



COUNTY OF PLACER
Department of Facility Services

Mary Dietrich, Director

INITIAL STUDY & CHECKLIST

This Initial Study has been prepared to identify and assess the anticipated environmental impacts of the following described project application. The document may rely on previous environmental documents (see Section C) and site-specific studies (see Section I) prepared to address in detail the effects or impacts associated with the project.

This document has been prepared to satisfy the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) (Public Resources Code, Section 21000 et seq.) and the State CEQA Guidelines (14 CCR 15000 et seq.) CEQA requires that all state and local government agencies consider the environmental consequences of projects over which they have discretionary authority before acting on those projects.

The Initial Study is a public document used by the decision-making lead agency to determine whether a project may have a significant effect on the environment. If the lead agency finds substantial evidence that any aspect of the project, either individually or cumulatively, may have a significant effect on the environment, regardless of whether the overall effect of the project is adverse or beneficial, the lead agency is required to prepare an EIR, use a previously-prepared EIR and supplement that EIR, or prepare a Subsequent EIR to analyze the project at hand. If the agency finds no substantial evidence that the project or any of its aspects may cause a significant effect on the environment, a Negative Declaration shall be prepared. If in the course of analysis, the agency recognizes that the project may have a significant impact on the environment, but that by incorporating specific mitigation measures the impact will be reduced to a less than significant effect, a Mitigated Negative Declaration shall be prepared.

Project Title: Placer County Animal Shelter	Plus# 20130103
Entitlement(s): Minor Use Permit	
Site Area: 4.5 acres / approx. 37,000 square feet	Portion of APN: 051-120-061
Location: B Avenue (west of Richardson Drive), Auburn, CA 95603	

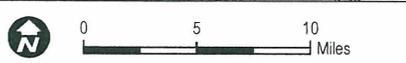
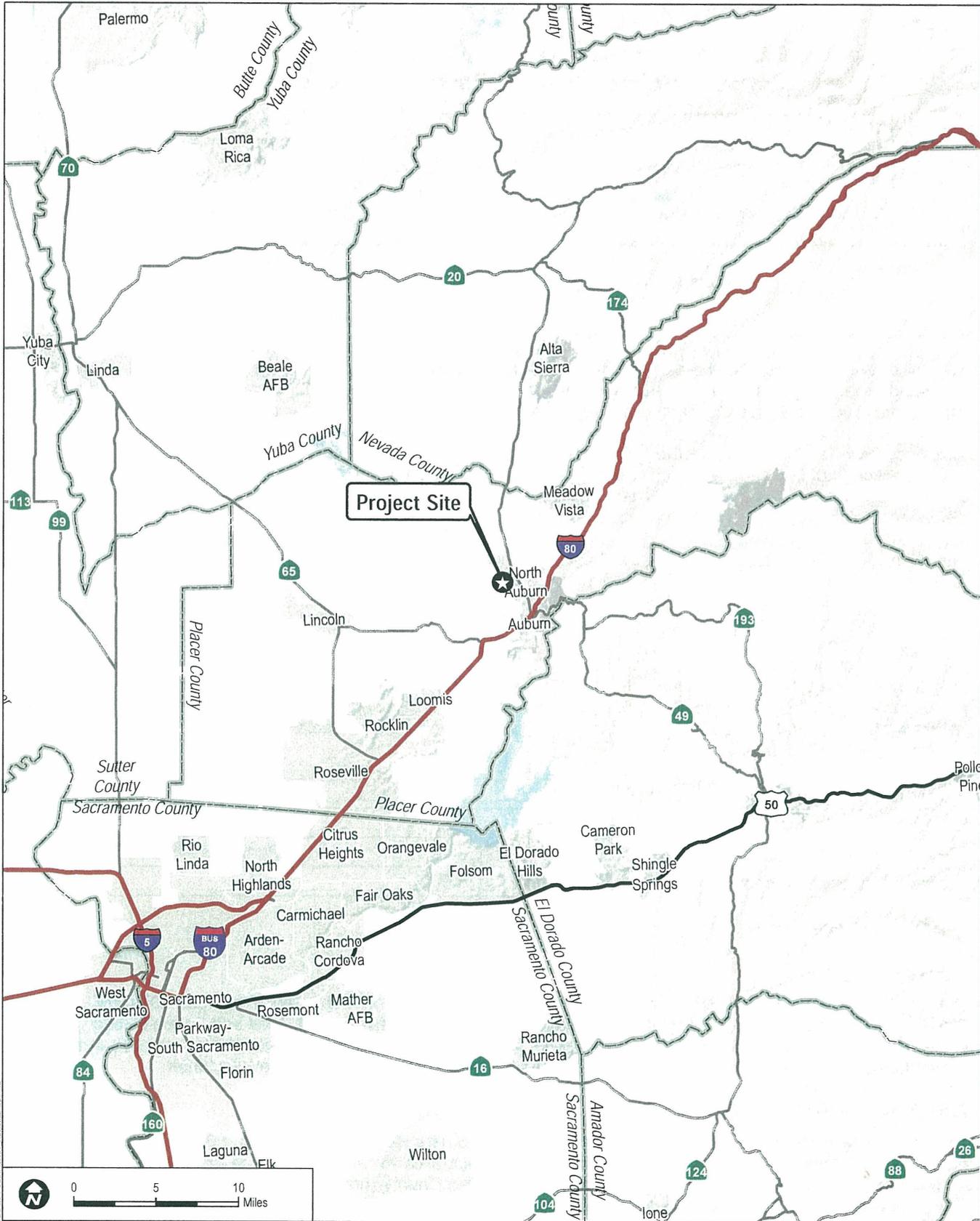
A. BACKGROUND:

