
Chapter 3
Land Use, Housing, and Population

CHAPTER 3

LAND USE, HOUSING, AND POPULATION

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses potential impacts of the Placer County General Plan associated with land use, housing, and population.

3.2 LAND USE

ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

Existing development within Placer County and the implications of buildout in accordance with the existing General Plan are discussed in detail in Chapter 1 of the *General Plan Background Report*, which is incorporated herein by reference. Table 2-3 in Chapter 2 of this *EIR* contains a summary of land use designations on the *Land Use Diagram* by acres and an estimate of total potential dwelling units at buildout of the General Plan.

METHODOLOGY

Assumptions

This *EIR* assumes that the rate at which vacant land within Placer County is developed with urban, suburban, and rural land uses designated by the *General Plan Land Use Diagram* will largely be determined by market forces. It is further assumed that not all of the land designated for development on the *Land Use Diagram* will develop as designated, at least within the time frame of this *EIR* analysis (i.e., 2010). These considerations will influence the level of development that is ultimately achieved under the *General Plan*, which in turn will affect the rate and location of changes to the development pattern of the county implied by the *Land Use Diagram*.

Thresholds of Significance

According to the State *CEQA Guidelines*, a project can result in adverse environmental impacts relating to land use if it has the potential to substantially alter the existing or planned land use of an area. This standard is somewhat awkward in its application to comprehensive general plan updates, since such updates, by definition, constitute changes in planned land use. Furthermore, the land use changes resulting from revision of general plans are typically manifest in secondary impacts that are directly measurable according to other impact categories discussed in the *State CEQA Guidelines* (i.e., traffic, air quality, agricultural land conversion), all of which are addressed in other chapters of this *EIR*. The analysis of land use impacts in this chapter, therefore, focuses primarily on two issues: land use compatibility issues and changes in *existing* land use.

IMPLICATIONS OF THE GENERAL PLAN LAND USE DIAGRAM

Land Use Compatibility

The *General Plan* and the development review and approval process generally seek to locate land uses adjacent to one another that are compatible, related, mutually supportive, and similar in the amount of traffic they generate and types of transportation facilities they need. In some cases, however, existing land use or circulation patterns, the timing of development on properties with different owners, environmental constraints or other factors prevent new land use patterns from providing a "gradation" of uses to ensure compatibility.

The *Countywide General Plan Land Use Diagram* designates land in several areas for uses that could be incompatible with adjacent designations. The most common examples are areas where planned residential development could be incompatible with nearby agricultural or timber production uses, or vice-versa. Since the *Land Use Diagram* designates so much land in Placer County for agriculture and timber uses, the possibility for conflicts resulting from such incompatibility is substantial. Other potential conflicts could result from development in areas where planned residential development would be adjacent to areas designated for public facility or industrial uses. In Placer County, the areas most susceptible to such conflicts are around the Western Regional Sanitary Landfill and various industrial processing operations (e.g., mineral resource extraction, lumber mills, industrial manufacturing sites).

Changes in Existing Land Use

As described in Chapter 2 of this *EIR*, development under the *Land Use Diagram* could result in additional residential development that would lead to a population increase through 2010 of approximately 45,000 in the unincorporated area of Placer County over the 1990 baseline population. This would represent an increase of approximately 55 percent. The unincorporated county's share of Placer County's total population would, however, decrease from 48.7 percent in 1990 to 41.5 percent in 2010. Non-residential development under the *Land Use Diagram* could also result in substantial employment growth, with the addition of approximately 21,000 workers to the county's unincorporated employment base; this equates to an 80 percent increase. As with population, the unincorporated county's share of employment would decrease, dropping from 39.7 percent of the county total in 1991 to 30.7 percent in 2010.

The unincorporated land use changes resulting in the population and employment growth cited above would be largely isolated to the Auburn-Foothills and South Placer regional analysis areas. The Auburn-Foothills would experience population growth of approximately 13,000 and employment growth of about 7,500, most of which would be located in the area covered by the Auburn-Bowman Community Plan. Most of the increase in population (12,000) and employment (23,000) in the South Placer regional analysis area would be located in the Dry Creek/West Placer Community Plan area. The most significant implications of development through 2010 in Placer County would, therefore, be concentrated in community plan areas that are not technically under the purview of the *Countywide Land Use Diagram*.

The *Countywide General Plan* will also result in land use changes that reduce development potential in two areas of the unincorporated county. The planned development pattern in the Colfax Community Plan area will be changed to reduce development potential on lands constrained by slope, parcel size, or other factors. These changes would result in a reduction of development capacity in this area equal to about 960 dwelling units. In the Lake Tahoe basin, which is governed by the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency, the *Countywide General Plan* will lead to a reduction in development potential that will be implemented

through revisions to the Kings Beach, Carnelian Bay, Tahoe City, Ward Valley, North Tahoe, and Lake Tahoe Community Plans.

