

# Notice of Preparation of an Environmental Impact Report and Scoping Meeting

**Date:** June 4, 2021

**Subject:** Notice of Preparation of an Environmental Impact Report and Scoping Meeting for the River Walk Specific Plan

**To:** State Clearinghouse  
State Responsible Agencies  
State Trustee Agencies  
Other Public Agencies  
Organizations and Interested Persons

**Lead Agency:** Donna Kenney, AICP MCRP, Planning and Building Manager  
City of Riverbank, Development Services Department  
6707 3<sup>rd</sup> Street  
Riverbank, CA 95367  
(209) 863-7124

**Notice of Preparation:** This is to notify public agencies and the general public that the City of Riverbank, as the Lead Agency, will prepare an EIR for the River Walk Specific Plan. The City of Riverbank is interested in the input and/or comments of public agencies and the public as to the scope and content of the environmental information that is germane to the agencies' statutory responsibilities in connection with the proposed Project, and public input. Responsible/trustee agencies will need to use the EIR prepared by the City of Riverbank when considering applicable permits, or other approvals for the proposed Project.

**Comment Period:** Consistent with the time limits mandated by State law, your input, comments or responses must be received in writing and sent at the earliest possible date, but not later than 5:00 PM, July 5, 2021.

**Comments/Input:** Please send your comments/input (including the name for a contact person in your agency) to: Attn: Donna Kenney at the City of Riverbank, 6707 3<sup>rd</sup> Street, Riverbank, CA 95367.

**Scoping Meeting:** Pursuant to Governor Newsom's Executive Order N-29-20, the City of Riverbank will hold a scoping meeting via video- and teleconference on June 17, 2021 to solicit input and comments from public agencies and the general public on the proposed Project and scope of the Environmental Impact Report (EIR). Members of the public are invited to participate in the Scoping Meeting via Zoom, which will be used to share information during the meeting. The City is requesting that you RSVP to Donna Kenney, Planning and Building Manager

[dkenney@riverbank.org](mailto:dkenney@riverbank.org) to obtain the link and/or telephone call-in instructions/information for the Zoom meeting.

The following provides a summary of the Project Location, Project Setting, Goals and Objectives, and Project Characteristics and Description. A more detailed discussion of the project, along with the figures, can be found at the City's website at <http://www.riverbank.org/330/Applications-Forms>. If you have any questions regarding the scoping meeting, contact Donna Kenney, Planning and Building Manager via email [dkenney@riverbank.org](mailto:dkenney@riverbank.org).

**Project Title:** River Walk Specific Plan

**1. Project Location**

The proposed Project is located in the unincorporated area of Stanislaus County and adjacent to the City of Riverbank, north of Patterson Road/State Route (SR) 108, east of McHenry Avenue, and approximately two miles northwest of downtown Riverbank. Figures 1 shows the Project's regional location and vicinity.

The proposed Project includes a proposed Specific Plan, as well as a Sphere of Influence (SOI) Amendment. The entire Project Area includes approximately 1,522 acres within the unincorporated county adjacent to the City of Riverbank. The River Walk Plan Area includes a 993-acre area to be annexed and subsequently developed. The remaining land within the Project Area is part of the SOI Amendment, and would be held as Reserve land for possible long-range planning at some future time.

The overall Project Area includes several distinct planning boundaries defined below. The following terms are used throughout this DEIR to describe planning area boundaries within the Project Area:

- SOI Expansion Area – includes the proposed Sphere of Influence Amendment and encompasses the entire Project Area.
- Specific Plan Area - includes all lands identified and included within the River Walk Specific Plan. The Specific Plan Area is proposed to be annexed into the City of Riverbank as part of the proposed Project. The Specific Plan Area is a portion of the SOI Expansion Area.
- Berghill Boundary – includes areas within the Specific Plan Area that are controlled by the project applicant.
- Project area - includes the SOI expansion area, including the Specific Plan and Berghill Boundary. The Project Area is the same boundary as the SOI Expansion Area.

Project area boundaries are shown on Figure 2 and acreages associated with each area are shown in Table 1. As shown on Figure 2 and in Table 1, the proposed Project includes

approximately 1,522 acres encompassing: (1) the Specific Plan Area that includes a total of 993 acres, including the Berghill Boundary, and (2) the SOI Expansion Boundary, which makes up the entire Project Area.

**TABLE 1: PLANNING AREA BOUNDARY ACREAGES**

<i>PLANNING AREA BOUNDARY</i>	<i>ACRES (GIS)</i>
Specific Plan Area	993 acres
Overall Project Area	1,522 acres

## 2. Project Setting

The Project Area is made up of 59 assessor parcel numbers (APNs). Parcels within the Project Area are listed in Table 2 and displayed on Figure 3.

