



CALAVERAS COUNTY PLANNING DEPARTMENT
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Planning Commission Staff Report

Hearing Date:	January 23, 2025
Project Number/Name	2024-002 Amendment to General Plan adding Copperopolis Community Area Policies
Supervisory District Number	All
Assessor's Parcel Number(s)	N/A
Planner	Peter N. Maurer, Special Projects Administrator

Date: December 27, 2024

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: Calaveras County is proposing to amend the General Plan to add a Copperopolis section to the Community Planning Element.

ANALYSIS:

Background: On November 12, 2019 the Board of Supervisors adopted the Calaveras County General Plan. The Plan included a Community Planning Element that contains a description of and policies relating to several of the unique communities in the County. This element also provides for the opportunity to add communities for which descriptions and policies had not been completed by the time that the County was ready to adopt the General Plan as a whole. Two communities that were identified as those whose citizens desired to be included were Valley Springs and Copperopolis. Valley Springs was added in 2020. After many years of County staff and citizen efforts, policies for Copperopolis are ready to be added.

Development of plan policies for Copperopolis goes back many years. Countless meetings and workshops were held with the community, dating back to the 1990s. Several draft versions of a plan were developed but were designed more to be stand-alone plan documents. With adoption of the General Plan in 2019 a different format was adopted with the intent that it be incorporated into the General Plan. Work on Copperopolis policies was picked up again in the last couple of years.

Discussion: Copperopolis is unique in a way that differs from most of the rest of the communities in Calaveras County. While there is a historic area of the community, much of the more recent development has focused away from it. Areas around Lake Tulloch and further to the southwest have seen significant growth over the years, and the newer Town Center has shifted some commercial activity away from the historic area and the commercial development further south on O'Byrnes Ferry Road. Several larger, approved subdivision maps exist that provide for potential for growth in the community. Additionally,

the General Plan identified two areas of future development by means of specific plans. The vision, goals and policies of the proposed community plan would try to provide more cohesion and interconnection between these physically separated areas. Several meetings were held in the community where citizens proposed policies to staff. Many of these duplicated policies that are already a part of the General Plan as a whole and would apply regardless of their inclusion in the Community Planning Element. For this reason, staff revised or deleted those so that the policies recommended by staff are those that are unique to Copperopolis.

The proposed policies supplement all of the other policies contained in the General Plan and are not intended to be a substitute for any of them. The land use map is not proposed to be amended, so there is no change in density or intensity of development.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW:

An Environmental Impact Report was prepared for the General Plan and certified when the Board adopted the plan in November, 2019 (State Clearinghouse #2017012043). A number of impacts were found to be significant, and while mitigation measures were added to the plan to reduce those impacts, many were found to still be significant and unavoidable as a result of implementing the plan. The Draft and Final EIR may be viewed or downloaded at: <https://planning.calaverasgov.us/General-Plan#gsc.tab=0>. Copies of the EIR are also available at the Planning Department for review or purchase.

An addendum to that EIR has been prepared pursuant to Section 15164 of the CEQA Guidelines and is provided as Attachment 3. This addendum found that the proposed amendment would not create new or expanded impacts, no new information was available that would change the previous findings, and the findings necessary in CEQA could be made for utilization of an addendum. It also found that the proposed amendment is within the scope of the General Plan EIR pursuant to Section 15168 of the CEQA Guidelines and that the EIR adequately describes this activity for purposes of CEQA. Pursuant to Section 15164(d) the decision-making body must consider the addendum when making a decision on the project.

While an addendum was prepared in an abundance of caution, it should be noted that the proposed project is also exempt from CEQA pursuant to Guidelines section 15183 as a project consistent with the development density established by General Plan policies for which an EIR was certified, and which will not result in any unanalyzed project-specific significant effects. The proposed Community Plan does not authorize any additional development, does not authorize any activities that would worsen any of the significant impacts identified in the General Plan EIR, and nothing in its terms would prevent the mitigation measures incorporated in the General Plan from applying with equal force to properties located within the Copperopolis Community Area.

RECOMMENDATION:

