

This section summarizes the purpose of the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the Vineyards at Anderson project, and describes the environmental procedures that are to be followed according to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). This section addresses: the background and purpose of the EIR; the type of document it represents; the intended uses of the EIR; known responsible and trustee agencies that may need to rely on this EIR; the organization and scope of the EIR; and the environmental review process.

2.1 BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

The City of Anderson, acting as the Lead Agency, has prepared this Draft EIR to provide the public and responsible and trustee agencies with information about the potential environmental effects of the proposed Vineyards at Anderson project. As described in the provisions of California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), Guidelines Section 15121(a), an EIR is a public informational document that assesses potential environmental effects of the proposed project as well as identifies mitigation measures and alternatives to the proposed project that could reduce or avoid its adverse environmental impacts. Public agencies are charged with the duty to consider and minimize environmental impacts of proposed development where feasible, and obligated to balance a variety of public objectives including economic, environmental, and social factors.

CEQA requires the preparation of an environmental impact report prior to approving any project that may have a significant effect on the environment. For the purposes of CEQA, the term "project" refers to the whole of an action, which has the potential for resulting in a direct physical change, or a reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change, in the environment (CEQA Guidelines Section 15378[a]). With respect to the Vineyards at Anderson project, the City has determined that this series of actions and plans constitute a "project" within the definition of CEQA.

2.2 TYPE OF DOCUMENT

The City has prepared an EIR that includes both a programmatic analysis of the overall proposed project and a project-specific environmental analysis of development proposed during the initial phase of development.

The State CEQA Guidelines identify several types of EIRs, each applicable to different project circumstances. State CEQA Guidelines Section 15160 identifies that there are variations in the types of EIR documents that can be tailored for specific circumstances and that lead agencies may use other variations of EIR documents to meet their needs. As discussed below, a Program EIR is appropriate for land use decision-making at a broad level that contemplates further, site-specific review of individual development proposals. Project EIRs are appropriate for specific proposed projects that will not require additional site-specific environmental review.

PROGRAM EIR (PROGRAM LEVEL ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS)

The EIR for the Vineyards at Anderson project includes both "program level" analysis and "project level" analysis for specific phases of the project. Program level analysis evaluates the requested actions as they relate to the proposed overall specific plan (refer to **Section 3.0, Project Description**, for further detail on the overall proposed project). Components of the overall project include: approval of a Specific Plan; pre-zone of areas proposed to be annexed to Vineyards Planned Development; annexation of 1,917 acres to the City of Anderson; the

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development of a mixed-use Village Center; the creation of numerous parks and private recreation centers; development of an extensive pedestrian trail system; construction of two elementary school sites and a fire station; development of approximately 240,000 square feet of commercial space on 44 acres; creation of 4,567 single-family residential lots; planting of vineyards and possibly other agricultural crops; and the addition of roadways and associated infrastructure to serve the project area.

The program level analysis analyzes the broad environmental effects of the overall project plan for the project site, such as impacts on traffic, water quality, biological resources, land use compatibility, air quality, and major utilities. In addition, the program level analysis addresses the cumulative impacts of development of the proposed project and analyzes a reasonable range of alternatives.

The proposed project encompasses separate phases of development. In order to move forward with a specific future phase, the project applicant will be required to submit a tentative subdivision map for each phase. At that time, the City would prepare a site-specific "project level" analysis of the development phase's impacts, particularly with respect to that phase's compliance with the analysis set forth in the current EIR (Pub. Res. Code Section 21083.3; State CEQA Guidelines Sections 15168, 15183).

PROJECT EIR (PROJECT LEVEL ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS)

This EIR also includes a more detailed project level analysis of the initial phase of the proposed project, for which the project applicant is currently requesting entitlements to construct (refer to **Section 3.0, Project Description**, for further detail of the proposed initial phase project components). The development proposal for this phase of the proposed project contains enough specificity to conduct a site-specific, project level environmental review and would allow the consideration of discretionary approvals, such as a tentative subdivision map approval and other associated approvals, required under the City of Anderson Municipal Code.

2.3 INTENDED USES OF THE EIR

The EIR is intended to evaluate the environmental impacts of the project to the greatest extent possible. This EIR, in accordance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15126, should be used as the primary environmental document to evaluate all subsequent planning and permitting actions associated with the project. Subsequent actions that may be associated with the project are identified in **Section 3.0, Project Description**, of this document, and are listed below:

- Vesting tentative and final subdivision maps;
- Prezone and subsequent rezone to Vineyards Planned Development;
- Detachment of territory from various special districts with subsequent annexation to the City of Anderson and the Anderson Fire Protection District;
- Site plans associated with the project and compliance with site zoning;
- Responsible agency permitting (including but not limited to, General Construction Activity Storm Water Permit - National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) State General Construction Permit, and Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP));
- Improvement plans;
- A 1602 Streambed Alteration Agreement;
- Encroachment permits to county roads;

- Grading plans; and
- Building permits.

Ultimately, the EIR will be used by the City as a tool in evaluating the environmental impacts of the proposed project, and can be further used to modify, approve, or deny the project based on the analyses provided in the EIR.

