

ATTACHMENT 3

CEQA FINDINGS OF FACT

and

**STATEMENT OF OVERRIDING
CONSIDERATIONS**

**OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
OF EL DORADO COUNTY**

for the

VALLEY VIEW SPECIFIC PLAN

December 1998

I.

INTRODUCTION

The Final Environmental Impact Report ("Final EIR") prepared for the Valley View Specific Plan (the "Project") addresses the potential environmental effects associated with a mixed-use urban development for a site in the El Dorado County, California. These findings have been prepared to comply with requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act ("CEQA") (Pub. Resources Code, § 21000 *et seq.*) and the CEQA Guidelines (Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, § 15000 *et seq.*).

II.

DEFINITIONS

"APCD" means the El Dorado County Air Pollution Control District.

"BMPs" means best management practices.

"Board of Supervisors" or "Board" refers to the El Dorado County Board of Supervisors.

"BUSD" means Buckeye Union School District.

"CC&Rs" refers to the projects covenants, conditions and restrictions.

"CDFG" means the California Department of Fish & Game.

"cfd" means cubic feet per day.

"cfs" means cubic feet per second.

"CIP" means Capital Improvement Program.

"CIWMB" means California Integrated Waste Management Board.

"CO" means carbon monoxide.

"CR" means core residential.

"CVRWQCB" means Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board.

“dBA” means A-weighted decibels.

“DBH” means diameter at breast height.

“Draft EIR” means the Draft Environmental Impact Report for the Valley View Specific Plan (July 1998).

“EDHFD” refers to El Dorado Hills Fire Department.

“EDUHSD” refers to El Dorado Union High School District.

“EDHWWTP” refers to El Dorado Hills Wastewater Treatment Plant.

“EDU” means equivalent dwelling unit.

“ERWQA” means Effluent and Receiving Water Quality Assessment.

“FEMA” refers to the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

“Final EIR” means the Final Environmental Impact Report for the Valley View Specific Plan.

“gpd” means gallons per day.

“LOS” means level of service.

“mgd” means million gallons per day.

“MMRP” means Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program.

“mu” means mixed use.

“NO_x” means nitrogen oxide.

“NPDES” means National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System.

“PFFP” means Public Facilities Financing Plan.

“Plan Area” means the Valley View Specific Plan Area.

“PM₁₀” means particulate matter with a diameter of 10 microns or less.

“PPM” means parts per million.

“P.U.E.” means public utility easements.

“RIF” means the El Dorado Hills/Salmon Falls Road Impact Fee.

“ROC” means Reactive Organic Compounds.

“ROG” means reactive organic gases.

“RWQCB” means Regional Water Quality Control Board.

“SFR” means single family residential.

“SO_x” means sulfur dioxide.

“STIP” means State Transportation Improvement Program.

“SWRCB” means the State Water Resources Control Board.

“SWPPP” means Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan.

“TDM” means travel demand management.

“TIM” means the County’s State System Capacity and Interchange Transportation Impact Fee.

“TSM” means Transportation System Management.

“UBC” means the Uniform Building Code.

“USACE” means the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

“USDA SCS” means U.S. Department of Agricultural Soil Conservation Service.

“USFWS” means the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

“VELB” means Valley Elderberry Longhorn Beetle.

“VVSP” means Valley View Specific Plan.

“VC” means Village Center.

III. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The project site is a 2,037-acre property located in western El Dorado County in the southern portion of El Dorado Hills, approximately one mile south of US Highway 50, southeast of the intersection of Latrobe Road and White Rock Road. The site is an irregularly-shaped area consisting primarily of undeveloped, non-native grassland, oak woodland, and oak savannah used for cattle grazing. Most of the site is currently designated for High Density Residential (1-5 units per acre) on the 1996 El Dorado County General Plan Land Use Map. Additional existing onsite General Plan designations include Multi-Family Residential (5-24 units per acre), Research and Development (about 170 acres), and Public Facilities.

The project is a specific plan that provides for the following future uses:

- approximately 1,279 acres of residential uses, including a maximum of 2,840 homes (2,409 single-family and 431 multi-family units);
- approximately 10.9 acres of commercial/office uses, including a maximum of approximately 107,000 square feet of floor area for retail, service, and/or office uses;
- approximately 24 acres of public/semi-public uses, including two school sites;
- approximately 87 acres of major roadways;
- approximately 77 acres of parks and recreation uses, including a 52-acre community park, a 12-acre “oak tree” park, and four smaller neighborhood parks; and
- approximately 559 acres of permanent open space/buffer land.

(DEIR, p. II-1.)

The project requires (1) amendment of the El Dorado County General Plan to change the current General Plan Land Use Map designations to Adopted Plan (AP) (which is required for areas with specific plans); (2) adoption of the Valley View Specific Plan, which sets forth the above land use

parameters and associated development standards and infrastructure provisions; and (3) rezoning of the property to reflect the specific plan land use designations and associated development controls (see El Dorado County file #AZ98-01). Following these approvals, subsequent discretionary actions required for the project will include approval of a development agreement, tentative and final subdivision maps, changes in service district boundaries, and other actions and permits. (DEIR, p. II-1.)

Location

Regional access to the site is provided by US Highway 50. The City of Placerville is located approximately 20 miles to the east via Highway 50; and the City of Sacramento is located approximately 25 miles to the west via Highway 50. The City of Folsom is located approximately seven miles to the east via Highway 50. (DEIR, p. III-1.)

The 126-acre Town Center East site is located north of the site across White Rock Road. Town Center East has been partially developed with retail commercial uses, and will ultimately contain over one million square feet of commercial space. A park-and-ride facility is located on the northeast corner of White Rock Road and Latrobe Road. Town Center West is on the west side of Latrobe Road and contains a compact disc case manufacturing plant. The Sunset Mobile Home Park is located adjacent to the northwest corner of the site. The El Dorado Hills Wastewater Treatment Plant is located immediately west of the site; and the approximately 854-acre El Dorado Hills Business Park is located west of the site across Latrobe Road. The business park has been partially developed with office and light industrial space. The Carson Creek Specific Plan area, located immediately west of the business park, has been approved for development of 2,434 single-family houses, 13.8 acres of commercial use, and 48.4 acres of research and development use. Rural residential development, consisting of homes on five-, ten-, and 20-acre lots, is located northeast, east, and southeast of the project site, and includes the Marble Mountain area to the northeast and the Ryan Ranch area to the southeast (see Figure III-2 of the Draft EIR). The approved Marble Valley project will be located immediately east of the project site. (DEIR, pp. III-1 - III-4.)

The community of Cameron Park is located east of El Dorado Hills on the north side of Highway 50, and the community of Shingle Springs is located east of El Dorado Hills on the south side of Highway 50. The community of Latrobe is located approximately four miles south of the site near the intersection of Latrobe Road and South Shingle Road. (DEIR, p. III-4.)

Site Characteristics

The eastern portion of the property contains evidence of previous surface mining activity that presumably occurred during the California Gold Rush era. The gold rush town of "Clarksville" was

located just north of the project site. The site has been used for cattle grazing since about 1860. (DEIR, p. III-8.) Existing project site characteristics, including topographic, hydrologic, vegetative, and agricultural features, and existing infrastructure, are illustrated on Figures III-3 and III-4 in the Draft EIR and described below.

a. Topography. The topography of the project site is varied, and includes a prominent north-south ridgeline, two valleys, wooded canyons, and natural rock outcroppings. Elevations on-site range from approximately 530 feet above sea level near the western boundary of the site to 1,240 feet above sea level at the northeastern edge of the site. A slope analysis map prepared for the applicant indicates that the majority of the 2,037-acre site (1,133 acres, or 56 percent of the site) contains 11 to 30 percent slopes. Much of this area lies on the western portion of the site. Approximately 795 acres, or 39 percent of the site, contains slopes of zero to ten percent, and a total of 110 acres, or five percent of the site, contains slopes of 31 percent or greater. (DEIR, p. III-4.)

b. Existing Hydrology. The site is located within the Plunkett and Carson Creek watersheds, both of which direct storm water runoff to Carson Creek. Plunkett Creek traverses the eastern portion of the site; Carson Creek runs through the western portion of the site; and a branch of Screech Owl Creek traverses the northern portion of the site.

c. Existing Vegetation. Vegetation on the site primarily consists of non-native annual grassland, oak woodland, and oak savannah. The site also contains cottonwood-willow riparian woodland, mixed riparian woodland, wetlands, and vernal pool communities. The greatest concentrations of trees are located on the east-facing hill slopes in the central and northeastern areas of the site. The property contains approximately 14.5 acres of wetland habitat, consisting of 2.21 acres of seep habitat, 0.08 acre of vernal pool habitat, 5.76 acres of seasonal wetland, 0.30 acre classified as perennial stream, and 6.12 acres classified as intermittent drainage. (DEIR, pp. III-4 and III-8.)

d. Existing Road System. Latrobe Road forms the western and southern boundary of the project site and provides access to US Highway 50. White Rock Road forms the northern boundary of the project site, and will eventually connect with the planned Silva Valley Parkway freeway interchange east of the Latrobe Road interchange. Existing onsite roadways consist of unpaved ranching roads. (DEIR, p. III-8.)

e. Existing Land Uses. Existing use of the site is limited to dry land cattle grazing, which has been the primary use of the site since about 1860. In addition, a two-acre landfill that has been inactive for the last 20 years is located at the southeastern boundary of the site. A 1.6-acre parcel of land containing a water tank that provides water to El Dorado Hills Business Park is located at

the northern edge of the site. This parcel is owned by the El Dorado Irrigation District. (DEIR, p. III-8.)

f. Utilities. The closest public water supply line is a 12-inch transmission main in Latrobe Road that feeds the water storage tank located onsite. The El Dorado Hills Wastewater Treatment Plant is located adjacent to the site. The closest sanitary sewer interceptor line is located just north of the treatment plant. There are no existing electrical or natural gas distribution or transmission facilities onsite. (DEIR, p. III-8.)

Project Objectives

The County has articulated the following project objectives to guide its decision with respect to the Specific Plan:

1. *To ensure comprehensive planning for development on the site consistent with the intent, purpose, and policy direction of the General Plan.*
2. *To create a new, balanced community in an area suitable for intensive development due to the availability of adequate infrastructure and services.*
3. *To provide cohesive design criteria that support the creation and maintenance of community character.*
4. *To place the primary emphasis on clustering intensive land uses and incorporation of modern planning techniques to minimize impact on various natural and man-made resources, minimize public health concerns, minimize aesthetic concerns, and provide for the creation of open space lands and other community land uses.*
5. *To maintain the visual integrity of hillsides and ridgelines.*
6. *To protect and maintain native trees, including oaks and landmark and heritage trees.*
7. *To ensure that safe and efficient transportation and circulation facilities, both locally and internally, are provided concurrent with new development.*

8. *To provide safe and efficient bicycle and pedestrian circulation that connect residential areas to one another, as well as residential areas to employment, retail, school, community facilities and recreation areas.*
9. *To designate appropriate sites for commercial uses to provide opportunities for County residents to shop and work within the county.*
10. *To provide a variety of housing opportunities by type, tenure, price and neighborhood character in order to meet County housing needs.*
11. *To conserve wetland, riparian areas, natural drainage, and other wildlife habitat of significant biological, scenic, and recreational values.*
12. *To provide adequate park and recreation facilities.*
13. *To grant development approvals consistent with the applicant's existing development agreement with the County.*

In addition to these objectives, the applicant has identified the following as its own project objectives:

1. *To provide for the planning of the site's development in a comprehensive manner, avoiding "piecemeal" approaches to infrastructure planning and development in conformance with the intent, purpose and policy direction provided by the El Dorado County General Plan;*
2. *To develop a project that will complement the overall development of the El Dorado Hills community by providing for a residential base south of Highway 50 that will enhance the viability of the El Dorado Hills Business Park and the various existing and planned commercial developments within the El Dorado Hills community;*
3. *To include lot sizes within the project that are generally larger than those available in existing areas of El Dorado Hills, without promoting a project that requires the construction of custom homes;*
4. *To include a variety of lot sizes within the project consistent with sound planning principles and with applicable policies of the El Dorado County General Plan;*

5. *To develop a project that considers the existing development patterns on adjacent properties in order to facilitate a development that does not adversely impact lifestyles presently enjoyed on surrounding properties; and*
6. *To develop the project in a manner that takes advantage of long distance views that exist on the site, without significant impacts on existing views of the property from the remainder of the community.*

(DEIR, pp. III-9 - III-11.)

IV. BACKGROUND

Application History

In 1981, Anthony Mansour formed a partnership and acquired approximately 7,000 acres of land in El Dorado Hills, including the 2,037-acre Valley View site, from the John Hancock Insurance Company.

In December 1983, El Dorado County adopted the El Dorado Hills/Salmon Falls Area Plan, which established land use designations for the project site. In April 1985, the County and the Mansour Company entered into a development agreement that created vested rights to develop the Valley View site consistent with the land use designations of the El Dorado Hills/Salmon Falls Area Plan.

In April 1994, the Mansour Company filed an application with El Dorado County for approval of a specific plan that would permit the development of up to 4,100 dwelling units, three village centers containing 40 acres of commercial uses, three school sites, and 400 acres of open space. In January 1996, El Dorado County adopted an updated General Plan. In September 1997, the Mansour Company revised the 1994 specific plan in response to land use and development policies contained in the updated General Plan.

(DEIR, pp. III-8 - III-9.)

Required Permits and Approvals

In order to implement the project, the County must approve the following:

- a. General Plan Amendment. The project requires approval of an amendment of the El Dorado County General Plan to change existing project site land use designations to *Adopted Plan (AP)*.

The General Plan requires that the *AP* designation be applied to areas with specific plans. Under the *AP* designation, specific plans are incorporated into the General Plan and the specific plan land use map is thereby adopted as the General Plan map for the area.

b. Specific Plan Adoption. The project requires County approval of a specific plan for the project site.

c. Rezoning. The project requires County approval of a rezoning of the project site to reflect the specific plan land use designations.

(DEIR, p. III-35.)

V. RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

For purposes of CEQA and these Findings, the Record of Proceedings for the Project consists of the following documents, at a minimum:

- The Notice of Preparation and all other public notices issued by the County in conjunction with the Project;
- The Final EIR for the Valley View Specific Plan (as described immediately above);
- All comments submitted by agencies or members of the public during the 45-day public comment periods on the Draft EIR;
- All comments and correspondence submitted to the County with respect to the Project, in addition to timely comments on the Draft EIR;
- The mitigation monitoring and reporting program for the Project;

- All findings and resolutions adopted by County decisionmakers in connection with the Project, and all documents cited or referred to therein;
- All reports, studies, memoranda, maps, staff reports, or other planning documents relating to the Project prepared by the County, consultants to the County, or responsible or trustee agencies with respect to the County's compliance with the requirements of CEQA and with respect to the County's actions on the Project;
- All documents submitted to the County by other public agencies or members of the public in connection with the Project, up through the close of the Board of Supervisors' public hearing;
- Minutes and/or verbatim transcripts of all information sessions, public meetings, and public hearings held by the County in connection with the Project;
- Any documentary or other evidence submitted to the County at such information sessions, public meetings, and public hearings;
- Matters of common knowledge to the County, including, but not limited to Federal, State, and local laws and regulations;
- El Dorado County General Plan (Volumes I and II) (January 23, 1996);
- Circulation Element and Land Use Element Maps for the El Dorado County General Plan;
- El Dorado County General Plan Update Draft Environmental Impact Report (December 1994);
- El Dorado County General Plan Update Supplement to the Draft Environmental Impact Report (September 1995);
- El Dorado County General Plan Final Environmental Impact Report (Volumes I through V) (December 1995);
- El Dorado County General Plan Findings (January 23, 1996, revised January 26, 1996);
- El Dorado County Hiking and Equestrian Trails Master Plan (April 1990);
- The El Dorado County Zoning Code;

- El Dorado Grading, Erosion and Sediment Control Ordinance No. 4071 (Ch. 15-14);
- The El Dorado County Drainage Manual (March 1995);
- The El Dorado County Design and Improvement Standards Manual;
- El Dorado County Supplemental Hillside Land Use and Hillside Road Standards;
- The El Dorado County Public Water Planning Ordinance, No. 4325;
- El Dorado County Integrated Waste Management Plan;
- El Dorado County Design and Improvement Standards Manual (released May 18, 1990);
- Board of Supervisors Resolution No. 199-91, Oak Tree and Wetlands Preservation (June 18, 1991);
- Board of Supervisors Resolution No. 322-92, Hillside Design Standards (October 20, 1992);
- Board of Supervisors Resolution No. 69-93, Water Conserving Landscape Standards (February 23, 1993);
- Board of Supervisors Resolution No. 58-94, Subdivision Improvements and Security (March 8, 1994);
- Board of Supervisors Resolution No. 175-96, Amending the El Dorado Hills/Salmon Falls Area Road Impact Fees (July 23, 1996), and all reports, studies, and analyses submitted to the Board of Supervisors in connection therewith and all testimony received thereon;
- Board of Supervisors Resolution No. 201-96, Amending West Slope Area of Benefit Traffic Impact Mitigation (TIM) Fees (August 20, 1996), and all reports, studies, and analyses submitted to the Board of Supervisors in connection therewith and all testimony received thereon;
- Board of Supervisors Resolution No. 202-96, Setting a Transportation Impact Mitigation Fee for the State System's Capacity & Interchanges (August 20, 1996), and all reports, studies, and analyses submitted to the Board of Supervisors in connection therewith and all testimony received thereon;

- Letter from Michael T. Stoltz to Board of Supervisors re El Dorado Hills/Salmon Falls Area Road Impact Fee (RIF) Revision (July 11, 1996);
- Interoffice Communication from Michael T. Stoltz to Board of Supervisors re "El Dorado Hills/Salmon Falls Road Impact Fee (RIF) Board of Supervisors Agenda Item #70, July 23, 1996" (July 22, 1996);
- El Dorado County Five Year Capital Improvement Program (January 1998);
- El Dorado County Twenty Year Capital Improvement Program (1995);
- Silva Valley Road Interchange Project Study Report (January 1991);
- Project Report for Silva Valley Parkway Interchange (January 1991);
- Final EIR for Silva Valley Parkway Interchange with U.S. Highway 50 (February 1990);
- El Dorado County Transportation Commission Regional Transportation Plan 1994 for El Dorado County (February 1995, reaffirmed December 1996);
- El Dorado County Transportation Commission Resolution No. 96/97.17, adopting 1998/1999 - 2004/05 Regional Transportation Improvement Program;
- Final Report, U.S. 50 Highway Interchange Planning Study through Folsom and Western El Dorado County (November 1995);
- Project Study Report on Route 50 from Sunrise Boulevard to El Dorado Hills Boulevard (December 1997);
- Sacramento Area Council of Governments, U.S. 50 Corridor Major Investment Study (December 1997);
- Draft State Route 50 Transportation Concept Report (October 1997);
- The Addendum to the Final EIR for the Carson Creek Specific Plan, including the appendices attached thereto (January 1997);
- El Dorado County Water Agency Water Program and El Dorado Project for the El Dorado Irrigation District Service Area Draft Environmental Impact Report (September 30, 1992);

- El Dorado County Water Agency Water Program and El Dorado Project for the El Dorado Service Area Final Environmental Impact Report (March 1993);
- Draft Supplement to El Dorado County Water Agency: Water Program and El Dorado Project Environmental Impact Report (July 1995);
- Final Supplement to El Dorado County Water Agency: Water Program and El Dorado Project Environmental Impact Report (October 1995);
- EID Policy Statement No. 22 (revised 1992);
- EID Policy Statement No. 41 (revised 1992);
- State Water Resources Control Board, Decision 1635 (Oct. 2, 1996);
- Notice of Appeal in League to Save Sierra Lakes et al. v. El Dorado County Water Agency et al. (El Dorado County Superior Court No. 93-3324) (now Third District Court of Appeal, 3 Civil C027948);
- Supplement No. 2 to the Preliminary Design Report for El Dorado Irrigation District Assessment District No. 3 (January 1991);
- 1996 Urban Water Management Plan, El Dorado Irrigation District (February 26, 1996);
- Crawford Ditch Improvement Project Final Environmental Impact Report (February 1990);
- Water Reclamation Master Plan, El Dorado Irrigation District (July 1994);
- El Dorado Irrigation District Water Supply and Demand Evaluation (August 29, 1997);
- Agenda Item Summary for March 27, 1995, El Dorado Irrigation District Board Meeting;
- Final Environmental Impact Report for the Crawford Ditch Improvement Project;
- El Dorado Hills Master Facilities Plan (November 1995);

- Draft Environmental Impact Statement/Environmental Impact Report for Central Valley Project Water Supply Contracts Under Public Law 101-514 (Section 206) (and Appendices I-III) (September 1997);
- U.S. Highway 50 Interchange Planning Study through Folsom and Western El Dorado County (Nov. 1995);
- Board of Supervisors Resolution No. 77-85 (April 16, 1985) and attachments (Measure A);
- "Lockwood Regional Landfill Facts";
- "Agreement - Lockwood Landfill," between Western El Dorado Recovery Systems and Refuse, Inc. (January 16, 1997);
- Any documents expressly cited in these findings, in addition to those cited above; and
- Any other materials required to be in the record of proceedings by Public Resources Code section 21167.6, subdivision (e).

The custodian of the documents comprising the record of proceedings is Dixie Foote, Clerk to the Board of Supervisors, whose office is located at 330 Fairlane Court, Building A, Placerville, California, 95667.

The Board of Supervisors has relied on all of the documents listed above in reaching its decision on the Valley View Specific Plan, even if not every document was formally presented to the Board or County Staff as part of the County files generated in connection with the Valley View Specific Plan. Without exception, any documents set forth above not found in the Project files fall into one of two categories. Many of them reflect prior planning or legislative decisions with which the Board was aware in approving the Valley View Specific Plan. (See City of Santa Cruz v. Local Agency Formation Commission (1978) 76 Cal.App.3d 381, 391-392 [142 Cal.Rptr. 873]; Dominey v. Department of Personnel Administration (1988) 205 Cal.App.3d 729, 738, fn. 6 [252 Cal.Rptr. 620].) Other documents influenced the expert advice provided to County Staff or consultants, who then provided advice to the Board. For that reason, such documents form part of the underlying factual basis for the Board's decisions relating to the adoption of the Valley View Specific Plan. (See Pub. Resources Code, § 21167.6, subd. (e)(10); Browning-Ferris Industries v. City Council of City of San Jose (1986) 181 Cal.App.3d 852, 866 [226 Cal.Rptr. 575]; Stanislaus Audubon Society, Inc. v. County of Stanislaus (1995) 33 Cal.App.4th 144, 153, 155 [39 Cal.Rptr.2d 54].)

VI. FINDINGS REQUIRED UNDER CEQA

Public Resources Code section 21002 provides that “public agencies should not approve projects as proposed if there are feasible alternatives or feasible mitigation measures available which would *substantially lessen* the significant environmental effects of such projects[.]” (Emphasis added.) The same statute states that the procedures required by CEQA “are intended to assist public agencies in systematically identifying both the significant effects of proposed projects and the feasible alternatives or feasible mitigation measures which will *avoid or substantially lessen* such significant effects.” (Emphasis added.) Section 21002 goes on to state that “in the event [that] specific economic, social, or other conditions make infeasible such project alternatives or such mitigation measures, individual projects may be approved in spite of one or more significant effects.”

The mandate and principles announced in Public Resources Code section 21002 are implemented, in part, through the requirement that agencies must adopt findings before approving projects for which EIRs are required. (See Pub. Resources Code, § 21081, subd. (a); CEQA Guidelines, § 15091, subd. (a).) For each significant environmental effect identified in an EIR for a proposed project, the approving agency must issue a written finding reaching one or more of three permissible conclusions. The first such finding is that “[c]hanges or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project which avoid or substantially lessen the significant environmental effect as identified in the final EIR.” (CEQA Guidelines, § 15091, subd. (a)(1).) The second permissible finding is that “[s]uch changes or alterations are within the responsibility and jurisdiction of another public agency and not the agency making the finding. Such changes have been adopted by such other agency or can and should be adopted by such other agency.” (CEQA Guidelines, § 15091, subd. (a)(2).) The third potential conclusion is that “[s]pecific economic, legal, social, technological, or other considerations, including provision of employment opportunities for highly trained workers, make infeasible the mitigation measures or project alternatives identified in the final EIR.” (CEQA Guidelines, § 15091, subd. (a)(3).) Public Resources Code section 21061.1 defines “feasible” to mean “capable of being accomplished in a successful manner within a reasonable period of time, taking into account economic, environmental, social and technological factors.” CEQA Guidelines section 15364 adds another factor: “legal” considerations. (See also Citizens of Goleta Valley v. Board of Supervisors (“Goleta II”) (1990) 52 Cal.3d 553, 565 [276 Cal. Rptr. 410].)

The concept of “feasibility” also encompasses the question of whether a particular alternative or mitigation measure promotes the underlying goals and objectives of a project. (City of Del Mar v. City of San Diego (1982) 133 Cal.App.3d 410, 417 [183 Cal.Rptr. 898].) “[F]easibility” under CEQA encompasses ‘desirability’ to the extent that desirability is based on a reasonable balancing of the relevant economic, environmental, social, and technological factors.” (Ibid.; see also

Sequoyah Hills Homeowners Assn. v. City of Oakland (1993) 23 Cal.App.4th 704, 715 [29 Cal.Rptr.2d 182].)

The CEQA Guidelines do not define the difference between “avoiding” a significant environmental effect and merely “substantially lessening” such an effect. The County must therefore glean the meaning of these terms from the other contexts in which the terms are used. Public Resources Code section 21081, on which CEQA Guidelines section 15091 is based, uses the term “mitigate” rather than “substantially lessen.” The CEQA Guidelines therefore equate “mitigating” with “substantially lessening.” Such an understanding of the statutory term is consistent with the policies underlying CEQA, which include the policy that “public agencies should not approve projects as proposed if there are feasible alternatives or feasible mitigation measures available which would substantially lessen the significant environmental effects of such projects.” (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002.)

For purposes of these findings, the term “avoid” refers to the effectiveness of one or more mitigation measures to reduce an otherwise significant effect to a less than significant level. In contrast, the term “substantially lessen” refers to the effectiveness of such measure or measures to substantially reduce the severity of a significant effect, but not to reduce that effect to a less than significant level. These interpretations appear to be mandated by the holding in Laurel Hills Homeowners Association v. City Council (1978) 83 Cal.App.3d 515, 519-527 [147 Cal.Rptr. 842], in which the Court of Appeal held that an agency had satisfied its obligation to substantially lessen or avoid significant effects by adopting numerous mitigation measures, not all of which rendered the significant impacts in question (e.g., the “cultural resource and visual factor problem”) less than significant.

Although CEQA Guidelines section 15091 requires only that approving agencies specify that a particular significant effect is “avoid[ed] or substantially lessen[ed],” these findings, for purposes of clarity, in each case will specify whether the effect in question has been reduced to a less than significant level, or has simply been substantially lessened but remains significant.

Moreover, although section 15091, read literally, does not require findings to address environmental effects that an EIR identifies as merely “potentially significant,” these findings will nevertheless fully account for all such effects identified in the Final EIR.

In short, CEQA requires that the lead agency adopt mitigation measures or alternatives, where feasible, to substantially lessen or avoid significant environmental impacts that will otherwise occur. Project modification or alternatives are not required, however, where such changes are infeasible or where the responsibility for modifying the project lies with some other agency. (CEQA Guidelines, § 15091, subd. (a), (b).)

With respect to a project for which significant impacts are not avoided or substantially lessened either through the adoption of feasible mitigation measures or feasible environmentally superior alternative, a public agency, after adopting proper findings, may nevertheless approve the project if the agency first adopts a statement of overriding considerations setting forth the specific reasons why the agency found that the project's "benefits" rendered "acceptable" its "unavoidable adverse environmental effects." (CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15093, 15043, subd. (b); see also Pub. Resources Code, § 21081, subd. (b).) The California Supreme Court has stated that, "[t]he wisdom of approving . . . any development project, a delicate task which requires a balancing of interests, is necessarily left to the sound discretion of the local officials and their constituents who are responsible for such decisions. The law as we interpret and apply it simply requires that those decisions be informed, and therefore balanced." (*Goleta II*, 52 Cal.3d at p. 576.)

VII.

LEGAL EFFECTS OF FINDINGS

To the extent that these findings conclude that various proposed mitigation measures outlined in the Final EIR are feasible and have not been modified, superseded or withdrawn, the County hereby binds itself to implement these measures. These findings, in other words, are not merely informational, but rather constitute a binding set of obligations that will come into effect when County decisionmakers formally approve the Project.

The mitigation measures are referenced in the mitigation monitoring program adopted concurrently with these findings, and will be effectuated through the process of constructing and implementing the Project.

VIII.

MITIGATION MONITORING AND REPORTING PROGRAM

A Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program ("MMRP") has been prepared for the Project and has been adopted concurrently with these Findings. (See Pub. Resources Code, § 21081.6, subd. (a)(1).) The County will use the MMRP to track compliance with Project mitigation measures. The MMRP will remain available for public review during the compliance period.

IX.

SIGNIFICANT EFFECTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

The Final EIR identified several significant environmental effects (or “impacts”) that the Valley View Specific Plan will cause. Some of these significant effects can be fully avoided through the adoption of feasible mitigation measures. Others cannot be avoided by the adoption of feasible mitigation measures or feasible environmentally superior alternatives; however, these effects are outweighed by overriding considerations set forth in Section XI below. This Section (IX) presents in greater detail the Boards’ findings with respect to the environmental effects of the Project.

A. LAND USE AND OPEN SPACE

Standards of Significance

Based on the CEQA Guidelines, the project may be considered to have a significant adverse land use and open space impact if it will:

- (a) Conflict with applicable environmental plans or policies adopted by agencies with jurisdiction over the project such that the conflict will lead to decreased environmental protection or increased environmental harm;
- (b) Be incompatible with existing land use in the vicinity;
- (c) Have a substantial, demonstrable negative aesthetic effect;
- (d) Disrupt or divide the physical arrangement of an established community;
- (e) Create a public health hazard or attract people to an area and expose them to hazards found there;
- (f) Conflict with established recreational, educational, religious or scientific uses in the area;
- (g) Affect agricultural resources or operations by creating incompatible land uses; or
- (h) Convert prime agricultural land to non-agricultural use or impair the agricultural productivity of prime agricultural land. For purposes of estimating actual acreage, “prime agricultural land” is defined in the Draft EIR as soil identified as Class I or Class II in the US Department of Agriculture Soil Conservation Service (“USDA SCS”) *Land Capabilities Classification* system, or as *Prime Farmland* by the State Department of Conservation.

(DEIR, pp. IV.A-15 - IV.A-16.)

Impact:

LU-1: The Project will have significant and unavoidable impacts on the El Dorado Hills open space and rural character. (DEIR, p. IV.A-16.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the Valley View Specific Plan that substantially lessen, but do not avoid, the significant environmental effect associated with open space and rural character impacts. No mitigation is available to render the effect less than significant. The effect therefore remains significant and unavoidable.

Explanation:

The specific plan designates approximately 1,401 acres (68.8 percent of the site) for urban uses (residential, commercial, research and development, school sites, streets, etc.) and 77 acres (3.8 percent) for park use. Approximately 559 acres (27.4 percent) of the site will remain as undisturbed open space.

The project vicinity is transitioning from an area with a predominantly rural character to an area that is more suburban. While uses north and west of the site are now predominantly suburban in character (e.g., El Dorado Hills Business Park, Town Center), uses south and east of the site still consist primarily of open space and rural residential development, although the Marble Valley site immediately east of the project site has been approved for single-family residential development. The project will extend the existing El Dorado Hills urbanization pattern further southeast.

(DEIR, p. IV.A-16.)

Mitigation LU-1:

Application of the visual impact mitigation measures identified in the Visual Impact Section of these Findings. (DEIR, p. IV.A-17.)

Significance after Mitigation

Significant and unavoidable for open space and rural character impacts. (DEIR, p. IV.A-17.)

Impact:

LU-2: The Project will have potentially significant compatibility impacts related to the El Dorado Hills Wastewater Treatment Plant. (DEIR, p. IV.A-17.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the Valley View Specific Plan that avoid the potentially significant environmental effect identified in the Final EIR.

Explanation:

The proposed Specific Plan calls for construction of: (1) a 52-acre community park north of the existing El Dorado Hills Wastewater treatment plant, (2) Core Residential uses permitting six dwelling units per acre south of the plant, and (3) Estate Residential uses permitting two dwelling units per acre east of the plant, with the latter two uses separated from the plant by a major collector road. There is a potential for odor intrusion from the treatment plant to be a nuisance to the future occupants of these adjacent recreational and residential areas, although this potential could be reduced with the anticipated installation of odor control measures to be funded through the proposed Assessment District 12. The potential odor nuisance represents a potentially significant impact.

Funding of odor control measures at the EID plant (e.g., elimination of sludge drying basins; structural containment of headworks) through proposed Assessment District 12 will assist in reducing odor problems at the project site.

(DEIR, p. IV.A-17.)

Mitigation LU-2:

- Implement Mitigation Measure AQ-4 as later described in the Air Quality section of these Findings.

This measure, combined with anticipated odor control measures at the treatment plant funded through proposed Assessment District 12, will reduce Impact LU-2 to a less than significant level. (DEIR, p. IV.A-18.)

Significance after Mitigation

Less than significant. (DEIR, p. IV.A-18.)

Impact:

LU-3: The Project will have potentially significant land use compatibility impacts on adjacent mobile homes. (DEIR, p. IV.A-18.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the Valley View Specific Plan that avoid the potentially significant environmental effect identified in the Final EIR.

Explanation:

The specific plan proposes a school site, a Core Residential area (six dwelling units per acre), a 52-acre community park, and an approximately 80-foot strip of permanent open space adjacent to the existing mobile home park east of the project site. The proposed open space and Core Residential uses will be compatible with the mobile homes. Depending upon the design of the school and community park, however, there will be a potential for land use conflict with the mobile home park related to noise intrusion from the school, and noise and nighttime lighting associated with the community park playing fields (i.e., soccer and baseball fields). This possible incompatibility represents a potentially significant impact. (DEIR, p. IV.A-18.)

Mitigation LU-3:

The applicant shall work with the El Dorado Hills Community Services District to develop a community park plan that either:

- (1) locates playing fields at least 300 feet away from the closest mobile home, or
- (2) limits use of closer playing fields to daytime hours only, in order to avoid nighttime noise and lighting impacts.

The future developer of the school site shall work with the Buckeye Union School District to develop a school plan that either:

- (1) avoids potential noise impacts on the mobile homes by locating any playing fields that may be proposed as part of the site plan at least 300 feet away from the closest mobile home, or

- (2) limits use of closer playing fields to daytime hours only, in order to avoid nighttime noise and lighting impacts.

(DEIR, p. IV.A-19.)

Significance after Mitigation

Less than significant. (DEIR, p. IV.A-19.)

Cumulative Impacts

Impact:

LU-4: Alteration of the existing patterns of county development associated with cumulative development will cause significant cumulative impacts. (DEIR, p. IV.A-21.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the Valley Views Specific Plan that substantially lessen, but do not avoid, the project's cumulatively considerable incremental contribution to the significant cumulative environmental effect associated with alteration of existing patterns of county development impacts throughout the County due to planned development. No mitigation is available to render the project's contribution less than cumulatively considerable, or the larger effect less than significant. The effect therefore remains significant and unavoidable.

Explanation:

Cumulative local and countywide urban growth, of which this project is a part, is anticipated and is addressed in the El Dorado County General Plan, adopted in 1996. The cumulative impacts of that growth on land use and open space have been analyzed in the El Dorado County General Plan EIR. The analysis for Regional Analysis Area 1 (which contains the El Dorado Hills area) in the Land Use, Population, and Growth Inducing Impacts section of the Draft EIR (section V.1), states that the primary cumulative changes in countywide development patterns will occur as large tracts of undeveloped land are converted to urban land uses. As feasible mitigation measures were not available, this cumulative alteration of the existing patterns of county development has been identified as a significant and unavoidable land use impact. As described herein under Impact LU-1.

the Project will specifically contribute to a significant cumulative loss of open space and rural character in the El Dorado Hills area. (DEIR, p. IV.A-21.)

