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**INTRODUCTION**

**1.1 TYPE AND PURPOSE OF THE EIR**

The Quarry Ridge Environmental Impact Report (EIR) has been prepared in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) of 1970, Pub. Res. Code §§ 21000-21178, as amended and the Guidelines for Implementation of the California Environmental Quality Act, Cal. Code Regs. Title 14, §§ 15000-15387 (CEQA Guidelines). Placer County is the lead agency for the environmental review of the Quarry Ridge project (proposed project) evaluated herein and has the principal responsibility for approving the project. As required by Section 15121 of the CEQA Guidelines, this EIR will (a) inform public agency decision-makers, and the public generally, of the significant environmental effects of the project, (b) identify possible ways to minimize the significant adverse environmental effects, and (c) describe reasonable and feasible project alternatives which reduce environmental effects. The public agency shall consider the information in the EIR along with other information that may be presented to the agency.

As provided in the CEQA Guidelines Section 15021, public agencies are charged with the duty to avoid or minimize environmental damage where feasible. The public agency has an obligation to balance a variety of public objectives, including economic, environmental, and social issues. CEQA requires the preparation of an EIR prior to approving any project that may have a significant effect on the environment. For the purposes of CEQA, the term *project* refers to the whole of an action, which has the potential for resulting in a direct physical change or a reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment (CEQA Guidelines Section 15378[a]). With respect to the proposed project, the County has determined that the proposed development is a *project* within the definition of CEQA, which has the potential for resulting in significant environmental effects.

The lead agency, which is Placer County for this project, is required to consider the information in the EIR along with any other available information in deciding whether to approve the application. The basic requirements for an EIR include discussions of the environmental setting, environmental impacts, mitigation measures, alternatives, growth inducing impacts, and cumulative impacts.

The CEQA Guidelines identify several types of EIRs, each applicable to different project circumstances. This EIR has been prepared as a *project-level EIR* pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15161, which is an analysis that examines the environmental impacts of a specific development project. A *project-level EIR* focuses primarily on the changes in the environment that would result from the development of the project, and examines all phases of the project including planning, construction, and operation.

## 1.2 PROJECT SUMMARY

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The 3.23-acre (gross) proposed project site is located at the northeast corner of Douglas Boulevard and Berg Street within the Granite Bay Community Plan area in Placer County, California.<sup>1</sup> The site is identified as Assessor's Parcel Number (APN) 048-084-030. The site is currently undeveloped and does not include any existing structures.

The proposed project consists of subdividing the 3.23-acre project site into four parcels to develop four office buildings, totaling 17,260 square feet (sf), and associated improvements. The proposed office complex would consist of one general office building (Building 1) and three office buildings (Buildings 2, 3, and 4) for which medical use is allowed. Building 1 would be approximately 3,200 sf and would be situated at the top of the knoll on the western portion of the site. Buildings 2 and 3 would be approximately 4,020 sf and 4,530 sf, respectively, and would be situated to the east of Building 1. Building 4 would be located in the southeastern portion of the site and would be separated from Building 3 by a narrow parking lot area. Building 4 would be approximately 5,510 sf in size.

At a minimum, the following approvals and permits would be required from the County prior to construction of the proposed project:

- General Plan/Granite Bay Community Plan amendment to change land use designation of the project site from Low Density Residential to Commercial;
- Granite Bay Community Plan text amendment to modify the setback standard for buildings located on the north side of Douglas Boulevard.
- Rezone of the project site from Residential Single Family, Building Site 20,000-sf minimum (RS-B-20) to Office and Professional with Design Review combining district (OP-DC);
- Tentative Parcel Map to subdivide the project site into four parcels ranging in size from 24,202 sf to 48,936 sf; and
- Design Review to construct four office buildings and associated improvements within an area zoned OP-DC.

## 1.3 EIR PROCESS

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The EIR process begins with the decision by the lead agency to prepare an EIR, either during a preliminary review of a project or at the conclusion of an Initial Study. Once the decision is made to prepare an EIR, the lead agency sends a Notice of Preparation (NOP) to appropriate government agencies and, when required, to the State Clearinghouse (SCH) in the Office of Planning and Research (OPR), which will ensure that responsible and trustee State agencies reply within the required time. The SCH assigns an identification number to the project, which then becomes the identification number for all subsequent environmental documents on the project. Commenting agencies have 30 days to respond to the NOP and provide information regarding alternatives and mitigation measures they wish to have explored in the Draft EIR and to provide notification regarding whether the agency will be a responsible agency or a trustee agency for the project.

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<sup>1</sup> Net acreage (excluding Douglas Boulevard and Berg Street right-of-way) is 2.73 acres.

Upon completion of the Draft EIR and prior to circulation to State and local agencies and interested members of the public, a notice of completion is filed with the SCH and a public notice of availability is published to inform interested parties that a Draft EIR is available for agency and public review. In addition, the notice provides information regarding the location of copies of the Draft EIR available for public review and any public meetings or hearings that are scheduled. The Draft EIR is circulated for a minimum period of 45 days, during which time reviewers may submit comments on the document to the lead agency. The lead agency must respond to comments in writing. If significant new information, as defined in CEQA Guidelines Section 15088.5, is added to an EIR after public notice of availability is given, but before certification of the EIR, the revised EIR or affected chapters must be recirculated for an additional public review period with related comments and responses.

A Final EIR will be prepared, containing public comments on the Draft EIR and written responses to those comments, as well as a list of changes to the Draft EIR text necessitated by public comments, as warranted. Before approving a project, the lead agency shall certify that the EIR (consisting of the Draft EIR and Final EIR) has been completed in compliance with CEQA, and that the EIR has been presented to the decision-making body of the lead agency, which has reviewed and considered the EIR. The lead agency shall also certify that the EIR reflects the lead agency's independent judgment and analysis.

