

SECTION 2: PROJECT DESCRIPTION

This Recirculated Draft Environmental Impact Report (Recirculated Draft EIR) analyzes the potential environmental effects of the proposed City of Elk Grove Sphere of Influence Amendment (SOIA) project (LAFC # 09-10), immediately south-southwest of the City of Elk Grove, California. The City has proposed to amend its current SOI boundary to be able to, once approved, comprehensively plan for the logical future growth of the City. The SOIA boundary described in this Recirculated Draft EIR is the same as was analyzed in the original Draft EIR.

The proposed SOIA for the City of Elk Grove (City) is an important policy instrument used in implementing the Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Local Government Reorganization Act of 2000 (CKH). A Sphere of Influence (SOI) is defined by Government Code section 56425 as “a plan for the probable physical boundary and service area of a local governmental agency, as determined by LAFCo” For the purposes of this document, the area within the project boundary is referred to as the SOIA Area. The SOIA Area represents territory adjacent to the service area of a jurisdiction where services might reasonably be expected to be provided in the next 20 years. For a limited-service agency such as the City of Elk Grove, approval of an SOIA by LAFCo indicates that the Commission has designated the amended SOIA Area as appropriate for planning purposes for potential future urbanization. While designation of territory within the City’s SOI does not define or identify specific development projects, change or modify land use jurisdiction or zoning, or grant land use entitlements, it may be viewed as an indicator of the potential urbanization of the area. Various other service providers will independently prepare necessary plans to secure the SOIA Area in the event of an annexation. However, the approval by LAFCo of this or any other SOIA does not authorize any change in land use or governance. The CKH further requires that a Municipal Service Review (MSR) be conducted prior to or in conjunction with the update or amendment of a Sphere of Influence, as necessary. Although the proposed SOIA would amend the City’s Sphere of Influence boundaries, property within the amended SOI would not be within the City’s jurisdiction until future requests for annexation of property are approved by LAFCo. If and when future requests for annexation are approved, the newly annexed property would be within the City’s jurisdiction and subject to applicable City General Plan policies and regulations. Approval of the SOIA project does not commit the City to development of any particular uses or the maximum amount of development described for this Recirculated Draft EIR. If the SOIA project is approved, future development will be driven by market conditions and future planning decisions by the City of Elk Grove, in terms of timing and type and intensity of development.

2.1 - Project Location and Setting

2.1.1 - Location

The SOIA Area is located in the unincorporated area of Sacramento County, California. The SOIA Area is generally located south-southwest of the existing City of Elk Grove boundaries (Exhibit 2-1) close to the community of Franklin-Laguna. More specifically, the area subject to this application by the City for an SOIA is described as the areas south of Bilby Road, Kammerer Road, and Grant Line Road, extending south to Eschinger Road and the edge of the 100-year floodplain boundary of the Cosumnes River; east toward the Cosumnes River and just past Freeman Road; and west toward Interstate 5 (I-5) and the Union Pacific Railroad tracks (Exhibit 2-2). The proposed boundary does not reach the Cosumnes River east of State Route 99 (SR-99) but follows the 100-year Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)-designated floodplain. The proposed SOIA Area is located on the Elk Grove, California, United States Geological Survey 7.5-minute topographic quadrangle map, Township 6 North, Range 5 East, Section 13 (Latitude 38°21'37" North; Longitude 121°23'02" West). Photographs of the project site are provided in Exhibit 2-3a and Exhibit 2-3b.

Existing Conditions

City of Elk Grove

The City of Elk Grove consists of approximately 42 square miles (26,974 acres) in the southern portion of Sacramento County. Urban land uses generally consist of residential, commercial, office, industrial, recreational, and public uses within and adjacent to the City of Elk Grove. Natural features within the City's General Plan planning area include the Stone Lakes National Wildlife Refuge, the Cosumnes River, the Sacramento River associated tributaries (such as Deer Creek, Morrison Creek, and Laguna Creek), vegetation communities consisting of valley oak woodland, annual grassland, valley foothill riparian, and agricultural lands.

Project Site

The 7,869-acre project site primarily contains agricultural uses consisting of fallow/row crops/nursery, orchards, vineyard, and dairy, poultry, and livestock operations. Few structures exist within the project site, and these are limited to barns, rural housing, storage sheds, and related structures. A small area surrounding the intersections of Hood Franklin Road/County Road J8 and Bilby Road/County Road J8 is developed with relatively suburban uses. This area is identified as the Old Town Franklin community. The existing land uses in this community can be described as a mix of rural housing, light industrial, commercial, and public facilities. Franklin Cemetery is located at the intersection of Franklin Boulevard and Hood Franklin Road. Sunset Skyranch Airport (Elk Grove Airport) is a privately owned airport that lies in the eastern portion of the project area, immediately adjacent to the existing Elk Grove city limits. Effective July 1, 2010, the airport was closed. Exhibit 2-4 shows the existing land uses on the project site.

The project site is mapped as containing 446.4 acres of Prime Farmland and 4,862.8 acres of Farmland of Statewide Importance. Both designations fall under the Important Farmland umbrella as classified by the California Department of Conservation Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program.

Approximately 2,474 acres of the project site are covered by active, multiple Williamson Act contracts. Some property owners have filed a Notice of Non-Renewal on approximately 548.8 acres to initiate termination of the contract. Exhibit 2-5 shows the SOIA Area properties that are active and for which a Non-Renewal Notice has been filed.

The proposed SOIA Area is located within the South Sacramento Habitat Conservation Plan (SSHCP) area. The SSHCP is a regional approach to addressing issues related to urban development, habitat conservation, and habitat protection. A portion of the SOIA Area west of SR-99 and south of Kammerer Road is located outside of the SSHCP's currently designated Urban Development Area. No conservation or mitigation sites exist with the project area except in the westernmost portions, where some parcels within the Stone Lakes National Wildlife Refuge are protected by a perpetual conservation agreement or owned by a conservancy group (see Exhibit 3.10-3).

2.1.2 - Surrounding Land Uses

Exhibit 2-6 shows the surrounding communities.

West

The Stone Lakes National Wildlife Refuge, managed by the US Fish and Wildlife Service and which protects natural habitats and agricultural resources, forms the western boundary of the project site. The boundary for Stone Lakes National Wildlife Refuge was established in 1994 and includes a core refuge area of approximately 9,000 acres and an approximately 9,000-acre "Cooperative Wildlife Management Area" where the US Fish and Wildlife service may seek to enter into cooperative agreements and memoranda of understanding with landowners or purchase of conservation easements. The Stone Lakes National Wildlife Refuge lies within the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta. Land uses within the refuge include aquatic habitat, annual grasslands, seasonal wetlands, pastures, oak woodlands, and agricultural uses. In addition, grazing land within the Stone Lakes National Wildlife Refuge boundary between Franklin Boulevard and Interstate 5 is under a permanent conservation easement. Agricultural uses occupy the area immediately adjacent to the proposed SOIA Area's western boundary. The County of Sacramento General Plan land use designations west of the project site include Agricultural Cropland, Natural Preserve, and Resource Conservation.

North

The project site is bounded by the City of Elk Grove to the north. Residential uses dominate the western portion of the City, and rural residential and small-scale agricultural uses prevail in the eastern portion of the City to the north of the proposed SOIA Area boundary. City of Elk Grove land use designations north of the project site include Commercial, Medium Density Residential,

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Southeast Policy Area, Low Density Residential, and Estate Residential. The Laguna Ridge Specific Plan lies approximately 0.5 mile north of Kammerer Road.

The Southeast Policy Area has no pending land use entitlements. A 2006 development application for the Southeast Policy Area was withdrawn in 2010. Any future planning for the Southeast Policy Area will need to be consistent with the General Plan's Land Use Element. Adjacent to the north is the approved Sterling Meadows project, comprising 984 single-family units and 200 multi-family units. The Lent Ranch Marketplace Special Planning Area lies to the north, with frontage along SR-99.