**TABLE 2: PARCELS WITHIN THE PROJECT AREA**

<i>MAP ID</i>	<i>APN</i>	<i>ACREAGE*</i>	<i>MAP ID</i>	<i>APN</i>	<i>ACREAGE*</i>
1	074-001-001	61.77	31	074-002-007	5.46
2	074-001-015	9.91	32	074-002-033	17.10
3	074-001-016	5.34	33	074-002-032	4.79
4	074-001-003	0.60	34	074-002-001	305.49
5	074-001-011	3.47	35	074-003-022	366.22
6	074-001-012	3.02	36	074-003-021	40.90
7	074-001-013	3.02	37	074-003-020	2.61
8	074-001-005	3.01	38	074-003-016	23.94
9	074-001-014	2.68	39	074-003-013	28.30
10	074-001-008	0.83	40	074-003-012	15.39
11	074-001-009	2.00	41	074-003-023	68.06
12	074-001-010	18.49	42	074-003-002	14.30
13	074-002-020	2.84	43	074-003-015	8.84
14	074-002-019	2.42	44	074-003-014	9.29
15	074-002-018	2.04	45	074-003-011	2.39
16	074-002-017	2.12	46	074-003-010	3.55
17	074-002-025	2.19	47	074-003-019	3.78
18	074-002-024	1.51	48	074-003-018	5.75
19	074-002-014	56.16	49	074-003-024	26.27
20	074-002-013	11.63	50	074-003-008	9.99
21	074-002-011	34.44	51	074-003-007	9.60
22	074-002-028	2.35	52	074-003-006	9.59
23	074-002-026	21.00	53	074-003-005	4.83
24	074-002-006	32.35	54	074-003-004	5.05
25	074-002-010	27.07	55	074-003-003	9.95
26	074-002-031	48.26	56	074-005-012	1.03
27	074-002-021	28.10	57	074-005-013	1.68
28	074-002-030	40.20	58	074-005-010	1.27
29	074-002-029	39.43	59	074-005-011	0.40
30	074-002-034	23.87			
<b>Total 1,497.94</b>					

*NOTE ACREAGE INCLUDE LOTS ONLY AND DOES NOT INCLUDE ALL ROW AREA.*

**Site Topography:** The Project Area topography ranges greatly in elevation from approximately 75 to 159 feet above sea level. The high area to the south and west is approximately 100 to 125 feet above mean sea level and acts as a ridge surrounding the lowland areas which are approximately 75 to 80 feet above mean sea level. There is a steep banked slope that separates the high and low areas. Other than the prominent steep sloping banked areas, the majority of the Project Area contains gentle slopes and is generally characterized as flat. Figure 4 shows the topography of the Project Area.

**Existing Site Uses:** The current uses in the Project Area are predominantly agricultural operations, including almond and walnut orchards in the eastern/southeastern portion of the Project Area and cherry orchards and fallow land in the western/central portion of the Project Area. The land in the north/northwestern portion of the Project Area contains fallow land and various trees including Eucalyptus and Willow trees. Twenty-five home sites and one-horse ranch exist within the Project Area and many of them have accessory structures on-site including storage buildings, shop buildings, and barn structures. The Project Area also includes a commercial nursery business and truck storage area. Additionally, an approximately 150-acre solar farm and the Modesto Rifle Club exist in the southwest portion of the Project Area directly northeast of the intersection of Patterson Road and McHenry Avenue, and the Morris Nursery exists in the southeastern corner of the Project Area directly northwest of the intersection of Patterson Road and Rock Creek Road. Figure 5 shows aerial imagery of the Project Area.

The Modesto Irrigation District (MID) provides the water supply for the existing agricultural uses and maintains two easements in the Project Area. A MID main canal with a crossing is located approximately 950 feet to the west and approximately 0.45 miles to the east of the intersection of Patterson Road and Coffee Road in the southern portion of the Project Area. The canal enters in the southwest portion of the Project Area and runs to the northeast eventually curving to exit the Project Area in the southeast. A series of private irrigation ditches and pipes distribute the MID water from the on-site canals throughout the Project Area for agricultural use.

Assessed uses as identified by the County Assessor include predominantly agricultural uses, with limited areas assessed by the County Assessor as single family residential, commercial, office and other miscellaneous uses. Figure 6 shows Assessed Land Uses within the Project Area as identified by the County Assessor.

**Existing Surrounding Uses:** Uses immediately adjacent to the southeast, south, southwest, and west of the Project Area include agricultural uses and limited residential uses, including ranchettes and large estate lots. Other nearby uses include residential subdivisions to the east within Riverbank and the unincorporated County, and to the west within the unincorporated County.

**General Plan Land Use Designations and Zoning:** The Project Area is currently located within Stanislaus County, and just outside the Riverbank city limits and SOI. The City of

Riverbank has identified much of the Specific Plan Area for urban development within their existing General Plan.

Existing City of Riverbank General Plan Land Use Designations: The City of Riverbank General Plan designates the Project Area as Lower Density Residential (0.0 to 8.0 du/ac), Medium Density Residential (8.0 to 16.0 du/ac), Higher Density Residential (16.0 or more du/ac), Mixed-Use, Civic, Park, Multi-Use Recreational/Resource, Buffer/Greenway/Open Space, Agricultural Resource Conservation Area, and Reserve. Table 3 shows the existing City land use designations and acreages for the Plan Area. Figure 7 depicts the existing City of Riverbank General Plan land use designations for the Project Area.