Project Location:

The project site is located at the west end of the Placer County Government Center campus (DeWitt Center) in Placer County, California, approximately 1 mile east of Highway 49, between Bell Road and Atwood Road. Access to the site would be provided from B Avenue within DeWitt Center. **Figure 1 Regional Map** shows the regional project location. **Figure 2 Vicinity Map** shows the location of the project site within DeWitt Center.

Project Site Characteristics:

The project site comprises approximately 4.5 acres of a 59.75 acre parcel (APN 051-120-061). The Placer County Public Works Department currently uses the proposed project area for material storage and as corporation yard. An unimproved gravel road runs through the site and provides County (non-public) access to the material storage and corporation yard, the southern end of the pond located to the west of the project site, and the undeveloped county land to the south.



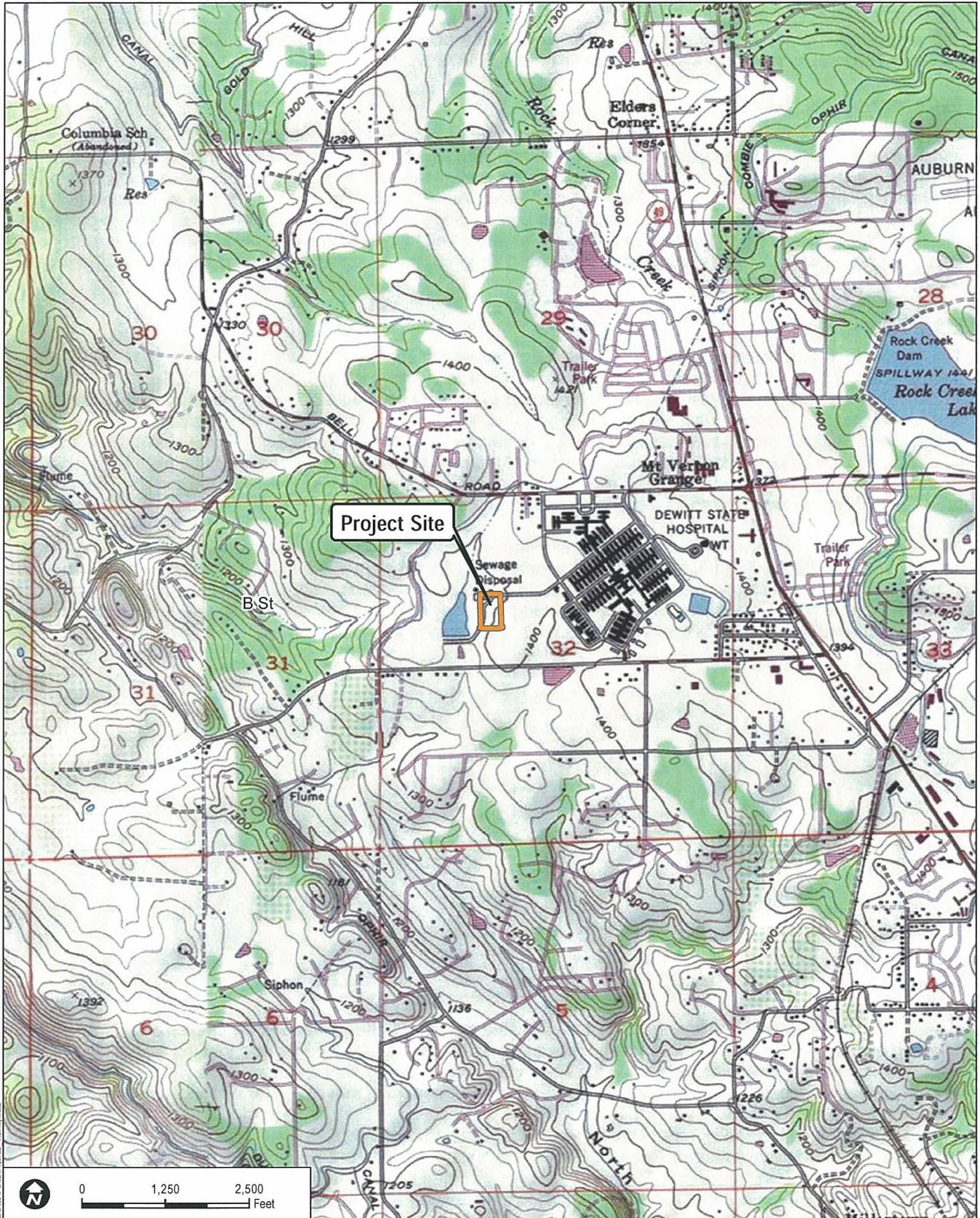
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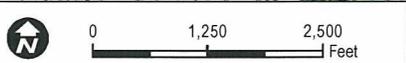
PLACER COUNTY ANIMAL SHELTER PROJECT INITIAL STUDY

FIGURE 1
Regional Map

Path 2: Placer County Animal Shelter Project Initial Study



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SOURCE: USGS 7.5 Minute Series Topographic Maps
Wood Rogers 2013

FIGURE 2
Vicinity Map

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PLACER COUNTY ANIMAL SHELTER PROJECT INITIAL STUDY

The project area generally slopes from east to west, with most of the area ranging in cross slopes from 2 to 8 percent. Topography ranges in elevation from 1415 feet to 1379.5 feet.

Surrounding Land Uses and Setting:

The project site is bounded to the north by B Avenue, the existing Placer County Animal Shelter, and a County impound yard. Further to the north, bordering the existing shelter and impound yard, is a residential neighborhood. The project site is bounded to the east by the County’s Juvenile Detention Facility and exercise fields and to the southeast by the Juvenile Detention Facility Solar Panel Array. South of the project site is undeveloped but disturbed oak woodland and Atwood Road. A pond and drainage channel is located to the west of the project site. The pond is a remnant of a long-abandoned sewage treatment pond system and it releases water to a smaller pond located approximately 75 yards to the south. **Figure 3 Project Site** provides an aerial photograph of the project site.

