resulting sound level at a given distance from that location is approximately 3 dB higher than the sound level produced by only one of the sources. For example, if one automobile produces a sound pressure level of 70 dB when it passes an observer, two cars passing simultaneously do not produce 140 dB; rather, they combine to produce 73 dB.

The typical human ear is not equally sensitive to all frequencies of the audible sound spectrum. As a consequence, when assessing potential noise impacts, sound is measured using an electronic filter that de-emphasizes the frequencies below 1,000 hertz (Hz) and above 5,000 Hz in a manner corresponding to the human ears decreased sensitivity to low and extremely high frequencies instead of the frequency mid-range. This method of frequency weighting is referred to as A-weighting and is expressed in units of A-weighted decibels (dBA). All noise levels reported in this section are in terms of A-weighting. There is a strong correlation between A-weighted sound levels and community response to noise. As discussed above, doubling sound energy results in a 3-dB increase in sound. In typical noisy environments, noise-level changes of 1 to 2 dB are generally not perceptible by the healthy human ear; however, people can begin to detect 3-dB increases in noise levels. An increase of 5 dB is generally

perceived as distinctly noticeable and a 10-dB increase is generally perceived as a doubling of loudness. The following are the sound level descriptors commonly used in environmental noise analysis:

- ▶ Equivalent sound level (L_{eq}): An average of the sound energy occurring over a specified time period. In effect, the L_{eq} is the steady-state sound level containing the same acoustical energy as the time-varying sound that actually occurs during the same period. The 1-hour, A-weighted equivalent sound level ($L_{eq[h]}$) is the energy average of A-weighted sound levels occurring during a 1-hour period.
- ▶ Maximum sound level (L_{max}): The highest instantaneous sound level measured during a specified period.
- ▶ L_{dn} (Day-Night Noise Level): The 24-hour L_{eq} with a 10 dB “penalty” applied during nighttime noise-sensitive hours, 10:00 p.m. through 7:00 a.m. The L_{dn} attempts to account for the fact that noise during this specific period of time is a potential source of disturbance with respect to normal sleeping hours.
- ▶ L_n (Statistical Descriptor): The noise level exceeded n percent of a specific period of time, generally accepted as an hourly statistic. An L_{10} would be the noise level exceeded 10 % of the measurement period.

Sound from a localized source (i.e., point source) propagates uniformly outward in a spherical pattern, and the sound level attenuates (decreases) at a rate of 6 dB for each doubling of distance from a point/stationary source. Roadways and highways and, to some extent, moving trains consist of several localized noise sources on a defined path; these are treated as “line” sources, which approximate the effect of several point sources. Sound levels attenuate at a rate of 3 dB for each doubling of distance from a line source. Therefore, noise from a line source attenuates less with distance than noise from a point source with increased distance.

GROUNDBORNE VIBRATION

Groundborne vibration is energy transmitted in waves through the ground. Vibration attenuates at a rate of approximately 50 percent for each doubling of distance from the source. This approach considers only the attenuation from geometric spreading and tends to provide for a conservative assessment of vibration level at the receiver.

Vibration is an oscillatory motion that can be described in terms of the displacement, velocity, or acceleration. Vibration typically is described by its peak and root-mean-square (RMS) amplitudes. The RMS value can be considered an average value over a given time interval. The peak vibration velocity is the same as the “peak particle velocity” (PPV), generally presented in units of inches per second. PPV is the maximum instantaneous positive or negative peak of the vibration signal and is generally used to assess the potential for damage to buildings and structures. The RMS amplitude typically is used to assess human annoyance to vibration, and the abbreviation “VdB” is used in this document for vibration decibels to reduce the potential for confusion with sound decibels.

EXISTING NOISE ENVIRONMENT

The nearest noise-sensitive land uses to the project site are single-family residences located approximately 350 feet south of the site, across U.S. Route 50 (US 50). These residences are shielded from the project site by an existing sound wall. An American Olean facility is located approximately 100 feet west of the project construction area. Although this facility may include some internal office space for sales and administrative functions, its primary use is commercial/light industrial, involving the sale and distribution of tile and related

materials. Under CEQA and local land use definitions, commercial and light industrial uses, even those with incidental office components, are not considered noise-sensitive receptors. Noise-sensitive receptors typically include residential dwellings, schools, hospitals, libraries, and similar uses where a quiet environment is essential. Therefore, the American Olean facility is not classified as a noise-sensitive receptor for the purposes of this analysis. The nearest structure sensitive to vibration is the American Olean facility building, located approximately 100 feet west of the project construction area.

The existing noise environment within the project area is primarily influenced by surface transportation noise generated by vehicular traffic on U.S. Route 50, located approximately 100 feet south of the project site, and on Folsom Boulevard, located approximately 1,700 feet to the north. Light rail operations along Folsom Boulevard also contribute to the noise environment. In addition, intermittent noise from outdoor activities associated with surrounding commercial and industrial uses, as well as residential activities (e.g., people talking, operation of landscaping equipment, car doors slamming, and dogs barking), further influences the existing ambient noise levels in the project area.

Light rails in the project area generate noise level of 60 dB L_{dn} , at 100 to 500 feet from center line of tracks (City of Rancho Cordova, 2006).

Existing traffic noise levels in the vicinity of the project site were estimated based on traffic volumes along US 50, as shown in Table 3.13-1. Estimated traffic noise levels are approximately 78 dBA L_{eq} at a distance of 250 feet from the US 50 centerline, corresponding to the location of the nearest noise-sensitive residential uses. These modeled noise levels assume no shielding from natural or artificial barriers. However, an existing sound wall between US 50 and the residences is expected to reduce traffic noise levels by approximately 10 dB. Accounting for this attenuation, traffic noise levels at the nearest noise-sensitive receptors would be at or below 68 dBA L_{eq} . The City of Rancho Cordova General Plan establishes a maximum exterior noise standard of 60 dBA L_{eq} for transportation noise sources affecting residential land uses (City of Rancho Cordova 2006).

