APPENDIX A: NOTICE OF PREPARATION (NOP)



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NOTICE OF PREPARATION OF A DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT

DATE: June 23, 2017

TO: Responsible Agencies, Organizations, and Interested Parties

LEAD AGENCY: City of Elk Grove

Contact: Christopher Jordan, AICP

8401 Laguna Palms Way Elk Grove, CA 95758

SUBJECT: Environmental Impact Report for the City of Elk Grove General Plan Update

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) publicly announces the preparation of a Program Environmental Impact Report (EIR), consistent with State CEQA Guidelines Section 15168 (Division 6 of Chapter 3 of Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations, hereinafter the CEQA Guidelines), for the **City of Elk Grove General Plan Update Project** (the Project, described later in this document). In accordance with Section 15082 of the CEQA Guidelines, the City of Elk Grove has prepared this Notice of Preparation (NOP) to provide the Governor's 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 EIR 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 Friday, June 23, 2017, to Monday, July 24, 2017.** The City of Elk Grove welcomes public input during the review period. In the event 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]).

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

City of Elk Grove
City Manager's Office
Strategic Initiatives and Long Range Planning
c/o Christopher Jordan, AICP
8401 Laguna Palms Way
Elk Grove, CA 95758
cjordan@elkgrovecity.org

A scoping meeting for the Project will be held from 6:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. on **Tuesday, July 11, 2017**, at the City of Elk Grove City Council Chambers, located at 8400 Laguna Palms Way in Elk Grove.

NOTICE OF PREPARATION

A copy of the NOP describing the Project location and potential environmental effects is available at the following locations:

- City of Elk Grove Development Services Department, 8401 Laguna Palms Way, Elk Grove, CA 95758
- Elk Grove Library, 8900 Elk Grove Boulevard, Elk Grove, CA 95624
- Franklin Library, 10055 Franklin High Road, Elk Grove, CA 95757
- The City's website: http://www.elkgrovecity.org/city_hall/departments_divisions/planning/a_brighter_future/

A. PROJECT LOCATION AND SETTING

The Project site consists of the Planning Area for the General Plan update, which contains all land within the Elk Grove City boundaries, as well as lands outside the City to the south and east that bear relation to City's planning activities as provided in California Government Code Section 65300. The Planning Area encompasses approximately 48.8 square miles (31,238 acres) located in south-central Sacramento County (see **Figure 1**). Elk Grove's City limits and the Planning Area boundary are shown in **Figure 2** and are generally described as follows:

- The City is generally bounded by Interstate 5 (I-5) on the west, Calvine Road and the City of Sacramento on the north, Grant Line Road on the east, and Kammerer Road on the south. State Route (SR) 99 runs north/south, bisecting the City near its center.
- The Planning Area boundaries generally coincide with the City limits on the north and west, but to the south the Planning Area extends to Eschinger Road and to Deer Creek to the east, as shown in **Figure 2**.

In the Planning Area, existing land uses include a mix of agriculture (10 percent), residential (55 percent), nonresidential (commercial, office, and industrial) (7 percent), park and open space areas (9 percent), civic/institutional (5 percent), public and quasi-public spaces, roadways, and other infrastructure (2 percent), and vacant land (12 percent). Existing land uses in the Planning Area are illustrated in **Figure 2**.

Aside from portions of the City of Sacramento to the northwest, all land surrounding the Project site is located in unincorporated Sacramento County and consists of mostly rural residential and agricultural uses.

B. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The City of Elk Grove is conducting a comprehensive update of its General Plan. State law (Government Code Section 65300) requires each city and county to adopt a comprehensive, long-term general plan for its physical development. The City's current General Plan was adopted in 2003, with various amendments changes made since then, and serves to direct the City's future growth and development as well as its conservation policy. The General Plan is now being updated to ensure that the guiding policy document remains a useful tool, keeps pace with change, and provides workable solutions to current and future issues.

