

NEVADA COUNTY, CALIFORNIA INITIAL STUDY

TO: Nevada County Building Department
 Nevada County Environmental Health Dept.
 Nevada County Transportation Comm./NCALCU
 City of Nevada City
 Sierra County
 Yuba County
 Nevada County Housing & Community Services
 Nevada County Executive Office
 All Nevada County Airport Districts
 All Nevada County Public Utility/Sanitation Districts
 Board of Realtors
 FREED
 Greater Grass Valley Chamber of Commerce
 Nevada County Clerk of the Board
 California Department of Food and Agriculture
 California DTSC
 Ca Natural Resources Agency
 CA State Lands Commission
 CAL Fire Nevada Yuba Placer Unit
 California Department of Conservation
 California Native Plant Society – Redbud
 California State Parks
 Caltrans: Aeronautics
 Contractors Association of Truckee Tahoe
 Department of Water Resources
 DSA Sacramento Regional Office
 Fire Safe Council of Nevada County
 Hospitality House
 Kevin Johnston
 Lahontan Water Quality Control District
 Native American Heritage Commission
 Nevada Cemetery District
 Nevada City Rancheria Nisenan Tribe
 Nevada County Contractors' Association
 Office of Emergency Services
 Office of Historic Preservation District
 OOTI Nature Preserve
 Project Go, Inc.
 Regional Housing Authority
 Rural California Housing Corporation
 All Nevada County Board of Supervisors
 All Nevada County Planning Commissioners
 Native American Heritage Commission
 Washoe Tribe of Nevada and California
 The Union
 Tyler Barrington, Principal Planner
 Sean Powers, Community Development Director
 All Property Owner Assoc. & Special Interest Groups
 Homeless Resource Council of the Sierras
 State Clearinghouse*

Nevada County Department of Public Works
 Nevada County Health & Human Services Dept.
 City of Grass Valley
 Town of Truckee
 Placer County
 Nevada Irrigation District
 Nevada County AG Commissioner
 All Nevada County School Districts
 All Nevada County Libraries
 All Nevada County Airport Managers
 Bear Yuba Land Trust
 LAFCO
 Nevada County Superintendent of Schools
 Bear River Recreation and District
 CA Dept. of Housing & Community Development
 CA Fish & Wildlife
 CA State Fire Marshal
 CAL Fire – Timber
 CalEPA
 California Land Surveyors Association
 California Office of Historic Preservation
 Caltrans: Highways
 Central Valley Water Quality Control Board
 Dept. of Conservation, Div. of Land Resource Prot.
 Donner Summit Public Utility District
 Engineer's Association of Nevada
 Farm Advisor
 Fire Protection Planner
 Jeff Thorsby and Barbara Price, COB
 Laborers Pacific Southwest Region
 Mountain Housing Council
 NAVFACSW Intergovernmental Branch AM-3
 Nevada City Chamber of Commerce
 Nevada County Association of Realtors
 Nevada County Economic Resource Council
 Northern Sierra Air Quality Management District
 Penn Valley Municipal Advisory Council
 Nevada County Public Health Department
 Resource Conservation District
 Sierra Roots
 United States Forest Service
 US Army Corps of Engineers
 United Auburn Indian Community
 US Fish & Wildlife Service
 Brian Foss, Planning Director
 County Counsel*
 All Nevada County Fire Districts

**receives full report; all others receive NOA only with the full report available online.*

Date: April 19, 2019

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File Number(s): PLN19-0021; GPT19-001, EIS19-0001

Assessor's Parcel Numbers: N/A

Applicant: County of Nevada
950 Maidu Avenue
Nevada City, California 95959

Zoning District: N/A

General Plan Designation: N/A

Project Description:

The project is an update to the Nevada County General Plan, Chapter 8, Housing Element, that was previously adopted by Nevada County in 2014. State Housing Element Law (Government Code Section 65580 (et. seq.)) mandates that local governments must adequately plan to meet the existing and projected housing needs of all economic segments of the community. Upon its adoption, the 2019-2027 Housing Element will become part of the Nevada County General Plan. The draft Housing Element was submitted to the State of California, Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) on March 11, 2019; HCD has 60 days to review the draft and provide comments back to the County. The County will then address HCD comments and upon tentative approval from HCD, will take the document to the Nevada County Planning Commission who will then make a recommendation to the Board of Supervisors for adoption and certification by HCD.

The projected housing for Nevada County during this planning cycle were determined through the Regional Housing Need Allocation (RHNA) process. State of California Housing Element law (Section 65583 of the California Government Code) requires that the Housing Element of each jurisdiction include an estimate of its "fair share" of the regional housing needs. For Nevada County, the regional allocation is developed by HCD, which acts as the Council of Governments, pursuant to Section 65584 of the California Government Code for countywide regions who are not represented by a Council of Governments. In October of 2018, HCD provided notice to the County of its Final Regional Housing Need Allocation Determination, pursuant to State of California Housing Element Law.

The RHNA plan allocated 2,062 units as the fair share for Nevada County to accommodate for the 2019-2027 Housing Element Planning Cycle. Of the 2,062 units, 475 units are to be affordable to the Very-Low Income Households, 367 units are to be affordable to the Low-Income Households, 346 units are to be affordable to the Moderate Income Households and 874 units are to be affordable to the Above-Moderate Income Households. The RHNA plan does not mandate that these units be constructed; it does however, require that the County demonstrate adequate zoning and available vacant lands to meet this projected need. To demonstrate that the County has sufficient land available to meet the projected need, the County performed a comprehensive analysis of vacant lands in Nevada County with appropriate zoning and land use designations to accommodate housing for all income categories. The primary source of information for the land inventory was the County's Geographic Information Systems (GIS) database. The inventory of available vacant lands, demonstrated that the County has more than adequate land resources with appropriate zoning to meet the County's fair share of the RHNA.

The update to the Housing Element also re-examined the Goals, Policies and Programs of the 2014-2019 Housing Element that gave direction to the County's housing program, as well as progress that had been made toward their attainment. The Housing Element update proposes a more refined and hopefully more realistically achievable set of Goals, Policies and Programs focused on accommodating housing development, preserving the existing affordable housing stock, maintaining and improving housing, removing both governmental and non-governmental constraints, providing equal opportunities in housing, encouraging energy conservation and ensuring that all residents in Nevada County have access to healthy homes as an important way to achieve Environmental Justice.

The adoption of the Housing Element update will not result in the approval of specific housing projects. Nor will the adoption of the Housing Element update result in changes to the physical environment. The Housing Element is strictly a policy document. All future housing projects will require that a project-specific environmental review occur prior to specific project approval. After adoption and certification of the Housing Element update, the County will review specific housing development proposals based on their compliance with the Nevada County General Plan, Land Use and Development Code and other appropriate ordinances. Additional environmental review of potential impacts of any specific project will be performed in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act as projects are submitted. Being in compliance with the Goals, Policies and Programs of the Housing Element alone, will not ensure project approval.

The complete proposed 2019-2027 Nevada County Housing Element update can be downloaded from the Nevada County website at <https://www.mynevadacounty.com/2591/Housing-Element-Update-2019-2027>.

Relationship to Other Projects:

Staff is not aware of any other project directly related to this project.

Other Permits, Which May Be Necessary:

Staff is not aware of any other permits would may be required related to the adoption of this Housing Element Update. This adoption of this Housing Element update will not result in the approval of any specific housing projects. Nor will the adoption of this Housing Element update result in changes to the physical environment.

Tribal Consultation:

On July 26, 2018, Staff sent an invitation to the United Auburn Indian Community of the Auburn Rancheria (UAIC) and the Washoe Tribe of Nevada and California (Washoe Tribe) to begin AB52 and SB 18 consultation for the proposed 2019-2027 Housing Element Update. UAIC responded to the invitation and requested to open consultation on the proposed Housing Element Update. On October 19, 2018, staff held a conference call with UAIC to discuss the proposed Housing Element Update and went over the existing 2014-2019 Housing Element and expected updates to the Goals, Programs and Policies. After the conferenced phone call, UAIC followed-up with an email on October 19, 2018, advising that they had no additional comments and that they would like to close consultation.

SUMMARY OF IMPACTS and PROPOSED MITIGATION MEASURES

Environmental Factors Potentially Affected:

All of the following environmental factors have been considered. Those environmental factors checked below would be potentially affected by this project, involving at least one impact that is "Less Than Significant with Mitigation" as indicated by the checklist on the following pages.

| | | |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--|
| 1. Aesthetics | 2. Agriculture / Forestry Resources | 3. Air Quality |
| 4. Biological Resources | 5. Cultural Resources | 6. Energy |
| 7. Geology / Soils | 8. Greenhouse Gas Emissions | 9. Hazards / Hazardous Materials |
| 10. Hydrology / Water Quality | 11. Land Use / Planning | 12. Mineral Resources |
| 13. Noise | 14. Population / Housing | 15. Public Services |
| 16. Recreation | 17. Transportation | 18. Tribal Cultural Resources |
| 19. Utilities / Service Systems | 20. Wildfire | 21. Mandatory Findings of Significance |

No mitigation measures are proposed for this Housing Element update.

