

5 PROJECT CONSISTENCY WITH PLANS AND POLICIES

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides information on the land use policies and designations applicable to the project. The project would include annexation to the City of Sacramento, expansion of the City of Sacramento's Sphere of Influence (SOI), expansion of the Sacramento Regional County Sanitation District's (SRCSD) SOI, expansion of the Sacramento County Sanitation District 1 (CSD-1) SOI, and amendment of the boundary of the NNCP area. The project would be a special planning area within the NNCP area subject to its own Planned Unit Development (PUD) guidelines. This chapter includes an assessment of the consistency of the Greenbriar project with applicable General Plan policies; the Policies, Standards and Procedures for the Sacramento Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCo); the City/County Joint Vision (Joint Vision) Plan Memorandum of Understanding (2002); and SACOG's Sacramento Region Blueprint.

Discussion in this chapter differs from the technical issue chapters of the EIR. In this chapter, consistencies and inconsistencies with existing and proposed local land use plans and policies are identified and addressed. This chapter complies with Section 15125(d) of the CEQA Guidelines, which directs all EIRs to discuss any inconsistencies between a proposed project and applicable general plans and regional plans. This chapter does not identify or address environmental impacts or mitigation measures. Physical environmental impacts that could result from the proposed project are addressed in Chapter 6 of this EIR.

5.2 EXISTING LAND USE SETTING

5.2.1 EXISTING PROJECT SITE LAND USES

The 577-acre project site is located in unincorporated Sacramento County adjacent to the western boundary of the City of Sacramento. The site is within the southwestern region of the Natomas Basin. The project site is undeveloped and has recently been under agricultural production. The site is located at the northwest intersection of State Route 70/99 (SR 70/99) and Interstate 5 (I-5) and immediately south of Elkhorn Boulevard. The site is adjacent to existing agricultural uses to the north and west and single-family residential developments to the south across I-5 and to the east across SR 70/99. The site is immediately adjacent to and west of the existing NNCP area and west of the approved Metro Air Parkway development.

5.2.2 LAND USES IN THE NORTH NATOMAS AREA

The North Natomas Community Plan area is located in the northwest portion of the City of Sacramento and is part of the greater Natomas Basin. The North Natomas community is bound by Elkhorn Boulevard on the north, Interstate 80 (I-80) on the south, the Natomas East Main Drain canal on the east and the West Main Drain canal and SR 70/99 on the west. According to the North Natomas Nexus Study Update (City of Sacramento 2002), 4,228 acres have been identified as "developable" in the NNCP area. In 1993, the primary land use in the NNCP area was agriculture. Since that time, the NNCP was adopted in 1994 and land uses have been rapidly converting to urban uses. The project is not within the NNCP but the boundaries will be amended to include the project. The project will not be subject to the NNCP policies but will be designated as a special planning area (SPA).

5.3 ADOPTED PLANS AND APPLICABLE POLICIES

5.3.1 CITY OF SACRAMENTO GENERAL PLAN

The City of Sacramento's General Plan is a 20-year (1986–2006) policy guide for physical, economic, and environmental growth and renewal of the city. The City's General Plan contains goals, policies, programs, and

actions that were based on an assessment of community needs and available resources. The General Plan covers the existing area of Sacramento and nearby portions of Yolo and Sacramento counties. The City is currently in the process of updating the General Plan which includes a reevaluation of land uses within areas of opportunity for reuse and incorporation of the City's community plans, such as the NNCP, as chapters into the General Plan. The project would amend the boundaries of the NNCP; however, policies within the NNCP are not applicable to the project because the project includes planned unit development (PUD) guidelines and a separate finance plan (Appendix C) that would guide development in the project site. The following are the policies in the current City of Sacramento General Plan that are applicable to the Greenbriar project.

CIRCULATION

- ▶ The City of Sacramento specifies Level of Service (LOS) C as the minimum acceptable level of service standard for the intersections that fall under its jurisdiction (Goal D – Streets and Road).
- ▶ Require major employment centers (50 or more total employees) to install showers, lockers, and secure parking areas for bicyclists as part of any entitlement (Goal A, Policy 2 – Bikeways).
- ▶ Promote a well designed and heavily patronized light rail and transit system (Goal A – Transit).
- ▶ Provide transit service in newly developing areas at locations that support its highest usage (Goal A, Policy 1 – Transit).
- ▶ Provide adequate off-street parking for new development and reduce the impact of in-street parking in established areas (Goal A – Parking).
- ▶ Require new subdivisions and planned unit developments to have safe walkways that provide direct links between streets and major destinations such as bus stops, schools, parks, and shopping centers (Goal A, Policy 1 – Pedestrian Ways).