East

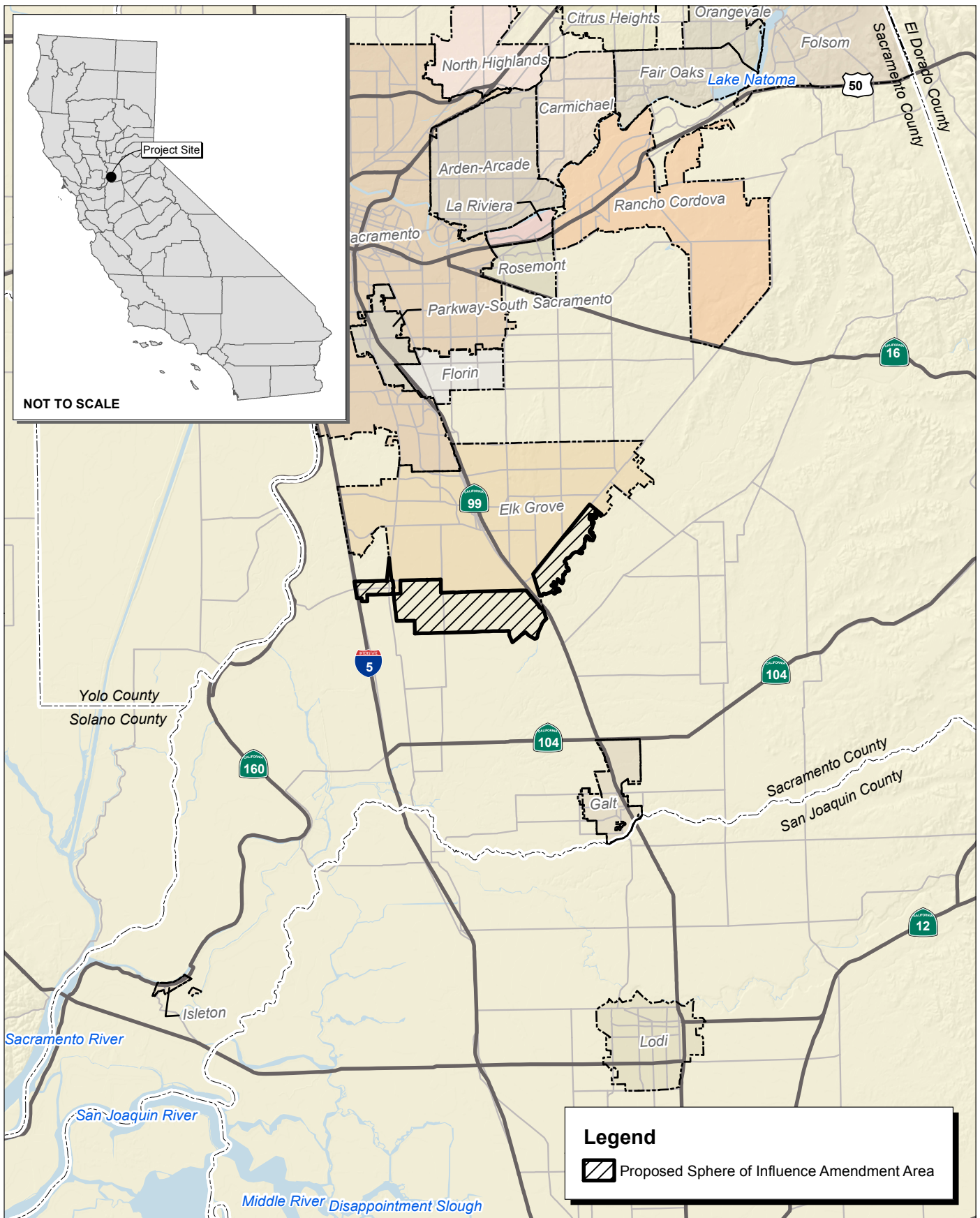
The unincorporated communities of Wilton and Sheldon lie to the east and are not part of the proposed SOIA. Wilton is primarily rural in character, and rural residential development on large lots is typical of the area. Rural residential and agricultural uses exist immediately east of the project boundary. Land in this area also lies within the FEMA 100-year floodplain of the Cosumnes River. County of Sacramento land use designations east of the project site include General Agriculture, Agricultural Cropland, Natural Preserve, and Resource Conservation.

South

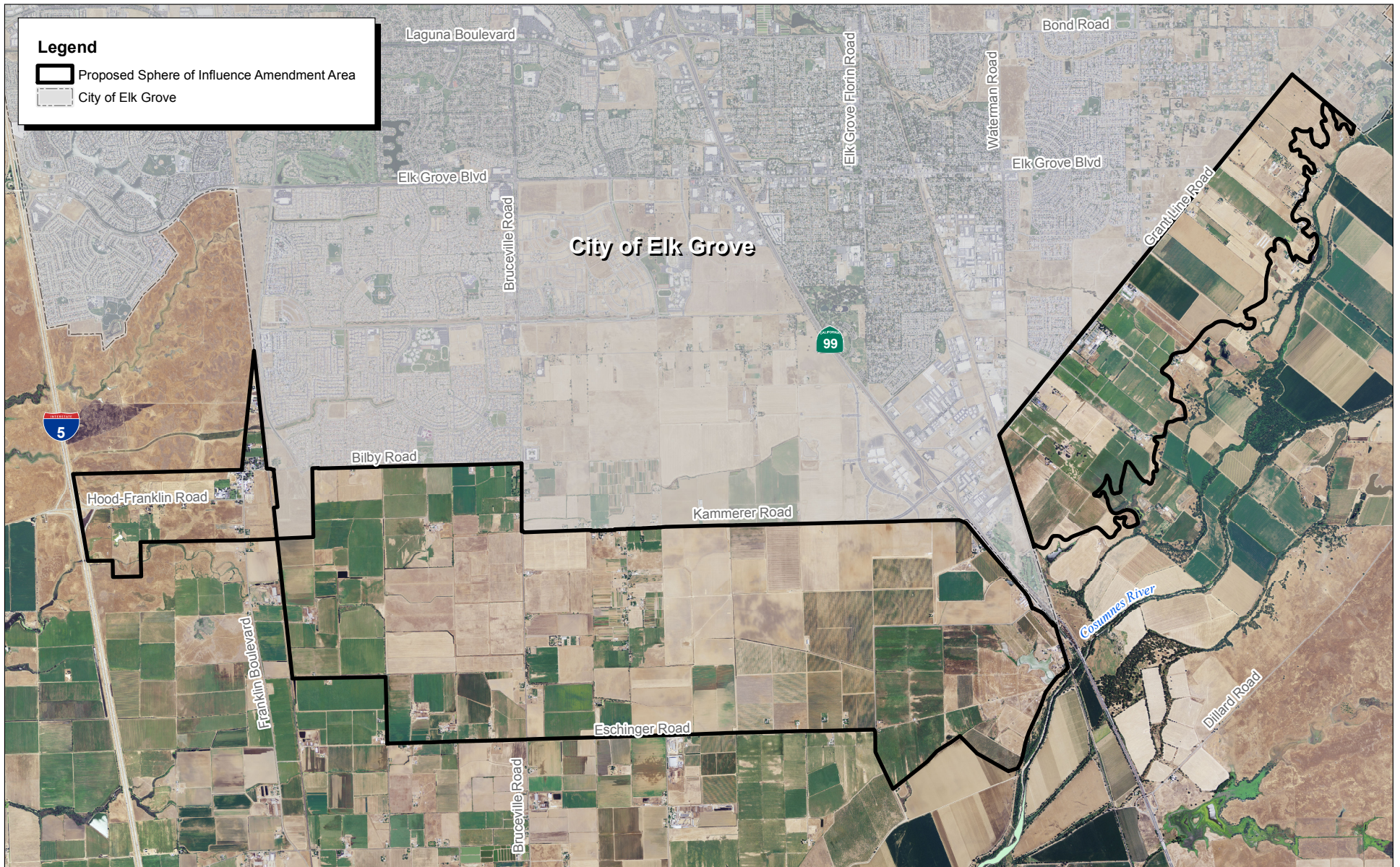
The unincorporated communities of Bruceville and Point Pleasant lie to the south and are not part of the proposed SOIA Area boundary. These communities are within the unincorporated community of Franklin-Laguna. Land uses in this area are similar to the adjacent agricultural land uses within the project site. County of Sacramento General Plan land use designations south of the project site include Agricultural Cropland. In addition, land within the legislative boundary of the Stone Lakes National Wildlife Refuge, but not under conservation easement, is located south of the project between Franklin Boulevard and Interstate 5. This land is within the Cooperative Wildlife Management Area as described above.

2.1.3 - Land Use Designations

The proposed SOIA does not change or propose to change any land use designations. The existing land uses for the project area are determined by the County's General Plan designations for the area. The current land use and zoning designations, as defined by the County's General Plan and Zoning Ordinance, are shown in Exhibit 2-7 and Exhibit 2-8, respectively. As shown in Table 2-1 and Table 2-2, the primary land use within the project site is agriculture.



Source: Census 2000 Data, The CaSIL, MBA GIS 2010.



Source: Sacramento County NAIP, 2009, County of Sacramento, City of Elk Grove, 2009.



Michael Brandman Associates

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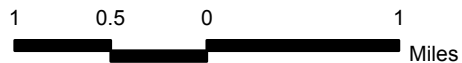


Exhibit 2-2 Local Vicinity Map Aerial Base



View of the Sunset Sky Ranch Airport (Elk Grove Airport).



Typical View of the Project Area west of Highway 99.



View of the Project Area from Rau Road looking west.



