CITY OF COLFAX

2040 GENERAL PLAN

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 City of Colfax Background

1.1.1 Regional Setting

The City of Colfax in Placer County California is on the western slope of the Sierra Nevada foothills bounded by the Bear River to the northwest and the North Fork of the American River on the southeast. The city lies at the extreme northeastern edge of the Sacramento metropolitan area some 50 miles east of the City of Sacramento. Colfax is in the heart of the mother lode, just a short distance from the gold mining areas along the American River, Bear River, and Auburn Ravine.

The general elevation of Colfax is 2,400 feet (See Figure 1-1). The climate is quite mild in the Colfax area. Temperatures range from lows in the twenties in mid-winter to highs in the 80's and 90's in mid-summer, with an occasional cold snap in December and January and occasional summer temperatures exceeding 100 degrees in July and August. Precipitation is approximately 40 inches per year, mostly in the form of rain, with occasional snow in the winter months. Except for a rare summer shower, most of the precipitation occurs between October and April. Colfax is normally out of the winter fog and above valley smog.

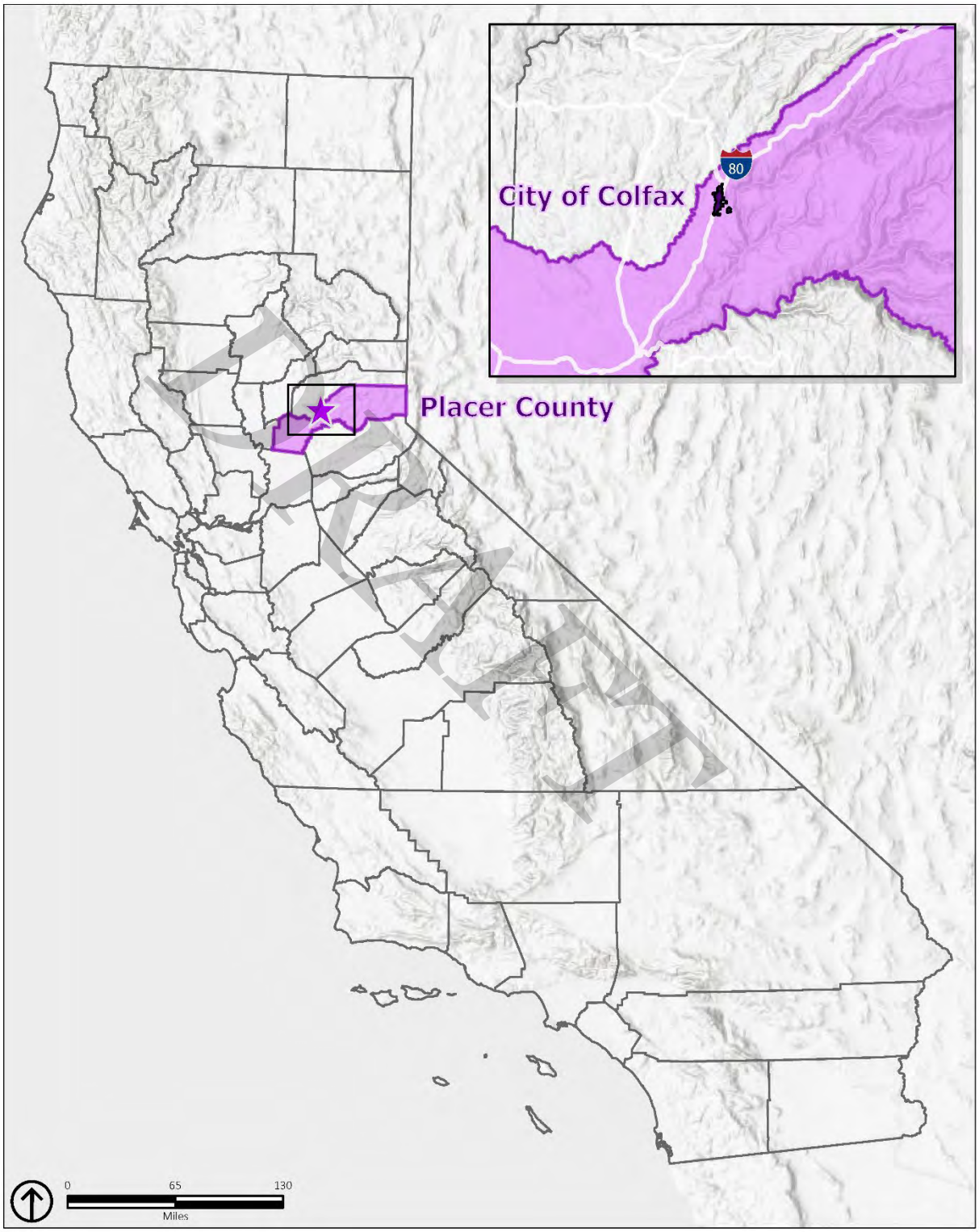
The city is bisected by the Union Pacific Railroad and Interstate 80, both major regional transportation routes from California to the Rocky Mountains, Midwest, and Eastern portions of the United States.

1.2 Purpose of the General Plan

California Government Code requires each city to prepare a general plan. A general plan is defined as "a comprehensive, long-term general plan for the physical development of the county or city, and any land outside its boundaries which in the planning agency's judgment bears relation to its planning." (Government Code Section 65300). The State requires general plans "comprise an integrated, internally consistent and compatible statement of policies for the adopting agency." (Government Code Section 65302).

The general plan has evolved into a clear guide for rational decision-making regarding a city or county's long-term physical development. The California Government Code establishes both the content of general plans and rules for their adoption and subsequent amendment. Together, state law and judicial decisions establish three overall guidelines for general plans.

FIGURE 1-1
CITY OF COLFAX AND PLACER COUNTY



1.3 Interpretation of this General Plan

The General Plan will be implemented over an extended period that will likely span several decades. During this time, long-range planning efforts will continue using the General Plan goals and policies as a guide. However, the General Plan is a living document. State law allows the General Plan to be updated and refined and requires annual review of implementation actions. Ideally the General Plan would be reviewed thoroughly reviewed every five years to ensure that it is still consistent with the community's goals.

In the event uncertainty exists regarding the location of boundaries of any land use category, proposed public facility symbol, circulation alignment, or another symbol or line found on the official maps of the General Plan, the following procedures will be used to resolve such uncertainty.

- Boundaries shown in the General Plan and on official maps as approximately following the limits of any municipal corporation are to be construed as following these limits.
- Boundaries shown in the General Plan as following property lines shall be construed as following such lines.
- Boundaries shall extend to the centerline of the adjacent roadway or easement even though the roadway may appear 'clear' on maps. The lack of color on the roadway is to aid in the legibility of roadway names.

If the above does not clarify the intent of the maps, or if the question is one of policy interpretation, the City Council is the final determiner of the intent of the General Plan.

1.4 Maintenance and Update of the General Plan

The General Plan will be implemented over an extended period (20+ years, with a time horizon of 2040). During this time, the long-range planning efforts for the City will continue using the goals and objectives as a guide.

However, a general plan is a living document, and presents the outcomes desired by the community based on their current goals and local conditions. As the city grows and changes, it may become necessary to amend specific policies and implementation measures as economic and demographic conditions change and new ideas about growth and conservation are formed.

Any part of the general plan may be amended to accommodate changing conditions. Property owners, the Planning Commission, the City Council, or City staff may propose amendments. Proposed changes must be reviewed by the Planning Commission and the City Council at public hearings and the potential of environmental impacts must be evaluated in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act.

Community members, neighborhood groups and local organizations are encouraged to get involved in the on-going planning efforts of the city and to participate in the implementation of the General Plan. Through active and thoughtful involvement, residents can be part of the process of shaping the city to make it even more attractive, prosperous, and welcoming than it is today.

California Government Code requires that the planning agency "render an annual report to the legislative body (City Council) on the status of the Plan and the progress in its implementation" (Section 65400(b)). State law further requires that the Housing Element be reviewed and updated at least once every eight (8) years. As part of this review, the City will consider progress in the context of the indicators presented within this General Plan. Similarly, each year, the Capital Improvements Program shall be reviewed to ensure the planned infrastructure investments are consistent with this General Plan.

1.5 Scope and Content of the General Plan

State law requires the City to adopt a comprehensive, long-term general plan for the physical development of its planning area. In Colfax, the planning area includes all lands within the incorporated city limits and Sphere of Influence (SOI). The general plan must include seven state mandated elements including: land use, circulation, housing, conservation, open space, noise, and safety elements, as specified in Government Code Section 65302, to the extent that the issues identified by State law exist in the City's planning area. Additional elements that relate to the physical development of the city may also be addressed in the general plan. The degree of specificity and level of detail of the discussion of each general plan element need only reflect local conditions and circumstances. The Colfax General Plan has been prepared consistent with the requirements of State law and addresses the relevant items addressed in Government Code Section 65300 et seq.

The Housing Element is also the only document that is standalone. State law, through the Housing Element, addresses the existing and projected housing needs within all economic segments of the State's various communities, and in this case, the City of Colfax. This legal mandate recognizes that, for the private sector to adequately address housing needs, local governments must adopt land use plans and other planning programs to create opportunities that do not constrain development of affordable housing. Housing policy in the State is dependent on the effective development and implementation of local general plans and particularly housing elements. The City's Housing Element was adopted by City Council on July 28, 2021, and covers the 2021-2029 housing cycle.

1.5.1 Organization of this General Plan

The General Plan is organized into the following chapters:

- Land Use Element. This element of the General Plan explains the various land use designations in the city and supports the zoning code regulating development.
- Community Design Element. The design element provides guidance for building in all areas of Colfax, including the Historic District.

- Circulation Element. The Circulation Element provides both motorized and non-motorized mobility options in the city.
- Housing Element (Stand-alone Element). The Housing Element demonstrates how the City will meet its Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA).
- Noise Element. Based in part on the traffic information for major streets, the noise element identifies primary noise sources and sets policy for adjacent land uses.
- Safety Element. The Safety Element identifies the natural and human-caused hazards that affect existing and future development and provide guidelines for protecting residents and other community members from injury and death. It describes present conditions and sets policies and standards for improved public safety.
- Conservation and Open Space Element. This element establishes goals and policies to conserve, protect, and maintain natural resources, habitat, and open space in the community.
- Economic Development Element. This element establishes goals and policies to guide city efforts to maintain an economically viable community. The Economic Development Element is linked primarily to the Land Use and Housing Elements.
- Environmental Analysis. This chapter, and associated technical appendices, will serve as the environmental impact as allowed by the CEQA guidelines.

The General Plan policy document contains the goals and policies that will guide future decisions within the city and identifies implementation measures to ensure the vision and goals of the General Plan are carried out. The General Plan also contains a land use diagram, which serves as a general guide to the distribution of land uses throughout the city. The General Plan addresses all of the elements required by State law, in addition to optional elements that the City has elected to include. Table 1-1 below identifies the elements included in the General Plan and the corresponding requirement in State law.

Each element (i.e., chapter) of the General Plan is organized into a set of goals, policies, and implementation measures. Each goal is supported by a particular set of policies and measures to implement and achieve that goal.

TABLE 1-1
ELEMENTS INCLUDED IN THE GENERAL PLAN

General Plan Elements	Elements Required by State Law							Optional Topics
	Land Use	Circulation	Conservation	Open Space	Noise	Safety	Housing	
Land Use	X							
Community Design								X
Circulation		X						
Housing							X	
Noise					X			
Safety						X		
Conservation and Open Space			X	X				
Economic Development								X

2.0 Land Use Element

2.1 Introduction

The Land Use Element plays a central role in the General Plan as it sets forth specific goals and policies to guide the intensity, location, and distribution of land uses for the City of Colfax and the planning area. The Land Use Element serves as the basis for determining service requirements, including plans for future streets and roads, water and sewer, schools, and police and fire protection services.

The Land Use Element shapes the City's form and character by providing a framework for orderly patterns of growth and development, and by ensuring an appropriate distribution or mixture of land uses.

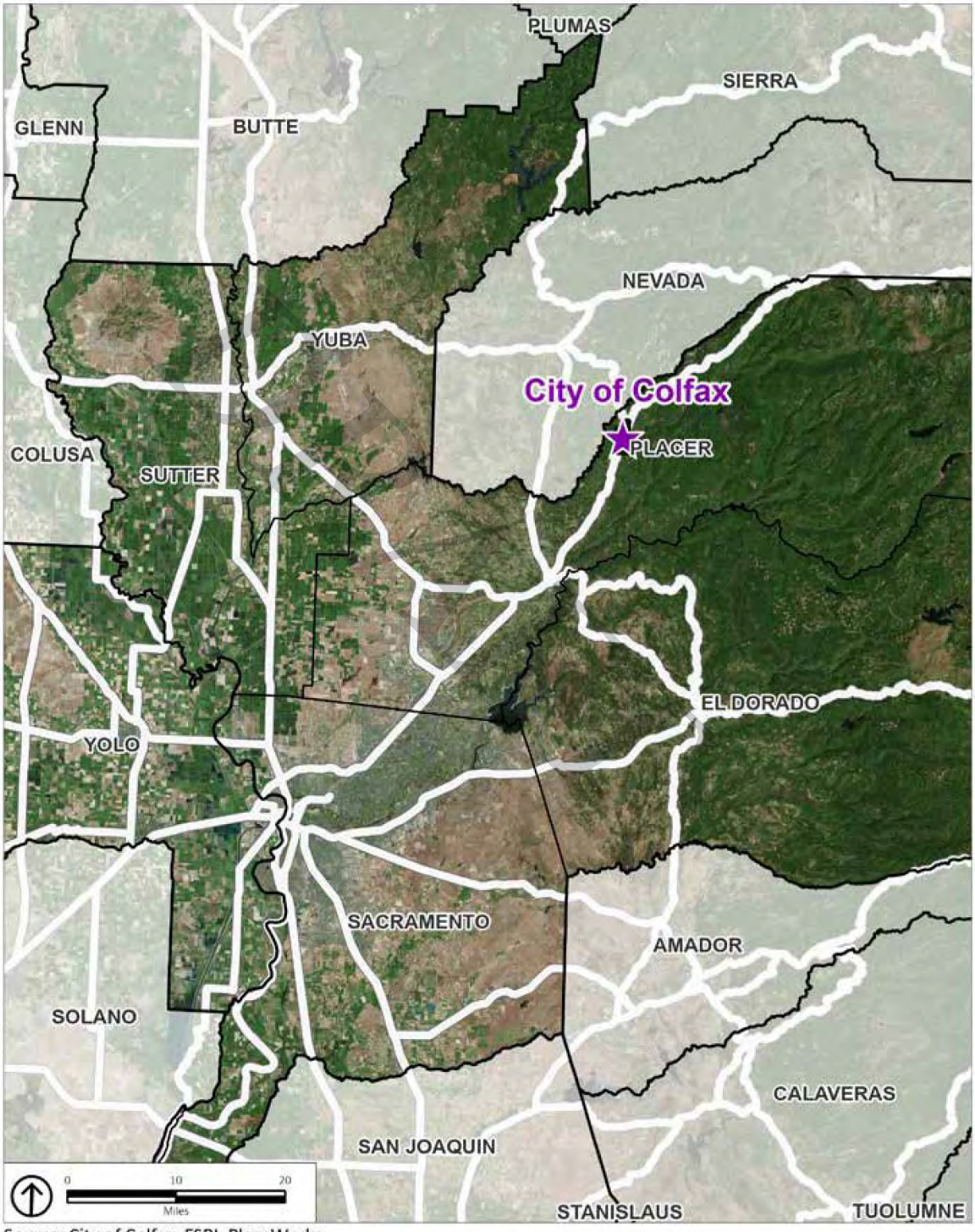
The Guiding Principles for the Land Use Element are:

- Provide land to accommodate housing and employment for the projected growth through the year 2040.
- Ensure land remains available for development beyond the year 2040 to account for unbuildable residential lots, allow for market competition, and provide flexibility in commercial and industrial land uses.
- Incentivize new development in and around existing developed areas while providing design standards.
- Ensure adequate land in the commercial and industrial land use designation to accommodate future demand.
- Capitalize on the freeway-oriented commercial development.
- Support community design standards for the preservation of historic architecture of the downtown and encourage new development that supports the character of Colfax.

2.2 City of Colfax and its Planning Area

The City of Colfax is the eastern-most incorporated city in Placer County, located in the Sierra Nevada Foothills at a general elevation of approximately 2,425 feet. The city covers an area of 1.3 square miles and is bisected by I-80. Colfax is situated a few miles outside the Tahoe National Forest as I-80 begins its climb into the Sierra Nevada mountains. As shown in Figure 2-1, the City of Colfax is in the western part of Placer County, approximately 46 miles northeast of Sacramento and 68 miles southwest of Reno.

FIGURE 2-1
REGIONAL LOCATION



Source: City of Colfax, ESRI, PlaceWorks

2.2.1 Requirements

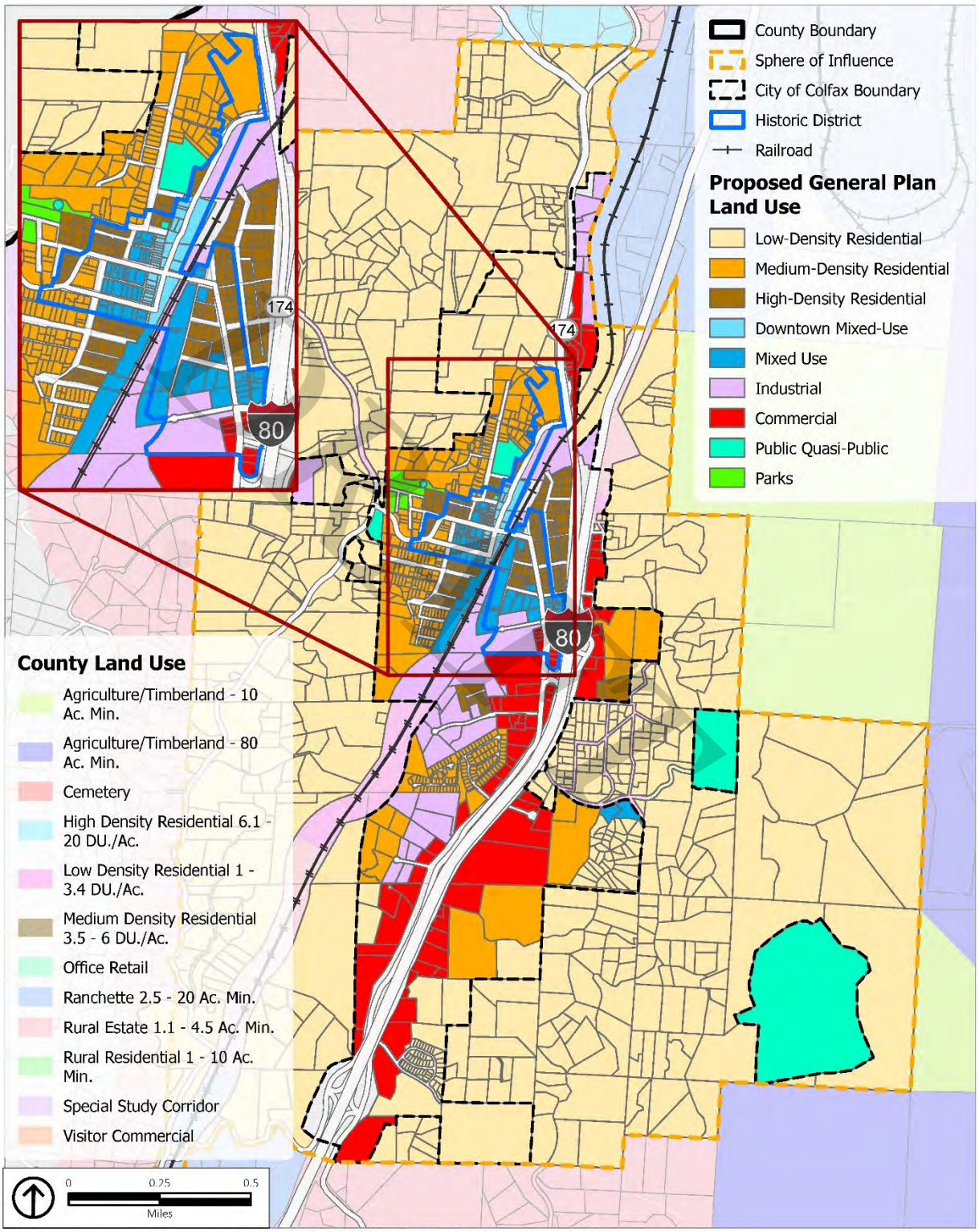
As required by California Government Code Section 65302(a) the Land Use Element of the General Plan must address the following issues:

- Distribution, general location, and extent of the uses of the land for housing, business, industry, open space, including agriculture, natural resources, recreation, and enjoyment of scenic beauty, education, public buildings, and grounds, solid and liquid waste disposal facilities, and other categories of public and private uses of land.
- Standards of population density and building intensity recommended for the various districts and other territory in the plan.