In conjunction with adoption of the *Countywide General Plan*, the County is also rescinding, or "unadopting," the Westville and Tinker Knob General Plans. The County has never implemented either of these plans, so their rescission is not assumed to have any affect on either existing or planned land use in the county.

GENERAL PLAN POLICY RESPONSE

Several provisions of the *General Plan Policy Document* address the implications of the *Land Use Diagram*, as well as the County's ongoing implementation of ordinances regulating development activity. This section first describes those aspects of the *Policy Document* that address land use compatibility, then describes a range of policy and program commitments that address the potential effects of changes to the county's existing development pattern.

Land Use Compatibility

As noted above, there are several areas in the unincorporated county where planned land uses could result in land use conflicts. To address cases where potentially incompatible land uses could conflict, the *Policy Document* requires the use of buffer zones. Four types of buffer zones are described in Part I of the *Policy Document*, as follows:

1. Agriculture/timberland buffers are required to separate urban uses (particularly residential) from lands designated Agriculture or Timberland.
2. Industrial/residential buffers are required to separate residential land uses from areas designated Business Park/Industrial.
3. Sensitive habitat buffers are required to separate any type of urban development from such sensitive habitats as stream corridors, wetlands, sensitive species habitats, and old growth forests.
4. Public facility buffers are required to protect the long-term viability of critical public facilities such as solid waste transfer and disposal sites, sewage treatment plants, and airports.

Part I of the *Policy Document* describes the general dimensions, uses allowed in buffer zones, and methods of preserving and maintaining buffer zones. The exact dimensions of the buffer zones and specific uses allowed in buffer zones will be determined through the County's specific plan, land use permit, and/or subdivision review process.

In addition to the buffer zones standards and policies, several other sections of the *Policy Document* contain policies that address land use conflicts, some directly and some indirectly. For instance, Section 7, Agricultural and Forestry Resources, includes policies addressing conflicts between agricultural uses and non-agricultural uses, as well as similar policies addressing timber production activities. Section 1, Land Use, addresses incompatibility between mineral resource extraction activities and other types of development. In terms of indirect treatment of land use conflict, several of the noise policies in Section 9 of the *Policy Document* are intended to ensure that noise-related conflicts are minimized.

General Land Use

Policies

- 1.A.2. The County shall permit only low-intensity forms of development in areas with sensitive environmental resources or where natural or human-caused hazards are likely to pose a significant threat to health, safety, or property.*
- 1.A.3. The County shall distinguish among urban, suburban, and rural areas to identify where development will be accommodated and where public infrastructure and services will be provided. This pattern shall promote the maintenance of separate and distinct communities.*
- 1.A.5. The County shall not approve intensive forms of development or land divisions into parcels of 10 acres or less within any city's sphere of influence where that city's general plan calls ultimately for urban development except where the County General Plan or applicable Community Plan designates the area for urban development. The County shall inform cities in a timely manner when applications for development within their sphere of influence are filed with the County and shall consider the city's ultimate plans for the relevant area during project review. In such cases, Policy #16 in Part III shall apply to such development projects.*

These general land use policies encourage development to occur where services can be efficiently provided, where sensitive environmental resources will not be adversely affected, and where natural and human-caused hazards will not pose a significant threat to health, safety, or property. Where a city's general plan calls for future urban development within its sphere of influence, the County will not approve urban development unless the area is also designated for urban or suburban development on the County General Plan.

Residential Land Use

Policies

- 1.B.1 The County shall promote the concentration of new residential development in higher-density residential areas located along major transportation corridors and transit routes.*
- 1.B.2 The County shall encourage the concentration of multi-family housing in and near downtowns, village centers, major commercial areas, and neighborhood commercial centers.*
- 1.B.4 The County shall ensure that residential land uses are separated and buffered from such major facilities as landfills, airports, and sewage treatment plants.*
- 1.B.5 The County shall require residential project design to reflect and consider natural features, noise exposure of residents, visibility of structures, circulation, access, and the relationship of the project to surrounding uses. Residential densities and lot patterns will be determined by these and other factors. As a result, the maximum density specified by General Plan designations or zoning for a given parcel of land may not be realized.*
- 1.B.6. The County shall require new subdivided lots to be adequate in size and appropriate in shape for the range of primary and accessory uses designated for the area.*

1.B.7. The County shall require multi-family developments to include private, contiguous, open space for each dwelling.

Programs

1.1. The County shall review the Zoning Ordinance to identify revisions that could enhance the vitality of downtowns/village centers within unincorporated communities. Depending on the results of that review, the County shall initiate Zoning Ordinance revisions.

1.2 The County shall modify its Design Guidelines Manual to include standards for the development of downtowns/village centers in new development areas.