The General Plan Update Project includes the following related components:

1.0 GENERAL PLAN UPDATE

The General Plan and implementing programs serve as the blueprint for future growth and development. These documents contain policies and programs designed to provide decision-makers with a solid basis for future decisions related to land use and development.

General Plan update documents and presentations developed to date are available at the following website:

http://www.elkgrovecity.org/city_hall/departments_divisions/planning/a_brighter_future/

1.1 Vision Statement and Supporting Principles

The following community Vision Statement supports the General Plan Update Project:

The City of Elk Grove is a great place to make a home, a great place to work, and a great place to play. Our community is diverse, healthy, safe, and family-oriented, with thriving schools and plentiful parks, shops, and places to work. Agriculture, rural homes, and urban life flourish together. Our natural resources, including water and open spaces, are protected and offer a variety of recreational opportunities. Community members travel easily by automobile, by bicycle, on foot, or using transit. The City is proactive in making daily life healthy and sustainable—considering the needs of future generations while protecting what is valued today.

Well-maintained infrastructure and the right mix of services and amenities draw new and dynamic businesses and development to Elk Grove. Development is guided to ensure responsible growth and opportunities for a diversity of individuals that call Elk Grove home.

Elk Grove's Vision is supported by a series of Supporting Principles, described below, that provide an overarching rationale for more specific General Plan goals and policies.

Regional Goals and Influence: Our Regional Neighbors Know Us and Our Contributions

Elk Grove occupies a prominent place in the regional dialogue. The City's identity and brand are clear in the minds of its neighbors. Our contributions to the region continue to strengthen that identity and include recreational opportunities, higher education, job centers, and quality neighborhoods. City officials engage with other cities, Sacramento County, and other partners to plan and build for an ever more dynamic region. The City's employment potential within the regional economy is fulfilled. New businesses have emerged, providing new employment centers that support technology and build from our agricultural roots. Both housing and jobs are available in the community, providing flexible opportunities for many lifestyles.

Infill Development and Outward Expansion: Development Fills in the Gaps and Expansion Occurs with Purpose

Unfinished, undeveloped gaps once found throughout the City become opportunities to develop economically successful additions that provide added value to our community as well as new job opportunities and lifestyle improvements. Existing small businesses are protected even as we invite in new businesses and different economic opportunities. New development plans are grounded by community needs and market demand, and are carried out efficiently and holistically. New housing built in a variety of shapes and sizes to meet the needs and desires of our diverse community also fills in these gaps.

Infill development is consistently executed with programs that address impacts and encourage innovative building solutions. A creative growth management strategy allows expansion to occur when economic need, community vision, and regional goals align. There is a strong system in place to guarantee that, as the community accommodates new neighbors and new jobs, it continues to maintain and improve facilities and services, such as schools, roads, and parks.

Economic Vitality: Our Economy Thrives and New Business Adds Value

Major employment centers make their home in Elk Grove, providing employment opportunities and stimulating ancillary businesses as well. We continue to invite businesses that are competitive in the region and set the stage to attract these businesses by providing resources and amenities they need. Old and new businesses together improve our lives by providing new jobs as well as convenient places to get amenities and entertainment. Elk Grove has a diverse economy that builds from our heritage, but also invites in new and changing industries. Higher education and technical training are available to our community members as they pursue diverse job opportunities in these new industries. The City is leading the way in innovative technology infrastructure, technical education opportunities, sports activities and entertainment, and a safe and crime-free environment. These features attract business and provide a better quality of life for individuals and families of all incomes, ages, abilities, and backgrounds.

Growth and development in the City is built with mindfulness of our historic resources and identity. These businesses bolster the community by providing jobs, services, goods, and recreational opportunities for residents.

Neighborhood, District, and Community Identity: City Core, Heritage, and Well-Known Neighborhoods

The City includes a civic core that offers central gathering spaces that all community members enjoy and feel welcome in. The City and community organizations partner to foster the civic core to be both thriving and safe. Successful projects and annual events enhance vitality and camaraderie in this space.