The findings prepared by the lead agency must be based on substantial evidence in the administrative record and must include an explanation that bridges the gap between evidence in the record and the conclusions required by CEQA. If the decision-making body elects to proceed with a project that would have unavoidable significant impacts, then a Statement of Overriding Considerations explaining the decision to balance the benefits of the project against unavoidable environmental impacts must be prepared.

#### **1.4 SCOPE OF THE EIR**

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The CEQA Guidelines, Section 15126.2(a), states in pertinent part:

An EIR shall identify and focus on the significant environmental effects of the proposed project. In assessing the impact of a proposed project on the environment, the lead agency should normally limit its examination to changes in the existing physical conditions in the affected area as they exist at the time the notice of preparation is published, or where no notice of preparation is published, at the time environmental analysis is commenced.

The Initial Study prepared for the proposed project during the scoping period (see Appendix C) includes a detailed environmental checklist addressing a range of technical environmental issues pursuant to the then-current (September 2017) Appendix G, Environmental Checklist Form, of the CEQA Guidelines. For each technical environmental issue, the Initial Study identifies the level of impact for the proposed project. The Initial Study identifies the environmental effects as either “no impact,” “less than significant,” “less than significant with mitigation incorporated,” or “potentially significant.” Impacts identified for the proposed project in the Initial Study as “no impact,” “less-than-significant,” or “less-than-significant with mitigation incorporated” are summarized below and discussed further in Appendix C. All remaining issues identified in the

Initial Study as “potentially significant” are discussed in the subsequent technical chapters of this EIR.

It is important to note that the CEQA Guidelines have been recently updated. More specifically, the updates proposed by the Office of Planning and Research (OPR) in January 2018 have been approved by the Office of Administrative Law and became effective December 28, 2018. As part of the updates, Appendix G, Environmental Checklist Form, of the CEQA Guidelines has been amended. The majority of changes represent consolidated or deleted questions to avoid redundancy, whereas a smaller subset represents additions based on current, often overlooked legal requirements (e.g., Energy), and legislation passed in recent years (e.g., Wildfire – Senate Bill 1241).<sup>2</sup> The above noted additions to Appendix G – Energy and Wildfire – are topics evaluated in this EIR, as will be demonstrated below.

The newly added Energy section (IV) of the updated CEQA Guidelines Appendix G includes the following checklist questions regarding whether the project would:

- Result in a potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during project construction or operation; or
- Conflict with or obstruct a State or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency.

These added checklist questions reflect the type of energy analysis already required under CEQA (see Pub. Resources Code, § 21100(b)(3) and Appendix F of the CEQA Guidelines). Thus, a project energy analysis has been provided in this EIR, in Section 6.3 of Chapter 6, Statutorily Required Sections, of this EIR. Please refer to Chapter 6 for a detailed energy analysis of the project.

The new Wildfire section (XX) of the updated CEQA Guidelines Appendix G has been added in response to Senate Bill 1241.<sup>3</sup> The Wildfire section includes the following checklist questions:

If located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, would the project:

- Substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan;
- Due to slope, prevailing winds, and other factors, exacerbate wildfire risks, and thereby expose project occupants to, pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire;

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<sup>2</sup> Note: While the Transportation Section of the Appendix G Checklist has been updated consistent with Senate Bill 743, deleting reference to level of service, and instead inserting a reference to new Guidelines Section 16054.3, subdivision (b), to focus on vehicle miles traveled where appropriate, this shift in focus on vehicle miles traveled is not required until January 1, 2020.

<sup>3</sup> Senate Bill 1241 (Kehoe, 2012) required the Office of Planning and Research, the Natural Resources Agency, and CAL FIRE to develop “amendments to the initial study checklist of the [CEQA Guidelines] for the inclusion of questions related to fire hazard impacts for projects located on lands classified as state responsibility areas, as defined in section 4102, and on lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, as defined in subdivision (i) of section 51177 of the Government Code.” (Pub. Resources Code, § 21083.01 (emphasis added).)

- Require the installation or maintenance of associated infrastructure (such as roads, fuel breaks, emergency water sources, power lines or other utilities) that may exacerbate fire risk or that may result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment; or
- Expose people or structures to significant risks, including downslope or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes.

Notably, the checklist questions only apply to a project located in or near a state responsibility area or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones. While the Initial Study prepared for the proposed project did not specifically include a separate checklist section regarding wildfire, impacts related to wildfire hazards were addressed in the Hazards and Hazardous Materials section (VII) of the Initial Study, as summarized below and included in full in Appendix C to this EIR. As noted below, the project site is not located in or near a state responsibility area or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones. Thus, the project would not meet the criteria necessitating additional wildfire analysis pursuant to the updated CEQA Checklist.

