

3.2 AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY RESOURCES

This section addresses the potential for loss or conversion of agricultural uses within the area of the Orchard Park Redevelopment component, as well as overall effects to agriculture from development.

Comments received on the NOP expressed concern with preservation of open space and cumulative impacts to land outside of campus. As they pertain to implementation of the Orchard Park Redevelopment component of the 2018 LRDP, these impacts are described and addressed within this section.

3.2.1 Regulatory Setting

Plans, policies, regulations, and laws (applicable to and/or considered for the Orchard Park Redevelopment component) are provided in Volume 1 of this EIR. As the regulatory setting provided in Volume 1 considers potential development, including the Orchard Park Redevelopment component, within the entirety of the UC Davis campus as envisioned through the 2018 LRDP, no additional regulatory setting is provided for the Orchard Park Redevelopment component.

3.2.2 Environmental Setting

Section 3.2, “Agriculture and Forestry Resources,” in Volume 1 of this EIR, presents the setting related to agriculture and forestry resources for the entire UC Davis campus, including the Orchard Park site.

The Orchard Park site consists of approximately 19 acres of previously developed land bounded by Orchard Park Circle to the south, State Route 113 to the west, Orchard Park Drive to the east, and Russell Boulevard to the north. The Experimental College Community Garden and additional agricultural land are located further to the south. Although the Orchard Park site is currently vacant, it was previously developed with the Orchard Park Apartments, which were removed for safety/security reasons as part of a separate project. Their removal was evaluated as a separate project in an Initial Study/Negative Declaration prepared in November 2017. As of the writing of this analysis, demolition of on-site structures is largely complete and the site will be restored to a natural/undeveloped condition in Spring 2018. The environmental setting for agricultural resources considers the site to be undeveloped.

3.2.3 Environmental Impacts and Mitigation Measures

SIGNIFICANCE CRITERIA

Refer to Section 3.2, “Agriculture and Forestry Resources,” in Volume 1 of this EIR for a discussion of applicable Significance Criteria.

ANALYSIS METHODOLOGY

See Section 3.2, “Agriculture and Forestry Resources,” in Volume 1 of this EIR for analytical methods relative to agricultural resources.

ISSUES NOT EVALUATED FURTHER

The following impacts were identified as part of the analysis of the 2018 LRDP, and are either (1) adequately evaluated at the program level of analysis of the 2018 LRDP, or (2) not applicable to the Orchard Park Redevelopment component.

Conversion of Important Farmlands

The Orchard Park site is located on previously developed land, designated as Student Housing, within the campus boundary. The Orchard Park Redevelopment component would result in development of the site to provide for additional student housing options. The Orchard Park Redevelopment component would not result in the conversion of important farmland, and therefore, no additional project-level analysis is necessary.

Williamson Act Contracts

Due to its tax-exempt status, lands within UC Davis are not eligible for contracts pursuant to the Williamson Act, and as such, the Orchard Park site is not under Williamson Act contract. In addition, adjacent properties are not under Williamson Act contract; therefore, no impacts would occur to designated Williamson Act lands. No additional project-level analysis is necessary.

Forest Resources

The Orchard Park site and surrounding land uses are not designated as forest or timber-production lands, therefore, no forestry resources would be affected by implementation of the Orchard Park Redevelopment component. No additional project-level analysis is necessary.

Existing Zoning for Agricultural Use

Land uses surrounding the Orchard Park site consist of existing urban development. The Orchard Park site is currently undeveloped but was previously developed as student housing. Implementation of the Orchard Park Redevelopment component would result in new student housing. No conversion or loss of agricultural land or uses would occur. No additional project-level analysis is necessary.

PROJECT-SPECIFIC IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

There are no potentially significant impacts identified related to agriculture and forestry resources for the Orchard Park Redevelopment component of the 2018 LRDP beyond those identified and addressed as part of the 2018 LRDP’s analysis in Volume 1. No additional project-specific mitigation is necessary.