
(PROJECT # 10PLN-01, 10PLN-02)

Initial Study and
Proposed Negative Declaration

Prepared by
City of Grass Valley
125 East Main Street
Grass Valley, CA 95949

March 9, 2010

Proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration

In accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act, the City of Grass Valley has conducted an Initial Study to determine whether the following project may have a significant adverse effect on the environment. On the basis of that study, the City finds that the proposed project will not have a significant adverse effect on the environment and will not require the preparation of an Environmental Impact Report. Therefore, this Negative Declaration has been prepared.

LEAD AGENCY: City of Grass Valley
Community Development Department
125 East Main Street
Grass Valley, CA. 95945

Contact: Barbara J. Carman, Planning Technician
(530) 274-4716

PROJECT APPLICANT: Nevada County Habitat for Humanity

Contact: Martin Wood
SCO Planning and Engineering
140 Litton Drive, Suite 240
Grass Valley, CA 95495

PROJECT LOCATION: The Habitat for Humanity project is located on the north side of Joyce Drive on 2.56 acres on two contiguous parcels. (APN's 29-270-32 and 29-280-13)

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: The Nevada County Habitat for Humanity project consists of a Planned Development (10PLN-01) and Tentative Map (10PLN-02) applications for sixteen (16) residential units. Three (3) of the units are proposed to be single story with the remaining thirteen (13) to be two-stories. These would consist of nine (9) 4- bedroom units, four (4) 3-bedroom units, and three (3) 2-bedroom units on 2.56 acres. Four (4) of the 4- bedroom units would be built as attached duplexes with the remaining twelve (12) units as detached single family dwellings. All units include single car garages with parking in the driveways. The driveways are designed to be 20 feet in length or greater to allow for additional guest parking as well.

The project has one access point from Whiting Street along Joyce Drive which is proposed as a modified residential road extending from Whiting Street into the site. The proposed loop road within the site will serve the interior lots as a residential alleyway. The applicant has proposed non-standard driveway encroachments to allow for the avoidance of the wetland. The street will have curb, gutter and sidewalk installed on the north side with a vegetated buffer along the south side. There are ten (10) proposed on-street parking spaces located along the residential street and in the common areas.

The site is relatively level grassland with a few native trees, low growing shrubs and a delineated freshwater emergent wetland at the northwest end of the site. The site drains to the south through a small channel. The proposed project is designed to avoid the existing wetland area by establishing a 10-foot setback. An existing City sewer lift station is located on the southwest side of the site along with a residential unit.

The applicant proposes that the site be served by City water and sewer, electricity and natural gas from P.G. & E. and telephone service from AT&T.

The project is proposed to be constructed in four (4) phases with the tentative map application creating separate parcels for each unit. Each phase is proposed to allow construction of four units.

REVIEW PERIOD:

March 9 through April 8, 2010

**CITY OF GRASS VALLEY
INITIAL STUDY ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST**

1. **Application Number:** 10PLN-01, Planned Development
10PLN-02, Tentative Map

2. **Applicant's/Representative's** Martin Wood

Name and Address: SCO Planning and Engineering
140 Litton Drive, Suite 240
Grass Valley, CA 95495

3. **Lead Agency Name and Address:** City of Grass Valley, Community Development Department
125 East Main Street
Grass Valley, CA 95949

4. **Project Description:** The Nevada County Habitat for Humanity project consists of a Planned Development (10PLN-01) and Tentative Map (10PLN-02) applications for sixteen (16) residential units. Three (3) of the units are proposed to be single story with the remaining thirteen (13) to be two-stories. These would consist of nine (9) 4-bedroom units, four (4) 3-bedroom units, and three (3) 2-bedroom units on 2.56 acres. Four (4) of the 4- bedroom units would be built as attached duplexes with the remaining twelve (12) units as detached single family dwellings. All units include single car garages with parking in the driveways. The driveways are designed to be 20 feet in length or greater to allow for additional guest parking as well.

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The applicant proposes that the site be served by City water and sewer, electricity and natural gas from P.G.&E. and telephone service from AT&T.

The project is proposed to be constructed in four (4) phases with the tentative map application creating separate parcels for each unit. Each phase is proposed to allow construction of four units.

5. **Project Location:** The project is located on 2.56 acres east of Highway 49, about 0.4 mile south-southeast of Highway 20 West/Highway 49 interchange.

6. **General Plan Designation:** Commercial
7. **Zoning:** NC-Flex (Neighborhood Center Flex)
8. **Other public agencies whose approval is required (e.g. permits, financing approval, or participation agreement):**

Building Permits - Grass Valley Building Department- 530-274-4340
Grading Permit - Grass Valley Engineering Division- 530-274-4351

DETERMINATION

On the basis of this initial evaluation:

I find that the proposed project COULD NOT have a significant effect on the environment, and a NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.

