

# CHAPTER 3.0

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## PROJECT DESCRIPTION

### 3.1 PROJECT LOCATION

The 49-acre project site is located on Assessor Parcel Number 021-283-022-000 at 1200 Athens Avenue, in the Sunset Industrial Area of Placer County (**Figure 3-1**). The project site is south of the City of Lincoln and north of the City of Roseville. Athens Avenue borders the project site to the south, and Union Pacific Railroad tracks are located to the east, beyond which is Industrial Avenue and then Highway 65. Athens Avenue provides roadway access to the site. From the south, the site is reached via Highway 65, Sunset Boulevard, and then the recently completed Foothills Boulevard North, which intersects Athens Avenue. Industrial Avenue provides an additional access route from the south. From the west, the site is accessed via Fiddymont Road and then Athens Avenue. From the north, the site is accessed via Highway 65, Twelve Bridges Drive, Industrial Avenue, then Athens Avenue.

### 3.2 STUDY AREA CHARACTERISTICS

The site is currently developed with the existing Thunder Valley Casino and associated infrastructure. **Figure 3-2** shows the project site and surrounding topography and **Figure 3-3** presents an aerial view of the project site and surrounding area. Land uses in the immediate vicinity are as follows:

North: Orchard Creek Conservation Bank.

South: Athens Avenue, temporary overflow parking lot for Thunder Valley Casino, the Rio Bravo Rocklin Biomass Power Plant, Lincoln Super Storage, agricultural (grazing) land, and vacant industrial land.

East: Orchard Creek Conservation Bank, vacant industrial land, Union Pacific Railroad tracks, Industrial Avenue, and Highway 65.

West: Orchard Creek Conservation Bank, vacant industrial land, agricultural (grazing) land, industrial uses including a sludge dewatering plant, concrete manufacturing facility, wood pallet manufacturing facility, recycling facility, and the Western Regional Sanitary Landfill.

**Figure 3-1:** Regional Location

**Figure 3-2: Site and Vicinity**

**Figure 3-3:** Aerial View of Existing Thunder Valley Casino Site

### 3.2.1 THUNDER VALLEY CASINO

Thunder Valley Casino is an approximately 237,000-square-foot, one-story structure that includes over 2,700 slot machines and 98 gaming tables. Associated onsite facilities include a fire station, paved parking, stormwater drainage facilities, potable water infrastructure, central utility plant, and wastewater treatment plant. These facilities are described in more detail below. Approximately 10,500 patrons visit the casino on an average day (Crowe, 2007a). The casino houses four restaurants (Austin's Steakhouse, Koi Palace, Thunder Café, and Feast Around the World Buffet), five fast food outlets (Panda Express, Sbarros, Gordito Burrito, FatBurger, and Starbuck's Coffee), and two lounges (Falls Bar and the Thunder Bar). Placer County sales tax revenues from these establishments totaled nearly \$520,000 in 2006. The casino is Placer County's second-largest employer and provides jobs for more than 2,200 full- and part-time workers.

Incremental Device fees paid to the State of California from slot machine operation totaled more than \$10.6 million in 2006 (Crowe, 2007b). As specified in the UAIC-Placer County MOU, contributions of at least \$50,000 per year are made to the California Council on Problem Gambling, with a minimum of \$45,000 directed for use in Placer County to address local problem gambling issues as determined by the County. As per Section 4.3.2 of the amended Tribal-State Gaming Compact (2004), an annual contribution of \$2 million is made to the Revenue Sharing Trust Fund for non-gaming tribes in California. In addition, Placer County receives contributions from the Indian Gaming Special Distribution Fund, which was established by the State in 1999 to help offset impacts associated with tribal gaming. As prescribed by state law SB 621, the Distribution Fund is available to mitigate impacts to Placer County and other local government agencies. The Placer County Indian Gaming Local Community Benefit Committee, which includes representatives from the UAIC, was established in 2004 to recommend grant awards to local government agencies from the Distribution Fund. Since 2004, the Committee has received approximately \$1.8 million, which has been awarded to local agencies to help mitigate impacts associated with the casino (Paddock, 2007). The amount of funding awarded to specific agencies is discussed in **Chapters 4.0 – 15.0**.

#### ***FIRE STATION***

An approximately 5,400 square-foot fire station is located on the southwest corner of the 49-acre property. As required in Section 5.A. of the amended UAIC-Placer County MOU, the fire station was sized to “reasonably address fire and emergency response needs on [the project site].” The fire station has four fire engine bays, living and sleeping quarters, a kitchen, men and women's restrooms, a shop, office spaces, and several storage rooms. Staff includes a full-time fire captain and firefighters on rotating shifts to ensure a three-person crew 24 hours a day year-round, including at least one employee per shift who has been certified as an advanced life support (ALS)-capable paramedic. The fire station is staffed and equipped by Placer County and the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CalFire/CDF), using annual funds of more than \$1.26 million supplied by the Tribe as per the amended UAIC-Placer County MOU (**Appendix A**).

