



TO: THE MEMBERS OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION
AGENDA: Planning Commission Meeting
DATE: June 17, 2021
ITEM #: J.1
SUBJECT: Public Review Draft Woodland Research and Technology Park Specific Plan and Draft Environmental Impact Report

Recommendation for Action: Staff recommends that the Planning Commission: 1) receive a staff report regarding the proposed Woodland Research and Technology Park Specific Plan ("Specific Plan") and Draft Environmental Impact Report ("EIR"); accept public comments on the Draft EIR; and provide comments on the Public Review Draft Specific Plan and the Draft EIR.

Staff Contact:

Erika Bumgardner, Principal Planner/Business Development Liaison, (530) 661-5886,
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Background:

On March 6, 2017, the City received Planning Application PLNG17--00017 for the Woodland Research and Technology Park Specific Plan ("Specific Plan"). The Specific Plan area ("Plan Area") is comprised of all or portions of six (6) individual parcels of land encompassing 351 acres and is located adjacent to the Spring Lake Specific Plan neighborhood to the north and east, County Road 25A and the Urban Limit Line to the south, and is bound by State Route (SR 113) to the west, as shown in Exhibit 1, below. The applicant team consists of five property owners, representing all six parcels of land located within the Plan Area.

As described in the 2017 planning application, *"The Specific Plan is proposed as a new type of employment center that also includes a range of housing options, a commercial mixed-use town center focused around a central green and connected by a multi-modal street network and trail system. Although the City anticipates that agricultural-related research will be a major focus of the Specific Plan, the plan will also support an environment of innovation in flexible formats for a wide variety of businesses in medical and veterinary, bio-tech, engineering, and other fields."*

