

2 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2.1 PROJECT UNDER REVIEW

This Draft EIR evaluates the environmental impacts related to the adoption of the General Plan for El Dorado County. The General Plan applies to the unincorporated areas of the County. California State law requires each jurisdiction to adopt a General Plan to guide physical development. The General Plan establishes County policy, and identifies planned land uses and infrastructure.

Four "equal-weight" General Plan alternatives are under detailed consideration:

- C Alternative #1, No Project (Writ Constrained)
- C Alternative #2, Roadway Constrained Six-Lane "Plus"
- C Alternative #3, Environmentally Constrained
- C Alternative #4, 1996 General Plan

The General Plan has a planning horizon of 2025. Among the four equal-weight alternatives, the increase in population by 2025 is projected to range between 53,610 persons and 81,241 persons. New housing units by 2025 are projected to range between 21,434 units and 32,491 units. New employment by 2025 is projected to range between 36,188 jobs and 42,711 jobs.

Land use designations, densities, and floor-area-ratios are identified for each of the equal-weight General Plan alternatives and differ slightly among them. Comparatively, planned land uses break down as follows:

Generic Land Use Category	Land Use Designations	Alt. #1 No Project	Alt. #2 Roadway Constrained	Alt. #3 Environmental Constrained	Alt. #4 96 General Plan
Residential	MFR, HDR, MDR, LDR	127,551 ac (11.5%)	94,497 ac (8.5%)	74,404 ac (6.7%)	127,551 ac (11.5%)
Commercial, Industrial	C, RD, I	6,684 ac (0.6%)	5,972 ac (0.5%)	4,814 ac (0.4%)	6,684 ac (0.6%)
Rural, OS, Resource	RR, RL, A, NR, TR, OS	949,925 ac (85.6%)	980,477 ac (88.3%)	1,001,735 ac (90.2%)	949,925 ac (85.6%)
Other	PF, AP, Roads	25,943 ac (2.3%)	29,157 ac (2.6%)	29,150 ac (2.6%)	25,943 ac (2.3%)
Total	All	1,110,103 ac	1,110,103 ac	1,110,103 ac	1,110,103 ac

The Draft General Plan (all alternatives) is organized into an Introductory Chapter and a number of "elements". Each element includes an introduction, background information, and a list of goals and policies. In addition, Alternative #2 (Roadway Constrained Six-Lane Plus) and Alternative #3 (Environmentally Constrained) each include an implementation program identified as a part of the text. The following Elements are included in all four alternatives:

- C Land Use
- C Circulation
- C Housing
- C Public Services and Utilities
- C Public Health, Safety and Noise
- C Conservation and Open Space
- C Agriculture and Forestry
- C Parks and Recreation
- C Economic Development

In addition, Alternative #1 (No Project) and Alternative #4 (1996 General Plan) include a Tahoe Basin Element and a Glossary. In Alternatives #2 and 3, information relevant to the Tahoe Basin and the definitions of terms, are included as appropriate throughout the document.

2.2 AREAS OF CONTROVERSY

Section 15123 of the CEQA Guidelines requires the summary section of an EIR to include "areas of controversy known to the lead agency." The following issues, in no order, are the controversial issues known to the County:

- C The type, density, and location of land uses throughout the County.
- C The ability of the County to maintain its rural character.
- C Growth pursuant to executed development agreements.
- C Traffic congestion.
- C The number of lanes on key roadways and on Highway 50.
- C The timing of and trigger for public utilities and services, including roadways, water, and wastewater.
- C Water supply.
- C Impacts to cultural resources.

- C Naturally occurring asbestos.
- C Oak tree retention.
- C Habitat fragmentation.
- C Special status species protection.
- C Protection of agriculture and forestry.
- C Provision of and location of affordable housing.

2.3 ISSUES TO BE RESOLVED

Section 15123 of the CEQA Guidelines requires the summary section of an EIR to include "issues to be resolved including choices among alternatives and whether and how to mitigate to less than significant effects." The following issues, in no order, fulfill that requirement.