### ***ROADWAYS, PARKING, AND OFFSITE FACILITIES***

Several roadway improvements were made when the casino was built. These improvements included turn lanes, traffic signals, access improvements to the casino, and improvements to the Athens Avenue railroad crossing. In addition, a new road segment between Sunset Boulevard and Athens Avenue was included as part of the original Thunder Valley Casino project. This road segment, named Foothills Boulevard North, was completed and accepted by the County in the spring 2007 and provides primary access to the casino. Onsite parking is provided with approximately 3,000 spaces on paved surface lots to the east, south, and west of the existing casino building. Improvements to the temporary overflow parking lot south of Athens Avenue were approved following the issuance of a Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) by Placer County (2007b). These improvements are currently under construction, with completion anticipated by the end of 2007.

### ***STORMWATER DRAINAGE FACILITIES***

As part of the development of Thunder Valley Casino, a drainage plan was implemented that included storm drain inlets, stormwater conveyance pipelines, and an approximately 3.9-acre-foot rectangular detention basin on the west end of the property. The detention basin is approximately five feet deep and has sloping sides planted with grass, reeds, and other native wetland vegetation. A spillway connects the basin to a small tributary drainage that flows to Orchard Creek. An existing culvert under Athens Avenue is routed via a box culvert storm drain through the project site, also draining to a tributary of Orchard Creek. The basin was sized to prevent peak runoff from increasing due to the casino development. Stormwater drainage from the temporary overflow parking lot south of Athens Avenue is directed to a basin at the northeast edge of the parking lot, adjacent to the UPRR right of way.

### ***WATER SUPPLY***

Potable water was originally supplied to the casino from two onsite groundwater wells, with supply routed through a pretreatment/disinfectant system. The wells and associated plumbing remain, and can be used to supplement the supply currently provided by the Placer County Water Agency (PCWA). The PCWA has supplied potable water to the casino since May 2005. The site is served using the Foothill and Sunset Water Treatment Plant which utilize entitlement from PG&E's Drum Spaulding hydro system and the PCWA's Middle Fork Project. A water storage tank with a capacity of one million gallons is located in the southwest corner of the project site. It buffers peak water demands and ensures an adequate water supply for fire suppression. Currently, two high-volume pumps feed a 12-inch diameter fire loop from the 1-million gallon water storage tank.

### ***CENTRAL UTILITY PLANT***

The existing central utility plant, which was constructed in 2002-2003, provides backup power, heating, cooling, and hot water to the casino, fire station, and WWTP operations buildings. It includes a boiler plant with four 8,000,000-British thermal units (BTU) per hour forced draft boilers, four 7.5-horsepower

(hp) primary hot water circulation pumps, and three 60-hp variable speed secondary hot water circulation pumps. The existing chilled water central plant includes four 900 nominal ton chillers, four 25-hp primary chilled water circulation pumps, and three 150-hp variable speed secondary chilled water circulation pumps. The plant also has a cooling tower yard, which consists of four 75-hp, 900 nominal ton cooling towers and four 50-hp condenser water circulation pumps.

### ***WASTEWATER SERVICE***

Wastewater service for Thunder Valley Casino is currently provided by an onsite microfiltration wastewater treatment plant (WWTP). The plant is located on the west end of the casino property, and discharges treated effluent to Orchard Creek under the regulation of a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Permit from the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB). The WWTP is currently configured to treat peak day flows of 350,000 gallons of wastewater, although average daily inflows are approximately 184,000 gallons.

The onsite system collects wastewater from the casino and associated buildings via several gravity mains leading to a central influent lift station. All wastewater is then pumped to the headworks of the WWTP by three pumps with a combined capacity of 475 gallons per minute (gpm). The headworks include flow measurement and screening equipment. Inorganic solids are compressed to extract water, and are sent to designated local landfill facilities.

The screened wastewater continues to the microfiltration facilities, which employ an immersed membrane bioreactor system (MBR). This MBR system can treat hydraulic flow rates up to 475,000 gallons per day (gpd) during a short-term peak event, although typical peak daily flow rates are around 225,000 gpd. Two process trains are provided, each equipped with an anoxic/denitrification basin, an aeration/nitrification basin, and four cassettes of microfiltration membranes. Each of these cassettes holds twenty-two microfiltration modules. Wastewater is pulled by suction pumps through 0.1-micron pores in the microfiltration fibers, which resemble long, hollow, “spaghetti-like” tubes. Every fifteen minutes, the fibers are cleaned with a two-minute “backpulse” cycle of filtered wastewater treated with sodium hypochlorite, to remove accumulated solids from the outside of the fibers and prevent biogrowth in the membrane modules.

Wastewater that has passed through the microfiltration fibers is called permeate; this filtered wastewater is then conveyed to the ultraviolet (UV) disinfection system. UV disinfection is accomplished by one of two identical units, each capable of treating the average daily flows of permeate. After UV disinfection, the treated effluent is conveyed to the effluent pump station wetwell. The facility discharges high-quality, tertiary treated effluent through a pipeline directly north along an existing power line easement to the main branch of Orchard Creek. A portion of the treated effluent is injected with sodium hypochlorite (chlorine) and diverted to a 250,000-gallon storage tank for irrigation of onsite landscaping.