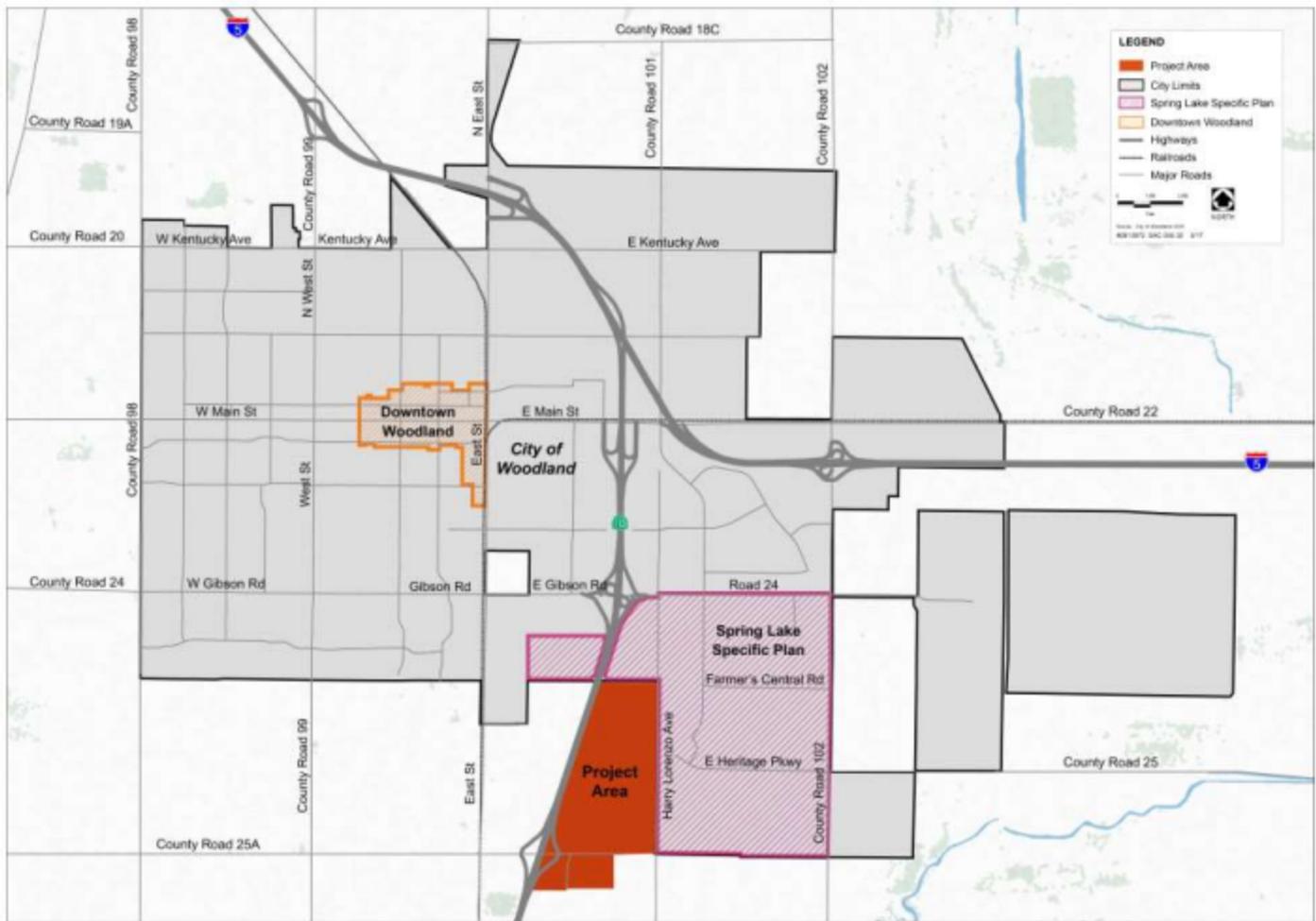


EXHIBIT 1 - Specific Plan Area Vicinity

On June 7, 2017, the City Council voted unanimously to authorize the preparation of the Specific Plan based on a finding of consistency with the vision and policies of the City of Woodland 2035 General Plan for the southern “new growth” area (SP1A). Specifically, the General Plan envisioned development of SP1A as a *“mixed-use neighborhood anchored by a research and technology business park in the ‘Southern Gateway’...The highest intensity of development will occur within the business park area, providing a prime opportunity for job creation within Woodland.”*

Since City Council’s authorization to proceed, the applicant team has worked in partnership with the City to prepare the necessary entitlement package to bring the Specific Plan forward for consideration and adoption. The Public Review Draft Specific Plan was completed and made available for review in November 2020. A copy of the Draft Specific Plan is provided as Attachment 1 to this report and is also available on the city's website at <https://www.cityofwoodland.org/ResearchPark> or [HERE](#).

The Draft EIR (Attachment 2) was recently completed and made available online on May 14, 2021, on the city's website at: <https://www.cityofwoodland.org/585/Documents> or [HERE](#). The printed version of the document is also available for review at City Hall, Community Development Department.

Additionally since June 2017, the City has completed several efforts that bear a direct relationship with the adoption and implementation of the Specific Plan including finalizing a tax sharing agreement with the County;

working with Yolo LAFCo to ratify the 2018 Municipal Service Review and Sphere of Influence update; the preparation and adoption of an Agricultural Land Mitigation Ordinance; adoption of the Yolo Habitat Conservation Plan and Natural Community Conservation Plan (HCP/NCCP) and an update of the City's Affordable Housing Ordinance. These provisions provide a foundation for implementation of the Specific Plan. As outlined in Chapter 6 of the draft document, the Specific Plan will comply with the City's Affordable Housing and Agricultural Land Mitigation Ordinances and will incorporate specific environmental protection and mitigation measures consistent with the Yolo HCP/NCCP.

