
7. TRANSPORTATION AND CIRCULATION

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7.1 INTRODUCTION

The Transportation and Circulation chapter of the EIR discusses the existing transportation and circulation facilities within the project vicinity, as well as applicable policies and guidelines used to evaluate operation of such facilities. Where development of the proposed project would conflict with applicable policies or guidelines, mitigation measures are identified. The information contained within this chapter is primarily based on the Technical Memorandum¹ and VMT Analysis² prepared for the proposed project by Fehr and Peers (see Appendix F), as well as the Placer County General Plan,³ and associated Placer County General Plan EIR.

At the beginning of 2019, updated California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines went into effect. The new Guidelines require CEQA lead agencies such as Placer County to transition from using “level of service” (LOS) to “Vehicle Miles Traveled” (VMT) as the metric for assessing transportation impacts under CEQA (see Section 15064.3). The State’s requirement to transition from LOS to VMT is aimed at promoting infill development, public health through active transportation, and a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions. Pursuant to the Guidelines, any project that did not initiate CEQA public review prior to July 1, 2020 must use VMT rather than LOS as the metric to analyze transportation impacts. LOS will still be used by the County for purposes of determining consistency with general plan and community plan goals and policies but is no longer used for determining significant impacts under CEQA.

Consistent with the County of Placer Transportation Study Guidelines (November 2020), both a VMT analysis and Local Transportation Assessment (LTA) were prepared for The Ridge project. Pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3, impact significance in this chapter is based upon VMT, whereas the results of the LTA are used to address consistency with Placer County General Plan goals and policies related to transportation, including adopted LOS policies.

7.2 EXISTING ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

The section below describes the physical and operational characteristics of the existing transportation system within the study area, including the surrounding roadway network, transit, bicycle and pedestrian facilities.

Study Intersections and Roadway Segments

The following section provides a list of the study intersections and roadway segments within the project area. The existing and future study intersections and roadways were identified based on the proposed project and conversations with Placer County’s Public Works Department. The study intersections are listed below, and depicted in Figure 7-1:

¹ Fehr and Peers. *Draft Technical Memorandum – The Ridge Subdivision*. August 6, 2020.

² Fehr and Peers. *The Ridge Subdivision VMT Analysis*. March 3, 2021.

³ Placer County. *Countywide General Plan Policy Document*. August 1994 (updated May 2013).



1. State Route (SR) 193/Sierra College Boulevard (existing); and
2. Sierra College Boulevard/Bickford Ranch Road (assumed under adjusted baseline).

The study roadway segments are listed below:

1. Sierra College Boulevard – SR 193 to the future Bickford Ranch Road; and
2. Sierra College Boulevard – Future Bickford Ranch Road to existing Twelve Bridges Drive.

SR 193

SR 193 is an east-west State highway that links the City of Lincoln with Newcastle. The two-lane highway is under the jurisdiction of the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) and provides access from the project site to SR 65 to the west and I-80 to the east. Project access to SR 193 would be provided by Sierra College Boulevard.

Sierra College Boulevard

Sierra College Boulevard is a north-south arterial that provides indirect access to the project site. This roadway is a public, County-maintained road that connects the project area to Loomis, Rocklin, and Sacramento to the south, as well as Lincoln (via SR 193) to the north. From Loomis' northerly town limits to SR 193, Sierra College Boulevard is classified as a rural arterial.

Bickford Ranch Road

As discussed in Section 1.5 of the Introduction chapter of this EIR, substantial evidence exists to support adjusting the existing conditions baseline for the area to assume that Phase 1 of the BRSP has been built out, as such adjustments would give the public and decision-makers the most accurate and understandable picture practically possible of the project's likely near-term and long-term impacts consistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15125[a].

Approximately 1,010 single family units could be developed within Phase 1 of the BRSP, as well as associated backbone roadway, water, sewer, and storm drainage infrastructure. The primary backbone roadway for Phase 1 of the BRSP would be Bickford Ranch Road, which will be a public, County-maintained roadway. The terminus of Bickford Ranch Road, after completion of Phase 1 BRSP improvements, would stop short of The Ridge project site, leaving approximately 400 feet of unpaved roadway between the terminus and the southwestern corner of The Ridge project site. The 400-foot roadway segment would either be constructed during commencement of Phase 2 of BRSP, or, depending on the timing of BRSP Phase 2, potentially by The Ridge applicant.

Bickford Ranch Road is planned to be a two- or four-lane winding collector roadway extending generally east from Sierra College Boulevard, through the BRSP, and towards the project site.

Existing Conditions

Fehr & Peers conducted intersection turning movement counts at the SR 193/Sierra College Boulevard intersection, and daily roadway segment counts on Sierra College Boulevard between SR 193 and Twelve Bridges Drive, on November 15, 2018, which was a typical weekday with clear weather conditions and local schools in session. The observed peak hours are summarized below:



**Figure 7-1
Study Intersections**



Source: Fehr & Peers, 2020.