I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, there will not be a significant effect in this case because revisions in the project have been made by or agreed to by the project proponent. A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.

I find that the proposed project MAY have a significant effect on the environment, and an ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required.

I find that the proposed project MAY have a "potentially significant impact" or "potentially significant unless mitigated impact" on the environment, but at least one effect 1) has been adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and 2) has been addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis as described on attached sheets. An ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required, but it must analyze only the effects that remain to be addressed.

I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, because all potentially significant effects (a) have been analyzed adequately in an earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION pursuant to applicable standards, and (b) have been avoided or mitigated pursuant to the earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION, including revisions or mitigation measures that are imposed upon the proposed project, nothing further is required.

Signature _____ Date _____

Printed Name _____ For _____

ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS POTENTIALLY AFFECTED:

The environmental factors checked below would be significantly affected by this project as indicated by the

checklist in the following sections:

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aesthetics | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Air Quality | <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture and Forest Resources |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Biological Resources | <input type="checkbox"/> Cultural Resources | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Geology / Soils |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hazards and Hazardous Materials | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hydrology/Water Resources | <input type="checkbox"/> Land Use/Planning | <input type="checkbox"/> Mineral Resources |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Noise | <input type="checkbox"/> Population/Housing | <input type="checkbox"/> Public Services |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Recreation | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation/Traffic | <input type="checkbox"/> Utilities/Service Systems |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mandatory Findings of Significance | | |

CEQA GUIDANCE

Appendix I of the State CEQA Guidelines was used in answering the checklist questions:

1. A brief explanation is required for all answers except "No Impact" answers that are adequately supported by the discussion. A "No Impact" answer is adequately supported if the discussion shows that the impact simply does not apply to projects like the one involved (e.g., the project falls outside a fault rupture zone). A "No Impact" answer should be explained when it is based on project-specific factors as well as general standards (e.g., the project will not expose sensitive receptors to pollutants, based on a project-specific screening analysis).
2. All answers must take account of the whole action involved, including offsite as well as onsite, cumulative as well as project-level, indirect as well as direct, and construction as well as operational impacts.
3. Once the lead agency has determined that a particular physical impact may occur, then the checklist answers must indicate whether the impact is potentially significant, less than significant with mitigation, or less than significant. "Potentially Significant Impact" is appropriate if there is substantial evidence that an effect may be significant. If there are one or more "Potentially Significant Impact" entries when the determination is made, an EIR is required.
4. "Negative Declaration: Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated" applies where the incorporation of mitigation measures has reduced an effect from "Potentially Significant Impact" to a "Less Than Significant Impact." The lead agency must describe the mitigation measures, and briefly explain how they reduce the effect to a less-than-significant level (mitigation measures from earlier analyses may be cross-referenced).

5. Earlier analyses may be used where, pursuant to the tiering, program EIR, or other CEQA process, an effect has been adequately analyzed in an earlier EIR or negative declaration (State CEQA Guidelines Section 15063(c)(D)). In this case, a brief discussion should identify the following:
 - a. Earlier Analysis Used. Identify and state where they are available for review.
 - b. Impacts Adequately Addressed. Identify which effects from the above checklist were within the scope of and adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and state whether such effects were addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis.
 - c. Mitigation Measures. For effects that are "Less than Significant with Mitigation Measures Incorporated," describe the mitigation measures which were incorporated or refined from the earlier document and the extent to which they address site-specific conditions for the project.
6. Lead agencies are encouraged to incorporate into the checklist references to information sources for potential impacts (e.g., General Plans, Land Use Codes). Reference to a previously prepared or outside document should, where appropriate, include a reference to the page or pages where the statement is substantiated.
7. Supporting Information Sources: A source list should be attached, and other sources used or individuals contacted should be cited in the discussion.
8. This is only a suggested form, and lead agencies are free to use different formats; however, lead agencies should normally address the questions from this checklist that are relevant to a project's environmental effects in whatever format is selected.
9. The explanation of each issue should identify:
 - a. the significance criteria or threshold, if any, used to evaluate each question; and
 - b. the mitigation measure identified, if any, to reduce the impact to less than significance

Identification of the potential for residual significant adverse environmental impacts would trigger the need for preparation of an EIR. For issue areas in which no significant adverse impact would result or impacts would be reduced to a less-than-significant level by mitigation, further analysis is not required.

