



NOTICE OF PREPARATION OF AN ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT LOOMIS GENERAL PLAN UPDATE

DATE: May 16th, 2022

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

SUBJECT: Notice of Preparation of an Environmental Impact Report for the Town of Loomis 2020-2040 General Plan Update

The Town of Loomis (“the Town”) will be the lead agency and will prepare an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) compliant with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) for the Town of Loomis 2020–2040 General Plan Update (also referred to as “the 2040 General Plan” or “the proposed project”). An Initial Study will not be prepared (CEQA Guidelines Section 15063[a]). In accordance with Section 15082 of the CEQA Guidelines, this Notice of Preparation (NOP) provides the project location, a brief project description, and a summary of the potential environmental effects of the proposed project.

The EIR will describe the potential environmental impacts associated with adoption and implementation of the 2040 General Plan. The 2040 General Plan is a policy document that will guide development and conservation within the Town, including the public infrastructure and public facility improvements required to serve future development. Development projects, public facility improvements, population growth, economic development, and other changes contemplated in the Town through the year 2040 could result in environmental impacts, which will be analyzed in the EIR.¹

The purpose of this NOP is to provide an opportunity to comment on the scope and proposed content of the EIR. The Town will rely on responsible and trustee agencies to provide information relevant to the analysis of resources falling within the jurisdiction of such agencies. Specifically, input is requested on:

1. **Scope of Environmental Analysis**—guidance on the scope of analysis for this EIR, including identification of specific issues that will require closer study due to the location, scale, and character of the project;
2. **Mitigation Measures**—ideas for feasible mitigation, including mitigation that would avoid, eliminate, or reduce potentially significant or significant impacts; and
3. **Alternatives**—suggestions for alternatives to the proposed project that could potentially reduce or avoid potentially significant or significant impacts.

As outlined in CEQA Guidelines Section 15082(b), each responsible and trustee agency must identify specific environmental issues, alternatives, and mitigation measures that should be explored in the EIR. If there is no response within 30 days, the Town will assume that there are no specific environmental issues, alternatives, or mitigation measures that the responsible and trustee agencies believe should be incorporated into the EIR.

¹ The Town’s Housing Element was updated in August 2021 and is incorporated into the proposed 2040 General Plan by reference. The Housing Element has already undergone separate environmental review as part of its adoption process. For more information, please refer to: Town of Loomis, 2021 (July). *Addendum to the General Plan EIR for the 2021–2029 Housing Element Update*. State Clearinghouse No. 2000012026. Available: <https://loomis.ca.gov/documents/housing-element-addendum-july-27-2021/>.

WRITTEN COMMENTS

Please provide your written comments before 5pm on June 16th, 2022. Comments, along with the name and contact information of the appropriate person in your organization, should be addressed to:

Mary Beth Van Voorhis, Planning Director
Town of Loomis
P.O. Box 1330
Loomis, CA 95650
GPUUpdate@loomis.ca.gov

Documents related to the 2040 General Plan Update EIR are available for review on the Town's website at: <https://loomis.ca.gov/2020-general-plan-update/>.

SCOPING MEETING

To encourage additional input to the scope of analysis, potential mitigation, and environmental alternatives, the Town will hold a scoping meeting on Wednesday, June 8th, starting at 7:00pm at the Loomis Depot, 5775 Horseshoe Bar Road, Loomis, CA 95650.

PROJECT LOCATION

The project site is the Planning Area for the 2040 General Plan, which contains all land within the Town's boundaries, and the Town's Sphere of Influence (which is co-terminus with the Town boundaries), as required by California Government Code Section 65300. The Town is in southern Placer County, approximately 25 miles northeast of the city of Sacramento (see Exhibit 1).

Loomis is divided into two distinct areas by Interstate 80, which traverses through the center of Town. The area north of I-80 contains the Town's existing retail, office, and industrial development, as well as residential development at different densities. Retail and office development is located predominantly along Taylor Road, the Town's major commercial corridor. The Union Pacific Railroad right-of-way parallels Taylor Road from Sierra College Boulevard to King Road, and then follows Rippey Road to the northerly Town boundary. Industrial land uses are located in the triangular area between Taylor Road and Swetzer Road in the northeastern portion of the Town. The area south of I-80 is almost exclusively rural and residential in character. Many local landowners maintain small-scale agricultural activities on small ranches, including the raising of farm animals. A number of creeks run through the Town, providing visual quality, wildlife habitat, drainage, and recreational opportunities.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Town of Loomis adopted its first General Plan in 1987. The first comprehensive update of the General Plan occurred in 2001 in response to changes in the community and the region since the Town was incorporated in 1984 and in the 14 years since the adoption of the first General Plan. Although a variety of amendments to the General Plan have been adopted since 1987. This is the second comprehensive update.