- C General Plan policies to be adopted for each element, in particular "concurrency" and appropriate levels of service.
- C A General Plan land use map and circulation exhibit to be adopted.
- C Compliance with the Writ.
- C An implementation program for the General Plan.
- C Update of impact fees, particularly for traffic impacts.
- C New sources of water supply.
- C Appropriate balancing of competing objectives.
- C Types of development that will and will not require discretionary review.

2.4 SUMMARY OF REGULATORY/POLICY CONSISTENCY

Section 15123 of the CEQA Guidelines requires the EIR to discuss "any inconsistencies between the proposed project and applicable general plans and regional plans." This EIR considers adoption of the general plan which, by its nature, would make this discussion inapplicable. Consistencies with regional plans are addressed in several sections within Chapter 5.

2.5 SUMMARY OF IMPACTS

This summary provides an overview of the analysis contained in Chapter 5 (Environmental Setting, Environmental Impacts, and Mitigation Measures). This summary also includes discussions of: a) effects found not to be significant; b) significant impacts; c) mitigation measures to avoid or reduce identified significant impacts; and d) unavoidable significant impacts.

EFFECTS FOUND NOT TO BE SIGNIFICANT

Section 15128 of the CEQA Guidelines requires an EIR to contain a statement briefly indicating the reasons why various possibly significant effects of a project were determined not to be significant and were therefore not discussed in detail. This EIR addresses the full scope of possible environmental impacts in detail. Please see Chapters 5 and 7, and the summary provided in Table 2-1.

SIGNIFICANT EFFECTS

Under CEQA, a significant effect on the environment is defined as a substantial, or potentially substantial, adverse change in any physical conditions within the area affected by the project. Adoption of the General Plan and its subsequent development would generate environmental impacts to several resources, as described in Chapters 5 and 7, and summarized in Table 2-1.

MITIGATION MEASURES TO AVOID OR REDUCE IDENTIFIED SIGNIFICANT IMPACTS

This program EIR discusses mitigation measures that could be implemented to reduce or avoid identified impacts. Generally, program-level mitigation for the General Plan takes the form of new or modified general plan policies or implementation actions. Table 2-1 lists each of the mitigation measures included in the EIR.

EFFECTS FOUND TO BE SIGNIFICANT AND UNAVOIDABLE

Under CEQA, a significant and unavoidable effect of the project is one that would cause a substantial adverse effect on the environment and for which no mitigation is available to reduce the impact to a less than significant level if the project is approved. These impacts are discussed in Chapters 5 and 7 and summarized in Table 2-1.

2.6 SUMMARY OF OTHER ALTERNATIVES

Chapter 5 contains an analysis of the four equal-weight alternatives described above (Section 2.1) and in detail in Chapter 3, Description of Equal-Weight Project Alternatives. In addition, the EIR evaluates eight other alternatives at a comparative level, as provided by CEQA in Chapter 6, Alternatives Analysis. Please see Table 6-1 in Chapter 6 for a comparative summary of impacts of each of these alternatives.

- C Alternative #5, 2001 Project Description
- C Alternative #6, Roadway Constrained Six-Lane
- C Alternative #7, Roadway Constrained Eight-Lane
- C Alternative #8, Modified Development Agreements
- C Alternative #9, Modified El Dorado Hills Development South of Highway 50
- C Alternative #10, New White Rock Road Connection
- C Alternative #11, Transit Emphasis
- C Alternative #12, Compact Development

2.7 CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

The cumulative impact analysis is provided in Section 7.1. The following cumulative impacts were identified. No additional mitigation measures, outside of those described in Chapter 5, have been identified to mitigate the cumulative impacts.

