

APPENDIX A

Notice of Preparation

Sutter County Community Services

1130 Civic Center Boulevard
Yuba City, CA 95993



Animal Control • Building Inspection • Emergency Services • Environmental Health • Fire Services • Planning

Date: March 29, 2007

To: State Clearinghouse
Responsible Agencies
Trustee Agencies
Interested Parties

From: Doug Libby, Senior Planner
Sutter County Community Services Department, Planning
1130 Civic Center Boulevard
Yuba City, CA 95993
dglabby@co.sutter.ca.us

Subject: **Notice of Preparation of a Draft Environmental Impact Report for the Sutter Pointe Specific Plan Project**

Public Review Period: **March 29, 2007, through April 30, 2007**

INTRODUCTION

The County of Sutter (County) is the lead agency for the preparation of an environmental impact report (EIR) for the Sutter Pointe Specific Plan project (proposed project). This notice of preparation (NOP) of an EIR has been prepared in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). In addition to the proposed specific plan development, the project involves construction of an on- and off-site sewer interceptor and a variety of other off-site infrastructure improvements. The Sacramento Regional County Sanitation District (SRCSD) is the responsible agency for approval and construction of the sewer interceptor, service, and ultimate connection to the Sacramento Regional Wastewater Treatment Plant (SRWTP); consequently, the EIR also will address SRCSD's needs for environmental evaluation and disclosure under CEQA.

Section 15082 of the State CEQA Guidelines states that after a decision is made to prepare an EIR, the lead agency must prepare an NOP to inform all responsible and trustee agencies that an EIR will be prepared. The purpose of an NOP is to provide information about the proposed project and its potential environmental impacts that is sufficient to allow agencies and individuals to make a meaningful response related to the scope and content of the EIR and to the environmental information that is germane to your agency's statutory responsibilities in connection with the proposed project. The project description, location, and the potential environmental effects are presented below. An initial study has not been prepared for this project because the EIR will address all issue areas.

Because the proposed project is of regional or areawide significance, Sutter County will conduct a scoping meeting on April 19, 2007, at 5:30 p.m. at the Veterans Memorial Community Building, 1425 Veterans Memorial Circle, Yuba City, CA 95993.

Because of the time limits mandated by state law, your response must be sent at the earliest possible date but not later than 30 days after receipt of this notice. The public comment period closes at 5 p.m. on April 30, 2007. Please send your response to Doug Libby, Sutter County Community Services Department, Planning, at the address shown above. Please include the name of a contact person.

