

# EL DORADO COUNTY DEVELOPMENT SERVICES STAFF REPORT



**Agenda of:** December 28, 2006  
**Item No.:** 10.a.  
**Staff:** Peter Maurer

## SPECIAL USE PERMIT

**FILE NUMBER:** S98-0017R/Aerometals Facilities Expansion

**APPLICANT:** Rex Kamphefner

**REQUEST:** Special use permit to allow an expansion of aerometals manufacturing plant and relocation of a helipad.

**LOCATION:** On the south side of Sandstone Drive, approximately 1,000 feet west of the intersection with Golden Foothill Parkway, in the El Dorado Hills area. (Exhibit A)

**APN:** 117-081-01

**ACREAGE:** 5.613

**GENERAL PLAN:** Research and Development (R&D) (Exhibit B)

**ZONING:** Research and Development with Design Control (R&D-DC) (Exhibit C)

**ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENT:** Mitigated Negative Declaration

**SUMMARY RECOMMENDATION:** Conditional Approval

### BACKGROUND:

The Planning Commission approved S98-17 for the Aerometals heliport on December 10, 1998, in conjunction with the manufacturing facility in the El Dorado Hills Business Park. The current request is to expand the manufacturing facility by an additional 38,850 square feet for a total of 76,650 square feet or a Floor Area Ratio of 0.30. The building expansion will require the relocation of the approved helipad to a centralized portion of the property. This helipad relocation to the center of the property was also a condition of S98-17 when residential development from Carson Creek encroached within 500-feet of the helipad.

The property is zoned Research and Development. Section 17.35.025(A) requires a special use permit for uses which may cause measurable dust, noise, air, or water pollutants beyond the exterior walls or buildings which could detrimentally impact neighboring land and uses.

## STAFF ANALYSIS

**Project Description:** This revision to the special use permit would relocate the private helicopter landing pad and provide for an expansion of the structure by 42,150 square feet. The building expansion will include additional manufacturing areas, offices, material/parts storage, and hanger. The relocated helipad will be more centrally located on the site and east of the addition. The number of flights and flight paths would not change from that originally approved. Flights will normally occur approximately once a week during normal business hours. A more detailed project narrative and site plan is attached to this report as Exhibit D and E.

The company manufactures helicopter parts for the McDonnell Douglas (Hughes) MD-500 helicopter. The MD-500 is a four passenger helicopter and is flown an average of 21 flights a year. The helicopter is used to test the parts that are manufactured on site as part of the testing and certification process.

**Site Description:** The project site consists of a parking lot for the Aerometals building and helipad located in the El Dorado Hills Business Park. The building and parking lot cover approximately a third of the 5.6-acre parcel. The remainder of the parcel is undeveloped, with a seasonal drainage course running toward the southeast corner of the property. This is not proposed to be disturbed as a part of the expansion of the use. The terrain is relatively flat and is at an elevation of approximately 490 feet above mean sea level. There are two willow trees located within the drainage easement onsite. These trees are being requested to be removed due to the helicopter landing pad location and takeoff safety.

### Adjacent Land Uses:

	Zoning	General Plan	Land Use/Improvements
<b>Site</b>	R&D	R&D	EDH Business Park, manufacturing
<b>North</b>	R&D	R&D	EDH Business Park, vacant
<b>South</b>	CC-SP	AP	Carson Creek Specific Plan, vacant
<b>East</b>	R&D	R&D	EDH Business Park, offices
<b>West</b>	CC-SP	AP	Carson Creek Specific Plan, Single Family Residential.

To the north and east are properties within the El Dorado Hills Business Park. To the west and south is the approved Carson Creek Specific Plan, with single family residential uses. Currently, homes have been constructed adjacent to the existing helicopter takeoff and landing zone as well as the manufacturing plant.

The Carson Creek residential area to the west acknowledged the Aerometals manufacturing plant and helicopter use by disclosure to potential buyers of the properties as well as incorporating the cinder block sound wall that separates the Business Park from the residential area. Other land uses include a private K-8 grade school to the north that is approximately 2,700-feet outside of the flight path of the helicopter. The future development of Carson Creek/Village 8 to the south will have 304 residential units at 5.5 dwelling units per acre according to the Specific Plan. The modified flight path of the helicopter will not affect Village 8. A cinder block sound wall will be required to be installed at the time of the Carson Creek/Village 8 construction.

**General Plan:** The General Plan designates the subject site as Research and Development. This designation permits high technology, non-polluting manufacturing plants, and research and development facilities. Policy 2.2.1.5, Table 2-3 Building Intensities, indicates a 0.25 Floor Area Ratio (FAR) for Research and Development except in the El Dorado Business Park. FAR's cannot exceed 0.30 based on limitations established on employees in Policy TC-1y. All projects within the Business Park that would individually exceed 0.25 FAR must undergo review and approval by the County. FAR's that exceed 0.30 would be required to submit a planned development with a traffic study that indicates that the proposed use would not exceed 0.25 FAR traffic trip generation rates pursuant to General Plan Policy TC-1y and TC-Xe.

The existing building is 34,500 square feet. With a parcel size of 5.136 acre (244,502 square feet) the FAR is 0.14. The proposed building expansion of 38,850 square feet, for a total of 73,350 square feet, will result in a FAR of 0.30. The building expansion will also include an additional 10 employees.

In order to comply with Policy TC-1y, the applicant will reduce the number of a.m. and p.m. peak hour vehicle trips by splitting the work shifts. This reduces the number of peak hour vehicle trips and places the project below the Level of Service thresholds identified in Policy TC-Xe.

Noise from the helicopter is considered a transportation noise source regulated through General Plan Policies 6.5.1.1, 6.5.1.9 and Table 6-1. Transportation noise sources and the standards in Table 6-1 are measured in a standard labeled Community Noise Level Equivalent (CNEL), an hourly noise average. The short duration of helicopter noise would not cause the hourly average CNEL to exceed the thresholds in the General Plan. Non-transportation noise sources have both a CNEL standard as well as a maximum level set forth in Table 6-2 of the General Plan. However, since the helicopter is classified as a transportation noise source, the maximum noise levels for non-transportation noise sources in General Plan Table 6-2 do not apply to this use.

The Carson Creek Draft EIR addressed the uses associated in the El Dorado Hills Business Park and, as a mitigation measure, installed a cinder block sound barrier wall along the property line. The sound barrier wall does not fully mitigate the noise generated from the helicopter takeoff or landing.

An acoustical analysis was conducted for S98-17 in 1998 indicating that the MD-500 helicopter would exceed the General Plan noise level thresholds if the helicopter was spooling up on the helipad prior to flight for more than an hour. The MD 500 helicopter typically will spool up on the helipad within 5 to 10 minutes prior to take off and upon landing within the same time period.

Otherwise, operational parameters for the helicopter, such as overheating the engine, would be

exceeded and would not be an efficient use of aviation fuel.

The helicopter has been in operation for over eight years, and the County has not received any complaints in the vicinity according to the El Dorado Hills Area Planning Advisory Committee. Furthermore, the expanded manufacturing facility will provide a noise barrier for the residential parcels to the west of the relocated helipad. This will reduce the noise impact from that which exists today. The expanded facility would not exceed the noise thresholds in the General Plan.

Policy 7.3.3.4 requires special setbacks and buffers from wetlands, streams, and other bodies of water. A 180-foot long drainage ditch that was created when the existing use was first constructed contains wetland plants such as willows and cattails. It is not identified as an intermittent stream and only collects run-off from sheet flow above the project site and empties into the vacant grazing land to the south. The California Department of Fish and Game has identified that a Streambed Alteration Agreement is required, and at the time of issuance of that agreement, the Department may require mitigation in the form of in-kind replacement or in-lieu fees. In situations where there are small, isolated wetland features, it has been the County's practice to rely on other state and federal permitting agencies for appropriate mitigation and permits.

**Conclusion:** As discussed above, staff finds that the project, as proposed, conforms to the General Plan.

**Zoning:** The proposed building and expansion is permitted in the Research and Development Zone District, pursuant to Section 17.35.020. The special use permit would authorize a use conducted outside a building which may cause dust and noise beyond the project boundary [17.35.025(A).]

Pursuant to Chapter 17.35.030, R&D Development Standards Inside Urban Areas, no more than 50 percent of the site can be developed. The proposed building expansion will not exceed 50 percent of the site including parking and relocated helipad.

The existing building and proposed expansion meets the required setbacks and will require conformance with Chapter 17.35.030 (3)(c) Landscape Buffers along the perimeter of the building adjacent to the residential units to the immediate west and south at time of development for Carson Creek/Village 8.

**Lighting** – Additional outdoor lighting will be placed on the roll up door areas of the expanded portion of the building. No additional parking lot lighting is proposed. All new and existing lighting will be required to meet County standards for shielding any light spillage onto adjacent properties.

**Architectural Design** – The proposed building expansion meets the criteria in Section 17.35.030(L) in that the proposed expansion will match the existing building design, colors, height, and texture. Mechanical ventilation equipment located on top of the manufacturing building is screened from adjacent land uses.

**Landscaping** – Landscaped parking areas in R&D Zone areas require shade trees to be planted for every 5 to 10 parking spaces and a certain percentage of tree canopy coverage within a specific time

period. Final landscaping plans shall be submitted for review consistent with the standards for the R&D Zone District.

Parking – The parking standards of the zoning ordinance sets forth the minimum number of spaces for different types of uses. As shown in the table below, the existing structure and the proposed expansion would require a total of 161 parking spaces.

Use	Area in square feet	Number of spaces required per square foot	Total number of spaces required
Manufacturing	49,393	1space per 400 sq. ft.	124
Warehousing including hangar	14,890	1space per 2,000 sq. ft.	10
Office	6,667	1 space per 250 sq. ft.	27
<b>Total</b>			161

There are presently only 45 spaces serving the project, which appears to be sufficient to handle parking needs for the business. The expansion proposes an additional 30 spaces, for a total of 75. Although this is less than half that which would be required under the code, the applicant has indicated that the expansion would only increase employment by 10 persons.

Section 17.18.040 (D) (2) allows for administrative relief from the strict compliance with commercial and industrial uses when the approving authority makes the following findings:

- a. The intent of the parking ordinance is preserved.
- b. The parking provided is sufficient to serve the use for which it is intended.
- c. The modification will not be detrimental to the public health or safety.

In considering the request for parking reduction, the approving authority shall consider:

1. The size and type of use or activity.
2. Composition and number of tenants.
3. Peak traffic and parking loads.
4. Rate of turnover.
5. Availability of public transportation including carpools or employer-provided transportation.

The use of this structure is limited by this special use permit, and although the building is primarily used for manufacturing, it is not generating the parking demand associated with typical light manufacturing uses. The expansion is generating a need for only 10 more spaces, while an additional 30 is proposed. Staff believes there is sufficient justification to reduce the number of parking spaces.

