

Department of
Community Development
Michael J. Penrose,
Acting Director



Divisions
Building Permits & Inspection
Code Enforcement
County Engineering
Economic Development & Marketing
Planning & Environmental Review

Department of Community Development Planning and Environmental Review Division Revised Notice of Preparation

JANUARY 5, 2017

TO: ALL INTERESTED PARTIES

**SUBJECT: REVISED NOTICE OF PREPARATION OF A DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT FOR THE
MATHER SOUTH COMMUNITY MASTER PLAN (PLNP2013-00065)**

Sacramento County will be the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Lead Agency for preparation of an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for a project known as the MATHER SOUTH COMMUNITY MASTER PLAN. This Notice of Preparation has been sent to responsible and trustee agencies and involved federal agencies pursuant to Section 15082 of the CEQA Guidelines. Agencies should comment on the scope and content of the environmental information that is germane to the agencies' statutory responsibilities in connection with the proposed project. Due to the time limits mandated by State law, your response must be sent at the earliest possible date, but not later than 30 days after receipt of this notice.

The project description, location, and the probable environmental effects are contained in the attached materials and may also be viewed at:

<https://planningdocuments.saccounty.net/ViewProjectDetails.aspx?ControlNum=PLNP2013-00065>

Please send your Agency's response to this Notice to:

Catherine Hack, Environmental Coordinator
Department of Community Development
Planning and Environmental Review Division
827 7th Street, Room 225, Sacramento, CA 95814
or via e-mail at: CEQA@saccounty.net.

Your response should include the name of a contact person in your agency.

Agencies with specific questions about the project should contact Emily Hyland, Project Manager, at (916) 874-6578 for further information.

PROJECT TITLE: MATHER SOUTH COMMUNITY MASTER PLAN

CONTROL NUMBER: PLNP2013-00065

PROJECT PROPONENT(S):

Owner:

Sacramento County
Office of Economic Development and
Marketing
Attention: Clark Whitten

Applicant:

Mather South, LLC
Attention: Phil Rodriguez

PROJECT LOCATION:

The Mather South Community Master Plan project area (project site) is located in the Cordova community of unincorporated Sacramento County (Plate NOP-1). The project site is located on an easterly portion of the former Mather Air Force Base and is generally bounded by the Mather Golf Course and Mather Lake to the north, the Folsom South Canal to the east, Kiefer Boulevard to the south and the Mather Preserve and Zinfandel Drive to the west (Plate NOP-2). The project is within both the Urban Policy Area and Urban Services Boundary (Plate NOP-3) and is approximately 10 miles from downtown Sacramento via Highway 50.

PROJECT BACKGROUND:

The original NOP for this project was issued in June 2014. The original project proposal consisted of a master plan development on approximately 885 acres with approximately 3,545 residential dwelling units, a 47-acre mixed use area consisting of ten acres of commercial uses integrated with 37 acres of multiple family uses at up to RD-30 densities (approximately 1,068 units of the project's 3,545 residential units), 43 acres of neighborhood parks and trails, a 126-acre Sports Complex, and a 152-acre site for a university.

At that time, Sacramento County was also processing a project known as Mather Field General Plan Amendments, Specific Plan Amendments, and Special Planning Area Amendments project (County Control Number PLNP2013-00044). The Mather South Community Master Plan is geographically contained within the Mather Field Specific Plan area, but is a separate project. The Board of Supervisors conducted a public hearing on the Mather Field project on September 16, 2015. Public testimony against the Mather Field project was given, and the Board chose not to take action on the project. The Board directed staff to engage in a more collaborative process with key stakeholders, to work through technical issues and define a concept plan that focused on the concerns that were raised during the hearing. The Mather South project applicant and County staff worked with the Mather Stakeholder Group to develop a conceptual plan that was incorporated into the Mather Field Specific Plan.

The conceptual plan reduced the potential development area for Mather South. The main revisions are the elimination of the original university concept and replacement with a smaller Environmental

Education Campus, the elimination of the sports complex, and inclusion of additional preserve area with associated open space corridors. The Mather Preserve was expanded to the east to protect known biological resources; approximately 53.2 acres of the Mather South project area is now included in the Mather Preserve. Zinfandel Drive was also realigned to run along the eastern border of the expanded preserve area (Plate NOP-4).

The Board of Supervisors approved the Mather Field project's General Plan Amendments on July 26, 2016, and the Specific Plan and Special Planning Area Amendments on September 13, 2016. These actions established the current Mather Field land use designations and alignment for Zinfandel Drive south of Douglas Road. However, the Mather South project area defined in Plate NOP-2 is based on exhibits in the Purchase and Sale Agreement between the County and Mather South LLC, as approved by the Board of Supervisors on April 26, 2011 by Resolution #2011-0283. This project does not propose to modify the land use designation or boundaries for the Mather Preserve that were established via the Mather Stakeholder Group process and subsequent Board of Supervisors approval.

REVISED PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

The revised land use plan for the Mather South Community Master Plan further refines the conceptual plan that was developed through the Mather Stakeholder Group process. The applicant is proposing an 848-acre master plan community with 3,522 residential dwelling units, a 28-acre Environmental Education Campus, a 21-acre Research and Development Campus, 21 acres of commercial-retail with up to 185,000 sq. ft. of retail space, 43 acres of parkland including 26 acres of neighborhood parks and a 17-acre community park, and 210 acres of open space areas which includes a portion of the Mather Preserve as well as other natural preserves and drainage corridors, storm water quality and detention basins, landscape buffers, and public utility corridors all connected by multi-use pedestrian and bicycle trails (Plate NOP-5 and Plate NOP 1).

The vision for the proposed environmental education campus includes offices, classrooms, and environmental research facilities that could be used by local school districts, community colleges, and other post-secondary education institutions. Because this is a unique use, it does not fit neatly within the existing Sacramento County General Plan land use categories. Therefore, the Environmental Education Campus area is proposed to have a General Plan land use designation of Commercial and Offices because this designation allows for a broad range of land uses that are generally consistent with the Environmental Education Campus vision. It is anticipated that the applicant will continue to work with local stakeholders to develop more details about this unique use and incorporate those details in the proposed Mather South Community Master Plan.