- Intersection Counts (AM) – the AM peak hour was 7:00 AM to 8:00 AM;
- Intersection Counts (PM) – the PM peak hour was 4:45 PM to 5:45 PM; and
- Roadway Segment Counts – the AM peak hour was 6:45 AM to 7:45 AM and the PM peak hour was 6:30 PM to 7:30 PM.

Vehicle Miles Traveled

Pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3, VMT is the primary metric used to identify transportation impacts under CEQA. VMT is a metric that accounts for the number of vehicle trips generated and the length or distance of those trips. VMT does not directly measure traffic operations; instead, VMT is a measure of transportation network use and efficiency, especially when expressed as a function of population (i.e., VMT per capita). For residential projects, such as the proposed project, Placer County considers household or home-based VMT per capita, which is the sum of trips originating from home, divided by the number of residents. VMT tends to increase as land use density decreases and travel becomes more reliant on the use of single-passenger vehicles.

In response to Senate Bill (SB) 743, which updated the CEQA Guidelines to include new transportation metrics, Placer County developed the Placer VMT Estimation Tool for use in evaluating local development projects. The Placer VMT Estimation Tool is based on data from the regional travel demand model, and is an interactive web-based map that estimates a project's VMT metrics based on the VMT performance of adjacent existing development. The Placer VMT Estimation Tool divides Placer County into Traffic Analysis Zones (TAZs) with generally similar rates of VMT. As a result, in order to use the Placer VMT Estimation Tool, the project must be generally consistent in size and land use type (i.e., density, mix of uses, transit accessibility, etc.) with the surrounding built environment.⁴ In addition, the significance thresholds for VMT impacts differ per region. Western Placer County has identified recommended VMT metrics used to measure VMT by land use type. Considering the project site is located in Western Placer County, the project is subject to such thresholds.

According to Fehr & Peers, and based on the Placer VMT Estimation Tool, the existing VMT setting in TAZ 205, in which the project site is located, is 29.57 VMT per capita.

Pedestrian, Bicycle, and Transit Facilities

The sections below describe the existing pedestrian, bicycle, and transit facilities located within the vicinity of the project site.

Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities

The Placer County Regional Bikeway Plan provides information regarding the regional system of bikeways for transportation and recreation purposes. The regional bikeway plan was approved by the Placer County Transportation Planning Agency (PCTPA) Board in 2018 and subsequently adopted by the Placer County Board of Supervisors. The Placer County Regional Bikeway Plan includes the following system classifications:

- Class I Bikeway (Bike Path) provides a completely separated facility designed for the exclusive use of cycles and pedestrians.

⁴ Placer County. *County of Placer Transportation Study Guidelines*. November 2020.



- Class II Bikeway (Bike Lane) provides on-road striped lanes with signs and pavement markings and legends with restricted travel to motor vehicles and pedestrians. Through travel by motor vehicles or pedestrians is prohibited, but crossflows by pedestrians and motorists is permitted.
- Class III Bikeway (Bike Route) provides on-street routes designated by signs or permanent markings and shared with pedestrians and motorists.
- Class IV Bikeway (Separated Bikeway) is a bikeway for the exclusive use of bicycles similar to a Class II facility, but includes a separation between the bike facility and through vehicular traffic. Separation facilities may include flexible posts, inflexible physical barriers or on-street parking. Class IV facilities also allow for two-way bicycle traffic.

Bickford Ranch Road, which would be constructed as part of BRSP Phase 1, would include a 10-foot-wide Class I (e.g., separated) bike and pedestrian (AC) pathway. In addition, a seven-foot Class II bike lane would be provided along Bickford Ranch Road.

Public Transit System

Placer County Transit provides public transit services in the project vicinity. The nearest existing bus stop to the project site is at Taylor Road and English Colony Way, which is located approximately two miles southeast of the project site. The Taylor Road and English Colony Way bus stop is served by Route #50, Taylor Road Shuttle, which connects Sierra College and the City of Auburn.

Mitigation Measure T-M of the BRSP EIR requires implementation of two new bus stops adjacent to the existing park-and-ride lot on the west side of Sierra College Boulevard, near SR 193, and/or within the BRSP area. The bus stops would consist of a paved area for benches and future bus stop improvements. The future bus stops would be accessible to future residents of the proposed project. However, the timing of bus stop development is unknown at this time, and the stops may not necessarily be operational at the time of occupancy of the proposed project.

7.3 REGULATORY CONTEXT

Existing transportation policies, laws, and regulations that would apply to the proposed project are summarized below and provide a context for the impact discussion related to the project's consistency with the applicable regulatory conditions. Federal plans, policies, regulations, or laws related to transportation are not directly applicable to the proposed project. Rather, the analysis presented herein focuses on State and local regulations, which govern the regulatory environment related to transportation at the project level.

State Regulations

The following are the regulations pertinent to the proposed project at the State level, organized chronologically.