**Special Use Permit Findings:** The operation of helicopters inherently is an outdoor activity which has the potential to create dust, noise, and safety problems. Pursuant to the Research and Development zoning, such a use may only be authorized by a special use permit. In order to approve the use, the approving authority must find that the use is consistent with the General Plan and would not be detrimental to the public health, safety and welfare nor be injurious to the neighborhood. These issues are discussed below:

Public Health and Safety – The California Department of Transportation, Division of Aeronautics, reviewed this proposal. The relocation of the helipad will require an amended State heliport permit. This agency identified several means in which the operation can avoid noise and safety impacts, primarily by routing the flight paths over areas without sensitive noise receptors and concentrations of people. Aerometals has done this by having the flight path go to the north, over primarily undeveloped areas of the El Dorado Hills Business Park. The El Dorado Hills Fire Department also commented on the proposed expansion and recommended several fire safety requirements relating to the heliport and manufacturing operations. These have been incorporated into the recommended conditions of approval.

Public Welfare/Neighborhood Impacts – The El Dorado Hills Area Plan Advisory Committee reviewed the request and recommended approval, stating that the use has been in existence for a number of years, there have been no complaints that the Committee is aware of, the total number of flights in 2005 was only 21, and the flights are entirely over the Business Park.

The special use permit process allows the County to revoke the permit if it is found by the issuing authority that conditions established for the permit have been violated, substantial compliance is lacking, or when the use is considered a public nuisance. This mechanism would enable the County to approve the special use permit and yet reconsider the approval at a later date if necessary.

At the time of the preparation of this report, staff had not received any comments from the public. New issues may arise as a result of the public notice of the hearing which will be discussed at that time.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW**

Staff has prepared an Initial Study (Environmental Checklist with Discussion attached) to determine if the project has a significant effect on the environment. Based on the Initial Study, staff finds that the project could have a significant effect on biological resources and noise. However, the project has been modified to incorporate the mitigation measures identified in the Initial Study which will reduce the impacts to a level considered to be less than significant. Therefore, a Mitigated Negative Declaration has been prepared

**NOTE:** This project is located within or adjacent to an area which has wildlife resources (riparian lands, wetlands, watercourse, native plant life, rare plants, threatened and endangered plants or animals, etc.), and was referred to the California Department of Fish and Game. In accordance with State Legislation (California Fish and Game Code Section 711.4), the project is subject to a fee of \$1,285.<sup>00</sup> after approval but prior to the County filing the Notice of Determination on the project. This fee, less \$35.<sup>00</sup> processing fee, is forwarded to the State Department of Fish and Game and is used to help defray the cost of managing and protecting the State's fish and wildlife resources.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

1. Adopt the Mitigated Negative Declaration based on the Initial Study prepared by staff and;

2. Approve the special use permit based on the findings in Attachment 2, subject to the conditions in Attachment 1.

## **SUPPORT INFORMATION**

### **Attachments to Staff Report:**

Attachment 1 .....	Conditions of Approval
Attachment 2 .....	Findings
Exhibit A .....	Vicinity Map
Exhibit B .....	General Plan Land Use Map
Exhibit C .....	Zoning Map
Exhibit D .....	Site Plan
Exhibit E .....	Helicopter flight path map

# ATTACHMENT 1

## CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL

FILE NUMBER S98-0017R

### Planning Services

1. The project, as approved, consists of the expansion of the manufacturing facility from 34,500 square feet to 73,350 square feet and the relocation of a helipad from the western boundary of the project site to the center of the site, as shown on Exhibit D. Helicopter use is limited to the McDonnell Douglas MD-500 helicopter. The use shall conform to the approved site plan and project narrative attached to this report (Exhibit D and Exhibit E). The helicopter is to be flown, on average, about once a week. The hours of operation shall typically be 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. with only an occasional night flight. Helicopter flights shall conform to FAA safety guidelines and flight rules, including the flight path as illustrated in Exhibit E.
2. The helicopter landing and takeoff area shall be located to the central portion of the property when residences are beginning to be constructed within 500 feet of the landing area shown on the site plan.
3. This special use permit will become void if the helicopter landing and takeoff use is abandoned for a period of one year.
4. If the helicopter landing and takeoff is found to create a public nuisance, or if the conditions of this permit have been violated, the County Planning Development Services Department may schedule a public hearing to revoke the use permit in accordance with the County Code.
5. ~~The applicant shall adhere to any State Department of Transportation, Division of Aeronautics, recommendations on traffic patterns and heliport operations regarding the school site selection.~~  
  
An amended State heliport permit will be secured from the State Department of Transportation, Division of Aeronautics, prior to authorization and use of the relocated helipad.
6. The applicant shall file a "Notice of Landing Area Proposal" (Form 7480-1) with the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA). A copy of the completed Form 7480-1 and response from the FAA shall be submitted to Planning Services.
7. The applicant shall institute trip reduction measures by splitting the work shifts and maintaining off-peak work shifts in order to reduce vehicle trips impacting Latrobe Road from exceeding thresholds identified in Policy TC-Xe.

8. Subject to the issuance of a Streambed Alteration Agreement by the California Department of Fish and Game.

### **El Dorado Hills Fire Department**

9. The potable water system for the purpose of the fire protection for this commercial project shall provide a minimum fire flow of 2,875 gpm with a minimum residual pressure of 20-psi for a three-hour duration. This requirement is based on a fire sprinkler building of Type III N.R. construction and shall not exceed 73,350 square feet. This flow rate shall be in excess of the maximum daily consumption rate for this development. A set of engineering calculations reflecting the fire flow capabilities of this system shall be supplied to the Fire Department for review and approval.
10. This development shall install one additional Mueller Dry Barrel fire hydrant conforming to El Dorado Irrigation District specifications for the purpose of providing water for fire protection. The location of the hydrant shall be determined by the Fire Department.
11. To enhance nighttime visibility, each hydrant shall be painted with safety white enamel and marked in the roadway with a blue reflective marker as specified by the Fire Department and the Fire Safe Regulations.
12. The building addition will require compliance with California Fire Code Section 902.21 – fire access lane within 150-feet of the buildings first floor as measured by an approved route around the exterior of the building.
13. The proposed helipad and hangar area shall comply with all requirements within the California Fire Code Article 24 for aviation facilities.

### **El Dorado County Air Quality Management District**

14. Project construction involving grading and excavation operations, which will result in a temporary negative impact on air quality with regard to the release of particulate matter (PM10) in the form of Dust, District Rules 223 and 223.1 will be required to insure compliance with mitigating fugitive dust emissions during construction. A Fugitive Dust Plan (FDP) application with appropriate fees shall be submitted to and approved by the District prior to start of project construction.
15. Project construction may involve road development and should adhere to District Rule 224 Cutback and Emulsified Asphalt Paving Materials.
16. The project construction will involve the application of architectural coating, which shall adhere to District Rule 215 Architectural Coatings.

17. Burning of wastes that result from “Land Development Clearing” must be permitted through the District. Only vegetative waste material may be disposed of using an open outdoor fire, Rule 300 Open Burning.
  
18. Prior to construction/installation of any new point source emission units or non-permitted emission units (i.e. gasoline dispensing facility, boilers, internal combustion engines, etc.), authority to construct applications shall be submitted to the District. Submittal of applications shall include facility diagram(s) equipment specifications and emission factors.

# **ATTACHMENT 2 FINDINGS**

## **FILE NUMBER S98-0017R**

### **1.0 CEQA Findings**

- 1.1 El Dorado County has considered the Mitigated Negative Declaration together with the comments received during the public review process. The Mitigated Negative Declaration reflects the independent judgment of the County and has been completed in compliance with CEQA and is adequate for this proposal.
- 1.2 Through feasible conditions and mitigation placed upon the project, impacts on the environment relating to noise have been eliminated or substantially mitigated.
- 1.3 A de minimis finding on the project's effect on fish and wildlife resources cannot be made, therefore, the project is subject to the payment of State Fish and Game fees pursuant to State Legislation (California Fish and Game Code Section 711.4).
- 1.4 The documents and other materials which constitute the record of proceedings upon which this decision is based are in the custody of the Development Services Department - Planning Services at 2850 Fairlane Court, Placerville, CA, 95667.
- 1.5 Public Resources Code Section 21081.6 requires the County to adopt a reporting or monitoring program for the changes to the project which it has adopted or made a condition of approval in order to mitigate or avoid significant effects on the environment. The approved project description and conditions of approval, with their corresponding permit monitoring requirements, are hereby adopted as the monitoring program for this project. The monitoring program is designed to ensure compliance during project implementation.

### **2.0 General Plan Findings**

- 2.1 The proposed manufacturing and testing use is consistent with the Research and Development land use designation of the 2004 General Plan.
- 2.2 The proposed project, including occasional helicopter test flights is consistent with the applicable policies of the General Plan relating to land use, floor area ratio standards, and noise, by implementing trip reduction measures and maintaining flight paths over non-populated areas.

### **3.0 Zoning Findings**

- 3.1 The proposed use of a heliport as part of the manufacturing and testing business is authorized with approval of a special use permit by Section 17.35.025(A) of the El Dorado County Code.
- 3.2 The building and other site improvements comply with the development standards contained in Sections 17.35.030 and 17.14.170 of the El Dorado County Code.

### **4.0 Special Use Permit Findings**

- 4.1 With specific conditions applied related to flight safety and fire protection as recommended by the State Department of Transportation, Division of Aeronautics, and the El Dorado Hills Fire Department respectively, the proposed revision to the special use permit would not be detrimental to the public health, safety and welfare.
- 4.2 With the relocation of the helipad and continued maintenance of the flight path away from the adjacent residentially-zoned property to the west, the use will not be detrimental to the neighborhood.

### **5.0 Reduction in Parking Findings**

- 5.1 The increase in parking demand for the expanded facility will be for 10 new employees while 30 new spaces will be provided, meeting the intent of the parking ordinance.
- 5.2 The total of 75 parking spaces will be sufficient to support the full number of employees and customers at the site.
- 5.3 All necessary parking will be provided on site so the expanded use will not create an off-site parking problem or block fire access lanes, thereby ensuring that the reduction will not be detrimental to the public health or safety.



**EL DORADO COUNTY PLANNING SERVICES  
2850 FAIRLANE COURT  
PLACERVILLE, CA 95667**

**ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST FORM  
AND DISCUSSION OF IMPACTS**

**Project Title:** S98-0017R – Special Use Permit Revision, Aerometals

**Lead Agency Name and Address:** El Dorado County, 2850 Fairlane Court, Placerville, CA 95667

**Contact Person:** Peter Maurer

**Phone Number:** (530) 621-5355

**Property Owner’s Name and Address:** Rex Kamphefner, 5425 Moss Lane, Granite Bay, CA 95746

**Project Applicant’s Name and Address:** Aerometals, 3920 Sandstone Drive, El Dorado Hills, CA 95762

**Project Agent’s Name and Address:** OJ Soma, Aerometals, 3920 Sandstone Drive, El Dorado Hills, CA 95762

**Project Engineer’s / Architect’s Name and Address:**

**Project Location:** South side of Sandstone Drive, 733 feet west of the intersection with Golden Foothill Parkway, in the El Dorado Hills Business Park/El Dorado Hills area.