2.2.2 General Plan Planning Area

The planning area for the General Plan is shown in Figure 2-2 and includes both the entirety of the City limits, and the area between the city limits and the sphere of influence (SOI). State law requires each city to include in its General Plan all territory within the boundaries of the incorporated area as well as "any land outside its boundaries which in the planning agency's judgment bears relation to its planning" (California Government Code Section 65300). The Colfax planning area encompasses approximately 903 acres (1.4 square miles) within the city limits, and 2,056.3 acres (3.2 square miles) within the SOI. The total land area covered by this General Plan is 2,959.3 acres (4.6 square miles).

FIGURE 2-2
LAND USE DIAGRAM



Source: City of Colfax, ESRI, Placer County, 2022; PlaceWorks, 2022

2.3 Sphere of Influence

The Sphere of Influence (SOI) is adopted by the Placer County Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) as the area of probable physical boundaries and service area for the City. LAFCO adopts a sphere of influence for every city and district in its jurisdiction and reviews them periodically. The law specifies four factors the Commission must take into consideration when determining a sphere of influence:

- The present and planned land uses in the area, including agricultural and open-space lands.
- The present and probable need for public facilities and services in the area.
- The present capacity of public facilities and the adequacy of public services that the agency provides or is authorized to provide.
- The existence of any social or economic communities of interest in the area if the Commission determines that they are relevant to the agency.

Land must be within the SOI before it can be considered for annexation to the city by LAFCO. As the SOI is adopted by another public agency, the city's SOI is shown on Figure 2-2 for informational purposes only.

2.4 Land Use Pattern

The City of Colfax has a land use pattern that was historically aligned with the railroad, and later to I-80. The railroad-oriented land uses generally comprise the historic center of the city including the downtown as shown in Figure 2-2, *Land Use Diagram*. Freeway-oriented development caters to the travelling public and is either near the Canyon Way interchange with I-80, or along the frontage roads that provide visibility to the interstate. Industrial and commercial land uses are aligned with both the downtown and interstate depending on their needs.

Buildings in the Downtown (also referred to as the Historic District), and the associated businesses, have evolved to enhance the pedestrian-oriented character while maintaining the historical elements of Colfax. Most of the downtown core area architecture preserves the history of the community. A few buildings have strayed from the past tradition. However, most of the buildings embody quality in construction, craft, and a style the community wants to maintain and replicate. The architectural elements and features in Colfax have a distinct character which is recognizable in many historic town centers throughout the Sierra foothill communities. Homes are generally closer together near the downtown as many of the parcels are smaller. Larger parcels toward the periphery of the city reflect the rural history of the city and tend toward homes that are further apart and considered a "lower density" than those near the downtown. The character of residential development in more rural areas includes space between buildings and open fencing, allowing for greater visibility lending to the rural character.

2.5 Historic District

The Historic District generally encompasses the intersection of Main Street and Grass Valley Street and reaches to just beyond Depot Street on North Main Street to the north and just beyond South Main Street at Church Street to the south. The buildings in the Historic Core include some of the city's oldest commercial structures with many dating from the last half of the 19th Century.

Another prominent feature of the Historic District is the railroad line which bisects the district from north to south. The identity of Colfax as one of the earliest prominent railroad cities in California is well preserved in the historic passenger and freight depot buildings also found within the Historic District.

The Historic District also includes a variety of other commercial/retail, residential, and light industrial uses. The commercial/retail uses are clustered around the Historic Core and along South Auburn Street. Light industrial uses are situated at the far north and south of the district adjacent to the railroad tracks. The remaining areas of the district are zoned primarily for single family residential uses, except for the area between Oak Street and East Church Street to the west of South Auburn Street.

2.6 Intent

As Colfax continues to grow and develop, the City intends to embrace the Historic District as a destination for residents and visitors alike. The Historic District is a core attraction for many and a representation of the City's unique history. Therefore, preserving Colfax's historic characteristics through appropriate land use patterns, local conditions, and design standards is critical to maintaining the Historic District as a destination for years to come. Furthermore, the City intends to capitalize on its proximity to I-80 by presenting Colfax as a destination for casual freeway visitors through appropriate signage, wayfinding, urban gateways, attractive public spaces and amenities, and its historic downtown. In doing so, visitors will be encouraged to explore, shop, and enjoy quality time in Colfax.

To ensure the city's orderly pattern of growth and development, the City will adopt a process for the review of land uses changes. All new development will be consistent and complimentary to the distinctive characteristics of the community. Residential uses will be encouraged near the downtown to increase walkability and reduce VMT. A more walkable community with an attractive historic downtown core will contribute to the social well-being and quality of life that makes Colfax a desirable community to visit and live.

2.7 Land Use Diagram and Standards

The Land Use Diagram depicts proposed land uses for Colfax through the year 2040 and beyond. The land uses are represented using designations that specify the type and intensity of allowed land uses. The boundary lines between land use designations are delineated as specifically as possible, in most cases following parcel lines.

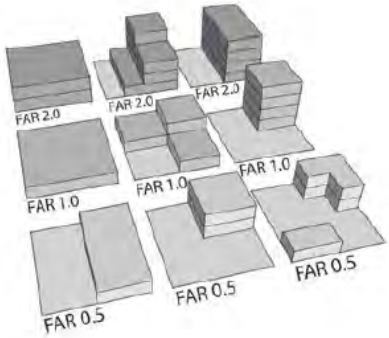
Development consistent with the Land Use Diagram is implemented through the City's zoning regulations as each land use designation has compatible zoning districts. Because land use designations are intentionally broad, more than one zoning district can be used for implementation. The land use designation provides general guidance and vision, while the zoning districts provide detailed development standards such as permitted or conditionally permitted land uses, building heights, setbacks, lot coverage, and parking requirements.

2.7.1 Development Standards

Development standards are legal standards of density for residential uses and standards of building intensity for non-residential and mixed use. The following explains how these standards operate.

Density. Standards of building intensity for residential uses are stated as a range (i.e., minimum and maximum) of allowable number of dwelling units per gross acre. The diagram below shows various building configurations representing different density ranges. Standards of population density can be determined based on an assumption of persons per household.

Floor Area-Ratio (FAR). Standards of building intensity for nonresidential uses, such as mixed-use, commercial, and industrial development, are stated as a range (i.e., minimum and maximum) of FARs. In the case of mixed-use developments that include residential uses, the FAR includes residential building square footage, and the development must meet both FAR and residential density standards.



An FAR is the gross building area on a site, excluding structured parking, to the net developable area of the site. The net developable area is the total area of a site excluding portions that cannot be developed (e.g., right-of-way, public parks). A site includes all contiguous parcels that will share parking or access. For example, on a lot with 25,000 square feet of land area, a FAR of 0.50 will allow 12,500 square feet of useable building floor area to be built, regardless of the number of stories in the building (e.g., 6,250 square feet per floor on two floors or 12,500 square feet on one floor). On the same 25,000- square-foot lot, a FAR of 1.00 would allow 25,000 square feet of useable floor area, and a FAR of 2.00 would allow 50,000 square feet of useable floor area. The diagram below shows various building configurations representing FARs of 0.50, 1.00, and 2.00.

While FAR provides for the overall development size and intensity, it does not specify the form or character of the building. Different interpretations of the same FAR can result in buildings of very different character and can be regulated through qualitative or quantitative development standards.

Mixed-Use. A mixed-use land use designation allows for a combination of residential uses with commercial and/or office uses either in the same building or on the same property. Two land use designations allow for this land use combination.

The Downtown Mixed-Use designation allows for apartments above existing non-residential with a FAR of 2.0. Access to the apartments would be from the ground floor and the street frontage would be for commercial and office uses. This designation would be in the Historic Downtown and mirrors the historic development pattern of apartments above businesses. Parcel sizes in the Downtown are small, often 25 feet wide by 100 feet deep with building(s) that may cover the entire parcel. Even with the smaller parcel size it might be possible to have from 1 – 4 apartments above a business. Because the primary focus of the Downtown is commerce, standalone residential structures would be discouraged.

Outside of the Downtown, the Mixed-Use designation would allow for both in-building or vertical mixed use, and for residential and non-residential uses to be on the same parcel of land as horizontal mixed use. Densities would be the same as the High Density Residential (HDR) land use designation allowing 10 – 29 units to the acre with a FAR of 1.5 to allow for variety in design. Unlike the downtown mixed-use designation, standalone residential structures and/or commercial structures would be allowed.

2.8 Land Use Designations

Table 2-1 summarizes the existing land uses in Colfax, their allowed density and intensity, as well as their distribution.

TABLE 2-1
LAND USE DESIGNATIONS

General Plan Land Use	Zones	Allowed Density/ Intensity	Total Acres	Percent of Total
Low-Density Residential (LDR)[1] This designation allows for single-family homes.	Single-Family Residence (R-1-5, R-1-10, R-1-20)	1–4 Units per Acre	2,074.5	75.2
Medium-Density Residential (MDR)[1] This designation allows detached and attached single-family dwellings.	Multi-Family Residence (RM-1) Residential Mobilehome Subdivision (R-MHS)	4–10 Units per Acre	171.6	6.2
High-Density Residential (HDR)[1] This designation provides for multifamily residential units, including townhouses, condominiums, and apartments.	Multi-Family Residence (RM-2)	10–29 Units per Acre	32.8	1.2

[1] Maximum density shall be reduced based on average slope as described in Section 2.C of the Hillside Design Guidelines (Appendix A).

General Plan Land Use	Zones	Allowed Density/ Intensity	Total Acres	Percent of Total
Downtown Mixed-Use (MU-1) This designation allows for the vertical combination of commercial and residential uses in the downtown area with pedestrian-oriented uses on the ground floor street frontage. This designation allows for multifamily housing as well as shops, restaurants, services, offices, hospitality, and other compatible uses.	Downtown Mixed-Use (MU-1)	2.0 FAR 625 Square Feet of Land Area per Dwelling Unit	8.3	0.3
Mixed-Use (MU-2) This designation allows for the horizontal and vertical combination of commercial and residential uses that are mutually compatible. This designation allows for multifamily housing as well as shops, restaurants, services, offices, hospitality, and other compatible uses.	Mixed-Use (MU-2)	1.5 FAR 10-29 Units per Acre	27.6	1.0
Industrial This designation allows the processing, manufacturing, assembly, packaging, storage, and distribution of goods and commodities. It also allows for warehouses, storage, logistics centers, trucking terminals, and railroad facilities.	Light Industrial (I-L)	0.50 FAR	187.1	6.8

General Plan Land Use	Zones	Allowed Density/ Intensity	Total Acres	Percent of Total
Commercial This designation provides for a combination of general and highway-oriented, retail, office, business, lodging, and service uses.	Retail Commercial (C-R) Highway Commercial (C-H)	0.50 FAR	155.0	5.6
Parks The Parks land use designation provides for active and passive recreational opportunities in Colfax.	Open Space (OS)	N/A	5.2	0.2
Public-Quasi Public Facilities (PQP) This designation includes areas with unique uses and urban forms. These areas may offer community services and/or educational, cultural, administrative, and recreational facilities. This designation provides for public and quasi-public uses including, but not limited to public and private schools, water and wastewater treatment facilities, transportation and utility facilities, community centers, and government buildings.	Special Public Service District (SPSD)	N/A	95.5	3.5

General Plan Land Use	Zones	Allowed Density/ Intensity	Total Acres	Percent of Total
Historic District Overlay The Historic District Overlay land use designation is intended to maintain the historic resources of Colfax while also enhancing the city's character and visual appearance. This designation allows for multifamily housing as well as shops, restaurants, services, offices, and other compatible uses.	Retail Commercial (C-R) Light Industrial (I-L) Single-Family Residence (R-1-5, R-1-10) Multi-Family Residence (RM-1) Multi-Family Residence (RM-2) Downtown Mixed-Use (MU-1) Mixed-Use (MU-2)	N/A	-	-
Total			2,757.5	100%

2.9 Land Use Goals, Policies, and Implementation Measures

Goal 2.1	Promote the orderly development of Colfax and its Surroundings.

Policy 2.1.1 The City will coordinate with service providers to provide infrastructure and services, such as water service, libraries, parks and recreational facilities, transportation systems, and fire/police/medical services.

Policy 2.1.2 Higher density housing and employment and service will be located in areas that are easily accessible to existing or planned transportation facilities.

Policy 2.1.3 The City may approve the clustering of development on sites that preserve historic resources, protect sensitive natural features (such as creeks, native trees, rock outcrops), and avoid potentially hazardous areas (such as steep slopes, flood zones, and unstable soils).

Policy 2.1.4 For all residential developments require clustering where appropriate. Clustered development as defined in this General Plan includes the following considerations:

- Clustering of residential development will allow flexibility of site design in responding to the natural features and resources of an individual site.
- Clustering means that structures will be located on a site so that larger areas are left as undeveloped open space.
- Undeveloped areas may either be preserved in private or public open space, or may be a portion of an individual lot, with deed restrictions prohibiting construction in that portion.

Implementation Measures

2.1.A Support commercial development on arterial streets and at major intersections near I-80 interchanges.

2.1.B Support the railroad by placing supportive land uses near access, and avoid placing sensitive uses where they could jeopardize use of rail.

2.1.C Locate industrial and commercial land uses away from noise sensitive land uses.

2.1.D To protect existing industry and commercial businesses, new sensitive land uses shall not be placed near existing noise generating uses.

Goal 2.2	**Ensure that new development pays for the necessary city facilities and services to support it through tax revenues, fees, or other means.**

Policy 2.2.1 Encourage the location and development of businesses which generate high property and sales taxes, local employment, and are environmentally compatible.

Policy 2.2.2 All new residential subdivision, commercial, or industrial land development within the city shall be contingent upon City services including sewer, water, and emergency vehicle access.

Policy 2.2.3 Establish and maintain a Capital Improvement Program and impact fees for public facilities improvements that parallels the rate of new land development in the city.

Policy 2.2.4 Encourage commercial and employment-generating uses which provide tax revenues and employment to help support planned residential growth, including auxiliary public facilities and services.

Policy 2.2.5 Prioritize infill development consistent with goals for reducing vehicle miles travelled and supporting existing businesses. Infill development should be evaluated carefully to ensure that development is consistent with the character of the community and open space is preserved, to the extent feasible.

Implementation Measures

2.2.A Develop criteria for utility extension that includes economic feasibility, environmental sensitivity and enforcement of the General Plan Land Use Diagram.

2.2.B Update the Capital Improvement Program as a means of keeping pace with the needs of future facilities and infrastructure.

2.2.C Negotiate a Master Tax Transfer agreement with the County to streamline future annexation requests.

2.2.D Investigate funding methods to offset infrastructure development maintenance costs associated with new development.

2.2.E Modify the development code to establish standards that would allow higher housing densities by right, mixed use, or increased commercial development, in select infill areas, such as those areas near the downtown.

Goal 2.3	**Conserve and improve aesthetic, historic, neighborhood, open space, and environmental land resources of the community.**
Policy 2.3.1	Natural features and materials shall be incorporated into project design as buffers or landscaped areas.
Policy 2.3.2	Commercial buildings shall be pedestrian oriented and street facing with parking at the rear or sides of buildings, utilizing materials that compliment surrounding uses.
Policy 2.3.3	The City shall require the design of future residential projects to emphasize character, quality, livability, and the provision of necessary services and facilities to ensure their permanent attractiveness.
Policy 2.3.4	The City shall encourage the retention and enhancement of natural vegetation along major roadways, drainages, trails, and open space to provide and protect scenic open spaces.
Policy 2.3.5	Encourage adaptive reuse of the Historic District and its buildings. New construction and buildings in the Historic District shall compliment the historical character of the community and surrounding architecture.
Policy 2.3.6	Adopt and maintain design standards and a development code for the City, including specific design standards for the Historic District.
Policy 2.3.7	As part of the Historic District Master Plan, the City will develop a wayfinding program to encourage visitors in the downtown.

Implementation Measures

2.3.A	Adopt and maintain design standards that require the orientation of commercial buildings to ensure sidewalk orientation, natural materials in the façade and lighting, encouraging stone and brick with outside seating compatible with the existing City buildings.
2.3.B	Adopt and maintain design standards for residential developments that address street improvements, parking, massing and scale, and compatibility with adjacent neighborhoods.
2.3.C	Adopt objective design standards for adaptive reuse of historic buildings and complementary construction of new buildings.

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3.0 Circulation

3.1 Authority and Purpose

The Purpose of the Circulation Element of a General Plan is to identify the location and the extent of major thoroughfares, transportation routes, terminals, and other public utilities and facilities, all correlated with the Land Use Element. Transportation systems are essential to any city or county and its economy and can be designed to enhance opportunity and improve equity. Transportation is both a regional and local issue. This Element is required by Government Code Section 65302(b) not to be in conflict with applicable state and regional transportation plans.

3.2 Background

Development of the city was initially linked to the development of the Union Pacific Railroad, and later to Interstate 80. These two features provide the main transportation connections between Colfax and several smaller communities to the northeast and ultimately to the Sacramento metropolitan area about 50 miles to the southwest.

3.2.1 Roadway Classifications

The City of Colfax is served by five different classifications of roadways as summarized below:

- Freeway – A limited access and high-speed road serving inter-regional movement with no interference from local street patterns or at-grade-crossings. Freeways are divided highways and serve primarily regional and long-distance travel.
- State Highway – Limited access and higher speed road for travel between communities. Medium capacity two-lane roadways with one lane in each direction. The passing of slower vehicles requires the use of the opposing lane where traffic gaps allow.
- Arterial – A street carrying the vehicular traffic of intra-community travel, as well as access to the rest of the county transportation system. Access to arterials is generally by minor arterial, collector, and local streets.
  - Minor Arterial – A street for movement of intra-community traffic and less traveled than arterial streets.
- Collector – These roadways serve traffic between local roadways and neighborhoods. Collector streets are used mainly for traffic movements within residential, commercial, and industrial areas.
- Local Street – Roadways used primarily for direct access to residential, commercial, industrial, or other abutting property with on-street parking. They do not generally include roadways carrying through traffic.

