



COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT/RESOURCE AGENCY
Environmental Coordination Services
County of Placer

DATE: August 28, 2019

TO: California State Clearinghouse
Responsible and Trustee Agencies
Interested Parties and Organizations

SUBJECT: Notice of Preparation of an Environmental Impact Report for the Proposed Housing Related Code Amendments

REVIEW PERIOD: August 29, 2019 to September 27, 2019

Placer County is the lead agency for the preparation of an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the proposed Housing Related Code Amendments in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), Section 15082. The purpose of the Notice of Preparation (NOP) is to provide responsible agencies and interested persons with enough information in order to enable them to make meaningful comments regarding the scope and content of the EIR. Your timely comments will ensure an appropriate level of environmental review for the project.

Project Description: The County proposes an update to the General Plan, Zoning Ordinance and Community Design Guidelines Manual to provide a better framework for future housing development in the County that considers population growth, economic factors, demographics, and community needs and wants.

Project Location: County-wide

For more information regarding the project, please contact Shawna Purvines, at (530) 745-3031. A copy of the NOP is available for review at the Applegate, Auburn, Colfax, Foresthill, Granite Bay, Kings Beach, Penryn, Rocklin, and Tahoe City County Libraries, the Placer County Community Development Resource Agency (Auburn), and on the Placer County website:

<https://ca-placercounty.civicplus.com/5925/Housing-Related-Code-Amendments>

NOP Scoping Meeting: In addition to the opportunity to submit written comments, a public scoping meeting will be held by the County to inform interested parties about the proposed plan, and to provide agencies and the public with an opportunity to provide comments on the scope and content of the EIR. The meeting will be held on Wednesday, September 18, 2019, at 10:00 a.m. at the Community Development Resource Center, 3091 County Center Drive, Auburn (Planning Commission Hearing Room).

NOP Comment Period: Written comments should be submitted at the earliest possible date, but not later than 5:00 p.m. on **September 27, 2019** to Shirlee Herrington, Environmental Coordination Services, Community Development Resource Agency, 3091 County Center Drive, Suite 190, Auburn, CA 95603. (530) 745-3132, Fax: (530) 745-3080, cdraecs@placer.ca.gov.

Location

This project involves amendments to housing-related policies of the County General Plan and the Zoning Ordinance. These changes will take effect county-wide in those areas that are under County jurisdiction (Figure 1, Regional Location Map). In addition, the County will consider new standards and guidelines for multi-family and mixed-use development.

Project Description

The County's purpose in proposing the General Plan, Zoning Ordinance and Community Design Guidelines Manual update is to provide a better framework for future housing development in the County that takes into account population growth, economic factors, demographics, and community needs and wants. This proposed project represents a component of a larger effort to implement elements of the Placer County Housing Strategy and Development Plan. The primary objectives of the Housing Related Code Amendments:

- Increase the availability of a mix of housing types in the County for existing and future residents, students, and employees whose income cannot support the cost of housing in the County;
- Improve the County's overall employment growth by assisting County employers in reducing critical shortages of skilled workers in part driven by a lack of available housing;
- Reduce Vehicle Miles Travelled (VMT) per capita by shortening commute distances for those who commute within Placer County for education or work, or other metric for VMT as determined appropriate by the County under SB 743 legislation, and
- Bring County housing policies, ordinances, standards, and guidelines into conformance with recent changes in State law.

Project Objectives

This proposed project is intended to implement the following objectives in addition to those of the Placer County Housing Strategy and Development Plan:

- Implement adopted General Plan policies that support efficient, resilient and sustainable housing development patterns that can be achieved through higher density, mixed use, transit oriented and infill development projects; and
- Align Placer County General Plan and Zoning Ordinance housing related land uses, development standards and implementation methods with recently adopted specific plans, community plans, and area plans.
- Implement County adopted Strategic Plan (November 20, 2018) which supports new housing construction that provides a mix of housing types for people of all income ranges through for existing and future residents.

