
4.3 AESTHETICS

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INTRODUCTION

This section of the EIR describes the existing aesthetic values of the project area and assesses the impacts on aesthetics created by the approval of the Clover Valley Large and Small Lot Tentative Maps (LSLTSM) project. The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) describes the concept of aesthetic resources in terms of scenic vistas, scenic resources (such as trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings along a state scenic highway), and the existing visual character or quality of the project site.

Sources cited include the *City of Rocklin General Plan*,¹ and the *City of Rocklin General Plan EIR*². Pertinent comments received in response to the Notice of Preparation (NOP) for the proposed project have been considered in this analysis.

ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

The City of Rocklin is located within Placer County and represents the transition from the Sierra Nevada foothills to the expanses of the Central Valley of California. Typically, the region is characterized by grasslands, rolling hills, graded slopes, and woodlands.

The project site consists of the northern end of Clover Valley, including the hillside forming the western limit of the valley and the entire eastern ridgeline. Surrounding land to the north contains scattered rural residences. Surrounding jurisdictions include: Placer County to the north and northeast, the Town of Loomis to the east and southeast, the City of Roseville to the south and southwest, and the City of Lincoln's Twelve Bridges development to the northwest.

The visual resources of the project site include its historic ranch valley setting, framed by the low, oak-wooded ridges on each side. Unique visual features are Clover Valley Creek and associated wetlands, the oak-covered hills, and several historic rock walls on-site.

Only a limited portion of the site is visible to the general public on a regular basis. A portion of the eastern part of the site is visible from areas within the Town of Loomis, including a large number of travelers along a short portion of Sierra College Boulevard. The southern part of the valley is visible to immediately adjoining residents of the existing subdivision to the east, as well as from the existing ranch residence.

The City of Rocklin General Plan includes an Open Space, Conservation and Recreation Element³, which "provides a description of the lands and waters that are unimproved and are to be devoted to natural uses through General Plan land use designation; and a description of existing and planned recreation sites and facilities." The Element

designates creeks, waterways, and steep slope areas as resource conservation areas, including 63 acres of Clover Valley. The Element also identifies Clover Valley Creek as a “significant stream.”

Figure 4.3-1(a) prepared by Stantec Consulting, Inc. identifies the locations where photos were taken during the site visit undertaken in June 2001. The photos are described below, and shown in Figure 4.3-1(b).

- Photo 1: southwest view from Wild Ginger Drive, south of proposed Bear Clover Way.
- Photo 2: northwest view from Wild Ginger Drive, south of proposed Bear Clover Way.
- Photo 3: a southwesterly view from the East side of Clover Valley, just east of the proposed Wild Ginger Drive.
- Photo 4: a northwesterly view from the East side of Clover Valley, just east of the proposed Wild Ginger Drive.
- Photo 5: a southwesterly view from the proposed Wild Ginger Drive, north from Photo 1.
- Photo 6: the pipeline easement on the western slope of the project site, east of the proposed Valley View Parkway.
- Photo 7: a view northward from the proposed Wild Ginger Drive.
- Photo 8: a southern view from a location just south of the proposed intersection of Wild Ginger Drive and Valley View Parkway.
- Photo 9: indigenous oak trees, just northeast of the proposed intersection of Wild Ginger Loop and Valley View Parkway.
- Photo 10: southward view on the northward approach toward the edge of the Clover Valley property.
- Photo 11: grasslands on the northward approach toward the edge of the Clover Valley property.
- Photo 12: northward view of the northern edge of the property.

Unique Visual Features

Clover Valley is a narrow, relatively undeveloped valley of high visual quality, and is one of the last remaining undeveloped, low-foothill valleys close to the urbanized Loomis-Rocklin area. Open grasses, riparian areas, and oak woodlands are the dominant visual features. Particularly unique visual features include the creek corridor, the wooded hillsides, and a number of historic stone walls. Large rock outcroppings and the wreckage of various shacks and vehicles are unique (though less frequent) features as well. A strip of trees approximately 40-feet wide was removed up the westward ridge toward the proposed Clover Valley Parkway as part of a pipeline easement and construction accomplished by the Placer County Water Agency (PCWA) (see Photo 6). Clover Valley is also unique in that views of the valley from the outside are limited.