Senate Bill 743

In 2013, SB 743 was passed to amend Sections 65088.1 and 65088.4 of the Government Code, amend Sections 21181, 21183, 21186, 21187, 21189.1, and 21189.3 of the Public Resources Code (PRC), to add Section 21155.4 to the PRC, to add Chapter 2.7 (commencing with Section 21099) to Division 13 of the PRC, to add and repeal Section 21168.6.6 of the PRC, and to repeal and add Section 21185 of the PRC, relating to environmental quality. In response to SB 743, the Office of Planning and Research (OPR) has updated the CEQA Guidelines to include new



transportation-related evaluation metrics. In December 2018, the California Natural Resources Agency certified and adopted the CEQA Guidelines update package along with an updated Technical Advisory related to Evaluating Transportation Impacts in CEQA. Full compliance with the Guidelines became effective July 2020. As a result of SB 743, and Section 15064.3 of the CEQA Guidelines, as discussed in further detail below, local jurisdictions may no longer rely on vehicle LOS and similar measures related to delay as the basis for determining the significance of transportation impacts under CEQA, and instead a VMT metric should be evaluated.

Technical Advisory on Evaluating Transportation Impacts in CEQA

In December of 2018, the OPR published the Technical Advisory on Evaluation Transportation Impacts in CEQA (Technical Advisory), which is a guidance document to provide advice and recommendations regarding assessment of VMT, thresholds of significance, and mitigation measures. The Technical Advisory is intended to be a resource for the public to use at their discretion, and the OPR does not enforce any part of the recommendations contained therein. The Technical Advisory includes recommendations regarding methodology, screening thresholds, and recommended thresholds per land use type. Per the Technical Advisory, residential development projects that would generate vehicle travel that is 15 or more percent below the existing residential VMT per capita, measured against the region or City, may indicate a less-than-significant transportation impact.

Vehicle Miles Traveled-Focused Transportation Impact Study Guide

In May of 2020, Caltrans adopted the Vehicle Miles Traveled-Focused Transportation Impact Study Guide (TISG) to provide direction to lead agencies regarding compliance with SB 743. The TISG replaces the Caltrans' 2002 Guide for the Preparation of Traffic Impact Studies and is for use with local land use projects, not for transportation projects on the State Highway System. The objectives of the TISG are to provide:⁵

- a) Guidance in determining when a lead agency for a land use project or plan should analyze possible impacts to the State Highway System, including its users.
- b) An update to the Guide for the Preparation of Traffic Impact Studies (Caltrans, 2002) that is consistent with SB 743 and the CEQA Guidelines adopted on December 28, 2018.
- c) Guidance for Caltrans land use review that supports state land use goals, state planning priorities, and GHG emission reduction goals.
- d) Statewide consistency in identifying land use projects' possible transportation impacts, to the State Highway System, and to identify potential non-capacity increasing mitigation measures.
- e) Recommendations for early coordination during the planning phase of a land use project to reduce the time, cost, and/or frequency of preparing a Transportation Impact Study or other indicated analysis.

Caltrans has jurisdiction over State highways. Therefore, Caltrans controls all construction, modification, and maintenance of State highways, such as SR 193. Any improvements to such roadways require Caltrans approval.

Local Regulations

Local rules and regulations applicable to the proposed project are discussed below.

⁵ Caltrans. *Vehicle Miles Traveled-Focused Transportation Impact Study Guide*. May 20, 2020.



Placer County General Plan

The following goals and policies from the Placer County General Plan are applicable to the proposed project:

- Goal 3.A To provide for the long-range planning and development of the County's roadway system to ensure the safe and efficient movement of people and goods.
- Policy 3.A.1 The County shall plan, design, and regulate roadways in accordance with the functional classification system described in Part I of this Policy Document and reflected in the Circulation Plan Diagram.
- Policy 3.A.2 Streets and roads shall be dedicated, widened, and constructed according to the roadway design and access standards generally defined in Section I of this Policy Document and, more specifically in community plans, specific plans, and the County's Highway Deficiencies Report (SCR 93). Exceptions to these standards may be considered due to environmental, geographical, historical, or other similar limiting factors. An exception may be permitted only upon determination by the Public Works Director that safe and adequate public access and circulation are preserved.
- Policy 3.A.3 The County shall require that roadway rights-of-way be wide enough to accommodate the travel lanes needed to carry long-range forecasted traffic volumes (beyond 2010), as well as any planned bikeways and required drainage, utilities, landscaping, and suitable separations. Minimum right-of-way criteria for each class of roadway in the County are specific in Part I of this Policy Document.
- Policy 3.A.11 The County shall require an analysis of the effects of traffic from all land development projects. Each such project shall construct or fund improvements necessary to mitigate the effects of traffic from the project consistent with Policy 3.A.7. Such improvements may include a fair share of improvements that provide benefits to others.
- Policy 3.A.13 The County shall assess fees on new development sufficient to cover the fair share portion of that development's impacts on the local and regional transportation system. Exceptions may be made when new development generates significant public benefits (e.g., low income housing, needed health facilities) and when alternative sources of funding can be identified to offset foregone revenues.