View of the Barn near the south end of Rau Road.

Source: Michael Brandman Associates, 2011.



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Exhibit 2-3a Site Photographs

SACRAMENTO LAFCo • ELK GROVE SPHERE OF INFLUENCE AMENDMENT
RECIRCULATED DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT



View of the Vineyards at the southeast corner from Eschinger Road.



View of the Union Pacific Railroad Looking east on Core Road.



View of the Franklin Cemetery from Hood Franklin Road.



View of the Suburban Development in Old Town Franklin area.

Source: Michael Brandman Associates, 2011.

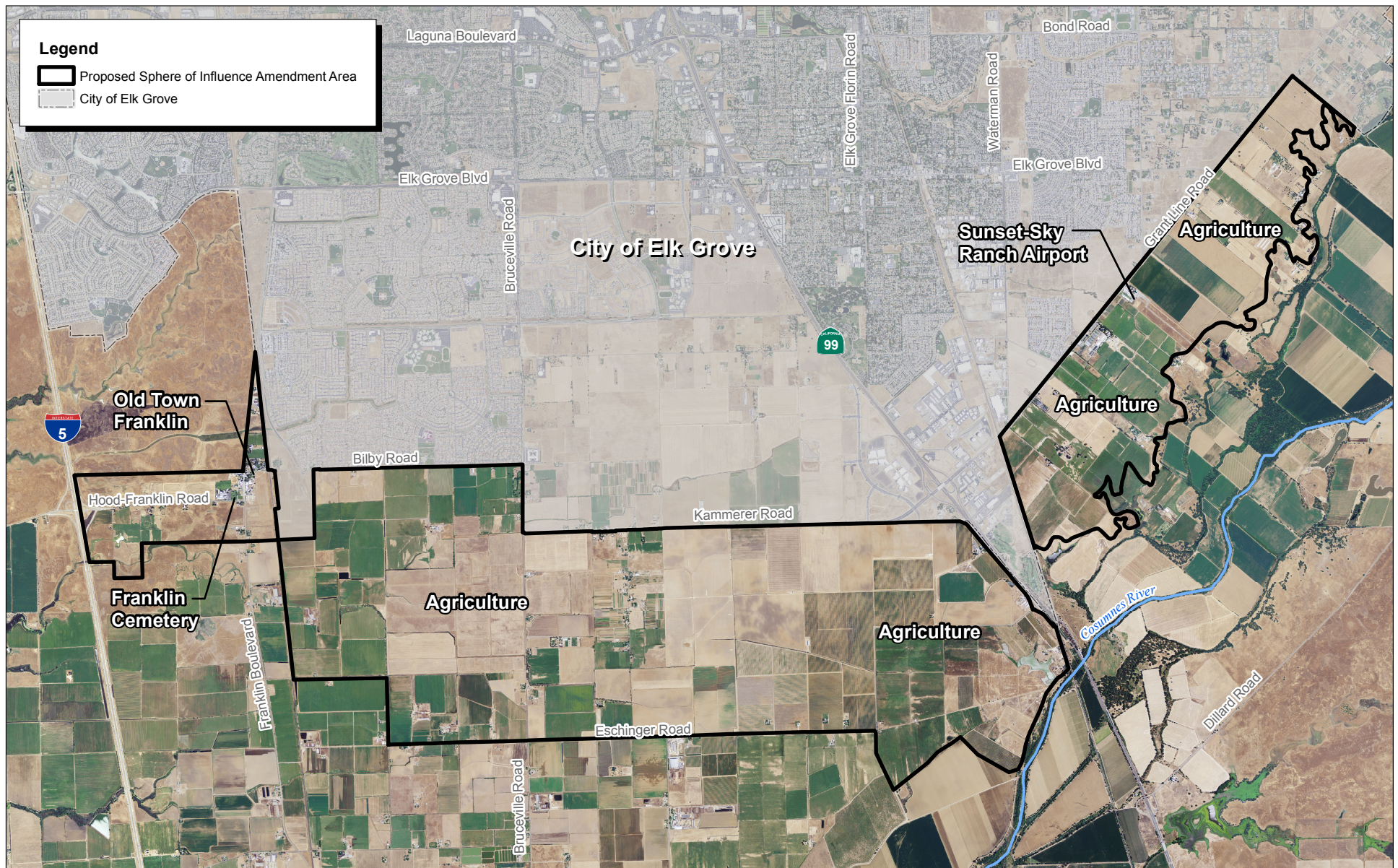


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Exhibit 2-3b Site Photographs

SACRAMENTO LAFCo • ELK GROVE SPHERE OF INFLUENCE AMENDMENT
RECIRCULATED DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT



Source: Sacramento County NAIP, 2009, County of Sacramento, City of Elk Grove, 2009.

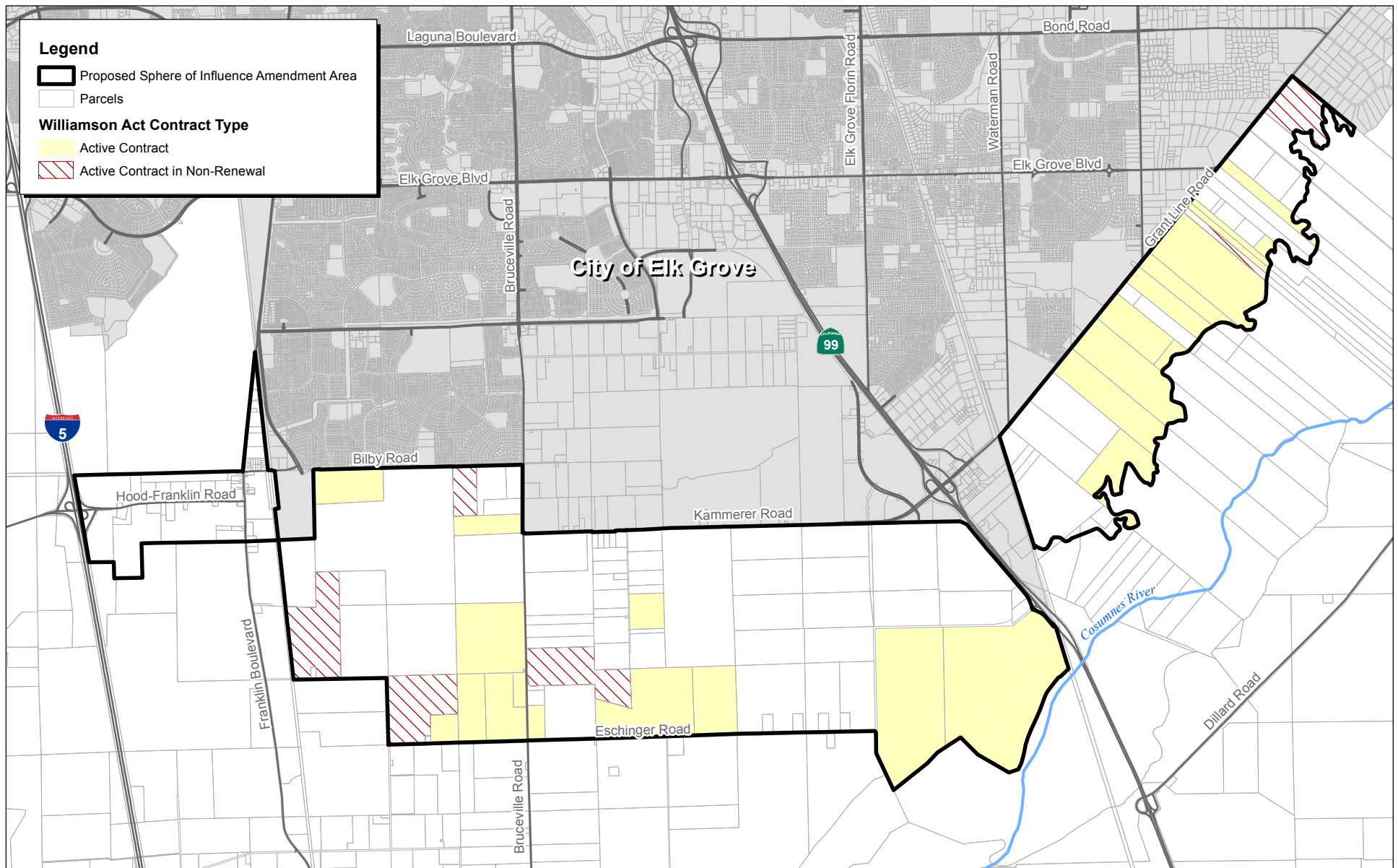


Table 2-1: Existing Land Use

County General Plan Land Use	Acreage
Agricultural Cropland	6,047.5
Agricultural Residential	83.8
Commercial/Office	6.9
General Agriculture (20 acre)	1,511.2
Intensive Industrial	37.9
Low Density Residential	29.7
Natural Preserve	78.2
Total¹	7,795.1
Notes: 1. Total acreage does not equal 7,869 because it represents net acreage based on Sacramento County General Plan 2030 land use designations (adopted in 2009) without land assumed for right of way. Source: City of Elk Grove.	