NOISE

- ▶ An acoustical report shall be required for any project which would be exposed to noise levels in excess of those shown as normally acceptable in Figure 3 (Table 6.3-8 of this EIR). The contents of the acoustical report shall be as described in the Noise Assessment Report Guidelines. No acoustical report shall be required where City staff has an existing residential report on file which is applicable (Goal A, Policy 1).
- ▶ Mitigation measures shall be provided to reduce noise exposure to the “Normally Acceptable Levels” in Figure 3 (Table 6.3-8 of this EIR), except where such measures are not feasible (Goal A, Policy 2).
- ▶ Land uses proposed where the exterior noise level would be below the “Normally Acceptable Levels” may be approved without any requirement for interior or exterior mitigation measures (Goal A, Policy 3).
- ▶ Enforce the Sacramento Noise Ordinance [i.e., Noise Control Standards] as the method to control noise from sources other than transportation sources (Goal C, Policy 2).

PUBLIC FACILITIES AND SERVICES

- ▶ Encourage private development of recreational facilities that complement and supplement the public recreational system (Goal A, Policy 1 – Parks and Recreation Services).
- ▶ Encourage joint development of parks with compatible uses such as schools, libraries and detention basins (Goal A, Policy 3 – Parks and Recreation Services).

- ▶ Design parks to enhance and preserve the natural site characteristics and environmental values (Goal A, Policy 5 – Parks and Recreation Services).
- ▶ Locate community and regional parks and linear recreational areas on or adjacent to major thoroughfares (Goal A, Policy 7 – Parks and Recreation Services).
- ▶ Ensure that all drainage facilities are adequately sized and constructed to accommodate the projected increase in stormwater runoff from urbanization (Goal A, Policy 1 – Drainage).
- ▶ Require the private sector to form assessment districts and/or utilize other funding mechanisms to cover the cost of providing drainage facilities (Goal A, Policy 4 – Drainage).
- ▶ Continue to support all efforts directed at providing the best fire protection services at the least cost. (Goal A, Policy 1 – Fire Service)
- ▶ Ensure that adequate water supplies are available for fire-fighting equipment in newly developing areas. (Goal A, Policy 2 – Fire Service).
- ▶ Promote greater coordination of land use development proposals with the Fire Department in order to ensure adequate on-site fire protection provisions. (Goal A, Policy 4 – Fire Service).
- ▶ Continue Police Department participation in the review of subdivision proposals and in assisting the Public Works department with traffic matters. (Goal A, Policy 1 – Police Service).
- ▶ Provide water service meeting or exceeding State and federal regulatory agency requirements (Goal A, Policy 1 – Water).

HEALTH AND SAFETY

- ▶ Prohibit construction of structures for permanent occupancy across faults, should any be designated (Goal A, Policy 1 – Seismic Safety).
- ▶ Continue to require soils reports and geological investigations for determining liquefaction, expansive soils, and subsidence problems on sites for new subdivision and/or multiple-story buildings in the City of Sacramento (Goal A, Policy 2 – Seismic Safety).
- ▶ Continue to implement the Uniform Building Code requirements that recognize State and federal earthquake protection standards in the construction or repair of buildings (Goal A, Policy 3 – Seismic Safety).
- ▶ Cooperate with and encourage the federal, State, and other local jurisdictions to investigate seismic and other hazards and to develop mitigation measures (Goal A, Policy 7 – Seismic Safety).
- ▶ Prohibit development of areas subject to unreasonable risk of flooding unless measures can be implemented to eliminate or reduce the risk of flooding (Goal A, Policy 1 – Flood Hazards).

URBAN GROWTH

- ▶ Approve development in the City’s new growth areas that promotes efficient growth patterns and public service extensions, and is compatible with adjacent developments (Policy 4 – New Growth Areas).
- ▶ Work with LAFCo to adjust the SOI to be in conformity with the City’s adopted annexation policy (Policy 7 – New Growth Areas).

CONSERVATION AND OPEN SPACE

- ▶ Retain land inside the City for agricultural use until need arises for development, and support actions of Sacramento County to similarly conserve its land until needed for urban growth (Goal A).
- ▶ Phase the conversion of agricultural land to urban uses while implementing the policies of the North Natomas Community Plan (Goal, A, Policy 1).
- ▶ Work with Sacramento County to explore the feasibility of an agricultural preservation plan (Goal A, Policy 2).