The project also includes new amendments to the General Plan Transportation Plan to show a future connection to Sunrise Boulevard (Plate NOP-6). As part of the planning process, County staff, elected officials, and interested members of the public have advocated for a new multimodal bridge crossing of the Folsom South Canal between Douglas Road and Kiefer Boulevard to improve east-west circulation in that area. Mather South LLC has committed to granting the right of way for such a facility, provided that the expense of permitting and constructing the facility is not solely their responsibility. The transportation study for the EIR will analyze scenarios with and without the future multimodal bridge crossing.

ENVIRONMENTAL/LAND USE SETTING:

The project site is generally flat, undeveloped grassland dominated by non-native annual grasses and weedy annual and perennial forbs, primarily of Mediterranean origin. The site has served various purposes since Mather Field was developed in the early 20th century and currently small outbuildings that served as ordnance storage and related military uses are located in the center of the site and a small area improved for model aeronautics use is located in the southwest corner. The eastern margin of the site primarily contains excavation material from the construction of the Folsom South Canal. Although actively used by the Air Force prior to the closure of Mather Air Force Base, the project site still contains areas of vernal pool habitat, seasonal wetlands, drainages, ditches and other sensitive habitat (Plate NOP-7). The site drains ephemerally to the Morrison Creek tributaries which cross or emanate from the site. The immediate upstream drainage conditions are a series of concrete bridges (chutes) over the Folsom South Canal.

REQUESTED ENTITLEMENTS:

The project would further modify the General Plan, the Mather Field Specific Plan and the Mather Field SPA Ordinance to reflect a level of detail applicable to a Master Planning and Specific Plan effort for an 848 acre portion of the 5,200 acre plus Mather Field Specific Plan area.

1. A **General Plan Amendment** to amend the Land Use Diagram **from** Urban Development Area (795 acres) **to** Low Density Residential (622 acres), Medium Density Residential (17 acres), Natural Preserve (86 acres), Commercial and Offices (70 acres). (Plate NOP-8)
2. A **General Plan Amendment** to amend the Transportation Plan to reflect proposed roadway alignments and transit systems. (Plate NOP-6)
3. A **General Plan Amendment** to amend the Bicycle Master Plan to add internal and external bicycle facilities within and through the project area as shown in the Bicycle Master Plan Amendment Diagram. (Plate NOP-9)
4. A **Specific Plan Amendment** to amend the Mather Field Specific Plan, to change a portion of the South Base Area (795 acres) **from** Urban Development Area (795 acres) **to** Mather South Community Master Plan (795 acres). (Plate NOP-10)
5. Adoption of the **Mather South Community Master Plan** as an amendment to the Mather Field Specific Plan including text, a Master Plan land use diagram, Design Guidelines and Development Standards.
6. A **Zoning Ordinance Amendment** of the Mather Field Special Planning Area (SPA) (SZC 97-0021, Section 603) to incorporate the Mather South Community Master Plan, Design Guidelines, and Development standards into the ordinance. (Plate NOP-11)
7. Adoption of a **Development Agreement** for the Mather South Community Master Plan by and between the County of Sacramento and Applicants.
8. Amendment of the Mather Field **Public Facilities Financing Plan**.

PROJECT ALTERNATIVE

County staff is proposing a project alternative to meet General Plan Housing Element requirements related to master plans, including specific plans, meeting a minimum of 90 percent of Sacramento County's Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) obligation. The project alternative consists of changing the proposed southeastern 21-acre Research and Development site to a designation of Mixed Use/Research and Development. This staff alternative is shown in Plate NOP-12.

PROJECT OBJECTIVE:

The primary objectives for the proposed project are as follows:

1. By way of a mutually beneficial public/private partnership, accomplish the reuse of a portion of the former Mather Air Force Base as a mixed use master planned residential community.
2. Improve the balance between the projected number of jobs and housing units within the air force base reuse plan.
3. Improve the financial means to support the infrastructure, both physical and biological, of the air force base reuse plan.
4. Provide the opportunity for the development of an environmental education campus to provide environmental education and research proximate to the Mather Preserve and create employment opportunities and generate economic activity to fulfill the goals of the re-use of the former Mather Air Force base.
5. Provide the opportunity for the development of a technological research and development campus to create employment opportunities and generate economic activity to fulfill the goals of the re-use of the former Mather Air Force base.
6. Develop a mixed use master planned community guided by state, regional and county principles of feasibility and sustainability.

PROBABLE ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS/EIR FOCUS:

The analysis within the EIR will focus primarily upon issues associated with land use, air quality, hydrology and water quality, aesthetics, biological resources, traffic, noise, hazardous materials and cultural resources.

INTENDED USES OF THE EIR:

The Sacramento County Planning Commission and the Board of Supervisors will use the information contained in the EIR to evaluate the proposed project and render a decision to approve or deny the requested entitlements. Responsible agencies, such as the Sacramento County Water Agency, California Department of Fish and Wildlife, the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, the United States Army Corps of Engineers, and the California Regional Water Quality Control Board, may also use the EIR for the following planning/permitting purposes:

- Approval of a Water Supply Assessment by the Sacramento County Water Agency.
- Federal Clean Water Act Section 404 Permit (U.S. Army Corps of Engineers)
- Federal Endangered Species Act Section 7 Consultation (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service)

- Section 401 Water Quality Certification (Regional Water Quality Control Board – Central Valley Region)
- Section 402 National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Permit (Regional Water Quality Control Board – Central Valley Region)
- Section 1602 Streambed Alteration Agreement (California Department of Fish and Wildlife)