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
1. AESTHETICS Would the proposal:				
a. Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?				x
b. Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, tree, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a scenic state highway?				X
c. Substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings?				X
d. Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in this area?				X

Discussion of Checklist Answers:

- a. The City of Grass Valley's General Plan includes objectives for the protection of major views in the planning areas, including hillsides, ridgelines and forested areas; as well as improving the entrances. The site is located to the east of Highway 49/20, below freeway level. There is currently an existing residence located to the west of the site toward the freeway. The rear of the site would have some retaining walls with fencing above it to screen from the adjoining church.

The General Plan's Conservation/Open Space Element includes a discussion about the 1972 and 1982 General Plans establishing Highway 49/20 as a scenic highway. The 1972 General Plan proposed policies prohibiting billboards and off-premise signs, and encouraged landscaping and tree planting along scenic corridors. The 1982 General Plan reinforced those policies and efforts through new policies designed to enhance City "entryways". The plan also identified the need to address view sheds, specifically, prominent hills and ridgelines. The 1999 General Plan states the City has implemented some aspects of scenic highway/entryway and hillside/ridgeline provisions through the zoning and design guidelines. However, the adopted policies focus on further implementing view shed protection measures. Caltrans has noted that the Highway 49/20 corridor is on the eligibility list to become a State Scenic Highway. The entire length of Highway 49, from Madera to Sierra Counties, is on the "eligibility list", with only a small section in Sierra County being "officially designated". To become "officially designated" as a State Scenic Highway, each local jurisdiction must conduct a substantial amount of research, adopt a scenic corridor protection program, and comply with the State's process and obtain the State's approval for the designation.

- b. The site is predominantly covered by grassland with some shrubs, recently cut blackberry bushes, and some wetland vegetation. There is one significant oak and one large pine tree on the site that are to be preserved. The project is screened from the freeway by pines, oaks and cedars located on the adjoining parcel to the west. The wetland area will be protected by a fenced buffer area which will provide a ten (10) foot setback. The site does not contain any scenic resources and would not impact any major views.

- c. The site appears to have been previously cleared of brush with only a few major trees, shrubs and grassland remaining. The homes would be constructed with lap siding, composition roofs and painted with historical color schemes. The site is currently vacant and is located behind an urban development and residential areas. The design of the new single family residential units would be consistent with the homes in the immediate area.
- d. Any lighting associated with the residential development would not create a substantial glare or affect nighttime views. On site lighting would come from standard residential uses, including porch lights and interior illumination. The project proposes not to use standard street lights on the small residential streets to incorporate the LEED guidelines and would therefore not create any substantial light or glare.

Conclusion: There are no scenic vistas or other unique aesthetic resources on this parcel.

Mitigation: No significant impacts associated with aesthetics or scenic resources are anticipated with this residential development. No mitigation measures would be required.

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<p>2. AIR QUALITY</p> <p>Where available, the significance criteria established by the applicable air quality management or pollution control district may be relied upon to make the following determinations.</p> <p>Would the project:</p>				
<p>a. Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?</p>				x
<p>b. Violate any air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation?</p>			x	

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
c. Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard (including releasing emissions which exceed quantitative thresholds for ozone precursors)?		x		
d. Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?				x
e. Create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people?				x

Discussion of Checklist Answers:

a.-e. The overall air quality in Nevada County is good but two known air quality problems exist, the Ozone and Suspended Particulate Matter (PM-10). Nevada County is considered to be "non-attainment" for both pollutants. PM-10 in Grass Valley meets federal ambient ozone standards but exceeds more stringent State standards in the winter, primarily due to smoke created from wood stoves and fireplaces. Violations in the summer months have been noted during forest fires or periods of open burning. The PM-10 is usually associated with dust generated during construction. The project will require excavation work to accommodate the building pads and roadways. Dust generated by grading and construction activities could have a potential to create short-term air quality impacts. The proposed homes are not expected to have activities that will generate pollutants, odors or impact air movement in the immediate area.

Even though this is a relocation and expansion of an existing business, the project is expected to generate additional vehicular traffic which will increase local vehicle emissions. The project is located within the Northern Sierra Air Quality Management District (NSAQMD). The NSAQMD has adopted standard regulations and mitigation measures for projects that exceed certain air quality threshold levels to address and mitigate both long and short-term emissions. The NSAQMD will require an analysis to determine what tier the project falls within. Those tiers are divided into three areas. Depending on which of the tiers the project falls within, the NSAQMD will apply that level of mitigation. All heating and cooling devices installed will be energy efficient to minimize any emission levels. The project site is not located near any sensitive receptacles.

Conclusion: With the implementation of the mitigation measure below to reduce potential dust impacts all other impacts associated with air quality resources are considered less than significant.