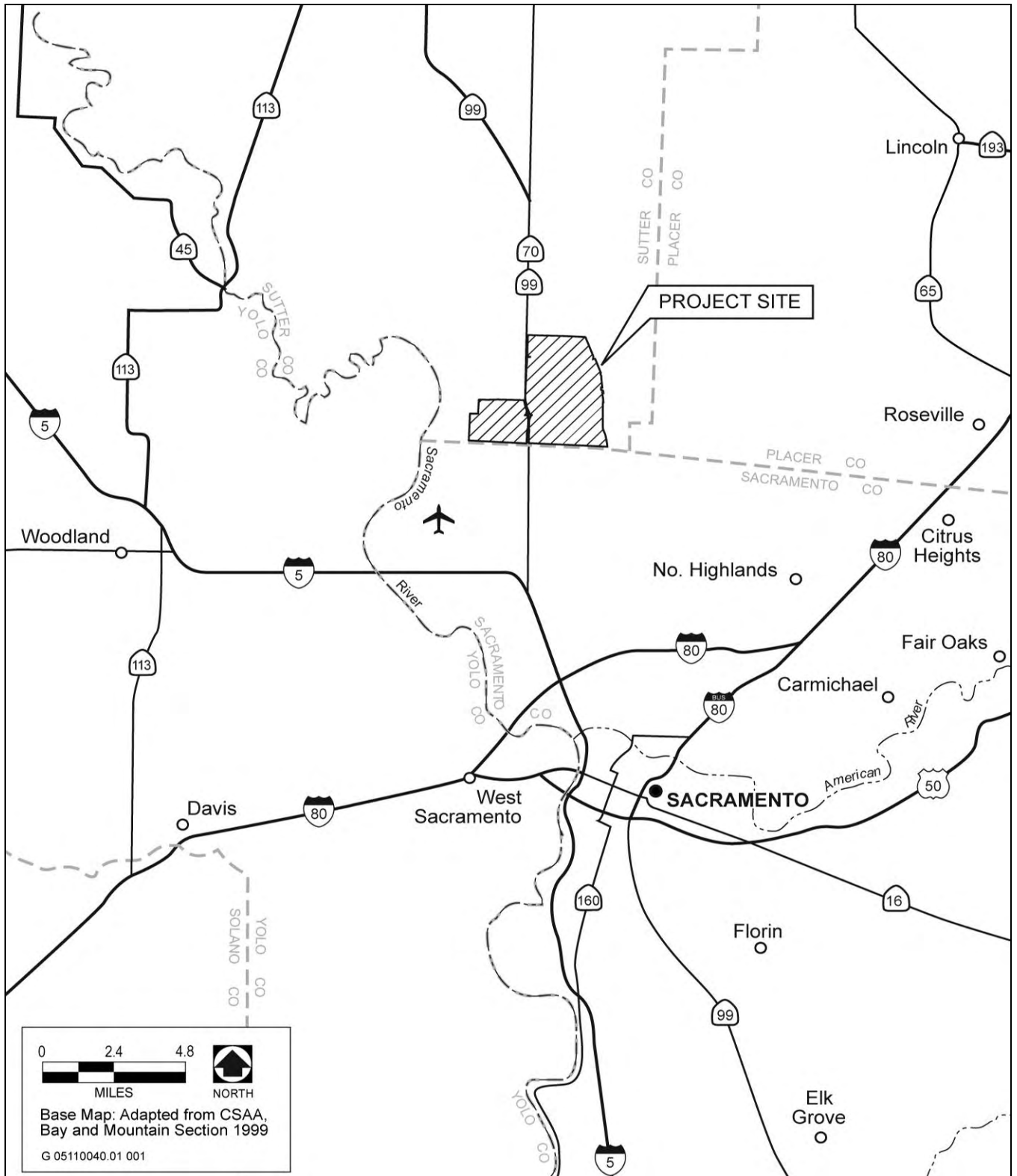
PROJECT LOCATION AND REGIONAL SETTING

The Sutter Pointe Specific Plan area (referred to as project site) encompasses approximately 7,500 acres in southeastern Sutter County. The site is generally bound by Natomas Road on the east, the Sacramento-Sutter County line on the south, and, at its westernmost point, Power Line Road; the northern boundary is approximately 4 miles north of the Sacramento-Sutter County line (Exhibits 1 and 2). State Route (SR) 99 divides the southern portion of the site and serves as the western boundary of the northern portion of the site. The project site is located in the northern part of the Natomas Basin, which is bound by the Natomas Cross Channel on the north, Pleasant Grove Creek Canal and Natomas East Main Drainage Canal (NEMDC)/Steelhead Creek on the east, the American River on the south, and the Sacramento River on the west. Pleasant Grove Creek Canal and the NEMDC serve as the eastern boundary of the project site. The Sacramento Area Flood Control Agency (SAFCA) has proposed a program of levee improvements to improve flood protection in the Natomas Basin.

The project site is also located within the boundaries of the Natomas Basin Habitat Conservation Plan (NBHCP) area. The NBHCP establishes a multispecies conservation program to mitigate the expected loss of habitat values and incidental take of protected species that would result from urban development, operation of irrigation and drainage systems, and rice farming. The goal of the NBHCP is to preserve, restore, and enhance habitat values found in the Natomas Basin while allowing urban development to proceed according to local land use plans. The NBHCP is a supporting document for federal Section 10(a)(1)(B) and state Section 2081 permit applications. Section 10(a)(1)(B) of the federal Endangered Species Act allows incidental take of endangered or threatened species subject to its permit requirements. Similarly, Section 2081 of the California Fish and Game Code allows the California Department of Fish and Game to enter into management agreements that allow activities that may otherwise result in habitat loss or take of individuals of a state-listed species.

The project site is located primarily on agricultural land. Existing land uses on the site are agricultural, composed mostly of rice fields, and industrial, including a 50-acre Sysco Corporation warehousing and distribution center and a Holt Tractor Manufacturing facility. Land located north and east of the site is used primarily for agriculture. Lands located south and west of the site include NBHCP reserve lands, managed by the Natomas Basin Conservancy for the benefit of protected species. These lands are located primarily along the Sacramento River. Nearby planned or already approved developments include the Metro Air Park project (an industrial and business park), located approximately 2–3 miles southwest of the project site, adjacent to the Sacramento International Airport; the Greenbriar project, also located to the south; and the Placer Vineyards Specific Plan area and the Rio Linda/Elverta Community Plan area to the east. The Sacramento City/County Natomas Joint Vision Plan area lies south of the project site.

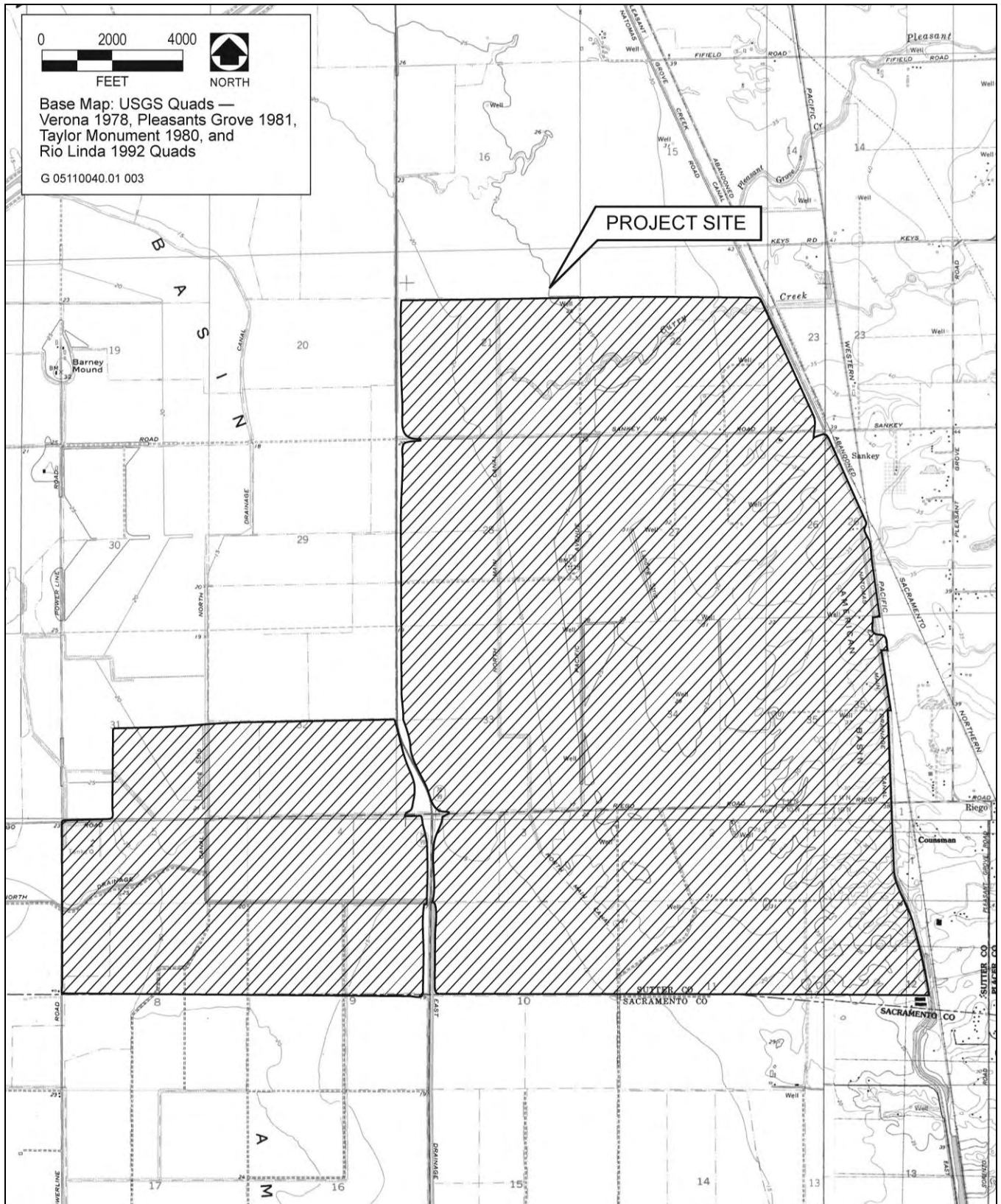
Natomas Mutual Water Company and Reclamation District (RD) 1000 hold easements for irrigation canals and drainage ditches throughout the project site and the Natomas Basin. The easements along existing canals and ditches measure between 20 and 70 feet wide. Except for the southwestern most portion of the project site, the site currently lies in a Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) special flood hazard area, Zone A.



