

4.0 EXISTING CONDITIONS, PROJECT IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this section is to inform decision-makers and the public of the type and magnitude of change to the existing environment that would be caused by the proposed project, and proposed and approved cumulative development, in the newly-formed City of Elk Grove. Individual environmental topics addressed in this EIR have been identified in the Notice of Preparation and Initial Study for the proposed project by the City of Elk Grove.

GENERAL FORMAT OF ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

The assessment of each issue area begins with a discussion of the existing conditions relevant to that issue area. Following existing conditions is a discussion of the project's impact relative to the issue area. Within the impact analysis, the first subsection, in most cases, identifies the methodology used to reach environmental impact conclusions. In addition, also contained within this subsection are the significance thresholds, which are the criteria, adopted by the City or other agencies, such as Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District (SMAQMD), to determine whether potential effects are significant. The next subsection describes each impact associated with project and cumulative projects, as well as mitigation measures to alleviate impacts. The last subsection contained within each section identifies all impacts that cannot be mitigated to a less than significant level.

IMPACT STATEMENTS

Within each impact analysis section, significant impacts are identified by impact statements, which are presented in bold type. Each impact statement corresponds numerically to the section of the EIR for which the impact is identified. For example **Impact 4.1-1** would constitute the first significant impact identified within **Section 4.1, Agricultural Resources**. **Impact 4.1-2** would constitute the second significant impact identified in **Section 4.1, Agricultural Resources**, and so on throughout the document. In the mitigation measure section of the document, each measure has been numbered to link it to the appropriate impact statement. For example, mitigation measure **MM4.1-1** would correspond to **Impact 4.1-1**; and **MM4.1-2** would correspond to **Impact 4.1-2**.

IMPORTANT DEFINITIONS UTILIZED IN ANALYSIS

Significant, Unavoidable Impacts are impacts that cannot be avoided or lessened by implementing mitigation measures. Specific economic, social, technical, or other considerations make infeasible the mitigation measures or project alternatives identified in the EIR. If the City of Elk Grove decides to approve the project, a Statement of Overriding Considerations must be adopted by the City Council for any identified significant and unavoidable impacts, as required by the State CEQA Guidelines, Section 15093(b).

Significant Impacts are impacts that may be feasibly mitigated to a less than significant level. State CEQA Guidelines, Section 15091(a)(1), requires that “findings” be made indicating that changes or alterations have been required in the project to avoid or substantially lessen these impacts.

Less Than Significant or Adverse Impacts are impacts that have been found not to significantly impact the environment even without the implementation of mitigation measures.

Mitigation is defined in the CEQA Guidelines (Section 15370) to include (a) avoiding the impact altogether by not taking a certain action or parts of an action; (b) minimizing the impact by limiting the degree or magnitude of the action and its implementation; (c) rectifying the impact by repairing, rehabilitating, or restoring the affected environment; (d) reducing or eliminating the impact over time by preservation and maintenance operations during the life of the action; and (e) compensating by replacing or providing substitute resources or environments.

CUMULATIVE METHODOLOGY

Cumulative impacts refer to two or more individual effects which, when considered together are considerable, or which compound or increase other environmental impacts (CEQA Guidelines Section 15355). The cumulative impacts from several projects is the change in the environment which results from the incremental impact of the project when added to other closely related past, present and reasonably foreseeable future projects. Cumulative impacts can result from individual minor, but collectively significant projects taking place over a period of time.

In order to analyze the cumulative impacts of the project in combination with existing development and other expected future growth, the amount and location of growth expected to occur in addition to that of the proposed project must be predicted. Section 15130(b) of the CEQA Guidelines allows the following two methods of prediction: “(A) a list of past, present, and reasonably anticipated future projects