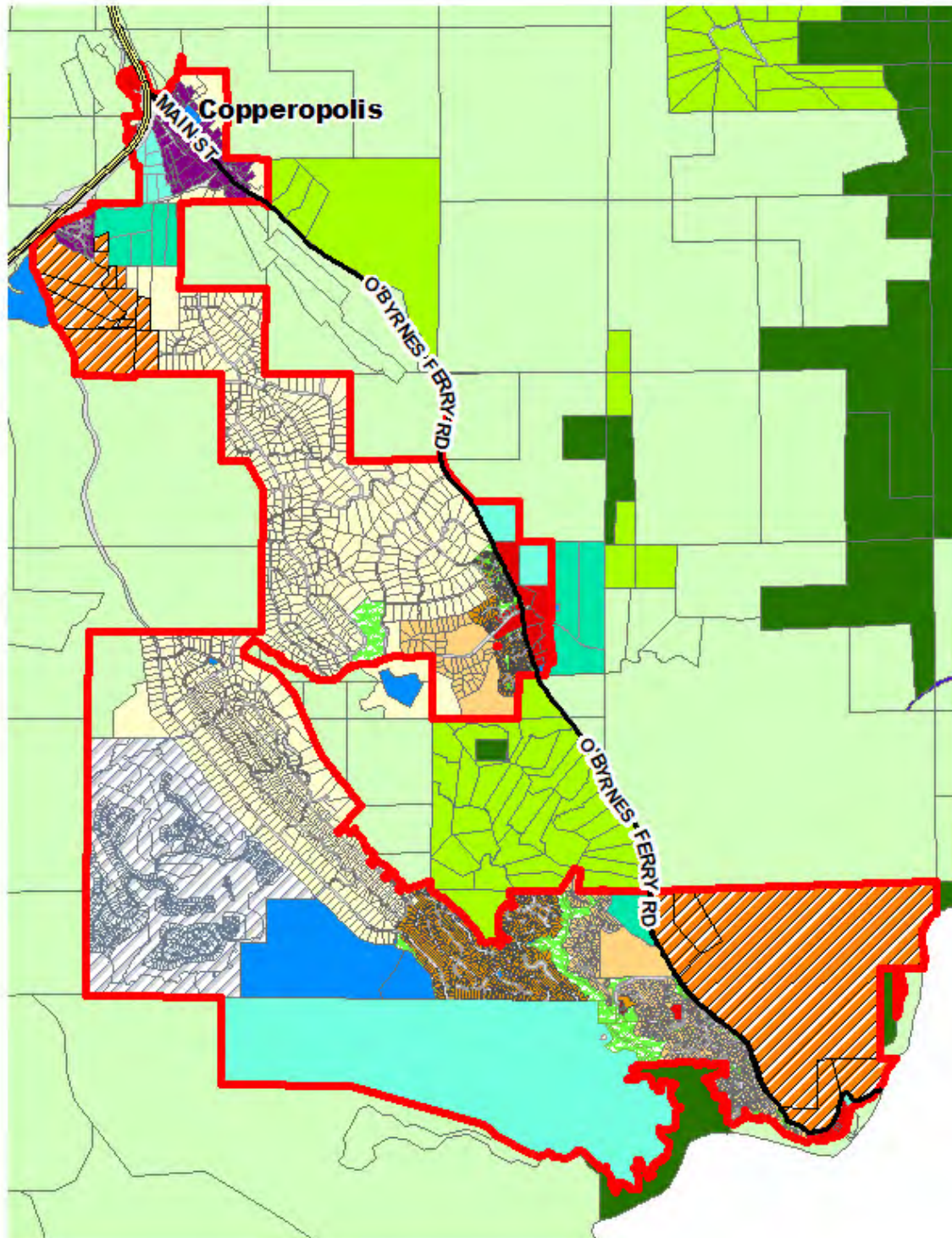
Staff recommends that the Planning Commission adopt Resolution 2025-003, recommending that the Board of Supervisors approve the Addendum to the EIR, find that

the project is also exempt from CEQA pursuant to Sec. 15183 of the CEQA Guidelines, and adopt the proposed general plan amendment adding a description and policies for the Copperopolis community to the Community Planning Element of the General Plan.

ATTACHMENTS:

Attachment 1	Draft Community Plan Description, Vision Statement, Goals and Policies for Copperopolis
Attachment 2	Resolution 2025-003
Attachment 3	Addendum to the General Plan EIR, SCH# 2017012043

Copperopolis Community Area



Location and Community Description

The Copperopolis Community Plan Area is located north of and adjacent to Lake Tulloch with O'Byrnes Ferry Road and Highway 4 serving as the primary transportation routes. The Planning Area is located 12 miles south of the City of Angels (Angels Camp) along Highway 4, separated by Bear Mountain, Copperopolis Mountain, Lightner Peak, and numerous ridges with elevations ranging from 1,100 feet to 1,800 feet. The planning area consists of four unique areas: The historic townsite of Copperopolis is located just south of Highway 4 on O'Byrnes Ferry Road/Main Street. Older subdivisions and commercial areas near Lake Tulloch are located three and a half to four miles south of the historic townsite. Newer development include Town Square (originally Copper Mill), located just west of the historic townsite south of Highway 4 and residential areas four miles south on Little John Road. The plan area also includes existing approved residential subdivisions and two areas identified on the General Plan land use map for future mixed use development. These are located just south of Coppertown Square and on Table Mountain, at the far southeast corner of the plan area.

Copperopolis was historically agricultural land primarily used for cattle grazing and mining activities prior to the 1950s, when numerous subdivisions near and/or adjacent to Lake Tulloch were developed. Ranching still thrives adjacent to Copperopolis. Farmland of Local Importance, as determined in accordance with the state's Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program, surrounds much of Copperopolis in the form of rangeland. The area was historically mined for copper in the 1860s with gold and silver mines also established during the Gold Rush. Tailing piles, remnant mineshafts, and other structures are present within the area.

History

The Copperopolis Community Plan Area was situated within the territory claimed by the Central Sierra Mi-Wuks. Mi-Wuk villages were typically located near water sources, within easy reach of bedrock outcrops where milling stations could be established. Such grinding rock artifacts remain in the Planning Area. Early European settlers were drawn to the Copperopolis area in response to the discovery of gold in 1849. The discovery of copper in 1860 and the growing demand for copper provided the impetus for the community to grow to more than 2,000 inhabitants, making Copperopolis the principal copper producing community in the Western United States in the 1860s with gold and silver mines also established during the Gold Rush. Copper mined in the area came from several mines including the Union, Empire, and Keystone, as well as smaller mines such as the Table Mountain Top, Scorpion, Kentucky, Index, Inimitable, and Harlem mines. Tailing piles, remnant mineshafts, and other structures are present within the area.

