



DEVELOPMENT SERVICES – PLANNING

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NOTICE OF PREPARATION OF A SUBSEQUENT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT

DATE: February 18, 2022

TO: Responsible and Trustee Agencies, Organizations, and Interested Parties

LEAD AGENCY: City of Elk Grove
Contact: Christopher Jordan, Director of Strategic Planning and Innovation
8401 Laguna Palms Way
Elk Grove, CA 95758

SUBJECT: Subsequent Environmental Impact Report for the City of Elk Grove General Plan Amendments and Update of Vehicle Miles Traveled Standards

In discharging its duties under Section 15021 of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines, the City of Elk Grove (as lead agency, hereinafter “City” or “Elk Grove”) intends to prepare a subsequent environmental impact report (SEIR), consistent with Section 15162 of the State CEQA Guidelines (Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations, hereinafter the “CEQA Guidelines”), for the General Plan Amendments and Update of Vehicle Miles Traveled Standards (the “Project,” described later in this document). In accordance with Section 15082 of the CEQA Guidelines, the City has prepared this notice of preparation (NOP) to provide the Office of Planning and Research, responsible and trustee agencies, and other interested parties with sufficient information describing the Project and its potential environmental effects.

The City made the determination to prepare an SEIR following preliminary review of the Project. Pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15063(a), because an EIR is needed, an initial study has not been prepared. Probable environmental effects of the Project are described in the attached Project summary.

As specified by the CEQA Guidelines, the NOP will be circulated for a 30-day review period. The comment period runs from February 18, 2022 to March 21, 2022. The City welcomes public input during the review period. If the City has not received either a response or a well-justified request for additional time by a responsible agency by the end of the review period, the City may presume that the responsible agency has no response (CEQA Guidelines Section 15082[b][2]).

CEQA provides for a Lead Agency to facilitate one or more Scoping Meetings, which provide opportunity for determining the scope and content of the EIR. Traditionally, the City hosts one Scoping Meeting for agencies and the general public during the NOP comment period. In accordance with State and local health orders limiting in-person public meetings, the City is providing an alternative method for the Scoping Meeting. A video presentation by staff, introducing the Project and outlining the CEQA process, is available for review at the website URL listed below. The website also provides a method for directly providing comments. This video and comment opportunity will be available at the above link throughout the NOP comment period (February 18, 2022 to March 21, 2022).

Comments may also be submitted in writing during the review period and addressed to:

City of Elk Grove
Office of Strategic Planning and Innovation
c/o Christopher Jordan
8401 Laguna Palms Way
Elk Grove, CA 95758
cjordan@elkgrovecity.org
http://www.elkgrovecity.org/city_hall/departments_divisions/city_manager/strategic_planning_and_innovation/kammerer_road_urban_design_study

PROJECT LOCATION AND SETTING

The City is located in Sacramento County and consists of approximately 42.7 square miles within its boundary (see Figure 1). Land uses are regulated under the City General Plan, which was comprehensively updated in 2019. The City General Plan established a Planning Area (approximately 31,238 acres) that includes lands outside the current City limits. Existing land uses in the City consist of residential at varying densities, commercial, office, industrial, park, and open space (see Figure 2). The Planning Area primarily consists of agricultural lands and rural residential uses. Nearby natural open space and habitat areas include the Stone Lakes National Wildlife Refuge and the Sacramento River to the west, the Cosumnes River Preserve to the south, and the Regional County Sanitation District bufferlands to the northwest. Major roadway access to the City is provided by Interstate 5 and State Route 99.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Project consists of the following components that are further described below: General Plan amendments to establish the Livable Employment Area Community Plan (Livable Employment Area Community Plan); update of City vehicle miles traveled (VMT) thresholds and guidelines (VMT Update); incorporation of siting for the future Zoo (Zoo Site); and various other General Plan land use adjustments.