Source: EDAW 2006

Regional Location Map

Exhibit 1



Source: EDAW 2006

Project Location Map

Exhibit 2

PROJECT HISTORY AND PLANNING CONTEXT

Sutter County initiated a comprehensive update of its general plan in July 1993. The General Plan Technical Update resulted in a revised general plan that was adopted on December 6, 1994. Upon completion of the General Plan Technical Update, the County initiated phase 2 of its general plan update process. This phase, known as the Comprehensive General Plan Revision (CGPR), focused on developing a 20-year plan with a 100-year vision. A major component of this process was an extensive public participation program.

A 25-member Citizens Advisory Committee was appointed by the County Board of Supervisors both to provide input to the County Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors on the issues that committee members determined should be included in the general plan and to provide recommendations identifying how those issues should be addressed. A series of study sessions and public meetings were conducted between March 13 and November 20, 1995. The planning commission reviewed the issues and the committee's recommendations during a separate series of public meetings and forwarded both sets of recommendations to the board of supervisors for consideration and direction.

Another major component of the CGPR process consisted of developing a preferred land use alternative for the County. The committee provided preliminary input regarding new areas for industrial and commercial development. In subsequent meetings, the planning commission and the board of supervisors considered three land use alternatives. Following substantial public input, including requests for land use designation changes from individual property owners, the board of supervisors selected a preferred alternative. This alternative served as the basis for developing the 1996 Sutter County General Plan and corresponding EIR. It was in these documents that the County applied the current urban development designation to the project area. A 10,500-acre area was designated as Industrial/Commercial Reserve to accommodate employment-related uses. (In 2005, the County reduced the size of the area to 9,500 acres.) To date, because of the lack of necessary infrastructure, no substantial employment-generating industry has located in south Sutter County. There has been no coordinated infrastructure planning and no ability to finance the substantial infrastructure that would be required to serve development in the area.

In 2004, a group of concerned citizens, political leaders, landowners, and developers crafted a strategic method to deliver jobs to Sutter County. They resolved that the only way to bring employers and deliver required infrastructure and public services to south Sutter County was to finance new development with a mix of land uses, including industry, commerce, education, housing, recreation, and open space. It was proposed that this mix was best contained on 7,500 acres of the then-10,500-acre project area and integrated with the NBHCP. The economic conditions in the region required that all these elements be in place simultaneously to create attractive economic incentives for private funding and investment.

In November 2004, Measure M, an advisory measure regarding a proposed strategic plan for the region, was put before County voters, and it was overwhelmingly approved. The text of Measure M contained the following requirements for any future development of the area:

- ▶ At least 3,600 acres would be provided for commercial and industrial parks to create new jobs in Sutter County as a condition of having residential units approved.
- ▶ At least 1,000 acres would be provided for schools, parks, open space, libraries, retail areas, and other community facilities paid for by the development.
- ▶ No more than 2,900 acres would be available for residential construction on land protected, at a minimum, from a 100-year flood event.
- ▶ All necessary road, bridge, water, drainage, sewer and other improvements would be paid for by the development.

- ▶ Ongoing law enforcement, fire, library, and other public services would be paid for by the development, without reducing current service levels.

The Sutter Pointe Specific Plan and the other associated entitlements are the planning tools that the County will consider implementing to satisfy the provisions of Measure M and to guide future development in the Industrial/Commercial Reserve area designated in the County General Plan. They have been crafted to respond to the opportunities and limitations put forth in Measure M.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposed project consists of adoption and implementation of the Sutter Pointe Specific Plan, including proposed amendments to the general plan and zoning code; construction of an approximately 6.1-mile sewer interceptor (Sutter Pointe Interceptor and Rio Linda Interceptor), which would ultimately connect to the Sacramento Regional Wastewater Treatment Plant (SRWTP); and construction of a variety of other off-site infrastructure improvements. The Sutter Pointe Specific Plan is an approximately 7,500-acre project proposed in the 9,500-acre Industrial/Commercial Reserve area currently designated in the Sutter County General Plan. It is a mixed-use project that combines industry, commerce, housing, open space, and civic and associated uses. Buildout of the proposed project would be split into five residential/mixed-use development phases and five employment center development phases and is anticipated to occur over approximately 30 years.