These policies provide for new residential development in a range of residential densities to meet the needs of all income groups. The policies also ensure that new residential development minimizes its effect on adjoining land uses and that new residential development occurs where adequate services are available.

Commercial Land Use and Downtown Areas/Village Centers

Policies

1.D.1. The County shall require that new commercial development be designed to encourage and facilitate pedestrian circulation within and between commercial sites and nearby residential areas rather than being designed primarily to serve vehicular circulation.

1.D.2. The County shall require new commercial development to be designed to minimize the visual impact of parking areas on public roadways.

1.D.4 The County shall require that significant new office developments locate near major transportation corridors and concentrations of residential uses. New office development may serve as buffers between residential uses and higher-intensity commercial uses.

1.D.5 The County shall encourage existing and new downtowns/village centers to provide a variety of goods and services, both public and private.

Programs

1.1. The County shall review the Zoning Ordinance to identify revisions that could enhance the vitality of downtowns/village centers within unincorporated communities. Depending on the results of that review, the County shall initiate Zoning Ordinance revisions.

1.2 The County shall modify its Design Guidelines Manual to include standards for the development of downtowns/village centers in new development areas.

These policies promote new commercial development to meet the needs of Placer County residents and visitors and to maintain economic vitality, while providing that such development is designed to facilitate pedestrian circulation and occurs where there are adequate infrastructure and services where it minimizes its effect on adjoining land uses.

Industrial Land

Policy

1.E.1. The County shall only approve new industrial development that has the following characteristics:

- a. Adequate infrastructure and services;*
- b. Convenient connections to the regional transportation network, including connections to existing transit and other non-automobile transportation;*
- c. Sufficient buffering from residential areas to avoid impacts associated with noise, odors and the potential release of hazardous materials;*
- d. Minimal significant adverse environmental impacts; and*
- e. Minimal adverse effects on scenic routes, recreation areas, and public vistas.*

This policy provides that new industrial development occurs where there are adequate infrastructure and services and ensures that new development minimizes its impacts on adjoining land uses, and has minimal environmental impacts.

Public and Quasi-Public Facilities, Infrastructure

Policies

1.F.2. The County shall seek to locate new public facilities necessary for emergency response, health care, and other critical functions outside areas subject to natural or built environment hazards.

1.F.3. The County shall require public facilities, such as wells, pumps, tanks, and yards, to be located and designed so that noise, light, odors, and appearance do not adversely affect nearby land uses.

These policies ensure that new public facilities necessary for emergency, response, health care, and other critical functions are located outside areas subject to natural or built environment hazards and requires that public facilities ar designed to minimize impacts on adjoining land uses.

Agricultural Land Use

Policies

1.H.1. The County shall maintain agriculturally-designated areas for agricultural uses and direct urban uses to designated urban growth areas and/or cities.

1.H.2. The County shall seek to ensure that new development and public works projects do not encourage expansion of urban uses into designated agricultural areas.

1.H.3. The County will maintain large-parcel agricultural zoning and prohibit the subdivision of agricultural lands into smaller parcels unless such development meets the following conditions:

- a. The subdivision is part of a cluster project and such a project is permitted by the applicable zoning;*
- b. The project will not conflict with adjacent agricultural operations; and*

- c. *The project will not hamper or discourage long-term agricultural operations either on site or on adjacent agricultural lands.*
- 1.H.4. *The County shall allow the conversion of existing agricultural land to urban uses only within community plan areas and within city spheres of influence where designated for urban development on the General Plan Land Use Diagram.*
- 1.H.5. *The County shall require development within or adjacent to designated agricultural areas to incorporate design, construction, and maintenance techniques that protect agriculture and minimize conflicts with adjacent agricultural uses.*
- 1.H.6. *The County shall require new non-agricultural development immediately adjacent to agricultural lands to be designed to provide a buffer in the form of a setback of sufficient distance to avoid land use conflicts between the agricultural uses and the non-agricultural uses. Such setback or buffer areas shall be established by recorded easement or other instrument, subject to the approval of County Counsel. A method and mechanism (e.g., a homeowners association or easement dedication to a non-profit organization or public entity) for guaranteeing the maintenance of this land in a safe and orderly manner shall be also established at the time of development approval.*

These policies, along with the policies and programs of Goals 7.A., Goal 7.B., and Goal 7.C of the *Policy Document*, seek to preserve viable agricultural operations outside of designated new growth areas by maintaining large parcel sizes and providing that adjoining land uses minimize impacts on agriculture.