Livable Employment Area Community Plan

The Kammerer Road Urban Design Study established a new vision for development along the Kammerer Road and Promenade Parkway corridors as well as redefined the cross-section for Kammerer Road itself. The Livable Employment Area Community is the implementation of the Kammerer Road Urban Design Study that consists of amendments to the General Plan Land Use Diagram and to General Plan chapters 2 (Vision), 3 (Planning Framework), 4 (Rural and Urban Development), 5 (Economic Development) 6 (Mobility), 9 (Community and Area Plans), and 10 (Implementation) to establish Transect-based land use designations and policy provisions for the development of a mixed-use (residential, live-work spaces, retail, and office uses) neighborhood at varying intensities and heights (see summary below). Figure 3 identifies the proposed land use designation changes to the General Plan Land Use Diagram. This action would not expand the City’s boundaries or study areas. As part of this change, the Southeast Policy Area (SEPA) Community Plan and South Pointe Policy Area (South Point) would be reduced and the Lent Ranch project area would be eliminated, with the new Livable Employment Area Community Plan taking their place. The new Livable Employment Area Community Plan would also serve as an overlay to portions of the South Study Area, providing land use and planning guidance for future annexation applications in that area, supplementing the provisions of the South Study Area Land Use Program provided in Chapter 4 (Rural and Urban Development).

Four new General Plan Land Use Designations would be established as part of the Project. These would be applied within the Livable Employment Area Community Plan and are summarized below.

Proposed Transect-Based Land Use Designations

| | |
|--|--|
| General Neighborhood Residential (T3-R) Development Characteristics | |
| Residential Density: | Minimum: 10.0 du/ac Maximum: 20.0 du/ac |
| Building Intensity: | Maximum FAR of 1.0 |

General Neighborhood Residential (T3-R)
General Neighborhood uses are typically characterized by small-lot single-family residential development (attached or detached), duplexes, townhomes, and small apartment buildings, but may also include small live-work spaces, home-offices or workspaces, and bed and breakfast inns. Limited amounts of local serving retail and small office structures, particularly at intersections are also permitted. Generally, buildings, are not taller than 3 stories, and are surface parked, in the side or rear of the lot.

| Neighborhood Center Low (T3) Development Characteristics | |
|---|--|
| Residential Density: | Minimum: 14.0 du/ac Maximum: 30.0 du/ac |
| Building Intensity: | Maximum FAR of 2.0 |

Neighborhood Center Low (T3)
Neighborhood Center Low includes the same uses and densities as T3-R, however, a mix of uses is permitted throughout, with no preference provided for residential uses. Typically, buildings, are not taller than 3 stories, and are surface parked, in the side or rear of the lot.

| Neighborhood Center Medium (T4) Development Characteristics | |
|--|--|
| Residential Density: | Minimum: 20.0 du/ac Maximum: 40.0 du/ac |
| Building Intensity: | Maximum FAR of 5.0 |

Neighborhood Center Medium (T4)
Neighborhood Center Medium uses are typically characterized by Neighborhood Center Medium includes a diverse mix of uses at higher intensities than T3. Residential building types generally include townhomes and urban apartment buildings, as well as live-work spaces. Retail, hotel, and office uses are permitted. Generally, buildings, are not taller than 5 stories, and may have a mix of garage and or surface parking in the rear of the lot or the middle of the block, screened from view.

| Neighborhood Center High (T5) Development Characteristics | |
|--|---|
| Residential Density: | Minimum: 40.0 du/ac Maximum: 100.0 du/ac |
| Building Intensity: | Maximum FAR of 7.0 |

Neighborhood Center High (T5)
Neighborhood Center High includes a diverse mix of uses at higher intensities than T4. Many individual buildings may have a mix of uses. Residential building types generally include apartment buildings as well as live-work spaces. Retail and Office uses as are hotels. Typically, buildings, are not taller than 7 stories, and will have garage screened from view or below ground.