INITIAL STUDY AND CHECKLIST

Introduction

This checklist is to be completed for all projects that are not exempt from environmental review under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The information, analysis and conclusions contained in the checklist are the basis for deciding whether an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) or Negative Declaration is to be prepared. If an EIR is determined to be necessary based on the conclusions of the Initial Study, the checklist is used to focus the EIR on the effects determined to be potentially significant.

This Initial Study uses the following terms to describe the level of significance of adverse impacts. These terms are defined as follows.

- **No Impact:** An impact that would result in no adverse changes to the environment.
- **Less than Significant Impact:** An impact that is potentially adverse but does not exceed the thresholds of significance as identified in the impact discussions. Less than significant impacts do not require mitigation.
- **Less than Significant with Mitigation:** An environmental effect that may cause a substantial adverse change in the environment without mitigation, but which is reduced to a level that is less than significant with mitigation identified in the Initial Study.
- **Potentially Significant Impact:** An environmental effect that may cause a substantial adverse change in the environment; either additional information is needed regarding the extent of the impact to make the significance determination, or the impact would or could cause a substantial adverse change in the environment. A finding of a potentially significant impact would result in the determination to prepare an EIR.

1. AESTHETICS

Existing Setting: Nevada County is an area of extraordinary scenic quality – from the covered bridge at Bridgeport to the vista of Lake Donner from the heights of Old Highway 40 to one of the County’s most notable features being its diversity in elevation. The County climbs from the Sacramento Valley at an elevation of 300 feet to the crest of the Sierra Nevada Mountains, at an elevation of 9,143 feet above mean sea level to the peak of Mount Lola. The aesthetic character of Nevada County is generally rural, natural, and historic with spectacular rolling vistas of foothills, valleys, mountains, with green meadows, extensive forests, wetlands and habitats unique to Nevada County and the Sierra Mountains. Important aesthetic resources in the County include natural and historic forms, including river gorges, creeks, mountains, hills, meadows, geologic formations, and native vegetation, which consist of grass-oak woodlands, montane, brush lands, mixed conifer forest, and eastside pine with sage. Historic forms within the County include bridges, homes, and other structures more than 50 years old. Sites and natural forms with cultural importance to, or repeated use by, Native American tribes also contribute to aesthetic significance.

| Except as provide in Public Resources Code Section 21099, would the proposed project: | Potentially Significant Impact | Less Than Significant with Mitigation | Less Than Significant Impact | No Impact | Reference Source (Appendix A) |
|---|--------------------------------|---------------------------------------|------------------------------|-----------|-------------------------------|
| a. Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista? | | | | ✓ | A, L, 18, 19, |

| Except as provide in Public Resources Code Section 21099, would the proposed project: | Potentially Significant Impact | Less Than Significant with Mitigation | Less Than Significant Impact | No Impact | Reference Source (Appendix A) |
|---|--------------------------------|---------------------------------------|------------------------------|-----------|-------------------------------|
| b. Substantially damage scenic resources, including but not limited to trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway? | | | | ✓ | A, L, 17, 18, 19 |
| c. In non-urbanized areas, substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings? (Public views are those that are experienced from publicly accessible vantage point). If the project is in an urbanized area, would the project conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality? | | | | ✓ | A, 24 |
| d. Create a new source of substantial light or glare, which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area? | | | | ✓ | A, 18 |

Impact Discussion:

1a-d: The 2019-2027 Housing Element update identifies a projected need for 2,062 housing units to be constructed/rehabilitated through August 2027. The element however, does not specifically identify the location or type of the projected housing units. Therefore, it is impossible to anticipate how the potential development of new housing will impact the existing visual character of the unincorporated area of Nevada County. The proposed Housing Element update does not contain Goals, Policies or Programs that encourage the intensification of development in scenic vistas or other scenic areas. All proposed housing developments that will be counted towards meeting the project housing needs of the Housing Element would be reviewed pursuant to California Environmental Quality Act to ensure that significant impacts do not occur to aesthetic resources. Additionally, those developments will be reviewed to ensure that they are in compliance with the applicable Nevada County Land Use and Development Code requirements, consistency with established General Plan Goals and Policies and for compliance with adopted Areas Plans and with Eastern or Western Nevada County Design Guidelines for the area that they are proposed. Therefore, the 2019-2027 Housing Element update would have ***no impact*** on aesthetic resources.

Mitigation: None required.

2. AGRICULTURAL/FORESTRY RESOURCES

Existing Setting: Farmlands of local importance is scattered throughout western Nevada County with major concentrations occurring northeast and east of Nevada City, near Penn Valley, and in the south and Southwest County. Countywide, there are 6,043 acres of Farmlands of Local Importance, 1,283 acres of Farmlands of Statewide Importance, 462 acres of Unique Farmlands and 290 acres of Prime Farmlands. There are no important agricultural lands mapped in eastern Nevada County. Generally, Nevada County soils are poor for intensive agricultural use; however, some soil types could support limited intensive agricultural use, including timber production. Nevada County supports extensive commercial timber resources, the majority of which are under the jurisdiction of the Tahoe National Forest in the eastern areas of the County. Pursuant to Nevada County Zoning District Maps, there are approximately 166,173 acres that are zoned General Agriculture (AG) and Agriculture Exclusive (AE) which provides for primary agricultural uses and there are approximately 36,712 acres which are zoned Residential Agriculture (RA) which allow agriculture uses as an accessory use to residential development. According to the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Agricultural operations in 2017 comprised approximately 52,061 acres, or approximately 12% of total lands, with

approximately 673 farms in operation, with an average size of 77 acres. A total 7,519 acres are currently under Williamson Act contract, preserving those lands from development.

| Would the proposed project: | Potentially Significant Impact | Less Than Significant with Mitigation | Less Than Significant Impact | No Impact | Reference Source (Appendix A) |
|---|--------------------------------|---------------------------------------|------------------------------|-----------|-------------------------------|
| 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 Department of Conservation's Division of Land Resource Protection, to non-agricultural use? | | | | ✓ | A, L, 7 |
| b. Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use or conflict with a Williamson Act contract? | | | | ✓ | A, 18 |
| c. Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resource Code section 12220(g)), timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code Section 51104(g))? | | | | ✓ | A, L, 18 |
| d. Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use? | | | | ✓ | L, 18, 19 |
| 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? | | | | ✓ | A, L, 7 |

Impact Discussion:

2a-e: The adoption of the 2019-2027 Housing Element update will not in itself result in an impact to Important Farmlands (Prime, Unique, Statewide or Local Important Farmlands), Timberland Production Zones nor will it conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use or a Williamson Act contract. The analysis of lands inventoried identified that the County has sufficient vacant land within residential zoning districts to accommodate the County's 2019-2027 RHNA projected housing needs. It is possible that some residential development could occur on agricultural or timberland parcels, however this development would be required to be consistent with existing zoning and general plan designations and would also be required to be designed in a manner that minimizes potential impacts to agricultural and timberland parcels. Therefore, the 2019-2027 Housing Element update would have *no impact on agricultural / forestry resources*.

Mitigation: None required.

3. AIR QUALITY

Existing Setting: Nevada County is located in the Mountain Counties Air Basin. The overall air quality in Nevada County has improved over the past decade, largely due to vehicles becoming cleaner. State and Federal air quality standards have been established for specific "criteria" air pollutants including ozone, carbon monoxide, nitrogen dioxide, sulfur dioxide, lead, and particulate matter. In addition, there are State standards for visibility reducing particles, sulfates, hydrogen sulfide, and vinyl chloride. State standards are called California Ambient Air Quality Standards (CAAQS) and federal standards are called National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS). NAAQS are composed of health-based primary standards and welfare-based secondary standards.

Western Nevada County is classified as a Serious Nonattainment Area for the 2008 ozone NAAQS and Moderate Nonattainment for the 2015 ozone NAAQS. It is also Nonattainment for the ozone CAAQS. The area is also Marginal Nonattainment for the 2008 ozone NAAQS and is Nonattainment for the ozone CAAQS. Most of western Nevada County's ozone is transported to the area by wind from the Sacramento area and, to a lesser extent, the San Francisco Bay Area. Ozone is created by the interaction of Nitrogen Oxides and Reactive Organic Gases (also known as Volatile Organic Compounds) in the presence of sunlight, especially when the temperature is high. Ozone is mainly a summertime problem, with the highest concentrations generally observed in July and August, especially in the late afternoon and evening hours.

Nevada County is also Nonattainment for the PM10 CAAQS, but Unclassified for the PM10 NAAQS due to lack of available recent data. The number after "PM" refers to maximum particle size in microns. PM10 is a mixture of dust, combustion particles (smoke) and aerosols, whereas PM2.5 is mostly smoke and aerosol particles. PM2.5 sources include woodstoves and fireplaces, vehicle engines, wildfires and open burning. PM10 sources include the PM2.5 plus dust, such as from surface disturbances, road sand, vehicle tires, and leaf blowers. Some pollen and mold spores are also included in PM10, but most are larger than 10 microns. All of Nevada County is Unclassifiable/Attainment for the PM2.5 NAAQS and Unclassified for the PM2.5 CAAQS (US Environmental Protection Agency, 2015).