- Goal 3.B To promote a safe and efficient mass transit system, including both rail and bus, to reduce congestion, improve the environment, and provide viable non-automotive means of transportation in and through Placer County.
- Policy 3.B.1 The County shall work with transit providers to plan and implement additional transit services within and to the County that are timely, cost-effective, and responsive to growth patterns and existing and future transit demand.
- Goal 3.C To maximize the efficient use of transportation facilities so as to: 1) reduce travel demand on the County's roadway system; 2) reduce the amount of investment required in new or expanded facilities; 3) reduce the quantity of emissions of pollutants from automobiles; and 4) increase the energy-efficiency of the transportation system.
- Policy 3.C.1 The County shall promote the use of transportation systems management (TSM) programs that divert automobile commute trips to transit, walking, and bicycling.
- Policy 3.C.2 The County shall promote the use, by both the public and private sectors, of TSM programs that increase the average occupancy of vehicles.
- Policy 3.C.4 During the development review process, the County shall require that proposed projects meet adopted Trip Reduction Ordinance (TRO) requirements.
- Goal 3.D To provide a safe, comprehensive, and integrated system of facilities for non-motorized transportation.
- Policy 3.D.5 The County shall continue to require developers to finance and install pedestrian walkways, equestrian trails, and multi-purpose paths in new development, as appropriate.
- Policy 3.D.8 The CDRA Engineering and Surveying Division and the Department of Public Works shall view all transportation improvements as opportunities to improve safety, access, and mobility for all travelers and recognize cycling, pedestrian, and transit modes as integral elements of the transportation system.
- Policy 3.D.11 The County shall work to achieve equality of convenience and choice among all modes of transportation – pedestrian, cycling, transit and motor vehicles, through a balanced and interconnected transportation system.

County of Placer Transportation Study Guidelines

The County of Placer Transportation Study Guidelines were published in November 2020. The Guidelines are intended to provide a clear and consistent technical approach to preparing



Transportation Studies in Placer County. They establish analysis techniques for transportation studies based on the current state-of-the-practice in transportation planning and engineering.

For example, the Guidelines set forth a number of thresholds for use in analyses within the County, including VMT thresholds per region. The significance thresholds for Western Placer County and recommended VMT metric used to measure VMT are described by land use type. Recommended thresholds for East Placer County (unincorporated areas from Donner Summit to the east, including the Tahoe Basin) were adopted by Placer County on June 22, 2021.

Placer County Transportation Planning Agency (PCTPA)

The PCTPA is the State-designated Regional Transportation Planning Agency for Placer County and is responsible for making decisions about the County's transportation system. In addition to developing and adopting the regional transportation plans and strategies, the PCTPA also allocates the local transportation funds and has entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with Caltrans and the Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG) to govern federal transportation planning and programming in Placer County. The PCTPA has also been involved in preparation of the following transportation planning documents.

Placer County Regional Bikeway Plan

In June 2018, Placer County adopted the Regional Bikeway Plan 2018 Update (Regional Bikeway Plan). The Regional Bikeway Plan identifies a vision and goals for bicycling, a network of bikeways to connect the County, and supportive programs and practices to encourage bicycling. The vision statement for the Regional Bikeway Plan is to promote safe, convenient, and enjoyable bicycling by establishing a comprehensive system of bikeways that link the communities of Placer County.⁶

The Regional Bikeway Plan develops a regional system of bikeways that connects the six incorporated cities and numerous unincorporated community areas. As shared-use paths are expanded across the County, they will continue to provide scenic recreational routes as well as key longer-distance regional connections.

Placer County Short-Range Transit Plan

In August 2018, the County adopted the Placer County Short-Range Transit Plan (SRTP) for the Placer County Transit program, which serves western Placer County. The SRTP is intended to provide a detailed business plan to guide the Placer County Transit program in establishing service strategies, improvement priorities, and implementation sequencing over the 2018 through 2025 planning period. The SRTP includes a review of demographics and transit needs, a series of surveys and ridership counts conducted for all Placer County Transit services, a review of the effectiveness and efficiency of existing services, analysis of a wide range of transit options, and the results of public input processes. This SRTP plan was prepared jointly with the development of parallel SRTPs for Roseville Transit, Auburn Transit, and the Western Placer Consolidated Transit Service Agency.⁷

Funding Sources/Fee Programs

In April 1996, the Placer County Board of Supervisors adopted the Countywide Traffic Impact Fee Program, which requires new development within the County to mitigate impacts to the roadway

⁶ Placer County. *Placer County Regional Bikeway Plan*. June 29, 2018.