**Figure 4.3-1(a)
Existing Visual Conditions in Clover Valley (Photo Key Map)**

(ADD 11 x 17 from 2002 EIR)

Figure 4.3-1(b)
Existing Visual Conditions in Clover Valley (Site Photos)



PHOTO 1



PHOTO 2

Figure 4.3-1(b) (Continued)
Existing Visual Conditions in Clover Valley (Site Photos)



PHOTO 3



PHOTO 4

Figure 4.3-1(b) (Continued)
Existing Visual Conditions in Clover Valley (Site Photos)



PHOTO 5



PHOTO 6

Figure 4.3-1(b) (Continued)
Existing Visual Conditions in Clover Valley (Site Photos)



PHOTO 7



PHOTO 8

Figure 4.3-1(b) (Continued)
Existing Visual Conditions in Clover Valley (Site Photos)



PHOTO 9



PHOTO 10

Figure 4.3-1(b) (Continued)
Existing Visual Conditions in Clover Valley (Site Photos)



PHOTO 11



PHOTO 12

REGULATORY CONTEXT

Existing policies, laws and regulations that would apply to the proposed project are summarized below.

Local

General Plan Policies

Existing policies, laws, and regulations established in the City of Rocklin General Plan, as applicable:

Land Use Element

- | | |
|----------|--|
| Policy 7 | To require that new development in or near existing residential areas be compatible with those existing neighborhoods. |
| Policy 8 | To coordinate planning in areas contiguous to neighboring jurisdictions in order to ensure compatible land uses. |

Open Space, Conservation, and Recreation Element

- | | |
|-----------|---|
| Policy 1 | To encourage the protection of natural resource areas, scenic areas, hilltops, open space areas, and parks from encroachment or destruction by incompatible development through the use of conservation easements, buffers, setbacks, or other measures. Developers shall be required to provide usable land areas outside of conservation easements or established natural resource buffers. |
| Policy 3 | To encourage the protection of historically significant and geologically unique areas and encourage their preservation. |
| Policy 4 | To encourage the protection of oak trees, including heritage oaks, and other significant vegetation from destruction. |
| Policy 20 | To consider development projects in terms of their visual qualities and compatibility with surrounding areas, especially those urbanizing areas abutting rural or semi-rural areas. |

Project Guidelines Related to Aesthetics

The Clover Valley General Development Plan (GDP) was prepared and approved as part of the 1995 Clover Valley Lakes Annexation project. Specific guidelines were included to establish basic concepts for the form and design of the development, to be used as a foundation for the future specific design of structures and landscapes. The following list delineates some of the concepts:

Residential Roadways

- Neighborhood clusters with distinct, internal circulation systems;
- Mixed architectural designs;
- Pedestrian and bicycle access via landscaped paths;
- Street trees, featuring one dominant species (with accents) to establish view corridors and individual street identity;

- Special paving treatment at points of desired emphasis, such as crosswalks, entries, and intersections; and
- Pedestrian-scale lighting for pathways.

Open Space and Parks

- Erosion control basins, designed to blend with native riparian corridors and to cause minimum destruction;
- Retention of existing riparian oaks where possible;
- New plantings, drawing on native and non-native riparian species, planted in informal groves;
- Open space landscaping treatments compatible with (and carried into) adjacent land use areas;
- Nondevelopment of slopes over 30 percent; development of 20 percent to 30 percent slopes with design review approval only; and
- Public parks to provide small recreation facilities, such as tot lots, playfields, picnic areas, restrooms, and walking paths.

IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

This section provides the standards of significance and method of analysis used to determine aesthetic impacts.