VMT Update

This Project would upgrade the City's Travel Demand Model from SACSIM15 to SACSIM19. The City's vehicle miles traveled (VMT) thresholds and guidelines would be updated based upon the new model and a new threshold for transportation projects would be established. The VMT Update would develop a new VMT screening tool for development projects (and potentially transportation projects) that cannot be screened out based on project characteristics or location but are generally too small to warrant a full model run.

Zoo Site

The Project would, as part of the Livable Employment Area Community Plan, designate an approximately 60-acre site for a future zoo. The site would be designated as Park on the General Plan Land Use Plan (see Figure 4). The design and details of operation of the Zoo would be developed as part of a separate project and environmental review. No land use entitlements to allow construction and operation of the Zoo would occur as part of this action. This Subsequent EIR would programmatically evaluate the conceptual design of the Zoo Site, including consideration of animal habitats, restaurants, parking, and support services for the animals and patrons. The anticipated annual attendance for the zoo is 1,000,000 patrons.

Other Land Use Adjustments

The Project also consists of various other adjustments to the General Plan Land Use Plan, including amendments in the Old Town area. The revisions allow for more mixed-use development along the corridor, with residential uses up to 40 dwelling units per acre, building heights up to 45 feet tall, and floor-area-ratios (FAR) up to 2.0, dependent upon land use district.

Table 1. Summary of Proposed Old Town Development Standards

| Zone | Residential Density (units per acre) | | Non-Residential FAR | | Height (feet) | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------------------|---------|---------------------|---------|---------------|---------|
| | Minimum | Maximum | Minimum | Maximum | Minimum | Maximum |
| Commercial Mixed Use | 15.1 | 40.0 | n/a | 1.0 | 25 | 45 |
| Village Mixed-Use | 12.1 | 40.0 | n/a | 2.0 | 30 | 45 |
| Neighborhood Mixed-Use | 15.1 | 40.0 | n/a | 2.0 | 25 | 45 |
| High Density Residential | 15.1* | 40.0 | n/a | n/a | 25 | 40 |
| Low Density Residential | 4.1 | 7.0 | n/a | n/a | n/a | 30 |

Note: In the High Density Residential zone, sites identified in the Housing Element of the General Plan as contributing to meeting the City’s share of the Regional Housing Needs Allocation have a minimum density of 20.1 units per acre.

General Plan Development Capacity

The proposed revisions to the General Plan would result in an update to the development capacity as provided in Table 3-2 of the General Plan. Revisions to the table are shown below in Table 2, with deletions shown in ~~strikeout~~ and additions in bold.

Table 2. Revisions to General Plan Development Capacity

| | Acres | Dwelling Units | Population ¹ | Employment (Jobs) | Jobs/Housing Ratio |
|---|--------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------|
| Existing Development Total ² | 31,449 | 53,829 | 171,059 | 45,463 | 0.84 |
| General Plan Total | 34,956 | 102,865 104,716 | 332,254 338,233 | 127,463 123,923 | 1.24 1.18 |
| City Limits | 29,946 | 72,262 76,906 | 233,406 248,406 | 81,784 72,788 | |
| Study Areas Subtotal | 8,008 | 30,603 27,810 | 98,848 89,826 | 45,679 51,135 | |
| North Study Area | 646 | 323 | 1,043 | 0 | |
| East Study Area | 1,772 | 4,806 | 15,523 | 9,183 | |
| South Study Area | 3,675 | 16,250 12,320 | 52,488 39,764 | 30,367 36,332 | |
| West Study Area | 1,915 | 9,224 10,361 | 29,794 33,466 | 6,129 5,620 | |

Table Notes: Number may not sum due to rounding

1. Based on 3.23 persons per household, average.

2. Existing development represents 2017 population and dwelling unit information and derived from 2013 jobs data (the most current year available at the time of writing the General Plan).

