Agenda Item 1-2

STAFF REPORT

MEETING

DATE: January 12, 2017

STAFF: Steve Marshall, Planning Manager

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SUBJECT: NOVATO GENERAL PLAN 2035

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT SCOPING



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REQUEST

Receive and consider public agency and community input on the scope and content of the EIR to be prepared for the General Plan 2035.

BACKGROUND

The City of Novato ("City"), acting as lead agency¹ pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act ("CEQA"), is preparing an EIR for the General Plan to determine what, if any, environmental impacts could result from implementation of the General Plan, as well as examine project alternatives and mitigation measures to reduce or avoid such impacts. A full copy of the City's draft General Plan may be accessed at:

http://novato.org/generalplan

A Notice of Preparation announcing the City's intent to prepare an EIR for the draft General Plan was issued to public agencies on December 19, 2016. The purpose of the Notice of Preparation ("NOP") is to inform agencies that an EIR is being prepared for the draft General Plan and to invite comments specific to the scope and content of the EIR. Accordingly, agencies are encouraged to provide comments relevant to potential impacts, project alternatives, and mitigation measures that should be considered in the draft EIR for the General Plan. A copy of the Notice of Preparation may be accessed using the web-link above.

Public notice of the scoping meeting for the EIR was published in the Marin Independent Journal and released via the City's Ecampaign email distribution system and posting to the City's website and online calendaring system on December 23, 2016.

The discussion below addresses the following topics related to the CEQA process generally and more specifically the purpose and content of the General Plan EIR:

¹The term "lead agency" is given by CEQA to a public agency that has primary discretionary authority over a given project and is therefore responsible for preparing environmental review documentation for the project.

- ➤ Purpose of the EIR Scoping Process
- ➤ Role of the Environmental Consultant
- > Purpose and Intent of CEQA
- > Purpose and Mandatory Content of an EIR
- ➤ Description of the General Plan ("Project Description")
- ➤ Proposed General Plan EIR Scope & Content
- ➤ General Plan EIR Project Alternatives Concepts
- Subsequent CEQA Activities
- ➤ EIR Scoping Comments (if received prior to the Commission's hearing)

PURPOSE OF THE EIR SCOPING PROCESS

CEQA encourages lead agencies to conduct early consultation with other public agencies and interested persons regarding the preparation of an EIR. CEQA refers to such a consultation as "scoping." The purpose of scoping is to obtain early input on environmental concerns, identify potentially significant impacts, receive suggestions regarding potential project alternatives, and identify potential mitigation measures that should be analyzed in-depth in an EIR. Ideally, a scoping session or meeting resolves any issues that could arise in a more serious form later in the environmental review process.

The Planning Commission will hold a scoping meeting for the General Plan EIR to provide a formal setting at which public agency staff, members of the public, and the Commission may provide comments on the scope and content of the EIR. Comments received at the scoping meeting will be made part of the General Plan EIR record. Staff and Rincon Consultants Inc., the City's contracted environmental consultant, will consider the comments as the General Plan EIR is being prepared. These comments (both a summary of any verbal comments and the written comments received) will also be included in the Appendix of the General Plan EIR.

The Planning Commission scoping meeting is intended to focus on environmental concerns relevant to the implementation of the General Plan rather than the merits of the programs and policies contained therein. Accordingly, the scoping meeting presents an opportunity to provide comments regarding potentially significant impacts, possible mitigation measures to address such impacts, and suggestions regarding project alternatives to be studied in the General Plan EIR. Future publicly noticed hearings before the Planning Commission and City Council will provide opportunities for the public comment on the merits of the General Plan.

ROLE OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL CONSULTANT

The City has retained Rincon Consultants, Inc. (Rincon) to prepare the General Plan EIR. Rincon's role in the General Plan process is that of an advisor to the City with respect to only those matters relevant to compliance with CEQA and the preparation of an analysis of the environmental impacts

associated with the General Plan as prepared by the City. Rincon has no role or authority with respect to the content of the General Plan.

Rincon will work directly with City staff regarding the General Plan EIR. Rincon is not tasked with, budgeted, or granted the authority to conduct individual meetings with any member of the public, special interest group, coalition, or elected officials. CEQA consultants as a matter of customary practice do not conduct individual meetings with persons outside of lead, responsible, or trustee agency staff.

CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT

The broad purpose of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), Section 21000-21177 of the California Public Resources Code, is to maintain and provide a high quality environment. CEQA attains these goals by requiring local government and state agencies to:

- 1) Inform decision makers and the public about the potential environmental effects of actions taken by a governmental agency;
- 2) Identify ways that potential environmental damage can be avoided or significantly reduced;
- 3) Prevent significant, avoidable damage to the environment by requiring changes in a project through the use of alternatives or mitigation measures when a governmental agency finds such changes to be feasible; and
- 4) Disclose to the public the reasons why a governmental agency approved the project in the manner the agency chose *if* significant environmental effects are involved.

The CEQA Guidelines, Sections 15000 – 15387 of Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations, provide the detailed requirements and procedures to be followed by a lead agency to meet the key CEQA principles noted above. The CEQA Guidelines include: a) uniform provisions to determine when and what level of environmental review is required; b) lists the mandatory impact categories that must be analyzed in an EIR; c) specifies public notice and review procedures; and, d) establishes specific findings to adopt or certify environmental review documents.

The CEQA process does not address the merits of a given project or program. CEQA is solely focused on providing the public and decision makers with an objective analysis and disclosure of the potential environmental implications of implementing a specific project or program of actions.

PURPOSE AND MANDATORY CONTENT OF AN EIR

The EIR is the highest level of review required under CEQA, involving the most rigorous analysis and disclosure of potential environmental effects. An EIR is distinguished from lesser levels of environmental review, such as a negative declaration, by the analysis of the growth inducing effects of a project, the consideration of project alternatives, the preparation of responses to comments on the Draft EIR, and the conduct of lengthier public review and comment periods. Key milestones in the EIR process are:

➤ Release of Notice of Preparation – announcing lead agency's intent to prepare an EIR and opening a 30-day comment period on the scope and content of the EIR;

- ➤ Completion of Draft EIR environmental analysis of the project based on CEQA Guidelines & Environmental Checklist (Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines);
- ➤ Notice of Completion and Availability of Draft EIR begins 45-day public review/comment period of Draft EIR;
- ➤ Public Hearing on adequacy of Draft EIR conducted during 45-day public review period;
- ➤ Preparation of Final EIR consists of Draft EIR, responses to comments on Draft EIR, and mitigation, monitoring, and reporting program;
- ➤ Certification of Final EIR review of Final EIR and CEQA findings for certification prior to approval of any project.

As mentioned earlier, the CEQA Guidelines specify the mandatory content of a Draft EIR. The following items are basic components of an EIR:

- ➤ Project Description what, where, when, how, and why details of a project.
- Existing Environmental Setting and Base Line Conditions current conditions at and physical characteristics of the project site and surrounding area including, but not limited to, traffic volumes, noise levels, water features, and native trees.
- Thresholds of Significance qualitative and quantitative criteria used to identify and gauge the severity/significance of a potential environmental effect(s).
- ➤ Project Impact Analysis detailed review and study of a proposed project's effects on the environment based on the impact categories listed in the CEQA Environmental Checklist (Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines).
- ➤ Cumulative Impact Analysis analysis of a project's effects when considered in light of past project approvals, current projects under consideration, and future build-out conditions anticipated in the lead agency's general plan.
- ➤ Project Alternatives consideration of a range of alternative forms of the primary project that would avoid or reduce potentially significant environmental effects.
- ➤ Mitigation Measures methods of reducing potentially significant impacts, which may involve changes to the project itself or post-approval actions to address certain project related activities.
- ➤ Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program detailed program identifying each mitigation measure, listing the agency/entity responsible for insuring implementation of each mitigation measure, the timing of implementation, and standards to determine compliance.

GENERAL PLAN PROJECT DESCRIPTION

As required by state law the City has prepared a draft General Plan, which is a comprehensive effort to update the existing 1996 General Plan and respond to current local and regional conditions, as well as changes in state law that may not have been in place when the General Plan was last updated. The General Plan is the long-range plan or roadmap for the City as a whole and defines the framework by which the City's physical and economic resources are to be managed and used over the next 20 years. City decision-makers will use the General Plan as a blueprint for:

- > Choices about the use of land
- > Protection of environmental resources
- Conservation and development of housing
- ➤ Provision of supporting infrastructure and public and human services
- > Protection of people and property from natural and man-made hazards

The General Plan 2035 update addresses the current needs and preferences of the community. The General Plan update identifies and prioritizes opportunities to preserve the character of the community, conserve natural resources, and direct land use policies that enable sustainable growth in Novato. Updates to the General Plan include changes to various policies directing land use amendments, addressing land use compatibility and development intensities, establishing impact thresholds for future development projects, and implementing programs focusing on the development of design guidelines and new zoning provisions.