⁷ Placer County Transportation Planning Agency. *Placer County Transit Short Range Transit Plan 2018-2025*. August 9, 2018.



system by paying traffic impact fees. The fees collected through the program, in addition to other funding sources, make it possible for the County to construct roads and other transportation facilities and improvements needed to accommodate new development. The fee was last updated in July of 2021. The County's fee program and Capital Improvement Program (CIP) are divided into eleven districts. The project site is included in the Placer Central District.

7.4 IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

This section describes the standards of significance and methodology utilized to analyze and determine the proposed project's potential impacts related to transportation and circulation.

Standards of Significance

Consistent with Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, the proposed project would be considered to result in a significant adverse impact on the environment in relation to transportation and circulation if the project would result in any of the following:

- Conflict with a program, plan, ordinance, or policy, except LOS (Level of Service), addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities;
- Conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3, subdivision (b);
- Substantially increase hazards to vehicle safety due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment); or
- Result in inadequate emergency access.

Specific application of the general thresholds is provided in the following section, based on guidance from Placer County.

Vehicle Miles Traveled Standard of Significance

On December 1, 2020, with the passage of Resolution 2020-250, the Placer County Board of Supervisors adopted VMT thresholds of significance, screening criteria, and Transportation Study Guidelines for analyzing transportation impacts under CEQA. Table 7-1 summarizes the VMT thresholds of significance for Western Placer County:

Land Use/Project Type	Recommended Metric	Threshold of Significance
Residential	Household or Home-based VMT per Capita	15% Below Unincorporated County Baseline
Commercial Retail	Total VMT	Zero Net Increase
Office Employment	Work VMT per Employee	15% Below Unincorporated County Baseline
Industrial/Agricultural Employment	Work VMT per Employee	
Hotel/Campground	VMT per Room or per Site	

Source: Fehr and Peers (2021).

Based on the above, for the proposed project, a VMT impact would be considered less than significant if the household or home-based VMT per capita is determined to be 15 percent below the unincorporated County Baseline.



Method of Analysis

The analysis methodology provided in the Technical Memorandum and VMT Analysis prepared for the proposed project by Fehr and Peers is discussed below.

Project Trip Generation

The number of automobile trips that would be generated by the proposed project was estimated through application of trip generation rates. For operation of the project, applicable trip generation rates were obtained from the Institute of Transportation Engineer's (ITE) publication, Trip Generation Manual, 10th edition. Table 7-2 below identifies the trip generation applied to the proposed project. As shown in the table, the proposed project would generate an estimated 322 daily trips, with 25 trips expected in the AM peak hour and 34 trips generated during the PM peak hour.

ITE Land Use Code and Category	Quantity (D/U)	Time Period	Trip Rate			Vehicle Trips		
			In	Out	Total	In	Out	Total
210 – Single-Family Detached Residential	34	Daily	4.72	4.72	9.44	161	161	322
		AM	0.19	0.55	0.74	6	19	25
		PM	0.62	0.37	0.99	21	13	34

Source: Fehr & Peers, 2020.

Project Vehicle Miles Traveled

As part of the VMT Analysis, Fehr and Peers estimated per capita VMT associated with the proposed project. In coordination with the Placer County Planning Services Division and the Department of Public Works, the proposed project was determined to be generally consistent in size and land use (i.e., density, mix or uses, transit accessibility, etc.) with the surrounding built environment. Therefore, the Placer VMT Estimation Tool was used to analyze the VMT performance of the proposed project. The Placer VMT Estimation Tool is an interactive web-based tool that estimates a project's VMT performance based on the VMT performance of adjacent existing development. The Placer VMT Estimation Tool is based on data from SACOG's SACSIM 19 regional travel demand model. The project site is located in TAZ 205 in the SACSIM 19 regional travel demand model.

Project-Specific Impacts and Mitigation Measures

The proposed project impacts on the transportation system are evaluated in this section based on the thresholds of significance and methodology described above. Each impact is followed by recommended mitigation to reduce the identified impacts, if needed. In the case of traffic operations, specifically intersection and roadway level of service, such an analysis is not required pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3(a) since congestion and intersection operations no longer constitute a transportation impact under CEQA. Placer County staff will separately review LOS for the project's consistency with General Plan LOS policies.

7-1 Conflict with a program, plan, ordinance, or policy, except LOS, addressing the circulation system during construction activities. Based on the analysis below and with implementation of mitigation, the impact is *less than significant*.



Construction activities associated with the proposed project would include use of construction equipment, including vehicles removing or delivering fill material, bulldozers, and other heavy machinery, as well as building materials delivery, and construction worker commutes. In addition, the project could include improvements and/or the extension of a short segment of Bickford Ranch Road within the project site vicinity, which could temporarily impede traffic for BRSP residents.

Construction workers typically arrive before the morning peak hour and leave before the evening peak hours of the traditional commute time periods. Deliveries of building material (lumber, concrete, asphalt, etc.) would also normally occur outside of the traditional commute time periods. Construction access to the project site would be from Bickford Ranch Road, with no access from Clark Tunnel Road. In addition, any truck traffic to the site would follow designated truck routes, and project construction would likely stage any large vehicles (i.e., earth-moving equipment, cranes, etc.) on the site prior to beginning site work and remove such vehicles at project completion. However, detailed information related to the construction schedule during site development or a construction management plan is not available. As a result, construction activities could include disruptions to the transportation network near the project site.