Standards of Significance

For the purposes of this EIR, an impact to aesthetic resources would be considered significant if the proposed project would:

- Substantially alter or degrade the visual character or quality of the project site; or
- Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista; or
- Substantially increase light or glare in the project site or vicinity, which would adversely affect day or nighttime views.

Method of Analysis

This section gives full consideration to the anticipated development of the project site and acknowledges the physical changes to the existing setting. Impacts to the existing environment in the project site are determined by the contrast between the site's visual setting before and after proposed development. In this analysis, emphasis has been placed on the transformation of the existing rural setting into a landscape characterized by proposed surface grading and residential buildout. Although few standards exist to singularly define the various individual perceptions of aesthetic value from person to person, the degree of visual change can be measured and described in a reasonably objective manner in terms of visibility and visual contrast, dominance, and magnitude.

Current residents adjacent to the project site, as well as future residents of the proposed project, are considered to be sensitive to the visual and aesthetic transformations in Clover Valley resulting from the proposed development.

Project-Specific Impacts and Mitigation Measures

4.3I-1 Degradation of the visual character or quality of the project site or off-site areas as a result of construction activities.

Implementation of the proposed project would introduce construction activities and vehicles into the Clover Valley viewshed. The anticipated development of the roadways, creek crossings, and utilities infrastructures proposed by the Clover Valley LSLTSM project would alter the existing setting from a rural valley into an area characterized by surface grading associated with construction of infrastructure. In addition, the development of single-family residences would constitute a substantial permanent alteration to the existing visual character of the project site.

Construction of the proposed project would require substantial grading, combined with cuts and fills, along the slopes of Clover Valley. The major roadways would result in a grading cut of approximately 46.4 acres; the construction of roadways, residential lots and parks would result in a surface grading of 256.3 acres; construction on slopes, landscape lots, and utility corridors would result in surface grading of 53.3 acres; and total graded surface area would be 309.6 acres. Existing soil and slopes would be considerably disturbed by the removal and relocation of large amounts of dirt on the project site.

Because the activities related to grading would contribute to the loss of existing vegetation on the project site, as well as at off-site locations due to the sewer line extension, the aesthetic value of the existing valley landscape would be substantially altered. A portion of the eastern part of the site is visible from areas within the Town of Loomis, including a large number of travelers along a short portion of Sierra College Boulevard. The southern part of the valley is visible to immediately adjoining residents of the existing subdivision to the east, as well as from the existing ranch residence adjacent to the project site. Therefore, the impact of the proposed project would be considered *significant*.

Mitigation Measure(s)

Implementation of the following mitigation measure would reduce the magnitude of potential aesthetic impacts related to grading and construction activities. However, the impact remains *significant and unavoidable*.

4.3MM-1 Prior to approval of improvement plans for the proposed project, the applicant shall submit grading and re-vegetation

plans for approval from the City Public Works Director and/or City Engineer. The plans shall indicate that all cuts and fills associated with the construction of on and off-site infrastructure, roadways, commercial, and recreational or public components of the project (excluding cuts and fills associated with home construction on a single-family lot) shall be re-vegetated once the earthwork has been completed.

The City Public Works Department and/or City Engineering Department shall act as the monitoring agency to ensure that the re-vegetation plan is being correctly implemented.

4.3I-2 Impacts to views from Sierra College Boulevard and in the Loomis area north of the summit and across Sierra College Boulevard.

The proposed project would result in changes to existing views due to the implementation of the new roadways, future houses and landscaping. The visual transition from rural urbanization to a very rural and undeveloped setting occurs along Sierra College Boulevard at a point contiguous with the project site. This road serves as a primary link and commuter route between Interstate-80 (and the Sacramento metropolitan area) and the rural ranches and residences of east Lincoln. This summit [of the eastern ridgeline] currently forms a distinct break between developed and relatively undeveloped land. The project would be anticipated to bring development to the roadway summit, eliminating the current barrier and visual transition it provides between developed and undeveloped land.

The project would be expected to result in a high level of change, un-buffered, as viewed from this area, and viewers from Sierra College Boulevard would experience an abrupt change in visual character of the area.