Each of the General Plan Chapters contains goals, policies, and programs to achieve the General Plan's overarching vision statement. Goals are statements that provide direction and state the desired end condition. Policies establish basic courses of action to achieve these goals, and directly guide the response of elected and appointed officials to development proposals and related community actions. Programs are specific actions, procedures, or techniques that the city must take to help achieve a specified goal or implement an adopted policy.

The General Plan 2035 addresses five focus areas involving recommended land use and development intensity changes that may result in environmental impacts. These focus areas include: Downtown Novato, North Redwood Corridor, North-North Redwood Corridor, the Northwest Quadrant, and the Hamilton/Ignacio Industrial Parks. The five focus areas are described below:

- ➤ Downtown. Downtown Novato is the core of the community and contains several buildings that were built over 100 years ago. The General Plan's vision for the Downtown is to maintain and enhance the area as the community's center for commercial, cultural, social, entertainment and civic functions and retain its small-town ambience and pedestrian character while fostering its economic vitality.
- ➤ North Redwood Corridor. The North Redwood Corridor, between De Long Avenue and San Marin Drive, is a major thoroughfare to Downtown Novato. This area currently hosts

retail and commercial industrial uses. The North Redwood Corridor provides an opportunity for the city to address its historic retail sales leakage and address community needs by creating a vibrant retail area with a unique sense of place. The General Plan envisions the North Redwood Corridor as a place featuring inviting gathering places with restaurants and entertainment uses.

- North, North Redwood Corridor. The North, North Redwood Corridor area extends north of San Marin Drive to the City's northerly boundary with Olompali State Park. The mile long corridor contains most of the City's remaining vacant commercially-zoned land, as well as a new SMART rail station. Under the General Plan the corridor could be developed with high-quality office and research and development uses and supporting uses such as local-serving retail and recreation.
- Northwest Quadrant Neighborhood. The Northwest Quadrant Neighborhood, north of Grant Avenue and west of Redwood Boulevard, is a residential area featuring a mix of single-family residences and one/two story apartments on lots small lots. The General Plan envisions the Northwest Quadrant Neighborhood as having the potential to see increased reinvestment and revitalization through development of carefully designed housing types that ensure compatibility with the scale and diversity of residences (both single-family and small scale multi-family housing types) while preserving and enhancing the sense of community.
- ➤ Hamilton/Ignacio Industrial Parks. The Hamilton/Ignacio Industrial Parks portion of the larger Bel Marin Keys Industrial Parks is developed with office, light industrial and service commercial buildings. Potential changes to the Master and Precise Development Plans would allow subsequent designation of parcels for biotech/life science campus development with modified zoning regulations for building height, building floor area and parking.
- ➤ In addition, the project includes consideration of companion zoning/master plan amendments in these focus areas relating to land use and development intensity changes, such as floor area ratio (FAR), building coverage, height limitations, and parking. It is anticipated that these potential changes in land use and intensity or density would be the primary changes in the General Plan that may result in environmental impacts, and thus would be the focus of the impact analysis in an EIR.

The General Plan is made up of five chapters: Great Places, Environmental Legacy, Living Well, Economic Vitality, and A City that Works, covering all seven of the state mandated elements of a general plan. The Great Places Chapter (Land Use and Housing Elements) describes the general distribution, location, and extent of various land uses. It contains a statement of the standards of population density and building intensity, types of permissible uses, community character, and special development and permit review requirements. Twenty separate land use designations have been established to provide a mixture of land uses for the City.

The General Plan (Great Places Chapter) projects the following incremental addition of new residential units and non-residential floor area from 2015 through 2035, with a large majority of this growth directed to the five focus areas:

- ➤ 686 residential units
- ➤ 619,855 square feet (sf) of office
- > 839,534 sf of commercial
- > -167,688 sf of industrial (due to conversion of existing industrial buildings on Redwood Boulevard)

Based on the projections above, the General Plan assumes the following cumulative level (existing plus projected) of development through 2035:

- ➤ 22,155 residential units
- ➤ 4,047,773 square feet (sf) of office
- > 4,596,494 sf of commercial
- > 914,626 sf of industrial

Novato adopted its current Housing Element in November 2014, covering the planning period 2015-2023. The Housing Element was submitted to the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) for review and comment, and the City received certification of the Housing Element from HCD in January 2015. No updates to the Housing Element are necessary or proposed at this time.