Roadways are usually public lands obtained as a dedication during a development proposal or purchased outright to improve the circulation system. Road right-of-way often contains more than simply pavement for vehicles as underground pipes carry water, wastewater, stormwater, electrical wiring, fiber optic cable and natural gas. The right-of-way must also accommodate all manner of mobility such as bicycles and pedestrians. Table 3-1 shows the right-of-way standards by roadway classification for city streets.

TABLE 3-1
RIGHT OF WAY STANDARDS

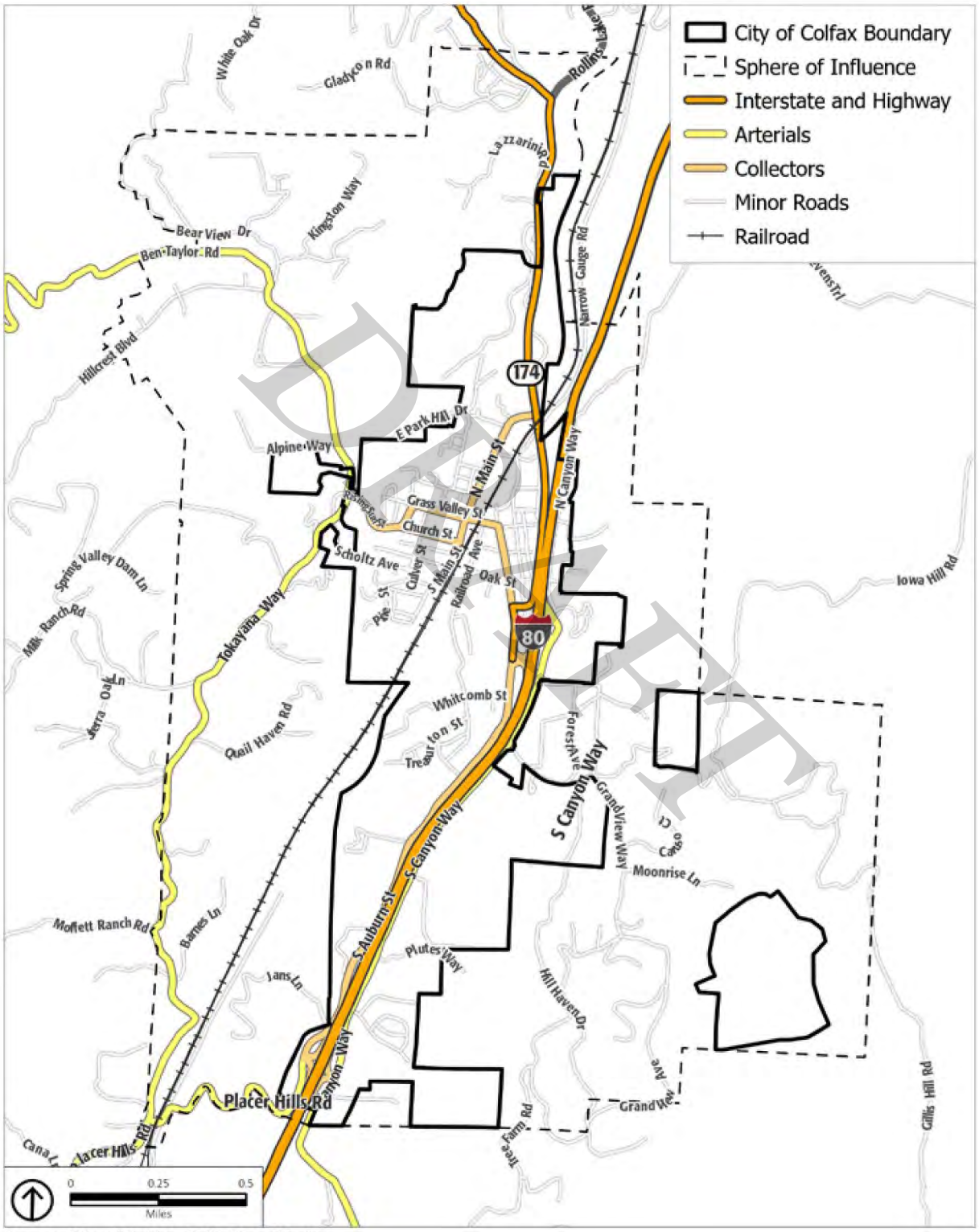
Supply	Access Control		Typical Number of Lanes	General ROW Requirements
	Minimum Intersection/ Interchange Spacing	Driveways Allowed		
Freeway (I-80)	1 - 2 miles	None	2 – 6	Varies
State Route (174)	Varies	Limited	1 - 2	Varies
Arterial	¼ mile	Shared	2 - 4	96' - 120'
Minor Arterial	¼ mile	Shared	2 - 4	70' - 84'
Collector	¼ mile	All Uses	2	60' - 70'
Local	¼ mile	All Uses	2	50' - 60'

3.2.2 Existing Facilities

Local streets are not intended to carry through traffic as the design and capacity of local streets are generally limited. Collector and arterial streets are very important to the circulation system of a community. Congestion or traffic problems usually occur where roadways meet or traffic is impeded, such as at intersections or driveways. Roadways in the City of Colfax include the following list, and are shown on Figure 3-1.

- I-80 (Freeway) – Interstate 80 is the main transportation route and bisects the City of Colfax; I-80 carries most of the traffic into and out of the city, while at the same time providing a physical barrier to intra-city circulation. The two interchanges located within the City of Colfax are Canyon Way, at the southern edge of the city limits and provides freeway access in the north and south bound direction, and South Auburn Street, which is the northern access point for I-80 in the city providing access to the historic downtown and is available to both north and south bound traffic.

FIGURE 3-1
CIRCULATION MAP



Source: City of Colfax, ESRI, PlaceWorks

- **Highway 174 (State Highway) –** Highway 174 is the next major traffic carrier and produces a mixing of local and through traffic at strategic intersections. It enters the city limits in the north and is connected to the historic downtown by way of Main Street. Highway 174 overpass crosses the railroad tracks and terminates on South Auburn Street. Highway 174 is used by local and regional traffic and provides access to Grass Valley and Nevada City.
- **South Auburn Street (Collector) –** South Auburn Street is a I-80 frontage street that connects to arterial streets that lead into the city.
- **Grass Valley Street (Collector)** – Grass Valley Street connects to arterial streets that lead into the city.
- **Railroad Street (Collector)** – Railroad Street connects to arterial streets that lead into the city.
- **Foresthill Street (Collector)** – Foresthill Street connects to arterial streets that lead into the city.
- **Vista Avenue (Collector)** – Vista Avenue connects to arterial streets that lead into the city.
- **Depot Street (Local Street) –** Depot Street connects residential areas to the network of collector roadways.
- **Church Street (Collector) –** Church Street connects to arterial streets that lead into the city.
- **Main Street (Collector) –** Main Street connects to arterial streets that lead into the city.
- **Rising Sun Road (Collector) –** Rising Sun Road connects to arterial streets that lead into the city.
- **Culver Street (Local Street) –** Culver Street connects residential areas to the network of collector roadways.
- **Pleasant Street (Local Street) –** Pleasant Street connects residential areas to the network of collector roadways.
- **Canyon Way (Arterial) –** Canyon Way is a I-80 frontage street and is an important arterial that connects to South Auburn Street and Placer Hills Road.
- **Placer Hills (Arterial) –** Placer Hills is an important arterial that connects to South Auburn Street and Canyon Way.
- **Tokayana Way (Arterial) –** Tokayana is an important arterial that connects to South Auburn Street, Placer Hills Road, and Ben Taylor Road. A short segment of this roadway is within the city limits.
- **Ben Taylor Road (Arterial) –** Ben Taylor is an important arterial that connects to South Auburn Street, Grass Valley Street, Church Street, and Main Street. A short segment of this roadway is within the city limits.

3.2.3 Parking

The provision of parking is important to residents as the city, especially for those not within walking distance of downtown as it does not have a robust and convenient transit system. While the General Plan envisions pedestrian and bicycle routes throughout the community, they have not yet been fully implemented to provide full access to the community. Appropriately designed and located parking is important to the historic downtown, as well as other businesses that rely on the traveling public. Parking is expensive to provide and maintain and can detract from the walkability and aesthetic quality of the built environment if not well designed. Shared parking is encouraged as is satellite parking near shopping, design for rideshare, and flexibility in the requirements for the number of parking spaces.

3.2.4 Bicycle Routes

The only existing bicycle facility within the City of Colfax is a Class II bike lane along one side of Rising Sun Road and Grass Valley Street. The bicycle pathway classifications are defined as follows:

- Class I are bicycle pathways that are fully separated from any traffic lanes, either in a setback landscaped corridor adjacent to the road, or in a totally separated corridor apart from the street.
- Class II bicycle pathways are within the right-of-way of streets, usually collectors and arterials. The lanes are up to seven feet wide, located adjacent to the vehicle travel lanes with signage and striping on the pavement demarking the lane.
- Class III bicycle pathways are shared usage of streets with no specific separation of different modes of traffic. Street signage is often used to designate a roadway as a bicycle route.
- Class IV is a separated bikeway for the exclusive use of bicycles and includes a separation required between the separated bikeway and the through vehicular traffic. The separation may include, but is not limited to, grade separation, flexible posts, inflexible posts, inflexible barriers, or on-street parking.

3.2.5 Pedestrians

Pedestrian needs can usually be accommodated by the construction of sidewalks and pathways, and in areas with little or no development, adequate shoulders (4 to 6 feet wide) should be provided for pedestrians. The use of pedestrian and bicycle facilities to link areas of home, work, school, and commercial uses can be used to reduce traffic and air pollution.

3.2.6 Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT)

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines establish criteria for determining the significance of transportation impacts as they would affect greenhouse gas emissions and air quality. Vehicle Miles Travelled (VMT) estimates the number of vehicle miles needed by resident in the city for work, recreation, and services, and compares the estimate against local or statewide figures. The intent

is to reduce the amount of VMT by providing mobility options such as trails, public transit, dedicated paths, and through design by ensuring that homes and services are close enough to encourage active transportation.[1] Active transportation is human-powered mobility, primarily walking or bicycling.

The previous level of service (LOS) metric remains important to determining when roadways should be expanded, but LOS is no longer a threshold for determining environmental impacts. Because LOS remains an important planning tool, the City will retain LOS as a general plan policy but will also adopt VMT standards to evaluate new development. Because of the rural nature of the city, and the lack of regular transit options, the VMT reduction strategies available to the city are limited. There are valid methods of reducing VMT such as connecting sidewalks and trails and making it easier for residents to park once and run several errands. Other means of reducing VMT include encouraging infill development near services, allowing mixed use where commercial and residential uses can share a building or a property, and supporting a vibrant downtown.

3.3 Future Circulation Conditions

Future circulation needs and improvements must be based on the impacts of the land use plan for the entire planning area. The land use plan forecasts future population and its impact on circulation. New development consistent with the General Plan may cause an increase in traffic on affected streets and roadways that could lead to the roadway being widened, or intersection improvements such as signals, timing changes, or redesign. Even with a reduction of VMT realized through land use design and connectivity, it is likely that future development will lead to additional traffic on all the roadways in Colfax.

3.4 Future Road Design

The wide roads of more urban areas are often difficult to achieve in Colfax because of existing buildings, topography, or simply that wide roads in some areas would be counter to the needs of the residents. While curb, gutter, and sidewalk with streetlights, and traffic signals may be appropriate in the downtown or busy commercial areas, a more rural road design with minimal improvements, only the road and individual driveway approaches may be reasonable in low traffic volume areas. The roadway standards, therefore, will vary depending on where in the City the road is located, and what types of land use the road is intended to service.

[1] Active transportation directly replaces motor vehicle miles traveled, so these modes are effective at conserving fuel, reducing vehicle emissions, bridging the first- and last-mile gap, and improving individual and public health. Bicycles, electric bikes, wheelchairs, scooters, and even walking are all considered active transportation.

3.5 Circulation Goals, Policies, and Implementation Measures

Goal 3.1	Create a problem free and safe transportation system in Colfax.

Policy 3.1.1 Strive to maintain a level of service "C" service standard for city intersections and roadways.

Policy 3.1.2 Ensure that roadways are built to standards meeting long-term needs by evaluating current and future land uses.

Policy 3.1.3 Ensure that roadways are complete streets meeting the needs of all users, including bicyclists, public transit users, children, seniors, persons with disabilities, pedestrians, motorists, and movers of commercial goods.

Policy 3.1.4 Use road and intersection improvement projects as an opportunity to improve the aesthetic quality of the intersection, roadway, and frontage improvements. Such improvements could include sidewalk installations, landscaping, medians, improved street lighting or pavement treatments.

Policy 3.1.5 To the extent that funding is available and feasible, ensure that city roadways are maintained and repaired as needed. As needed, the City will also coordinate with Caltrans and Placer County to address needed maintenance of roadways within the city-limits and City's SOI in order to provide safe driving conditions in the community.

Implementation Measures

3.1.A Monitor standards and requirements for future development of residential and commercial land, noting and prioritizing needed improvements such as streets, wastewater distribution/treatment system and stormwater system. These needed improvements will be included in the City's Capital Improvement Program.

3.1.B Update Engineering Design Standards to ensure that all new roadway projects and major reconstruction projects provide appropriate and adequate rights-of-way for all users including bicyclists, pedestrians, transit riders, and motorists, except where pedestrians and bicyclists are prohibited by law from using a given facility.

3.1.C Require that dedication and improvements of rights-of-way following City design standards by roadway classification except as determined by the City Council in areas where the City determines that such improvements are either infeasible or undesirable.

3.1.D	Land uses that generate a high incidence of auto traffic, such as drive-thru facilities, convenience stores, fast food outlets, shopping centers, apartment projects, and large subdivisions shall be required to submit a site-specific traffic impact report, and commit to improvements, prior to construction or expansion of such facilities.

Goal 3.2 **Reduce vehicle miles travelled.**

Policy 3.2.1	Require that design of new construction, and major remodel of existing buildings, allow for alternative forms of transportation by providing necessary facilities, such as bicycle racks, walkways, paths, and connections, as well as ride share parking.
Policy 3.2.2	Promote the development of bikeways, sidewalks, pedestrian pathways, and multi-use paths that connect residential neighborhoods with other neighborhoods, schools, employment centers, commercial centers and public open space, and that separate bicyclists, skateboarders, and pedestrians from vehicular traffic whenever possible.
Policy 3.2.3	Ensure that pedestrian facilities follow logical routes providing connections between transportation nodes and land uses, including bicycle and pedestrian connections to transit stops, buses that can accommodate bicycles, and park-and-ride lots, so that the pedestrian facilities serve the transportation needs of residents, and are not constructed as "sidewalks to nowhere."

Implementation Measures

3.2.A	Create an integrated network of pedestrian connections throughout the planning area.
3.2.B	As appropriate, use transportation systems management techniques to lower vehicle miles traveled and to decrease air pollution emissions.
3.2.C	Develop a Walkways, Trails, and Bikeways Master Plan that incorporates the recommendations of the City of Colfax Bikeway Master Plan, and other planning proposals as appropriate, to plan the location and development of future trails and active transportation routes in the city and the vicinity. The Master Plan will also consider the following: • The city bicycle network will connect with the countywide bicycle network. The City will encourage and work with the County in development of a countywide bicycle network.

- Signage should be provided (where automobile traffic merges with or intersects bicycle traffic) to notify automobile drivers of the presence of cyclists.
- Repair or development of railroad crossings should be done in a way that allows safe crossing by bicycles and pedestrians.
- The timing of traffic lights and sensitivity of traffic sensing equipment should accommodate bicycles.

3.2.D Partner with others to seek funding for improvements such as the Safe Routes to School program, or other programs to facilitate the planning, design, and implementation of eligible projects to improve the safety and accessibility of pedestrian and bicycle routes.

3.2.E Implement traffic calming techniques to protect neighborhoods and residents from adverse traffic impacts.

Goal 3.3 **Ensure an efficient network of streets for vehicles, as well as provide an adequate supply of parking.**

Policy 3.3.1 Maintain and implement a comprehensive on- and off-street parking system that serves the needs of residents and businesses while supporting the use of multiple modes of transportation.

Policy 3.3.2 Require transportation systems planned and constructed in conjunction with significant development projects, including roads, trails, bikeways, and other improvements, to provide links to the existing transportation network.

Policy 3.3.3 Limit access points, parking, turn lanes, and intersections of streets and highways based upon the road's classification and function. Access points must be located a sufficient distance away from major intersections to allow for safe, efficient operation.

Policy 3.3.4 Limit road widening and other major change to the characteristic street pattern, and instead, encourage added traffic to be diverted as directly as possible to Interstate 80.

Implementation Measures

3.3.A Develop a long-term parking plan and appropriate development fees for the City as a whole, or for portions as appropriate.

3.3.B Develop parking areas in the perimeter of downtown to create an adequate parking supply to serve existing businesses and future development.

3.3.C Encourage shared parking arrangements for nearby and compatible land uses.

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4.0 Noise

4.1 Authority and Purpose

California law requires that a general plan include an element that addresses noise. This element was prepared to meet the requirements of Government Code Section 65302(f)) and addresses both noise and vibration. Noise is recognized as an environmental pollutant that can threaten quality of life and human health by causing annoyance or disrupting sleep and everyday activities. In extreme cases excessive noise can cause health problems. This noise element identifies noise in the city from a variety of sources and supports a pattern of land uses designed to minimize exposure of residents to excessive noise. This element includes methods that could address existing and foreseeable noise problems and areas where more noise may be acceptable.

4.2 Background

All sound levels referred to in this element are in A-weighted which de-emphasizes the very low and very high frequencies of sound much like the human ear. Most community noise standards utilize A-weighting, as it provides a higher degree of correlation with human annoyance and health effects.

4.3 Terminology

A decibel (dB) is a unit of measurement that indicates the relative amplitude of a sound. A measure of 0 decibels indicates the lowest sound level that the healthy, unimpaired human ear can detect. A one dB change is the minimum generally perceivable in a laboratory setting. Typically, it takes a change of 3-5 decibels before the change in noise is perceptible outside of the laboratory.

A single noise event like a car door closing or loud voices can exceed a noise limit, but likely only for a brief period. It would be unreasonable to regulate for a single event therefore noise studies often use noise averages to describe the character of sound over time. Equivalent Noise Level (L_{eq}) is the measure most used to describe average noise levels. Noise is usually

DEFINITIONS

A-Weighted Sound Level (dB): The sound pressure level obtained by using the A-weighting filter of a sound level meter, expressed in decibels (dB). A-weighted de-emphasizes the very low and very high frequencies of sound in a manner like the human ear.

Community Noise Equivalent Level (CNEL): The sound pressure level during a 24-hour day, obtained after addition of approximately five decibels to sound levels in the evening from 7:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. and ten decibels to sound levels in the night before 7:00 a.m. and after 10:00 p.m.

Day/Night Average Sound Level (L_{dn}): The sound pressure level during a 24-hour day, obtained after addition of ten decibels to sound levels in the night after 10:00 p.m. and before 7:00 a.m.