Project Description:

The Placer County Department of Facility Services is proposing to construct a new animal shelter in DeWitt Center, approximately 250 feet from the existing County Animal Shelter. The existing 9,292 square foot shelter, located at 11251 B Avenue, was constructed in 1972. The proposed new shelter would be approximately 37,000 square feet and would provide modern functionality, efficiency and the implementation of best practices in animal care, housing, and health in order to increase the number of adoptable animals in the County. The existing shelter would be closed and the building vacated upon construction of the new facility. Staff members and animals housed at the existing shelter would be relocated to the new shelter prior to the opening of the facility to the public. The existing building would not be demolished as a part of the proposed project.

As shown in **Figure 4 Conceptual Site Plan**, the proposed new facility would include administrative space, animal areas, space for the public to interact with the animals, and an on-site veterinarian. The exterior facilities would include outdoor patios, dog kennels and cat pens, an exercise yard, storage shed, walk-in cooler, and a barn for housing larger animals. *Table 1* provides a summary of the facilities and approximate square footage associated with the proposed shelter interior areas and exterior covered areas.

Table 1: Proposed Animal Shelter Facilities

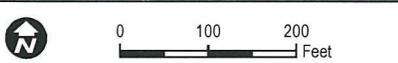
<i>Interior Areas</i>	<i>Total Square Footage (sf)</i>
Public Areas Animal Areas Administration Shelter Veterinary	28,700 sf
<i>Exterior Covered Areas</i>	<i>Total Square Footage (sf)</i>
Barn Exterior Dog Kennels Sallyport/Cage Storage Cat Porches & Pens Exercise Yard Patio Areas Storage Shed Walk In Cooler	8,700 sf
Total Interior & Exterior Areas	37,000 sf

In addition to the interior and exterior covered areas listed in *Table 1*, the proposed new shelter would include the following outdoor facilities: an approximately 300 square foot fenced agility yard for dog training and testing; 1,500 square foot barn paddocks to be located on the sides of the barn building; and an approximately 10,000 square foot pasture located adjacent to the paddocks to provide improved freedom of movement for barn animals.

A paved parking area located in front of the main shelter building would contain 20 public parking spaces and would be accessible from a driveway on B Avenue. Behind the main building, there would be 15 designated staff parking spaces, 15 volunteer parking spaces, 10 spaces for animal control vehicles, as well as designated parking areas for livestock trailers. There would be two ways to access the service yard and parking areas located behind the main building: from a gated driveway located along the eastern perimeter of the building and from the existing County access road. Entry from the County access road would be provided by a gate located in the service yard area. The



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Project Boundary

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SOURCE: ESRI 2013
Wood Rogers 2013

FIGURE 3
Project Site

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PLACER COUNTY ANIMAL SHELTER PROJECT INITIAL STUDY

County access road would remain open accessible to County workers. The gated driveways would also provide access to the barn driveway.

The building design for the new facility is proposed to be appropriate with the existing campus and would use acceptable exterior building materials, landscaping, and lighting as necessary for project approval through the County Design Review process. The building construction, proportions, shape, massing, roofline, lighting, signage and use of site and building materials and colors would be appropriate to the building's scale and respectful of the other existing campus buildings. Landscaping at the new shelter would be consistent with other newly landscaped portions of DeWitt Center and would primarily consist mostly of drought tolerant plantings that would predominantly be irrigated with drip emitting tubes.

Proposed Project Operations

The hours of operations for the proposed new animal shelter would remain the same as the current hours at the existing shelter. The front counter/business office for receiving animals, licensing, trap rental, etc. would be open from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Tuesday through Saturday. The cat and dog kennels for adoptions and picking up lost pets would open from 10:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Tuesday through Saturday. The shelter would be open until 7:00 p.m. on Wednesdays. The shelter would be closed for lunch daily between the hours of 1:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m., and would be closed on Sundays, Mondays, and legal holidays. Pet adoptions would stop approximately 30 minutes prior to closing each day.

As shown in *Table 2* below, in comparison to the existing shelter, the proposed project would provide an increased capacity for dogs and barn animals, and a slight decrease in the cat capacity at the new shelter. The proposed project would also provide additional parking for the public, volunteers, staff, and Animal Control Officer (ACO) trucks.