The Environmental Legacy Chapter (Open Space and Conservation Elements) presents a framework for governing future decisions about how Novato will sustain open space and natural resources for today's residents, as well as future generations. The chapter focuses on the protection, maintenance and enhancement of Novato's natural resources and open spaces, while conserving resources and reducing greenhouse gas emissions. This chapter partially addresses the state requirements for the open space and conservation elements of a general plan. Together with the City's Zoning Ordinance regulations related to open space, this chapter constitutes the City's open space plan.

The Economic Vitality Chapter presents a framework for governing future decisions about how the City will encourage a thriving business environment with high-paying industries, a vibrant downtown, and a healthy economy. The chapter aims to create a climate where business and innovation flourishes and a city that draws visitors and provides residents with attractive options for shopping, recreation, and working.

The Living Well Chapter (Noise and Open Space Elements) presents a framework for governing future decisions about how Novato will develop and maintain recreation facilities, parks, trails, and social services while promoting healthy eating and active living to improve community health, well-being and physical activity. The chapter also provides guidelines to protect the community from excessive or harmful noise and ensure a high quality of life in Novato.

The City That Works Chapter (Circulation, Safety, Land Use, and Conservation Elements) presents a framework for governing future decisions about how the City will provide a safe and well-connected community and deliver services and infrastructure to today's residents, as well as future generations. The chapter aims to maintain and improve Novato's circulation network and protect the community from natural and man-made hazards. It also seeks to maintain and improve community facilities, infrastructure and services, and provide effective and responsive governance.

If the General Plan is adopted, the City will subsequently need to review the rest of its Zoning Ordinance, including its Zoning Map, to make sure it is consistent with the new General Plan.

PROPOSED GENERAL PLAN EIR SCOPE & CONTENT

Staff and Rincon have developed a comprehensive EIR work scope to provide a legally adequate program EIR. The scope of work contemplates preparing a program level analysis of the General Plan.

A program EIR is an EIR that may be prepared on a series of actions that can be described as one large project, but which may occur as series of individual projects over a period of time. A program EIR provides an opportunity for more exhaustive consideration of potential environment effects, in particular cumulative impacts, and project alternatives than would be practical if environmental review documentation were prepared separately for each individual project falling under the larger program. A program EIR assumes a future project under the umbrella of the larger program may require project specific environmental review at the time of adoption. Given this circumstance, individual development projects resulting from the General Plan's vision for future development may require subsequent environmental review, which may be based on the findings of the General Plan EIR.

The General Plan EIR will address each of the standard topical impact categories required in an EIR as mandated by the state CEQA Guidelines. These impact categories are:

- > Aesthetics
- ➤ Agriculture and Forestry Resources
- ➤ Air Quality
- ➤ Biological Resources
- Cultural Resources
- ➤ Geology/Soils
- ➤ Greenhouse Gas Emissions
- ➤ Hazards & Hazardous Materials
- ➤ Hydrology/Water Quality

- ➤ Land Use/Planning
- ➤ Mineral Resources
- Noise
- > Population/Housing
- > Public Services
- > Recreation
- > Transportation/Traffic
- > Tribal Cultural Resources
- ➤ Utilities/Service Systems

Attached for reference is a copy of the CEQA Guidelines Environmental Checklist Form. The Environmental Checklist Form presents a series of questions providing the basis for an EIR

analysis. Rincon will address each question in the Environmental Checklist, as well as document cumulative and potential growth inducing impacts as required of EIRs.

The General Plan EIR will identify any potential direct, secondary, and/or cumulative environmental effects potentially resulting from the adoption and implementation of the General Plan itself. Although staff and Rincon have developed a comprehensive EIR scope tailored to the particular characteristics of the General Plan, the Planning Commission, members of the public, and agency staff are encouraged to identify their environmental concerns and provide comments on potential impacts, project alternatives, and mitigation measures to help guide preparation of the General Plan EIR.