Mitigation:

No feasible mitigation measures are available. (DEIR, p. IV.A-21.)

Significance after Mitigation

Significant and unavoidable. (DEIR, p. IV.A-21.)

B. VISUAL FACTORS

Standards of Significance

Based on CEQA Guidelines, the project may be considered to have a significant visual impact if it will:

- (a) Conflict with applicable General Plan policies intended to reduce the visual impacts or improve the aesthetics of new development;
- (b) Have a substantial, demonstrable negative aesthetic effect.
- (c) Substantially and negatively affect a scenic vista or scenic highway.
- (d) Create light or glare that will result in a substantial negative effect.

Based on the El Dorado County General Plan and on criteria (a), (b), and (c) above, the project may also be considered to have a potentially significant visual impact if it will substantially and negatively:

- (e) change distinct or characteristic natural landscape features onsite (goal 2.3 and objective 2.3.1);
- (f) change the visual integrity of onsite hillsides and ridgelines (objective 2.3.2);
- (g) fail to maintain the rural character of the community (goal 2.5);

- (h) fail to provide physical and visual separation between existing and new communities (objective 2.5.1, policy 2.5.1.1, and policy 2.5.1.2);
- (I) provide signage that will not maintain and enhance the visual appearance of the County (goal 2.7); and
- (j) create high intensity lighting and glare (goal 2.8).

(DEIR, pp. IV.B-8 - IV.B-9.)

Impact:

V-1: The Project will cause significant impacts associated with the change in natural landscape and rural visual character. (DEIR, p. IV.B-19.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the Valley View Specific Plan that substantially lessen, but do not avoid, the potentially significant environmental effect associated with change in natural landscape and rural visual character. No mitigation is available to render the effect less than significant. The effect therefore remains significant and unavoidable.

Explanation:

The project will convert the existing open, rural, oak-studded site to a developed community with large lot and ranchette residential, suburban residential, institutional (schools), and commercial structures, water tanks, roadways, and introduced landscaping. Development permitted under the Specific Plan will substantially and negatively detract from existing surrounding views of the site and from the distinct natural and rural character of the area. In general terms, development of the project site under the Valley View Specific Plan will change the existing visual character of the project site from an undeveloped, rural, natural landscape to a developed suburban residential and commercial landscape. These effects will represent a significant visual impact. (DEIR, p. IV.B-19; FEIR, p. IV.B-19.)

Mitigation V-1:

Incorporation of the additional design standards and guidelines listed below will reduce the overall impact of the project on the natural landscape and rural character, although not to a less than significant level. Any substantial change in the site's existing visual character from open grazing

land to suburban land uses, with the conventional development layouts provided for under the Specific Plan, could be expected to substantially change the distinct natural rangeland features of the site, reduce the visual integrity of its hillsides and ridgelines, and thus have a substantial negative aesthetic effect.

The applicant shall be responsible for implementing measures (a) through (c) identified below:

- (a) Landscape and Vegetation Management Plan. Prepare a detailed Landscape and Vegetation Management Plan for review and approval by the County Planning Department. Retain a qualified landscape architect or plant ecologist to prepare the plan. Structure the plan for implementation by the applicant/future developers and project homeowners associations. Incorporate the required oak tree retention, consolidation, and replacement measures (Biological Resources Mitigation Measures BR-3, BR-4, BR-5, BR-6, and BR-7) into this plan. The plan shall also be the primary tool for implementing measures (1), (2) and (3) listed below pertaining to tree protection, tree pruning, tree maintenance and replacement, and introduced landscaping. Incorporate the Landscape and Vegetation Management Plan into the project covenants, codes, and restrictions ("CC&Rs") in order to enforce the plan.
 - (1) Protect Trees from Removal/Replace Removed Trees. Incorporate the tree protection measures described under Mitigation Measure BR-3. The visual effect of any native tree losses will remain until replacement trees reach trunk diameter comparable to the average size of the removed trees, which will require a 20 to 50 year growth period.
 - (2) Limit Tree Pruning. Existing trees that are successfully retained, but are within proximity to introduced residential development, could be subject to pruning by homeowners to maximize views from hillside and ridgetop homesites. Similarly, the effectiveness of introduced vegetative screening could be defeated by homeowners trying to maximize views from their homes by pruning trees needed for screening. Specify pruning restrictions in the Landscape and Vegetation Management Plan and project CC&Rs so that the beneficial screening effects of the trees are not significantly compromised.
 - (3) Implement a Vegetation Maintenance and Replacement Program. Establish a program of ongoing maintenance and replacement for existing and introduced landscaping. This program should be included in the Landscaping and Vegetative Management Plan. Implementation and enforcement of the program shall be the responsibility of the project homeowners association, which will collect dues to fund common maintenance costs, and will enforce the project CC&Rs.

- (b) Vegetative Screening. Revise the Specific Plan landscaping requirements and prepare a Landscaping and Vegetation Management Plan, as described under (a) above, to specify the following:
- (1) Plant Trees in Natural Patterns to Screen Buildings. Plant new trees as visual screening in locations where they will reduce the visibility and prominence of project homes, schools, and commercial buildings from offsite vantage points. Cluster such screen landscaping in natural-appearing arrays. Emphasis use of native and other drought-tolerant species to the extent possible. Many native species are relatively slow-growing. In order to provide for visual screening in the short-term, interplant native species with fast-growing evergreen trees that have low water requirements.
 - (2) Cluster Screen Planting in Natural-Appearing Arrays. Cluster landscaping used for screening purposes in natural-appearing arrays in the immediate vicinity (ten to 30 feet) of the buildings to be screened. Locating vegetative screening close to residential structures will also provide greater opportunities for selective placement and trimming to frame and maintain certain views.
- (c) Architectural Standards and Landscaping Controls. The visual impacts due to conversion of broad rangeland (approximately 1,174 acres of open rangeland) to large lot and ranchette residential development could only be mitigated to a less than significant level through development avoidance and permanent preservation of these areas as open space. These measures will be inconsistent with the basic objectives of the project, which are to develop the site as permitted by the El Dorado County General Plan. Nevertheless, to substantially reduce the extent of visual impact, the applicant shall incorporate additional architectural standards and landscaping controls in the Community Design element of the Specific Plan, and ultimately, the project CC&Rs, and shall establish an associated design review procedure, to implement those standards and controls.
- (1) Architectural Design Standards. The following standards, or variations on these standards which are acceptable to the County, shall be incorporated to reduce the visual impacts of project architectural designs to insignificant levels:
 - (a) Building location and introduced landscaping at the outer, most visible edge of the main ridgeline shall be avoided, to the extent possible.

- (b) Hillside and ridgetop building designs shall incorporate a combination of small volumes and varying surface planes to create visual interest and to avoid conspicuous, large-bulk structures and box-like masses.
 - (c) Building heights and scales shall be compatible with the existing terrain and other surrounding project homesites.
 - (d) Architectural designs for sideslope and ridgetop crest residential structures shall be visually adaptive and generally sensitive to the hillside topography.
 - (e) The design of residential and accessory structures shall be subordinate to existing hillside and ridgeline forms. Hillside and ridgecrest homes shall be constructed in multiple levels to achieve a better fit with the existing sideslopes, reduce the need for grading, and promote overall visual compatibility with the natural hillsides.
 - (f) Use of hillside "stilt" designs shall be avoided. Building elevations on the downhill sides shall continue to the ground.
 - (g) The design of residential exteriors and appurtenances, including fencing, shall be harmonious with the natural character of the landscape.
 - (h) Building materials and colors shall be subdued to minimize contrast with the natural Valley View landscape. Page 84 of the specific plan already states (under guideline 2, Architectural Guidelines for Single Family Residential) that natural materials "are encouraged" and that "colors shall be...primarily natural tones." This guideline should also apply to all building construction onsite, not just single family units.
 - (i) Reflective windows and building materials shall be prohibited.
 - (j) Where roof surfaces will be visible from onsite or offsite vantage points, natural-appearing roofing materials (tile, fire-retardant shake, etc.) shall be used to minimize visual impacts.
- (2) Landscaping Controls. The following landscaping standards shall be incorporated to reduce the visual impacts of introduced landscaping:

- (a) The landscaping plan shall include the establishment of strategic vegetative screening in common areas to reduce the visibility of project homes on north- and west-facing ridges and sideslopes visible from viewpoints to the north, west, and south, and for project homes visible from the Marble Mountain community to the east.
 - (b) The project landscaping plan shall emphasize use of similar common landscaping elements throughout the site in order to unify the project and minimize its impact on offsite viewpoints.
 - (c) The landscape plan shall emphasize use of native, drought-tolerant, wind-resistant species.
 - (d) Given the ongoing, long-term importance of vegetative screening in mitigating project visual impacts, a program of ongoing maintenance and replacement of existing and introduced vegetative screening shall be established--see measure (a)(2) above.
- (d) Water Tank Provisions. One or a combination of the following measures should be implemented to reduce the visual impacts of the proposed water tanks.
- (1) Visual Screening. Trees should be planted to screen the water tanks from view and the tanks should be painted with a low-gloss paint in a color that blends with the natural environment.
 - (2) Depressed or Underground Tank Design. Unless the tanks can be adequately screened from view by existing vegetation, the water tanks should be placed partially or fully underground. The County and EID. should determine whether full or partial placement of the tanks underground would be needed in conjunction with or instead of the vegetative screening measures identified above in order to satisfactorily reduce visual impacts.

(DEIR, pp. IV.B-24 - IV.B-27; FEIR, IV.B-27.)

Significance after Mitigation

Significant and unavoidable. (DEIR, p. IV.B-24.)

Impact:

V-2: Project impact on views from Highway 50 eastbound will be significant and adverse. (DEIR, p. IV.B-27.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the Valley View Specific Plan that substantially lessen, but do not avoid, the significant environmental effect associated with impacts on views from Highway 50 eastbound. No mitigation is available to render the effect less than significant. The effect therefore remains significant and unavoidable.

Explanation:

Substantial portions of the Specific Plan development areas will be briefly visible from the eastbound Highway 50, including foreground portions of White Rock Village and more distant portions of West Valley Village (nearly all of this area) and East Ridge Village (the west-facing upper hillsides and ridgeline development areas). The simulation on Figure B-6 of the Draft EIR is somewhat representative of this view. These project-related changes will negatively affect existing views of the site and will represent a significant adverse impact. (DEIR, p. IV.B-27.)

Mitigation V-2:

The applicant shall implement the mitigation measures identified below, as well as the measures identified under Mitigation Measure V-1 above.

- (a) Enhance Specific Plan Design Controls. Implement the measures described under Mitigation Measure V-1 to reduce the overall impact of the project on the natural landscape and rural character, including the following:
 - a Landscape and Vegetation Management Plan,
 - vegetative screening, and
 - architectural standards and landscaping controls.
- (b) Relocate Visible Hillside ER-LL Units. Relocate the Estate Residential (ER-LL) lots on the immediate knoll at the northwestern section of East Ridge Village, just southeast of the Multiple Family Residential (MF)-designated area in White Rock Village, that will contain

units visible on the ridgeline from this vantage point (two are assumed in the Draft EIR, Figure B-6 simulation) to a less visible location elsewhere onsite. Relocation of these lots will preserve existing views of the open hillside and ridgeline and will substantially reduce the visual impact of the project on this vantage point.

(DEIR, pp. IV.B-27 - IV.B-28.)

Significance after Mitigation

Significant and unavoidable. (DEIR, p. IV.B-27.)

Impact:

V-3: Impacts on views from El Dorado Hills community vantage points north of Highway 50 will be significant and unavoidable. (DEIR, p. IV.B-28)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the Valley View Specific Plan that substantially lessen, but do not avoid, the significant environmental effect associated with impacts on views from El Dorado Hills community vantage points north of Highway 50. No mitigation is available to render the effect less than significant. The effect therefore remains significant and unavoidable.

Explanation:

As illustrated on Figure B-6 of the Draft EIR (view from El Dorado Hills Shopping Center), views of the project site from the existing El Dorado Hills community north of Highway 50 will change substantially with project buildout. A limited number of residential lots atop the intermediate knoll at the northern edge of East Ridge Village (two such lots are assumed in the simulation) will be highly visible from this vantage point. Much of the development proposed for lower elevation West Valley Village and White Rock Village development areas will also be visible. These changes in the existing open space character of these visual units will negatively affect existing views of the site and will represent a significant adverse visual impact. (DEIR, p. IV.B-28.)

Mitigation V-3:

Implement Mitigation Measures V-2 above. (DEIR, p. IV.B-28.)

Significance after Mitigation

Significant and unavoidable. (DEIR, p. IV.B-28.)

Impact:

V-4: The Project will have a potentially significant impact on views from Latrobe Road. (DEIR, p. IV.B-29.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the Valley View Specific Plan that substantially lessen, but do not avoid, the significant environmental effect associated with impacts on views from Latrobe Road. No mitigation is available to render the effect less than significant. The effect therefore remains significant and unavoidable.

Explanation:

The view of the project site from Latrobe Road near Golden Foothill Parkway will also change dramatically with buildout of the project. Existing open views of the broad, oak-scattered Valley View rangeland will be replaced with foreground views of West Valley Village development (see Figure III-8, Draft EIR). The commercial buildings, residential buildings, walls, and roadside landscaping visible along the east edge of Latrobe Road will act as a barrier to views of the onsite hillsides and ridgeline. The uniform pattern of introduced, densely-planted peripheral trees at the Village Center entrance will bear little resemblance to existing native vegetation characteristics of the area. These changes will substantially and negatively affect existing views of the site and will therefore represent a potentially significant adverse visual impact. (DEIR, p. IV.B-29.)

Mitigation V-4:

Implement Mitigation Measures V-1 and V-2 above, as well as the following mitigation measures:

- (a) **Streetscape Design Parameters.** The applicant and County shall formulate and adopt streetscape design parameters or guidelines for the Valley View Specific Plan area frontage along Latrobe Road to ensure a streetscape treatment which is balanced and harmonious with the existing business park development frontage on the opposite side of the route. The measures should be addressed both in onsite and offsite landscaping and other street design features (street lights, signage, etc.) that will affect the visual character of the route. The streetscape design guidelines shall address the need for consistent setbacks, consistent

architectural controls, and street landscaping, pedestrian, signage, and lighting treatments which unify the project frontage and are harmonious with the other side of the route.

- (b) **Design Review.** The County shall subject Valley View development along the Latrobe Road frontage to particularly stringent design review, guided by the streetscape design guidelines described under (a) above.

(DEIR, p. IV.B-29.)

Significance after Mitigation

Less than significant. (DEIR, p. IV.B-29.)

Impact:

- V-5: Visual impacts of Wastewater Treatment Plant due to implementation of the Project will be potentially significant.** (DEIR, p. IV.B-31.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the Valley View Specific Plan that avoid the potentially significant environmental effect identified in the Final EIR.

Explanation:

The El Dorado Hills Wastewater Treatment Plant is located adjacent to the western boundary of the project site. The Specific Plan community park, and areas designated Estate Residential and Core Residential, could have potentially unattractive views of the treatment plant facilities. This possibility represents a potentially significant impact. (DEIR, p. IV.B-31.)

Mitigation V-5:

Implementation of Mitigation Measure LU-3 above, including landscaped buffers and proper noticing of potential future project occupants, will reduce this visual impact. In particular, provision of landscape screening in the recommended 300-foot buffer area will be expected to reduce views of the treatment plant from the community park and Core Residential area. For the substantially higher elevation of the Estate Residential area in relation to the plant, require onsite vegetative screening for lots on the northern edge of that neighborhood to effectively block views of the plant. (DEIR, p. IV.B-31.)

Significance after Mitigation

Less than significant. (DEIR, p. IV.B-31.)

Impact:

V-6: The Project will cause potentially significant light and glare impacts. (DEIR, p. IV.B-31.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the Valley View Specific Plan that avoid the potentially significant environmental effect identified in the Final EIR.

Explanation:

The project will introduce exterior nighttime lighting to the site, as well as structures that may contain glare-producing materials. Such lighting could change nighttime views of the site from surrounding vantage points, and could illuminate the nighttime sky. These changes could adversely affect views from the existing El Dorado Hills community north of Highway 50, views from Highway 50 itself, and views from surrounding rural residential properties to the north, south, and east. The Specific Plan includes some guidelines to limit these impacts, but this potential still represents a potentially significant impact. (DEIR, p. IV.B-31.)

Mitigation V-6:

The applicant shall incorporate the measures listed below into the Specific Plan and the project CC&Rs.

- (a) Exterior lighting parameters for the project shall stipulate low mounting heights and, where the exterior fixture may be exposed to a surrounding public vantage point, use of appropriate light refractors or diffusers.
- (b) For driveway and street lighting, stipulate use of low-intensity fixtures (e.g., with the cone of light focused in a manner which avoids illuminating nearby vertical surfaces).
- (c) Limit project pathway illumination to low bollard fixtures.
- (d) Prohibit use of highly reflective or glare-producing materials onsite.

(DEIR, p. IV.B-32; FEIR, p. IV.B-32.)

Significance after Mitigation

Less than significant. (DEIR, p. IV.B-32.)

Impact:

V-7: Visual impacts from signage in the Village Center will be potentially significant and adverse. (DEIR, p. IV.B-33.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the Valley View Specific Plan that avoid the potentially significant environmental effect identified in the Final EIR.

Explanation:

The Specific Plan does not contain guidelines for commercial area signage. Use of intensive neon, internally-lit, brightly-colored, and/or oversize signs could adversely affect the visual character of the area, and views from surrounding vantage points, including Highway 50. Such signage characteristics could contribute to overall potentially significant adverse visual impacts. (DEIR, p. IV.B-33; FEIR, p. IV.B-33.)

Mitigation V-7:

In order to avoid adverse signage-related visual impacts, the applicant shall be responsible for revising the Specific Plan to include the signage controls listed below in order to prohibit unattractive, conspicuous signs.

(a) Signs to identify the designated Village Center:

- Prohibit free-standing pole signs. Monument signs, or signs on walls and buildings should be used instead of free-standing pole signs.
- At each street entrance to the Village Center, only one detached sign on each side of the street shall be permitted. The information displayed on the signs shall be limited to the name and symbol or logo of the center. No advertising should be permitted on these signs.

- Such signs shall be low-profile signs less than 6 feet in height with maximum message area of approximately 100 square feet.
- Such signs shall be located in the landscape setback at least 10 feet from the street right-of-way line.
- Wood and other natural earth materials such as concrete, aggregate, stone, brick or slumpstone are acceptable building materials for these signs. Plastic signs shall not be permitted. Signs shall be integrated with landscaping (i.e., mounted on landscaped berms, etc.).

(b) Detached business identification signs in the Village Center:

- One detached sign shall be permitted on each development site for the purpose of identifying the occupant of the site. The information displayed on these signs shall be limited to the name and symbol of the business or businesses occupying the site or the name and symbol of the business or businesses occupying the site and the street and street number. No advertising shall be permitted on these signs.
- Signs shall be less than 4 feet in height with a maximum message area of 32 square feet.
- Wood and other natural earth materials such as concrete, aggregate, stone, brick, or slumpstone are acceptable building materials for these signs. The choice of materials should match major building materials. Signs shall be externally illuminated.
- District identification signs shall not be combined with business identification signs.

(c) Mounted business identification signs in the Village Center:

- One mounted sign shall be permitted on each structure for the purpose of identifying the occupant of the building. The information displayed on this sign shall be limited to the name and symbol of the building's occupant or occupants and the address.
- Mounted signs attached to vertical surfaces of a building or building-associated wall shall be allowed, with the provision that such signs appear as an integral part of the overall architectural and site design concept. Sign materials shall complement those of the structure to which they are attached. The attached sign area shall not exceed

three percent (3%) of the total area of the walls on any face of the building to which they are attached.

- Fascia and roof signs are not permitted.

(DEIR, pp. IV.B-33 - IV.B-34.)

Significance after Mitigation

Less than significant. (DEIR, p. IV.B-33.)

Cumulative Impacts

Impact:

V-8: Visual impacts associated with the Project will cause a cumulatively considerable contribution to significant cumulative impacts. (DEIR, p. IV.B-34)

Finding:

Adherence to General Plan policies that are required of the Valley View Specific Plan substantially lessen, but do not avoid, the project's significant cumulatively considerable incremental contribution to the significant environmental effect associated with visual impacts throughout the County due to planned development. No mitigation is available to render the project's contribution less than cumulatively considerable, or the larger effect less than significant. The effect therefore remains significant and unavoidable.

Explanation:

The cumulative visual impacts of local, subregional, and regional urban growth, of which the project is part, are addressed in the Visual Quality section of the County-certified 1995 El Dorado County General Plan Update EIR. The General Plan EIR states under Impact 13.1 and 13.2 that the countywide associated introduction of light and glare into the newly established or expanded built (urban communities) will result in a significant cumulative visual impact. The EIR then identifies the policies incorporated in the adopted General Plan Update which have been formulated to address these impacts. The General Plan EIR concludes that, although these measures will aid in the reduction of cumulative visual impacts, the impacts (13.1 and 13.2) will remain significant and unavoidable. (DEIR, pp. IV.B-34 - IV.-35.)

Mitigation:

No mitigation measures are proposed. (DEIR, p. IV.B-35.)

Significance after Mitigation

Significant and unavoidable. (DEIR, p. IV.B-35.)

C. POPULATION, HOUSING, AND EMPLOYMENT**Standards of Significance**

Based on Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, the project will be considered to have a significant adverse impact on population, employment or housing conditions if it will:

- (1) Induce substantial growth or concentration of population; or
- (2) Displace a large number of people.

(DEIR, p. IV.C-14.)

Cumulative Impacts**Impact:**

PHS-3: The project will create a cumulatively considerable incremental contribution to significant cumulative impacts related to county-wide jobs/housing balance.
(DEIR, p. IV.C-23.)

Finding:

No mitigation is available to render the project's contribution less than cumulatively considerable, or the larger effect less than significant. The effect therefore remains significant and unavoidable.

Explanation:

The analysis of Employment and Housing section of the General Plan EIR (section V.2) states that a significant cumulative impact (Impact 2.2.1) on the countywide jobs/housing balance (a jobs-to-

housing ratio less than 1.0) could occur under the General Plan, and that even with the associated monitoring and economic development measures identified in the General Plan and General Plan EIR, this impact will be significant and unavoidable. This impact was also identified as significant and unavoidable in the Findings of Fact of the Board of Supervisors of El Dorado County for the El Dorado County General Plan (January 23, 1996, revised January 26, 1996; page 81). The Valley View Specific Plan project will contribute to this cumulative unavoidable impact. (DEIR, p. IV.C-23.)

Mitigation:

No mitigation measures are proposed. (DEIR, p. IV.C-23.)

Significance

Significant and unavoidable. (DEIR, p. IV.C-23.)

Cumulative Impact (General Plan)

The population, employment, and housing impacts of cumulative local, subregional, and regional urban growth, of which this project is a part, were anticipated in the County General Plan (adopted in 1996) and have been analyzed in the 1995 El Dorado County General Plan EIR. The analysis for the Regional Analysis Area 1 (which contains the El Dorado Hills area) in the Land Use, Population, and Growth-Inducing Impacts section of the Draft EIR (section V.1) states that development consistent with the adopted General Plan will result in a related cumulative increase in the population of the County (Impact 1.3.1) and that this will result in related cumulative impacts (traffic, public services, air quality, noise, etc.) that are addressed throughout the General Plan EIR. Similarly, related mitigations are identified throughout the EIR where necessary under the specific items discussed.

In addition, the analysis of Employment and Housing section of the General Plan EIR (section V.2) states that a significant cumulative impact (Impact 2.2.1) on the countywide jobs/housing balance (a jobs-to-housing ratio less than 1.0) could occur under the General Plan, and that even with the associated monitoring and economic development measures identified in the General Plan and General Plan EIR, this impact would be significant and unavoidable. This impact was also identified as significant and unavoidable in the Findings of Fact of the Board of Supervisors of El Dorado County for the El Dorado County General Plan (January 23, 1996, revised January 26, 1996; page 81). The Valley View Specific Plan project would contribute to this cumulative unavoidable impact.

(DEIR, p. IV.C-23; FEIR, p. IV.C-23.)

D. TRANSPORTATION

Standards of Significance

Roadway and Intersection Significance Criteria

Appendix G, item a, of the CEQA Guidelines indicates that a project may be considered to have a significant impact if it will conflict with applicable General Plan policies intended to improve the County's transportation system and reduce the transportation impacts of development. The significance criteria in this section are adapted from Appendix G and the El Dorado County General Plan Circulation Element policies listed in section 2 herein. The project will be considered to cause a significant impact if:

- (1) Project roadway provisions are not consistent with the right-of-way, intersection spacing, design, and access point location standards for subdivisions and other development as specified in the County Design and Improvement Standards Manual (General Plan Policies 3.1.1.1 and 3.1.2.1);
- (2) Project generated traffic causes any intersection or roadway segment currently operating at LOS A, B, C, D, or E to deteriorate to LOS F (General Plan Policy 3.2.1.1, Goal 3.5, and Objective 3.5.1);
- (3) Project generated traffic causes any roadway segment projected by the General Plan to operate at LOS A, B, or C in the year 2015 to fall to LOS D or worse or any roadway segment projected by the General Plan to operate at LOS D in the year 2015 to fall below LOS D (General Plan Policy 3.5.1.1);
- (4) Project generated traffic causes an increase in delay (one percent or greater) at a County intersection or roadway segment already operating at LOS F; or
- (5) Project generated traffic directly or cumulatively causes state highway (Highway 50) LOS to deteriorate to LOS F (General Plan Policy 3.3.2) or causes an increase in traffic delay (one percent or greater) on a state highway (Highway 50) segment already operating at LOS F (General Plan Policies 3.2.1.1 and 3.3.2).

(DEIR, pp. IV.D-29 - IV.D-30.)

Transit System Significance Criteria

Policy 3.8.1.1 of the El Dorado County General Plan Circulation Element requires any development that creates increased demand for transit to be responsible for providing onsite transit facilities. Such facilities will include school and public bus turnouts, shelters, and ramps at bus stops. Based on this policy, the project will be considered a significant impact if it creates an increased demand for transit and does not provide onsite transit facilities. (DEIR, p. IV.D-30.)

Pedestrian and Bicycle System Significance Criteria

As stated in policy 3.9.1.6 of the El Dorado County General Plan Circulation Element, prior to or in conjunction with project review and approval and/or development of a multifamily project, the developer shall cooperate with the County in providing for the construction of pedestrian and bicycle paths (separated or integrated) to allow unimpeded circulation within the entire property being developed. As stated in policy 3.11.1.1, the project should aid in implementing the El Dorado County Bikeway Master Plan and Hiking and Equestrian Trails Master Plan. Based on these policies, the project will be considered to cause a significant impact on the pedestrian and bicycle system if the developer did not cooperate with the County in providing for the construction of pedestrian and bicycle paths. (DEIR, p. IV.D-30.)

Impact:

T-1: The Project will have significant Existing-Plus-Project impacts on Latrobe Road/Golden Foothill Parkway South Intersection. (DEIR, p. IV.D-41.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the Valley View Specific Plan that avoid the significant environmental effect identified in the Final EIR.

Explanation:

This T-intersection currently operates at LOS A. The addition of a two-lane project access road as a fourth leg of the intersection, and the corresponding traffic addition on the east side of Latrobe Road, will cause conditions in the PM peak hour to deteriorate to LOS F. This existing-plus-project condition will represent a significant impact. (DEIR, p. IV.D-41.)

Mitigation T-1:

Widen Latrobe Road to provide two southbound and one northbound left-turn lanes. At the project entrance/exit, provide two lanes in each direction, including a separate right-turn lane. The intersection shall also be signalized. These improvements will alleviate the congestion at this intersection and allow the intersection to operate at acceptable levels of service with the project, mitigating the impact to a less than significant level. (DEIR, p. IV.D-45.)

Significance after Mitigation

Less than significant. (DEIR, p. IV.D-45.)

Impact:

T-2: The Project will have significant Existing-Plus-Project impacts on Latrobe Road/White Rock Road Intersection. (DEIR, p. IV.D-45.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the Valley View Specific Plan that avoid the significant environmental effect identified in the Final EIR.

Explanation:

This intersection currently operates at LOS B in the AM peak hour and LOS C in the PM peak hour. Conditions will deteriorate to LOS F during the PM peak hour with the project. This existing-plus-project condition will represent a significant impact. (DEIR, p. IV.D-45.)

Mitigation T-2:

Mitigate the project impact to this signalized intersection by making changes to the lane configuration. On Latrobe Road, provide two through lanes in each direction from White Rock Road to south of Golden Foothills Parkway in order to mitigate all project impacts. In addition, provide a second southbound left turn lane on the Latrobe Road approach to this intersection. Provide a left-turn lane for eastbound White Rock Road. These improvements will allow the intersection to operate at acceptable levels of service with the project, mitigating the impact to a less than significant level. (DEIR, p. IV.D-45.)

It should be noted that this mitigation will be consistent with the mitigation requirements identified later in this section for the "Cumulative-Plus-Project" scenario, as well as with the County's 20-year CIP. The caveat is that the second left turn lane in the southbound direction might not be needed

to mitigate the "Cumulative-Plus-Project" impacts. For the "Cumulative-Plus-Project" scenario, however, even when the project-required impact measures recommended for that scenario are implemented, the intersection will still operate at LOS F, albeit with a lower level of delay than projected for the "Cumulative-No-Project" scenario. The second southbound left-turn lane will aid in mitigating the remaining congestion; thus, the added lane will be a valid mitigation of the existing-plus-project condition, and should be included as part of a long-range solution to the projected problems at this location. (DEIR, p. IV.D-45.)

Significance after Mitigation

Less than significant. (DEIR, p. IV.D-45.)

Impact:

T-3: The Existing-Plus-Project impacts on El Dorado Hills Boulevard/Highway 50 Westbound Ramps Intersection will be significant. (DEIR, p. IV.D-46.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the Valley View Specific Plan that avoid the significant environmental effect identified in the Final EIR.

Explanation:

This intersection currently operates at LOS C during the AM peak hour and LOS B during the PM peak hour. Addition of project traffic will cause deterioration to LOS F during the AM peak hour. This existing-plus-project condition will represent a significant impact. (DEIR, p. IV.D-46)

Mitigation T-3:

The County has programmed a comprehensive improvement to the US 50/El Dorado Hills Boulevard interchange as part of its current El Dorado Hills/Salmon Falls Road Impact Fee ("RIF") program. The improvement is currently fully funded: it is included in the County's current Five-Year Capital Improvement Program ("CIP"). Construction is expected to begin in 2001. A new ramp will be added to provide for westbound traffic, and additional capacity will be added to the existing ramp. The improvement will add a new widened off-ramp for eastbound traffic oriented toward destinations to the south; it will also widen the existing off-ramp and dedicate it to eastbound traffic oriented to the north. The combination of improvements will produce LOS C operations at this intersection in the AM peak hour and LOS B in the PM peak hour, which will satisfy County LOS

policy. This RIF-funded improvement will more than mitigate the project impacts. The project is subject to County RIF requirements. All future project development will be required to make RIF payments. (DEIR, p. IV.D-46; FEIR, p. IV.D-46.)

Significance after Mitigation

Less than significant. (DEIR, p. IV.D-46.)

Impact:

T-4: The Existing-Plus-Project impact on Latrobe Road/Highway 50 Eastbound Ramps Intersection will be significant. (DEIR, p. IV.D-46.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the Valley View Specific Plan that substantially lessen, but do not avoid, the significant environmental effect associated with LOS on Latrobe Road/Highway 50 Eastbound Ramps impacts. No mitigation is available to render the short-term effect less than significant. The short-term effect therefore remains significant and unavoidable.

Explanation:

This intersection currently operates at LOS E during the AM peak hour and LOS F during the PM peak hour. Addition of project traffic will exacerbate the existing LOS F conditions during the PM peak hour and will also cause deterioration to LOS F during the AM peak hour. This existing-plus-project condition will represent a significant impact. (DEIR, p. IV.D-46.)

Mitigation T-4:

As indicated above under Mitigation Measure T-3, the County has programmed and funded a comprehensive improvement to the US 50/El Dorado Hills Boulevard interchange through the County's RIF program. The improvement will add a new widened off-ramp for eastbound traffic oriented toward destinations to the south; it will also widen the existing off-ramp and dedicate it to eastbound traffic oriented to the north. The combination of improvements will produce LOS C operations at this intersection, which will satisfy County LOS policy. This funded improvement will more than mitigate the project impacts. The project is subject to County RIF requirements. All future project development increments will be required to make RIF payments. This measure will reduce this impact to a less than significant level. It is possible, however, that portions of the Valley

View project will be completed before construction of this improvement (scheduled to begin by 2001) is completed. The addition of this increment of project traffic before the roadway improvement is completed will represent a short-term significant unavoidable impact.

No mitigation is proposed for the potential short-term impact, since there are no interim measures that will be compatible with the overall interchange improvement project.

(DEIR, p. IV.D-47.)

Significance after Mitigation

Significant and unavoidable in the short-term if portions of the Valley View project are completed before roadway improvement is completed. (DEIR, p. IV.D-47.)

Impact:

T-5: The Existing-Plus-Project impacts on Latrobe Road/Suncast Lane intersection will be significant. (DEIR, p. IV.D-47.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the Valley View Specific Plan that avoid the significant environmental effect identified in the Final EIR.

Explanation:

This intersection is currently stop-sign controlled and operates at LOS A. Addition of project traffic will reduce the number of available gaps in traffic along Latrobe Road, resulting in LOS F conditions during the PM peak hour when vehicles will have a difficult time turning left from Suncast Lane onto Latrobe Road or from Latrobe Road onto Suncast Lane. This existing-plus-project condition will represent a significant impact. (DEIR, p. IV.D-47.)

Mitigation T-5:

The only reasonable mitigation measure for this condition will be to install a traffic signal, but the standard Caltrans Peak Hour warrant for installation of a traffic signal is not met by the volumes projected at this intersection for the "Existing-Plus-Project" scenario. The signal will, however, be warranted under the "Cumulative-Plus-Project" scenario. Thus, the required mitigation at this location for the "Existing-Plus-Project" scenario shall be to monitor the location on a periodic basis.

in conjunction with the issuance of building permits. If standard County signal “warrants” are satisfied by some combination of future traffic, then installation of a signal shall be required to mitigate this impact, and the project shall be assessed for a proportional share of the cost of the signal. (DEIR, p. IV.D-48.)

Significance after Mitigation

Less than significant. (DEIR, p. IV.D-48.)

Impact:

T-6: The Existing-Plus-Project impact on Latrobe Road South of White Rock Road is significant. (DEIR, p. IV.D-48.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the Valley View Specific Plan that avoid the significant environmental effect identified in the Final EIR.

Explanation:

The segment analysis indicates that the Service Level on this portion of Latrobe Road will decrease from LOS D to F on a daily basis. This cumulative-plus-project condition will represent a significant impact. (DEIR, p. IV.D-48.)

Mitigation T-6:

Widen Latrobe Road to four lanes (plus turning lanes as noted in the previous mitigation measures) from White Rock Road to a point 300-500 feet south of White Rock Road. South of this point, the road could revert back to a two-lane cross-section. The RIF currently includes, and is periodically revised to fully fund, this County roadway improvement. The project is subject to County RIF requirements. All future project development will be required to make RIF payments. (DEIR, p. IV.D-48.)

Significance after Mitigation

Less than significant. (DEIR, p. IV.D-48.)