Proposed Amendments to the General Plan, Zoning Map, and Zoning Ordinance

The following table provides a summary of the project components and proposed amendments to the General Plan, Zoning Map and Zoning Ordinance Text. The proposed Mixed Use and Multi-family related housing amendments primarily target infill development on commercial and residential zoned parcels within proximity to public transit. Amendments related to clustered housing and increased density would apply in limited areas throughout the unincorporated areas of the County. Below the table is a discussion of the proposed amendments.

The Notice of Preparation is available from the Community Development Resource Agency, 3091 County Center Drive, Suite 280, Auburn, CA 95603, and online at: <https://ca-placercounty.civicplus.com/5925/Housing-Related-Code-Amendments>, and at the following County libraries:

Applegate Library

Auburn Library

Colfax Library

Foresthill Library

Granite Bay Library

Kings Beach Library

Penryn Library

Rocklin Library

Tahoe City Library

SECTIONS	PROJECT COMPONENT	OBJ-ID	OBJECTIVE SUMMARY
General Plan Amendments	Mixed Use and Multi-family	GP-1	<p>Allow residential densities when part of a mixed use project or within a mixed-use zone to be measured using Floor Area Ratio (FAR) in General Commercial (GC) and Higher Density Residential (HDR) Land Use Designations by amending General Plan Table 1-2 to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase HDR Land Use Designation FAR to 2.0 to be consistent with GC Land Use Designation FAR • Add note to table to acknowledge the allowance of smaller lot size then shown in table when project is consistent with mixed use projects and cluster housing project standards and allow up to 30 units per acre.
		GP-2	<p>Amend General Plan Table 1-3 (General Plan Land Use Designations and Consistent Zoning Districts) to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allow General Commercial (C-2), Commercial Planned Development (CPD) or Mixed use (MU) zone districts within the HDR Land Use Designation • Allow Multi-family (MF) zoning in the General Commercial Land Use Designation • Add note to table to acknowledge the allowance of smaller lot size then shown in table when project is consistent with cluster housing project standards.
Zoning Map Amendments	Mixed Use Zone District	ZM-1	Create a new mixed use zone district
		ZM-2	Revise –B, -UP and –DL combining zone district on all Commercial and Multifamily zones where adequate infrastructure and public services are available and replace with –DC, –DS and –DH.
Zoning Text Amendments	Mixed Use and Multi-Family Zone and Standards	MU-1	Create a mixed use zone district
		MU-2	Establish Standards and Guidelines for Multi-family and Mixed Use Development for mixed use and multi-family development
		MU-3	Create a mixed-use development land use
	Residential Density	RD-1	Revise Density allowed in Mobile Home Parks to allow for 12 units per acre with improved design standards
	Workforce Housing	WF-1	Where currently permissible, allow with zoning clearance the construction of mobile homes, recreational homes or tiny houses when they are for caretaker or employee housing, with the exception of FOR and TPZ zones.
		WF-2	Define Tiny Houses on Wheels and allow for use a single family and secondary dwelling

Zoning Text Amendment Objectives (Continued)	Development Standards	DS-1	Include flexible parking standards	
		DS-2	Include flexible building heights	
		DS-3	Reduce or remove lot coverage standards in commercial and higher density residential zones including when part of a mixed-use project or areas where adequate infrastructure and public services are available	
		DS-4	Update development standards for Multifamily Residential Zone District	
		DS-5	Exclude Secondary Dwellings (e.g. Accessory Dwelling Units) from maximum floor area requirements for residential accessory structures	
	By-Right Development and Revisions to Permitting	BR-1	Increase by-right development and administrative level review subject to zoning compliance through : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design Review • Development and Design Standards for Mixed Use and Multifamily • Add Infill Definition 	
	Density Bonus	DB-1	Bring Density Bonus Ordinance into compliance with new State Density Bonus law; include adoption of procedures and timelines for review	
		DB-2	Further expand Density Bonus provisions beyond state requirements to all for up to 100% Density Bonus for mixed-use projects and residential zoned areas where adequate infrastructure and public services are available	
		DB-3	Establish dwelling unit equivalence standards	
		DB-4	Establish density bonus code to allow duplexes, triplexes and fourplexes on Single Family (RS) and Multi-family (MF) residential zones where adequate infrastructure and public services are available	
	Cluster Housing	CH-1	Allow for different types of cluster housing, including tiny house communities; agriculture-, conservation-, and open space-oriented communities; cottage housing; and cohousing	
		CH-2	Revise Combining Zone Planned Development (-PD) and related ordinance and process to streamline the review and approval process	
	Design Standards and Guidelines Update Objectives	Design Standards Manual	DG-1	Prepare a standalone Community Design Manual for Mixed Use and Multi-family Development that updates adopted Community Design Guidelines for these development types , and develop a clear design review process for mixed-use and multifamily projects
			DG-2	Develop a clear process and forms for CEQA streamlining including the development of a design review checklist.