Table 3.13-1. Summary of Existing Traffic Noise Level in the Vicinity of the Project Site

Roadway	Segment	Traffic Volume (Peak Hour)	Distance (Feet)	Noise Level, dB, L_{eq}	Contour Distances		
					70 dB	65 dB	60 dB
US 50	Sunrise Boulevard to Nimbus Road	16,100	250	78	1,489	4,708	14,888

Notes: dB = decibels; L_{eq} = equivalent sound level (the sound energy averaged over a continuous period of time); Modeled roadway noise levels assume no natural or artificial shielding between the roadway and the receptor. Source: Caltrans 2020, Data compiled by AECOM in 2025.

THRESHOLDS OF SIGNIFICANCE

The project would result in a significant impact on the environment if it would:

- ▶ 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?
- ▶ Generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?

- ▶ For a project 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?

According to the City of Rancho Cordova General Plan, impacts to adjacent land uses from stationary sources of noise are limited to 55 dBA L_{eq} during daytime hours and 45 dBA L_{eq} during nighttime hours (City of Rancho Cordova 2006). A reduction of 5 dB L_{eq} (to 50/40 dB L_{eq}) is required for sources that generate tonal, repetitive, or impulsive noise. Impulsive noise is defined as sound of short duration, usually less than one second, with an abrupt onset and decay, such as explosions, drop forge impacts, and firearm discharges. Tonal noise is generally any sound that can be distinctly heard as a single pitch or a set of pitches, and repetitive noise refers to noise that is regularly repeated in a manner that causes annoyance, such as back-up alarms ("beepers") or pile driving activities.

While the City of Rancho Cordova General Plan sets absolute exterior noise level limits for land uses, it does not define a specific threshold for evaluating increases in construction noise above ambient levels. However, consistent with CEQA practice and guidance from Caltrans and other agencies, a 5 dBA L_{eq} increase above existing ambient conditions is commonly used as the threshold at which a noise increase is considered potentially significant, as it is generally perceived as a noticeable change in noise levels.

The City's Noise Ordinance, which is based on the Sacramento County Noise Ordinance, establishes maximum allowable exterior and interior noise levels for affected land uses. The ordinance generally limits exterior noise levels at residential and agricultural lands to 55 dBA during any cumulative 30-minute period during daytime hours (7:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.), and to 50 dBA during any cumulative 30-minute period during nighttime hours (10:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m.) (City of Rancho Cordova 2006). The ordinance allows somewhat higher maximum levels for shorter-duration noise events; however, noise should not exceed 75 dBA during the day or 70 dBA at night. Activities typically exempt from the City's noise standards include construction activities (provided that they occur between 7:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. Monday through Saturday, and between 9:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. on Sunday), school athletic and entertainment events, activities conducted at public parks and playgrounds, and transportation noise. The City's Noise Ordinance is applicable to areas within the Planning Area and would apply to areas outside the current City limits once annexed.

Under CEQA, a groundborne vibration impact is typically considered significant if vibration levels would exceed 0.2 inches per second (in/sec) peak particle velocity (PPV) for structural damage to normal buildings, or 80 vibration decibels (VdB) for human annoyance at residential receptors (FTA 2018; Caltrans 2020).

3.13.2 DISCUSSION

- 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?**

SHORT-TERM PROJECT-GENERATED CONSTRUCTION NOISE

Less than Significant Impact. Construction of the proposed structures would occur on the project site and include site preparation activities, such as minor grading, material transport, and installation of the prefabricated sign structures. Several pieces of equipment would be used during construction. An auger would bore a 5-foot-

diameter, 30-foot-deep hole for installation of the monopole. A crane would lift and install the monopole and digital sign boards. A backhoe or excavator would excavate the utility trench and perform minor grading activities. A concrete mixer truck would deliver and pour concrete to backfill the monopole foundation hole. A flatbed truck would transport the prefabricated sign components to the site, and a pickup truck would transport workers and smaller materials. Construction activities would occur over an approximately two-week period during daytime hours. Based on the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Roadway Construction Noise Model (RCNM) (FHWA 2006), noise levels for individual pieces of project equipment are expected to range from 70 to 75 dBA L_{eq} and 74 to 81 dBA L_{max} at a distance of 50 feet, as shown in Table 3.13-2.

The nearest residential sites to the project site are located approximately 350 feet from the project site. Based upon the equipment noise levels, usage factors, and a typical noise-attenuation rate of 6 dB for every doubling of distance, exterior noise levels at noise-sensitive receptors located within 350 feet of the project site could be as high as 57 dB to 64 dB L_{eq} from the project construction activities. Also, a sound wall is located between the construction site and the nearest residences, which would provide at least 5 to 10 dB reduction in noise, reducing the project construction noise to below 54 dB, L_{eq} . This level of noise is below the City’s threshold of 55 dB for station noise sources. Therefore, this impact would be less than significant.

Table 3.13-2 summarizes modeled construction noise levels at the nearest noise-sensitive locations to the project site.

Table 3.13-2. Project Construction Noise Levels

Receiver	Noise Level, dBA L_{eq} , at 50 feet	Noise Level, dBA L_{max} , at 50 feet	Noise Level, dBA L_{eq} , at 350 feet	Noise Level, dBA L_{max} , at 350 feet
Drill Rig Truck	72	79	62	55
Crane	73	81	64	56
Backhoe	74	78	61	57
Concrete Mixer Truck	75	79	62	58
Flat Bed Truck	70	74	57	53
Pickup Truck	71	75	58	54

dBA = A-weighted decibels

L_{eq} = Equivalent Noise Level

L_{max} = Instantaneous Maximum Noise Level.