California state law requires each county, and each incorporated city or town, to adopt a comprehensive general plan "for the physical development of the county or city, and any land outside its boundaries which in the planning agency's judgment bears relation to its planning" (California Government Code Section 65300). A general plan establishes the community's development and conservation goals and public policy relative to the distribution of future land uses, both public and private. Since the general plan affects the welfare of current and future generations, State law requires that the plan take a long-term perspective (California Government Code Section 65300).

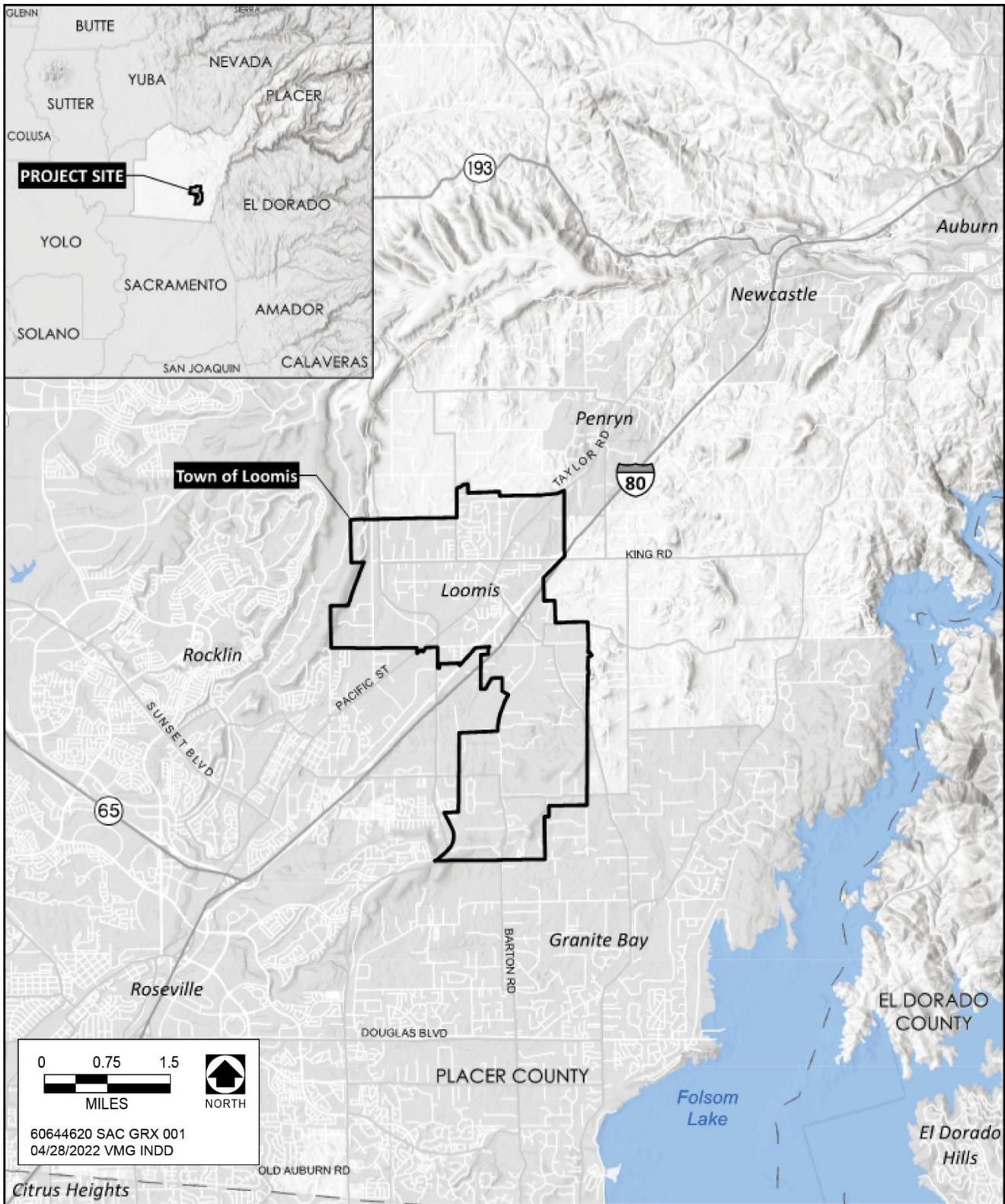


Exhibit 1. Loomis Planning Area and Vicinity

In California, general plans are the guiding policy documents for local governments. Local agencies implement general plans in part through the adoption and enforcement of zoning codes, subdivision ordinances, and other regulations. General plan land use designations and policies provide a framework for zoning designations and development standards. General plans often contain policies that direct the content of municipal code sections and ordinances that regulate grading, building permits, open space dedications, landscaping requirements, parkland dedication, off-street parking requirements, transportation infrastructure, signage, improvement standards, impact fees, and other planning-related codes and ordinances.