**TABLE 3: EXISTING RIVERBANK LAND USE DESIGNATIONS WITHIN PROJECT AREA**

<i>LAND USE</i>	<i>ACREAGE</i>
Agricultural Resource Conservation Area	517.17
Buffer/Greenway/Open Space	129.44
CANAL	20.68
Civic	15.79
Higher Density Residential (16+ units/Acre)	17.25
Lower Density Residential (0-8 units/Acre)	319.59
Medium Density Residential (8-16 units/Acre)	117.22
Mixed Use	51.45
Multi-Use Recreational/Resource	5.31
NO GP	2.26
Parks	14.79
Reserve	306.63
ROW	4.13
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,521.70</b>

The General Plan contains the following standards to guide development for these land uses:

*Lower Density Residential (LDR):* The LDR land use designation includes single-family homes, one to each lot, developed at a net density of up to eight dwelling units per acre. Lots would be at least 6,000 square feet in size. This category would primarily include detached units, but attached single-family units may be permitted, provided each unit has ground-floor living area and private outdoor open space.

*Medium Density Residential (MDR):* The MDR land use designation includes small-lot, single-family detached homes, attached single-family homes, and other residences developed at a net density of between eight and 16 dwelling units per acre. Lots would be at least 2,500 square feet in size.

*Higher Density Residential (HDR):* The HDR land use designation allows for all types of attached single-family and multi-family housing, including condominiums, apartment buildings, townhouses, and other similar residential structures developed at a net density of 16 or more dwelling units per acre.

*Mixed-Use (MU):* The MU land use designation would accommodate neighborhood-scale retail uses, offices, personal and commercial services, and similar land uses. This is the primary category for Riverbank to accommodate neighborhood-serving retail, services, offices, and similar needs during the buildout of this General Plan. As such, this land use classification is anticipated to be mainly non-residential. However, the MU designation also explicitly allows for higher-density residential development in a vertical or horizontal mixed-use setting. This could include residential development above (on upper stories of a building) or adjacent to commercial operations on the same property.

*Civic (C):* The C land use designation includes civic and cultural land uses of various types. Examples include schools, places of worship, public facilities and infrastructure, community halls, and similar cultural and civic land uses. Where such land uses occur within an existing or planned neighborhood, they shall be designed to be compatible with the surrounding neighborhood. They shall be designed to be pedestrian friendly, include publicly accessible areas (where appropriate), and shall unify rather than divide neighborhoods. Certain land uses included in this category, such as day care centers, public facilities and services, places of religious worship, and other appropriate land uses will be allowed in other land use designations, as well, according to standards established in Riverbank's zoning ordinance.

*Park (P):* The P land use designation includes active and passive parkland of all types. New and existing neighborhoods in Riverbank shall have close and convenient access to community parks, neighborhood parks, and smaller "pocket parks." This category can include public plazas, town squares, tot lots, parkways, linear parks, and other park space configurations.

*Buffer/Greenway/Open Space (B/G/OS):* This designation provides the opportunity to preserve important open spaces containing natural resources, such as sensitive biological habitat. This category also includes areas where buffering is necessary between different land uses. Bicycle and pedestrian pathways are also accommodated by this Land Use Designation.

*Multi-Use Recreational/Resource (MUR/R):* This designation would provide opportunities for stormwater management, renewable energy production, and community recreation amenities. This area would accommodate stormwater detention facilities, groundwater recharge areas, wind generators, solar collectors, wind breaks, as well as trails, benches, and other passive recreational uses.

Areas designated MUR/R could also act as a buffer between ongoing agriculture and new residential areas and provide an identifiable and permanent boundary to the outward expansion of the City. Areas designated MUR/R between new growth areas and ongoing agricultural operations will be identified and appropriate widths established through the Specific Plan. The width of MUR/R areas will vary depending on the intended uses taking place within a particular area. The width of the MUR/R for agricultural buffering purposes will be designed to minimize noise, dust, and any adverse impacts related to application of agricultural chemicals as experienced by encroaching residential uses.

*Agricultural/Resource Conservation Area (AG):* This designation provides for ongoing agricultural operations and land uses compatible with ongoing agricultural operations. Generally, this designation occurs in areas with large properties, where agricultural practices are more feasible. This designation also tends to occur in areas with high-quality soils (for cultivation purposes). Examples of land uses compatible with ongoing agricultural operations include equestrian uses, groundwater recharge areas, public infrastructure, farmer's market stands and other on-site sales of local produce, and farmworker housing.

*Reserve (R):* The Reserve category is intended for land that the City has not yet planned for a specific urban, agricultural, or resource land use.

*Existing Stanislaus County General Plan Land Use Designations:* The Stanislaus County General Plan designates the majority of the Project Area as Agriculture (AG), and a small portion (5 acres including APNs 074-005-012, 074-005-013, 074-005-010, 074-005-011) of the eastern portion of Project Area as Urban Transition (UT). The General Plan contains the following standards to guide development for these land uses:

*Agriculture:* The Agriculture land use designation recognizes the value and importance of agriculture by acting to preclude incompatible urban development within agricultural areas. The designation is intended for areas of land which are presently or potentially desirable for agricultural usage. These are typically areas which possess characteristics with respect to location, topography, parcel size, soil classification, water availability and adjacent usage which, in proper combination, provide a favorable agricultural environment. This designation establishes agriculture as the primary use in land so designated, but allows dwelling units, limited agriculturally related commercial services, agriculturally related light industrial uses, and other uses which by their unique nature are not compatible with urban uses, provided they do not conflict with the primary use.