Old Town Elk Grove continues to protect and showcase our heritage for the enjoyment of residents and visitors alike. All of our neighborhoods are built around our top-notch parks and schools. Preservation and change in our neighborhoods are guided by values of diversity, neighborly spirit, and small-town character.

Rural Areas: Protecting Our Farming Heritage and Rural Life

We celebrate the rural area and its heritage, and balance that heritage with other needs, services, and lifestyles desired in Elk Grove. The rural area is valued in our community for its aesthetic and cultural value, as well as the economic and educational opportunities agriculture provides. Our commitment to maintaining the rural area is clear and codified in core planning documents through programs that preserve the aesthetics and style of our rural heritage. Agricultural producers and other land uses remain good neighbors, each with desired services and infrastructure needs fully met.

Open Space and Resource Management: Outdoor Recreation Is Right Outside Our Door

Our parks and trails are high quality and highly valued. We continue to enhance and maintain our recreational open spaces so that they are safe, connected, and accessible to all. Our trails connect easily to other trails and parks in the region, and community gardens are a source of local food and local involvement.

Mobility and Active Transportation: Moving Around Anywhere, Any Way

Our residents, workers, and visitors need to move about efficiently, and have a variety of ways to do so. Connected transportation networks, regional coordination, and public and active transportation options are priorities for our community. Connected and mobile community members have the ability to travel within the City and to other places in the region by a variety of methods, with seamless transitions between modes and regions. Our community has roadways in place that allow for efficient movement and safe travel spaces for all modes of getting around. The infrastructure and facilities for pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit users are clean, safe, and well maintained, and walkways and bike lanes are continuous and complete with convenient connections to local and regional transit.

Sustainable and Healthy Communities: Clean, Green Practices and Healthy Living

Sustainable practices are at the forefront of environmental concerns in Elk Grove. Organizations, businesses, and residents desire a city that is adaptive to and resilient against climate change, is a leader in conservation, and embraces innovations in green technologies. The City layout and land uses promote healthy living, with healthy grocery options and destinations nearby that people can get to by walking and biking.

The City's residents and businesses recognize the importance of responsible resource use, and they work together to conserve and use water and energy to their full potential.

Coordinated Services, Technology, and Infrastructure: Services for the Needs of All Residents

Safety and services are important to all members of our community, and services for youth, seniors, and disadvantaged families are provided. Entertainment and social centers create a thriving and diverse economy and give residents a place to shop, play, and relax.

The City ensures that important services in our community, including social, housing, transportation, health, and education, are available and efficiently obtainable for community members that choose or need them to thrive.

1.2 General Plan Structure

The General Plan must include subject matter identified in State law for the following State-required elements or topics: Land Use, Circulation, Housing, Conservation, Open Space, Noise, and Safety. The updated Elk Grove General Plan will be divided into 10 chapters, which together address the topics mandated by the State, as well as additional topics of interest to the City. Each chapter is briefly described below.

- Introduction: Addresses the purpose and scope of the General Plan; background on Elk Grove's history, current demographics, and economic conditions; planning context (other local and regional plans); the relationship of the General Plan to other plans and documents, including the City's Municipal Code; and the geographic area and topics covered in the General Plan.
- 2. **Vision**: Includes the Community Vision Statement and nine Supporting Principles that guide the General Plan, as developed during the public engagement process for the General Plan update.

