

**PRELIMINARY ADMIN REVIEW DRAFT
SUBJECT TO REVISION (27 MAY 2005)**

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- Other means approved by the Air Pollution Control Officer.

Sacramento General Plan Update

The SGPU includes the following goals and policies that pertain to air quality management (SGPU 5-1, 5-5, and 5-6):

Circulation Element

Overall Goals – Goal C: Maintain a desirable quality of life including good air quality while supporting planned land use and population growth.

Transportation Planning – Goal A: Work toward a comprehensive transportation plan that identifies needs, integrates the existing transportation network with plan growth and proposes new facilities.

Goal A – Policy 6: Develop an Air Quality Improvement Program, which will include strategies and specific programs that reduce air pollution.

Sacramento City Code

SCC Title 15 Buildings and Construction provides direction for dust abatement measures. These measures help ensure the limitation of PM10 impacts to the Sacramento Valley Air Basin during Phase I and Phase II construction activities.

4.2.3 Standards of Significance

The City of Sacramento's standards of significance are based on the Guide to Air Quality Assessment (SMAQMD 2004). *state standard?*

- Ozone and Particulate Matter. An increase of nitrogen oxides (NOX) during the construction of the project (short-term effects) above 85 pounds per day would result in a significant impact. An increase of reactive organic gases (ROG) and/or NOX during the operation of the project (long-term effects) above 65 pounds per day would result in a significant impact. An increase of PM10 above 275 pounds per day during the construction or operation of the project would result in a significant impact and require mitigation.
- Carbon Monoxide. The pollutant of concern for sensitive receptors is carbon monoxide (CO). Motor vehicle emissions are the dominant source of CO in Sacramento County (SMAQMD 1994). For purposes of environmental analysis, sensitive receptor locations generally include parks, sidewalks, transit stops, hospitals, rest homes, schools, playgrounds, and residences. Commercial buildings are generally not considered sensitive receptors. Carbon monoxide concentrations are considered significant if they exceed the 1-hour state ambient air quality standard of 20.0 parts per million (ppm) or the 8-hour state ambient standard of 9.0 ppm (state ambient air quality standards are more stringent than their federal counterparts).

4.2.4 Impacts

AIR-1 Impact: Construction of the project would contribute ROG, NOx, and PM10 emissions into the non-attainment area.

Analysis: Construction activities would generate emissions of ROG, NOx, and PM10. The Guide to Air Quality Assessment (SMAQMD 2004) provides a method to conduct a

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preliminary screening of projects to find a simple indication of whether the project may exceed the construction or operation threshold. The screening level (threshold) for potentially significant NOx construction emissions for a single-family residential development is 28 units or more. The Islands at Riverlake project proposes 139 single-family residential units, which exceeds the screening threshold. The URBEMIS 2002 for Windows 7.4.2 (emissions modeling software) was used to estimate construction (short term) and operational (long term) emissions. The Analysis year 2005 – 2006 was used to estimate project emissions. The Sacramento Valley Air Basin default was selected and the operation setting for pass-by trips was turned on. The unmitigated construction emission estimates are in Table 15.

Table 15. Construction Emissions Estimates (Unmitigated)

	ROG	NOx	PM ₁₀
2005 Totals (lbs/day, unmitigated)	8.75	73.09	73.38
2006 Totals (lbs/day, unmitigated)	532.76	103.78	4.61
Significance Threshold	NST*	85	275

*NST = No Significance Threshold

The proposed project would exceed the significance threshold for NOx in 2006. The SMAQMD developed construction procedures to minimize emissions of criteria pollutants resulting from construction activities. The two categories of construction procedures are 1) reducing NOx emissions from off-road diesel powered equipment and 2) controlling visible emissions from off-road diesel powered equipment (SMAQMD 2004 page 3-19). With implementation of AIR-1 Mitigation, the potentially significant emissions during project construction would be reduced to a less than significant amount of NOx.

The project is subject to SCC Section 15.40.050 Construction Site Regulations, Control Dust and Mud and SMAQMD District Rule 403. The following measures were conditions of the grading permit and are listed on the approved grading plan. The measures ensure compliance with the regulatory regime.

- The construction contractor shall enclose, cover, or water all soil piles twice daily.
- The construction contractor shall water exposed soil with adequate frequency to keep soil moist at all times.
- The construction contractor shall water all haul roads twice daily.
- The construction contractor shall insure that all haul/dump trucks are securely covered when hauling loads.
- The construction contractor shall stabilize all construction entrances to the site pursuant to the Administrative and Technical Procedures Manual for Grading and Erosion and Sediment Control to reduce or eliminate the tracking of sediment onto public rights-of-way or streets.

Significance: Potentially significant unless mitigated.

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Mitigation: AIR-1 Mitigation (See below.)

AIR-2 Impact: Operation of the project would contribute ROG, NOx, and PM10 emissions into the non-attainment area.

Analysis: Operation of the project would generate emissions of ROG, NOx, and PM10. The screening level (threshold) for potentially significant NOx emissions for the operation of a single-family residential development is 656 units or more (SMAQMD 2004, Table 2.2 on page 2-13). The SMAQMD recommends that a more detailed analysis be conducted for any project whose size is within 10% of the values indicated in Table 2.2 of the Guide to Air Quality Assessment (SMAQMD 2004, page 2-13). The Islands at Riverlake proposes 139 residential units, 21% fewer than the screening threshold. The impacts on air quality resulting from additional ROG, NOx, and PM10 contributed to the SVAB during operation of the project are considered less than significant and no mitigation would be needed.

Significance: Less than significant.

Mitigation: None required.

AIR-3 Impact: Construction and operation of the proposed project would result in an increased concentration of CO, a criteria pollutant.

Analysis: The SMAQMD identified screening techniques to identify projects that can be conservatively assumed not to be associated with substantially increased CO concentrations. The SMAQMD considers single-family residential development projects that propose fewer than 656 units to have a less than significant impact CO concentration (SMAQMD 2004, page 5-2 and Table 2.2 on page 2-13). The Islands at Riverlake proposes fewer dwelling units than the SMAQMD screening threshold. No mitigation would be required because SMAQMD determined that projects of the proposed project's size would not result in significant increases in CO concentration.

Significance: Less than significant.

Mitigation: None required.

AIR-4 Impact: The increased area of paved surface may lead to a localized temperature increase.

Analysis: The project as proposed would plant one Riverlake Community Association (RCA) and Riverlake Architectural Control Committee (Riverlake ACC) approved shade tree on the yards fronting on the internal private street (Conceptual Planting Plan in Exhibit D). The project would also plant large evergreen and deciduous shade trees in the seven passive use mini-parks. As the trees grow, shade cast on the private drive would help reduce localized temperatures previously caused by the direct sunlight heating up the asphalt. Implementing the Conceptual Planting Plan prepared by

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operation equipment shall be made at least weekly, and a monthly summary of the visual survey results shall be submitted throughout the duration of the project, except that the monthly summary shall not be required for any 30-day period in which no construction activity occurs. The monthly summary shall include the quantity and type of vehicles surveyed as well as the dates of each survey. The SMAQMD and/or other officials may conduct periodic site inspections to determine compliance. Nothing in this section shall supersede other SMAQMD or state rules or regulations.

4.3 Transportation/ Circulation

4.3.1 Environmental Setting

The Islands at Riverlake Project is located on the north and south sides of Pocket Road. The Islands at Riverlake Project on the north side of Pocket Road begins approximately 1,200 feet west of West Shore Drive and ends at East Shore Drive. The Islands at Riverlake Project on the south side of Pocket Road begins approximately 520 feet east Coleman Ranch Way and ends approximately 580 feet east of Dutra Bend Drive. The project is located approximately 250 feet west of the intersection of Pocket Road and Greenhaven Drive, and approximately 2,000 feet west of Interstate 5 (I-5).

The South Pocket area is served by I-5, which creates the eastern border of the Pocket area (SGPU EIR Y-34). The major east-west arterial that serves the project site and connects the project site with I-5 is Pocket Road. Pocket Road is a four-lane road with a landscaped median. The median is not continuous for the length of the project site. Space for left turn lanes are provided at the intersections of the three collector streets with Pocket Road. West Shore Drive and East Shore Drive are north-south collector streets located on the north side of Pocket Road. Dutra Bend Drive is a north-south collector street located on the south side of Pocket Road. The north-south Greenhaven Drive is a major arterial that provides the project site with access to Florin Road.

The Sacramento Regional Transit District (RT) provides bus service to the project area with Transit Centers on Greenhaven Drive at the intersection with Pocket Road and a Transit Center on Pocket Road at the intersection of Greenhaven Drive. Bus stops located along Pocket Road adjacent to the project site provide access to Route 3, the "Riverside Express," for service to downtown Sacramento and the local Route 226 "Pocket/Riverside Boulevard" for service to the Rush River Transit Center. Route 56 "Valley Hi" stops at the Transit Center on Greenhaven Drive at the intersection with Pocket Road. Route 56 also provides connecting service to the Rush River Transit Center. The Rush River Transit Center provides connecting service to Routes 2, 6, 7, 56, and 62. Light rail does not serve the project site (SGPU EIR Y-45 – Y-48). Bike lanes are located on Pocket Road and Greenhaven Drive.

4.3.2 Regulatory Setting

City of Sacramento General Plan

The following goals and policies in the Circulation Element of the SGPU direct transportation and circulation planning decisions in the City of Sacramento and are applicable to the proposed project:

Overall Goals (SGPU 5-1)

Goal A: Create a safe, efficient surface transportation network for the movement of people and goods.

Goal B: Provide all citizens in all the communities of the City with access to a transportation network, which serves both the City and region, either by personal vehicles or by transit.

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Goal A: Increase the use of the pedestrian mode as a mode of choice for all areas of the City.

Policy 1: Require new subdivisions and planned unit developments to have safe pedestrian walkways that provide direct links between streets and major destinations such as bus stops, schools, parks, and shopping centers.

Policy 5: Require developments to provide street-separated pedestrian access to shopping centers, business activity centers, and transit stations.

Bikeways (SGPU 5-29 –5-34)

Goal A: Develop bicycling as a major transportation mode.

Policy 1: Develop bikeways to facilities commuting to and from major trip generators.

Policy 3: Maintain public bikeways in a manner that promotes their use, by developing a continuous repair and maintenance program.

Pocket Area Community Plan – South Pocket Specific Plan

City streets can be classified into three broad categories: local, collector, and major streets. Local streets are the greatest in number and total length in a suburban area, however the collector and major street systems subordinate their importance (PACP-SPSP 17).

Major Streets

The primary function of major streets is to move large volumes of vehicles from residential areas to freeways and from one part of a city to another. Florin Road, Pocket Road, and the southerly extension of Greenhaven Drive are four-lane divided major streets with 82 and 86 feet curb-to-curb rights-of-way (PACP-SPSP 17).

Collector Streets

The main function of a collector street is to carry traffic from local residential streets to major streets or freeways. Collector streets should have 40 feet to 64 feet average curb-to-curb widths and should not intersect major streets within 800 feet of freeway interchanges (PACP-SPSP 17 – 19).