Prior to implementation of a Specific Plan, various entitlements are required and entail action by the Planning Commission, City Council and/or other responsible agencies such as the Yolo Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCo). The following entitlements (typical of specific plans generally) will apply to the proposed Woodland Research and Technology Park ("WRTP") project:

- 1. Certification of the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) and Mitigation Monitoring Plan** - Planning Commission will take action to recommend to City Council approval and certification of the project EIR and Mitigation Monitoring Program for the Specific Plan. City Council will take final action.
- 2. Specific Plan Approval and General Plan Amendment** - Planning Commission will take action to recommend to City Council approval of the Specific Plan and amend of the General Plan to create a new City of Woodland land use designation of Woodland Research and Technology Park Specific Plan and amend the Woodland City Limit boundary. City Council will take final action.
- 3. Prezoning** - Planning Commission will take action to recommend to City Council approval of the “pre-zoning” of the land within the specific plan boundary based on the approved land plan in preparation of subsequent annexation of the project site into the Woodland City Limit. City Council will take final action.
- 4. Financing Plan and Development Agreement** - No action required by the Planning Commission. City Council will approve a project Financing Plan and Development Agreement for the WRTP to provide certainty and mutual assurances to the City and the project applicant regarding plan implementation and build-out.
- 5. Annexation** - No action required by the Planning Commission. City Council will authorize and direct staff to pursue annexation of the project area into the city limit, which will go before LAFCo for review and approval.

Discussion:

The Planning Commission meeting scheduled for June 17, 2021, is primarily an opportunity for the public and the Planning Commission to provide comments on the Draft EIR; however, the Planning Commission and public will also have an opportunity to provide comments on the Specific Plan itself with staff providing an summary of public outreach to date. Although a public meeting to receive oral comments on Draft EIRs is not a procedural requirement, it is the City's practice to conduct such a meeting for certain projects. Immediate and/or direct answers on questions regarding the Draft EIR will not be provided during the meeting. This information will be provided later in writing as part of the forthcoming Final EIR (Response to Comments) document.

Note: there will be no transcription of oral comments at this meeting. Comments received will be summarized by staff for inclusion in the record and Final EIR. Those who wish to have their oral comments incorporated verbatim into the record and Final EIR must submit their comments in writing by the deadlines described

below.

The state guidelines for determining the adequacy of an EIR indicate the following:

An EIR should be prepared with a sufficient degree of analysis to provide decision makers with information which enables them to make a decision which intelligently takes account of environmental consequences. An evaluation of the environmental effects of a proposed project need not be exhaustive, but the sufficiency of an EIR is to be reviewed in the light of what is reasonably feasible. Disagreement among experts does not make an EIR inadequate, but the EIR should summarize the main points of disagreement among the experts. The courts have looked not for perfection, but for adequacy, completeness, and a good faith effort at full disclosure. (CEQA Guidelines, Section 15151)

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines require that formal written responses be prepared and made available for relevant comments received on the Draft EIR, including oral comments. These responses, plus the Draft EIR, will comprise the Final EIR for the Woodland Research and Technology Park Specific Plan project.

Deadline for Comments: The Draft EIR was released on May 14, 2021, for review and comment. Comments will be accepted for a 49-day period that ends on July 2, 2021 at 5:00pm.

Please direct all comments to:

Erika Bumgardner, Business Development Liaison
City of Woodland Economic Development Department
300 First Street
Woodland, CA 95695
Erika.bumgardner@cityofwoodland.org

Response to Comments: A Final EIR (Response to Comments) document will be prepared following public review and comment. This subsequent volume will include responses to comments received on the Draft EIR, errata and/or other changes, modifications, or clarifications of the Draft EIR, identification of any other pertinent data or information, and a mitigation monitoring and reporting plan (MMRP). The City will consider this information when deliberating the project.

CEQA EIR Basics: An EIR is an informational document that examines and discloses the potential for adverse environmental impacts to result from approval and implementation of the proposed project. The Draft EIR provides an analysis of the potential for impacts in 14 topical areas, plus an evaluation of cumulative effects, and other required matters.

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) regulates the EIR process. Pursuant to State law EIRs focus only on significant adverse physical impacts. However, there are other important considerations the Planning Commission and City Council will ultimately consider such as beneficial economic and social factors. CEQA requires “reasonable” analysis – not perfect,

speculative or exhaustive analysis. EIR conclusions do not dictate Planning Commission or City Council action, they are meant to inform decision-making bodies.