Without proper planning of construction activities, construction traffic could interfere with existing roadway operations during the construction phase, which could result in a risk to public safety. Therefore, project traffic related to construction activities could result in a **significant** impact.

Mitigation Measure(s)

Implementation of the following mitigation measure would reduce the above potential impact to a *less-than-significant* level.

7-1 *The Improvement Plans shall include a striping and signing plan and shall include all on- and off-site traffic control devices. Prior to the commencement of construction, a construction signing and traffic control plan shall be provided to the Engineering and Surveying Division for review and approval. The construction signing and traffic control plan shall include (but not be limited to) items such as:*

- *Guidance on the number and size of trucks per day entering and leaving the project site;*
- *Identification of arrival/departure times that would minimize traffic impacts;*
- *Approved truck circulation patterns;*
- *Locations of staging areas;*
- *Locations of employee parking and methods to encourage carpooling and use of alternative transportation;*
- *Methods for partial/complete street closures (e.g., timing, signage, location and duration restrictions);*
- *Criteria for use of flaggers and other traffic controls;*
- *Preservation of safe and convenient passage for bicyclists and pedestrians through/around construction areas;*
- *Monitoring for roadbed damage and timing for completing repairs;*



- *Limitations on construction activity during peak/holiday weekends and special events;*
- *Preservation of emergency and school bus vehicle access;*
- *Coordination of construction activities with construction of other projects that occur concurrently in the BRSP to minimize potential additive construction traffic disruptions, avoid duplicative efforts (e.g., multiple occurrences of similar signage), and maximize effectiveness of traffic mitigation measures (e.g., joint employee alternative transportation programs);*
- *Removing traffic obstructions during emergency evacuation events; and*
- *Providing a point of contact for BRSP residents and guests to obtain construction information, have questions answered, and convey complaints.*

The construction signing and traffic control plan shall be developed such that the following minimum set of performance standards is achieved throughout project construction. It is anticipated that additional performance standards would be developed once details of project construction are better known.

- *All construction employees shall park in designated lots owned by the project applicant or on private lots otherwise arranged for by the project applicant; and*
- *Roadways shall be maintained clear of debris (e.g., rocks) that could otherwise impede travel and impact public safety.*

7-2 Conflict with a program, plan, ordinance or policy addressing transit, bicycle and pedestrian facilities. Based on the analysis below, the impact is *less than significant*.

The following discussion evaluates whether the proposed project would result in impacts to existing or planned pedestrian facilities, bicycle facilities, or transit facilities and services within the project area.

Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities

As noted previously, Bickford Ranch Road, which will extend along the southern site boundary, would include a 10-foot-wide Class I separated bike and pedestrian pathway. In addition, a seven-foot Class II bike lane would be provided along Bickford Ranch Road. As previously discussed, the terminus of Bickford Ranch Road after completion of Phase 1 BRSP improvements will stop short of The Ridge project site, leaving about 400 feet of unpaved roadway between the terminus and the southwestern corner of The Ridge project site. This 400-foot segment would either be constructed during commencement of Phase 2 of BRSP, or depending on the timing of BRSP Phase 2, potentially by The Ridge applicant. If The Ridge applicant elects to proceed with construction of this 400-foot segment and the portion of Bickford Ranch Road along the project's frontage, the roadway cross-section would be constructed in conformance with BRSP improvement plans, which include the above-noted bike and pedestrian facilities. As such, pedestrian and bicycle



infrastructure which connects to the existing network would be available to future residents of the proposed project.

The Placer County Regional Bikeway Plan presents a vision for implementation of infrastructure and programs to support biking through the County. Figure 22 of the Placer County Regional Bikeway Plan identifies recommended focus areas and corridors for bikeway improvements. The project site is not located within a recommended focus area for bikeway improvements.⁸ Therefore, implementation of the proposed project would not conflict with or preclude the development of any planned pedestrian or bicycle facilities identified in adopted plans, and a less-than-significant impact would occur.

Transit System

As noted previously, transit service in the vicinity of the project site is currently provided by Placer County Transit. The nearest bus stop to the project site is for Route #50, the Taylor Road Shuttle route, at Taylor Road and English Colony Way, which is located approximately two miles southeast of the project site. Based on the 2018 Placer County Short-Range Transit Plan, future transit routes are not identified in the immediate project vicinity.⁹ However, ridership of the Taylor Road Shuttle averages 2.3 passenger trips per hour (or 4.6 per two-hour loop), which is the lowest productivity among the Placer County Transit routes. Therefore, the Taylor Road Shuttle has substantial capacity to accommodate the additional residents associated with the proposed project. Furthermore, the 2018 Placer County Short Range Transit Plan included consideration of the BRSP. As noted therein, the PCTPA recommended that a limited commuter service be provided to the BRSP area. Thus, buildout of the project area has been previously considered in County-wide planning efforts. Furthermore, as noted in the 2015 Addendum¹⁰ to the BRSP EIR, implementation of the BRSP would include enhancements to an existing park and ride lot located on the west side of Sierra College Boulevard. Future residents of the proposed project would have access to all such improvements. As a result, the project would not conflict with any planning efforts related to public transit, and a less-than-significant impact would occur.