*Urban Transition:* The purpose of the Urban Transition designation is to ensure that land remains in agricultural usage until urban development consistent with a city's (or unincorporated community's) general plan designation is approved. Generally, urban development will only occur upon annexation to a city, but such development may be appropriate prior to annexation provided the development is not inconsistent with the land use designation of the general plan of the affected city. If this is to occur, a change in the General Plan designation consistent with the adopted goals and policies to some other land use designation shall be required.

*Existing Stanislaus County Zoning Designations:* The Stanislaus County Zoning Ordinance currently designates the majority of the Project Area for General Agriculture 40 Acre (A-2-40) uses, and a limited portion (APNs 074-005-012, 074-005-013, 074-005-010, 074-005-011) as General Agriculture 10 Acre (A-2-10). The County Zoning Code contains the following standards to guide development for these designations:

*General Agriculture 40 and 10 Acre (A-2):* The A-2 zone supports and enhances agriculture as the predominant land use in the unincorporated areas of the County. These district

regulations are also intended to protect open-space lands pursuant to Government Code Section 65910.

Surrounding General Plan Designations: Lands surrounding the Project Area within the County generally consist of AG uses, with limited areas of Urban Transition (UT) and low density residential along the easternmost boundary.

Lands to the south (within the Riverbank city limits) are designated by the City for low density residential (LDR) uses. Areas along the easternmost boundary are designated by the City for LDR uses, with limited areas of Mixed-Use (MU) designated areas adjacent to the southeast corner of the Project Area.

### 3. Project Goals and Objectives

Consistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15124(b), a clear statement of objectives and the underlying purpose of the proposed Project shall be discussed.

**Overall Project Objectives:** The principal objective of the proposed Project is the expansion of the City of Riverbank Sphere of Influence, and approval and subsequent implementation of the Specific Plan. The quantifiable objectives include expansion of the Riverbank Sphere of Influence by approximately 1,522 acres, annexation of approximately 993 acres into the Riverbank City limits, extension of infrastructure to the annexed area to serve development, and the subsequent development of the annexed area for: Low Density Residential, Medium Density Residential, High Density Residential, Mixed-Use, and Parks/Recreation, including all infrastructure and utilities necessary to service the development.

**Specific Plan Objectives:** The primary objectives of the Specific Plan are to establish the framework for a new mixed-use community, allowing residents to live in a community where they can enjoy a high quality of life with abundant opportunities for outdoor recreation and social activities. The following goals have been established as a framework to achieving the primary objectives for the Specific Plan:

- Goal 1: Develop a mix of residential housing products to accommodate a variety of desires in the market.
- Goal 2: Prioritize the age-restricted development as a vibrant community with diverse housing types and densities allowing residents to age-in-place.
- Goal 3: Develop a community core area that serves as a central community gathering place for social interaction, recreation, retail, services, and living space.
- Goal 4: Promote health and wellness through extensive pedestrian and bicycle trails, outdoor recreation areas, and opportunities for social interaction.
- Goal 5: Respect the natural resources (i.e., Stanislaus River), terrain, and character of land by designing a residential community that highlights the scenic views of the Plan Area.

- Goal 6: Achieve a safe and efficient circulation system for all users and modes of transportation.
- Goal 7: Highlight village identity while promoting community amenities.

The following quantifiable objectives for the Specific Plan are identified below:

- Development of up to 2,432 residential dwelling units within residential designations including:
  - 1,550 – Low Density Residential Units
  - 702 – Medium Density Residential Units
  - 180 – High Density residential Units
- Development of approximately 71 acres of Mixed-Use for the development in six specific areas offering neighborhood-scale retail uses, offices, personal and commercial services, with opportunities for higher-density residential development in a vertical or horizontal mixed-use setting.
  - MU-1 – Approximately 38 acres of general retail use, possibly shopping center with visitor serving uses, resulting in up to 420,000 square feet of space under a .25 FAR, or up to 350 residential units, assuming a development density of around 18 units to the acre.
  - MU-2 and MU-3 – Approximately 15 acres, of a retail use that can serve a passerby, as well as local residents (i.e., gas station, small restaurant, real estate sales, law firm, tax firm, medical/dental, etc.) resulting in up to 175,000 square feet of space under a .25 FAR.
  - MU-4 – Approximately 8 acres for an age-restricted active adult community clubhouse with a 20,000 square foot clubhouse building with fitness center, restaurant, lounge, event/meeting space, outdoor pool/spa, outdoor BBQ and seating area, tennis/pickle ball courts, bocce ball courts, community garden area, and other amenities.
  - MU-5 – Approximately 5 acres for an age-restricted active adult multi-story building with neighborhood retail uses on the first story and high-density housing or office on the second story. The first story uses would include small restaurants (i.e., coffee shop, deli, small office services). The first story is anticipated to have up to 110,000 square feet of building space. The second story is anticipated to have up to 110,000 square feet of building space, which could be up to 100 high density units, or commercial/retail serving uses, or a combination of both.
  - MU-6 – Approximately 4 acres of a retail use that can serve a passerby, as well as local residents (i.e., gas station, small restaurant, real estate sales, law firm, tax firm, medical/dental, etc.) resulting in up to 44,000 square feet of space under a .25 FAR.
- Development of approximately 244.9 acres of Park, Greenway, and Open Space.