Ultramafic rock and its altered form, serpentine rock (or serpentinite), both typically contain asbestos, a cancer-causing agent. Ultramafic rock and serpentine are likely to exist in several areas of western Nevada County; however, the area of the project site is not mapped as an area that is likely to contain natural occurrences of asbestos (California Department of Conservation, 2000, Northern Sierra Air Quality Management District).

Please see Section 8 of this Initial Study for a discussion of project impacts related to Greenhouse Gas Emissions.

| Would the proposed project: | Potentially Significant Impact | Less Than Significant with Mitigation | Less Than Significant Impact | No Impact | Reference Source (Appendix A) |
|--|--------------------------------|---------------------------------------|------------------------------|-----------|-------------------------------|
| a. Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan. | | | | ✓ | A,G |
| b. Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is in non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard? | | | | ✓ | A,G |
| c. Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations? | | | | ✓ | A,G,L |
| d. Result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people? | | | | ✓ | A,G |
| e. Generate substantial smoke ash or dust? | | | | ✓ | A,G |

Impact Discussion:

3a-e: Adoption of the 2019-2027 Housing Element update, itself, will not result in impacts to air quality in Nevada County. The Housing Element update is strictly a policy document and does not provide entitlements to any specific land use projects. The proposed Housing Element update does not revise, replace or attempt to supersede any existing air quality standards adopted by the County, the Northern Sierra Air Quality Management District or the State of California. The Housing Element encourages dense housing development to be concentrated within village centers and community regions that typically have adequate infrastructure to support higher density housing. Individual future development proposals will be subject to project-specific environmental review to ensure that the project will be in compliance with local and regional standards and procedures for minimizing impacts to air quality. Therefore, the 2019-2027 Housing Element update would have *no impact* on air quality.

Mitigation: None required.

4. **BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES**

Existing Setting: Nevada County contains a wide range of plants, animals, and habitat types. With elevations ranging from 300 feet above mean sea level in the west to 9,143 feet above mean sea level in the east and precipitation amounts varying from 30 inches in the west to 60 inches near the crest of the Sierras, the County supports a true diversity of habitat types. Generally, the County can be characterized by gently rolling oak woodlands in the west that transition to coniferous forest in the middle ranges and a desert-like association on the eastern slope of the Sierras. A given type of vegetation association, with associated animal life, is referred to as a life zone. A life zone is an area with generally uniform of homogeneous characteristics located within general geographic boundaries. The life zones in Nevada County include Upper Sonoran, Transition, Canadian, Hudsonian, Arctic-Alpine and Mixed Conifer-Jeffrey Pine-Sagebrush.

The California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) recognizes five primary wildlife habitat types in California: tree dominated; shrub dominated; herbaceous dominated; aquatic; and developed. These habitats occur in continuous stretches and isolated pockets depending on the overall topography, elevation, climate and pattern of development in a particular area. Wildlife may move between various habitat types to satisfy their life requirements. Wildlife utilize riparian corridors, low lying or “saddle” areas of ridges, established trails, and other corridors for their inter-habitat movement. In addition, many species, including deer, move seasonally in response to their seasonal habitat requirements. In this context, it is possible that loss of a habitat could constitute an adverse effect (because of local or regional scarcity and ecological value of a habitat) even though the individual species of plants that make up the habitat, or animal species which use the habitat may not, in and of themselves, be endangered or rare.

Habitats throughout the County have been modified by human activity. The western portions of the County, especially the Upper Sonoran and Transition life zones, have experienced rapid residential growth in recent decades. The resultant parcelization, fencing, alteration of vegetation, introduction of domestic animals, roadways, noise, and night lighting have served to reduce the habitat values throughout the area. In the mid to high elevations, logging, mining, and development of second homes and subdivisions have also served to alter habitats. Habitat values can be reduced by both direct (construction of housing) and indirect (increased density in wide movement corridors) activities. Although the overall trend in the County is toward a decline in habitat values as identified by the CDFW, there is a wide localized variation in habitats, tolerances of species, and degrees of human disturbance.

| Would the proposed project: | Potentially Significant Impact | Less Than Significant with Mitigation | Less Than Significant Impact | No Impact | Reference Source (Appendix A) |
|--|--------------------------------|---------------------------------------|------------------------------|-----------|-------------------------------|
| 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? | | | | ✓ | K,17, 18, |
| b. Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or US Fish and Wildlife Service? | | | | ✓ | A,K,L,17, 18 |
| c. Have a substantial adverse effect on state or federally protected wetlands (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means? | | | | ✓ | A,K,L,17, 18 |

| Would the proposed project: | Potentially Significant Impact | Less Than Significant with Mitigation | Less Than Significant Impact | No Impact | Reference Source (Appendix A) |
|--|--------------------------------|---------------------------------------|------------------------------|-----------|-------------------------------|
| d. Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites? | | | | ✓ | A, 10, 16, 17, 18 |
| e. Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance? | | | | ✓ | A, 16, 17, 18 |
| f. Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan? | | | | ✓ | A, 16, 17, 18 |
| g. Introduce any factors (light, fencing, noise, human presence and/or domesticated animals) which could hinder the normal activities of wildlife? | | | | ✓ | A, 16, 17, 18 |

Impact Discussion:

4a-g: The adoption of the 2019-2027 Housing Element update, itself, will not result in potential impacts to biological resources. The update is strictly a policy document focused on addressing the County's existing and future housing needs. All future development projects will be required to submit a biological site assessment as a part of their application submittal. Any potential impacts will be reviewed pursuant to CEQA and as a general rule mitigated to levels of less than significance during the project specific environmental review process. The proposed Housing Element update does not revise, replace or attempt to supersede any existing sensitive biological resource protection standards adopted by the County. Therefore, the 2019-2027 Housing Element update would have **no impact** on biological resources.

Mitigation: None required.

5. CULTURAL RESOURCES

Existing Setting: The varied environmental zones, the geological characteristics, and the geographical position of Nevada County account for a cultural resource base which is exceedingly rich and exceptionally complex. This explains the relatively large number of recorded prehistoric and historic sites and the wide array of types. Prehistoric site types which have been inventoried include villages and associated cemeteries, multi-task camps, single task-specific locales (such as bedrock mortar milling features), and special use sites (hunting blinds, petroglyphs and quarries). Historic themes within Nevada County are manifest archaeologically by site types related to mining, water management, logging, transportation, emigrant travel, ranching and agriculture, grazing, and the ice industry. A number of State laws regulate the disturbance of archaeological sites and the Nevada County General Plan and Zoning Regulations establish procedures for identifying potentially sensitive sites.

| Would the proposed project: | Potentially Significant Impact | Less Than Significant with Mitigation | Less Than Significant Impact | No Impact | Reference Source (Appendix A) |
|--|--------------------------------|---------------------------------------|------------------------------|-----------|-------------------------------|
| a. Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to § 15064.5? | | | | ✓ | A, 16, 17 |
| b. Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to § 15064.5? | | | | ✓ | A, 16, 17 |

| Would the proposed project: | Potentially Significant Impact | Less Than Significant with Mitigation | Less Than Significant Impact | No Impact | Reference Source (Appendix A) |
|--|--------------------------------|---------------------------------------|------------------------------|-----------|-------------------------------|
| c. Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries? | | | | ✓ | A, 16, 17 |

Impact Discussion:

5a-c: The adoption of the proposed 2019-2027 Housing Element update, itself, will not impact cultural resources. Pursuant to Nevada County Land Use and Development Code as well as the Nevada General Plan, all applicable projects require an applicant to initiate a North Central Information Center (NCIC) records search to provide the most current information about the sensitivity of a particular parcel to contain cultural resources and to assess the need for a cultural resource study. As part of the review by NCIC, a recommendation will be made as to the determination if a Cultural Resource Study is required based on if there are known cultural, historical or traditional resources within the project area. If the NCIC recommendation determines that a cultural resource is recommended then a qualified professional will be required to submit an archeological survey that will review site-specific cultural resources and the proposed project's impact to those resources, if present.

In addition, pursuant to Assembly Bill 52 (Gatto, 2014) and Senate Bill 18 (Burton, 2004), all applicable projects require will require the County to consult with traditionally and culturally affiliated California Native American tribes. The intent is to provide California Native American tribes an opportunity to participate in local land use decisions at an early planning state, for the purpose of protecting, or mitigating impacts to, cultural places. The purpose of involving local tribes at these early planning stages is to allow consideration of cultural places in the context of broad local land use policy, before individual site-specific, project-level, land use decisions are made by a local government. Furthermore, the consultation requirements of SB 18 apply to General Plan or Specific Plan processes proposed on or after March 1, 2005.

Thus, future projects will be reviewed for compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act and as a general rule; any potential impacts will be mitigated through project conditioning and review. Therefore, the 2019-2027 Housing Element update would have ***no impact*** on cultural resources.

Mitigation: None required.