Table 2-2: Existing Zoning

County Zoning	Acreage
A2 ^a	53
Agricultural-20 acres (AG20)	302
Agricultural-40 acres (AG40)	53
Agricultural-80 acres (AG80)	7,328
Agricultural Residential-2 acres (AR2)	18
Agricultural Residential-10 acres (AR10)	50
Limited Commercial zone (LC)	8
Heavy Industrial (M2)	20
Single Family Zone (R-1-A)	35
RR	2
Total	7,869
Note: ^a Multiple zoning designations: Agricultural-40 acres (AG40), Agricultural-80 acres (AG80) Source: County of Sacramento, 2009.	

2.2 - Project Characteristics

The proposed project consists of a request initiated by the Elk Grove City Council (Resolution #2008-54) to the Sacramento Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCo) to amend the City of Elk Grove's SOI. The current SOI is coterminous with the City boundary. The application to amend the

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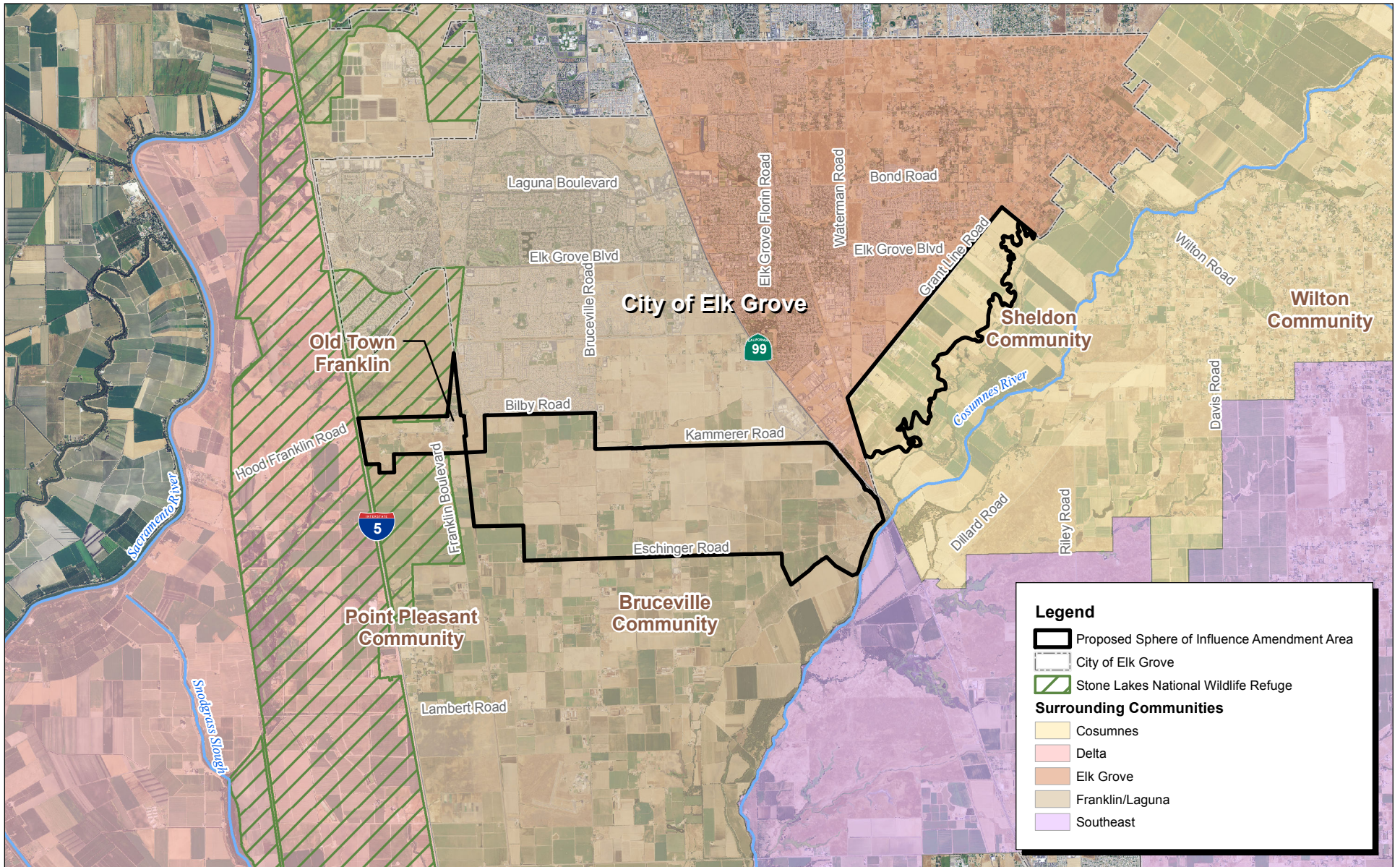
SOI includes 7,869 acres generally described as the areas south of Bilby Road/Kammerer Road and Grant Line Road, as shown in Exhibit 2-2. Current City of Elk Grove land use projections indicate that future growth may require additional lands outside of the current City boundary.¹ The City's available residential, industrial, and commercial land inventory is in the process of building out and may be unable to accommodate all anticipated urban growth within the city limits. As a result, the City needs to establish a direction to accommodate its anticipated future growth by designating an area for long-term planning that also allows for a beneficial jobs/housing balance. For purposes of analyzing environmental impacts, LAFCo has developed land use assumptions in the following sections that would allow LAFCo to understand environmental effects of expanding the City's SOI that may result from potential growth during future annexations. There are no specific land use entitlements proposed at this time in conjunction with the proposed SOIA. California Government Code Section 65300 provides that a city may comprehensively plan for lands outside of its jurisdiction without the area being within an approved SOI. However, while the Elk Grove City Council has expressed its desire to have the proposed SOI area master planned, the Council has explicitly stated that no comprehensive planning of the area will occur until LAFCo approves the SOIA. Therefore, for the purposes of analyzing potential environmental impacts of the projects, land use assumptions were developed by LAFCo in consultation with City Staff by utilizing the City of Elk Grove's General Plan designation mix and ratios that would occur within the city limits by the City's General Plan buildout, as described further below.

The current City boundaries with coterminous SOI encompass 26,974 acres. The proposed SOIA would expand the existing SOI, not city limits, by 7,869 acres, or by 29 percent, to a total Sphere of Influence of 34,843 acres. However, anticipated future growth and expansion through the annexation process would be limited to areas outside of the FEMA 100-year floodplain, in accordance with Elk Grove Safety Policy SA 15. Likewise, the Central Valley Flood Management Planning Program will require 200-year floodplain protection for urban areas. This would limit future growth to 6,882 acres of the proposed 7,869-acre SOI expansion, leaving 13 percent of the area for non-urban uses, such as open space. Table 2-3 shows the total acreages in the existing and proposed SOIA areas.

Table 2-3: Existing and Proposed Sphere of Influence Area

SOI Boundary	Acreage
Current City boundaries/SOI	26,974
Proposed SOI Amendment	7,869
Overall SOI area	34,843
Source: City of Elk Grove, Sphere of Influence Amendment Application, 2010.	

¹ City of Elk Grove, Sphere of Influence Amendment Application, 2010.



Source: Sacramento County NAIP, 2009, County of Sacramento, City of Elk Grove, 2009. USFWS National Cadastral Data, 2011.