**Assessor’s Parcel No:** 117-081-01

**Zoning:** Research and Development with Design Control (R&D-DC)

**Section:** 14     **T:** 9N   **R:** 8E

**General Plan Designation:** Research and Development (R&D)

**Description of Project:** Expansion of Aerometals manufacturing plant and helipad relocation.

**Surrounding Land Uses and Setting:**

	<u>Zoning</u>	<u>General Plan</u>	<u>Land Use</u> (e.g., Single Family Residences, Grazing, Park, School)
Site:	RD/DC	RD	Research and Development, office, manufacturing, warehouse
North:	RD/DC	RD	Offices, vacant lands
East:	RD/DC	RD	Offices, vacant lands
South:	CC-SP	AP	Carson Creek Specific Plan – future residential use)
West:	CC-SP	AP	Carson Creek - Residential

Briefly Describe the environmental setting: The project site consists of 5.613-acres, with a permitted manufacturing plant and helicopter use within the El Dorado Hills Business Park. Existing vegetation includes landscaped trees for the parking areas and perimeter of the building. Two trees have established themselves within the drainage easement on the property. The site is predominately flat and located at an average elevation of 500 feet above mean sea level. The site is not located within an area known to have rare or endangered plant species.

**Other public agencies whose approval is required (e.g., permits, financing approval, or participation agreement.):**

1. El Dorado County Air Quality Management District: Fugitive Dust Plan required.
2. California State Department of Transportation – Division of Aeronautics: Amended State heliport permit.
3. Federal Aviation Authority: Notice of Landing Area Proposal (Form 7480-1)

**ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS POTENTIALLY AFFECTED**

The environmental factors checked below would be potentially affected by this project, involving at least one impact that is a "Potentially Significant Impact" as indicated by the checklist on the following pages.

	Aesthetics		Agriculture Resources		Air Quality
	Biological Resources		Cultural Resources		Geology / Soils
	Hazards & Hazardous Materials		Hydrology / Water Quality		Land Use / Planning
	Mineral Resources	<b>X</b>	Noise		Population / Housing
	Public Services		Recreation		Transportation/Traffic
	Utilities / Service Systems		Mandatory Findings of Significance		

**DETERMINATION**

**On the basis of this initial evaluation:**

- I find that the proposed project **COULD NOT** have a significant effect on the environment, and a **NEGATIVE DECLARATION** will be prepared.
- I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, there will not be a significant effect in this case because revisions in the project have been made by or agreed to by the project proponent. A **MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION** will be prepared.
- I find that the proposed project **MAY** have a significant effect on the environment, and an **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT** is required.
- I find that the proposed project **MAY** have a "potentially significant impact" or "potentially significant unless mitigated" impact on the environment, but at least one effect: 1) has been adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards; and 2) has been addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis as described in attached sheets. An **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT** is required, but it must analyze only the effects that remain to be addressed.
- I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, because all potentially significant effects: a) have been analyzed adequately in an earlier EIR or **NEGATIVE DECLARATION**, pursuant to applicable standards; and b) have been avoided or mitigated pursuant to that earlier EIR or **NEGATIVE DECLARATION**, including revisions or mitigation measures that are imposed upon the proposed project, nothing further is required.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: November 3, 2006

Printed Name: Peter N. Maurer For: El Dorado County

## **PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

### **Introduction**

This Initial Study has been prepared in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) to evaluate the potential environmental impacts resulting from an expansion of an existing manufacturing plant and relocated helipad on a 5.613 acre parcel located at 3920 Sandstone Drive in the El Dorado Hills area.

### **Project Location and Surrounding Land Uses**

The 5.613-acre project site is located at 3920 Sandstone Drive, approximately 1,000 feet west of the intersection with Golden Foothill Parkway in the El Dorado Hills area. The project area lies at an elevation of approximately 500 feet above mean sea level. The surrounding properties contain offices, warehouses, research and development and single-family residential units.

### **Project Characteristics**

This proposal is expanding the manufacturing plant to 0.30 Floor Area Ratio (FAR) and relocating the helipad.

#### 1. Transportation/Circulation/Parking

Access to the site is provided by an existing improved paved road located in the El Dorado Hills Business Park. On-site circulation and parking requirements are consistent with Section 17.18 of the Zoning Ordinance. The use of the helicopter is used for the business and is not used for passenger service.

#### 2. Utilities and Infrastructure

The project site is served by El Dorado Irrigation water and sewer. Power utilities and telephone service have been extended to the site by local utility companies.

#### 3. Population

The industrial building expansion will not add to the residential population in the vicinity.

#### 4. Construction Considerations

Construction of the project will consist of additional on-site grading for the building expansion and helipad relocation. The project applicant would be required to obtain permits for grading from the Department of Transportation and obtain an approved fugitive dust mitigation plan from the Air Quality Management District.

### **Project Schedule and Approvals**

This Initial Study is being circulated for public and agency review for a 30-day period. Written comments on the Initial Study should be submitted to the project planner indicated in the Summary section, above.

Following the close of the written comment period, the Initial Study will be considered by the Lead Agency in a public meeting and will be certified if it is determined to be in compliance with CEQA. The Lead Agency will also determine whether to approve the project.

## **EVALUATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS**

1. A brief explanation is required for all answers except "No Impact" answers that are adequately supported by the information sources a lead agency cites in the parentheses following each question. A "No Impact" answer is adequately supported if the referenced information sources show that the impact simply does not apply to projects like the one involved (e.g., the project falls outside a fault rupture zone). A "No Impact" answer should be

explained where it is based on project-specific factors as well as general standards (e.g., the project will not expose sensitive receptors to pollutants, based on a project-specific screening analysis).

2. All answers must take account of the whole action involved, including off-site as well as on-site, cumulative as well as project-level, indirect as well as direct, and construction as well as operational impacts.
3. Once the lead agency has determined that a particular physical impact may occur, then the checklist answers must indicate whether the impact is potentially significant, less than significant with mitigation, or less than significant. "Potentially Significant Impact" is appropriate if there is a fair argument that an effect may be significant. If there are one or more "Potentially Significant Impact" entries when the determination is made, an EIR is required.
4. "Negative Declaration: Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated" applies where the incorporation of mitigation measures has reduced an effect from "Potentially Significant Impact" to a "Less Than Significant Impact." The lead agency must describe the mitigation measures, and briefly explain how they reduce the effect to a less than significant level.
5. Earlier analyses may be used where, pursuant to the tiering, program EIR, or other CEQA process, an effect has been adequately analyzed in an earlier EIR or negative declaration. Section 15063(c)(3)(D). In this case, a brief discussion should identify the following:
  - a. Earlier Analysis Used. Identify and state where they are available for review.
  - b. Impacts Adequately Addressed. Identify which effects from the above checklist were within the scope of and adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and state whether such effects were addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis.
  - c. Mitigation Measures. For effects that are "Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated," describe the mitigation measures which were incorporated or refined from the earlier document and the extent to which they address site-specific conditions for the project.
6. Lead agencies are encouraged to incorporate into the checklist references to information sources for potential impacts (e.g., general plans, zoning ordinances). Reference to a previously prepared or outside document should, where appropriate, include a reference to the page or pages where the statement is substantiated.
7. Supporting Information Sources: A source list should be attached, and other sources used, or individuals contacted should be cited in the discussion.
8. This is only a suggested form, and lead agencies are free to use different formats; however, lead agencies should normally address the questions from this checklist that are relevant to a project's environmental effects in whatever format is selected.
9. The explanation of each issue should identify:
  - a. the significance criteria or threshold, if any, used to evaluate each question; and
  - b. the mitigation measure identified, if any, to reduce the impact to less than significant.

Potentially Significant Impact	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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**ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS**

<b>I. AESTHETICS.</b> <i>Would the project:</i>			
a. Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?			X
b. Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?			X
c. Substantially degrade the existing visual character quality of the site and its surroundings?			X
d. Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?		X	

**Discussion:**

A substantial adverse effect to Visual Resources would result in the introduction of physical features that are not characteristic of the surrounding development, substantially change the natural landscape, or obstruct an identified public scenic vista. The proposed project is requesting to expand the existing Aerometals building and the relocation of the approved helipad to the center of the property.

- a. **Scenic Vista.** The project site is located within the El Dorado Hills Business Park adjacent to the Carson Creek-Euer Ranch residential development. The subject property is predominately flat and surrounded by residential units, vacant parcels of land and with commercial/research and development buildings in the business park. The property is not identified as a scenic view or resource.<sup>1</sup> The building expansion will not impact the surrounding visual scenic resources in the vicinity. The private heliport will not have a negative aesthetic affect. There would be no impact as a result of the building expansion and relocated helipad.
- b. **Scenic Resources.** The project site is not within a State Scenic Highway. There are no trees or historic buildings that have been identified by the County as contributing to exceptional aesthetic value at the project site.<sup>2</sup>
- c. **Visual Character.** The proposed project and will not be readily visible from an off-site public view (Golden Foothill Parkway or within from the main streets in the Carson Creek subdivision located to the west.) A cinder block sound wall has been constructed along the border of Carson Creek Subdivision and the Business Park that helps mitigate the visual impacts between the residential uses and Business Park. Additional landscaping along this sound wall also mitigates visual impacts between the two land uses. The residential units directly adjacent to the manufacturing plant have fences installed along the sound wall that provide additional screening.
- d. **Light and Glare.** Additional outdoor lighting will be placed on the roll up door areas of the expanded portion of the building. No additional parking lot lighting is proposed. All existing and proposed lighting

<sup>1</sup> El Dorado County Planning Department, El Dorado County General Plan Draft EIR (SCH #2001082030), May 2003, Exhibit 5.3-1 and Table 5.3-1.

<sup>2</sup> California Department of Transportation, California Scenic Highway Program, Officially Designated State Scenic Highways, p.2 (<http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/LandArch/scenic/schwy1.html>).

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is required to meet County standards for shielding any light spillage onto adjacent properties. Therefore, the impacts of existing and proposed light and glare as seen from Sandstone Drive or from Golden Foothill Parkway would be less than significant.