Reeds Turnpike, a private toll road, was an important feature in the development of Copperopolis since it was considered one of the best roads in the state, and there were good watering places located along its route. Teams from Stockton bound for Chinese Camp, Sonora, and Columbia came through Copperopolis by this route, then went on to cross the Stanislaus River at O'Byrnes Ferry.

After the closure of the copper mines, the development of Copperopolis was greatly influenced by the creation of Lake Tulloch in the 1850s, which has continued to be an important catalyst for bringing newcomers to the area. Lake Tulloch is operated by the Oakdale Irrigation District (OID) and the South San Joaquin Irrigation District (SSJID), cooperatively operating as the Tri-DAM Project.

Revitalization efforts have turned "historic" Copperopolis into a vibrant, attractive town center and tourist destination with community events, and neighborhood and tourist-serving opportunities. The Copperopolis Town Square located off Hodson Road, has turned into an attractive tourist destination with a hotel, retail shops, restaurants, and housing, and is hosting community events and providing opportunities to serve residents and tourists.

Community Vision

Copperopolis will retain its small town, rural community identity, preserve its natural beauty, and protect its vast recreational opportunities while embracing diverse housing, commercial, recreational and employment opportunities integrated with the natural resources and open space elements of the community. Lake Tulloch will flourish as a safe and uncongested community attraction.

Copperopolis will remain a nice, prosperous community with long-term residents who care, and new residents who embrace the lifestyle and culture of the area. Copperopolis will also continue to enrich the next generation through participation in groups like 4-H and Future Farmers of America. Motorized circulation, and non-motorized circulation where appropriate and with the suitable infrastructure, in parts of Copperopolis will provide safe and attractive access to all areas of the community, and residents, young and old, will take advantage of the community's pedestrian, equestrian, and bicycle pathways that will tie into the community's business centers and recreational amenities. The Community will continue to enjoy the golf course and beautiful open space, and parks in Copperopolis. While the Community Plan seeks harmony of land uses, it will respect the Constitutional rights to life, liberty, and property. The fervent wish of the community is that people who visit Copperopolis leave with the impression that it is a beautiful place and a friendly town where all are welcome.

Copperopolis Community Plan Goals and Policies

Land Use

- Goal CPC 1** An orderly developed community that retains a rural mining/ranching town atmosphere with an emphasis on community appearance and character.
- CPC 1.1** Support high quality, well-designed development that is compatible with surrounding uses, with natural, scenic and historic resources and is integrated with the community and the physical environment in which it is located. (LU-2E, LU-2F, LU-4A)
- CPC 1.2** Encourage a mix of uses including a wide range of residential, commercial, visitor-serving and job-generating uses throughout the Plan Area.
- CPC 1.3** Support the protection and enhancement of existing buildings and other structures of historic and architectural importance, as reflected in state and federal standards for significance, and that contribute to the historic identity of Copperopolis.
- CPC 1.4** Preserve the rural character of the area and encourage beautification and enhancement of properties.
- CPC 1.5** Maintain and improve commercial districts within historic Copperopolis and encourage the attraction of new compatible businesses and industries to the plan area. (LU-5G)

Circulation

- Goal CPC 2** Improved traffic circulation that provides safe routes for both vehicular and non-vehicular traffic in the Plan Area.
- CPC 2.1** Provide a safe mix of vehicular and non-vehicular transportation infrastructure. Support a balanced circulation system that provides for the safe and efficient movement of people and goods while maintaining the rural and historic character of the community. Encourage opportunities for trips to be made by walking and bicycling. (C-1A, C-1D, C-5A, COS-7B)
- CPC 2.2** Require traffic calming measures with new development to reduce travel speeds to the extent feasible within community and neighborhood areas to enhance the historic character or unique features of the community and to protect public safety.

- CPC 2.3** Include traffic calming measures in any update to the Copperopolis Benefit Basin fee program where appropriate. (C-2D)
- CPC 2.4** Increase roadway connectivity. (C-1A)
- CPC 2.5** Encourage the use of public transit, as well as ridesharing, and vanpools in the plan area. (C-3A, C-3B, C-3C)

Conservation and Open Space/Recreation

Goal CPC 3 Achieve a harmonious relationship between the developed environment and its surroundings by preserving open space and agriculture/rangelands and protecting and enhancing the natural resources of the Plan Area.

- CPC 3.1** Support development of a high-quality system of recreational facilities enhancing the quality of life and health of residents and visitors and contributing to the community's economy. (COS-7D, COS-7I)
- CPC 3.2** Support the restoration, enhancement, and preservation of prehistoric, archaeological, cultural, historical, and paleontological resources. (LU-4D)
- CPC 3.3** Work with new development to identify and protect scenic resources that preserve rural character, quality of life, and tourism-based economic development, while protecting property rights. (COS-6B)
- CPC 3.4** Support the retention of existing mature trees where practicable in landscaping for new development, consistent with fire protection needs, to facilitate carbon sequestration. (LU-4C)
- CPC 3.5** Require the inclusion of design features in new development to capture stormwater and recharge groundwater where practicable. (PF-2J)

Safety

Goal CPC 4 Enhanced public safety with regard to fire protection, law enforcement, and emergency services to protect people, property, the economy, and natural resources from the risks of natural and manmade hazards.