Impact:

**T-7: The Existing-Plus-Project Impact on US 50 West of El Dorado Hills Boulevard/
Latrobe Road is significant. (DEIR, p. IV.D-49.)**

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the Valley View Specific Plan that avoid the significant environmental effect identified in the Final EIR.

Explanation:

US 50 west of El Dorado Hills Boulevard currently operates at LOS D. The “Existing-Plus-Project” scenario will produce an LOS F on this portion of the freeway. As noted above, this condition represents a hypothetical “Existing-Plus-Project” scenario, developed to isolate potential project-related mitigation needs. In actuality, as other land uses are developed over the extended time period that the Valley View project is actually developed, it is expected that more traffic will be oriented to local land uses rather than toward Sacramento. Thus, it is not likely that the conditions forecast here will actually lead to an LOS F condition solely due to the impacts of the Valley View project. (DEIR, p. IV.D-49.)

Mitigation T-7:

Mitigation of this impact is largely an issue of project phasing. An impact identified later in this section for the “Cumulative-Plus-Project” scenario (Impact T-16) requires that the developer conduct interim traffic studies for submittal to the El Dorado County DOT together with each application for tentative map approval of future phases of the project. This interim study requirement is consistent with General Plan policy and will assure that County standards are maintained at each future project phase as well as for the total project. The County's State System Capacity and Interchange Transportation Impact Fee (State TIM) has been established to provide fair share developer contributions to partially finance improvements to County segments of the state highway system. The state TIM currently includes, and is periodically revised, to partially fund the widening of Highway 50 to six lanes by 2010 and eight lanes by 2015. The project is subject to County TIM requirements. All future project development will be required to make TIM payments. (DEIR, p. IV.D-49.)

Significance after Mitigation

Less than significant. (DEIR, p. IV.D-49.)

Impact:

T-8: The Cumulative-Plus-Project impacts on White Rock Road/North project access intersection will be significant. (DEIR, p. IV.D-62.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the Valley View Specific Plan that avoid the significant environmental effect identified in the Final EIR.

Explanation:

An unacceptable year 2015 level of service (LOS F) is projected at the White Rock Road/North Project Access intersection. This cumulative-plus-project effect will represent a significant impact. (DEIR, p. IV.D-62.)

Mitigation T-8:

Signalize the intersection and provide a right-turn lane for the eastbound approach and a left-turn lane for the westbound approach. If an entrance to Town Center East is provided opposite this project entrance, also provide an eastbound left turn lane. The exit from the project shall have two lanes: one for left turns and one for the remaining movements. This improvement will alleviate congestion at the intersection and allow it to operate at LOS B. (DEIR, p. IV.D-62.)

Significance after Mitigation

Less than significant. (DEIR, p. IV.D-62.)

Impact:

T-9: The Cumulative-Plus-Project impacts on Latrobe Road/Golden Foothills Parkway South/Project Access Intersection will be significant. (DEIR, p. IV.D-63.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the Valley View Specific Plan that avoid the significant cumulative environmental effect identified in the Final EIR.

Explanation:

The addition of project traffic to projected year 2015 cumulative intersection volumes will result in unacceptable levels of service on the Latrobe Road/Golden Foothills Parkway South/Project Access intersection. Without the project, this intersection will operate at LOS A in the AM peak hour and LOS B during the PM peak hour. With the project and its associated traffic, this intersection will degrade to LOS F during both peak hours. This cumulative-plus-project effect will represent a significant impact. (DEIR, p. IV.D-63.)

Mitigation T-9:

As with the “Existing-Plus-Project” scenario, provide a new traffic signal at this intersection. The “Cumulative-Plus-Project” scenario requires that the project entrance have two inbound and two outbound lanes. One of the outbound lanes will need to be striped as an exclusive right-turn-only lane. The mitigation will also require the widening of Latrobe Road to provide for two southbound left-turn lanes and one northbound left turn lane. In addition, widen the northbound departure on Latrobe Road to provide an exclusive right-turn and two through lanes northbound; one of these lanes will be the natural continuation of the exclusive right-turn lane from the project. This two lane section will then continue north as far as White Rock Boulevard, as described in Mitigation Measure T-13 below. This improvement will alleviate the congestion at the intersection and allow it to operate at LOS C. (DEIR, p. IV.D-63.)

Significance after Mitigation

Less than significant. (DEIR, p. IV.D-63.)

Impact:

T-10: The Cumulative-Plus-Project impacts on White Rock Road/Latrobe Road Intersection will be significant. (DEIR, p. IV.D-63.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the Valley View Specific Plan that avoid the significant cumulative environmental effect identified in the Final EIR.

Explanation:

This intersection is projected to operate at LOS F under the “Cumulative-Plus-Project” scenario in both peak hours. The project will add traffic to an intersection already projected to operate at LOS F. This cumulative-project-plus effect will represent a significant impact. (DEIR, p. IV.D-63.)

Mitigation T-10:

This intersection is projected to operate at LOS F in the peak hours for the base (cumulative-without-project) scenario. To mitigate the project impacts: widen Latrobe Road to provide two northbound and southbound through lanes, one northbound and southbound left turn lane, and one northbound and southbound right turn lane; widen White Rock Road east of Latrobe Road to become a four-lane divided roadway as discussed under Mitigation Measure T-14. (DEIR, p. IV.D-64.)

Significance after Mitigation

Less than significant. (DEIR, p. IV.D-64.)

Impact:

Impact T-11: **The Cumulative-Plus-Project impact on Latrobe Road/Golden Foothills Parkway North Intersection will be significant.** (DEIR, p. IV.D-64.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the Valley View Specific Plan that avoid the significant cumulative environmental effect identified in the Final EIR.

Explanation:

The added project volumes will cause this signalized intersection to operate at LOS F in both peak hours, compared to LOS D in the AM peak hour and LOS B in the PM peak hour without the project. This cumulative-project-plus effect will represent a significant impact. (DEIR, p. IV.D-64.)

Mitigation T-11:

Provide two through lanes in each direction on Latrobe Road at this intersection. This mitigation measure will improve operations to LOS B in both peak hours. (DEIR, p. IV.D-67.)

Significance after Mitigation

Less than significant. (DEIR, p. IV.D-64.)

Impact:

T-12: The Cumulative-Plus-Project Impact on Latrobe Road/Suncast Lane Intersection will be significant. (DEIR, p. IV.D-67.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the Valley View Specific Plan that avoid the significant cumulative environmental effect identified in the Final EIR.

Explanation:

The addition of project traffic to projected year 2015 cumulative intersection volumes will result in unacceptable levels of service on the Latrobe Road/Suncast Lane intersection. Without the project, this stop-sign controlled intersection will operate at LOS A in the AM peak hour and LOS B during the PM peak hour. Addition of project traffic will reduce the number of available gaps in traffic along Latrobe Road, resulting in LOS F conditions during the PM peak hour when vehicles will have a difficult time turning left from Suncast Lane onto Latrobe Road or from Latrobe Road onto Suncast Lane. This cumulative-project-plus effect will represent a significant impact. (DEIR, p. IV.D-67.)

Mitigation T-12:

Signalize the intersection, widen Latrobe Road to provide two through lanes in each direction, a northbound left-turn lane and a southbound right-turn on Latrobe Road (see Figure D-20 in section IV.D.5 of the Draft EIR). This improvement will result in LOS A-B operation at this intersection under cumulative-plus-project conditions. (DEIR, p. IV.D-67.)

Significance after Mitigation

Less than significant. (DEIR, p. IV.D-67.)

Impact:

T-13: The Cumulative-Plus-Project Impact on Latrobe Road Between White Rock Road and Carson Creek will be significant. (DEIR, p. IV.D-68.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the Valley View Specific Plan that avoid the significant cumulative environmental effect identified in the Final EIR.

Explanation:

The segment analysis indicates that the LOS on this portion of Latrobe Road south of White Rock Road will decrease from LOS D to F on an average daily basis. This cumulative-project-plus effect will represent a significant impact. (DEIR, p. IV.D-68.)

Mitigation T-13:

Widen Latrobe Road to four lanes (plus turning lanes as noted in the previous mitigation measures) between White Rock Road and the intersection with the new project entrance/Golden Foothills Parkway South. South of the Golden Foothills Parkway intersection, the road could revert to a two-lane cross-section. This widening will provide a consistent four-lane roadway width through each of the signalized intersections in this segment. The RIF currently includes, and is periodically revised to fully fund, this County roadway improvement. The project is subject to County RIF requirements. All future project development will be required to make RIF payments. (DEIR, p. IV.D-68.)

Significance after Mitigation

Less than significant. (DEIR, p. IV.D-68.)

Impact:

T-14: The Cumulative-Plus-Project impact on White Rock Road East of Latrobe Road will be significant. (DEIR, p. IV.D-68.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the Valley View Specific Plan that avoid the significant cumulative environmental effect identified in the Final EIR.

Explanation:

White Rock Road east of Latrobe Road is currently a two-lane undivided rural roadway. This roadway is projected to operate at LOS F in the "Cumulative-Without-Project" scenario as well as the "Cumulative-With-Project" scenario. The "Cumulative-With-Project" scenario will add traffic and thus increase delay on this segment that is already projected to operate at LOS F. This cumulative-project-plus effect will represent a significant impact. (DEIR, p. IV.D-68.)

Mitigation T-14:

Mitigate this condition by widening the roadway to become a four-lane divided roadway with median. Such a widening will make the roadway consistent with the already approved plans for White Rock Road west of Latrobe Road. The RIF currently includes, and is periodically revised to fully fund, this County roadway improvement. The project is subject to County RIF requirements. All future project development will be required to make RIF payments. (DEIR, p. IV.D-68.)

Significance after Mitigation

Less than significant. (DEIR, p. IV.-.)

Impact:

T-15: The Project will cause a cumulatively considerable contribution to significant cumulative impacts on Highway 50. (DEIR, p. IV.D-69.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the Valley Views Specific Plan that substantially lessen, but do not avoid, the project's cumulatively considerable incremental contribution to the significant environmental effect associated with level of service on Highway 50 impacts due to planned development. No mitigation is available to render the project's contribution less than cumulatively considerable, or the larger effect less than significant. The effect therefore remains significant and unavoidable.

Explanation:

The US 50 freeway will operate at LOS F for both the "Cumulative" and the "Cumulative-Plus-Project" scenarios. Because the project will exacerbate a projected base case LOS F condition, this will represent a significant impact. (DEIR, p. IV.D-69.)

The "Cumulative" scenario is based on the assumption that US 50 will be widened to become a six-lane freeway prior to the year 2015. As the projections indicate, the capacity of the freeway at six lanes will be exceeded by the year 2015. This will be a base case condition not attributable to the project. The project will, however, exacerbate this base case condition. (DEIR, p. IV.D-69.)

Mitigation: T-15

The project shall contribute its fair share to the cost of widening US 50 to eight lanes as is proposed by the 20-year CIP. The state TIM currently includes, and is periodically revised, to partially fund the widening of Highway 50 to six lanes by 2010 and eight lanes by 2015. The project is subject to

County state TIM requirements and El Dorado Hills RIF requirements. All future project development will be required to make state TIM payments. Once this widening is implemented, the freeway will operate at an acceptable LOS E west of El Dorado Hills Boulevard and LOS C east of El Dorado Hills Boulevard for the “Cumulative-Plus-Project” scenario. Because future funding for the widening is not currently assured (i.e., not currently in place). (DEIR, p. IV.D-69; FEIR, p. IV.D-46.)

Significance after Mitigation

Significant and unavoidable. (DEIR, p. IV.D-69.)

Impact:

T-16: The Project will have a significant impact on County Roadway Improvement Phasing Needs. (DEIR, p. IV.D-69.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the Valley View Specific Plan that avoid the significant environmental effect identified in the Final EIR.

Explanation:

If the offsite roadway system improvements identified in the Draft EIR as necessary to meet General Plan specified LOS standards are not completed as each development increment occurs, the project could result in an interim LOS deficiency. This will represent a significant impact. (DEIR, p. IV.D-69.)

The short-term (“Existing-Plus-Project”) impact scenario has been analyzed in the Draft EIR in keeping with General Plan Policies 3.2.1.1 and 3.5.1.1, that is, in order to predict what mitigation needs can be expected in the future if the project is built out with no improvement to the existing roadway system. Similarly, the long-term (year 2020 “Cumulative-Plus-Project”) impact scenario has been analyzed to determine what mitigation needs will be expected in the future if the project is built out and only those planned offsite roadway improvements which are currently “fully funded” are implemented. In reality, the Valley View Specific Plan offsite roadway mitigation measures are intended to be developed incrementally over a number of years as traffic generated by the project incrementally increases. (The “VVSP” is intended to build out over the next ten to twenty years as dictated by market forces.) If the roadway improvement needs identified in the Draft EIR are not completed in proper increments that correspond adequately to project and cumulative traffic

demands occurring in that time period, significant roadway operational deficiencies could result. (DEIR, p. IV.D-.69)

Mitigation T-16:

Ongoing traffic study and mitigation monitoring measures shall be implemented by project developers and the County. The County's General Plan includes policies calling for such ongoing traffic study and monitoring. As detailed in section IV.D.6 of the Draft EIR, these policies shall be implemented with the project through the following two mechanisms:

- T-16a: Interim Traffic Studies, and
- T-16b: The DOT Annual Monitoring Program.

(DEIR, p. IV.D-70.)

Significance after Mitigation

Less than significant. (DEIR, p. IV.D-70.)

Impact:

T-17: The Project will cause significant pedestrian and bicycle impacts. (DEIR, p. IV.D-71.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the Valley View Specific Plan that further avoid the less than significant environmental effect identified in the Final EIR.

Explanation:

The project does not include provisions for implementation of the Latrobe Trail (identified in the County's Bikeway Master Plan and Hiking and Equestrian Trails Master Plan) along the frontage of the project site. Given the identified need for widening of Latrobe Road due to the project and cumulative development in the area, and the increase in the demand for trails that will be expected to result from the project, the lack of project participation in the implementation of the Latrobe Trail is considered a significant impact. (DEIR, p. IV.D-71.)

Mitigation T-17:

Revise the Specific Plan to include a bicycle and pedestrian trail along the portion of Latrobe Road adjacent to the project site consistent with El Dorado County and El Dorado Hills Community Service District standards. (DEIR, p. IV.D-71.)

Significance after Mitigation

Less than significant. (DEIR, p. IV.D-71.)

Impact:

T-18: **The Project will cause significant impacts associated with emergency access/egress into and out of East Ridge Village.** (DEIR, p. IV.D-74.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the Valley View Specific Plan that avoid the significant environmental effect identified in the Final EIR.

Explanation:

The access configuration for the East Ridge Village, as currently proposed, may not provide adequate emergency access/egress. This potential deficiency represents a significant adverse impact. (DEIR, p. IV.D-74.)

The East Ridge Village access configuration is, in effect, a large cul-de-sac with only one way in and one way out. Emergency access to Marble Valley to the east is no longer a part of the specific plan circulation system; therefore, this access roadway will need to accommodate all traffic, even in emergencies. The roadway will need to accommodate emergency vehicles, even if it were partially blocked. (DEIR, p. IV.D-74.)

Mitigation T-18:

To maintain access to the greatest extent possible, provide cross-overs between the two separate travelways at periodic intervals. The frequency of cross-overs will depend on topography, but typically should be provided every 1,800 to 2,000 feet. (DEIR, p. IV.D-74.)

Significance after Mitigation

Less than significant. (DEIR, p. IV.D-74.)

E. PUBLIC FACILITIES AND SERVICES

1. Water Service

Standards of Significance

The Project may be considered to have a significant impact on water service if it will:

- (1) Conflict with applicable plans or policies adopted by agencies with jurisdiction over the project, such that the conflict will lead to decreased environmental protection or increased environmental harm;
- (2) Result in a need for new water systems, or substantial alterations to water services or utilities; and/or
- (3) Contaminate a public water supply, substantially degrade or deplete a groundwater resource, or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge.

Official County policy is that significant impacts relating to the creation of water demand that exceeds existing supplies can be mitigated to a less than significant level through compliance with El Dorado County General Plan policies related to water supply. (DEIR, pp. IV.E-27 - IV.E-28.)

Impact:

PF-1: The lack of reliable long-term water supply is considered a potentially significant cumulative impact.

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the Valley View Specific Plan that avoid the potentially significant cumulative environmental effect identified in the Final EIR.

Explanation:

According to EID's 1998 projections, the entire EID system has more water than is needed to meet the current demand of 38,428 acre-feet, an approximate 5,672 acre-feet of surplus, of which approximately 1,460 acre-feet of Folsom Lake surplus is available for the El Dorado Hills area in which Valley View is included. This surplus of annual reliable water supply, however, cannot

sustain the projected needs of both anticipated growth and currently Projects within EID, including Valley View. The Valley View project itself is projected to have an annual water supply demand of 2,002 acre-feet, which exceeds the existing surplus water in the EID system. (DEIR, p. IV.E-33.)

The El Dorado County 1997 Public Water Availability Evaluation estimates that the total potential annual water demand for all projects and parcels in EID will be 55,982 acre-feet, which clearly exceeds the current annual reliable water supply of 44,100 acre-feet. The development capacity stipulated in the draft Valley View Specific Plan translates into approximately 2,901 EDUs (2,002 acre-feet). EID's current records indicate that parcels within the project site are currently assigned 906 EDUs additional capacity. Under District Policy, the project cannot receive more than 906 EDUs of water service unless additional EDU entitlements are granted. Therefore, a reliable future water supply for the buildout of the Valley View project has not been acquired or developed by EID. (DEIR, p. IV.E-33.)

Mitigation PF-1:

Require that:

- (a) no final subdivision map, final parcel map, or building permit shall be issued for the project until water meters or equivalent water guarantees for the proposed urban development levels are obtained from EID or other water purveyors, consistent with El Dorado County General Plan Objective 5.1.2 and Policies 5.1.2.1, 5.2.1.2, 5.2.1.3, and 5.2.1.4;
- (b) the project shall incorporate water conservation measures specified in Mitigation Measure PF-3 below; and
- (c) no grading permit shall be issued for the project, or any portion thereof, unless and until the applicant has reached final agreement with EID regarding a fully vested right to water service to the portion of the project site affected by the grading permit.

(DEIR, p. IV.E-34.)

Significance after Mitigation

Less than significant. (DEIR, p. IV.E-34.)

Impact:

PF-2: Project dependency on Potable Water Supply for Irrigation/Landscaping Purposes will cause potentially significant impacts. (DEIR, p. IV.E-35.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the Valley View Specific Plan that avoid the potentially significant environmental effect identified in the Final EIR.

Explanation:

The project's dependency on EID's limited potable water supply for irrigation purposes is considered a potentially significant impact, given EID's goal of using reclaimed water to reduce potable water needs. (DEIR, p. IV.E-36.)

To reduce the need for potable (treated) water in accordance with the 1994 Water Reclamation Master Plan, EID plans to use reclaimed water from the El Dorado Hills Wastewater Treatment Plant for irrigation of golf courses, parks, and open space. EID desires that the project use reclaimed water for irrigating landscaping for schools, commercial uses, offices, mixed-use open space, and street medians.

The estimated total annual water demand of the office, commercial, schools and multi-use open space land use components of the Project is approximately 255.8 acre-feet--i.e., approximately 14 percent of the total project demand (excluding unaccounted water demand). Using reclaimed water for the high irrigation demands of these project land use components will substantially reduce the project's total potable demand. The 1-MG Business Park storage tank (water surface elevation of 960 feet), located in the northern central project site area, is in the process of being converted to store reclaimed water from the EDHWWTP and could provide reclaimed water for irrigation to these high irrigation demand land users. To date, however, a reclaimed water supply and use plan has not been developed for the Valley View project.

(DEIR, pp. IV.E-35 - IV.E-36.)

Mitigation PF-2:

In order to ensure adequate use of reclaimed water as a means of reducing its dependence on EID potable water supply, measures (a) through (d) listed below, and shall be completed as a condition of any future project rezoning or subdivision approval (based on General Plan Policy 5.2.1.4).

- (a) Concurrent with the buildout of the Valley View project area, the applicant shall work with EID to develop and provide a reliable reclaimed water supply that can be substantially used by Valley View.

- (b) The applicant shall develop a reclaimed water supply and use plan that will provide for irrigation of landscaping for parks, multi-use open space, school grounds, commercial/office uses, and landscaped median strips. This plan should also consider use of reclaimed water for irrigation of residential landscaping and fire protection, and shall be in place at or prior to approval of the first neighborhood/subdivision of the Valley View Specific Plan.
- (c) The 1-MG Business Park storage tank, currently being converted to store reclaimed water from the EDHWWTP, should be utilized for project site reclaimed water demand.
- (d) All reclaimed water distribution facilities and water lines shall comply with EID requirements as specified below under "Mitigation for Water Distribution Facility Impacts."

(DEIR, p. IV.E-36.)

Significance after Mitigation

Less than significant. (DEIR, p. IV.E-36.)

Impact:

PF-3: The Project does not propose a Drought Contingency and Water Conservation Planning. This omission is considered a potentially significant impact. (DEIR, p. IV.E-38.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the Valley View Specific Plan that avoid the potentially significant environmental effect identified in the Final EIR.

Explanation:

Water supply for the project will be susceptible to the effects of prolonged droughts. EID obtains a large portion of its water from the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, which, in times of drought, imposes rationing and cutbacks. The project does not propose a drought contingency plan or a specified water conservation program. (DEIR, p. IV.E-38.)

Mitigation PF-3:

The applicant shall implement water conservation measures to reduce the amount of water used by the project and reduce the potential effects of extended drought conditions. The following measures should be implemented:

- (a) Fit all new homes with low-flow toilets and shower heads.
- (b) Include an individual water meter for each new home.
- (c) For all commercial landscape areas, comply with Water Conservation in Landscaping Act requirements.
- (d) Use drought tolerant and/or native vegetation for commercial landscape areas.
- (e) Use drip irrigation to the greatest extent possible.
- (f) Provide all new home owners with educational and informational literature on drought-tolerant landscaping techniques.
- (g) To the extent that it can be made available, make maximum use of reclaimed wastewater (See also Mitigation Measure PF-2).

(DEIR, pp. IV.E-39 - IV.E-40.)

Significance after Mitigation

Less than significant. (DEIR, p. IV.E-39.)

2. Sewer Service

Standards of Significance

The project may be considered to have a significant impact on sewer service if it will:

- (1) Conflict with applicable plans or policies adopted by agencies with jurisdiction over the project, such that the conflict will lead to decreased environmental protection or increased environmental harm;
- (2) Result in a need for new systems, or substantial alterations to sewer services; or

- (3) Extend a sewer trunk line with capacity to serve new development.

Official County policy is that significant impacts relating to the creation of demand for wastewater capacity beyond what is currently available can be mitigated to a less than significant level through compliance with the County's "Concurrency Policy" (El Dorado County General Plan Objective 5.1.2.

(DEIR, p. IV.E-50.)

Impact:

PF-4: The Project's impacts on existing wastewater flows will be potentially significant. (DEIR, p. IV.E-52.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the Valley View Specific Plan that avoid the potentially significant environmental effect identified in the Final EIR.

Explanation:

At full buildout, the project will generate wastewater flows of approximately 0.7 mgd (average dry weather flow) and 2.8 mgd (total peak wet weather flow). There is an insufficient allocation of existing wastewater treatment capacity to accommodate these ultimate wastewater flows. (DEIR, p. IV.E-52.)

Project Wastewater Generation. For purposes of the EIR, it was assumed that development of the project will be phased by village. The Valley View project phasing must coincide with available reliable wastewater capacity and wastewater collection facilities. The estimated average dry weather flows by village are: (1) White Rock: 79,680 gallons per day ("gpd"); (2) West Valley: 451,400 gpd; and (3) East Ridge: 173,280 gpd. The site's current EDU allotment (906 EDUs) will be adequate to serve the wastewater flows of either White Rock or East Ridge Village, but not for full buildout of the project. (DEIR, p. IV.E-52.)

Availability of Wastewater Treatment Capacity. The project wastewater flows are proposed to be routed directly into EID's wastewater collection network for treatment at the EDHWWTP. Currently, the EDHWWTP receives an average dry weather flow of 1.25 mgd and, with a current dry-weather capacity of 1.6 mgd, does not have adequate unused capacity to treat the additional wastewater flows generated by the project at buildout. The El Dorado Hills Master Facilities Plan has outlined a construction sequence for required modifications and upgrading to the existing

facilities in six phases. The currently recommended phased construction sequences identified in Table E-8 of the Draft EIR will ultimately support the future 35,316 EDUs currently anticipated in the El Dorado Hills area by the year 2024. (DEIR, p. IV.E-53.)

In the interim, the expansion of the EDHWWTP facilities to 3.0 mgd is currently underway. The expansion is expected to be completed in December 1998. The District will implement the remaining Facilities Plan recommended expansion phases once additional water rights are secured. The interim increase in capacity of the EDHWWTP to 3.0 mgd will allow the plant to support approximately 12,500 total EDUs, approximately 2.5 times more EDUs than currently served. According to EID, full expanded plant capacity as outlined in the Master Facilities Plan will be ample to handle the wastewater flows of the Valley View project at buildout. (DEIR, p. IV.E-53.)

Historically, the effluent discharged into Carson Creek has exceeded the water quality objectives of the CVRWQCB as detailed in Order No. 95-151. The current focus of concern is mainly on the rate of failure of the sewage collection system rather than the performance of the EDHWWTP. The second-phase ERWQA scheduled for completion in 1999 will characterize the quality of effluent discharge to Carson Creek and identify plant/treatment operational mitigations necessary to reduce constituent concentrations in the discharge. (DEIR, p. IV.E-53.)

Although the planned EID expansions will be able to handle the additional effluent generated by buildout of the project, the number of EDUs currently assured for Valley View is limited by the project's current AD3 entitlement of 906 EDUs, or approximately 217,440 gpd (0.2 mgd), based on the El Dorado Hills Service Area Wastewater Design Criteria, which includes a factor of 240 gallons per EDU per day for a single-family residential unit. The project at ultimate buildout under the specific plan will require a total entitlement of 2,901 EDUs. (DEIR, p. IV.E-53.)

Mitigation PF-4:

Require that no final subdivision map, final parcel map, or building permit shall be issued for the project until EID has demonstrated (in a manner acceptable to the El Dorado Department of Transportation) that adequate wastewater service is available to serve the development in question.

EID and the applicant will likely be required to complete the following actions in order to carry out this mitigation measure.

- (a) EID Actions. EID will be required to complete the proposed phased wastewater capacity and collection system improvements outlined in the Master Facilities Plan in a sequence that provide anticipated development with an adequate wastewater collection, treatment and disposal system.

In order for the completion of the planned interim expansion of the EDHWWTP to occur, EID must complete the second-phase ERWQA and implement the treatment plant operational mitigations identified in the report and by the CVRWQCB. Effluent discharged from EDHWWTP into Carson Creek must adhere to the discharge constraints and water quality objectives outlined in the NPDES permit issued by the CVRWQCB.

To avoid repeated sewage spills into the Carson Creek drainage basin, EID must complete the promised implementation of maintenance and upgrade improvements to its collection system by the year 2002.

(b) Applicant Actions. The applicant will be required to participate in AD12 in order to obtain wastewater service entitlements for additional EDUs beyond the existing 906 EDUs currently allocated to the project site (a total entitlement of 2,901 EDUs will be required to serve specific plan buildout).

In cooperation with EID, the applicant will also likely be required to develop a plan for phasing of project development that is coordinated with planned phasing of wastewater facility improvements and capacity availability. This phasing plan will identify specific development area or neighborhood increments, and correlate these with specific wastewater facilities and treatment capacity improvements that must be in place before development can proceed. Phasing of the development should not exceed allocated EDUs or collection and treatment capacity, as stipulated by El Dorado General Plan Objective 5.3.1.

The applicant will also be required to submit a Facility Plan Report for EID approval, in accordance with EID's Design and Construction Standards (November 1993).

(DEIR, p. IV.E-54; FEIR, p. IV.E-54.)

Significance after Mitigation

Less than significant. (DEIR, p. IV.E-54.)

3. Police Protection

Standards of Significance

The project may be considered to have a significant impact on police protection if it will:

- (1) Result in a need for new or altered police services. The project will be considered to "result in a need for new or altered police services" if it will (a) cause Sheriff's Department response

times for priority calls to exceed eight minutes for 80 percent of the population, or (b) prevent the Department from meeting the Sheriff's department standard of 1.8 sworn officers per 1,000 residents.

- (2) Result in possible interference with an emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan.

(DEIR, p. IV.E-58.)

Impact:

PF-5: Potentially significant emergency police access impacts may result with the Project. (DEIR, p. IV.E-59.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the Valley View Specific Plan that avoid the potentially significant environmental effect identified in the Final EIR.

Explanation:

Unless adequate emergency access is provided, police protection could be compromised within the project, resulting in a potentially significant impact. (DEIR, p. IV.E-59.)

Mitigation PF-5:

The applicant shall implement the following measures:

- (a) provide for emergency access adequate to meet adopted County response time standards;
- (b) incorporate County standards for emergency access in project plans, and submit the appropriate maps for approval by the County Sheriff's Department; and
- (c) secure any emergency access gates in a fashion that will allow emergency entry with a minimum of time and effort.

Incorporate these measures in each project increment (individual development plan approval) to Sheriff's Department.

(DEIR, p. IV.E-59.)

Significance after Mitigation

Less than significant. (DEIR, p. IV.E-59.)

4. Fire Protection and Emergency Medical Services

Standards of Significance

The project may be considered to have a significant impact on fire protection or emergency medical services if it will:

- (1) Conflict with applicable environmental plans adopted by the agencies with jurisdiction over the project, or policies of the community, such that the conflict will lead to decreased protection against fires or emergency conditions; or increased harm due to fire or emergency conditions.
- (2) Result in a need for new or altered fire protection or emergency medical services. The project will be considered to “result in a need for new or altered services” if it will cause the Fire District (a) to exceed an eight minute response time of five minutes to 80 percent of the population, the standard established by the El Dorado County General Plan.
- (3) Result in possible interference with an emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan.

(DEIR, p. IV.E-63.)

Impact:

PF-6: The Project will have potentially significant fire protection and emergency medical services demand and phasing impacts. (DEIR, p. IV.E-63.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the Valley View Specific Plan that avoid the potentially significant environmental effect identified in the Final EIR.

Explanation:

The EDHFD will require additional staffing and equipment, and probably a new fire station, to provide fire protection and emergency medical response to the project adequate to meet adopted County and EDHFD goals and standards. Unless provided as needed, the project will cause a potentially significant impact on fire protection and emergency medical services. (DEIR, p. IV.E-63.)

EDHFD's Five-Year Plan includes a proposal to develop a new fire station in the El Dorado Hills Business Park (across from the project site). The Project will increase the need for the Business Park Station. The new station will be staffed with nine new firefighters and two new fire engines. The Valley View Fiscal Impact Study prepared by EPS for the County indicates that revenues generated by the project will be adequate to pay for increased project-related fire protection needs. Increased fire protection and emergency medical services will need to be phased adequately to meet increased demands as they occur over the project buildout period. (DEIR, p. IV.E-63.)

Mitigation PF-6:

The applicant-prepared Public Facilities Financing Plan (PFFP) shall specify phasing of fire protection services and facilities, for review and approval by the EDHFD. Also, the applicant shall be required to comply with applicable development fees and with the site and building design ~~features~~ requirements identified below under (b) to reduce fire hazards.

- (a) Public Services and Facilities Plan. The PFFP should specify how fire protection and emergency medical services will be phased to meet project needs as determined by the EDHFD. A mechanism should be established to ensure that staffing, equipment, and facility needs will be fulfilled to maintain adopted service standards throughout the various phases of the project. The PFFP should also consider a funding mechanism for the ongoing maintenance of the onsite open space.
- (b) Site and Building Design ~~Features~~ Requirements. The project shall comply with current adopted site and building design performance standards and prepare a Fuel Modification Plan in order to reduce identified fire protection and EMS response time impacts to less than significant levels. To meet current adopted standards, the applicant shall implement the following:
 - Roofing Materials. Use non-combustible (Class "A") roofing materials (clay tiles, concrete tiles, fiberglass shingles, and certain metal tiles), as required by state law.
 - Signs and Addresses. To facilitate locating a fire and to avoid delays in response, all newly constructed or approved roads, street, and buildings shall be designated by names or numbers, posted on signs clearly visible and legible from the roadway.

- Fuel Modification Plan. Prepare a Fuel Modification Plan that specifies fire buffers and fire breaks. Incorporate such buffers and breaks into tentative subdivision maps as determined necessary by the EDHFD. Submit these plans to the El Dorado County Planning Department for review to also ensure that any adverse biological impacts that may result from the incorporation of such fire protection measures are avoided. The Fuel Modification Plan should also be submitted to the entity that would be responsible for ongoing maintenance of onsite open space.
- Gates. If gates are included, gate entrances shall be at least two feet wider than the width of the traffic lane(s) serving the gate. All gates providing access from a road to a driveway shall be at least 30 feet from the roadway and shall open to allow a vehicle to stop without obstructing traffic on that road. Where a one-way road with a single traffic lane provides access to a gated entrance, a 40-foot turning radius shall be provided.
- Installation of Roadways and Hydrants Prior to Building Construction. Install EDHFD- and EID-approved roadways and fire hydrants prior to construction of buildings.

(DEIR, p. IV.E-64; FEIR, p. IV.E-64.)

Significance after Mitigation

Less than significant. (DEIR, p. IV.E-64.)

Impact:

PF-7: The project will cause potentially significant emergency fire protection and medical access impacts. (DEIR, p. IV.E-65.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the Valley View Specific Plan that avoid the potentially significant environmental effect identified in the Final EIR.

Explanation:

No specific circulation plans are available at this stage of the planning process to determine the emergency access adequacy, and no specific guidelines are included in the project application. Currently, the County Board of Supervisors has approved an emergency access to the project site

from the Marble Valley site, adjacent to the project on the east. Unless two permanent access roads are provided onsite during all phases of construction and thereafter, fire protection and emergency medical service response could be compromised within the project, resulting in a potentially significant impact. (DEIR, p. IV.E-65.)

Mitigation PF-7:

Require the applicant to develop and submit a Fire Safety Plan for review and approval by the El Dorado County Department of Transportation, the El Dorado Hills Fire District, and the California Department of Forestry. The Fire Safety Plan shall provide for adequate emergency access by providing a minimum of two permanent access roads during and after all phases of development, or an alternative access provision acceptable to the reviewing agencies. The plan shall incorporate standards contained in the State Fire Safe Regulations and the current El Dorado County Department of Transportation Design Standards Manual in all circulation plans.

The DOT Design Standards Manual specifies provision of:

At least two connections with an existing, improved public street, or with a future street extension approved by the Planning Commission or the Board, shall be provided, except when a proposed subdivision only contains one cul-de-sac street that is less than 500 feet in length in which case the one connection is sufficient. When the secondary access is to be provided, with a future street extensions, then a temporary exit road or acceptable alternative may be required, and approved by the Planning Director, with a favorable recommendation from the responsible fire agencies.

(DEIR, p. IV.E-65; FEIR, p. IV.E-65.)

Significance after Mitigation

Less than significant. (DEIR, p. IV.E-65.)

5. Parks and Recreation

Standards of Significance

The project may be considered to have a significant impact on parks and recreation services if it will:

- (1) Conflict with applicable environmental plans pertaining to parks and recreation as adopted by the agencies with jurisdiction over the project, or policies of the community, where conflict with plans will have a negative impact on the physical environment.
- (2) Increase the demand for neighborhood or regional parks or other recreational facilities. The project will be considered to create a significant additional local park demand if it will fail to meet established park standards (i.e., 5.0 acres of park land per 1,000 residents).
- (3) Affect existing recreational opportunities.

(DEIR, p. IV.E-70.)

Impact:

PF-8: The Project's lack of participation in the Latrobe Road Trail will result in significant impacts. (DEIR, p. IV.E-71.)