Table 2: Existing vs. Proposed Capacity

	Existing Shelter	Proposed New Shelter
Cat Capacity	76 permanent	72 permanent
	28 temporary	24 feral (outside) permanent
	104 total	96 total
Dog Capacity	43 permanent (indoor only)	56 permanent (indoor-outdoor)
	16 temporary (outdoor)	12 permanent (indoor only)
	59 total	68 total
Barn Capacity	5 animal stalls	8 animal stalls
	1 tack/storage room	1 tack/storage room
	Approx. 1,300 sf	Approx. 2,100 sf
Parking Capacity	12 General (public/volunteers)	20 Public
	10 Staff	15 Staff
	8 ACO Truck	15 Volunteer
	30 total	10 ACO Truck
		60 total

Waste Management

Animal waste would be removed on a regular basis, in accordance with routine practices currently in place at the existing County Animal Shelter. Companion animals (dogs or cats) that are euthanized at the shelter would be removed from the facility, outside of the public view, by the rendering company under existing contract with the County.

Staffing

There is currently 18.5 full-time County staff employed at the existing animal shelter. While the new facility would provide capacity for potential future increases in staffing, there would be no immediate increase in staffing levels associated with the project.

Proposed Project Construction Activities:

Project construction is anticipated to begin in the spring of 2014 and would be completed by 2016. Construction hours would be from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. Construction Activities are presented in *Table 3*.

Table 3: Project Construction Activities

Activity	Duration	Equipment
Earthwork	15 days	One each: scraper, loader, motor grader, skip loader, roller, water truck, end dump truck
Underground Utilities	15 days	Excavator (1), back hoe (2), end dump truck (2)
Site Concrete Work	10 days	One each: concrete pump, Read Mix concrete truck
Paving Work	3 days	One each: paver, roller, end dump truck
Miscellaneous, Site Construction (site furnishings, fencing, etc.)	10 days	One each: back hoe, flat bed truck, skip loader
Building Foundation	15 days	One each: concrete pump, Read Mix concrete truck
Building Construction	450 days	Miscellaneous tools, vehicles, and equipment

Grading cuts and fills are expected to range between one and three feet. The proposed project grading plan would require the import of approximately 30 to 50 cubic yards of soil, which would be accomplished in approximately five truck and transfer loads. Construction trucks would be utilized primarily to deliver building materials and remove debris. Because the site is currently mostly vacant, scrap materials and other waste would be minimal. To the extent feasible, surplus construction materials would be recycled.

The project would prepare and implement a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) in compliance with the requirements of the State Construction General Permit that will specify the use of appropriate best management practices (BMPs) for erosion control and spill prevention during construction and permanent post-construction stormwater management measures following construction.

Entitlements and Required Approvals

Placer County for:

- Minor Use Permit
- Design Review
- Grading Permit
- Building Permit
- Improvement Plan Review
- Stormwater and Surface Water Quality BMP Plan (compliance with NPDES General Permit)
- Preliminary Drainage Report

Placer County Air Pollution Control District for:

- Construction Emission/Dust Control Plan

B. ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING:

The table below provides a summary of the zoning, land use designations, and existing conditions and improvements for the proposed project site and surrounding areas.

Location	Zoning	General Plan/Community Plan Designations	Existing Conditions and Improvements
Site	Heavy Commercial (C3-Dc) Open Space (O)	Mixed Use (MU) Open Space (OS)	Placer County Public Works Department materials storage and corporation yard
North	Residential Multi-Family (RM-UP-DL5 PD=5)	Mixed Use (MU) Low Medium Density Residential (LMDR)	Existing Placer County Animal Shelter Residential Neighborhood
South	Residential Multi-Family (RM-DL 10 PD=1)	Rural Low Density Residential (RLDR)	Atwood Road
East	Heavy Commercial (C3-Dc)	Mixed Use (MU)	Placer County Juvenile Detention Facility
West	Open Space (OP-DR-Dc)	Mixed Use (MU) Open Space (OS)	Placer County Women's Center and Children's Shelter