Equivalent Sound Level (L_{eq}): The sound pressure level containing the same total energy as a time varying signal over a given sample period. A single value that expresses the time-averaged of a fluctuating sound level. The L_{eq} is typically computed over 1, 8 and 24-hour sample periods.

averaged over the period of an hour, but L_{eq} can describe any series of noise events of arbitrary duration.

People notice noise increases more during the evening and at night because background noise levels are low. Noise can also interfere with the ability to sleep, therefore 24-hour descriptors have been developed that lower noise thresholds during the evening and night. A similar change in acceptable noise threshold can be made for weekend and holiday times when more people are at home and the expectation of quiet is higher.

4.4 Existing Noise Sources

4.4.1 Mobile Sources

The combination of topography, and the closeness of development to these noise sources means that Interstate 80 and the railroad can be heard throughout the city. Figure 4-1 shows the existing and future contours from these noise sources.

Other mobile sources include trucks, cars, motorcycles, leaf blowers, lawn mowers, and other portable maintenance equipment. These are considered normal sounds of a city and are regulated by the California Vehicle Code or the City's noise ordinance.

4.4.2 Traffic Noise

Movement of cars on roadways generates noise. While some of the noise comes from the engine and exhaust, at higher speeds tires and wind noise predominate. Major roadways such as I-80, State Route 174, and City arterials carry larger volumes of traffic at higher speeds. Noise from the interstate can be heard throughout the City depending on weather conditions and traffic volume. Table 4-1 shows the existing noise levels for roadways in Colfax and Table 4-2 shows future noise levels calculated from projected traffic data for roadways. Figure 4-1 illustrates the noise contours in Colfax by 60, 65, and 75 dB L_{dn} thresholds.

TABLE 4-1
EXISTING ROADWAY NOISE LEVELS

Roadway Segment	Volume (Average Daily Trips)	CNEL at 50 Feet	Distance to CNEL Contour (feet)			
			70 dBA	65 dBA	60 dBA	55 dBA
Interstate 80						
All of Colfax	30,500	75.1	109 ft	234 ft	505 ft	1,087 ft
Auburn Avenue						
South of I-80 WB Ramps	4,608	57.2	-	-	33 ft	70 ft
Between I-80 WB Ramps and SR 174 Overcrossing	6,768	58.9	-	-	42 ft	91 ft

Roadway Segment	Volume (Average Daily Trips)	CNEL at 50 Feet	Distance to CNEL Contour (feet)			
			70 dBA	65 dBA	60 dBA	55 dBA
Between SR 174 Overcrossing and Central Street	9,261	60.3	-	-	52 ft	112 ft
Between Central Street and Grass Valley Street	5,535	58.0	-	-	37 ft	80 ft
Canyon Way						
North of I-80 EB Ramp	801	49.6	-	-	-	-
Between I-80 EB Ramps and SR 174 Overcrossing	4,914	57.5	-	-	34 ft	74 ft
Between SR 174 Overcrossing and Iowa Hill Road	1,719	52.9	-	-	-	36 ft
Between Illinoistown Road and I-80 EB Ramp	1,440	57.4	-	-	33 ft	72 ft
South of I-80 EB Ramp	324	50.9	-	-	-	-
Grass Valley Street						
West of Rising Sun Road	198	43.6	-	-	-	-
Between Rising Sun Road and Main Street	3,771	56.4	-	-	-	62 ft
Between Main Street and Auburn Avenue	5,409	57.9	-	-	36 ft	78 ft
East of Auburn Avenue	45	37.1	-	-	-	-
Rising Sun Road						
East of Ben Taylor Road/ Tokayana Way	27	34.9	-	-	-	-
Between Ben Taylor Road and Grass Valley Street	3,744	56.3	-	-	-	61 ft
Main Street						
South of Grass Valley Street	1,881	53.3	-	-	-	39 ft
Between Grass Valley Street and Dinky Avenue	1,791	53.1	-	-	-	38 ft
Between Dinky Avenue and Central Street	1,404	52.1	-	-	-	-
Forest Hill Street						
Between Grass Valley Street and Dinky Avenue	54	37.9	-	-	-	-
Central Street (SR 174)						
North of Main Street	4,779	64.7	-	48 ft	103 ft	223 ft
Between Main Street and Auburn Avenue	4,293	62.1	-	32 ft	69 ft	149 ft
West of Auburn Avenue	234	38.1	-	-	-	-
Dinky Avenue						
East of Foresthill Street	9	30.1	-	-	-	-
Between Main Street and Foresthill Street	27	34.9	-	-	-	-

Roadway Segment	Volume (Average Daily Trips)	CNEL at 50 Feet	Distance to CNEL Contour (feet)			
			70 dBA	65 dBA	60 dBA	55 dBA
Tokayana Way/Ben Taylor Road						
North of Rising Sun Road	3,222	58.3	-	-	38 ft	83 ft
South of Rising Sun Road	1,179	53.9	-	-	-	42 ft
West of Ben Taylor Road	27	37.5	-	-	-	-
North of Placer Hills Road	549	50.6	-	-	-	-
South of Placer Hills Road	1,053	53.4	-	-	-	39 ft
Placer Hills Road						
Between Tokayana Way and I-80 WB Ramp	1,026	50.7	-	-	-	-
Between Illinoistown Road and I-80 WB Ramp	1,548	52.5	-	-	-	34 ft

Source: Traffic noise levels on all Colfax roadways were calculated using the FHWA roadway noise prediction model in conjunction with the trip generation rate identified by Fehr and Peers Transportation Consultants.

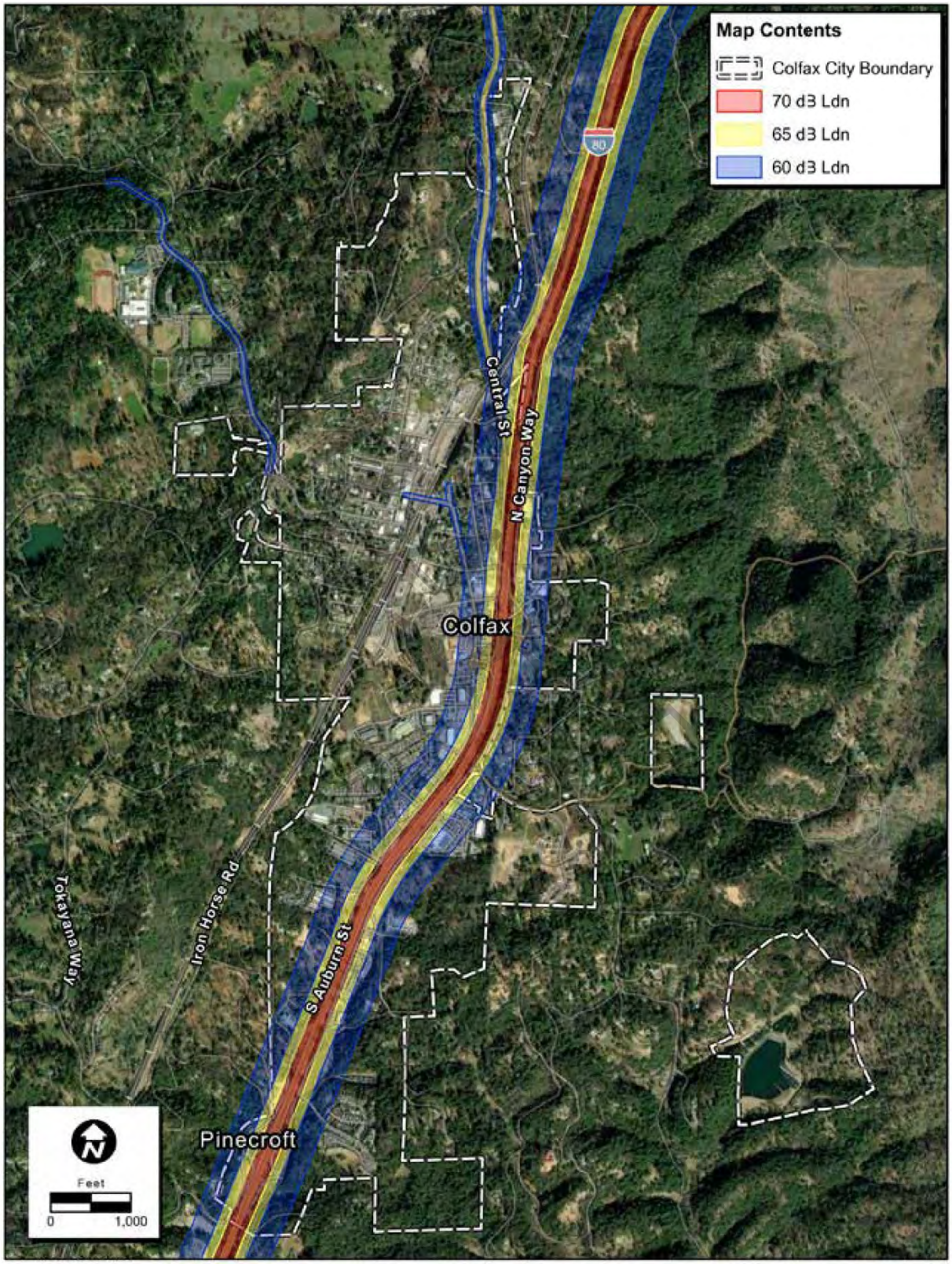
TABLE 4-2
GENERAL PLAN BUILDOUT ROADWAY NOISE LEVELS

Roadway Segment	Volume (Average Daily Trips)	CNEL at 50 Feet	Distance to CNEL Contour (feet)			
			70 dBA	65 dBA	60 dBA	55 dBA
Interstate 80						
All of Colfax	44,200	76.7	139 ft	300 ft	646 ft	1,392 ft
Auburn Avenue						
South of I-80 WB Ramps	5,221	57.8	-	-	36 ft	77 ft
Between I-80 WB Ramps and SR 174 Overcrossing	7,256	59.2	-	-	44 ft	95 ft
Between SR 174 Overcrossing and Central Street	9,586	60.4	-	-	53 ft	115 ft
Between Central Street and Grass Valley Street	6,837	58.9	-	-	43 ft	92 ft
Canyon Way						
North of I-80 EB Ramp	1,269	51.6	-	-	-	-
Between I-80 EB Ramps and SR 174 Overcrossing	4,984	57.6	-	-	34 ft	74 ft
Between SR 174 Overcrossing and Iowa Hill Road	1,968	53.5	-	-	-	40 ft
Between Illinois town Road and I-80 EB Ramp	2,228	59.3	-	-	45 ft	96 ft
South of I-80 EB Ramp	472	52.5	-	-	-	34 ft
Grass Valley Street						
West of Rising Sun Road	362	46.2	-	-	-	-
Between Rising Sun Road and Main Street	4,375	57.0	-	-	-	68 ft

Roadway Segment	Volume (Average Daily Trips)	CNEL at 50 Feet	Distance to CNEL Contour (feet)			
			70 dBA	65 dBA	60 dBA	55 dBA
Between Main Street and Auburn Avenue	5,811	58.2	-	-	38 ft	82 ft
East of Auburn Avenue	80	39.6	-	-	-	-
Rising Sun Road						
West of Ben Taylor Road/Tokayana Way	40	36.6	-	-	-	33
Between Ben Taylor Road and Grass Valley Street	4,791	57.4	-	-	34 ft	72 ft
Main Street						
South of Grass Valley Street	2,277	54.2	-	-	-	44 ft
Between Grass Valley Street and Dinky Avenue	2,136	53.9	-	-	-	42 ft
Between Dinky Avenue and Central Street	1,714	52.9	-	-	-	36 ft
Forest Hill Street						
Between Grass Valley Street and Dinky Avenue	69	39.0	-	-	-	-
Central Street (SR 174)						
North of Main Street	6,814	66.3	-	61 ft	131 ft	282 ft
Between Main Street and Auburn Avenue	6,904	64.2	-	44 ft	65 ft	204 ft
West of Auburn Avenue	455	41.0	-	-	-	-
Dinky Avenue						
East of Foresthill Street	18	33.1	-	-	-	-
Between Main Street and Foresthill Street	47	37.3	-	-	-	-
Tokayana Way/Ben Taylor Road						
North of Rising Sun Road	3,618	58.8	-	-	42 ft	90 ft
South of Rising Sun Road	1,558	55.1	-	-	-	51 ft
West of Ben Taylor Road	44	39.6	-	-	-	-
Placer Hills Road						
Between Tokayana Way and I-80 WB Ramp	2,593	54.7	-	-	-	48 ft
Between Illinoistown Road and I-80 WB Ramp	3,136	55.6	-	-	-	54 ft

Source: Traffic noise levels on all Colfax roadways were calculated using the FHWA roadway noise prediction model in conjunction with the trip generation rate identified by Fehr and Peers Transportation Consultants.

FIGURE 4-1
EXISTING TRAFFIC NOISE CONTOURS

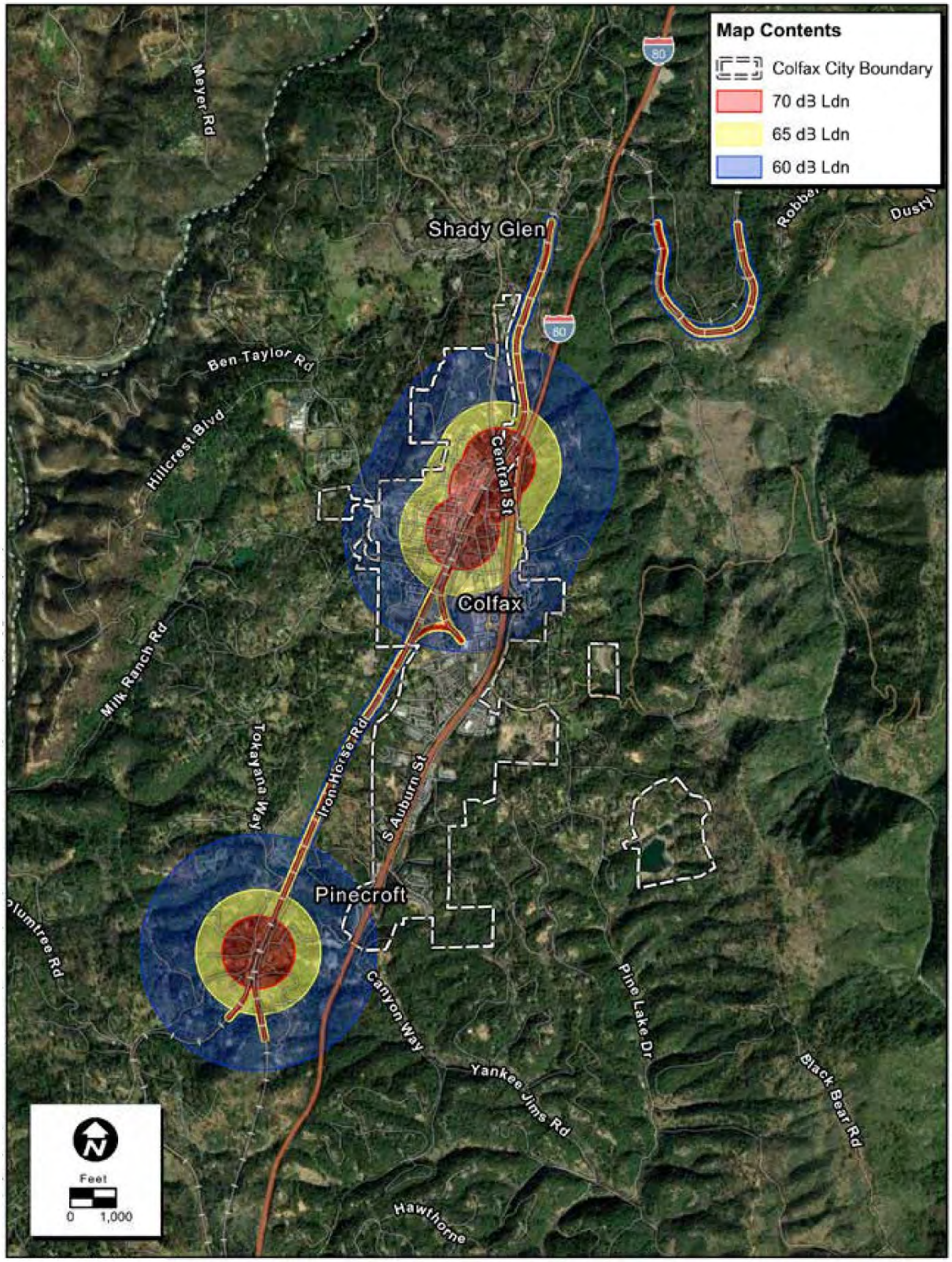


4.4.3 Union Pacific Railroad

The Union Pacific Railroad runs north and south through Colfax and was essential to the founding of the town and still plays an important role in connecting the country by rail. The railroad has freight and passenger trains that generate intermittent, loud sounds during their journey through the city. Noise is different for each train as the length, weight, locomotive type, speed, and whistle all vary. Locomotives can generate maximum noise levels of approximately 80 to 85 dBA while train cars generate noise levels of about 70 to 75 dBA at 100 feet from the railway tracks.

Trains are required to sound their warning whistle near "at-grade" vehicle crossings. However, because Colfax is designated quiet zone trains that operate along the Union Pacific Railroad have been directed to cease the routine sounding their horns when approaching public highway-rail grade crossings. Train horns may still be used in emergency situations or to comply with other Federal regulations or railroad operating rules. Figure 4-2 illustrates the railroad crossing and noise contours in Colfax by 60, 65, and 75 dB L_{dn} thresholds.

FIGURE 4-2
RAILROAD AND RAIL CROSSING NOISE CONTOURS



4.4.4 Construction Noise

As the city develops, infill and rebuilding of sites will occur more frequently. The construction process can be noisy and affect people who live and work nearby. Construction is part of any city and while it can be considered temporary, construction can also last for several years if the project is large or complex. Regardless of duration, construction noise impacts are real and will need to be considered along with any development project. Simple things like setting reasonable construction times, placement of staging areas, ensuring that mufflers and noise suppression features of equipment are working, can help limit the noise intrusion into the surrounding area.

Construction activities would include site preparation, grading, building construction, paving, and architectural coating. Such activities would require graders, scrapers, and tractors during site preparation; graders, dozers, and tractors during grading; cranes, forklifts, generators, tractors, and welders during building construction; pavers, rollers, mixers, tractors, and paving equipment during paving; and air compressors during architectural coating. Typical operating cycles for these types of construction equipment may involve 1 or 2 minutes of full power operation followed by 3 to 4 minutes at lower power settings. However, low and full power operating cycles could last for several hours, days, or even weeks at a time. Other primary sources of noise would be random incidents, which would last less than one minute (such as dropping large pieces of equipment or the hydraulic movement of machinery lifts).

The City regulates noise from construction based on time of day and day of the week, recognizing that most residents are home in the evening and on holidays and have an expectation of quiet during those times. The federal transit agency considers 85 dBA to be the threshold for noise during construction near residential areas. Portable sound reducing fences, mufflers, and even selecting different types of equipment can all affect noise from construction. In general, construction in Colfax is for low to mid-rise buildings and unlikely to need large construction equipment. Should a large or complex project be proposed, the project-specific environmental analysis, and the required noise study will calculate the anticipated noise and recommend mitigation to address the impact.

4.4.5 Construction Truck Trips

Construction activities would also cause increased noise along access routes to and from the site due to movement of equipment and workers. Mobile source noise would increase along access routes to and from the project site during construction. However, this source of noise would be temporary and would cease upon completion of the proposed project. It is anticipated that hauling would occur along major city roadways and may travel in areas near homes or other noise sensitive uses. While individual trucks will generate noise as they pass by a receptor, the intermittent noise would not exceed a noise threshold which is based on hourly or daily noise levels. Additionally, construction activities would only take place within the allowable hours specified by City code.