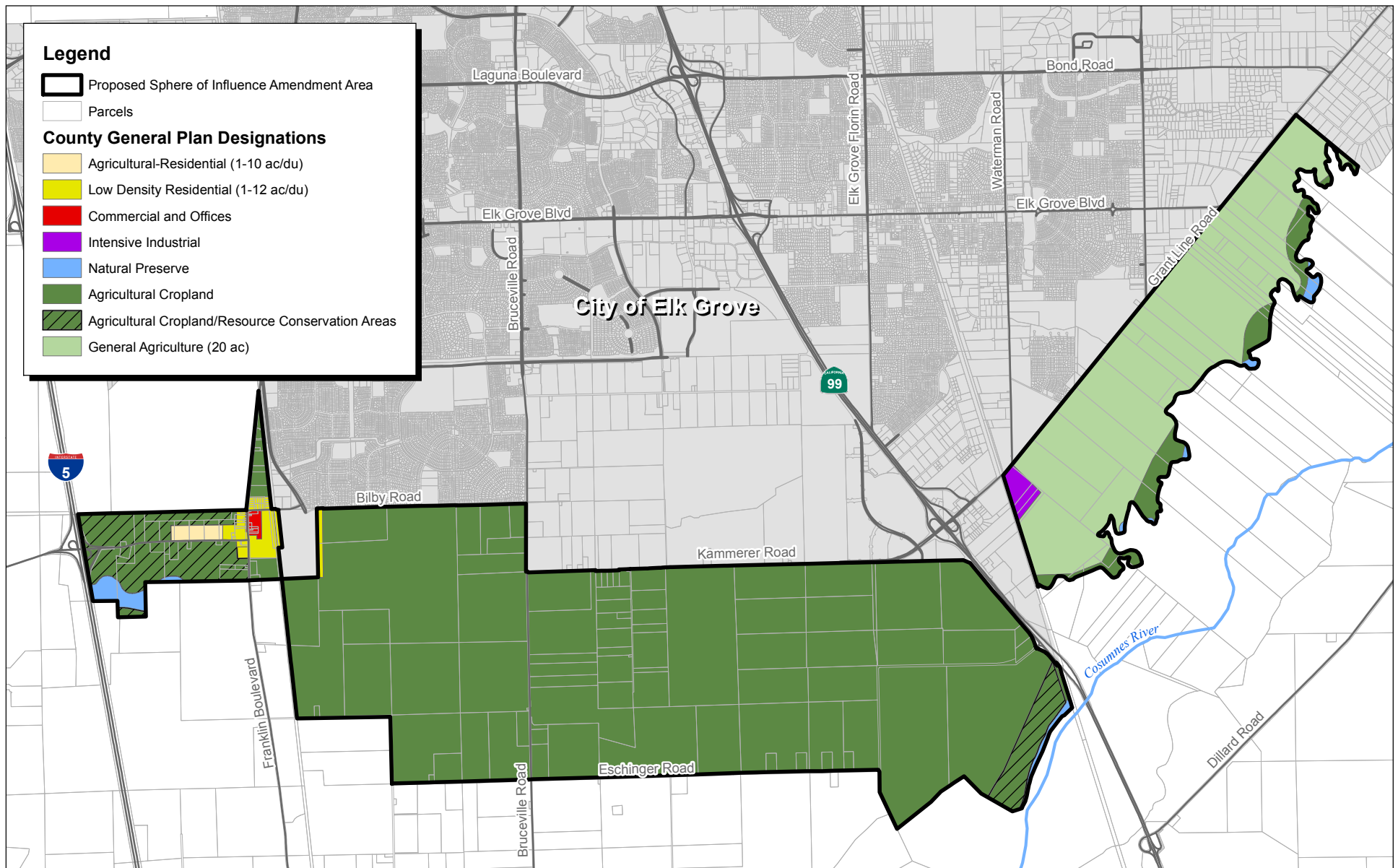
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Feet

Michael Brandman Associates

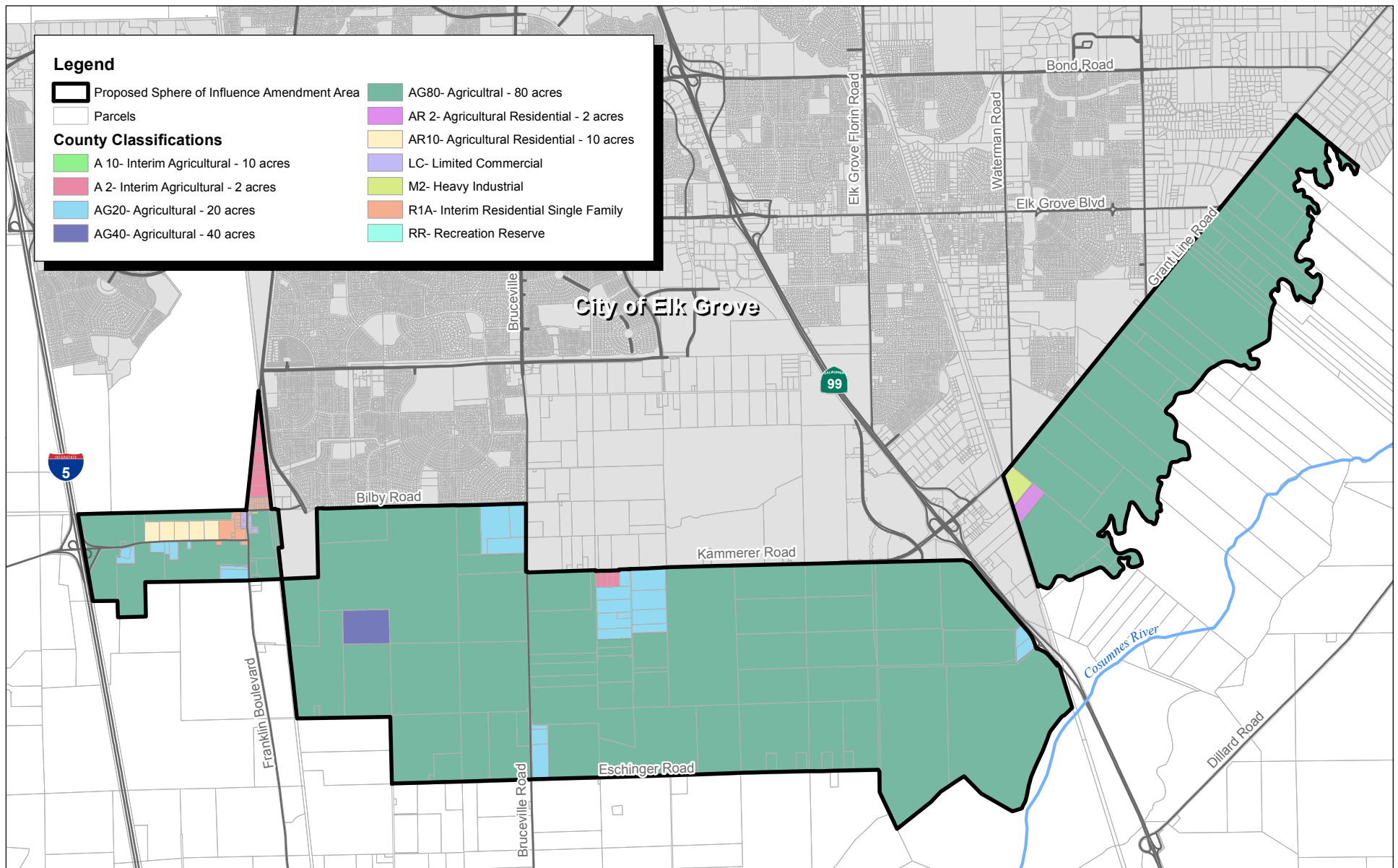
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Exhibit 2-6 Surrounding Communities

SACRAMENTO LAFCo • ELK GROVE SPHERE OF INFLUENCE AMENDMENT
RECIRCULATED DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT



Source: Sacramento County NAIP, 2009, County of Sacramento, City of Elk Grove, 2009.



Source: Sacramento County NAIP, 2009, County of Sacramento, City of Elk Grove, 2009.



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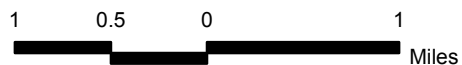


Exhibit 2-8 Existing County Zoning Classifications

SACRAMENTO LAFCo • ELK GROVE SPHERE OF INFLUENCE AMENDMENT
RECIRCULATED DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT

Nearby communities of interest include the unincorporated communities of Bruceville, Old Town Franklin, Point Pleasant, Sheldon, and Wilton. Bruceville and Point Pleasant are south of the proposed SOIA Area. Old Town Franklin is immediately adjacent to the City of Elk Grove and is included within the proposed SOIA Area. Wilton is located across the Cosumnes River, outside of the proposed SOIA Area.

The City of Elk Grove and the County of Sacramento have continued to work collaboratively to establish a “joint vision” shared between the City and County regarding the future planning and preservation activities within the City’s proposed SOIA Area. The proposed SOIA is consistent with these ongoing discussions.

Land Use Assumptions

The following land use assumptions are intended to provide a general concept of the future and potential impacts that may result from future development in the SOIA Area. As previously stated, these assumptions have been developed by LAFCo staff, in consultation with City Staff, for the purposes of understanding possible environmental effects that should be considered with future annexation proposals. They do not necessarily represent the City’s vision for land use distribution in the SOIA Area. The project land use assumptions were calculated using the City’s General Plan designations applied within the City. The City’s General Plan land use designation mix and ratios that would be developed within the city limits by General Plan buildout are provided in Table 2-5. It is reasonably foreseeable that the City would develop the SOIA Area with generally the same mix and ratios of General Plan designations as would be developed within the City at the City’s General Plan buildout.