6. ENERGY

Existing Setting: Electric and natural gas facilities are provided in Western Nevada County by the Pacific Gas & Electric Company (PG&E). There are 5 PG&E substations within the County. Four of these substations have distribution voltages of 12kV and one substation has a distribution voltage of 21kV. Three of the substations are served via 60kV transmission lines and two substations are served via 115kV transmission lines. The transmission lines are networked and generation for these transmission lines comes from generators located throughout the state. The transmission lines are operated by California Independent System Operators, CALISO. In Eastern Nevada County, the Truckee Donner Public Utility District also supplies electricity. Propane is a common fuel source used in Nevada County by individual homes and businesses.

| Would the proposed project: | Potentially Significant Impact | Less Than Significant with Mitigation | Less Than Significant Impact | No Impact | Reference Source (Appendix A) |
|--|--------------------------------|---------------------------------------|------------------------------|-----------|-------------------------------|
| a. Result in potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary | | | | ✓ | A, 19 |

| Would the proposed project: | Potentially Significant Impact | Less Than Significant with Mitigation | Less Than Significant Impact | No Impact | Reference Source (Appendix A) |
|---|--------------------------------|---------------------------------------|------------------------------|-----------|-------------------------------|
| consumption of energy resources, during construction or operation? | | | | | |
| b. Conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency? | | | | ✓ | A, D, 19 |

Impact Discussion:

5a-b: The adoption of the proposed 2019-2027 Housing Element update, itself, will not result in an impact to energy resources. The Housing Element update is strictly a policy document and does not provide entitlements to any specific land use projects. The document contains Goals, Policies and Programs aimed at accommodating 2,062 housing units by 2027; yet the Element itself does not provide any entitlements for the construction of these units. As required by the RHNA plan, the County is required to demonstrate appropriate zoning to meet the needs of all income levels and special needs groups. The proposed Housing Element update encourages development in developed areas where the density can be supported by existing infrastructure.

As with previous Housing Elements, the proposed 2019-2027 Housing Element includes an Energy Conservation Section within the Goals, Policies and Programs which recognizes that increases in the price of energy can affect the costs of providing housings and that increased energy efficiency can assist in reducing the cost of housing. The section also recognizes that appropriate energy policies help to support alternative and efficient transportation systems, reduction of energy consumption in buildings through design and proper landscaping, and encourage the reduction of energy use through efficient construction materials and building standards. In addition, the section also contains policies which encourage the construction of housing beyond the California Energy Code (Title 24) requirements by including such items as, passive solar design, preservation of existing vegetation, maximization of use of daylight and energy-efficient lighting and energy-star rated appliances, as well as appropriate use of water conservation features. Lastly, the proposed Housing Element update also notes that there are programs available which can help to minimize the cost of energy consumption such as solar and better insulation.

As proposed, the Housing Element update does not revise, replace or attempt to supersede any existing energy conservation standards which have been adopted by the County, Special District, the State of California or any Federal Agency. Individual future housing development proposals will be subject to project-specific environmental review to ensure that the project will be in compliance with local and regional standards and procedures for minimizing short-term and long-term impacts related to wasteful, inefficient or unnecessary consumption of energy resources. As proposed, all future housing development projects would be required to obtain appropriate Building Permits and would be required to meet all current building standards including but not limited to the California Building Code, California Electrical Code, California Energy Code (Title 24) as well as the Nevada County Land Use and Development Code. Therefore, the 2019-2027 Housing Element update would have **no impact** on energy resources or to state or local plans for renewable energy or energy efficiency.

Mitigation: None Required.

7. GEOLOGY / SOILS

Existing Setting: Nevada County is within the Sierra Nevada Mountains, a geologic block approximately 400 miles long and 80 miles wide which extends in a north-south band along the eastern portion of California. The terrain of Nevada County is distinctly characterized by two features of the Sierra Nevada Mountains. The western third of the

County is comprised of rolling foothills which form a transition between the low-lying Sacramento Valley to the west and the mountains to the east. The eastern two-thirds of the County is comprised of the steep terrain and exposed granite of the Sierra Nevada Mountains itself.

The geologic substructure of the county can be divided into three very broad groups, which are reflected in the surface soils:

- Western Foothills. This area, extending from the Yuba County border to just northeast of the Grass Valley/Nevada City area, is generally comprised of metavolcanic and granitic formations.
- Central Portion. The area extending northeast of the Grass Valley/Nevada City area to the upper mountainous area near Bowman Lake Road is generally comprised of sedimentary, metasedimentary and volcanic formations.
- Eastern Portion. This portion of the County through the high Sierra to the Nevada state line is generally comprised of volcanic and granitic formations.

According to the Nevada County Resource Conservation District there are a total of 29 soils series, including cut and fill and alluvial lands within the county. The soil series include Ahwahnee; Aiken; Alluvial lands, Argonaut; Auberry; Auburn; Boomer; Chaix; Chaix thick solum variant; Cohasset, Dubakella; Dubakella shallow variant; Hoda; Horshoe; Hotaw; Iron Mountain; Josephine; Mariposa; Maymen; McCarthy; Musick; Rescue; Secca; Shenandoah; Sierra; Sites; Sobrante; and Trabuco.

The soil types are described by topography, slope, permeability, dwelling limitations, septic limitations, erosion hazards, and agricultural and timber capacities. In general, the County soils are variable: the soil permeability ranges from very slow to very rapid, and the erosion hazard ranges from slight to very high. The soil erosion hazard ratings of moderate to high are typically associated with slopes 15% or greater.

| Would the proposed project: | Potentially Significant Impact | Less Than Significant with Mitigation | Less Than Significant Impact | No Impact | Reference Source (Appendix A) |
|--|--------------------------------|---------------------------------------|------------------------------|-----------|-------------------------------|
| a. Directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including risk of loss, injury or death involving: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42. ii. Strong seismic ground shaking? iii. Seismic-related ground failure including liquefaction? iv. Landslides? | | | | ✓ | A, D L, 9, 12, 16, 17, 18, 29 |
| b. Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil? | | | | ✓ | A, D L, 9, 12, 16, 17, 18, 29 |

| Would the proposed project: | Potentially Significant Impact | Less Than Significant with Mitigation | Less Than Significant Impact | No Impact | Reference Source (Appendix A) |
|--|--------------------------------|---------------------------------------|------------------------------|-----------|-------------------------------|
| c. Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse? | | | | ✓ | A, D L,9, 12,16, 17, 18, 29 |
| d. Be located on expansive soil creating substantial direct or indirect risks to life or property? | | | | ✓ | A, D L,9, 12,16, 17, 18, 29 |
| 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? | | | | ✓ | A, D L,9, 12,16, 17, 18, 29 |
| f. Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature? | | | | ✓ | A, D L,9, 12,16, 17, 18, 29 |
| g. Result in substantial grading on slopes over 30 percent? | | | | ✓ | A, D L,9, 12,16, 17, 18, 29 |

Impact Discussion:

7a-g: Adopting the 2019-2027 Housing Element update will not by itself upset existing geologic or soil conditions. Potential geologic impacts associated with the construction of new housing units will vary on a project-by-project basis. Each development project will be subject to site-specific environmental review at the time that the project is proposed. At that time, a comprehensive review of potential geologic impacts will be performed to ensure that future housing developments do not result in a significant environmental impacts without sufficient mitigation. The proposed Housing Element update does not contain any Goals, Programs or Policies that will result in changes to the County's processes for protecting Geology and Soil during residential construction. Therefore, the 2019-2027 Housing Element update would have **no impact** on Geology and Soils.

Mitigation: None required.

8. GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

Existing Setting: Greenhouse gases (GHGs) are those gases that trap heat in the atmosphere. GHGs are emitted by natural and industrial processes, and the accumulation of GHGs in the atmosphere regulates the earth's temperature. GHGs that are regulated by the State and/or EPA are carbon dioxide (CO₂), methane (CH₄), hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs), perfluorocarbons (PFCs), sulfur hexafluoride (SF₆) and nitrous oxide (NO₂). CO₂ emissions are largely from fossil fuel combustion. In California, approximately 43 percent of the CO₂ emissions come from cars and trucks. Electricity generation is another important source of CO₂ emissions. Agriculture is a major source of both methane and NO₂, with additional methane coming primarily from landfills. Most HFC emissions come from refrigerants, solvents, propellant agents and industrial processes, and persist in the atmosphere for longer periods of time and have greater effects at lower concentrations compared to CO₂. The adverse impacts of global warming include impacts to air quality, water supply, ecosystem balance, sea level rise (flooding), fire hazards, and an increase in health related problems.

Assembly Bill 32 (AB 32), the California Global Warming Solutions Act, was adopted in September 2006 and requires that statewide GHG emissions be reduced to 1990 levels by the year 2020. This reduction will be accomplished through regulations to reduce emissions from stationary sources and from vehicles. The California Air Resources Board (ARB)

is the State agency responsible for developing rules and regulations to cap and reduce GHG emissions. In addition, the Governor signed Senate Bill 97 in 2007 directing the California Office of Planning and Research to develop guidelines for the analysis and mitigation of the effects of greenhouse gas emissions and mandating that GHG impacts be evaluated in CEQA documents. CEQA Guidelines Amendments for GHG Emissions were adopted by OPR on December 30, 2009. The Northern Sierra Air Quality Management District (NSAQMD) has prepared a guidance document, *Guidelines for Assessing Air Quality Impacts of Land Use Projects*. Therefore, in order to satisfy CEQA requirements, projects should make a reasonable attempt to quantify, minimize and mitigate GHG emissions as feasible.

| Would the proposed project: | Potentially Significant Impact | Less Than Significant with Mitigation | Less Than Significant Impact | No Impact | Reference Source (Appendix A) |
|--|--------------------------------|---------------------------------------|------------------------------|-----------|-------------------------------|
| a. Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment? | | | | ✓ | A, G, 21 |
| b. Conflict with any applicable plan, policy or regulation of an agency adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases? | | | | ✓ | A, G, 21 |

Impact Discussion:

8a-b: Adoption of the 2019-2027 Housing Element update, itself, will not result in impacts to greenhouse gas emissions in Nevada County. The Housing Element update is strictly a policy document and does not provide entitlements to any specific land use projects. The proposed Housing Element update does not revise, replace or attempt to supersede any existing greenhouse gas emission standards adopted by the County, the Northern Sierra Air Quality Management District or the State of California. The Housing Element encourages development to be concentrated within village centers and community regions that typically have adequate infrastructure to support higher density housing. Individual future development proposals will be subject to project-specific environmental review to ensure that the project will be in compliance with local and regional standards and procedures for minimizing short-term and long-term impacts related to increases in greenhouse gas emissions. Therefore, the 2019-2027 Housing Element update would have **no impact** on greenhouse gas emissions.