Local Streets

The major purpose of local or residential streets is to provide access to property abutting them. Their most common location is within residential neighborhoods. At the time a tentative map is submitted for review by the City, local and other streets will be evaluated. Specific criteria for evaluating local streets within the South Pocket are as follows (PACP-SPSP 19 – 20):

1. Local streets should be designed in a manner that harmonizes with the recommended collector and major street system; and in a manner that discourages through traffic.
2. Local streets should not intersect with major streets closer than 500 feet freeway interchanges, except as to Assessor's Parcel numbers 031-200-04 and -05.
3. Local streets adjacent to the Sacramento River Parkway or canal-parkway should be designed to reflect the concept of loop and/or frontage streets shown in Diagram 1 of the PACP-SPSP (not included with this IS).

On-Street Bikeways

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On-street bikeways are achieved by adding five feet on the outer side of the outer automobile lanes. Collector streets are mostly used for this purpose, however local residential streets can also be used. On-street bikeways can be added to the basic network as the need arises. The following design criteria for on-street bikeways should be used (PACP-SPSP 21):

1. All bike lanes on collector streets should be clearly identified and have a minimum width of five feet.
2. Bike routes on local streets should be clearly identified, but do not necessarily require additional right-of-way lanes.

Off-Street Bikeways

It is recommended that off-street bikeways be designed in accordance with the following criteria (PACP-SPSP 21):

1. Two-directional bikeways should have a minimum width of 10 feet and should be striped.
2. Adequate signs should be posted to control circulation.
3. Bike lanes should have a height clearance of eight feet.
4. Separated grade crossings, either overhead or tunneled passage, should be considered at major street intersections.
5. The bikeway system of the Sacramento River Parkway should be in accordance with that adopted plan.

Sacramento City Code

SCC Title 17.64.020 Parking Requirements By Land Use Type defines the minimum and maximum number of parking spaces that are required by land use type. One parking space is required for each single-family residential unit.

4.3.3 Standards of Significance

- **Roadway Traffic.** An impact is considered significant for roadways or intersections when the project causes the facility to change from LOS C or better to LOS D or worse. For facilities that are, or will be worse than LOS C without the project, an impact is also considered significant if the project: 1) increases the average delay by 5 seconds or more at an intersection, or 2) increases the volume to capacity ratio by .02 or more on a roadway.
- **Bikeways.** A significant bikeway impact would occur if a project hindered or eliminated an existing designated bikeway, or if the project interfered with the implementation of a proposed bikeway. A significant bikeway impact would occur if a project were to increase bicycle/pedestrian or bicycle/motor vehicle conflicts.
- **Regional Transit.** A significant impact to the transit system would occur if normal operation of the project results in blockage to transit routes. A significant impact to the transit system would also occur where project-generated ridership, when added to existing or future ridership, exceeds available or planned system capacity. Capacity is defined as the total number of passengers the system of busses and light rail vehicles can carry during the peak hour of operation.

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- Parking. A significant impact to parking would occur if the anticipated parking demand of the project exceeds the available or planned parking supply.

4.3.4 Impacts

TRAN-1 Impact: New residential development would generate new traffic on the roads serving the project site.

Analysis:

The proposed project would increase the number of vehicle trips. The City of Sacramento Public Works Department, Development Services Division has reviewed the project and determined that the Islands at Riverlake Project is consistent with the SGPU land use designation and the density allocated for the project site for the approved LPPT PUD (personal communication Anis Ghobril). The traffic resulting from the Islands at Riverlake Project would not generate any unanticipated traffic impacts other than those already evaluated in the SGPU DEIR. Therefore, the City Public Works Department determined that impacts resulting from increased traffic volume would not surpass the significance threshold of LOS C or worse (personal communication, Anis Ghobril).

The City of Sacramento referenced traffic counts previously conducted for Pocket Road. Then the City conducted additional traffic counts on Pocket Road at West Shore Drive and East Shore Drive on 10 April 2002. Traffic counts were conducted at Pocket Road and Dutra Bend Drive on 18 June 2002. With the traffic count data, the City determined existing peak hour volumes and the average daily trips. The traffic counts demonstrated that Pocket Road currently operates at approximately half of its designed capacity.

The Public Works Department used the Trip Generation manual prepared by the Institute of Transportation Engineers (5th Edition, 1991) to estimate the number of vehicle trips that would be generated by the proposed project. This method is an accepted practice by Caltrans and Federal Highways Administration. Trips generated by the project will be dispersed along Pocket Road. The largest concentration of units is on the northern parcels between East Shore Drive and West Shore Drive (approximately 4,500 feet in length). This portion of the project is accessed through three driveways along Pocket Road and through ingress/egress at West Shore Drive. The trips generated by this portion of the project are distributed and dispersed over these four access locations. In the PM peak hour, when most of the generated trips from this portion of the proposed project are headed west from the I-5 Interstate, vehicle trips would most likely utilize the right-in/right-out driveways along Pocket Road. Given the available capacity of Pocket Road and the dispersion of site trips, impacts at any one location are not expected to rise to a level of significance requiring mitigation.

Significance: Less than significant.

Mitigation: None required.

TRAN-2 Impact: Substandard street width could result in exposing residents to safety hazards.

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Analysis: The proposed road was designed to meet the following design requirements provided by the Sacramento City Fire Department (memorandum dated 18 January 2002 from Greg Hoeger): 1) the proposed street width is 18 feet wide with two feet on either side of rolled curb and gutter, providing a 20-foot level street width, 2) on-street parking would be prohibited, and 3) all turn radii meet the 45-foot inside and 55-foot outside dimensions. By accommodating the Fire Department's design requirements, the proposed road would be consistent with California Fire Code Section 902.2.2.3 regarding turning radii and providing adequate emergency access to the proposed project. The final design was submitted to the Fire Department for final review and approval. Final approval is a condition of the Building Permit process.

The proposed street width is considered a traffic calming design, and no additional traffic calming measures would be needed.

The Public Works Department Development Service Division reviewed the project and determined that two design features would reduce the potential for safety hazards resulting from possible roadway obstructions (Staff report (P01-133) for Sacramento City Council, dated 4 June 2003, prepared by City of Sacramento Planning and Building Department, Planning Division):

- On-street parking would be prohibited on the private roads. The private roads would be signed and striped for no parking at all times. The Riverlake Community Association would be responsible for enforcing the no parking rule.
- The Covenants, Codes and Restrictions (CC&Rs) would require that all trash and recycle bins are placed on the same side of the private road on pick-up day.

Significance: Potentially significant unless mitigated.

Mitigation: TRAN-2 Mitigation. (See below.)

TRAN-3 Impact: Parking demand could be larger than available parking spaces.

Analysis: Potential impacts resulting from insufficient parking spaces are not considered significant because parking spaces offered by the project exceed the required minimum number of spaces by 240%.

Significance: Less than significant.

Mitigation: None required.

TRAN-4 Impact: The project could lead to potential bicycle/pedestrian or bicycle/motor vehicle conflicts.

Analysis: The project proposes a 4-foot wide sidewalk on the interior lots. The sidewalks reduce pedestrian conflicts with bicycles and motorists by providing pedestrians physical separation from the travel lanes in the street.

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During construction activity on any property upon which a heritage tree is located, the following rules shall apply. Unless the express written permission of the director is first obtained, no person shall:

- A. Change the amount of irrigation provided to any heritage tree from that which was provided prior to the commencement of construction activity;
- B. Trench, grade or pave into the drip line area of a heritage tree;
- C. Change, by more than two feet, grade elevations within 30 feet of the drip line area of a heritage tree;
- D. Park or operate any motor vehicle within the drip line area of any heritage tree;
- E. Place or store any equipment or construction materials within the drip line area of any heritage tree;
- F. Attach any signs, ropes, cables or any other items to any heritage tree;
- G. Cut or trim any branch of a heritage tree for temporary construction purposes;
- H. Place or allow to flow into or over the drip line area of any heritage tree any oil, fuel, concrete mix or other deleterious substance.

4.4.3 Standards of Significance

An impact is considered significant if the project would:

- Create a potential health hazard, or use, produce or dispose materials that would pose a hazard to plant or animal populations in the area affected;
- Substantially degrade the quality of the environment, reduce the habitat, reduce a population of threatened or endangered species of plant or animal below self-sustaining levels;
- Affect other species of special concern to agencies or natural resource organizations (such as regulatory waters and wetlands); or
- Violate the Heritage Tree Ordinance (City Code 12.64.040).

4.4.4 Impacts

BIO-1 Impact: Construction of the proposed project could result in the disturbance of nesting Swainson's hawk (*Buteo swainsoni*) or other nesting raptors if present.

Analysis: Trees occurring within and adjacent to the project site provide potential nesting habitat for Swainson's hawk and other raptors such as white-tailed kite (*Elanus leucurus*). These raptors typically breed between 1 March and 15 September. A significant impact would occur if construction activities resulted in the abandonment of a nest or the forced fledging of chicks in an active raptor nest located within 0.25 mile of the project site. Implementation of BIO-1 Mitigation would reduce the level of potential impacts to less than significant.

Significance: Potentially significant unless mitigated.

Mitigation: BIO-1 Mitigation. (See below.)

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BIO-2 Impact: Construction of the project could result in the need to remove, trim or cut the roots of trees covered by City ordinances.

Analysis: The Islands at Riverlake Project will result in the trimming and removal of trees within the project site. Trees scheduled for removal are shown on Figure 5 Tentative Subdivision Map. Of the trees scheduled for removal or those potentially affected by construction, the City Arborist identified 16 trees covered by either Sacramento City Code 12.64.10 – 12.64.70 “Heritage Tree Ordinance” or Sacramento City Code 12.56.10 – 12.56.170 “Street Tree Ordinance.” The redwood trees (*Sequoia sempervirens*) are not considered “native” trees in the City of Sacramento under the Heritage Tree Ordinance. Redwoods are not native to the Sacramento Valley. When present, they have been planted as horticultural trees. The redwoods have legal status if their trunk circumference is 100 inches or more or if they meet the definition of a street tree. All of the redwoods are private trees and none are heritage trees. The City does not require a permit for the removal of private trees that are not heritage trees.

The City requires a permit to be obtained to remove or trim City street trees and heritage trees. The permit specifies what actions can be taken on certain trees. The permit also specifies mitigation for trees that are removed. It states the size and species of the mitigation trees and the location where the mitigation trees are to be planted. The City Arborist may require certain trees scheduled for removal to be posted with a public notice stating the intended action 30 days prior to removal.

In general, for trees that are to be preserved, the City requires that a 6-foot chain link fence be installed around the trunk of the tree prior to construction. The fence is to be located at a distance from the trunk as specified by the City Arborist. No grade changes or trenching is allowed within the fenced area. Obtaining and complying with the permit achieve compliance with the City Heritage Tree and Street Tree ordinances. Pruning or trimming of trees to be preserved may be conducted at the discretion of the City Arborist. All pruning and trimming activities must be completed by an ISA certified arborist.

The City issued a grading permit on 29 July 2004. Construction began in the middle of August. The applicant received tree removal permits and removed the following City-protected trees: 17 and 18. At the request of the Riverlake Community Association, the applicant obtained a removal permit for NL #1 and posted the tree in accordance with the City Heritage Tree ordinance but has not removed the tree yet. As a condition of the tree removal permits the applicant will plant replacement trees according to the ratios identified in the permits. Table 6 in Section 3.3.4 of this DEIR lists the number of inches of diameter at breast height (DBH) that requires planting to replace the number of inches DBH removed. All replacement trees will be planted on-site at the mini-park locations during the landscaping phase of the project. No unintended impacts to heritage and street trees occurred resulting from improperly severing roots during grading activities.