<b>II. AGRICULTURE RESOURCES. <i>Would the project:</i></b>				
a. Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance, or Locally Important Farmland (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?				<b>X</b>
b. Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act Contract?				<b>X</b>
c. Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland, to non-agricultural use?				<b>X</b>

**Discussion:**

A substantial adverse effect to Agricultural Resources would occur if:

- There is a conversion of choice agricultural land to nonagricultural use, or impairment of the agricultural productivity of agricultural land;
- The amount of agricultural land in the County is substantially reduced; or
- Agricultural uses are subjected to impacts from adjacent incompatible land uses.

- a. **Conversion of Prime Farmland.** El Dorado County has established the Agricultural (A) General Plan land use overlay district and included this overlay on the General Plan Land Use Maps. Review of the General Plan land use map for the project area indicates that the project site is not considered to be “Prime Farmland” however; is classified as urban and built up lands.
- b. **Williamson Act Contract.** The property is not located within a Williamson Act Contract and the project will not conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, and will not affect any properties under a Williamson Act Contract.
- c. **Non-Agricultural Use.** The site is classified as urban and built up lands under the Farmland Mapping Program and the soil type has been classified as per the USDA Soil Survey as:

AkC: Argonaut gravelly loam, 2 – 15% slopes. This soil is very similar to Argonaut very rocky loam, except that less than 5% of the surface has outcrops of bedrock. Surface runoff is medium and erosion hazard is moderate. This soil is used for range. Occasional crops of hay and grain or irrigated pasture are grown. Capability unit IVE-3(18); range site 1; woodland suitability group not assigned.

Potentially Significant Impact	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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The property once was used as rangeland for cattle operations prior to the Business Park development. The building expansion and relocated helipad will not impact agricultural operations or lands designated for agricultural uses present.<sup>3</sup> There would be no impact.

**Finding**

No impacts to agricultural land are expected with the proposed project either directly or indirectly. The project is compatible with the surrounding Business Park and uses in the vicinity. For this “Agriculture” category, no impacts as a result of the Aerometals building expansion and relocated helipad.

<b>III. AIR QUALITY. <i>Would the project:</i></b>				
a. Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?			<b>X</b>	
b. Violate any air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation?			<b>X</b>	
c. Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is nonattainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard (including releasing emissions which exceed quantitative thresholds for ozone precursors)?			<b>X</b>	
d. Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?			<b>X</b>	
e. Create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people?			<b>X</b>	

**Discussion:**

A substantial adverse effect on Air Quality would occur if:

- Emissions of ROG and NO<sub>x</sub>, will result in construction or operation emissions greater than 82lbs/day (See Table 5.2, of the El Dorado County Air Pollution Control District – CEQA Guide);
- Emissions of toxic air contaminants cause cancer risk greater than 1 in 1 million (10 in 1 million if best available control technology for toxics is used) or a non-cancer Hazard Index greater than 1. In addition, the project must demonstrate compliance with all applicable District, State and U.S. EPA regulations governing toxic and hazardous emissions.

a-c.

**Air Quality Plan and Standards.** Improvements to the on-site improvements could generate short-term fugitive dust and exhaust from construction equipment. Short-term air quality impacts result from emissions generated by construction related equipment. Emissions of NO<sub>x</sub> and ROG from construction equipment are the primary pollutants. However, short-term thresholds for these will most likely not exceed 82 pounds per day as identified as a significant threshold for air quality impacts for El Dorado County and will require conformance to District Rule 523. Construction fugitive dust emissions will be considered not significant

<sup>3</sup> State of California, Department of Conservation, Division of Land Resource Protection, Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program Map, 2002.

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and estimation of fugitive dust emissions is not required if complete mitigation is undertaken as part of the project (or mandatory condition of the project) in compliance with the requirements of Rule 403 of the South Coast AQMD, such that there will be no visible dust beyond the boundaries of the project. (EDC APCD-CEQA Guide, 1<sup>st</sup> Ed, 2002) In addition, the El Dorado County Air Quality Management District will require grading construction activities to be in conformance with District Rules 223, 223.1 and 223.2 for fugitive dust prevention and track out prevention as well as Rule 300 for open burning if applicable. Prior to any grading, an approved Fugitive Dust Plan will be required prior to issuance of a grading permit. If grading meets the requirements of the District Rules, the grading improvements would not involve the creation of significant smoke, ash or odors. The building expansion will create additional employee vehicle traffic and emissions in which may add to the overall non-attainment status of the County's existing violations for ozone. However, trip generation rates and air impacts were addressed for the El Dorado Hills Business Park in the 2004 General Plan EIR upon full build-out. The Business Park is approximately 50% from full build-out and the County's Department of Transportation has determined the additional employees will not exceed the 2004 General Plan policies for increase traffic impacts. Therefore, short-term and long-term air quality impacts would be less than significant.

d-e.

**Sensitive Receptors and Objectionable Odors.** Common types of facilities known to produce odors include wastewater treatment plants, sanitary landfill, transfer station, asphalt batch plant and manufacturing plants. The Aerometals manufacturing plant is located next to Carson Creek/Euer Ranch Subdivision. Other sensitive receptors such as a private K-8<sup>th</sup> grade school is located approximately 2,700-feet to the north of the project site. The private school most likely will not be impacted by the short term grading and construction phase of the building expansion if the project is in compliance with the Air District Rules. The requested project may generate or produce objectionable odors. These odors may be attributed to the use of the helicopter and the manufacturing of aviation related parts. The helicopter is used approximately twice a month with occasional night flights. The typical time the helicopter is spooling up on the helipad is within 5-10 minutes before takeoff while landing is within the same time period. The manufacturing of helicopter and a few aircraft parts are made by automated milling machines and the use of welding equipment which is completely enclosed within the building. The application of aircraft type coatings occur within a paint booth on site that contains air filtrations systems capable of reducing VOC's from entering the air outside. Aircraft bonding occurs within the building as well, and due to the low production rate of bonding parts, most likely would not exceed air quality threshold standards. Furthermore, El Dorado County Air District has reviewed the proposed project and will require all new point source emission units or non-permitted emission units (i.e. gasoline dispensing facility, boilers, internal combustion engines, etc.), to submit an authority to construct application. All new point source emission units and non-permitted emission units will require approval prior to use. The Short-term heavy equipment emissions generated by the grading and construction activities would not involve the creation of significant smoke, ash or odors based upon an approved fugitive dust mitigation plan conforming to District Rules 223, 223.1 and 223.2 and Rule 300 as applicable. In addition, the nearest residential unit is located approximately 30 feet west of the project site which may be impacted temporarily by the required grading and construction work. Asphalt surface treatment for the expanded parking lot will be required to meet the Air Districts Rules to ensure the proper mitigation measures are adhered to. The proposed building expansion will not include any features that would be a source of substantial pollutant emissions that could affect sensitive receptors or generate objectionable odors. Therefore, long-term impacts would be less than significant.

**Finding**

Potentially Significant Impact	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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A significant air quality impact is defined as any violation of an ambient air quality standard, any substantial contribution to an existing or projected air quality violation, or any exposure of sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations. As discussed above, the proposed project would not impact air quality. For this “Air Quality” category, the thresholds of significance have not been exceeded.

<b>IV. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES.</b> <i>Would the project:</i>				
a. Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?				X
b. Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?			X	
c. Have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?				X
d. Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?				X
e. Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?			X	
f. Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?				X

**Discussion:**

A substantial adverse effect on Biological Resources would occur if the implementation of the project would:

- Substantially reduce or diminish habitat for native fish, wildlife or plants;
- Cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels;
- Threaten to eliminate a native plant or animal community;
- Reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal;
- Substantially affect a rare or endangered species of animal or plant or the habitat of the species; or
- Interfere substantially with the movement of any resident or migratory fish or wildlife species.

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- a. The proposed project would have no impact on any rare or endangered plant or animal species. No special status species exist on the site<sup>4</sup>.
- b, c and e. The site was historically used for grazing prior to the development of the El Dorado Hills Business Park. It has been graded and now covered with seasonal grasses with the exception of the man-made drainage that was created with construction of the original building to carry sheet flow off the site to the southeast corner. This ditch has created wetland habitat with cattails and two willow trees. Once leaving the project site, the ditch ends and any water sheetflows across the grazing land to the south. The California Department of Fish and Game has indicated that although it is not high quality habitat, it still provides value for wildlife<sup>5</sup>. streambed alteration permit will be required from the state in order to extend the culvert and remove this habitat. This permit will require mitigation in the form of in-kind replacement or in-lieu fees. The project will have a less than significant impact on wetland and riparian habitat with the mitigation.

**Mitigation Measure**

The applicant shall secure a streambed alteration permit from the California Department of Fish and Game for which in-kind replacement or in-lieu fees shall be required.

- d. The project will not interfere with wildlife movement or impede wildlife nursery sites. The site is surrounded by development on three sides, and does not provide appropriate habitat, nor link wildlife migration corridors.
- f. The site is not covered by an HCP or other conservation plan. There would be no impact as a result of this project. The site located in Mitigation Area 2 of the Gabbro soils rare plant preserve program and subject to the payment of mitigation fees only.

**Finding**

No impacts from biological resources are expected with on-site improvement associated with the building expansion and helipad re-location. For this “Biological” category, the thresholds of significance have not been exceeded.

<b>V. CULTURAL RESOURCES. Would the project:</b>				
a. Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in Section 15064.5?				<b>X</b>
b. Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of archaeological resource pursuant to Section 15064.5?				<b>X</b>
c. Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?				<b>X</b>

<sup>4</sup> El Dorado County Planning Department, El Dorado County General Plan Draft EIR (SCH #2001082030) May 2003, p.5.9-29.

<sup>5</sup> Wicker, Kerry, Environmental Scientist, California Department of Fish and Game, Sacramento Valley and Central Sierra Region, personal conversation with Peter Maurer, El Dorado County Planning Services, October 23, 2006

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<b>V. CULTURAL RESOURCES.</b> <i>Would the project:</i>				
d. Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?				<b>X</b>

**Discussion:**

In general, significant impacts are those that diminish the integrity, research potential, or other characteristics that make a historical or cultural resource significant or important. A substantial adverse effect on Cultural Resources would occur if the implementation of the project would:

- Disrupt, alter, or adversely affect a prehistoric or historic archaeological site or a property or historic or cultural significant to a community or ethnic or social group; or a paleontological site except as a part of a scientific study;
- Affect a landmark of cultural/historical importance;
- Conflict with established recreational, educational, religious or scientific uses of the area; or
- Conflict with adopted environmental plans and goals of the community where it is located.

a-d. The El Dorado Hills Business Park Draft EIR addressed cultural resources. An archaeological literature survey of the site was conducted by the North Central Information Center. The Center made the following findings. Prehistoric Resources: no previously recorded sites occur within the project boundary. Historic Resources: “The Carson Emigrant Road between Clarksville and White Rock probably followed the route of the present White Rock Road.” “It is quite possible that artifacts dating as early as 1849-1850 may be present.” “Based upon the following information, the site ranges in sensitivity from moderate to high for both prehistoric and historic resources.” “Those areas highest in sensitivity would be along the drainages and adjacent to both White Rock and Latrobe Roads but site can and do occur in the open areas such as those in the project.” The Aerometals project site is approximately 2,760-feet south of White Rock Road and approximately 570-feet from the nearest drainage. Carson Creek Subdivision which is adjacent to the Aerometals project site completed an EIR. Within the Carson Creek EIR, Cultural Resources were mostly identified as ranching and early settlement features including placer mining along the drainages. Furthermore, the Carson Creek EIR indicated that no cultural resources were found within the Carson Creek project boundary or adjacent to the project based on record searches. A few Native American artifacts were found in the 1995 sample survey of Carson Creek and other prehistoric resources were recorded in close proximity to the Carson Creek project site.

