

2.1 HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

2.1.1 LAND USE

This section describes the existing land uses at the proposed project site, characterizes surrounding uses and summarizes current planning activities in the project area. This analysis focuses on land use compatibility and impacts associated with the implementation of the project.

REGULATORY SETTING

The Sheldon Road/SR 99 Interchange Improvement Project is subject to the goals and policies of both the City of Elk Grove General Plan and the City of Sacramento General Plan. The function of the general plan for each respective city is to provide guidance to the development and management of land within each city. Additionally, the portion of the project within the jurisdiction of the City of Sacramento is within the South Sacramento Community Plan area, and is subject to special land use policies associated with the community plan. Neither the City of Elk Grove General Plan, nor the City of Sacramento General Plan list specific policies that relate to land use, as it relates to the proposed project.

Local

City of Elk Grove

The City of Elk Grove General Plan identifies one policy that relate to Land Use under Land Use Policies: Interagency Coordination:

- LU-39: The City shall coordinate with regional planning agencies setting land use and environmental policies and programs and cooperate in the implementation of programs consistent with General Plan policy.

City of Sacramento

The City of Sacramento General Plan does not identify specific policies that relate to land use as they relate to the proposed project.

AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

Regional Setting

The City of Elk Grove is located entirely within Sacramento County, California. Sacramento County is bounded on the north by Placer and Sutter counties, on the south by San Joaquin County, on the west by Yolo and Solano counties, and on the east by El Dorado and Amador counties. Sacramento County covers approximately 1,633 square kilometers (1,015 square miles) of land, the majority of which consists of flat grassland and oak woodlands with foothill areas to the west and east of the County line. The land uses in the surrounding counties vary from flat agricultural lands in Yolo, Sutter, Solano, and San Joaquin counties to, foothill areas in Amador county, and mountain terrains in Placer and El Dorado counties.

2.1 HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

Local Setting

The City of Elk Grove is located entirely within the southern portion of Sacramento County. Land use in this portion of the County is primarily residential, commercial, and agricultural. The City of Sacramento borders Elk Grove to the north, and also contains residential and commercial land uses near the City boundary. To the south of the City, south of Twin Cities Road is primarily agricultural land, mostly utilized for cattle raising and dairy activities. The Sacramento River is the western border for the City and the Cosumnes River is the eastern border.

Project Area

The project is located on the northern boundary of the City of Elk Grove and the southern boundary of the City of Sacramento. The northwest quadrant of the Sheldon Road/SR 99 intersection is located in the City of Sacramento and the remaining quadrants are within the City of Elk Grove. The Sheldon Road/SR 99 interchange is 1.6 kilometers (1.0 mile) directly north of the Bond Road-Laguna Boulevard/SR 99 interchange and 1.6 kilometers (1.0 mile) directly south of the Calvine Road/SR 99 interchange. **Figure 1.1-1** in Section 1 *Proposed Project* shows the project area.

Existing land uses on the east and west sides of State Route 99 consist of a mixture of private residences, agricultural activity, retail and commercial complexes, and undeveloped land. **Figures 2.1.1-1a** and **2.2.2-1b** show the current zoning of the project area in both the City of Elk Grove and the City of Sacramento. Right of way would be acquired on parcels surrounding State Route 99 and no farmland would be converted.

Land Uses

Southeast Quadrant

East of the interchange along the south side of Sheldon Road are the Elk Grove Church of Christ and several residences. South along E. Stockton Boulevard are two commercial business (Stockman's Supply store and Sensation Spas), a series of undeveloped parcels, and the First Baptist Church. Two dog grooming businesses are also located in the southeast quadrant on Sheldon Road and are associated with residences. A small amount of right-of-way may be taken from the front of the parcels, but would not affect the homes or businesses located on the parcels. Northeast of the church is a large residential subdivision (Sheldon Pacific) that is currently under construction. A Caltrans Park and Ride lot is situated on the west side of E. Stockton Boulevard, adjacent to SR 99. (**Table 2.1.1-1** summarizes the land uses in each quadrant). This area is part of the City of Elk Grove and is zoned as General Commercial (GC) and Agricultural-Residential (AR-5). **Figure 2.1.1-1a** shows the current zoning of the project area in the City of Elk Grove. **Figure 2.1.1-1b** shows the current zoning of the project area in the City of Sacramento.

According to the Elk Grove General Plan (2003), existing and future land uses in the quadrant are Commercial and Commercial/Office/Multi-Family. **Figures 2.1.1-2a** and **2.1.1-2b** show the existing land uses in the project area in the City of Elk Grove and the City of Sacramento, respectively.

Southwest Quadrant

The southwest quadrant is currently undergoing development. A WinCo supermarket, Carl's Jr. restaurant, and Chevron gas station have recently been constructed along the south side of Sheldon Road in proximity to the intersection of Sheldon Road and Lewis Stein Road. South of the WinCo supermarket is a large vacant parcel on which a 152-unit apartment complex (Park Meadows Apartments) was recently approved. Immediately east of Park Meadows Apartment site, a new residential subdivision (Park Meadows) is under construction. The area immediately west of SR 99 between the new Park Meadows subdivision and the Carl's Jr. restaurant is undeveloped, commercially-zoned lands. A map showing the location of existing land uses in the vicinity of the project site is included as **Figure 2.1.1-3**. The southwest quadrant is zoned as Shopping Center Land Use Zone (SC).