REQUIRED APPROVALS

Actions to be taken by the City to adopt the Project include, but are not limited to:

- ▶ certification of the SEIR prepared for the Project,
- ▶ adoption of General Plan amendments that accomplish the following:
 - Comprehensive update to the Southeast Area Community Plan, removing XXX acres
 - Elimination of the Lent Ranch Policy Area
 - Creation of the Livable Employment Area Community Plan
 - Comprehensive update to the Planning Framework (Chapter 3 of the General Plan), including the Land Use Plan and Transportation Plan,
 - Revisions to the Mobility Chapter (Chapter 6) of the General Plan to reflect the transfer of transit services to Sacramento Regional Transit,
 - Revisions to Chapters 2 (Vision), 4 (Urban and Rural Development), 5 (Economy and the Region), and 10 (Implementation) for internal consistency of the General Plan,
- ▶ adoption of new Zoning provisions for the Livable Employment Area Community Plan area, and
- ▶ adoption of the updated City's VMT thresholds and guidance.

PROBABLE ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS

The SEIR will evaluate whether implementing the proposed Project would potentially result in one or more significant environmental effects. The following issue areas will be addressed in the SEIR:

- ▶ Aesthetics
- ▶ Air Quality
- ▶ Cultural and Tribal Cultural Resources
- ▶ Energy
- ▶ Greenhouse Gases and Climate Change
- ▶ Noise and Vibration
- ▶ Population and Housing
- ▶ Public Services
- ▶ Recreation
- ▶ Transportation
- ▶ Utilities and Service Systems

Issues Scoped Out from Analysis in the EIR

The City anticipates that the Project would have less-than-significant or no impacts on the following environmental issue areas. These areas will not be discussed in the SEIR for the reasons discussed below.

Agriculture and Forestry Resources

No forestry resources or timberlands are in the City or its Planning Area. The EIR certified for the City's 2019 General Plan Update evaluated the potential for impacts on agricultural resources in the City's Planning Area. Because this issue

was evaluated in that document and no additional agricultural impacts (no change in the City's planned development footprint) would occur because of implementing the General Plan Amendments, this issue will not be discussed in the SEIR.

Biological Resources

The EIR certified for the City's 2019 General Plan Update evaluated the potential for impacts on biological resources in the City's Planning Area. Because the Project would not change the extent of land disturbance from what was evaluated in the General Plan Update EIR (no change in the City's planned development footprint), this issue will not be discussed in the SEIR.

Geology and Soils

The EIR certified for the City's 2019 General Plan Update evaluated the potential for impacts related to geology and soils in the City's Planning Area. Because the Project would not change the extent or character of land disturbance from what was evaluated in the General Plan Update EIR (no change in the City's planned development footprint), this issue will not be discussed in the SEIR.

Hazards and Hazardous Materials

The EIR certified for the City's 2019 General Plan Update evaluated the potential for impacts related to hazards and hazardous materials in the City's Planning Area. Because the Project would not change the extent or character of land disturbance from what was evaluated in the General Plan Update EIR (no change in the City's planned development footprint) or introduce a new land use that could create hazards, this issue will not be discussed in the SEIR.

Hydrology and Water Quality

The EIR certified for the City's 2019 General Plan Update evaluated the potential for impacts related to hydrology and water quality in the City's Planning Area. Because the Project would not change the extent or character of land disturbance from what was evaluated in the General Plan Update EIR (no change in the City's planned development footprint), this issue will not be discussed in the SEIR.