As specified in California Government Code Section 65302, there are nine required “elements” for a general plan: land use, circulation, housing, conservation, open space, noise, safety, environmental justice (if the jurisdiction has a disadvantaged community), and air quality (if the jurisdiction is located in the San Joaquin Valley). These elements, or portions thereof, may be combined or separated, in whatever way best meets the needs of the local jurisdiction. In addition to the mandatory elements, a jurisdiction may also adopt any other elements that relate to other topics of local interest (California Government Code Section 65303). The Town of Loomis 2040 General Plan will include the following nine elements: land use; circulation; public facilities and services; conservation of resources; public health, safety, and noise; parks, recreation, and open space; environmental justice; economic development and finance; and housing.

The 2040 General Plan would essentially maintain the historic development pattern, with higher-intensity uses intended to be concentrated in the following areas: (1) adjacent to the Downtown Core, (2) along Taylor Road, and (3) adjacent to I-80, and development in surrounding areas progressively less intense as the distance from the Downtown Core increases. This arrangement of land uses within the Town is known in Loomis as the “core concept.” It is the Town’s intent to preserve the existing semi-rural feel and character in the fringes of the community, while also accommodating change consistent with General Plan goals.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

The EIR will evaluate the potential environmental effects of implementing the 2040 General Plan Update compared to existing baseline conditions, along with a reasonable range of alternatives, including the no-project alternative. For many environmental topic areas, existing conditions have been identified and summarized in updated background setting sections, provided as Volume III of the General Plan Update. These setting sections will be incorporated by reference into the EIR and used, as appropriate, to inform the existing conditions from which many of the environmental impacts will be analyzed, as further detailed below. The EIR will also address direct, reasonably foreseeable indirect, cumulative, and growth-inducing effects. The EIR will identify feasible mitigation measures, if available, to reduce significant and potentially significant impacts.

POTENTIAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

The following environmental topic areas will be evaluated in the EIR.

- **Aesthetics and Visual Resources** —The EIR will summarize the existing visual conditions in the Planning Area. This section will evaluate the potential impacts on scenic vistas, scenic roadways, and visual character that may result from 2040 General Plan implementation, as well as impacts related to light and glare, including consideration of how proposed 2040 General Plan policies and implementation measures would help to reduce adverse effects to aesthetic and visual resources.
- **Agriculture and Forestry Resources** — This section will describe the California Department of Conservation Important Farmland Mapping Classifications within the Planning Area, along with any areas that may be held under Williamson Act contracts. The analysis will evaluate the potential for direct and indirect conversion of Important Farmland to non-agricultural uses, or conflicts with active Williamson Act contracts. As forestry resources do not exist within the Planning Area, this section will only briefly discuss the potential for conflicts with, or future conversion of, forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code section 12220[g]), timberland (as defined by Public Resources Code section 4526), or timberland zoned for Timberland Production.