Table 3 in Section 3.1.3 lists the trees covered by City ordinances that remain in the project site, Riverlake Community Association landscape easement, or City parkway easement. Tree numbers 1, 137, and 151 are located in the project site. Tree number 137 is located in a proposed mini-park lot. Tree number 136 is located in the Riverlake Community Association landscape easement. Tree numbers NL #1 and 99

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are located in the City parkway easement. The tree numbers correspond to the tree number displayed on the Tentative Subdivision Map (Figure 5). Continued adherence to the conditions of the permit will reduce potentially significant impacts to locally designated species to a less than significant level. Unintended impacts to heritage and street trees could occur if roots are severed improperly during additional trenching activities.

For trees that are to be preserved (trees 99, 136, 137, and 151) the City requires that a 6-foot chain link fence be installed around the trunk of the tree prior to construction. The fence will be located at a distance from the trunk at a distance specified by the City Arborist. No grade changes or trenching will be allowed within the fenced area. Pruning or trimming of trees to be preserved may be conducted at the discretion of the City Arborist. All pruning and trimming activities must be completed by an ISA certified arborist. Implementation of BIO-2 Mitigation would reduce the level of potential impacts to preserved trees due to root severance or pruning to less than significant.

Significance: Potentially significant unless mitigated.

Mitigation: BIO-2 Mitigation. (See below.)

4.4.5 Mitigation Measures

BIO-1 Mitigation: Construction of the proposed project could result in the disturbance of nesting Swainson's hawk (*Buteo swainsoni*) if present.

- If construction begins outside the 1 March to 15 September breeding season a preconstruction survey for active nests does not need to be conducted.
- If construction is scheduled to commence during the breeding season, a preconstruction survey will be conducted by a qualified biologist to determine if raptors are nesting within 0.25 mile of the project site.
- The applicant will conduct a preconstruction survey at least 2 weeks prior to construction.
- If no active nests are found, no additional mitigation will be necessary.
- If active raptor nests are found within 0.25 mile of the project site, DFG will be notified and no project activities that could result in nest abandonment (e.g., noise generated from the operation of heavy equipment) will be conducted without DFG approval.

BIO-2 Mitigation: Construction of the project could result in the need to remove, trim or cut the roots of trees covered by City ordinances.

- Plant replacement trees at the ratios and locations identified in the City tree removal permit during the landscaping phase of the project.
- Project plans shall note that all roots shall be cut clean. Any roots greater than two inches in diameter will require inspection by an ISA certified arborist prior to severing. The applicant shall provide the City Arborist with a report

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demonstrating that severed roots greater than two inches diameter were inspected by an ISA certified arborist before cutting.

4.5 Aesthetics

This section includes a description of the existing aesthetic standards controlling the development of the project site, as well as the aesthetic criteria suggested in the "Initial Study Checklist" at Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines. An analysis of the consistency of the project with City standards and policies aimed at aesthetic impacts and qualities follows the regulatory setting discussion. Because the City's land use regulations and policies provide, in many instances, the only objective criteria by which to judge the project's aesthetic qualities, significant overlap occurs between this section and the land use consistency section. Thus, references to the preceding land use section, 4.2.1, are made wherever relevant.

4.5.1 Environmental Setting

The Islands at Riverlake Project is located on the north and south sides of Pocket Road approximately 250 feet west of the intersection of Pocket Road and Greenhaven Drive and approximately 2,000 feet west I-5. The project site is currently vacant and under construction. A 60-foot-wide Linear Parkway comprised of Pocket Road ROW (20 feet), landscaping easement dedicated to the Riverlake Community Association (25 feet), and a parkway easement dedicated to the City of Sacramento (15 feet) separates the project site from Pocket Road (Figure 5). The Linear Parkway is landscaped with grass and native and nonnative trees.

Single-family attached and detached residential development is located north of and adjacent to the proposed project on the north side of Pocket Road and south of and adjacent to the proposed project on the south side of Pocket Road. A six-foot high wood fence separates the existing yards from the project site. The side yards and backyards of existing houses abut the project site. Most of the backyards and side yards are vegetated with medium to large trees. Several lots at the east end of the proposed project abut an existing office building known as the Dutra House.

Streets in the Riverlake area curve and meander to conform to the oxbow in the Sacramento River and internal lake configuration. As a result lots are often odd-shaped. In the LPPT PUD the street layout results in reverse frontage lots where the backyards of halfplex units abut the side yards or backyards of R-1 lots. The existing two story halfplex units with 7.5 rear yard setbacks adjacent to the side yard or backyard of existing R-1 were not identified in previous CEQA documents prepared by the City in 2002-2003 as evidence that locating R-1A adjacent to R-1 had caused aesthetic or privacy impacts. The Third District Court of Appeal found that there might be a fair argument that the project could result in significant aesthetic impacts resulting by locating the proposed housing R-1A alternative housing type adjacent to existing R-1 standard housing products and R-1A alternative halfplex developments. Section 3.2 describes the surrounding developments.

4.5.2 Regulatory Setting

Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG)

Please refer to Section 4.1.2 of this DEIR for a description of the Blueprint Preferred Scenario for 2050 Map and Growth Principles and Section 4.1.4 for an evaluation of project consistency with the policies. Figure 7 is the Blueprint Preferred Scenario for 2050 Map for South Sacramento. This section of the DEIR evaluates aesthetic impacts as they relate to the SACOG Growth Principles.

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Please refer to Section 4.1.2 of this DEIR for a description of the SGPU and Section 4.1.4 for an evaluation of project consistency with the policies. Figure 8 is the SGPU Land Use Designation Map. This section of the DEIR evaluates aesthetic impacts as they relate to the goals and policies in the General Plan including Overall Urban Growth Policy 12 "Smart Growth Principals."

Pocket Area Community Plan – South Pocket Specific Plan (PACP-SPSP)

Please refer to Section 4.1.2 of this DEIR for a description of the PACP-SPSP and Section 4.1.4 for an evaluation of project consistency with the policies. Figure 9 is the PACP Land Use Designation Map. This section of the DEIR evaluates aesthetic impacts as they relate to the goals and policies in the Community Plan.

City of Sacramento Single-Family Residential Design Principles

The City adopted residential design principles and guidelines/design approaches in September 2000 to assist developers, homebuilders, and architects in the design of new single-family residences and subdivisions. The principles are intended to promote quality design and innovative solutions that in turn encourage viable neighborhoods of enduring value. The principles do not represent mandatory requirements, but rather, suggested principles for sustainable development. The City proscribed broad and flexible principles, followed by suggested guidelines or design approaches to accomplish the principles, although alternative design approaches that achieve the design principles will also be considered by the City. The analysis below sets forth a discussion of each of the principles and recommended guidelines/design approaches and the extent to which the proposed project is consistent with or achieves those principles.

L and P Pacific Teichert Planned Unit Development (LPPT PUD)

Please refer to Section 4.1.2 of this DEIR for a description of the LPPT PUD Development Guidelines and Section 4.1.4 for an evaluation of project consistency with the Guidelines. Figure 10 is the LPPT PUD Schematic Plan Map. This section of the DEIR evaluates aesthetic impacts as they relate to the Development Guidelines.

Sacramento City Code (SCC)

Please refer to Section 4.1.2 of this DEIR for a description of the applicable City ordinances and Section 4.1.4 for an evaluation of project consistency with the ordinances. Figure 11 is a City of Sacramento Zoning Map. Chapter 9 is a glossary of these terms as used in this DEIR.

4.5.3 Standards of Significance

An impact is considered significant if the project would:

- Obstruct a significant view or viewshed in a location that is visible from a public gathering or viewing area;
- Shade a recognized public gathering place (e.g., park) or locate residences/child care centers in complete shade;
- Cast glare in such a way that it causes a public hazard or annoyance for a sustained period of time;
- Cast light into oncoming traffic or residential uses in such a way that it causes a public hazard or annoyance for a sustained period of time.

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- Create a demonstrable negative aesthetic effect as measured by the following criteria:
 - The minimum setback requirements set forth in the applicable City Codes or the LPPT PUD Development Guidelines for this site or the average setbacks of surrounding properties;
 - The minimum landscaping and lot coverage requirements set forth in the applicable City Codes or the LPPT PUD Development Guidelines;
 - The maximum density allowable for the site as set by the applicable City Codes or LPPT PUD Development Guidelines;
 - The City of Sacramento Single-Family Residential Design Principles (adopted 9/2000; Resolution No. CC2000-523);
 - The City of Sacramento Smart Growth Principles; and
 - The Sacramento Area Council of Governments' "Blueprint for Development Transportation and Land Use Study."

- Create a monolithic façade so as to result in a "tunnel" or "canyon" appearance.

4.5.4 Impacts

AES-1 Impact: The Islands at Riverlake project proposes building setbacks in an R-1A zone that are less than the standard setbacks for R-1 development and proposes lot coverages that exceed the standard lot coverage for R-1 development. Project opponents have made a "fair argument" that the proposed setbacks may result in a demonstrable negative aesthetic effect.

Analysis: The City's zoning code states that the minimum yard requirements in the R-1A zone "shall be the same as that specified in the R-1 zone, except that the planning commission may vary the provisions in their review and determination of the required special permit" (SCC Title 17.060.020). The Islands at Riverlake project has applied for a special permit to construct 139 residential units with reduced setbacks, including 65 units on interior lots with reduced rear yard setbacks of 12 feet from the house and 10 feet from the garage.

As discussed under LAN-12 Impact in Section 4.1.5 of this DEIR, if the Islands at Riverlake project were built with a standard R-1 rear yard setback of 15 feet, the minimum expected distance from a new house to an existing house would be 30 feet for abutting rear yard houses (15 feet rear yard setback plus 15 feet rear yard setback) and 20 feet for an adjacent side yard house (5 feet side yard setback plus 15 feet rear yard setback). Of the 35 adjacent lots with abutting back yards, 11 existing houses would be located closer to the proposed project than the R-1 standard minimum distance of 30 feet between houses. The remaining 24 rear yard adjacent houses would have at least the R-1 minimum distance of 30 feet between buildings. Of the 24 adjacent lots with abutting side yards, 13 existing houses would be located closer to the proposed project than the R-1 standard minimum of distance of 20 feet. The

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remaining 11 side yard adjacent houses would have the R-1 minimum distance of 20 feet between buildings. A total of 24 existing houses would have less distance between the proposed house than would be provided by standard R-1 minimum setbacks.

The previously approved Pocket Road Manor Houses project (evaluated in Chapter 5 of this DEIR as Alternative A2) included 10-foot rear yard setbacks for two-story single-family alternative detached units abutting existing houses. For two-story single-family alternative halfplexes on reverse frontage lots in other parts of Riverlake, including the Bridgeview, Southshore, and Dutra Bend subdivisions, rear yard setbacks were established at 7.5 feet for the first floor and 15 feet for the second floor. The proposed project would have rear yard setbacks for single-story houses of 12 feet from the house and 10 feet from the garage. This meets or exceeds setbacks established for a project previously approved for the project site as well as other single-family alternative (R-1A) developments in the LPPT PUD. The setbacks were determined to be based on sound principles of land use for compatibility with the existing community and would not be detrimental to the public welfare or result in a public nuisance.