Findings:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the Valley View Specific Plan that avoid the significant environmental effect identified in the Final EIR.

Explanation:

The draft Valley View Specific Plan states on page 56 that "Bicycle and pedestrian paths will be developed within the collector street system of ...[West Valley] and White Rock Villages leading to the entrances at White Rock Road and the Village Center. These routes will also link neighborhoods to the two schools which are planned within each village. Bicycle paths will be installed both in the right-of-way as Class 2 facilities and, where feasible, within adjacent open space and greenbelt areas." The project does not include provisions for implementation of the Latrobe Trail along the frontage of the project site. Given the need for widening of Latrobe Road due to the project and cumulative development in the area, and the increase in the demand for trails that will be expected to result from the project, the lack of project participation in the implementation of the Latrobe Trail is considered a significant impact. (DEIR, p. IV.E-71.)

Mitigation PF-8:

Revise the Specific Plan to include a bicycle and pedestrian trail along the portion of Latrobe Road adjacent to the project site consistent with El Dorado County and El Dorado Hills CSD standards. (DEIR, p. IV.E-71.)

The El Dorado Hills Community Services District recommends that the bicycle and pedestrian trail along Latrobe Road be a Class I Bicycle Path. (FEIR, p. IV.E-71.)

Significance after Mitigation

Less than significant. (DEIR, p. IV.E-71.)

6. Schools

Standards of Significance

The project may be considered to have a significant impact on schools if it will:

- (1) Conflict with applicable environmental plans pertaining to schools as adopted by the agencies with jurisdiction over the project, or policies of the community.
- (2) Result in a need for new or altered school services.
- (3) Propose a school site that fails to meet applicable State of California site selection standards (listed in section b.2 above) or BUSD standards for school facilities.

(DEIR, p. IV.E-77.)

Impact:

PF-9: Project impacts on BUSD elementary and middle school facilities will be significant. (DEIR, p. IV.E-78.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the Valley View Specific Plan that avoid the significant environmental effect identified in the Final EIR.

Explanation:

School fees will most likely be collected in the amounts permitted by State law; however, it is not anticipated that these State-limited fees will be adequate to fund the complete site preparation and facility construction costs for the needed elementary and middle school facilities. The Valley View Specific Plan includes a Specific Plan Administration chapter that calls for a Project Facilities

Financing Plan (PFFP) that identifies potential financing mechanisms for school facilities. Unless the PFFP includes provisions for those elementary and middle school construction costs that exceed the impact fee revenue, elementary school facilities could not be constructed as needed onsite, middle school capacity could not be provided offsite, and capacities will therefore be inadequate. General Plan policy 5.8.1.1 requires an applicant to enter into a written agreement with the school districts affected to mitigate the project impacts to school facilities or demand thereof. (DEIR, p. IV.E-78.)

Unless adequate funding were available to finance school preparation and facility construction, the BUSD elementary and middle school capacity needed over the project buildout period (nine to 11 years) to ultimately accommodate the 1,295 elementary school students and 387 middle school students generated by the project could not be provided, resulting in a significant impact on BUSD schools. (DEIR, p. IV.E-78; FEIR, p. IV.E-78.)

Mitigation PF-9:

The applicant shall implement each of the following mitigation measures:

- (a) Consistent with General Plan Policy 5.8.1.1, enter into a written agreement with the BUSD to mitigate the project impacts on school facilities or the demand therefor;
- (b) Include measures in the PFFP that will ensure to El Dorado County's and the BUSD's satisfaction, that adequate funding will be available for school facilities when needed;
- (c) Determine and identify in the PFFP when elementary school facilities will be needed onsite and when additional middle school space will be needed offsite to serve proposed development. Require that locations of necessary schools be formalized concurrent with future tentative map approvals. Access, configuration, size, useable space and basic infrastructure needs (including timing and delivery of utilities) should also be determined at this time; and
- (d) Prior to issuance of building permits for units in the various phases of the project, secure written verification from the BUSD guaranteeing that adequate elementary and middle school space will be provided in schools on- or off-site.

(DEIR, p. IV.E-78.)

Significance after Mitigation

Less than significant. (DEIR, p. IV.E-78.)

Impact:

PF-10: **Project impacts on EDUHSD high school capacity is significant.** (DEIR, p. IV.E-79.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the Valley View Specific Plan that avoid the significant environmental effect identified in the Final EIR.

Explanation:

The project will contribute to the need for a new high school in El Dorado Hills. Unless the project's fair-share of funding for construction of a new high school were provided and unless it were demonstrated that adequate school capacity will be available by the time of occupancy of units to be constructed in the various phases of the project, capacity for project-generated high school students will be inadequate. It is not anticipated that the adopted school impact fee will be sufficient to cover the cost of providing adequate facilities to serve the 578 project-generated high school students. This impact will be significant. (DEIR, p. IV.E-79; FEIR, p. IV.E-79.)

Mitigation PF-10:

The applicant shall implement each of the following four mitigation measures:

- (a) Consistent with County General Plan Policy 5.8.1.1, enter into a written agreement with the EDUHSD to mitigate the impact of the project on school facilities;
- (b) Include measures in the project PFFP to ensure to El Dorado County's and the EDUHSD's satisfaction, that the project will provide its fair-share of funding for additional high school capacity when needed;
- (c) Determine and identify in the PFFP when high school capacity will be needed to serve the various phases of proposed development; and
- (d) Prior to issuance of building permits for units in the various phases of the project, secure written verification from the EDUHSD guaranteeing that adequate high school space will be provided for project-generated high school students.

(DEIR, p. IV.E-79.)

Significance after Mitigation

Less than significant. (DEIR, p. IV.E-79.)

Impact:

PF-11: **The Project will result in significant impacts to elementary school sites.** (DEIR, p. IV.E-81.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the Valley View Specific Plan that avoid the significant environmental effect identified in the Final EIR.

Explanation:

The two elementary school sites proposed under the Specific Plan do not appear to meet State school facility site selection standards and/or BUSD standards. Unless these school sites were modified/relocated to conform to State and District Standards, the project will result in a significant impact. (DEIR, p. IV.E-81.)

Choosing a school site also requires that facilities within one-quarter mile of the proposed site, which might reasonably be anticipated to emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous materials, be identified. The El Dorado County Air Pollution Control District has determined that five such sites exist within one-quarter mile of the project boundaries. (DEIR, p. IV.E-81; FEIR, p. IV.E-81.)

Mitigation PF-11:

The applicant shall implement the following measures:

- (a) relocate the White Rock Village elementary school site to a location away from the onsite earthquake fault, and reconfigure the site as necessary to satisfy BUSD criteria regarding a square or rectangular in shape;
- (b) reconfigure the West Valley Village elementary school site as necessary to satisfy BUSD criteria regarding a square or rectangular in shape;
- (c) provide information for each site adequate for the lead agency to make determinations regarding site-related hazardous materials and hazardous wastes pursuant to PRC 21151.8; and

- (d) identify facilities within one-fourth of a mile of the proposed school sites that might reasonably be anticipated to emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances or waste and determine health risks as required under PRC 21151.8.

(DEIR, p. IV.E-82; FEIR, IV.E-82.)

Significance after Mitigation

Less than significant. (DEIR, p. IV.E-82.)

F. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

Standards of Significance

Based on CEQA Guidelines, the project will be considered to have a significant impact on biological resources if it will:

1. Reduce the number or restrict the range of an endangered, rare or threatened species;
2. Interfere substantially with the movement of any resident or migratory fish or wildlife species;
3. Substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, or threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community; or
4. Conflict with applicable plans or policies adopted by the agencies with jurisdiction over the project such that an adverse environmental impact will be created.

(DEIR, pp. IV.F-20 - IV.F-21.)

Impact:

BR-1: The Project will have potentially significant impacts associated with increased presence of invasive non-native plant species. (DEIR, p. IV.F-22)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the Valley View Specific Plan that avoid the potentially significant environmental effect identified in the Final EIR.

Explanation:

The presence of human development and related land disturbances associated with the project will lead to the increased presence of weedy, opportunistic, and invasive non-native plant species. These introduced species will tend to rapidly colonize disturbed areas, further reducing the number and diversity of naturally occurring local plant species. According to page 92 of the Valley View Specific Plan, non-native trees and shrubs will replace native vegetation along the project roads to create "... a tidy manicured appearance year round with minimal maintenance and low water consumption." The majority of plant species recommended in the landscaping section of the Valley View Specific Plan are either non-native or do not occur in the natural habitats found in the Valley View area. This impact will be potentially significant. (DEIR, p. IV.F-22.)

Mitigation BR-1:

The applicant shall revise the Specific Plan to:

- (a) state that native plant species will be encouraged for landscaping to the extent possible, and will be required where landscaping borders oak woodlands and oak savannah communities, and in riparian and wetland buffer zones;
- (b) prevent the introduction of invasive non-native vegetation, implement revegetation and erosion control measures in a timely manner following construction;
- (c) incorporate measures to control invasive non-native species into the Specific Plan's landscape, restoration and habitat management plans; and
- (d) use caution when selecting any non-native plants for landscaping purposes on the site to ensure that no potentially invasive plant species are selected. The current Specific Plan Landscape Plan objectives of "... minimal maintenance and low water consumption ..." are worthwhile and could be achieved using native plants.

(DEIR, p. IV.F-26.)

Significance after Mitigation

Less than significant. (DEIR, p. IV.F-26.)

Impact:

BR-2: The Project will cause loss of non-native annual grassland habitat, resulting in a potentially significant impact. (DEIR, p. IV.F-26.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the Valley View Specific Plan that avoid the potentially significant environmental effect identified in the Final EIR.

Explanation:

The loss of approximately 907 acres of non-native grassland onsite will decrease foraging habitat for a variety of birds, mammals, and reptiles. Birds, especially raptors, depend on the open grassland and adjacent oak savannah to forage. They will be expected to use adjacent habitat, provided that it exists, and some raptors are able to coexist with nearby development. All raptor and songbird species will, however, be affected while construction is occurring. Although some species will be expected to return in reduced numbers, the majority of the species will not return due to loss of suitable habitat. Grassland habitat is also used by mammals, amphibians, and reptiles. The smaller less mobile species will be destroyed, whereas the larger, mobile species will attempt to recolonize the remaining nearby habitat. In any case, the species that survive construction will be forced to forage elsewhere. The loss of grassland, the foraging habitat for some raptors and songbirds, will not constitute a significant impact due to the foraging habitat available in adjacent areas. The loss for grassland mammals, reptiles, and amphibians will, however, be significant if corridor access to other adjacent areas is not available. The loss of non-native grassland habitat represents a potentially significant impact of the project. (DEIR, p. IV.F-26.)

Mitigation:

The applicant shall implement the following measures to avoid or minimize impacts of non-native annual grassland losses on both common and sensitive plant and wildlife species:

- (a) preserve grassland habitat in contiguous areas where possible to minimize fragmentation and maximize retention of habitat functions and values; and
- (b) use temporary fencing and/or protective signage to prevent construction impacts and unauthorized access to grasslands and associated wildlife corridors not planned for development.

(DEIR, p. IV.F-27.)

Significance after Mitigation

Less than significant. (DEIR, p. IV.F-27.)

Impact:

BR-3: The Project will cause loss of oak woodland/oak savannah habitats, resulting in a significant impact. (DEIR, p. IV.F-28.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the Valley View Specific Plan that avoid the significant environmental effect identified in the Final EIR.

Explanation:

The project-related loss of substantial oak woodland and oak savannah habitat (317 and 164 acres respectively) will be a significant loss of oak trees, and a significant habitat loss to many bird and mammal species. Several songbirds use the oaks for foraging, nesting and cover, while raptors use these trees as crucial roosting and nesting habitat. Portions of these existing oak communities will be fragmented by development-related removal of oak trees from currently uninterrupted stands. Any tree loss, whether individually standing or as part of a woodland, will impact these bird species. The loss of nests will impact reproductive success, while the loss of roosts and cover will displace individuals and decrease survivorship. These effects represent a significant impact of the project. (DEIR, p. IV.F-28.)

Mitigation:

The applicant shall implement the following:

- (a) conduct pre-construction surveys for raptor and songbird nests, and bat roosts;
- (b) limit development within the canopy of existing oak trees in the oak woodland, oak savannah, and non-native grassland whenever possible to retain the maximum feasible number of oak trees;
- (c) concentrate development and open space in contiguous areas to minimize fragmentation and maximize habitat value;

- (d) where oak woodland and oak savannah impacts are unavoidable, replant oaks at a rate of 5-to-1 (as specified by CDFG) as detailed in the Tree Replacement Plan specified under Mitigation Measure BR-4 below; and
- (e) implement the Tree Replacement Plan prior to any construction activities that will adversely affect oaks.

(DEIR, p. IV.F-29.)

Significance after Mitigation

Less than significant. (DEIR, p. IV.F-29.)

Impact:

BR-4: During construction, there will be a reduction of the habitat quality of oak woodland, resulting in a potentially significant impact. (DEIR, p. IV.F-31.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the Valley View Specific Plan that avoid the potentially significant environmental effect identified in the Final EIR.

Explanation:

Damage to oak trees and other mature trees preserved within the oak woodland and oak savannah communities may occur the Valley View Specific Plan area. Construction impacts could include

- (a) damage to the root systems by earth-moving equipment,
- (b) storage of construction materials and/or dumping within the dripline of the trees,
- (c) trimming of tree branches,
- (d) the siting of infrastructure improvements, homes, and commercial structures too close to the dripline of the trees, and
- (e) trimming of tree branches.

These activities represent a potentially significant impact of the project. (DEIR, p. IV.F-31.)

Mitigation:

The applicant shall implement the following:

- (a) protect the existing oak trees within the oak woodland, oak savannah, and non-native grassland during construction; and
- (b) implement the Tree Replacement Plan prior to any construction activities that will adversely affect oaks.

(DEIR, p. IV.F-31.)

Significance after Mitigation

Less than significant. (DEIR, p. IV.F-31.)

Impact:

BR-5: **The Project will result in the loss of riparian areas, a significant impact.** (DEIR, p. IV.F-33.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the Valley View Specific Plan that avoid the significant environmental effect identified in the Final EIR.

Explanation:

Approximately 1.6 acres of Carson Creek and Plunkett Creek riparian area will be developed with bridge structures. The resulting potentials for destruction or alteration of existing riparian areas could potentially impact the health and survival of birds, reptiles, amphibians, and invertebrates in the riparian areas, especially on Plunkett Creek. The creation of ad-hoc trails through riparian areas may also be detrimental. Many invertebrates, especially insects, use the trees and shrubs within riparian areas, attracting birds and bats. Reptiles and amphibians may use riparian areas for foraging, reproduction, cover, and estivation during the dry season. Such alteration of riparian vegetation onsite will represent a significant impact on biological resources. (DEIR, p. IV.F-33.)

Mitigation:

The applicant shall implement the following measures to mitigate impacts on riparian areas:

- (a) construct creek crossings in locations which minimize riparian vegetation disturbance,
- (b) provide buffers,
- (c) limit activities in buffer zones, and
- (d) protect riparian habitat.

At a minimum, mitigation should conform to El Dorado County General Plan Policy 7.3.3.2, which requires avoidance of any net loss of riparian vegetation associated with wetlands. In addition, implement Mitigation Measure BR-6 (see below).

(DEIR, p. IV.F-33.)

Significance after Mitigation

Less than significant. (DEIR, p. IV.F-33.)

Impact:

BR-6: The proposed landscape plan will cause potentially significant impacts on riparian areas. (DEIR, p. IV.F-34.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the Valley View Specific Plan that avoid the potentially significant environmental effect identified in the Final EIR.

Explanation:

The proposed Valley View landscape plan includes the use of non-native species in drainage areas where enhanced naturalized plantings are desirable. Local wildlife is adapted to use native riparian vegetation, and may be unable to use exotic species. The use of non-native species in a riparian area is inconsistent with El Dorado County General Plan Objective 7.3.4, which calls for the protection and use of natural drainage patterns such that natural watercourses should be integrated into new development so that they enhance the aesthetic and natural character of the site without disturbance. Non-native plantings will result in the disturbance and alteration of the natural riparian plant and wildlife community, and will represent a potentially significant impact to riparian woodland and associated plants and animals. (DEIR, p. IV.F-34.)

Mitigation:

The applicant shall implement the following: plant locally occurring native species (willows, alders, oaks) in riparian areas and adjacent buffer zones rather than non-native trees and shrubs. At a minimum, mitigation should conform to El Dorado County General Plan Policy 7.3.3.2, which requires avoidance of any net loss of riparian vegetation associated with wetlands. (DEIR, p. IV.F-34.)

Significance after Mitigation

Less than significant. (DEIR, p. IV.F-34.)

Impact:

BR-7: The reduction of habitat quality of riparian areas during construction will be a potentially significant impact. (DEIR, p. IV.F-35.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the Valley View Specific Plan that avoid the potentially significant environmental effect identified in the Final EIR.

Explanation:

The two riparian communities that exist onsite (Great Valley Mixed Riparian and Cottonwood Willow Riparian) may be affected during project construction. Impacts on riparian woodland during construction may include damage to root systems by earth-moving equipment, storage of construction materials, dumping within the dripline of the trees, siting of infrastructure improvements within the dripline of the trees, as well as trimming of tree branches, and degradation of water quality. These construction related activities represent a potentially significant impact. (DEIR, p. IV.F-35.)

Mitigation :

The applicant shall implement the following measures:

- (a) protect riparian habitats with temporary fencing during construction;
- (b) permanently fence riparian corridors and a buffer zone extending 50 feet out from the riparian canopy;

- (c) not disturb riparian zone vegetation during construction;
- (d) prevent erosion, sedimentation, and urban runoff into the riparian corridors; and
- (e) consult with CDFG regarding the possible need for a Streambed Alteration Agreement. At a minimum, mitigation should conform to El Dorado County General Plan Policy 7.3.3.2, which requires avoidance of any net loss of riparian vegetation associated with wetlands. In addition, implement Mitigation Measure BR-6.

(DEIR, p. IV.F-35.)

Significance after Mitigation

Less than significant. (DEIR, p. IV.F-35.)

Impact:

BR-8: The Project will cause a loss of wetlands, a significant impact. (DEIR, p. IV.F-36.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the Valley View Specific Plan that avoid the significant environmental effect identified in the Final EIR.

Explanation:

The jurisdictional wetlands determination conducted on the site by the USACE in 1997 identified 14.47 acres of jurisdictional wetlands within the project area. The applicant's biologists indicate that the project will impact approximately 1.93 acres of jurisdictional wetlands. The destruction or alteration of existing wetland areas will significantly impact the health and survival of birds, reptiles, amphibians, and invertebrates. Perennial and intermittent streams, seeps, and other seasonal wetlands (14.39 acres), and vernal pools (0.08 acre) are necessary for survival of these specialized species, and the loss of that habitat will eliminate these species on the project site. Reptiles and amphibians require a variety of wetland types for foraging, reproduction, cover, and estivation during the dry season. Several songbirds use these areas for cover, nesting and foraging. Destruction of these wetland areas will mean the direct elimination of these species on the project site and thus will contradict the "no net loss" policy of the USACE. This impact will be significant. (DEIR, p. IV.F-36.)

Mitigation :

The applicant shall implement the following measures:

- (a) redesign the project to avoid filling wetlands, or
- (b) prepare a Wetlands Mitigation Plan and replace wetland habitat in-kind and on-site at a minimum 1:1 replacement ratio in conformance with County Policy 7.3.3.2 of no net wetland loss and based on consultation with the Army Corps of Engineers and Regional Water Quality Control Board. The County should review and approve a mitigation plan approved by the USACE and Regional Water Quality Control Board. Vernal pools, however, because of their special soil requirements, are often better mitigated by utilizing a local, but offsite mitigation bank specifically developed to provide vernal pool habitat (Mitigation Measure BR-10 which follows). Preparation of the Wetland Mitigation Plan and implementation of this plan shall be carried out by a qualified wetland revegetation specialist in a timely manner. Address indirect post-construction impacts on wetlands by clearly written CC&Rs provided to homeowners.

(DEIR, p. IV.F-37.)

Significance after Mitigation

Less than significant. (DEIR, p. IV.F-37.)

Impact:

BR-9: The reduction of habitat quality of wetlands during construction will be a potentially significant impact. (DEIR, p. IV.F-38.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the Valley View Specific Plan that avoid the potentially significant environmental effect identified in the Final EIR.

Explanation:

Damage to wetlands onsite may occur during the construction of the proposed development, even though many wetlands are out of the planned development areas. Impacts may include damage to the existing wetland vegetation by earth-moving equipment, storage of construction materials and

dumping within wetlands, and inadvertent placement of fill material in wetlands. This impact will be potentially significant. (DEIR, p. IV.F-38.)

Mitigation :

The applicant shall be responsible for mitigating impacts on wetlands during construction by implementing protective buffer zone construction fencing of sensitive habitat. Provide a 50-foot buffer zone as recommended in the El Dorado County General Plan EIR, measured from the edge of the jurisdictional wetland. Keep all construction vehicles and supplies out of these fenced areas. (DEIR, p. IV.F-40.)

Significance after Mitigation

Less than significant. (DEIR, p. IV.F-40.)

Impact:

BR-10: **The Project will cause a significant loss of vernal pool habitat.** (DEIR, p. IV.F-40.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the Valley View Specific Plan that avoid the significant environmental effect identified in the Final EIR.

Explanation:

Project-related destruction of 0.08 acre of existing vernal pool areas in the western portion of the project site could significantly affect the health and survival of certain invertebrates endemic to this habitat. Both the vernal pool fairy shrimp and the vernal pool tadpole shrimp are federally protected species; and the presumption of their presence requires Section 7 (Endangered Species Act) consultation. Vernal pools are necessary for survival of these specialized species, and the loss of that habitat will eliminate these species on the project site. Several songbirds also use these areas for cover, nesting, and foraging. Destruction of 0.08 acre of vernal pools in the western section of the project area will represent a significant impact. (DEIR, p. IV.F-40.)

Mitigation :

The applicant shall implement the following:

- (a) obtain a Section 404 permit from the USACE for vernal pool wetland losses,
- (b) conduct Section 7 consultation for listed vernal pool crustacean species losses, and
- (c) purchase credit in a certified vernal pool mitigation bank at a ratio consistent with measures and conditions determined during the Section 7 consultation. At a minimum, the mitigation bank credit purchase should be consistent with the County's wetland no-net-loss policy (Policy 7.3.3.2), and avoid a reduction in the number, or restriction in the range of, endangered, rare or threatened species associated with these vernal pools.

(DEIR, p. IV.F-40.)

Significance after Mitigation

Less than significant. (DEIR, p. IV.F-40.)

Impact:

BR-11: **The Project will cause a potentially significant impact on vernal pool crustaceans.** (DEIR, p. IV.F-42.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the Valley View Specific Plan that avoid the potentially significant environmental effect identified in the Final EIR.

Explanation:

Rain-filled depressions and vernal pools potentially inhabited by the vernal pool fairy shrimp (federal threatened species) and vernal pool tadpole shrimp (federal endangered species) will be lost due to the proposed development, representing a potentially significant impact. (DEIR, p. IV.F-42.)

Mitigation :

The applicant is assuming presence of vernal pool crustaceans on site and shall:

- (a) initiate Section 7 consultation with USFWS for listed vernal pool crustacean species losses, and

- (b) purchase credit in a certified vernal pool mitigation bank at a ratio consistent with measures and conditions determined during Section 7 consultation. At a minimum, the mitigation bank credit purchase should be consistent with the County's wetland no-net-loss policy (Policy 7.3.3.2), and avoid a reduction in the number, or restriction in the range of, endangered, rare or threatened species associated with these vernal pools.

(DEIR, p. IV.F-42.)

Significance after Mitigation

Less than significant. (DEIR, p. IV.F-42.)

Impact:

BR-12: **The Project will cause potentially significant impacts on bats.** (DEIR, p. IV.F-43; FEIR, p. IV.F-43.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the Valley View Specific Plan that avoid the potentially significant environmental effect identified in the Final EIR.

Explanation:

Bats require specific temperature and humidity ranges in their roosts to survive winter hibernation and daily torpor. Many tree roosting species in California are CDFG Species of Special Concern or federal Species of Concern. The project will result in the loss of oak and pine snags and hollow trees to development, which provide potential roost habitat for bats. This represents a potentially significant impact. (DEIR, p. IV.F-43.)

Mitigation:

The applicant shall implement the following:

- (a) avoid potential roost trees (e.g. those supporting cavities) to the extent possible;
- (b) within or adjacent to open space areas, leave snags in place wherever feasible (without compromising human safety); and

- (c) to the extent possible, conduct planned tree removal outside of the bat maternity period, which extends from approximately May 1 through August 31, and before hibernation begins, approximately October. The County should review and approve mitigation measures developed in consultation with and approved by the CDFG.

(DEIR, p. IV.F-43.)

Significance after Mitigation

Less than significant. (DEIR, p. IV.F-43.)

Impact:

BR-13: **The Project may cause potentially significant impacts on raptors.** (DEIR, p. IV.F-43 ;FEIR, p. IV.F-43.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the Valley View Specific Plan that avoid the potentially significant environmental effect identified in the Final EIR.

Explanation:

Large trees and areas of oak savannah and oak woodland that may provide nesting habitat for several species of raptors (many of which are CDFG Species of Special Concern) will be lost to the proposed development. Active raptor nests are protected by state and federal laws. The project could involve construction activities near active raptor nests, or the removal of trees in which active raptor nests are located (which could violate state and federal laws). This impact is potentially significant. (DEIR, p. IV.F-43.)

Mitigation:

The applicant shall hire a qualified biologist to implement the following:

- (a) conduct a pre-construction survey effort to determine active nest locations between March and June; and
- (b) describe the locations of any active raptor nests and, in consultation with CDFG, establish appropriate buffers. The applicant shall also be responsible for ensuring that disturbance to active raptor nests due to construction activity is avoided during the breeding season.

(DEIR, p. IV.F-44.)

Significance after Mitigation

Less than significant. (DEIR, p. IV.F-44.)

Impact:

BR-14: The Project may cause potentially significant impacts on the valley elderberry longhorn beetle. (DEIR, p. IV.F-45 ;FEIR, p. IV.F-45.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the Valley View Specific Plan that avoid the potentially significant environmental effect identified in the Final EIR.

Explanation:

Elderberry shrubs and trees potentially inhabited by the federal threatened valley elderberry longhorn beetle (VELB) will be lost due to the proposed development, representing a potentially significant impact. USFWS policy regarding the VELB is to consider all habitat (i.e. elderberry shrubs) within the geographic range of the beetle as potentially-occupied habitat. (DEIR, p. IV.F-45.)

Mitigation :

The USFWS considers all elderberry shrubs directly affected by construction as “directly impacted” and all shrubs that are within 100 feet of disturbance activities as “indirectly impacted.” All affected shrubs require compensation, as is outlined in the USFWS guidelines, Mitigation Guidelines for the Valley Elderberry Longhorn Beetle (dated September 19, 1996). The applicant shall consult with the USFWS during the Section 7 process to determine mitigation requirements. Some or all of the VELB mitigation may (also) need to proceed under Section 10 of the Endangered Species Act. (DEIR, p. IV.F-45.)

Significance after Mitigation

Less than significant. (DEIR, p. IV.F-45.)

Impact:

BR-15: **The Project may cause potentially significant impacts on adjacent open space/habitat areas due to the increased human presence.** (DEIR, p. IV.F-45; FEIR, p. IV.F-45.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the Valley View Specific Plan that avoid the potentially significant environmental effect identified in the Final EIR.

Explanation:

The increase in human presence onsite could result in a potentially significant impact on the adjacent open space/habitat areas. The increased human access and use of the open spaces could disrupt these remaining habitat areas. Additions such as roads and trails, even if unpaved or used by only a few individuals, can fragment existing habitat. Human refuse, such as garden clippings, car fluids, chemicals, machinery, and incidental trash, could contribute to the degradation of habitat quality. Domestic pets, especially cats, could become feral and do significant damage to native populations of birds, small mammals, and reptiles. Many open spaces bordering on residential areas could suffer significant wildlife casualties, especially to ground-nesting birds, due to feral cats. These anticipated post-construction human disturbances could represent a potentially significant impact of the project. (DEIR, p. IV.F-45.)

Mitigation:

Human access and usage of the project site needs to be limited both during and after construction. The applicant shall implement the following:

- (a) design an integrative plan to limit use and educate the new community about open space preservation;
- (b) restrict access in the open space areas, especially in regard to the creation of trails and roads which fragment existing habitat, even if they are unpaved;
- (c) discourage mountain biking and off-road vehicles and limit access for hikers;
- (d) prohibit human refuse within the open space; and
- (e) post signs at appropriate access locations at the development/natural habitat boundary to inform residents of the impacts to wildlife communities resulting from feral animals, to

encourage them to notify County Animal Control of sightings, and to inform them of county leash laws.

(DEIR, p. IV.F-46.)

Significance after Mitigation

Less than significant. (DEIR, p. IV.F-46.)

Impact:

BR-16: The project will cause a cumulatively considerable incremental contribution to significant cumulative biological impacts due to regional development. (DEIR, p. IV.F-46; FEIR, p. IV.F-46.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the Valley Views Specific Plan that substantially lessen, but do not avoid, the project's cumulatively considerable incremental contribution to the significant environmental effect associated with loss of habitat impacts throughout the County due to planned development. No mitigation is available to render the project's contribution less than cumulatively considerable, or the larger effect less than significant. The effect therefore remains significant and unavoidable.

Explanation:

There are currently three development projects in the Valley View vicinity totaling approximately 5,552 acres that have been approved and are either under construction or have been completed and occupied. An additional 14 projects in the vicinity totaling 7,067 acres have been approved, but remain unbuilt. Two projects totaling 3,340 acres have been proposed but have not been approved. If all 19 projects totaling nearly 16,000 acres are completed, the likely result will not only be the direct loss of existing wildlife habitat, but also additional degradation of remaining habitats through fragmentation of wildlife corridors, increased intrusion by humans and pets, introduction of exotic plants and animals, and increased noise, water, and air pollution. Considered together, these projects could result in a significant cumulative impact. (DEIR, p. IV.F-46.)

Mitigation :

To the extent that projects in the Valley View vicinity provide mitigation measures similar to those proposed for the Valley View project in the Draft EIR, such as maintaining wildlife corridors,

avoiding sensitive areas, such as wetlands, woodlands, and special status species habitats, and limiting impacts primarily to low habitat value non-native grassland, the cumulative biological impacts will be reduced. (DEIR, p. IV.F-46.)

Significance after Mitigation

Significant and unavoidable. (DEIR, p. IV.F-46.)

G. GEOLOGY AND SOILS

Standards of Significance

According to the CEQA Guidelines, exposure of people or structures to major geological hazards should be considered a significant adverse impact. The project may be considered to have a potentially significant impact if:

- (1) aspects of the project, such as grading, will alter existing geologic conditions on the site or in the surrounding area in a manner that may create unstable geologic conditions that will expose people and improved property to significant geotechnical hazards and that will last beyond the short-term construction period; or
- (2) the project will expose people and improved property to significant hazards or will present significant engineering or construction limitations due to factors such as underlying geologic soils conditions or regional seismic conditions.

(DEIR, pp. IV.G-13 - IV.G-14.)

Impact:

SG-1: The Project may cause landslide/soil creep hazards, a potentially significant impact. (DEIR, p. IV.G-14.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the Valley View Specific Plan that avoid the potentially significant environmental effect identified in the Final EIR.

Explanation:

The field reconnaissance revealed a moderate potential impact from soil creep and/or landslides within the west-facing slope in the central portion of the White Rock and West Valley Villages. The slope to the east of the abandoned landfill in the south part of West Valley Village also has minor landsliding and creep. Landslides may be present within the wooded areas of East Ridge Village, along the western flank of the ridge that traverses this portion of the site. Areas of oversteepened slopes undergoing soil creep and/or landsliding must be addressed during project grading operations, as cut slopes could alter current slope stability. Existing landslides and soil creep in the central portion of the White Rock Village, the central and southern portions of the West Valley Village, and the wooded areas of the East Ridge Village have the potential to pose hazards to future project occupants. This possibility represents a potentially significant impact. (DEIR, p. IV.G-14.)

Mitigation SG-1:

Require the project applicant to conduct a detailed onsite geologic and geotechnical investigation prior to tentative subdivision map approval. This investigation should identify landslide activity and map in detail the extent of landsliding. Repair of identified landslides should be guided by each landslide's specific conditions and by the constraints imposed by its proposed future use, and be acceptable to the El Dorado County Building Department and Department of Transportation (for project roads). (DEIR, p. IV.G-14.)

Significance after Mitigation

Less than significant. (DEIR, p. IV.G-14.)

Impact:

SG-2: The Project may cause differential compaction/seismic settlement hazards. This impact is potentially significant. (DEIR, p. IV.G-15.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the Valley View Specific Plan that avoid the potentially significant environmental effect identified in the Final EIR.

Explanation:

The field reconnaissance revealed a very low potential for seismic settlement on slopes and ridges where the soil mantle is thin. A moderately low potential exists in drainage areas near the center of

the site and along the Bear Mountains fault where the soil horizon is thicker. The Bear Mountains fault trends northwesterly through the west central portion of the site. The project proposes to designate this fault trace as an open space area. Differential compaction and seismic settlement in drainage areas and along the Bear Mountains fault have the potential to pose hazards to future project occupants. This possibility represents a potentially significant impact. (DEIR, p. IV.G-15.)

Mitigation SG-2:

Implement the following mitigation measures:

- Require the project applicant to perform detailed geotechnical subsurface exploration in areas of the site that have unsuitable soil conditions for structural support;
- Require that soil samples be taken and analyzed to determine their engineering characteristics; and
- Require geotechnical earthwork or foundation design that will compensate for low density material, acceptable to the El Dorado County Building Department and Department of Transportation (for project roads) and in conformance with the County of El Dorado Design and Improvement Standards Manual and Uniform Building Code.

(DEIR, p. IV.G-15.)

Significance after Mitigation

Less than significant. (DEIR, p. IV.G-15.)

Impact:

SG-3: The Project may cause potentially significant impacts associated with an increase onsite sedimentation and erosion. (DEIR, p. IV.G-15.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the Valley View Specific Plan that avoid the potentially significant environmental effect identified in the Final EIR.

Explanation:

Because of the large areas of significant relief difference across the site, topographic alteration due to grading activities could cause a moderate increase in sedimentation and erosion. The precise location and extent of sedimentation and erosion will be determined by future grading plans for the site. Grading for project development may increase onsite sedimentation and erosion, which could create hazards for future project occupants. (DEIR, p. IV.G-15.)

Mitigation SG-3 :

Implement the following mitigation measures:

- Minimize topographic modifications of the site to reduce sedimentation and erosion potential. Require drainage facilities to be lined as necessary to prevent erosion of the site soils;
- Prior to tentative map approval, require the project applicant to perform a detailed geotechnical investigation to confirm site characteristics and to identify site soils that may be subject to erosion when excavated and exposed to weathering;
- Require erosion control measures implemented during and after construction to conform with National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) storm drain standards and El Dorado County standards (including El Dorado County Department of Transportation erosion control specifications); and
- Where possible, design collection systems to divert natural drainage away from parking facilities, roadway surfaces and buildings, and to collect water concentrated by impervious surfaces and convey it away from the site in accordance with the above-mentioned standards.

(DEIR, p. IV.G-16.)

Significance after Mitigation

Less than significant. (DEIR, p. IV.G-16.)

Impact:

SG-4: The Project may cause potentially significant hazards from cut-and-fill slopes.
(DEIR, p. IV.G-16.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the Valley View Specific Plan that avoid the potentially significant environmental effect identified in the Final EIR.