For each environmental topic, the DEIR identifies the baseline (existing) condition, the significance threshold (the point at which the impact moves from acceptable to unacceptable), mitigation that would reduce or eliminate the impact, and whether the remaining effect (after mitigation) is acceptable or unacceptable. Here is a summary of some common CEQA terminology:

- Existing condition = setting = baseline for impact analysis
- No impact = no change in outcome from existing conditions
- Less Than Significant impact = an acceptable outcome
- Significant Impact = an unacceptable outcome = impact that exceeds the significance threshold = adverse
- Mitigatable = a significant impact that will be reduced to less than significant levels by the mitigation
- Unavoidable = a significant impact that will not be reduced to less than significant levels by the mitigation

WRTP Project Description: The WRTP Specific Plan is the overarching policy and planning document for the City's designated new growth area for future specific plan development, SP-1A, as identified in the 2035 General Plan. The WRTP Specific Plan is comprehensive in scope, addressing land use, transportation, community design, housing, conservation of resources, economic development, public facilities and infrastructure, public safety, and open space, among many other subjects. The WRTP Specific Plan would provide for a variety of housing types and non-residential land uses, as well as parks and open space and supportive public facilities and infrastructure. A multi-modal street network and bike-pedestrian trail system in the WRTP Specific Plan have been designed to balance the circulation and flow of vehicular traffic with the provision of safe and accessible facilities for walking, biking, public transit, and ride share drop-off/pick-up. A modified grid street network provides circulation and access within the WRTP Specific Plan Area, to the Spring Lake Specific Plan Area, and adjacent areas of the city. While not a part of the WRTP Specific Plan Area, the Draft EIR also addresses potential impacts associated with off-site improvement areas.

Significant Environmental Effects: The Draft EIR has identified the below-listed environmental issue areas as having potentially significant environmental impacts from implementation of the WRTP Specific Plan. Those resources indicated with an asterisk (*) have been identified as having significant and unavoidable impacts. These findings are consistent with those of the City's 2035 General Plan and Climate Action Plan EIR certified in 2017.

- Aesthetics and Visual Resources*
- Agricultural and Forestry Resources*
- Air Quality*
- Biological Resources
- Cultural and Tribal Cultural Resources*
- Geology, Soils, Minerals, and Paleontological Resources
- Hazards and Hazardous Materials
- Hydrology, Flooding, and Water Quality
- Noise and Vibration*

- Transportation and Circulation

There are no sites in the WRTP Specific Plan area that are listed on the Hazardous Waste and Substances Sites List as set forth in Government Code Section 65962.5.

CEQA Alternatives: As legally required, the Draft EIR considers the no-project scenario that represents the existing conditions, as well as what would reasonably be expected to occur in the foreseeable future if the project were not approved. In this case, this no-project scenario could take two forms: Alternative 1, the “No-Project (No Development) Alternative,” as a scenario in which urban development does not occur at all within SP-1A and existing conditions within SP-1A persist; or Alternative 2, the “No-Project (Development) Alternative,” a scenario in which development still occurs, consistent with the framework for SP-1A prescribed by the 2035 General Plan and City’s planning efforts.

The environmental analysis in the Draft EIR also evaluates two different alternatives, Alternatives 3 and 4, for growth within the WRTP Specific Plan Area, relative to the objectives of the WRTP Specific Plan. These alternatives consider an intensity of development that would still be consistent with the framework for SP-1A prescribed by the 2035 General Plan, but consider whether different layout, mix, and density of land uses, or adjustment to proposed land use designations, would reduce potentially significant impacts. Alternative 3 considers a similar overall amount of development as the proposed WRTP Specific Plan, but would distribute destination land uses within residential areas to facilitate pedestrian and bicycle access for future residents. Alternative 4, would provide an alternative site design, specifically utilizing increased open space to serve as environmental buffers between potential land use conflicts.

For the purposes of the Draft EIR, Alternative 1, the “No-Project (No Development)” Alternative, is environmentally superior. The next most environmentally superior alternative is Alternative 4. Please refer to Chapter 4 of the EIR, “Alternatives,” for more detail.