Mitigation Measure # 1. Prior to issuance of a grading permit, a Dust Mitigation Plan shall be submitted for review and approval by the Northern Sierra Air Quality Management District and City Engineer. Dust mitigation measures shall be implemented in accordance with the approved Dust Mitigation Plan. The dust mitigation plan shall include the following:

- The applicant shall be responsible for ensuring that all adequate dust control measures are implemented in a timely manner during all phases of project development and construction.
- All material excavated, stockpiled, or graded shall be sufficiently watered, treated, or covered to prevent dust from leaving the property boundaries and causing a public nuisance or a violation of an ambient air standard. Watering should occur at least twice daily, with complete site coverage.
- All land clearing, grading, earth moving, or excavation activities on the project shall be suspended as necessary to prevent excessive windblown dust when winds are expected to exceed 20 mph.
- All inactive portions of the development site shall be covered, seeded, or watered until a suitable cover is established. Alternatively, the applicant shall be responsible for applying City approved non-toxic soil stabilizers (according to manufactures specifications) to all inactive construction areas (previously graded areas which remain inactive for 96 hours) in accordance with the local grading ordinance.
- All areas with vehicle traffic shall be watered or have dust palliative applied as necessary for regular stabilization of dust emissions.
- All material transported off-site shall be either sufficiently watered or securely covered to prevent public nuisance.
- Paved streets adjacent to the project shall be swept or washed at the end of each day, or as required to remove excessive accumulations of silt and/or mud which may have resulted from activities at the project site.
- No burning of waste material or vegetation shall take place on-site.

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<p>3. AGRICULTURE AND FOREST RESOURCES</p> <p>In determining whether impacts to agricultural resources are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to the California Agricultural Land Evaluation and Site Assessment Model (1997) prepared by the California Dept. of Conservation as an optional model to use in assessing impacts on agriculture and farmland. In determining whether impacts to forest resources, including timberland, are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to information compiled by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection regarding the state's inventory of forest land, including the Forest and Range Assessment Project and the Forest Legacy Assessment project; and forest carbon measurement methodology provided in Forest Protocols adopted by the California Air Resources Board.</p> <p>Would the project:</p>				
<p>a. Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to nonagricultural use?</p>				x
<p>b. Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?</p>				x

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
c. Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code section 12220(g)), timberland (as defined by Public Resources Code section 4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code section 51104(g))?				x
d. Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?				x
e. Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland, to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?				x

Discussion of Checklist Answers:

a-f. This property is surrounded by urban and residential uses. The project location is not considered as farmland or used for agricultural purposes in any way. The site is predominantly covered by grassland with some shrubs, recently cut blackberry bushes, and some wetland vegetation. There is a significant oak and a pine tree on the site that are to be preserved. The property does not contain the Williamson Act contract, nor is it located near any active farms. There will be no loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use.

Conclusion:

Impacts associated with the agricultural and forest resources are considered less than significant.

Mitigation:

No mitigation measures required

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
4. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES Would the proposal:				
a. Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?			x	
b. Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or US Fish and Wildlife Service?			x	
c. Have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?			x	
d. Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native residents or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?			x	

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
e. Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?			x	
f. Conflict with provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?			x	

Discussion of Checklist Answers:

a-f.

The property is entirely vegetated with a mixture of grassland and shrubs. It has previously undergone grading and site disturbance, specifically mowing and brushing to prevent a fire hazard. A significant black oak and large pine trees will be retained on the site. The site borders a small foothill woodland area which is outside the mapped area for the project. A freshwater emergent wetland has been identified and mapped starting along the northeast corner of the site and extending southward to an existing culvert in the form of an excavated ditch. No special-status species or habitats were present on the site in a biological inventory dated December 20, 2009.

The proposed "Lot C" will be a separate .51 acre parcel and will incorporate the wetland and wetland buffer area along the north side of the site as open space. The project as proposed will preserve the wetland area. In order to avoid disturbance of the area, a 3 foot high split rail fence will be set back 5 feet from the edge of the wetland area and is proposed to prevent disturbance of the site. A 404 permit would be required from the Army Corps of Engineers if any fill or disturbance of the wetland was proposed, but as no disturbance of the wetland area is proposed it would not be required. The project proposes a 10 foot "no build" setback from the borders of the wetland area.

The project site has previously been brushed mowed to remove fire hazards. A few small trees and shrubs remain on the site and will be removed with the project. Any trees over 8" in diameter will require a tree removal permit from the City of Grass Valley. Trees designated to remain on the site will be protected during the construction process.

The Biological Inventory Report conducted by EcoSynthesis on December 20, 2009 did not identify any native or migratory fish or wildlife in the area that would be disturbed in any way. There are no adopted habitat conservation plans, NCCP's or local conservation plans in the area.

As a condition of approval, the applicant will be required to obtain from the Army Corps of Engineers a letter stating that no permit is required for work on the project site with a delineated wetland. This will require the applicant to submit the record of delineation for the wetland area along with the footprint of the project site showing that no development would take place within the wetland area.