Open Space, Habitat, and Wildlife Resources

Policies

- 1.I.1. *The County shall require that significant natural, open space, and cultural resources be identified in advance of development and incorporated into site-specific development project design. The Planned Residential Developments (PDs) and the Commercial Planned Development (CPD) provisions of the Zoning Ordinance can be used to allow flexibility for this integration with valuable site features.*
- 1.I.2. *The County shall require that development be planned and designed to avoid areas rich in wildlife or of a fragile ecological nature (e.g., areas of rare or endangered plant species, riparian areas). Alternatively, where avoidance is infeasible or where equal or greater ecological benefits can be obtained through off-site mitigation, the County shall allow project proponents to contribute to off-site mitigation efforts in lieu of on-site mitigation.*

These policies, along with the policies and programs of Goal 6.B., Goal 6.C., Goal 6.D., and Goal 6.E. of the *Policy Document*, require that significant natural, open space, and cultural resources are protected in areas where new development is anticipated.

Mineral Resources

Policies

- 1.J.1. The County shall require new mining operations to be designed to provide a buffer between existing or likely adjacent uses, minimize incompatibility with nearby uses, and adequately mitigate their environmental and aesthetic impacts.*
- 1.J.2. The County shall require that new non-mining land uses adjacent to existing mining operations be designed to provide a buffer between the new development and the mining operations. The buffer distance will be based upon an evaluation of noise, aesthetics, drainage, operating conditions, topography, lighting, traffic, operating hours and air quality.*
- 1.J.3. The County shall discourage the development of any uses that would be incompatible with adjacent mining operations or would restrict future extraction of significant mineral resources.*
- 1.J.4. The County shall discourage the development of incompatible land uses in areas that have been identified as having potentially significant mineral resources.*
- 1.J.5. The County shall require that all mining operations prepare and implement reclamation plans that mitigate environmental impacts and incorporate adequate security to guarantee proposed reclamation.*
- 1.J.6. The County shall require that plans for mining operations incorporate adequate measures to minimize impacts to local residents and county roadways.*

Program

- 1.3. The County should, in consultation with the California Division of Mines and Geology, evaluate the relative value of potentially-significant mineral deposits identified in the General Plan Background Report and designated as Mineral Resource Zone (MRZ) in relationship to other mineral resources of the same type in the county or region. If these mineral deposits are determined to be easily replaced by other substitute deposits, the County should continue to apply existing policies and plans to allow extraction of these resources. If these deposits are found not to be easily substituted, the County should amend the Countywide General Plan or applicable community plan as necessary to direct incompatible growth away from these sites.*

These policies require that new mining operations minimize impacts on adjoining land uses, adequately mitigate their environmental and aesthetic impacts, and provide for reclamation of the land, and the policies protect existing mining operations from incompatible new development

Visual and Scenic Resources

Policies

- 1.K.1. The County shall require that new development in scenic areas (e.g., river canyons, lake watersheds, scenic highway corridors, ridgelines and steep slopes) is planned and designed in a manner which employs design, construction, and maintenance techniques that:*
- a. Avoids locating structures along ridgelines and steep slopes;*
 - b. Incorporates design and screening measures to minimize the visibility of structures and graded areas;*
 - c. Maintains the character and visual quality of the area.*
- 1.K.2. The County shall require that new development in scenic areas be designed to utilize natural landforms and vegetation for screening structures, access roads, building foundations, and cut and fill slopes.*
- 1.K.3. The County shall require that new development in rural areas incorporates landscaping that provides a transition between the vegetation in developed areas and adjacent open space or undeveloped areas.*
- 1.K.4. The County shall require that new development incorporates sound soil conservation practices and minimizes land alterations. Land alterations should comply with the following guidelines:*
- a. Limit cuts and fills;*
 - b. Limit grading to the smallest practical area of land;*
 - c. Limit land exposure to the shortest practical amount of time;*
 - d. Replant graded areas to ensure establishment of plant cover before the next rainy season; and*
 - e. Create grading contours that blend with the natural contours on site or with contours on property immediately adjacent to the area of development.*
- 1.K.5. The County shall require that new roads, parking, and utilities be designed to minimize visual impacts. Unless limited by geological or engineering constraints, utilities should be installed underground and roadways and parking areas should be designed to fit the natural terrain.*
- 1.K.6. The County shall require that new development on hillsides employ design, construction, and maintenance techniques that:*
- a. Ensure that development near or on portions of hillsides do not cause or worsen natural hazards such as erosion, sedimentation, fire, or water quality concerns;*
 - b. Include erosion and sediment control measures including temporary vegetation sufficient to stabilize disturbed areas;*
 - c. Minimize risk to life and property from slope failure, landslides, and flooding; and*
 - d. Maintain the character and visual quality of the hillside.*

These policies are intended to minimize the visual impact of new development. These policies address the visual effects of new development by protecting ridgelines, steep slopes, and other highly-visible locations in scenic rural areas, by requiring screening of development in scenic areas, by minimizing land alterations, and preserving and enhancing hillsides.