The project site's northern ridgeline along Sierra College Boulevard is a primary sensitive visual resource. Depending on the design and construction of the ultimate buildout of the project, the aesthetic qualities of the ridgeline as well as preservation of the viewshed from the ridgeline would potentially be adversely affected. Based on this information, the impact of the anticipated development and the proposed project would remain *significant*.

Mitigation Measure(s)

Because no feasible mitigation measure is available, this impact would be considered *significant and unavoidable*.

4.3I-3 Alteration of views from western Loomis, including Del Mar Avenue.

The Town of Loomis is located below the 100- to 150-foot high ridgeline on the east side of the project site. A moderate-to-large number of vehicular and residential viewers from western Loomis will have relatively unrestricted views of the development proposed for the southeastern ridgeline, west of Del Mar Avenue. Despite the project's high visibility, the project uses would be consistent with the surrounding off-site homes.

Viewers from this area are expected to tolerate a low-to-moderate level of visual change because of the quality of existing views, and because views from residences are particularly sensitive to the residents. Although the project would result in a high level of change as viewed from this area, the proposed project incorporates buffers in the southeast area of the project site. As can be seen in TS-5 and TS-6 of the tentative project map, the proposed project includes a buffer zone of 250-280 feet at the crest of the hill on the southeastern boundary of the proposed project site. Therefore, the impact of the anticipated development and the proposed project is considered *less-than-significant*.

Mitigation Measure(s)

None required.

4.3I-4 Impacts to viewers in homes immediately off-site.

The proposed project would potentially obstruct the viewshed for residents adjacent to the project site. Approximately seven to eight homes exist on the eastern-facing ridge slopes immediately off-site to the east. The homes may have limited views of project residences along the site perimeter, and one or two may have topography- and/or vegetation-screened views of Clover Valley and the developed western ridge. However, the project's low-density residential units and park/open space corridor would be visually consistent with the off-site homes.

Potential impacts exist regarding the current viewshed over Clover Valley and the developed western ridge. However, visual consistency in residential design would be implemented through the City review process. Additionally, ultimate buildout is at a lower overall density than originally anticipated under the approved General Plan and Zoning designations. In addition, increased open space has been incorporated into the tentative maps. Therefore, the impact of the anticipated development and the proposed project would remain *less-than-significant*.

Mitigation Measure(s)

None required.

4.3I-5 Impacts to viewers west of the site.

Views for residents west of the project site would be affected by implementation of the proposed project. The exposure of residents along the perimeter of the Whitney Oaks and the approved Twelve Bridges project, located west and northwest of the proposed development (respectively, atop the western ridge), compared to views of proposed Clover Valley development and homes, are consistent with the designs of single-family dwellings proposed by Clover Valley project.

Development of the proposed project would be visible from the western ridge of Clover Valley. However, the uses associated with the proposed project are visually consistent with those in the Whitney Oaks and Twelve Bridges developments. Therefore, the impact of the anticipated development and the proposed project would remain *less-than-significant*.

Mitigation Measure(s)

None required.

4.3I-6 Impacts to viewers in the subdivision at the southern end of Clover Valley.

Implementation of the proposed project would modify the visual setting of the Clover Valley viewshed for viewers in the subdivision to the south. Seventeen existing or future homes in the subdivision would directly border upon the Clover Valley site, and another 20 to 25 would view the proposed hillside developments at a distance of 200 feet or less. The future homes anticipated in the Clover Valley development would be consistent with the homes of those viewers. Hillside development similar to the proposed project is also a part of the southern subdivision.

The southern subdivision has been built out (with the exception of a few vacant lots) as Clover Valley Woods. The future buildout of the proposed project would remain visible from the southern end of Clover Valley. However, the development of the small lot subdivisions would remain consistent with the nearby Clover Valley Woods development. Therefore, the impact of the anticipated development and the proposed project would remain *less-than-significant*.

Mitigation Measure(s)

None required.