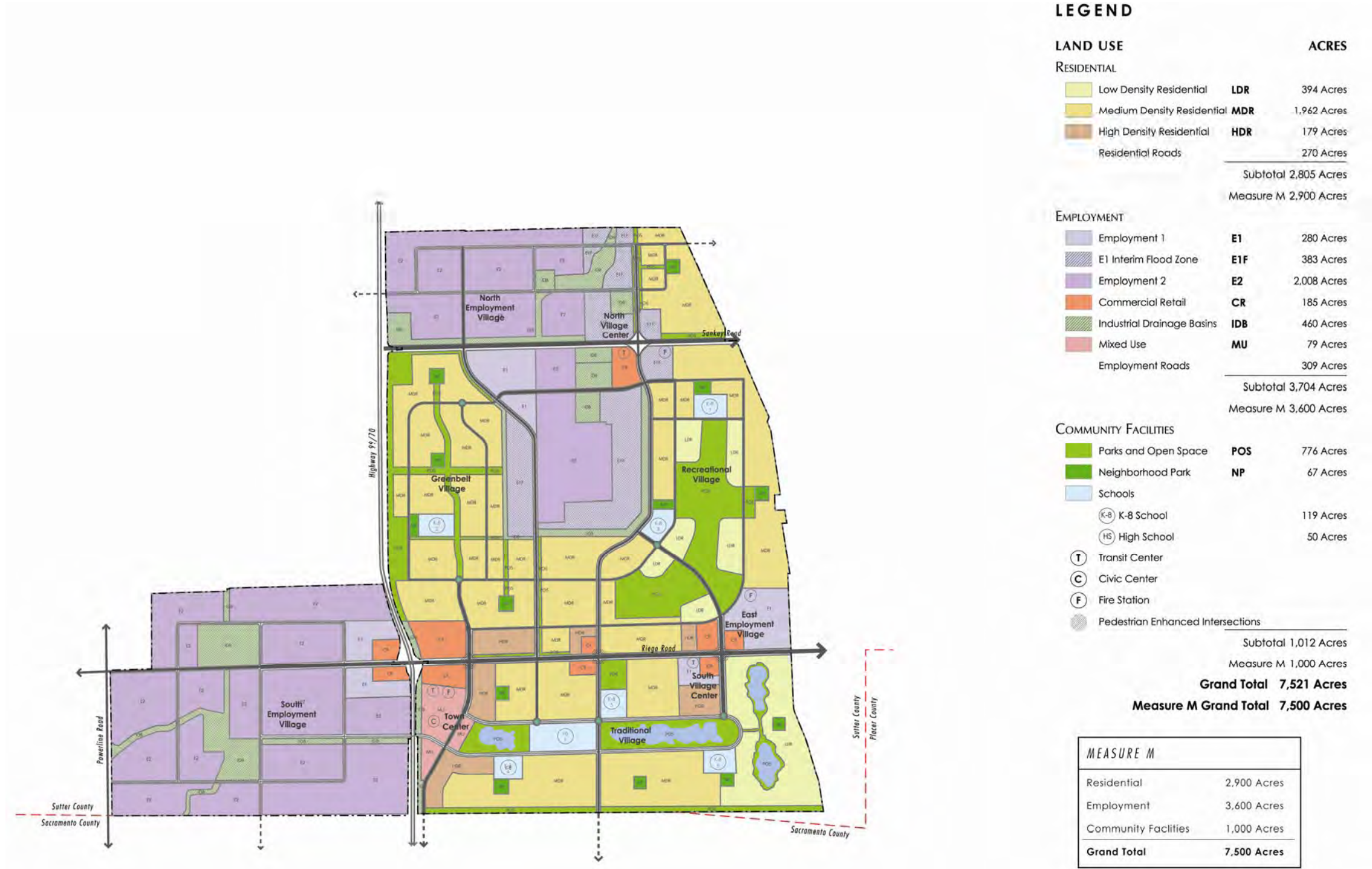
On-Site Project Elements

The project site is located approximately 2 miles northeast of the Sacramento International Airport and has been designed to comply with the land use requirements and restrictions of the Sacramento International Airport Comprehensive Land Use Plan. The design of the proposed project reflects many of the principles established by the Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG) Blueprint plan, which envisions a greater range of housing choices and diversity; compact development; natural resources conservation; design for good-quality, mixed-use developments; and transportation choices. The proposed project:

- ▶ includes the construction of a range of housing types (e.g., high, medium, low density) that would be located close to public transportation systems and
- ▶ places employment center, commercial, and residential growth on the project site, demonstrating that this location is appropriate for development in a regional context and complements existing transportation patterns.

The proposed project would accommodate a maximum of 17,500 residential dwelling units on approximately 2,900 acres; approximately 3,600 acres of employment-generating uses; and K-8 and high schools, parks and open space, and other community facilities on approximately 1,000 acres (Exhibit 3). The existing industrial uses (e.g., Sysco Corporation warehousing and distribution center, Holt Tractor Manufacturing facility) would remain part of the site.

The proposed project would require several land use entitlements from Sutter County in addition to the Sutter Pointe Specific Plan, including a general plan amendment, zoning code and map amendments, approval of a development agreement(s) between the project applicants and the County, adoption of a public facilities financing plan, adoption of a public facilities infrastructure/phasing plan, and other actions (e.g., establishment of maintenance districts). Because site-specific project detail is not available at this time, the proposed project is not seeking approval of tentative subdivision maps or improvement plans, special-use permits, or design review. With the exception of the on- and off-site sewer infrastructure needed to support initial project phases, the proposed project will be analyzed in the EIR at a program-level. (See “Type of Environmental Impact Report,” below, for further discussion.)