Plate NOP-1: Regional Location and Context

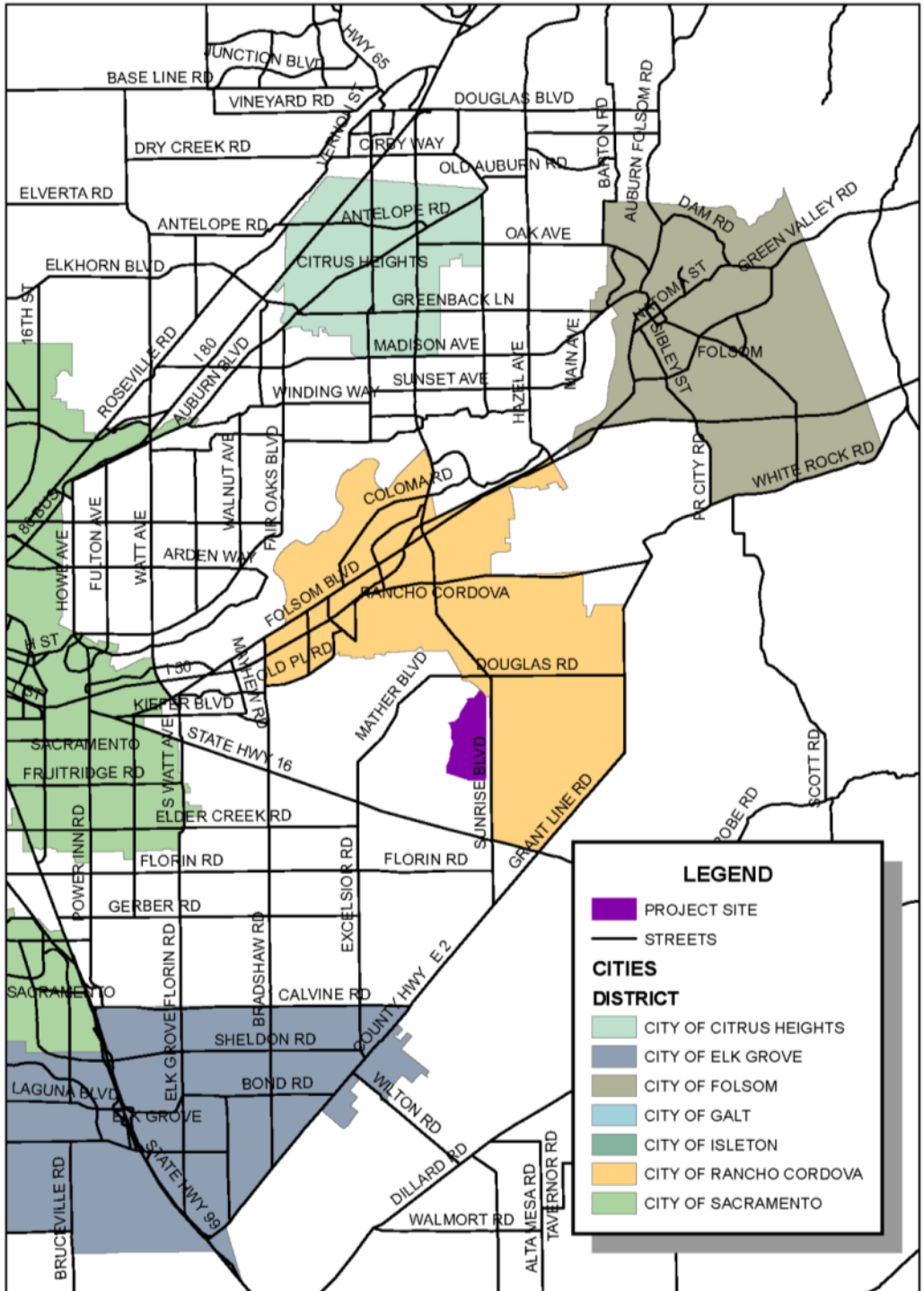


Plate NOP-2: Project Location and Local Context