5.3.2 SACRAMENTO LAFCO POLICIES, STANDARDS, AND PROCEDURES

LAFCo is charged with applying the policies and provisions of the Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Local Government Reorganization Act (reorganized and amended by Legislation enacted in 2000) to its decisions regarding annexations, incorporations, reorganizations, and other changes in government organization. The Sacramento County LAFCo Policies, Standards and Procedures (LAFCo 1990 and revised 1993) were adopted pursuant to the authority contained in the 1985 Cortese-Knox Act to assist in carrying out its provisions.

LAFCo's are intra-local agencies that were created by State legislation to ensure that changes in governmental organization occur in a manner that provides efficient and quality services and preserves open space land resources. In 1963, the State Legislature established LAFCo's in each county and gave them regulatory authority over local agency boundary changes. In the 1970s, the Legislature recognized the connection between decisions concerning governmental organization and the issues of urban sprawl and loss of prime agricultural land. In response to these concerns, LAFCo's were charged with implementing changes in governmental organization in a manner that preserves agricultural and open space land resources, as well as provides the delivery of services. In 2000, the Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Act was further amended as a result of Assembly Bill 2838.

The following are the Sacramento County LAFCo standards that are applicable to the Greenbriar project.

SPHERES OF INFLUENCE

- ▶ The Sphere of Influence Master Service Element must be current before additions to a SOI will be approved by LAFCo. Amendment proposals must be consistent with an updated Sphere of Influence Master Services Element (LAFCo Standards, pgs. IV-2 and V-11). The LAFCo standards provide the specific content requirements of a Master Service Element.
- ▶ Amendment proposals involving Sphere expansion that contains prime agricultural land will not be approved by the LAFCo if there is sufficient alternative land available for annexation within the existing SOI (LAFCo Standards, pg. V-12).

CONFORMANCE WITH APPLICABLE GENERAL AND SPECIFIC PLAN

- ▶ LAFCo will approve changes of organization or reorganization only if the proposal is consistent with the General Plan and relevant Specific Plans of the applicable planning jurisdiction. For annexation to a city, the applicable jurisdiction is the city to which annexation is proposed. The governing body of the applicable planning jurisdiction shall recommend by resolution whether the proposal meets all applicable consistency requirements of State law. LAFCo shall retain discretion to determine consistency pursuant to its jurisdiction (LAFCo Standards, pgs. IV-2 and IV-3).

AGRICULTURAL LAND CONSERVATION

- ▶ LAFCo will approve a change of organization or reorganization that will result in the conversion of prime agricultural land in open space use to other uses only if the Commission finds that the proposal will lead to the planned, orderly, and efficient development of an area. For purposes of this standard, a proposal leads to the planned, orderly, and efficient development of an area only if all of the following criteria are met:
 - The land subject to the change of organization or reorganization is contiguous to either lands developed within an urban use or lands that have received all discretionary approvals for urban development.
 - The proposed development of the subject lands is consistent with the Spheres of Influence Plan, including the Master Services Element of the affected agency or agencies.
 - Development of all or a substantial portion of the subject land is likely to occur within 5 years. In the case of very large developments, annexation should be phased wherever feasible. If the Commission finds phasing infeasible for specific reasons, it may approve annexation if all or a substantial portion of the subject land is likely to develop within a reasonable period of time.
 - Insufficient vacant nonprime lands exist within the applicable Spheres of Influence that are planned, accessible, and developable for the same general type of use.
 - The proposal will have no significant adverse effect on the physical and economic integrity of other agricultural lands. In making this determination, LAFCo will consider the following factors: (1) the agricultural significance of the subject and adjacent areas relative to other agricultural lands in the region; (2) the use of the subject and adjacent areas; (3) whether public facilities related to the proposal would be sized or situated so as to facilitate the conversion of adjacent or nearby agricultural land, or will be extended through or adjacent to, any other agricultural lands that lie between the project site and existing facilities; (4) whether natural or human-made barriers serve to buffer adjacent or nearby agricultural land from the effects of the proposed development; (5) applicable provisions of the General Plan open space and land use elements, applicable growth-management policies, or other statutory provisions designated to protect agriculture (LAFCo Standards, pgs. IV-5 and IV-6).

PUBLIC FACILITIES AND SERVICES

- ▶ “The annexation must be consistent with the applicable Master Service Elements. An annexation ... shall be approved only if the services element of the Spheres of Influence Plan of the affected agency or agencies demonstrates that adequate services will be provided within the time frame needed by the inhabitants of the annexed ... area.” Proposed annexations for land areas that lie outside of the current and next five-year increments of projected service delivery in the services element are presumed not to comply with this standard unless the applicant clearly establishes that special and unique circumstances exist which ensure the provision of quality services during the applicable time frame for the affected area consistent with the other standards. (Section I, Standard Number 4).
- ▶ “The annexation must provide the lowest cost and highest quality of urban services for the affected population. LAFCo will approve an annexation ... only if the Commission determines that the annexing agency possesses the capability to provide the most efficient delivery of applicable urban services for the affected population.” (Section I, Standard Number 5).