WOODLAND RESEARCH AND TECHNOLOGY PARK SPECIFIC PLAN

Guiding Principles: In May 2017, the City of Woodland adopted a comprehensive update to its General Plan, setting the stage for future growth and development within its Urban Limit Line (ULL) through the year 2035. A key focus of the General Plan is economic development and job growth. The Plan Area is specifically envisioned within the General Plan as a natural extension of the city, ideally located and positioned for jobs and housing development. General Plan Policy 2.L.2 provides further guidance for the Plan Area:

General Plan Policy 2.L.2 - "Promote development of SP1A as a mixed-use residential district anchored by a research and technology business park in the Southern Gateway area at CR 25A and SR 113. Concentrate the highest intensity of development within and in close proximity to the business park area, with lower density, largely residential uses to the north. Encourage sustainable development through the use of renewable energy sources and water conservation tools with the goal of striving to achieve zero net energy at the building and neighborhood level to the extent feasible."

Based on this General Plan guidance, the following WRTP Guiding Principles, outlined in Chapter 1 of the Specific Plan, provide the overarching vision and desired outcome for development within the Plan Area:

1. Innovation

The Plan Area will develop as a state-of-the-art innovation center campus for technology, research and

development, and office uses. Flexibility in design and implementation is supported, allowing businesses to respond to market demand through phasing of construction and the ability to offer a variety of building types and sizes. Complementary uses within immediate proximity to the business park, including hotel, commercial, employee-serving retail and recreational opportunities will support day-to-day needs of businesses, their clients and their employees.

2. Technology Capture/Talent Retention

Collaboration with UC Davis, Woodland Community College and others will bolster start-up businesses and growing mid-to-large size companies through technology transfer and IP sourcing. The Plan will accommodate advanced technology-related jobs and training that allow a greater number of Woodland residents and college graduates from the Woodland Community College and throughout the region to live and work in the community, generating an infusion of intellectual capital.

3. Business Partnerships

Companies locating in the Tech Campus will have the opportunity to take positive advantage of the existing and thriving seed, food, and agricultural-based industries currently located and doing business in and around Woodland. Access to additional resources and new markets, new ideas, materials and expertise will grow through strategic partnerships with new and existing businesses in Woodland.

4. Sustainable and Resilient

The Plan Area will lead in energy efficiency and sustainable design. Development within the Plan Area will incorporate cutting edge green building practices. Land use strategies and transportation demand management will reduce vehicle miles traveled and facilitate the use of alternative fuel vehicles. The city's urban forest canopy will be increased and projects will incorporate naturalized stormwater management. These and other measures will contribute to meeting City goals for greenhouse gas reduction by 2035 contained in its 2035 Climate Action Plan.

5. Gathering Place

A successful Village Center and featured 11-acre linear park will provide a mix of social gathering spaces for employees, residents, and visitors to connect, recreate, and relax. These informal networking opportunities will foster greater innovation and engagement among the workforce and allow for the balanced integration of work and life that the next generation of professionals seek.

6. Connectivity/Mobility

A combination of well-designed complete streets, protected bicycle lanes, and pedestrian / bicycle greenways will prioritize the pedestrian experience throughout the Plan Area. Well-connected parks, open spaces and greenbelts will encourage residents and employees to walk, bike, or scooter rather than drive to work, home and play. Existing bike trails and greenbelts will extend from and connect to the adjacent community including nearby schools, community center and shopping center. A shared mobility hub will serve as a point of connection for those arriving and departing the Tech Campus by various forms of alternative transportation – including micro transit stops and fixed bus routes with frequent service to Downtown Woodland and UC Davis. Amenities to support last mile active

transportation alternatives are featured, including bike and scooter share services.

7. Healthy Community

Connected streets with bicycle and pedestrian facilities, trails, accessible parks and open spaces with passive and programmed recreation will facilitate and encourage active, healthy living. Access to healthy foods through community gardens, a farmer's market and/or fresh produce market in the Village Center will be promoted. A mix of social gathering places will enable employees and residents to come together for fun and relaxation, boosting emotional wellness.