Mitigation: None required.

9. HAZARDS/HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

Existing Setting: The interface of the natural and manmade environments creates potential safety hazards associated with avalanches, landslides, earthquakes, floods, and wildfires. Other potential safety hazards, such as airport operations and transportation of hazardous materials, arise from the potential for accidents during the transport of goods and people. Each of these hazards has particular characteristics that affect the future development of the County. Some of these safety hazards can be minimized with emergency planning, while other hazards are reduced by development standards and land use planning.

| Would the proposed project: | Potentially Significant Impact | Less Than Significant with Mitigation | Less Than Significant Impact | No Impact | Reference Source (Appendix A) |
|---|--------------------------------|---------------------------------------|------------------------------|-----------|-------------------------------|
| a. Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials? | | | | ✓ | A,C,29 |
| b. Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset | | | | ✓ | C |

| Would the proposed project: | Potentially Significant Impact | Less Than Significant with Mitigation | Less Than Significant Impact | No Impact | Reference Source (Appendix A) |
|---|--------------------------------|---------------------------------------|------------------------------|-----------|-------------------------------|
| and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment? | | | | | |
| c. Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school? | | | | ✓ | A, L |
| 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, create a significant hazard to the public or the environment? | | | | ✓ | C, 32 |
| 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 or excessive noise for people residing or working in the project area? | | | | ✓ | A, N, 31 |
| f. Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan? | | | | ✓ | H, K |
| g. Expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires? | | | | ✓ | H, K |

Impact Discussion:

9a-g: Adoption of the 2019-2027 Housing Element update, itself, is not anticipated to result in an impact to the creation of potential hazards or hazardous materials for the citizens of Nevada County. The Housing Element update is strictly a policy document and does not provide entitlements to any specific land use projects. As proposed, the Housing Element update does not contain any Goals, Policies or Programs which are anticipated to impact hazardous materials. Future development of projects will be subject to both local and regional hazard and hazardous materials regulation and will also be required to meet all Nevada County Land Use and Development Code requirements including all adopted local and State Fire Safety Standards as well be compatible with both the Nevada County and Truckee Tahoe Airport Land Use Compatibility Plans. All potential hazards will be reviewed at the time when a site-specific development project is made. Therefore, the 2019-2027 Housing Element update would have **no impact** on hazards or hazardous materials.

Mitigation: None required.

10. HYDROLOGY / WATER QUALITY

Existing Setting: Nevada County is located within the watersheds of Truckee River, the Yuba River and the Bear River, which combined drain approximately 420 square miles. Combined, these rivers drain about 420 square miles. The smaller watercourses and creeks that flow into these watersheds are supplied from melting snow pack, annual rainfall, springs, and surfacing groundwater. In general, the County's water quality varies with topography and development. Water quality tends to be good in the mountainous, less developed areas, and is impacted at lower elevations or in more developed areas. Water quality is influenced by several sources, including soil erosion, sedimentation, septic systems, pesticides, and agriculture. Water resources have a multitude of uses from agricultural to domestic, as well as fish and aquatic/riparian habitat, wildlife and plant habitat, and year-round recreation. A number of historic irrigation ditch systems are located throughout the western County, owned and maintained by the Nevada Irrigation District, and on a

much smaller scale, by the San Juan Ridge County Water District. There are a number of public water purveyors within the County; the Nevada Irrigation District, and the Cities of Grass Valley and Nevada City primarily serve western Nevada County with the Washington County Water District providing service to the small community of Washington. In the eastern Nevada County the Donner Summit and Truckee Donner Public Utility Districts, and the Glenshire Mutual Water Company provide domestic treated water service.

| Would the proposed project: | Potentially Significant Impact | Less Than Significant with Mitigation | Less Than Significant Impact | No Impact | Reference Source (Appendix A) |
|---|--------------------------------|---------------------------------------|------------------------------|-----------|-------------------------------|
| a. Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or ground water quality? | | | | ✓ | A, D |
| b. Substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin? | | | | ✓ | A, C |
| c. Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner that would: i. result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site; ii. substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or offsite? iii. create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned storm water drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted run off; or iv. impeded or redirect flood flows? | | | | ✓ | A, D, L 9,16, 17 |
| d. In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk release of pollutants due to project inundation? | | | | ✓ | L,9,13 |
| e. Conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan? | | | | ✓ | A, D |
| f. 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? | | | | ✓ | L,9,13 |
| g. Place within a 100-year flood hazard area structures that would impede or redirect flood flows? | | | | ✓ | L,13 |

Impact Discussion:

10a-g: Adoption of the 2019-2027 Housing Element update, itself, will not result in a significant impact to hydrology and water quality. The Housing Element update is strictly a policy document that encourages housing opportunities for a variety of income classes and any future development proposal that is intended to assist in meeting the County's projected housing need will be reviewed pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act. The proposed Housing Element update does not propose to change any of the County's practices

for protecting water quality during project review and construction. All future development proposals will be subject to site-specific environmental studies as deemed appropriate by the County and will be required to adhere to all water and waste discharge standards of the County. Any potential hydrologic impacts of specific projects will be reviewed at the time of project submittal. Therefore, the 2019-2027 Housing Element update would have **no impact** on hydrology / water quality.

Mitigation: None required.

11. LAND USE / PLANNING

Existing Setting: Nevada County is bound by Sierra County to the North, Yuba County to the West, Placer County to the South and the State of Nevada to the East. There are three incorporated cities within the County including Grass Valley, Nevada City and Truckee. The project area is the approximately 429,000 acres of privately held land in the unincorporated area of Nevada County, excluding, incorporated cities, state and federal lands. Land uses in the unincorporated County consists of a mixed land use pattern which includes residential, commercial, industrial, agricultural and public uses. Federal and state public lands in the County total approximately 314 square miles of the County's 943 square miles, or about 33% of the County's total land area. The unincorporated County contains a variety of resources and constraints, diverse topography and sensitive environments.

Within the unincorporated County residential and rural development is governed by the General Plan that provides an overall policy guide, and Nevada County Land Use and Development Code which establish specific Zoning standards, varying with each Zoning District, which includes 4 Residential Districts, 4 Rural Districts, 5 Commercial Districts, 3 Industrial Districts, and 5 Special Purpose Districts.

| Would the proposed project: | Potentially Significant Impact | Less Than Significant with Mitigation | Less Than Significant Impact | No Impact | Reference Source (Appendix A) |
|--|--------------------------------|---------------------------------------|------------------------------|-----------|-------------------------------|
| a. Physically divide an established community? | | | | ✓ | A, L |
| b. Cause a significant environmental impact due to a conflict with any land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect? | | | | ✓ | A,18,19 |

Impact Discussion:

11a-b: The proposed project is to adopt the 2019-2027 Housing Element update. This update provides Goals, Policies and Programs focused on addressing housing needs within the unincorporated area of Nevada County. Adoption of the Housing Element update will not grant entitlements for any project. The Housing Element update examines Nevada County's housing needs, as they exist today, and projects future housing needs. It sets forth statements of community goals, objectives, and policies concerning those needs and it includes housing programs that respond to current and future needs within the limitations posed by available resources. The housing program details an eight-year schedule of actions the community is undertaking or plans to undertake to achieve its Housing Goals and Objectives. Upon its adoption by the Nevada County Board of Supervisors, the updated Housing Element will serve as a comprehensive statement of the County's Housing Policies and as a specific guide for program actions to be taken in support of those policies. As a part of the General Plan, the Housing Element complies with the County's adopted General Plan.

The Housing Element update is strictly a policy document that encourages housing opportunities for a variety of income classes and any future development proposal that is intended to assist in meeting the County's projected housing need will be reviewed pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act. The proposed Housing Element update does not propose to change any of the County's practices which require that all future development projects comply all adopted local and State laws as well as the Nevada County General Plan and Land Use and Development Code. Any and all future housing projects that proposed to meet the projected housing needs for Nevada County will be considered a project, pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act and will require project specific environmental review as well. Therefore, the 2019-2027 Housing Element update would have ***no impact*** related to established land use policy.

Mitigation: None required.