Sources: FHWA Roadway Construction Noise Model, January 2006; Modeled by AECOM 2025

With respect to increases above ambient noise levels, as described above, the existing ambient noise environment at the nearest noise-sensitive receptors, residences located approximately 350 feet south of the project site across U.S. Route 50, is approximately 68 dBA L_{eq} , accounting for the presence of an existing sound wall and conservatively assuming a 10 dB reduction in traffic noise (Table 3.13-1). Construction activities associated with the proposed project are estimated to generate noise levels of up to 64 dBA L_{eq} at these receptors. When combined with the existing ambient noise, this would result in an overall noise level of approximately 69.5 dBA L_{eq} , representing an increase of about 1.5 dB due to project-related construction noise. Because this increase is well below the commonly used 5 dBA L_{eq} threshold for a substantial increase above ambient noise levels under CEQA practice, the project's short-term construction noise would not result in a significant temporary increase at the

nearest noise-sensitive uses. Therefore, the impact related to construction noise increase above ambient conditions would be considered less than significant.

LONG-TERM PROJECT-GENERATED STATIONARY SOURCE NOISE

No Impact. Project is construction only. There would be no operational noise due to the proposed project. Therefore, no impact would occur.

b) Generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?

Less-than-Significant Impact. Construction activities have the potential to result in varying degrees of temporary groundborne vibration, depending on the specific construction equipment used and operations involved. Vibration generated by construction equipment spreads through the ground and diminishes in magnitude with increases in distance.

As discussed above, on-site construction equipment could include a backhoe or excavator. For conservative analysis purposes, vibration levels associated with a dozer, considered comparable to a backhoe or excavator, are used. According to Federal Transit Administration (FTA 2018), vibration levels associated with the use of a large dozer is 0.089 inches per second (in/sec) peak particle velocity (PPV) and 87 vibration decibels [VdB referenced to 1 microinch per second ($\mu\text{in}/\text{sec}$) and based on the root mean square (RMS) velocity amplitude] at 25 feet.

Using FTA's recommended procedure for applying a propagation adjustment to these reference levels, predicted worst-case vibration levels of approximately 0.011 in/sec PPV and 69 VdB at the closest existing sensitive receptor, located 100 feet from the project site, could occur. These vibration levels would not exceed Caltrans's recommended standard of 0.2 in/sec PPV (Caltrans 2020b) with respect to the prevention of structural damage for normal buildings or the FTA's maximum-acceptable vibration standard of 80 VdB (Federal Transit Administration 2018) with respect to human annoyance for residential uses. The long-term operation of the proposed project would not include any vibration sources, and short-term construction would not result in the exposure of people or structures to or generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels. As a result, this impact would be **less than significant**.

c) For a project 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?

No Impact. The project site is located within two nautical miles of a public airport. The closest airport is Mather Airport, located approximately 1.5 miles (1.3 nautical miles) south of the project site. However, the proposed project involves only short-term construction activities for the installation of a digital billboard and would not introduce any new long-term noise-sensitive uses, such as residential, school, or medical facilities, into the area. In addition, the project would not involve the use of aircraft or require access to or through the airport for construction purposes. Workers on-site would adhere to standard occupational safety practices, including those set forth by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA 2023), to protect against exposure to existing environmental noise sources, including aircraft overflights, as necessary. Given the nature and limited duration of the construction activities, and the absence of any new permanent noise-sensitive uses, the project would not expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels related to airport operations. Therefore, no impact would occur.

3.14 POPULATION AND HOUSING

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
XIV. Population and Housing. Would the project:				
a) Induce substantial 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)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

3.14.1 SETTING

The project site is located in the City of Rancho Cordova, in an office/light industrial park within the Folsom Boulevard Specific Plan Area. Based on survey data available from the U.S. Census Bureau (2025), in 2020 the City had a population of 79,332 people and a total of 28,614 housing units. In 2023, the City’s employment rate was 60.7 percent, with a median household income of \$76,948 (which was below the State median income of \$95,521). In 2023, approximately 23 percent of the workers in the City were employed by the local, State, or federal government.

3.14.2 DISCUSSION

- a) Induce substantial 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)?**

No Impact. The proposed project consists of installation and operation of a digital freeway sign within an existing, developed office and light industrial park. The proposed project does not include a residential component. No new houses or businesses would be built as a result of the project. The proposed project does not include an extension of roads or other infrastructure that would induce population growth, would not increase the population in the area, and would not contribute to population growth in the area. Therefore, the proposed project would have no impact.

- b) Displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?**

No Impact. The proposed digital freeway sign would be installed within an existing, developed office and light industrial park. Therefore, it would not displace any housing. Because no housing would be displaced, a substantial number of people would also not be displaced. Thus, there would be no impact.

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3.15 PUBLIC SERVICES

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
XV. Public Services. Would the project:				
a) Result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times, or other performance objectives for any of the public services:				
Fire protection?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Police protection?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Schools?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Parks?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Other public facilities?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

3.15.1 SETTING

Fire protection services for the project area are provided by the Sacramento Metropolitan Fire District, which has 155 personnel to serve the District's communities. Routine and emergency operations are managed with five Battalion Chiefs with oversight through an Assistant Chief assigned a 24-hour shift (Sacramento Metropolitan Fire District 2025). The nearest fire protection facility is Station No. 62 located at 3646 Bradshaw Road, approximately 1.3 miles southwest of the project site.

Police protection services for the project area are provided by the City of Rancho Cordova Police Department, which includes 55 sworn officers and 7 non-sworn staff (Rancho Cordova Police Department 2025). The police department is located at 2897 Kilgore Road, approximately 3.3 miles northeast of the project site.

The project site is within the Folsom Cordova Unified School District, which operates 29 regular K–12 elementary, middle, and high schools, along with several alternative education and adult schools.

Please see Section 3.16, “Recreation,” for information related to parks in the project area.

3.15.2 DISCUSSION

- a) **Result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental**

impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times, or other performance objectives for any of the public services:

Fire protection?

No Impact. The proposed project consists of a digital freeway sign within an existing developed office/industrial park. Because the proposed project does not include new housing or employment uses, there would be no population increase and therefore no additional fire personnel or fire facilities would be required. Thus, there would be no impact related to the provision of new fire protection services and facilities.