### 3.3 PROJECT OBJECTIVES

Implementation of the proposed project is aimed at achieving the following objectives:

- Provide additional amenities, including an expanded gaming facility, upscale hotel, and performing arts center, that are in demand by existing and anticipated future patrons and not currently available in Placer County.
- Bring theater and sporting events, musical performances, and professional or recreational conferences/conventions to Placer County, thus increasing tourism to the County and providing residents with an alternative to traveling outside the County for entertainment.
- Provide additional employment opportunities for residents of Placer County and surrounding areas.
- Continue the economic success of Thunder Valley Casino in an increasingly competitive business environment and allow the facility to remain a premier casino/resort in northern California.
- Continue to develop a sustainable, long-term economic base for the UAIC Tribal Government that could be utilized to fund a variety of social, governmental, administrative, educational, health and welfare services; and to provide capital for other economic development and investment opportunities.

### 3.4 DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED PROJECT CHARACTERISTICS

The proposed project includes the addition of a 650-room hotel, performing arts center, expanded casino floor, and multi-level parking structure, as shown on the conceptual site plan (**Figure 3-4**) and architectural rendering (**Figure 3-5**). Existing and proposed project components are summarized in **Table 3-1** and are discussed in detail below. As required by Section 13 of the UAIC-Placer County MOU and Section 6.4.2 of the Tribal-State Compact, all improvements on the site would be constructed in accordance with the Uniform Building Codes, as adopted and supplemented by the Tribe and Placer County.

After construction of the casino expansion, it is projected that the average daily number of patrons would increase from 10,500 to 14,000 and the number of employees would increase from approximately 2,280 to 3,480 (Crowe, 2007a). The expanded gaming floor would increase the number of slot machines, consequently raising the annual State Incremental Device fees by more than \$16 million. Placer County Sales Tax from food, beverage, and merchandise sales would be increased by \$326,750 from the new restaurants, lounges, and retail shopping establishments. It is anticipated that the expanded casino resort will increase purchases of local goods and services by an additional \$17.5 million. As required by Section 12 of the Tribal-County MOU, the Tribe would pay an estimated \$850,000 annually for the equivalent of the Transient Occupancy Tax.

**Figure 3-4:** Conceptual Site Plan

**Figure 3-5:** Architectural Rendering of Proposed Expansion

**TABLE 3-1  
EXISTING AND PROPOSED PROJECT COMPONENTS**

| <b>Structure</b>       | <b>Component</b>            | <b>Existing</b>   | <b>Proposed (new)<br/>(net gain)</b> | <b>Total</b>        |
|------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------|--------------------------------------|---------------------|
| Main Building          | Gaming Floor                | 102,000 sf        | 76,500 sf                            | 178,500 sf          |
|                        | Restaurants/Lounges         | 67,000 sf         | 45,000 sf                            | 112,000 sf          |
|                        | Retail                      | 1,040 sf          | 1,000 sf                             | 2,040 sf            |
|                        | Back of House               | 61,000 sf         | 106,000 sf                           | 167,000 sf          |
|                        | Circulation/Restrooms/Other | 6,000 sf          | 172,500 sf                           | 178,500 sf          |
|                        | Meeting/Ball Rooms          |                   | 50,000 sf                            | 50,000 sf           |
|                        | Spa                         |                   | 24,000 sf                            | 24,000 sf           |
| <b>Subtotal</b>        |                             | <b>237,040 sf</b> | <b>475,000 sf</b>                    | <b>712,040 sf</b>   |
| 650-Room Hotel         | Standard Guest Rooms        |                   | 256,500 sf                           | 256,500 sf          |
|                        | Standard Guest Suites       |                   | 111,000 sf                           | 111,000 sf          |
|                        | Deluxe Guest Suites         |                   | 13,500 sf                            | 13,500 sf           |
|                        | VIP Suites                  |                   | 6,000 sf                             | 6,000 sf            |
|                        | Penthouse Suite             |                   | 2,500 sf                             | 2,500 sf            |
|                        | Circulation/Common Areas    |                   | 144,500 sf                           | 144,500 sf          |
|                        | Family Center/Arcade        |                   | 16,000 sf                            | 16,000 sf           |
| <b>Subtotal</b>        |                             |                   |                                      | <b>550,000 sf</b>   |
| Performing Arts Center | Seating                     |                   | 84,500 sf                            | 84,500 sf           |
|                        | Back of House               |                   | 52,000 sf                            | 52,000 sf           |
|                        | Kitchens                    |                   | 3,800 sf                             | 3,800 sf            |
|                        | Lobby/Restrooms/Circulation |                   | 34,500 sf                            | 34,500 sf           |
| <b>Subtotal</b>        |                             |                   |                                      | <b>174,800 sf</b>   |
| 9-Level Parking Garage | Parking Spaces              | 2,729 spaces      | 3,293 spaces                         | 6,022 spaces        |
| <b>Total</b>           |                             |                   |                                      | <b>1,436,840 sf</b> |

sf = approximate square feet

Source: Thunder Valley Casino, 2007; JMA Architects, 2007; AES, 2007

### 3.4.1 MAIN CASINO STRUCTURE AND GROUNDS

Approximately 475,000 square feet of new interior space would be added to the existing casino building, including an expanded gaming floor, offices, storage and other back-of-house (BOH) space, additional restaurants and lounges, meeting rooms to accommodate up to 2,000 people, and retail gift shops. A Tribal cultural exhibit area is also planned for the casino. Spa facilities would be connected to the swimming pool proposed on the south side of the hotel. Different portions of the expanded building would vary from one to four stories in height. Interior air circulation and ventilation systems within the existing casino utilize roof-mounted air handling units for removal of cigarette smoke and similar systems would be utilized for the proposed project. Direct access would be provided from the casino to the proposed hotel, parking garage, and performing arts center.