**Finding**

Based upon the archaeological survey reports and EIR documentation prepared for the Business Park and Carson Creek Subdivision, it is determined that all feasible conditions have been incorporated in the project to reduce potential impacts on cultural resources to a level of insignificance. For this “Cultural Resources” category, the thresholds of significance have not been exceeded.

Potentially Significant Impact	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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<b>VI. GEOLOGY AND SOILS.</b> <i>Would the project:</i>			
a. Expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:			<b>X</b>
i) Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42.		<b>X</b>	
b. Expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:			<b>X</b>
i) Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42.			<b>X</b>
ii) Strong seismic ground shaking?		<b>X</b>	
iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?			<b>X</b>
iv) Landslides?			<b>X</b>
c. Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?		<b>X</b>	
d. Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse?		<b>X</b>	
e. Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994) creating substantial risks to life or property?		<b>X</b>	
f. Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative waste water disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of waste water?			<b>X</b>

**Discussion:**

A substantial adverse effect on Geologic Resources would occur if the implementation of the project would:

- Allow substantial development of structures or features in areas susceptible to seismically induced hazards such as ground shaking, liquefaction, seiche, and/or slope failure where the risk to people and property resulting from earthquakes could not be reduced through engineering and construction measures in accordance with regulations, codes, and professional standards;
- Allow substantial development in areas subject to landslides, slope failure, erosion, subsidence, settlement, and/or expansive soils where the risk to people and property resulting from such geologic hazards could not

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be reduced through engineering and construction measures in accordance with regulations, codes, and professional standards; or

- Allow substantial grading and construction activities in areas of known soil instability, steep slopes, or shallow depth to bedrock where such activities could result in accelerated erosion and sedimentation or exposure of people, property, and/or wildlife to hazardous conditions (e.g., blasting) that could not be mitigated through engineering and construction measures in accordance with regulations, codes, and professional standards.

a. **Seismicity, subsidence and liquefaction.** There are no Earthquake Fault Zones subject to the Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Act (formerly Special Studies Zone Act) in El Dorado County.<sup>6</sup> No other active or potentially active faults have been mapped at or adjacent to the project site where near-field effects could occur.<sup>7</sup> There would be no impact related to fault rupture. There are two known faults within the project vicinity; however, the project site is located in a region of the Sierra Nevada foothills where numerous faults have been mapped. The project site is situated between the West Branch Bear Mountains fault Zone and the Mormon Island Fault Zone.

The Carson Creek Specific Plan EIR addressed these fault zones and geological setting. The “study of the Mormon Island Fault Zone by Tierra Engineering Consultants in 1983 concluded that a minimum displacement has not occurred during the last 65,000 to 70,000 years and probably has not been the locus of large displacements since late Mesozoic time. Additionally, the Carson Creek Specific Plan addressed Liquefaction, Landslide, Differential Compaction/Seismic Settlement, Ground Rupture and Ground Shaking impacts. The following are findings from that EIR:

- Liquefaction is not likely to occur within most of the project site due to the presence of a thin mantle of soil developed upon firm bedrock.
- Landslides were not found within the Carson Creek project site.
- Differential Compaction/Seismic Settlement – the thin mantle of soil over bedrock would not be prone to differential compaction or seismic settlement.
- Ground Rupture – Ground Rupture is possible due to the location of the two fault zones. Given the available geologic and seismic data and due to the project (Carson Creek Subdivision), proximity to the Bear Mountain fault Zone, ground rupture, although unlikely, is possible within the site. This rupture would likely be associated with damaging earthquakes in the Richter Magnitude range of 5 or greater and would probably not result in major ruptures, but would be limited to sympathetic movement along discontinuities associated with joint systems, and result in minor displacement. Although displacements have not occurred along the Mormon Island Fault Zone during the last 65,000 to 70,000 years, ground rupture on the site is considered to be potential due to the presence of this fault zone. Ground rupture impacts to land uses proposed within the (Carson Creek) Specific Plan area are considered potentially significant.
- Ground Shaking – Because the potential exists for ground accelerations as high as 0.7 G from strong earthquakes along the bear Mountain Fault Zone near the project site (Carson Creek Specific Plan), a low to moderate potential for sever ground shaking exists at the site. The presence of the Mormon Island Fault Zone also creates a potential for ground shaking to occur on

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<sup>7</sup> California Department of Conservation, California Geological Survey, Mineral Land Classification of El Dorado County, California, CGS Open-File Report 2000-03, 2001, Plate 1.

Potentially Significant Impact	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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the project site. Ground shaking impacts are considered to be less than significant when standard building permit procedures are applied.

Prior to the approval of a grading permit for Aerometals building expansion and re-located helipad, the applicant shall submit to, and receive approval from the El Dorado County Department of Transportation a soils and geological hazards report meeting the requirements for such reports provided in the El Dorado County Grading Ordinance.

Prior to the issuance of building permits, all structures shall be designed in accordance with the Uniform Building Code (UBC), Chapter 23. All structures shall be designed in accordance with the ground acceleration analysis for the Mormon Island Fault Zone and the onsite ground acceleration anticipated from the Bear Mountain fault Zone. The building expansion shall adhere to the design factors presented for UBC Zone 3 as a minimum. Final design standards shall be in accordance with the findings of detailed geological and geotechnical analysis for the proposed building expansion. Therefore, short-term and long-term impacts would be less than significant if the building expansion conforms to UBC Chapter 23 for seismic loading.

- b & c. **Soil Erosion and loss of topsoil.** The project site has been previously graded and is flat. A small portion of the site near the southern boundary line may require fill material to be imported to match the existing lot grade for the building expansion.

All grading activities exceeding 250 cubic yards of graded material or grading completed for the purpose of supporting a structure must meet the provisions contained in the *County of El Dorado - Grading, Erosion, and Sediment Control Ordinance* (Ordinance No. 3983, adopted 11/3/88). This ordinance is designed to limit erosion, control the loss of topsoil and sediment, limit surface runoff, and ensure stable soil and site conditions for the intended use in compliance with the El Dorado County General Plan. During site grading and construction of any on-site improvements, there is potential for erosion, changes in topography, and unstable soil conditions.

The Department of Transportation (DOT) reviewed the proposed project and has placed conditions of approvals onto the proposed parcel split. Impacts would be less than significant.

- d. **Expansive soils.** Expansive soils are soils that greatly increase in volume when they absorb water and shrink when they dry out. The central half of the County has a moderate expansiveness rating while the eastern and western portions are rated low. These boundaries are very similar to those indicating erosion potential. When buildings are placed on expansive soils, foundations may rise each wet season and fall each dry season. This movement may result in cracking foundations, distortion of structures, and warping of doors and windows. Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code establishes a numerical expansion index for soil types ranging from very low to very high. The project site has been classified per the USDA Soil Survey as Argonaut gravelly loam. The thin mantle of soil over the majority of the site appears to have a low potential to expand or to collapse. The prior construction of the Aerometals building required a soils compaction report. The expanded building and re-located helipad will require an updated soils report that addresses soil expansion for the project site. Building permits for the building expansion and relocation of the helipad, will require conformance with UBC codes. Impacts would be less than significant.

- e. The project site is serviced by public waste water collection system. There would be no impacts.

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**Finding**

Following the implementation of the above mitigation measures, project impacts on earth resources would be reduced to less than significant. For this “Geology and Soils” category, the thresholds of significance have not been exceeded.

<b>VII. HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS. <i>Would the project:</i></b>				
a. Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?			X	
b. Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?			X	
c. Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?				X
d. Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?				X
e. For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?				X
f. For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?				X
g. Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?				X
h. Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires, including where wildlands are adjacent to urbanized areas or where residences are intermixed with wildlands?				X

**Discussion:**

A substantial adverse effect due to Hazards or Hazardous Materials would occur if implementation of the project would:

- Expose people and property to hazards associated with the use, storage, transport, and disposal of hazardous materials where the risk of such exposure could not be reduced through implementation of Federal, State, and local laws and regulations;

Potentially Significant Impact	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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- Expose people and property to risks associated with wildland fires where such risks could not be reduced through implementation of proper fuel management techniques, buffers and landscape setbacks, structural design features, and emergency access; or
  - Expose people to safety hazards as a result of former on-site mining operations.
- a. **Hazardous Substances.** No hazardous substances are involved with the building expansion. Temporary use of heavy equipment for building construction will be required. A diesel fuel storage tank may be located on site for the heavy equipment. The potential storage and transport of diesel fuel in such quantities that would create a hazard to people or the environment will require an approved hazardous material business plan issued from the El Dorado County Environmental Management Department. Said hazardous material business plan will identify potential impacts to the environment and require mitigation measures to reduce any potential impacts. Based on the amount of on-site parking lot improvements required and the duration of heavy equipment on-site and off site to complete the parking lot improvements, and that fuel storage will most likely not occur, impacts would be less than significant. Impacts related to diesel fuel spillage would be less than significant with an approved hazardous materials business plan. The existing Aerometals building utilizes aviation fuel for the helicopter and materials in the manufacturing of helicopter and aircraft parts. Said material storage has been reviewed and approved by El Dorado County Environmental Management Department. Further expansion of the manufacturing plant and additional materials will require an updated hazardous materials plan to be approved by the Environmental Management District prior to building permit issuance. Impacts related to fuel spillage and other materials used in the manufacturing of aviation parts would be less than significant with an approved hazardous materials business plan
- b. **Creation of Hazards.** The use of the helicopter as part of the business of Aerometals may pose a risk to the adjacent residential units to the west in Carson Creek/Euer Ranch Subdivision as well as the rest of the Business Park if for some unforeseen mechanical malfunction occurs with the helicopter in flight. Since the flight path of the helicopter avoids residential areas and the infrequent use of the helicopter during the year and continued maintenance of the helicopter and the required pre-flight check of the helicopter, the risk associated with mechanical failure is greatly reduced. Over the past 8-years, no accidents have happened. In addition, each part manufactured by Aerometals must go through a very rigorous inspection process by Federal Licensed inspectors. Some of the parts manufactured by Aerometals are used on this helicopter. Since the helicopter is used as part of the business, the helicopter is kept in excellent mechanical order thus reducing the possibility of accidents from occurring. If a mechanical failure occurs while in flight, the helicopter would auto-gyro back down safely to earth. As part of maintaining a helicopter pilot's license, the pilot(s) are trained yearly in this auto-gyro technique in case an emergency situation occurs. Based on the mechanical and safety operations of the helicopter, the potential impacts are reduced to less than significant.
- c. **Hazardous Emissions.** There is a private K-8<sup>th</sup> grade school 2,700-feet of the project site. The proposed project building expansion would not include any operations that would use acutely hazardous materials or generate hazardous air emissions that would impact the school. The use and flight path of the helicopter avoids the school site and other school sites within the Business Park. There would be no impact.