4.4.6 Fixed Noise Sources

Any fixed or mobile source not preempted from local control by federal or state regulations. Fixed noise sources which are typically of concern include HVAC systems, generators, gas or diesel motors, transformers, outdoor speakers, air compressors and similar equipment. The types of uses which may typically operate the noise sources described above include, but are not limited to industrial facilities, lumber mills, trucking operations, tire shops, auto maintenance shops, metal fabricating shops, shopping centers, drive-up restaurant windows, car washes, loading docks, batch plants, bottling and canning plants, recycling centers, electric generating stations, race tracks, landfills, sand and gravel operations, and athletic fields. In the case of a power outage or public safety power shutoff (PSPS) event, generators may be necessary to provide power to residences in the community. PSPS events may last days given the duration of potentially dangerous conditions and the time needed to inspect and repair equipment in an affected area. Given these circumstances and the need for community members to power their residences the City would exempt generators from established noise thresholds for the duration of a power outage or PSPS event.

The following terms are used in this element and in the noise ordinance to describe land uses that are sensitive to noise.

Noise-Sensitive Land Uses:

- Residential development, except temporary dwellings
- Schools: preschool to secondary, college and university, and specialized education and training
- Hospitals, nursing, and personal care
- Churches
- Hotels, motels, and bed and breakfast lodging

Outdoor Activity Areas: Common outdoor activity areas of multi-family dwellings, back yards of single-family dwellings, and designated outdoor recreation/activity areas for transient lodging, hospitals, nursing, and personal care facilities.

4.4.7 Fixed Noise Sources in Colfax

Stationary noise sources range from loudspeakers at restaurant drive-through ordering kiosks, to compressors at garages, and machinery or mechanical equipment associated with industrial uses. For this reason, land uses are often grouped together so that the noise generated by one land use is tolerated by adjacent and similar land use. Industrial land uses for example are best located near busy roads and railroads and away from homes. Key stationary noise sources in the city include the lumber mill, railroad operations, and commercial auto and truck repair. These uses are essential to the commercial needs of the City and policies in this element are designed to help protect their ability to function by limiting new sensitive receptors.

4.5 Effects of Noise

Hearing Loss

When sounds are too intense and prolonged, the hearing receptor cells, or "hair cells", can be damaged. The inner ear (cochlea) is a coiled tube about 34 millimeters long, containing about 17,000 hair cells. Hearing loss can occur along all parts of the cochlea. The degree of hearing loss depends not only on the injury at any one location but upon the spread of hearing loss in the inner ear. Hearing loss usually occurs above the speaking ranges and spreads downward. Damage can, therefore, be substantial before hearing loss is noticed.

Most experts believe that noise levels of 70 dBA or more contribute to loss of hearing over a lifetime. Clear evidence is available that noises above 80 dBA can contribute to inner ear damage and eventually hearing loss if they are frequently and regularly encountered. Trucks, trains, sports cars, and motorcycles all exceed 80 dBA at 50 feet. Amplified music at close range may reach 120 dBA. In industry, excessively loud machinery is common. Generally, noise levels above 80 dBA in a work environment require some form of ear protection. The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) Occupational Noise Exposure (§1926.52) sets noise level standards for workers exposed to noise for an extended duration of time. OSHA sets the sound level as 90 dBA for an 8-hour work week. When noise level is increased by 5dBA, the amount of time a person is exposed to a continuous level of noise is cut in half (noise level increases to 95 dBA, time exposed to noise is cut to four hours). Personal Protective and Life Saving Equipment (§1926.101) requires ear protective devices be provided and used whenever the noise level or duration to exposures specified in Permissible Noise Exposures, in § 1926.52, cannot be reduced.

Speech and Sleep Interference

Speech interference begins occurring at about 40-45 dBA and becomes severe at 60 dBA and above. For this reason, the department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) establishes an interior noise level of 45 dBA L_{dn} (day-night average sound level) as stated in § 51.101 of Title 24 of the Code of Federal Regulation (24 CFR) and §1207.4 of the California Building Code (CBC). Excessive background noise can reduce the amount and quality of verbal exchange and adversely affect education, family lifestyles, occupational efficiency, and quality of one's relaxation.

To protect a person from sleep interference sound levels should not rise above 35-40 dBA. Whether a person is actively awakened by a particular noise will depend upon noise levels, characteristics of noise, stage of sleep, the person's motivation to awaken, age, sex, and so on. Elderly people and persons who are ill are particularly susceptible to sleep interference caused by noise.

Stress Inducement

Noise as a source of stress is a likely contributor to what many medical authorities believe are stress related diseases such as ulcers, high blood pressure, heart disease, and arthritis. As a source of stress, noise may also be a contributing factor in mental illness, anxiety, and psychological distress. This

distress, in turn, can lead to instability, sexual impotency, headaches, nausea, general anxiety, and changes in general mood.

Performance and Learning

Work performance can be adversely affected by noise through distraction and through the physical reactions previously described. While noise does not seem to affect overall work productivity, it can reduce accuracy of work, particularly of complex tasks, and inhibit learning. Noise can also increase fatigue, distraction, and irritability on the part of the employee or student. Studies conducted in Europe recommend 55 dBA as an upper limit for peak-interfering noise in classrooms. Studies conducted in the United States determined typical mean levels for primary school are 56 dBA when students are participating in quiet activities (Viet et al. 2014).

Annoyance

Many factors affect how annoyed people will be by environmental noise. A first consideration is the characteristics of the noise itself including loudness, duration, steadiness, or whether it contains speech or music. Secondly, background noise levels affect the determination of how intrusive a particular noise is perceived. Thirdly, the time of day and seasonal variations can make a difference. People are most likely to be disturbed at home, at night, and during warm weather when windows and doors are open.

4.6 Noise Standards

The State of California's noise insulation standards are codified in the California Code of Regulations, Title 24, Building Standards Administrative Code, Part 2, California Building Code. These noise standards are applied to new construction for the purpose of providing suitable interior noise environments. Noise studies must be prepared when a project seeks to place people near major transportation noise sources, and where such noise sources create an exterior noise level of 60 dBA CNEL or higher. A project must demonstrate that structures have been designed to limit interior noise in habitable rooms to meet the Noise Compatibility Standards set forth in Table 4-3, Noise Compatibility Standards for People.

Table 4-3 provides the City with a tool to gauge the compatibility of land uses relative to existing and future noise levels. The table reflects permanent noise sources and not temporary events such as construction or special events. The City allows for flexibility for outdoor events such as fairs, concerts, outdoor dining, etc. This is essential for the events to be successful and reflects support for these activities.

TABLE 4-3
NOISE COMPATIBILITY STANDARDS

Type of Development	Exterior Noise Standard (CNEL)	Interior Noise Standard (CNEL)
Low Density Residential (single-family, duplex, mobile-home)	60[b]	45
Medium or High Density Residential (Multi-Family, Apartments)	65[c]	45[d]
Lodging (Motels/Hotels)	65	45[d]
Mixed Use/Infill Development	70	45[d]
Schools, Libraries, Community Centers, Religious Institutions, Hospitals, Nursing Homes	70	45
Auditoriums, Concert Halls, Amphitheaters	70	N/A
Playgrounds, Neighborhood Parks	70	N/A
Outdoor Recreation (Commercial and Public)	75	N/A
Commercial (Office/Retail)	70	60
Industrial, Manufacturing, and Utilities	75	70

For new development that generates noise a stationary noise threshold is important as the noise can be intermittent and therefore not exceed a 24-hour CNEL threshold, but still cause disturbance affecting the surrounding land uses. For these types of noise an L_{eq} threshold is appropriate and would cover noise from land uses such as carwashes, compressors, and loudspeakers.

4.7 Vibration

Sources of vibration include natural phenomena (e.g., earthquakes, landslides) and those introduced by human activity (e.g., explosions, machinery, traffic, trains, construction equipment). Vibration sources may be continuous, (e.g., operating factory machinery) or transient in nature (e.g., construction). Vibration levels can be depicted in terms of amplitude and frequency, relative to displacement, velocity, or acceleration.

Typical outdoor sources of perceptible ground vibration are construction equipment, steel-wheeled trains, and traffic on rough roads. If a roadway is smooth, the ground vibration is rarely perceptible. The range of interest is from approximately 50 vibration decibels (VdB), which is the typical background vibration-velocity level, to 100 VdB, which is the general threshold where minor damage can occur in fragile buildings. Construction activities can generate enough ground vibrations to pose a risk to nearby structures. Constant or transient vibrations can weaken structures, crack facades, and disturb occupants.

Indoor sources of vibration can come from heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) equipment, and manufacturing processes. Even the fan on a personal computer can cause a small vibration. Most of the interior sources can be screened, or isolated to avoid affecting people who live and work near the source.

Usually, vibration is an annoyance, but with fragile buildings, addressing vibration impacts is important. Vibration amplitudes are commonly expressed in peak particle velocity (PPV) or root-mean-square (RMS) vibration velocity. PPV and RMS vibration velocity are normally described in inches per second (in/sec) or in millimeters per second. PPV is defined as the maximum instantaneous positive or negative peak of a vibration signal. PPV is typically used in monitoring transient and impact vibration and has been found to correlate well with the stresses experienced by buildings.

Although PPV is appropriate for evaluating the potential for building damage, it is not always suitable for evaluating human response. It takes some time for the human body to respond to vibration signals. In a sense, the human body responds to average vibration amplitude. As with airborne sound, the RMS velocity is often expressed in decibel notation as vibration decibels (VdB). The typical background vibration-velocity level in residential areas is approximately 50 VdB. Ground vibration is normally perceptible to humans at approximately 65 VdB. For most people, a vibration-velocity level of 75 VdB is the approximate dividing line between barely perceptible and distinctly perceptible levels.

One of the impacts of construction is vibration that can be felt by people. Vibration can be a short-term sensation like when a heavy truck passes, however if several trucks were to pass by, or machinery nearby creates a constant vibration, the vibration can have negative effects on people. What starts as a minor irritation in people from vibration, over time turns into feelings of unease, disruption of sleep, and result in a constant annoyance that reduces the enjoyment of their home. Vibration can also disrupt delicate procedures such as surgery and manufacturing.

Vibrations generated by construction activity can be transient, random, or continuous. Transient construction vibrations are generated by blasting, impact pile driving, and wrecking balls. Continuous vibrations result from vibratory pile drivers, large pumps, and compressors. Random vibration can result from jackhammers, pavement breakers, and heavy construction equipment. Table 4-4 describes the general human response to different ground vibration-velocity levels.

TABLE 4-4
HUMAN RESPONSE TO DIFFERENT LEVELS OF GROUND NOISE AND VIBRATION

Vibration-Velocity Level	Human Reactions
65 VdB	Approximate threshold of perception.
75 VdB	Approximate dividing line between barely perceptible and distinctly perceptible. Many people find that transportation-related vibration at this level is unacceptable.
85 VdB	Vibration acceptable only if there are an infrequent number of events per day.

Notes: VdB = vibration decibels referenced to 1 micro inch per second and based on the root-mean-square (RMS) velocity amplitude.
Source: FTA 2018

4.8 Noise Goals, Policies, and Implementation Measures

Goal 4.1	**A city with appropriate noise and vibration levels that support a range of places from quiet neighborhoods to active outdoor events.**
Policy 4.1.1	**Require new development to meet the noise compatibility standards identified in Table 4-3.**
Policy 4.1.2	**Require the use of integrated design-related noise reduction measures for both interior and exterior areas prior to the use of noise barriers, buffers, or walls to reduce noise levels generated by or affected by new development.**
Policy 4.1.3	**Non-architectural noise attenuation measures such as sound walls, setbacks, barriers, and berms shall be integrated into the design of the project and must be complementary in appearance to the surrounding neighborhood.**
Policy 4.1.4	**Require development proposing to add people in areas where they may be exposed to major noise sources (e.g., roadways, rail lines, aircraft, industrial or other non-transportation noise sources) to conduct a project level noise analysis and implement recommended noise reduction measures.**
Policy 4.1.5	**Maintain the Rail Crossing Quiet Zone and allow the establishment of a full or partial at-grade rail crossing quiet zone.**
Policy 4.1.6	**Ensure the municipal code includes standards for exterior noise that would allow for special events and outdoor entertainment.**
Policy 4.1.7	**Require new development to reduce vibration to 85 VdB or below at the property line.**

Goal 4.2	**Minimize exposure to excessive noise by ensuring compatible land uses relative to noise sources.**
Policy 4.2.1	Require that effective noise mitigation measures be incorporated into the design of new noise-generating and new noise-sensitive land uses.
Policy 4.2.2	Protect noise-sensitive land uses from high levels of noise by restricting noise-producing land uses from these areas.
Policy 4.2.3	Revise the municipal code to include appropriate interior and exterior noise level standards for existing and future residential areas.

5.0 Community Design

5.1 Authority and Purpose

While the Community Design Element is not a required element, State Law (Government Code Section 65303) allows other elements to be included within the General Plan that will promote the well-planned growth of the designated area.

Community Design is about community building. It concerns the built character, order, and psyche of the city. It is the interrelationship of various components (buildings, the transportation system, open space, vistas, human interactions between each other and the natural environment, heritage, and economics) that when put together make up a total community.

Community Design concerns range from how to build neighborhoods to planning pedestrian ways safe for children to walk to school or for the elderly to cross the street. Design addresses key issues as how to maintain the downtown area as a place where local people as well as visitors want to go. Good Community Design respects the natural environment as well as economic gain and strives to create places for people to feel comfortable with each other and with the built environment.

This element provides an overview of the City of Colfax and seeks to maintain and enhance the community's existing character and preserve the cultural and historical resources which make Colfax a desirable place to live. This element is comprised of three sections. Each section is designed to maintain and enhance the desirable characteristics of Colfax. Community Character addresses the positive physical appearance of the community. Community Design presents specific design guidelines to maintain and promote positive physical qualities of the community. Lastly, Historic Preservation identifies the historic features and cultural heritage of Colfax and sets measures to preserve historic areas.

5.2 The Design Element

5.2.1 Introduction

Design Review is administered by the Planning Director, or for larger projects, by the City Council. Design Review duties are as follows:

- Review and approve, modify, or deny all proposed developments requiring qualified aesthetic and architectural judgment to the end that the general appearance of all proposed developments shall preserve or enhance the physical environment and character of the city.
- Ensure that public projects within the city, such as parks and recreation facilities, historical interpretive facilities, and public buildings, including recreation or cultural facilities, have the benefit of Design Review.

» As directed by the Council, update such architectural and landscape guidelines as may be adjudged and appropriate for:

- Public and private structures, (excluding existing independent one- or two-family homes), signs and landscaping,
- Specific larger-scale developments such as industrial parks, shopping centers, mixed use planned developments, or housing subdivisions,
- All structures in "Special Historic Preservation Areas."

5.2.2 Purpose

The purpose of Design Guidelines is to foster good design, provide a feeling of civic pride, encourage investment, and to improve the area's economic vitality.

Most U.S. cities have traditionally relied on zoning to guide the physical character of the community. Although zoning has adequately regulated the types and locations of land uses, it usually does not address the quality or appearance of development related to such land uses. Visual design guidelines encompass all the physical elements which make up the city and its natural setting. They include the visual quality of the entire city, as well as development patterns of specific areas. Design guidelines will help determine how Colfax will look in the future, how it will function as a community, ensuring it is attractive and livable.

The Community Design Element has been prepared to lend itself to establishing a set of design guidelines for use by property owners undertaking rehabilitation, renovation and new construction projects, for business owners engaging in storefront improvements, for city officials and staff involved in reviewing development applications, and for the general public interested in furthering their understanding of the fundamental design characteristics that make up the historic character in the Historical District. This element and design criteria are intended to be just that an educational guide to compatible and image-enhancing building improvements and development throughout the entire City of Colfax.

Design review is applicable to building exteriors only and most exterior changes, modifications, and additions to an existing building of any type requires a building permit. This includes many minor alterations such as the removal of stairs or window changes and signage changes. Whenever a building or sign permit is required, the criteria established by the applicable ordinances, and this element shall apply.

5.3 Community Character

The City of Colfax is a small community in Placer County. Colfax that is bisected by the Union Pacific Railroad and I-80, both major transportation routes from California to the eastern United States. Much of the agricultural export from California travels east by highway and rail through the city. Although some mining, logging, and fruit growing and packing did take place in the vicinity, the main item of

historical significance has been the railroad. The impact of the railroad can still be seen in the alignment of Main Street with the railroad tracks.

As Colfax continues to grow, challenges to maintain the community's historic character will increase. The appeal of this community is created by numerous positive attributes that form its identity. These attributes include its historic development, close ties to rail and auto transportation, and small-town atmosphere. The community's character should be maintained by preserving the special qualities that form the foundation of Colfax.

The city's character begins in the historic downtown commercial and residential area. However, recent commercial developments in the commercial highway zone have strayed from traditional building materials and design features that have created the look and feel of the city. Recent growth can be linked with the character of the existing community both architecturally and physically.

5.3.1 City Form

Although the city is divided into three distinct sections by the railroad and I-80, Colfax has maintained a relatively compact urban form. The city has developed and evolved around the downtown Historical District along Main Street, between Depot Street and Church Street. This downtown area is the geographical heart of the urban area and has traditionally been the focal point for the community. The highway commercial district adjacent to Auburn Street and Canyon Way are located east of the historic downtown. These areas are dependent upon and cater to thoroughfare traffic and encourage centers for retail, commercial, and other highway-related activities.

To maintain the rural character of Colfax, future growth and development should be orderly and promote a strong urban form. This urban form should reinforce the historic characteristics of the city and maintain the historic downtown area as the focal point.

5.3.2 Gateways

Gateways are distinct entrances into a city or region. When formed by strong building edges, signs, landscaping, or other design elements, they help create a special sense of arrival and departure from an area and promote a sense of place for a community. A gateway location will gradually change over time as the urban area develops. However, the purpose of the gateway is constant. The gateway welcomes both visitors and residents into the community and provides a lasting image upon departure.

Three gateway entrances into Colfax are described below. The character of each entrance and the purpose of each roadway is distinct. The reasons people use these corridors also vary.

Freeway Corridor

Colfax is bisected by I-80, a major transportation route connecting California to the Rocky Mountains. Freeway interchanges and corridors often create the first impression of a city for visitors. This gateway provides a transition from a high-paced highway to a calmer environment. Buildings and signs located along the I-80 corridor should take into consideration the view of drivers from the freeway. This freeway corridor provides an opportunity for travelers along I-80 to recognize this gateway as an invitation into Colfax.

Main Street and Highway 174

Main Street begins at Highway 174, enters the city from the north, and leads into Historic Colfax and the downtown area. Highway 174 provides access to neighboring communities such as Grass Valley and Nevada City, as well as provides a link between Highway 20 and I-80. The Main Street/Highway 174 intersection offers the City the chance to create a gateway to attract visitors using Highway 174 into the downtown area, which can be done with features such as signs, landscaping, and road improvements.

Auburn Street and Highway 174

Highway 174 terminates at its intersection with Auburn Street. This gateway provides access into the highway commercial zone along I-80 and Auburn Street which is located southwest of the historic downtown. The natural setting along Highway 174 quickly transitions into residential and commercial land uses. The abrupt transition produces a strong city edge which presents a clear distinction between the rural natural environment and urban form.