Because neither the zoning code nor the LPPT PUD Development Guidelines assign any quantifiable aesthetic values to setbacks, the determination of whether the setbacks create any adverse aesthetic impacts is ultimately a subjective one. Because of the subjective evaluation of the relationship between setbacks and aesthetic appearance, it is ultimately a matter for the discretion of the planning commission and the City Council to determine whether the setbacks proposed for the project create an undesirable aesthetic effect. The setbacks previously approved were considered adequate to provide necessary screening and privacy for residents of both housing types. The proposed project design avoids placing two-story units adjacent to existing houses on abutting lots. This design feature was included to avoid privacy intrusions resulting from locating second-story windows overlooking the adjacent houses.

Under LAN-12 Impact in Section 4.1.5 of this DEIR, four design features of the proposed project and one existing regulation reduces impacts resulting from locating new houses next to 24 existing houses with less than the R-1 minimum distance between buildings:

1. The project proposes only single-story units on the lots abutting these 22 existing houses, as well as for all lots abutting existing houses. This design feature ensures that no second-story windows overlook the existing house.
2. The rear yard setbacks proposed by the project are greater than minimum rear yard setbacks approved for reverse lot R-1A halfplex developments in Riverlake and a previously approved project for the project site. As evaluated under LAN-4 Impact in Section 4.1.4.2 "Sacramento General Plan, Residential Strategy, Goal A, Policy 6, for halfplexes on reverse lots the rear yard setback were established at 7.5 feet. The project proposed 12-foot setback from the house and 10-foot setback from the garage exceeds this previously used standard. The first project approved for the project site, the Pocket Road Manor Houses project, provided a 10-foot rear yard setback for a single-family alternative detached dwelling unit abutting lots with existing houses.

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3. The 6-foot high good neighbor fence provides privacy to residents when they are in the yard. It also provides sightline screening when looking out from the first floor windows.
4. The lots are situated so that the lot lines are staggered. Houses would not be directly in line with one another.
5. The Riverlake Community Association requires five 15-gallon trees be planted in each yard in Riverlake. The interior lots of the Islands at Riverlake project will have landscaped front yards. Between 1 and 2.5 Riverlake Community Association approved shade trees will be planted in the front yards. The responsibility of planting the remaining 4 to 2.5 trees would be the new homeowner's. Riverlake Community Association approved trees planted by the new homeowners in the backyards would increase screening between the new houses and the existing houses. A copy of the Riverlake Community Association Approved Shade and Palm Tree List (January 2004) is in Exhibit E of this DEIR.

Significance: With the design features and existing regulations incorporated into the project and because the proposed rear yard setbacks meet or exceed the rear yard setbacks established for R-1A halfplexes on reverse frontage lots, and in many instances, exceed setbacks of existing R-1 homes, AES-1 is considered a less than significant impact.

Mitigation: None required.

AES-2 Impact: The Islands at Riverlake project proposes lot sizes that are less than the minimum size required for the R-1 zone in the City Zoning Code and proposes floor plans that exceed the R-1 standard lot coverage. Project opponents have made a "fair argument" that the lot sizes and coverage proposed for the Islands at Riverlake project may result in a demonstrable negative aesthetic effect.

Analysis: The City's zoning code states that the maximum lot coverage and minimum lot area per dwelling unit requirements in the R-1A zone "shall be the same as that specified in the R-1 zone, except that the planning commission may vary the provisions in their review and determination of the required special permit" (SCC Title 17.060.020). The zoning code sets maximum lot coverage at 40% and minimum lot size at 5,200 square feet for R-1-zoned lots (*Ibid*). The City calculates "lot coverage" as the footprint of the building, and does not include uncovered porches, walkways, driveways or patios in this calculation (SCC Title 17.17.010.) The zoning code also states, however, that the R-1A zone is intended to permit "alternative single-family designs" with lot sizes and area requirements that vary from standard single-family requirements (SCC Title 17.20.010.). Therefore, the R-1A zone is expressly intended to be a flexible designation with respect to lot coverage and size. The LPPT PUD Development Guidelines do not specify any maximum lot coverage requirements for "Townhouse and related development" (R-1A) parcels.

The average lot coverage proposed by the Islands at Riverlake project is 46% (Table 9). The average proposed lot coverage would exceed the average building coverage of other R-1A developments in the LPPT PUD Schematic Plan area. However, the

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maximum lot coverage proposed by the Islands at Riverlake project, 54%, does not exceed the maximum lot coverage area in the Bridgeview (65%), Westshore (62%), and Stillwater (56%) subdivisions. The average lot coverage area of the proposed project (46%) is below the maximum lot coverage areas of the abutting subdivisions Bridgeview (65%), Southshore (53%), and Dutra Bend (53%) and the maximum Islands at Riverlake lot coverage area is only 1% more than Southshore and Dutra Bend.

The zoning code does not set minimum landscaping coverage for developments within either the R-1 or R-1A zones. The LPPT PUD Development Guidelines require a minimum of 25% landscaping coverage. With an average landscape coverage area of 43%, all of the typical lot plans proposed for the project exceed the LPPT PUD's minimum requirements of 25% landscaping coverage.

The project's inconsistency with the R-1 zone lot coverage requirement does not, however, in and of itself, create a significant adverse aesthetic impact. Neither the City's regulations nor the LPPT PUD assign any qualitative aesthetic relationship to the minimum lot coverage requirement. Moreover, because lot coverage and size are intended to be flexible in an R-1A zone, the question for the planning commission or City Council is whether, in considering the lot coverage of the proposed lot plans in the context of the special permit required for any development within the R-1A zone, the proposed plans comply with "sound principles of land use," are not "detrimental to the public health, safety or welfare, or do not create a nuisance, and comply with the objectives of the general or specific plan for the area" (SCC Title 17.212).

The proposed lot sizes are smaller than the average lot sizes of abutting parcels (Table 4). This is a result of the density required by the LPPT PUD Schematic Plan for the project site. The lot coverage area is directly proportional to lot sizes. Therefore, the Islands at Riverlake lot coverage area are higher than abutting parcels due to the density requirement. [Because the City previously determined that the range of lot coverage area of the other R-1A alternative housing products did not result in a demonstrable negative aesthetic effect, the proposed lot coverage areas are considered consistent with the City's previous findings.] *cite? support?*

The variation in lot size, lot coverage and landscaping that the different lot plans provide, as well as the seven mini-parks located throughout the development, serve to break up potential uniformity of the lots. The proposed typical lot plans exceed the minimum amounts of landscaping required under the LPPT PUD Development Guidelines. For the foregoing reasons, any aesthetic impacts associated with lot sizes, lot coverage and landscaping are considered less than significant.

Significance: Less than significant.

Mitigation: None required.

AES-3 Impact: Project opponents have made a "fair argument" that the Islands at Riverlake project may have a demonstrable negative aesthetic effect if it conflicts with the City's Single-Family Residential Design Principles.

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Analysis:

The City's Single-Family Residential Design Principles set forth general design goals expected by the Planning Commission. The project's consistency with each of these principles and the guidelines/design approaches recommended to achieve these principles is set forth below, based on the plans and elevations contained in Exhibit D:

Principle: General Architecture: Variation in residences, structures and buildings is achieved through the use of quality materials and detail in design, which lends visual interest, distinctive character and identity to a community.

Encourage:

- Design diversity that breaks from repetitive tract house style by providing front elevation variation throughout neighborhood plan.
- Manipulation of building elements and massing to avoid visual monotony with particular emphasis on long streets.
- Consistent levels of detailing/finish on all sides of structure such as recessed, pop out, or trim features where visible from public streets or spaces.
- Exterior color and material palettes that reflect area context.
- Window shape and placement that breaks long expanses of wall.
- Roof form, mass, shape & material changes to create variations in plans.
- Residential heating/air conditioning units should be located to have the minimum visual and noise impacts on adjacent residential neighbors.

Discourage/Avoid:

- Excessive repetition of identical floor plans and elevations throughout a neighborhood or subdivision with little differentiation.
- The use of low quality/grade materials that do not wear well and contribute to a sense of permanence.
- Roof-mounted heating and air conditioning

The proposed project incorporates most of the above recommendations. The project applicant proposes six different floor plans (two 1-story plans and three 2-story plans) with three elevations each, ranging from a 1,428 square-foot, single-story house to a 2,250-square-foot, two-story house (Floor plans and elevation drawings are in Exhibit D of this DEIR). The proposed designs incorporate consistent levels of detailing and finishes on all sides of the structure, with particular attention to publicly visible facades. No side-by-side or cross-private road duplication of a house elevation would occur. Therefore, the proposed project is considered consistent with this principle.

Principle: Garages: Minimizing the impact of the garage as viewed by the public realm creates a visual relationship between the front entrance of each home and the street.

Encourage:

- Alternatives to garages as predominate architectural features by creative use of the following design elements:
 - Recess garage back 5' from front house elevation entry.
 - Detach garage to rear of property – tie to residence with trellis, breezeway, etc.
 - Side turn-in garage at front elevation.

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- Grouped garage locations in higher densities.
- Courtyard garage design.
- Provide a second story above garage with features such as balconies for direct visual access.
- The use of architectural detailing, textures, windows, and garage placement or other design solutions to reduce the dominance of garage doors.
- Place active living areas at the front of the house with windows onto the street limiting the garage projection.

Discourage/Avoid:

- Prominent placement of garage door with respect to front door, entryway or front porch. This reduces the perception of eyes on the street and allows for less interaction with neighbors.
- Avoid the long uninterrupted wall created by the extension of the garage out from the house.

The garages are recessed two feet from the front house elevation. In addition, the 74 houses that front on Pocket Road have garages that are attached to the rear of the houses, thereby virtually eliminating the view of garages from those traveling on Pocket Road (the main travel road into the LPPT PUD). Several of the floor plans include second stories above garages and also include windows and other architectural detailing that have the effect of reducing the dominance of the garage doors. Therefore, the proposed project is considered consistent with this principle.

Principle: Porches/Entries/Courts: A clear sense of entry and design interest to a home is provided through the inclusion of porches, verandas, porte cocheres and other architectural elements that contribute to a sense of place and activity.

Encourage:

- Fronts of houses and entries that face the street. Each house should have a clearly identified entry and have active use windows (i.e., living room, kitchen) facing the street.
- The main entry feature (which should not be the garage door) should be prominently displayed on the elevation facing the street.
- Front porches large enough to accommodate chairs provide an opportunity for increased interaction among neighbors.
- "Standard" entryways can be extended to provide a modest front porch with minor modifications and cost.
- At a minimum, the front door should have the same prominence as the garage door.
- Porches that provide weather protection and shade are desired.

Discourage/Avoid:

- Providing a garage door that protrudes forward from the front face of the house. This tends to reduce visibility from the street to the front door.
- Locating a porch or entryway in a location obstructed by the garage or side of the house.
- Locating entryways and windows that are small and oriented to the interior or side of the site.

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The proposed designs prominently feature front entries or rear facades that are designed to approximate a front-entry appearance, oriented to the street, and many also include covered porches (Elevation drawings in Exhibit D). Additionally, the proposed units that front on Pocket Road feature a dual "front-door" appearance to both Pocket Road and the interior private street. The proposed project is considered consistent with this principle.