#### 4. Project Description

**Project Entitlement Requests:** The proposed project is the expansion of the City of Riverbank Sphere of Influence, and approval and subsequent implementation of the Specific Plan. The Sphere of Influence expansion covers approximately 1,522 acres. The Specific Plan covers approximately 993 acres of the Sphere of Influence expansion area, and includes an annexation into the Riverbank City limits, extension of infrastructure to the annexed area to serve development, and the subsequent development of the annexed area for: Low Density Residential, Medium Density Residential, High Density Residential, Mixed-Use, and Parks/Recreation, including all infrastructure and utilities necessary to service the development.

The proposed Project would require a City of Riverbank General Plan Amendment to change land uses in the Project Area. Table 4 shows the proposed land uses within the Project Area.

**TABLE 4: PROPOSED GENERAL PLAN LAND USE DESIGNATIONS**

<i>PROPOSED LAND USE</i>	<i>GIS ACRES</i>
BGOS - Bluff	66.8
BGOS - Canal	23.1
BGOS - River Park	69.8
Dual Use Park/Ponding Basin	41.0
HDR	10.0
LDR	365.5
MDR	54.4
Mixed Use	76.8
Park	44.2
Reserve	583.5
ROW	186.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,521.70</b>

Figure 7 illustrates the current Riverbank General Plan land uses within the Plan Area. Proposed General Plan land uses are shown on Figure 8. The proposed amendment to the City's Circulation Element would include relocation of certain planned roads identified in the General Plan.

This EIR analyzes the SOI Expansion area, and it is intended to be used by Stanislaus County Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCo) for their consideration of the SOI amendment and annexation of the Specific Plan Area. LAFCo will require the Specific Plan Area to be pre-zoned by the City of Riverbank in conjunction with the proposed annexation request. The City's pre-zoning for the annexation area will include the Specific Plan (SP) zoning designation for the entire Specific Plan Area, and a small portion of Mixed-Use (CX-1) in the southeast portion of the Project Area and adjacent to the Specific Plan area. The remainder of the Project Area to the west would remain unassigned. The pre-zoning would go into effect upon a LAFCo annexation approval. The proposed pre-zoning for the Project Area is shown on Figure 9.

The Specific Plan requires adoption by resolution or ordinance, following public hearings before both the Planning Commission and the City Council. Additional entitlement applications that are necessary for the implementation of the Specific Plan may be made concurrently with the Specific Plan application, while others may follow. It is noted that the Environmental Impact Report is intended to be a project-level analysis of the Specific Plan area.

**Specific Plan Characteristics:** The Specific Plan is a Mixed-Use development project that provides for a range of residential housing densities, neighborhood-scale retail, commercial and health/medical services, private clubhouse, public recreation, a pedestrian/bicycle trail system, and extensive open space and landscaping. The Specific Plan provides an opportunity for an active adult community on a portion of the Specific Plan Area, with the remaining portion designed for all ages.

*Residential:* The Specific Plan provides for up to 2,432 dwelling units in 18 residential villages. A portion of the Specific Plan is designed as an age restricted active adult community, while a portion of the Plan is not age-restricted. The Specific Plan would result in the development of up to 1,550 Low Density Residential (LDR) units, up to 702 Medium Density Residential (MDR) units, and up to 180 High Density Residential (HDR) units within these 18 residential villages. Housing products would range from single family detached, accessory dwelling units (ADUs), duplexes, cluster homes, courtyard homes, alley loaded homes, motor courts, townhomes, condominiums, apartments, senior apartments, assisted living, or memory care. Densities would range from 0-8 units per acre under the Low Density Residential designation, 8-16 units to the acre under the Medium Density Residential designation, and 16+ units to the acre under the High Density Residential designation. Zoning for these villages would fall under the R-1, R-2, and R-3 designations. Table 5 provides a breakdown of each village.

*Age-restricted Active Adult:* The residential portion of the Specific Plan could include up to 13 villages that provide a location for age-restricted active adult development, each designed with varying anticipated housing product types and densities to offer flexibility and variation within an active adult community.

Any ADU in an age restricted portion of the Plan will exempt caretakers living in the unit from the age-restrictions.

*Not Age-restricted:* The residential portion of the Specific Plan provides for 5 villages planned for more traditional single-family development, each designed with varying anticipated housing product types and densities to offer flexibility and variation within the community.

*Flexible Design Provision:* The Specific Plan includes a flexible design provision to enable each residential village to be designed with a variety of housing products varying in lot and product sizes. Under this flexible design provision, the final design of villages may include up

to 25% of the lots designed at a density consistent with greater density products, as long as the average density does not exceed density allowed for the land use.