Conclusion:

The project as designed avoids the need for any fill and minimizes the indirect impact on the wetland area and oak tree and with

standard conditions, the impacts associated with biological resources are considered less than significant. In addition, as stated in the geotechnical section, the grading on site includes Best Management Practices (BMP's).

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
5. CULTURAL RESOURCES Would the proposal:				
a. Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in §15064.5?				x
b. Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archeological resource pursuant to §15064.5?				x
c. Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?				x
d. Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?				x

Discussion of Checklist Answers:

a-d.

The project site is not located within an area listed as high or moderate sensitivity in the General Plan EIR. The site has also been subjected to an archeological records search and survey and no significant resources were identified to recommend a further survey be completed.

Conclusion:

Impacts associated with cultural resources are considered less than significant.

Mitigation: None required

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
6. GEOLOGY AND SOILS Would the project:				
a. Expose people or structure to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:				
i. Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated in the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42.				x
ii. Strong seismic ground shaking?			x	
iii. Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?				x
iv. Landslides?				x
b. Result in substantial soil erosion or loss of topsoil?			x	
c. Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable because of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse?				x
d. Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial risks to life or property?				x

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
e. Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of wastewater?				x

Discussion of Checklist Answers:

a.-e.

The Soil Survey of Nevada County identifies the soils on the property as “Loamy Alluvial Land and Musick Sandy Loam: The Alluvium soil represents areas where alluvial material has been deposited and has a highly variable nature. The Musick sandy loam was indicated to be 18-35 percent mixed clay soil with a moderately slow permeability and moderate erosion potential. There are no identified active fault lines on the property. The City of Grass Valley is located in the low intensity zone for earthquake severity. The proposed site does not contain any unique geologic or physical features. Since minimal grading is needed, no landslides or subsidence of the site are expected. The geotechnical report prepared concludes that the site is suitable for the proposed improvements provided that the engineering recommendations are followed.

A Geologic Engineering Report was prepared by Holdrege and Kull in June 2005. The report concluded that the site is suitable for the proposed improvements with the incorporation of the recommendations and design criteria as set forth in the report. The development of the site requires implementation of the of the geotechnical recommendations as part of the building and grading permits to insure the development would not result in exposing people or property to geologic hazards such as ground failure, or similar hazards. Therefore the following mitigation will reduce any potential geologic impacts to levels that are less than significant.

Conclusion:

With the following mitigation measure, the impacts associated with geology and geologic hazards are considered less than significant.

Mitigation Measure #2:

- Prior to issuance of a grading permit, a final Geotechnical Engineering report shall be prepared to review the grading plan and structural improvements.
- A Geotechnical Engineer shall adhere to the implementation of those recommendations and design criteria as listed in the preliminary geotechnical report.

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
7. HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIAL				
Would the project:				
a. Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?				x
b. Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?				x
c. Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?				x
d. Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?				x
e. For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?				x

f. For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?				X
g. Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?				X
h. Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires, including where wildlands are adjacent to urbanized areas or where residences are intermixed with wildlands?			X	

Discussion of Checklist Answers:

a-h.

The proposed residential use will not use hazardous materials in its operations. Development of the site is not expected to result in a risk of accidental explosion or release of hazardous substances as long as proper construction methods are used. Hennesey School is located to the north of the site. The Nevada County Airport is located to the east of the property; however, the projects site is not located within the flight path or approach zone. The project will not physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan. The development of the residential units would have to comply with all fire code regulations for landscaping and specific vegetation clearance.

Conclusion:

No significant impacts associated with health hazards or hazardous materials are anticipated with this project. .

Mitigation:

None required.

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
8. HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY Would the project:				
a. Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements?			x	
b. Substantially deplete groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that there would be a net deficit in aquifer volume or a lowering of the local groundwater table level (e.g., the production rate of pre-existing nearby wells would drop to a level which would not support existing land uses or planned uses for which permits have been granted)?				x
c. Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, in a manner which would result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site?			x	
d. Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, or substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or off-site?			x	
e. Create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff?			x	

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
f. Otherwise substantially degrade water quality?				x
g. Place housing within a 100-year flood hazard area as mapped on a federal Flood Hazard Boundary or Flood Insurance Rate Map or other flood hazard delineation map?				x
h. Place within a 100-year flood hazard area structures which would impede or redirect flood flows?				x
i. Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving flooding, including flooding as a result of the failure of a levee or dam?				x

Discussion of Checklist Answers:

a-i. This project site is located within the Wolf Creek watershed. As noted in section 4, the site contains a .51 acre delineated wetland. The FIRM map produced by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) identifies the project site as being adjacent to a 100-year floodplain. A floodway is defined as the channel of a stream plus any adjacent floodplain areas that must be kept free of encroachments so that the 1% annual chance can be carried without substantial increases in flood heights. The site is located along the 2,394 contour line shown on the FIRM map. The floodway is located below Joyce Drive where the wetland drains into Little Wolf Creek. The project will not be located within the 100-year floodplain. The ditch on site is artificial in origin.