LEGEND

| LAND USE | | ACRES |
|---|------------|--|
| RESIDENTIAL | | |
| Low Density Residential | LDR | 394 Acres |
| Medium Density Residential | MDR | 1,962 Acres |
| High Density Residential | HDR | 179 Acres |
| Residential Roads | | 270 Acres |
| | | Subtotal 2,805 Acres |
| | | Measure M 2,900 Acres |
| EMPLOYMENT | | |
| Employment 1 | E1 | 280 Acres |
| E1 Interim Flood Zone | E1F | 383 Acres |
| Employment 2 | E2 | 2,008 Acres |
| Commercial Retail | CR | 185 Acres |
| Industrial Drainage Basins | IDB | 460 Acres |
| Mixed Use | MU | 79 Acres |
| Employment Roads | | 309 Acres |
| | | Subtotal 3,704 Acres |
| | | Measure M 3,600 Acres |
| COMMUNITY FACILITIES | | |
| Parks and Open Space | POS | 776 Acres |
| Neighborhood Park | NP | 67 Acres |
| Schools | | |
| (K-8) K-8 School | | 119 Acres |
| (HS) High School | | 50 Acres |
| (T) Transit Center | | |
| (C) Civic Center | | |
| (F) Fire Station | | |
| (PEI) Pedestrian Enhanced Intersections | | |
| | | Subtotal 1,012 Acres |
| | | Measure M 1,000 Acres |
| | | Grand Total 7,521 Acres |
| | | Measure M Grand Total 7,500 Acres |

| MEASURE M | |
|----------------------|--------------------|
| Residential | 2,900 Acres |
| Employment | 3,600 Acres |
| Community Facilities | 1,000 Acres |
| Grand Total | 7,500 Acres |

Conceptual Land Use
 SUTTER POINTE
 Measure 'M' Group

Sutter Pointe Specific Plan
 Sutter County
 EDAW | AECOM
 March 15, 2007

The proposed project also would require approval from SRCSD for approval and construction of the Sutter Pointe and Rio Linda Interceptors, service, and connection to the SRWTP. Because the sewer infrastructure would be required to serve the initial phases of project development, on- and off-site sewer infrastructure will be analyzed in the EIR at a project level. (See “Type of Environmental Impact Report,” below, for further discussion.)

Depending on the timing of interceptor construction, the proposed project may require construction of a temporary wastewater treatment plant, which would serve development on the project site until a sewer line connects the site to the SRWTP. The plant would be located in the south-central portion of the project site (Exhibit 4).

The project site is currently designated as Commercial/Industrial Reserve in the County General Plan. The majority of the undeveloped land in the project site and vicinity is zoned General Agricultural (AG) with 80-acre minimum lot sizes. Currently developed properties in the project site are zoned General Industrial (M-2). With implementation of the proposed project, the General Plan land use designations for the project area would be amended to appropriate designations, such as employment, residential, and parks and open space land use designations consistent with the Specific Plan. The Specific Plan would provide zoning districts and development and performance standards for future development on the project site.

Primary access through the project site would be provided via SR 99, which is the primary north-south transportation route between Yuba City/Marysville and Sacramento. Riego Road is a primary east-west corridor providing access from the Placer County/Roseville area, through the site, to SR 99. Placer Parkway, with a planned alignment parallel to Sankey Road, is a future east-west corridor that would provide access to the southwest Placer County area.

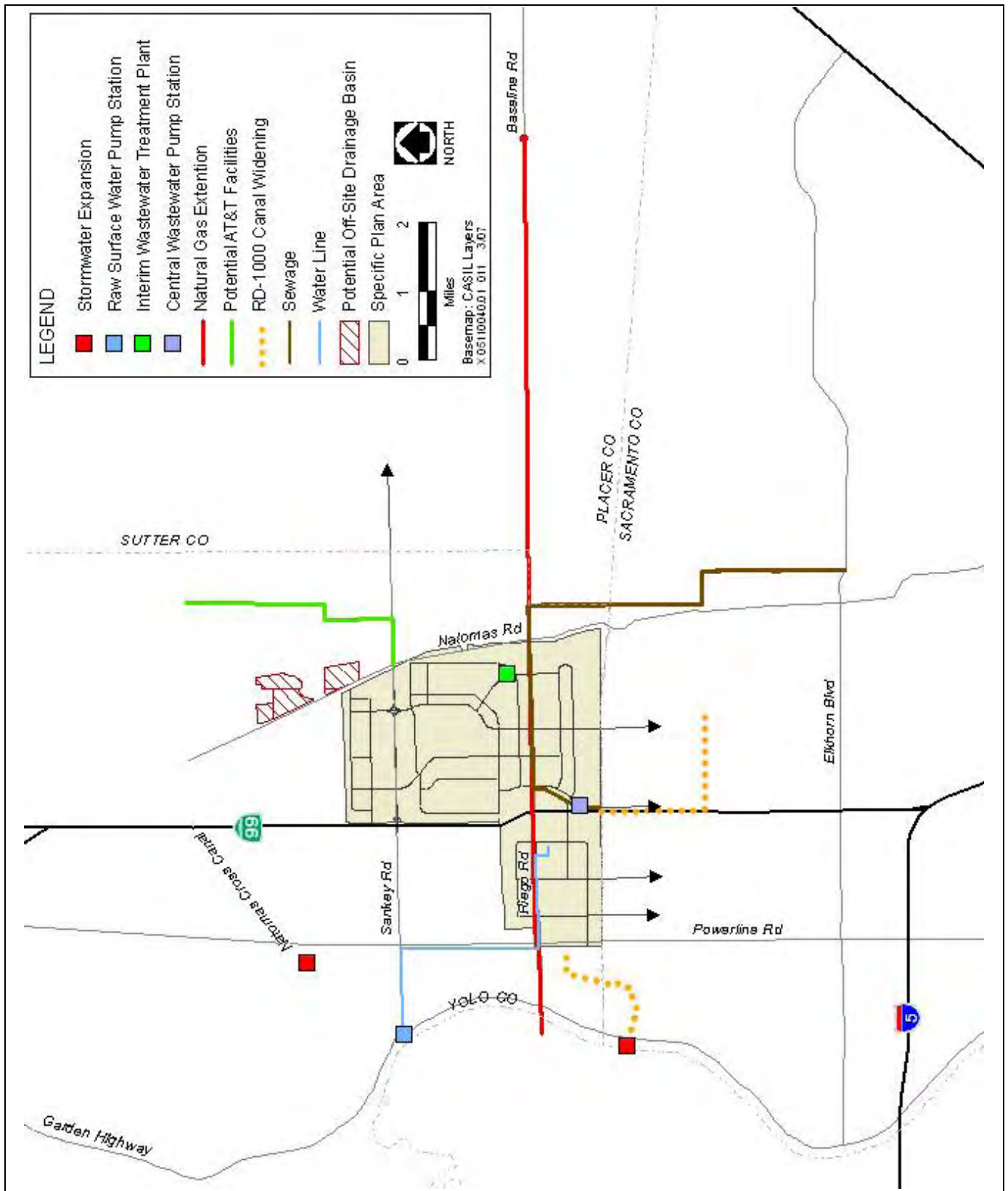
The Riego Road/SR 99 intersection is a major near-term access point. Construction of the Riego Road/SR 99 interchange is planned to occur in the initial project development phases, and the completion of Placer Parkway (existing Sankey Road) north of the project site, is scheduled for 2020 or later.