- *Aesthetics (All Items)*: The proposed project site is located along Douglas Boulevard, a major travel corridor that is designated as a Scenic Roadway per the Granite Bay Community Plan. Goal 4.1.4 in the Community Plan establishes the goal of maintaining a scenic corridor along Douglas Boulevard to enhance and maintain existing landscaping and scenic qualities. Policy 4.2.10 encourages the use of large setbacks along designated Scenic Roadways, where appropriate. The project would incorporate a variety of design elements to retain the rural character of the site and reduce the impact of the proposed development. For example, all of the proposed buildings would include 20-foot minimum landscaped setbacks from Douglas Boulevard. Therefore, a *less-than-significant* impact would occur. In addition, Placer County does not contain officially designated State Scenic Highways, and, thus, *no impact* would occur. Furthermore, the project could create a new source of substantial light or glare that would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area. However, implementation of Mitigation Measure I-1 set forth in the Initial Study, which requires the project to submit a detailed lighting and photometric plan that include provisions related to shielding and automatic light reduction for parking lot lighting, would ensure any impacts related to such would be reduced to a *less-than-significant* level.
- *Agricultural & Forest Resources (All Items)*: According to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program, the proposed project site and all off-site improvement areas are classified as Urban and Built-Up Land. The project site does not contain forest land or timberland, and is not located adjacent to agricultural lands or operations. As such, development of the proposed project would not convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide or Local Importance (Farmland) to non-agricultural use, conflict with General Plan or other policies regarding land use buffers for agricultural operations, or conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, a Williamson Act contract, or the Placer County Right-to-Farm policy. The project site is zoned RS-B-20 and the proposed project requests to rezone the site to OP-DC. Thus, the proposed project would not conflict with existing zoning for forest land or timberland, and would not involve changes in the environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in the loss or conversion

of Farmland (including livestock grazing) or forest land to non-agricultural or non-forest use. Therefore, *no impact* would occur.

- *Air Quality (All Items)*: Implementation of the proposed project would contribute local emissions in the area during construction and operation. However, the proposed project's construction and operational emissions would not exceed the applicable thresholds of significance. In addition, the project would be required to comply with all applicable Placer County Air Pollution Control District (PCAPCD) rules and regulations. Because the project would not exceed the thresholds of significance, the proposed project would not substantially contribute to the region's nonattainment status of ozone or PM. Therefore, implementation of the proposed project would not violate an air quality standard or contribute to an existing or projected air quality violation, and a *less-than-significant* impact related to air quality would occur. Similarly, the project's incremental contribution to impacts related to the cumulative emissions of criteria pollutants for which PCAPCD is in non-attainment would be considered *less than significant*.

The major pollutant concentrations of concern are localized carbon monoxide (CO) emissions and toxic air contaminant (TAC) emissions. While the proposed project would result in increases in vehicle traffic volumes at local roadways and intersections, such increases would not substantially contribute to high levels of localized CO emissions. Therefore, the proposed project would not be anticipated to expose sensitive receptors to substantial concentrations of CO. In addition, considering the short-term nature of construction activities, the limited extent of ground disturbance, and the regulated and intermittent nature of the operation of construction equipment at the site, the likelihood that any one sensitive receptor would be exposed to high concentrations of TACs for any extended period of time during construction would be low. As such, project construction would not be expected to expose sensitive receptors to substantial TAC concentrations. Overall, the proposed project would not expose any sensitive receptors to substantial concentrations of any pollutants. Therefore, impacts related to such would be *less than significant*.

- *Biological Resources (All Items)*: According to the Biological Resources and Wetlands Constraints Analysis prepared for the proposed project, the project site does not have the potential to contain any special-status plant species. However, potential habitat for raptors, such as white-tailed kites, red-tailed hawks, and great horned owls, as well as migratory birds covered by the Migratory Bird Treaty Act, occurs in association with the larger trees, shrubs, and possibly groundcover located throughout the project site. If any vegetation removal would occur during the associated breeding/nesting season, disturbance of nesting activities could occur. However, implementation of Mitigation Measure IV-1 set forth in the Initial Study requires exclusionary buffers to be established for any active nests of raptors and migratory birds identified by a qualified biologist within and in the vicinity of the proposed project site. Thus, implementation of Mitigation Measure IV-1 would ensure that any impacts related to nesting special-status birds would be reduced to a *less-than-significant* level.

According to the Biological Resources and Wetlands Constraints Analysis, the proposed project site contains approximately 2.4 acres of grassland habitat and 0.6 acre of oak woodland habitat. The oak woodland habitat consists of several large oaks, mostly blue oak, scattered and clustered throughout the site. Given that the proposed project site contains less than one acre of oak woodland, the project would not conflict with the County's existing guidelines related to oak woodland preservation. As such, the proposed project would not have a substantial adverse effect on the environment by converting oak woodlands, and/or have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community, including oak woodlands, identified in local or regional plans, policies or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS), U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), or National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Fisheries. Thus, a *less-than-significant* impact would occur. However, the proposed project would involve the removal of two significant oak trees in good condition, and, thus, could conflict with local policies and/or ordinances that protect biological resources, including tree resources. However, implementation of Mitigation Measures IV-2 and IV-3 set forth in the Initial Study would ensure any impacts related to such would be reduced to a *less-than-significant* level.

The proposed project site does not contain federally or State protected wetlands. As such, the proposed project would not have a substantial adverse effect on federal or State protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) or as defined by State statute, through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means. Therefore, *no impact* would occur. In addition, due to the built-out nature of the project area and the proximity of the site to Berg Street and Douglas Boulevard, the proposed project site is not likely to provide a wildlife corridor for native resident or migratory wildlife species, and is not likely used as a native wildlife nesting or breeding site. Therefore, a *less-than-significant* impact would occur.

The project site is located within the boundaries of the draft Placer County Conservation Program (PCCP). The mitigation and conservation protocols that are applied through the PCCP are an equal to or greater functional equivalent mitigation standard for biological resources that are represented in the Initial Study. However, the PCCP has not yet been adopted at this time, and, thus, *no impact* would occur related to conflicting with an adopted habitat conservation plan.