- < **Land Use and Housing:** The separation of western El Dorado County and the City of Folsom would become indistinguishable, a significant and unavoidable cumulative impact.
- < **Agriculture and Forestry:** The General Plan would contribute to regional loss of agriculture and would place pressure to convert timber land to other uses. Both of these impacts are significant and unavoidable.
- < **Visual Resources:** Development consistent with the General Plan would add to the cumulative change in visual character to the U.S. 50 corridor, a significant and unavoidable impact.
- < **Traffic and Circulation:** Traffic from the General Plan would contribute significantly to cumulative traffic growth in the region. Depending on the alternative selected, the General Plan would fall short of the Metropolitan Transportation Plan allocation for growth (No Project and Roadway Constrained 6-Lane “Plus” alternatives) or would meet the growth allocations (Environmentally Constrained and 1996 General Plan

alternatives). To the degree development falls short of projections, the General Plan alternatives could result in reallocation of land uses to other jurisdictions and cumulative impacts to other roadway systems. Within the county, the proposed Shingle Springs Rancheria Casino/Hotel project would add significant traffic to the cumulative load generated by the General Plan alternatives. Each of these cumulative impacts is significant and unavoidable.

- < **Water Resources:** Development of water resources to supply growth under the General Plan alternatives would result in increased competition for limited water resources for development in the region and the state. This cumulative impact is significant and unavoidable.
- < **Utilities:** Most utilities would not be cumulatively affected by development under the General Plan in combination with other regional development. One utility resource that would be cumulatively affected is electricity. The increased demand in electricity associated with development of the General Plan in combination with other regional demands for electricity would result in significant and unavoidable impacts to this utility.
- < **Public Services:** Most public services would not be cumulatively affected by development under the General Plan in combination with other regional development. Increased demand on State of California firefighting capabilities could result in cumulative demands and subsequent development of California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CDF) facilities. This could result in potential significant and unavoidable impacts to resources affected by development of such facilities.
- < **Human Health and Safety:** No cumulatively significant impacts related to human health and safety were identified.
- < **Geology, Soils and Mineral Resources:** No cumulatively significant impacts related to geology, soils, and mineral resources were identified.
- < **Noise:** Traffic from development under the General Plan alternatives would contribute to substantial cumulative noise increases along U.S. 50 between the El Dorado County line and Prairie City Road in Folsom. This cumulative impact would be significant and unavoidable.
- < **Air Quality:** Development under the General Plan alternatives in combination with other regional development and air pollutant transport from the west would substantially affect air quality in the County. This cumulative impact would be significant and unavoidable.

- < **Biological Resources:** Development in other Sierra Nevada foothill areas in combination with development under the General Plan alternatives would result in increased habitat fragmentation and loss of sensitive habitats. These cumulative impacts would be significant and unavoidable.
- < **Cultural Resources:** No cumulatively significant impacts related to cultural resources were identified.
- < **Lake Tahoe Basin:** Development along the west slope of the County under all General Plan alternatives, in addition to regional growth, would result in cumulative impacts to traffic, recreation facilities, noise, and air quality. Of these cumulative impacts, all but noise are identified as significant and unavoidable.

2.8 SUMMARY TABLE

The following table (Table 2-1, Summary of Impacts and Mitigation Measures) has been organized to correspond with environmental issues discussed in Chapter 5 of this EIR. The summary table is arranged in four columns:

1. Environmental impact.
2. Level of significance before mitigation.
3. Recommended mitigation measures.
4. Level of significance after mitigation.

Chapter 5 addresses impacts that would be expected within the planning horizon of the general plan, 2025, and at full buildout. The summary only distinguishes between these time periods if the significance of the impact is different between 2025 and buildout.

A series of measures is noted where more than one mitigation may be required to reduce the impact to a less than significant level. Different or modified mitigation measures may be needed for different alternatives, and this is noted. See Chapter 5 for a complete analysis. An additional summary table that addresses impacts to the full range of resources in the Tahoe Basin is provided in Section 5.14. Please see Table 5.14-1, Summary of Impacts to Lake Tahoe Basin.