Plate NOP-3: Urban Services Boundary and Urban Policy Area

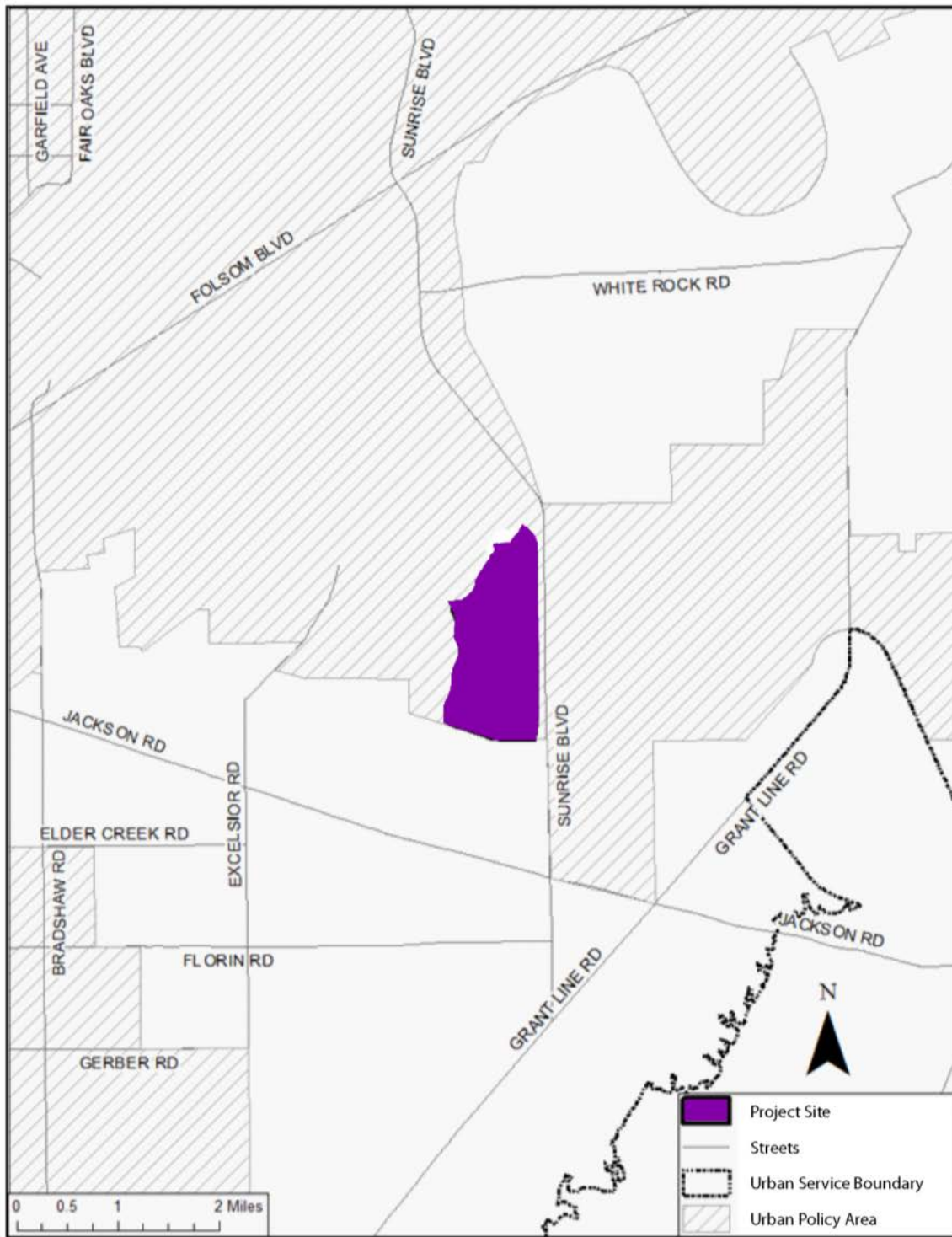
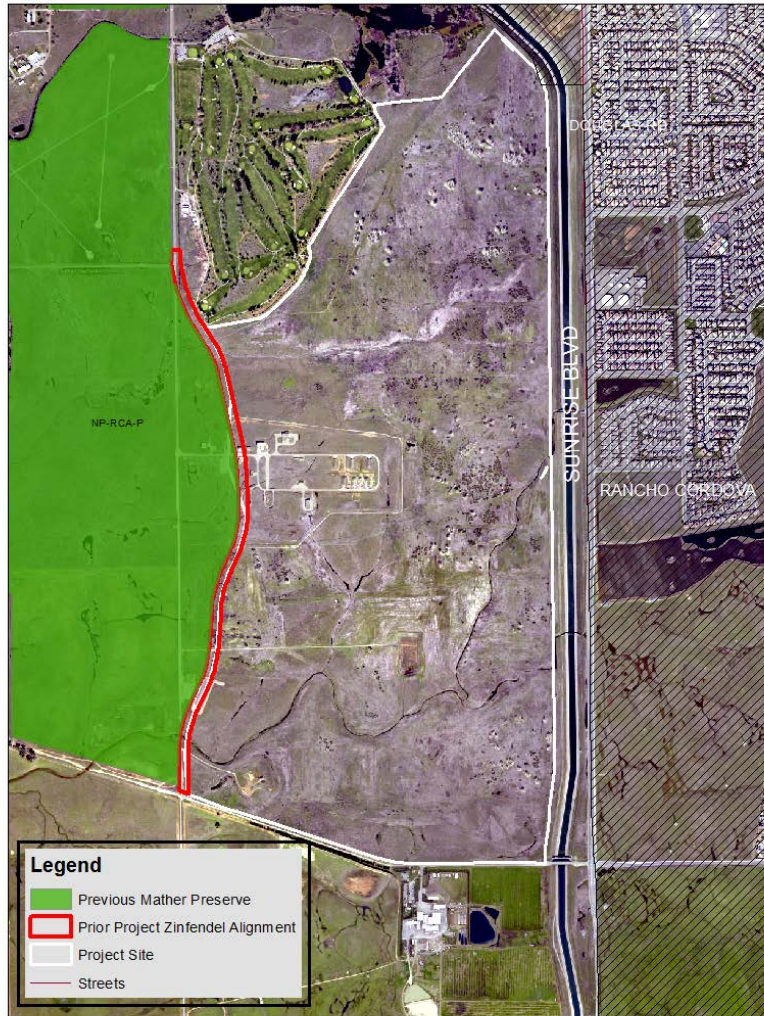