Jobs-Housing Balance

Policies

- 1.M.1. The County shall concentrate most new growth within existing communities emphasizing infill development, intensified use of existing development, and expanded services, so individual communities become more complete, diverse, and balanced.*
- 1.M.2. The County shall encourage large residential projects to be phased or timed to occur simultaneously with development that will provide primary wage-earner jobs.*

These policies encourage new development to concentrate in existing developed areas to reduce the impacts associated with commuting to jobs outside a community. Encouraging development in existing communities and new growth areas, these policies will also help minimize the pressure to convert agricultural and open space lands outside these areas.

Economic Development

Policy

- 1.N.12 The County shall seek the establishment of a joint-powers authority (JPA) between the County and the cities of Roseville, Rocklin, and Lincoln in order to improve the provision of infrastructure in the incorporated and unincorporated areas in and around the Sunset Industrial Area. The JPA is to also develop a economic development strategy with the goal of improving the economic development potential of the region.*

Program

- 1.8. The County will petition the Local Agency Formation Commission to modify the spheres of influence of the Cities of Rocklin, Roseville, and Lincoln to remove the Sunset Industrial Area.*

This policy and program provide for development of the unincorporated Sunset General Plan area, contained within the spheres of influence of the cities of Rocklin, Roseville, and Lincoln, to occur under County jurisdiction. The program provides for submission of a petition to the Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) requesting LAFCO to remove the Sunset Industrial Area from the cities' spheres of influence. While this would not resolve inconsistencies with the City of Roseville's General Plan, it would resolve the issue concerning the County's intent to develop this area as an unincorporated industrial area.

Development Form and Design

Policies

- 1.O.3. The County shall require that all new development be designed to be compatible with the scale and character of the area. Structures, especially those outside of village, urban, and commercial centers, should be designed and located so that:*
 - a. They do not silhouette against the sky above ridgelines or hilltops;*

- b. *Roof lines and vertical architectural features blend with and do not detract from the natural background or ridge outline;*
- c. *They fit the natural terrain; and*
- d. *They utilize building materials, colors, and textures that blend with the natural landscape (e.g., avoid high contrasts).*

1.O.4. The County shall require that new rural and suburban development be designed to preserve and maintain the rural character and quality of the county.

One of the potential impacts of new development in the county will be the loss of rural character in areas currently designated for agriculture or other non-urban land uses. These policies will minimize these impacts.

IMPACTS

Land Use Compatibility

The buffer standards and policies, in combination with various other policies and programs in the *Policy Document*, will effectively mitigate the potential for conflicts between incompatible types of development. The impacts related to land use compatibility will, therefore, be less-than-significant.

Changes in Existing Land Use

The *General Plan Land Use Diagram* will result in changes to the present and planned land uses in the unincorporated area of the county. As noted above, a project can result in adverse environmental impacts relating to land use if it has the potential to substantially alter the existing or planned land use of an area. Since the *Land Use Diagram* proposes such alterations, the *Countywide General Plan* would result in potentially significant adverse impact on existing development in the unincorporated county. In addition to this primary impact, the development of previously undeveloped land in accordance with the land use designations of the *Land Use Diagram* will have secondary impacts on sensitive resources, such as the loss of agricultural land, open space or wildlife habitat, an increase in traffic, and an increase in the demand for public services and facilities. The secondary impacts of proposed land use changes are evaluated in the remaining chapters of this *Final EIR*. Furthermore, major development projects in accordance with the *Land Use Diagram* will require subsequent environmental review when more precise information regarding the proposed land uses, circulation, and infrastructure improvements is known.

MITIGATION MEASURES

Land Use Compatibility

No mitigation measures are necessary.

Changes in Existing Land Use

No mitigation measures are available to reduce the adverse impact resulting from the alteration of existing land use in the unincorporated county to a less-than-significant level.

3.3 HOUSING

ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

Housing supply and other housing issues within Placer County are discussed in detail in Chapter 2 of the *General Plan Background Report*, and in the *Housing Element* adopted by the Board of Supervisors in June 1992 and certified by the State Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) in September 1992.

IMPLICATIONS OF THE GENERAL PLAN LAND USE DIAGRAM

According to the *CEQA Guidelines*, a project may have adverse impacts on housing if it will affect the existing supply of housing or create a demand for more housing. Table 2-3 of Chapter 2 of the *FEIR* indicates the *General Plan* could accommodate approximately 193,000 new dwelling units in the unincorporated county at complete buildout, and could affect the demand for new housing through the designation of additional commercial and industrial land. As described in Chapter 2, this estimate of total dwelling units at buildout probably overstates the actual amount of additional dwellings that will be built during the 2010 and 2040 General Plan development scenarios.