2.4 KNOWN RESPONSIBLE AND TRUSTEE AGENCIES

“Responsible Agency” means a public agency that proposes to carry out or approve a project, for which a Lead Agency is preparing or has prepared an EIR or Negative Declaration. For the purpose of CEQA, the term “Responsible Agency” includes all public agencies other than the Lead Agency that have discretionary approval power over the project or an aspect of the project. The following agencies are identified as potential Responsible Agencies:

- Anderson Fire Protection District;
- California Department of Fish and Game;
- California Department of Transportation (Caltrans);
- Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board;
- Shasta County;
- Shasta County Air Quality Management District;
- Shasta County Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCo);
- State Water Resources Control Board; and
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

According to the State of California, a trustee agency is a state agency having jurisdiction by law over natural resources affected by a project. The California Department of Fish and Game and State Water Resources Control Board are the only trustee agencies applicable to the Vineyards at Anderson project.

2.5 ORGANIZATION AND SCOPE

Sections 15122 through 15132 of the State CEQA Guidelines identify the content requirements for EIRs. An EIR must include a description of the environmental setting, an environmental impact analysis, mitigation measures, alternatives, significant irreversible environmental changes, growth-inducing impacts, and cumulative impacts. The environmental issues addressed in the Draft EIR were established through review of environmental documentation developed for the site, environmental documentation for nearby projects, and public agency responses to the Notice of Preparation. Based upon these comments, agency consultation and review of the project application, the City determined the scope for this Draft EIR.

The EIR for the Vineyards at Anderson is organized in the following manner:

Section 1.0 –Executive Summary

This Section summarizes the characteristics of the proposed project.

Section 2.0 - Introduction

This Section provides an introduction and overview for the EIR process and document, and describes the intended uses of the program EIR and the review and certification process.

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Section 3.0 - Project Description

This Section provides a detailed description of the proposed project.

Section 4.0 - Environmental Setting, Impacts and Mitigation Measures

This Section contains an analysis of specific environmental topic areas as identified below. Each subsection generally contains: a description of the environmental setting; an overview of the regulatory framework concerning particular aspects of the environmental topic; and an evaluation of expected impacts with proposed mitigation measures. The following environmental topics are addressed in this EIR:

- Land Use
- Population and Housing
- Hazards
- Transportation and Circulation
- Noise
- Air Quality
- Hydrology and Water Quality
- Geology and Soils
- Biological Resources
- Cultural and Paleontological Resources
- Public Services
- Utilities and Service Systems
- Aesthetics and Visual Resources
- Agricultural Resources

Section 5.0 - Alternatives to the Project

CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6 requires that an EIR describe a range of reasonable alternatives to the project that could feasibly attain the basic objectives of the project while generally reducing the degree of environmental impact. Because the EIR must identify ways to mitigate or avoid the significant effects that the project may have on the environment, the discussion of the alternatives focus on alternatives that are capable of avoiding or substantially lessening significant effects of the project. This EIR considers the following fundamental alternatives for discussion:

No Project Alternative: CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6(e) requires that a "no project" alternative be evaluated in an EIR. Under the "No Project Alternative," the proposed project would not be built and the site would remain in its current undeveloped condition. The City portion of the site would still be General Plan designated Special Planning Area (SPA) and zoned a combination of Low Density Residential/Hillside Slopes (R1/HS) and Planned Development (PD). The County portion would remain General Plan designated RA and RB (Rural Residential "A" and "B") and zoned Limited Residential (RL-BA-10), Planned Development (PD), and Unclassified (U). For the purposes of this analysis,

it is assumed in the No Project Alternative that the majority of the project site would not be developed and would remain as grazing land.

Bruce Drive/South Street One-Way Couplet: This alternative evaluates a different means of providing access to the City to the north of the project area. The proposed project recognizes that South Street would need to be widened to accommodate four (4) lanes of traffic at project buildout. Topographic and historic structure constraints will make widening of the roadway difficult. Instead of a four-lane roadway, this alternative would create two one-way couplets by converting a portion of South Street to one-way traffic and developing an extension of Bruce Drive to connect with West Anderson Drive.

New North/South Roadway Connection to Rhonda Road: Under this alternative, instead of constructing an extension of Anderson Hills Parkway to Rhonda Road as proposed, the resources would be spent constructing a portion of the new north/south roadway identified in the Shasta County Southern Region Transportation Planning Study and Traffic Impact Fee Program Project along with a roundabout or intersection at the eastern edge of the specific plan area.

Section 6.0- Other Sections Required by CEQA

CEQA requires several specific topics to be addressed in an EIR. Section 6.0 includes discussion of the following topics: Cumulative Impacts; Growth Inducing Impacts; Significant and Unavoidable Environmental Effects; and Significant Irreversible Environmental Changes.

Section 7.0 – Report Preparers

This section provides a list of all authors and agencies that assisted in the preparation of the report by name, title, and company or agency affiliation.

Section 8.0 - References

Section 8.0 itemizes supporting and reference data used in the preparation of the EIR and lists all government agencies, organizations, and other individuals consulted in preparing the EIR.