Explanation:

Anticipated construction activities will involve cut and fill of existing onsite slopes, including landslide areas on steeper slopes. Cut-and-fill can cause soil erosion and instability. These effects may be accelerated due to shearing associated with the Bear Mountains fault. Construction activities that cause ground disturbance could produce a moderate to high potential for unstable cut-and-fill slopes. This possibility represents a potentially significant impact. (DEIR, p. IV.G-16.)

Mitigation SG-4:

Require that cut slopes parallel or subparallel to the geologic structure be eliminated where possible or reinforced with retaining structures. Any cut or fill slopes and their appurtenant drainage facilities should be designed in accordance with Uniform Building Code Appendix Chapter 33, Sections 3312 and 3313 and in general should be no steeper than 2:1 (horizontal to vertical) unless authorized by the El Dorado County Building Department based on corroborating evaluation by the project geotechnical engineer. Slope angles should be designed to conform to the competence of the material into which they are excavated. (DEIR, p. IV.G-16.)

Significance after Mitigation

Less than significant. (DEIR, p. IV.G-16.)

Impact:

SG-5: The Project may cause potentially significant hazards due to trench wall instability. (DEIR, p. IV.G-17.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the Valley View Specific Plan that avoid the potentially significant environmental effect identified in the Final EIR.

Explanation:

Utility trenches will be excavated during project construction. Subsurface conditions encountered may be somewhat variable, ranging from competent to weak. The weaker soils can be expected nearer the creek channels, swale areas, and within the few feet of the ground surface. Trench walls

in these areas may be unstable. In addition, shearing and high groundwater associated with the Bear Mountains fault could cause trench wall instability. In areas of the site that contain weaker soils, utility trench walls may be unstable. This possibility represents a potentially significant impact. (DEIR, p. IV. G-17.)

Mitigation SG-5:

Require that trenches greater than five feet in depth be shored, sloped back at a 1:1 (horizontal to vertical) slope angle or reviewed for stability by the County's geotechnical engineer in accordance with the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) regulations (described in 29 CFR 1926.650 to 1926.653) if personnel are to enter the excavations. Require trench excavations to conform with local ordinances. Monitor shearing and high groundwater associated with the Bear Mountains fault during trench construction and require additional shoring and/or dewatering as necessary. (DEIR, p. IV.G-17.)

Significance after Mitigation

Less than significant. (DEIR, p. IV.G-17.)

Impact:

SG-6: **The Project may cause potentially significant ground rupture hazards.** (DEIR, p. IV.G-17.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the Valley View Specific Plan that avoid the potentially significant environmental effect identified in the Final EIR.

Explanation:

Development in the White Rock and West Valley Villages may be subject to ground rupture due to earthquake activity. While the potential for ground rupture at the project site is low, occupants of the White Rock and West Valley Villages could be exposed to this hazard. This possibility represents a potentially significant impact. (DEIR, p. IV.G-17.)

Mitigation SG-6:

Implement the following mitigation measures:

- Require the project applicant to map the fault geology of the site in detail prior to tentative subdivision map approval;
- Require that the width of the Bear Mountains fault and any fault splays be identified prior to siting schools, hospitals, fire stations and other essential service buildings; and
- Require that the surface mapping be verified by seismic and trenching methods, that the trench logs be interpreted for evidence of recency of fault activity, and that, if necessary, age dating be performed.

(DEIR, p. IV.G-17; FEIR, p. IV.G-17.)

Significance after Mitigation

Less than significant. (DEIR, p. IV.G-17.)

Impact

SG-7: **The Project may cause potentially significant ground shaking hazards.** (DEIR, p. IV.G-17.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the Valley View Specific Plan that avoid the potentially significant environmental effect identified in the Final EIR.

Explanation:

A low to moderate potential for severe ground shaking exists at the site. White Rock, West Valley and East Ridge Villages will be subject to this hazard. The severity of shaking will depend on the location of the earthquake epicenter and the magnitude of the earthquake. The project site has the potential to experience severe seismic ground shaking, which could damage project structures and infrastructure. This possibility represents a potentially significant impact. (DEIR, p. IV.G-18.)

Mitigation SG-7:

Require compliance with Uniform Building Code seismic design criteria (Appendix Chapter 16, Sections 1626-1635) and determine the exact location of the Bear Mountains fault prior to tentative subdivision map approval, and the siting of essential service buildings. In addition, inform all

potential home buyers of the potential seismic risk associated with the Foothills Fault System. (DEIR, p. IV.G-18.; FEIR, p. IV.G-18)

Significance after Mitigation

Less than significant. (DEIR, p. IV.G-18.)

Impact:

SG-8: **The Project may cause potentially significant Seiche hazards.** (DEIR, p. IV.G-19.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the Valley View Specific Plan that avoid the potentially significant environmental effect identified in the Final EIR.

Explanation:

Waves generated by seismic energy may affect structures near the El Dorado Hills Waste Water Treatment Plant pond or near the pond located near the eastern property boundary. The ponds are not large in size, and the hazard will probably be limited to minor flooding. In the case of the treatment plant pond, however, flooding could cause the spread of infectious biological agents. A seiche developing within the 1,000,000-gallon water tank could cause the tank to fail, resulting in flooding in the area below the tank. Project occupants may be exposed to hazards due to seiches that may develop in (1) the El Dorado Hills Waste Water Treatment Plant pond located approximately 200 feet west of the project site, (2) the farm pond located near the eastern property boundary, (3) the 1,000,000-gallon water storage tank located in the north central portion of the site, or (4) any planned water tanks, lakes, ponds, or pools within the proposed development. This possibility represents a potentially significant impact. (DEIR, p. IV.G-19.; FEIR, p. IV.G-19.)

Mitigation SG-8:

Require project buildings to be adequately set back from nearby ponds or any water tanks, lakes or ponds planned for construction. Design a flood control system below the 1,000,000-gallon water tank and restrict residential development in this area, or evaluate the structural design of the tank for failure potential and require improvements to substantially reduce this potential. (DEIR, p. IV.G-19; FEIR, p. IV.G-19.)

Significance after Mitigation

Less than significant. (DEIR, p. IV.G-19.)

Impact:

SG-9: The Project may cause potentially significant dam or water storage facility failure impacts. (DEIR, p. IV.G-19.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the Valley View Specific Plan that avoid the potentially significant environmental effect identified in the Final EIR.

Explanation:

The likelihood of a flood event occurring because of failure of structures is considered low. Failure of the farm pond dam to the east of the project site, however, will result in flooding along the Plunkett Creek drainage in East Ridge Village. Currently this farm pond is not large and flooding will probably be minimal. Failure of the water storage tank in the north central portion of the site could cause flooding in the area immediately downslope of the tank.

Flooding could occur along drainages in the proposed White Rock and West Valley Villages, and along Plunkett Creek in the proposed East Ridge Village, during periods of heavy rainfall. Seismic activity could cause failure of (a) the farm pond dam east of the project site, causing flooding in the East Ridge Village; and/or (b) the water storage tank in the north central portion of the site, causing flooding immediately downslope of the tank. (DEIR, p. IV.G-19.)

Mitigation:

Implement the above mitigation measure SG-8. (DEIR, p. IV.G-20.)

Significance after Mitigation

Less than significant. (DEIR, p. IV.G-19.)

Impact:

SG-10: The Project may cause potentially significant impacts associated with exposure to asbestos. (DEIR, p. IV.G-20.)

Finding:

Valley View Specific Plan EIR - Findings of Fact and Statement of Overriding Consideration

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the Valley View Specific Plan that avoid the potentially significant environmental effect identified in the Final EIR.

Explanation:

Naturally occurring asbestiform minerals have been identified in regional serpentine bodies and along fault traces near the site. Asbestos fibers can be released into the air by earthwork activities. Exposure to asbestos fibers is associated with a number of diseases. Geologic mapping has not identified asbestiform mineral deposits on or adjacent to the site. Earthwork activities such as grading, drilling, or footings excavation, however, may uncover previously unidentified deposits of asbestiform minerals. Dust control measures and monitoring may be required where asbestiform minerals are identified. (DEIR, p. IV.G-20; FEIR, p. IV.G-20)

Mitigation:

Identify serpentine deposits during geotechnical investigations associated with earthwork design and during earthwork construction monitoring. Where serpentine rock or asbestiform mineral deposits are identified, implement El Dorado County standards for dust control and mitigation for serpentine soils. Require that any identified asbestos contamination be disclosed to future property owners, as required by law. (DEIR, p. IV.G-20; FEIR, p. IV.G-20.)

Significance after Mitigation

Less than significant. (DEIR, p. IV.G-20.)

Cumulative Impacts (General Plan)

Cumulative local and countywide growth, of which this project is a part, is anticipated and provided for in the 1996 El Dorado County General Plan. The cumulative soils, geology, and mineral resources impacts of that growth are addressed in section V.7. Soils, Geology, and Mineral Resources, of the General Plan EIR. The EIR states that, with implementation of the measures listed in the EIR, which have been incorporated as General Plan policy, there will be no significant unmitigated cumulative soils or geologic impact. The Findings of Fact of the Board of Supervisors of El Dorado County for the El Dorado County General Plan (January 23, 1996, revised January 26, 1996; pages 196 and 210) identified effects associated with seismic hazards and loss of areas available for mineral resource extraction as significant and unavoidable. (DEIR, p. IV.G-21.)

H. HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

Standards of Significance

Based on CEQA Guidelines, the project may be considered to have a significant impact on drainage, flooding, and water quality conditions if it will:

- (1) Cause a substantial change in the amount of water in project area drainages;
- (2) Cause a substantial change in the rate and amount of surface runoff leaving the project site;
- (3) Cause substantial flooding, erosion or siltation;
- (4) Expose people or structures to substantial new or increased flooding;
- (5) Result in the substantial degradation of surface or groundwater quality;
- (6) Substantially interfere with groundwater recharge; or
- (7) Conflict with adopted plans or goals of agencies with jurisdiction over the project such that adverse hydrology and water quality impacts will be created.

For purposes of this analysis the following additional significance criteria are used to define hydrology and water quality impacts.

Less than Significant: Hydrology and water quality impacts are considered less than significant if the proposed project results in no substantially adverse increased runoff and water quality impacts.

Potentially Significant: Hydrology and water quality impacts are considered potentially significant if the proposed project has the potential to substantially impact flooding and water quality goals of the region.

Significant: Hydrology and water quality impacts are considered significant if the proposed project will clearly have substantial flooding and water quality effects that will be difficult to mitigate and/or will require significant re-design of the project.

(DEIR, pp. IV.H-16 - IV.H-17.)

Impact:

H-1: The Project may cause potentially significant impacts associated with increased flows in tributary four of Carson Creek. (DEIR, p. IV.H-18.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the Valley View Specific Plan that avoid the potentially significant environmental effect identified in the Final EIR.

Explanation:

The DOT-approved Carson Creek Drainage Study proposes three detention ponds, CU/VV4, CX2/VV1B and CY/VV2-1, to control anticipated runoff directly from the Valley View project site. The regional pond CU/VV4 will reduce future peak runoff flows in Carson Creek downstream of Latrobe Road by 100 cfs; and inclusion of detention ponds CU/VV4 and CX2/VV1B as part of the project development will result in no net increase in future peak flows from the project site into the main channel of Carson Creek at Golden Foothill Parkway. Detention pond CY/VV2-1, proposed in the upper reach of Tributary 4, does not, however, reduce future peak flows in Tributary 4 to those of existing conditions. Future development will cause Tributary 4 to experience an approximate seven-percent increase in peak flow at Latrobe Road, which will add to the existing downstream flooding and capacity problems in this tributary. This impact is potentially significant. (DEIR, p. IV.H-18.)

Mitigation:

Implement the following mitigation measures, including preparation of a drainage plan, construction of onsite drainage facilities, and ongoing maintenance of detention basins and drainage facilities.

- The applicant shall prepare an El Dorado County DOT-approved drainage plan that is consistent with the DOT-approved Carson Creek Drainage Study. The applicant shall coordinate with the El Dorado County DOT and contribute a proportionate share of the cost for downstream channel capacity improvements associated with any increases in discharge from the Project. Onsite detention basins will be permanently maintained.
- The drainage plan shall be prepared by a certified Civil Engineer and in conformance with the El Dorado County Drainage Manual (adopted by DOT in March 1995 and available for review at the El Dorado County Planning Department).
- At a minimum, the drainage plan shall include:
 - Written text addressing existing conditions;

- Effects of project improvements;
 - All hydrologic and hydraulic calculations;
 - Watershed Map;
 - Potential increases in downstream flows;
 - Proposed onsite improvements;
 - Proposes schedule of drainage improvements to assure that the necessary facilities are in place to mitigate the effects of each development phase as it occurs; and
 - Necessary drainage easements to accommodate flows from the site and implementation/maintenance responsibilities.
- All onsite drainage facilities shall be constructed according to El Dorado County DOT standards and satisfaction. At a minimum this will require compliance with the following performance standards:
 - Those watercourses set forth in an adopted master plan of drainage for the County of El Dorado shall be designed and constructed not to exceed the quantities of water indicated in such master drainage plans when said plans are adopted. All other watercourses and drainage ways shall be designed by a civil engineer in accordance with DOT criteria.
 - Drainage facilities for areas greater than 100 acres shall be designed to safely convey the storm runoff of the 100-year flood. All available headwater depth of the culvert may be used for these facilities. Flooding effects from backwater shall be analyzed when available headwater depth is incorporated into the design.
 - Drainage facilities for less than 100 acres shall be designed to safely convey the storm runoff of the 10-year flood. Without the headwater depth exceeding the culvert barrel height. Exceptions will be considered on a case-by-case basis when upstream ponding is required for the attenuation of flood peaks.
 - Natural channels for the collection and conveyance of stormwater runoff shall be given priority over artificial channels in project design.
 - Design flows shall be computed by use of methods acceptable to the DOT defined in Section 2 of the County of El Dorado Drainage Manual.

For further details on hydraulic design standards in regard to project development and onsite drainage facilities, refer to the County of El Dorado Drainage Manual.

- Specific mitigation measures shall be identified in the final drainage plans to reduce post-development stormwater discharge in Tributary four at Latrobe Road and Plunkett Creek at its confluence with Deer Creek. These measures shall include detention basins of adequate size or alternative stormwater detention measures subject to the approval of the El Dorado County DOT to reduce post-development runoff flows to pre-development levels.
- Maintenance of the detention basins and drainage facilities shall require periodic annual inspections to ensure facility functionality and debris removal as necessary.

(DEIR, pp. IV.H-20 - IV. H-21; FEIR, p. IV.H-20.)

Significance after Mitigation

Less than significant. (DEIR, p. IV.H-20.)

Impact:

H-2: The Project may cause potentially significant impacts associated with increased flows in Plunkett Creek. (DEIR, p. IV.H-18.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the Valley View Specific Plan that avoid the potentially significant environmental effect identified in the Final EIR.

Explanation:

The project-related increase in runoff to Plunkett Creek could exacerbate flooding at Plunkett and Deer Creeks. No prior hydrological analysis of Plunkett Creek was available for review. Therefore, Questa Engineering used the methods outlined in the County of El Dorado Drainage Manual to calculate the existing and future peak flows of Plunkett Creek at its confluence with Deer Creek. Table H-3 presents the estimated pre- and post-development 10-year and 100-year peak flows for Plunkett Creek at its confluence with Deer Creek.

As indicated by the above calculations, the Valley View project will result in estimated five- and three-percent increases in 10-year and 100-year peak runoff flows, respectively. There are no proposed detention facilities within the Plunkett Creek watershed to reduce increased flows associated with proposed development. The confluence of Plunkett Creek with Deer Creek occupies the 100-year floodplain, any increases in runoff could exacerbate this condition. This impact is potentially significant.

(DEIR, p. IV.H-18.)

Mitigation:

Implement the above mitigation measure H-1. (DEIR, pp. IV.H-20 - IV.H-21.)

Significance after Mitigation

Less than significant. (DEIR, p. IV.H-20.)

Impact:

H-3: The Project may cause potentially significant impacts associated with localized flooding. (DEIR, p. IV.H-21.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the Valley View Specific Plan that avoid the potentially significant environmental effect identified in the Final EIR.

Explanation:

Periodic flooding of the proposed multi-use open space land use is not considered a significant impact; however, flooding of structures proposed in the core residential area or the school site could occur. According to the DOT-adopted Bottorff study, the northeastern project site boundary occupies an existing 100-year floodplain. The Specific Plan proposes core residential, a school site and multi-use open space land uses within this adjacent 100-year floodplain. The Bottorff study includes channel improvements within Carson Creek to contain anticipated 100-year flows within its banks; however, to date no specific plans have been implemented or conducted for improving the creek channels through this area to increase their flood flow capacity. This impact is potentially significant. (DEIR, pp. IV.H-21 - IV.H-22.)

Mitigation H-3:

Project development shall not occur in areas within the 100-year floodplain (as delineated in the Bottorff study) unless El Dorado County DOT-approved 100-year flood protection improvements (as defined in the County of El Dorado Drainage Manual) are implemented. As defined in the County of El Dorado Drainage Manual:

- Floodplain requirements must include the definition of the natural easement boundaries necessary for intermittent occupancy by runoff waters, and within which encroachment by development will be prohibited.
- Land development shall be evaluated for impacts to floodplains both onsite and offsite. Measures shall be implemented that will lessen the exposure of property and facilities to flood losses and inhibit incompatible development in flood-prone areas (e.g., building finish floors must be elevated one foot above the base flood elevation of the 100-year floodplain).
- Floodplain limits shall be delineated along all significant water courses within proposed development. Floodplain boundaries shall be shown on preliminary and final subdivision maps. The area inundated should be indicated as a flow easement. Floodplain designations should account for future development within the catchment.
- Limits shall be established from applicable FEMA studies, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Floodplain Studies, U.S. Geological Survey Floodplain Maps, regional flood studies prepared by private consulting engineers or other appropriate studies (e.g., Bottorff Study).
- Proposed development within a floodplain shall have also met all requirements and obtained all necessary approvals from jurisdictional agencies independent of the County of El Dorado and the requirements set forth in the County of El Dorado Drainage Manual prior to plan approval. If no requirements exist, documentation shall be provided stating that an investigation was conducted and requirements do not exist.

(DEIR, p. IV.H-22.)

Significance after Mitigation

Less than significant. (DEIR, p. IV.H-22.)

Impact:

H-4: The Project may cause potentially significant impacts associated with increased flood duration. (DEIR, p. IV.H-23.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the Valley View Specific Plan that avoid the potentially significant environmental effect identified in the Final EIR.

Explanation:

In addition to the 100-year floodplain detailed in the Bottorff study, the existing FEMA Flood Insurance Rate Maps identify the confluences of Plunkett Creek and the unnamed tributary as occupying regions prone to the flooding hazards of the 100-year flood. The proposed detention basins outlined in the Bottorff study and recommended for Plunkett Creek are intended to maintain or reduce the post-development peak flow rate entering Carson and Deer Creeks associated with anticipated development. They will not, however, mitigate the increased volume of flow leaving the development area. Moreover, the duration of peak flows will increase, adding to the existing downstream flooding conditions in Carson and Deer Creeks. The project will not affect the extent of flooding, but will increase flood duration. In other words, areas subject to flooding under existing conditions will be flooded for a longer period of time under “with project” conditions, representing a potentially significant adverse effect. Without future improvements to contain anticipated flows within Carson and Deer Creeks or the expansion of onsite detention facilities, increased flood duration will represent a potentially significant adverse impact to present and future uses of land along downstream flood-prone sections of Carson and Deer Creeks. (DEIR, p. IV.H-23.)

Mitigation H-4:

In addition to the mitigation measures cited for Impacts H-1 and H-2, the applicant shall mitigate the flood duration impacts on Carson Creek and Deer Creek by either (1) contributing a proportionate share of the cost of Carson and Deer Creek channel improvements, or (2) designing and constructing onsite detention facilities with surplus capacity.

1. The project applicant shall cooperate with El Dorado County DOT and contribute a proportionate share of the cost for the completion of necessary channel improvements to eliminate downstream flooding along Carson and Deer Creeks. The specific improvements to be provided shall be based upon hydrologic analysis of these watersheds and shall be subject to review and approval by DOT. In the event that the Valley View project is built out prior to the securing of all monies to construct the downstream improvements, the applicant shall be required to bear the additional costs (beyond their fair share) to complete the necessary flood control improvements, under the condition that such additional payments will be reimbursed when other “fair share” contributions are received.

or

2. The applicant shall design and construct the onsite detention facilities with surplus capacity to avoid increases in the magnitude of peak discharge and the total duration of flooding as determined by the time when the low-lying properties improvements are first inundated by overbank flooding to the time when the floodwaters recede from those properties

improvements at the end of the flood event. The specific amount of surplus capacity to be provided shall be based upon a hydrologic-hydraulic analysis for the 10-, 50- and 100-year floods of the detention facilities in relation to downstream flood conditions, and shall be subject to review and approval by DOT. All detention facilities must be designed in accordance with DOT standards.

(DEIR, pp. IV.H-23 - IV.H-24.)

Significance after Mitigation

Less than significant. (DEIR, p. IV.H-23.)

Impact:

H-5: The Project may cause significant construction-related soil erosion and sedimentation impacts. (DEIR, p. IV.H-24.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the Valley View Specific Plan that substantially lessen, but do not avoid, the significant environmental effect associated with impacts on erosion and sedimentation. No mitigation is available to render the effect less than significant. The effect therefore remains significant and unavoidable.

Explanation:

The applicant has not yet prepared a grading plan for the site at a sufficient level to allow projection of grading quantities. As previously discussed, the Valley View project will involve significant earthmoving, with extensive grading proposed on approximately 430 acres of the project site. The project will present a significant threat of soil erosion from soil disturbance because: (a) proposed grading will occur on soils located on moderate to steep hill slopes; (b) the predominant soils on the project site are Auburn soils, which are moderately to very highly susceptible to erosion; and (c) large amounts of grading will be required to construct the project. Alterations in drainage patterns could compound and increase erosion onsite and downstream of the project by subjecting unprotected areas to the erosional forces of runoff, particularly in the Carson Creek, Screech Owl Creek, Plunkett Creek and the unnamed tributary channels.

Soil erosion can cause numerous types of environmental impacts. Eroded soil contains nitrogen, phosphorus, and other nutrients. When these nutrients are carried into water bodies, the nutrients can trigger algal blooms that reduce water clarity, deplete oxygen, and create odors. Excessive

deposition of sediments in streams may blanket fauna. The increased turbidity from the erosion may also reduce photosynthesis that produces food supply and natural aquatic habitats. Sediment from project-induced onsite erosion could also be deposited in the downstream receiving channels of Carson and Deer Creeks, which could interfere with the natural flow of storm waters, cause flooding where it will not otherwise occur, aggravate downstream flooding conditions or accelerate channel erosion.

Soil erosion and subsequent sedimentation and water quality effects could occur during project construction. This impact will be significant.

(DEIR, p. IV.H-24.)

Mitigation H-5:

Require the applicant to:

- (a) obtain a general construction activity stormwater permit under NPDES regulations.
- (b) obtain a County General Grading Permit,
- (c) include a County-approved erosion and sediment control plan in the project drainage plans, and
- (d) prepare a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan as part of the NPDES permit. Clear all drainage culverts and downstream receiving channels from accumulated sediment after each project construction phase is completed. These measures will reduce project construction-related erosion and sedimentation impacts, but not necessarily to a less than significant level.

(DEIR, p. IV.H-25.)

In addition, the applicant shall also implement the following mitigation measures:

- Prior to issuance of a County Grading Permit, require the applicant to obtain from the CVRWQCB a general construction activity stormwater permit under the NPDES regulations and comply with the requirements of the permit to minimize pollution of stormwater discharge during construction activities.
- Require the applicant to obtain a County General Grading Permit with the El Dorado County Department of Transportation.

- Include in the project drainage plans a County-approved erosion and sediment control plan to minimize the impacts from erosion and sedimentation during construction of all elements of the project. This plan should conform to all standards adopted by the county. This plan should include Best Management Practices, or others deemed effective by the DOT, such as:
 - (a) site construction practices including restricting grading to the dry season, winterization, traffic control and dust control;
 - (b) using soil stabilization techniques to protect all finished graded slopes from erosion such as straw mulching, hillslope benching, erosion control matting, hydroseeding, revegetation, and preservation of existing vegetation;
 - (c) protecting downstream receiving drainage channels and storm drains from sedimentation and retaining sediment on the project site by using silt fencing, straw bale sediment barriers and drop inlet sediment barriers, diversion dikes and swales, sediment basins and sediment traps.

The standards and specifications of this plan shall be in compliance with the Erosion and Sediment Control Guidelines for Developing Areas of the Sierras (prepared by the High Sierra Resource Conservation and Development Council).

- After each phase of construction is completed, inspect all drainage culverts and the downstream receiving channels of Carson Creek, Screech Owl Creek, Plunkett Creek, and the unnamed tributary for accumulated sediment. Where sediment has accumulated, these drainage structures should be cleared of debris and sediment.
- Require the applicant to prepare a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) as part of the NPDES permit. A standard requirement of the SWPPP is to designate an individual responsible for the inspection and monitoring of all construction activities posing potential water quality concerns, including the implementation of erosion control measures and erosion remediation. Given the past construction-related erosion problems in the county, this standard requirement is not expected to be wholly effective in protecting downstream receiving waters. This can be corrected by requiring that the implementation and monitoring of the erosion control measures within the SWPPP be subject to inspection by the licensed design professional who prepares the erosion control plan (and the SWPPP). In this manner, the licensed professional will:
 - (a) provide added assurance that the prescribed erosion control measures are implemented;

- (b) be available to recognize onsite problems and adjust/modify design measures accordingly, and
- (c) act as the liaison between the Regional and State Water Boards.

(DEIR, pp. IV.H-25 - IV.H-26.)

Significance after Mitigation

Significant, unavoidable impact. (DEIR, p. IV.H-25.)

Impact:

H-6: The Project may cause significant impacts associated with urban runoff pollutant discharge into creeks. (DEIR, p. IV.H-26.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the Valley View Specific Plan that substantially lessen, but do not avoid, the significant environmental effect associated with impacts on urban runoff pollutant discharge into creeks. No mitigation is available to render the effect less than significant. The effect therefore remains significant and unavoidable.

Explanation:

The project will generate urban runoff that may degrade water quality in Carson and Deer Creeks. Adverse impacts on the water quality of Carson and Deer Creeks could also occur as a result of urban pollutant runoff from the proposed streets, single- and multi-family residences, commercial sites, school grounds, multi-use open space (parks) and parking lots on the project site. Stormwater runoff from these areas will include materials and chemicals that will be washed into the developed storm drain system from a variety of urban sources. Unlike water pollutants that come from single point sources, such as industrial or sewage treatment plants, non-point source pollutants are washed by rainwater and other means from streets, sidewalks, driveways, landscape areas, parking lots, construction sites, and agricultural areas. Because storm drains are generally separate from the wastewater collection system, these pollutants will flow directly into the local drainages and downstream receiving waters of Carson and Deer Creeks.

For the Project, the types of pollutants that are likely to be found in greater concentrations than currently occurring in the Carson Creek and Deer Creek drainages include suspended solids and floating debris, litter, nutrients associated with landscape fertilizers, heavy metals (especially copper,

lead, and zinc) from automobiles, hydrocarbons associated with fuels and crankcase oil, pesticides, commercial land use related pollutants and chemicals, and trace organics from household solvents.

(DEIR, pp. IV.H-26 - IV.H-27.)

Mitigation H-6:

Implement a comprehensive urban runoff control program to mitigate the non-point source water quality effects of the project. This measure will reduce project impacts, but not necessarily to a less than significant level. (DEIR, p. IV.H-27.)

The project applicant shall develop specific stormwater management plans for each major sub-area of the project. The stormwater management plans for each major sub-area shall be subject to review and approval by the El Dorado County Department of Transportation and the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board. At a minimum, the plan shall:

- (a) identify specific types and sources of stormwater pollutants;
- (b) determine the location and nature of potential impact; and
- (c) specify appropriate control measures to eliminate any potentially significant impacts to receiving water quality from stormwater runoff.

(DEIR, p. IV.H-27; FEIR, p. IV.H-27.)

Control measures may include vegetated buffer strips, water quality detention basins, site development restrictions, public education, street sweeping, and other design or source control management practices, as appropriate, to mitigate adverse potential water quality effects. Educational information should be distributed explaining that dumping oil, automotive products, household products and other toxics into the storm drainage system is illegal and damaging to the environment. Storm drain inlets should be marked with signs proclaiming "No Dumping-Drains to Local Streams." As each individual subdivision is built within the project, a regular community street sweeping program shall be implemented. (DEIR, p. IV.H-27.)

The Bottorff study proposes three stormwater detention ponds associated with the Valley View Specific Plan to reduce the projected increase in project site runoff from entering Carson Creek and/or its tributaries. The design details of these ponds have not been provided. Detention facilities will also be required to reduce anticipated increased flows in Plunkett Creek. These proposed and anticipated detention facilities could also be used as water quality ponds. Water quality ponds have been shown to reduce concentration of heavy metals and oil and grease. By retaining storm water,

suspended solids are allowed to settle. Since many of the typical urban storm pollutants are attached to suspended solids, the proposed ponds would remove a portion of these pollutants. (DEIR, p. IV.H-27.)

Significance after Mitigation

Significant, unavoidable impact. (DEIR, p. IV.H-27.)

Cumulative Impacts (General Plan)

Cumulative local and countywide growth, of which this project is a part, is anticipated and provided for in the El Dorado County General Plan. The cumulative impacts of that growth on hydrology and water quality are addressed in section V.5, Water: Resources, Quality and Hazards, of the County-certified 1995 El Dorado County General Plan Update EIR. The General Plan EIR indicates that most of the anticipated cumulative impacts will be mitigated to less than significant levels through implementation of related General Plan policies, but that the following cumulative impact, to which the project will contribute, will remain significant and unavoidable:

Impact 5.2.3: Increase in Surface Pollutants: The impact due to cumulative increases in surface water pollutants, which being substantially reduced through implementation of the General Plan policies, will be presumed to be cumulatively significant with the anticipated year 2015 level of development.

This impact is also identified as significant and unavoidable in the Findings of Fact of the Board of Supervisors of El Dorado County for the El Dorado County General Plan (January 23, 1996, revised January 26, 1996; page 171). In addition, the Findings of Fact (page 174) identified Impact 5.2.4 (Increase in Groundwater Pollutants) as significant and unavoidable. (DEIR, p. IV.H-28.)

I. AIR QUALITY

Standards of Significance

As established in Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, the project will be considered to have a significant impact on air quality if it will:

- (1) Violate any air quality standard, contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation, or expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations.

For the purposes of this study a significant impact on local air quality is defined as:

- (2) A predicted violation of the carbon monoxide ambient air quality standards due to project traffic on the local street network.
- (3) The potential to frequently expose members of the public to objectionable odors.

A significant impact on regional air quality is defined in this analysis as:

- (4) An increase in emissions of an ozone precursor or PM₁₀ exceeding the Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District's recommended thresholds of significance. The District considers increases in emissions of 85 pounds per day of either ozone precursor or 285 pounds per day of PM₁₀ to represent a significant adverse impact.

(DEIR, pp. IV.I-7 - IV.I-8.)

Impact:

AQ-1: The Project will cause potentially significant air quality impacts from construction. (DEIR, p. IV.I-8.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the Valley View Specific Plan that avoid the potentially significant environmental effect identified in the Final EIR.

Explanation:

Construction activities such as demolition, excavation and grading operations, construction vehicle traffic, and wind blowing over exposed earth, will generate exhaust emissions and fugitive particulate matter emissions that will affect local and regional air quality. These effects will be potentially significant. (DEIR, p. IV.I-8.)

Construction dust will affect local and regional air quality at various times during the build-out period of the project. The dry, windy climate of the area during the summer months combined with the fine, silty soils of the region create a high potential for dust generation. Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District guidance documents differentiate between Phase I (grading) and Phase II (actual construction) activities and air pollutant sources. Emissions during the grading phase of construction are primarily associated with the exhaust of large earth moving equipment and the dust which is generated through grading activities. Emissions in Phase II of construction are

primarily associated with construction employee commute vehicles, asphalt paving, mobile equipment, stationary equipment, and architectural coatings. (DEIR, pp. IV.I-8 - IV.I-9.)

The anticipated effects of project construction activities include increased dustfall and locally elevated levels of PM₁₀ near the construction activity. Depending on the weather, soil conditions, the amount of activity taking place, and nature of dust control efforts, these impacts could affect existing or future residential areas within or near the project. Consequently, project construction dust generation is considered to be a potentially significant adverse impact, particularly during later phases of construction when residents of previously completed phases of the project could be affected. (DEIR, p. IV.I-9.)

Construction activities in areas of asbestos-containing soils and rock have the potential to expose the public to increased concentrations of asbestos in the air. The County of El Dorado recently adopted an ordinance establishing special guidelines and requirements for grading and construction activities in areas designated as Serpentine Rock in the Soil Survey of El Dorado County. The ordinance establishes dust mitigation practices to be used when construction occurs in areas with serpentine soil, and additionally authorizes the El Dorado County Environmental Management Department and the El Dorado Air Pollution Control District to require an "Asbestos Hazard Dust Mitigation Plan" for review and approval prior to the commencement of any grading or construction activities. Potential impacts due to asbestos exposure from construction activities are discussed in Impact SG-10 in the Soils and Geology Section of these Findings. (DEIR, p. IV.I-9.)

Mitigation AQ-1:

- (A) Dustfall control measures. Require implementation of dust control measures by project construction contractors during all phases of construction. The comprehensive dust control efforts listed below will be expected to reduce construction period dust-related air quality impacts to a less than significant level. (DEIR, p. IV.I-8.)

Rule 223 of El Dorado County Air Pollution Control District's regulations requires control of fugitive dust. The requirements for construction activities include:

- Application of water or suitable chemicals or other specified covering on materials stockpiles, wrecking activity, excavation, grading, sweeping, clearing of land, solid waste disposal operations or construction or demolition of buildings or structures, and
- Covering or wetting at all times when in motion of open-bodied trucks, trailer or other vehicles transportation materials that create a nuisance by generating particulate matter in areas where the general public has access.

Additional construction mitigation practices are identified below.

To ensure that these construction period mitigations are implemented, contractors shall develop, prior to the start of construction, a construction dust control program. This program shall include the following commitments:

- Suspend dust-producing activities during periods of high winds when dust control measures are unable to avoid visible dust plumes;
- Enclose, cover or water twice daily all soil piles;
- During the dry season provide equipment and staffing for watering of all exposed or disturbed soil surfaces at least twice daily;
- Conduct daily clean-up of mud and dirt carried onto paved streets from the site;
- Limit the speed of all haul trucks to 15 miles per hour while on site;
- Cover or wet down materials transported by truck to control dust;
- Replant vegetation in disturbed areas as quickly as possible;
- Install wheel washers for all exiting trucks, or wash off the tires or tracks of all trucks and equipment leaving the site; and
- Limit the area subject to excavation, grading and other construction activity at any one time.

The above measures will need to be enforced during all construction, although watering for dust control will not be necessary when soil moisture is high during the winter months.

(DEIR, p. IV.I-9 - IV.I-10.)

- (B) Exhaust emissions. Contractor's equipment fleets will be considered during the bidding process for construction contracts. Preference will be given to contractors using heavy-duty construction equipment meeting 1997 Federal emission standards for this type of vehicle. Utilizing new equipment manufactured to current emissions standards will reduce emissions of NO_x from equipment exhausts by up to 20 percent. Implementation of this measure will reduce construction period exhaust emission air quality impacts to a less than significant level.

(DEIR, p. IV.I-10; FEIR, p. IV.I-10.)

Significance after Mitigation

Less than significant. (DEIR, p. IV.I-10.)

Impact:

AQ-2: The Project will have significant regional air quality effects. (DEIR, p. IV.I-11.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the Valley View Specific Plan that substantially lessen, but do not avoid, the significant environmental effect associated with impacts on regional air quality effects. No mitigation is available to render the effect less than significant. The effect therefore remains significant and unavoidable.