Police protection?

No Impact. The proposed project consists of a digital freeway sign within an existing developed office/industrial park. To prevent vandalism, the bottom digital display faces would be elevated approximately 40 feet above grade. The monopole structure support would have a steel ladder welded to the side of the pole with the bottom of the ladder approximately 30 feet off the ground. The digital sign would be accessed either by a very tall specialty ladder or a bucket lift. Because the proposed project does not include new housing or employment uses, there would be no population increase and therefore no additional police officers or police facilities would be required. Thus, there would be no impact related to the provision of new police protection services and facilities.

Schools?

No Impact. The proposed project consists of a digital freeway sign within an existing developed office/industrial park. Because the proposed project does not include new housing or employment uses, there would be no new school children that would require new school services or facilities. Thus, there would be no impact related to the provision of new school services and facilities.

Parks?

No Impact. Please see Section 3.16, "Recreation," for the analysis of the project's potential impacts on park facilities, which was determined to result in no impact.

Other public facilities?

No Impact. The proposed project would not increase the population as a result of new housing or employment opportunities. Therefore, the proposed project would not increase demand for other public facilities and there would be no impact.

3.16 RECREATION

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
XVI. Recreation. Would the project:				
a) 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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Does the project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities that might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

3.16.1 SETTING

Parks in the City of Rancho Cordova are operated by the Cordova Recreation and Park District. The District operates 43 parks, 10 community recreation facilities, and several trails and landscape corridors across more than 630 acres, including a large regional sports complex, a golf course, and a senior center (Cordova Recreation and Park District 2024). The closest District park is the Lincoln Village Community Park, approximately 0.35 miles to the south (south of U.S. 50). Lincoln Village Community Park encompasses approximately 17 acres and includes a baseball field, softball field, tennis courts, basketball courts, climbing wall, fitness station, multiuse field, picnic areas, and playground, along with the Lincoln Village Community Pool and Neil Orchard Senior Activities Center (Cordova Recreation and Park District 2025a). The District also operates Riviera East Park, on the north side of U.S. 50, approximately 0.8 miles northwest of the project site. Riviera East Park encompasses approximately 9 acres and includes a basketball court, tennis courts, multiuse field, picnic areas, and playgrounds (Cordova Recreation and Park District 2025b).

Recreational opportunities are also available within the American River Parkway, operated by Sacramento County, at the Gristmill Recreation Area approximately 0.9 miles northwest of the project site. The Gristmill Recreation Area is primarily used by hikers, anglers, rafters, and boaters (Sacramento County Regional Parks 2025). A cobblestone bar, which is accessible by vehicle, protrudes into the American River; this area provides a convenient takeout for rafters, as well as a car-top launching area for fishing boats. The site is also used by equestrians; an equestrian/hiking trail begins at Howe Avenue and terminates a short distance upstream from Gristmill.

The project site and the proposed 60-foot-tall digital sign would not be visible from the American River due to the intervening distance (approximately 0.5 mile at the closest point), buildings, and tall landscape trees.

3.16.2 DISCUSSION

- a) **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?**

No Impact. The proposed project includes construction and operation of a digital freeway sign. The construction period would encompass approximately two weeks, Monday through Friday. Construction workers would come from the local Sacramento region. Operation of the digital sign would require no more than four daily visits by one person per year. No new residences or businesses would be created, and thus there would be no new or increased demand for recreational facilities. Therefore, the proposed project would not 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, and there would be no impact.

- b) **Does the project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities that might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?**

No Impact. The proposed project includes construction and operation of a digital freeway sign. No new residences or businesses would be created, and thus there would be no new or increased demand for recreational facilities. The proposed project does not include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities that might have an adverse physical effect on the environment, and thus there would be no impact.

3.17 TRANSPORTATION

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
XVII. Transportation. Would the project:				
a) Conflict with a program, plan, ordinance or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle and pedestrian facilities?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines § 15064.3, subdivision (b)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d) Result in inadequate emergency access?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

3.17.1 SETTING

The project site is located on the north side of U.S. Route 50, between Bradshaw Road and Zinfandel Drive, in the City of Rancho Cordova. It is bordered by U.S. Route 50 to the south, Fite Circle and adjacent commercial and light industrial uses to the north and east, and additional commercial and light industrial development to the west. Site access is provided via an existing driveway on the west side of Fite Circle, near the northern end of the project site, with a direct connection to Folsom Boulevard to the north.

CEQA GUIDELINES SECTION 15064.3

CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3, which addresses the determination of the significance of transportation impacts, identifies vehicle miles traveled (VMT) as the most appropriate metric for evaluating transportation-related environmental impacts. The guidelines provide lead agencies with the discretion to select appropriate methodologies and thresholds for VMT analysis. The City of Rancho Cordova has adopted Transportation Impact Guidelines to assist projects in assessing transportation impacts under CEQA, consistent with Senate Bill 743 and CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3, subdivision (b) (City of Rancho Cordova 2020). The City's guidelines establish screening criteria, significance thresholds, analysis methodologies, and mitigation recommendations for evaluating VMT impacts.

3.17.2 DISCUSSION

- a) **Conflict with a program, plan, ordinance or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities?**

Less-than-Significant Impact. During the approximately two-week construction period for the proposed digital billboard, construction vehicles would access the project site from Folsom Boulevard via Fite Circle using the existing driveway near the northern end of the site. Construction-related trips would include the delivery of equipment such as a backhoe and crane, delivery of prefabricated sign components, and truck transport of small amounts of fill material and excavated soil/asphalt, and the arrival and departure of construction workers. All

construction activities, including equipment staging, would occur entirely within the existing paved areas of the project site and would not alter or obstruct public rights-of-way. Following construction, operation and maintenance of the digital billboard would require only infrequent site visits by lessee or operator staff, estimated at a few times per year. Because construction activities would be temporary, limited in scope, and confined to the project site, and because long-term operations would not generate substantial traffic volumes, the proposed project would not conflict with City of Rancho Cordova policies related to transportation, transit, pedestrian, or bicycle facilities. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

b) Conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines § 15064.3, subdivision (b)?