**TABLE 5: RIVER WALK SPECIFIC PLAN RESIDENTIAL VILLAGE SUMMARY**

VILLAGE	LAND USE	AGE RESTRICTED	LOT COUNTY
A	Low Density Residential	No	101
B	Low Density Residential	No	42
C	Low Density Residential	Yes	254
D	Low Density Residential	Yes	207
E	Low Density Residential	Yes	148
F	Low Density Residential	Yes	173
G	Low Density Residential	Yes	97
H	Medium Density Residential	Yes	157
I	High Density Residential	Yes	180
J	Medium Density Residential	Yes	227
K	Medium Density Residential	Yes	318
L	Low Density Residential	Yes	176
M	Low Density Residential	Yes	73
N	Low Density Residential	Yes	42
O	Low Density Residential	Yes	106
P	Low Density Residential	No	31
Q	Low Density Residential	No	51
R	Low Density Residential	No	49
Total	--	--	2,432

NOTES: DU/AC = DWELLING UNITS PER ACRE;

The proposed residential land uses are further described below:

*Low Density Residential (LDR):* The LDR designation is intended to provide primarily detached, single-family dwellings on a variety of lot sizes and neighborhood configurations. Lot sizes will vary, and are expected to range in size from 4,500 square feet and larger. The density within this category, however, ranges from 0-8 dwelling units per acre which allows for a variety of lot sizes.

*Medium Density Residential (MDR):* The MDR designation is intended to provide areas with smaller lot sizes for both attached and detached housing including but not limited to cluster homes, courtyard homes, motor courts and townhomes. Lot sizes will vary, and are expected to range in size from 2,500 square feet and larger. The density within this category, however, ranges from 8 to 16 dwelling units per acre which allows for a variety of lot sizes.

*High Density Residential (HDR):* The purpose of the HDR land use designation is to provide attached, single-family and multi-family housing, including condominiums, apartment buildings, townhouses, and other similar residential structures developed as a higher density residential option to residents of the Specific Plan area. The “minimum” net density allowed within the HDR designation is 16 dwelling units or more per acre. The average density in the Specific Plan is 18 units per acre within the HDR category.

Mixed-Use: The Mixed-Use portion of the Specific Plan would accommodate neighborhood-scale retail uses, offices, personal and commercial services, and similar land uses. This land use classification is anticipated to be mainly non-residential; however, the Mixed-Use designation also explicitly allows for higher-density residential development in a vertical or horizontal mixed-use setting. This could include residential development above (on upper stories of a building) or adjacent to commercial operations on the same property. Mixed-Use designated areas will be designed to be accessible, safe, and convenient for bicyclists, pedestrians, transit users, and drivers.

There are six different Mixed-Use areas, each with an anticipated type of end user. The total square footage is anticipated to be up to 880,000 square feet, or a variation of not less than 385,000 square feet with up to 450 High Density Residential units. For purposes of the environmental analysis, the modeling assumptions will be based on 644,000 square feet of retail/commercial and 275 residential units in this Mixed-Use category. Each Mixed-Use area is described below:

- **MU-1** – Given the larger size of this Mixed-Use area, combined with the accessibility/exposure to a higher traffic volume along Patterson Road, this is anticipated to be a general retail use, possibly shopping center with visitor serving uses. This land use does not have a specific FAR restriction, but it is anticipated that this site could develop up to 420,000 square feet of space under a .25 FAR if it were developed for strictly for commercial/retail. This Mixed-Use area could also provide high density residential uses for up to half of the area, about 300 to 350 units, assuming a development density of around 18 units to the acre. If high density residential development occurs, it will have a commensurate reduction in the square footage of retail uses provided. For purpose of this analysis, it is assumed that 75% of the development potential will be commercial/retail and 25% will be high density residential. This assumption equates to approximately 315,000 square feet of retail and approximately 175 residential units. It is noted that the existing uses are allowed to continue under the Existing Non-conforming standard noted at the end of this chapter.
- **MU-2 and MU-3** – Given the smaller size of these parcels (approximately 8 and 7 acres respectively), combined with the accessibility/exposure to a higher traffic volume along Patterson Road, these parcels are anticipated to be a retail use that can serve a passerby, as well as local residents. Example uses would include a gas station, small restaurant, or other visitor serving use. This area could also function as an office use for service providers. Examples of services provides could include real estate sales, law firm, tax firm, medical/dental, etc. Under a .25 FAR, these parcels could develop up to 175,000 square feet of space. This Mixed-Use area would not be anticipated to provide high density residential uses.
- **MU-4** – This is site is specifically located to serve as a clubhouse for the active adult community. The clubhouse is anticipated to include an approximately 20,000 square foot clubhouse building with fitness center, restaurant, lounge, event/meeting space, plus a variety of outdoor amenities including a pool/spa, outdoor BBQ and seating area,

tennis/pickle ball courts, bocce ball courts, community garden area, and other amenities. This clubhouse will serve as a focal point for the active adult community core. The roadway fronting this site will involve a modification to the major collector to slow traffic and create a community core feel with on-street diagonal parking, two travel lanes, landscape area, and a large pedestrian storefront walkway. This Mixed-Use area would not provide high density residential uses.