Principle: Driveways/Entry Walks: Creative driveway entry walk design, with the use of quality materials, are scaled to the pedestrian, enhancing overall neighborhood appeal.

Encourage:

- Separate pedestrian access to the front door from the driveway.
- Single-width driveways whenever possible, especially on lots less than 50 feet wide.
- "Hollywood" driveways are encouraged.
- When a large portion of the front elevation is devoted to driveways and walkways, the driveways should be constructed with visually contrasting paving surfaces such as salt finish bomanite, stamped/colored concrete or paver stones.
- Driveway access to "third" garages and/or R.V. access should be provided with alternative paving materials (i.e., Hollywood driveways, pavers, decorative concrete, etc.)

Discourage/Avoid:

- Excessively wide paved driveways that result in smaller yard area, increase heat in the summer and increased storm water runoff.
- Encroachment of the driveway into the front yard area (i.e., between the street and the front window and/or entryway).

Most of the proposed home designs feature separate pedestrian access to the front doors from the driveway, interior private-street, and the existing Linear Parkway. Of the total 139 units, the 65 lots fronting on the interior private-street would have 16-foot wide and 18-foot long driveways; 72 of the lots fronting on Pocket Road would have 16-foot wide and 20-foot long driveways; two of the specialty lots would have 16-foot wide and 15-foot long driveways. Since the houses are a minimum of 57-feet wide, the driveways will comprise $\pm 28\%$ of the front width and this would not dominate the visual appearance of the front elevations of the proposed units. The driveways lead straight into the private street and do not encroach into the front yard area between the front entries and the street. The proposed project is considered consistent with this principle.

Principle: Setbacks/Lot widths: Neighborhood environments are established by the variety of architecture and landscape defined by varied lot widths and setbacks.

Encourage:

- The incorporation of reduced or varied front setbacks. These provide for a more interesting street environment, provide for a sense of security for pedestrians and allow front yard landscaping to contribute to softened densities.
- Curvilinear or angled streets to allow varied setbacks.

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Discourage/Avoid:

- Deep homogenous front setbacks. This provides for a “sameness” that exists throughout most new developments.

The front yard setbacks from the lots fronting on the interior, private street are “reduced” -- approximately 9-to-11 feet, with a typical 18-foot driveway. The front yard setbacks of the houses fronting on Pocket Road and the landscape easement are zero feet because there are two landscape easements totaling 40 feet between the proposed houses and the Pocket Road right-of-way. These setbacks bring the houses with their windows and “eyes on the street” closer to the streets and sidewalks for a sense of security for pedestrians. The proposed plans feature nine different elevation designs, with a varied palette of colors, trim materials, and roofs (Elevation drawings are in Exhibit D). The yards of the lots fronting on Pocket Road will be completely landscaped. The front yards of the lots fronting on the interior private street will be completely landscaped. Landscaping of the backyards of the interior lots will be the responsibility of the homeowner. The Conceptual Landscape Plan is in Exhibit D of this DEIR. These features, plus the varied home sizes and heights, will prevent any sense of homogeny. The proposed project is therefore considered consistent with this principle.

Principle: Landscaping/Sidewalks: Consistent quality and design of landscape elements and sidewalks softens the aesthetics of structures and ties neighborhoods together while contributing to energy efficiency.

Encourage:

- Planting at least one 15-gallon shade tree within the front yard setback to provide for shading on the house and sidewalk. Spacing between front yard trees should be no greater than 50 feet.
- Residential subdivisions should incorporate thematic street tree programs in their designs.
- Utilize drought tolerant landscaping whenever possible.
- Sidewalks should be developed consistent with the City of Sacramento Streets Standards Manual. Landscape strips between sidewalks and curbs are desirable.

Discourage/Avoid:

- Building new homes with few or no front yard shade trees.
- The planting of water-dependent turf only.

The project will plant between 1 and 2.5 Riverlake Community Association approved shade trees in each yard abutting the interior private street. The Riverlake Community Association Landscaping Guidelines and List of Approved Trees is in Exhibit E. Shade trees exist already in landscape easement along Pocket Road and additional shade trees will be planted in the mini-parks throughout the development. Because the private drive is narrower than a standard City street section, the proposed shade trees are expected to provide adequate cover of the street’s hard surface. A landscape strip between the private street and the interior sidewalk is not proposed. When the Islands at Riverlake project was previously approved by the City Council, it was not subject to conditions of approval requiring the use of drought-tolerant landscaping. Because most of the existing shade trees within the landscape easement will be preserved, larger shade trees may be planted in the mini-parks, and the proposed

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landscaping coverage well exceeds the 25% minimum coverage requirement of the LPPT PUD Development Guidelines (proposed landscape coverage averages 44%), the proposed project, is considered nonetheless consistent with this principle.

Principle: Street view walls/Monument entries/Access: Through creative design and use of quality materials, perimeter wall and entry elements provide a sense of arrival and identity for neighborhoods.

Encourage:

- Front or side on lots adjacent to local and collector streets where traffic and noise impacts allow. This orientation contributes to a more aesthetic and pedestrian friendly streetscape.
- Multiple ingress and egress points into subdivisions. This allows for a more even dispersal of traffic through a neighborhood. It also allows for improved emergency vehicle access.

Discourage/Avoid:

- Long walls separating subdivisions front street access and other subdivisions. This type of development restricts movement between neighborhoods and creates “dead” spaces along pedestrian corridors.
- Gates as entryways into subdivisions. Gates tend to create a “fortress” feeling and discourage interaction among neighborhoods.

Of the 139 proposed units, 74 houses will front on the landscape easement on Pocket Road. The project will be accessed through five new driveways and in the Linear Parkway and one connection in West Shore Drive. None of the ingress/egress locations would be gated and no walls are proposed for the perimeter of the project... Therefore, the proposed project is considered consistent with this principle.

Principle: Orientation to parks/public open space: Visual and physical accessibility to public open spaces and parks allows for cohesive neighborhood viability and sustainability.

Encourage:

- Residential units should front or side onto parks and public open space (including creeks and wetlands) providing “eyes” on active and passive open space.
- Where side or front on lots may not be possible or desirable, visual breaks should be provided (e.g., wrought iron, low fencing, etc.) in rear yard walls to provide visual access to open space.

Discourage/Avoid:

- Back-on lots. This orientation turns a “blind eye” to active areas and reduces the opportunity for passive surveillance. It also misses the opportunity for increased housing values.
- Walls adjacent to visual corridors.

The project is located immediately adjacent to an existing landscape easement along Pocket Road and is designed to front on this Linear Parkway. The project proposes seven passive use mini parks scattered throughout the development to provide access

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and integration with the City walkway in the Linear Park (Conceptual Landscape Plan in Exhibit D). The proposed project is considered consistent with this principle.

Significance: Less than significant. The proposed project is consistent with all of the guidelines in the Single-Family Residential Design Principles. This impact is considered less than significant.

Mitigation: None required.

AES-4 Impact: Project opponents have made a "fair argument" that the density and intensity of the detached units in the Islands at Riverlake project may result in a demonstrable negative aesthetic effect as compared to previously approved attached-unit projects.

Analysis: The proposed project nearly achieves the maximum 8 dwelling units per net acre density designation of the LPPT PUD. The proposed density is consistent with the density designated by the SGPU, PACP-SPSP, and the R-1A zone (LAN-10 Impact under Section 4.1.5 of this DEIR).

Based on the evaluation under LAN-11 Impact in Section 4.1.5 of this DEIR, the intensity (mass as it relates to density) of the proposed project is consistent with City findings for similar R-1A housing products abutting standard R-1 projects. The Islands at Riverlake project proposes smaller houses than the typical houses in the LPPT PUD on smaller than typical lots. The project uses smaller lots to achieve the required density. The smaller lots result in greater mass/bulk statistics. The Alternatives Analysis in Chapter three illustrates that the intensity of the development is directly proportional to the number of residential units located on the project site.

The proposed project will be more dense than the adjacent existing neighborhoods; however, the project site has been slated for this density of development for at least 20 years. In the opinion of the City planning staff, there is no further objective valuation that can be made regarding the aesthetic effect associated with the proposed project's density. Because the project is consistent with the City's goals and policies encouraging denser residential infill development and is consistent with objective City criteria governing maximum density, any aesthetic impact associated with the project's density is therefore considered less than significant.

Significance: Less than significant.

Mitigation: None required.

AES-5 Impact: Project opponents have made a "fair argument" that the Islands at Riverlake project could have a demonstrable negative aesthetic effect if it would obstruct a significant view or viewshed in a location that is visible from a public gathering or viewing area.

Analysis: Views from Pocket Road

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The proposed project consists of two rows of wide and shallow lots with garage access off a private drive between the linear parkway and the existing houses. On the proposed houses along the linear parkway, the front door/elevation will face the linear parkway and Pocket Road. The existing character of the site is a graded vacant lot, bordered on one side by residential development and by a 60-foot wide linear parkway on the other. The character of the proposed project is congruous with the neighboring residential development. Passers-by of the project on Pocket Road would see the front elevations of detached houses and would not consider the development visually disruptive because urban residential development is a common and accepted part of the landscape in the City.

The existing view from Pocket Road is of the Linear Parkway in the foreground, homes in the midground, and sky in the background. The proposed project will not substantially change this view. The view from Pocket Road after project construction will be of the Linear Parkway in the foreground, homes in the midground, and sky in the background.

The linear parkway is maintained by the Riverlake Community Association (RCA) with contribution from the project. The RCA voted to include the Islands at Riverlake subdivision into the homeowners association. Implementation of and adherence to the CC&Rs for front yard maintenance would ensure that the residential development and the linear parkway are maintained in a manner consistent with the rest of the Riverlake community. Therefore, the potential aesthetic effect associated with the view of the project from Pocket Road is considered to be less than significant.

Private Views from Residential Development

Some existing residents have expressed the opinion that the proposed project would conflict with their visual expectations for the site. Some residents previously expressed an expectation for larger, manor-style homes or attached townhomes. The proposed project would figure prominently in the foreground of the private view sheds from the rear of the neighboring houses and would in some cases obstruct their view of the Linear Parkway. Clustered manor homes or townhouses would possibly result in different private viewsheds being affected, but it cannot be reasonably argued that the effect would be "more" or "less" under the subject project. Clustered manor homes could block similar private viewsheds as the proposed combination of single- and two-story single-family homes. Townhouses could conceivably be similar or block more views because of their height.

To characterize these private views and potential impacts to them as triggering mitigation under CEQA is inappropriate, however, as the subject property has been designated for over 20 years for two-story residential development. As such, the private views under consideration were interim beneficial conditions. The loss or impairment of these views with proposed development of the subject site is not a significant impact under CEQA.