- *Cultural Resources (All Items)*: According to Natural Investigations, historic resources have not been previously recorded within a 0.25-mile radius of the proposed project site. In addition, the site does not contain any existing buildings or other structures, and historic resources were not observed on the site during an intensive pedestrian-level survey conducted on the project site. Therefore, *no impact* would occur. A search of the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) Sacred Lands File failed to indicate the presence of Native American sacred lands in the immediate project vicinity, and known archeological resources, paleontological resources, or unique geological features on or near the site did not appear in the records search. Nonetheless, while unlikely, unknown archaeological resources have the potential to be uncovered during ground-disturbing

activities associated with the proposed project. Therefore, the proposed project could cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a unique archaeological resource pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5. However, implementation of Mitigation Measure V-1 would ensure impacts related to such would be reduced to a *less-than-significant* level.

As discussed above, the proposed project site does not contain any known historic or archaeological resources. As such, the proposed project site would not result in a physical change that would affect unique ethnic cultural values. In addition, the site is not associated with any known historic religious or sacred uses. As such, a *less-than-significant* impact would occur. In addition, although human remains or evidence thereof was not identified during the site surveys, the potential for unknown human remains to be discovered during construction cannot be eliminated given the known prehistoric occupation of the vicinity by Native American tribes. However, implementation of Mitigation Measure V-2 set forth in the Initial Study would ensure any impacts related to such would be reduced to a *less-than-significant* level.

- *Geology & Soils (All Items)*: According to the Placer County General Plan, Placer County lies within a seismically active area of the western United States, but beyond the influence of the highly active faults found along California's coast. The western portion of the County, in which the proposed project is located, is generally characterized by low seismicity, and is not in an area at risk for severe ground shaking associated with earthquakes. In addition, the proposed project site is not underlain by any active faults and is not located within an Alquist-Priolo Fault Study Zone. Furthermore, according to the site-specific Geotechnical Report, on-site soils are not substantially susceptible to liquefaction, and seismic-induced liquefaction is not likely to occur on the proposed project site. Therefore, the proposed project would not expose people or structures to unstable earth conditions, changes in geologic substructures, or geologic and geomorphological (i.e. Avalanches) hazards such as earthquakes, landslides, mudslides, ground failure, or similar hazards, and a *less-than-significant* impact would occur.

The proposed project would include site preparation, grading, paving, utility placement, and various other construction activities which would disrupt on-site soils. In addition, the proposed project would include modifications to the proposed project site that would alter the existing topography and ground surface relief features. Implementation of Mitigation Measures VI-1, VI-2, and VI-3 would ensure impacts related to significant disruptions, displacements, compaction or overcrowding of on-site soils, and/or substantial change in topography or ground surface relief features would be reduced to a *less-than-significant* level. As discussed above, unique geologic features are not known to exist within the project area. Therefore, the proposed project would not result in the destruction, covering or modification of any unique geologic or physical features, and a *less-than-significant* impact would occur.

Implementation of the proposed project would involve construction-related activities, including utility excavation and grading. During such stages of construction, and prior to overlaying the ground surface with structures, the potential exists for wind erosion to occur,

which could affect the project area and potentially inadvertently transport eroded soils to downstream drainage facilities. However, implementation of Mitigation Measures VI-4 and VI-5 would ensure impacts related to such would be reduced to a *less-than-significant* level. It should be noted that minor revisions to Mitigation Measure VI-4 from what is included in the Initial Study have been made as part of this EIR. The updated mitigation measure is presented in Table 2-1 of this EIR. Changes to Mitigation Measure VI-4 do not affect the efficacy of the measure, and impacts following the implementation of Mitigation Measure VI-4 would remain less than significant, as previously determined in the Initial Study prepared for the project.

With respect to expansive soils, the Foundational Investigation determined that on-site soils consist of low-plasticity to non-plastic sands. Such soils are considered to be virtually nonexpansive. Therefore, the proposed project would result in a *less-than-significant* impact related to being located on expansive soils.

- *Greenhouse Gas Emissions (All Items)*: Buildout of the proposed project would contribute to increases of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions that are associated with global climate change during construction and operations. However, the proposed project's unmitigated construction-related and operational GHG emissions would be below the applicable PCAPCD thresholds of significance. Therefore, the proposed project would not be considered to generate GHG emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment, or conflict with any applicable plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of GHGs, and impacts would be *less than significant*.
- *Hazards and Hazardous Materials (All Items)*: During construction and operation of the proposed project, proper handling and usage of potentially hazardous materials in accordance with label instructions would ensure that adverse impacts to human health or the environment would not result. In addition, the Phase 1 ESA prepared for the proposed project found that the project is not located on a site that is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5. Therefore, the project would have a *less-than-significant* impact with respect to creating a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine handling, transport, use, or disposal of hazardous or acutely hazardous materials or being located on a hazardous materials site. The proposed project would not be located within 0.25-mile of an existing or proposed school, and, thus, a *less-than-significant* impact would occur associated with the handling of hazardous materials within 0.25-mile of a school. The project area is not located within the vicinity of a public airport or a private airstrip, nor is the site within an airport land use plan. Therefore, the proposed project would not create safety hazards for people living or working in the project area as a result of being in close proximity to an airport, and *no impact* would occur.

With respect to wildfire, according to the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) Fire and Resource Assessment Program (FRAP), the project site is located within an unincorporated Local Responsibility Area (LRA), which is an area that is not under federal or state responsibility and in which the local agencies have sole

responsibility for fire suppression activities. The nearest state responsibility area is located approximately 2.3 miles northeast of the project site. Per the Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones (VHFHSZ) in the LRA map, the project site is within a non-VHFHSZ, which indicates that the site is not in an area subject to a substantial hazard due to wildland fires. Additionally, the project site is abutted to the north and east by existing development and to the south and west by existing roadways. As such, wildland fires are not anticipated to pose a significant risk to the site, and a *less-than-significant* impact related to such would occur.