- **Air Quality**—Construction and operation of land uses accommodated under the 2040 General Plan would generate air pollutant emissions. Earth would be disturbed during site development activities, generating dust, and construction vehicles and equipment would create short-term pollutant emissions. Development accommodated under the 2040 General Plan may result in additional vehicular traffic and demand for energy that would generate air pollution. The EIR will discuss the regional and local air quality setting and quantify projected changes in air pollutant emissions as a result of implementation of the 2040 General Plan. The emissions estimates will be derived with consideration of recommended methods and significance thresholds developed by the Placer County Air Pollution Control District, and the EIR will explain how methods and thresholds are designed to assess potential human health effects.
- **Biological Resources**—The EIR will summarize the biological resources in the Planning Area, identify existing habitats, and evaluate the project’s potential effects on waterways and wetlands, sensitive habitats and mature native trees, sensitive plants and wildlife, and wildlife movement corridors, and will include a discussion of potential conflicts with relevant biological resources policies or ordinances, as well as how proposed General Plan policies and implementation measures will reduce or avoid potential impacts.
- **Cultural and Tribal Cultural Resources**—The EIR will summarize existing cultural and Tribal Cultural Resources and evaluate potential impacts on those resources. The EIR will also describe consultation with California Native American tribes to obtain input that informs policies and implementation measures related to cultural and tribal cultural resources.
- **Energy**—The EIR will include an analysis of energy consumption attributable to implementation of the 2040 General Plan, with an emphasis on avoiding or reducing inefficient, wasteful, or unnecessary consumption of energy. The section will also include a discussion of potential conflicts with applicable plans for renewable energy or energy efficiency. Adverse physical environmental effects associated with energy demand within the Planning Area will be reported in relevant topic area sections, such as Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Emissions.
- **Geology, Soils, Minerals, and Paleontology**—The EIR will briefly describe the geologic setting as related to seismicity, soils, other geologic hazards, and unique paleontological (fossil) resources. This section will outline design measures, best management practices, and regulatory requirements to minimize impacts on people or structures from seismic, soil, and other geologic hazards. The EIR will also identify any potential impacts to undiscovered fossils. The California Geological Survey mineral land classifications within the Planning Area will be discussed, and impacts to any regionally or locally important mineral resources will be evaluated.
- **Greenhouse Gas Emissions**—The EIR will present an analysis of greenhouse gas emissions attributable to implementation of the 2040 General Plan, and cumulative impacts related to climate change. The EIR will not analyze the impact of climate change or other environmental impacts on the Planning Area, except to the extent the 2040 General Plan would substantially exacerbate these hazards.
- **Hazards and Hazardous Materials**—The EIR will identify potential impacts from the transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials; accidental releases of hazardous materials; emissions of hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste near a school; proximity to known hazardous materials sites on the Cortese List (California Government Code Section 65962.5); and impairment of an adopted emergency response or evacuation plan. Fire hazards will be discussed in the Wildland Fire Hazards section of the EIR. The Town’s Planning Area is not located in or near any airfields or airports or any associated airport land use plans; therefore, airport safety hazards will not be evaluated in this EIR.
- **Hydrology and Water Quality**—The EIR will provide a brief overview of existing hydrologic and water quality conditions in the Planning Area, and will evaluate potential short-term construction-related effects on water quality from stormwater runoff, as well as longer-term effects from the addition of impervious surfaces on stormwater drainage, flooding, and water quality. This section will also evaluate potential impacts on groundwater recharge and sustainability. Potential impacts related to flood flows will also be evaluated in this

section. This section will outline design features, best management practices, and regulatory requirements required to minimize hydrology and water quality effects.

- **Land Use and Planning, Population, and Housing**—The EIR will evaluate the potential for the 2040 General Plan to divide an existing community, or to conflict with existing, adopted land use plans or regulations that were adopted for the purpose of reducing or avoiding environmental effects. The EIR will also evaluate the potential for 2040 General Plan implementation to induce substantial unplanned population growth, or to displace substantial numbers of housing units or people that could lead to potentially significant physical environmental effects.
- **Noise and Vibration**—This section will present an analysis of noise generation associated with implementation of the 2040 General Plan, as well as vibration impacts. The Town's Planning Area is not located in or near noise contours associated with airfields or airports that are a concern for land use compatibility planning; therefore, airport noise will not be evaluated in the EIR.
- **Public Services and Recreation**—The EIR will describe existing public services related to fire, police, schools, and parks, and will evaluate whether the 2040 General Plan would result in potential increases in demand that would require new facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts. The EIR will also evaluate whether any increased use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities would result in substantial physical deterioration of such facilities.
- **Transportation and Circulation**—The EIR will discuss the Town's transportation network, and will identify potential conflicts with applicable policies related to circulation, including transit, roadway, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities and any potential conflicts with State guidance related to increases in travel demand. The EIR will also present an analysis of potential impacts related to hazardous design features and emergency access.
- **Utilities and Service Systems**—The EIR will evaluate physical environmental impacts related to the provision of utility systems, including water supply, wastewater treatment, solid waste disposal, electricity, and natural gas. Stormwater drainage facilities will be assessed in the Hydrology and Water Quality chapter of the EIR.
- **Wildland Fire Hazards**—The Planning Area is located near state responsibility areas to the north and east, but is not situated within a state responsibility area or lands classified by the state as very high fire hazard severity zones. However, the Town has adopted fire hazard severity zone ratings for the Planning Area, which include moderate and high hazard classifications. The EIR will evaluate the potential for the 2040 General Plan to exacerbate wildland fire hazards, and any potential conflicts with applicable policies designed to reduce fire hazards.