Public views down length of interior street of project

Some project opponents have expressed the view that passersby looking down the length of the interior street of the project will experience a "canyoning" or "tunneling" effect, due to the narrower width of the private street and the reduced front setbacks of the proposed lot plans. The City has no established, objective or quantifiable criteria by which to measure this subjective effect. As discussed above, however, the project

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has been determined to be consistent with the quantifiable criteria for density, setbacks, lot coverage, landscaping requirements, and building heights and styles. The City Fire, Public Works, and Transportation Departments considered the width of the private street and determined that the narrower width would not pose any significant public safety risks or traffic hazards. The length of the interior street will be interrupted by periodic wider, "hammerhead" turnouts and concrete "islands" which will minimize the potential adverse visual effect that a long, uninterrupted stretch might otherwise create. Shade trees will be planted in the mini-parks proposed throughout the development and in the yards facing the interior street. In consideration of all of these factors, the potential "canyoning" or "tunneling" effect is determined to be less than significant from a CEQA perspective. The ultimate determination of the desirability of the proposed design and the appropriate balancing of the needs of existing and future residents will be decided by the planning commission and City Council and guided by the standards for the issuance of a special permit.

Significance: Less than significant.

Mitigation: None required.

AES-6 Impact: Project opponents have made a "fair argument" that the Islands at Riverlake project proposal to construct houses and plant trees could have demonstrable negative aesthetic effects if they excessively shade the linear parkway, locate existing adjacent residences in complete shade, or incorporate landscaping that is incompatible with the existing character of the neighborhood.

Analysis: A total of 65 houses would be built on interior lots. Of the 65 houses, 55 would be single-story and 10 would be two-story. The two-story lots are lots 14, 45, 51, 54, 55, 69, 75, 79, 80, and 86. The lots that are proposed for two-story plans are located adjacent to cul-de-sacs and not existing homes. The single-story houses would be a maximum of 16 feet high, and the two-story houses would be a maximum of 24.5 feet high. Of the 59 existing houses, 11 are single-story and 48 are two-story houses. The houses will be constructed on level ground adjacent to existing houses on the same ground level. The City's Zoning Ordinance limits the height of buildings in the R-1 to 35 feet.

The Islands at Riverlake project proposes greater setbacks and lower building heights than have been approved and constructed in the Bridgeview, Southshore, and Dutra Bend. The proposed setbacks are greater than and the height less than what has been approved and constructed in other subdivisions in the LPPT PUD.

The Riverlake Community Association approved Landscape Guidelines in April 2004 (Exhibit E). The Guidelines require each front yard have a minimum of one 15-gallon shade trees that has been selected from the Approved Shade Trees list. One of the five required 15-gallon trees must be a shade tree located in the front yard. The back yards of the abutting houses appear to comply with the requirement. At maturity, the shortest approved shade tree is 20 feet (Trident Maple) and the tallest is 80 feet tall (Red Oak, Scarlet Oak, and Maidenhair). The average mature tree height of the from the approved tree list is \pm 50 feet.

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The Islands at Riverlake project would plant 1 to 2.5 shade trees in the front yards of the existing interior lots. The new homeowners of interior lots are required to landscape their backyards. It would be the homeowners responsibility to plant the remaining 4 – 2.5 required trees in the backyard. The average tree height is 34 feet higher than the proposed single-story house and \pm 25 feet higher than the two-story house. If there were shade impacts, they would result from shade trees planted in backyards not from the buildings. Shade impacts resulting from shade trees is not considered a significant impact because the Riverlake Community Association has expressly identified shade trees as a community benefit.

Significance: Less than significant.

Mitigation: None required.

AES-7 Impact: The Islands at Riverlake Project could result in a demonstrable negative aesthetic effect if it would cast glare light or glare into traffic or residential uses in such a way that it causes a public hazard or annoyance for a sustained period of time.

Analysis: The project will include the installation of outdoor lighting. Compliance with SCC Titles 17.24 and 17.68.030 Part B will ensure that exterior lighting is consistent with similarly zoned and developed areas in the City. Among the restrictions of these regulations are: light must be reflected away from neighboring land uses (SCC 17.68.030 Part B).

Significance: Less than significant.

Mitigation: None required.

4.5.5 Mitigation Measures

No significant impacts were identified. No mitigation measures are needed.

4.6 Cultural Resources

4.6.1 Environmental Setting

The project is located in a Primary Impact Area identified in the SGPU EIR as being especially sensitive and thus requiring a preliminary cultural survey (SGPU EIR V-5).

Peak and Associates, Inc. conducted a cultural survey of the project site in 1984 to assist the City with environmental review of the LPPT PUD application. The results of that study were negative. In May 2002, Peak and Associates conducted a records search at the North Central California Information Center (NCIC) to determine if any cultural resources had been identified since the initial report. Based on the results of the records search Peak and Associates determined that no cultural resources had been identified since the original study. Based on these findings, the City of Sacramento determined that an additional site survey would not be required for this project. The results of the records search is provided in Appendix E and is here summarized:

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Sites within Radius: Nothing found

Studies within Radius: 1984. Cultural Resources Assessment of the L-P-P-T Project, City of Sacramento, Peak and Associates, Inc.
1987. Cultural Resources Assessment of the Slaughter Property, City of Sacramento, Peak and Associates, Inc.

OHP Historic Properties Directory: Nothing found.

NCIC Historic Resources Map: Nothing found.

California Inventory (1976): Nothing found.

4.6.2 Regulatory Setting

Cultural resources are treated under two areas of code: CEQA Section 21083.2 and Section 21084.1 and California Public Resources Code (PRC) Section 5024.1a-i and Section 5097.5a. CEQA Section 21083.2 defines a "unique archeological resource" as:

1. Contains information needed to answer important scientific research questions and that there is a demonstrable public interest in that information.
2. Has a special and particular quality such as being the oldest of its type or the best available example of its type.
3. Is directly associated with a scientifically recognized important prehistoric or historic event or person.

CEQA Section 21084.1 defines a significant historical resource as a resource listed or eligible for listing in the CRHR. Any resource that has been determined eligible for inclusion in the NRHP will be considered eligible for the CRHR. Any resource included in a local register of historical resources, or that has been identified in a historical resources survey that meets the requirements of PRC Section 5024.1(g) is considered a historical resource.

The PRC Section 5097.5a protects prehistoric and historical resources, geologic, and paleontological resources. PRC Section 5097.5a reads, in part, "No person shall knowingly and willfully excavate upon, or remove, destroy, injure, or deface, any historic or prehistoric ruins, burial grounds, archaeological or vertebrate paleontological site, including fossilized footprints, inscriptions made by human agency, rock art, or any other archaeological, paleontological or historical feature."

Projects that receive funding or require approvals from a federal agency, e.g., U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Section 404 permit, must meet not only CEQA requirements but also requirements of Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act.

City of Sacramento General Plan

The SGPU EIR determined that the following mitigation measures would reduce potential impacts to cultural resources to level of less than significant (SGPU EIR V-7 – V-8):

1. Required consultation with the North Central Information Center to identify known cultural resources and potential cultural resources that could be found on land proposed for development.
2. Require an archeological field survey if development area is sensitive.
3. Implement specific preservation measures recommended by the survey archeologist.

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4. Cease construction activities and consult qualified archeologists upon discovery of potential cultural resources.
5. Maintain confidentiality of significant prehistoric resource locations.
6. Adopt cultural resource policies as part of the SGPU EIR.

4.6.3 Standards of Significance

An impact is considered significant if the project would:

- Cause a substantial change in the significance of a historical or archaeological resource as defined in CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5, or
- Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature.

4.6.4 Impacts

CUL-1 Impact: Previously unidentified artifacts could be discovered during trenching to install of underground utilities.

Analysis: Implementation of mitigation measures would reduce the level of potential impacts.

Significance: Potentially significant unless mitigated.

Mitigation: CUL-1 Mitigation. (See below.)

CUL-2 Impact: Previously unidentified human remains could be unearthed during construction.

Analysis: Implementation of mitigation measures would reduce the level of potential impacts.

Significance: Potentially significant unless mitigated.

Mitigation: CUL-2 Mitigation. (See below.)

4.6.5 Mitigation Measures

CUL-1 Mitigation: Previously unidentified artifacts could be discovered during trenching to install of underground utilities.

- If subsurface archaeological or historical remains (including, but not limited to, unusual amounts of bones, stones, or shells) are discovered during excavation or construction of the site, work within 100 feet of the discovery shall stop immediately and a qualified archaeologist and a representative of the Native American Heritage Commission shall be consulted to develop, if necessary, further mitigation measures to reduce any archaeological impact to a less than significant level before construction continues.

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CUL-2 Mitigation: Previously unidentified human remains could be unearthed during construction.

- If human burials are encountered, work within 100 feet if the discovery shall stop immediately and the Sacramento County Coroner's office shall be notified immediately. If the remains are determined to be Native American in origin, both the Native American Heritage Commission and any identified descendants must be notified and recommendations for treatment solicited (CEQA Section 15064.5).

4.7 Recreational Resources

This section includes a description of the standards controlling the use and development of the existing Linear Parkway adjacent to the project site. An analysis of the consistency of the proposed project with these criteria follows the regulatory setting discussion.

4.7.1 Environmental Setting

An approximately 60-foot wide Linear Parkway is located along the length of the project site adjacent to Pocket Road (Figure 5). The Linear Parkway includes the landscaped 20-foot wide Pocket Road right-of-way (ROW), a 15-foot wide stretch of land that is encumbered with an easement for the benefit of the City of Sacramento, and a 25-foot wide stretch of land with a landscape easement to the Riverlake Community Association (RCA). An 8-foot wide concrete sidewalk meanders through the Pocket Road ROW and the City's 15-foot wide parkway easement. The Linear Parkway is ± 5.8 acres (2.2 acres in the City parkway easement and 3.6 acres in the RCA landscape easement). The linear parkway is planted with grass and native and nonnative trees. The primary uses of the Linear Parkway are walking, jogging, and dog walking on the path.

Considered a community park, the Garcia Bend Park is located within 0.5 mile of the project site. The 24-acre Garcia Bend Park is located between Pocket Road and the Sacramento River. The park is equipped with a boat launch, soccer fields, a tot lot, and parking.

The maximum population estimate for the project site under PACP-SPSP (Residential 7-15) is 991.44 people (15 dwelling units per net acre x 19.44 net acres = 291.6 dwelling units x 3.4 people per dwelling unit = 991.44). The population estimate for the proposed project is approximately 472.6 people (3.4 people per dwelling unit x 139 dwelling units).

4.7.2 Regulatory Setting

City of Sacramento General Plan

The SGPU DEIR identifies three classes of parks: 1) Neighborhood Park (2 – 10 acres to serve a 0.5-mile radius), 2) Community Park (6 – 60 acres to serve a 3-mile radius), and 3) Regional Park (greater than 75 acres to serve a radius of 30 minutes driving time). In the Public Facilities and Services Element of the SGPU DEIR, the City set the following goal (SGPU DEIR, C-61):

Goal A: Provide adequate parks and recreational services in all parts of the City, adapted to the needs and desires of each neighborhood and community. Attempt to achieve the park acreage standards in the Parks and Recreation Master Plan.

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The park acreage standard in the Parks and Recreation Master Plan is 5 acres per 1,000 residents or approximately 2.5 acres per 1,000 residents for Neighborhood Parks and 2.5 acres for Community Parks per 1,000 residents.

The SGPU DEIR adopted the following policies to achieve Goal A that are applicable to the proposed project (SGPU DEIR, C-61):

Policy 1: Encourage private development of recreational facilities that complement and supplement the public recreational system.

Policy 4: Reserve and acquire when needed all park sites designated in Community Plans and specific plans.