- **MU-5** – This approximately 5-acre site is specifically located to serve age-restricted active adult uses and, to complement other attractions planned in this focal area of the Specific Plan including the clubhouse, community park, and high density residential/assisted living housing. The buildings are anticipated to be multi-story with neighborhood retail uses on the first story and high-density housing or office on the second story. The first story uses would include small restaurants (i.e., coffee shop, deli, small office services). The first story is anticipated to have up to 110,000 square feet of building space, not including outdoor seating areas. The second story is anticipated to have up to 110,000 square feet of building space, which could be up to 100 age restricted high density units, or commercial/retail serving uses, or a combination of both. The roadway fronting this site will involve a modification to the major collector to slow traffic and create a community core feel with on-street diagonal parking, two travel lanes, landscape area, and a large pedestrian storefront walkway.
- **MU-6** – Given the smaller size of these parcels (approximately 4 acres), combined with the accessibility/exposure to a higher traffic volume along McHenry Avenue, these parcels are anticipated to be a retail use that can serve a passerby, as well as local residents. Example uses would include a gas station, small restaurant, or other visitor serving use. This area could also function as an office use for service providers. Examples of services provides could include real estate sales, law firm, tax firm, medical/dental, etc. Under a .25 FAR, these parcels could develop up to 44,000 square feet of space. This Mixed-Use area would not be anticipated to provide high density residential uses.

*Parks and Open Space:* The Specific Plan provides for the development park, greenway, and open space areas with a variety of passive and active recreational opportunities. The park and open space will fall into two different land use designations: Parks (P), and Buffer/Greenway/Open Space (B/G/OS). Each of these uses are described below:

*Parks (P):* This category includes active and passive parkland of all types. Neighborhoods shall have close and convenient access to community parks, neighborhood parks, and smaller “pocket parks.” This category can include public plazas, town squares, tot lots, parkways, linear parks, and other park space configurations. The Park land use provides visual interest to the residents and visitors; provides connectivity amongst residences and land uses; creates gathering places for active and passive recreation; promotes walk-able, pedestrian-friendly neighborhoods; and preserves areas with existing natural resources (i.e., Stanislaus River) and natural topographic challenges. The Specific Plan includes an extensive network of Parks to serve the community. It is also noted that several stormwater basins

have been incorporated into the Specific Plan for storm drainage function, but are also intended to provide a dual use park opportunity.

*Buffer/Greenway/Open Space (B/G/OS):* This designation provides the opportunity to preserve important open spaces containing natural resources, such as sensitive biological habitat. This category also includes areas where buffering is necessary between different land uses. Bicycle and pedestrian pathways can be accommodated by this Land Use Designation. Within the B/G/OS category several subcategories are included including B/G/OS–Bluff, B/G/OS–Canal, and B/G/OS–River Park.

#### Reserve

*Reserve:* The Reserve category is intended for land that the City has not yet planned for a specific urban or resource land use. This area offers an opportunity to plan for future land uses by identifying specific criteria before development takes place in these areas. The Reserve designation does not denote any specific land use, but rather is an overlay designation that specifies additional requirements related to timing of development, analysis required by the City, infrastructure and service standards, and related topics. Before making Reserve areas eligible for consideration for urban development, the area would need to have a land plan developed and processed through the standard application process, including a detailed environmental analysis. Within the Specific Plan area, the Reserve designation is an area with an existing cherry orchard and is intended to remain under orchard use for the foreseeable future. As an alternative, the existing orchard area may be utilized as shallow flood storage to contain and infiltrate stormwater runoff from the project.

**Specific Plan Entitlement Request:** To enable the development of the land uses and zoning described above, the proposed Project includes a request for a General Plan Amendment, Specific Plan adoption, pre-zoning, and annexation of the entire Specific Plan Area as well as APNs 074-005-012, 074-005-013, 074-005-010, and 074-005-011. All other lands that are included within the SOI expansion area, but outside the Specific Plan area are not proposed for development at this time and thus are not included in the Specific Plan adoption, pre-zoning, or annexation request.

The Specific Plan estimates between 2,432 – 2,682 residential units, and 375,000 and 875,000 square feet of Mixed-Use for commercial, office, service, or retail use, as well as some transitional care facilities. A large portion of the Specific Plan is intended to be an age-restricted active adult community, while a portion will not be age restricted. Table 6 provides a land use summary of the Specific Plan. Figures 8 and 9 illustrates the land use and zoning designations. Figure 10 illustrates the layout of the villages.