5.3.3 Downtown Revitalization

The downtown business area is in the heart of the historic portion of the city. An economically strong downtown is necessary to maintain unity and pride in the community. The downtown should continue its revitalization efforts to produce a strong and self-sufficient city. Promoting the historic attributes of the downtown should be part of any revitalization effort.

5.3.4 Continuity and Compatibility

Some newer development in Colfax is incompatible with the community's historic character in that it lacks the feel or the appearance of the older parts of town. There is a need to establish continuity between new development and the City's existing historic character. It is important that new commercial and residential growth blend in with the feel and character of Colfax.

For new development to blend in with the character of the existing historic parts of the city, several qualities must be incorporated into site design. The following principles served as a guide the development of the General Plan and the Community Design Element:

- » Neighborhoods must maintain a human scale, and streetscapes and sidewalks should welcome the pedestrian.
- » New housing must be diverse in design and character.
- » Developments must focus on design features and historic characteristics that are positive attributes in Colfax.
- » Developments must maintain established street patterns and provide pedestrian linkages using sidewalks, bikeways, and trails.
- » Development must enhance the natural environment and resources within the city through the establishment of trails and other recreation facilities.

5.4 Community Design Guidelines

The purpose of establishing design guidelines for the City of Colfax is to retain the historic, rural, and mountain feeling of the city during a period of growth and significant increase in density. This section proposes specific design and architectural qualities that create an attractive urban environment. The Design Guidelines contained in this section will be utilized by the City during review of development proposals. Through the implementation of these guidelines the City will promote visual qualities in site development, building design, and landscaping that will enhance the city's appearance.

5.4.1 Design Review General Conditions

5.4.1.1 All conditions of a land use entitlement shall be complied with prior to the approval of occupancy.

5.4.1.2 The development or use by the developer of any activity or structure authorized by a use permit shall constitute acceptance of all conditions and obligations imposed by the City on the permit. The developer by said acceptance waives any challenge as to the validity of project conditions of approval.

5.4.1.3 The location of buildings and structures shall substantially conform to final 'approved' Exhibits, unless amended.

5.4.1.4 The elevations of all buildings and structures shall substantially conform to finally 'approved' Exhibits, unless amended by a major modification or minor modification. The final building plans submitted with the building permit application shall clearly indicate all building materials and colors to be used in construction.

5.4.1.5 All modifications in the final design or materials and colors for building and masonry walls will be subject to review by the decision-maker of the Design Review Permit. Any request for a minor modification shall be made to the Planning Director in writing and shall be accompanied by plans reflecting the requested modifications.

5.5 General Guidelines for Design

The project design must have a clear architectural concept which is carried throughout all elevations to achieve continuity of design.

5.5.1 Development must relate to the needs of the greater Colfax community, as well as the needs of passing traffic.

5.5.2 Design of the building incorporates articulation and details to create architectural interest.

5.5.3 Site design must take full advantage of views, creeks, or any other natural asset provided by the property in question.

5.5.4 Materials or textures must wrap around the side of the building and not end abruptly.

5.5.5 Building texture is used to create interest and compliment a feature or concept.

5.5.6 Buildings should be oriented as to provide for landscaping and aesthetic value for passing traffic.

5.5.7 Site plans shall take into consideration landscaping and existing vegetation.

5.5.8 Site plan, elevations, textures, and colors shall take into consideration the character of surrounding buildings and development.

5.5.9 Signage shall be consistent in size, materials, location, and color with surrounding development.

5.5.10 Exterior lighting shall be directed inward and onto the site.

5.5.11 Parking should be to the side or rear of buildings when possible.

5.5.12 All service areas are to be screened from passing traffic and customers, access to parking areas should provide minimum congestion to all frontage roads.

5.5.13 Site plans shall indicate pedestrian and bicycle linkage to adjacent properties.

5.6 Street Design Guidelines

5.6.1 Cul-de-sacs and circular street patterns are discouraged.

5.6.2 Create street patterns that are pedestrian in scale.

5.6.3 Streets must include appropriate streetscape improvements.

5.6.4 Continuous and consistent tree planting will be used to form a canopy enclosure.

5.6.5 Create street patterns that are easily accessible to bicycles or develop bike lanes.

5.6.6 Curb cuts shall conform to adopted City policy.

5.6.7 The sidewalk should be a safe and interesting place for sitting and walking.

5.6.8 Park benches and other street furniture should be available for people to sit down and enjoy the setting.

5.6.9 Planter boxes and landscape vegetation are encouraged.

5.6.10 Trash enclosures and bicycle racks are encouraged.

5.7 Residential Site Design

The design of housing units should include various traditional building concepts that create a friendly, small-town atmosphere. New developments should add to the culture and character of Colfax.

5.7.1 Developments should provide architectural variation through the design of articulated facades, varying building heights, colors, materials, and textures.

5.7.2 New development should be compatible and complimentary to existing development, particularly regarding aspects of historic design. Residential housing characteristics should reflect architectural features common during 1875 to 1950.

5.7.3 Houses should be located toward the minimum front lot line setback.

5.7.4 Detached and rear access garages are encouraged.

5.7.5 Garage doors should not be the focal point of house design.

5.7.6 Front doors and porches should be the most prominent aspect of house design.

5.8 Commercial/Business Site Design

Businesses should be designed to attract customers and encourage people to come to a specific area.

The storefront is one of the essential elements in the design of a building. It is important that the storefront is treated as a focal point of the structure. In the historic downtown area, the historical look of the buildings is desirable and appealing.

5.8.1 Maintain the community's character and appearance using traditional materials and building styles. Commercial development characteristics should reflect architectural features and building materials and building colors common during 1875 to 1920.

5.8.2 Utilize historic design features and colors. The Design Review Commission has established appropriate historic building colors.

5.8.3 Maintain pedestrian scale in the downtown area.

5.8.4 Articulate the different parts of the building's facade by use of color arrangement of facade elements or change in materials.

5.8.5 Avoid blank walls. Utilize windows, wall articulation, or other such features.

5.8.6 Awnings are an important feature of a building. Awnings add color and break up the vertical look of a facade, as well as provide protection from the weather. Awnings are encouraged in building construction.

5.8.7 The size, shape, and color of an awning should be compatible with the rest of the structure and adjacent development.

5.9 Building Articulation and Massing

Height and mass of buildings should be in proportion to the surrounding buildings, trees, and terrain. Two stories or stepped hillside/split level construction is the preferred maximum offset rather than long warehouse buildings with no articulation.

5.9.1 Boxy building designs with no visual interest should be avoided.

5.9.2 Break-up solid wall surfaces with reliefs and variations in the depth of buildings.

5.9.3 Avoid a lack of architectural detail which creates a plain appearance.

5.9.4 Utilize varied materials, textures, or colors to create horizontal and vertical articulation.

5.10 Scale of Structure

5.10.1 The size of structures should remain consistent with the surrounding buildings in the area.

5.10.2 Buildings should maintain similar proportions.

5.10.3 Height of structures shall be compatible with surrounding development.

5.11 Building Materials

The use of traditional building materials produces a natural feel that blends with the historical look of Colfax. Preferred materials and colors are those that reflect the early days of the railroad. Wood, rock, and brick are preferred on the facades of buildings. Metal (non-bright colors) roofs are a plus in the area due to fire protection and snow removal. All color should be subdued whether on structure or signs. Lettering on signs should reflect early western style (see Signs, Section 14, below).

5.11.1 All new or remodeled structures shall reflect the early railroad and/or a mountain/western style of architecture. Roofs shall be pitched rather than flat. Porches or covered entries shall be used. Brick, rock, or wood facades are preferred rather than block or stucco.

5.11.2 Traditional materials such as wood and brick are encouraged.

5.11.3 Stucco and other man-made materials generally detract from community character.

5.12 Utilities and Roof Equipment

5.12.1 Refuse enclosures shall be constructed in accordance with the standards of the Public Works Department. Enclosures shall be located as shown in the approved plans. Final location of enclosures shall be subject to the approval of the Public Works Director.

5.12.2 Enclosures shall be constructed and finished in a manner to match the major design element of the main structure. Such finish shall be indicated on the building plans and is subject to approval by the Planning Department.

5.12.3 On-site utility service shall be installed underground in accordance with the Public Works Department policies and standards.

5.12.4 Adjacent off-site utility services shall be installed underground unless upon application of a developer or utility company, and after paying required fees, the Planning Commission waives or conditionally waives the provisions for the requirement of underground installation of utility lines in accordance with the City code.

5.12.5 All roof heating and/or cooling systems and other appurtenance equipment shall be recessed and/or screened from adjoining property.

5.12.6 Outdoor storage and display shall not be permitted.

5.12.7 Screening of roof equipment shall be a part of the roof design and equipment installation.

5.13 Lighting

5.13.1 No lighting shall be of the type or in a location such that it constitutes a hazard to vehicular traffic, either on private property or on abutting streets.

5.13.2 To prevent damage from automobiles, lighting standards shall be mounted on reinforced concrete pedestals or otherwise protected.

5.13.3 Under canopy lighting elements shall be recessed or concealed in such a manner as not to be directly visible from a public street.

5.13.4 Neon lighting shall constitute signage and must conform to the City's Sign Ordinance and must be reviewed and approved by the Design Review Commission.

5.13.5 Exterior lighting should be designed as pan of the architectural and site design of a project. Fixture style and locations should be compatible with the building's architecture and landscaping. Projects should display a consistency in lighting fixture style.

5.13.6 Control brightness and direction of light radiation to maintain view of night sky in the city.

5.14 Signs

5.14.1 No sign shall be erected, constructed, painted, or printed without a sign permit issued by the City pursuant to the City Sign Ordinance. Sign area, size, and location shall be in accordance with sign regulations of the zone as established by City Ordinance and requirements of this element. Any change in copy shall conform to the original sign in terms of materials and sign area.

5.14.2 Signs must respect the architectural design and proportion of the building and should not cover transoms, insignias, or any architectural ornamentation.

5.14.3 Sign clutter should be avoided. Generally, one primary sign located on the face of the building to announce the name of the business accompanied by smaller secondary signage in the windows or entryway is the most desirable approach.

5.14.4 Limit the number of lettering styles used on a sign to increase legibility, i.e., no more than two for small signs and up to three for larger signs.

5.14.5 The following types of signs are encouraged:

- Flush wall-mounted signs, projecting signs with solid metal supports, hanging signs from an overhang or from the interior by the window, window painted signs.

5.14.6 The desired lettering style for Colfax is as follows: Bostonian, Hasler Circus, Playbill, Mesquite, Wide Latin, Bookman Bold, and Barclay Expanded Ultrabold.

5.15 Landscaping

5.15.1 Promote the pedestrian-scale between pedestrians, buildings, and landscaping. Proposed landscaping should relate to the scale of the structures on the site and should be compatible with the character and scale of adjacent landscaping.

5.15.2 Landscaping should enhance the aesthetic appearance of development and increase compatibility between abutting land uses.

5.15.3 Civic plantings in the Colfax area should include horticulture which will be enhanced with the unique changing seasons of the area. Since Colfax has a chilling and definite change in the fall season, every effort should be made to include horticulture that is enhanced with that particular season, such as leaf color, fruit, or stem structure of trees and shrubs. Care should be given to plant material that will withstand an occasion with snow on the ground for a week or so every few years. Plant for local altitude of 2,400 to 2,500-foot elevation.

5.15.4 Consideration in landscaping and design should include the needs of birds. Evaluation must be included to the enhance the horticulture to the benefit, preservation, feeding, or nesting habitat for birds and butterflies.

5.15.5 Trees and shrubs recommended are those having root systems which adapt well to the Colfax area and require a minimum of maintenance and are planted to give the appearance of "the mountain look."

5.15.6 Landscaping and irrigation shall be installed as submitted and approved by the Design Review Commission and Public Works Department.

5.15.7 Landscaping and irrigation shall be inspected and approved by the Building Official prior to the issuance of Certificate of Occupancy.

5.15.8 Landscaping should provide for the conservation of water resources through the efficient use of irrigation, appropriate plant materials, and regular maintenance of landscaped areas. Xeriscaping landscaping is recommended.

5.15.9 The developer shall provide for the installation of front yard and street side yard landscaping within 60 days of dwelling unit occupancy. The developer shall bond to ensure faithful performance within the specified time.

5.15.10 Continuous maintenance of all landscaped areas, as specified by the Building Official shall be provided.

5.15.11 A plan showing all existing plants, designated plants to be saved, transplanted, or removed shall be submitted for approval prior to submittal of landscape and irrigation plans. Retain old/new native conifers, oaks, and maples where possible. Replace and replant any dead or removed plants or trees.

5.15.12 All trees shall be 24" box size (minimum), all shrubs and vines shall be 5-gallon size (minimum), unless otherwise approved by the Design Review Committee.

5.15.13 Proposed landscaping shall observe the recommended tree species list established by the Design Review Commission.

5.15.14 Hillside Development - Top contour of all hills is to be maintained with native trees, not clear-cut.

5.15.15 Hillside Development - Graded and cut slopes/fills are to be planted immediately and landscaped to prevent erosion and channel runoff to designated retention areas.

5.16 Historic Design Guidelines

5.16.1 Conduct research and/or maintain a visual inventory (i.e., pictures/illustrations) that illustrates the original appearance and significance of historic structures. Determine if the original historic design can be restored or rehabilitated prior to alterations, additions, or rehabilitations.

5.16.2 Respect the design of a structure as a product of the design philosophy and reflection of a specific time.

5.16.3 Retain and restore the distinctive stylistic features of the structure.

5.16.4 Replace lost features when possible. Restore historical elements of original building designs to create the visual appearance of the original structure.

5.16.5 Minimize alterations made to a historic structure. Facade changes should be made only if necessary.

5.16.6 Maintain storefront elements. Original materials should be repaired or replaced when necessary.

5.17 Historic Preservation

Most of the historic structures in Colfax are located around the railroad tracks and along Main Street in the historic downtown. These areas have significant architectural features that are important in maintaining the character of the community.

5.17.1 Historic Preservation Programs

Programs for the conservation of historic features and structures will vary depending upon the level of protection and the type of funding the City wishes to pursue. These will vary with the significance of the structures and the City's level of commitment to historic preservation.

5.17.2 Historic Preservation Designations

Federal

At the Federal level, a structure can be designated on the National Register of Historic Places. In order to be on this list, the structure must have architectural and historical significance that promotes the integrity of the national history. The designation process requires from six months to three years to complete. This is the strongest level of protection that can be provided. It is also the strictest level and upon placement on the register, permission must be granted by the Secretary of the Interior before modifications to the structure could take place.

State

At the State level, a structure can be designated on the California Register of Historic Places. The structure must significantly promote California history and architecture to be placed upon this list. Once listed, permission must be granted for any kind of alteration to the structure. State listing is more easily accomplished than Federal listing since only California history must be promoted through the preservation of the structure.

Many options are available to the local jurisdiction to promote Historic Preservation. The City may pass a Historic Preservation Ordinance or create a Historic District to protect various areas or structures. A Specific Plan can be prepared that would address issues of traffic, housing, land use, and design review of a project area or district. Another preservation tool is the State Historic Building Code, which addresses specific construction problems that older structures face.

5.17.3 Funding Sources

Generally, the greatest challenge to historic preservation is related to the economic burden of structural renovations. The funding sources listed below should be considered and incorporated as appropriate in the City's Historic Preservation Plan.

Community Development Block Grants

Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) are used to develop urban communities by expanding economic opportunities, primarily for persons of low or moderate income. Small cities like Colfax would use the Small Cities Program. Use of the funds may be for acquiring historic structures, rehabilitation, construction, and code enforcement. Money can be used to fund studies, such as Historic District Specific Plans, or to provide low interest loans for renovations.

Certified Local Government Program

A local government must have a Historic Preservation Committee or be in the process of completing an inventory of historic resources to participate in this program. This program gives unincorporated and smaller incorporated areas an opportunity to receive federal and state grants.

Tax Incentives

By making tax incentives available to owners, local governments encourage preservation of important properties. A contract between the property owner and the agency assures that property owners will be given public money (tax credits) if they maintain their property.

Mills Act Contracts

In California, owners of historic properties can get reduced property tax rates through this program. The program requires a contract that lasts for ten years and owners must give up any future development rights for the duration of the contract. Owners must agree to restore the property as necessary and maintain the historical character.

Charitable Contributions

A historically important structure may be donated to government or a preservation organization. Property owners would be entitled to deduct the value of the donated property from their federal income tax.

Bond Measures

The City may vote on a bond measure to generate money. The City would then pay this money back in future years. This money could be used for low interest loans and the City could work with private property owners in renovating their property.

5.18 Community Design Goals, Policies, and Implementation Measures

Goal 5.1	**Maintain and enhance the City's character and visual appearance to promote a vibrant future community.**
Policy 5.1.1	**Require all new development to incorporate high quality site design, architecture, and planning to enhance the overall quality of the built environment in Colfax and create a visually interesting and aesthetically pleasing environment.**
Policy 5.1.2	**Continue to maintain downtown Colfax as the heart of the planning area.**

Policy 5.1.3	Develop and improve the appearance of community gateways, downtown, other neighborhoods, and commercial districts. to emphasize a clear sense of arrival and departure.
Goal 5.2	**Preserve and enhance the historic resources, qualities, and small-town character of Colfax.**
Policy 5.2.1	Ensure that street design is pedestrian in scale and incorporates landscaping that contributes to the overall quality of development-specific design and the city's unique character.
Policy 5.2.2	Enhance downtown as a community focal point by creating a diverse array of reasons - shopping, services, community events, entertainment, and recreation - for people to come to the downtown area.
Policy 5.2.3	Preserve and revitalize Colfax's historic buildings and sites, and ensure that new development respects the character and context of those resources.
Policy 5.2.4	Preserve notable landmarks, streetscape, and other areas of architectural or aesthetic value providing continuity with the past.
Policy 5.2.5	Ensure that infill development is consistent with historic development patterns in terms of scale, design, and material.
Goal 5.3	**Assure that new development is sensitive to and strengthens the existing built and natural environment.**
Policy 5.3.1	Maintain a compact city form through a clear distinction between urban development and the surrounding environment.
Policy 5.3.2	Ensure that new development is compatible with existing urban areas.
Policy 5.3.3	Support efforts that seek to improve automobile circulation and/or circulation for pedestrian and bicycles.
Policy 5.3.4	Encourage public and private development of all kinds to create safe, inviting, and functional pedestrian and cyclist environments through a variety of techniques, including: • Planting trees to provide shade on pedestrian paths, sidewalks, and walkways; • Safe, separated pedestrian walkways;

- Safe, visible bicycle parking;
- Shaded walkways; and
- Wide sidewalks

Policy 5.3.5 Ensure that development continues to promote and protect functional open spaces.

Policy 5.3.6 Ensure that new development containing higher densities in clustered development patterns minimize infrastructure requirements and maximize open space and natural features.

Implementation Measures

5.1.A Enforce the Design Guidelines in this section as interim guidelines until a fully developed version is completed.

5.1.B Require that new development is subject to design review by the Design Review Commission to ensure that desired qualities are incorporated.

5.1.C Adopt design guidelines that promote the incorporation of historic features in new developments.

5.1.D Adopt a Historic Preservation Plan which establishes strategies used by the to promote historic preservation.

5.1.E Use open space and design monuments to develop gateway entrances that attract travelers along I-80 into the city.