As previously stated, the project does not include development proposals, but would allow the City to submit annexation requests to LAFCo at a future date for areas within the SOIA Area. It is not known at this time if annexation of the SOIA Area would occur in multiple phases or as one application. It is possible that the City may request annexation of the entire SOIA Area or submit multiple annexation applications for portions of the SOIA Area. In addition, it is possible that the City may develop a phased annexation program to further guide development within the SOIA Area.

In consultation with the City, LAFCo has provided projected growth and land needs outside the existing city limits/SOI. The City’s General Plan includes a policy (LU-10) that calls for the City to designate “sufficient lands in all employment-generating categories to provide a minimum 1:1 correspondence between Elk Grove’s working population and jobs.” Elk Grove’s goal is to have enough land available for future development to provide a range of employment, shopping, and living options for City residents. The development projects approved by Sacramento County and the City over the past 20 years have provided a number of residential and commercial opportunities, but have not addressed the long-term employment needs.

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As shown in Table 2-4, the City expects that it would require a total of 6,327 acres outside of the city limits to accommodate the City's projected job and housing growth to 2035. The amount of land projected for employment-oriented land uses would be 34 percent and residential uses 66 percent. The proposed SOIA Area incorporates 7,869 acres, of which only 6,882 acres are developable, as discussed earlier. Assuming the same percentages, land available for employment-generating uses would be 2,340 acres, and land available for residential uses would be 4,542 acres within the SOIA Area. The SOIA area is not identified for development within the current adopted MTP/SCS planning period.

Table 2-4: City of Elk Grove Future Land Demand Projections

Land Demand Projections	MTP/SCS 2035 Draft Preferred Scenario
Existing Employment Land Acres	5,198
Employees Percent Difference between 2008 and 2035	67%
Projected 2035 Employment Land Acres*	8,706
Employment Land Acreage Needed	3,508
Existing Residential Land Acres	16,803
Dwelling Units Percent Difference between 2008 and 2035	35%
Projected 2035 Residential Land Acres*	22,628
Residential Land Acreage Needed	5,825
New Growth Acreage Needed	9,333
Available Vacant Land within Existing City (includes greenfield and infill acreage)	2,918
Total Acreage Needed Outside Existing City	6,328
Notes: Based on SACOG's Draft MTP/SCS 2035 Update – Appendix E-3 Land Use Forecast Background Documentation (see Table 3.0-2) * Assumes Sterling Meadows Policy Area, Southeast Area Specific Plan, Laguna Ridge Specific Plan, and Elk Grove Triangle Policy Areas, plus 500 acres of other areas within the City are currently vacant Source: City of Elk Grove, Draft Municipal Service Review, March 2012.	

The land use assumptions used for the proposed SOIA Area are based on the buildout assumptions used for the 2003 City of Elk Grove General Plan Update DEIR and shown in Table 2-5. LAFCo and MBA utilized the same ratios of development for the identified land use categories and to develop a land use scenario for the SOIA Area, as shown in Table 2-6.

**Table 2-5: City of Elk Grove General Plan Land Use Summary at Buildout
within the City Limits (General Plan 2003 DEIR)**

Land Use Category	Acreage	Percentage
Rural Residential (0.1 to 0.5 du/acre)	5,256	36
Estate Residential (0.6 to 4.0 du/acre)	1,034	7
Low Density Residential (4.1 to 7.0 du/acre)	7,729	53
Medium Density Residential (7.1 to 15.0 du/acre)	425	3
High Density Residential (15.1 to 30.0 du/acre)	247	2
Total	14,691	100
Office/Multi-Family (20.0 du/ac maximum)	206	6
Commercial/Office	39	1
Commercial/Office/Multi-Family (20.0 du/ac maximum)	45	1
Commercial	932	28
Office	65	2
Public Schools	683	21
Institution	160	5
Public/Quasi Public	325	10
Light Industry	350	11
Heavy Industry	505	15
Total	3,310	100
Note: These acreages do not include acreages within Policy Areas and Open Space Land designations shown on the Land Use Map.		

Table 2-6: Proposed Land Use Projections within the SOIA Area

Land Use Category	Acres Proposed within the SOIA
Rural Residential (0.1 to 0.5 du/acre)	1,625
Estate Residential (0.6 to 4.0 du/acre)	320
Low Density Residential (4.1 to 7.0 du/acre)	2,390
Medium Density Residential (7.1 to 15.0 du/acre)	131
High Density Residential (15.1 to 30.0 du/acre)	76
Total	4,542
Office/Multi-Family (20.0 du/ac maximum) ²	146
Commercial/Office ²	28
Commercial/Office/Multi-Family (20.0 du/ac maximum) ²	32

Table 2-6 (cont.): Proposed Land Use Projections within the SOIA Area

Land Use Category	Acres Proposed within the SOIA
Commercial	659
Office	46
Public Schools	483
Institution	113
Public/Quasi Public	230
Light Industry	247
Heavy Industry	357
Total	2,340
Open Space¹	987
Total SOIA Area	7,869
Notes: ¹ Area limited FEMA 100-year floodplain. ² Mixed-use designations have been calculated as a percentage of total acres available for employment. Source: Michael Brandman Associates, 2011.	

Roadways

A diversity of local roadways and facilities exist within or adjacent to the SOIA Area. The major roads serving the area include Bilby Road, Kammerer Road, Hood-Franklin Road, Grant Line Road, Eschinger Road, and Bruceville Road. Hood-Franklin Road, Kammerer Road, and Grant Line Road provide direct access to I-5 and SR-99. No new roads or road improvements are proposed as part of this application.

The SOIA Area currently requires minimal circulation and roadway services, as the area remains primarily agricultural. Since no specific land use plan has been defined, existing uses are expected to remain largely unchanged. Existing service providers are expected to continue the current service level. Addition of the SOIA Area would cause no additional, immediate demand for circulation and roadway infrastructure; however, it is reasonably foreseeable, based on land use assumptions, to accommodate development that is due to residential and job growth in the region that would lead to an increased demand for circulation service and roadway infrastructure in the future.

Utilities

The full array of service considerations is more fully discussed in the Municipal Services Review, which is not considered a project under CEQA.

Storm Drainage

The SOIA Area currently requires minimal storm drainage services, as the area remains primarily agricultural. Since no specific land use plan has been defined, existing uses are expected to remain the same. Existing service providers are expected to continue the current service level. Addition of the SOIA Area would cause no additional, immediate demand for municipal storm drainage service and infrastructure. Accordingly, no new storm drainage infrastructure is proposed; however, it is reasonably foreseeable, based on land use assumptions, to accommodate development that is due to land and job growth in the region that would lead to an increased demand for storm drainage infrastructure in the future.

Water

The SOIA Area currently receives municipal water services. However, the area remains primarily agricultural. Since no specific land use plan has been defined, existing uses are expected to remain the same. Existing service providers are expected to continue the current service level. Addition of the SOIA Area would cause no additional immediate demand for municipal water service, water supplies, and infrastructure. Accordingly, no new water infrastructure is proposed; however, it is reasonably foreseeable, based on land use assumptions, to accommodate development that is due to housing and job growth in the region that would lead to an increased demand for municipal water service and infrastructure may be required in the future to serve this area.

The Sacramento County Water Agency (SCWA) is one of the logical municipal water service providers in the SOIA Area. The SCWA would need to plan for the financing and extension of infrastructure and services to fully serve the entire SOIA Area as part of the comprehensive planning for the area. As a County agency, SCWA is not within the jurisdiction of LAFCo.

Wastewater

The SOIA Area currently does not require or receive any existing municipal wastewater services, as the area remains primarily agricultural. Since no specific land use plan has been defined, existing uses are expected to remain the same. There are no existing service providers. Addition of the SOIA Area would cause no additional immediate demand for municipal wastewater service and infrastructure. Accordingly, no new wastewater infrastructure is proposed; however, it is reasonably foreseeable, based on land use assumptions, that new wastewater infrastructure may be necessary to accommodate development that is due to housing and job growth in the region that would lead to an increased demand for municipal wastewater service and infrastructure in the future.

The Sacramento Area Sewer District (SASD) may be the future local sanitary sewer collection and transmission service provider for development in the SOIA Area. The Sacramento Regional County Sanitation District (SRCSD) may be the wastewater treatment service provider, under a similar scenario. The SOIA Area is not within the existing Sphere of Influence of either district. If future

annexation proposals include these service providers, the affected territory would need to annex into the SRCSD and SASD service areas.

Electricity and Natural Gas

The Sacramento Municipal Utility District (SMUD) and Pacific Gas and Electricity (PG&E) are the service providers in the SOIA Area and would remain the logical electrical and natural gas service providers if the SOIA is approved. Since no land use changes are proposed, there is no change in the existing level of electricity and natural gas services in the area. Accordingly, no new electrical or natural gas infrastructure is proposed; however, it is reasonably foreseeable, based on land use assumptions, to accommodate development that is due to housing and job growth in the region that would lead to an increased demand for electricity and natural gas services in the future.