Table 2-8 shows housing unit development scenarios for the years 2010 and 2040. When market forces and other constraints are factored in, the total dwelling units in the unincorporated county are assumed to be about 60,800 in 2010, and about 80,600 in 2040.

The General Plan will result in both direct and indirect housing impacts. The direct impacts will result from the construction of additional housing units, increasing the supply of housing in the unincorporated county. Indirect impacts may result as previously undeveloped land is developed with housing, resulting in the loss of agricultural land and other sensitive resources. Other indirect impacts may result from an increase in traffic and the increased demand for public services and facilities to accommodate the additional dwellings and their occupants. These indirect impacts are discussed in subsequent chapters of this *EIR*.

Assuming 1.4 employed persons per household, and using the development scenario for residential development summarized by Table 2-7 of the *FEIR*, the General Plan would provide housing in the unincorporated areas of the county for about 85,000 employed persons in 2010 in Placer County. Employment growth by 2010 is estimated to result in as many as 20,860 additional jobs being created, for a total of about 47,000 jobs in the year 2010 in the unincorporated county. Therefore, market forces will likely result in the production of more housing than job opportunities by 2010. SACOG has projected that the growth in jobs in the region is expected to be greatest in Sacramento County. The designation of land for employment-generating development in Placer County by the General Plan, however, will provide an opportunity for residents of Placer County to find jobs closer to home. Because of the projected growth in jobs outside the county, the demand for new housing in the western part of the county is projected to be greater than that for new commercial and industrial development, at least in the near term.

GENERAL PLAN POLICY RESPONSE

The General Plan, and the *Housing Element* in particular, includes policies and programs to offset housing-related impacts associated with the *Land Use Diagram*. Besides simply designating more residential land to meet the housing needs of county residents, the *Housing Element* encourages the conservation and

rehabilitation of existing dwelling units and the maintenance of programs designed to accommodate those with special housing needs. In addition, the increase in land designated for the development of more employment-generating land uses will help stem the flow of workers out of the county, leading to a better balance between jobs and housing.

Relevant housing-related General Plan policies include the following:

Residential Land Use

Policies

- 1.B.1. The County shall promote the concentration of new residential development in higher-density residential areas located along major transportation corridors and transit routes.*
- 1.B.2. The County shall encourage the concentration of multi-family housing in and near downtowns, village centers, major commercial areas, and neighborhood commercial centers.*
- 1.B.6. The County shall require new subdivided lots to be adequate in size and appropriate in shape for the range of primary and accessory uses designated for the area.*
- 1.B.7. The County shall require multi-family developments to include private, contiguous, open space for each dwelling.*
- 1.B.9. The County shall discourage the development of isolated, remote, and/or walled residential projects that do not contribute to the sense of community desired for the area.*

These policies provide for higher density residential development along major transportation corridors and new transit routes, in and near downtowns, village centers, and commercial areas, provide for appropriate lot sizes, and discourage isolated, remote, and walled residential projects.

Jobs-Housing Balance

Policies

- 1.M.1. The County shall concentrate most new growth within existing communities emphasizing infill development, intensified use of existing development, and expanded services, so individual communities become more complete, diverse, and balanced.*
- 1.M.3. The County shall encourage the creation of primary wage-earner jobs, or housing which meets projected income levels, in those areas of Placer County where an imbalance between jobs and housing exists.*

These policies encourage new residential development within existing communities and new growth areas and promote the opportunity for residents to live near their place of work.

Affordable Housing

The following policies, contained in the County's *Housing Element* (adopted June 1992), will help reduce the effects of the *Land Use Diagram* on housing by promoting the development of affordable housing.

- A.1 *The County shall adopt policies, programs and procedures with the intent of achieving its fair share regional housing allocation, including the numbers of units for each income classification.*
- A.2 *The County shall maintain an adequate supply of appropriately zoned land with public services to accommodate projected housing needs.*
- A.3 *The County shall ensure that its adopted policies, regulations and procedures do not add unnecessarily to the cost of housing while still attaining other important County objectives.*
- A.4 *The County shall give highest priority for permit processing to development projects that include a lower income residential component.*
- A.5 *The County shall encourage "mixed-use" projects where housing is provided in conjunction with compatible non-residential uses.*
- A.6 *The County shall relax or reduce development standards for low-income housing projects as an incentive for developers.*
- A.7 *Prior to disposing of County-owned surplus land, the County will consider the appropriateness of such land for housing. If found appropriate for housing, the County may lease, sell or grant such property to facilitate the construction of lower income housing.*
- A.8 *The County shall establish a public housing authority serving the Placer County area.*
- A.9 *The County shall support the creation of a nonprofit housing development corporation whose primary focus will be to serve the Placer County area.*
- A.10 *The County shall, through a public housing authority and/or in conjunction with nonprofit or for profit developers, apply for funds from the state and federal governments to construct housing for low income households.*
- A.11 *All new housing projects of 100 or more units on land that has received an increase in allowable density through either a public or privately initiated general plan amendment, community plan amendment, rezoning or specific plan shall be required to provide at least 10 percent of the units to be affordable to low income households. The low income units shall be available concurrently with the market-rate units. All such units shall remain affordable for at least 20 years*
- A.12 *All new housing projects of less than 100 units on land that has received an increase in allowable density through a general plan amendment, community plan amendment, rezoning or specific plan shall be required to pay an in-lieu fee of 1 percent of the total estimated land and construction cost of the project, for use in producing affordable housing. Alternatively, the County may waive the fee in cases where lower income units are included in the project and*