Conclusion

Based on the above, the proposed project would not conflict with adopted policies, plans, or programs supporting alternative transportation (i.e., bus turnouts, bicycle lanes, bicycle racks, public transit, pedestrian facilities, etc.). Thus, the project would result in a **less-than-significant** impact to pedestrian, bicycle, and transit facilities.

Mitigation Measure(s)

None required.

⁸ Placer County. *Placer County Regional Bikeway Plan 2018 Update*. June 2018.

⁹ Placer County Transportation Planning Agency. *Placer County Transit Short Range Transit Plan 2018-2025*. August 9, 2018.

¹⁰ Placer County Community Development Resource Agency. *Environmental Review Checklist: Bickford Ranch Specific Plan Amendment*. October 2015.



7-3 Conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines section 15064.3, subdivision (b). Based on the analysis below, even with the implementation of mitigation, the impact is *significant and unavoidable*.

Table 7-3 summarizes the VMT performance of the proposed project based on the output from the Placer VMT Evaluation Tool. The analysis was conducted for the year 2021.

The unincorporated County baseline VMT per capita was identified to be 31.05. As discussed previously, per County guidance, residential projects that generate VMT per capita at 15 percent less than the unincorporated County baseline average may be considered less than significant. Therefore, the VMT threshold applied to the proposed project is 15 percent less than 31.05, or 26.39 VMT per capita.

As shown in the table, the VMT per capita for the proposed project would be 29.55 VMT per capita, which exceeds the established threshold for residential land use by 12 percent.

Table 7-3 Unmitigated VMT per Capita		
Baseline Year	Analysis Scenario	
	No Project	Plus Project
2021	29.57	29.55
VMT Threshold	26.39	
VMT Threshold Exceeded?	Yes	Yes

Source: Fehr & Peers, 2021.

Given that the per-capita VMT associated with the proposed project would exceed the applicable threshold, the proposed project could conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines section 15064.3, subdivision (b), and a *significant* impact would occur.

Mitigation Measure(s)

Implementation of a Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Program would reduce project-related VMT. Mitigation Measure 7-3 includes Tier 4 VMT reduction strategies identified in the Placer County VMT Estimation Tool. Fehr & Peers recommended an additional reduction strategy, TP-12, which requires the project to contribute to the development of a neighborhood school that would serve families living in the development. This requirement is already addressed through State law in accordance with Proposition 1A/SB 50. As shown in Table 7-4, implementation of the TDM measures included in Mitigation Measure 7-3 would reduce the project’s VMT per capita by approximately five percent. However, the project’s VMT per capita would still exceed the threshold of 26.39. The effectiveness of TDM Strategies depend heavily on the level of implementation. The analysis presented herein assumes the maximum level of implementation and, consequently, the results in Table 7-4 present a best-case scenario. Furthermore, a portion of the TDM strategies may prove to be economically infeasible. Due to uncertainties regarding the ability for the mitigation measure to reduce VMT to a less-than-significant level, the impact would remain *significant and unavoidable*.



Table 7-4 Mitigated VMT per Capita		
Baseline Year	Analysis Scenario	
	No Project	Plus Project
2021	29.57	28.15
VMT Threshold	26.39	
VMT Threshold Exceeded?	Yes	Yes
<i>Source: Fehr & Peers, 2021.</i>		

7-3 *Prior to Improvement Plan approval, the project applicant shall submit a plan to achieve the following TDM measures to the satisfaction of the Placer County Community Development Resource Agency. The Plan shall be implemented by the HOA and included in the CC&Rs:*

- *TP01 – School Pool Programs: Organize a program that matches families in carpools for school pick-up and drop-off.*
- *TP07 – Subsidized Transit Program: Provide either partially or fully subsidized transit passes for all residents who request them, and shall publicize the availability of transit passes to residents in periodic communications.*
- *TP18 – Voluntary Travel Behavior Change Program: The HOA shall provide educational materials (e.g., brochure) to new homebuyers that target individual attitudes towards travel and providing tools for individuals to analyze and alter their travel behavior.*

7-4 Substantially increase hazards to vehicle safety due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment), or result in inadequate emergency access or access to nearby uses. Based on the analysis below, the impact is *less than significant*.

Potential impacts related to gated access, roadway design features, incompatible uses, and emergency access are discussed below.