Because construction of the proposed parking garage would provide most of the needed parking spaces for the expanded facilities, surface parking lots along the south side of the casino parcel would no longer be needed. Plans for the expansion include extensive landscaping in these locations, including a garden area of native vegetation located to the east of the performing arts center. Trees, shrubbery, and undulating walkways would frame the frontage along Athens Avenue, and a water feature is planned south of the hotel in front of a new porte cochere entryway. Security features include surveillance cameras within all buildings and outdoor areas throughout the project area that would provide 24-hour monitoring.

### **3.4.2 HOTEL**

A 20-level hotel, approximately 550,000 square feet in size with approximately 650 guest rooms and suites, would sit on top of four levels of casino/meeting space. The total building height would be approximately 300 feet, with communications antennae adding an additional 18 feet of height. As shown in **Figure 3-5**, these antennae would be shielded by an architectural feature that would reduce their visual prominence. A swimming pool is proposed on the south side of the hotel, with approximately 30,000 square feet of deck area and adjacent indoor and outdoor spa facilities. An exercise room and family center/arcade would be available for hotel guests. The proposed family center would be a supervised child care/entertainment facility with no casino access.

In addition to all standard features required by the Uniform Building Codes, several fire and emergency safety features are planned for the hotel at the suggestion of the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection and the Placer County Fire Department. An emergency helicopter landing platform is proposed for the top of the hotel, and would be constructed 15 feet above the roof level to provide clearance for mechanical equipment. This landing pad would be used solely for emergency evacuation purposes, and would not be a visible feature of the hotel, as shown in the architectural rendering presented in **Figure 3-5**. An above-roof elevator stop would be built, as would an enclosed stairwell that leads to the roof. Emergency air stations and fire equipment cache rooms are planned on every fifth floor of the hotel tower. Smoke removal and stair pressurization systems are included in the building design, and fire monitoring equipment would be directly linked to the main control center of the onsite fire station.

### **3.4.3 PERFORMING ARTS CENTER**

The proposed performing arts center building would be approximately 175,000 square feet and 93 feet high. It would be located south of the existing casino building, with the main entryway linked through the casino. This fully enclosed, multi-use space would be designed to host concerts, theater performances, sporting events, gaming tournaments, banquets, or trade shows. The building construction and design would provide optimum acoustical clarity and range, with built-in wiring for live media broadcast capabilities. A main stage would be located at the south side of the building, with backstage and BOH areas located against the southern building façade facing Athens Avenue.

Flexible seating arrangements on three levels would provide capacity for approximately 3,000 people, depending on the seating configuration used for each event. A portion of the main stage would be removable to maximize floor space when needed. The main floor (orchestra level) would feature electronically controlled retractable seating to allow for standing-room events, table layouts (for example, card tournaments or trade shows), or several configurations of theater-style seating (for concerts, sporting events, etc.). Warming kitchens are planned to accommodate catered events. Ten VIP Suites would be located above the orchestra level, each equipped with a kitchenette and other amenities. Balcony level seating would also be provided.

#### **3.4.4 PARKING STRUCTURE**

A 9-level, approximately 5,000-space aboveground parking structure would be located on the west side of the expanded casino facility. Some existing surface parking would be lost as a result of new construction, resulting in a net gain of 3,293 spaces and a total of 6,022 spaces on the 49-acre property. Vehicular access to the parking garage would be available through two entryways: one leading directly from Athens Avenue and a second routed through the main hotel/casino valet porte cochere, with interior walkways connecting patrons to the hotel, performing arts center, and casino gaming floor.

#### **3.4.5 CENTRAL PLANT**

Existing central plant facilities would be expanded to provide additional heating, cooling, hot water, and back-up power for the proposed casino and hotel facilities. Additions include three 12,000,000-BTU per hour forced draft boilers, three 7.5-horsepower (hp) primary hot water circulation pumps, and three 100-hp variable speed secondary hot water circulation pumps to the boiler plant. Additions to the chiller plant would include three 1800-nominal ton chillers, and three 200-hp variable speed primary chilled water circulation pumps to replace the existing 25-hp primary chilled water circulation pumps. Four 120-hp, 1930 nominal ton cooling towers would replace the existing 75-hp, 900 nominal ton cooling towers, and three 150-hp condenser water circulation pumps would be added to a new cooling tower platform at the stormwater detention pond.

#### **3.4.6 WATER SUPPLY INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS**

It is estimated that the potable water demands of the casino complex post-expansion would be 757,000 gallons on an average day, with a peak day demand of 1,178,000 gallons. These demands may be lowered by implementing water conservation measures throughout the proposed hotel/casino facilities, and by maximizing use of recycled water for onsite landscape irrigation and industrial uses. Three options are available for supplying potable water to the expanded casino facilities. These include: 1) expansion of the existing PCWA water connection, 2) a new connection to the future City of Lincoln water supply, or 3) re-activating the existing onsite wells to supplement the current PCWA supply. All three alternatives are summarized below and have been fully evaluated in a report prepared by HydroScience Engineers, Inc. (HSe) attached as **Appendix J**.