Policy 5: Design parks to enhance and preserve the natural site characteristics.

Policy 6: Review all necessary infrastructure improvements for their potential park and open space usage.

Policy 7: Locate community and regional nodal and linear recreational areas on or adjacent to major thoroughfares.

Pocket Area Community Plan – South Pocket Specific Plan

The PACP-SPSP determined that acreage alone does not assure a well-balanced park system. Sacramento River frontage and the drainage canal system running through the South Pocket offer potential for recreational activities that duplicate to varying degrees the functions of more conventional parks. The PACP-SPSP attempts to achieve park facilities that compliment the river and the drainage canal as well as other parks (PACP-SPSP 23).

General standards and criteria used to determine park locations provide a realistic and flexible approach to planning a well-balanced recreation system. Those applicable here include the following:

Policy 1. Neighborhood parks should be located adjacent to school sites to encourage greater use over a longer period of time.

Policy 2. Park sites in general should be easily accessible to potential users.

Policy 3. Park facilities should be centrally located within their intended service area.

Sacramento City Code

SCC 16.64 Parks and Recreational Facilities requires a developer to dedicate land, pay a fee in lieu, or both as a condition of approval of a final subdivision map or parcel map. The City found that the public interest, convenience, health, welfare and safety require that five acres of property for each 1,000 persons residing within the City be devoted to local recreation and park purposes. According to the standards and formula in this chapter, the City determines the amount of real property to be dedicated or amount of the in lieu fee.

4.7.3 Standards of Significance

An impact is considered significant if the project would:

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- Create a new demand for additional recreational facilities or
- Affect existing recreational opportunities.

4.7.4 Impacts

REC-1 Impact: The Islands at Riverlake Project will create an increased demand for parks due to increased population.

Analysis: **Park Dedication Standard:** The SGPU DEIR and the Sacramento Master Park Plan standard for park dedication by the developers is 5 acres per 1,000 residents or approximately 2.5 acres per 1,000 residents for Neighborhood Parks and the same ratio for Community Parks. The proposed project will result in approximately 473 new residents. Pursuant to City plans, the project is required to provide a total of 2.37 acres of parks (1.18 acres of Neighborhood Parks and 1.18 acres of Community Parks).

Dedication of parkland was a condition of approval for the LPPT PUD in 1985. To satisfy the parkland dedication requirement for the entire LPPT PUD development, the original developer provided a ± 30-acre scenic and recreational lake; a 2.5-acre public park constructed to the satisfaction of the City on the landward side of the levee between lots 16 and 17 (Shore Park Garden Apartments), and a partially publicly dedicated (2.2 acres to the City) and partially privately owned (3.6 acres to the RCA) Linear Parkway improved to the satisfaction of the City. The City determined that "City and Developer agree that Developer's obligations... are more than sufficient to satisfy Developer's parkland dedication obligation for the total project, so that no such dedication or fees in lieu thereof shall be required" (Development Agreement dated 27 August 1985 and amended 15 July 1996). The original completed the obligations specified in the Developer Agreement.

Significance: The LPPT PUD has completed its parkland dedication obligation. REC-1 Impacts is considered less than significant.

Mitigation: None required.

REC-2 Impact: Adjacent private residential development may affect recreational opportunities in the Linear Parkway.

Analysis: The LPPT PUD was approved with the Townhouse and related (R-1A) designation located adjacent to the Linear Parkway. The City has consistently found that residential uses at densities up to 164 dwelling units per net acre are compatible with Linear Parkway use. The Pocket Road Manor Houses was approved in 1987 (P87-129, -130, and -131) with a time extension approved in 1989 (all projects joined under number P87-129). The Pocket Road Manor Houses was approved to construct 100 single-family alternative attached and 50 single-family alternative detached houses. The Riverlake Park Homes was approved in 1994 (P93-089) with a time extension for the project approved in 1995. The Riverlake Park Homes project was approved to construct 162 individually owned residential units in 22 triplexes and 24

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quadplexes. The Islands at Riverlake project is a residential land use and proposes a lower density than the previously approved projects.

With the proposed project single-family alternative detached housing would be constructed between the Linear Parkway and the existing residential development. No fence or sound wall is proposed along the Linear Parkway. The residential units adjacent to the parkway are designed to appear as if the front of the house faces the parkway and Pocket Road.

The presence of new homes on the project site adjacent to the Linear Parkway is not expected to discourage existing Linear Parkway users from continuing to use it. The presence of homes adjacent to parks and parkways parks bordering residential subdivisions is common in the City. The presence of a developed residential environment next to the Linear Parkway may afford people using the Linear Parkway a greater sense of security than the existing vacant land, particularly at night.

Significance: Because the City determined that the two previous residential development projects would not cause significant impacts to the Linear Parkway use and the proposed project is a residential land use with a lower density than the previously approved projects, impacts to the Linear Parkway resulting from adjacent residential development is considered a less than significant impact.

Mitigation: None needed.

REC-3 Impact: Construction of driveway entrances and walkways in the Linear Parkway may affect recreational opportunities in the Linear Parkway.

Analysis: Construction of the five new driveways to Pocket Road will convert 6,879 square feet (0.16 acre) of the Linear Parkway to roadway use. A new three-foot wide pathway would be constructed in the Riverlake Community Association landscape easement parallel to the existing eight-foot-wide walkway in the City of Sacramento parkway easement. Like the walkway in the City's easement, the new pathway meanders. The pathway connects each lot fronting Pocket Road with either the new pathways through the mini-parks or with the private road. Each residential lot fronting Pocket Road would have a three-foot-wide, straight, broom-finished concrete pathway connection with the new Riverlake Community Association pathway. No units fronting Pocket Road will have direct pathway connection with the City of Sacramento's eight-foot wide walkway in the City's parkway easement, no with any City sidewalk. The new pathways result in the conversion of 16,825 square feet (0.39 acre) of the Linear Parkway. The total amount of Linear Parkway conversion due to roads and pathways is 0.55 acre.

Project opponents also claim that the proposed project will encroach into the easement. However, the terms of the Linear Parkway easements allow the project applicant, as owner of the property subject to the easements, to construct driveways and other facilities such as sidewalks across the easements as are necessary and appropriate to subdivide and develop the adjacent lots.

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The Riverlake Manor Houses project plans (P87-129, -130, and -131) showed patios, parking lots, and pathways in the Riverlake Community Association landscape easement area of the Linear Parkway (Figure >[#]). The City conditioned its approval on the removal of patios and parking lots from the landscape easement. The City eliminated private pathway connections to public sidewalk ROW at West Shore Drive and East Shore Drive. Pathways in the landscape easement connecting the residential units were acceptable. This is verified by the revised drawings approved in 1989 for the project's time extension: patios and parking spaces were removed from the parkway and direct connection of private pathways to public sidewalk ROW were eliminated.

The project would construct seven passive use mini-parks totaling 0.36 acre of open space. The mini-parks help to integrate the Islands at Riverlake subdivision with the Linear Parkway. The pathways connecting the houses fronting Pocket Road with the mini-park serves to encourage use of the walkway in the City's parkway easement. Having the improved paths will make it easier for residents to access the walkway instead of walking through the grass to the City walkway.

Significance: Because the proposed construction in the Linear Parkway is consistent with the parkway easement recorded in favor of the City and the landscape easement recorded in favor of the Riverlake Community Association, the project is consistent with the two previously approved projects, and provides passive use mini-parks, impacts on recreational opportunities in the Linear Parkway are considered less than significant.

Mitigation: None needed.

4.7.5 Mitigation Measures

No significant impacts were identified. No mitigation is needed.

5.0 ALTERNATIVES TO THE PROPOSED PROJECT

5.1 Introduction

The Islands at Riverlake project, as proposed by the project applicant, has been described and analyzed in the previous chapters with an emphasis on potentially significant impacts in the categories of Aesthetics, Land Use, and Recreational Resources. Less than significant impacts and potentially significant impacts reduced to a level of "less than significant" are addressed in the Initial Study (Exhibit A).

The State CEQA Guidelines require the description and comparative analysis of a range of reasonable alternatives to the proposed project that could feasibly attain the objectives of the project and reduce project impacts (CEQA *Guidelines*, Section 15126.6[a]). The following discussion is intended to inform the public and decision makers of the feasible alternatives that consider mitigation measures recommended in this DEIR and Initial Study.

The State CEQA Guidelines require consideration of a "No Project Alternative" in every EIR. In this case, the No Project Alternative assumes that this alternative includes construction work necessary to restore the Islands at Riverlake project site to preconstruction condition, after which no further development activity occurs at the site in the near future.

CEQA Guidelines require that the environmentally superior alternative be designated. In the event that the No Project Alternative is considered the environmentally superior alternative, CEQA Guidelines requires the identification of the next most environmentally superior alternative.

5.2 Alternative Considered but Rejected for Environmental Analysis

The State CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6(c) states: "The range of potential alternatives to the proposed project shall include those that could feasibly accomplish most of the basic objectives of the project and could avoid or substantially lessen one or more of the significant effects. The EIR should briefly describe the rationale for selecting the alternatives to be discussed. The EIR should also identify any alternatives that were considered by the lead agency but were rejected as infeasible during the scoping process and briefly explain the reasons underlying the lead agency's determination." In accordance with this section, the following alternative was suggested but rejected.

5.2.1 Contemporary Townhouse Design

The Contemporary Townhouse Design alternative would construct a townhouse or condominium development using contemporary townhouse design principles. The difference between many high quality apartments and condominium or townhouse developments is one of ownership. A single or two-story apartment or townhouse development with groups of four to eight units with some common walls may appear similar to each other in appearance. While an apartment complex like the Crossings at Riverlake is one single legal parcel under one ownership with multiple rented or leased units, a townhouse exists on a unique legal parcel, separate from the legal parcel on which the adjoining, common wall unit is located.

Contemporary townhouse designs achieve a higher density than was designated on the LPPT PUD Schematic Plan. Densities are typically in the range of 10 to 12 dwelling units per net acre. A townhouse project could locate 194 to 233 units on the project site at these densities.

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This density would be consistent with the Low Density Residential (4 – 15 dwelling units per net acre) General Plan designation for the study area. No General Plan amendment would be required. This density would be consistent with the Residential 7 – 15 dwelling units per net acre set forth in the Pocket Area Community Plan designation. A Community Plan amendment would not be required. The project would require an LPPT PUD Schematic Plan amendment because the project would not be consistent with the density specified for these parcels, which is a maximum density of 8 du/na. The housing product would be consistent with the Townhouse R-1A designation.

This project alternative is not evaluated further in this DEIR for potential environmental impacts for several reasons.

1. This alternative is inconsistent with land use plans for the project site. Since the large lots of the project site were created in 1985, the City's intention was to see this land developed at a maximum density of 8 dwelling units per net acre. *this contradicts the statement above*
2. No project has been approved on this site at this density. *Z*
3. This density of development may create land use conflicts with adjacent R-1 neighborhoods. *how?*
4. This alternative does not satisfy the objectives of the applicant to build detached, alternative single-family housing.

5.3 Alternatives Selected for Analysis

Project alternatives considered in an EIR must "feasibly attain the basic objectives of the project" and shall be "capable of eliminating any significant environmental effects" (CEQA Guidelines Section 15126). Some of the significant environmental effects of the proposed project that might reasonably be minimized by an alternative include the effects on biological resources and increased traffic, air pollution, and cumulative noise.