4.3I-7 Visual impacts to the Clover Valley Creek riparian corridor from on-site development and Antelope Creek riparian corridor from the off-site sewer line extension.

Development of the off-site sewer line could impact Antelope Creek. Additionally, development of proposed project features along Clover Valley Creek, specifically creek crossings, and detention basins would impact the existing, undeveloped visual setting. The valley portion of the project site is roughly bisected by the creek and its riparian corridor. Although the proposed project would include much of the land in open space, visual impacts to this corridor would occur within three categories (listed below).

- Road Crossings and Other Encroachment. The proposed project would result in road crossings over the creek at four locations. A typical construction scenario would involve laying spiral, metal pipe in the streambed, as a culvert, and constructing the roadbed with 2:1 fill slopes over the pipe/culvert. The side slopes would extend into the stream area an estimated 12 to 20 feet horizontally from each side of the roadway. With this method, road-width disturbance causing vegetation loss and associated visual impacts would, on average, nearly double at each crossing.

In addition, roadways would be designed to parallel both sides of the riparian corridor for nearly all of its length on site. Depending upon the specific horizontal and vertical alignment of these roads, disturbance of the riparian habitat would potentially result from such roadway alignment. More likely, disturbance would occur from associated fills or grading equipment within areas required for construction activities.

- Construction of Detention Basins. The proposed project would construct two detention basins intended to detain on-site waters of the Clover Valley Creek system. These basins would be built within the riparian corridor and wetland areas, as on-line basins incorporated into the creek. The construction of these basins is expected to cause visual degradation of the riparian corridor, due to grading disturbance, artificial appearance of ponds, and vegetation loss.
- Riparian Trail and Park. Generally, pedestrian-oriented passive recreational uses of the creek corridor are expected to be visually positive. However, extensive and/or non-compatible development within the park is expected to result in vegetation loss or visual degradation within the riparian corridor.

The proposed project would impact the creek corridor by proposing to (a) cross Clover Valley Creek via four streets, (b) install bridges (c) implement two detention basins (Ponds 1 & 2) and a series of oil/grit/sediment structures,

and (d) construct a bike trail along the creek perimeter. These project features would be visually consistent in their design with surrounding developments as required by the City during the project review process. However, buildout of these project features would still impact the existing view by transforming the natural creek environment into a more developed area. Therefore, the impact of the anticipated development and the proposed project would remain ***potentially significant***.

Mitigation Measure(s)

Implementation of the following mitigation measures would mitigate potential aesthetic impacts related to the Clover Valley Creek riparian corridor to a *less-than-significant* level.

4.3MM-7 *The Large Lot Tentative Subdivision Map and Small Lot Tentative Subdivision Map Improvement Plans shall be submitted for the review and approval of the City Engineer, and shall include the following:*

- *All road crossings of Clover Valley Creek shall be bridged, or culverts with masonry creek walls shall be used, to eliminate fills into the riparian areas on and the off the project site. If culverts are used, they shall be sized to ensure that flood flows and movement of fish and wildlife are not adversely affected. Culvert walls shall be designed to appear as bridges;*
- *Retaining walls shall be used to eliminate fills into riparian areas where vegetation loss will result. These areas will be determined upon submittal of the detailed drainage plan. If the culvert is used, the construction and finish of these walls shall match the simulated bridge road crossings described above;*
- *To the extent possible, all detention basins shall be constructed to appear as natural lakes or ponds, with design subject to review by the California Department of Fish and Game, and the Army Corps of Engineers, as appropriate. The shape of each basin and its dam and levee areas shall be graded in a non-linear design to reduce the impression of a man-made structure and designed in conjunction with a licensed landscape architect;*
- *Bridge structures and improvements within the riparian corridor on the project site shall be designed and constructed to be visually complementary to the native riparian corridor. Plant materials shall be carefully chosen to appear as extensions of the native corridor. Design shall be produced by a licensed landscape architect and approved by the City. Native trees, shrubs and groundcover*

materials shall be emphasized, while non-native plantings and lawn shall be de-emphasized; and

- *Temporary fencing shall be erected at locations determined by the City Engineer during all construction operations to prevent encroachment into riparian areas or woodland tree canopies.*

4.3I-8 Impacts to wooded hillsides.