Less-than-Significant Impact. As discussed above, construction of the proposed digital billboard would generate a limited number of construction-related trips over an approximately two-week period. These construction trips represent temporary redistribution of existing vehicle trips across the regional transportation network, rather than the generation of new permanent trips. In addition, construction activities would be short-term in duration. Therefore, construction activities would not substantially increase vehicle miles traveled (VMT) in the region. Following construction, operation and maintenance of the digital billboard would require only infrequent site visits by lessee or operator staff, estimated at no more than a few visits per year. The City's Transportation Impact Guidelines establish a small-project screening criterion for projects generating fewer than 237 daily trips. As the proposed project's operational trips would be far below this screening threshold, the project would not be expected to substantially increase VMT in the region. Impacts related to VMT would therefore be considered less than significant.

c) Substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?

No Impact. The proposed project would not involve the creation or modification of any roadways and, therefore, would not introduce any unsafe geometric design features. Construction-related traffic would utilize the existing driveway on Fite Circle to access the project site, and all construction activities and staging would occur entirely within the existing paved areas of the site. As a result, the project would not substantially increase roadway hazards or result in any adverse impacts related to design features.

d) Result in inadequate emergency access?

Less-than-Significant Impact. During the approximately two-week construction period for the proposed digital billboard, construction vehicles would access the project site from Folsom Boulevard via Fite Circle, a local roadway providing direct access to the site's existing driveway near the northern end of the property. Folsom Boulevard is a four-lane, east-west arterial that is straight and easily navigable by emergency vehicles. In addition, the project site contains ample unused parking areas to accommodate construction vehicle queueing and parking, which would prevent any back-ups onto Fite Circle or Folsom Boulevard. As a result, the proposed project would not impair emergency access, and impacts related to emergency vehicle circulation would be less than significant.

3.18 TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
XVIII Tribal Cultural Resources. Would the project:				
a) Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in Public Resources Code § 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:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
i 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), or	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
ii 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 § 5024.1. In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resource Code § 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

3.18.1 SETTING

The project site lies within the ethnographic territory of the Nisenan, who primarily occupied lands east of the Sacramento River. The Nisenan were one of three Maidu speaking tribelets (i.e., Maidu, Konkow, Nisenan) who inhabited the northeastern half of the Sacramento Valley and adjoining western slopes of the Sierra Nevada. Ethnographic village sites along the American River in Nisenan territory include Ekwo (on Sunrise Boulevard), Shiba (on Hazel Avenue), and Yodok (at Folsom). Nisenan villages varied considerably in size, with a large village containing from 40 to 50 domed earthen houses and more than 500 people. A typical settlement in the lowland areas of Nisenan territory would be situated on natural rises along the major rivers and streams. The Nisenan were organized like many California Indian communities; a certain territory was identified as belonging to a group, and that group recognized themselves as a unit (i.e., tribelet). Several affiliated villages may have existed in the tribelet territory. Each village, and often a group of allied villages, had a headman, whose duty was to advise the members of the community. No larger levels of political organization occurred beyond these village affiliations (Shipley 1978:82–85; Kroeber 1925:395–398; Wilson and Towne 1978:388, 393).

The Nisenan were affected little by the early Spanish and Mexican incursions into California’s interior. They were, however, greatly affected by a malaria epidemic that ravaged parts of California during the 1830s, believed to have been spread by fur trappers. The disease often killed entire villages, and 75 percent of the population is estimated to have died because of the epidemic. The Nisenan who survived the epidemic were among the California groups most affected by the Gold Rush of 1849. In 1948, John Marmust discovered gold at Coloma, in

Nisenan territory. Soon afterwards, fortune seekers descended on the Nisenan and adjoining territories and, within a short time span, Nisenan lands were overrun. Descendants of the Nisenan who survived those harsh times are thriving today as part of the greater Sacramento community (Wilson and Towne 1978:396).

CONCEPTS AND TERMINOLOGY FOR IDENTIFICATION OF TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES

Tribal cultural resources are defined in CEQA as a site, feature, place, cultural landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American tribe, which may include non-unique archaeological resources previously subject to limited review under CEQA.

ASSEMBLY BILL 52 NATIVE AMERICAN CONSULTATION

In compliance with AB 52, Native American consultation was initiated for the proposed project. The Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) was contacted on April 30, 2025, to obtain a CEQA tribal consultation list and to request a Sacred Lands File search for known cultural and tribal cultural resources within or near the project site. Results of the search returned by the NAHC on May 1, 2025, and was negative for Native American cultural resources in the project vicinity. The NAHC provided contact information for tribal members and organizations affiliated with the region to be contacted for more information on the potential of Native American cultural resources within or near the project area for consultation under AB 52:

- ▶ Colfax-Todds Valley Consolidated Tribe
- ▶ Shingle Spring Band of Miwok Indians
- ▶ TSI-AKIM Maidu of the Taylorsville Rancheria
- ▶ United Auburn Indian Community of the Auburn Rancheria (UAIC)
- ▶ Wilton Rancheria

On May 27, 2025 the City sent letters informing the tribes of the project and providing a formal invitation to consult under AB 52. The same letter was emailed by the City to the recipients. The UAIC responded via email on June 10, 2025 (Starkey 2025) that they conducted a background search for the identification of Tribal Cultural Resources for this project that included a review of pertinent literature, historic maps, and a records search using UAIC's Tribal Historic Information System (THRIS). The THRIS database is composed of UAIC's areas of oral history, ethnographic history, and places of cultural and religious significance, including UAIC Sacred Lands that are submitted to the NAHC. The THRIS resources shown in this region also include previously recorded indigenous resources identified through the California Historic Resources Information System Center (CHRIS) as well as historic resources and survey data. Based on careful review, UAIC determined that the project area does not have any known TCRs present, and they do not require to conduct a tribal survey. The UAIC Tribal Historic Preservation Officer (THPO) Joseph Fore's recommendation included an unanticipated discoveries mitigation measure to reduce impacts to any TCRs that may be discovered during project construction (PRC §21080.3.2(a)), which was provided as part of the consultation.