C. PREVIOUS ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENT:

The County has determined that an Initial Study shall be prepared in order to determine whether the potential exists for unmitigatable impacts resulting from the proposed project. Relevant analysis from the County-wide General Plan

and Community Plan Certified EIRs, and other project-specific studies and reports that have been generated to date, were used as the database for the Initial Study. The decision to prepare the Initial Study utilizing the analysis contained in the General Plan and Specific Plan Certified EIRs, and project-specific analysis summarized herein, is sustained by Sections 15168 and 15183 of the CEQA Guidelines.

Section 15168 relating to Program EIRs indicates that where subsequent activities involve site-specific operations, the agency would use a written checklist or similar device to document the evaluation of the site and the activity, to determine whether the environmental effects of the operation were covered in the earlier Program EIR. A Program EIR is intended to provide the basis in an Initial Study for determining whether the later activity may have any significant effects. It will also be incorporated by reference to address regional influences, secondary effects, cumulative impacts, broad alternatives, and other factors that apply to the program as a whole.

The following documents serve as Program-level EIRs from which incorporation by reference will occur:

- ➔ Placer County General Plan EIR
- ➔ Auburn Bowman Community Plan EIR
- ➔ DeWitt Government Center Facility Plan EIR & B Avenue Addendum EIR

Section 15183 states that "projects which are consistent with the development density established by existing zoning, community plan or general plan policies for which an EIR was certified shall not require additional environmental review, except as may be necessary to examine whether there are project-specific significant effects which are peculiar to the project or site." Thus, if an impact is not peculiar to the project or site, and it has been addressed as a significant effect in the prior EIR, or will be substantially mitigated by the imposition of uniformly applied development policies or standards, then additional environmental documentation need not be prepared for the project solely on the basis of that impact.

The above stated documents are available for review Monday through Friday, 8am to 5pm, at the Placer County Community Development Resource Agency, 3091 County Center Drive, Auburn, CA 95603..

D. EVALUATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS:

The Initial Study checklist recommended by the State of California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines is used to determine potential impacts of the proposed project on the physical environment. The checklist provides a list of questions concerning a comprehensive array of environmental issue areas potentially affected by the project (see CEQA Guidelines, Appendix G). Explanations to answers are provided in a discussion for each section of questions as follows:

- a) A brief explanation is required for all answers including "No Impact" answers.
- b) "Less Than Significant Impact" applies where the project's impacts are insubstantial and do not require any mitigation to reduce impacts.
- c) "Less Than Significant with Mitigation Measures" applies where the incorporation of mitigation measures has reduced an effect from "Potentially Significant Impact" to a "Less than Significant Impact." The County, as lead agency, must describe the mitigation measures, and briefly explain how they reduce the effect to a less-than-significant level (mitigation measures from earlier analyses may be cross-referenced).
- d) "Potentially Significant Impact" is appropriate if there is substantial evidence 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.
- e) All answers must take account of the entire 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 [CEQA Guidelines, Section 15063(a)(1)].
- f) 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 [CEQA Guidelines, Section 15063(c)(3)(D)]. A brief discussion should be attached addressing the following:
 - ➔ **Earlier analyses used** – Identify earlier analyses and state where they are available for review.
 - ➔ **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. Also, state whether such effects were addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis.
 - ➔ **Mitigation measures** – For effects that are checked as "Less Than Significant with Mitigation Measures," 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.

- g) References to information sources for potential impacts (i.e. General Plans/Community Plans, zoning ordinances) should be incorporated into the checklist. Reference to a previously-prepared or outside document should include a reference to the pages or chapters where the statement is substantiated. A source list should be attached and other sources used, or individuals contacted, should be cited in the discussion.