8. New Neighborhoods/Seamless Transitions

Diverse, high quality and attractive new neighborhoods and housing options, including single and multi-family residential units and mixed-used projects will allow Tech Park employees to live and work close by and "move up" within the same neighborhood as families grow or nests are emptied. Land use and circulation planning, coupled with design and development standards will ensure a thoughtful transition between the Plan Area and the adjacent Spring Lake neighborhood, complementing the established community.

Implementation Policies derived from these Guiding Principles can be found in Chapter 2 of the Specific Plan. Specific Plan Policies speak to Land Use, Design, Sustainability, Open Space, Streetscape and Mobility, and Economic Development, with several policies closely mirroring those adopted as part of the 2035 General Plan. Consistent with the 2035 General Plan growth assumption for this area (SP1A), the 350 acre Plan Area will accommodate 2.2 million square feet of office, commercial and research/technology space, approximately 1,600 residential housing units and 21 acres of parks and open space, network trails and greenbelts at build out. Approximately 5,000 jobs are anticipated at build-out.

Specific Plan Framework: The Woodland Research and Technology Park Specific Plan, is comprised of seven chapters that work together to guide orderly development of the Plan Area in line with the above listed Guiding Principles, as well as the design and technical guidance to achieve this vision, and the implementation and administrative steps to carry out the project. The Specific Plan document itself is organized as follows:

Chapter 1 - Introduction and Vision: identifies the vision and organizing principles that guide the physical form and development patterns of the Plan Area. In addition to the Guiding Principles listed above, Chapter 1 describes the project's regional context, the many strengths of the Woodland community and its agricultural heritage that make Woodland a natural fit for an innovation campus focused around food, health and life science.

Chapter 2 - Land Use Framework: presents the Specific Plan guiding policies, depicts the overall land use plan and districts that constitute the Plan Area. Chapter 2 describes the three core districts that make up the 350 acre Plan Area, including the Technology Park District, The Village Center District and the residential Villages District and how each of these districts come together to provide a complete and unique "Work, Live, Play" community. The Land Use Plan, also provided in Chapter 2, lays out the land use zones within the three core Districts. The thoughtful layout of zones/uses within the 350 acre Plan Area provides a seamless transition from the Spring Lake neighborhood located immediately east and north of the Plan Area, through to the Technology Park District located adjacent to SR 113 on the west. See Exhibit 2, below, Chapter 2, Section 2.3.1, *Introduction of the Land Use Zones*, and Chapter 3, Section 3.2.4, *Description of Zoning*

Categories, for further description of the Land Plan and zoning designations.

Chapter 3 - Land Use Regulations, Development Standards and Design Guidelines: defines the permitted uses, development standards, regulations and provides design recommendations and guidance for individual projects. Chapter 3 lays out the specific entitlement and design requirements for both commercial and residential development with emphasis on high quality design, pedestrian interaction/interface and appropriate transitions between the various zones and land use within the Plan Area.

Chapter 4 - Mobility and Circulation: describes the network to accommodate the movement of vehicles, pedestrians and bicyclists. A foundational element of the Plan Area, Chapter 4 outlines a circulation program that prioritizes pedestrian, bicycle and other alternative/active transportation modes to encourage fewer automobile dependent trips to work, home and to recreational activities. The project's planned mobility hub, The Union, is described in Chapter 4. At project build out, The Union will serve as *"the nucleus of the alternative transportation system providing integrated access to intra-city as well as inter-city transit service. The Plan Area's seamless network of roads, bike paths, and sidewalks combined with a variety of transportation services will offer multiple choices to support "last mile" connectivity. Located at the Village Center, The Union will be designed to accommodate a range of potential alternative transportation choices..."* See Chapter 4, Section 4.2.2, *Shared Mobility Hub*, for additional facility details.