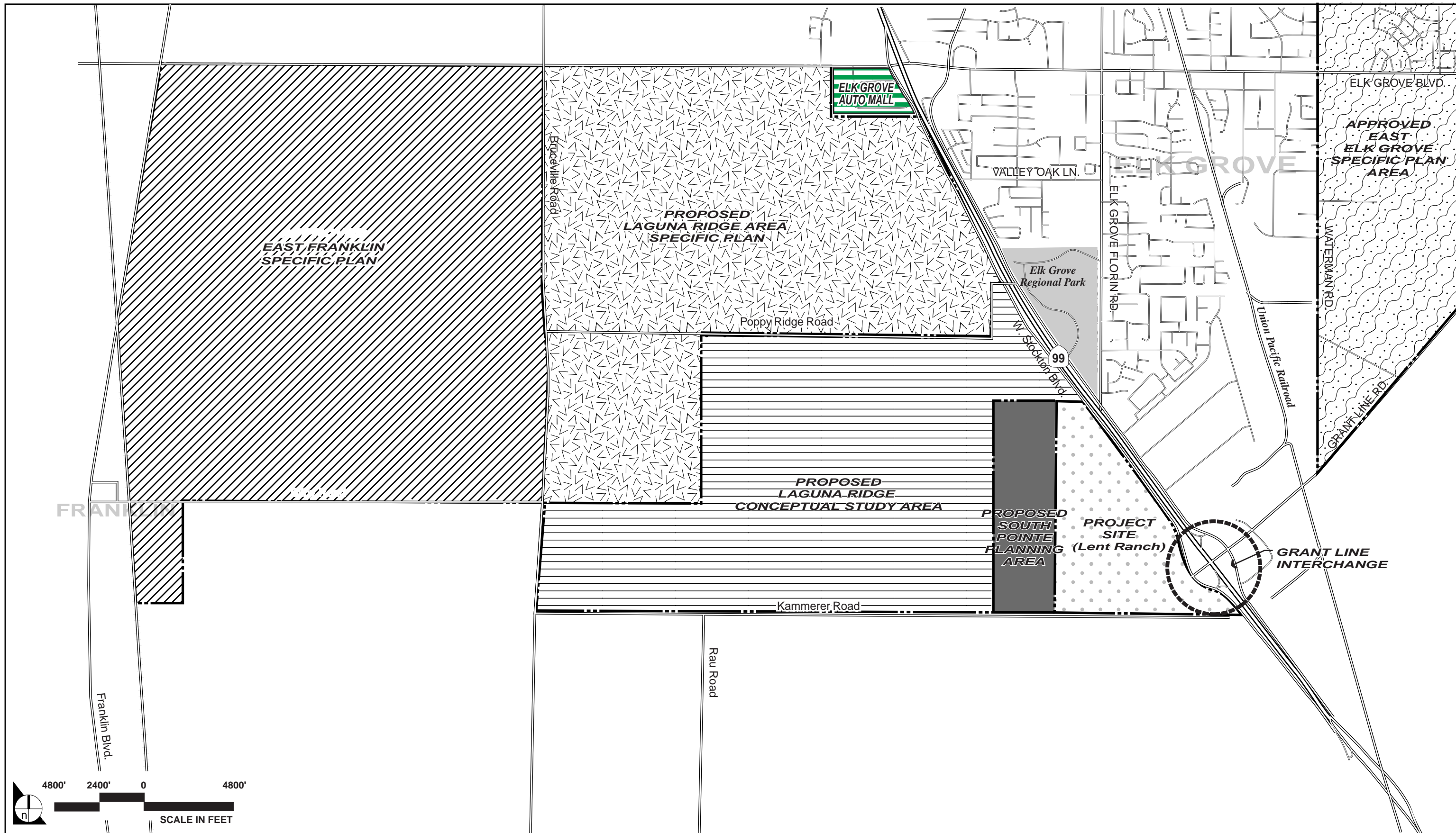
producing related or cumulative impacts, including those projects outside the control of the agency, or (B) a summary of projections contained in an adopted general plan or related planning document which is designed to evaluate regional or areawide conditions.” In order to analyze a worst-case condition, this EIR uses a combination of both methods to provide a comprehensive estimate of cumulative impacts. Growth forecasts for the project are based on the City’s *General Plan* build-out model, which presumes buildout of land is consistent with current designations. The build-out model was enhanced in the area surrounding the Lent Ranch project site to also reflect the planned and approved development projects contemplated for the area. The combination of the project list method (“A” above) and the buildout projection method (“B” above) results in a worst-case future growth scenario.

Proposed and approved residential, commercial, industrial and institutional projects used in the cumulative analysis are summarized within **Table 4.0-1**. The general location of most of the cumulative projects is illustrated in **Figure 4.0-1**. Where project specific impacts have been identified that, together with the effects of other pending projects, could result in cumulatively significant impacts, the relevant pending projects together with the proposed project have been evaluated and potential impacts documented.

**Table 4.0-1
Cumulative Projects**

Project Name	Status	Single Family Dwelling Units	Multi-Family Dwelling Units	Commercial./ Retail	Non-Retail
Lent Ranch	Application	0	280	279.5 acres.	0
Laguna Ridge Concept Area	Planning	4,700	-	17 acres.	32 ac.
Elk Grove Auto Mall	Approved	0	0	54.1 acres.	0
East Franklin Specific Plan	Approved	9,497	606	53.1 acres.	1.6
East Elk Grove Specific Plan	Approved	4300	0	23.6 acres.	454.3 acres
Sunrise/Douglas Community Plan & Specific Plan ¹	Application	18,170	3,017	478.9 acres.	833.0 acres
Laguna Ridge Specific Plan	Application	6,504	874	56.9 acres.	124.7 acres.
Chevron ¹	Approved	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Folsom Sphere of Influence ¹	Planning	0	0	0	2,509 acres.
Grant Line Interchange	Planning	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Rio Del Oro ¹	Application	10,145	1,550	86.6 acres	302.8 acres

¹ These projects are not illustrated on Figure 4.0-1.



FIGURE

Cumulative Projects