- 3. **Planning Framework:** Presents the three main components of the General Plan—the Land Use Plan, the Transportation Plan, and the Resource Conservation Plan—and lays out the key concepts and components underlying each. Includes three long-range planning policy diagrams: the Land Use Diagram, the Transportation Network Diagram, and the Resource Conservation Diagram. Describes the relationship between these three components, as well as their relationship to other planning documents such as the City's Housing Element.
- 4. **Urban and Rural Development:** Identifies the City's goals and policies related to development and expansion of urban areas, including both infill development and annexation of new land into the City. Summarizes key goals and policies from the City's Housing Element and how these relate to urban development and expansion policies. Discusses goals and policies related to agriculture and ongoing preservation of rural areas.
- 5. **Economy and the Region:** Presents the City's goals and policies related to economic vitality and economic development. Discusses regional coordination with public and private entities related to economic goals.
- 6. **Mobility:** Presents the City's goals and policies related to multimodal and active transportation, including complete streets design, public transit, maintenance and expansion of the roadway system, and the rail transportation network. Addresses related transportation topics, including safety and metrics for measuring traffic volumes and vehicle miles traveled.
- 7. **Community and Resource Protection:** Defines the City's goals and policies related to preserving the character and identity of neighborhoods and districts, protecting historic and cultural resources, promoting arts and culture, providing public open spaces and recreational facilities, and conserving the environment and natural resources. Summarizes community governance and decision-making goals and processes.
- 8. **Services, Health, and Safety:** Addresses the City's goals and policies related to health and safety, including disaster and emergency preparedness, public safety services (police and fire), and noise. Discusses specific risks such as hazardous materials and waste, flooding and drainage, and geologic and seismic hazards, and outlines policies to address these risks. Discusses environmental equity and community health. Presents the City's goals and policies related to community services, including libraries, schools, and youth and senior services.
- 9. **Community and Area Plans:** Describes four Community and Area Plans that are existing or will be developed as part of this plan or in the future to further refine the goals and objectives of the General Plan in key, specific geographical areas of the city:
 - Southeast Policy Area Community Plan (adopted)
 - Sheldon/Rural Area Community Plan (to be prepared as part of the Project)
 - East Elk Grove Community Plan (to be prepared as part of the Project; this community plan will include various policies currently contained in the East Elk Grove Specific Plan, which is proposed to be rescinded, as noted in Section 3.0, Specific Plans.)
 - Central Elk Grove Community Plan (to be prepared in the future as a separate project)

- 10. **Implementation:** Sets forth specific actions and tools for implementation of the General Plan, along with a detailed work program. Describes the process for maintaining and monitoring progress in implementing the General Plan.
- 11. **Glossary and Acronyms:** Provides a list of acronyms and definitions for key terms used in the General Plan.
- 12. **Appendices**: A series of technical appendices addressing land use, mobility, housing, and safety.

The mandated elements of the General Plan will be addressed in the chapters as identified in **Table 1**.

TABLE 1

COMPARISON OF PROPOSED GENERAL PLAN CHAPTERS AND STATE MANDATED GENERAL PLAN ELEMENTS

Proposed General Plan Chapters		Mandated Government Code Elements							
		Land Use	Circulation	Housing	Conservation	Open Space	Noise	Safety	
1.	Introduction								
2.	Vision								
3.	Planning Framework	О	О	0		О			
4.	Urban and Rural Development	Х		Х					
5.	Economy and the Region								
6.	Mobility		X					0	
7.	Community and Resource Protection				Х	Х			
8.	Services, Health, and Safety		0				Х	Х	
9.	Community and Area Plans	О	О	О	О	О	О	0	
10.	Implementation	О	0	0	0	0	О	0	
11.	Glossary and Acronyms								
12.	Appendices								
	A. Land Use Technical Data	О							
	B. VMT and Traffic Technical Data		О						
	C. Housing Element Statutory Requirements			О					
	D. Safety Element Statutory Requirements							О	

X = Chapter that primarily addresses element requirements

O = Chapter has policies or discussion that supports the element requirements or addresses components not addressed in the primary chapter

1.3 Land Use Diagram

The Preferred Alternative Land Use Map (**Figure 3**) establishes the general pattern of uses in the Planning Area. The maximum permitted land use densities and intensities will be identified in the General Plan for these land uses. As the density and intensity standards for each land use designation are applied to future development projects and land use decisions, properties will gradually transition from one use to another, and land uses and intensities will gradually shift to align with the intent of the General Plan. Within the Study Areas identified on the Land Use Diagram, future uses may be developed in accordance with annexation policies identified in the General Plan and are subject to more detailed planning (e.g., specific plan).