Plate NOP-4: Zinfandel Drive Alignment

Previous Zinfandel Drive Alignment



Current Zinfandel Drive Alignment

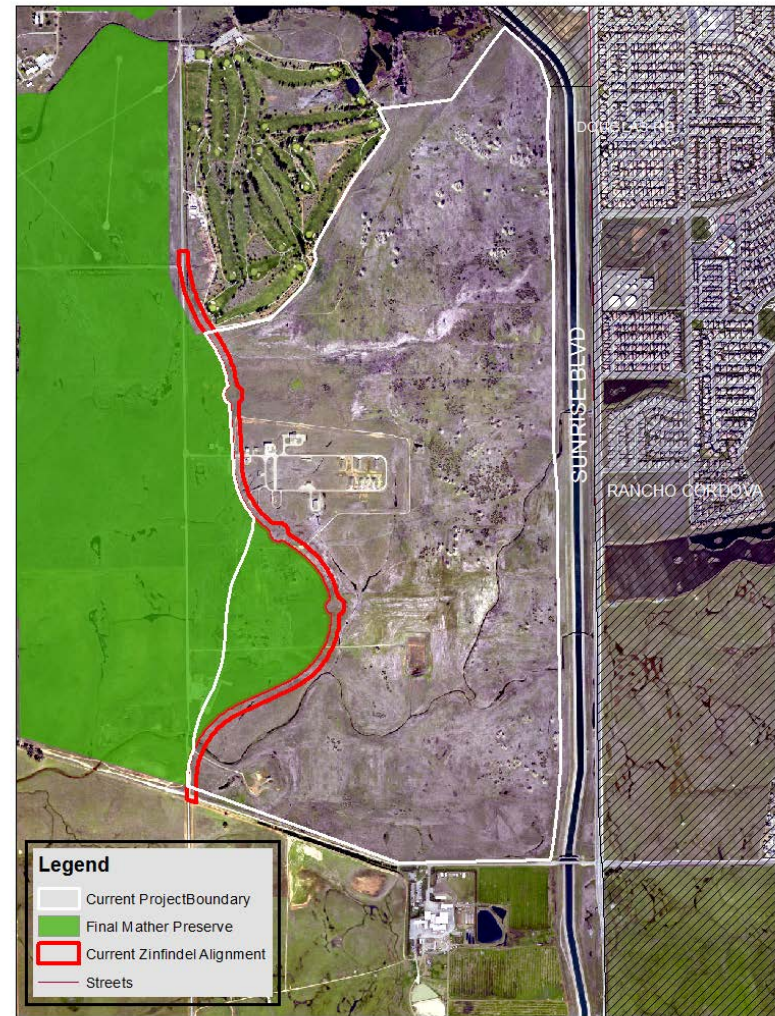


Plate NOP-5: Proposed Land Use Plan

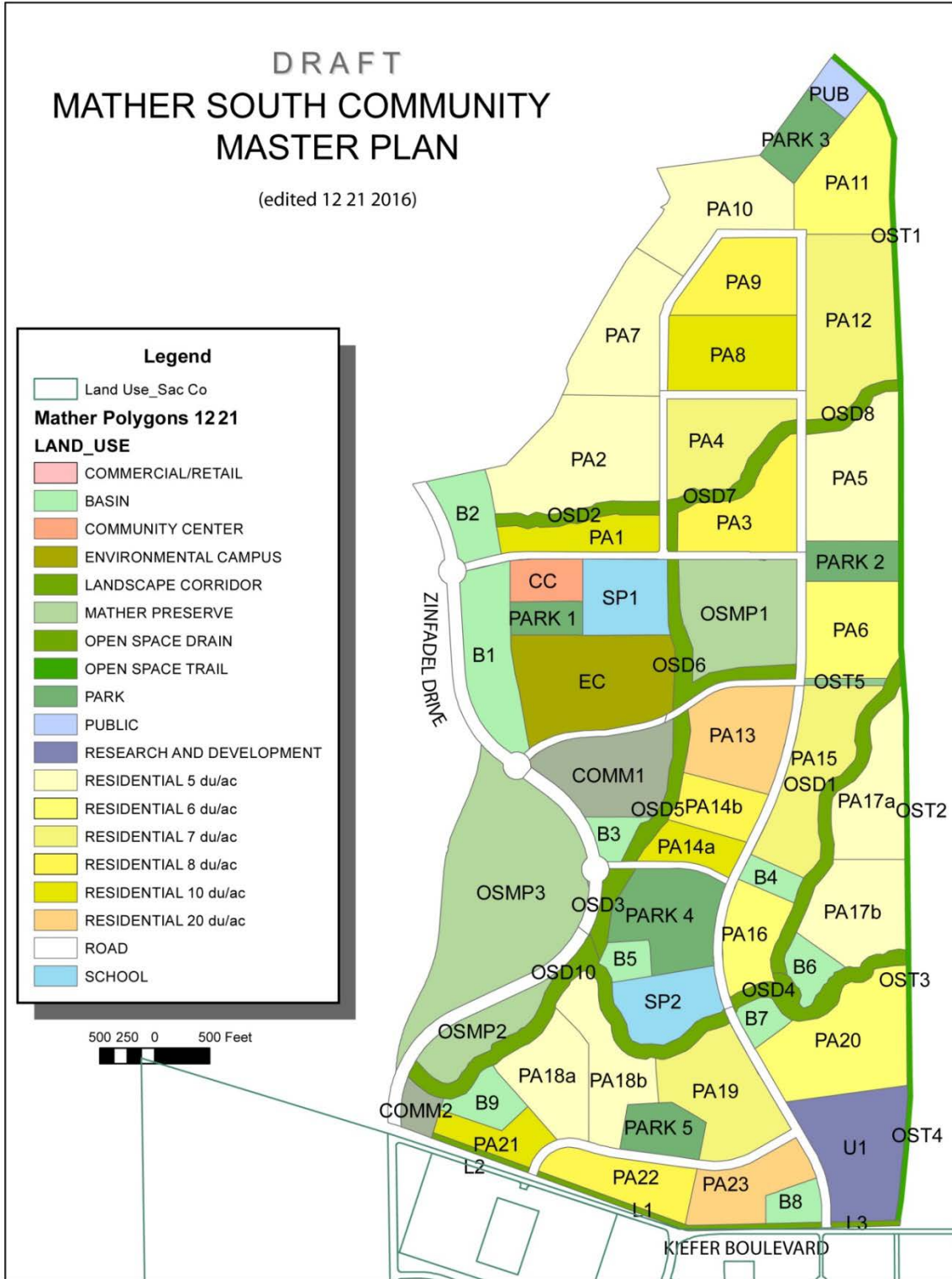


Table NOP-1: Mather South Community Master Plan Approximate Acreage and Yield by Land Use

LAND USE	ACREAGE SUBTOTAL	ACREAGE TOTAL	RESIDENTIAL UNITS	COMMERCIAL SQ. FEET
Open Space		210.5		
Mather Preserve	53.16			
Natural Preserve & Creek/Drainage	88.57			
Water Quality Detention Basin	50.44			
Utility/Trail Corridors	13.48			
Landscape Buffer	4.85			
Parks & Recreation		43.05		
Neighborhood Park	25.92			
Community Park	17.13			
Environmental Education Campus		27.90		
Commercial - Office	22.90			275,000
Residential RD-20 (20 du/ac)	5.00		200	
Research & Development Campus		21.35		
Commercial – Office	21.35			325,000
Commercial		26.86		
Retail	21.06			185,000
Community Center	5.80			15,000
Public Facilities		83.79		
School	23.67			
Utilities/Water Storage	3.5			
Roadways	62.7			
Residential		428.65		
RD-5 (>5 du/ac)	152.63		816	
RD-6 (>6 du/ac)	70.8		471	
RD-7 (>7 du/ac)	84.89		638	
RD-8 (>8 du/ac)	50.28		406	
RD-10 (>10 du/ac)	40.97		410	
RD-20 (>20 du/ac)	29.08		581	
Totals	848.2		3,522	800,000