12. MINERAL RESOURCES

Existing Setting: Significant areas of Nevada County contain mineral deposits and between the 1850's and the early 1900's, the County's economy was mine based. These mineral resources include gold, copper, silver, lead, zinc, chromite, and small amounts of tungsten and manganese. Industrial minerals include barite, quartz for silicon production, and small amounts of limestone, asbestos, clay and mineral paint. In addition, significant deposits of sand, gravel, and rock types suitable for construction aggregate are exposed throughout the County. Within the County are large areas classified as Mineral Resource Zones (MRZs) that have existing deposits measured or indicated by actual site data (MRZ-2a), or inferred from other sources (MRZ-2b).

| Would the proposed project: | Potentially Significant Impact | Less Than Significant with Mitigation | Less Than Significant Impact | No Impact | Reference Source (Appendix A) |
|---|--------------------------------|---------------------------------------|------------------------------|-----------|-------------------------------|
| 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? | | | | ✓ | A, 1 |
| 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? | | | | ✓ | A, 1 |

Impact Discussion:

12a-b: Adoption of the 2019-2027 Housing Element update will not result in an impact to mineral resources. Any future development project will be assessed for potential impacts to mineral resources at the site where the project is being proposed under the guidance of the California Environmental Quality Act Guidelines. The proposed Housing Element update does not revise, replace or attempt to supersede any existing mineral resource protection standards adopted by the County or the State of California. Therefore, the 2019-2027 Housing Element update would have ***no impact*** on mineral resources.

Mitigation: None Required.

13. NOISE

Existing Setting: The General Plan and Land Use and Development Code have establishes maximum allowable noise levels for land use projects and encourages future sensitive land uses to be located in areas where noise generation is limited. Given the rural character of the area, the ambient noise level is quite low. Daytime ambient noise levels are

typical of rural and low-density residential areas. Significant noise sources in the County include traffic on major roadways, railroad operations, airports, and localized noise sources such as from industrial uses. Ambient noise levels in areas that are not located in the vicinity of major transportation routes are generally very low.

| Would the proposed project result in: | Potentially Significant Impact | Less Than Significant with Mitigation | Less Than Significant Impact | No Impact | Reference Source (Appendix A) |
|---|--------------------------------|---------------------------------------|------------------------------|-----------|-------------------------------|
| a. Generation of a substantial temporary or permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the project in excess standards established in the local General Plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies? | | | | ✓ | A,17,18,24 |
| b. Generation of excessive ground borne vibration or ground borne noise levels? | | | | ✓ | A |
| c. For a project located within the vicinity of a private airstrip or 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? | | | | ✓ | A,L |

Impact Discussion:

13a-c: The adoption of the proposed 2019-2027 Housing Element update will not result in the generation of substantial noise throughout the County. The Housing Element update is strictly a policy document and does not provide entitlements to any specific land use projects. The updated Housing Element contains Goals, Policies and Programs which have a goal of accommodating 2,062 housing units by 2027, however, it does not provide any project entitlements or reduce any noise standards as identified in the County General Plan and Land Use and Development Code. As required by the RHNA plan, the County is required to demonstrate appropriate zoning to meet the needs of all income levels and special needs groups. All future housing development projects will be considered a project under the California Environmental Quality Act and will be subject to site-specific review for potential noise generation. Additionally, these future projects are required to adhere to County Noise Standards.

Therefore, the 2019-2027 Housing Element update would ***no impact*** on temporary or permanent increases in ambient noise levels or ground borne vibrations or noise levels nor expose people residing or working within the vicinity of a private airstrip or public or private airport.

Mitigation: None Required.

14. POPULATION / HOUSING

Existing Setting: In 2018, the State of California Department of Finance estimated that unincorporated Nevada County had a population of 66,207 and consisted of 31,182 housing units. Small towns and rural development that is largely integrated into the natural environment characterize the unincorporated County. Single-family residential development is the predominant housing type within the unincorporated area of the County; much of which occurs in rural areas and small communities.

| Would the proposed project: | Potentially Significant Impact | Less Than Significant with Mitigation | Less Than Significant Impact | No Impact | Reference Source (Appendix A) |
|---|--------------------------------|---------------------------------------|------------------------------|-----------|-------------------------------|
| a. Induce substantial unplanned 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)? | | | | ✓ | A |
| b. Displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere? | | | | ✓ | A |

Impact Discussion:

14a-b: The proposed Housing Element update has Goals, Policies and Programs that encourage development to occur within previously development areas such as village centers and community regions identified in the General Plan. These areas are identified as adequate for higher density housing because these areas typically have existing infrastructure, which can support residential housing. The County's General Plan requires that a clustered option be considered in all residential subdivisions to assist in minimizing impacts to environmental resources. The proposed Housing Element update also contains Goals, Policies and Programs focused on maintaining and improving the existing housing stock and retaining existing affordable housing. The programs will assist in minimizing potential environmental impacts of population growth, which may occur during the next planning cycle. It should be noted that the County has experienced a very slow growth rate of approximately 0.3 percent over the last five years according to the most recent population estimates from the California Department of Finance.

Adoption of the 2019-2027 Housing Element update will not result in a substantial amount of population growth, nor will it displace a substantial amount of housing units or people that will result in the construction of replacement housing elsewhere. The Housing Element update is strictly a policy document that is focused on meeting the County's projected housing needs from 2019-2027. The adoption of the Housing Element will not result in entitlements for any specific housing project. All future specific projects will be considered projects pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act and will require project specific environmental review. Additionally, all future affordable housing projects will be reviewed for compliance with the General Plan, Land Use and Development Code and specific ordinances, including design review where applicable. The 2019-2027 Housing Element update would not result in population growth or displacement of housing or people as the projected housing needs are in direct relation to state projected population growth in the County. Thus, the 2019-2027 Housing Element update would have **no impact** related to these issues.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation is required.

15. PUBLIC SERVICES

Existing Setting: Public services within the unincorporated County are provided by the County of Nevada, state and federal agencies, and numerous special districts, including fire protection districts, school districts, park and recreation districts, and an irrigation district.

| Would the proposed project: | Potentially Significant Impact | Less Than Significant with Mitigation | Less Than Significant Impact | No Impact | Reference Source (Appendix A) |
|---|--------------------------------|---------------------------------------|------------------------------|-----------|-------------------------------|
| a. Result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of or 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 following the public services: | | | | | |
| 1. Fire protection? | | | | ✓ | H, M |
| 2. Police protection? | | | | ✓ | A |
| 3. Schools? | | | | ✓ | A, P |
| 4. Parks? | | | | ✓ | A |
| 5. Other public services or facilities? | | | | ✓ | A |

Impact Discussion:

15a.1-5: The adoption of the proposed 2019-2027 Housing Element update, itself, will not result in an impact to energy resources. The Housing Element update is strictly a policy document and does not provide entitlements to any specific land use projects. The document contains Goals, Policies and Programs aimed at accommodating 2,062 housing units by 2027; yet the Element itself does not provide any entitlements for the construction of these units. As required by the RHNA plan, the County is required to demonstrate appropriate zoning to meet the needs of all income levels and special needs groups. The proposed Housing Element update encourages development in developed areas where the density can be supported by existing infrastructure. All future projects will be reviewed for their impact to public services as a part of its project-specific environmental review process at the time of project submittal.

Mitigation: None required.

16. RECREATION

Existing Setting: Recreational opportunities within Nevada County are varied, ranging from public parks with intensively used recreational facilities, to vast tracts of forestlands and drainage systems, which provide a natural environment for passive recreation. Three separate Recreation and Park districts are formed within the County, including the Bear River and Western Gateway Park Districts in western Nevada County and the Truckee Donner Recreation & Park District in eastern Nevada County

| Would the proposed project: | Potentially Significant Impact | Less Than Significant with Mitigation | Less Than Significant Impact | No Impact | Reference Source (Appendix A) |
|--|--------------------------------|---------------------------------------|------------------------------|-----------|-------------------------------|
| 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? | | | | ✓ | A |
| b. Include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities that might have an adverse physical effect on the environment? | | | | ✓ | A |
| c. Conflict with established recreation uses of the area, including biking, equestrian and/or hiking trails? | | | | ✓ | A, L |

Impact Discussion:

16a-c Adoption of the 2019-2027 Housing Element update, itself, will not result in potential impacts to recreational resources in Nevada County. The Housing Element update is strictly a policy document and does not provide entitlements to any specific land use projects. The document contains Goals, Policies and Programs aimed at accommodating 2,062 housing units by 2027; yet the Element itself does not provide any entitlements for the construction of these units. As required by the RHNA plan, the County is required to demonstrate appropriate zoning to meet the needs of all income levels and special needs groups. All future development will be subject to the County's Recreation Mitigation Fee, which will assist in minimizing potential impacts. This fee will be applied at the appropriate timeframe when the project is being built. Additionally, all future projects will be subject to site-specific environmental review and must comply with all applicable County policies and regulations in regards to recreational services. Therefore, the 2019-2027 Housing Element update would have *no impact* related to recreational resources.

Mitigation: None required.