Table 2 identifies anticipated land use changes that would occur with implementation of the General Plan, both from a 2015 baseline condition and relative to the currently adopted General Plan. For purposes of the EIR, analysis of potential environmental effects will be based on the net change between 2015 baseline conditions and the proposed General Plan.

TABLE 2
ANTICIPATED LAND USE CHANGES

	Acres	Dwelling Units	Population	Jobs	Jobs/Housing Ratio
Existing Development ¹ Total	31,238	53,829	171,059	45,463	0.84
Current General Plan ² Total	31,238	77,716	252,560	97,373	1.25
City Limits Subtotal	23,441	75,718	246,108	89,097	
Study Areas Subtotal	7,797	1,997	6,452	8,276	
Preferred Land Use Map ³ Total	31,238	101,665	328,378	122,802	1.21
City Limits Subtotal	23,441	71,334	230,407	82,446	
Study Areas Subtotal	7,797	30,332	97,971	40,356	
Difference Between Existing Development and Proposed General Plan	0	47,836	157,319	77,339	

Note: Numbers may not sum due to rounding

^{1.} Existing development represents 2017 population and dwelling information and 2013 jobs data. These are the latest datasets that are available.

^{2.} Current General Plan refers to buildout of the existing General Plan land use diagram.

^{3.} Preferred Land Use Map refers to the buildout of the proposed General Plan Land Use Diagram.

1.4 Transportation Network Diagram

The transportation network is a major determinant of urban form and land use. Factors such as traffic patterns and congestion, access to transit, and ease and safety of walking and biking may determine where people choose to live, work, and visit. **Figure 4** illustrates anticipated roadway capacities needed to serve vehicle traffic anticipated with the proposed land uses. Policies developed for the General Plan will ensure a complete network including fixed transit, pedestrian and bicycle routes, and Class 1 trails.

2.0 CLIMATE ACTION PLAN UPDATE

The City of Elk Grove adopted a Climate Action Plan (CAP) in 2013. As part of the General Plan Update Project, the City is also completing an update to the CAP. The updated CAP will include an updated community-wide emissions inventory for Elk Grove, along with updated emissions forecasts for 2020, 2030, and 2050 based on land use activities anticipated with implementation of the updated General Plan.

While the existing CAP was originally designed to meet a 2020 target and provide CEQA streamlining benefits under Section 15183.5 of the CEQA Guidelines, the updated CAP will be consistent with new state legislation and guidance issued since the existing CAP was adopted in 2013, such as Senate Bill (SB) 32, Executive Order (EO) B-30-15, and updates to the State's Climate Change Scoping Plan. This information will be used to update the existing CAP emissions reduction measures to outline a strategy to achieve reduction targets consistent with State law and guidance. The updated CAP will also include an implementation program identifying time frames, responsible parties, indicators, potential costs and benefits, funding sources, and monitoring mechanisms.

3.0 SPECIFIC PLANS

To implement the policies and programs proposed in the General Plan update, the Project includes the following actions related to existing Specific Plans in the City:

- Rescind the East Elk Grove Specific Plan, integrating various policies into the proposed East Elk Grove Community Plan and establishing relevant development standards in Title 23 (Zoning) of the City's Municipal Code (herein after the Zoning Code).
- Rescind the East Franklin Specific Plan, integrating various policies into the proposed General Plan, as relevant and establishing relevant development standards in the Zoning Code.
- Amend various sections of the Laguna Ridge Specific Plan for consistency with the updated General Plan.

4.0 ZONING CODE AMENDMENTS

To maintain consistency with the updated General Plan, the Project also includes a number of amendments to the Zoning Code. Amendments planned as part of the Project include:

- Updating the allowed uses in commercial, office, and industrial zones as necessary for consistency with the General Plan Land Use Designations.
- Updating the Multifamily Overlay Zone for consistency with the General Plan Land Use Designations.