- *Hydrology & Water Quality (All Items)*: The project would not rely on groundwater wells as a potable water source. In addition, the project would not damage any existing water facilities or infrastructure. Therefore, the proposed project would not interfere with existing potable water supply infrastructure or violate water quality standards related to potable water and a *less-than-significant* impact would occur. The proposed project would not substantially deplete groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that there would be a net deficit in aquifer volume or a lessening of local groundwater supplies (i.e. 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). In addition, the project would not substantially degrade groundwater quality or alter the direction or rate of flow of groundwater. Thus, a *less-than-significant* impact would occur.

The project would not substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the project area or substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff. Furthermore, runoff exiting the project site would be properly treated by the proposed vegetated swales, and, thus, the proposed project would not create or contribute runoff water which would include substantial additional sources of polluted water. A final preliminary drainage report will be required with the project Improvement Plans to substantiate the preliminary drainage design. Implementation of Mitigation Measures IX-1, IX-2, IX-3, and IX-4 set forth in the Initial Study, which include preparation of a Drainage Report that will evaluate the condition and capacity of drainage facilities and identify any necessary improvements, would ensure impacts related to such would be reduced to a *less-than-significant level*. It should be noted that minor revisions to Mitigation Measure IX-2 from what is included in the Initial Study have been made as part of this EIR. The updated mitigation measure is presented in Table 2-1 of this EIR. Changes to Mitigation Measure IX-2 do not affect the efficacy of the measure, and impacts following the implementation of Mitigation Measure IX-2 would remain less than significant, as previously determined in the Initial Study prepared for the project.

In the post-development condition, the project could potentially introduce contaminants such as oil and grease, sediment, nutrients, metals, organics, surfactants from vehicle washing activities, pesticides, and trash from activities such as pavement runoff, outdoor storage, landscape fertilizing and maintenance, and refuse collection. However, implementation of Mitigation Measures IX-5, IX-6, IX-7, IX-8, and IX-9 set forth in the Initial Study, would ensure impacts associated with water quality degradation would be reduced to a *less-than-significant level*. It should be noted that minor revisions to

Mitigation Measures IX-5, IX-6, and IX-8 from what is included in the Initial Study have been made as part of this EIR. The updated mitigation measures are presented in Table 2-1 of this EIR. Changes to Mitigation Measures IX-5, IX-6, and IX-8 do not affect the efficacy of the measure, and impacts following the implementation of Mitigation Measures IX-5, IX-6, and IX-8 would remain less than significant, as previously determined in the Initial Study prepared for the project.

The proposed project would not place housing within a 100-year flood hazard area per the flood insurance rate map (FIRM) for the site, place within a 100-year flood hazard area improvements which would impede or redirect flood flows, or 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. Therefore, *no impact* would occur. Furthermore, short-term construction activities associated with the proposed project could result in soil erosion or the loss of topsoil. However, implementation of Mitigation Measures VI-1 through 5, IX-1, and IX-5 through 9 set forth in the Initial Study, would ensure impacts associated with such would be reduced to a *less-than-significant* level.

- *Land Use & Planning (All Items)*: The proposed project would not physically divide an established community or disrupt or divide the physical arrangement of an established community, and a *less-than-significant* impact would occur. While the project would alter the planned land use of the site, the proposed changes would not conflict with development trends in the project area or negatively impact adjacent land uses.

The Community Design Element of the Granite Bay Community Plan, Section 4.2.11, *Road Corridors*, establishes a 75-foot setback requirement from edge of right-of-way for buildings located north of Douglas Boulevard. The setback is intended to separate land uses from potential incompatibility issues associated with Douglas Boulevard, and reduce potential visual impacts or impacts to other site-specific resources. As discussed in Chapter 3, Project Description, of this EIR, the proposed project includes a text amendment to the Granite Bay Community Plan to modify the setback requirement in order to provide more flexibility in the application of the standard setback dimension. For discretionary permits, a setback of less than 75 feet as otherwise required by the Community Plan may be approved by the Decision-making Body as long as a visual buffer is in place that provides for one or more of the following: 1) landscaping, building architectural design or other buffer techniques have been incorporated into the project to reduce visual impacts of the project when viewed from the Douglas Boulevard right-of-way; 2) a setback of less than 75 feet would result in increased setbacks from either adjacent properties or on-site resources and/or conditions, which, on balance, result in better overall site planning and design.

In the case of the proposed project, application of the 75-foot setback requirement for the proposed project would require the removal of six to seven mature oak trees, which would represent an increase in visual impacts related to site development. Because of the existing topography of the project site, replacement of the six to seven mature oaks would be difficult or impossible. In addition to the preservation of the aforementioned mature oaks, other landscaping and design features have been added to the project that will effectively

address visual impacts from Douglas Boulevard. The proposed landscape plan would include landscaping the existing large cut bank that fronts Douglas Boulevard. Landscaping over the existing cut bank would include plantings and stepped back retention walls that would serve to soften the slopes and the potential building impacts. Additionally, Building 1 would be angled on the site to incorporate the existing oaks, rather than remove them as would be required in a traditional building layout. The oaks being preserved in proximity to Building 1 and Building 2 provide a further visual buffer from Douglas Boulevard. Finally, reduction of the 75-foot buffer from Douglas Boulevard would allow for an increase in the setback of the proposed structures from adjacent residential uses to the north, which would reduce the potential for the proposed project to result in light or noise related land use conflicts with the existing residences. Property owners to the north have expressed a desire for such an increased setback between the residential uses to the north and the proposed structures. Thus, the proposed project has been designed to satisfy the buffer criteria described in the proposed Granite Bay Community Plan amendment.