I. AESTHETICS – Would the project:

Environmental Issue	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Measures	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
1. Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista? (PLN)				X
2. Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings, within a state scenic highway? (PLN)		X		
3. Substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings? (PLN)			X	
4. Create a new source of substantial light or glare, which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area? (PLN)			X	

Discussion- Item I-1:

The project site is located within the Placer County Government Center (DeWitt Center) and does not contribute to any scenic vistas. A scenic vista is generally defined as an expansive view of highly valued landscape observable from a publicly accessible vantage point. In the project vicinity, publically accessible vantage points are limited to public roads. However, views from public roads, including B Avenue, are constrained by the urban development within DeWitt Center. As shown in **Figure 5 Project Site Photos**, the majority of the proposed project area is currently used by the Placer County Public Works Department as a materials storage and corporation yard. This area is enclosed by chain-link fencing. Privacy slats in the fencing along the site boundary along B Avenue provide for an obstructed view of the project site from the road. The proposed main building of the new shelter would be setback from B Avenue and would be constructed approximately 250 feet south of the existing animal shelter. While the project would construct an animal shelter and associated facilities on an undeveloped site, which would alter the existing views of the site from B Avenue, the site has been contemplated for future development and does not contribute to any scenic vistas. Therefore, no impacts to scenic vistas would occur as a result of the project.

Discussion- Item I-2:

Scenic resources are physical features that provide scenic value to a project site and its surroundings. These typically include topographic, geologic, hydrologic, and biological resources (for example, hills, rock outcroppings, creeks, woodlands or landmark trees). Photographs of the project site are provided in **Figure 5 Project Site Photos**. This project area is in the western portion of DeWitt Center and is primarily characterized as a developed area. The institutional land uses of the jail, juvenile hall, existing animal shelter, and women’s center and children’s shelter comprise the majority of development in this area. A large portion of the proposed project site is used by Placer County Public Works Department as a materials storage and corporation yard. An unimproved gravel road runs through the site and provides County (non-public) access to the material storage area and corporation yard, the southern end of the pond located to the west of the project site, and the undeveloped County-owned land located to the south. There are no buildings on the site and no state-designated or eligible scenic highways or routes in the project vicinity. There is no formal landscaping on the project site. As shown in **Figure 4 Conceptual Site Plan**, the project would include landscaping along the project site frontage on B Avenue, and along the perimeter of the main shelter building.

Although the *DeWitt Government Center Facility Plan EIR* (NFA/URS 2003) classifies the project area as developed/disturbed, there are a total of 33 individual trees currently found within the project area. The Arborist Report prepared for the project, included as Appendix A to this Initial Study, indicates that project construction would require removal of 19 protected trees, including six native blue oaks (Dudek 2013). The removal of 19 protected trees would be considered a potentially significant impact to scenic resources. Impacts to trees are also discussed in *Section IV Biological Resources*, below. *Mitigation Measure AES-1*, which requires implementation of *Mitigation Measure BIO-2*, would mitigate for the removal of protected tress and protect the trees retained onsite during construction. Implementation of *Mitigation Measure AES-1* would ensure that impacts to onsite trees would be minimized and impacts to scenic resources would remain less than significant.

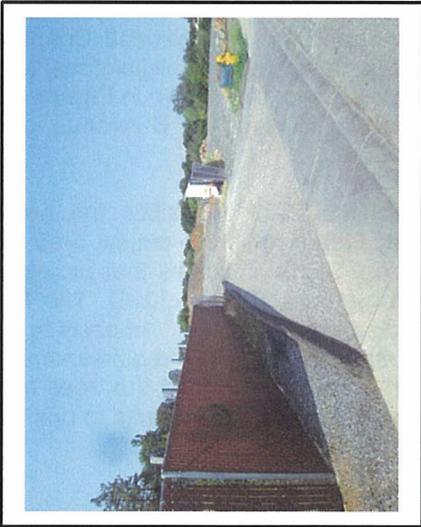


Photo 1: View of project site from B Avenue.