Off-Site Project Elements

Off-Site Infrastructure Improvements

Off-site infrastructure improvements would be required to support the proposed project (Exhibit 4). In accordance with the goals and policies of Sutter County General Plan and Measure M, the proposed specific plan sets forth conceptual infrastructure plans for drainage/flood control; potable water; reclaimed water; sewer; solid waste; and dry utilities, including gas, electricity, telephone, and television cable service. All off-site infrastructure needed to support the proposed project will be analyzed in the EIR unless CEQA coverage has been previously obtained. Wastewater infrastructure required to serve Phase 1 of the proposed project will be analyzed in the EIR at a project-specific level, whereas the balance of the infrastructure required to serve Phase 1 and all the infrastructure required for subsequent development phases (Phases 2–5) will be analyzed in the EIR at a programmatic level. (See “Type of Environmental Impact Report,” below, for further discussion.) The project applicant would be responsible for the water and sewer improvements, the canal widening, and the creation of detention basins. The service providers would extend dry utilities to the project site.

As discussed previously, in addition to the proposed specific plan development, the proposed project involves construction of an approximately 6.1-mile sewer interceptor (Sutter Pointe Interceptor and Rio Linda Interceptor) that would ultimately connect to the SRWTP (Exhibit 4). The sewer interceptor would run east along Riego Road from the east boundary of the plan area and then run south along Pleasant Grove Road and Sorento Road. It would then follow Elverta Road east to the point of connection with SRCSD’s proposed Rio Linda Interceptor. The Rio Linda Interceptor would connect with the planned Upper Northwest Interceptor. A county service area or community services district would be established to manage this infrastructure.



Source: Adapted from ECORP 2007

Utilities Map

Exhibit 4

The following additional off-site activities also are elements of the proposed project (Exhibit 4):

- ▶ communication facilities improvements,
- ▶ storm drainage station improvements and canal widenings,
- ▶ water line construction,
- ▶ natural gas extensions,
- ▶ roadway extensions, and
- ▶ raw surface water pump station.

Project Purpose

The purpose of the proposed project is to create a mixed-use development through the development of employment-generating land uses and a variety of residential housing types. The proposed project, intended to be a pedestrian-friendly development, provides a multifaceted and multiphased transit program. Ultimately, the proposed project could accommodate the potential extension of the Downtown/Natomas/Airport light rail line to serve a central point within the proposed project. A key component of the proposed project is the ability to provide peak-period express transit services for commuters to Sutter, Sacramento, and Placer Counties, as well as internal specialized service to schools, commercial centers, and industrial job centers.

Project Objectives

The Sutter Pointe Specific Plan would implement the Sutter County General Plan, as amended, and would provide a development framework for a master-planned residential, commercial, and industrial community in south Sutter County. It sets forth the following project objectives:

- ▶ Create a major employment center in south Sutter County that serves both Sutter County and the greater Sacramento region.
- ▶ Accommodate projected regional growth in a location adjacent to existing and planned infrastructure, urban services, transportation corridors, and major employment centers.
- ▶ Provide a complementary and supportive array of land uses that enables development of a community featuring employment centers, homes, shopping, schools, recreation, cultural and worship facilities, and public services.
- ▶ Provide a range of housing choices for all family types.
- ▶ Promote a vibrant, compact, mixed-use community composed of neighborhoods and local activity centers.
- ▶ Provide for development of needed regional service facilities, such as a hospital/medical center or community college.
- ▶ Establish a system of multimodal transportation facilities that connects to the regional transportation system, including pedestrian and bicycle trails and future bus rapid transit.
- ▶ Create an efficient internal street system that connects residents to employment, commercial and civic centers, schools, and recreational and community facilities.
- ▶ Locate neighborhood parks adjacent to schools, and establish joint use of park and school sites.
- ▶ Provide usable recreation facilities that also act as transition zones between employment areas and adjacent residential neighborhoods, including dual-use recreation and drainage facilities.

- ▶ Comply with the NBHCP, SAFCA flood control plans, and other regional resource conservation and safety plans.
- ▶ Provide connectivity between individual habitat reserves and between reserves and surrounding agricultural lands.
- ▶ Promote a balance in the type and phasing of land uses that supports a strong tax base and generates financial resources to pay for public services and infrastructure without financial burden to existing Sutter County residents.
- ▶ Maintain flexibility to adapt and adjust to changing economic and market conditions.
- ▶ Support incorporation of the specific plan area as a city at the optimal time in the future.