the Board of Supervisors finds that the number of lower income units is commensurate with the numbers that could be built or leveraged through the fee.

- A.13 *Inclusionary housing provisions shall be incorporated in all new or updated community plans.*
- A.14 *Housing for low-income households that is required in a new residential project shall not be concentrated into a single building or portion of the site but shall be dispersed throughout the project, to the extent practical, given the size of the project and other site constraints.*
- A.15 *Low income housing produced through government subsidies and/or through incentives or regulatory programs shall be distributed throughout the County and not concentrated in a particular area or community.*
- A.16 *The County shall require low income housing units in density bonus projects to be available at the same time as the market-rate units in the project.*
- A.17 *The County shall encourage the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency (TRPA) to strengthen the effectiveness of existing incentive programs for the production of affordable housing in the Lake Tahoe region. Such efforts may include:*
- Relaxing TRPA development codes for affordable housing projects and second residential units.*
 - Allowing affordable housing projects an exemption from the requirement to secure development-rights.*
 - Increasing the density bonus for affordable housing projects to make them more financially feasible.*
- A.18 *The County shall require new resorts in the Sierra Nevada and Lake Tahoe areas to provide for employee housing equal to 50 percent of the housing demand generated by the project. Employee housing shall be provided for in one of the following ways (in order of preference):*
- Construction of employee housing onsite.*
 - Construction of employee housing offsite.*
 - Dedication of land for needed units.*
 - Payment of an in-lieu fee.*
- A.19 *Owners of vacation houses in the Lake Tahoe area shall be encouraged to rent to resort workers, especially in the North Tahoe area.*
- A.20 *The County will encourage the development of multi-family dwellings in locations where adequate facilities are available and where such development would be consistent with neighborhood character.*
- A.21 *The County will allow dwellings to be rehabilitated that do not meet current lot size, setback, and yard requirements, and other current zoning standards, so long as the non-conformity is not increased and there is no threat to public health and or safety.*
- A.22 *If redevelopment districts are adopted, the agencies shall utilize at least 20 percent of all tax increment proceeds for low income housing, in accordance with State law. Furthermore, a*

portion of all units built in the redevelopment area shall be affordable to very low, low and moderate income households, as required by State law.

- A.23 *For residential projects where 10 percent of the units are affordable to very low income households, or 20 percent are affordable to low income households, 50 percent of the development-related fees over which the County has direct control shall be waived. The Board of Supervisors may waive more fees as an additional incentive for affordable housing on a case-by-case basis.*

Quality of Residential Development

The following policies, contained in the County's *Housing Element* (adopted June 1992), will help reduce the effects of the *Land Use Diagram* on housing by promoting quality in residential development.

- B.1 *The County encourages residential development of high architectural and physical quality, compatible with neighboring land uses.*

Housing Rehabilitation

The following policies, contained in the County's *Housing Element* (adopted June 1992), will help reduce the effects of the *Land Use Diagram* on housing by promoting housing rehabilitation.

- C.1 *The County shall continue to make rehabilitation loans to low income households from its CDBG program revolving loan funds.*
- C.2 *The County shall continue to apply for CDBG's for the purpose of rehabilitating low cost, owner occupied and rental housing.*
- C.3 *Private financing of the rehabilitation of housing shall be encouraged.*
- C.4 *The conversion of mobile home parks to other types of housing and to other land uses shall be discouraged.*
- C.5 *The County shall require the abatement of unsafe structures, while giving property owners ample time to correct deficiencies. Residents displaced by such abatement should be provided relocation assistance.*
- C.6 *The demolition of existing multi-family units should be allowed only when: a structure is found to be substandard and unsuitable for rehabilitation; and tenants are given reasonable notice, an opportunity to purchase the property, and relocation assistance.*
- C.7 *The County will support efforts to convert mobile home parks where residents lease their spaces to parks where residents own their spaces.*
- C.8 *The County shall continue to provide Section 8 assistance to eligible households.*

Preservation of At-Risk Units

The following policies, contained in the County's *Housing Element* (adopted June 1992), will help reduce the effects of the *Land Use Diagram* on housing by promoting the preservation of assisted housing at risk of conversion to market rate housing.