Plate NOP-6: Proposed General Plan Transportation Plan

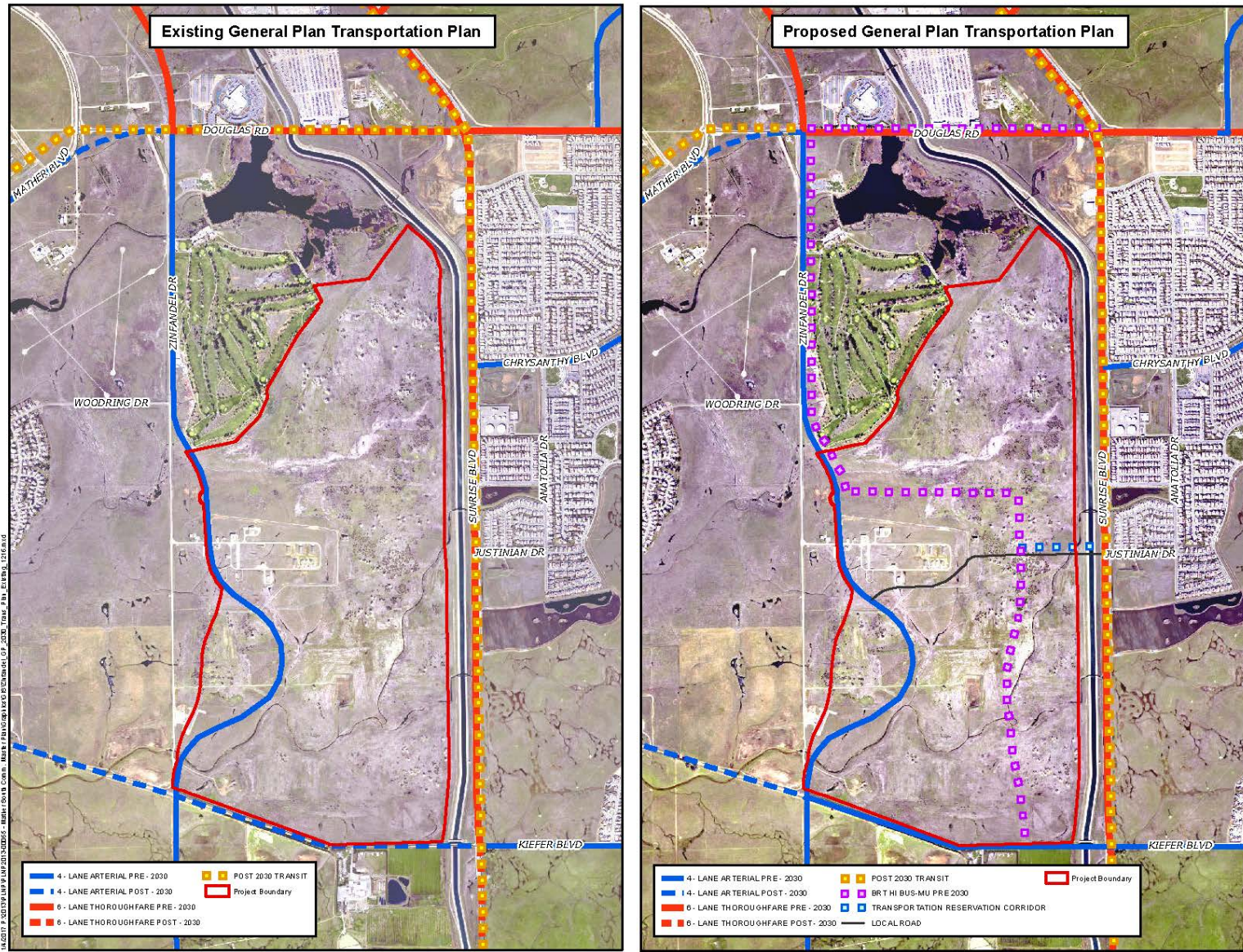


Plate NOP-7: Aerial Photograph and Wetland Resources



Plate NOP-8: Proposed General Plan Land Use Diagram

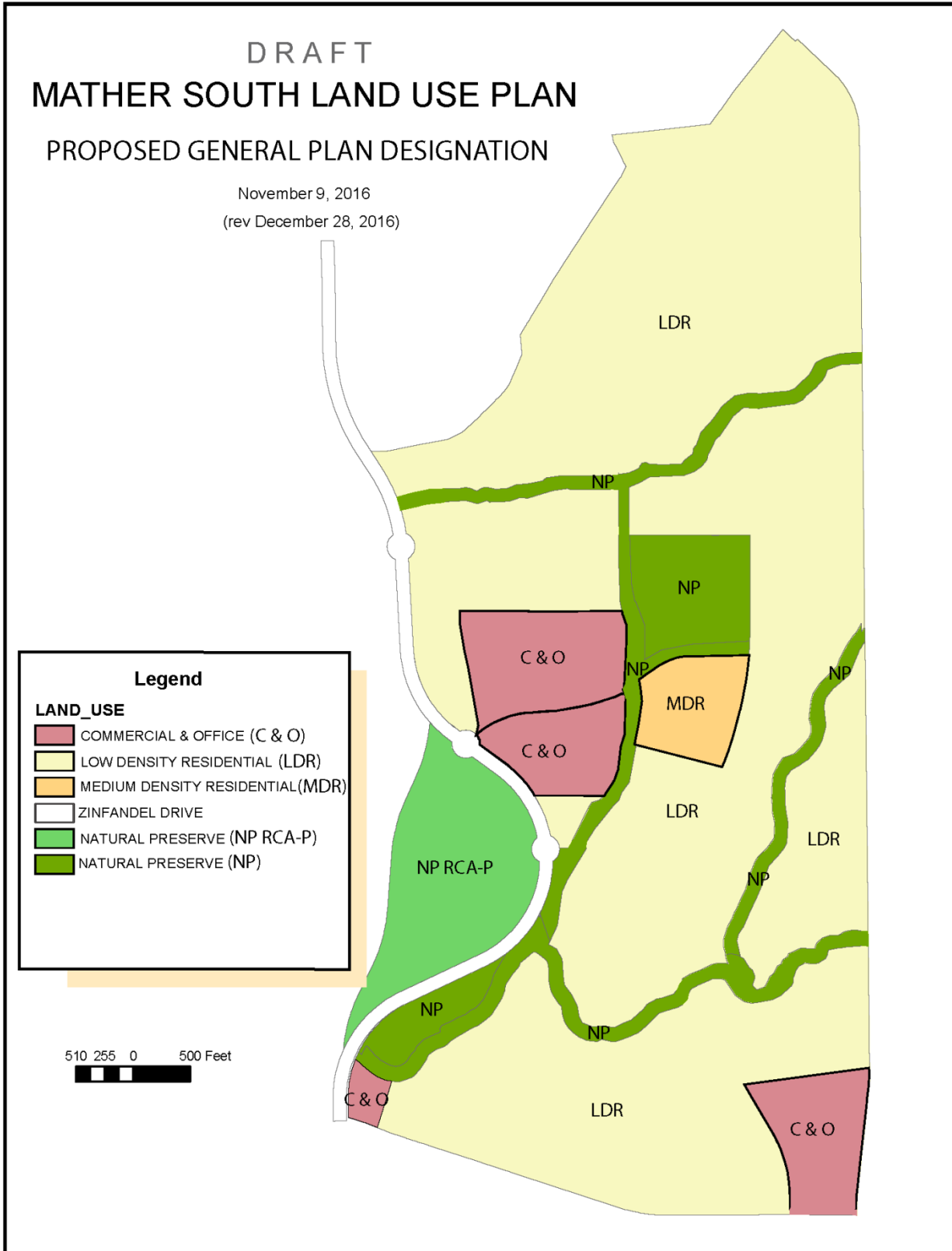