- CPC 4.1** Apply adopted standards to new development designed to protect the community from unreasonable risks of death, injuries, property damage and economic and social dislocation resulting from fires or from hazardous materials and wastes. (S-3A, S-3B, S-3C)
- CPC 4.2** When considering whether or not to approve discretionary permits in the Community Plan Area the County should encourage the minimization of wildfire ignitions, the use of evacuation routes, and other fire safety measures. (S-1A, S-3A, S-3B, S-3V)
- CPC 4.3** The County will, in cooperation with the County Office of Emergency Services, the local fire district, fire safe council, Resource Conservation District, CAL FIRE , and/or the Red Cross, implement the Local Hazard Mitigation Plan. (S-1A)

Public Facilities

Goal CPC 5 Public facilities adequate to meet the demands of the community's growth.

- CPC 5.1** Support the enhancement of infrastructure that will support economic growth within the community boundary including roads, water systems, sewer systems, and transportation networks. (PF-1B, PF-2C, PF-2D)

- CPC 5.2** Cooperate with school districts and park providers to develop adequate school sites and parks to support the population of Copperopolis. (LU-3C)
- CPC 5.3** Continue to support the sheriff's committed presence in the Copperopolis Community (e.g. by maintaining the satellite sheriff's station in Copperopolis). (PF-4A)
- CPC 5.4** Support development of a multi-purpose community center with sports facilities, a playground, a dog park, a smoke-free and cooling shelter, senior citizen activities and swimming.
- CPC 5.5** Cooperate with Tri-Dam to develop equitable public access to Lake Tulloch for motorized and non-motorized uses. (LU-3C)
- CPC 5.6** Cooperate with the San Joquin Delta Community College District to establish a satellite campus to serve the residents of Copperopolis. (LU-3C, PF-7C)

Economic Development

- Goal CPC 6** Commercial development designed to complement the character of the appropriate areas within the Plan Area.
- CPC 6.1** Support development of overnight accommodations in Copperopolis that will create jobs and economic benefits to the County. (LU-5E)
- CPC 6.2** Support opportunities for additional education and job internships for the community's youth. Invest in education and training programs that will provide residents and young people with the skills and knowledge needed for the jobs of the future. (LU-5E)
- CPC 6.3** Support tourism by leveraging the region's natural resources and cultural heritage to attract visitors, generate revenue, and create sustainable jobs.

**COUNTY OF CALAVERAS, STATE OF CALIFORNIA
PLANNING COMMISSION**

RESOLUTION NO. 2025-003

A RESOLUTION RECOMMENDING THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS APPROVE THE ADDENDUM TO THE EIR FOR THE GENERAL PLAN (SCH# 2017012043) AND ADOPT AN AMENDMENT TO THE COMMUNITY PLANNING ELEMENT OF THE GENERAL PLAN ADDING A DESCRIPTION AND POLICIES FOR THE COPPEROPOLIS COMMUNITY

WHEREAS, on November 12, 2019, the Calaveras County Board of Supervisors certified the Environmental Impact Report (SCH# 2017012043) and adopted the Calaveras County General Plan; and

WHEREAS, in January 2020, the Calaveras County Board of Supervisors identified priorities for implementing the General Plan, one of which was adopting policies for the Copperopolis community; and

WHEREAS, this General Plan Amendment was referred to applicable California Native American tribes as required by County Code 17.39.060(B) and State law, and they were given an opportunity to consult with the County; and

WHEREAS, staff prepared an addendum to the EIR which was considered by the Planning Commission; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission considered all of the information presented to it, including its Staff Report and public testimony presented in writing and at the meeting,

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that the Planning Commission recommends that the Board of Supervisors 1) approve the addendum to the EIR for the General Plan, finding also that the project is exempt from CEQA pursuant to Section 15183 of the CEQA Guidelines; and 2) approve Project 2024-002, an amendment to the Community Planning Element of the General Plan to add a description and policies for the Copperopolis Community, based on the following findings:

1. The addendum to the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the General Plan (SCH# 2017012043) complies with the requirements of CEQA.

Evidence: Pursuant to Section 15164 and 15168 of the State CEQA Guidelines, an addendum to a previously certified program EIR may be prepared if the subsequent approval is within the scope of the program EIR and if changes to the project are necessary but none of the conditions described in Section 15162 calling for preparation of a subsequent EIR have occurred. These conditions are as follows:

- (a) When an EIR has been certified or a negative declaration adopted for a project, no subsequent EIR shall be prepared for that project unless the lead agency*

determines, on the basis of substantial evidence in the light of the whole record, one or more of the following:

- (1) Substantial changes are proposed in the project which will require major revisions of the previous EIR or negative declaration due to the involvement of new significant environmental effects or a substantial increase in the severity of previously identified significant effects;*

For the reasons described in the staff report and addendum, which are incorporated by reference herein, the amendment to the General Plan will not involve new significant environmental effect or a substantial increase in the severity of the previously identified effects. The Copperopolis policies enhance policies in the General Plan that apply county-wide and would further protect environmental resources. The addition of a Community Plan to the countywide General Plan is also not a substantial change to the General Plan.