The Shingle Springs Band of Miwok Indians responded to the City via email on June 17, 2025 with a formal request to be added as a consulting party and requested any and all completed records searches and/or surveys in and around the project area prior before a meeting with the City (Perry 2025). No additional responses from tribes have been received as of the release of the IS/MND and AB 52 consultation with the City is ongoing.

RECORDS SEARCH

A records search of the project site and a 0.25-mile buffer was completed on April 30, 2025, at the North Central Information Center (NCIC) of the California Historic Resources Information System at California State University, Sacramento (NCIC File No. SAC-25-83). A summary of the records search results is presented in Section 3.5, “Cultural Resources.” No tribal cultural resources or precontact archaeological resources associated with tribal cultural resources were identified on the project site or within a 0.25-mile radius of the project site.

3.18.2 DISCUSSION

- a) **Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in Public Resources Code § 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:**
 - i) **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),**
 - ii) **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 § 5024.1. In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resource Code § 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.**

Less-than-Significant with Mitigation Incorporated. No tribal cultural resources have been identified on the project site. As part of the AB 52 consultation process, the UAIC conducted a background search for this project and determined that the project area does not have any known TCRs present (Starkey 2025). Based on the results of the NCIC records search and NAHC Sacred Lands File search, there is low potential that buried archaeological resources associated with tribal cultural resources would be encountered during ground-disturbing activities for the proposed project. However, despite the limited extent of ground disturbance, if previously unknown tribal cultural resources were encountered during these ground-disturbing activities, this impact could be **potentially significant**.

The UAIC provided the following Unanticipated Discoveries mitigation measure intended to address the identification and treatment of unanticipated discoveries of potential TCRs or resources of cultural significance to UAIC during ground-disturbing activities (Starkey 2025).

Mitigation Measure TCR-1: Unanticipated Discoveries of Tribal Cultural Resources

If any suspected TCRs or resources of cultural significance to UAIC, 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 project area and nature of the find. 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, cultural resources specialist, or professional archaeologist.

A Tribal Representative and the City of Rancho Cordova shall be immediately notified, and the Tribal Representative in coordination with the City of Rancho Cordova shall determine if the find is a TCR (PRC §21074) and the Tribal Representative shall make recommendations for further evaluation and treatment as necessary.

TREATMENT AND DOCUMENTATION:

The culturally affiliated Tribe shall consult with the City of Rancho Cordova to (1) identify the boundaries of the new TCR and (2) if feasible, identify appropriate preservation in place and avoidance measures, including redesign or adjustments to the existing construction process, and long-term management, or 3) if avoidance is infeasible, a reburial location in proximity of the find where no future disturbance is anticipated. Permanent curation of TCRs will not take place unless approved in writing by the culturally affiliated Tribe.

The construction contractor(s) shall provide secure, on-site storage for culturally sensitive soils or objects that are components of TCRs that are found or recovered during construction. Only Tribal Representatives shall have access to the storage. 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.

The construction contractor(s) and the City of Rancho Cordova shall facilitate the respectful reburial of the culturally sensitive soils or objects. This includes providing a reburial location that is consistent with the Tribe's preferences, excavation of the reburial location, and assisting with the reburial, upon request.

Any discoveries shall be documented on a Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) 523 form within 2 weeks of the discovery and submitted to the appropriate CHRIS center in a timely manner.

Work at the TCR discovery location shall not resume until authorization is granted by the City of Rancho Cordova in coordination with the culturally affiliated Tribe.

If articulated or disarticulated human remains, or human remains in any state of decomposition or skeletal completeness are discovered during construction activities, the County Coroner and the culturally affiliated Tribe shall be contacted immediately. Upon determination by the County Coroner that the find is Native American in origin, the Native American Heritage Commission will assign the Most Likely Descendent who will work with the project proponent to define appropriate treatment and disposition of the burials.

SIGNIFICANCE AFTER MITIGATION

Implementation of Mitigation Measure TCR-1 would reduce project-related impacts to unanticipated discoveries of TCRs to **Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated.**

3.19 UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
XIX. Utilities and Service Systems. Would the project:				
a) Require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, or wastewater treatment facilities or storm water drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foresee future development during normal, dry and multiple dry years?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Result in a determination by the waste water 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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d) 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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) Comply with federal, State, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

3.19.1 SETTING

Potable water for the project site and the surrounding area is supplied by the California American Water Company (American Water), Sacramento Main District (District). The project site is situated within the District’s Suburban-Rosemont Supply Area. Most of the water to supply the Suburban-Rosemont area comes from groundwater, and a small amount is purchased or imported water. Modeling performed for the District’s 2021 Urban Water Management Plan indicated that sufficient water supply is available to meet demand during normal, dry, and multiple-dry years through the year 2040 (Murraysmith 2021).

Electrical service to the project site is provided by the Sacramento Municipal Utility District. Please see Section 3.6, “Energy,” of this IS/MND for the discussion and analysis related to energy use.

The Sacramento Area Sewer District (SacSewer) provides wastewater collection services in the project area and operates the EchoWater Resource Recovery Facility near Elk Grove, which provides wastewater treatment and recycled water for the Sacramento region including the project site.

There are several landfills in the Sacramento region that are permitted to receive construction debris, including the privately operated L&D Landfill and Material Recovery Facility (located at 8635 Fruitridge Road), and the Kiefer

Landfill operated by Sacramento County (located at 12701 Kiefer Boulevard). Table 3.19-1 shows the maximum capacity, remaining capacity, and closure date of these landfills.