5.1.F Pursue programs such as grants, public and private donations, and contributions for improving maintenance of properties throughout Colfax.

5.1.G Create and maintain an inventory of all historic structures and areas in Colfax.

6.0 Conservation and Open Space Element

6.1 Authority and Purpose

State law requires that a General Plan include both a Conservation Element and an Open Space Element. The Colfax General Plan combines these two elements into a single Conservation and Open Space Element that addresses their similar and overlapping concerns and satisfies the legal requirements for both.

Government Code identifies a series of topics which must be addressed in the Conservation Element and the Open Space Element. The Conservation Element is required to address the conservation, development, and utilization of natural resources, including forests, rivers and other waters, fisheries, plants and wildlife, minerals, and soils. The Open Space Element must address a range of open space types, including four major categories identified in the Government Code: Open Space for the Preservation of Natural Resources, Open Space used for Managed Resource Production, Open Space for Outdoor Recreation and Scenic Resources, and Open Space for Public Health and Safety. The Conservation and Open Space Element addresses those aspects of conservation and open space determined most important to Colfax.

The Conservation and Open Space Element of the General Plan is dedicated to preserving and improving the quantity, quality, and character of open space in Colfax, and to conserving and enhancing the City's important natural resources. It identifies Colfax's open space lands and resources and ensures that future development will respect the natural and scenic qualities of those places, helping to shape the desired physical form of the community by safeguarding open space for future generations. The Element also seeks to strengthen the role of the City and its citizens as environmental stewards, striving to minimize individual and collective impacts on local and global resources and to improve the overall health of the environment.

6.2 Existing Conditions

6.2.1 Vegetation

There are four general vegetation types found naturally in Colfax. These include chaparral and shrub communities, woodland communities, conifer forest communities and sierran mixed conifer forest. Low-lying vegetation include scrub-oak, manzanita, deer brush, as well as a variety of herbs and grasses. In the surrounding area natural vegetation has been cleared for pastures, orchards, and vineyards. Vegetation within the city includes ornamental landscaping, shade trees, lawns, and shrub cover.

Habitat with native vegetation is a valuable resource for both the community and wildlife. These areas provide diverse and ecologically rich habitats for wildlife, stabilize soils, increase groundwater supply, maintain water quality, and provide recreational and aesthetic resources.

6.2.2 Wildlife

Native vegetation in and around Colfax supports various wildlife species. Species found throughout these habitats include the California quail, gray fox, mule deer, California thrasher, western rattlesnake, brush rabbit, dusk-footed woodrat, western gray squirrel, California ground squirrel, bobcat, raccoon, scrub jay, golden mantled ground squirrel, mountain lion, as well as numerous smaller reptile and animal species.

The City of Colfax is comprised of approximately 664 acres of land with most of the land being developed. Wildlife in the community is dependent on the remaining undeveloped areas with natural habitat.

6.2.3 Water Resources

Domestic water for the City of Colfax is provided by the Placer County Water Agency (PCWA). The city is situated on a ridge dividing the Bear River watershed to the north from the North Fork American River watershed to the south. The source of water for the City of Colfax is the South Fork of the Yuba River and the Bear River. The water is conveyed from Lake Spaulding via the PG&E Drum Canal, into the Agency's Boardman Canal, and then in a pipe to the Colfax Water Treatment Plant.

The city lies within PCWA's Service Zone 3. This zone also includes the communities of Applegate, Weimar, Meadow Vista, Gold Run, Monte Vista, Dutch Flat, and Alta. PCWA's Zone 3 treatment plants include Alta, Monte Vista, Colfax, and Applegate. There are about 29 miles of treated water piping and 2.3 million gallons of treated storage in Zone 3.

PCWA's Zone 3 extends from Upper Zone 1 (i.e., City of Auburn and surrounding communities) up to nearly 4,000 feet and is characterized by Sierra forest climate with warm summers, cold wet winters, and occasional snow. Precipitation at these elevations is significant. Spring runoff from the higher elevations, above 4,000 feet, is the backbone of PCWA's water supply system. Colfax is representative of the climate in PCWA's Zone 3 service area. Water system facilities in Zone 3 are relatively old, leading to more water loss. As water system facilities are replaced, water loss will decrease and, in turn, Zone 3 gross water use will decrease.

PCWA's surface water supplies consist of water diverted from the Yuba, Bear, and North Fork American River and its tributaries which includes:

- Water purchased from the PG&E from the Yuba and Bear Rivers under the 1982 Zone 3 Contract Purchase Agreement and the February 27, 2015 Water Supply Agreement;
- Surface water from various small creeks under pre-1914 water rights.

As shown in Table 6-1, PCWA's Zone 3 surface water supply originates from the Yuba and Bear Rivers, as well as Canyon Creek.

TABLE 6-1
PCWA ZONE 3 SURFACE WATER SUPPLY SUMMARY

Supply	Source	Purpose of Use	Max Use Acre Feet per Year	Place of Use
PG&E (Zone 3) Purchase Agreement (1982)	Yuba and Bear Rivers Irrigation	Domestic	25,000	Zone 3
Pre-1914 Appropriative Right (S000959)	Canyon Creek	Irrigation and Domestic	40 cubic feet per second (Max.)	Alta, Colfax, Monte Vista and rural areas (Not limited to Zone 3)

Some residents within the city rely on ground water for their water supply. The average depth of water in the Colfax area is 150-300 feet. The Placer County Health Department monitors water quality in these wells. Water in these areas depend on local aquifers. Some have high production potential and others are unpredictable.

The State has maximum contaminant levels for minerals and chemicals in drinking water. The State of California, Department of Health Services establishes these standards for drinking water based on the National Interim Primary Drinking Water Regulations. Water quality in the City of Colfax is consistently high. There have been no shortages or violations of water quality in the service area.

Future water supplies in the city depend on PCWA and its sources for water supplied through the Colfax treatment plant. The potential supply is sufficient for future development in the city. Conservation methods can extend the supply and quality of water.

6.2.4 Soils

The soil present in Colfax is influenced by underlying rock, climate, topography, and vegetation. The soils in Colfax are primarily Class VI and VII. Class VI soils are considered suitable for limited cultivation. Class VII soils are best adapted to pasture, range, woodland, or wildlife habitat.

1. Mariposa-Josephine-Sites: undulating to steep, well drained soils that are shallow to deep.
2. Maymen-Mariposa: hilly to very steep, well drained, and somewhat excessively drained soils that are shallow to moderately deep over metamorphic rock.
3. Cohasset-Aiken-McCarthy: undulating to steep, well drained soils that are moderately deep to very deep over volcanic rock.
4. Dubakella-Rock outcrop: rolling to steep, well drained soils that are moderately deep over serpentine, also rock outcrop.

These soil types have limited agricultural uses and are better suited for pasture, woodland, habitat areas, and aesthetic purposes. Soil conditions directly and indirectly affect the health of vegetation, wildlife, and aesthetic value of Colfax. Accelerated soil erosion poses many environmental hazards, including degradation of water quality, soil sterility, increased sedimentation of local streams, and safety hazards.

6.2.5 Open Space

As defined in Section 65560(b) of the Government Code, "open space land" is any parcel or area of land or water which is essentially unimproved and devoted to an open-space use such as:

- Open Space for the *preservation of natural resources* including, but not limited to, areas required for the preservation of plant and animal life, including habitat for fish and wildlife species; areas required for ecological and other scientific study purposes; rivers, streams, bays and estuaries; and coastal beaches, lake shores, banks or rivers and streams, and watershed lands.
- Open space used for the *managed production of resources*, including but not limited to, forest lands, rangeland, agricultural lands, and areas of economic importance for the production of food or fiber; areas required for recharge of ground water basins; bays, estuaries, marshes, rivers and streams which are important for the management of commercial fisheries; and areas containing major mineral deposits, including those in short supply.
- Open space for *outdoor recreation*, including but not limited to, areas of outstanding scenic, historic and cultural value; areas particularly suited for park and recreation purposes, including access to lakeshores, beaches, and rivers and streams; and areas which serve as links between major recreation and open space reservations, including utility easements, banks of rivers and streams, trails, and scenic highway corridors.
- Open Space for *public health and safety*, including but not limited to, areas which require special management or regulation because of hazardous or special conditions such as earthquake fault zones, unstable soil areas, flood plains, watersheds, areas presenting high fire risks, areas required for the protection of water quality and water reservoirs and areas required for the protection and enhancement of air quality.

Approximately 4.87 acres, or less than one percent of land in Colfax is designated as open space. Currently, the city does not have any designated open space intended for the preservation of natural resources. The various land uses that comprise open space include unimproved public or private land devoted to parks, playgrounds, buffer zones, and landscaping. Areas designated as open space in the city include the Colfax Ball Park Complex (Al Meyers Sports Field and Lions Club Community Park), Sierra Vista Community Center, as well as other unimproved public and private lands.

The City of Colfax requires that new developments provide 4 acres of open space land for every 1,000 people. Table 2 shows the acreage that is currently counted against these standards and the projected need for additional acreage as the population of Colfax increases. Based on this analysis, there is currently a shortage of open space within the City of Colfax of 3.74 acres.

TABLE 6-2
PARK ACREAGE AND POPULATION

Population	
Current (2020)	2,152
Future (2036)	2,297
Open Space	
Existing Acres	4.87[1]
General Plan Standard (acres per 1,000 people)	4.00
Current	
Need	8.61
(Deficit) or Surplus	3.74
Future	
Need	9.19
(Deficit) or Surplus	4.32

Sources: Department of Finance, 2020, SACOG MTP/SCS Modeling Projections, 2016

As shown in Table 6-3, the City of Colfax owns and maintains 3.26 acres of parkland in four facilities. The parks include a baseball field, a basketball court, swimming pool, picnic areas, gazebos, and other amenities. The Ball Park has been used by sports leagues (Little League, Colfax Meadow Vista Auburn Softball League, volleyball leagues), for private events such as family reunions and weddings, and for public events. The City also operates the Colfax Youth Center, which provides structured after-school activities for children from 11 to 17 years old, including supervised sports, homework mentoring, arts and crafts, and martial arts.

[1] City of Colfax open space acreage includes Lions Club Community Park and Sierra Vista Community Center.

TABLE 6-3
CITY OF COLFAX PARKS

Park	Area	Facilities
Colfax Ball Park Complex (Al Meyers Sports Field and Lions Club Community Park)	1.8 acres	Lighted baseball field, basketball court, tot play area, water play area, pool, picnic area, restroom, concessions, off-street parking.
Roy Toms Plaza	2,300 sq ft	Gazebo, historical/cultural remnant, seating, special paving, off-street parking.
Depot Park	1.4 acres	Historical markers, statue, seating, off-street parking, 414 sq. ft. meeting room with eight 2'x4' tables and 32 chairs.
Arbor Park (Picnic Park)	500 sq ft	Picnic table, gazebo, bike parking

6.3 Conservation and Open Space Goals, Policies, and Implementation Measures

Goal 6.1 **Maintain biodiversity and conserve lands that support wildlife and native habitat.**

Policy 6.1.1 **Limit development on lands that provide wildlife and native habitat.**

Policy 6.1.2 **Require flexibility in development standards to balance both private property rights with the need to conserve wildlife and native habitat.**

Policy 6.1.3 **Encourage development to incorporate native and natural features into project design.**

Policy 6.1.4 **Protect native plant species in undisturbed portions of a development site and encourage planting and regeneration of native plant species wherever possible in undisturbed portions of the project site.**

Policy 6.1.5 **Protect federal or State-designated endangered, threatened, special status or candidate species, to the extent feasible.**

Implementation Measures

6.1.A **Encourage Federal and State agencies as well as non-profit conservation organizations to work with private landowners to establish programs to enhance and conserve important wildlife and native habitat.**

6.1.B **Require all new development to achieve a status of no net loss of native tree species. This is done by site design, replanting, or any other method that the City deems acceptable.**

6.1.C Implement grading, drainage, and ground cover policies to minimize disturbance of existing vegetation.

Goal 6.2 **Protect areas of significant wildlife habitat and sensitive biological resources.**

Policy 6.2.1 Provide for the integrity and continuity of biological resources open space, habitat and wildlife movement corridors and support the permanent protection and restoration of these areas, particularly those identified as sensitive resources.

Policy 6.2.2 Protect sensitive wildlife habitat from destruction and intrusion by incompatible land uses where appropriate. All efforts to protect sensitive habitats should consider:

- Sensitive habitat and movement corridors in the areas adjacent to development sites, as well as on the development site itself.
- Prevention of habitat fragmentation and loss of connectivity.
- Use of appropriate protection measures for sensitive habitat areas such as non-disturbance easements and open space zoning.
- Off-site habitat restoration as a potential mitigation, provided that no net loss of habitat value results.
- Potential mitigation or elimination of impacts through mandatory clustering of development, and/or project redesign.

Policy 6.2.3 Preserve riparian corridors through application of setbacks and other development standards that respect these resources.

Implementation Measures

6.2.A Provide development incentives for projects which incorporate habitat protection into project design.

6.2.B Develop guidelines and an education strategy for property owners about issues concerning development near or adjacent to sensitive wildlife habitats. The guidelines should clearly define the range of activities allowed within buffer areas adjacent to sensitive habitats.

6.2.C Amend the Development Code to add incentives for the permanent protection of areas of important wildlife habitat and sensitive biological resources.

Goal 6.3	**Conserve and protect the water resources of Colfax.**
Policy 6.3.1	Minimize excessive paving that negatively impacts surface water runoff and groundwater recharge rates.
Policy 6.3.2	Protect surface and groundwater resources from contamination from runoff containing pollutants and sediment, through implementation of the Regional Water Quality Control Board's (RWQCB) Central Valley Region's, Best Management Practices.
Policy 6.3.3	Require new development projects that have the potential to impact local water quality through increased stormwater runoff or erosion to include analysis of water quality impacts as a component of project review, and to integrate mitigation measures that would reduce identified impacts to an acceptable level.
Policy 6.3.4	Ensure that proposed developments can be adequately served by available water supplies.
Policy 6.3.5	Support all efforts to encourage water conservation by Colfax residents and businesses, and public agencies to implement water conservation programs and incentives that facilitate conservation efforts.
Policy 6.3.6	Continue to protect and enhance existing water courses, riparian and other hydrologic features for the purpose of improving ground water recharge and runoff infiltration through implementation of existing City standards and ordinances.

Implementation Measures

6.3.A	Establish coverage limitations for impervious paved areas in new development, and encourage the use of permeable paving materials and other water quality management practices to minimize stormwater runoff and the loss of groundwater recharge from paving.
6.3.B	Require on-site review for any development that could have an effect on surface or ground water.

Goal 6.4	**Conserve and protect the soil resources of Colfax.**
Policy 6.4.1	Require discretionary project review for all substantial grading activities not associated with an approved development project.

Policy 6.4.2 Require slope analysis maps during the environmental review process or at the first available opportunity of project review, as needed, to assess future grading activity, building location impacts, and road construction impacts.

Policy 6.4.3 Require projects that require earthwork and grading, including cuts and fills for roads, to incorporate measures to minimize erosion and sedimentation. Typical measures include project design that conforms with natural contours and site topography, maximizing retention of natural vegetation, and implementing erosion control Best Management Practices.

Implementation Measures

6.4.A Implement and enforce all guidelines and restrictions of the City's Municipal Code relating to grading and drainage.

6.4.B Require an on-site soil survey by an approved soil erosion prevention specialist for all large developments.

6.4.C Work with the American River Watershed Group and Central Valley RWQCB to identify existing critical erosion problems and to pursue funding to resolve these problems.

6.4.D Establish standards for temporary and permanent erosion control measures for grading associated with single family residences, duplexes, and second units on existing and future lots.

Goal 6.5 **Provide a high-quality system of parks and recreational facilities in Colfax.**

Policy 6.5.1 Require land or in-lieu fees for parks to be provided by new development at a minimum ratio of four acres per thousand population, to conform with standards established by the City.

Policy 6.5.2 Cooperate with the Park and Recreation Commission to improve and maximize the use of existing parks, trails and recreational facilities, identify needed facilities and improvements, and to effectively plan for the future parks and recreation needs of Colfax's residents and visitors.

Policy 6.5.3 Strive to provide neighborhood parks to meet the needs of developing areas.

Policy 6.5.4 Continue to meet community park and recreation needs.

Implementation Measures

6.5.A Require developers of residential projects to contribute land for park sites and/or pay in-lieu fees to improve parks in the vicinity at the maximum rate allowed by law.

6.5.B **Maintain a ratio of not less than four acres of neighborhood parks per one thousand City population.**

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7.0 Safety Element

7.1 Purpose and Content

The Colfax Safety Element is a is a state-mandated General Plan element that must identify potential natural and human-created hazards that could affect the City of Colfax's (City) residents, businesses, and services. The purpose of the Safety Element is to establish a framework that anticipates these hazards and prepares the community to minimize exposure to these risks.

The Safety Element conveys the City's goals, policies, and implementation measures to minimize the hazardous situations and protect and improve public health in and around Colfax. It identifies the natural and human-caused hazards that affect existing and future development, describes present and expected future conditions, and sets policies and standards for improved public safety. This includes efforts to minimize physical harm to the buildings and infrastructure in and around Colfax to reduce damage to local economic systems, community services, and ecosystems.

Some degree of risk is inevitable because the potential for many disasters cannot be eliminated completely, and the ability to predict when such disasters is limited. However, the Safety Element aims to reduce this risk through the following functions:

- Develop a framework to introduce safety and public health considerations into the land use planning process.
- Establish a policy framework for periodic updates of the hazard mitigation plan.
- Facilitate the identification and mitigation of hazards for new development and strengthen existing codes, project review, and permitting processes.
- Present policies directed at identifying and reducing hazards in existing developed areas.
- Support efforts to improve community health, emphasizing equity and comprehensive health issues.
- Strengthen preparedness planning and post-disaster reconstruction policies for earthquake, flood, dam inundation, wildland fire, and other relevant hazards.
- Identify how natural and climate-related hazards are likely to increase in frequency and intensity in the future, and provide policies to increase community resilience through preparedness and adaptation.

The Safety Element addresses the topic of public health and safety following state requirements, as presented in Section 65302(g) of the California Government Code. State law requires that the Safety Element contain background information and policies to address multiple natural hazards, analyze the vulnerabilities from climate change and contain policies to improve climate change resilience, and assess residential areas with evacuation constraints. The public safety issues in Colfax include emergency preparedness and response, fire hazards, seismic and geologic hazards,

hazardous waste and materials, crime, as well as climate-related hazards such as drought, extreme heat, and severe weather. The Safety Element identifies goals and policies for these hazards and other public health and safety issues.

7.2 Relationship to Other Documents

The Safety Element does not exist in a vacuum but is one of several plans that address community public safety and related topics, including other General Plan elements, the Placer County Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (LHMP), and various local regulations. The Safety Element should be consistent with these other elements and plans to minimize conflicts between documents and ensure that the City has a unified strategy to address public safety issues. The Safety Element incorporates information, technical analyses, and policies from these other documents where appropriate to help support this consistency.