As part of the proposed project, a gated entrance would be provided at the southern end of the project site, along Bickford Ranch Road. Placer County has adopted a design standard for gated access to residential subdivisions (Plate 115). Visitors would be able to call the resident they are visiting to gain access to the neighborhood. Should the resident they are visiting not be available to permit access, a vehicle turnaround area would be provided. Routine delivery drivers, such as USPS, and emergency services would be provided an access code. It should be noted that access to the proposed subdivision is available pursuant to easements on the recorded BRSP large lot final map (through Lot LS-11).

The proposed project would not include any new sharp curves or dangerous intersections and would not be located in the vicinity of any such roadway features. Furthermore, the proposed project would not introduce incompatible uses, such as heavy-duty truck traffic,



to area roadways during operations. Potential impacts related to project construction traffic are discussed under Impact 7-1 above.

The proposed project includes a request for an exception to the Placer County standards regarding design speed, as defined by Section 4.03 of the County's Land Development Manual, in two locations. The proposed private street and cul-de-sacs within the project site (Road A) is fully consistent with the BRSP Development Standards. The cul-de-sacs at the east and west ends of Road A would serve as the primary access points for the project's proposed six Low Density Residential lots, three of which are located on the eastern side of the project site and three on the western side. Access for each of the lots would be provided by private 20-foot paved lanes (Lanes B and C) located within a 24-foot private roadway easement.

While each of the proposed private street to private lane transitions is designed with a 25-foot minimum turning radius to allow for full emergency vehicle access, neither lane meets the 25-mph design speed requirement for residential streets, as defined by Section 4.03. However, the terminus and transition from the 40-foot private street to a 20-foot private lane at a fully improved cul-de-sac would naturally serve to slow speeds to 15 mph or less. Additionally, the two locations cannot accommodate a turning radius that adheres to a 25-mph design speed. The design of the transition from the private street to the private lane requires the reduction of speed with a transition to what is intended to be effectively a private lot driveway. As such, the project proposal requests a design exception to the 25-mph design speed requirement to use a 15-mph design speed at the defined locations of each end of the private street (Road A).

Several factors determine whether a project has sufficient access for emergency vehicles, including the following:

1. Number of access points (both public and emergency access only);
2. Width of access points; and
3. Width of internal roadways.

Three emergency vehicle access (EVA) roads are planned for the project area. The EVA roads would provide emergency vehicle access to the project site and serve as secondary evacuation routes for the public if Bickford Ranch Road and other primary roads in the area are obstructed or heavily congested. BRSP Phase 1 would include construction of the following planned EVA locations: Clark Tunnel Road to SR 193, and the southernmost portion of the BRSP to Woodsdale Court in Penryn. All internal roadways proposed as part of the project would be at least 20 feet in width, which is substantially wide enough to accommodate emergency vehicles. In addition, the proposed gated access would be required to comply with the emergency vehicle access conditions established by Section 15.04.580 of the Placer County Code.

Conclusion

Based on the above, the proposed internal circulation system and roadway improvements would be designed to minimize hazardous roadway design features, and the project would not introduce incompatible uses to area roadways. In addition, adequate emergency access would be available. Therefore, a **less-than-significant** impact would occur.



Mitigation Measure(s)

None required.

Cumulative Impacts and Mitigation Measures

For further detail related to the cumulative setting of the proposed project, refer to Chapter 9, Statutorily Required Sections, of this EIR.

It should be noted that increased traffic volumes on local roadway facilities under cumulative conditions would not substantially alter performance related to bicycle facilities, pedestrian facilities, transit facilities and services, and emergency vehicle access. Rather, impacts to such facilities under Cumulative Plus Project conditions would be identical to those discussed above under Impact 7-2. In addition, construction activities associated with the project would be complete prior to the cumulative analysis year. Therefore, such topics are not discussed further in the cumulative analysis presented herein.

Similarly, the VMT impact analysis for Existing Plus Project conditions included under Impact 7-3 would also apply to Cumulative Plus Project conditions. The VMT significance threshold compares project-generated VMT per service population to that of existing local and regional development. The VMT comparison is useful because the comparison provides information regarding how the project aligns with long-term environmental goals related to VMT established based on existing development levels. Use of VMT significance thresholds based on existing development levels is recommended in the OPR's Technical Advisory. The Technical Advisory indicates that VMT efficiency metrics, such as VMT per service population, are not appropriate for CEQA cumulative analysis. Instead, the Technical Advisory recommends that an impact finding from an efficiency-based project-specific VMT analysis (i.e., Existing Plus Project conditions) would imply an identical impact finding for a cumulative VMT analysis.¹¹ An example provided by OPR explains that a project that falls below an efficiency-based threshold that is aligned with long-term environmental goals and relevant plans would have no cumulative impact distinct from the project impact. Therefore, an analysis of VMT is not presented in this section as the conclusion would remain identical to that presented under Impact 7-3.

¹¹ See *Placer County Transportation Study Guidelines*, November 2020, pg. 24, for similar determination.