Table 3.19-1. Landfills in the Project Region

Facility	Location	Capacity
L and D Landfill	8635 Fruitridge Road Sacramento, CA 95826	Maximum permitted capacity: 20.5 million cubic yards Remaining capacity: 3.1 million cubic yards Closure date: December 31, 2030
Kiefer Landfill	12701 Kiefer Boulevard Sloughhouse, CA 95683	Maximum permitted capacity: 117.4 million cubic yards Remaining capacity: 102.3 million cubic yards Closure date: January 1, 2080

Sources: CalRecycle 2025a, 2025b

3.19.2 DISCUSSION

a) Require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, or wastewater treatment facilities or storm water drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects?

No Impact. The proposed project consists of installation and operation of a digital freeway sign (i.e., a telecommunications device). Electrical service for the proposed project would be provided by the Sacramento Municipal Utility District, and project-related construction includes a 1.5-foot-deep utility trench for a new underground electrical line from the proposed sign to an existing electrical panel on the adjacent light industrial building (see Section 3.6, “Energy,” for additional analysis). As discussed in Section 3.10, “Hydrology and Water Quality,” the existing on-site stormwater drainage system would continue to be used, and no additions or modifications would be required. Furthermore, no new or expanded water, wastewater treatment, or natural gas facilities would be required. The potential physical environmental impacts of constructing and operating the proposed digital freeway sign and installing the adjacent underground electrical line are evaluated throughout all of the topic area sections of this IS/MND (Sections 3.1 through 3.20), along with the Mandatory Findings of Significance (Section 3.21). There are no other physical environmental impacts specific to the provision of utilities or service systems that are not already evaluated in the individual topic area sections of this IS/MND. Thus, there would be no impact.

b) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foresee future development during normal, dry and multiple dry years?

Less-than-Significant Impact. The proposed project consists of installation and operation of a digital freeway sign. Minimal water would be required during the project’s two-week construction phase for dust control and soil compacting, and this water would be supplied by water trucks. No water would be required during project operation. American Water has determined that the Suburban-Rosemont Supply Area within the Sacramento Main District has sufficient water supplies to serve projected demand through the year 2040 (including projected future growth) during normal, dry and multiple-dry years (Murraysmith 2021). Therefore, the minimal amount of water required during the project’s two-week construction phase would result in a less-than-significant impact related to sufficiency of water supplies.

- c) **Result in a determination by the waste water 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?**

No Impact. The proposed project consists of a digital sign, which does not require or include wastewater treatment. Temporary, portable restrooms would be provided for construction workers during the construction phase. Thus, there would be no impact related to the provision of wastewater treatment.

- d) **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?**

Less-than-Significant Impact. Construction of the proposed project would generate a total of approximately 42 cubic yards of soil that would be excavated and removed from the project site. A small amount of asphalt pavement would be removed from the location of the electrical utility trench. Both the L&D Landfill (approximately 6 miles southwest of the project site) and the Kiefer Landfill (approximately 27 miles southeast of the project site) are permitted to accept construction debris, including soil and asphalt for recycling. As shown in Table 3.19-1, both landfills have capacity to accept the small amount of construction debris that would be generated by the proposed project. Therefore, the proposed project would not 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, and this impact would be less than significant.

- e) **Comply with federal, State, and local management and reductions statutes and regulations related to solid waste?**

No Impact. The California Integrated Waste Management Act of 1989 (Assembly Bill [AB] 939) required each local jurisdiction in the State to divert a minimum of 50 percent of discarded materials away from disposal in landfills. AB 341 subsequently established that at least 75 percent of the solid waste that is generated must be source-reduced, recycled, or composted by the year 2020. CALGreen requires, as part of the California Green Building Standards Code, Title 24, California Code of Regulations, that 65 percent of nonhazardous construction and demolition debris be diverted from the waste stream. Rancho Cordova Municipal Code Chapter 16.92 requires that construction and demolition material be delivered to a certified recycling facility to further the city's efforts to reduce waste deposited in landfills and to meet or exceed the mandatory diversion requirements imposed by AB 939 and the California Green Building Standards Code requirements. The proposed project would comply with Rancho Cordova Municipal Code Chapter 16.92 by sending the construction-related soil and asphalt materials to a recycling facility with capacity to accept the materials, as described in detail in criterion d) above. No solid waste would be generated during project operation. Therefore, the proposed project would comply with federal, State, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste, and there would be no impact.

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3.20 WILDFIRE

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
XX Wildfire. Would the project:				
a) Substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) 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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) 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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d) 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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

3.20.1 SETTING

Public Resources Code Sections 4201–4204 and Government Code Sections 51175–51189 require identification of fire hazard severity zones within the state of California. Fire hazard severity zones are measured qualitatively, based on vegetation, topography, weather, crown fire potential (a fire’s tendency to burn upward into trees and tall brush), and ember production and movement within the area in question. The California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) delineates three potential wildfire hazard ratings: moderate, high, and very high. These classifications indicate “hazard” not “risk.” CAL FIRE’s fire “hazard” rating is based on the physical conditions that create a likelihood for wildfire in combination with expected fire behavior, over a 30- to 50-year period (without considering measures such as home hardening, recent wildfires that have burned vegetation, or fuel reduction efforts).

The project site is within a Local Responsibility Area—land where the primary responsibility for firefighting falls within the purview of a local agency rather than a State agency. Based on the most recent (2025) fire hazard severity zone ratings issued by CAL FIRE for Local Responsibility Areas, the project site and the surrounding lands are not classified, meaning that the fire hazard is low (i.e., they are not within moderate, high, or very high fire hazard severity zones) (CAL FIRE 2025).

The nearest State Responsibility Area is east of Grant Line Road, approximately 7.5 miles east of the project site (CAL FIRE 2025). The nearest very high fire hazard severity zone is in El Dorado County east of Latrobe Road, approximately 17 miles east of the project site (CAL FIRE 2025).