5.3.3 CITY AND COUNTY OF SACRAMENTO NORTH NATOMAS JOINT VISION PLAN

In the late 1990s, the City and County of Sacramento were each considering projects that would urbanize a substantial portion of the Natomas Basin north of the city limits, including the Greenbriar site. Both jurisdictions

determined that it would be mutually beneficial to plan the area cooperatively. Starting in 2001, City and County staff met to discuss a process for planning the unincorporated Natomas area. This gave rise to the proposal to develop the City/County Joint Vision Plan. The two jurisdictions coordinated and along with input from stakeholders created the basic principles for development in the area. On December 10, 2002, the Sacramento City Council and the County Board of Supervisors approved a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that outlined a Joint Vision for land use and revenue sharing principles for Natomas. The MOU recognizes the City as the agent of development and the County as the agent of permanent open space protection, including farmlands and habitat.

The County and City agreed to the following applicable principles through the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) (City of Sacramento, County of Sacramento 2002). The MOU expresses the County's and City's desires for development within the Natomas Basin, but it does not provide binding land use policies for either agency. Areas for potential development were identified, but land use designations were not adopted.

OPEN SPACE

1. Open space planning will rely on, and coordinate with, existing open space programs and will address linkage issues. Some specific areas will be designated for preservation as permanent open space to provide assurance that community separators are implemented. Other areas, such as west of Sacramento International Airport, may not require active preservation because of specific constraints related to inadequate infrastructure or public ownership.
2. Open space mitigation may be in conjunction with or distinct from any applicable criteria of the Natomas Basin Habitat Conservation Plan (NBHCP) and may, depending upon circumstances, exceed that of the NBHCP. A joint funding mechanism will provide funding for land and easement acquisitions.
3. Land to be preserved as farmland must not be restricted by nearby development and needs to have a secure supply of affordable water. Buffer areas will be derived from developing lands.

FUTURE GROWTH

1. Consideration of new growth should be done in partnership with the preservation of open space. The urban form should include a well-integrated mixture of residential, employment, commercial, and civic uses, interdependent on quality transit service with connections linking activity centers with streets, transit routes, and linear parkways with pedestrian/bike trails.
2. The City is the appropriate agent for planning new growth in Natomas. The County is the appropriate agent for preserving open space, agricultural, and rural land uses.
3. The County will preserve its interest in the planning and development of Sacramento International Airport and Metro Airpark.
4. New growth will be supportive of the City's Infill Strategy. It will contribute to the sustainability of established neighborhoods/commercial corridors/business districts.
5. Development in Natomas will build on the vision of the currently planned growth in North Natomas, including the application of the City Council-adopted (Resolution No. 2001-805) Smart Growth Principles.
6. Future growth areas shall foster development patterns that achieve a whole and complete, mixed-use community.

7. The City, as the agent of development, will apply the adopted Smart Growth Principles to any new development in Natomas. Smart Growth Principles emphasize pedestrian and transit orientation by addressing density, efficient design, and urban open space to provide sustainable, livable communities with fewer impacts than standard development.

The open space principles provide an agreement regarding the size, location, and nature of open space preservation areas within the Natomas area. The future growth principles provide a vision of the location, size, and nature of future growth within the Natomas area. Regarding open space, the City and County have agreed to implement a principle that would require new development to preserve permanent open space in the Natomas area at a mitigation ratio of 1 acre of lost open space to 1 acre of preserved open space.

5.3.4 SACOG BLUEPRINT

As described in Chapter 4, SACOG adopted the Sacramento Region Blueprint Transportation and Land Use Study Preferred Blueprint Scenario (Blueprint) in December 2004. The Blueprint is a vision for growth that promotes compact, mixed-use development and more transit choices as an alternative to low-density development. The essential purpose is to consider how the region will develop over the next 50 years and to promote land use patterns that consume less land, conserving more farmland and habitat (considered on a regional basis), and provide for a more efficient transportation system. It expresses principles for agencies to consider in their planning for long-term development, but does not bind any of the agencies to implement the Blueprint. The Blueprint is guided by a series of smart growth principles which include the following:

- ▶ Provide housing choice and diversity.
- ▶ Use existing assets by infilling or intensifying the use of underutilized parcels in urbanized areas.
- ▶ Create compact development.
- ▶ Incorporate public-use open space within development projects (over and above existing regulatory requirements).
- ▶ Design for quality to increase the attractiveness of living in a compact development.
- ▶ Provide mixed-use developments, both vertical (mixed in one building) or horizontal (with a combination of uses in close proximity).
- ▶ Provide transportation choices to encourage people to walk, ride bicycles, ride the bus, ride light rail, take the train, or carpool.