- (2) Substantial changes occur with respect to the circumstances under which the project is undertaken which will require major revisions of the previous EIR or negative declaration due to the involvement of new significant environmental effects or a substantial increase in the severity of previously identified significant effects; or*

No changes in circumstances under which the project was undertaken have occurred. The General Plan was adopted in November 2019 and development that has occurred since that time has been consistent with the General Plan. No changes to the land use map have been made.

- (3) New information of substantial importance, which was not known and could not have been known with the exercise of reasonable diligence at the time the previous EIR was certified as complete or the negative declaration was adopted, shows any of the following:*

- (A) The project will have one or more significant effects not discussed in the previous EIR or negative declaration;*

No new significant effects have been identified that was not known or could have been known at the time of certification of the previous EIR.

- (B) Significant effects previously examined will be substantially more severe than shown in the previous EIR;*

The addendum demonstrates that the significant effects previously examined will not be more severe than shown in the previous EIR.

- (C) Mitigation measures or alternatives previously found not to be feasible would in fact be feasible and would substantially reduce one or more significant effects of the project, but the project proponents decline to adopt the mitigation measure or alternative; or*

No mitigation measures found not to be feasible in the previous EIR in fact would be feasible and would substantially reduce one or more significant effects on the environment. All mitigation measures identified in the previous EIR will continue to apply after the adoption of this Community Plan.

(D) Mitigation measures or alternatives which are considerably different from those analyzed in the previous EIR would substantially reduce one or more significant effects on the environment, but the project proponents decline to adopt the mitigation measure or alternative.

No mitigation measures considerably different from those analyzed in the previous EIR have been identified that would reduce one or more significant effects on the environment.

For the reasons described in the addendum, the adoption of the Copperopolis Community Plan is within the scope of the General Plan EIR, and that program EIR adequately describes this project for purposes of CEQA. The EIR contemplated the subsequent adoption of community plans to further define the goals and planning priorities of the various communities. As contemplated in the EIR, the Copperopolis Community Plan remains subservient to the General Plan and does not prevent the application of any of the General Plan's implementation or mitigation measures within the Community Area.

2. The proposed amendment is consistent with the General Plan.

Evidence: The proposed policies for the community of Copperopolis compliment the policies contained within the other elements of the General Plan. The Community Planning element contemplated the later amendment of the General Plan to include additional Community Plans as they developed. General Plan implementation measures that are applicable county-wide can be utilized to implement the Copperopolis community policies.

3. This General Plan Amendment is "within the public interest" as contemplated by Government Code section 65358.

Evidence: The Community Planning element of the General Plan provides a vehicle for individual communities within unincorporated Calaveras County to define themselves and set goals for their future development over time. Allowing for this incentivizes residents of each community to develop a personal investment in their respective locales and to participate more in both local and countywide planning processes that could impact their communities. A county with several unique communities, each with their own character, is also likely to attract more visitor interest, which can help stimulate the local tourism economy.

PASSED AND ADOPTED by the Planning Commission of the County of Calaveras, at a regular meeting of the Planning Commission held on January 23, 2025 on a motion by Commissioner _____ and seconded by Commissioner _____.

AYES:
NOES:
ABSTAIN:
ABSENT:

Chair, Planning Commission

ATTEST:

Bret Sampson, Planning Director

September 2024 – Environmental Impact Report Addendum

**ADDENDUM TO THE
CALAVERAS COUNTY GENERAL PLAN
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT**

SCH# 2017012043

Calaveras County

Prepared by:

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Background

On November 12, 2019 the Calaveras County Board of Supervisors certified an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) and adopted the General Plan. Fourteen objectives of the General Plan were identified and are listed below:

1. Protect property rights;
2. Provide flexibility in meeting the needs of the County;
3. Promote maintenance and development of productive resources;
4. Promote an improved, business friendly economic climate;
5. Enhance the County's tax base to provide needed services and fiscal stability;
6. Allow for diverse economic growth;
7. Support agriculture, forestry, mineral industries, recreation, and tourism where such endeavors are practical;
8. Preserve the natural beauty of the region where such preservation efforts are appropriate;
9. Preserve the character of historic communities within the County;
10. New development will provide infrastructure necessitated by development and maintain existing levels of service;
11. Maintain transportation connectivity and encourage other modes of transportation;
12. Coordinate the provision of essential services;
13. Protect citizens from hazards; and
14. Maintenance of open space, habitat, and resource lands will be accomplished by the continued ability of those who own, operate, or manage them.

As discussed in the Community Planning element, community plans have long been a component of Calaveras County's General Plan. Prior to the adoption of the current General Plan, there were community plans for Arnold, Avery/Hathaway Pines, Ebbetts Pass, Mokelumne Hill, Murphys/Douglas Flat, Rancho Calaveras, San Andreas, and Valley Springs. With the exception of plans for Mokelumne Hill, Rancho Calaveras and San Andreas, the Community Plans from the 1996 General Plan had not been revised and approved by the County to be included in the current General Plan. The Community Planning element includes Policy CP 1.1, which encourages each community that does not have a community plan included in the General Plan to find consensus in a community plan, applicable in particular to that community and consistent with this General Plan, that expresses that community's own goals, policies and implementation measures, and Implementation Measure CP-1A, which directs the County to support communities that wish to adopt or update community plans. The Community Planning element notes that additional community plans may be added through general plan amendments as they are completed.