2.2.1 - Construction Activities

The proposed project does not include any land development activity.

2.2.2 - Project Background

Over the course of 2007, the Elk Grove City Council initiated the process of comprehensively planning the Urban Study Areas as outlined in the City's General Plan. The initially identified boundary for the City's SOI was the same as the Urban Study Area boundary, extending south of the existing city limits to the edge of the 100-year floodplain boundary of the Cosumnes River. However, prior to submitting its application to LAFCo, the City and County met and conferred regarding the proposed boundaries, development standards, and planning and zoning requirements with the County, pursuant to Government Code Section 56425(b). The City complied with this requirement by meeting with County staff during four City-County meetings between December 2007 and February 2008. During the meetings, the City and County staff discussed a number of mutual concerns, including lands needed to accommodate projected growth, drainage and flooding issues, future growth outside of the 100-year floodplain, infrastructure and municipal services, habitat and open space preservation, agricultural users, and coordination with the South Sacramento Habitat Conservation Plan (SSHCP). Based on those discussions, the SOIA boundaries were modified to the proposed SOIA boundaries, extending only as far as Eschinger Road to the south and terminating at the edge of the 100-year floodplain of the Cosumnes River.

The proposed SOIA Area includes the area that connects to I-5 at the Hood-Franklin interchange. This area was not included in the Urban Study Area, but it is proposed by the City to be included in the proposed SOIA application to serve as a gateway from I-5 to the City.

2.2.3 - Proposed General Plan and Zoning

The City's General Plan designates the affected territory as an Urban Study Area. The Urban Study Area designation envisions the areas in which future growth, to some extent, may occur. The General

Plan does not identify a formal land use plan for these areas, but it describes the following policies to guide the study of future development in cooperation with the public and other agencies and parties:

- **Policy LU-16:** The areas designated in the Planning Area as “Urban Study Areas” are envisioned as areas in which urbanization to some extent could occur, generally in compliance with the following criteria:
 - Development should be limited to areas outside of the 100-year floodplain. Development should take place in compliance with the goals and policies of this General Plan.
 - Any study of potential land uses in these areas should be accomplished in cooperation with the County of Sacramento, the Sacramento Local Agency Formation Commission, and other agencies and parties with ownership or jurisdiction of lands in and near the study area.
 - Any study of land uses in these areas should be accompanied by an environmental evaluation of the potential impacts of development.
 - Prior to the completion of land use studies, the City’s policy is that County of Sacramento land use designations in effect as of December 31, 2002, are retained.
- **Policy LU-17:** Implement a comprehensive and citywide strategy for the preservation of open space, habitat and agriculture, both inside and outside the City’s existing city limits.

A growth scenario is envisioned in Table 2-6. However, no specific land use designation or rezoning is proposed at this point. Current County General Plan land use designations are anticipated to remain the same until such land planning by the City occurs, in conjunction with a General Plan amendment, rezoning, and annexation application. Land use jurisdiction of the SOIA Area would not change, and any related City-issued development entitlements would not take effect until such time as an annexation may be approved.

2.3 - LAFCo CEQA Policies

The Legislature has charged LAFCo with carrying out changes in governmental organization to promote specified legislative policies now codified in the CKH. Decisions relating to the most efficient form of local government and the preservation of agricultural land inherently involve the balancing of potentially competing interests of jurisdictions, because applications for change of organization may involve the interests of the County, a city, and one or more special districts.

Sacramento LAFCo has adopted local Policies, Standards, and Procedures Guidelines that aid in the implementation of the CKH. LAFCo may make exceptions to these general and specific standards if it determines that such exceptions: are necessary due to unique circumstances; are required to resolve conflicts between general and specific standards; result in improved quality or lower cost of services available; or there exists no feasible or logical alternative. The applicable LAFCo CEQA policies are provided below.

Chapter III, General Policies

- **Policy 1.** The LAFCo will encourage participation in its decision-making process. LAFCo will contact community members through community councils, give published notice, and, where LAFCo determines appropriate, give mailed notice to the owners of property within 500 feet of a project site.
- **Policy 2.** LAFCo will encourage communication on actions among the County, cities, and special districts.
- **Policy 5.** The CEQA requires that LAFCo assess the environmental consequences of its actions and decisions, and take actions to avoid or minimize a project's adverse environmental impacts, if feasible, or approve a project despite significant effects because it finds overriding considerations exist. To comply with CEQA, the LAFCo will take one or more of the following actions:
 - (1) At its discretion, approve a project without changes if environmental impacts are insignificant;
 - (2) Require an applicant to modify a project;
 - (3) Establish mitigating measures as a condition of its approval of the proposal;
 - (4) Deny the proposal because of unacceptable adverse environmental impacts;
 - (5) Approve the project despite its significant effects by making findings of overriding concern.
- **Policy 7.** LAFCo will favorably consider those applications, which improve the balance between jobs and housing.

Chapter IV, General Standards

Standard A. Spheres of Influence

- **Standard A.3.** The LAFCo will require that any agency making a proposal for action through LAFCo must have an updated Master Service Element (Municipal Services Review – MSR) of its Spheres of Influence Plan. The LAFCo will approve a proposal only if the proposed service provider is the most efficient provider of services with an acceptable costs, as demonstrated in the provider's Master Service Element.

Section B. Conformance with Applicable General and Specific Plans

- **Standard B.1.** LAFCo will approve changes of organization or reorganization only if the proposal is consistent with the General Plan and applicable Specific Plans of the applicable planning jurisdiction.
- **Standard B.2.** For Purposes of the above policy, the applicable jurisdiction is as follows:
 - a. For annexations to a city, the applicable jurisdiction is the city to which annexation is proposed;
 - b. For applications for annexation to or detachment from a district all of whose territory lies within an adopted Sphere of influence of a city, the General Plans of the city;

- c. For an application for annexation to a special district for lands outside an adopted city Sphere of Influence, the Sacramento County General Plan.
 - d. For an application for annexation or detachment from a district whose territory lies in both the city and the unincorporated area of the county, the General Plan of the city unless the project lies outside of the city's Sphere of Influence; and
 - e. For application for incorporations, this standard is inapplicable.
- **Standard B.3.** For the purposes of this standard, the proposal shall be deemed consistent if the proposed use is consistent with the applicable General Plan designation and text, the applicable General Plan is legally adequate and internally consistent and the anticipated types of services to be provided are appropriate to the land use designated for the area.

Section E. Agricultural Land Conservation

- **Standard E.1.** LAFCo will approve a change of organization or reorganization, which 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:
 - a. The land subject to the change of organization or reorganization is contiguous to either lands developed with an urban use or lands which have received all discretionary approvals for urban development.
 - b. 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.
 - c. Development of all or a substantial portion of the subject land is likely to occur within five years. In the case of very large developments, annexation should be phased whenever feasible. If the Commission finds phasing infeasible for the 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.
 - d. Insufficient vacant non-prime lands exists within the applicable Spheres of Influence that are planned, accessible, and developable for the same general type of use.
 - e. 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 the 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 which lie between the project site and existing facilities.

- (4) Whether natural or man-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 designed to protect agriculture.

- **Standard E.2.** LAFCo will not make the affirmative findings that the proposed development of the subject lands is consistent with the Spheres of Influence in the absence of an approved Sphere of Influence Plan. LAFCo will not make the affirmative findings that sufficient non-prime land exists within the Spheres of Influence Plan unless the applicable jurisdiction has:
 - a. Identified within its Spheres of Influence all “prime agricultural land” as defined herein.
 - b. Enacted Measures to preserve prime agricultural land identified within its Sphere of Influence for agricultural use.
 - c. Adopted as part of its General Plan specific measures to facilitate and encourage infill development as an alternative to development of agricultural lands.

Section F. Application of the California Environmental Quality Act to Changes of Organization or Reorganization and Spheres of Influence.

The following standards will apply to LAFCo’s compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (“CEQA”) in reviewing requests for changes of organization or reorganization and spheres of influence. Appendix H provides more detailed information on LAFCo’s specific procedures for the preparation and processing of environmental documents.

- **Standard F.1.** In general, LAFCo will function as a Lead Agency in situations where:
 - a. LAFCo is the first agency in time to act;
 - b. The primary decision relates to a change of organization or reorganization or sphere of influence;
 - c. The applicant agency is unable to act as the Lead Agency; or
 - d. There are no underlying land use approvals involved.
- **Standard F.2.** The Executive Officer shall have the authority to prepare or cause to be prepared the appropriate environmental documentation. LAFCo will not act upon any proposal for a change of organization until environmental documentation has been completed which adequately addresses the requirements of CEQA. The Executive Officer of LAFCo shall serve as LAFCo’s Environmental Coordinator and shall make an environmental determination per the requirements of CEQA.