The Blueprint's preferred land use scenario identifies the Greenbriar project site for high density residential and single family small lot development. Existing development to the east is designated for single family large lot and single family small lot development including a new light-rail stop. The area south of the project site is identified for medium density mixed-use center or corridor, public, single family large lot, and single family small lot development. However, the Blueprint's preferred land use scenario is to be used as a concept-level illustration of the Blueprint's growth principles, although it is not necessarily intended to be applied or implemented on a parcel-level. Such decisions are left to the local planning jurisdiction, in this case the City of Sacramento. However, the more local agencies apply the land use suggestions of the Blueprint, the greater the opportunity for accommodation of population growth pressures while preserving regional assets.

5.4 CONSISTENCY WITH PLANS AND POLICIES

5.4.1 CONSISTENCY WITH THE SACRAMENTO COUNTY GENERAL PLAN

LAND USE

Implementation of the project would require annexation of the project site into the City of Sacramento. For this reason, the majority of Sacramento County General Plan policies would not apply, except for policies associated specifically with the consideration of annexation proposals.

Policy LU-71 of the County's General Plan states that the County would only advocate annexations which, "ensure provisions and demonstrate maintenance for adequate municipal services; are consistent with state law and LAFCo standards and criteria; provide for equitable distribution, based on region-wide analysis, of social services and low income needs; are consistent with General Plan and Community Plan policies; and preserve community identity" (County of Sacramento 1993).

The Greenbriar project includes development of a project-specific PUD guidelines and financing plan. The financing plan would establish the funding mechanisms necessary to fund public facility expansions and/or extensions. Sections 6.4, "Utilities," and 6.5, "Public Services," of this EIR describe specifically how utilities and public services would be provided to the Greenbriar project. As described therein, provisions would be made to ensure adequate funding, installation, and maintenance of utilities and public services to serve the project.

LAFCo would approve changes of organization or reorganization if the proposal is consistent with the applicable plans of the applicable jurisdiction (LAFCo Standards, pgs IV-2 and IV-3). In this case, the project would need to demonstrate consistency with the City of Sacramento General Plan. The project's consistency with the policies associated with this plan is discussed in the following sections.

The project would preserve community identities as identified in the Sacramento County General Plan objectives, which include creating a logical extension of adjacent neighborhoods such as residential development located east and south of the project site and by creating a neighborhood that provides a mix of housing densities and types throughout the NNCP area.

5.4.2 CONSISTENCY WITH THE CITY OF SACRAMENTO GENERAL PLAN

CIRCULATION

The City has adopted the goal of maintaining LOS C as the minimum acceptable level of service standard for intersections that fall within its jurisdiction. Section 6.1, "Transportation and Circulation," provides a detailed analysis of the project's impacts to the local and regional roadway system. As described therein, where the project would result in impacts to the City's intersections, mitigation has been recommended, where feasible, to reduce these impacts. However, several intersections within the City would operate over their design capacity with or without the project. No additional mitigation is available to reduce these impacts. Because these intersections would operate unacceptably without the project, the project would not be the sole cause for these intersections to operate unacceptably. Further, while it is a goal for the City to maintain LOS C at intersections within its jurisdiction, the City does not prohibit any intersection from operating below LOS C. The City in its review of the project will need to determine whether the operation of local roadways near the project site below LOS C is acceptable and consistent with how it intends to implement its policies.

The City promotes the development of well designed and patronized light rail system (Goal A – Transit) and that new developments provide transit service at locations that support its highest usage (Goal A, Policy 1 – Transit). The project includes the dedication of land for a new light rail station and alignment that would be a critical component of the Sacramento Regional Transportation District's (SRTD) Downtown-Natomas-Aiport (DNA)

light rail line. Further, staff of SRTD have indicated (during public testimony at a LAFCo hearing) that the proposed light rail station supported by the proposed land use densities is critical to ensure the success of the light rail station and fund its implementation (Scott 2005). Therefore, the project would be consistent with these policies.

The City requires that adequate off-street parking be provided in new developments (Goal A – Parking). As described in Section 6.1, “Transportation and Circulation,” the project, with mitigation, would provide adequate parking on the project site including adequate off-street parking. Therefore, the project would be consistent with this policy.