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- d. **Hazardous Materials Sites.** The project site is not included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5.<sup>8</sup> There would be no impact.
- e. **Public Airport Hazards.** The project site is not within any airport safety zone or airport land use plan area. There would be no impact.
- f. **Private Airstrip Hazards.** There is no private airstrip that is identified on a U.S. Geological Survey Topography map or latest aerial photographs that indicate a private airstrip in the vicinity. There would be no impact.
- g. **Emergency Response Plan.** The parcel is accessed by Golden Foothill Parkway and Sandstone in the El Dorado Hills area. El Dorado Hill Fire Department have reviewed and responded to the proposed project and have indicated that the project will require compliance with all California Fire Safety Codes associated with the proposed use including the installation of an additional fire hydrant. Based upon the conditions of approval for on-site improvements, there would be no impact related to emergency response or evacuation plans.
- h. **Fire Hazards.** The project site located in an area classified as having a moderate fire hazard.<sup>9</sup> The El Dorado County 2004 General Plan Policy 6.2.3.2 requires application of uniform fire protection standards to development projects by fire districts. General Plan Policy 6.2.3.2 also requires the applicant to demonstrate that adequate access exists or can be provided to ensure that emergency vehicles can access the site and private vehicles can evacuate the area. As part of the conditions of approval for the project, the applicant will be required to comply with California Fire Codes 902.21 and 902.2.3.4 for fire safe access and turn around in addition to insuring adequate fire flow and an the installation of additional fire hydrant. There would be no impact.

**Finding**

No Hazards or Hazardous conditions are expected with the parcel split either directly or indirectly. For this “Hazards” category, the thresholds of significance have not been exceeded.

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<sup>8</sup> California Department of Toxic Substances Control, Hazardous Waste and Substances Site List (Cortese List), [http://www.dtsc.ca.gov/database/Calsites/Cortese\\_List](http://www.dtsc.ca.gov/database/Calsites/Cortese_List), accessed September 23, 2004; California Regional Water Quality Control Board, Central Valley Region, Leaking Underground Storage Tanks Quarterly Report, April 2004; California Regional Water Quality Control Board, Central Valley Region, Site Cleanup List, April 2004.

<sup>9</sup> El Dorado County Planning Department, El Dorado County General Plan Draft Environmental Impact Report (SCH #2001082030), May 2003, Exhibit 5.8-4.

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<b>VIII. HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY. <i>Would the project:</i></b>			
a. Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements?			<b>X</b>
b. Substantially deplete groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that there would be a net deficit in aquifer volume or a lowering of the local groundwater table level (e.g., the production rate of pre-existing nearby wells would drop to a level which would not support existing land uses or planned uses for which permits have been granted)?			<b>X</b>
c. Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, in a manner which would result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or -off-site?		<b>X</b>	
d. Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, or substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or off-site?			<b>X</b>
e. Create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff?			<b>X</b>
f. Otherwise substantially degrade water quality?			<b>X</b>
g. Place housing within a 100-year flood hazard area as mapped on a federal Flood Hazard Boundary or Flood Insurance Rate Map or other flood hazard delineation map?			<b>X</b>
h. Place within a 100-year flood hazard area structures which would impede or redirect flood flows?			<b>X</b>
i. Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving flooding, including flooding as a result of the failure of a levee or dam?			<b>X</b>
j. Inundation by seiche, tsunami, or mudflow?			<b>X</b>

**Discussion:**

A substantial adverse effect on Hydrology and Water Quality would occur if the implementation of the project would:

- Expose residents to flood hazards by being located within the 100-year floodplain as defined by the Federal Emergency Management Agency;
- Cause substantial change in the rate and amount of surface runoff leaving the project site ultimately causing a substantial change in the amount of water in a stream, river or other waterway;
- Substantially interfere with groundwater recharge;

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- Cause degradation of water quality (temperature, dissolved oxygen, turbidity and/or other typical storm water pollutants) in the project area; or
- Cause degradation of groundwater quality in the vicinity of the project site.

- a & f. **Water Quality Standards.** The project is of limited scope and would not involve disturbance to water bodies or require water service, and would therefore have no effect on surface or groundwater quantity or quality. The building expansion is located adjacent to Carson Creek watershed. The construction of the building expansion will require additional site work and grading. The amount of grading and soil removal will be less than 20 cubic yards and El Dorado County Department of Transportation has reviewed the project and determined that a grading permit is not warranted. However, the project will be connected to the El Dorado Hills Business Park Storm Drain System in which is tied into the waste water collection system operated by El Dorado Irrigation. The building expansion and uses within for the manufacturing of aviation parts would not involve any uses that would generate wastewater. There would be no impact.
- b. **Groundwater.** There would be no increased demand on groundwater resources as a result of the proposed building expansion. There would be no impact.
- c. **Erosion Control Plan.** The purpose of the erosion control program is to limit storm water runoff and discharge from a site. The Water Quality Control Board has established specific water quality objectives, and any project not meeting those objectives is required to apply for a Waste Discharge Permit. The Department of Transportation has reviewed the proposed project and finds that an erosion control plan is not warranted for the proposed project. Submitted plans for building construction and grading will require compliance with erosion control measures to ensure erosion does not enter into the Carson Creek watershed. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.
- d. **Existing Drainage Pattern.** The property has one drainage easement that flows towards one of the tributaries of Carson Creek. The onsite drainage easement is one of the drainage outlets within the Business Park. The proposed building expansion parking lot improvements and new helipad location will not alter the existing drainage pattern on-site. The El Dorado County Department of Transportation has reviewed the proposed parcel map project and has determined that a drainage, erosion control and grading plan are not warranted. Therefore, there would be no impact on the existing drainage pattern.
- e. **Storm Water Run-off.** There are natural drainages off-site and an engineered drainage culvert/easement on-site. The Business Park has a storm water system in place. The proposed building expansion will increase the impervious area of the parcel and potentially led to additional storm water runoff. However, 50 percent of the project site is still undeveloped in which percolation occurs as well as the drainage easement on the project site assists in conveying storm water off site to the Carson Creek watershed. The proposed project would not involve any operations that would be a source of polluted water. Therefore, there would be no impact on drainage patterns, flooding, drainage systems, or water quality.
- g, h, & i. **Flooding.** The level project site is situated on flat land at an elevation of approximately 490 feet above sea level. There are two 100-year flood hazard areas in the vicinity of the site. Based on the Carson Creek Regional Drainage Study 2005 Update, the 100-year flood areas do not affect the project site location. The site is not in an area subject to seiche, tsunami, or mudflow. The site is not in an area subject to flooding as a result of levee or dam failure. There would be no impact.

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**FIRM.** The Flood Insurance Rate Map (Panel No. 060040 0700 D, last updated October, 18, 1983) for the project area establishes that the project site is not within a mapped 100-year floodplain.

**Finding**

No significant hydrological impacts are expected with the parcel split either directly or indirectly. For this “Hydrology” category, the thresholds of significance have not been exceeded.

<b>IX. LAND USE PLANNING. <i>Would the project:</i></b>				
a. Physically divide an established community?				<b>X</b>
b. Conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project (including, but not limited to, the general plan, specific plan, local coastal program, or zoning ordinance) adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?				<b>X</b>
c. Conflict with any applicable habitat conservation plan or natural community conservation plan?				<b>X</b>

**Discussion:**

A substantial adverse effect on Land Use would occur if the implementation of the project would:

- Result in the conversion of Prime Farmland as defined by the State Department of Conservation;
- Result in conversion of land that either contains choice soils or which the County Agricultural Commission has identified as suitable for sustained grazing, provided that such lands were not assigned urban or other nonagricultural use in the Land Use Map;
- Result in conversion of undeveloped open space to more intensive land uses;
- Result in a use substantially incompatible with the existing surrounding land uses; or
- Conflict with adopted environmental plans, policies, and goals of the community.

- a. **Established Community.** The project site is surrounded by Research and Development type uses and residential uses within the El Dorado Hills Area. The building expansion and re-located helipad would not physically divide an established community. There would be no impact.
- b. **Land Use Plan.** The parcel is zoned for Research and Development (RD) and allows light manufacturing and uses conducted outside a building which may cause measurable dust, noise beyond the exterior of the building which could detrimentally impact neighboring land and uses with an approved use permit. The existing use has been approved with a use permit for the operation of a helipad and helicopter as part of the Aerometals business. The existing use and expansion has been determined that it does not conflict with the adopted General Plan land use designation for the site (Research and Development with Design Control overlay (RD/DC)) or adjacent uses. There would be no impact.

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- c. **Habitat Conservation Plan.** As noted in Item IV (Biological Resources), the project site is located in the Rare Plant mitigation area 2, however is not within an ecological preserve mitigation area established for the Pine Hill rare plants or red-legged frog core area. There would be no impact.

**Finding**

The proposed use of the land will be consistent with the zoning and the General Plan policies for Research and Development uses. There will be no significant impact from the project due to a conflict with the General Plan or zoning designations for use of the property. No significant impacts are expected. For this “Land Use” category, the thresholds of significance have not been exceeded.

<b>X. MINERAL RESOURCES. <i>Would the project:</i></b>				
a. Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state?				<b>X</b>
b. Result in the loss of availability of a locally-important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan or other land use plan?				<b>X</b>

**Discussion:**

A substantial adverse effect on Mineral Resources would occur if the implementation of the project would:

- Result in obstruction of access to, and extraction of mineral resources classified MRZ-2x, or result in land use compatibility conflicts with mineral extraction operations.

a & b. **Mineral Resources.** The project site is not in an area where mineral resources classified as MRZ-2a or MRZ-2b by the State Geologist is present.<sup>10</sup> There are no mining activities adjacent to or in the vicinity of the project site that could affect existing uses. There would be no impact.

**Finding**

No impacts to energy and mineral resources are expected with the proposed parcel split either directly or indirectly. For this “Mineral Resources” category, the thresholds of significance have not been exceeded.

<b>XI. NOISE. <i>Would the project result in:</i></b>				
a. Exposure of persons to or generation of noise levels in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?			<b>X</b>	
			<b>X</b>	

<sup>10</sup> California Department of Conservation, California Geological Survey, Mineral Land Classification of El Dorado County, California, CGS Open-File Report 2000-03, 2001.