The Board of Supervisors is proposing to amend the General Plan to incorporate the Copperopolis Community Plan into the County General Plan. The proposed General Plan amendment would add a description of the Copperopolis Community and policies for that community to the Community Planning Element. The purpose of this addendum is to determine whether the proposed General Plan amendment would result in any new or substantially more severe significant impacts compared to what was analyzed in the EIR and whether the Copperopolis Community Plan is within the scope of the General Plan EIR for purposes of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

CEQA Analysis

Under CEQA Guidelines Section 15164, an addendum to an EIR shall be prepared if some changes or additions are necessary, but none of the conditions identified in Guidelines Section 15162 have occurred. The following discussion concludes that the conditions set forth in Section 15162 are not present, and that an addendum is appropriate for the proposed Copperopolis Community Plan policies amendment (Amendment). The following discussion also concludes that the Copperopolis Community Plan is within the scope of the General Plan EIR per CEQA Guidelines Section 15168.

Discussion

The discussion in this addendum confirms that the proposed Amendment would not require major revisions to the EIR due to the involvement of new significant environmental effects or a substantial increase in the severity of previously identified significant effects. As demonstrated below, the potential impacts of the Amendment were evaluated in a previously certified EIR and the EIR provides a sufficient and adequate analysis of the environmental impacts of the proposed Amendment. Thus, the County determined that an addendum is the appropriate environmental document for adoption of the proposed Amendment.

Pursuant to Section 15164 of the State CEQA Guidelines, the “lead agency or a responsible agency shall prepare an addendum to a previously certified EIR if some changes or additions are necessary but none of the conditions described in Section 15162 calling for preparation of a subsequent EIR have occurred.”

The following are the provisions from Guidelines Section 15162 referenced above describing when a subsequent EIR must be prepared:

- (a) *When an EIR has been certified or a negative declaration adopted for a project, no subsequent EIR shall be prepared for that project unless the lead agency determines, on the basis of substantial evidence in the light of the whole record, one or more of the following:*
 - (1) *Substantial changes are proposed in the project which will require major revisions of the previous EIR or negative declaration due to the involvement of new significant environmental effects or a substantial increase in the severity of previously identified significant effects;*
 - (2) *Substantial changes occur with respect to the circumstances under which the project is undertaken which will require major revisions of the previous EIR or negative declaration due to the involvement of new significant environmental effects or a substantial increase in the severity of previously identified significant effects; or*
 - (3) *New information of substantial importance, which was not known and could not have been known with the exercise of reasonable diligence at the time the previous EIR was certified as complete or the negative declaration was adopted, shows any of the following:*
 - (A) *The project will have one or more significant effects not discussed in the previous EIR or negative declaration;*
 - (B) *Significant effects previously examined will be substantially more severe than shown in the previous EIR;*

- (C) Mitigation measures or alternatives previously found not to be feasible would in fact be feasible and would substantially reduce one or more significant effects of the project, but the project proponents decline to adopt the mitigation measure or alternative; or*
- (D) Mitigation measures or alternatives which are considerably different from those analyzed in the previous EIR would substantially reduce one or more significant effects on the environment, but the project proponents decline to adopt the mitigation measure or alternative.*

The discussion below addresses whether any of these events have occurred.

Environmental Impacts Analysis

This section evaluates the potential for the proposed Amendment to result in new or substantially more severe significant impacts compared to the impacts disclosed for the adopted General Plan that was analyzed as the “proposed project” in the certified EIR. The environmental analysis provided in this section describes the information that was considered in evaluating the questions contained in the CEQA Checklist in Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines. The information used in this evaluation includes the certified Calaveras County General Plan EIR and the proposed Amendment.

The proposed amendment would add a section to the Community Planning Element of the General Plan that provides a description of the community of Copperopolis, its history, and a vision statement taken from documents worked on by community members over several years. In addition, 28 community-specific policies would be added that complement the General Plan policies that apply to the county as a whole. These policies are divided into six categories: Land Use, Circulation, Conservations and Open Space/Recreation, Safety, Public Facilities, and Economic Development which are intended to enhance the livability of Copperopolis and further protect community values and the environment unique to that community. The additional community-specific policies are consistent with the General Plan and would not cause additional development that was not contemplated in the EIR.

Aesthetics

The EIR found that there would be a significant and unavoidable impact due to the degradation of the existing visual character of the county. Implementation Measures PF-4D and LU-5A were modified through mitigation measure 4.1-2(a) to consider the environmental sensitivity when siting communication facilities, but development in the county would still result in potentially significant impacts. The proposed amendment would not increase potential impacts and would enhance measures to preserve the visual character of Copperopolis. Policy CPC 1.5 requires preservation of visual character and beautification of properties, CPC 3.4 encourages protection of scenic resources, CPC 3.5 encourages retention of mature trees in landscaping. All other potential aesthetic impacts would remain less than significant. No new information nor substantial change has been identified that would require a subsequent EIR.