GENERAL PLAN EIR PROJECT ALTERNATIVES CONCEPTS

CEQA Requirements

A mandatory component of any CEQA EIR is a project alternatives analysis. According to the CEQA Guidelines, an EIR shall describe a range of reasonable alternatives to a proposed project, or to the location of the project, which would feasibly attain most of the basic objectives of the project, but would avoid or substantially lessen any of the significant effects of the project. The EIR should evaluate the comparative merits of the project alternatives. An EIR need not consider every conceivable alternative to a project. Rather it must consider a reasonable range of potentially feasible alternatives that will foster informed decision making and public participation. CEQA does not specify a precise number of alternatives to be evaluated in an EIR. Instead, CEQA leaves it to the discretion of the lead agency to select a number of alternatives permitting a reasoned choice.

In instances where a project alternative is identified as the environmentally superior alternative to the primary project, a lead agency retains the authority to adopt the primary project so long as the primary project itself does not result in significant and unavoidable impacts. If a primary project would result in significant and unavoidable impacts, a lead agency is still able to approve the primary project although the agency must first make findings rejecting the project alternatives as being infeasible and adopt a statement of overriding considerations. A statement of overriding considerations allows a lead agency to consider the environmental, legal, technical, social, and economic or other benefits of a project in light of any unavoidable adverse environmental effects. Adoption of statement of overriding considerations represents the lead agency's determination that the environmental, legal, technical, social, and economic or other benefits of a primary project outweigh its unavoidable impacts, thus the adverse environmental effects are thereby considered to be acceptable.

General Plan Alternatives

The scope of work for the General Plan EIR includes the development and analysis of three project alternatives including the mandatory "No Project" alternative. For reference, CEQA requires an EIR to consider a "No Project" alternative, which addresses what would be reasonably expected

to occur in the foreseeable future if a project were not undertaken, based on current plans (e.g., current general plan) and consistent with available infrastructure and community services.

At this time, it is not possible to specify or fix the exact project alternatives to be studied in the General Plan EIR since there is no information available regarding the potential environmental effects of implementation of the General Plan. Again, project alternatives must avoid or substantially lessen the identified significant effects of the primary project. Therefore, it is necessary to understand the potential impacts of the primary project before developing project alternatives.

Although it is too early to identify the exact project alternatives to be analyzed in the General Plan EIR, it is possible to generally describe the form these alternatives are most likely to take. As mentioned above project alternatives are based on changes to the project (e.g., eliminating or altering a component or specific element of a given project) or selection of different locations for the project.

The project alternatives in the General Plan are most likely to be based on reduced and dispersed development. In concept, a reduced development alternative would likely take the form of examining the environmental impacts of reducing the projected development associated with the General Plan to address potential growth-related impacts.

A dispersed development alternative would address potential impacts associated with concentrating the majority of future growth within the five focus areas. In concept, this type of alternative would likely take the form of examining the environmental impacts of alternative development patterns that might be expected to reduce or eliminate environmental impacts. Staff understands there was a significant amount of effort put into studying development policies for the five focus areas identified in the General Plan. However, to prepare a legally adequate EIR under state law, the City must consider project alternatives.

SUBSEQUENT CEQA ACTIVITIES

Following conclusion of the scoping meeting and closure of the public comment period on the Notice of Preparation, staff and Rincon will begin preparing the General Plan EIR for the Project. Once the General Plan EIR is complete the City will conduct a 45-day public review period during which members of the public and interested agencies may comment on the adequacy of the General Plan EIR in disclosing and mitigating the potential impacts of the General Plan. During the public review period or at its conclusion the General Plan EIR will be presented to the Planning Commission at a publicly noticed hearing. The Planning Commission will be asked to consider comments received on the adequacy of the General Plan EIR. The final EIR will consist of responses to comments received on the General Plan EIR. The EIR process will then culminate with hearings before the Planning Commission and City Council.

PUBLIC NOTICE

The Notice of Preparation (NOP) of the General Plan EIR was emailed and mailed to public agencies on December 19, 2016. Notice of the Planning Commission's EIR scoping meeting was published in the Marin Independent Journal and released via the City's Ecampaign email distribution and posting on the City's website and online calendaring system on December 23, 2016.