- **Standard F.5.** An EIR completed on a project subject LAFCo review shall contain a discussion of the following topics:
 - a. County-wide or cumulative impacts which concern LAFCo.
 - b. Where the EIR identifies significant effects, a description of the range of reasonable alternatives to the project, or to the location of the project, which could feasibly attain the basic objectives of the project. The range of alternatives to be considered shall include, at a minimum, the “no-action” alternative, alternative boundary locations, and a discussion of using other agencies to provide the facility or service proposed to be provided as a result of the proposed change of organization or reorganization.

Chapter V, Specific Standards by Type of Action

Section H. Sphere of Influence Plans

A Sphere of Influence plan is a plan for the probable, ultimate physical boundaries and service areas of a local agency. This section of the LAFCo Policies and Standards sets forth the required contents of a Sphere of Influence Plan, the procedures for submittal and approval of Sphere of Influence Plans and amendments thereto, and the use of Sphere of Influence Plans in LAFCo determinations.

- **Standard H.1:** The Sphere of Influence Plan for all government agencies within the LAFCo’s jurisdiction, shall contain the following:
 - a. A map defining the probable boundary of its service area;
 - b. A statement of the present and planned land uses in the area, including agricultural and open space lands;
 - c. The present and probable need for public facilities and services in the area;
 - d. The present capacity of public facilities and adequacy of public services, which the agency provides or is authorized to provide;
 - e. The existence of any relevant social or economic communities of interest in the area; and
 - f. With respect to all cities, sewer districts, water districts, community service districts, drainage districts, and multi-purpose districts within the jurisdiction of Sacramento LAFCo, a Master Services Element as defined in paragraph H.2 below. Other agencies may prepare a Master Services Element.
- **Standard H.2.** A Master Service Element shall contain the following:
 - a. A projection of the geographic extent of service capabilities during the next 20 years denominated in 5-year increments. In the case of cities, a shorter time frame may be appropriate if the applicable General Plan has a shorter planning period.
 - b. Projected level of service capabilities in the same time frames and geographical areas.

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- c. Actual and projected costs of services to consumers. This shall include a statement of actual and projected allocation of the cost of services between existing and new residents.
 - d. The Service Element shall contain sufficient information concerning current and projected capital improvement necessary to support the projected service capabilities for those areas set forth in the element.
- **Standard H.3.** LAFCo may, at its discretion, designate a geographic area beyond the Sphere of Influence as an Area of Concern to the local agency. An Area of Concern is a geographic area beyond the Sphere of Influence in which land use decisions or other governmental actions of the County impact directly or indirectly upon the local agency. For example, a development project outside the limits or Sphere of Influence of a local agency may result in that local agency providing services or adjusting its planning assumptions.
- **Standard H.4.** LAFCo will adopt, amend, or revise Sphere of Influence Plans after a public hearing and pursuant to the procedures set forth in this section 56427 and 56428 of the Cortese-Knox Act. Sphere of Influence Plans shall be revised as necessary, but in all cases at least every five years
- **Standard H.10.** In the case of a Sphere of Influence Plan which contains a Master Services Element, if the evidence demonstrates that an agency is unable to provide an adequate level of service within a portion of its ultimate service area boundaries, the Sphere of Influence Plan shall be amended pursuant to the procedures for periodic review such that the ultimate service boundaries are consistent with the Master Services Element. If the Master Services Element projections demonstrate an adequate level of service beyond the ultimate service boundary, the Sphere of Influence Plan may be amended accordingly.

Section I. Amendments to Spheres of Influence

- **Standard I.1.** The LAFCo will generally treat a proposed amendment to an agency's Sphere of Influence similarly to an application for approval of a Sphere of Influence. The LAFCo's policies will be applied to applications planned for the mid- to long-range future. For that reason, each of the following sets of policies will apply to applications for amendment to Spheres of Influence:
 - a. General policies;
 - b. Specific policies and standards for annexations to cities and special districts; and
 - c. Specific policies and standards for amendments for amendments to Spheres of Influence.
- **Standard I.2.** The Sphere of Influence Master Services Element must be current before additions to a Sphere of Influence will be approved by LAFCo.
- **Standard I.3.** The Sphere of Influence amendments shall precede applications for annexations.

- **Standard I.7.** A phased plan for annexation of Sphere of Influence territory should be included in the Sphere of Influence proposal.
- **Standard I.8.** No amendments to a Sphere of Influence Plan will be approved unless a Master Services Element of the Sphere of Influence Plan exists that has been prepared by a local agency and adopted by LAFCo if required.
- **Standard I.10.** The LAFCo will approve a proposed amendment to a Sphere of Influence only if the subject agency will be the most logical and prospectively most efficient provider of services to the subject territory.

Definition of Open Space:

Sacramento LAFCo uses the following criteria to define open space:

According to Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Section 56059, Open Space: Open space means any parcel or area of land or water which is substantially unimproved and devoted to an open-space use, as defined in Section 65560.

Planning, Zoning & Development Law Section 65560 further defines Open Space:

- a. "Local open-space plan" is the open-space element of a county or city general plan adopted by the board or council...."
- b. "Open-space land" is any parcel or area of land or water which is essentially unimproved and devoted to an open-space use as defined in this section, and which is designated on a local, regional or state open space plan as any of the following:
 - (1) Open space for the preservation of natural resources including, but not limited to, areas required for the preservation of plant and animal life, including habitat for fish and wildlife species; areas required for ecologic and other scientific study purposes; rivers, streams, bays and estuaries; and coastal beaches, lakeshores, banks of rivers and streams, and watershed lands.
 - (2) Open space used for the managed production of resources, including but not limited to, forest lands, rangeland, agricultural lands and areas of economic importance for the production of food or fiber; areas required for recharge of ground water basins; bays, estuaries, marshes, rivers and streams which are important for the management of commercial fisheries; and areas containing major mineral deposits, including those in short supply.
 - (3) Open space for outdoor recreation, including but not limited to, areas of outstanding scenic, historic and cultural value; areas particularly suited for park and recreation purposes, including access to lakeshores, beaches, and rivers and streams; and areas which serve as links between major recreation and open-space reservations, including utility easements, banks of rivers and streams, trails, and scenic highway corridors.

- (4) Open space for public health and safety, including, but not limited to, areas which require special management or regulation because of hazardous or special conditions such as earthquake fault zones, unstable soil areas, flood plains, watersheds, areas presenting high fire risks, areas required for the protection of water quality and water reservoirs and areas required for the protection and enhancement of air quality.

2.4 - Project Objectives

The objectives of the proposed project are to:

- Amend the Sphere of Influence (SOI) boundary beyond the existing Elk Grove city limits to accommodate orderly and sustainable growth consistent with the City's General Plan.
- Implement the Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Local Government Reorganization Act of 2000 consistent with public service conditions present or reasonably foreseeable in the proposed SOIA Area.
- Establish a logical boundary within which future and timely annexation requests by the City of Elk Grove may be considered.
- Establish an SOI for the City of Elk Grove that will facilitate the protection of important environmental, cultural, and agricultural resources.
- Provide sufficient land to accommodate a jobs-housing ratio for the City of Elk Grove that provides for sufficient residential and employment-generating lands uses to minimize the need for commuting to or from other jurisdictions.

2.5 - Intended Uses of This Draft EIR

This Recirculated Draft EIR was prepared by Sacramento LAFCo to assess the potential environmental impacts that may arise in connection with actions related to implementation of the proposed project. Pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15367, Sacramento LAFCo is the lead agency for the proposed project and has discretionary authority over the proposed project and approval of the City's SOIA request. This Recirculated Draft EIR is intended to serve as an informational document for the public agency decision makers and the public regarding the proposed project.

2.5.1 - Discretionary and Ministerial Actions

Discretionary approval is required by Sacramento LAFCo for implementation of the proposed project. The project application would require the following discretionary approval and action:

- Consideration of the Sphere of Influence Amendment – Sacramento Local Agency Formation Commission

2.5.2 - Responsible and Trustee Agencies

The Sacramento Local Agency Formation Commission is granted sole authority to consider local agency reorganizations, including requests to amend an existing SOI, under the Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Local Government Reorganization Act of 2000. As stated in Section 1, Introduction, this document is not intended as a programmatic document for use to tier the CEQA analysis for future projects.

There may be a number of agencies that may serve as responsible and trustee agencies, pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15381 and Section 15386, respectively during future planning or development activities. These agencies may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- United States Army Corps of Engineers
- United States Fish and Wildlife Service
- California Department of Fish and Wildlife
- California Department of Transportation
- California Department of Conservation
- Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board
- Sacramento County Water Agency
- Sacramento Area Sewer District
- Sacramento Regional County Sanitation District
- City of Elk Grove