Explanation:

Traffic generated by the project will increase regional emissions for reactive organic gases and oxides of nitrogen (two precursors of ozone) and PM₁₀ by several times the threshold of significance. This effect will represent a significant unavoidable impact. (DEIR, p. IV.I-11.)

- (a) Vehicular trips. The Valley View Specific Plan includes the following plan components that will tend to reduce air quality impacts somewhat providing for reduced auto travel, including: a mixed-used village center providing neighborhood commercial uses; an internal mix of commercial, recreational, and residential uses; higher-density residential in proximity to the village center commercial core; and schools in proximity to the village center commercial core.

(DEIR, p. IV.I-11.)

The substantial levels of external vehicular vehicle trips to and from the project, however, will still result in substantial air pollutant emissions affecting the regional air basin. Regional emissions associated with project vehicle use have been calculated for this EIR analysis using the URBEMIS-5 computer program. PM₁₀ emissions from road dust were calculated separately and added to the URBEMIS-5 results to get the total PM₁₀ emission. The URBEMIS-5 program and the assumptions made in its use are described in Appendix H of the Draft EIR. (DEIR, p. IV.I-11.)

- (b) Non-Mobile Sources. Residential uses contain a number of intermittent air pollution sources. The largest of these sources is residential woodburning and residential combustion of natural gas for space and water heating. Daily emission factors for woodburning and residential natural gas combustion for residences in El Dorado County were calculated using a county-wide inventory of air pollution sources. (DEIR, p. IV.I-11.)
- (c) Total Emissions. Total emissions associated with project land uses are presented in Table I-3 for reactive organic gases (287.2 pounds per day) and oxides of nitrogen (two precursors of ozone) (386.3 pounds per day) and PM₁₀ (1171.5 pounds per day). Guidelines for the evaluation of project impacts issued by the Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District consider emission increases of ozone precursors to be significant if they exceed 85 pounds per day. Based on this criterion, the project will have a significant impact on regional ozone air quality. Guidelines for the evaluation of project impacts issued by the Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District consider emission increases of PM₁₀ to be significant if they exceed 275 pounds per day. Based on this criterion, the project will also have a significant impact on regional PM₁₀ air quality. (DEIR, p. IV.I-11.)

Mitigation AQ-2:

In addition to the measures already included in the project, require the applicant to incorporate feasible land use, energy, and transportation measures into the project. These measures include (i) the inclusion of a mixed use village center providing neighborhood commercial uses; (ii) an internal mix of commercial, recreational, and residential uses; (iii) higher-density residential uses in proximity to the village center commercial core; and (iv) schools in proximity to the village center commercial core. Effective implementation of these measures, however, will not be expected to reduce project-related air emissions below significance thresholds; and this impact will remain significant and unavoidable. (DEIR, p. IV.I-13.)

The following additional mitigation measures will reduce project impacts on the regional scale by further reducing automobile travel or reducing direct emissions from residences:

- Develop a bikeway and pedestrian trail system along major roadways to connect residences to the Village Center and existing commercial centers and a park-and-ride lot north of the site;
- Require the installation of secure bicycle parking facilities at project schools, commercial areas and parks;

- Require that residential garages have electrical service that will allow installation of electric car recharge outlets at a later date;
- Wire each housing unit to allow use of emerging electronic communication technology;
- Implement feasible travel demand management (TDM) measures for a project of this type. These measures will include a ride-matching program (i.e., an informational service for residents interested in carpooling) and a public education program to inform residents of ridesharing and transit opportunities;
- Do not allow wood-burning open-hearth fireplaces. Use of EPA-certified woodstoves/ fireplace inserts, pellet stoves or decorative natural gas- or LPG-fired fireplaces should be encouraged;
- Require outdoor outlets at residences to allow use of electrical lawn and landscape maintenance equipment; and
- Electrical or alternatively fueled equipment should be used by any Community Services District for maintenance of the area under its jurisdiction.
- If and when the El Dorado County APCD establishes an air pollution mitigation measure trust fund, the applicant would contribute a pro-rata share to the trust fund to help improve the air quality of the District.

(DEIR, p. IV.I-13; FEIR, p. IV.I-13.)

Significance after Mitigation

Significant and unavoidable. (DEIR, p. IV.I-13.)

Impact:

AQ-3: The Project will cause potentially significant air quality impacts from residential uses. (DEIR, p. IV.I-14.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the Valley View Specific Plan that avoid the potentially significant environmental effect identified in the Final EIR.

Explanation:

Woodsmoke from project residences will affect air quality locally. This impact is potentially significant. Woodsmoke from fireplaces and woodstoves are residential sources of pollutants receiving increasing scrutiny in the past few years. Woodsmoke problems have been identified in many cities and rural areas in the western United States. Although constituting a very small percentage of total PM₁₀ emissions on an annual basis, woodsmoke is a major contributor to reduced visibility and reduced air quality on winter evenings in both urban and rural areas. (DEIR, p. IV.I-14.)

The potential for woodsmoke problems is related to a number of factors. The density of development is of primary importance, as is the terrain of the area. In general, dispersion of smoke is better in elevated terrain than in valleys or canyons. The higher eastern portions of the site have a relatively low residential density and elevated terrain, so the potential for wood-smoke problems is limited. The lower-lying western portion of the site will have the highest density development, and so will have the highest potential for wood smoke problems. (DEIR, p. IV.I-14.)

Mitigation AQ-3:

In addition to the general restriction on open-hearth fireplaces included under Mitigation Measure AQ-2, the following restriction should be adopted as a development standard for the MF and CR land use districts:

- Only natural gas fueled fireplaces are permitted.

(DEIR, p. IV.I-14.)

Significance after Mitigation

Less than significant. (DEIR, p. IV.I-14.)

Impact:

AQ-4: The Project will cause potentially significant odor and land use compatibility impacts. (DEIR, p. IV.I-15.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the Valley View Specific Plan that avoid the potentially significant environmental effect identified in the Final EIR.

Explanation:

The project will place new residences adjacent to an existing wastewater treatment plant. This land use relationship could expose project residents to objectionable odors, although this potential could be reduced with the anticipated installation of odor control measures funded through proposed Assessment District 12. The potential odor nuisance is considered a potentially significant impact. (DEIR, p. IV.I-15.)

The existing El Dorado Irrigation District (EID) wastewater facility abuts two residential areas within the Project. Wastewater treatment plants are industrial in nature, so placement of these two land use types in proximity without a buffer zone creates a land use conflict. The treatment plant can be expected to have a characteristic odor during normal operation and may create stronger odors during periods of upset or breakdown. As a result, the project will be expected to increase the potential for odor nuisance complaints generated by the El Dorado Irrigation District wastewater facility. Funding of odor control measures at the EID plant (e.g., elimination of sludge drying basins; structural containment of headworks) through proposed Assessment District 12 will assist in reducing odor problems at the project site. (DEIR, p. IV.I-15.)

Mitigation AQ-4:

In order to reduce land use compatibility impacts between the project and the treatment plant, require the applicant to provide a 300-foot-wide open space, buffer and proper noticing of potential future project occupants. These measures, combined with anticipated odor control measures at the EID plant funded through proposed Assessment District 12, will reduce the impact to a less than significant level. (DEIR, p. IV.I-15.)

- (a) Buffer. As recommended by the El Dorado Irrigation District (EID), provide a 300-foot open space buffer between the proposed residential uses east and south of the treatment plant. This measure is consistent with the intent of El Dorado County General Plan policy 2.2.5.14, which states that *"buffers shall be established around future water supplies and other public facilities to protect them from incompatible land uses."*
- (b) Disclosure. Provide disclosure statements regarding the existence of the wastewater treatment plant and the associated potential odor problems. Include disclosure statements with all sales and lease agreements for all project residential and commercial properties located within one mile of the treatment plant. It is important to note that while this requirement may help reduce future complaints about odor from the treatment plant, it will not reduce the potential nuisance caused by odor from the plant; therefore, the buffer described under (a) above is considered the primary mitigation measure for this impact.

(DEIR, p. IV.I-15.)

Significance after Mitigation

Less than significant. (DEIR, p. IV.I-15.)

Cumulative Impacts (General Plan)

Cumulative local and countywide growth, of which this project is a part, is anticipated and provided for in the El Dorado County General Plan. The cumulative impacts of that growth on air quality are addressed in section V.10, Air Quality, of the General Plan EIR. The General Plan EIR indicates that the anticipated cumulative air quality impacts will be reduced through implementation of related General Plan policies, but that the following cumulative impacts will remain significant and unavoidable:

Impact 10.2.1: Increase in short-term emissions. Construction related exhaust emissions, mobile source, fugitive dust, and volatile organic emissions will remain significant after mitigation.

Impact 10.2.2: Increase in long-term emissions. Stationary point source and area emissions, mobile emissions, will remain potentially significant after mitigation.

Impact 10.2.3 and Impact 10.2.4: Increase in toxic air emissions and exposure of sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations.

Impact 10.2.5: Conflicts with APCD air quality attainment plan programs. Will remain significant until a jobs/housing balance of 1.0 is achieved.

(DEIR, p. IV.I-18.)

The Findings of Fact of the Board of Supervisors of El Dorado County for the El Dorado County General Plan (January 23, 1996, revised January 26, 1996; pages 284, 298, 302, 306, and 310) also identified Impacts 10.2.1, 10.2.2, 10.2.4, and 10.2.5 as significant and unavoidable, but determined that Impact 10.2.3 (increases in toxic air emissions) could be mitigated to a less than significant level (e.g., through compliance with State law and El Dorado County Air Pollution Control District rules regulating fugitive dust emissions). (DEIR, p. IV.I-18.)

J. NOISE

Standards of Significance

Based on CEQA Guidelines (Appendix G), the project will be considered to have a significant impact on the noise environment if it will:

1. Conflict with applicable environmental plans adopted by agencies with jurisdiction over the project or policies of the community, such that the conflict will lead to increased noise levels or decreased protection against unacceptable noise levels;
2. Increase substantially the ambient noise levels for adjoining areas; or
3. Expose people to severe noise levels.

(DEIR, p. IV.J-12.)

Specific Criteria

1. "Substantial" increase in noise levels. To determine whether project-generated noise will conflict with an adopted plan or goal of El Dorado County, projected noise levels for this project have been compared with the goals, policies, and noise and land use compatibility guidelines contained in the Noise Element of the El Dorado County General Plan. Based upon these goals and policies, an increase in noise will be considered "substantial" and significant if:

- noise resulting from the project will increase average noise levels (L_{dn}) by 1 dBA or more, and existing average noise levels will increase from below an L_{dn} of 60 dBA to above an L_{dn} of 60 dBA;
- noise resulting from the project will increase average noise levels (L_{dn}) by 1 dBA or more where existing noise levels already exceed an L_{dn} of 60 dBA; or
- noise resulting from the project will increase average noise levels (L_{dn}) by 5 dBA or more and the resulting noise levels remain below an L_{dn} of 60 dBA.

(DEIR, p. IV.J-13.)

2. Land use compatibility standards. Tables J-4 and J-5 of the Draft EIR present the noise and land use compatibility standards for El Dorado County. In addition to the types of noise increases listed above, exposure of proposed land uses to noise levels that exceed these County-designated limits will also constitute a significant impact. (DEIR, p. IV.J-13.)

3. Construction noise. The General Plan policies that set the noise levels set forth in Tables J-4 and J-5 of the Draft EIR as maximum ambient noise levels do not apply to temporary construction noise. Project construction noise is assessed somewhat differently from noise associated with project operation, since construction noise typically is only of short duration. The most appropriate criteria for assessing construction noise impacts are based on related potential for intermittent speech interference during daytime or sleep disturbance during nighttime. Daytime construction noise at any noise-sensitive receptor (e.g., schools, hospitals) will be considered a significant short term noise impact if the level will exceed an hourly average L_{eq} of 60 dB during daytime hours. Nighttime construction is not proposed and will not be allowed. (DEIR, p. IV.J-13.)

Impact:

N-1: The Project will cause potentially significant land use/noise conflicts along Latrobe road frontage. (DEIR, p. IV.J-14.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the Valley View Specific Plan that avoid the potentially significant environmental effect identified in the Final EIR.

Explanation:

The Valley View Specific Plan proposes some noise-sensitive residential development along Latrobe Road. Current and predicted future noise levels along this corridor will exceed the County's noise/land use compatibility standards for these particular land uses. This land use/noise incompatibility will represent a potentially significant impact. (DEIR, p. IV.J-14.)

Most of the designated development along Latrobe Road is clustered to the north and south of the main project entrance. Core Residential (CR) is proposed to the north of the Village Center (VC) area and Single-Family Residential (SFR) is proposed to the south of the Village Center area. A Mixed-Use Development (MU) is also proposed just north of the southern project entrance from Latrobe Road. For the purposes of this noise and land use compatibility assessment, the future noise level expected to result from project-plus-cumulative traffic generation along Latrobe Road area is used. Under this future scenario, residential development proposed within about 500 feet of the centerline of Latrobe Road will be exposed to an L_{dn} of greater than 60 dBA. The future noise level 100 feet from the center of the roadway is calculated to be 71-74 dBA. (DEIR, p. IV.J-14.)

Mitigation N-1:

The following mitigation measures shall be implemented:

- Noise attenuation such as earth berms or combination earth berm/wall shall be installed at the time of development of project residential structures within the affected Latrobe Road frontage area (i.e., within the projected 60 dBA L_{dn} contour) and shall be designed according to the recommendations of an acoustical engineer, subject to the approval of the County;
- Special noise abatement measures and specifications in the architectural design of single- and multi-family residential structures shall also be implemented within the affected frontage area;
- Single- and multi-family housing shall incorporate noise abatement measures as necessary to achieve an interior noise level of 45 dBA L_{dn} or less; and
- Multi-family housing, which is subject to the requirement of Title 24, Part 2, of the State Building Code, shall be reviewed and an Acoustical Report submitted to the County prior to issuance of a building permit.

Implementation of an appropriate combination of these measures will reduce this impact to a less than significant level. (DEIR, p. IV.J-16.)

Significance after Mitigation

Less than significant. (DEIR, p. IV.J-16.)

Impact:

N-2: The Project will cause potentially significant land use/noise conflicts along interior roadway frontages. (DEIR, p. IV.J-16.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the Valley View Specific Plan that avoid the potentially significant environmental effect identified in the Final EIR.

Explanation:

Interior project roadways which carry an average daily traffic volume of 4,000 to 5,000 vehicles per day will typically generate a 60 L_{dn} noise contour at least 50 feet from the centerline of the roadway. Residential development proposed along major and minor collectors could therefore be exposed to

noise levels exceeding an L_{dn} of 60 dBA (the County's maximum acceptable exterior standard). This impact will be potentially significant. (DEIR, p. IV.J-16.)

Mitigation N-2:

Implement measures recommended under Mitigation Measure N-1 above. Roadside noise barriers, i.e., either a berm, soundwall, or combination berm/wall of approximately 6-foot height, will be effective along affected major collectors. The specific height, length, and location of such barriers will depend upon the final internal traffic distribution, individual tentative maps, site plans, and grading plans. Implementation of this measure will reduce this impact to a less than significant level. (DEIR, p. IV.J-16.)

Significance after Mitigation

Less than significant. (DEIR, p. IV.J-16.)

Impact:

N-3: The Project will subject future residents to potentially significant noise impacts from the wastewater treatment plant. (DEIR, p. IV.J-17.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the Valley View Specific Plan that avoid the potentially significant environmental effect identified in the Final EIR.

Explanation:

Existing or future equipment at the wastewater treatment plant will generate noise levels in planned adjacent residential areas which will exceed County land use/noise compatibility standards. This impact will be potentially significant. (DEIR, p. IV.J-17.)

The specific plan designates residential development east of the El Dorado Irrigation District Waste Water Plant. The common property boundary was visited during the noise monitoring survey in 1995. The average noise level during the morning measurement was 40 dBA, resulting primarily from distant traffic on Latrobe Road. It was noted that the outdoor pump was not operating. Existing and future noise levels generated by this facility are therefore not known. Development at this land use interface is subject to the County's Noise Level Performance Standards shown in Table

J-5 of the Draft EIR. These standards will be imposed at the residential property line. The noise limits are 55 dBA L_{eq} during the daytime, 50 dBA L_{eq} during the evening, and 45 dBA L_{eq} at night. The waste water plant will be separated from proposed residential development by a major collector road. Most of the equipment at the waste water plant is separated by a large open space buffer on the Irrigation District property. (DEIR, p. IV.J-17.)

Mitigation N-3:

The following mitigation measures shall be implemented:

- Incorporate a 300-foot buffer on the project site adjacent to the wastewater treatment plant where residential land uses are proposed;
- Prior to development of this area, require an Acoustical Study to analyze collector road traffic noise impacts, and an assessment of noise from the wastewater treatment plant. The Acoustical Study shall recommend measures to ensure that the County's Noise Level Performance Standards are met. It is anticipated that the 300-foot buffer will be sufficient to mitigate noise impacts from the wastewater treatment plant on adjacent residential development, subject to confirmation by the Acoustical Study; and
- The possibility of additional specific equipment noise control improvements funded by the project shall also be evaluated and implemented, if necessary.

(DEIR, p. IV.J-17.)

Significance after Mitigation

Less than significant. (DEIR, p. IV.J-17.)

Impact:

N-4: The Project will cause potentially significant existing-plus-project traffic noise impacts along White Rock Road. (DEIR, p. IV.J-18.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the Valley View Specific Plan that avoid the potentially significant environmental effect identified in the Final EIR.

Explanation:

Valley View Specific Plan EIR - Findings of Fact and Statement of Overriding Consideration

The existing L_{dn} noise level on White Rock Road was measured and found to be greater than 55 dBA, but less than 60 dBA, at representative residential receptors. Project traffic will increase this L_{dn} noise level by about 5 dBA along White Rock Road west of Latrobe Road and by about 7 dBA along White Rock Road east of Latrobe Road. The L_{dn} with the addition of project traffic will therefore be greater than 60 dBA along both roadway segments. Both frontages include existing noise-sensitive uses (mobile home park and individual residences). Therefore, this impact is potentially significant. (DEIR, p. IV.J-18.)

Mitigation N-4:

The following mitigation measures shall be implemented:

- Incorporate traffic noise mitigation measures such as earthen berms, soundwalls or combination berm/walls and setback restrictions as part of the overall program of roadway widening improvements already planned along White Rock Road to accommodate anticipated cumulative traffic increases;
- Incorporate fair-share funding for these noise mitigation components into the overall White Rock Road improvement program (see Mitigation Measure T-14). This traffic noise mitigation measure shall be designed to comply with the maximum allowable noise exposure standards set forth in Table 6-1 of the El Dorado County General Plan (i.e., an L_{dn} of 60 dB in outdoor activity areas at residential receptors); and
- The specific location, height, length, and type of barrier will be evaluated as part of the design of the roadway improvement project. These mitigation measures will be imposed on both segments of White Rock Road, just east and west of Latrobe Road, at the sensitive receptor frontages that will be significantly affected.

(DEIR, p. IV.J-18.)

Significance after Mitigation

Less than significant. (DEIR, p. IV.J-18.)

Impact:

N-5: The Project will cause potentially significant short-term construction noise impacts. (DEIR, p. IV.J-19.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the Valley View Specific Plan that avoid the potentially significant short-term environmental effect identified in the Final EIR.

Explanation:

Residents located south and east of the project site will occasionally be exposed to increased noise levels during heavy periods of new construction activity in adjacent portions of the project site. Construction activities during various phases will be expected to produce intermittent noise levels exceeding 60 dBA L_{eq} at these residences and will result in short-term potentially significant impacts for adjacent noise sensitive land uses. (DEIR, p. IV.J-19.)

Project construction will involve ground clearing, site grading, and development of infrastructure and paving, followed by site improvements and erection of various buildings in the different development areas. Table J-6 of the Draft EIR identifies the types of construction equipment typically used for this type of project and the range of maximum noise levels that such equipment generates at a distance of 50 feet. Corresponding estimates of average hourly noise levels generated during various typical sequences of construction are listed in Table J-7 of the Draft EIR. (DEIR, p. IV.J-19.)

Mitigation N-5:

For all construction within the specific plan area, implement the following measures pertaining to construction scheduling, public notification, and equipment maintenance and use:

- (a) Construction Scheduling. Limit noise-generating construction activities near sensitive land uses to the hours of 7:00 AM to 7:00 PM, Monday through Saturday. Prohibit construction on Sundays;
- (b) Construction Equipment. Properly muffle and maintain all construction equipment powered by internal combustion engines;
- (c) Idling Prohibitions. Prohibit unnecessary idling of internal combustion engines near sensitive receptors;
- (d) Equipment Location. Locate all stationary noise-generating construction equipment, such as air compressors and portable power generators, as far as practical from noise-sensitive land uses;
- (e) Quiet Equipment Selection. Select quiet construction equipment whenever possible; and

- (f) Noise Disturbance Coordinator. Designate a project Noise Disturbance Coordinator (such as a County staff person or a superintendent already working at the construction site) responsible for responding to local complaints regarding construction noise. Include the name and the phone number of the disturbance coordinator on the construction schedule notification mailed to nearby residents. Post a related sign at the main entry points to the portion(s) of the project under construction.

(DEIR, p. IV.J-22.)

Significance after Mitigation

Less than significant. (DEIR, p. IV.J-22.)

Impact:

N-6: Cumulative-plus-project traffic noise impacts along White Rock Road will be significant. (DEIR, p. IV.J-23.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the Valley Views Specific Plan that avoid the project's cumulatively considerable incremental contribution to the significant environmental effect associated with cumulative traffic noise impacts along White Rock Road due to planned development throughout the County.

Explanation:

Project traffic will contribute to projected cumulative increases in traffic noise at sensitive frontages along White Rock Road east and west of Latrobe Road. Both roadway segment frontages include existing noise-sensitive uses (mobile home park and individual residences). This noise will represent a significant cumulative impact upon sensitive receptors along White Rock Road. (DEIR, p. IV.J-23.)

Traffic volumes along White Rock Road are predicted to increase substantially as a result of the Project and other development in the area (see Figure D-17 in section IV.D.4 of the Draft EIR). White Rock Road is proposed to be improved to a four-lane divided road west of Latrobe Road and a six-lane divided road east of Latrobe Road (see section IV.D.3.a(2) of the Draft EIR). The cumulative traffic noise increase is predicted to be 10 to 15 dBA at existing sensitive receptors adjacent to this roadway. This impact will be cumulatively significant. (DEIR, p. IV.J-23.)

Mitigation N-6:

Implement the above Mitigation Measure N-4. Implementation of this measure will be expected to reduce this noise impact to a less than significant level. (DEIR, p. IV.J-23.)

Significance after Mitigation

Less than significant. (DEIR, p. IV.J-23.)

Cumulative Impact (General Plan)

Cumulative local and countywide growth, of which this project is a part, is anticipated and provided for in the El Dorado County General Plan. The cumulative impacts of that growth on environmental noise are addressed in section V.11, Noise, of the General Plan Update EIR. The General Plan EIR indicates that most of the anticipated cumulative noise impacts will be mitigated to less than significant levels through implementation of related General Plan policies, but that the following two cumulative impacts, though reduced, will remain significant and unavoidable:

Impact 11.3.1: Increase in traffic noise. It is recognized that in many instances, increases in traffic noise levels will occur as a result of growth. In some cases, particularly at existing noise-sensitive uses, the General Plan policies and recommended additional mitigation measures will not reduce the impacts to a less than significant level and additional mitigation measures may not be feasible. Therefore, the impacts may be considered significant and unavoidable.

Impact 11.3.4: Increase in background noise levels. An increase in background noise levels will creep upwards as a direct result of population growth. The mitigation measures and policies of the General Plan will not maintain background noise at present levels; they will only control the increase in noise. In time, ambient noise levels will increase to sensitive land uses and be considered a significant change.

These impacts are also identified as significant and unavoidable in the Findings of Fact of the Board of Supervisors of El Dorado County for the El Dorado County General Plan (January 23, 1996, revised January 26, 1996; pages 316 and 323). In addition, the Findings of Fact (page 318) identified Impact 11.3.2 (Increase in Noise Levels Due to Fixed or Non-Transportation Noise Sources) as significant and unavoidable.

(DEIR, p. IV.J-23 - IV.J-24.)

K. PUBLIC HEALTH AND SAFETY

Standards of Significance

Based on the CEQA Guidelines, the project will be considered in to have a significant health and safety effect if it will:

1. expose people to existing sources of potential health hazards;
2. create a health hazard or potential health hazard, or involve the use, production, or disposal of materials that pose a hazard to people or animal or plant populations in the area affected; or
3. create a risk of accidental explosion or release of hazardous substances (including, but not limited to, oil, pesticides, chemicals, or radiation).

(DEIR, p. IV.K-3.)

Impact:

PHS-1: The Project will cause potentially significant impacts associated with the El Dorado Hills landfill. (DEIR, p. IV.K-3.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the Valley View Specific Plan that avoid the potentially significant environmental effect identified in the Final EIR.

Explanation:

Potential soil, groundwater and air contamination at this abandoned, unlined facility on the project site, if not remediated prior to project construction, may create health hazards for construction workers and future occupants of the West Valley Village. This possibility represents a potentially significant impact. (DEIR, p. IV.K-3.)

Mitigation PHS-1:

The applicant shall implement the following:

- (a) contact appropriate jurisdictional authorities such as the California Integrated Waste Management Board (CIWMB), the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB), and the Placer County Environmental Health Services Department, regarding landfill closure;
- (b) conduct a detailed environmental assessment of the landfill site to determine if any soil or groundwater contamination exists;
- (c) depending on the level of contamination identified, either provide for minimum segregation of the landfill by designating it open space or parkland or provide for maximum segregation of the landfill (i.e., install fencing) to limit human exposure; and
- (d) complete clean-up prior to approval and recordation of any final subdivision map that includes the affected areas.

(DEIR, p. IV.K-3.)

Significance after Mitigation

Less than significant. (DEIR, p. IV.K-3.)

Impact:

PHS-2: The Project will cause potentially significant impacts to Placer-mined drainages.
(DEIR, p. IV.K-4.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the Valley View Specific Plan that avoid the potentially significant environmental effect identified in the Final EIR.

Explanation:

Potential mercury contamination in project site drainages, if not remediated prior to project construction, may create health hazards for construction workers and future project occupants. Plunkett Creek and other drainages on the site are likely to have been placer-mined, creating the potential for mercury contamination. This possibility represents a potentially significant impact. (DEIR, p. IV.K-4.)

Mitigation PHS-2:

The applicant shall implement the following:

- (a) collect representative wet sediment samples from stream areas that have been placer-mined and analyze the samples for mercury;
- (b) assess the vertical and lateral extent of elevated levels of mercury in sediments, if present, via surface and subsurface sample collection and laboratory analyses; and
- (c) assess the risk associated with elevated levels of mercury in sediments, and either restrict access to the area or remediate the contaminated materials to a level acceptable to the El Dorado County Department of Environmental Health.

(DEIR, p. IV.K-4.)

Significance after Mitigation

Less than significant. (DEIR, p. IV.K-4.)

Impact:

PHS-3: The Project will cause potentially significant impacts to soil or groundwater contamination on the site. (DEIR, p. IV.K-4.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the Valley View Specific Plan that avoid the potentially significant environmental effect identified in the Final EIR.

Explanation:

Future commercial, office, and R&D in the West Valley Village may store, handle or transport hazardous substances that will have the potential to cause soil or groundwater contamination on the site. This possibility represents a potentially significant impact. (DEIR, p. IV.K-4; FEIR, p. IV.K-4.)

Mitigation PHS-3:

The County shall require future onsite commercial development to prepare business plans that describe management of hazardous substances and procedures for handling potential releases of these substances. (DEIR, p. IV.K-4.)

Significance after Mitigation

Less than significant. (DEIR, p. IV.K-4.)

Impact:

PHS-4: The Project will cause potentially significant health hazards for construction workers and future occupants. (DEIR, p. IV.K-5.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the Valley View Specific Plan that avoid the potentially significant environmental effect identified in the Final EIR.

Explanation:

Potential soil, surface water, and groundwater contamination and odor problems at the El Dorado Hills Waste Water Treatment Plant may create health hazards for construction workers and future occupants of the southern portion of White Rock Village and the northern portion of West Valley Village. This possibility represents a potentially significant impact. (DEIR, p. IV.K-5.)

Mitigation PHS-4:

The County shall:

- (a) implement Mitigation Measure AQ-4; and
- (b) require the applicant to design the project to accommodate the existence of buried pipelines leading to and from the treatment plant.

Independently from the Project, it is expected that the Regional Water Quality Control Board will require the EID to:

- (a) establish a monitoring system downgradient from the El Dorado Hills Waste Water Treatment Plant to detect existing soil and groundwater contamination and to provide warning of future events; and
- (b) provide containment measures for releases of hazardous materials.

These measures will also assist in reducing potential health hazards to project construction workers and future occupants.

(DEIR, p. IV.K-5.)

Significance after Mitigation

Less than significant. (DEIR, p. IV.K-5.)

Cumulative Impacts (General Plan)

Cumulative local and countywide growth, of which this project is a part, is anticipated and provided for in the El Dorado County General Plan. The cumulative impacts of that growth are addressed in the General Plan Update EIR. The General Plan EIR does not identify any significant public health and safety impacts associated with this anticipated cumulative growth. (DEIR, p. IV.K-5.)

L. CULTURAL RESOURCES

Standards of Significance

The project will be considered to have a significant impact on cultural resources if it will:

- a. disrupt or adversely affect an important archaeological resource;
- b. disrupt or adversely affect a significant paleontological site; or
- c. cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an historical resource.

(DEIR, p. IV.L-17.)

Impact:

CR-1: The Project will have potentially significant impacts on prehistoric sites (CA-ELD-80/H, CA-Eld-785/H, Ca-Eld-788, V1, V2, V4, V5, V10, V14, V15, V16, V19, V20, V22, V23, V24, V27, V38, V42, V43). (DEIR, p. IV.L-22.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the Valley View Specific Plan that substantially lessen, but do not avoid, the potentially significant environmental effect associated with impacts on prehistoric sites. No mitigation is available to render the effect less than significant. The effect therefore remains potentially significant and unavoidable.

Explanation:

As indicated in Table L-2 of the Draft EIR, these prehistoric sites fall within areas that are both planned for development and reserved for open space. These sites may qualify as "historical resources" under Public Resources Code section 21084.1, and therefore may be considered potentially significant. Direct impacts to these sites could result from the destruction of prehistoric or historic archaeological sites during any ground disturbance activities. Indirect impacts may be caused by the increased public use of the general vicinity and could result in equally devastating impacts. Indirect impacts may also be caused by the general changes in land use that may effect the integrity of the setting of these sites. (DEIR, p. IV.L-22.)

All of the prehistoric sites recorded within the Valley View site are considered potentially significant heritage resources until further work, intended to evaluate their research, interpretative and cultural values, has been completed. With the exception of the prehistoric component of CA-Eld-80/H, additional evaluation work on the other sites may involve additional archaeological field test excavation, mapping, and photo documentation. Representatives from the local Native American community should be closely involved in evaluating their significance. The prehistoric component of CA-Eld-80/H (the southern locus of the site) falls outside the project area; hence, it should not be indirectly or directly impacted by project activities; and additional evaluation research is not necessary. (DEIR, p. IV.L-22.)

Mitigation CR-1:

Avoid disturbance of these significant prehistoric sites, if feasible. Where avoidance is not feasible, develop and implement an appropriate mitigation program as specified under Mitigation Measures CR-1 below:

- If project redesign to avoid direct and indirect impacts is infeasible, then the applicant shall implement and carry out other appropriate mitigation measures. Prior to the property's modification or destruction, the applicant shall design and implement field-related mitigation activities in consultation with appropriate federal, state and local agencies and Native Americans, in order to recover the significant information contained within these heritage properties prior to project ground disturbance activities. Specifically, the applicant shall implement the following:

- (a) Modify the project to protect and/or avoid identified significant prehistoric sites. In lieu of project modification, implement a data recovery program. That program may involve focused archival research, oral history interviews, documentation with still and audio-video photography, detailed mapping, collection of artifacts, recordation of features, metal detection surveys, test excavations, technological analyses, interpretative trails, signing and displays, or some combination of these tasks;
- (b) Implement long-term protection measures for sites that are not destroyed by development. This protection may involve fencing with regular security checks and/or capping with culturally sterile soils placed over a mesh barrier. Signage at each of these locales, to explain the nature of the heritage resource and reason for its preservation, may be appropriate;
- (c) To prevent accidental damage to Valley View's important archaeological sites during construction activities, place temporary fencing around the perimeter of each site;
- (d) To further insure that the cultural resources are not disturbed once construction is underway, retain a professional archaeologist familiar with the Valley View sites to attend preconstruction meetings and brief contractors on heritage resource locations and protection methods;
- (e) As a further protection measure, conditions of approval shall include a clause that prohibits the collecting, digging or removal of any stone, artifact or other prehistoric or historic object from the open space managed by the homeowner's association;
- (f) At the discretion of the homeowners association, permit representative(s) of local Native American groups to visit, study, stabilize, preserve or restore the archaeological sites located within open space areas at their own expense; and
- (g) The project sponsor has an opportunity to incorporate selective preservation and interpretation of a representative sample of the unique and varied heritage resources inventoried within the Valley View Specific Plan area. In this regard, antiquities are not viewed as a constraint, but rather as an opportunity. The open space areas contain a variety of heritage remains that can be creatively integrated into a system of hiking/biking/equestrian trails and community parks and can also serve as field trip destinations for local schools planned within the project area. Open space areas along the west flank of Plunkett Ridge, in the upper reaches of Screech Owl Creek and in Plunkett Creek Valley, are especially amenable to this use. The project sponsor can expand the existing land use plan for these open space corridors.

designating them as both natural and cultural preserves for the enhancement of natural resources and interpretation of heritage resources.

(DEIR, pp. IV.L-23 - IV.L-24.)

Significance after Mitigation

Potentially significant and unavoidable. (DEIR, p. IV.L-23.)

Impact:

CR-2: **The Project will cause potentially significant impacts on placer mining sites (CA-Eld-80/H, V12, V21, V25, V39, V40, V41).** (DEIR, p. IV.L-24.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the Valley View Specific Plan that substantially lessen, but do not avoid, the potentially significant environmental effect associated with impacts on Placer mining sites. No mitigation is available to render the effect less than significant. The effect therefore remains potentially significant and unavoidable.

Explanation:

All of the early 19th century mining landscape sites recorded within the Valley View Specific Plan area (V12, V21, V25, V39, V40, V41) may qualify as "historical resources" under Public Resources Code section 21084.1, and therefore are considered potentially significant heritage resources until further work, intended to evaluate their research, interpretative, and cultural values, has been completed. Placer diggings within the Screech Old Creek main channel (V25-1) and in the Plunkett Creek valley (V12) are of special interest. Plunkett Creek Valley, in particular, represents a microcosm of early gold rush activities, where more complex tailings features, ditch systems, and associated habitation remains are present with good integrity. Mining landscape remains easily lend themselves to public interpretation without elaborate protection measures, unlike fragile pattern site types with surface and buried portable artifacts. Placer mining remnants in the Carson Creek main channel have been largely obliterated (CA-Eld-80/H) and no further work is required here. Other diggings recorded along tributaries to Carson Creek (V21, V39, V40, V41) are less complex placers with relatively few associated features or habitation areas and are less interesting in terms of interpretation and research potential. (DEIR, p. IV.L-24.)

Mitigation CR-2:

Protect and avoid disturbance of mining sites to the extent possible. Where avoidance is not feasible, conduct additional documentation and analysis of the various mining sites as specified in section IV.D.4 of the Draft EIR.