### ***EXPANDED PCWA WATER CONNECTION TO MEET 100% OF PROJECT REQUIREMENTS***

The first option would be an expanded connection to the existing PCWA supply line to allow use of PCWA water for 100% of the project's needs. Because the existing 8-inch diameter PCWA service connection line was sized to allow for future increases in water flows, this would be sufficient to meet the estimated peak day demand of the expanded facility (approximately 1.2 million gallons per day). The existing 4-inch meter and 4-inch diameter tap into the PCWA water main would be upgraded to 8 inches, and the booster pump station would be upgraded to meet the higher flow requirements. The upgraded booster pump could be configured to serve potable water demands either through the 1-million gallon storage tank, or demands up to peak flows directly from the PCWA water main (with additional hourly peak flows provided from the storage tank).

The PCWA connection described above would not be sufficient to meet both the peak day demands and the anticipated necessary fire flows of 3,000 gpm. To meet the fire flow demand, a 16-inch diameter lateral feed could be installed directly from the 18-inch diameter PCWA water main within Athens Avenue. This lateral would split into two parallel 12-inch diameter double check backflow preventers, then tie into the existing 12-inch diameter fire loop on the casino property. Alternatively, two separate 12-inch diameter laterals could be installed to serve the fire loop at different locations in order to improve system redundancy. The existing high-flow fire pumps would be disconnected, as fire flows would be obtained directly from the PCWA water main, rather than the 1-million gallon onsite storage tank. Consultation with the PCWA confirms that their existing system capacity could serve the anticipated potable water needs (both peak day flows and fire protection requirements) of the expanded casino facility without any offsite system upgrades (Martin, 2007; included as Appendix F of HSe report **(Appendix J)**).

### ***CONNECTION TO CITY OF LINCOLN WATER SUPPLY***

The second option for supplying the proposed project would be a connection to the City of Lincoln's water supply for 100% of the project's requirements. The City of Lincoln purchases up to 17 million gallons per day (mgd) of treated surface water from the PCWA, and supplements this supply with water from three municipal wells having a combined output of 4 mgd. The City is currently installing a fourth well, which will provide an additional 1.5 mgd. City storage tanks hold up to 9.5 million gallons in reserve to enable the City to manage varying water demand.

For the City of Lincoln to become the sole supplier of potable water for the expanded casino facilities, the City would have to expand its current water distribution system. This expansion is planned so that the City can become the utility provider for all properties within its sphere of influence, including all properties on the north side of Athens Avenue. The conversion to City of Lincoln water supply would occur in three phases: the first would be an administrative change of the existing water connection from PCWA authority to the City of Lincoln, including an upgraded 8-inch meter and tap, as well as the new 16-inch diameter fire flow lateral as described in the PCWA supply option 1 above. Phase II would

include the acquisition from Placer County of an existing unused 16-inch diameter water main within Athens Avenue between Industrial Avenue and the western edge of the Thunder Valley Casino parcel, followed by extension of an 18-inch diameter water main from the Twelve Bridges Drive/Industrial Avenue intersection south along Industrial Avenue to tie in with this existing 16-inch diameter pipeline. The third phase involves extension of the 16-inch diameter water main westward along Athens Avenue to supply existing and future development on the north side of this road.

### ***EXISTING PCWA/WELL WATER***

The third option includes the use of the existing PCWA connection, supplemented by water pumped from the two existing onsite wells. Initially designed to be the sole water supply to the casino complex, the well facilities include a pretreatment system consisting of a twin softening system, brine concentrator and brine pump system, caustic injection system, antiscalant injection system, and a cartridge pre-filtration system. A sodium hypochlorite (chlorine) injection point on the storage tank fill line provides for disinfection of the water prior to delivery to the casino buildings.

As previously noted, the expanded casino/hotel facilities will have an estimated peak day water demand of 1.2 mgd, or 830 gpm. The peak flow that is currently metered through the 4-inch PCWA water connection is limited to 250 gpm; the two onsite wells can deliver a combined supply of 350 gpm. The total water supply that can be delivered by the combination of the existing PCWA connection and the onsite wells is 600 gpm, which is insufficient to meet the anticipated peak day demand. Even with the 1-million gallon storage tank, peak flow demands lasting more than one day could not reliably be met by this option and still retain sufficient water for fire safety.

### **3.4.7 WASTEWATER SERVICE**

The proposed expansion project would increase average daily wastewater flows to approximately 555,000 gpd, with estimated peak day flows of 785,000 gpd (HSe, 2008). Alternatives for project wastewater disposal include onsite and offsite processing of wastewater, via connection to the City of Lincoln's Wastewater Treatment and Reclamation Facility (WWTRF), connection to the City of Roseville's wastewater treatment plant (WWTP), or expansion of the existing onsite WWTP on the western end of the Thunder Valley Casino parcel. These alternatives are described below and more detailed information is available in **Appendix J**.