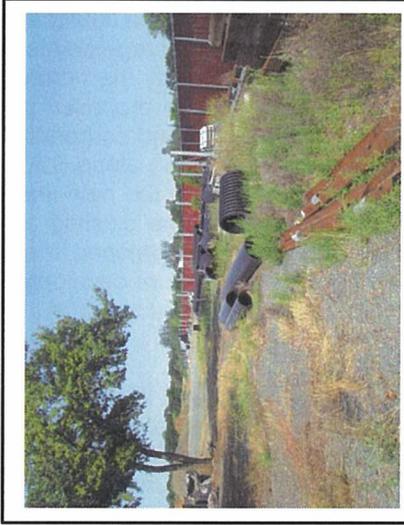


Photo 2: Existing County Public Works Department material storage in northeast portion of site adjacent to B Avenue.

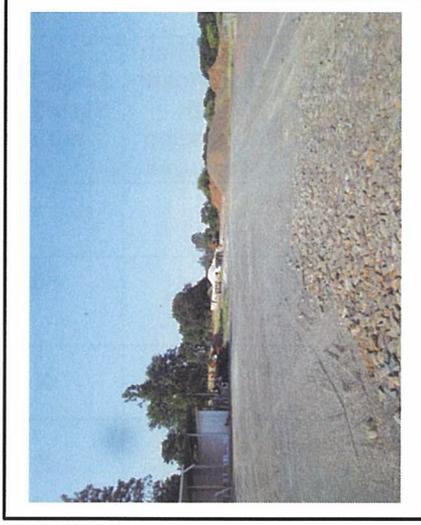


Photo 3: View to south across site.

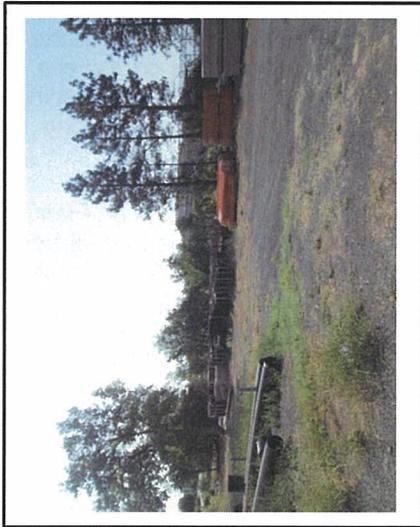


Photo 4: View to east across site with Juvenile Detention Facility visible in background.

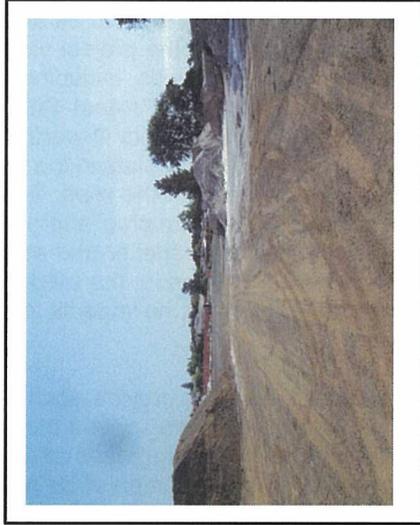


Photo 5: View to northeast across site with B Avenue, existing animal shelter facilities, and residential neighborhood in background.

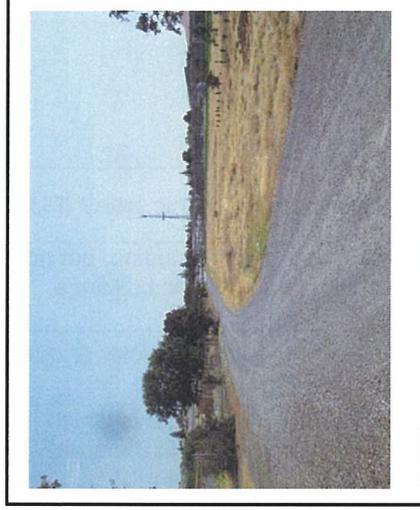


Photo 6: View from existing County gravel access road in southwest portion of project site.