Drainage associated with the new development of sixteen single family residences and roadways will result in an increase in run-off. The project proposes an oil- water separator located on the south side of Joyce Drive at the low point of the project to remove pollutants prior to discharge. Stormwater that will sheet flow from the centerline of Joyce Drive and pass through a vegetated buffer zone located on the south side of Joyce Drive which is proposed to reduce the velocities of water, increase infiltration and remove pollutants prior to continuing in a sheet flow condition mimicking the current conditions. The project also proposes to incorporate roof runoff controls on the residential units by utilizing infiltration trenches at the downspouts for both retention and runoff of storm water.

The project would be conditioned to provide pre-development stormwater flows from the site, as well as, conditioned to include methods to minimize the flow of sediment disturbed during construction, which would be approved by the City Engineer. During construction additional Best Management Practices (BMP) would be implemented to control pollutants and water discharges from the construction site.

The City Engineer's standard condition includes a detailed engineered drainage plan to be submitted for the review and approval by the City Engineer. The drainage plan shall be designed to ensure that off-site concentrated storm water flows will be equal to or less than pre-development conditions for a model storm event. Drainage improvements shall be constructed in accordance with the

approved engineered drainage plan. The project will be required to incorporate "Best Management Practices" to address short-term impacts of on-site sediments, including silt, sand and mud flow during construction. This plan shall provide approved methods to keep sediment disturbed during construction, and shall be approved by the City Engineer. A condition would be added that the project developer shall provide evidence to the Community Development Director and the City Engineer that the California Department of Fish and Game has reviewed the project and determined if a 1602, Streambed Alteration Agreement, is required for the placement of the discharge drain lines into the drainage ditch prior.

Conclusion:

Impacts associated with hydrology and water quality resources are considered less than significant with the incorporation of the BMP's and the City's standard conditions associated with stormwater runoff and detention. No mitigation measures would be required for the hydrology and water quality section.

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
9. LAND USE PLANNING Would the project:				
a. Physically divide an established community?				x
b. Conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project (including, but not limited to the general plan, specific plan, local coastal program, or Land Use Code) adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?				x
c. Conflict with any applicable habitat conservation plan or natural community conservation plan?				x
d. Affect agricultural resources or operations (e.g. impacts to soils or farmland from incompatible uses)?				x

Discussion of Checklist Answers:

a-d.

The Grass Valley 2020 General Plan Land Use Map designates the site as Commercial. The properties are zoned NC-Flex (Neighborhood Center- Flex) which allows for a full range of housing types including proposed single family and duplexes for a

medium to high density housing to promote a walkable neighborhood. It also allows flexibility for the market to determine the character. The proposed Planned Development will allow the project to address the site constraints, building setbacks, street facing widths, and to be built in phases. The site is currently vacant and is located behind an urban development and residential areas. There are no habitat conservation plans, natural community conservation plans, or agricultural resources in the area.

Conclusion:

Impacts associated with land use and planning are considered less than significant.

Mitigation:

No mitigation is required for the land use section.

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
10. MINERAL RESOURCES. Would the project:				
a. Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state?				x
b. Result in the loss of availability of a locally important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan or other land use plan?				x

Discussion of Checklist Answers:

a-b. The site is classified by the Mineral Management Element of the General Plan as being M-2 and states that a good portion of the City has significant mineral deposits. The property is not located in or adjacent to the two areas identified in the Mineral Management Element as being targeted for mining conservation.

Conclusions:

Impacts associated with mineral resources are considered less than significant.

Mitigation:

None required

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
11. NOISE. Would the project result in:				
a. Exposure of persons to or generation of noise levels in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?		x		
b. Exposure of persons to or generation of excessive groundbourne vibration or groundbourne noise levels?			x	
c. A substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?			x	
d. A substantial temporary or periodic increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?			x	
e. For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?				x
f. For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?				x

Discussion of Checklist Answers:

a-d. The General Plan establishes maximum allowable noise levels for different land uses. The noise generated by State Highway

49/20 would have the potential of impacting the residents living closest to the western portion of the development. The General Plan defines the decibels at State Highway 49 at 71 at 100 feet from the roadway which would be over the 60 decibels (dB) threshold that would generally be acceptable. The site is buffered by existing pine, oak and cedar trees along the highway. An existing residential unit and City sewer lift station are located to the west along a small portion of the Joyce Drive. The site is currently vacant and located below the freeway with a small hill to the northwest providing a buffer to the northern section of the site.