With approval of the proposed Community Plan amendment, the proposed project would be consistent with the County's adopted plans and policies. As such, a *less-than-significant* impact would occur. The project site is located within the boundaries of the draft PCCP. However, the PCCP has not yet been adopted at this time, and, thus, *no impact* would occur related to conflicting with the provisions of an adopted habitat conservation plan. The proposed project would not affect agricultural and timber resources or operations, and, thus, *no impact* would occur. Furthermore, given that the proposed project is not a large retail project, the project would not cause economic or social changes, such as urban decay or blight, that would result in significant adverse physical changes to the environment. Thus, a *less-than-significant* impact would occur.

- *Mineral Resources (All Items)*: The proposed project site does not contain mineral resource extraction operations or known mineral resources. The Granite Bay Community Plan does not identify any mineral resources within the planning area. As such, the proposed project would not result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource or a locally-important mineral resource recovery site. Therefore, *no impact* would occur.
- *Noise (XII-4, and -5)*: As discussed previously, the proposed project site is not located within an airport land use plan or within two miles of a public airport, public use airport, or private airstrip. As such, the proposed project would not expose people working in the project area to excessive noise levels associated with air traffic. Therefore, *no impact* would occur.
- *Paleontological Resources (All Items)*: Based on the project site soil characteristics, fossils do not have the potential to occur on the project site and a *less-than-significant* impact would occur.
- *Population & Housing (All Items)*: Buildout of the project site would not induce substantial growth in the area. In addition, the project site does not contain existing housing or habitable structures, and, thus, the project would not displace existing housing,

necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere. Therefore, a *less-than-significant* impact would occur.

- *Public Services (All Items)*: The South Placer Fire District has indicated that it would be capable of providing adequate fire protection services to proposed project without the construction of additional facilities; the proposed project would be required to include adequate fire safety design elements; and the project applicant would pay a Development Impact Fee to the South Placer Fire District. Therefore, the proposed project would result in a *less-than-significant* impact. In addition, the project would not have a significant demand on existing police protection resources, which would necessitate the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, or the 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 police protection services. Thus, the project would have a *less-than-significant* impact. The proposed project would not result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered school facilities or governmental services and/or facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times, or performance objectives for maintenance of public facilities. Thus, a *less-than-significant* impact would occur.
- *Recreation (All Items)*: The proposed project does not include residential development. As such, the project would not substantially increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities. In addition, the project does not include the construction of recreational facilities. Therefore, *no impact* would occur.
- *Transportation & Traffic (XVII-3, -4, -5, -6, and -8)*: The proposed project would not result in increased impacts to vehicle safety due to roadway design features or incompatible uses, inadequate emergency access or access to nearby uses, and/or hazards or barriers for pedestrians or bicyclists. Therefore, a *less-than-significant* impact would occur. The proposed parking lot would include 92 parking stalls, including six Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliant spaces, and, thus, would meet the County's requirements for off-street parking, and, thus, *no impact* would occur. The proposed project would not involve construction of any buildings or structures of excessive heights that could potentially affect air traffic. In addition, the project does not include any operations that would increase air traffic levels or involve a change in location that would result in substantial safety risks, and, thus, *no impact* would occur.
- *Tribal Cultural Resources (All Items)*: A search of the Sacred Lands File maintained by the NAHC returned negative results for the presence of known Tribal Cultural Resources in the immediate project vicinity. On July 15, 2016, Placer County provided consultation requests to the Shingle Springs Band of Miwok Indians, T'Si-Akim Maidu, the United Auburn Indian Community of the Auburn Rancheria, and the Washoe Tribe of Nevada and California per the requirements of Assembly Bill 52. On August 16, 2016, a response was received from the Shingle Springs Band of Miwok Indians requesting continued consultation in the form of regular updates on the status of the proposed project. In addition,

the tribes did not identify any known tribal cultural resources on the project site. Nevertheless, the possibility exists that construction of the proposed project could result in a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource if previously unknown tribal cultural resources are uncovered during grading or other ground-disturbing activities. However, implementation of Mitigation Measures V-1 and V-2 set forth in the Initial Study, would ensure impacts associated with such would be reduced to a *less-than-significant* level.

- *Utilities & Service Systems (All Items)*: Placer County Sewer Maintenance District would be capable of serving the project and, thus, a *less-than-significant* impact would occur. The proposed project would have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project from existing entitlements and resources, and new or expanded entitlements would not be needed. Thus, a *less-than-significant* impact would occur. The proposed project would be served by a landfill with sufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the project's solid waste disposal needs in compliance with all applicable laws, and a *less-than-significant* impact would occur.

Pursuant to the CEQA Guidelines, the scope of this EIR addresses specific issues and concerns identified as potentially significant in the Initial Study prepared for the proposed project. The sections of the CEQA Checklist identified for study in this EIR include:

- Noise; and
- Transportation and Circulation.

The evaluation of effects is presented on a resource-by-resource basis in Chapters 4 and 5 of the EIR. Each chapter is divided into the following three sections: Existing Environmental Setting, Regulatory Context, and Impacts and Mitigation Measures. The Impacts and Mitigation Measures section addresses both project-specific and cumulative impacts. Impacts that are determined to be significant in Chapters 4 and 5, and for which feasible mitigation measures are not available to reduce those impacts to a less-than-significant level, are identified as *significant and unavoidable*. Chapter 6 of the EIR presents a comprehensive list of all significant and unavoidable impacts identified in Chapters 4 and 5.