ALTERNATIVES

- 1. Direct staff to proceed with the General Plan EIR as proposed and include analysis of the potential revisions to the Bel Marin Keys Industrial Parks Master/Precise Development Plan for biotech/life science campus development;
- 2. Direct staff to proceed with the General Plan EIR as proposed and not include analysis of potential revisions to the Bel Marin Keys Industrial Parks Master/Precise Development Plan for biotech/life science campus development;
- 3. Direct staff to proceed with the General Plan EIR with revisions to the scope of analysis and include analysis of the potential revisions to the Bel Marin Keys Industrial Parks Master/Precise Development Plan for biotech/life science campus development;
- 4. Direct staff to proceed with the General Plan EIR with revisions to the scope of analysis and not include analysis of potential revisions to the Bel Marin Keys Industrial Parks Master/Precise Development Plan for biotech/life science campus development;
- 5. Continue the item with direction to staff.

RECOMMENDATION

- 1. Receive public and agency comments regarding the scope and content of the EIR to be prepared for the General Plan.
- 2. Direct staff to proceed with the General Plan EIR as proposed and provide direction regarding whether to include the potential revisions to the Bel Marin Keys Industrial Parks Master/Precise Development Plan for biotech/life science campus development.

ATTACHMENTS

CEQA Environmental Checklist Form

Agenda Item 1-2 Attachment 1

Appendix G

Environmental Checklist Form

NOTE: The following is a sample form and may be tailored to satisfy individual agencies' needs and project circumstances. It may be used to meet the requirements for an initial study when the criteria set forth in CEQA Guidelines have been met. Substantial evidence of potential impacts that are not listed on this form must also be considered. The sample questions in this form are intended to encourage thoughtful assessment of impacts, and do not necessarily represent thresholds of significance.

Contact person and ph	one number:		
	one number.		
roject sponsor's name			S
General plan designation	on:	7. Zoning	; <u>.</u>
hases of the project, a	(Describe the whole action and any secondary, support additional sheets if necessity.)	rt, or off-site features n	
2 2 0 0 0			
			ndinos:
urrounding land uses	and setting: Briefly descr	ibe the project's surrou	iliailigs.
	and setting: Briefly descr		

ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS POTENTIALLY AFFECTED:

The en	vironmental factors checked stentially Significant Impact	below " as ind	would be potentially affected icated by the checklist on the	by this follow	s project, involving at least one impaing pages.	ct that	
	Aesthetics		Agriculture and Forestry Resources		Air Quality		
	Biological Resources		Cultural Resources		Geology /Soils		
	Greenhouse Gas Emissions		Hazards & Hazardous Materials		Hydrology / Water Quality		
	Land Use / Planning		Mineral Resources		Noise		
	Population / Housing		Public Services		Recreation		
	Transportation/Traffic		Utilities / Service Systems		Mandatory Findings of Significance		
DETER	RMINATION: (To be compl	eted by	the Lead Agency)				
On the	basis of this initial evaluatio	n:					
	I find that the proposed pra NEGATIVE DECLARA	oject C ATION	OULD NOT have a significa will be prepared.	nt effec	et on the environment, and		
	I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, there will not be a significant effect in this case because revisions in the project have been made by or agreed to by the project proponent. A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.						
	I find that the proposed pr ENVIRONMENTAL IMI		AY have a significant effect EPORT is required.	on the	environment, and an		
	I find that the proposed project MAY have a "potentially significant impact" or "potentially significant unless mitigated" impact on the environment, but at least one effect 1) has been adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and 2) has been addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis as described on attached sheets. An ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required, but it must analyze only the effects that remain to be addressed.						
	I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, because all potentially significant effects (a) have been analyzed adequately in an earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION pursuant to applicable standards, and (b) have been avoided or mitigated pursuant to that earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION, including revisions or mitigation measures that are imposed upon the proposed project, nothing further is required.						
	Signature				Date		
	Signature				Date		

EVALUATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS:

