

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

This chapter describes the purpose and organization of the Sunset Industrial Area (SIA) Plan and provides an overview of what an Area Plan is, why it is prepared, and why it is important. This chapter also provides an overview of the purpose, content, and organization, and format of the SIA Plan Existing Conditions Report.

This chapter is organized into the following sections:

- What is an Area Plan? (Section 1.1)
- Using the Area Plan (Section 1.2)
- Format of the Existing Conditions Report (Section 1.3)
- Regional Setting (Section 1.4)

SECTION 1.1 WHAT IS AN AREA PLAN?

An area plan is a supplement to a general plan that provides additional policies and programs for a subregion within the general plan planning area. Every county and city in California is required by State law to prepare and maintain a general plan. A general plan serves as the **jurisdiction’s “constitution” or “blueprint” for future decisions concerning land** use and resource conservation. All specific plans, subdivisions, public works projects, and zoning decisions must **be consistent with the local jurisdiction’s general plan.**

An area plan addresses many of the same topics as a general plan. An area plan existing conditions report and policy document focuses on a specific area, while the general plan existing conditions report and policy document considers the entire city or county. An area plan augments the goals and policies of the general plan for a specific region. Communities use area plans to comprehensively address issues and opportunities associated within distinct areas.

SECTION 1.2 USING THE AREA PLAN

Area plans are additional sections of the general plan used by the Board of Supervisors, Planning Commission, and County staff to make decisions with direct or indirect land use implications within a specific area of the general plan planning area. The general plan is the basis for a variety of regulatory mechanisms and administrative procedures. California planning law requires consistency between the general plan and its implementation programs. Implementation programs and regulatory systems of the general plan include zoning and subdivision ordinances, capital improvement programs, specific plans, environmental impact procedures, building and housing codes, and area plans. Area plans contain goals, policies, and programs specific to a particular area.

The Placer County General Plan, of which the Sunset Industrial Area Plan is a part, is reviewed annually. County staff conducts a more comprehensive and thorough review and revision typically every five or ten years to document changes in local conditions based on the new data. State law permits the Board of Supervisors to amend the General Plan up to four times in any calendar year, unless special conditions apply as defined by Government Code Sections 65358(c) and (d). Each amendment may contain more than one change to the General Plan.

The SIA Plan should be user-friendly. To this end the SIA Plan is divided into two primary documents: the Existing Conditions Report and the Area Plan Policy Document. The Existing Conditions Report is further divided into seven chapters. Additional documents, such as an Opportunities and Constraints Report, a Capital Improvement Program, and a Financing Strategy, will be developed but are not considered primary components of the SIA Plan.

The following describes the two component documents that make up the SIA Plan:

- **Existing Conditions Report.** The Existing Conditions Report takes a “snapshot” of the SIA’s current (2015) trends and conditions. It provides a detailed description of a wide range of topics within the SIA. The report provides decision-makers, the public, and local agencies with context for making policy decisions. Unlike the Policy Document, the Existing Conditions Report is objective and policy-neutral. The Existing Conditions Report also serves as a setting for the Environmental Impact Report prepared for the SIA Plan update. The chapters of the report include:
 - **Introduction.** This chapter discusses the purpose and overview of the Existing Conditions Report.
 - **Land Use.** This chapter describes the existing conditions, ownership, planning framework, and land uses in the SIA.
 - **Transportation and Circulation.** This chapter discusses the transportation network that serves the SIA, including roads, transit services, non-motorized facilities, and goods movement.
 - **Public Services and Utilities.** This chapter describes the water, wastewater, stormwater, solid waste, utilities, and other County and public services and systems in the SIA.
 - **Natural Resources.** This chapter describes the natural resources within the SIA, including soils, historical resources, oil and gas resources, open space, and scenic resources within the SIA.
 - **Hazards and Safety.** This chapter discusses potential geologic and seismic hazards including earthquake faulting, surface rupture, ground shaking and liquefaction during earthquakes, slope instability, expansion and shrinking of soils, and soil erosion.
- **Policy Document.** This report is the essence of the SIA Plan. It contains the goals and policies that will guide future decisions within the SIA. It also identifies a full set of implementation programs that will ensure the goals and policies in the SIA Plan are carried out.

As part of the SIA Plan update, the County will prepare an **Environmental Impact Report**. The Environmental Impact Report (EIR) responds to the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) as set forth in Sections 15126, 15175, and 15176 of the CEQA Guidelines Act. The Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors will use the EIR during the SIA Plan Update process to understand the potential environmental implications associated with implementing the SIA Plan. The EIR is not part of the General Plan or SIA Plan.

SECTION 1.3 FORMAT OF THE EXISTING CONDITIONS REPORT

Each chapter of the Existing Conditions Report includes the following sections:

- **Introduction.** The introduction provides a brief description of the issues covered in the section.
- **Major Findings.** Each chapter contains a brief summary of key findings. The findings present key facts and preliminary issues from the chapter. These findings serve as the basis for the identification of issues to be addressed in the Policy Document.
- **Topical Sections.** Each chapter includes several sections that address a specific topic. These topical sections are organized into two subsections:
 - **Existing Conditions.** The Existing Conditions subsection describes existing conditions as of May 2015 for each resource or issue area. Supplemental information developed since that time is provided in some cases.
 - **Regulatory Setting.** The Regulatory Setting subsection summarizes the laws and regulations pertaining to the topics identified. Federal, State, and local regulations are described, as applicable.
- **Key Terms.** Each chapter contains a list of terms that are unique to the topical areas within each chapter in the Existing Conditions Report.
- **References.** Each chapter contains a list of the reports, publications, websites, and other sources used when drafting the chapter.

SECTION 1.4 REGIONAL SETTING

The Sunset Industrial Area is located in unincorporated southern Placer County. Southern Placer County is urban and suburban and is influenced by the Sacramento metropolitan area. Placer County stretches to the Nevada State Line and Lake Tahoe to the east. The SIA covers 13.9 square miles and is situated between the cities of Rocklin to the east, Roseville to the south, Lincoln to the north, and unincorporated Placer County to the west. The area to the west of the SIA is primarily farmland. Major landforms in the area include the Sierra Nevada Range to the east and Folsom Lake to the southeast. The area lies west of Highway 65 which connects to Interstate 80 in the south and State Route 99 to the north. The SIA is a 30-minute drive to downtown Sacramento via State Route 65 and Interstate 80.

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