17. TRANSPORTATION

Existing Setting: The Nevada County circulation system is composed of a combination of state highways, county roadways, city-maintained roadways, and privately maintained roadways. Generally, roadways are grouped into six basic classifications including: Interstate Highways and Freeways, Principal Arterials, Minor Arterials, Major and Minor Collectors, Local Roads and Regional Emergency Access Roads. The County maintains approximately 560 miles of roadways with the remainder being maintained by State and Federal Agencies, Cities, and private Road Maintenance Associations. Numerous county roadways provide intermediate and localized access to rural areas of the county, as well as to the more populated cities of Grass Valley, Nevada City, and Truckee and the communities of Lake Wildwood, Alta Sierra, Lake of the Pines, and others.

| Would the proposed project: | Potentially Significant Impact | Less Than Significant with Mitigation | Less Than Significant Impact | No Impact | Reference Source (Appendix A) |
|--|--------------------------------|---------------------------------------|------------------------------|-----------|-------------------------------|
| a. Conflict with a program plan, ordinance, or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle or pedestrian facilities? | | | | ✓ | A,B |
| b. Would the project conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3, subdivision (b)? | | | | ✓ | A,B |
| c. Substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., a sharp curve or dangerous intersection) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)? | | | | ✓ | A,H,M |
| d. Result in inadequate emergency access: | | | | ✓ | H,M |
| e. Result in an increase in traffic hazards to motor vehicles, bicyclists, or pedestrians, including short-term construction and long-term operational traffic? | | | | ✓ | A,H,M |

Impact Discussion:

17a-e: The adoption of the proposed 2019-2027 Housing Element update, itself, will not result in potential impacts to transportation and circulation. When future projects are submitted for County review, the County standards require that a traffic analyses be prepared. These traffic studies will be reviewed for compliance with County codes as a part of the overall project environmental review process. Traffic and circulation specific mitigation measures have been integrated into the County's General Plan in the form of Goals, Policies and Programs to ensure that local traffic impacts are mitigated to less than significant levels. Therefore, the 2019-2027 Housing Element update would have **no impact** related transportation impacts.

Mitigation: None required.

18. TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES

Existing Setting: The varied environmental zones, the geological characteristics, and the geographical position of Nevada County account for a cultural resource base which is exceedingly rich and exceptionally complex. This explains the relatively large number of recorded prehistoric and historic sites and the wide array of types. Prehistoric site types which have been inventoried include villages and associated cemeteries, multi-task camps, single task-specific locales (such as bedrock mortar milling features), and special use sites (hunting blinds, petroglyphs and quarries). Nevada County lies within the territory of the Nisenan, or Southern Maidu. The Nisenan occupied the upper drainages and the adjacent ridges of the Yuba River, the north, middle and south forks of the American River and at least the upper north side of the Cosumnes River. The territory is conventionally believed to extend to the crest of the Sierra to the east and the Sacramento River to the west. A number of State laws regulate the disturbance of archaeological sites and the Nevada County General Plan and Zoning Regulations establish procedures for identifying potentially sensitive sites. Tribal Cultural Resources include sites, features, and places with cultural or sacred value to California Native American Tribes. Both the Washoe Tribe of Nevada and California and United Auburn Indian Community of the Auburn Rancheria (UAIC) have contacted the County to request consultation on projects falling within their delineated ancestral lands.

| Would the proposed project: | Potentially Significant Impact | Less Than Significant with Mitigation | Less Than Significant Impact | No Impact | Reference Source (Appendix A) |
|---|--------------------------------|---------------------------------------|------------------------------|-----------|-------------------------------|
| a. Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in Public Resources Code section 21074 as either a site, feature, place, cultural landscape that is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American tribe, and that is: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, or in a local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code section 5020.1(k), or ii. A resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1. In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resource Code Section 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe. | | | | ✓ | J,25, 26 |

Impact Discussion:

18a i-ii: Assembly Bill 52 (Chapter 532, Statutes 2014) required an update to Appendix G (Initial Study Checklist) of the California Environmental Quality Act Guidelines to include questions related to impacts to tribal cultural resources. Changes to Appendix G were approved by the Office of Administrative Law on September 27, 2016. Senate Bill 18 (SB 18), which went into effect January 1, 2005, requires local governments (city and county) to consult with Native American tribes before making certain planning decisions and to provide notice to tribes at certain key points in the planning process. The intent is to “provide California Native American tribes an opportunity to participate in local land use decisions at an early planning stage, for the purpose of protecting, or mitigating impacts to, cultural places.” The purpose of involving tribes at these early planning stages is to allow consideration of cultural places in the context of broad local land use policy, before individual site-specific, project-level, land use designations are made by a local government. The consultation requirements of SB 18 apply to General Plan or Specific Plan processes proposed on or after March 1, 2005. Both the Washoe Tribe of Nevada and California and United Auburn Indian Community of the Auburn Rancheria (UAIC) have contacted the County to request consultation on projects falling within their delineated ancestral lands.

On July 26, 2018, Staff sent an invitation to the United Auburn Indian Community of the Auburn Rancheria (UAIC) and the Washoe Tribe of Nevada and California (Washoe Tribe) to begin AB52 and SB 18 consultation for the proposed 2019-2027 Housing Element Update. Cherilyn Neider of the United Auburn Indian Community of the Auburn Rancheria Tribal Preservation Office responded to the invitation and requested to open consultation on the proposed Housing Element Update. On October 19, 2018, staff held a conference call with UAIC to discuss the proposed Housing Element Update as well as the existing 2014-2019 Housing Element and expected updates to the Goals, Programs and Policies. After the conferenced phone call, UAIC followed-up with an email on October 19, 2018, advising that they had no additional comments and that they would like to close consultation. As discussed above, staff also set an invitation to the Washoe Tribe of Nevada and California to begin AB 52 and SB 18 consultation, however, a response to the request was not received.

The adoption of the proposed 2019-2027 Housing Element update, itself, will not impact Tribal Cultural Resources. Any future housing development project submittal will be required to be reviewed for Tribal Cultural Resources and would require future consultation of traditionally and culturally affiliated California Native American tribes. Additionally, future projects will be reviewed for compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act, and as a general rule; any potential impacts will be mitigated through project conditioning and review. Therefore, the 2019-2027 Housing Element update would have ***no impact*** on tribal cultural resources.

Mitigation: None required.

19. UTILITIES / SERVICE SYSTEMS

Existing Setting: Public utilities serving Nevada County include the Pacific Gas & Electric Company for natural gas and electricity, and in Eastern Nevada County, the Truckee Donner Public Utility District also supplies electricity. Propane is a common fuel source used in Nevada County by individual homes and businesses.

Wastewater Collection and Treatment: The County does not comprehensively provide wastewater collection and treatment to all areas of the County. Primarily there are eight Community Regions, two Rural Regions, one Rural Area and two districts in Eastern Nevada County that have access to public sewage disposal. Much of Nevada County is served by onsite sewage disposal/septic systems. Lack of extensive public sewage disposal can be viewed as the primary limiting factor to the development of high density housing in Nevada County. All other services are viewed to be adequate to accommodate planned higher density multi-family housing. Seven different sewer service areas within the unincorporated area are identified as adequate to serve all types of housing development in Nevada County. These sewer areas include: City of Grass Valley near and long term Sphere of Influence areas; City of Nevada City five year Sphere of Influence areas; Truckee Sanitation District Boundaries; Donner Summit Public Utility District (PUD); and the Lake of the Pines, Lake Wildwood, and Penn Valley Sanitation Districts. Of these seven sanitation districts, the County of Nevada is the sole operator of the Lake of the Pines, Lake Wildwood and the Penn Valley Sanitation Districts only. The County also provides wastewater collection and treatment for the North San Juan and Cascade Shores Sanitation Districts.

Water Service: The County does not act as a domestic water supplier. Residential uses are typically served by groundwater, the Nevada Irrigation District, Truckee-Donner Public Utility District or by smaller community water districts. The Nevada Irrigation District (NID) makes up the largest water purveyor in western Nevada County. NID supplies nearly 20,000 homes, farms and businesses with treated water in Nevada and Placer counties in the foothills of Northern California's Sierra Nevada Mountains. NID collects water from the mountain snowpack and stores it in an extensive system of 10 reservoirs. As water flows to customers in the foothills, it is used to generate clean hydroelectric energy and to provide public recreational opportunities. NID supplies both treated drinking water and irrigation water. Adequate water supply is not seen as a constraint to the development of housing during the current planning period.

Solid Waste: In Western Nevada County, the County maintains a transfer station and contracts with independent waste haulers for curbside pickup through established Franchise Agreements. County residents may dispose of greet waste and hazardous waste at the transfer station as well. In Eastern Nevada County, solid waste is hauled to the Eastern Regional Landfill located in Placer County by an independent contractor.

| Would the proposed project: | Potentially Significant Impact | Less Than Significant with Mitigation | Less Than Significant Impact | No Impact | Reference Source (Appendix A) |
|--|--------------------------------|---------------------------------------|------------------------------|-----------|-------------------------------|
| a. Require or result in the relocation or the construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment or storm water drainage, electric power, | | | | ✓ | A,D |

| Would the proposed project: | Potentially Significant Impact | Less Than Significant with Mitigation | Less Than Significant Impact | No Impact | Reference Source (Appendix A) |
|---|--------------------------------|---------------------------------------|------------------------------|-----------|-------------------------------|
| natural gas or telecommunication facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects? | | | | | |
| b. Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry and multiple dry years? | | | | ✓ | A |
| c. Generate solid waste in excess of State or local standards, or in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure, or otherwise impair the attainment of solid waste goals? | | | | ✓ | C |
| d. Comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste? | | | | ✓ | C |

Impact Discussion:

19a-d: The adoption of the proposed 2019-2027 Housing Element update, itself, will not result in an impact to county utilities and service systems. The Housing Element update is strictly a policy document and does not provide entitlements to any specific land use projects. The document contains Goals, Policies and Programs aimed at accommodating 2,062 housing units by 2027; yet the Element itself does not provide any entitlements for the construction of these units. As required by the RHNA plan, the County is required to demonstrate appropriate zoning to meet the needs of all income levels and special needs groups. All future projects will be reviewed for their impact to utilities and services as a part of its project-specific environmental review process at the time of project submittal. Therefore, the 2019-2027 Housing Element update would have **no impact** on utilities / service systems.