- 1) A brief explanation is required for all answers except "No Impact" answers that are adequately supported by the information sources a lead agency cites in the parentheses following each question. A "No Impact" answer is adequately supported if the referenced information sources show that the impact simply does not apply to projects like the one involved (e.g., the project falls outside a fault rupture zone). A "No Impact" answer should be explained where it is based on project-specific factors as well as general standards (e.g., the project will not expose sensitive receptors to pollutants, based on a project-specific screening analysis).
- 2) All answers must take account of the whole action involved, including off-site as well as on-site, cumulative as well as project-level, indirect as well as direct, and construction as well as operational impacts.
- 3) Once the lead agency has determined that a particular physical impact may occur, then the checklist answers must indicate whether the impact is potentially significant, less than significant with mitigation, or less than significant. "Potentially Significant Impact" is appropriate if there is substantial evidence that an effect may be significant. If there are one or more "Potentially Significant Impact" entries when the determination is made, an EIR is required.
- 4) "Negative Declaration: Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated" applies where the incorporation of mitigation measures has reduced an effect from "Potentially Significant Impact" to a "Less Than Significant Impact." The lead agency must describe the mitigation measures, and briefly explain how they reduce the effect to a less than significant level (mitigation measures from "Earlier Analyses," as described in (5) below, may be cross-referenced).
- 5) Earlier analyses may be used where, pursuant to the tiering, program EIR, or other CEQA process, an effect has been adequately analyzed in an earlier EIR or negative declaration. Section 15063(c)(3)(D). In this case, a brief discussion should identify the following:
 - a) Earlier Analysis Used. Identify and state where they are available for review.
 - b) Impacts Adequately Addressed. Identify which effects from the above checklist were within the scope of and adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and state whether such effects were addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis.
 - c) Mitigation Measures. For effects that are "Less than Significant with Mitigation Measures Incorporated," describe the mitigation measures which were incorporated or refined from the earlier document and the extent to which they address site-specific conditions for the project.
- 6) Lead agencies are encouraged to incorporate into the checklist references to information sources for potential impacts (e.g., general plans, zoning ordinances). Reference to a previously prepared or outside document should, where appropriate, include a reference to the page or pages where the statement is substantiated.
- 7) Supporting Information Sources: A source list should be attached, and other sources used or individuals contacted should be cited in the discussion.
- 8) This is only a suggested form, and lead agencies are free to use different formats; however, lead agencies should normally address the questions from this checklist that are relevant to a project's environmental effects in whatever format is selected.
- 9) The explanation of each issue should identify:
 - a) the significance criteria or threshold, if any, used to evaluate each question; and
 - b) the mitigation measure identified, if any, to reduce the impact to less than significance.

SAMPLE QUESTION

Issues:

- 2	Significant Impact	Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
I. AESTHETICS - Would the project:				
a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?				
b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?				
c) Substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings?				
d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?				
II. AGRICULTURE AND FOREST RESOURCES: In determining whether impacts to agricultural resources are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to the California Agricultural Land Evaluation and Site Assessment Model (1997) prepared by the California Dept. of Conservation as an optional model to use in assessing impacts on agriculture and farmland. In determining whether impacts to forest resources, including timberland, are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to information compiled by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection regarding the state's inventory of forest land, including the Forest and Range Assessment Project and the Forest Legacy Assessment project; and forest carbon measurement methodology provided in Forest Protocols adopted by the California Air Resources Board. — Would the project:				
a) Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?				
b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?				
c) Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code section 12220(g)), timberland (as defined by Public Resources Code section 4526) or timberland zoned Timberland				

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Production (as defined by Government Code section 51104(g))?		•		
d) Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?		E5		
de) Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland, to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?			2	
III. AIR QUALITY Where available, the significance criteria established by the applicable air quality management or air pollution control district may be relied upon to make the following determinations. Would the project:				
a) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?				
b) Violate any air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation?				
c) Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard (including releasing emissions which exceed quantitative thresholds for ozone precursors)?				
d) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?				
e) Create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people?				
IV. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES Would the project:				
a) Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?	77		_ ^	
b) Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Game or US Fish and Wildlife Service?				
c) Have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of				

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
the Clean Water Act (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?	13			
d) Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?				
e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?				
f) Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?				
V. CULTURAL RESOURCES Would the project:				
a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in § 15064.5?				
b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to § 15064.5?				
c) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?				
d) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?				
VI. GEOLOGY AND SOILS Would the project:				
a) Expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:				
i) Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42.				
ii) Strong seismic ground shaking?				
iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?				
iv) Landslides?				