According to the Elk Grove General Plan that was adopted in November 2003, existing and future land uses in the southwest quadrant are Commercial and Medium-density Residential.

Northeast Quadrant

The northeast quadrant is within the City of Elk Grove consists mainly of undeveloped grassy fields, farm buildings, and a concentration of residential dwellings in the vicinity of E. Stockton Boulevard and Bow Street. For land use planning purposes, this area is part of the approved Calvine Special Planning Area. For zoning purposes, the northeast quadrant is zoned as the Laguna Community Floodplain Special Planning Area. The purpose of designating the area part of the Laguna Community Floodplain Special Planning Area is to allow development that will protect and preserve the floodplain of Laguna Creek and its tributaries in a natural condition, provide a natural lasting boundary between the Laguna community and development within the Sacramento Metropolitan area to the north, protect future residents from potential flooding of Laguna Creek and its tributaries, provide open space amenities for future residential development, and promote the "village" concept adopted by the Board of Supervisors in the Laguna Community Area Plan. The Elk Grove Community Service District (CSD) has acquired land and is planning a park in this quadrant.

Existing and future land uses in the northeast quadrant according to the Elk Grove General Plan that was adopted in November 2003 are Commercial, Medium Density Residential, and Low-Density Residential.

Northwest Quadrant

The San Joaquin Cemetery is in the northwest quadrant (within the City of Sacramento), immediately adjacent to the highway and the overpass. Along the west side of W. Stockton Boulevard, which parallels SR 99, are the following: vacant properties, a single-family residence, and several established commercial businesses, including Sentry Storage, Honda of Sacramento, All Storage of Elk Grove and U-Haul outlet, Laguna Village RV Park, Laguna Millennium Gifts, and SKM Market. Located along the north side of Sheldon Road are single-family residences and a golf driving range facility. This quadrant is zoned within the City of Sacramento as Rural Estates (RE-1/4) and General Commercial (C-2-R).

According to the City of Sacramento General Plan Land Use map that was updated in July 2002, existing and future land uses in the northwest quadrant are Low-Density Residential, Mixed Use, and Parks and Recreation-Open Space.

**TABLE 2.1.1-1
SURROUNDING LAND USES**

Quadrants	Current Land Uses	Current Zoning	Approved or Planned Plans or Developments
Southeast (City of Elk Grove)	This area consists of churches, residences, two commercial businesses, two dog grooming businesses associated with single-family residential homes, undeveloped parcels, and a Caltrans Park and Ride Lot.	General Commercial (GC), Agricultural-Residential (AR-5)	Sheldon Pacific, a large residential subdivision, is currently under construction in the Southeast quadrant.
Northeast (City of Elk Grove)	This area consists of newly developed residential properties, undeveloped grassy fields, and farm buildings.	Laguna Community Floodplain Special Planning Area	This area is designated as the approved Calvine Special Planning Area. The Community Services District (CSD) is planning a park in this quadrant as part of the mitigation for rapid housing developments and residential growth in the area. The park will be approximately 10 acres. The CSD is currently working with engineers to design access to and from the park that would meet the City's needs and be compatible with the Sheldon Road Interchange improvement project.
Northwest (City of Sacramento)	This area consists of a cemetery, vacant properties, single-family residences, commercial businesses, and a golf driving range facility.	Rural Estates (RE-1/4) and General Commercial (C-2-R)	No development is currently planned in this quadrant. Vacant parcels are located north of existing businesses on West Stockton Boulevard, and vacant parcels, and abandoned homes are located on Sheldon Road.
Southwest (City of Elk Grove)	This area consists of a supermarket, fast food restaurants, gas station, residential properties, and undeveloped land.	Shopping Center Land Use Zone (SC)	Park Meadow Apartments is a 152-unit apartment complex that was recently approved. Also, Park Meadows residential subdivision is under construction.

Table 2.1.1-2, located in Appendix G at the end of this document, provides a full list of projects in the City of Elk Grove as of April 9, 2004.

Local and Regional Plans Pertinent to the Project Area

South Sacramento Habitat Conservation Plan

When approved, the South Sacramento Habitat Conservation Plan (SSHCP) would address the conservation and development of lands within the portion of the County and includes the project

2.1 HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

area. The SSHCP is a regional approach to addressing issues related to urban development, habitat conservation, regulatory compliance, and agricultural protection. The SSHCP would consolidate environmental efforts to protect and enhance wetlands (primarily vernal pools) and upland habitats to provide ecologically viable conservation areas. Its intent is to also minimize regulatory hurdles and streamline the permitting process for projects that engage in development activities. The SSHCP covers 41 different species of plants and wildlife, including 11 that are state or federally listed as threatened or endangered.¹ Once the plan is approved, it will allow for incidental take of covered species with the requirement of mitigation for lost habitat at approved ratios.²

The boundaries of the SSHCP are Highway 50 on the north, Interstate 5 on the west and the County boundary on the east and south. It encompasses about 341,000 acres, excluding the cities of Galt and Sacramento, and the entitled areas of Elk Grove and Laguna.