The development of on- and off-site infrastructure and roadway improvements as well as the future residential development of the project site would result in substantial cuts and fills in the surrounding wooded slopes, and an estimated loss of 7,422 trees or 26.3 percent of the total trees on-site (off-site impacts to trees have not been calculated). Clover Valley is framed by steep oak-wooded hillsides that provide a strong visual sense of enclosure. Ultimate development of the area based upon the General Development Plan zoning designations, allows up to 933 units. The plan proposes the buildout of 558 residential units. The General Development Plan requires Planning Commission Design Review approval for development on slopes in excess of 20 percent.

The location of the major roadways and areas of ultimate development have been identified in order to minimize the impacts on environmentally sensitive areas (*c.f.* Chapter 4.8, Biological Resources). In conjunction with the further refinement of the engineering, the amount of cut and fill for the project has been determined to total approximately 1.46 million cubic yards with the cut and fill to be roughly balanced on-site. Implementation of the proposed project would be anticipated to impact the existing wooded hillsides and reduce the aesthetic values of the project site. Therefore, the impact of the proposed project would be considered ***potentially significant***.

Mitigation Measure(s)

Implementation of the following mitigation measures would reduce the magnitude of the impacts; however, impacts related to wooded hillsides would remain *significant and unavoidable*.

4.3MM-8(a) Prior to recording of final maps, the developer shall prepare Small Lot Design Guidelines, which include the following:

- *Delineation of driveway access;*
- *Suggested methods of site development, including treatment of cuts, fills, retaining walls, and appropriate, adaptive foundations on individual lots of 20 to 29 percent; lot-by-lot approval shall be conducted by the Planning Commission on these sites. Grading of lots sloping 15 to 30 percent shall be designed by a licensed civil engineer and shall include site-adaptive foundations;*

- *All permanent public landscaping publicly owned or managed by a Homeowner's Association shall be irrigated by a permanent drip system or low water consumption systems acceptable to the City of Rocklin. All street landscape areas shall be maintained by the Homeowners' Association or placed into the City Landscape and Lighting District or other appropriate mechanism; and*
- *A maintenance plan for areas of preserved existing oaks within developed and landscaped areas to ensure long-term health is required by the City's Oak Tree Preservation Guidelines and shall be followed. In addition, within the project's residential areas, homebuyers shall be given a copy of the City's Oak Tree Preservation Guidelines to encourage appropriate treatment.*

4.3MM-8(b) *The grading plans for on- and off-site infrastructure associated with the project shall indicate the following for the review and approval of the City Engineer:*

- *Roadway rights-of-way shall be graded only to the extent needed to install roads and utilities. Specific site plans shall be reviewed to determine where sidewalks or on-street parking could be restricted to allow for narrowed streets. Overgrading to dispose of soil or to remove viable existing plant growth shall not be permitted. The effect of narrower road widths and terraced retaining walls on cross-slopes of 20 percent or greater shall be assessed;*
- *As shown in the City of Rocklin Construction Specifications Improvement Standards, City grading standards shall be adhered to. In addition, the Master Grading Plans for each subdivision/development shall recommend appropriate grading techniques including cut/fill treatment. Methods to reduce the height and visual impact of cuts/fills shall be included such as terracing of cuts, revegetation techniques, etc. where appropriate;*
- *Grading associated with detention basins shall be confined to the specific area forming the boundaries of the basin;*
- *Construction fencing shall be erected within and/or around all intensive grading sites as determined by the City Engineer to protect desirable features and limit grading impacts. These areas include the park sites, detention ponds, commercial site, and home sites on wooded hillsides; and*
- *All cuts and fills associated with project roadway construction, or the construction of future commercial and*

recreational or public components of the project (excluding cuts and fills associated with home construction on a single-family lot) shall be revegetated. Timing and standards of revegetation shall be at the discretion of the City. Revegetation plans shall be submitted with grading plans.