Agricultural, Forest, and Mineral Resources

The EIR found that there would be significant impacts from the development that would likely occur under the General Plan from conversion of farmland and loss of mineral resources. With mitigation, the impacts on mineral resources was determined to be less than significant, but the impact remained significant and unavoidable for the loss of important farmland. The adoption of these new policies would not change the land use map and would not increase potential development on agricultural land or land with mineral resources. All of the land within the Copperopolis community boundary, where the proposed policies would apply are designated for urban development and no Resource Production designated land is within the community area boundary. There is no new information, changes in circumstances, or new measures that would warrant preparation of a subsequent EIR.

Air Quality and Greenhouse Gases

The EIR found that there would be a significant cumulative effect on the environment due to violation of air quality standards, exposure of sensitive receptors to pollution and odors, and generation of greenhouse gases. While mitigation measures were added, the development under the plan would still lead to significant and unavoidable air quality and GHG impacts. Several policies and implementation measures address efforts to reduce air quality and GHG impacts, and those would apply to any development in Copperopolis. None of the proposed policies would reduce the effectiveness of those policies nor would they provide for development that would increase potential impacts. Several proposed policies would encourage development that would promote pedestrian circulation (CPC 2.1, 2.3 and 2.4) and reduce wildfire risk (CPC 4.1, 4.1 and 4.3), which in turn would have the effect of decreasing GHG impacts. The addition of the proposed policies would not increase the significant effect of these impacts. There is no new information, changes in circumstances, or new measures that would warrant preparation of a subsequent EIR.

Biological Resources

Implementation of the General Plan would have potentially significant and unavoidable impacts on several biological resources. These included impacts to special status species, riparian habitats, oak woodlands, wetlands, and wildlife movement. While mitigation measures were incorporated into the general plan to reduce those impacts, they were still determined to be significant. Development in Copperopolis would still be subject to all of the mitigation measures and policies of the plan and the addition of the proposed community area policies would not increase the potential for impacts to biological resources or reduce the effectiveness of any of the mitigation measures identified in the EIR. There is no new information, changes in circumstances, or new measures that would warrant preparation of a subsequent EIR.

Cultural Resources

Similarly, the EIR found that there could be significant and unavoidable impacts to a variety of cultural resources, including historic, archaeological, and tribal cultural resources. Mitigation measures were incorporated into the policies and implementation measures to reduce those impacts, but they were still considered significant. Policies CPC 1.3 and 3.3 specifically require protection of archeological and cultural resources. The additional policies would not reduce the effectiveness of any of the existing policies or implementation measures. There are no changes in circumstances or new information that would warrant preparation of a subsequent EIR.

Geology and Soils

No significant impacts to geologic resources, including soils and seismicity, were found by the EIR as a result of the General Plan. The proposed policies would not create any new impacts or significantly increase impacts related to geology and soils. There are no changes in circumstances or new information that would warrant preparation of a subsequent EIR.

Hazards and Hazardous Materials

The only hazard identified in the EIR as being significant was the potential risk to structures and people from wildfire. This impact was found to be significant and unavoidable even after mitigation measure 4.7-5 (Policy S 3.2) was added. The additional policies will only enhance the ability to protect from wildfire hazards. There are several policies intended to enhance the safety of the community from hazards and hazardous materials. These include Safety Policies CPC 4.1 and 4.2. Several additional policies address the risks from wildfires, including Policies CPC 4.2, 4.3 and 4.4. The additional policies would not reduce the effectiveness of any of the existing policies or implementation measures. There are no changes in circumstances or new information that would warrant preparation of a subsequent EIR.

Hydrology and Water Quality

Hydrologic and water quality impacts were found to be less than significant in the EIR after mitigation measures were added. Mitigation measures from the EIR addressed groundwater supplies and off-site stormwater run-off. The proposed policies would not increase potential impacts or reduce the effectiveness of the measures. Policy CPC 1.2 encourages design features in new development for stormwater capture and groundwater recharge. There are no changes in circumstances or new information that would warrant preparation of a subsequent EIR.

Land Use and Planning

No significant impacts to land use and planning were found in the EIR resulting from development of the General Plan. The proposed Copperopolis Community Plan provides a description of the community, a brief history, a vision of what community members would like to see for their community, and a series of policies. All of these would serve to support the General Plan goals and policies to facilitate appropriate development within the communities, enhance economic growth and provide adequate infrastructure to support planned growth. There is no new information, changes in circumstances, or new measures that would warrant preparation of a subsequent EIR.

Noise and Vibration

The EIR found that there would be substantial and unavoidable impacts from noise and vibrations resulting from implementing the General Plan. These included exposure of people from transportation noise, exposure to non-transportation noise sources, and an increase in temporary and permanent ambient noise levels. Additionally, impacts were found to be significant from exposure to ground borne vibration and noise, but mitigation measure 4.10-3 (Policy N 1.14) reduced this impact to less than significant. Proposed Policy CPC 2.2 would promote reduced travel speeds, a source for transportation noise. The other proposed policies would not reduce the effectiveness of any of the existing policies or implementation measures. There are no changes in circumstances or new information that would warrant preparation of a subsequent EIR.