CONTENTS OF THE SPECIFIC PLAN

The Sutter Pointe Specific Plan comprises the following 12 chapters, which together satisfy state requirements for a specific plan:

- ▶ The *Introduction* defines the specific plan project area and provides a regional context and site history. The introduction also sets forth the regulatory context for the specific plan, including requirements of Sutter County Measure M, the Sutter County General Plan, and several regional plans.
- ▶ The *Community Vision, Plan Principles, and Concepts* describe the desired characteristics of the Sutter Pointe planned community in the future and establish the overarching objectives of the specific plan. This chapter communicates planning concepts that are amplified in subsequent sections of the plan.
- ▶ The *Land Use Element* presents goals and policies for the future distribution and intensity of land use throughout the specific plan area. This chapter designates the type, intensity, and general distribution of uses of land among the residential, industrial, and public facility uses specified in Measure M and provides additional descriptions of the types of housing, business, industry, open space, education, civic uses, and other categories of both public and private land use desired and permitted in the plan.
- ▶ The *Parks, Recreation and Open Space Element* presents goals, policies, and plans addressing provision of open space, neighborhood parks, passive recreation, and active recreation in the specific plan area.
- ▶ The *Resource Conservation and Management Element* presents goals, policies, and plans addressing a variety of resources found in and adjacent to the plan area, including wetlands, riparian resources, grassland habitats, and agricultural lands, and consistency with the NBHCP.
- ▶ The *Transportation and Circulation Element* presents goals, policies, and plans addressing connections to regional transportation routes, and provision of roadways, pedestrian and bicycle facilities, public transit, park-and-ride facilities, and transportation system management in the specific plan area.
- ▶ The *Affordable Housing Element* presents goals, policies, and plans regarding provision of affordable housing in the specific plan area.
- ▶ The *Community Facilities and Services Element* presents goals, policies, and plans responding to the need for fire protection, police protection, schools, and libraries in the specific plan area. This chapter also contains provisions for civic/government facilities to be located in the specific plan area.
- ▶ The *Infrastructure Systems and Services Element* presents goals, policies, and backbone service plans for provision of roadways, sanitary sewers, solid waste collection and disposal, distribution of water and recycled

water, storm drainage and flood control, dry utilities (gas and electric), and communications services in the specific plan area.

- ▶ The specific plan's *Development Standards* provide development requirements for each type of land use in the specific plan area. Sign regulations and parking requirements in the specific plan area are also addressed.
- ▶ The specific plan also includes *Design Guidelines* that establish residential, commercial, and industrial guidelines pertaining to future development in the specific plan area to achieve good-quality design and accomplish the planning principles set forth in the specific plan introduction.
- ▶ The *Implementation* chapter provides information regarding phasing of the specific plan, financing of public improvements, and subsequent entitlements. Additionally, this chapter sets forth procedural requirements for adjusting or amending the specific plan, and transferring development rights between parcels in the specific plan area.

Following adoption of the specific plan by the Sutter County Board of Supervisors, all subsequent development in the plan area must be consistent with specific plan goals, policies, and standards. (See Government Code Section 65455.)

TYPE OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT

The EIR will include only program-level, or "first-tier," analysis for some elements of the project, consistent with California Public Resources Code (PRC) Sections 21083.3, 21093, and 21094; 14 California Code of Regulations (CCR) Sections 15152 and 15168; and 40 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 1500.4(i), 1502.4(b), and 1502.20. The program-level analysis will consider the broad environmental effects of adoption and implementation of the specific plan. The EIR will identify performance standards (e.g., setbacks, measures to protect biological and visual resources) and mitigation measures that would apply to all subsequent, future project phases under the specific plan (as conditions of approval) at the Sutter Pointe Specific Plan project site. These performance standards will be incorporated into the specific plan to avoid or reduce impacts to the maximum extent feasible. In addition, the program-level analysis will address the cumulative and growth-inducing impacts of development of the proposed project and address a reasonable range of alternatives, including a No-Project Alternative, as required by CEQA.

The project has five separate phases of residential/mixed-use development and five phases of employment center development. To move forward with a specific phase, the project applicant will submit a tentative subdivision map/improvement plan for the entirety of each phase. At that time, the County will require compliance with the Sutter Pointe Specific Plan performance standards and mitigation measures set forth in the EIR and incorporated into the Sutter Pointe Specific Plan for each tentative subdivision map/improvement plan as conditions of approval. CEQA includes a number of different but complementary means for streamlining environmental review consistent with an approved general plan, specific plan, or zoning action. More than one of these provisions might apply to future entitlements in the approved specific plan area. (See, for example, PRC Section 21083.3 [streamlined review for projects consistent with general plans, community plans, or zoning actions for which an EIR was prepared]; 14 CCR Section 15183 [same]; PRC Sections 21093 and 21094 [tiering]; 14 CCR Section 15152 [same]; California Government Code Section 65457 [CEQA exemption for residential projects in a specific plan for which an EIR was prepared]; and 14 CCR Section 15182 [same].) The extent of environmental review, if any, for future development entitlements will depend on a number of factors, including the streamlining provision of CEQA that are most applicable to a particular proposed entitlement; consistency of the development with the adopted specific plan; and the extent to which the programmatic analysis, performance standards, and mitigation measures have anticipated and accounted for the site-specific impacts of the requested entitlements.

In addition to the programmatic analysis described above, the EIR also will include a more detailed, project-level analysis of the on- and off-site sewer infrastructure to serve Phase 1 of the proposed Sutter Pointe Specific Plan

project. The on- and off-site sewer infrastructure portion of the project contains enough specificity for a site-specific, project-level environmental review under CEQA and will allow the consideration of discretionary approvals for implementation of the approximately 6.1-mile sewer interceptor. The County's and SRCSD's intention in evaluating Phase 1 wastewater improvements at a project level of detail is that no further EIRs or negative declarations will be required for additional regulatory approvals following adoption of the specific plan, barring the occurrence of any of the circumstances described in PRC Section 21166 or State CEQA Guidelines Sections 15162 and 15163.

PROJECT SCHEDULE

Following preparation and circulation of the draft EIR, a final EIR will be prepared that responds to public and agency comments received on the draft EIR. The County Board of Supervisors is expected to consider certification of the final EIR and approval of the proposed project in early 2008.

ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS

The County reviewed the proposed project and determined that a full-scope EIR should be prepared. The EIR will analyze the effects of the proposed specific plan development and off-site infrastructure and roadway improvements required to support implementation and development of the plan. The following environmental issues will be evaluated in the EIR. In addition to anticipated environmental issues, the State CEQA Guidelines Section 15082(a)(1)(C) states that the information in the NOP shall also include "probable environmental effects of the project." It is assumed that implementation of the proposed project would result in environmental effects in all issue areas, described below; however, the actual effects will be identified during the EIR process.

Aesthetics – The EIR will describe the potential visibility of the proposed project from surrounding uses and viewsheds. It also will describe the changes in visual character from conversion of the project site from a largely agricultural use to urban development. An assessment of the spatial attributes of the project and lighting/glare impacts on on- and off-site areas will be provided.

Agriculture – The EIR will evaluate the proposed project's conversion of agricultural land to urban uses and identify any direct or indirect impacts on surrounding agricultural lands.

Air Quality – The EIR will describe regional and local air quality in the project vicinity and evaluate the potentially significant direct, indirect, and cumulative air quality effects of the project during construction (temporary, short term) and operation (long term). The proposed project's estimated air emissions will be compared to emissions thresholds of the Feather River Air Quality Management District. The EIR will also evaluate toxic air emissions, potential sources of odor, and the project's effects on climate change.

Biological Resources – The EIR will describe the proposed project's effects on existing biological resources and evaluate the proposed project's direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts on these biological resources. The project also will analyze the project's consistency with the NBHCP.

Cultural Resources – The EIR will conduct a cultural resource impact assessment for the proposed project. The EIR will describe the existing cultural resources on the project site and off-site areas and evaluate the proposed project's impacts on these cultural resources, including the potential to affect undiscovered resources.

Geology and Soils – The EIR will evaluate seismicity of the local area, presence of existing fault lines and effect on development, the potential for erosion of site soils, soil stability, and expansive characteristics of site soils.

Hydrology and Water Quality – The EIR will evaluate the proposed project's effect on hydrology and water quality characteristics of the Central Valley region, including water supply, alteration of drainage patterns, erosion, stormwater discharges, and flooding.

Land Use and Planning – The EIR will evaluate the proposed changes to on-site conditions in terms of consistency with all applicable plans, including, but not limited to, the Sutter County General Plan, Sacramento County General Plan, the Natomas Basin Habitat Conservation Plan, the Comprehensive Airport Land Use Plan, SACOG Preferred Blueprint Scenario, California Department of Education Siting Criteria, and other relevant adopted plans and policies.

Noise – The EIR will describe the proposed project’s construction and operational noise impacts (including traffic) and will compare these impacts to applicable noise thresholds. It will also address the noise/land use compatibility of the proposed project with existing and future expected noise levels, including noise generated by nearby Sacramento International Airport (using community noise equivalent level [CNEL] contours developed by the Sacramento County Airport System) and traffic noise generated at nearby roadways and freeways (using traffic noise modeling).

Parks and Open Space – The EIR will analyze the proposed project’s potential to increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks. It will evaluate the proposed project’s consistency with applicable plans and policies for parks and open space. Compliance with the provisions of Measure M also will be documented in the EIR.

Population, Employment, and Housing – The EIR will evaluate the project’s consistency with applicable goals and policies of the Housing Element in the Sutter County General Plan, as they relate to environmental policies and impacts. The EIR will analyze how the project affects the jobs/housing ratio for Sutter County and the region. The EIR will also analyze the indirect effects on other issue areas from population, employment, and housing generation.

Public Health and Hazards – The EIR will summarize the results of hazardous materials assessments and will evaluate the operational characteristics of the proposed project to determine potential impacts related to use of hazardous materials and emergency response plans. The EIR will address safety issues, if any, related to the Sacramento International Airport.

Public Services – The EIR will evaluate the proposed project’s potential to create adverse impacts on the provision of fire protection, police protection, libraries, and public schools. The EIR also will analyze proposed project effects on judicial, health, mental health, and social services to document commitments to Measure M. Compliance with the provisions of Measure M also will be documented in the EIR.

Traffic and Circulation – The EIR will evaluate the proposed project’s direct and cumulative impacts on local and regional transportation facilities, including several freeway segments. The evaluation will be based on a transportation analysis that will evaluate local intersections, project-related vehicle trips, proposed site circulation and access, local transit operations, and the surrounding roadway network. The EIR will identify dwelling unit triggers for transportation improvements. The traffic and circulation section also will analyze effects on public transit, as well as public transit needs and alternatives modes of transportation.

Utilities – The EIR will analyze the current capacity of the water and wastewater systems and the proposed project’s impact on these systems. An analysis of the regional water supply conditions will be provided, consistent with Senate Bill 610 (PRC Section 21151.9, Water Code 10910). The EIR will analyze the potential impacts resulting from extending services to the project site, including water conveyance, wastewater collection and treatment, storm drainage, solid waste disposal, and electricity and natural gas services. Compliance with the provisions of Measure M also will be documented in the EIR.

Growth Inducement – The EIR will analyze the anticipated effects on population conditions in Sutter County and examine the proposed project’s potential for inducing additional growth on adjacent lands and on the region. The EIR also will analyze growth-inducement potential from construction of the off-site sewer interceptor (i.e., Rio Linda Interceptor).

Cumulative Impacts – The EIR will summarize the cumulative impacts of the proposed project as identified and described in each of the environmental technical sections.

ALTERNATIVES

The EIR will examine a range of feasible alternatives to the proposed project, including the No-Project Alternative. The alternatives that will be identified in the EIR will be developed as a result of scoping and as a result of the outcome of the environmental impact analysis.

SUBMITTING COMMENTS

To ensure that the full range of project issues of interest to responsible agencies and the public are addressed, comments and suggestions are invited from all interested parties. Written comments or questions concerning the EIR should be directed to the environmental project manager at the address above by **5:00 p.m. on April 30, 2007**. Please provide the name of a contact person who should receive future correspondence regarding the project.