4.3I-9 Impacts to historic stone walls.

Unique visual features on the project site would potentially be removed during development. Numerous runs of historic, mortar-less, stone range walls exist on the project site. Although located in remote areas of the site and not highly visible, the walls visually evoke the region's past. However, the remains of the historic stone walls have not been designated for protection by state, county, or municipal policy. Therefore, the impact of the anticipated development and the proposed project would be considered *less-than-significant*.

Mitigation Measure(s)

None required.

4.3I-10 Impacts related to increased lighting and glare on adjacent sensitive receptors.

The introduction of lighting into future recreational and commercial sites, and throughout the residential development, would represent a significant change from the currently unlit conditions in the project area. In addition, the overall substantial increase in lighting would potentially alter the enclosed aspect of the valley at night by blending the site together with surrounding lit areas. The introduction of streetlights and other site-specific lighting on the ridgelines and eastern portions of the site would potentially cause the most concern, where views from Loomis and Sierra College Boulevard would be significantly altered.

Table 4.3-1 illustrates lighting levels commonly used for land uses such as those proposed for Clover Valley.

Table 4.3-1 Typical Illumination Levels	
Land Use	Lighting Levels
Commercial Centers	3 Fc (high)
	2 Fc (average)
	1 Fc (low)
Sports Fields (min)	20 Fc
Parks/Schools	1-3 Fc or less
Major Roadways	0.3-0.5 Fc
Higher Density Residential	0.3 Fc or less
Residential Neighborhoods	0.1 Fc or less
<i>Fc = Footcandles</i>	
Data source: 1995 Clover Valley Lakes Annexation EIR	

The proposed development consists of primarily residential neighborhoods, which produce 0.1 Fc or less of light, though the project also contains one 5.0-acre commercial site (1.0 to 3.0 Fc) and one 5.3-acre park (1.3 to 3.0 Fc). The proposed project would also result in street lighting along the major roadways. Because the implementation of project lighting would be expected to create visual impacts in an area not previously exposed to sustained artificial illumination, the impact of the anticipated development and the proposed project would be considered *potentially significant*.

Mitigation Measure(s)

Implementation of the following mitigation measure would mitigate potential impacts related to lighting to a *less-than-significant* level.

4.3MM-10(a) *All design review applications for commercial development on the Clover Valley project site shall include a lighting plan for the review and approval of the City of Rocklin which indicates the following:*

- *Parking lot landscaping designed to filter light and daytime glare from distant views through the use of dense canopy shade trees, earth berms, and continuous perimeter landscape plants;*
- *Light standards on the commercial site placed to avoid light and glare on adjacent residential properties;*
- *Commercial building lighting limited to indirect cut-off sources, or motion sensitive detectors utilized for security after hours; and*
- *Parking lot lighting designed to be down-lighting.*

4.3MM-10(b) A street lighting plan that is designed to filter street lighting from distant views shall be submitted for the review and approval of the City of Rocklin.

4.3I-11 Visual impacts related to the introduction of signage to the area.

Visual obstruction related to signage in the proposed development would potentially impact the existing viewsheds in the project area. The proposed project includes a “Conceptual Project Signage Program,” which includes placement of proposed signage as well as detailed proposals for community monuments, community mailboxes, community identification enhancements, and decorative creek crossing pilasters. The signage proposed primarily consists of natural stone facades with precast concrete caps atop artificial stone veneers (see Tentative Map SP-3). The existing site would be especially sensitive to signage impacts due to its currently undeveloped, unlighted state. Three types of signage that would be expected during development:

- Project-entry monumentation. Although not specifically proposed, entry monumentation is often used to distinguish developments such as Clover Valley from surrounding subdivisions. These monuments can vary widely, but feature (at minimum) a lighted structure carrying the project name and logo. Often, a water feature, a gatehouse, and functional or ornamental gates are added. These monuments are designed to be visually prominent, and would be anticipated for the major project-entry roads, especially Sierra College Boulevard. Because of this designed prominence, adverse visual impacts would potentially result from any one of a number of elements of the monumentation: color, lighting, glare, size, reflectivity (day or night), and general compatibility or incompatibility with the surroundings. Should illuminated monuments be located at the ridgeline entrances to the site (at the west and southwest), lighting impacts could be further increased (depending on the design of the features) at the expense of the existing viewshed.
- Sub-development or village monumentation. Project guidelines stated that residential areas would be designed as “neighborhood clusters with distinct boundaries.” Although not detailed on the City of Rocklin GDP Map, new projects of this size often distinguish development phases or features by establishing named villages or parks within the project, each bearing individual monumentation (similar to project-entry monumentation). If uncontrolled, this signage could create visual clutter and additional illumination along the scenic public roadways within Clover Valley.
- Commercial Signage. Lighted signage would be an expected feature for the proposed commercial center. Commonly, a lighted monument sign along the main thoroughfare (in this case, Sierra College Boulevard)

would be coupled with lighted signage on the individual stores within the Center. Viewed in combination with the associated parking lot lighting, the impact of illuminated commercial development would be a major change to this portion of the site visible from Sierra College Boulevard.

The City's review of the commercial site would facilitate buildout of the same property, and would be expected to propose strategies to address the obtrusion of commercial signage and monumentation. However, eventual implementation of the project signage features would still be anticipated to create visual impacts in the project area where none currently exist. The future development associated with the residential small lots and commercial property would include signage. Therefore, the impact of the anticipated development would remain *potentially significant*.

Mitigation Measure(s)

Implementation of the following mitigation measure would mitigate potential impacts related to signage to a *less-than-significant* level.

4.3MM-11 The Conceptual Project Signage Program shall be used to develop a Master Sign Program, which shall be reviewed and approved by the City of Rocklin prior to the issuance of Sign Permits and the installation of any signage. Sign design concepts shall reflect the character of the area and minimize the light and glare and loss-of-viewshed impacts to the surrounding areas.

Cumulative Impacts and Mitigation Measures

4.3I-12 Alteration of the overall visual character of the project site as a result of the proposed project in combination with existing and future development in the project area.

Growth to the north of Sacramento (Roseville, Rocklin, Loomis, Lincoln etc.) is expected to continue its current momentum and contribute to a visual transformation of the region into an area characterized by residential and commercial developments. Ongoing development of the region is anticipated to adhere to the policies and approved designs of the applicable municipalities, including project approval in accordance with environmental regulations. However, the City of Rocklin General Plan determined that future development would substantially alter existing viewsheds and aesthetic resources to an extent that could not be mitigated. Therefore, the cumulative impact of the proposed development would be considered *significant*.

Mitigation Measure(s)

Implementation of Mitigation Measures 4.3MM-1, 4.3MM-3, 4.3MM-7, 4.3MM-8(a), and 4.3MM-8(b) would reduce the magnitude of the impact; however, the impact remains *significant and unavoidable*.

4.3I-13 Impacts related to increased light and glare on adjacent sensitive receptors due to project development in combination with existing and future development in the project area.

The proposed project and other developments in the overall region would cumulatively produce a substantial amount of new lighting sources. Accompanying glare would also be anticipated to result. The Clover Valley area has not previously been illuminated. Ultimate buildout of development in the valley and surrounding areas would be anticipated to generate street and building lighting, and would visually increase nocturnal light levels, reducing available views of nighttime skies. Therefore, the cumulative impact of the anticipated development and the proposed project would be considered *significant*.

Mitigation Measure(s)

Implementation of Mitigation Measures 4.3MM-10 and 4.3MM-11 would reduce the magnitude of the impact; however, the impact remains *significant and unavoidable*.

Endnotes

¹ City of Rocklin General Plan, 1991.

² City of Rocklin General Plan EIR, 1990.

³ City of Rocklin General Plan, 1990 (pp. 51-63).