Land Use and Planning

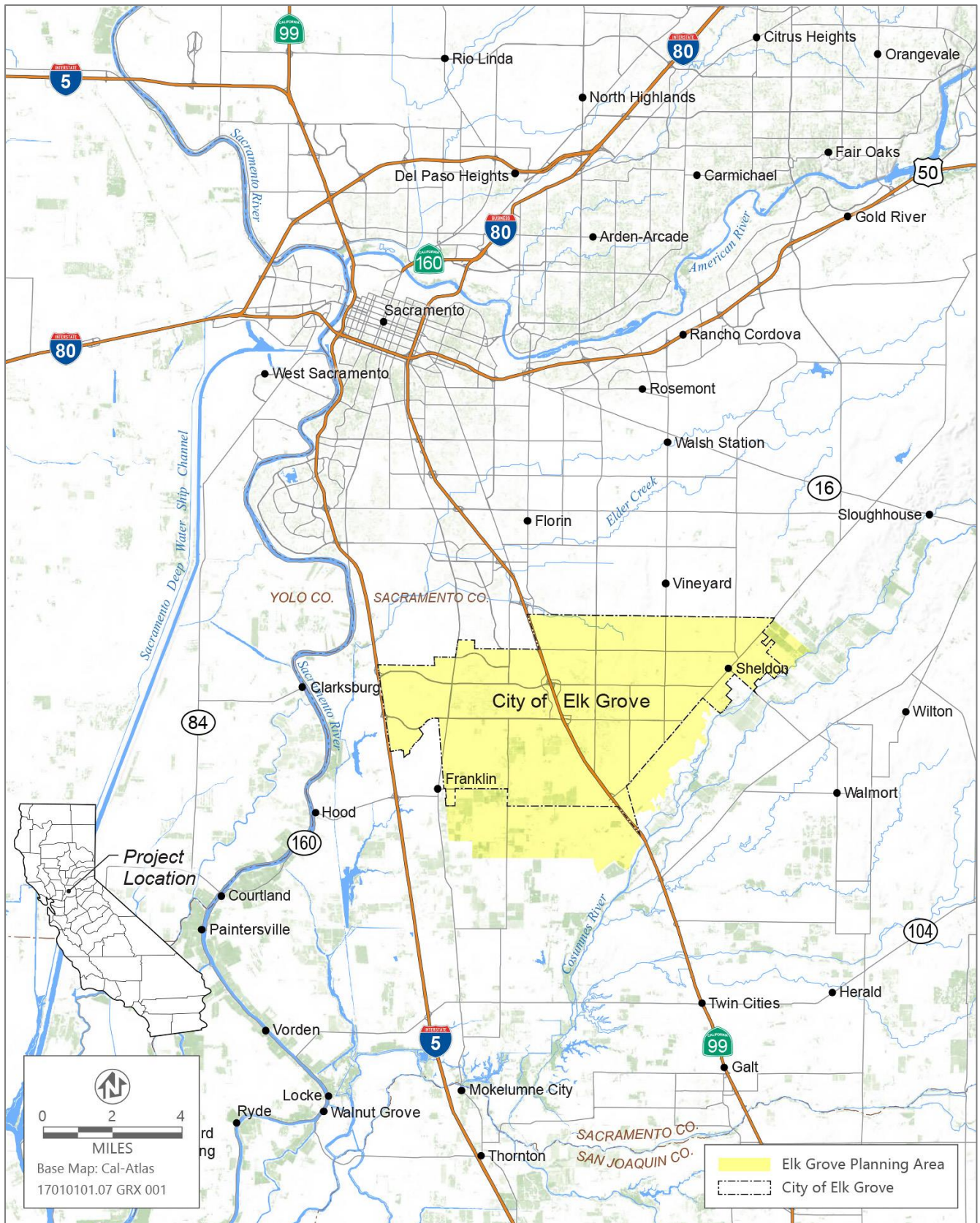
The EIR certified for the City's 2019 General Plan Update evaluated the potential for impacts related to land uses and plans in the City's Planning Area. Because the Project would not change the extent or character of land disturbance from what was evaluated in the General Plan Update EIR (no change in the City's planned development footprint), this issue will not be discussed in the SEIR.

Mineral Resources

No significant mineral resources have been identified in the City. The Project would not change the extent of land disturbance from what was evaluated in the General Plan Update EIR (no change in the City's planned development footprint). Therefore, this issue will not be discussed in the SEIR.

Wildfire

The City is not located in or near a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone. Therefore, there would not be a significant impact related to wildfire, and this issue will not be discussed in the SEIR.