The alternatives analysis focuses on alternatives capable of eliminating significant adverse environmental effects or reducing them to a level of insignificance, even if these alternatives would impede to some degree the attainment of the project objectives, or would be more costly. If an alternative would cause one or more significant effects in addition to those which would be caused by the project as proposed, the significant effects of the alternative should be discussed, but in less detail than the significant effects of the proposed project. Based on the analysis in Chapter 4, none of the impacts of the project are considered significant. All of the project impacts are either less than significant without any mitigation required or less than significant after mitigation is incorporated. *or reducing*

The alternatives cover a range of single-ownership housing styles and site layouts at densities 25 to 55% greater than adjacent standard single-family development in Riverlake. A No Project alternative was evaluated. Alternatives A2 and A3 were two different designs that were previously approved for the site. They represent design solutions that were based on sound principles of land use for compatibility with the existing community. Alternatives A2 and A3 proposed setbacks less than standard R-1 setbacks, provided for circulation improvements, and integrated with the linear parkway in ways that the City determined would not be detrimental to the public welfare or result in a public nuisance.

The Pocket Protectors, the neighborhood group that opposes the Islands at Riverlake design, prepared a conceptual housing development design and submitted it to the City of Sacramento for consideration. The Pocket Protectors plan for a row of halfplexes is evaluated in this document as Alternative A4. The alternative proposes a private road along the existing fence line like A2, A3, A5, and A6.

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Regis Homes provided a second alternative to the proposed project. Alternative A5 proposes a single-family alternative detached housing design that locates the private road along the existing fence line like A2, A3, A4, and A6. The alternative is similar to Coleman Ranch in that the lots are narrow and deep. A5 eliminates one side yard to create space for the mini parks which provide integration with the Linear Parkway.

Alternative A6 (R-1 Rezone) evaluates a rezone of the project site from R-1A to R-1. The Third Appellate Court found that substantial evidence existed to support a fair argument that the City's interpretation allowing detached housing on a site the PUD specifically designated as R-1A zone for townhouse or other clustered housing development was in conflict with the PUD's policies. In arriving at this conclusion, the Court looked at past actions of the City Council. The Court commented, "Furthermore, the Development Agreement for the prior unbuilt project, which the Council presumably executed with the PUD's objectives in mind, stated that a rezoning to R-1 would be required to build "single family residential" housing on the site." (p. 45, 124 Cal. App. 4th 903). The alternative evaluates how the site could accommodate a standard single family residential housing development with the site zoned R-1.

Alternative A7 (R-1A Mixed) evaluates the proposed project's street and lot layout with a different mix of detached units and halfplexes than were approved under Alternative A2. The alternative proposes to locate one and two story halfplexes opposite existing residences instead of single story detached units that the Islands at Riverlake proposes. Halfplexes occur in every residential neighborhood in Riverlake, except Coleman Ranch. In approving the tentative maps for the LPPT PUD subdivisions, the City established 7.5 foot to 10 foot setbacks for two story halfplexes. The setbacks were determined to be based on sound principles of land use for compatibility with the existing community and would not be detrimental to the public welfare or result in a public nuisance.

The following site development alternatives are discussed and analyzed below:

➤ **ALTERNATIVE 1: No Project (A1)**

The No Project alternative assumes that the construction equipment and materials would be removed and restored to the site conditions that were present as late as August 2004. The site would remain vacant and no development would likely occur on the site in the near future. The site would be subject to weed abatement measures once or twice annually.

➤ **ALTERNATIVE 2: Pocket Road Manor Houses (A2)**

The Pocket Road Manor Houses Project was approved in 1987 (P87-129, P87-130, and P87-131). It consists of 150 individually owned, single-family alternative residential units. Fifty of the units would be detached and 100 would be in halfplexes. This alternative has a private street that is narrower than the City's standard street width.

➤ **ALTERNATIVE 3: Riverlake Park Homes (A3)**

The Riverlake Park Homes project was approved in 1994 (P93-089). It consists of 162 individually owned, single-family alternative residential units. Sixty-six of the units would be in 22 triplexes and 96 would be in 24 quadplexes. This alternative has a private street that is narrower than the City's standard street width.

➤ **ALTERNATIVE 4: Pocket Protectors' Plan (A4)**

The Pocket Protectors' Plan consists of 126 individually owned, single-family alternative residential units. All of the units would be in 63 halfplexes. This alternative has a private street that is narrower than the City's standard street width.

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- **ALTERNATIVE 5: Zero Lot Line (A5)**
The Zero Lot Line Project consists of 155 individually owned, single-family alternative residential units. All of the units would be detached. The front of the units would face Pocket Road. The garage would be accessed from the private drive. This alternative has a private street that is narrower than the City's standard street width.

- **ALTERNATIVE 6: R-1 Rezone (A6)**
The R-1 Rezone alternative considers the development of a single-family standard residential subdivision that meets all of the setbacks and lot coverage requirements of an R-1 zoned development. The subdivision would consist of approximately 100 individually owned, single-family standard residential units on R-1 standard 5,200 square-foot lots. The units would have standard R-1 setbacks with a maximum lot coverage of 40% and maximum building height of 35 feet, based on City Code requirements. All of the units would be detached. The front of the units would face Pocket Road. The garage would be accessed from the interior private drive. This alternative has a private street that is narrower than the City's standard street width.

- **ALTERNATIVE 7: R-1A Mixed (A7)**
The R-1A Mixed alternative (A7) would construct 139 detached and attached single-family alternative residential units. A 22-foot wide private road with a four-foot wide sidewalk on one side would have the same alignment as the proposed Islands at Riverlake project. The R-1A Mixed alternative would construct between 5 and 30 single- or two-story halfplexes between the private road and the existing fence instead of the detached units the Islands at Riverlake proposes to construct. The rear yard setbacks for the halfplexes would be consistent with other approved R-1A halfplexes in the LPPT PUD for a minimum 7.5-ft rear yard setback. This alternative has a private street that is narrower than the City's standard street width.

Following the detailed discussion of the individual alternatives, summary tables are provided that evaluate the alternatives together.

5.3.1 Alternative 1: No Project (A1)

5.3.1.1 Project Characteristics

- The No Project alternative (A1) assumes that the project site would be restored to preconstruction conditions as a fallow field. Replacement trees would be planted. No development would occur on-site at this time. The site would be subject to weed abatement once or twice annually.

5.3.1.2 Less than Significant Impacts

Alternative A1 would have substantially fewer environmental impacts than the proposed project. No impacts would occur in the categories of population and housing, geology, transportation, energy, public services, and utilities.

A1 could result in the following less than significant impacts not requiring mitigation:

WAT-3 Impact: Re-grading could result in a temporary minimal increase in siltation and sedimentation into the City's storm water system.

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HAZ-1 Impact: Re-grading could result in the accidental spill of hazardous materials, such as fuel.

HAZ-2 Impact: Re-grading could unearth previously unidentified hazardous material(s).

AIR-3 Impact: Re-grading and restoration of project site would result in an increased concentration of CO, a criteria pollutant.

AIR-5 Impact: Re-grading and restoration of project site could result odorous emissions.

NOI-1 Impact: The proposed project would contribute short-term noise to the existing Community Noise Environment.

The following potentially significant impacts could occur:

AIR-1 Impact: ROG, NOX, and PM10 pollutants could be emitted during site restoration.

BIO-1 Impact: Site restoration activities could disturb nesting Swainson's hawks (*Buteo swainsoni*) if any were present.

CUL-1 Impact: Previously unidentified artifacts could be discovered during earth moving for activities for site restoration.

CUL-2 Impact: Previously unidentified human remains could be unearthed during earth moving for site restoration.

Mitigation measures for construction-related air quality impacts, preconstruction surveys for Swainson's hawk and tree protection, and procedures to follow in the event subsurface artifacts or human burials are unearthed would reduce potentially significant impacts to a level of less than significant.

5.3.1.3 Land Use

No General Plan, Community Plan, or Schematic Plan amendments would be needed. However, A1 is not consistent with any of these plans because each designated the site to be developed with residential land uses. The City would need to look elsewhere in the City to realize the loss of this housing potential.

5.3.1.4 Aesthetics

Aesthetic resources would be improved from existing conditions with A1 because the on-site construction equipment would be removed and the site would be regraded. Over time, the physical environment would return to pre-project conditions – an unimproved lot requiring weed abatement once or twice annually.

5.3.1.5 Recreational Resources

No change in recreational opportunities would occur.

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5.3.2 Alternative 2: Pocket Road Manor Houses (A2)

5.3.2.1 Project Characteristics

The Pocket Road Manor Houses alternative (A2) would construct the related projects that were approved in 1987 (P87-129, -130, and -131, with a time extension approved in 1989; all projects joined under project number P87-129). The City reviewed the applications pursuant to CEQA and adopted a mitigated negative declaration for the Pocket Road Manor House projects.

A2 is a clustered housing project with 100 single-family alternative attached units and 50 single-family alternative detached houses. Not including garages, the detached dwelling units are 1,408 square feet in size and the halfplex units total 3,760 square feet; the attached units would be 1,791 square feet and 1,696 square feet, respectively. Looking at the project from Pocket Road, there is 6 feet between structures at the narrowest point and 25 feet at the widest. Seven of the two-story, single-family alternative detached units would be located adjacent to existing houses in Bridgeview, Southshore, and Dutra Bend, with a 10-foot rear yard setback from the fence, which is the same rear yard setback as the proposed project. A 24-foot-wide private road and five feet of landscaping separates the remaining 43 single-family alternative detached dwelling units from the existing fence. A six-foot-high fence on the interior property line and a five-foot landscape setback from the fence are necessary to mitigate for the road being placed within the minimum 12.5-foot street side, side yard setbacks.

The Pocket Road Manor Houses project located guest parking at the end of each private drive, in the motor courts, and in the linear parkway. It did not locate parallel parking opposite the cul-de-sacs because the project originally proposed to connect to the cul-de-sacs. When the project was approved, the City required that parking spaces be located outside the linear parkway and required the driveways to not connect Pocket Rd with the adjacent single-family subdivisions. The alternative could have up to 46 on-street parallel parking stalls opposite the adjacent Riverlake neighborhood cul-de-sacs, similar to A3. To obtain a 9-ft wide parking stall, the 5-ft wide landscape buffer would be reduced by 3-ft and the 6-ft high wooden fence would be moved 6-ft towards the cul-de-sacs. The alternative would provide 444 parking spaces, 134 of which are for guest parking.

This alternative would provide 17 ingress/egress points to collector streets and public roads, including seven driveways through the Linear Parkway. Several of the cul-de-sacs north of the project site north of Pocket Road would be opened up to access the project. None of these cul-de-sac extensions would provide direct connection with Pocket Road.

The neighborhood building coverage area was calculated for each alternative. The square footage of the first floor including garage for each floor plan was multiplied by the number units proposed to be constructed by floor plan. The area covered by all of the units was divided by the net acreage of the site (19.44 acres) to determine the percent of the neighborhood covered by buildings. For Alternative A2, the neighborhood building coverage area is 26 percent.

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5.0 Alternatives

Figure 12. Pocket Road Manor House Tentative Subdivision Map (Five sheets).