Plate NOP-9: Proposed Bicycle Master Plan Amendment

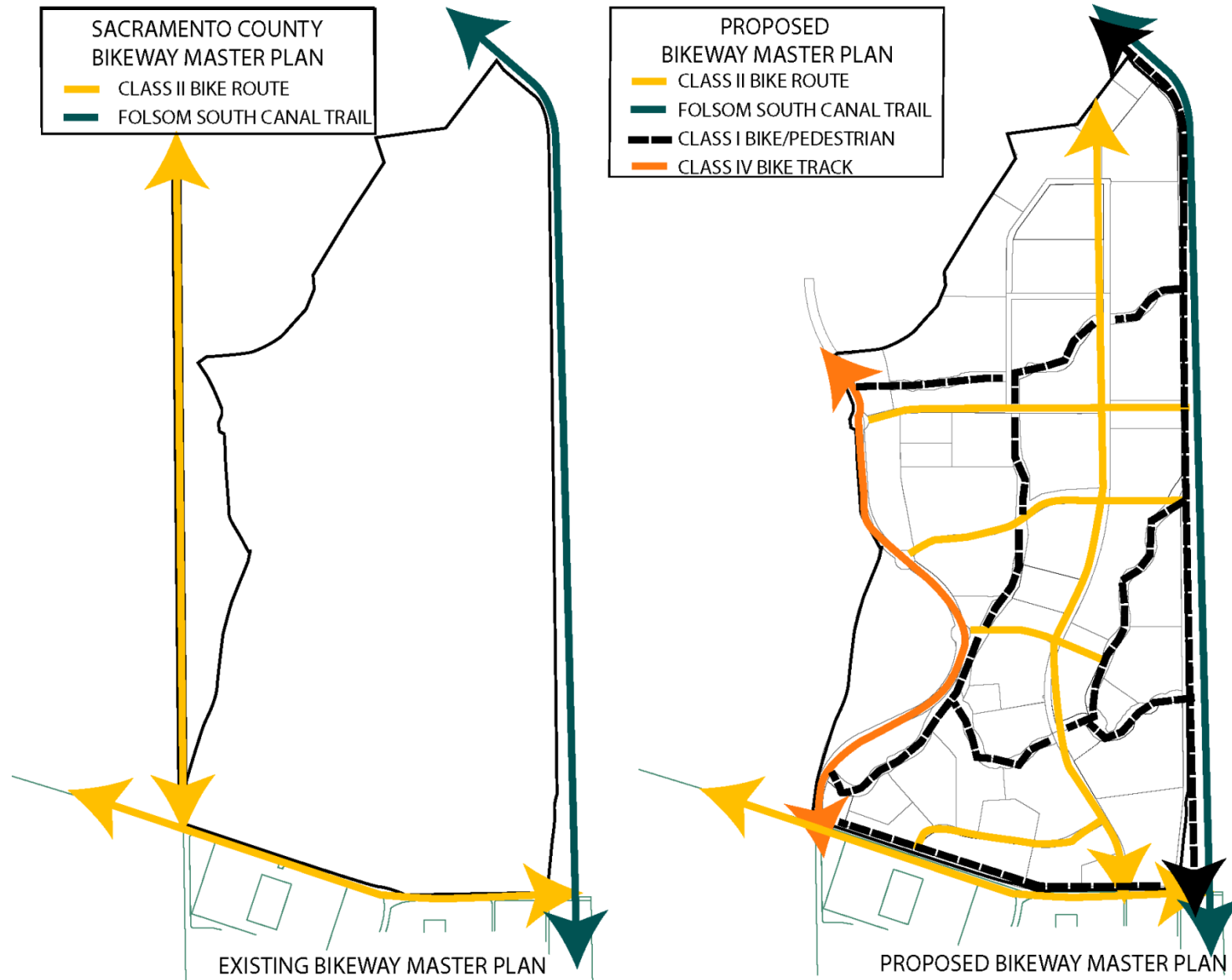


Plate NOP-10: Proposed Mather Field Specific Plan Amendment

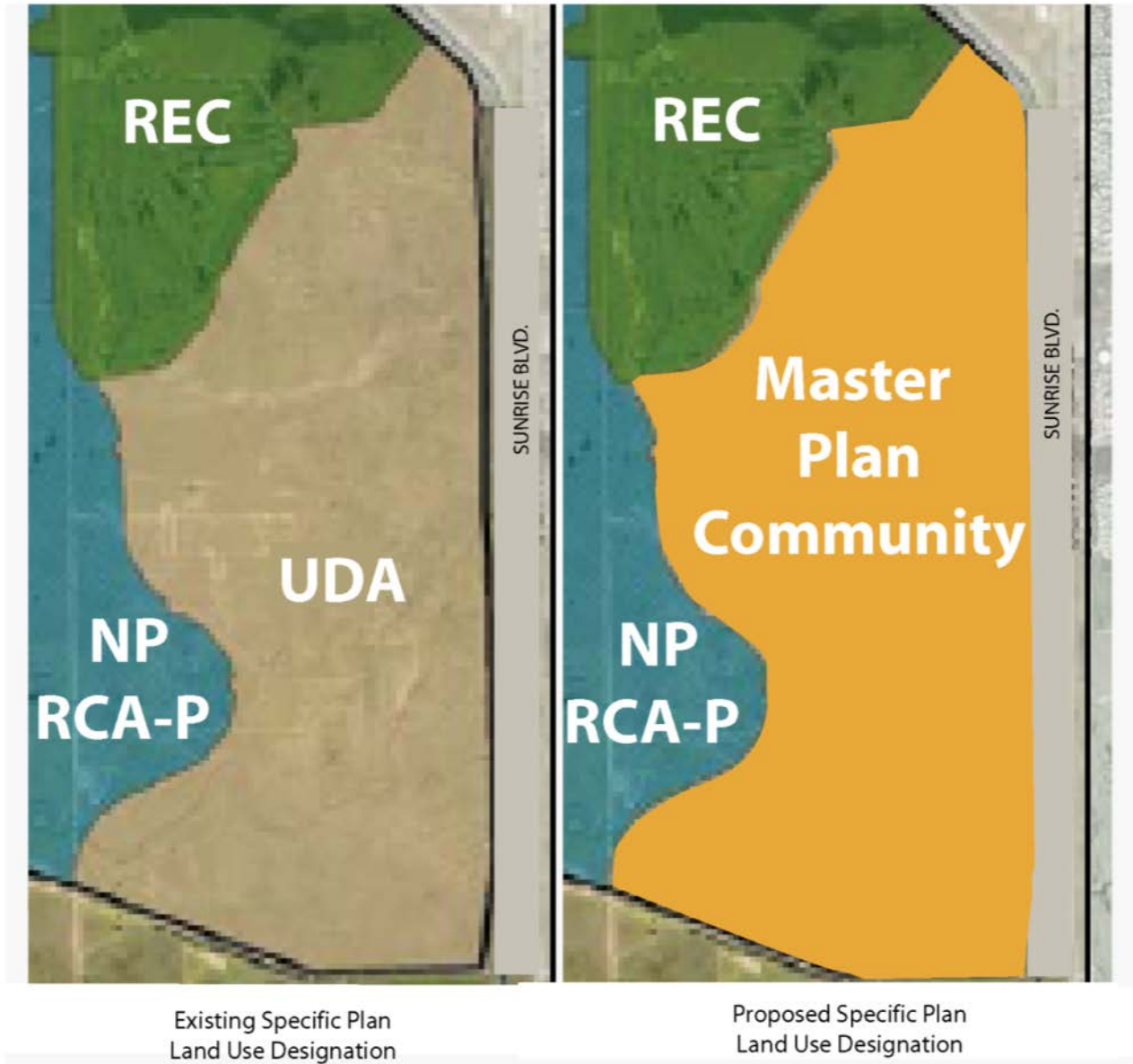
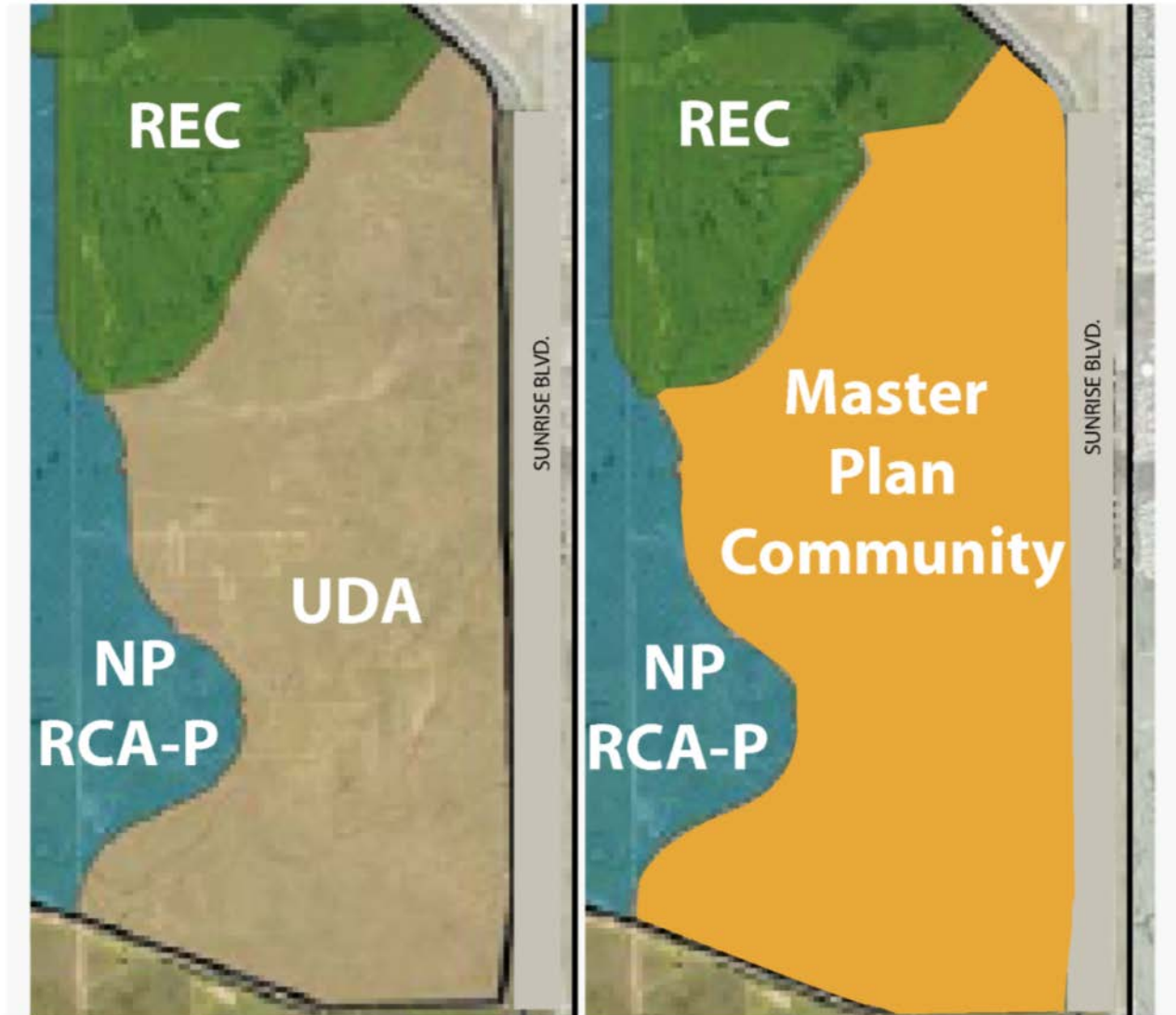


Plate NOP-11: Proposed Mather Field Special Planning Area Designation



Existing Special Planning Area
Land Use Designation

Proposed Special Planning Area
Land Use Designation

Plate NOP-12: Proposed Project Alternative