#### ***CONNECTION TO CITY OF LINCOLN WASTEWATER TREATMENT AND RECLAMATION FACILITY***

This alternative consists of treatment of casino wastewater at the City of Lincoln treatment plant, which is located at 1245 Fiddymont Road, approximately two miles northwest of the casino. This facility currently is permitted for a design average dry weather flow of 3.3 mgd. An application has been submitted to increase the rated capacity to 4.2 mgd. After issuance of the amended permit, the available unused capacity of the plant would be approximately 1.4 mgd. The City of Lincoln WWTRF uses screening,

biological treatment, filtration and disinfection to produce a high-quality tertiary treated effluent, which is used to irrigate fodder crops and discharged under an NPDES permit to Auburn Ravine. The City proposes to use additional future effluent flows for irrigation of other land uses, industrial process cooling, and other potential recycled water uses within the area.

Plans are currently underway to enlarge the infrastructure of the City of Lincoln's wastewater collection and treatment facilities. This may include a new 30 to 48-inch diameter gravity sewer line, known as the South Lincoln Regional Sewer System (SLRSS), which would collect and convey wastewater from present and future properties along Athens Avenue to the existing WWTRF. Two gravity sewer line configurations have been proposed that would enable Thunder Valley Casino to utilize this sewer system for the proposed expansion project. These alignments are shown in **Figure 3-6** and described below:

***Option 1- North Side Gravity Sewer.*** A gravity sewer along the back (north) side of the casino parcel that extends through the Orchard Creek Conservation Bank parcel, and then diagonally through the Antonio Mountain Ranch Property to the City of Lincoln WWTRF.

***Option 2- South Side Gravity Sewer.*** A gravity sewer constructed along the Athens Avenue frontage of the casino property and westerly along Athens Avenue extending to the Sundance Property and thence diagonally northwesterly through the Antonio Mountain Ranch Property to the WWTRF.

The City of Lincoln would be responsible for construction, operation, and maintenance of all off-site facilities included in either of these two options. A Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the South Lincoln Sewer Line Project has been prepared that evaluates the environmental impacts of the various pipeline configurations proposed for the SLRSS project (EIP Associates, 2005). A Final EIR and two Amendments have also been prepared to evaluate options for the SLRSS (EIP Associates, 2006; City of Lincoln, 2006; PBS&J, 2007). The City of Lincoln has confirmed that if all designs and approvals are finalized according to plan, the system could be constructed and operational by December 2008 (Pedri, 2007).

A third option that would utilize the City of Lincoln's WWTRF would be a pump station/force main system within Placer County right of way:

***Option 3- Pump Station/Force Main.*** This system would extend one or two 12 to 24-inch diameter force main(s) from the casino westward along Athens Avenue, then north along Fiddymont Road, to the City of Lincoln WWTRF. A pump station would be located in the vicinity of the casino, in one of the four alternate locations shown in **Figure 3-6**.

If this option were selected, the Tribe would construct all off-site infrastructure, then deed the system to Placer County for operation and maintenance. The pump station/force main option could be constructed as a dedicated line for the Thunder Valley Casino property, or it could be configured to also serve other properties south of Athens Avenue. Potential environmental impacts have been evaluated in the EIR for the South Lincoln Sewer Line Project (EIP Associates, 2005), and the Sunset Industrial Area (SIA) Collection System Master Plan (Harold Welborn & Associates, 1999).

A letter from the City of Lincoln indicating its willingness to accept wastewater from the casino at the WWTRF is provided in **Appendix M**. Each of the three alternate pipeline alignments allowing connection to the City of Lincoln WWTRF are shown on **Figure 3-6**, along with the possible locations for a pump station, if Option 3 were selected.

### ***CONNECTION TO CITY OF ROSEVILLE WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT***

The second option regarding wastewater disposal for the proposed project is a connection to the South Placer Wastewater Authority (SPWA) collection system, with treatment provided at the City of Roseville's Pleasant Grove WWTP. The Pleasant Grove WWTP was completed in 2004 and is designed for an average dry weather flow of 12 mgd. An expansion of the plant is proposed, however Phase I of this expansion is not anticipated to be complete until 2010 at the earliest. The Pleasant Grove WWTP treats wastewater flows by screening and grit removal, denitrification in oxidation ditches, secondary clarifiers, filtration, and disinfection with sodium hypochlorite. Treated effluent is discharged to Pleasant Grove Creek or used as recycled water.

Facility upgrades required by this option include construction of a new influent lift station and approximately 900 feet of connecting gravity sewer pipeline within the Thunder Valley Casino parcel. This pipeline would extend from the existing influent lift station on the northeast side of the Thunder Valley Casino WWTP, west and south to a new larger lift station to be constructed in the vicinity of the casino. A new public force main pipeline would be extended west along Athens Avenue, then south along Fiddymment Road, to a tie-in with an existing SPWA pipeline (**Figure 3-7**). The total length of new sewer line would be approximately 19,500 feet (3.7 miles). The new lift station and force main would be constructed, owned, operated, and maintained by Placer County rather than the SPWA. Potential environmental impacts have generally been addressed in the SIA Collection System Master Plan (Harold Welborn & Associates, 1999), and in the SIA Plan EIR (ESA, 1997).