## 1.5 DEFINITION OF BASELINE

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According to CEQA Guidelines Section 15125, an EIR must include a description of the existing physical environmental conditions in the vicinity of the project to provide the “baseline physical conditions” against which project-related changes can be compared. Normally, the baseline condition is the physical condition of the site that exists when the NOP is published. The NOP for the proposed project was published on September 13, 2017. Therefore, conditions existing at that time are considered to be the baseline against which changes that would result from the proposed project are evaluated. Impacts could include both direct and indirect physical changes to the baseline condition. The baseline condition for the proposed project site is presented in Chapter 3, Project Description, of this EIR. The baseline conditions pertaining to each resource area are described in the “Existing Environmental Setting” section of the respective chapters of this EIR.

## **1.6 PROJECT CHANGES SINCE PUBLICATION OF THE NOP**

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Since the NOP was published, an additional project entitlement was added to the project description. The proposed project includes a proposed text amendment to the Granite Bay Community Plan to modify the setback standards for the north side of Douglas Boulevard. Please see the Project Description chapter for additional details.

## **1.7 SIGNIFICANCE CRITERIA**

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The CEQA Guidelines define a significant effect on the environment as “a substantial, or potentially substantial adverse change in any of the physical conditions within the area affected by the project, including land, air, water, minerals, flora, fauna, ambient noise, and objects of historic and aesthetic significance.” In addition, the Guidelines state, “An economic or social change by itself shall not be considered a significant effect on the environment. A social or economic change related to a physical change may be considered in determining whether the physical change is significant.” (CEQA Guidelines Section 15382).

Pursuant to the CEQA Guidelines, this EIR relies on the following three levels of impact significance: 1) Less-than-significant impact; 2) Less-than-significant impact with implementation of mitigation; and 3) Significant impact that cannot be mitigated to a level that is less than significant.

Each environmental area of analysis uses a distinct set of significance criteria. Where measurable and explicit quantification of significance is identified, such as violation of an ambient noise level standard, this measurement is used to assess the level of significance of a particular impact in this EIR. If criteria for determining significance relative to a specific environmental resource impact are not identified in the CEQA Guidelines, criteria were developed for this Draft EIR.

The significance criteria are identified at the beginning of the Impacts and Mitigation Measures section in each of the technical chapters of this EIR. Although significance criteria are necessarily different for each resource considered, the provided significance levels ensure consistent evaluation of impacts for all alternatives considered.

## **1.8 NOTICE OF PREPARATION AND SCOPING**

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In accordance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15082, an NOP was circulated to the public, local, State and federal agencies, and other known interested parties for a 30-day public and agency review period from September 13, 2017 to October 13, 2017 (included as Appendix A). Notice of the project was also published in the Sacramento Bee on September 13, 2017. The purpose of the NOP was to provide notification that an EIR for the proposed project was being prepared and to solicit public input on the scope and content of the document.

Pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15082, the County held a scoping meeting for the EIR during the review period on September 19, 2017 for the purpose of receiving comments on the scope of the environmental analysis to be prepared for the proposed project. The County did not

receive any verbal comments during the scoping meeting. Agencies and members of the public were invited to attend and provide input on the scope of the EIR. Several comment letters were received during the 30-day review period and are provided as Appendix B to this EIR. All comments were taken into consideration during the preparation of this Draft EIR. A summary of the NOP comments received are summarized in section 1.8 below.

**1.9 COMMENTS RECEIVED ON THE NOTICE OF PREPARATION**

During the NOP public review period from September 13, 2017 to October 13, 2017, Placer County received four (4) comment letters. A copy of each letter is provided in Appendix B of this EIR. The comment letters were authored by the following representatives of State and local agencies, as well as other interested parties:

**State Agencies**

- State Department of Transportation (Caltrans) – Smith, David
- Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board – Tadlock, Stephanie

**Local Agencies**

- Placer County Air Pollution Control District – Hobbs, Ann

**Residents/General Public**

- Individual – Sandgathe, Robert and Monica

The following list, categorized by issue, summarizes the concerns brought forth in the comment letters:

<p><b><u>Transportation and Circulation</u></b>          (c.f. Chapter 5)</p>	<p>Concerns related to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Analysis of cumulative impacts at the following intersections:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Douglas Boulevard/Sierra College; and</li> <li>○ Douglas Boulevard/East Roseville Parkway.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Analysis of cumulative impacts at the following roadway segments:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Douglas Boulevard from Rocky Ridge Drive to Eureka Road;</li> <li>○ Douglas Boulevard from Eureka Road to East Roseville Parkway; and</li> <li>○ Douglas Boulevard from East Roseville Parkway to Sierra College Boulevard.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Increase in traffic to existing surrounding roadways.</li> </ul>
<p><b><u>Initial Study</u></b>          (see Appendix C)</p>	<p>Concerns related to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fugitive dust emissions.</li> <li>• Compliance with Water Quality Control Board policies and permitting requirements.</li> </ul>

All of these issues are addressed in this EIR and attached Initial Study, in the relevant sections identified in the first column.