Source: Ascent Environmental 2019

Figure 1 Regional Location Map

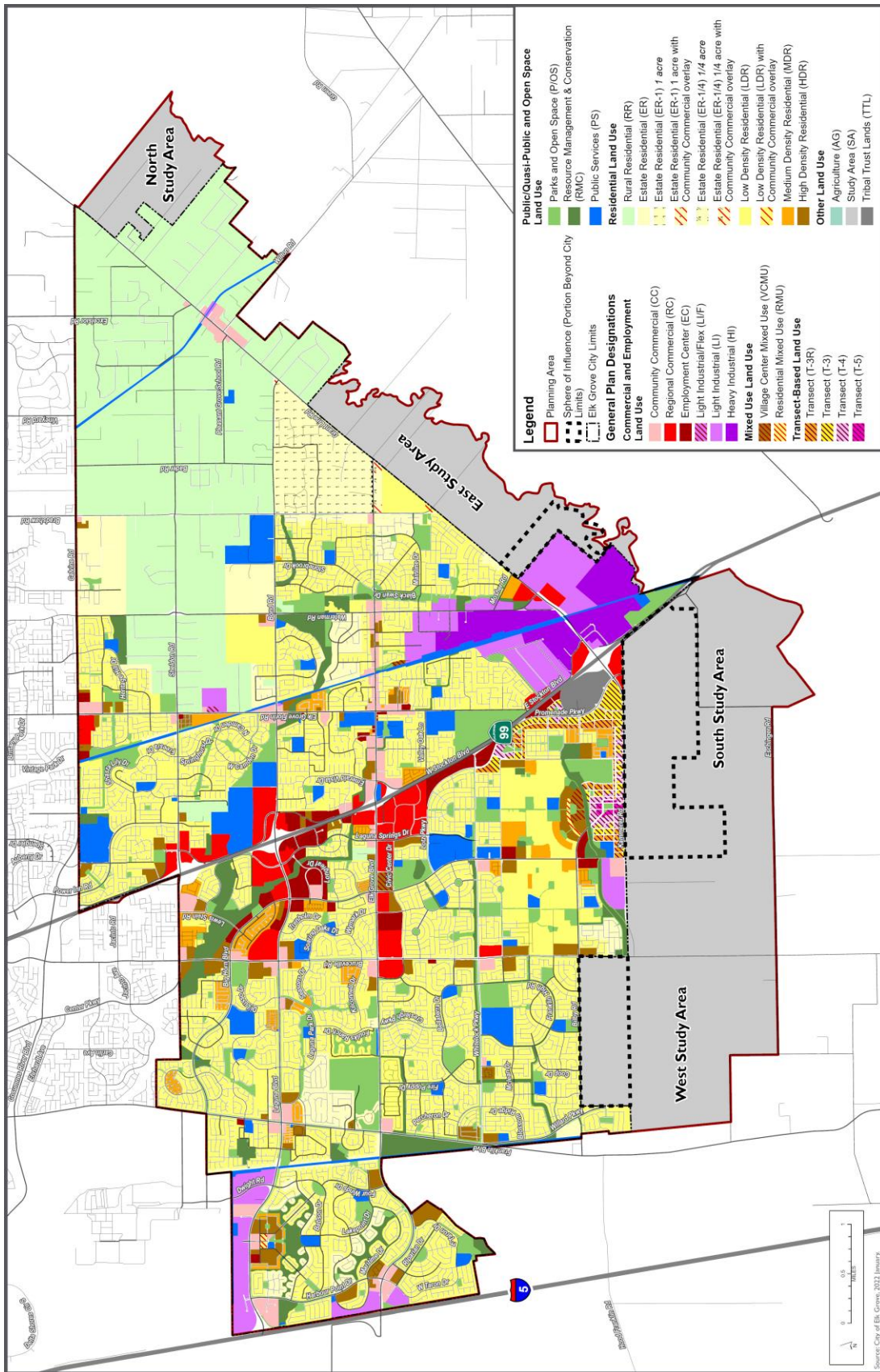


Figure 2 Proposed General Plan Land Use Map