### ***EXPANSION OF EXISTING WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT (WWTP)***

The onsite WWTP has a permitted capacity of 350,000 gpd, and since the opening of the casino, a peak of 323,000 gallons of wastewater was treated over a 24-hour period (HSe, 2008). If the existing casino WWTP were to serve the estimated average daily wastewater flows of the expanded casino/hotel facilities (approximately 550,000 gallons per day), it would need to be enlarged and upgraded. New components would include a three-pump influent lift station to replace the existing lift station, a new influent diversion

**Figure 3-6:** Proposed Pipeline Routes to City of Lincoln WWTRF

**Figure 3-7:** Proposed Pipeline Route to Pleasant Grove WWTP

pump station to divert incoming flows to storage in the event of an equipment failure, a 750,000-gallon emergency storage tank (60 feet diameter, 37 feet tall), and a return activated sludge/influent mixing wetwell. A single-story, concrete masonry block building would be constructed to house new solids handling equipment and additional blowers, electrical gear and controls.

Expansion of the immersed membrane bioreactor system (MBR) would also be necessary, for a total of five active process trains, each with the same components and configuration as described previously in Section 3.2. The existing UV disinfection system would be replaced with a higher-capacity system installed in a cast-in-place concrete channel. Disinfection would be provided by a new single-channel system with three banks of UV lamps submerged in the microfiltered permeate. Treated wastewater would be received by a new recycled water diversion pump station, which would divert effluent to re-use (chlorination followed by storage in the existing 250,000-gallon tank) or discharge to Orchard Creek. A conceptual plan for the expanded WWTP facilities is shown in **Figure 3-8**.

Continued surface water discharge would require an amendment to the existing NPDES permit to allow the increase in effluent disposal. This amended permit would continue to be administered under the authority of the RWQCB, Region 5 (Central Valley), Sacramento Office. A Clean Water Act Section 401 Water Quality Certification would also be required, as would upgrades to the existing effluent pump station, outfall piping, and outfall manifold.

### **3.4.8 ROADWAYS AND OTHER OFFSITE FACILITIES**

Access to the Thunder Valley Casino complex would continue to be via Athens Avenue. As shown in **Figure 3-4**, Athens Avenue eastbound would be widened by adding a lane from a point approximately 350 feet west of the existing fire station to Thunder Valley Court. Westbound Athens Avenue would be widened by one lane from Thunder Valley Court to a point 1,500 feet west of the fire station. This would result in approximately 1.5 acres of additional pavement within the Athens Avenue right of way. Culverts within the expanded road right of way would be extended to maintain drainage patterns. Two new traffic signals would be installed, one at the entrance to the proposed parking garage, and one at the new hotel valet porte cochere. Traffic corridors within and leading to the surface parking lot on the east side of the casino building would be reconfigured to maximize efficiency of traffic movement. Three overhead directional signs with minimum vertical clearance of 20 feet are proposed above Athens Avenue, in order to direct eastbound and westbound drivers to various facilities, parking areas and roadways. Additional monument-style signs at each entrance would provide more detailed information for arriving patrons (**Figures 3-4, 3-9, and 3-10**). During construction, three changeable message signs would be placed along the north side of Athens Avenue to direct westbound drivers to the temporary parking lot as needed. These signs would be located within the Athens Avenue right of way near the southeast corner of the casino site, and on the casino parcel near the two eastern driveways. Two changeable message signs would be provided within the right of way on the south side of Athens Avenue for eastbound traffic.

**Figure 3-8:** Proposed Expansion of WWTP Facilities

**Figure 3-9:** Proposed Signage

**Figure 3-10:** Proposed Offsite Sign Locations

Additional temporary signs for construction traffic would be placed within the casino parcel and along Athens Avenue and Thunder Valley Court. Offsite sign locations for permanent, temporary, and temporary changeable signs are shown on **Figure 3-10**. A letter from the Auburn Area California Highway Patrol (CHP) regarding the proposed signage plan is included as **Appendix N**. The CHP supports the signage plan in order to reduce the potential for traffic congestion and accidents as distracted drivers unfamiliar with the area attempt to navigate to the casino.

As shown in **Figure 3-11**, Thunder Valley Court south of Athens Avenue would be widened to two southbound lanes and three northbound lanes for a distance of approximately 950 feet, adding approximately 0.4 acres of new paved surfaces to the landscape buffer area between Thunder Valley Court and the temporary overflow parking lot. The landscape buffer would be replaced upon completion of paving improvements. The southern portion of Thunder Valley Court would not be altered. Additional roadway easements would be required for the improvements to Thunder Valley Court. Lanes at the existing Thunder Valley Court/Athens Avenue traffic signal would be modified to accommodate the temporary parking arrangements during construction, and modified again once construction is complete to accommodate the revised traffic and parking patterns. During construction, lane configurations would be as follows: westbound; one left-turn lane, one shared left-turn/through lane, one through lane, and one right-turn lane. Northbound; one left-turn lane, one shared left-turn/through lane and one right-turn lane. Eastbound; one left-turn lane, two through lanes, and one right-turn lane. Southbound; one left-turn lane, one shared left-turn/through lane, and one right turn lane. Upon completion of construction, the westbound lanes would be configured to allow one left-turn lane, two through lanes, and one right-turn lane. The other intersection movements would remain as described above.