The project site falls within the 60-65 dB noise contours for the 2020 General Plan and is 210 feet from the edge of Highway 49 to the north side of Joyce Drive. The proposed lots 13-16 would be the closest to the highway; however, since their rear yards are designed to be away from the highway the homes would create a buffer for their outdoor activity area and provide a buffer for the other sites in the area. Lots 7-10 show the rear yards to be approximately 300 feet away from the right of way with the rear yard of Lot 10 having the highest potential outdoor noise exposure since it would be closest to the highway. One way to reduce noise exposure would be to construct a wall or solid fence at the rear property line of Lot 10. However, if a fence were to be provided in the rear of Lot 10, the aesthetics of the open space located behind it would be lost. The General Plan Noise Element identifies a noise exposure of 65dB as being conditionally acceptable. Staff believes the aesthetic value of preserving the low fence and open space is very valuable for the project residents and therefore the 65dB is acceptable in this instance. Many of the standard modern construction materials required in the construction of new buildings provide significant sound insulation.

Temporary noise will occur during construction. The City has established hours for construction which will minimize the neighbors expose to the construction noise. Once completed, the project can be expected to generate traffic and neighborhood related noise. However, there are no noise sensitive land uses adjacent to the proposed project which could be impacted by this project.

e-f. The project site is not located within an airport land use plan or near a private or public airport.

Conclusion:

The outdoor activity area for Lot 10 is expected to be exposed to the 60 to 65 dB noise levels created by SR49. The fencing in the rear of the lot (bordering the wetland) is proposed to be split rail which will allow a view of the open space being provided. The aesthetics from the open space values are greater than utilizing higher fencing to provide a buffer from SR49. The interior noise levels would still meet the standards set forth in the General Plan. With the greater aesthetic values, the impacts associated with noise are considered less than significant.

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
12. POPULATION AND HOUSING. Would the project:				
a. Induce substantial population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)?			x	
b. Displace substantial numbers of existing housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?				x
c. Displace substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?				x

Discussion of Checklist Answers:

a-c. The proposed residential use is allowed and was planned for in the City's 2020 General Plan and therefore would not affect regional or local population or housing projections. The project includes sixteen residential units providing additional housing. Therefore, the project will not impact population or housing in the area or City. The site is zoned for an area that allows mixed uses. The site is currently vacant and would not cause any housing or people to be displaced.

Conclusion:

Impacts associated with population and housing is considered less than significant.

Mitigation:

No mitigation measures would be required

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less-Than-Significant Impact	No Impact
13. PUBLIC SERVICES.				
a. Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for any of the public services:				x
i. Fire protection?			x	
ii. Police protection?			x	
iii. Schools?			x	
iv. Parks?			x	
v. Other Public Facilities?				x

Discussion of Checklist Answers:

a. The project is located within the city limits of Grass Valley, and within the service boundaries of the City. The project would be served by the City of Grass Valley Fire and Police Departments. With proper fire prevention measures as required under the Uniform Building Code and Uniform Fire Code, the project is not expected to significantly impact Fire Department services. Payment of new development fees will address the project's impact on City Fire and Police Department Services. The project will be required to pay the adopted school impact fees and therefore, not impact schools. The project will not require the need for new maintenance of new public facilities. No significant impact on public services is anticipated with this project.

Conclusion:

Impacts associated with public services are considered less than significant.

Mitigation:

No mitigation measures would be required

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
14. RECREATION. Would the Project:				
a. Increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?			x	
b. Include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?			x	

Discussion of Checklist Answers:

a-b. The project proposes sixteen new residential units. The project would only slightly increase the demand on the recreational facilities in the City of Grass Valley. The City's Parks and Recreation Master Plan does not show any planned park or trail sites on the property. As part of the project approval, recreational fees would be required to be paid by the applicant at the time of development of the structures. With the proposed payment of the recreational fees, the project would not have a significant impact on the recreational opportunities in the neighborhood or the City of Grass Valley.

Conclusion:

Impacts associated with recreation are considered less than significant.

Mitigation:

No mitigation measures would be required for the recreation section.

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
15. TRANSPORTATION/TRAFFIC Would the proposal:				
a. Cause an increase in traffic which is substantial in relation to the existing traffic load and capacity of the street system (i.e., result in a substantial increase in either the number of vehicle trips, the volume to capacity ratio on roads, or congestion at intersections)?		x		
b. Exceed, either individually or cumulatively, a level of service standard established by the county congestion management agency for designated roads or highways?			x	
c. Result in a change in air traffic patterns, including either an increase in traffic levels or a change in location that results in substantial safety risks?				x
d. Substantially increase hazards due to a design feature (e.g., sharp curves of dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?				x
e. Result in inadequate emergency access?				x
f. Result in inadequate parking capacity?				x
g. Conflict with adopted policies, plans, or programs supporting alternative transportation (e.g., bus turnouts, bicycle racks)?			x	

Discussion of Checklist Answers:

a. -b.