Chapter 5 - Public Utilities and Services: describes plan-wide utilities of water, wastewater, storm drainage, electric, natural gas, communications and the public services of parks, schools, law enforcement, fire and solid waste. Chapter 5 identifies the backbone infrastructure necessary to serve the Plan Area. Utility infrastructure will be constructed to ensure compliance with all applicable service and improvement standards, and state and federal laws and regulations.

Chapter 6 - Implementation: describes implementation procedures and strategies for financing and maintenance of public facilities and services. California Government Code Section 65451 requires that Specific Plans include programs of implementation strategies related to regulatory changes, programs, financing strategies and public works projects needed to carry out the proposed land use, infrastructure and development standards outlined in the Specific Plan. Chapter 6 provides a summary of the methods by which the Specific Plan will be implemented and provides discussion on the sequencing and financing programs that demonstrate compliance with General Plan policies and the vision, goals and policies of the Specific Plan.

Chapter 7 - Administration: outlines the Specific Plan process and its relationship to the subsequent entitlement processes, describes the administrative procedures to implement and amend, interpret and enforce the Specific Plan.

LEGEND

- LDR LOW DENSITY RESIDENTIAL
- VCLDR VILLAGE CENTER LOW DENSITY RESIDENTIAL
- MDR MEDIUM DENSITY RESIDENTIAL
- VCMDR VILLAGE CENTER MEDIUM DENSITY RESIDENTIAL
- HDR HIGH DENSITY RESIDENTIAL
- HDR/CCO HIGH DENSITY RESIDENTIAL WITH COMMUNITY COMMERCIAL OVERLAY
- VCMU VILLAGE CENTER MIXED USE
- RTP RESEARCH & TECHNOLOGY PARK
- RTP/TO RESEARCH & TECHNOLOGY PARK WITH TRANSITIONAL OVERLAY
- RTP/CCO RESEARCH & TECHNOLOGY PARK WITH COMMUNITY COMMERCIAL OVERLAY
- RTP/RFO RESEARCH & TECHNOLOGY PARK WITH RESEARCH FLEX OVERLAY
- HC HIGHWAY COMMERCIAL
- OS GREENBELTS, OPEN SPACE, PROMENADES
- VCOS VILLAGE CENTER OPEN SPACE



EXHIBIT 2 - Land Use Plan

As noted in the Draft Specific Plan (Chapter 6, Section 6.2.3, *Subsequent Implementation Documents/Analysis*), additional documents will be prepared following adoption of the Specific Plan:

Conceptual Plan for the 11-acre linear park, The Yard, to guide phased park improvements, and ensure

pedestrian and bike paths internal to the park connect to the external network trail and greenbelt system.

Comprehensive planting and street tree palette shall be developed for each District to guide both private and public landscaping improvements. Street Furnishings, Street Lighting Palettes and Gateway monuments (25A/Road B and Road B/Marston) shall be included as part of this effort.

Comprehensive Transportation Demand Management strategy, in conjunction with key stakeholders, and identifying check in points to demonstrate efficacy.

Coordination with the Yolo County Transportation District and UC Davis with policies of the Specific Plan to insure timely provision of transit service and appropriate funding mechanisms in place.

Mobility Hub Master Plan, identifying the dedication of necessary Right of Way with the first tentative map in the location of the planned facility (Road B at the Village Center).

Climate Action Plan Checklist, modified as necessary to achieve Greenhouse Gas Reduction targets.

The provision of these subsequent documents will be outlined in the project Development Agreement including the process by which the documents will be evaluated and approved.

Conclusion:

Staff recommends that the Planning Commission: 1) receive a staff report regarding the proposed Woodland Research and Technology Park Specific Plan ("Specific Plan") and Draft Environmental Impact Report ("EIR"); accept public comments on the Draft EIR; and provide comments on the Public Review Draft Specific Plan and the Draft EIR.

Prepared By: Erika Bumgardner, Business Development Liaison

Reviewed By: Cindy Norris, Principal Planner

Attachments:

1. Public Review Draft Woodland Research and Technology Park Specific Plan
2. Draft Environmental Impact Report Woodland Research and Technology Park Specific Plan