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<b>XI. NOISE.</b> <i>Would the project result in:</i>			
b. Exposure of persons to or generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?			
c. A substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?			<b>X</b>
d. A substantial temporary or periodic increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?	<b>X</b>		
e. For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise level?			<b>X</b>
f. For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?			<b>X</b>

**Discussion:**

A substantial adverse effect due to Noise would occur if the implementation of the project would:

- Result in short-term construction noise that creates noise exposures to surrounding noise sensitive land uses in excess of 60dBA CNEL;
- Result in long-term operational noise that creates noise exposures in excess of 60 dBA CNEL at the adjoining property line of a noise sensitive land use and the background noise level is increased by 3dBA, or more; or
- Results in noise levels inconsistent with the performance standards contained in Table 6-1 and Table 6-2 in the El Dorado County General Plan.

a-d. **Noise Standards.** *Short Term Noise Impacts:* The on-site improvements would generate temporary construction noise from the large heavy equipment, trucks, bulldozer, crane) at a potentially significant level (greater than 70 dB  $L_{eq}$  and 90 dB  $L_{max}$  between 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. (2004 GP table 6-3 for maximum allowable noise exposure for non transportation noise sources in community regions-construction noise). However, the site is located on a large parcel within the El Dorado Hills Business Park with adjacent sensitive receptors located within the project vicinity. Construction operations for building expansion and parking lot improvements will require adherence to construction hours between 7:00 a.m. and 7 p.m. during weekdays and will require the heavy construction equipment to install the latest noise reduction technologies available. Short-term noise impacts would therefore be less than significant. The long-term noise impacts would be related to the use of the helicopter which would be under the maximum noise level thresholds in the 2004 General plan table 6-1 of 60 dB  $L_{dn}$ /CNEL or less. The construction activities associated with the building expansion would occur weekdays during daylight hours and would not involve extensive use of heavy equipment that would be a substantial source of noise or vibration at the residence or adjacent residences. Short-term impacts would be less than significant.

*Short-Term/Long Term Noise Impacts:* The helicopter is used approximately twice a month with an occasional night time flight. The use of the helicopter is used as part of the Aerometals business. The

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flight log for the year 2005 indicated 21 flights. The helicopter produces noise from its turbine engine and rotor blades. The noise is very loud close to the helicopter, but residential and other sensitive receptors will be generally exposed for a short time period approximately twice a month with occasionally night time flights. Each take-off and landing of the helicopter occurs within 5-10 minutes typically. The relocated helipad will be located towards the eastern property line further away from the nearest residential units. The expanded building will also assist in the reduction of noise generated by the helicopter. Additionally, Carson Creek subdivision installed cinder block sound walls along the border between the Business Park and residential areas.

“Turbine-powered helicopters generally are quieter than reciprocating engine-powered helicopters. Blade slapping is the modulating sound of the main rotor; however, pilot techniques can minimize blade slapping. Also selecting specific routes, altitude, and climb and descent profiles can reduce the noise perceptible to persons on the ground.” (U.S. Department of Transportation – Federal Aviation Administration, Advisory Circular, “Safety in and Around Helicopters”, AC NO: 91-32B, 06/02/97).

An acoustical noise study was prepared for S98-17, the original use permit for the location of a helipad and use of a helicopter for Aerometals in 1998. According to the Bollard Acoustical Consulting report dated 11/6/1998, concluded that the MD-500 helicopter would exceed the County’s noise standards based on assumptions and conversion factors associated with a helicopter use and the County’s hourly noise standards. The noise study report concluded that the noise exceeding the General Plan Policies were short term and not long term noise impacts.

It is important to recognize that the helicopter is a transportation noise source regulated through General Plan Policies 6.5.1.1, 6.5.1.9 and Table 6-1. Transportation noise sources and the standards in Table 6-1 are measured in a standard labeled Community Noise Level Equivalent (CNEL), an hourly noise average. The short duration of helicopter noise would not cause the hourly average CNEL to exceed the thresholds in the General Plan. Non-transportation noise sources have both a CNEL standard as well as a maximum level set forth in Table 6-2 of the General Plan. However, since the helicopter is classified as a transportation noise source, the maximum noise levels for non-transportation noise sources in General Plan Table 6-2 do not apply to this use.

The following information on the MD-500 helicopter is from the Helicopter Association International – Fly Neighborly Program dated 10/25/2002.

- The general noise level of the MD-500 during take off is between 84 and 86 Effective Perceived Noise Level (EPNL in dB), assuming that the helicopter is stabilized at maximum takeoff power, climbing at the best rate of climb along a path starting from the rotation point located 1640 feet forward of the flight reference point at a height of 65 feet above the ground.
- For landing, the noise level is between 86 and 88 (EPNL in Db), for a helicopter that is stabilized in its landing configuration (90% of VH), and following a 6° approach path, above the flight path reference point at a height of 396 feet.

The Typical Decibel Level of Common Sounds is:

- Normal Conversation (at 3-feet) indoors: 60 dB’s (A-weighted Decibels) while in comparison a Cessna 172 Landing (3,300 feet from runway end outdoor is 60 dB’s.

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- Large Business Office (indoors) 65 dB’s (A-weighted Decibels) while in comparison, an automobile, 30 mph at 50 feet.
- Noisy Restaurant (indoors) 75 dB’s (A-weighted Decibels) while in comparison, busy street at 50-feet.
- Jet Aircraft Cabin, at Cruise shouting (at 3-feet) 80 dB’s (A-weighted Decibels) while in comparison, an automobile at 65 mph at 50-feet.
- Diesel truck, 40 mph at 50-feet 85 dB’s (A-weighted Decibels)
- Noisy Cocktail Bar 90 dB’s (A-weighted Decibels) while in comparison, a 727-200 at takeoff (4 miles from start of roll).
- Power lawn mower at 50-feet: 100 dB’s (A-weighted Decibels)
- Ambulance Siren at 100-feet: 100 dB’s (A-weighted Decibels).
- Rock Band: 110 dB’s (A-weighted Decibels).
- Threshold of hearing pain: 140 dB’s (A-weighted Decibels).

Several criteria used by helicopter pilots in reducing noise from noise-sensitive areas: (Fly Neighborly Guide)

- Maximum distance and altitude separation from noise-sensitive areas is the most effective means of noise abatement.
- Noise exposure is lower to the sides of the flight path than directly underneath and lower upwind than downwind of the helicopter.
- Plan takeoff path away from noise-sensitive areas. Climb to cruise altitude at the best rate of climb airspeed 60-62 knots (69-71 statute miles per hour). (Conversion factor: knots x 1.1508)
- Use maximum power for takeoff.
- The MD-500 is quieter on the right side than the on the left.
- When crossing noise sensitive areas, maintain airspeed of no more than 110 knots. (126.6 mph)
- Where possible, maintain a minimum altitude of 1,000 feet above ground level

The use of the helicopter as part of the Aerometals business would create intermittent short-term/long-term noise impacts in the immediate vicinity of the residential uses (Carson Creek/Euer Ranch Subdivision). Based on the fact that typical take off times are within 5-10 minutes and the landings and shut down mode occurs within 5-10 minutes are short-term yet, will occur approximately twice a month with occasional night flights during the year. These short-term noise impacts over the long-term period do not exceed the 2004 General Plan Noise policies. The addition of existing noise sound walls along the border of the business park and the residential subdivision to the west assist in mitigating the direct noise impacts from the helicopter. Furthermore, the expanded Aerometals building will provide additional noise mitigation. Additionally, prospective buyers of the residential units in Carson Creek are notified about Aerometals and the use of the helicopter prior to purchasing. Moreover, the helicopter flight path avoids the residential and other noise-sensitive land uses in the vicinity, thus further reducing noise impacts. The following mitigation measure will reduce the potential noise impact to a level of less than significant:

**Mitigation Measure**

The applicant shall adhere to the flight path approved by the California Department of Transportation, Division of Aeronautics. Helicopter flights shall be limited to an average of one per week, between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m.

- e & f. **Airport Noise.** The project site is not within the airport land use plan. There would be no aircraft-related noise impacts. There are no impacts.

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**Finding**

With the mitigation measure identified above, the impacts from noise as a result of this project will be less than significant.

<b>XII. POPULATION AND HOUSING.</b> <i>Would the project:</i>				
a. Induce substantial population growth in an area, either directly (i.e., by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (i.e., through extension of roads or other infrastructure)?				<b>X</b>
b. Displace substantial numbers of existing housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?				<b>X</b>
c. Displace substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?				<b>X</b>

**Discussion:**

A substantial adverse effect on Population and Housing would occur if the implementation of the project would:

- Create substantial growth or concentration in population;
- Create a more substantial imbalance in the County’s current jobs to housing ratio; or
- Conflict with adopted goals and policies set forth in applicable planning documents.

a-c. **Population Growth.** The project site is in an area zoned for research and development use, utility services are available at the project site. No housing or people would be displaced, and no extensions of infrastructure would be required. There would be no impact.

**Finding**

The project will not displace housing. There is no potential for a significant impact due to substantial growth with the proposed project either directly or indirectly. For this “Population and Housing” category, the thresholds of significance have not been exceeded.

<b>XIII. PUBLIC SERVICES.</b> <i>Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for any of the public services:</i>				
a. Fire protection?			<b>X</b>	
b. Police protection?				<b>X</b>
c. Schools?				<b>X</b>

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<b>XIII. PUBLIC SERVICES.</b> <i>Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for any of the public services:</i>			
d. Parks?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
e. Other government services?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

**Discussion:**

A substantial adverse effect on Public Services would occur if the implementation of the project would:

- Substantially increase or expand the demand for fire protection and emergency medical services without increasing staffing and equipment to meet the Department’s/District’s goal of 1.5 firefighters per 1,000 residents and 2 firefighters per 1,000 residents, respectively;
- Substantially increase or expand the demand for public law enforcement protection without increasing staffing and equipment to maintain the Sheriff’s Department goal of one sworn officer per 1,000 residents;
- Substantially increase the public school student population exceeding current school capacity without also including provisions to adequately accommodate the increased demand in services;
- Place a demand for library services in excess of available resources;
- Substantially increase the local population without dedicating a minimum of 5 acres of developed parklands for every 1,000 residents; or
- Be inconsistent with County adopted goals, objectives or policies.

a. **Fire Protection.** The parcel is within the El Dorado Hills Fire District. The closest fire station is located approximately 3.35 miles away from the Aerometals site. The El Dorado Hills Fire District reviewed the project and provided comments. The project will be conditioned to comply with Fire District requirements including the installation of a new fire hydrant. Impacts would be less than significant.

b. **Police Protection.** No new or expanded law enforcement services would be required. There would be no impact.

c-e. **Schools, Parks and Other Facilities.** The proposed project is located within the boundaries of the El Dorado Hills Business Park and the El Dorado Hills CSD. The proposed project is not creating new lots or creating additional residential units and is therefore is not subjected to fees in lieu of land dedication for parks. There are no components of the proposed project that would include any permanent population-related increases that would substantially contribute to increased demand on schools, parks, or other governmental services that could, in turn, result in the need for new or expanded facilities. There would be no impact.