The SSHCP is overseen by a Steering Committee appointed by the County Board of Supervisors. Committee membership includes developers, environmentalists, regulators and farmers. Economic and Biological Subcommittees report to the Steering Committee. Added assistance comes from a Technical Advisory Committee, a Regulatory Integration Committee and a Future Funding Committee. The City of Elk Grove is a member of the steering committee and is actively participating in the development process of the SSHCP.

The SSHCP will streamline the permitting process by providing a predictable mitigation/compensation process to comply with environmental regulations. The plan requires a one-time, economically attractive per acre fee for mitigating impacts. The fee will be used to protect and manage habitat.

Participation in the SSHCP will be voluntary for local governments. The predominant habitat is vernal pool grasslands. The plan will provide 1:1 open space mitigation. The fee will provide compliance with federal and state endangered species and wetland regulations. The County will hold applicable state and federal permits. The fee will be two tiered: a base fee and a wetted acre fee. The fee will purchase habitat only from willing sellers and mostly by purchasing easements. The plan will protect about 50% of the existing vernal pools inside the Urban Services Boundary (USB). The project assumes no changes in the USB. The SSHCP will be in place until build out within the USB or about 50-70 years.

The proposed timeline for adoption and implementation of the SSHCP as of June 16, 2004, is late 2005.

¹ <http://www.saccounty.net/planning/habitat-conservation/overview.html>. Site accessed 4/28/04. Municipal Services Agency Planning and Community Development Department. South Sacramento Habitat Conservation Plan.

² Sacramento County. South Sacramento Habitat Conservation Plan. Anna Whalen. Personal Communication. July 19, 2004.

South Sacramento Community Plan and Jacinto Creek Planning Area

The northwest quadrant of the project site is designated as a Special Planning District with the City of Sacramento's South Sacramento Community Plan (SSCP). The Jacinto Creek Planning Area (JCPA) has been developed for this Special Planning District. The JCPA is located within the southeast part of the SSCP. The land within the SSCP and JCPA is largely undeveloped. The JCPA consists of approximately 170 hectares (418 acres) of land that the City of Sacramento has planned for primarily single-family development.

One of the guiding policies of the SSCP is to enhance the urban form and community character through the creation and expansion of community activity centers, enhancement of major roadway corridors, attractive and unique park and recreational enhancements, and preservation and enhancement of the character of existing neighborhoods. Additionally, the SSCP dictates that major corridors should be attractive, well landscaped, with attractive development and focused development at critical nodes. The SSCP plans for Sheldon Road to include streetscape enhancements with development along Sheldon Road and in connection with the new interchange.

IMPACTS

No Build Alternative

Consistency with Local Plans

The No Build Alternative would not be consistent with local and regional plans. Without the proposed improvements from either Alternative 2A or 3A, the City of Sacramento and the City of Elk Grove would both fail to meet General Plan Circulation level of service (LOS) requirements.

Build Alternatives (2A and 3A Impacts)

Consistency with Local Plans

The proposed project Alternatives 2A and 3A would be consistent with local and regional plans and the City of Elk Grove and City of Sacramento General Plans, and is part of the City of Elk Grove's Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP).

CEQA FINDING

The proposed project would have **no impact** on consistency with local plans.

Impacts to San Joaquin Cemetery

Both alternatives would encroach upon the San Joaquin Cemetery located in the northwest quadrant adjacent to the highway. The proposed realignment of West Stockton Boulevard would pass through the northwest corner of the cemetery. The roadway would encroach upon a previously disturbed area (i.e., the existing alignment of West Stockton Boulevard, a graveled

2.1 HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

parking area, the fence line for the cemetery, and an alignment of subsurface utilities), and no project related activities would occur in proximity to any burials within the cemetery.

Alternative 3A would provide access to the San Joaquin Cemetery from West Stockton Boulevard via a tunnel. There is a concern that the tunnel proposed as part of Alternative 3A may be perceived as an undesirable way to access a cemetery.

Alternative 2A would provide access from West Stockton Blvd via a driveway which is similar to the existing access.

CEQA FINDING

The modification of access to the San Joaquin Cemetery is a **less than significant impact**.

Impacts to Planned Park

The Elk Grove Community Service District (CSD) has acquired land and is planning a park in this quadrant. The proposed realignment of East Stockton Blvd. would require right-of-way from the park parcel in order to accommodate the realignment. The City of Elk Grove has coordinated with the CSD in order to accommodate the needs of both the proposed project and the park, and they have reached a tentative agreement on how to compensate for the right-of-way take that would be required by the project. This agreement is outlined in a letter from the CSD to the City of Elk Grove, which is attached as **Appendix H**.

CEQA FINDING

The proposed project will provide access to the planned park. CSD will be compensated for all right-of-way that would be required from the planned park site. The modification to the planned park site is a **less than significant impact**.