The City requires that new subdivisions provide safe walkways that are connected to major destinations. As described in Section 6.1, “Transportation and Circulation,” the project, with mitigation, would provide adequate on-site pedestrian circulation on the project site including access to open space, recreation, retail, light rail, and commercial centers. Therefore, the project would be consistent with this policy.

The City requires major employment centers (e.g., 50 or more employees) to provide adequate bike lockers and parking areas. As described in Section 6.1, “Transportation and Circulation,” mitigation recommended for the project would ensure that adequate bicycle parking facilities are provided at the project site. Therefore, the project would be consistent with this policy.

NOISE

The City requires new development projects to prepare an acoustical report to determine noise levels associated with the project and provide mitigation, where necessary, to reduce noise exposure to normally acceptable levels except where such measures are not feasible (Goal A, Policy 1 and 2). Where noise levels are consistent with the City’s noise ordinance, no further action is required (Goal A, Policy 3). A detailed noise acoustical study was prepared for the project and presented in Section 6.2, “Noise.” As described therein, the project would result in significant long-term operational traffic noise and land use compatibility noise impacts. Mitigation recommended for the project would substantially reduce project-related noise impacts and would include measures (e.g., berms, walls, re-orientation of homes) consistent with the City’s noise ordinances (Goal C, Policy 2) to reduce noise impact to a less-than-significant level. Therefore, the project would be consistent with the City’s noise policies.

PUBLIC FACILITIES AND SERVICES

The City requires that new developments provide adequate public facilities to serve the development including water, wastewater, fire, police, drainage, and parks and recreation. The project includes development of a project-specific community plan, financing plan, and stand-alone PUD guidelines. The financing plan would establish the funding mechanisms necessary to fund public facility expansions and/or extensions. Sections 6.4, “Utilities,” 6.5, “Public Services,” and 6.6, “Parks and Open Spaces,” of this EIR describe specifically how utilities and public services would be provided to the Greenbriar project. As described therein, provisions would be made to ensure adequate funding, installation, and maintenance of utilities and public services to serve the project. The project includes the joint-use of a park site with an elementary school (Goal A, Policy 3 – Parks and Recreation), all on-site drainage facilities are adequately sized (Goal A, Policy 1 – Drainage), and adequate police, fire, and water facilities would be provided (Goal A, Policies 1, 2, and 4 – Fire Service; Goal A, Policy 1 – Police Service; Goal A, Policy 1 – Water). Further, park facilities would be provided on-site in a manner that is consistent with the elements of the City’s Parks and Recreation Master Plan. Amenities planned for on-site parks would be fully described in the PUD guidelines. Therefore, the project would be consistent with the City’s public facilities and services policies.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

The City requires that new developments construct proposed facilities in conformance with the Uniform Building Code, construct facilities outside of flood prone areas or across fault traces, and adequately investigate the potential for geological hazards on-site (e.g., liquefaction, expansive soils). As described in Section 6.8, “Public Health and Hazards,” the project would be located outside the FEMA-designated 100-year flood plain, would construct facilities in accordance with Uniform Building Code standards, and would implement measures to eliminate any potential geologic hazards. Therefore, the project would be consistent with the City’s health and safety policies.

URBAN GROWTH

The City requires new development projects to be compatible with adjacent developments. The Greenbriar project would result in the development of a residential neighborhood incorporating low density, medium density, and high density housing along with parks, commercial uses, and a linear open space/buffer along its western boundary. The project would be compatible with existing residential development located immediately east of the site, proposed residential development to the south, and the Metro Air Parkway development to the west, as this residential development is similar in nature to the proposed project.

It is the policy of the City to work with LAFCo to adjust the LAFCo SOI to be in conformity with the City’s adopted annexation policy. The most relevant adopted policy regarding annexation is the City/County Joint Vision Plan MOU. The consistency of the project with this adopted MOU is examined later in this analysis.

CONSERVATION AND OPEN SPACE

The City of Sacramento promotes retaining land inside its boundaries for agricultural use until the need for development arises, and the support of actions of Sacramento County to similarly conserve its land until needed for urban growth. Development in the North Natomas area has occurred fairly rapidly since adoption of the NNCP in 1994. Of the properties that are currently designated for low-density residential, there is not a known site that could accommodate a development similar to the Greenbriar project (in size) that is not already being pursued for development by other property owners. This rapid development and demand for residential properties demonstrate that there is a need for residential properties, in addition to those within the current city boundaries of the Natomas area. In addition, because the project site is contiguous with the existing NNCP boundaries, and is inline with planned future extension of light rail, the project site provides for the orderly extension of the North Natomas community. For these reasons, the project would be consistent with the City’s policy to conserve agricultural land until it is needed for urban growth and supporting the phasing of the conversion of agricultural land while implementing the policies of the NNCP.