**Finding**

As discussed above, no significant impacts are expected to public services either directly or indirectly. For this “Public Services” category, the thresholds of significance have not been exceeded.

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<b>XIV. RECREATION.</b>			
a. Would the project increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?			<b>X</b>
b. Does the project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?			<b>X</b>

**Discussion:**

A substantial adverse effect on Recreational Resources would occur if the implementation of the project would:

- Substantially increase the local population without dedicating a minimum of 5 acres of developed parklands for every 1,000 residents; or
- Substantially increase the use of neighborhood or regional parks in the area such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur.

a-b. **Parks and Recreation.** The proposed project will not require park in lieu fees instead of lands dedicated for parks and recreation purposes. The proposed project will not include any increase in permanent population that would substantially contribute to increased demand on recreation facilities or contribute to increased use of existing facilities. There would be no impact.

**Finding**

No significant impacts to recreation and open space resources are expected either directly or indirectly. For this “Recreation” category, the thresholds of significance have not been exceeded.

<b>XV. TRANSPORTATION/TRAFFIC. <i>Would the project:</i></b>			
a. Cause an increase in traffic which is substantial in relation to the existing traffic load and capacity of the street system (i.e., result in a substantial increase in either the number of vehicle trips, the volume to capacity ratio on roads, or congestion at intersections)?			<b>X</b>
b. Exceed, either individually or cumulatively, a level of service standard established by the county congestion management agency for designated roads or highways?			<b>X</b>
c. Result in a change in air traffic patterns, including either an increase in traffic levels or a change in location that results in substantial safety risks?			<b>X</b>
d. Substantially increase hazards due to a design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?			<b>X</b>
e. Result in inadequate emergency access?			<b>X</b>

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<b>XV. TRANSPORTATION/TRAFFIC.</b> <i>Would the project:</i>			
f. Result in inadequate parking capacity?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
g. Conflict with adopted policies, plans, or programs supporting alternative transportation (e.g., bus turnouts, bicycle racks)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

**Discussion:**

A substantial adverse effect on traffic would occur if the implementation of the project would:

- Result in an increase in traffic, which is substantial in relation to the existing traffic load and capacity of the street system;
- Generate traffic volumes which cause violations of adopted level of service standards (project and cumulative); or
- Result in, or worsen, Level of Service “F” traffic congestion during weekday, peak-hour periods on any highway, road, interchange or intersection in the unincorporated areas of the county as a result of a residential development project of 5 or more units.

a&b. **Capacity and Level of Service.** El Dorado Hills Business Park is serviced by County Roads that are listed in the 2004 General Plan for roads and highways needing level of service improvements. White Rock Road and Latrobe Road are slated for road improvements to accommodate the increase in traffic generated by the full build-out of the Business Park and the approved residential subdivisions along Latrobe Road. General Plan Policy TC-Xd of the Transportation and Circulation Element addresses Level of Service (LOS) thresholds. For County maintained roads and state highways within the unincorporated areas of the county shall not be worse than LOS E in Community regions. Policy TC-Xe: Worsen is defined as a 2% increase in traffic during the a.m. peak hour, p.m. peak hour, or daily, or the addition of 100 or more daily trips, or the addition of 10 or more trips during the a.m. peak hour or the p.m. peak hour. The proposed project anticipates an additional ten employees. Since the Business Park is approximately 50% built out and Aerometals will split the work shifts, the worker’s shift times will avoid contributing to the Level of Service thresholds identified in the General Plan. The number of vehicles associated with the proposed project would not change current vehicle trip rates and would not measurably affect traffic volumes or levels of service on a permanent basis such that County standards would be exceeded. Impacts would be less than significant.

c. **Traffic Patterns.** The project site is not within an airport safety zone. No changes in air traffic patterns would occur or be affected by the proposed project. There would be no impact.

d. **Hazards.** The project site is readily accessible from Golden Foothill Parkway. No traffic hazards such as sharp curves, poor sight distance, or dangerous intersections exist on or adjacent to the project site. There would be no impacts.

e. **Emergency Access.** The project site receives access from Sandstone Drive which terminates at the Carson Creek Subdivision/Sound Wall. Access to the project site will be improved with additional access onto Sandstone Drive. Based upon the on-site improvements there would be no disruption of emergency access to and from the existing residence or those in surrounding parcels. There would be no impact.

Potentially Significant Impact	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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- f. **Parking.** Additional parking will be provided on the subject parcel. There would be no impact.
- g. **Alternative Transportation.** No public transportation systems, bicycle lanes or bicycle storage would be affected because such features are not present at or adjacent to the project site. The El Dorado County Bicycle Transportation Plan (01/25/05) does not identify Sandstone Drive as a bicycle route. There would be no impact.

**Finding**

As discussed above, no significant traffic impacts are expected either directly or indirectly. For this “Transportation/Traffic” category, the thresholds of significance have not been exceeded.

<b>XVI. UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS. <i>Would the project:</i></b>				
a. Exceed wastewater treatment requirements of the applicable Regional Water Quality Control Board?				<b>X</b>
b. Require or result in the construction of new water or wastewater treatment facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?				<b>X</b>
c. Require or result in the construction of new stormwater drainage facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?				<b>X</b>
d. Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project from existing entitlements and resources, or are new or expanded entitlements needed?				<b>X</b>
e. Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider which serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments?				<b>X</b>
f. Be served by a landfill with sufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the project's solid waste disposal needs?				<b>X</b>
g. Comply with federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste?				<b>X</b>
h. Result in demand for expansion of power or telecommunications service facilities without also including provisions to adequately accommodate the increased or expanded demand.				<b>X</b>

**Discussion:**

A substantial adverse effect on Utilities and Service Systems would occur if the implementation of the project would:

Potentially Significant Impact	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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- Breach published national, state, or local standards relating to solid waste or litter control;
- Substantially increase the demand for potable water in excess of available supplies or distribution capacity without also including provisions to adequately accommodate the increased demand, or is unable to provide an adequate on-site water supply, including treatment, storage and distribution;
- Substantially increase the demand for the public collection, treatment, and disposal of wastewater without also including provisions to adequately accommodate the increased demand, or is unable to provide for adequate on-site wastewater system; or
- Result in demand for expansion of power or telecommunications service facilities without also including provisions to adequately accommodate the increased or expanded demand.

- a. **Wastewater.** The proposed project would not involve discharges of untreated domestic wastewater that would violate water quality control board requirements. Storm water runoff would be negligible (see Item c, below). There would be no impact.
- b., d., e. **New Facilities** New or expanded water or wastewater facilities would be required for the proposed building expansion including an additional fire hydrant. The facilities are connected to the existing EID service lines. There would be no impact.
- c. **Storm Water Drainage.** All required drainage facilities for the project shall be built in conformance with the standards contained in the “*County of El Dorado Drainage Manual*,” as determined by the Department of Transportation. The Department of Transportation has reviewed the project proposal and has concluded that the provisions of the drainage manual will not be required. There would be no impact.
- f & g. **Solid Waste.** Some anticipated increases of solid waste generated from the manufacturing expansion will occur. Generated waste could be in the form of aluminum shavings, or parts which can be recycled as well as typical office paper waste. There would be no impact.
- h. **Power.** Power and telephone facilities are currently in place and utilized at the project site. Additional office space and manufacturing milling machines will be located within the expanded portion of the building. There would not be a demand for expanded power of telecommunications service facilities needed to accommodate the minor increase in facility equipment on-site. There would be no impacts.

**Finding**

No significant utility and service system impacts are expected either directly or indirectly. For this “Utilities and Service Systems” category, the thresholds of significance have not been exceeded.

Potentially Significant Impact	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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<b>XVII. MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE. Does the project:</b>			
a. Have the potential to degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal, or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?			<b>X</b>
b. Have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? ("Cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects)?			<b>X</b>
c. Have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?			<b>X</b>

**Discussion**

- a. As discussed in Item V (Cultural Resources), the proposed project would have no significant effect on historical or unique archaeological resources as mitigated. There would be no effects on fish habitat (Item IV). There would be no significant effect on special-status plant or animal species (Item IV).
- b. Due to the small size of the proposed project, types of activities proposed, and site-specific environmental conditions, which have been disclosed in the Project Description and analyzed in Items I through XVI, there would be no significant impacts related to agriculture resources, air quality, biological resources, cultural resources, geology/soils, hazards/hazardous materials, hydrology/water quality, land use/planning, mineral resources, noise, population/housing, public services, recreation, traffic/transportation, or utilities/service systems that would combine with similar effects such that the project's contribution would be cumulatively considerable. For these issue areas, it has been determined there would be no impact or the impact would be less than significant. The project's contribution to changes in the visual environment has been mitigated to less-than-significant levels through project design. The cumulative contribution to the view shed would not be considerable.
- c. Due to the small size of the proposed project, types of activities proposed, and site-specific environmental conditions, there would be no environmental effects that would cause substantial adverse impacts on people either directly or indirectly.

Potentially Significant Impact	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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**SUPPORTING INFORMATION SOURCE LIST**

The following documents are available at the El Dorado County Planning Department in Placerville.

El Dorado County General Plan Draft Environmental Impact Report  
Volume I - Comments on Draft Environmental Impact Report  
Volume II - Response to Comment on DEIR  
Volume III - Comments on Supplement to DEIR  
Volume IV - Responses to Comments on Supplement to DEIR  
Volume V - Appendices

El Dorado County General Plan - Volume I - Goals, Objectives, and Policies

El Dorado County General Plan - Volume II - Background Information

Findings of Fact of the El Dorado County Board of Supervisors for the General Plan

El Dorado County Zoning Ordinance (Title 17 - County Code)

County of El Dorado Drainage Manual (Resolution No. 67-97, Adopted March 14, 1995)

County of El Dorado Grading, Erosion and Sediment Control Ordinance (Ordinance No. 3883, amended Ordinance Nos. 4061, 4167, 4170)

El Dorado County Design and Improvement Standards

El Dorado County Subdivision Ordinances (Title 16 - County Code)

Soil Survey of El Dorado Area, California

California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Statutes (Public Resources Code Section 21000, et seq.)

Title 14, California Code of Regulations, Chapter 3, Guidelines for Implementation of the California Environmental Quality Act (Section 15000, et seq.)

Fly Neighborly Guide – Helicopter Association International, February 1993.