Population and Housing

The EIR found that the General Plan would result in population growth inducing impacts. The proposed Copperopolis Community Plan would not change the land use designations, and therefore, would not increase the potential for population growth in the area. The proposed policies would further clarify development expectations consistent with the goals and policies of the Land Use, Circulation, Public Facilities and Services, and Conservation and Open Space elements of the General Plan. There is no new information, changes in circumstances, or new measures that would warrant preparation of a subsequent EIR.

Public Services and Utilities

The EIR found that there would be significant and unavoidable effects due to the need to provide new or expanded facilities for law enforcement, fire protection, and other public facilities to accommodate the growth projected in the General Plan. Significant and unavoidable impacts were also identified from the construction of water projects, wastewater treatment, telecommunication, and recreation facilities. The proposed policies would not increase the demand for these services, therefore, would not increase the severity of the impacts. Policy CPC 5.3 also encourages the ongoing support of the Sheriff substation in Plan area. There are no changes in circumstances or new information that would warrant preparation of a subsequent EIR.

Transportation and Circulation

The EIR found that there would be a significant and unavoidable impact due to conflicts with adopted Caltrans plans for State-maintained roadways. Cumulative growth projections would exceed the desired level of service (LOS) on O'Byrnes Ferry Road.¹ The proposed community plan would not increase density or intensity of development, therefore, there would be no increase in travel demand and corresponding reduction in LOS. Several policies would enhance non-vehicular modes of traffic (CPC 2.1, mix of travel modes, CPC 2.3, connectivity, and CPC 2.3 public transit). The additional policies would not reduce the effectiveness of any of the existing policies or implementation measures. There are no changes in circumstances or new information that would warrant preparation of a subsequent EIR.

Cumulative Impacts

The EIR found that with buildout of the draft General Plan, the associated impacts in combination with other projects would not create a substantial difference in the analyses and conclusions included throughout the EIR. The additional policies proposed with this amendment would not increase the severity of any of the impacts, and therefore, would not create any new substantial difference.

¹ As noted above, the purpose of an addendum is to document whether there are new or substantially more severe impacts compared to what was analyzed in a previously certified EIR. After the EIR was certified, the Legislature amended CEQA to prohibit agencies from considering changes in Level of Service or other measures of traffic congestion as significant environmental impacts. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21099, subd. (b)(2); CEQA Guidelines, § 15064.3.) In any event, the proposed modifications would not result in new or more severe significant impacts even if such analysis was required for this addendum.

Alternatives

The DEIR analyzed three alternatives: No Project, Department of Finance (DOF) Projections, and Rural Character Protection. The addition of policies specific to the Copperopolis Community would not alter any of the impacts associated with these alternatives because each alternative was a land use map-based alternative. The proposed amendment would not change the land use map that was adopted when the EIR was certified in November, 2019.

Within the Scope of the General Plan EIR

The General Plan Draft EIR discussed that, “Community Plans, as developed by the local residents, will help preserve the character of historic communities and foster economic growth, delivery of services, and provision of infrastructure.” It also discusses (in Chapter 4.9, Land Use and Planning) the Board’s intent to quickly adopt Community Plans for those identified Community Areas that did not have Plans in place when the General Plan was adopted. “The purpose of the Community Plan Element is to identify the unique characteristics of these communities, the vision of its citizens, and provide policies to support and assist development and preservation of their social, economic, environmental, and historic assets.” (DEIR 4.9-8). The EIR expressly anticipated the adoption of additional community plans through General Plan amendments as they are completed. (DEIR 4.9-8). As described in the EIR, the addition of Community Plans to the Community Plan Element of the General Plan was intended to serve a preservative function, refining the planning goals and functions of each community while remaining subservient to the mitigation and Implementation Measures of the countywide General Plan (DEIR 6-22; FEIR 2-261).

The proposed Copperopolis Community Plan contains policies that refine the vision and planning goals of the Copperopolis Community without authorizing additional development, increasing or adding to any of the environmental impacts identified in the General Plan EIR, and without reducing the applicability or effectiveness of mitigation measures included in the General Plan EIR. The proposed Community Plan serves a preservative function in that it promotes additional protections for the most valued features of the Copperopolis community. As such, the proposed Community Plan fits squarely within the scope of the General Plan EIR, which expressly anticipated the adoption of additional Plans of this nature for each Community Area.

Conclusion

The proposed General Plan amendment, adding the proposed community-specific policies for the Copperopolis area, would not result in new significant environmental impacts, or impacts that would be substantially more severe than those identified in the 2019 EIR. Based on the above analysis and discussion, no substantive revisions are needed to the 2019 Calaveras County Draft General Plan FEIR because no new significant impacts or substantially more severe impacts would result from the proposed amendment; because there have been no changes in circumstances in the project area that would result in new significant environmental impacts or substantially more severe impacts; and because no new information has come to light that would indicate the potential for new significant impacts or substantially more severe impacts than were discussed in the 2019 FEIR. Therefore, no further evaluation is required, and no Subsequent EIR is needed pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15162. This EIR Addendum has therefore appropriately been prepared, pursuant to Section 15164. This Addendum has also been appropriately prepared pursuant to Section 15168 because the proposed Community Plan is within the scope of the project described in the program EIR prepared for the General Plan.