- D.1 The County shall strive to preserve all at risk dwelling units in the unincorporated County.
- D.2 At least 2 years notice shall be required prior to the conversion of any units for low income households to market rate in any of the following circumstances:
- The units were constructed with the aid of government funding.
 - The units were required by an inclusionary zoning ordinance.
 - The project was granted a density bonus.
 - The project received other incentives.

Such notice will be given at least to the following:

- The County
- HCD
- Any public housing authority and nonprofit housing corporations that may exist in Placer County at the time
- Residents of at-risk units.

Special Housing Needs

The following policies, contained in the County's *Housing Element* (adopted June 1992), will help reduce the effects of the *Land Use Diagram* on housing by promoting the development of housing for persons with special housing needs.

- E.1 *The development of housing for seniors, including congregate care facilities, shall be encouraged.*
- E.2 *County policies, programs and ordinances shall provide opportunities for handicapped persons to reside in all neighborhoods.*
- E.3 *The County will work with the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency (TRPA) to encourage the construction of larger units for families in the Kings Beach area.*

The Homeless

The following policies, contained in the County's *Housing Element* (adopted June 1992), will help reduce the effects of the *Land Use Diagram* on housing by promoting the development of emergency shelters and aid for the homeless.

- F.1 *The County shall continue to contribute to emergency shelter programs that provide adequate shelter in centralized locations accessible to the majority of homeless persons in the county.*

- F.2 *The county will assist various nonprofit organizations involved with emergency shelter and other aid to homeless persons.*

Energy Conservation

The following policies, contained in the County's *Housing Element* (adopted June 1992), will help reduce the secondary housing effects of the *Land Use Diagram* by promoting energy conservation in new housing development.

- G.1 *All new dwelling units shall be required to meet current state requirements for energy efficiency. The retrofitting of existing units shall be encouraged.*

- G.2 *New land use patterns should encourage energy efficiency, to the extent feasible.*

The policies and programs of the *Housing Element* are estimated to result in the construction of about 7,500 new dwelling units by 1997. This number exceeds the County's total regional fair-share allocation of 5,178 new units set by the Sierra Planning Organization. However, the County's fair-share for the construction of housing for 'very-low' income households is not projected to be achieved during the time frame of the *Housing Element*.

IMPACTS

The General Plan will result in a substantial increase in the total number of units, as well as substantial changes in the composition and affordability of housing stock in the unincorporated county. These changes are not, however, considered significant impacts for purposes of CEQA. The designation of additional land for housing will not in itself have direct adverse environmental impacts. The indirect impacts of housing construction may result from increased traffic, the loss of valuable natural resources such as wildlife habitat and the conversion of agricultural land, and the increase in demand for public services and facilities. The secondary and tertiary impacts resulting from the designation of additional land for housing are discussed in the remaining sections of this *EIR*.

MITIGATION MEASURES

No mitigation measures are necessary.

3.4 POPULATION

ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

The existing population characteristics of Placer County are summarized in Chapter 3 of the *General Plan Background Report*. The overall population changes that will result from the General Plan are discussed in Chapter 2 of this *EIR*.

IMPLICATIONS OF THE GENERAL PLAN LAND USE DIAGRAM

According to the *CEQA Guidelines*, a project could have adverse impacts on population if it has the potential to substantially alter the location, distribution, density, or growth rate of the population of an area. Table 2-5 in Chapter 2 of this *EIR* presents an estimate of population growth in the unincorporated county based on assumptions about market forces and resource availability. This table shows that the

General Plan could accommodate a significant increase in the population in the unincorporated county, especially in the Auburn-Foothills and South Placer regional analysis areas.

As Table 2-5 shows, the 2010 development scenario would result in a total county population of about 310,000 in the year 2010, an increase of about 140,000 above the 1990 population. The unincorporated areas of the county are assumed to have a population of approximately 128,500 in 2010. The rate of population growth will largely be determined by market forces as new housing is developed, as well as the ability to finance the expansion of infrastructure to accommodate additional population.

GENERAL PLAN POLICY RESPONSE

The *Policy Document* does not contain policies specifically intended to address population change. Virtually all of the policies and programs in the *Policy Document* address general effects of future development, and, therefore, address the effect of development on both the existing and future population.

IMPACTS

The General Plan will accommodate a substantial increase in the unincorporated population. The increase in population will not in itself directly result in adverse environmental impacts. The indirect impacts associated with population growth include increased traffic with associated air quality impacts, the increase in the demand for public services and facilities, and in some cases a loss of rural character. These indirect impacts are discussed in subsequent chapters of this *EIR*.

MITIGATION MEASURES

No mitigation measures are necessary.