The project site is within an office/light industrial park in an urbanized area of the City of Rancho Cordova, and is surrounded by office and light industrial buildings and paved parking areas to the north, east, and west. U.S. 50,

which consists of 12 travel lanes and is approximately 190 feet in total width of paved area, is immediately south of the project site.

3.20.2 DISCUSSION

a) Substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?

No Impact. The project site is not located in or near a State Responsibility Area or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, and the existing fire hazard at the project site is low (CAL FIRE 2025). As discussed in criterion (f) in Section 3.9, “Hazards and Hazardous Materials,” project-related construction would be minor in nature (drilling a hole and pouring concrete to support the sign post and trenching for an underground electrical line) and would occur during weekdays over a two-week period. The location where the proposed digital sign would be installed is adjacent to a paved parking area and is approximately 400 feet from the travel lanes on Fite Circle, and project-related construction would not require lane closures. Regular operation of the sign would require no more than four daily visits by one person per year. Therefore, the proposed project would not impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan, and there would be no impact.

b) 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?

No Impact. The project site is not located in or near a State Responsibility Area or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones (CAL FIRE 2025). The project site and the surrounding area are flat. The existing wildland fire hazard at the project site is low (CAL FIRE 2025), and installation of the proposed digital sign would not exacerbate the existing fire hazard conditions. Therefore, due to slope, prevailing winds, and other factors, the proposed project would not exacerbate wildfire risks, and would not expose project occupants to pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire, and there would be no impact.

c) 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?

No Impact. The project site is not located in or near a State Responsibility Area or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, and the existing wildland fire hazard at the project site is low (CAL FIRE 2025). The proposed project consists of a new digital sign and a short trench for an underground electrical line, and does not require the installation or maintenance of associated infrastructure that may exacerbate fire risk or that may result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment related to wildfire, and there would be no impact.

d) 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?

No Impact. The project site is not located in or near a State Responsibility Area or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, and the existing wildland fire hazard at the project site is low (CAL FIRE 2025). The proposed project consists of installation of a digital sign, and would not exacerbate the existing fire hazard conditions. Therefore, the proposed project would not 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 from wildland fires. Thus, there would be no impact.

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3.21 MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
XXI. Mandatory Findings of Significance.				
a) Does the project have the potential to substantially degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, reduce the number or restrict the range of an endangered, rare, or threatened species, or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Does the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? (“Cumulatively considerable” means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Does the project have environmental effects that will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Authority: Public Resources Code Sections 21083, 21083.5.

Reference: Government Code Sections 65088.4.

Public Resources Code Sections 21080, 21083.5, 21095; *Eureka Citizens for Responsible Govt. v. City of Eureka* (2007) 147 Cal.App.4th 357; *Protect the Historic Amador Waterways v. Amador Water Agency* (2004) 116 Cal.App.4th at 1109; *San Franciscans Upholding the Downtown Plan v. City and County of San Francisco* (2002) 102 Cal.App.4th 656.

3.21.1 DISCUSSION

- a) **Does the project have the potential to substantially degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, reduce the number or restrict the range of an endangered, rare, or threatened species, or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?**

Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated. As described in Section 3.4, “Biological Resources,” implementation of Mitigation Measure BIO-1 would reduce potentially significant impacts on nesting migratory birds to a **less-than-significant** level.

As discussed in Section 3.5, “Cultural Resources,” and Section 3.18 “Tribal Cultural Resources” implementation of Mitigation Measures CUL-1 and TCR-1 would reduce potentially significant impacts resulting from inadvertent damage or destruction of significant cultural resources, tribal cultural resources, and inadvertent disturbance to human remains to a **less-than-significant** level.

As discussed in Section 3.7, “Geology and Soils”, implementation of Mitigation Measure GEO-1 would reduce destruction of or damage to previously unknown unique, scientifically important paleontological resources to a **less-than-significant** level.

Therefore, with implementation of outlined mitigation measures, the proposed project would result in less-than-significant impacts involving the potential to degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of fish or wildlife species, cause fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal, or eliminate important examples of the major period of California history or prehistory.

b) Does the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? (“Cumulatively considerable” means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects.)

Less-than-Significant Impact. The geographic context for cumulative impacts is generally limited to the immediate vicinity of the project site with the exception of air quality and greenhouse gas impacts, which are more regional. Past, present, and foreseeable future projects in the vicinity of the project site include:

- ▶ Development and ongoing operation of the nearby transportation networks (Sacramento Regional Transit Light Rail, Folsom Boulevard, US 50), and surrounding commercial and residential development.

Air quality and greenhouse gas impacts are inherently cumulative by nature, and the impact discussions in Sections 3.3 and 3.8 already consider potential cumulative impacts, which were found to be less than significant or less than significant with mitigation.

Because the majority of project impacts would be short-term, localized impacts that would only occur during the two-week construction period of project implementation, and because none of the past or future projects would overlap with that implementation period, there would be no potential for short-term impacts such as disturbance of wildlife species, construction noise, water quality, or traffic safety to combine with the impacts of other projects to cause a significant cumulative impact.

Therefore, the proposed project’s contribution to a cumulative impact would not be considerable, and would be less than significant.

c) Does the project have environmental effects that will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?

Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated. The proposed project could potentially cause substantial adverse effects on human beings in relation to air quality. However, the proposed project would implement mitigation measure MM AIR-1 identified in the air quality section of this IS/MND. This mitigation measure would reduce potentially significant impacts in this resource area to a **less-than-significant** level. In addition, the proposed project would comply with all applicable regulations identified throughout the IS/MND. As such, the proposed project would not cause a substantial direct or indirect adverse effect on human beings.

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None.

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None.

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APPENDIX A

Sign Lighting Study by Watchfire Signs

Available for viewing or download on the City of Rancho Cordova's website at:

<https://www.cityofranhocordova.org/departments/community-development/planning/planning-division-document-library>

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APPENDIX B

Biological Resources CNDDDB Database Search and Focal Point Arborist Report

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