If avoidance of the sites is not feasible, the applicant shall implement the following mitigation measures:

- (a) Hire a qualified archaeologist to conduct additional mining technological analysis and detailed documentation with still and audio-video photography for sites V-25 and V-12;
- (b) Protect sites V-25 and V-12 to the extent possible and incorporate them into public interpretation areas as part of the project's open space; and
- (c) For impacts to sites V21, V39, V40, and V41, hire a qualified archaeologist to complete additional still and audio-video photography documentation and minimal mining technological analysis.

(DEIR, p. IV.L-25.)

Significance after Mitigation

Less than significant (if disturbance of sites is avoided); Significant and unavoidable (if disturbance of sites cannot be avoided). (DEIR, p. IV.L-25.)

Impact:

CR-3: **The Project will cause potentially significant impacts on mining habitation sites (V6, V7, V9, V17, V29, V30, V31, V32, V33, V34, V35, V36, V37, V44). (DEIR, p. IV.L-25.)**

Finding :

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the Valley View Specific Plan that substantially lessen, but do not avoid, the potentially significant environmental effect associated with impacts on mining habitation sites. No mitigation is available to render the effect less than significant. The effect therefore remains potentially significant and unavoidable.

Explanation:

All of the early mining habitation sites recorded within the Valley View Specific Plan area (V6, V7, V9, V17, V29, V30, V31, V32, V33, V34, V35, V36, V37, V44) may qualify as "historical resources" under Public Resources Code section 21084.1, and therefore are considered potentially significant heritage resources until further work, intended to evaluate their research, interpretative, and cultural values has been completed. (DEIR, p. IV.L-25.)

Mitigation CR-3:

The applicant shall implement the following:

- (a) Hire a qualified archaeologist to conduct additional archival research and archaeological field test excavation of these sites; and
- (b) Hire a qualified archaeologist to document these sites and avoid or protect them to the extent possible.

(DEIR, p. IV.L-26.)

Significance after Mitigation

Significant and unavoidable (if disturbance of resources cannot be avoided). (DEIR, p. IV.L-26.)

Impact:

CR-4: The Project will cause potentially significant impacts on way station site (V18).
(DEIR, p. IV.L-26.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the Valley View Specific Plan that substantially lessen, but do not avoid, the potentially significant environmental effect associated with impacts on way station site (V18). No mitigation is available to render the effect less than significant. The effect therefore remains potentially significant and unavoidable.

Explanation:

This site (V18) may qualify as a "historical resource" under Public Resources Code section 21084.1, and therefore is considered a potentially significant heritage resource until further work, intended to evaluate its research, interpretative, and cultural values, has been completed. (DEIR, p. IV.L-26.)

Mitigation CR-4:

The applicant shall implement the following:

- (a) Hire a qualified archaeologist to conduct additional archival research and archaeological field test excavation of this site;
- (b) Hire a qualified archaeologist to document the site and avoid or protect it to the extent possible; and
- (c) Implement the list of mitigation strategies listed under Mitigation Measure CR-4 in the Cultural Resource Section of these Findings.

(DEIR, p. IV.L-26.)

Significance after Mitigation

Significant and unavoidable (if disturbance of site cannot be avoided). (DEIR, p. IV.L-26.)

Impact:

CR-5: **The Project will cause potentially significant impacts on ranching habitation sites (CA-Eld-786-H, CA-Eld-787-H, V3, V8, V13, V16, V28).** (DEIR, p. IV.L-27.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the Valley View Specific Plan that substantially lessen, but do not avoid, the potentially significant environmental effect associated with impacts on ranching habitation sites. No mitigation is available to render the effect less than significant. The effect therefore remains potentially significant and unavoidable.

Explanation:

Ranching sites recorded in the project area (CA-Eld-786-H, CA-Eld-787-H, V3, V8, V13, V16, V28) may qualify as "historical resources" under Public Resources Code section 21084.1, and therefore are considered potentially significant heritage resources until further work, intended to evaluate their research, interpretative, and cultural values, has been completed. (DEIR, p. IV.L-27.)

Mitigation CR-5:

The applicant shall implement the following:

- (a) Hire a qualified archaeologist to conduct additional archival research and archaeological field test excavation of these sites;
- (b) Hire a qualified archaeologist to document these sites and avoid or protect them to the extent possible; and
- (c) Implement mitigation strategies listed under Mitigation Measure CR-1 above.

(DEIR, p. IV.L-27.)

Significance after Mitigation

Significant and unavoidable (if disturbance of sites cannot be avoided). (DEIR, p. IV.L-27.)

Impact:

CR-6: The Project will cause potentially significant impacts on buried/undiscovered heritage resources. (DEIR, p. IV.L-27.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the Valley View Specific Plan that substantially lessen, but do not avoid, the potentially significant environmental effect associated with impacts on buried/undiscovered heritage resources. No mitigation is available to render the effect less than significant. The effect therefore remains potentially significant and unavoidable.

Explanation:

It is possible that significant direct impacts could occur to buried or concealed heritage resources discovered during project construction activities that were not detectable on the surface. Any such resources may qualify as "historical resources" under Public Resources Code section 21084.1, and therefore will be considered potentially significant heritage resources until further work, intended to evaluate their research, interpretive, and cultural values, has been completed. (DEIR, p. IV.L-27.)

Mitigation CR-6:

The applicant shall implement the following:

- (a) In the event of discoveries of buried or concealed heritage resources, cease project activities in the area of the find and consult a qualified archaeologist for recommended procedures;
- (b) If human remains are inadvertently discovered, cease work immediately and notify the county coroner, in accordance with California law; and
- (c) Hire a professional archaeologist to assist in the development of appropriate mitigation of site impacts.

(DEIR, p. IV.L-28.)

If human remains are inadvertently discovered, California law requires that work must stop immediately and the County Coroner must be notified. (See Health and Safety Code, Section 7050.5; Public Resources code, Section 5097.95, 5097.98.) In the event of discovery or recognition of human remains in any location other than a dedicated cemetery, no further excavation or disturbance of a project site or any nearby area reasonably suspected to overlie adjacent human remains can occur until the County Coroner has been informed and determines that no investigation of the cause of death is required. (DEIR, p. IV.L-28.)

If the remains are Native American, AB 297 requires that the County Coroner notify the Native American Heritage Commission in Sacramento to see whether that agency can identify descendants of the deceased Native American(s). If, within 24 hours of being notified by the Commission, such descendants offer the lead agency recommendations for treating or disposing of the remains and any associated grave goods, such recommendations should be followed, unless the landowner disagrees with the recommendation, in which case the Native American Heritage Commission shall mediate the dispute. If the Native American Heritage Commission is unable to identify a descendant, or the descendant fails to offer a recommendation within 24 hours after being notified by the Commission, or the Commission cannot mediate a dispute between the descendants and the landowner to the latter's satisfaction, further work on the project may proceed, but the landowner must rebury the remains and any grave goods "with appropriate dignity" on the property in a location not subject to subsurface disturbance. (DEIR, p. IV.L-28.)

Significance after Mitigation

Significant and unavoidable (if disturbance of resources cannot be avoided). (DEIR, p. IV.L-28.)

Impact:

CR-7: The Project will cause potentially significant impacts on buried/undiscovered traditional cultural properties. (DEIR, p. IV.L-29.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the Valley View Specific Plan that substantially lessen, but do not avoid, the potentially significant environmental effect associated with impacts on buried/undiscovered traditional cultural properties. No mitigation is available to render the effect less than significant. The effect therefore remains potentially significant and unavoidable.

Explanation:

It is possible that significant impacts to sites of ethnic/religious/cultural significance to descendants of the county's Native American population may occur, as these types of resources are difficult to identify during surface field reconnaissance due to an absence of any discernible physical remains. Any such resources may qualify as "historical resources" under Public Resources Code section 21084.1, and therefore will be considered potentially significant heritage resources until further work, intended to evaluate their research, interpretive, and cultural values, has been completed. (DEIR, p. IV.L-28.)

Mitigation CR-7:

Further consultation with the local Native American community is required in order to determine areas of potential traditional cultural importance. The applicant shall implement the following:

- (a) Maintain the initial contacts established with the Shingle Springs Band of Miwok and the El Dorado Indian Council during the archaeological inventory phase as part of ongoing operations;
- (b) In consultation with local Native Americans, research the available project-specific ethnographic data pertaining to local Nisenan and Miwok groups within the project vicinity;
- (c) In the event of discoveries of buried or concealed heritage resources, cease project activities in the area of the find and consult a qualified archaeologist for recommended procedures;
- (d) If human remains are inadvertently discovered, cease work immediately and notify the county coroner; and

- (e) Hire a professional archaeologist to assist in the development of appropriate mitigation of site impacts.

(DEIR, p. IV.L-29.)

Significance after Mitigation

Significant and unavoidable (if disturbance of resources cannot be avoided). (DEIR, p. IV.L-29.)

Impact:

CR-8: **The Project will cause potentially significant impacts on linear features; four discrete mining ditch systems (V-LF1, V-LF22, V-LF43, and V-LF45), one mining road (V-LF42), four road transportation systems (V-LF7, V-LF18, V-LF24, V-LF41) one ranch water conveyance system (V-LF44), and 38 rock walls (AF-9-76-H, AF-9-77-H, V-LF2 through V-LF6, V-LF8 through V-LF17, V-LF19 through V-LF21, V-LF23, V-LF25 through V-LF40). (DEIR, p. IV.L-30.)**

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the Valley View Specific Plan that substantially lessen, but do not avoid, the potentially significant environmental effect associated with impacts on linear features. No mitigation is available to render the effect less than significant. The effect therefore remains potentially significant and unavoidable.

Explanation:

At this inventory and evaluation stage, it is not clear which features are significant contributing elements to the larger system. It is likely that all are not contributors and, for those non-contributing features, all of their important data can be recoverable through a more detailed field recordation of their dimensions, shape, construction techniques, etc., and with more thorough mapping, in addition to documentation via still and audio-video photography. Limited, focused archival research may also be appropriate. Although the initial EIR inventory/evaluation serves as a substantial effort towards such documentation, additional work is warranted. While only representative examples of these linear feature systems should ultimately be preserved, all 48 features should be protected until impact mitigation/data recovery is complete. These features are of interest and some possess considerable interpretive potential. As substantial segments fall within project open space, selective

preservation of a few key feature segments may be compatible with project plans. (DEIR, p. IV.L-30.)

Mitigation CR-8:

Protect and avoid disturbance of these linear features to the extent possible. If avoidance is not feasible, conduct additional field recordation and documentation to determine which features are significant contributing elements to the larger feature systems associated with transportation, mining and ranching. Preserve representative examples of each feature system. (DEIR, p. IV.L-31.)

Significance after Mitigation

Significant and unavoidable (if disturbance of resources cannot be avoided). (DEIR, p. IV.L-31.)

Cumulative Impacts (General Plan)

Cumulative local and countywide growth, of which this project is a part, is anticipated and provided for in the El Dorado County General Plan. The cumulative impacts of that growth on cultural resources are addressed in section V.12, Cultural Resources, of the General Plan Update EIR. The General Plan EIR indicates that the following cumulative cultural resources impacts will remain significant and unavoidable due to increased disturbance through development and other human activity:

Impact 12.2.1. Disturbance or destruction of prehistoric or historic sites, properties, or areas of ethnic significance; "important archaeological resources" as defined in Appendix K of the CEQA Guidelines; and properties eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places.

Impact 12.2.2. Indirect impacts on cultural resources through an increase in human activity.

The Findings of Fact of the Board of Supervisors of El Dorado County for the El Dorado County General Plan EIR (January 23, 1996, revised January 26, 1996; pages 332 and 333) also identified these impacts as significant and unavoidable.

(DEIR, p. IV.L-32.)

M. ENERGY

Standards of Significance

Based on the CEQA Guidelines, the project will be considered to have a potentially significant impact on energy resources if it will:

- (1) encourage activities that result in the use of large amounts of fuel, water, or energy; [or] use fuel, water, or energy in a wasteful manner, or
- (2) conflict with applicable environmental plans adopted by agencies with jurisdiction over the project, or policies of the community, such that the conflict will lead to increased energy consumption.

(DEIR, p. IV.M-2.)

Impact:

E-1: The Project will cause long-term project energy use impacts. (DEIR, p. IV.M-3.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the Valley View Specific Plan that avoid the significant environmental effect identified in the Final EIR.

Explanation:

At buildout, the residential, commercial and public facility uses proposed by the project could use an estimated 2.32 million therms of energy each year. This impact is potentially significant.

Residential Uses. The project residential units will consume energy for lighting, heating, cooling, ventilation, and cooking. Based on a standard energy usage figure of 680 therms per unit for conventional dwelling units, it is estimated that the proposed 2,840 units will consume up to 1.93 million therms annually.

Commercial Uses. The commercial components of the project will consume energy for lighting, heating, cooling, ventilation, water heating, and restaurant operations. Based on an assumed average energy usage figure of 1.38 therms per square foot annually for conventional commercial space, it

is estimated that the 107,000 gross square feet of commercial uses proposed by the project could consume up to 0.15 million therms annually at buildout.

Public/Semi-Public Facilities Uses. The project-proposed Public/Semi-Public-designated areas will contain approximately 172,000 square feet of community facility buildings included in the project (two schools, fire station, community centers, post office, and religious institutions). These uses consume up to approximately 0.24 million therms annually at buildout, assuming energy usage will be comparable to that estimated for conventional commercial space (1.38 therms per square foot).

(DEIR, p. IV.M-3.)

Mitigation E-1:

Require the project to comply with Title 24 Energy Efficiency Standards.

The project construction design will be required to comply with Title 24 Energy Efficiency Standards set forth in the California Code of Regulations. Compliance with the following measures will allow the project to meet or exceed these standards:

- Where possible given local terrain, streets should be oriented such that the principal streets are running primarily east/west. This orientation provides for optimum solar gain as well as the best shelter of streets from the winter west-northwesterly winds. Solar access to south-facing winter heating and shading of low morning and afternoon summer heat gain are the primary reasons for this guideline;
- Building orientation and solar access should be considered in choosing housing types. Application of passive solar technology in residential design suggests differing unit types for differing exposures. For example, the front facade of a north-facing home should be different from the home opposite it with full southern exposure;
- Residential and commercial buildings should use natural daylight. Residential and commercial buildings should provide at least 75 percent of their daytime lighting needs with natural daylighting. Possible technologies include interior light courts, clerestory windows, lightshelves (reflecting daylight onto light-colored surfaces), mirror systems, skylights, windows on at least two sides of every room in a house, and narrow floor plates in commercial buildings;
- Thermal mass, such as a concrete or tile floor or masonry wall, should be part of every residential unit's design as needed to meet Title 24 standards;

- Windows should not receive direct sunlight during the hours of 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM between March 21 and September 21. Walls and windows facing east, south and west generate a large portion of a building's cooling load. Shading these will greatly increase efficiency. Shading solutions, including architectural elements, movable awnings, trellises, deciduous vegetation, and adjacent buildings, should be considered in building design;
- Building designs should provide opportunities for winter sunlight. Structures or coniferous vegetation ("evergreens") should not shade any south-facing glazing or roof-top solar devices from 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM on December 21. Winter sun should shine on the thermal mass within the unit. Solar water heaters and photovoltaic arrays are encouraged for business park rooftops;
- Single-family house designs should provide at least two outdoor living areas. Designs should include at least two outdoor living areas, one that is well shaded in the summer and one which remains sunny in winter. These can be left to be finished by the homebuyer, but they should be a defined part of the house plan and have doors opening onto them;
- Fifty percent of any building's window area should feature operable windows and shading devices. Employees in commercial buildings should be able to control their environment;
- All buildings should contain insulation that conforms to Title 24. Caulking, insulation and weatherstripping is an inexpensive method for reducing unwanted air flows. Insulation in attics, ceilings, and exterior wall cavities help minimize air flows and heat transference;
- All buildings should contain high-efficiency lighting. All lighting fixtures permanently installed in housing units and commercial buildings should include high-efficiency bulbs. Possibilities include compact fluorescent, tube fluorescent, electronic bulbs, low voltage, and other emerging products. Energy-efficient lighting equipment, such as electronic ballasts, reduced-voltage lamps, high light efficiency fixtures, fixture lenses and reflectors, help reduce the amount of lighting energy required for a particular application. An estimated 35 to 50 percent of all electrical energy used in commercial, retail and institutional facilities is consumed by lighting. On/off controls, variable output controls and occupancy sensor controls are effective mechanisms for managing lighting needs;
- Mechanical equipment should be energy-efficient. Heating, ventilation, and air conditioning systems generally account for between 45 to 60 percent of the energy used in a typical commercial building. A wide variety of energy-efficient equipment is available. Incorporating energy-efficient technologies into commercial buildings can increase the buildings' value and marketability. PG&E also has cash incentive programs for builders

using energy-efficient equipment. Energy-efficient water heaters, booster pumps and insulation of water pipes also help reduce overall energy costs; and

- Natural heating and cooling technology should provide a portion of the building's environmental management needs. Possible heating technologies include direct gain passive solar, active solar, trombe walls, and hybrid remote heat storage. Possible cooling technologies include passive and active solar, thermo-siphoning, underground cooling tubes, and ventilated cavities between two layers.

(DEIR, p. IV.M-4 - IV.M-5.)

Significance after Mitigation

Less than significant (DEIR, p. IV.M-4.)

Impact:

E-2: The Project will cause potentially significant transportation-related energy consumption impacts. (DEIR, p. IV.M-5.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the Valley View Specific Plan that avoid the potentially significant environmental effect identified in the Final EIR.

Explanation:

Transportation-related energy consumption will consist primarily of fuel for project-generated vehicular trips. Based on an (a) estimated average one-way trip length of 10 miles, (b) the Council on Environmental Quality estimate of average fuel consumption of 23.6 miles per gallon for late model mid-sized American sedans, and (c) an estimate of approximately 31,600 trips per day and 9.5 million trips per year (31,600 x 300 days), approximately 4.2 million gallons of gasoline will be consumed by the project annually at buildout. This fuel use rate will be equivalent to approximately 5.27 million therms of energy per year. (DEIR, p. IV.M-5 - IV.M-6.)

The Project is part of a pattern of rapid urbanization of the Sierra foothills in general and El Dorado County specifically. This pattern of development is very auto-dependent and results in relatively long commute distances to employment centers. Project-related energy usage will be substantially reduced if a portion of the project residents, and commercial space clients used public transit, bicycled, or walked instead of using automobiles. (DEIR, p. IV.M-6.)

Within the Plan area and its immediate surroundings, opportunities exist for non-motorized transportation primarily by bicycle and foot. West Valley and White Rock Villages, particularly, are within easy walking and riding distance of the neighborhood services planned for the Village Center and also within a short distance of major commercial and office uses and the Multi Modal Transfer facility located in Town Center East. For certain individuals who will be fortunate enough to both live in Valley View and work at businesses located in the adjacent employment centers, commuting could be accomplished without dependence upon the automobile. (DEIR, p. IV.M-6.)

Bicycle and pedestrian paths will be developed within the collector street system of Valley View and White Rock Villages leading to the entrances at White Rock Road and at the Village Center. These routes will also link neighborhoods to the two schools which are planned within each village. Bicycle paths will be installed both in the right-of-way as Class 2 facilities and, where feasible, within adjacent open space and greenbelt areas. (DEIR, p. IV.M-6.)

Unless the project provides substantially for modes of transportation that offer viable alternatives to the automobile, the project will be expected to result in comparatively wasteful uses of transportation fuel, representing a potentially significant impact. (DEIR, p. IV.M-5.)

Mitigation E-2:

Reduce automobile trips by facilitating and encouraging use of local public transit opportunities and other alternative modes of transportation. Implement the following measures:

- Develop a bikeway and pedestrian trail system along major roadways to connect residences to the Village Center and existing commercial centers and park-and-ride lot north of the site;
- Require the installation of secure bicycle parking facilities at project schools, commercial areas and parks;
- Wire each housing unit to allow use of emerging electronic communication technology; and
- Implement feasible travel demand management (TDM) measures for a project of this type. These measures will include a ride-matching program (i.e., an information service for residents interested in carpooling) and a public education program to inform residents of ridesharing and transit opportunities.

(DEIR, p. IV.M-7.)

Significance after mitigation

Less than significant. (DEIR, p. IV.M-7.)

Cumulative Impacts (General Impacts)

Cumulative local and countywide growth, of which this project is a part, is anticipated and provided for in the El Dorado County General Plan. The cumulative impacts of that growth on energy use are addressed in section IV.C of the General Plan Update EIR, Energy Conservation. This section of the General Plan EIR indicates that anticipated cumulative energy impacts will be mitigated to less than significant levels through implementation of related General Plan policies, particularly those in the Public Services and Utilities, Circulation, and Conservation and Open Space elements of the plan. (DEIR, p. IV.M-7.)

X. PROJECT ALTERNATIVES

Where a lead agency has determined that, even after the adoption of all feasible mitigation measures, a project as proposed would still cause one or more significant environmental effects that cannot be substantially lessened or avoided, the agency, prior to approving the project as mitigated, must first determine whether, with respect to such impacts, there remain any project alternatives that are both environmentally superior and feasible within the meaning of CEQA. An alternative may be “infeasible” if it fails to fully promote the lead agency's underlying goals and objectives with respect to the project. Thus, “‘feasibility’ under CEQA encompasses ‘desirability’ to the extent that desirability is based on a reasonable balancing of the relevant economic, environmental, social, and technological factors” of a project. (*City of Del Mar*, *supra*, 133 Cal.App.3d at p. 417; see also *Sequoiah Hills*, *supra*, 23 Cal.App.4th at p. 715.)

The detailed discussion in Section IX demonstrates that all of significant project-specific environmental effects of the Valley View Specific Plan project have been either substantially lessened or avoided through the imposition of mitigation measures recommended in the EIR. Thus, the County has no legal obligation to determine whether any alternatives identified in the Draft EIR are both feasible and environmentally superior. (*Laurel Hills*, *supra*, 83 Cal.App.3d at pp. 519-527; *Kings County Farm Bureau v. City of Hanford* (1990) 221 Cal.App.3d 692, 730-731 [270 Cal.Rptr. 650]; and *Laurel Heights Improvement Association v. Regents of the University of California* (1988) 47 Cal.3d 376, 400-403 [253 Cal.Rptr. 426].)

For the sake of full disclosure, however, the County has chosen, in these Findings, to identify those impacts that, though substantially lessened, remain significant and unavoidable, and to address the feasibility of project alternatives. Such impacts include the following: certain land use and open

space impacts (LU-1); certain visual factors (V-1, V-2, and V-3); certain transportation impacts (T-15); certain biological resource impacts (BR-16); certain hydrology and water quality impacts (H-5 and H-6); certain air quality impacts (AQ-2); and certain cultural resource impacts (CR-1, CR-2, CR-3, CR-4, CR-5, CR-6, CR-7, and CR-8). The Draft EIR summarizes these significant, unavoidable impacts as follows:

- Project impacts on El Dorado Hill open space and rural character;
- change in the natural landscape and rural visual character;
- impact on views from Highway 50 Eastbound;
- impacts on views from El Dorado Hills Community vantage points north of Highway 50;
- cumulative-plus-project impact on US 50;
- project vicinity cumulative impacts on biological resources;
- construction-related soil erosion;
- urban runoff pollutant discharge into creeks;
- regional air quality impacts;
- impacts on prehistoric sites;
- impacts on Placer mining sites;
- impacts on mining habitation sites;
- impacts on Way Station site;
- impacts on Ranching Habitation sites;
- impacts on buried/undiscovered heritage resources;
- impacts on buried/undiscovered traditional cultural resources; and
- impacts on linear features.

(DEIR, pp. VII-2 - VII-3..)

To fully account for these unavoidable significant effects, and the extent to which particular alternatives might or might not be environmentally superior with respect to them, these Findings will address the environmental merits of the alternatives with respect to all broad categories of impacts -- even though such a far-ranging discussion is not required by CEQA. The Findings will also assess whether each alternative is feasible in light of the County's objectives for the Project.

The County's review of project alternatives is guided primarily by the need to reduce potential impacts associated with the Project, while still achieving the basic objectives of the Project. Here, the Applicant's and County's objectives include the following:

As noted earlier, the County's objectives for this project are:

1. *To ensure comprehensive planning for development on the site consistent with the intent, purpose, and policy direction of the General Plan.*
2. *To create a new, balanced community in an area suitable for intensive development due to the availability of adequate infrastructure and services.*
3. *To provide cohesive design criteria that support the creation and maintenance of community character.*
4. *To place the primary emphasis on clustering intensive land uses and incorporation of modern planning techniques to minimize impact on various natural and man-made resources, minimize public health concerns, minimize aesthetic concerns, and provide for the creation of open space lands and other community land uses.*
5. *To maintain the visual integrity of hillsides and ridgelines.*
6. *To protect and maintain native trees, including oaks and landmark and heritage trees.*
7. *To ensure that safe and efficient transportation and circulation facilities, both locally and internally, are provided concurrent with new development.*
8. *To provide safe and efficient bicycle and pedestrian circulation that connect residential areas to one another, as well as residential areas to employment, retail, school, community facilities and recreation areas.*

9. *To designate appropriate sites for commercial uses to provide opportunities for County residents to shop and work within the county.*
10. *To provide a variety of housing opportunities by type, tenure, price and neighborhood character in order to meet County housing needs.*
11. *To conserve wetland, riparian areas, natural drainage, and other wildlife habitat of significant biological, scenic, and recreational values.*
12. *To provide adequate park and recreation facilities.*
13. *To grant development approvals consistent with the applicant's existing development agreement with the County.*

(DEIR, pp. III-9 - III-11.)

In addition, the applicant has identified the following basic project objectives:

1. *To provide for the planning of the site's development in a comprehensive manner, avoiding "piecemeal" approaches to infrastructure planning and development in conformance with the intent, purpose and policy direction provided by the El Dorado County General Plan;*
2. *To develop a project that will complement the overall development of the El Dorado Hills community by providing for a residential base south of Highway 50 that will enhance the viability of the El Dorado Hills Business Park and the various existing and planned commercial developments within the El Dorado Hills community;*
3. *To include lot sizes within the project that are generally larger than those available in existing areas of El Dorado Hills, without promoting a project that requires the construction of custom homes;*
4. *To include a variety of lot sizes within the project consistent with sound planning principles and with applicable policies of the El Dorado County General Plan;*
5. *To develop a project that considers the existing development patterns on adjacent properties in order to facilitate a development that does not adversely impact lifestyles presently enjoyed on surrounding properties; and*

6. *To develop the project in a manner that takes advantage of long distance views that exist on the site, without significant impacts on existing views of the property from the remainder of the community.*

The Draft EIR identified the following seven potentially feasible alternatives to the Project: No Project/Existing Conditions Left Unchanged; No Project/Future Development Based on Current Entitlements; Mitigation Alternative; Rural Residential Alternative; Reduced Density Alternative #1; Reduced Density Alternative #2, and; Alternative Sites. Each of these Alternatives will be discussed in detail below.

A. NO PROJECT-EXISTING CONDITIONS ALTERNATIVE

Section 15126, subdivision (d)(4), of the CEQA Guidelines require the evaluation of the “No Project” alternative. Such an alternative “shall discuss the existing conditions, as well as what will be reasonably expected to occur in the foreseeable future if the project were not approved, based on current plans and consistent with available infrastructure and community services.” Under this CEQA-required “no project alternative,” the project site will remain in its existing condition, and the current open space and cattle grazing uses will not change for a prolonged period of time. (DEIR, p. VI-4.)

1. Land Use and Open Space

Under this alternative, the existing open space conditions onsite would remain unchanged and the adverse land use impacts identified for the proposed specific plan would not occur. In particular, the extension of urban development and the project contribution to the El Dorado Hills area open space loss, change in the rural character, onsite land use conflicts, and other adverse land use impacts as previously discussed, would not occur. (DEIR, p. VI-18.)

2. Visual Factors

Under the “No Project/Existing Conditions” alternative, there would be no change in the existing visual character of the site. The onsite open rangeland would not be converted to suburban use and views of the site from surrounding areas would not change. (DEIR, p. VI-18.)

3. Population, Housing, and Employment

Under this alternative, the site would remain uninhabited. Therefore, none of the population, housing, or employment effects associated with the Project, described previously in these Findings, would occur. (DEIR, p. VI-18.)

4. Transportation

Under the “No Project/Existing Conditions” alternative, there would be no project-related change in the circulation pattern or traffic levels on local or regional roadways; and none of the transportation impacts associated with the Project described previously in these Findings would occur.

5. Public Facilities and Services

Under this alternative there would be no project-related increased demand for water, sewage treatment and disposal, police protection, fire protection, emergency medical service, parks and recreation, schools, solid waste collection and disposal, road maintenance, or other public services and facilities. Onsite parks and school sites would not be provided under this alternative. (DEIR, p. VI-18.)

6. Biological Resources

The “No Project/Existing Conditions” alternative would not change conditions onsite and therefore would not affect current vegetation, wildlife habitat, or wildlife use of the site. This alternative would not result in a reduction in habitat for any special status wildlife species. None of the impacts described previously in these Findings would occur. (DEIR, pp. VI-18 - VI-19.)

7. Geology and Soils

Under this alternative, the existing topography of the site would not change; no grading or filling would occur. No buildings, roadways, or infrastructure would be constructed onsite that would be subject to the potential adverse soil and geotechnical problems identified in these Findings. (DEIR, p. VI-19.)

8. Hydrology and Water Quality

Under this alternative, existing drainage, flooding, and water quality conditions on and downstream from the Valley View site would not change. Drainage improvements proposed by the project would not be constructed, and impacts described previously in these Findings would not occur. No new development would be added to the site that would increase the impervious surface area and associated runoff volumes and rates. Water quality in Carson Creek, Plunkett Creek, and Screech Owl Creek would not deteriorate. (DEIR, p. VI-19)

9. Air Quality

Under the “No Project/Existing Setting” alternative, there would be no measurable change in air quality due to onsite activities. None of the impacts described previously would occur under the no project alternative. No construction would occur. No additional vehicular traffic and associated traffic congestion would be generated under this alternative, and consequently, there would be no long-term regional air quality impacts.

10. Noise

None of the impacts previously described would occur under this “No Project/Existing Conditions” alternative. There would be no new site occupants exposed to noise levels associated with traffic on adjacent roadways or the adjacent wastewater treatment plant. In addition, this alternative would not contribute to increased traffic-generated noise along Latrobe Road and White Rock Road. (DEIR, p. VI-19.)

11. Public Health and Safety

Under this alternative, none of the impacts previously described would occur. There would be no increase in population or employment onsite, and therefore little risk of human contact with contaminants from the abandoned El Dorado Hills Landfill, potential mercury contamination in site drainages, or potential soil, surfacewater, groundwater, or air contamination from the wastewater treatment plant. (DEIR, p. VI-19.)

12. Cultural Resources

None of the impacts on cultural resources previously described would occur under this alternative. No changes in the conditions of onsite prehistoric and historic cultural resources would occur. There would be no construction activity that could result in unearthing of and damage to prehistoric or historical resources. (DEIR, p. VI-19.)

13. Energy

Under the “No Project/Existing Conditions” alternative there would be no increase in the demand for natural gas, electricity, or fuel associated with the site. (DEIR, p. VI-19.)

14. Relationship of Alternative to Project Objectives

Implementation of the No Project-Existing Conditions Alternative would achieve very few of the objectives established for the Project. Scenarios involving County acquisition of the property have comparatively low feasibility, given the inventory of open space land in the region with comparable or higher open space amenity and natural resource value, and the relative price of the Valley View

property given its current General Plan Community Region location and designation for mixed urban development. In addition, implementation of this no development alternative would require a mutual interest and willingness by both the landowner and the Board of Supervisors to amend the 1985 development agreement, which allows development of the site under 1983 El Dorado Hills Area Plan policies. (DEIR, p. VI-18.) The applicant has indicated no willingness to abandon its rights under that agreement. For these reasons, the Board of Supervisors concludes that the No Project Existing Conditions Alternative is not feasible. (See City of Del Mar, *supra*, 133 Cal.App.3d at p. 417; Sequoiah Hills, *supra*, 23 Cal.App.4th at p. 715.)

B. NO PROJECT - CURRENT ENTITLEMENTS

A primary feature of the “No Project/Current Entitlements” alternative is that 2,700 multiple family units would be provided (compared to 431 under the Project), increasing County opportunities to meet its future fair share of regional affordable housing needs. This alternative also provides greater acreage devoted to research and development than the Project, which would provide increased employment opportunities in El Dorado Hills. As described below, however, due to the increase in development intensity and the lack of open space, this alternative would result in substantially greater impacts on land use and open space, visual factors, transportation, public services, biological resources, geology and soils, hydrology and water quality, air quality, noise, public health and safety, cultural resources, and energy. (DEIR, p. VI-20.)

1. Land Use and Open Space

Under this alternative, the open space conditions onsite would change significantly as the open grazing land would be converted to a dense suburban land use pattern. The adverse land use impacts identified for the Project would be expected to occur under this alternative, but to a more substantial degree. The extension of urban development, change in the local land use pattern, loss of open space, change in the rural character of the area, onsite land use conflicts, and other adverse land use impacts identified in the Land Use and Open Space Section of these Findings for the Project would also occur under this alternative, but to a substantially greater degree. (DEIR, p. VI-21.)

2. Visual Factors

The visual impacts under this alternative would be expected to be greater than under the Project. The open rangeland landscape of the site would be converted to suburban use, and views of the site from surrounding areas would change significantly. In particular, this substantially more intensive

development alternative could be expected to result in more ridgeline development and associated adverse impacts on views from Highway 50 and the El Dorado Hills community north of Highway 50. (DEIR, p. VI-21.)

3. Population, Housing, and Employment

Under this alternative a total of approximately 6,342 homes could be developed onsite, resulting in a population of approximately 18,160 residents. An estimated 2,700 multiple family residential units would be provided, which would increase future opportunities for the County to meet its fair share of regional affordable housing needs. Substantially more employment (approximately 4,400 employees) would be created due to the approximately 170 acres of R&D use that would be permitted, compared to 10.9 acres of commercial and R&D use under the Project (approximately 268 employees; see Table C-8 of the Draft EIR). (DEIR, p. VI-21.)

4. Transportation

Daily and peak period traffic levels on local or regional roadways would increase significantly under this "No Project/Current Entitlements" alternative. The critical peak period (PM) traffic increment from the site would increase from approximately 2,869 trips for the Project to 7,219 for the alternative, resulting in increased operational (LOS) impacts on the local and interregional roadway system. Eventual buildout would result in the addition of approximately 68,500 average daily trips, or approximately three times the number of daily trips anticipated under the Project, far greater than those associated with the Project and as described in the Transportation Section of these Findings. (DEIR, p. VI-22.)

5. Public Facilities and Services

This alternative would also result in substantially increased demands for water, sewage treatment and disposal, police protection, fire protection, emergency medical service, parks and recreation, schools, and other public services and facilities. Table VI-8 of the Draft EIR indicates that annual water demand would increase from approximately 2,002 acre-feet for the Project to approximately 3,762 acre-feet. Table VI-9 of the Draft EIR indicates that daily wastewater generation would increase from approximately 0.68 million gallons per day (MGD) average dry weather flow for the project as proposed as already exceeding the EID capacity allocation to the project site) to approximately 1.7 MGD, roughly a 250 percent increase. Table VI-10 of the Draft EIR indicates the degree to which school enrollment increases from Alternative B would exceed those of the project as proposed (2.2-fold). Similarly, Table VI-11 of the Draft EIR indicates the degree to which solid waste generation from the project site would increase under this alternative (2.1-fold). (DEIR, p. VI-22.)

6. Biological Resources

The No Project/Current Entitlements alternative would also significantly increase project adverse impacts on current vegetation, wildlife habitat, and wildlife use of the site, and could result in a significant reduction in habitat for special status wildlife species. The impacts described in the Biological Resource Section of these Findings for the Project would be substantially greater under this alternative due to the higher development densities and the reduction or elimination of large permanent open space dedications. (DEIR, p. VI-22.)