### **1.10 DRAFT EIR AND PUBLIC REVIEW**

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This Draft EIR is being circulated for public review and comment for a period of 45 days. During this period, the general public, organizations, and agencies can submit comments to the Lead Agency on the Draft EIR's accuracy and completeness. Release of the Draft EIR marks the beginning of a 45-day public review period pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15105. The public can review the Draft EIR at the County's website at:

<http://www.placer.ca.gov/departments/communitydevelopment/envcoordsvcs/eir>

or at following address during normal business hours:

Placer County, Community Development Resource Center  
3091 County Center Drive  
Auburn, CA 95603

Comments may be submitted both in written form and/or orally at the public hearing on the Draft EIR. Notice of the time and location of the hearing will be published in local newspapers, mailed to property owners and residents surrounding the project, emailed to residents that have requested to be placed on the project's email notification list, posted on the County's website, and posted at and adjacent to the site prior to the hearing.

All comments or questions regarding the Draft EIR should be addressed to:

Placer County, Community Development Resource Agency  
Environmental Coordination Services  
3091 County Center Drive, Suite 190  
Auburn, CA 95603  
(530) 745-3132  
fax (530) 745-3080  
[cdraecs@placer.ca.gov](mailto:cdraecs@placer.ca.gov)

### **1.11 ORGANIZATION OF THE DRAFT EIR**

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The Quarry Ridge Project EIR is organized into the following sections:

#### **Chapter 1 – Introduction**

Provides an introduction and overview describing the intended use of the EIR and the review and certification process, as well as summaries of the chapters included in the EIR and summaries of the issues and concerns received from the public and public agencies during the NOP review period.

## **Chapter 2 – Executive Summary**

Summarizes the elements of the project and the environmental impacts that would result from implementation of the proposed project, describes proposed mitigation measures, and indicates the level of significance of impacts after mitigation. Acknowledges alternatives that would reduce or avoid significant impacts.

## **Chapter 3 – Project Description**

Provides a detailed description of the proposed project, including the project's location, background information, major objectives, and technical characteristics.

## **Chapter 4 – Noise**

The Noise chapter of the EIR describes the existing noise environment in the project vicinity and identifies potential impacts and mitigation measures related to the increase in noise as a result of construction and operation of the proposed project. The method by which the potential impacts are analyzed is discussed, followed by the identification of potential impacts and the recommended mitigation measures designed to reduce significant impacts to less-than-significant levels.

## **Chapter 5 – Transportation and Circulation**

The Transportation and Circulation chapter of the EIR discusses existing transportation and circulation conditions associated with the proposed project. The analysis includes consideration of vehicle traffic impacts on roadway capacity, as well as the transit, bicycle, and pedestrian network.

## **Chapter 6 – Statutorily Required Sections**

The Statutorily Required Sections chapter of the EIR provides discussions required by CEQA regarding impacts that would result from the proposed project, including a summary of cumulative impacts, potential growth-inducing impacts, impacts related to energy conservation in accordance with Appendix F of the CEQA Guidelines, significant and unavoidable impacts, and significant irreversible changes to the environment.

## **Chapter 7 – Alternatives Analysis**

The Alternatives Analysis chapter of the EIR describes and evaluates the alternatives to the proposed project.

## **Chapter 8 – References**

The References chapter of the EIR provides bibliographic information for all references and resources cited.

## **Chapter 9 – EIR Authors and Persons Consulted**

The EIR Authors and Persons Consulted chapter of the EIR lists EIR and technical report authors who provided technical assistance in the preparation and review of the EIR.

## **Appendices**

The Appendices include the NOP, comments received during the NOP comment period, the Initial Study, and all technical reports prepared for the proposed project.

## 1.12 TECHNICAL CHAPTER FORMAT

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Each technical chapter addressing a specific environmental issue begins with an **introduction** describing the purpose of the section. The introduction is followed by a description of the project's **existing environmental setting** as the setting pertains to that particular issue. The setting description is followed by the **regulatory context** and the **impacts and mitigation measures** discussion, which contains the **standards of significance**, followed by the **method of analysis**. The **impact and mitigation** measures discussion includes impact statements prefaced by a number in bold-faced type (for both project-level and cumulative analyses). An explanation of each impact and an analysis of the impact's significance follow each impact statement. All mitigation measures pertinent to each individual impact follow directly after the impact statement (see below). The degree of relief provided by identified mitigation measures is also evaluated. An example of the format is shown below:

### x-1 Statement of Impact

Discussion of impact for the proposed project in paragraph format.

Statement of *level of significance* of impact prior to mitigation is included at the end of each impact discussion. The following levels of significance are used in the EIR: less than significant or significant. If an impact is determined to be significant, mitigation will be included in order to reduce the specific impact to the maximum extent feasible.

#### Mitigation Measure(s)

Statement of *level of significance* after the mitigation is included immediately preceding mitigation measures. If reduction of the specific impact to a less-than-significant level is not feasible, the impact is considered significant and unavoidable.

*X-1(a) Required mitigation measure(s) presented in italics and numbered in consecutive order.*

*X-1(b) Required additional mitigation measure, if necessary.*

## 1.13 FINAL EIR AND EIR CERTIFICATION

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Upon completion of the Draft EIR public review period, a Final EIR will be prepared that will include written comments on the Draft EIR received during the public review period and responses to those comments. The Final EIR will also include the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Plan (MMRP) prepared in accordance with Section 21081.6 of the Public Resource Code. The Final EIR will address any revisions to the Draft EIR made in response to public comments. The Draft EIR and Final EIR together will comprise the EIR for the proposed project. Before the County can approve the project, it must first certify that the EIR has been completed in compliance with CEQA, that the County Board of Supervisors has reviewed and considered the information in the EIR, and that the EIR reflects the independent judgment of the County. The County also will be

required to adopt Findings of Fact, and for any impacts determined to be significant and unavoidable, adopt a Statement of Overriding Considerations.