Mitigation: None required.

20. WILDFIRE

Existing Setting: The Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 (DMA), requires that each State develop a hazard mitigation plan, in order to receive future disaster mitigation funding following a disaster. The DMA also requires the development of local or county plans for that particular county to be eligible for post-disaster mitigation funding. The purpose of these requirements is to encourage State and local government to engage in systematic and nationally uniform planning efforts that will result in locally tailored programs and projects that help minimize loss of life, destruction of property, damage to the environment and the total cost of disasters before they occur. The Nevada County Office of Emergency Services (OES), in coordination with the Nevada County Operational Area Emergency Services Council, has developed a Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (LHMP) for Nevada County to meet the requirements of the DMA on behalf of the County, its incorporated cities and towns and participating districts. Approved by the Nevada County Board of Supervisors, the LHMP enables Nevada County to be eligible for future post-disaster mitigation funding. The LHMP recognizes the threat of natural and man-made disasters and hazards pose to people and property within Nevada County and that undertaking hazard mitigation action delineated in the LHMP reduces the potential for harm to people and property from future disaster and hazardous incidents.

| If located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire severity hazard zones, would the project: | Potentially Significant Impact | Less Than Significant with Mitigation | Less Than Significant Impact | No Impact | Reference Source (Appendix A) |
|--|--------------------------------|---------------------------------------|------------------------------|-----------|-------------------------------|
| a. Substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan? | | | | ✓ | A,H,M,23 |
| b. Due to slope, prevailing winds, or other factor, exacerbate wildfire risks, and thereby expose project occupants to pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontainable spread of wildfire? | | | | ✓ | A,B,H,M,18 |
| c. Require the installation or maintenance of associated infrastructure (such as roads, fuel breaks, emergency water sources, power lines or other utilities) that may exacerbate fire risk or that may result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment? | | | | ✓ | A,H,M |
| d. Expose people or structures to significant risks, including downslope or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes? | | | | ✓ | A,H,M,12 |

Impact Discussion

20a-d: The Safety Element of the Nevada County General Plan addresses wildfire hazards in Nevada County and has several policies to improve fire safety. The Safety Element discusses the importance of ingress and egress by roadways, as well as maintaining the Nevada County Defensible Space Standards as described in Policy FP10.11.2. The Element also recognizes the importance of Public Resources Code 4290 and 4291 which are known as the State Responsible Area Fire Safe Regulations. Nevada County has also adopted a Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (LHMP) that was updated in August 2017. Objective 3.6 of the LHMP is to improve communities' capabilities to prevent/mitigate hazards by increasing the use of technologies. Goal 4 of the LHMP is to reduce fire severity and intensity, with Objective 4.4 to promote the implementation of fuel management on private and public lands.

The adoption of the proposed 2019-2027 Housing Element update, itself, will not result in an impact to the ability of the County, State or Federal Agencies or Local Fire Districts or Law Enforcement Agencies from carrying out an adopted emergency response or emergency evacuation plan. The Housing Element update is strictly a policy document and does not provide entitlements to any specific land use projects. The document contains Goals, Policies and Programs aimed at accommodating 2,062 housing units by 2027; yet the Element itself does not provide any entitlements for the construction of these units. As required by the RHNA plan, the County is required to demonstrate appropriate zoning to meet the needs of all income levels and special needs groups. Future development of projects will be subject to both local and regional hazard and hazardous mitigation plans and will also be required to meet all Nevada County Land Use and Development Code requirements including all adopted local and State Fire Safety Standards as well all Federal Emergency Management Agency and California Office of Emergency Standards. All potential wildland fire hazards will be reviewed at the time when a site-specific development project is made, including for compliance with appropriate California Building Codes and for development within Wildland Urban Interface areas. Therefore, the 2019-2027 Housing Element update would have **no impact** on wildland fire or adopted emergency response plans.

Mitigation: None required.

21. MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANT ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECT

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

Impact Discussion:

21a,c: The proposed 2019-2027 Housing Element update is strictly a policy document, intended to guide the County in meeting the County's projected housing need over the next eight years. The adoption of the proposed Housing Element update will not grant any entitlements for the development of housing. Additionally all future housing development projects, whose outcome assists in meeting the County's housing development objectives, will be considered a project under the California Environmental Quality Act and will require site/project-specific environmental review at the time of project submittal. Therefore, the 2019-2027 Housing Element update would have ***no impact*** related to these issues.


21b: A project's cumulative impacts are considered significant when the incremental effects of the project are "cumulatively considerable," meaning that the project's incremental effects are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past, current, and probable future projects. Reasonably foreseeable projects that could have similar impacts to the proposed project include other anticipated projects within the project vicinity that could be constructed or operated within the same timeframe as the project. The proposed 2019-2027 Housing Element update is strictly a policy document, intended to guide the County in meeting the County's projected housing need over the next eight years. The document does contain Goals, Policies and Programs aimed at accommodating 2,062 housing units by 2027; yet the element itself does not provide any entitlements for the construction of these units. All future housing development project, whose outcome assists in meeting the County's housing development objectives, will be considered a project under the California Environmental Quality Act and would require site/project-specific environmental review, including operational impacts at the time of project submittal. Therefore, the adoption of the 2019-227 Housing Element update, would have ***no impact*** on environmental effects that are individually limited by cumulatively considerable.

Mitigation: None required.

RECOMMENDATION OF THE PROJECT PLANNER

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 a "potentially significant unless mitigated" impact on the environment, but at least one effect 1) has been adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and 2) has been addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis as described on attached sheets. An ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required, but it must analyze only the effects that remain to be addressed.
- ☐ I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, because all potentially significant effects (a) have been analyzed adequately in an earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION pursuant to applicable standards, and (b) have been avoided or mitigated pursuant to that earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION, including revisions or mitigation measures that are imposed upon the proposed project, nothing further is required.


Matt Kelley, Senior Planner

4/19/19
Date

APPENDIX A – REFERENCE SOURCES

- A. Planning Department
 - B. Department of Public Works
 - C. Environmental Health Department
 - D. Building Department
 - E. Nevada Irrigation District
 - F. Natural Resource Conservation Service/Resource Conservation District
 - G. Northern Sierra Air Quality Management District
 - H. Nevada County Consolidated Fire District
 - I. Regional Water Quality Control Board (*Central Valley Region*)
 - J. North Central Information Service, Anthropology Department, CSU Sacramento
 - K. California Department of Fish & Wildlife
 - L. Nevada County Geographic Information Systems
 - M. California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (Cal Fire)
 - N. Nevada County Transportation Commission
 - O. Nevada County Agricultural Advisor Commission
 - P. Grass Valley/ Nevada Joint Union School District
 - Q. Gold Country Stagecoach
 - R. Caltrans
-
- 1. State Division of Mines and Geology. *Mineral Classification Map*, 1990.
 - 2. State Department of Fish and Game. *Migratory Deer Ranges*, 1988.
 - 3. State Department of Fish and Game. *Natural Diversity Data Base Maps*, as updated.
 - 4. Cal Fire. *Fire Hazard Severity Zone Map for Nevada County*, 2007. Adopted by CalFire on November 7, 2007. Available at: <http://www.fire.ca.gov/wildland_zones_maps.php>.
 - 5. State Division of Mines and Geology. *Geologic Map of the Chico, California Quadrangle*, 1992.
 - 6. State Division of Mines and Geology. *Fault Map of California*, 1990.
 - 7. California Department of Conservation, Division of Land Resource Protection. 2016. *Nevada County Important Farmland Data*. Available at: <ftp://ftp.consrv.ca.gov/pub/dlrp/FMMP/pdf/2016/nev16.pdf>.
 - 8. State Dept. of Forestry & Fire Protection. *Nevada County Hardwood Rangelands*, 1993.
 - 9. U.S.G.S, 7.5 *Quadrangle Topographic Maps*, as updated.
 - 10. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. *National Wetlands Inventory*, December 1995.
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 - 12. U.S. Geological Service. *Nevada County Landslide Activity Map*, 1970, as found in the Draft Nevada County General Plan, Master Environmental Inventory, December 1991, Figure 8-3.
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 - 14. Northern Sierra Air Quality Management District. *Guidelines for Assessing Air Quality Impacts of Land Use Projects*, 2016.
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 - 18. Nevada County. *Nevada County Zoning Regulations*, adopted July 2000, and as amended.
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