

This Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR) was prepared in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and CEQA Guidelines (Section 15132). The City of Elk Grove is the lead agency for the environmental review of the proposed project (project) and has the principal responsibility for approving the project. This FEIR assesses the expected environmental impacts resulting from approval of the project and associated impacts from subsequent development under the project. The FEIR also responds to comments received on the Draft EIR.

1.1 BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE OF THE EIR

OVERVIEW OF CEQA REQUIREMENTS FOR PREPARATION OF AN EIR

The City of Elk Grove (City), acting as the lead agency, has prepared this FEIR to provide the public and responsible trustee agencies with information about the potential environmental effects of the proposed Sheldon/99 General Plan Amendment (GPA) and Rezone. As described in the CEQA Guidelines Section 15121 (a), an EIR is a public informational document that assesses potential environmental effects of the project, as well as identifies mitigation measures and alternatives to the project that could reduce or avoid its adverse environmental impacts. Public agencies are charged with the duty to consider and minimize environmental impacts of proposed development where feasible, and obligated to balance a variety of public objectives including economic, environmental, and social factors.

CEQA requires the preparation of an environmental impact report prior to approving any project which may have a significant effect on the environment. For the purposes of CEQA, the term "project" refers to the whole of an action which has the potential for resulting in either a direct physical change or a reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment (CEQA Guidelines Section 15378[a]). The City has determined that the proposed Sheldon/99 GPA and Rezone project is a "project" within the definition of CEQA.

CEQA REQUIREMENTS FOR A FEIR

Section 15132 of the State CEQA Guidelines states:

The Final EIR shall consist of:

- (a) The draft EIR or a revision of the draft.*
- (b) Comments and recommendations received on the draft EIR either verbatim or in summary.*
- (c) A list of persons, organizations, and public agencies commenting on the draft EIR.*
- (d) The responses of the Lead Agency to significant environmental points raised in the review and consultation process.*
- (e) Any other information added by the Lead Agency.*

CEQA required findings, and any statement of overriding considerations, would be made after the City has considered the FEIR and would be included in the public record. Likewise, the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP) would be adopted at the same time as the findings and also be included in the public record.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND OF ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW PROCESS OF THE PROJECT

The following is an overview of the environmental review process for the Sheldon/99 GPA and Rezone project that has led to the preparation of this FEIR:

Notice of Preparation and Initial Study

In accordance with Section 15082 of the CEQA Guidelines, the City prepared a Notice of Preparation (NOP) of an EIR for the project that was issued to the public and local, responsible, and trustee agencies on December 14, 2007, and distributed to state agencies through the State Clearinghouse. The comment period ended January 18, 2008. The City was identified as the lead agency for the project. This notice was circulated to the public, local, state, and federal agencies, and other interested parties to solicit comments on the project. Concerns raised in response to the NOP were considered during preparation of the Draft Environmental Impact Report (Draft EIR). The NOP and responses by interested parties are presented in **Appendix A** of the Draft EIR. Also, an Initial Study for the project was prepared and released for public review along with the NOP. Its conclusions supported preparation of an EIR for the project. The Initial Study is also included in **Appendix A** of the Draft EIR.

Notice of Availability and Draft EIR

The Notice of Availability for the Draft EIR was published on August 15, 2008. The Draft EIR was also released for public and agency review August 15, 2008, with the review period ending September 29, 2008. The Draft EIR contains a description of the project, description of the environmental setting, identification of project impacts, and mitigation measures for impacts found to be significant, as well as an analysis of project alternatives.

FEIR

The City received five individual comment letters, all from agencies, regarding the Draft EIR. This document responds to the written comments received as required by CEQA. This document also contains minor edits to the Draft EIR and the final MMRP for the project. This document and the Draft EIR constitute the FEIR.

Certification of the FEIR/Project Consideration

The City of Elk Grove will review and consider the FEIR. The City Council will consider the FEIR prior to making any decisions regarding project approval. If the City Council finds that the FEIR is "adequate and complete," the City may certify the FEIR at a public hearing. However, a public hearing is not required by CEQA. The rule of adequacy generally holds that the EIR can be certified if it: (1) shows a good faith effort at full disclosure of environmental information; and (2) provides sufficient analysis to allow decisions to be made regarding the project in contemplation of its environmental consequences.

Upon review and consideration of the FEIR, the City may take action to approve, revise, or reject the project. A decision to approve the project would be accompanied by written findings in accordance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15091 and Section 15093. Public Resources Code Section 21081.6 also requires lead agencies to adopt a Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP) to describe measures that have been adopted or made a condition of project approval that mitigate or avoid significant effects on the environment.

1.2 TYPE OF DOCUMENT

The CEQA Guidelines identify several types of EIRs, each applicable to different project circumstances. This EIR has been prepared as a Project EIR pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15161. A Project EIR focuses primarily on the changes in the environment that would result from a development project during planning, construction, and operation.

1.3 INTENDED USES OF THE EIR

This EIR has been prepared in accordance with CEQA. The EIR is intended to evaluate the environmental impacts of the project to the greatest extent possible. In accordance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15126, this EIR should be used as the primary environmental document to evaluate all subsequent planning and permitting actions associated with the Sheldon/99 GPA and Rezone project. Subsequent actions that may be associated with the project are identified in Section 3.0, Project Description, of the Draft EIR.

1.4 ORGANIZATION AND SCOPE OF THE FEIR

This document is organized in the following manner:

SECTION 1.0—INTRODUCTION

Section 1.0 provides an overview of the EIR process to date and what the FEIR is required to contain.

SECTION 2.0—EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Section 2.0 contains the executive summary of the Final EIR.

SECTION 3.0—COMMENTS AND RESPONSES TO COMMENTS ON THE DRAFT EIR

Section 2.0 provides a list of commenters, copies of written comments (coded for reference), and the responses to those written comments.

SECTION 4.0—ERRATA

Section 4.0 consists of minor text changes made to the Draft EIR as a result of comments on the Draft EIR.