- Rezoning various properties to zoning districts consistent with the General Plan Land Use Designations.
- Rescinding the Laguna Community/Floodplain Special Planning Area zoning district.
- Rescinding the Laguna Gateway Special Planning Area zoning district.
- Rescinding the Calvine Road/Highway 99 Special Planning Area zoning district.
- Establishing new zoning district(s) as necessary to implement the updated General Plan.
- Updating other development standards as necessary to implement the updated General Plan.

5.0 Parks and Recreation Master Plan Update

The Cosumnes Community Services District (CCSD) is preparing an update to the Parks and Recreation Master Plan, which describes how parks and recreation services are provided to the residents of Elk Grove. The City is fully located within the parks and recreation service area of the CCSD. The update to the Parks and Recreation Master Plan is being coordinated with the General Plan Update as the Master Plan describes the service area and design objectives for new parks and recreation facilities within the community. The EIR will address these updated parks criteria.

C. Type of Environmental Document

The General Plan Update EIR will be prepared as a Program EIR, pursuant to Section 15168 of the CEQA Guidelines. A Program EIR examines the environmental impacts of an overall area that may contain a series of subsequent projects. This type of EIR focuses on the changes in the environment that would result from implementation of the overall Project, including development of land uses and transportation systems identified in the Project, as well as other infrastructure required to serve the Project. The General Plan Update EIR will serve as the environmental review document for subsequent activities in the program. Consistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15168(c), the City will review subsequent activities to determine whether the activity is within the scope of the Project covered by the Program EIR or whether an additional environmental document must be prepared. If the City finds, pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15162, that no new effects could occur or no new mitigation measures would be required, the City can approve the subsequent activity as being within the scope of the Project covered in the Program EIR, and no new environmental document would be required.

D. PROBABLE ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS

The EIR will evaluate whether the proposed Project would potentially result in one or more significant environmental effects. The following issues will be addressed in the EIR:

- Aesthetics, Light, and Glare
- Agricultural Resources
- Air Quality
- Biological Resources
- Cultural Resources

- Land Use
- Noise
- Mineral Resources
- Population and Housing
- Public Services

- Geology, Soils, and Seismicity
- Greenhouse Gas Emissions
- Hazards and Hazardous Materials
- Hydrology and Water Quality

- Public Utilities
- Recreation
- Transportation
- Tribal Cultural Resources
- Energy Conservation and Other Required CEQA Topics

ISSUES SCOPED OUT FROM ANALYSIS IN THE EIR

One environmental issue would result in a less than significant impact and will not be discussed in the EIR for the reasons discussed below.

Seiche, Tsunami, and Mudflow

Based on the Project's location (inland, away from any water bodies) and topography (relatively flat), there would be no impact related to seiche, tsunami, or mudflow. This impact will not be discussed in the EIR.

E. EIR AND GENERAL PLAN UPDATE PROCESS

The Draft EIR will incorporate the input received at the scoping meeting and comments submitted on the NOP. The purpose of the Draft EIR is to examine and disclose the potential environmental impacts of the Project and to identify mitigation measures and alternatives that would reduce and/or avoid significant impacts.

The Draft EIR will have a 45-day public review period in which agencies and members of the public will review and comment on the Draft EIR. Comments received on the Draft EIR will be reviewed and addressed in the Final EIR. The Final EIR will be a document consisting of the Draft EIR, errata or changes to the Draft EIR, and responses to comments on the EIR, as well as any additional technical reports or follow-up documentation that may be necessary. The Elk Grove Planning Commission will hold a public hearing on the Final EIR and make a recommendation to the City Council regarding the Final EIR prior to action on the General Plan Update. The City Council will hold its own public hearing on the Final EIR and make its own determination on certification of the Final EIR prior to action on the General Plan Update.

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