Due to the roadway improvements described above, portions of the overhead Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E) Lincoln-Pleasant Grove 60kV powerline would need to be adjusted. Eight wooden utility poles adjacent to the south side of Athens Avenue would be removed along a 2,500-foot long section of the line, and replaced with five taller poles of steel, concrete or wood, located within 30 feet of the southern edge of the Athens Avenue right of way. This would increase the spans between each pole, but would not alter the current alignment of the powerline or the size and location of the existing utility easement. PG&E also has plans to upgrade their electrical supply facilities, but this will only involve changing the conductors on the existing utility poles, and would not necessitate removal of any poles within the project area.

Approximately 1200 feet of underground telephone cable conduit would be placed within the north side of the Athens Avenue right of way west of the casino parcel, as an upgrade of existing direct-buried AT&T telephone cable. The conduit will be placed by the roadway contractor, while AT&T would relocate conductors as needed. Additional conduits may be placed in the same trench for Roseville Telephone or other communications cables, as needed to service the expanded casino and hotel. Disruption of telephone service to the existing facilities is not anticipated during this upgrade.

**Figure 3-11:** Temporary Overflow Parking Lot Improvements

Improvements to a temporary overflow parking lot to the south of Athens Avenue have recently been completed to meet the needs of the existing casino. Improvements approved through the MND issued by Placer County (2007b) consist of paving and lighting approximately 2,372 parking spaces, construction of sidewalks and casino shuttle stops, and landscaping along the east side of Thunder Valley Court.

Additional improvements to this parking lot are proposed to ensure sufficient parking and associated facilities for casino guests, employees, and construction workers during the expansion project. The northern half of the parking lot would be used for guest parking, the center quarter of the lot would contain employee and bus/shuttle parking, and the southern quarter would house construction trailers, laydown areas, and parking for construction workers. A 6,500-square foot temporary central bus station is proposed on the northern half of the lot. This building would include restrooms, vending machines, a viewing center for the expansion project, full-sized models of completed hotel rooms, and offices for marketing staff. The existing guard booth at Entrance 1 would be replaced and new guard booths would be constructed at the other two parking lot entrances. In addition, a new two-story guard booth would be constructed on the east side of the parking lot, adjacent to the guest parking area. This structure would be approximately 18 feet, 7 inches high at the roof peak, and would match the one-story booths in architectural design and features. Lighting of these structures would include task lighting inside, with the minimum lighting required by code to illuminate the exterior stairs. The southeast corner of the parking lot would be reserved for a temporary construction trailer complex with approximately 30,000 square feet of space, and laydown areas totaling approximately 40,000 square feet. Also proposed for the north end of this area would be a temporary transportation center housed in a 700-square foot trailer, with restrooms and office space for shuttle and bus drivers. Parking for casino shuttles and limousines would also be designated in this area, with a canopy provided for shade. Some of the parking space striping and locations of shuttle stops in this portion of the overflow parking lot would be varied from the plans included with the MND and the total number of approved parking spaces would be decreased by approximately 50.

Restrooms and break rooms in the central bus station, the transportation center, and construction trailers would be supplied with water from an existing 5/8-inch metered connection to a 2-inch diameter PCWA water line located in the southwest corner of the parcel. Landscaping would also be irrigated with water from this connection. Fire hydrants within the parking lot are connected to a larger PCWA water main that also serves the casino, in order to ensure an adequate fire flow. Wastewater would be collected in storage tanks to be emptied and disposed of daily at an approved offsite facility by a licensed sewage disposal contractor. **Figure 3-10** shows improvements proposed under the current project (shaded) along with those approved under the 2007 MND (unshaded). Following the completion of all construction for the expansion, the central bus station, transportation center and other trailers would all be removed and bus, limo, and employee parking would be provided in the onsite lots or the parking garage.

## **3.5 INTENDED USES OF THE TEIR**

### **3.5.1 REQUIRED PERMITS AND APPROVALS**

The information contained in this TEIR may be used as the basis for the following project-related permits and approvals:

- 1) UAIC Tribal Council: The Draft and Final TEIR, along with associated findings, will go to the UAIC Tribal Council for consideration and certification.
- 2) Placer County Planning Director: The TEIR will be reviewed by the Director of the Placer County Planning Department for determination that the project has complied with the environmental review process specified in the MOU between UAIC and Placer County. Per the MOU, this determination shall not be unreasonably withheld.
- 3) U.S. Environmental Protection Agency: General Construction Stormwater NPDES Permit compliance for project site.
- 4) Regional Water Quality Control Board: NPDES Permit for increased wastewater effluent discharge to Orchard Creek, if applicable. General Construction Stormwater NPDES Permit compliance for offsite improvement area.
- 5) Placer County or City of Lincoln: approval for sewer connection, if applicable.
- 6) Placer County Water Agency or City of Lincoln: expanded/new water service.
- 7) Placer County: encroachment permit for offsite signage and frontage improvements on Athens Avenue and Thunder Valley Court, if necessary.
- 8) Placer County: zoning text and/or Community Plan Amendment for offsite signage, if required.
- 9) U.S. Army Corps of Engineers: Section 404 permit under the Clean Water Act for filling jurisdictional wetlands associated with frontage improvements on Athens Avenue and Thunder Valley Court, if necessary.
- 10) Issuance of Clean Water Act Section 401 Water Quality Certification or waiver from the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board, if necessary.
- 11) State Historic Preservation Office consultation under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, if necessary.
- 12) California Public Utilities Commission consultation regarding PG&E powerline relocation, if necessary.