**TABLE 6: RIVER WALK SPECIFIC PLAN LAND USE SUMMARY**

MAP SYMBOL	ACREAGE	DENSITY RANGE	UNIT OR SF RANGE
LDR – Low Density Residential	365.5	0 – 8 du/ac	1,550
MDR – Medium Density Residential	54.4	8 – 16 du/ac	702
HDR – High Density Residential	10.0	16 + du/ac	180
MU – Mixed-Use (outside of community core)	58.64	16 + du/ac 0.25 FAR	0 – 350 du 275,000-635,000 sf
MU – Mixed-Use (inside of community core)	5.06	16 + du/ac 0.50 FAR	0 – 100 du 110,000-220,000 sf
MU – Mixed-Use (Clubhouse)	8.0	0.50 FAR	20,000 sf
Park	44.2	N/A	N/A
B/G/OS - Bluff	66.8	N/A	N/A
B/G/OS - Canal	23.1	N/A	N/A
B/G/OS - River Park	69.8	N/A	N/A
Park - Ponding Basin	41.0	N/A	N/A
Reserve	60.2	N/A	N/A
ROW	186.6	N/A	N/A
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>993.4</b>	<b>--</b>	<b>2,432 – 2,682 du</b> <b>375,000 – 875,000 sf</b>

NOTES: SF = SQUARE FEET; DU/AC = DWELLING UNITS PER ACRE; FAR = FLOOR-AREA-RATIO; N/A = NOT APPLICABLE.

ASSUMPTION FOR ANALYSIS: MODELING ASSUMPTIONS WILL BE BASED ON 644,000 SQUARE FEET OF RETAIL/COMMERCIAL AND 275 RESIDENTIAL UNITS IN THE MIXED-USE LAND USES.

**Other:** Additional information regarding the proposed circulation, infrastructure, public services, and utilities is provided in the detailed Project Description that can be obtained on the City’s website.

## 5. Uses of the EIR and Required Agency Approvals

**City of Riverbank:** The City of Riverbank will be the Lead Agency for the proposed Project, pursuant to the State Guidelines for Implementation of CEQA, Section 15050. Actions that would be required from the City include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Certification of the EIR;
- Adoption of the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program;
- Approval of the City of Riverbank General Plan Amendments;
- Approval of the City of Riverbank Pre-zoning;
- Approval of SOI Amendment;
- Approval of a Municipal Services Review Update/Amendment;
- Approval of Annexation of the Specific Plan Area and APNs 074-005-012, 074-005-013, 074-005-010, and 074-005-011 into the City of Riverbank;
- Approval of Specific Plan;
- Approval of the Neighborhood Electric Vehicle Plan;
- Approval of Development Agreement;
- Approval of Vesting Tentative Maps;
- Annexation into city-wide Community Facilities District 2016-01 for impacts to roads, stormwater facilities, waste water facilities, etc.;

- Approval of future Final Maps;
- Approval of future Improvement Plans;
- Approval of future Grading Plans;
- Approval of future Site Plan and Design Review;
- City review, approval, and construction and utility plans;
- Approval of future Building Permits;
- Approval of future Conditional Use Permits.

**Other Governmental Agency Approvals:** The following agencies may be required to issue permits or approve certain aspects of the proposed Project. Other governmental agencies that may require approvals in connection with the Project include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Native American Tribal Consultation;
- Modesto Irrigation District (MID): Approval of roadway and utility pipeline crossings in at least two locations along the MID Main canal within the Specific Plan Area. Approval of a widening of Patterson Road at two existing crossings of the MID Main Canal. Approval of a roadway and utility pipeline crossing at the Spenker Drain. Approval of a stormwater discharge agreement to authorize discharge of stormwater into MID facilities.
- California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW);
- California Department of Transportation (Caltrans);
- Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board (CVRWQCB) - Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) approval prior to construction activities pursuant to the Clean Water Act;
- Stanislaus LAFCO – Sphere of Influence Amendment, Municipal Services Review Update/Amendment, Annexation;
- San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District (SJVAPCD) - Approval of construction-related air quality permits;
- State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB);
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS);
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE).

## 6. Project Alternatives

The exact alternatives that will be evaluated in the Draft EIR will be determined through the Notice of Preparation and Scoping Process. Through preliminary discussions, there are four alternatives to the proposed Project that are being contemplated for evaluation in the Draft EIR. These include the following:

- **No Project (No Build) Alternative:** Under this alternative, development in the Plan Area would not occur, and the Plan Area would remain in its current existing condition.
- **Alternative Location:** This alternative would address potential impacts associated with development of the Project, as currently proposed by the applicant, at a location other than the currently proposed Plan Area.

- **Increased Density Alternative:** Under this alternative, the proposed Project would be developed with the same amenities as described in the Project Description, but the density of the residential uses would be increased.
- **No Age Restriction Alternative:** Under this alternative, the proposed Project would be developed with the same uses and overall footprint, but the areas designated for age-restriction would allow for all ages.

**Areas of Potential Impacts:** All environmental topics identified in Appendix G of the State CEQA Guidelines require analysis within an EIR. The Draft EIR will examine the following: Aesthetics, Agricultural and Forest Resources, Air Quality, Biological Resources, Cultural Resources, Energy, Geology/Soils, Environmental Justice, Greenhouse Gases/Climate Change, Hazards and Hazardous Materials, Hydrology/Water Quality, Land Use/Planning, Mineral Resources, Noise, Population/Housing, Public Services, Recreation, Transportation/Circulation, Tribal Cultural Resources, Utilities, Wildlife, and Cumulative Impacts, and Growth Inducing Impacts.

**Initial Study:** An Initial Study has not been prepared for this Project. All environmental topics identified in Appendix G of the State CEQA Guidelines will be analyzed in the EIR.

Date: June 4, 2021

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