5.4.3 CONSISTENCY WITH THE SACRAMENTO LAFCO POLICIES, STANDARDS, AND PROCEDURES

SPHERES OF INFLUENCE

LAFCo requires the submittal of a current Sphere of Influence Master Service Element before it will approve additions to a SOI. Alternatively, a project specific Municipal Services Review may be considered by LAFCo in lieu of the Master Service Element update. The Municipal Review may be prepared by the City of Sacramento and submitted to LAFCo for consideration (Brundage, pers. comm., 2005). A Municipal Services Review has been prepared for the project (Wood Rodgers 2005). Sections 6.4, “Utilities,” and 6.5, “Public Services,” provide a more detailed analysis of how public services and utilities would be provided to the site. These information sources would be reviewed by LAFCo and could not be approved until it is demonstrated that the project would comply with LAFCo’s requirements related to the provision of public services and utilities.

As described in Chapter 3.0, the project would require an expansion of the City's SOI and city limits. This would take place before the City's initial actions to amend the General Plan to reflect potential residential development at the project site. LAFCo does not typically approve amendment proposals for areas of prime agricultural land if sufficient alternative land is available for annexation within the existing SOI.

The project site consists of 329 acres of Prime Farmland, 68 acres of Farmland of Statewide Importance, 68 acres of Farmland of Local Importance, and 53 acres of Unique Farmland. Conversion of the project site to nonagricultural use would be considered a significant impact, as further described in Section 6.11, "Agriculture."

As previously noted, development in the North Natomas area has occurred fairly rapidly since adoption of the NNCP in 1994. Of the properties that are currently designated for low-density residential, there is not a known site that could accommodate a development similar to the Greenbriar project (in size) that is not already being pursued for development by other property owners. This rapid development and demand for residential properties demonstrate that there is a need for residential properties, in addition to those within the current city boundaries of the North Natomas area. Thus, the proposed project appears to be consistent with the LAFCo requirement that Sphere expansions containing prime agricultural land not be supported unless there is no alternative land available for annexation within the existing SOI.

AGRICULTURAL LAND CONSERVATION

The following provides a summary of the consistency of the proposed project with LAFCo's policies related to agricultural land conversion.

- ▶ The proposed project would be contiguous with the adjacent development to the east, west, and south which consists of lands developed or approved for urban use or lands that have received all discretionary approvals for urban development.
- ▶ The project is not currently consistent with the planned SOI for the City of Sacramento. However, the necessary analysis has been prepared to update the Master Services Element and provide for public services and utilities.
- ▶ Development of a substantial portion of the proposed project would occur within 5 years, consistent with LAFCo policy. Construction of the proposed project is anticipated to begin in the spring of 2007. The development would be expected to be fully built and occupied in the fall of 2012.
- ▶ As previously noted, development in the North Natomas area has occurred fairly rapidly since adoption of the NNCP in 1994. Of the properties currently designated for low-density residential, there is no known site that could accommodate a development similar to the Greenbriar project (in size) that is not already being pursued for development by other property owners. Thus, it can be concluded that insufficient vacant nonprime land exists within the City's SOI. Furthermore, because of its logical connection to the North Natomas community, the project site is highly accessible.

LAFCo requires the determination of whether the project would have a significant adverse effect on the physical and economic integrity of other agricultural lands. Although the project site is in proximity to other agricultural lands, agricultural lands located to the west would be physically separated from the project site through a proposed open space buffer. Irrespective, these lands are in the process of being developed with commercial land uses consistent with the County's recently approved Metro Airpark Development. Because agricultural lands located to the north are envisioned for future urban development under the Joint Vision Plan, a physical separation between the project site and these agricultural lands has been determined unnecessary by the City of Sacramento. In addition, urban land either already exists or is planned to the east and south of the project site. Public facilities for the project would only be sized for the project itself, and the provision of these services to the

site is not expected to induce any additional growth. For these reasons, it is not anticipated that the project would lead to negative effects on nearby agricultural properties.

PUBLIC FACILITIES AND SERVICES

LAFCo requires the determination of whether public services are adequate and available to serve inhabitants living on the project site. Although the project site is not within the sphere of influence for the Sacramento Regional County Sanitation District (SRCSD), the project would amend the SOI's for both SRCSD thereby allowing wastewater collection service be provided to the project as discussed in Section 6.4, "Utilities." All other public services (e.g., police, fire, water supply, solid waste collection) would be provided directly by the City of Sacramento and would be readily available to serve inhabitants of the project at their highest quality as discussed in Sections 6.4, "Utilities" and 6.5, "Public Services." For these reasons, all required public services and facilities would be available to the serve the project at their highest quality and within the specified timeframe needed.