7. Geology and Soils

Changes to the existing topography (the volume and extend of grading) could be expected to be much greater under this alternative than under the Project. Development densities would be greater, less open space preservation would be expected, and more hillside development would be expected to occur. In addition, the more extensive network of buildings, roadways, and infrastructure that would be constructed under this alternative would be subject to similar but expanded adverse soil and geotechnical problems compared to those identified in the Geology and Soils Section of these Findings, and a substantially greater population would be exposed to such risks. (DEIR, p. VI-22.)

8. Hydrology and Water Quality

Under this alternative, existing drainage, flooding, and water quality conditions on and downstream from the Valley View site would be similar to, but greater than, those of the Project. The degree of increase in 10- and 10-year peak period runoff rates into Upper Plunkett Creek and into the storm drainage system along Latrobe Road would be more than would be expected from the Project. (The Project increment would result in a significant impact on existing downstream flooding and capacity problems in this tributary, as described in the Hydrology and Water Quality Section of these Findings.) Similarly, water quality in Carson Creek, Plunkett Creek, and Screech Owl Creek could deteriorate more substantially under this alternative. (DEIR, p. VI-23.)

9. Air Quality

Alternative B would result in substantially greater, and substantially more significant, air quality impacts than the project as proposed. Projected emissions associated with vehicular traffic and stationary residential sources would exceed established standards by substantial multiples, resulting in significant unavoidable adverse impacts on regional air quality. Construction period particular (PM₁₀) emissions impacts would also be substantially greater than those of the project. (DEIR, p. VI-23.)

10. Noise

Under this alternative, noise impacts would be similar to, but greater than, those described for the Project. A greater extent of noise-sensitive development within the project site frontage along Latrobe Road would be exposed to future noise levels along this corridor, which are predicted to exceed the County's General Plan goals of 60 dBA L_{dn} with or without the project. In addition, land use/noise conflicts along interior roadway frontages, wastewater treatment plant noise impacts, project-related traffic noise increases along Latrobe Road, and project-related construction period noise impacts would all be substantially greater under Alternative B than anticipated for the Project (DEIR, p. VI-23.)

11. Public Health and Safety

Under this alternative, as under the Project, there would be an increased potential risk to project construction personnel and future occupants of: (1) contact with remnant contaminants associated with the abandoned, unlined, El Dorado Hills Landfill, (2) contact with mercury contaminants in site drainages due to past mining activity, and (3) contact with soil, surface water, groundwater, or air contaminants from the wastewater treatment plant. In addition, the potential exposure of site occupants to herbicide and pesticide use and to hazardous materials that may be handled or stored onsite under the Project would increase. The potential for construction worker or future occupant exposure to release of natural-occurring asbestos fiber from serpentine rock during development-related earthwork activities would also be greater under Alternative B. (DEIR, p. VI-23.)

12. Cultural Resources

Potentially more extensive impacts on cultural resources than those described in the Cultural Resource Section of these Findings for the Project would be expected to occur under Alternative B, since there would be more construction activity that could result in unearthing of and damage to prehistoric or historic resources. (DEIR, p. VI-23.)

13. Energy

Energy usage would also be correspondingly greater under this alternative than under the Project. There would be a greater increase in the demand for natural gas, electricity, and fuel compared to the Project. (DEIR, p. VI-24.)

14. Relationship of Alternative to Project Objectives

In terms of rate of return, assuming a market ready and willing to absorb large numbers of multi-family units, Alternative B would have the highest economic feasibility of the six alternatives by virtue of its highest development yields, but the prospect of County acceptance and approval is questionable. A primary feature of the "No Project/Current Entitlements" alternative is that 2,700

multiple family units would be provided (compared to 431 under the Project), increasing County opportunities to meet its future fair share of regional affordable housing needs. This alternative also provides greater acreage devoted to research and development than the Project, which would provide increased employment opportunities in El Dorado Hills. Due to the increase in development intensity and the lack of open space, however, this alternative would result in substantially greater impacts on land use and open space, visual factors, transportation, public services, biological resources, geology and soils, hydrology and water quality, air quality, noise, public health and safety, cultural resources, and energy. (DEIR, p. VI-21.)

Because the Alternative is *not* environmentally superior to the Project, the County has no need to assess whether it is feasible. Even so, however, the County concludes that the alternative is infeasible within the meaning of CEQA, as it would not meet project objectives as well as the Project as approved. For example, conversion of the open space and grazing land to dense suburban land uses and development of more ridgelines is contrary to the County's objective to "[m]aintain the visual integrity of hillsides and ridgelines." The No Project/Current Entitlement Alternative would also add approximately three times more daily vehicle trips to the area. This Alternative would compromise the County objective to "[e]nsure that safe and efficient bicycle and pedestrian circulation facilities, both locally and internally, are provided concurrent with new development."

Because the applicant, presumably for market-based reasons, has not seen fit to seek approval of an alternative emphasizing high-density residential uses, the Board sees no reason to impose such an alternative, particularly since it would cause increased environmental impacts. The current project reflects the landowner's considered judgment regarding how to develop its property in light of the realities of the marketplace. The Board believes it is appropriate to give some weight to this judgment. (See *Laurel Hills*, *supra*, 83 Cal.App.3d at p. 521 (a "public agency may approve a developer's choice of a project once its significant adverse effects have been reduced to an acceptable level -- that is, all avoidable damage has been eliminated and that which remains is otherwise acceptable").) For all of these reasons, the Board rejects the alternative as infeasible. (See *City of Del Mar*, *supra*, 133 Cal.App.3d at p. 417; *Sequoiah Hills*, *supra*, 23 Cal.App.4th at p. 715.)

C. MITIGATED ALTERNATIVE

This alternative consists of a revised specific plan for the project site that would incorporate numerous mitigations recommended in the Draft EIR to reduce identified significant environmental impacts. As indicated in Tables VI-1 and VI-3 of the Draft EIR, this alternative would include a development program similar to the Project--i.e., 2,840 residential units, 10.9 acres of commercial and R&D acreage, 77 acres of parkland, 559 acres of open space, two school sites totaling 24 acres, and 87 acres for major roads, but with incorporation of numerous EIR-recommended mitigations.

Figure VI-1 of the Draft EIR illustrates the primary site design modifications that would occur under the Mitigated Alternative. These modifications would include the following:

1. Provision of a 300-foot buffer south and east of the wastewater treatment site (*Mitigation Measure LU-2*).
2. Location of the community park and elementary school playing fields 300 feet away from the mobile home park (*Mitigation Measure LU-3*).
3. Increased limitations on vegetation removal, and increased use of vegetative screening in natural patterns to reduce visual impacts (*Mitigation Measure V-1*).
4. Reduction or avoidance of building placement and introduced landscaping on the outer, most visible edges of the main ridgeline (*Mitigation Measure V-1*).
5. Incorporation of building height and scale limitations which are compatible with the existing terrain and other surrounding project homesites (*Mitigation Measure V-1*).
6. Incorporation of common vegetative screening for project homes on the north- and west-facing ridges and sideslopes visible from viewpoints to the north, west, and south, and east (*Mitigation Measure V-1*).
7. Relocation of *Estate Residential (ER-LL)* lots on the immediate knoll at the northwestern section of East Ridge Village to a less visible location elsewhere onsite (*Mitigation Measure V-2*).
8. Subjection of development along Latrobe Road to particularly stringent design review using guidelines to ensure a harmonious streetscape treatment (*Mitigation Measure V-4*).
9. Relocation of White Rock Village school site south to the proposed location of the Core Residential units, in order to provide a rectangular-shaped site and avoid the potentially-active west branch of the Bear Mountains fault (*Mitigation Measure PF-11*).
10. Reconfiguration of the shape of the West Valley Village school site so that it is square or rectangular (*Mitigation Measure PF-11*).
11. Avoidance of oak woodland areas with special status species use and cluster development to retain oak tree corridors (*Mitigation Measure BR-3*).

12. Provision of a 50-foot buffer zone along Carson and Plunkett Creeks and construct creek crossings over Plunkett Creek in areas with little or no riparian vegetation (*Mitigation Measure BR-5*).
13. Planting of locally-occurring native species (wouldows, alder, oaks) in riparian areas and adjacent buffer zones rather than non-native trees and shrubs (*Mitigation Measure BR-6*).
14. Avoidance of wetland filling. This could be at least partially-achieved through use of clustering development (see Draft EIR, Figure VI-1, for example, which recommends clustering in the SFR- and CR-designated areas that include wetlands that would be affected by the Project) (*Mitigation Measures BR-8 and BR-10*).
15. Establishment of adequate building setbacks from the onsite Bear Mountains fault (*Mitigation Measure SG-6*).
16. Establishment of adequate building setbacks from nearby offsite ponds and any lakes planned onsite. Design a flood control system below the onsite water tank or evaluate the tank and improve it to substantially reduce the potential for failure (*Mitigation Measure SG-8*).
17. Avoidance of disturbance of significant archaeological sites by clustering development and, where required, eliminating lots (*Mitigation Measures CR-1 through CR-5*). It is possible that the project could provide for greater densities at the western edge of the site, allowing lots to be eliminated elsewhere, particularly in archaeologically-sensitive areas while still providing the same number of residential units.

(DEIR, p. VI-24; FEIR, p. VI-27)

There is no need to address the environmental attributes and feasibility of this Alternative because the Board, in effect, has decided to approve the Alternative, insofar as the Board has adopted all of the mitigation measures proposed in the Draft and Final EIRs. The Alternative, in short, is feasible, and has been adopted.

D. RURAL RESIDENTIAL ALTERNATIVE

Under this alternative, the site would be developed in a manner similar to that of existing rural residential development to the north, south, and east. The 2,037-acre site would be developed with 206 five-and ten-acre residential lots. As illustrated in the Draft EIR, on Figure VI-2 and indicated

in Table VI-4, there would be 21 five-acre lots in White Rock Village, 122 five-acre lots in West Valley Village, and 63 ten-acre lots in East Ridge Village. Development would not be permitted on the three prominent ridgelines onsite or on the western flank of the main, central ridgeline. (DEIR, p. VI-30.)

1. Land Use and Open Space

Under this alternative, existing open space conditions onsite would change; the site would be subdivided into 206 rural residential lots. The alternative would extend the rural land use pattern that currently exists north, south and east of the site (Ryan Ranch area, etc.). This project alternative would change the existing land use pattern from open grazing land to rural residential use; the rural character of the site would in general be retained. The extension of urban development and the project contribution to a substantial change in the land use pattern, loss of open space, change in the rural character of the area, onsite land use conflicts, and other adverse land use impacts described in the Land Use and Open Space Section of these Findings for the Project would not be significant under this alternative. (DEIR, p. VI-31.)

2. Visual Factors

Under the Rural Residential alternative, there would be some change in the visual character of the site: portions of open grazing land would be replaced with large residential lots; and views of the site from surrounding areas would change accordingly, although not as substantially as would occur under the Project. The change to rural residential use and assumed greater abilities to restrict development on the ridgelines and the western flank of the central ridgeline would be expected to reduce the visual impacts of the project to a less than significant level. (DEIR, p. VI-31.)

3. Population, Housing, and Employment

An estimated 206 housing units and 577 residents would be added to the site under this alternative. Some temporary employment would occur during construction, but no permanent employment would be generated. All of the housing units under this alternative would be affordable to above moderate-income households; no affordable units would be provided. This attribute of the alternative would have a significant adverse affect on El Dorado County's ability to meet its regional fair share housing needs. (DEIR, p. VI-31.)

4. Transportation

Under the Rural Residential alternative, an additional 1,967 average daily trips would be added to the circulation system, representing approximately nine percent of the 21,250 average daily trips generated by the Project. Impacts on service levels and associated mitigation needs would therefore be substantially less than those identified for the Project, as shown in Table VI-7 of the Draft EIR. (DEIR, p. VI-31.)

5. Public Facilities and Services

Under this alternative, the increase in demand for water, sewage treatment and disposal, police protection, fire protection, emergency medical service, parks and recreation, schools, and other public services and facilities would be substantially less than for the Project. This alternative would require approximately 272 acre-feet of water per year (1.20 acre-feet per rural unit), which would be well under the available water supply allocated by EID to the site. Wastewater, school enrollment, and solid waste disposal impact reductions associated with this alternative (Alternative D) are listed in the Draft EIR in Tables VI-9, 10, and 11, respectively. Onsite parks and school sites would not be provided under this alternative. (DEIR, p. VI-33.)

6. Biological Resources

The impacts of this alternative on vegetation, wildlife habitat, and wildlife use on the site would be far less substantial than those described in the Biological Resource Section of these Findings for the Project due to the reduction in site disturbance under this alternative, and could be readily mitigated. (DEIR, p. VI-33.)

7. Geology and Soils

Under this alternative, changes in topography would be minimal; no grading or filling of large areas would occur. Grading would be limited to that required for roadways and individual building pads and driveways. Avoidance of the potential adverse soil and geotechnical problems identified in the Geology and Soils Section of these Findings for the project could be readily achieved under this alternative. (DEIR, p. VI-33.)

8. Hydrology and Water Quality

Under this alternative, runoff increases from the site and associated impacts on downstream drainage provisions and flooding would be negligible. Erosion and sedimentation resulting from the 206 lots could still contribute to deterioration of water quality in Carson Creek, Plunkett Creek, and Screech Owl Creek, but to a much lesser degree than with the Project. (DEIR, p. VI-33.)

9. Air Quality

Under the Rural Residential alternative, the change in air quality due to onsite activities would be minimal, as shown by Table VI-12 of the Draft EIR. During construction there would be elevated levels of PM-10. Long-term vehicular traffic and associated traffic congestion generated under this alternative and associated long-term regional air quality impacts would be far less than those associated with the Project. No state or federal air emissions standard would be exceeded. There would also be much fewer residents onsite that could be affected by odor from the wastewater treatment plant, and development would be located a greater distance from the plant. (DEIR, p. VI-33.)

10. Noise

Under this alternative, the dwelling units would be set well back and outside of the Latrobe Road 60 dBA noise contour, and therefore would not be exposed to unacceptable noise levels associated with traffic. The lots would also be set back more than 300 feet from the wastewater treatment plant, and therefore would not be exposed to noise from the plant. In addition, this alternative would not be expected to contribute significantly to increased traffic noise along Latrobe Road or White Rock Road. (DEIR, p. VI-33.)

11. Public Health and Safety

Under this alternative, as under the Project, there would be a risk to project-related construction personnel and occupants of: (1) contact with contaminants from the abandoned El Dorado Hills Landfill; (2) potential mercury contamination in site drainages; (3) potential soil, surface water, groundwater, or air contamination from the wastewater treatment plant; and (4) potential contact with natural-occurring asbestos due to grading of serpentine soils. The overall effects of these factors, however, would be reduced to well below significant levels due to the substantial reduction in the numbers of units and people. (DEIR, p. VI-34.)

12. Cultural Resources

Similarly, under the Rural Residential alternative, the potential for impacts on onsite prehistoric and historic cultural resources would also be reduced, since less of the site would be disturbed by development, and avoidance of resources would be easier to achieve. (DEIR, p. VI-34.)

13. Energy

Compared with the Project, the energy impacts of this alternative would be reduced by over 90 percent due to the reduction in the number of residential units and associated automobile trips. (DEIR, p. VI-34.)

14. Relationship of Alternative to Project Objectives

Alternative D would have low economic feasibility. Economic viability would probably require some combination of acquisition of the development rights on a large portion of the site at an acceptable price by a public or private open space conservation entity, and the marketing of the 206 rural lots at a high residential estate price. The prospects of County approval of such a substantial, 2,037-acre land use change in a designated Community Region may also be low. (DEIR, p. VI-31.)

The Rural Residential Alternative would provide no affordable units, which would have a significant adverse affect on El Dorado County's ability to meet its regional fair share housing needs. This lack of affordable housing units does not meet the County's objective to "[p]rovide a variety of housing opportunities by type, tenure, price and neighborhood character[.]" Furthermore, the alternative is inconsistent with the 1985 development agreement, which gives the applicant the vested right to approvals consistent with the El Dorado Hills/Salmon Falls Area Plan. The applicant therefore has the right to veto this alternative, and has done so. The alternative, then, would be inconsistent with the project objective "[t]o grant development approvals consistent with the applicant's existing development agreement with the County." For all of these reasons, the Board of Supervisors concludes that the Rural Residential Alternative is not feasible. (See *City of Del Mar*, *supra*, 133 Cal.App.3d at p. 417; *Sequoia Hills*, *supra*, 23 Cal.App.4th at p. 715.)

E. REDUCED DENSITY ALTERNATIVE # 1

This alternative consists of a specific plan permitting development similar to that envisioned under the Project, but at a reduced scale that would not exceed the existing EID water allocation for the site. Under current EID allocations, the Valley View site is entitled to a guaranteed supply of water for 906 equivalent dwelling units (EDUs), which amounts to approximately 625 acre-feet of water annually. As described in the Water Supply Section of these Findings, the Project would require 2,002 acre-feet of water per year; and, although it is anticipated that this water could probably be supplied, there is currently no guarantee that more than 625 acre-feet could be supplied. (DEIR, p. VI-34.)

Under this alternative there would be 1,054 residential units, including 788 multiple-family units and 266 single-family units, many of which would be clustered to avoid sensitive site features (e.g., visually vulnerable ridgelines, cultural and biological resources, and the earthquake fault). This alternative also includes 10.9 acres of commercial and R&D use (the same as the Project), one 12-acre elementary school site, 35 acres of parkland (a 30-acre community park, and a five-acre neighborhood park), and 87 acres for major roads. The remaining 1,464 acres would be permanent open space/buffer area. (DEIR, p. VI-34.)

1. Land Use and Open Space.

Land use and open space impacts would be reduced under this alternative, since a greater percentage of the site would be preserved in permanent open space. Approximately 1,464 acres, or 72 percent of the 2,037-acre site, would be preserved in open space, compared to 559 acres, or 27 percent, under the Project. (DEIR, p. VI-35.)

2. Visual Factors.

The visual impacts of this alternative would also be substantially less than those of the Project. Development could be readily avoided on the central ridgeline and on the prominent knoll in White Rock Village. (DEIR, p. VI-35.)

3. Population, Housing, and Employment.

This 1,054-unit alternative would generate an estimated 2,557 residents at buildout, or about one-third of the number projected for the Project. The alternative would also provide 788 multiple-family units, compared to 431 under the Project, which would provide more affordable housing opportunity than would the Project, and would therefore increase the County's ability to meet its fair share of regional housing needs. Permanent employment opportunities would be the same as for the Project. (DEIR, p. VI-35.)

4. Transportation.

The transportation impacts of this alternative would also be less than those associated with the Project. This alternative would generate an estimated 9,564 trips per average weekday, or approximately 45 percent of the 21,250 daily trips that would be generated by the Project. The "existing-plus-project" operational (LOS) impacts of Alternative E would be mitigated to less than significant levels on all county roadway components, but would still be significant on Highway 50. The higher number of affordable multiple family units provided under this alternative would increase the likelihood that people employed in the El Dorado Hills Business Park and Town Center would be able to afford to live in Valley View. This feature would in turn reduce commute distances and increase the potential for alternative modes of commuting (i.e., walking and bicycling) to work. (DEIR, p. VI-35.)

5. Public Facilities and Services.

The primary difference between this alternative and the Project is that it would not require more water than is currently allocated by EID to the project site. This alternative would require 625 acre-

feet of water annually; that is, it would not exceed the current EID allocation of 625 acre-feet per year. This alternative would result in increases in demands for sewage treatment and disposal, police protection, fire protection, emergency medical service, parks and recreation, schools, and other public services and facilities; but demands on these services and facilities would be approximately 67 percent less than would be required by the Project. The specific wastewater generation, school enrollment, and solid waste disposal impacts of Alternative D, in comparison to the Project, are shown in the Draft EIR, Tables VI-9, VI-10, and VI-11, respectively. Due to a greater number of multiple-family residential units and fewer larger more expensive units that would create more tax revenue for the County and the fire district, the ability of this alternative to pay for its own additional police and fire protection and other public service needs would be more limited. (DEIR, pp. VI-35 - VI-37.)

6. Biological Resources.

Because development onsite would be more limited under this alternative than the Project, opportunities for avoidance of sensitive resources would be increased, and impacts on vegetation, wildlife habitat, and wildlife use on the site would be correspondingly reduced. (DEIR, p. VI-37.)

7. Geology and Soils.

Under this alternative, changes to the existing topography would be reduced compared to the Project, since less of the site would be graded and developed. Buildings, roadways, and infrastructure constructed under this alternative would be subject to adverse soil and geotechnical risks similar to those identified in the Geology and Soils Section of these Findings; however, there would be greater site design flexibility and ability to avoid such constraints, and there would be fewer residents onsite that could be exposed to geotechnical problems. (DEIR, p. VI-37.)

8. Hydrology and Water Quality.

As with the Project, existing drainage and water quality conditions on and downstream from the Valley View site would change as a result of development under this alternative. The drainage impacts for the Project would be reduced due to a reduced level of development and reduced area of impermeable surface created. Similarly, as anticipated under the Project, water quality in Carson Creek, Plunkett Creek, and Screech Owl Creek would deteriorate, but to a correspondingly reduced degree. (DEIR, p. VI-37.)

9. Air Quality.

Under the Reduced Density alternative, air emissions due to onsite activities would be much less substantial than the air quality impacts described for the Project. Significance thresholds for reactive organic gases, oxides of nitrogen, and particulate matter (PM₁₀), however, would still be exceeded. (DEIR, p. VI-37.)

10. Noise.

Under this alternative, noise impacts would be similar to, but less substantial than, those described for the Project. New onsite occupants could still be exposed to noise levels associated with traffic on adjacent roadways and with the treatment plant, but development could be more readily set back from these noise sources due to the substantial reduction in development intensity. This alternative would also contribute to increased traffic-generated noise along Latrobe Road and White Rock Road, but to a substantially lesser degree than would occur with the Project. (DEIR, p. VI-37.)

11. Public Health and Safety.

Under this alternative, as under the Project, there would be a risk to occupants of contact with: (1) potential contamination from the abandoned El Dorado Hills Landfill; (2) potential mercury contamination in site drainages; (3) potential soil, surface water, groundwater, or air contamination from the wastewater treatment plant; (4) natural-occurring asbestos due to possible grading disturbance of serpentine soils; and (5) herbicide and pesticide use, and other hazardous materials that may be handled or stored onsite. These risks, however, would be substantially less than for the Project, due to the reduced development intensity and greater ability to avoid risk-prone areas. (DEIR, p. VI-38.)

12. Cultural Resources.

Under this alternative, the potential for impacts on onsite prehistoric and historic cultural resources would be similarly reduced, since less of the site would be disturbed by development and avoidance of resources would be easier to achieve. (DEIR, p. VI-38.)

13. Energy

Compared with the Project, the energy impacts of this alternative would be reduced by approximately 63 percent, since fewer residential units would be developed and fewer automobile trips would be generated. (DEIR, p. VI-38.)

14. Relationship of Alternative to Project Objectives

The per-home land and development costs associated with Alternative E would translate into a potentially prohibitive selling or rental price requirement for the 266 single-family homes and 788 multi-family units in the competitive Sierra foothill housing market. The economic feasibility of Alternative E is highly questionable. (DEIR, p. VI-34.) Furthermore, the applicant maintains that, under the 1985 development agreement, the Board has no ability to reject any project configuration proposed by the applicant consistent with uses authorized under the El Dorado Hills/Salmon Falls Area Plan. Without expressing agreement or disagreement with that position, the Board finds that the legal conflict that might be caused by a decision to reject that view is a factor militating against an attempt to impose a Reduced Density Alternative on an unwilling applicant.

Furthermore, because the applicant, presumably for market-based reasons, has not seen fit to seek approval of this alternative or a project variant similar to it, the Board sees no reason to impose such an alternative, particularly since all project-specific significant impacts have been at least substantially lessened. The current project reflects the landowner's considered judgment regarding how to develop its property in light of the realities of the marketplace. The Board believes it is appropriate to give some weight to this judgment. (See *Laurel Hills*, supra, 83 Cal.App.3d at p. 521 (a "public agency may approve a developer's choice of a project once its significant adverse effects have been reduced to an acceptable level -- that is, all avoidable damage has been eliminated and that which remains is otherwise acceptable").) For all of these reasons, the Board rejects the alternative as infeasible. (See *City of Del Mar*, supra, 133 Cal.App.3d at p. 417; *Sequoyah Hills*, supra, 23 Cal.App.4th at p. 715.)

F. REDUCED DENSITY ALTERNATIVE # 2

This alternative consists of a specific plan permitting development similar to that envisioned under the Project, but, as indicated on Figure VI-4 of the Draft EIR, almost all of East Ridge Village would be preserved in open space in order to avoid impacts on the sensitive visual, biological, and cultural resources present in the proposed East Ridge Village area. Portions of White Rock Village and West Ridge Village development areas would also be converted to open space in order to avoid impacts on sensitive visual, biological, and cultural resources. (DEIR, p. VI-38.)

The majority of development under this alternative would occur in West Valley Village, and much of the residential development here would be clustered to avoid sensitive site features (e.g., cultural

and biological resources, the earthquake fault). This alternative includes 355 single family units, 566 multiple family units, 10.9 acres of commercial and R&D use (the same as the Project), one 12-acre elementary school site, 35 acres of parkland (a 30-acre community park, and a five-acre neighborhood park), and 60 acres for major roads. The remaining 1,675 acres would be preserved as permanent open space/buffer area. (DEIR, p. VI-38.)

1. Land Use and Open Space

The land use and open space impacts of the project would be reduced under this alternative due to a greater percentage of the site being preserved in permanent open space. Under this alternative, 1,675 acres, or approximately 82 percent of the 2,037-acre site, would be preserved in open space, compared to 559 acres, or 27 percent, under the Project. (DEIR, p. VI-39.)

2. Visual Factors

The visual impacts of this alternative would also be substantially less than those of the Project. There would be no development on the central ridgeline or the prominent knoll in White Rock Village. (DEIR, p. VI-39.)

3. Population, Housing, and Employment

This 921-unit alternative would generate an estimated 2,401 residents at buildout, or about one-third of the number projected for the Project. The alternative would provide 566 multiple-family units, compared to 431 under the Project, which would provide slightly more affordable housing opportunity than would the Project, and would therefore increase the County's ability to meet its fair share of regional housing needs. Permanent employment opportunities would be the same as those identified in the Draft EIR for the Project. (DEIR, p. VI-39.)

4. Transportation

The transportation impacts of this alternative would be significant, but less than those associated with the Project. This alternative would generate an estimated 9,130 trips per day, or approximately 43 percent of the 21,250 daily trips that would be generated by the Project. As with Alternative E, this alternative would result in no significant "existing-plus-project" impacts on county roadway segments, but would still contribute to significant impacts on Highway 50. Also as with Alternative E, the higher number of affordable multiple-family units provided under this alternative would increase the likelihood that people employed in the El Dorado Hills Business Park and Town Center would be able to afford to live in Valley View. This feature would in turn reduce commute

distances, increase opportunities for alternative modes of transportation (i.e., walking and bicycling) to work, thereby reducing traffic impacts. (DEIR, p. VI-39.)

5. Public Facilities and Services

This alternative would require 634 acre-feet of water annually, slightly greater than the current allocation of 625 acre-feet per year. This alternative would also result in increased demands for sewage treatment and disposal, police protection, fire protection, emergency medical service, parks and recreation, schools, solid waste, and other public services and facilities, but to a lesser degree than the Project. Those impacts would be similar to those of Alternative E, and substantially less than those described in the Public Facilities and Service Section of these Findings for the Project. Due to a greater number of multiple-family residential units and fewer larger, more expensive units (that create more tax revenue for the County and the fire district), the ability of this alternative to pay for its own additional police and fire protection and other public service needs would be more limited. (DEIR, pp. VI-39 - VI-41.)

6. Biological Resources

Because the extent of development onsite would be substantially less under this alternative than the Project, opportunities for avoidance of sensitive resources would be increased, and impacts on vegetation, wildlife habitat, and wildlife use on the site would be correspondingly reduced. (DEIR, p. VI-41.)

7. Geology and Soils

Under this alternative, changes to the existing topography would be reduced, compared to what would occur with the Project, since less of the site would be graded and developed. Buildings, roadways, and infrastructure constructed under this alternative would be subject to adverse soil and geotechnical risks similar to those identified in the Geology and Soils Section of these Findings; however, there would be greater layout flexibility and ability to avoid such constraints, and there would be fewer residents onsite that could be exposed to such geotechnical problems. (DEIR, p. VI-41.)

8. Hydrology and Water Quality

As with Alternative E, existing drainage and water quality conditions on and downstream from the Valley View site would change as a result of development. The drainage impacts described in the Hydrology and Water Section of these Findings would be reduced due to a reduced level of development and reduced area of impermeable surface created. Water quality in Carson Creek,

Plunkett Creek, and Screech Owl Creek would still deteriorate under this alternative, but to a lesser degree than under the Project. (DEIR, p. VI-41.)

9. Air Quality

Air emissions due to onsite activities would be similar to, but less substantial than, those that would occur with the Project. The significance thresholds for reactive organic gases, oxides of nitrogen, and particular (PM₁₀), however, would still be exceeded. (DEIR, p. VI-41.)

10. Noise

Under this alternative, noise impacts would be similar to, but less substantial than, those described for the Project. New onsite occupants could still be exposed to noise levels associated with traffic on adjacent roadways and with the treatment plant, but development could be more readily set back from these noise sources due to the reduction in development intensity. This alternative would also contribute to increased traffic-generated noise along Latrobe Road and White Rock Road, but to a substantially lesser degree than the Project. (DEIR, p. VI-41.)

11. Public Health and Safety

Under this alternative, as under the Project, there would be a risk to occupants of contact with: (1) potential contaminants from the abandoned El Dorado Hills Landfill; (2) potential mercury contaminants in site drainages; (3) potential soil, surface water, groundwater, or air contaminants from the wastewater treatment plant; (4) natural-occurring asbestos due to possible grading disturbance of serpentine soils; and (5) herbicide and pesticide use, and other hazardous materials that may be handled or stored onsite. As with Alternative E, however, these risks would be substantially less than those associated with the Project, due to the reduced development intensity and greater ability of this alternative to avoid risk-prone areas. (DEIR, p. VI-42; FEIR, p. VI-42.)

12. Cultural Resources

Under this alternative, the potential for impacts on onsite prehistoric and historic cultural resources would be similarly reduced, since less of the site would be disturbed by development and avoidance of resources would be easier to achieve under this alternative. (DEIR, p. VI-43.)

13. Energy

Compared with the Project, the energy impacts of this alternative would be reduced by approximately 68 percent, since fewer residential units would be developed and fewer automobile trips would be generated. (DEIR, p. VI-43.)

14. Relationship of Alternative to Project Objectives

As with Alternative E, the per-home land and development costs associated with Alternative F would translate into a potentially prohibitive selling price requirement for the 355 single-family homes in the competitive Sierra foothill housing market, thereby reducing the viability of an affordable 566-unit multi-family component. The economic feasibility, then, of Alternative F is highly questionable. (DEIR, p. VI-39.) Furthermore, the applicant maintains that, under the 1985 development agreement, the Board has no ability to reject any project configuration proposed by the applicant consistent with uses authorized under the El Dorado Hills/Salmon Falls Area Plan. Without expressing agreement or disagreement with that position, the Board finds that the legal conflict that might be caused by a decision to reject that view is a factor militating against an attempt to impose a Reduced Density Alternative on an unwilling applicant.

Furthermore, because the applicant, presumably for market-based reasons, has not seen fit to seek approval of this alternative or a project variant similar to it, the Board sees no reason to impose such an alternative, particularly since all project-specific significant impacts have been at least substantially lessened. The current project reflects the landowner's considered judgment regarding how to develop its property in light of the realities of the marketplace. The Board believes it is appropriate to give some weight to this judgment. (See *Laurel Hills*, *supra*, 83 Cal.App.3d at p. 521 (a "public agency may approve a developer's choice of a project once its significant adverse effects have been reduced to an acceptable level -- that is, all avoidable damage has been eliminated and that which remains is otherwise acceptable").) For all of these reasons, the Board rejects the alternative as infeasible. (See *City of Del Mar*, *supra*, 133 Cal.App.3d at p. 417; *Sequoyah Hills*, *supra*, 23 Cal.App.4th at p. 715.)

XI.

STATEMENT OF OVERRIDING CONSIDERATIONS

As set forth in the preceding sections, the County's approval of the Project will result in impacts that, even with mitigation, remain significant and unavoidable. Despite these impacts, however, the Board of Supervisors has chosen to approve the Project (as mitigated). The Board has therefore adopted the following Statement of Overriding Considerations.

Valley View Specific Plan EIR - Findings of Fact and Statement of Overriding Consideration

Any one of the reasons for approval cited below is sufficient to justify approval of the Project. Thus, even if a Court were to conclude that not every reason is supported by substantial evidence, the County would stand by its determination that each individual reason is sufficient. The substantial evidence supporting the various benefits can be found in the preceding findings, which are incorporated by reference into this Section (XI), and in the documents found in the Record of Proceedings, as defined in Section V.

The Board of Supervisors finds that the project will have the following economic, social, or other benefits:

Provision of Permanent Jobs and Temporary Construction Jobs. The Valley View Specific Plan

will add approximately 2,840 residential units to the El Dorado Hills community by the year 2009, which will provide housing for an estimated 7,764 people. The Project will also add approximately 107,000 square feet of commercial and industrial floor area that will provide space for an estimated 268 jobs by the year 2009. The Project could stimulate additional development elsewhere in the El Dorado Hills area, as currently allowed by the El Dorado County General Plan. (DEIR, p. VII-1.) Implementation of the Project will also require a large number of construction jobs for all the construction and associated infrastructure (i.e., roads, water and sewer lines). These additional jobs generated by the Project will also cause an increase in the purchasing of goods and services in the area. The Valley View Specific Plan will provide for future employment opportunities that will financially benefit the entire community.

Economic Benefits from Taxes Generated by the Project. With the addition of 2,840 residential housing units, and office and retail uses in the Project Area, there will be an eventual increase in property taxes and local sales tax from the purchase of goods and services within the community. This revenue could be used to fund a variety of other services and capital improvements required by the County. This revenue increase represents a significant public benefit of the Project.

Consistency with the County's General Plan Policies. The Valley View Specific, in its land use design, will support the policy commitments set forth in General Plan goals and policies (Goals 2.1, and 2.2; and Policies 2.1.1.2 and 2.1.1.3), which require protection of existing communities, establishment of community regions, encouragement of mixed-use development, and provision of a range of land uses. The Valley View Specific Plan will be consistent with the General Plan goals and policies, by planning the project site's development in a comprehensive manner, providing mixed-use land uses consistent with those on surrounding properties. The Project will be able to mitigate any land use impacts to an acceptable level through its designing and location of specific land uses (e.g., relocation of playing field in relation to existing mobile homes). The Valley View Specific Plan is beneficial in furthering or effectuating many County General Plan goals and policies.

Provision of a Diverse Housing Stock and Jobs/Housing Balance. The adoption and implementation of the Valley View Specific Plan will provide for the probable eventual development of 2,840 new housing units of various kinds, including substantial numbers of affordable units. The project site is located adjacent to Town Center and the El Dorado Hills Business Park. It is estimated that these adjacent uses will provide space for up to 30,000 jobs at buildout. The Project will provide a variety of housing types to above-moderate-income employees in these areas. Project-proposed townhomes, condominiums, and apartments may also be affordable to moderate-income households. (DEIR, p. IV.C-.23) The provision of 2,840 residential units varying in densities and unit prices will give existing and future El Dorado Hill Business Park employees a range of housing types and costs, and an opportunity to live near their place of employment, thus encouraging a jobs/housing balance for the area and avoiding long commute trips with the attendant traffic and air quality effects.

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