Section 9.0 – Acronyms and Abbreviations

Section 9.0 provides a list of the acronyms and abbreviations commonly used in the EIR.

Appendices

This section includes: all notices related to the EIR (e.g., the Notice of Preparation [NOP]; related comment letters (e.g., comments in response to the NOP); procedural documents; and supplemental studies (if any) pertinent to the EIR.

2.6 ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW PROCESS

The review and approval process for the EIR and the Project involves the following procedural steps:

- 1. Notice of Preparation (NOP):** The NOP for this EIR was completed and distributed to the State Clearinghouse in March 2006. The NOP public comment period was March 8, 2006 through April 14, 2006. The project was assigned State Clearinghouse No. 2006031030. The NOP serves as the first invitation for comment on the EIR process and assists in directing the scope of the EIR based upon input from interested respondents. The City conducted a public scoping

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meeting on March 30, 2006 for the purpose of soliciting public feedback. The City received letters in response to the NOP and the comments have been incorporated into this EIR. The NOP is included in this EIR as **Appendix 2.0-1**. Comment letters in response to the NOP are summarized herein and letters are reproduced and included in **Appendix 2.0-2**.

2. **Notice of Completion (NOC):** The City filed an NOC with the State Office of Planning and Research when the Draft EIR was completed to begin the required public review period (per Public Resources Code, Section 21161).
3. **Public Notice/Public Review:** Concurrent with the NOC, the City provided public notice of the availability of the EIR for public review and invited comment from the general public, agencies, organizations, and other interested parties. The public review and comment period for an EIR should be no less than 30 days and no more than 90 days. The review period in this case was set for 45 days. Public comment on the EIR will be accepted both in written form and orally at public hearings. Although no public hearings on the EIR are required by CEQA, the City Planning Commission is expected to hold a public hearing during the review period. Notice of the time and location of the hearing will be published prior to the hearing.

All comments or questions regarding this EIR should be addressed to:

John Stokes, Planning Director
City of Anderson
1887 Howard Street
Anderson, CA 96007
(530) 378-6636

4. **Response to Comments/FEIR:** Following the public review period, a Final EIR (FEIR) will be prepared. The FEIR will respond to written comments received during the public review period and to oral comments concerning the EIR made at the public hearing in which the EIR is considered. These two documents, the EIR and the FEIR, represent the complete EIR for this project. The FEIR will be available for public review prior to its consideration for specific approvals by the City Council. The City Council will review and consider the FEIR prior to its decision to approve, revise or reject the proposed project.
5. **Certification of the EIR:** If the City finds that the EIR is "adequate and complete", the City will certify the EIR. The rule of adequacy generally holds that the EIR can be certified if: 1) it shows a good faith effort at full disclosure of environmental information, and 2) provides sufficient analysis to allow decisions to be made regarding the project in contemplation of environmental considerations.
6. **Project Consideration:** Upon review and consideration of the EIR, the City may act upon the project. A decision to approve the project would be accompanied by written findings in accordance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15091 and, if applicable, Section 15093. The City would also adopt a monitoring and reporting program for any mitigation measures that have been incorporated into or imposed upon the project to reduce or avoid significant effects on the environment.

2.7 MITIGATION MONITORING

CEQA requires that, when a public agency makes findings based on an EIR, that agency must adopt a reporting and monitoring plan for those mitigation measures, or otherwise make them a condition of the project approval. A reporting and monitoring plan will be designed to ensure compliance during project implementation and provide disclosure to the public to ensure that conditions are monitored and properly met (Public Resources Code Section 21081.6).

2.8 COMMONLY USED TERMS

DEFINITIONS

This EIR uses the following terminology in its analysis of environmental effects of the proposed project:

Phase 1: This term is used to describe the previously approved 242-unit residential subdivision referred to as the Sanderson Subdivision. This subdivision was previously evaluated under CEQA (State Clearinghouse No. 2004042047) and approved by the City of Anderson in 2004 (TSM 03-03). The 194-acre Sanderson Subdivision has been incorporated into the larger Specific Plan Area due to the many similarities it shares with the proposed project, such as topography, product type, and location.

Phase 2: This term is used to describe the project's next proposed phase of site development on approximately 293 acres. Phase 2 consists of 722 single-family residential lots, approximately two acres of commercial development, a 3.3-acre private recreation center, a 9.2-acre public park, a one-acre fire station site, and associated roadways and infrastructure. This portion of the project is analyzed at a Project level of detail pursuant to CEQA.

Project Buildout: This term is used to refer to the entire project under consideration, which includes Phase 2. Total project buildout consists of 5,228 single-family residential lots, a mixed use Village Center, a one-acre fire station site, two public schools, 240,000 square feet of commercial space, nine private recreation centers, four public park sites, approximately 26 miles of pedestrian trails, and associated roads and infrastructure. Those portions of site development beyond Phase 2 are analyzed at a program level of detail pursuant to CEQA.

Specific Plan Area: This term is used to describe the entire 2,442.2-acre project site, including Phase 1.

Project Area: This term is used to describe the 2,248.2 acres within the Specific Plan area but outside of Phase 1.