5.4.4 CONSISTENCY WITH CITY/COUNTY NORTH NATOMAS JOINT VISION PLAN MOU

OPEN SPACE

The Greenbriar project has been developed in coordination with existing and planned open space programs. These programs and studies to support these programs are currently on-going. The project includes a 250-foot linear open space/buffer along the western edge of the project site, which is consistent with the open space principles set forth in the City/County Joint Vision Plan MOU. In addition, the project applicant is proposing to dedicate two properties (contiguous with each other and north, but not adjacent to the project site) that total 289 acres as off-site compensation for biological resource effects. The applicant is proposing to implement a restoration plan for this compensation site, which would include components of riparian woodland, perennial marsh, and grassland or alfalfa cropland habitats. For conservation and management, the property would be dedicated to the Natomas Basin Conservancy, which is responsible for implementing the NBHCP and the management of related conservation lands. As described in Section 6.6, "Parks and Open Space," the project would be required to mitigate for its loss of on-site open space and habitat (total of 577 acres) at a 1:1 mitigation ratio (0.5:1.0 open space, 0.5:1.0 habitat) based on the principles agreed to in the City/County Joint Vision Plan MOU. A portion of the mitigation would be provided through on-site open space buffers, corridors, and the lake/detention basin. The remaining portion would be provided at off-site locations (including properties dedicated for off-site biological habitat) determined in consultation with the City. Additionally, in the event that mitigation ratios change as a result of on-going studies in support of the City/County Joint Vision Plan MOU before issuance of grading permits, the project applicant would comply with the revised policy. For these reasons, the proposed project is consistent with the open space principles and mitigation requirements set forth in the City/County Joint Vision Plan MOU.

FUTURE GROWTH

The City and County have acknowledged that the City is the appropriate agent for planning new growth in the North Natomas area. For this reason, the Greenbriar development is being considered by the City of Sacramento, rather than the County. As previously discussed, the Greenbriar project is being proposed as an extension of the NNCP, which provides for a well-integrated mixture of residential, employment, commercial, and civic uses, interdependent on quality transit service with connections linking activity centers with streets, transit routes, and linear parkways with pedestrian/bike trails. The project builds upon the vision of the currently planned growth in North Natomas and is a logical extension of the NNCP. The Greenbriar project would not conflict with the principle of fostering development patterns which achieve a whole and complete, mixed-use community, consistent with adopted smart growth principles. For these reasons, the proposed project is consistent with the future growth principles set forth in the City/County Joint Vision Plan MOU.

5.4.5 CONSISTENCY WITH THE SACOG BLUEPRINT

The SACOG Blueprint is advisory and does not bind agencies within the Blueprint area to action. If a literal interpretation of the Blueprint preferred scenario map was taken, it would likely interpret that the Greenbriar site would continue the development pattern of the surrounding NNCP properties, which would mean that the site would be used for single-family small lot and high-density mixed residential development, as currently proposed. SACOG warns against a literal interpretation of the preferred scenario map, so it is most appropriate to consider whether the project is a logical extension of the NNCP, which generally adheres to the future growth principles set forth by the SACOG Blueprint. The proposed project would include a mixture of residential densities by incorporating medium-density and high-density residential on the project site. Thus, the project site would provide housing diversity and would create a compact development. The majority of the project site is proposed to be developed for medium-density residential. This type of land use is appropriate given its location at the edge of the North Natomas community. In addition, the project would develop commercial land uses on-site providing residents with easy access to neighborhood commercial services.

The project is further consistent with the Blueprint principles because the project would be accessible to several transportation choices, which would allow and encourage people to walk, ride bicycles, ride the bus, and/or use light rail. Specifically, residential uses would be within walking distance of the mixed-use core center and a new light rail station centrally located on the project site. In addition, pedestrian and bicycle pathways extending throughout the project site for providing easy access to all portions of the project site.

5.4.6 CONSISTENCY WITH OTHER RELEVANT PLANS AND POLICIES

The project would be subject to the policies of the Sacramento International Airport's Comprehensive Land Use Plan (CLUP) and The Natomas Basin Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP), as it relates to preparation of an analysis of effects on the HCP. Consistency with these plans are described as impact evaluated in the DEIR. Section 6.8, "Public Health and Hazards," evaluates the project's consistency with the CLUP and Section 6.12, "Biological Resources," evaluates the project's consistency with the HCP.