Level of Detail for the Environmental Analysis in the Draft EIR

The analysis will be at a program-level. It will focus on the reasonably foreseeable direct and indirect physical environmental effects that could result from implementation of the proposed project and policy and ordinance changes. Because no specific development projects are being proposed, the analysis will not be parcel-specific.

Scope of the EIR– Potential Significant Effects

The following list of potentially significant effects is not intended to be comprehensive. The Draft EIR may address additional impacts as a result of the comments received on the Notice of Preparation.

Comments and suggestions are requested regarding the environmental issues that will be analyzed in the EIR.

Potentially Significant Impacts to be Addressed in the EIR

At this time, the following issues are anticipated to be addressed in the EIR:

1. Aesthetics
2. Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Emissions
3. Biological Resources
4. Cultural Resources and Tribal Cultural Resources
5. Energy
6. Land Use/Planning
7. Noise
8. Population/Housing
9. Public Services
10. Recreation
11. Transportation/Traffic
12. Utilities/Service Systems
13. Wildfire

Less Than Significant Impacts That Will Not Be Addressed in the EIR

Based on a preliminary review of the Project, the County has determined that the proposed Project would have a less than significant impact or no impact on the CEQA issue areas identified below. This is a preliminary determination only and does not preclude the County from making a different determination upon further analysis.

The primary reasons for these preliminary determinations are as follows:

Agriculture and Forestry Resources

None of the proposed changes in General Plan policy or zoning regulations will result in any conflicts with existing zoning or conversions of Farmland to nonagricultural use.

Geology, Soils, Mineral Resources, and Paleontology

None of the proposed changes in General Plan policy or zoning regulations will result in an increased risk from geologic hazards in that no reduction in safeguards are proposed. None of the proposed changes in General Plan policy or zoning regulations will substantively change mineral resource designations or the regulation of mineral resource recovery.

Hazards and Hazardous Materials

None of the proposed changes in General Plan policy or zoning regulations will result in the exposure of the public to substantial new hazards or hazardous materials. For example, no changes are proposed to regulations regarding the handling of hazardous materials sites.

Hydrology and Water Quality

None of the proposed changes in General Plan policy or zoning regulations will violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements, nor will the proposed project substantially alter or degrade groundwater supplies, existing drainage patterns, or water quality.

Alternatives to be Addressed in the EIR

In accordance with section 15126.6 of the State CEQA Guidelines, an EIR must “describe a range of reasonable alternatives to the Project, or to the location of the Project, which would feasibly attain most the basic objectives of the Project, but would avoid or substantially lessen any of the significant effects of the Project, and evaluate the comparative merits of the alternatives.” The State CEQA Guidelines also require that a No Project Alternative be evaluated, and that under specific circumstances, an environmentally superior alternative be designated from among the remaining alternatives.

The EIR will evaluate a reasonable range of alternatives, selected by an alternatives screening analysis, which will include alternatives that meet most or all of the objectives described above, are potentially feasible, and reduce significant impacts associated with the proposed project. However, no alternatives have yet been selected. The EIR will include an explanation of why other alternatives were rejected from further analysis in the EIR.

The alternatives analysis may, in addition to the No Project Alternative, consider one or more reduced intensity alternatives for further development and analysis in the EIR. The selected alternatives will be analyzed at a qualitative level of detail for comparison against the impacts identified for the proposed Project, consistent with the requirements of CEQA. Because this project involves changes to County land use policy, no alternative will be analyzed that is outside the county and therefore outside of the County’s control.