The ITE traffic manual predicts the total number of trips associated with the sixteen residential unit development is approximately 16 PM peak hour vehicle trips. At 16 PM peak hour vehicle trips the project is below the City's traffic threshold policy and does not require a formal traffic study. The number of trips would not impact the PM peak hour conditions at any identified critical intersection.

The project would be required to pay the City and Regional traffic impact fees that fund necessary intersection improvements at identified critical intersections, those fees would be based on the 16 PM peak hour trips. With the collection of the local and regional fees, the project would not have a significant impact on the transportation and circulation in the area and region. The site will be considered as a neighborhood and will not provide any type of collector or arterial street to other intersections. The access to the site will be via a modified residential road serving only the residences. The interior units will be served by a loop road

c.-e.

The project is located outside of the Nevada County Airport flight patterns and would not have an impact on air traffic.

f. The project is consistent with the parking required in the City of Grass Valley's Development Code to meet the parking needs of the residential use.

Conclusion

Impacts associated with traffic and circulation is considered less than significant.

Mitigation:

No mitigation measures would be required for the traffic and circulation section.

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
16. UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS. Would the project:				
a. Exceed wastewater treatment requirements of the applicable Regional Water Quality Control Board?				x
b. Require or result in the construction of new water or wastewater treatment facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?			x	
c. Require or result in the construction of new storm water drainage facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could have significant environmental effects?			x	
d. Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project from existing entitlements and resources, or are new or expanded entitlements necessary?			x	
e. Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider which serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments?			x	
f. Be served by a landfill with sufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the project's solid waste disposal needs?			x	

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
g. Comply with federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste?			x	

Discussion of Checklist Answers:

a-g. The project will require connections to the existing water, sewer, storm drainage, power, and communication systems. All these systems and utilities are available to the site. The property is within the City of Grass Valley water and sewer service area. Waste Management provides solid waste service to the City. The project will be connected to the City's sewer system. The City has approved development projects involving potential increased demands on the City's waste water treatment plant, recognizing the potential limits on sewer availability. A recent expansion of the sewer plant capacity from 1.72 to 2.78 MGD (million gallons per day), provides adequate sewer capacity for the proposed project. However, specific approval to connect to the sewer system must be obtained from the City at the time of building permit issuance. The project will be required to provide for on-site storm water detention pursuant to the City's standard conditions of approval.

The City of Grass Valley currently has a lift station located on the west side of the site. In order to allow the applicant to connect to the sewer system, upgrades may be needed to the lift station. The project proposes a sewer easement dedication for the area surrounding the existing sewer lift station. Additional onsite sewer storage capacity is also proposed to allow for the increase in use. These items would be conditioned by the City Engineer using standard conditions to manage the infrastructure.

Conclusion:

No significant impact on utilities is anticipated with this project.

Mitigation:

No mitigation measures would be required for the utility services section.

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
17. MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE				
a. Does the project have the potential to degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife species population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?			x	
b. Does the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? ("Cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, and the effects of probable future projects)				x
c. Does the project have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?				x

Discussion of Checklist Answers:

a-c. As discussed in sections 1 through 16 above, the project, as mitigated, will not impact habitat of a fish, wildlife or plant species, nor will it create substantial adverse impacts on human beings. The project is consistent with the City's General Plan and, as mitigated, it is not expected to create significant impacts on the environment. No short-term impacts were noted that could lead to potential long-term impacts. Since the project is consistent with the General Plan the project can rely on established impact fees to address any potential cumulative impacts created by this development.

Conclusion:

No significant impact associated with cumulative impacts has been identified with this project and other projects in the immediate area. No mitigation measures would be required for this section.

REFERENCES: The following references used in preparing this report have not been attached to this report. The reference material listed below is available for review upon request of the Grass Valley Community Development Department, 125 East Main Street, Grass Valley, CA 95945 (530) 274-4330.

- City of Grass Valley 2020 General Plan and General Plan EIR
- Background Report, City of Grass Valley General Plan Update, November 1998
- Soil Survey of Nevada County, United States Department of Agriculture, Soil Conservation Service,
- Preliminary Geotechnical Report, by Holdrege & Kull, June 2, 2005
- Archaeological Survey, prepared by Genesis Society, November 30, 2009
- Biological Inventory Report, prepared by , EcoSynthesis, December 20, 2009
- Preliminary Drainage Report, prepared by, SCO Planning and Engineering

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Vicinity/Location Map