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
b) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?				:5
c) Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in onor off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse?				
d) Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial risks to life or property?		·		
e) Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative waste water disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of waste water?		i de		7,2
VII. GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS Would the project:	A			
a) Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?				
b) Conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?				
VIII. HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS - Would the project:				
a) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?				
b) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?	σ			<u> </u>
c) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?				
d) Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?				
e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard				

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
for people residing or working in the project area?		into por acco		
f) For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?				
g) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?			***	
h) Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires, including where wildlands are adjacent to urbanized areas or where residences are intermixed with wildlands?				
IX. HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY Would the project:				W-100
a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements?				
b) Substantially deplete groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that there would be a net deficit in aquifer volume or a lowering of the local groundwater table level (e.g., the production rate of preexisting nearby wells would drop to a level which would not support existing land uses or planned uses for which permits have been granted)?				
c) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, in a manner which would result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site?				
d) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, or substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or off-site?				
e) Create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff?				
f) Otherwise substantially degrade water quality?				
g) Place housing within a 100-year flood hazard area as mapped on a federal Flood Hazard Boundary or Flood Insurance Rate Map or other flood hazard delineation map?				

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
h) Place within a 100-year flood hazard area structures which would impede or redirect flood flows?	#			
i) Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving flooding, including flooding as a result of the failure of a levee or dam?				III.
j) Inundation by seiche, tsunami, or mudflow?				
X. LAND USE AND PLANNING - Would the project:	S.			
a) Physically divide an established community?				
b) Conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project (including, but not limited to the general plan, specific plan, local coastal program, or zoning ordinance) adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?				27 J
c) Conflict with any applicable habitat conservation plan or natural community conservation plan?				
XI. MINERAL RESOURCES Would the project:				
a) Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state?				
b) Result in the loss of availability of a locally- important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan or other land use plan?				
XII. NOISE Would the project result in:				
a) Exposure of persons to or generation of noise levels in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?	η,			
b) Exposure of persons to or generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?				
c) A substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?				
d) A substantial temporary or periodic increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?				

	Significant Impact	Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Significant Impact	No Impact
e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?				
f) For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?			,	
XIII. POPULATION AND HOUSING Would the project:		9	113	
a) Induce substantial population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)?		<u> </u>		
b) Displace substantial numbers of existing housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?				
c) Displace substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?				
XIV. PUBLIC SERVICES				
a) Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for any of the public services:				
Fire protection?				
Police protection?				
Schools?				
Parks?				
Other public facilities?				
XV. RECREATION				
a) Would the project increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?				

9	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
b) Does the project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?				
XVI. TRANSPORTATION/TRAFFIC Would the project:		4 <u></u>	3 <u> </u>	-
a) Conflict with an applicable plan, ordinance or policy establishing measures of effectiveness for the performance of the circulation system, taking into account all modes of transportation including mass transit and non-motorized travel and relevant components of the circulation system, including but not limited to intersections, streets, highways and freeways, pedestrian and bicycle paths, and mass transit?			et. 30	83
b) Conflict with an applicable congestion management program, including, but not limited to level of service standards and travel demand measures, or other standards established by the county congestion management agency for designated roads or highways?		ž		
c) Result in a change in air traffic patterns, including either an increase in traffic levels or a change in location that results in substantial safety risks?				u t
d) Substantially increase hazards due to a design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?				
e) Result in inadequate emergency access?				
f) Conflict with adopted policies, plans, or programs regarding public transit, bicycle, or pedestrian facilities, or otherwise decrease the performance or safety of such facilities?				
XVII. UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS Would the project:				
a) Exceed wastewater treatment requirements of the applicable Regional Water Quality Control Board?				
b) Require or result in the construction of new water or wastewater treatment facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?				
c) Require or result in the construction of new storm water drainage facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which		* S		

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
could cause significant environmental effects?	_		2-18	
d) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project from existing entitlements and resources, or are new or expanded entitlements needed?				
e) Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider which serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the				
provider's existing commitments?				
f) Be served by a landfill with sufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the project's solid waste disposal needs?	i i			
g) Comply with federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste?				i i
XVIII. MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE				
a) Does the project have the potential to degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, reduce the number or				
restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?				
b) Does the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? ("Cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the	3.3			
effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects)?		_		
c) Does the project have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?				

Note: Authority cited: Sections 21083, 21083.05, Public Resources Code. Reference: Section 65088.4, Gov. Code; Sections 21080, 21083.05, 21095, Pub. Resources Code; Eureka Citizens for Responsible Govt. v. City of Eureka (2007) 147 Cal.App.4th 357; Protect the Historic Amador Waterways v. Amador Water Agency (2004) 116 Cal.App.4th at 1109; San Franciscans Upholding the Downtown Plan v. City and County of San Francisco (2002) 102 Cal.App.4th 656.