Requests for Additional Information

If you have any questions, please contact Shawna Purvines at the County of Placer, Community Development/Resource Agency, 3091 County Center Drive, Suite 280, Auburn, CA 95603, by telephone at (530) 745-3031, or by e-mail to spurvine@placer.ca.gov.

Attachments

Figure 1. Regional Location Map

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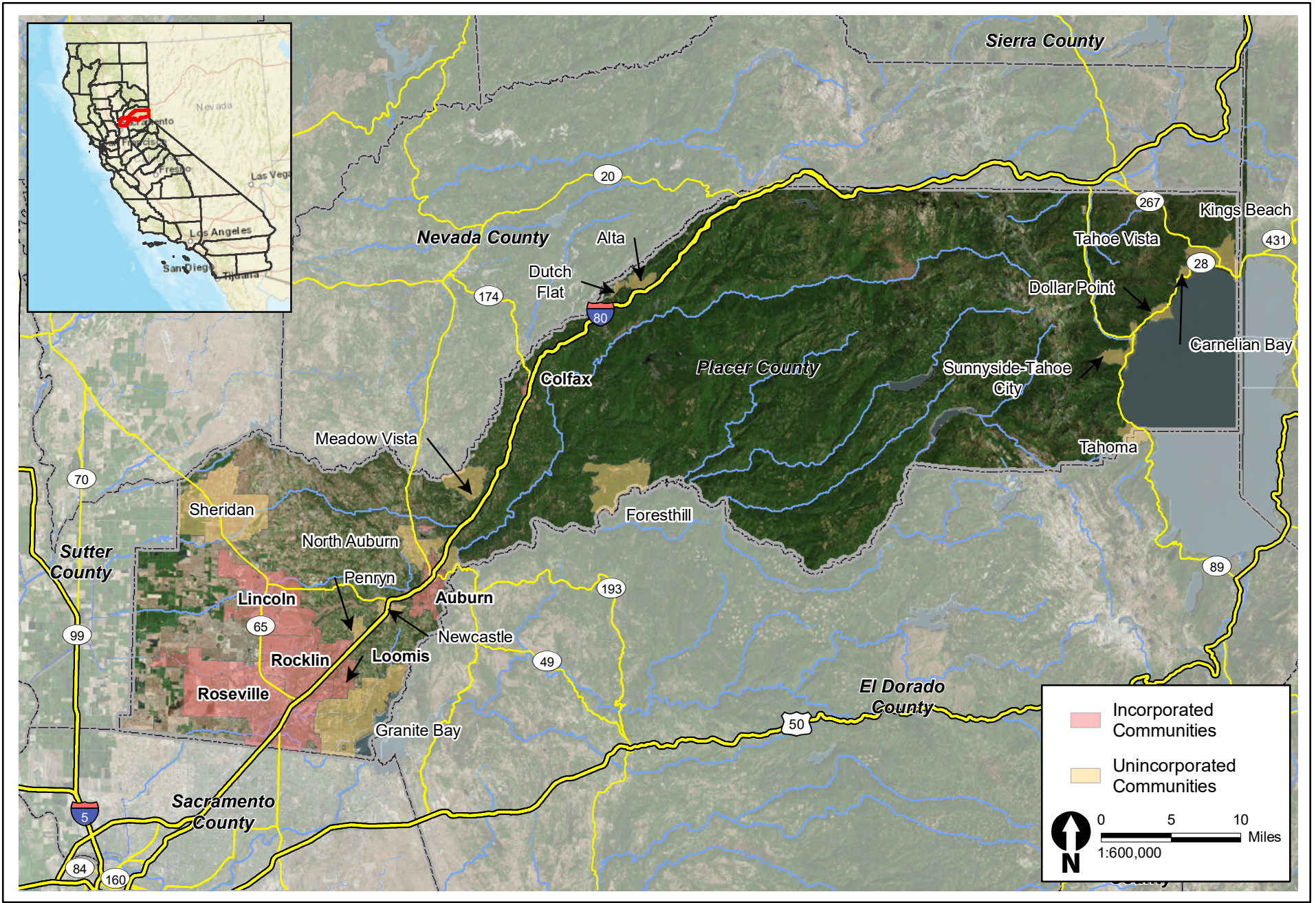


Figure 1
Regional Location Map