7.2.1 Other General Plan Elements

The Safety Element is one of several elements of the Colfax General Plan. Other social, economic, political, and aesthetic factors must be considered and balanced with safety needs. The Safety Element provides policy direction and identifies safety improvements that complement the intent and policies of other General Plan elements. Crucial relationships exist between the Safety Element and the other General Plan elements. How land uses are determined in areas prone to natural hazards, what regulations limit development in these areas, and how hazards are mitigated for existing development are among the issues that tie the elements together. For instance, the Land Use Element diagram and policies must consider the potential for various hazards identified in the Safety Element and must be consistent with the policies to address those hazards. Safety Element policies, especially those concerning evacuation routes and critical facilities, must also be consistent with those of the Circulation Element. Interstate (I-) 80 is Colfax's primary evacuation route, supported by routes designated as major or primary arterials in the city. This Safety Element is consistent with the other elements of the Colfax General Plan.

7.2.2 Placer County Local Hazard Mitigation Plan

In collaboration with the City and other local agencies and special districts, Placer County prepared the 2021 LHMP in accordance with the federal Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 and the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA's) LHMP guidance. Placer County's LHMP is a plan that assesses hazard vulnerabilities from natural and human-caused hazards, including risk to people and facilities, and identifies mitigation actions to reduce or eliminate hazard risks in Placer County, including in incorporated communities. The LHMP includes a dedicated annex for Colfax, which discusses additional information specific to the community, with a focus on providing additional details on the planning process, risk assessment, and mitigation strategy for the city. The mitigation actions in the LHMP include both short-term and long-term strategies, and involve planning, policy changes, programs, projects, and other activities. These mitigation actions are identified based on assessments of hazards, vulnerabilities, and risks and the participation of a wide range of stakeholders and the

public in the planning process. Local governments are required to develop a hazard mitigation plan as a condition for receiving certain types of non-emergency disaster assistance.

The LHMP and Safety Element address similar issues, but the Safety Element provides a higher-level framework and policies that pertain to the safety of the city, while the LHMP focuses on more specific mitigation, often short-term, and actions to enable jurisdictions to better protect lives, property, and natural systems. LHMPs form the foundation for a community's long-term strategy to reduce disaster losses and break the cycle of disaster damage, reconstruction, and repeated damage. The current 2021 LHMP, certified by FEMA, is incorporated into this Safety Element by reference, as permitted by California Government Code Section 65302.6. It is available online at: https://www.placer.ca.gov/1381/Local-Hazard-Mitigation-Plan.

7.2.3 Placer County Community Wildfire Protection Plan

The Placer County CWPP is the result of an area-wide planning effort. In collaboration with the Placer County Fire Safe Alliance, Foresthill/Iowa Hill Fire Safe Council (FSC), Greater Auburn Area FSC, Greater Lincoln FSC, Placer Sierra FSC, California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE), United States Forest Service (USFS), Placer County Resource Conservation, other Placer County officials, numerous local fire departments and protection districts, and landowners, Placer County prepared and published the 2012 Placer County Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP).

The plan incorporates new and existing information relating to wildfire, which is intended to serve and be of value to citizens, policy makers, and public agencies throughout western Placer County. The Placer County CWPP is a comprehensive document aimed at reducing the risk of wildfires in Placer County. The plan identifies areas of high wildfire risk and proposes measures to prevent and mitigate the effects of wildfires in these areas. It outlines a coordinated approach between federal, state, and local agencies, as well as private stakeholders, to create defensible space, improve evacuation procedures, and enhance firefighting capabilities. The CWPP also includes community outreach and education efforts to increase awareness and promote fire prevention and safety measures. The plan serves as a roadmap for improving wildfire resiliency in Placer County and provides a framework for future collaboration and planning.

7.2.4 CAL FIRE NEU Strategic Fire Plan

The Nevada-Yuba-Placer Unit (NEU) Fire Management Plan is a product of the implementation of the State Fire Plan. The State Fire Plan provides an analysis procedure utilizing, in part, computer based geographical information data that is validated by experienced fire managers to assess fire fuel hazards and risks to design and implement mitigating activities. The plan identifies areas of high wildfire risk and proposes measures to prevent and mitigate the effects of wildfires in these areas. The NEU Fire Management Plan provides background information, fuels and fire data, proposed projects, and individual Battalion reports outlining mitigating activities commonly carried out each year. The NEU Fire Management Plan is CAL FIRE's local road map to create and maintain defensible landscapes to protect those assets vital to the state.

7.3 Climate Change Vulnerability

Changes to the global climate system are expected to affect future occurrences of natural hazards in and around Colfax. Many hazards are projected to become more frequent and intense in coming years and decades, and in some cases, these trends have already begun. Key climate change considerations that affect Colfax include increasing temperatures, changes in precipitation, wildfire, and drought. Overall, precipitation levels are expected to increase slightly; however, there are likely to be more years of extreme precipitation events and droughts that last longer and are more severe. According to California's Fourth Climate Change Assessment, Colfax can expect to experience various changes to climate-related hazard events.[1]

- Both droughts and floods are expected to become more frequent because rain is expected to fall in fewer, more intense storms due to climate change. Dry ground as a result of drought can also increase runoff, leading to floods. Drought conditions may also affect Colfax's sources of water in the long term. More rapid melting of the Sierra snowpack is likely to increase the risk of spring flooding, while droughts may become more likely in the late summer and autumn.
- Severe weather events, such as lightning, hail, heavy rainfall, and high winds, may become more frequent and intense due to climate change. Climate change is expected to cause an increase in severe weather, such as intense rainfall and high winds. This may also contribute to an increased risk of landslides in the hills around Colfax. Increases in severe wind may coincide more frequently with wildfire conditions. This can cause fires to grow and spread more rapidly and cause more frequent public safety power shutoff (PSPS) events to prevent wildfires from sparking.
- Warmer temperatures are projected to cause an increase in extreme heat events, rising from a historical annual average of 4 to an average of 53 days per year by the end of the century. In addition to the increases in extreme heat events, Colfax is expected to see an increase in the average warmer nights.
- Hotter, drier weather because of climate change is expected to lead to an increase in wildfires in the surrounding area and across Placer County. While locations higher in the Sierra face the greatest risk, the areas immediately around Colfax are still projected to see an increase in wildfire activity. According to the *Placer County Sustainability Plan*, wildfire activity across Placer County is expected to increase approximately 127 percent above historic levels by the end of the century. Across the region, more frequent and intense wildfires may also create poor air quality for Colfax.

What Is Vulnerability?

Vulnerability is the degree to which natural, built, and human systems are susceptible to harm from exposure to stresses associated with environmental and social change and from the absence of a capacity to adapt.

Source: California Governor's Office of Emergency Services. 2020. California Adaptation Planning Guide. https://resilientca.org/apg/

» Pests and organisms that cause or spread disease may be active for a longer period of time due to warmer temperatures. Changes in temperature and precipitation patterns could cause new pests and diseases to be active in and around Colfax. Such pests and diseases may not only affect human health but could harm local ecosystems and agricultural activities.

7.3.1 Vulnerability Assessment Results

Under California law, the Safety Element is required to include a vulnerability assessment that looks at how people, buildings, infrastructure, and other key community assets may be affected by climate change. The City conducted a Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment in the winter of 2023 to analyze Colfax's susceptibility to climate-related hazards. Colfax's vulnerability assessment, prepared in accordance with the most recent available guidance in the California Adaptation Planning Guide, assesses how eight different climate-related hazards (agricultural pests and diseases, drought, extreme heat, flooding, human health hazards, landslides, severe storms, and wildfire and smoke) may affect 46 different population groups and community assets. Each population or asset received a score of V1 (minimal vulnerability) to V5 (severe vulnerability) for each climate-related hazard. The Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment indicates that Colfax's populations and assets are most vulnerable to wildfire, severe weather, and extreme heat.

Overall, populations in Colfax tend to be most vulnerable to severe weather, extreme heat, wildfire and smoke, and human health hazards, which directly affect health outcomes. The most vulnerable communities include households in poverty, outdoor workers, and senior citizens living alone, all of which are highly or severely vulnerable to most climate change hazards. Additional highly vulnerable populations include immigrant communities, persons experiencing homelessness, and persons with chronic illnesses and/or disabilities.

Climate change could affect the transportation network, including passenger and goods movement. Transportation infrastructure such as roadways, bridges, and railways are all potentially at increased risk due to landslides, wildfire, and severe weather events. When parts of the transportation infrastructure network fail, typical travel routes for both passenger travel and goods movement may disrupted, including I-80.

Localized disruption of these local transportation roadways due to hazards such as landslides, wildfires, or severe weather could significantly impact the transportation of goods, services in the city, the economic vitality of the community, the ability to evacuate during an emergency, and the livelihood of many businesses, particularly if the impacted areas include key nodes of Colfax's transportation network.

Citywide, energy delivery is vulnerable to multiple hazards, including severe weather, such as high winds that can trigger PSPS events, extreme heat that reduces the capacity and strains the system, and wildfires that damage the system, ultimately disrupting energy service. Electrical transmission infrastructure is also subject to harm from landslides, which can undermine the foundations of transmission towers. Loss of energy service can create loss of cooling (particularly dangerous during extreme heat events), disrupt medically necessary electric devices, and reduce access to the internet

or other information systems. Many businesses are forced to close during power outages, causing economic hardships and depriving community members of important services such as grocery stores, gas stations, and banks/ATMs. Power outages can also be harmful to people who depend on electrically powered medical devices.

The Safety Element includes goals, policies, and implementation measures to increase community resilience and help lower vulnerability scores, particularly for the populations and assets that received a score of V4 or V5 in the Vulnerability Assessment. A full list of the Vulnerability Assessment results can be found in Appendix B.

7.4 Public Safety Issues

This section outlines the existing hazardous conditions and likely future hazardous conditions and other public safety issues in Colfax and policy responses to these issues. The public safety issues in Colfax include:

- Emergency preparedness and response
- Fire hazards
- Seismic and geologic hazards
- Hazardous waste and materials
- Crime
- Additional climate-related hazards (drought, extreme heat, and severe weather)

This section provides details pertaining to probable locations where each hazard or issue is likely to occur (per availability of data), past notable events in and around Colfax, agencies responsible for providing protection, and other background information as required by California Government Code Section 65302(g)(4).

The results of the Vulnerability Assessment are integrated into the hazards and other public safety issues previously mentioned.

7.4.1 Emergency Preparation and Response

Local Emergency Response

The Placer County Sheriff's Office and CAL FIRE conduct emergency preparedness activities in Colfax.

Placer County Sheriff's Office

The Placer County Sheriff's Office provides contract law enforcement services to the City of Colfax. The Placer County Sheriff's Office has a substation located at 10 Culver Street. In an agreement that began in 1996, the City contracted with the County to supply all law enforcement services including

patrol, detectives, juvenile services, traffic enforcement, and traffic accident investigation. The Sheriff's Office plays a significant role in the safety and quality of life within the community. Some of the Police Department's crime prevention programs include Business Watch, Crime Stoppers, Identify Theft, Chaplaincy, Megan's Law, National Night Out, and Neighborhood Watch.

Placer County Fire Department/CAL FIRE

Fire protection in the City of Colfax is provided by contract through the Placer County Fire Department and CAL FIRE. The 24 hour per day service includes a paid part-time Fire Chief, fire marshal services, dispatch, and staffing. CAL FIRE maintains an active volunteer program with 17 members. The City maintains two volunteer staffed fire stations. The City of Colfax participates in the Western Placer County Fire Chief's Association Cooperative Response Agreement, where fire agencies have agreed to automatically support each other on incidents using the closest available resource concept. No areas in Colfax are currently lacking access to fire protection services.

U.S. Forest Service/Bureau of Land Management

The Bureau of Land Management manages public lands in the area, including portions of the Tahoe National Forest, which surrounds Colfax on its northern, eastern, and southern sides. Additionally, the BLM manages several recreational areas and trails in the region, such as the Stevens Trail and the Western States Trail. The Tahoe National Forest surrounds Colfax on its northern, eastern, and southern sides, and includes over 800,000 acres of public land for recreation and other uses. The U.S. Forest Service (USFS) manages the Tahoe National Forest. Both the BLM and USFS are responsible for wildland fire management and protection on these lands.

Community Warning Systems

The City of Colfax participates in the Placer County Alert Network, which operates an emergency notification system that allows public safety agencies to help protect lives and property by providing critical information to residents during emergencies and dangerous situations. The Placer County Alert Network is managed by the Placer County Sheriff's Office and allows public safety agencies to quickly send an emergency alert to citizens in any affected geographic area within Placer, Sacramento, and Yolo Counties. This system enables the Placer County Sheriff's Office to provide residents with critical information quickly in a variety of situations, such as severe weather, unexpected road closures, missing persons, and evacuations of buildings or neighborhoods. Placer Alert provides community members with emergency notifications through telephone call, text message, and email notifications.

Mutual Aid Agreements

Additional emergency management and response services in Colfax are assisted through the California Master Mutual Aid Agreement. This agreement is signed by the Governor of California and managed by the California Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES) with a purpose "to provide for systematic mobilization, organization, and operation of necessary fire and rescue resources of the

state and its political subdivisions in mitigating the effects of disasters, whether natural or man-caused."

Other systems include the Emergency Alert Systems (EAS) and the Emergency Digital Information System (EDIS). The EAS is a national public warning system commonly used by state and local authorities to deliver important emergency information, such as weather and AMBER alerts, to affected communities. EAS participants include radio and television broadcasters, cable systems, satellite radio and television providers, and wireline video providers. FEMA, the Federal Communications System, and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's National Weather Service work collaboratively to maintain the EAS and Wireless Emergency Alerts, which are the two main components of the national public warning system and enable authorities at all levels of government to send urgent emergency information to the public. The EDIS is a wireless emergency and disaster information service operated by the California Governor's Office of Emergency Services and is an enhancement to the EAS. These systems are available in multiple languages.

Public Safety Power Shutoffs

Electricity utilities throughout California, including PG&E, have begun to occasionally "de-energize," or turn off the electricity for power lines that run through areas where there is an elevated fire risk. This is intended to reduce the risk of power lines sparking or being damaged and starting a wildfire. As previously described, these activities, called PSPS events, result in a loss of power for customers served by the affected power lines. A PSPS event may occur at any time of the year, usually during high wind events and dry conditions. PSPS events may be limited to specific communities or they may affect broad swaths of the state. In October 2020, PG&E conducted one large-scale PSPS event, shutting off power to approximately 345,470 customers, including customers in Colfax. In September 2020, PG&E conducted two large-scale PSPS event, shutting off power to approximately 236,244 customers, including customers in Colfax. While smaller, these events still affected thousands of PG&E customers across Placer County, including Colfax.

PSPS events can impact emergency management activities. A loss of power can make it more difficult for homes or businesses to receive emergency notifications if needed. PSPS events can also create vulnerabilities for community members that lack backup power supplies and depend on electricity for heating or cooling homes and buildings, lighting, and internet. PSPS events may also be harmful to people who depend on electrically powered medical devices. Additionally, community members may be faced with economic hardships and be deprived of important services, such as grocery stores, gas stations, and banks/ATMs. Traffic lights and other traffic-control systems may not work, which can complicate any evacuation needs and may hinder emergency response. Although critical public health and safety facilities often have backup generators, the loss of power may also disable other key infrastructure systems.

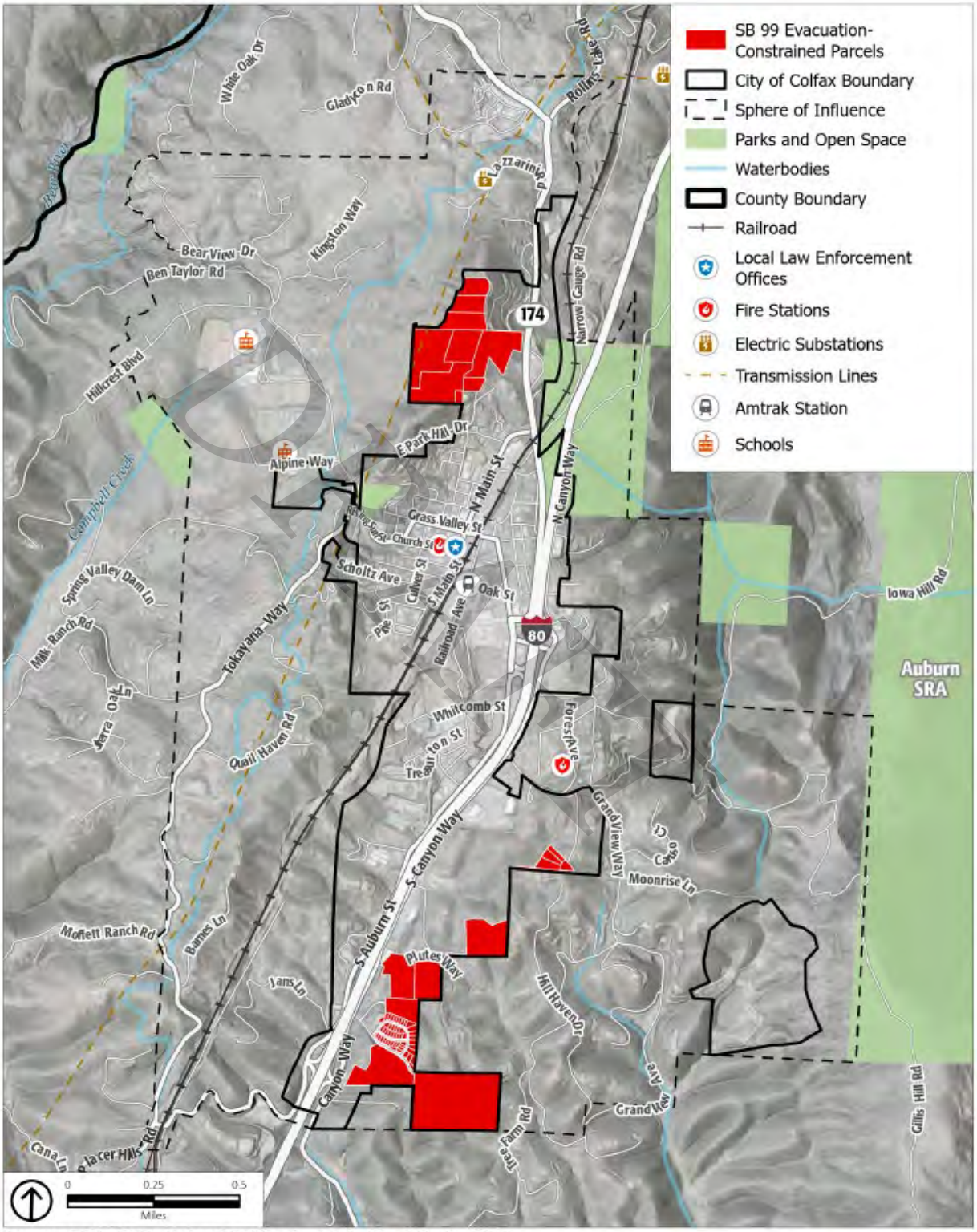
Emergency Evacuation

With advanced warning, evacuation can be effective in reducing injury and loss of life during a catastrophic event. Figure 7-1 shows residential parcels with evacuation constraints. All parcels identified as having evacuation constraints are at least a half mile from a major roadway and may have access to only one emergency evacuation route. The lack of multiple emergency access points limits roadway access for these properties, which may create difficulties if there is a need to evacuate. Figure 7-2 shows the evacuation routes throughout the city. Primary emergency access and evacuation routes include I-80, which intersects the city from north to south, as well as other local roadways that connect to this primary evacuation route. In the event of widespread disruption to local evacuation routes, remaining evacuation routes may become congested, slowing down evacuation of the community or specific neighborhoods. This issue could be compounded because evacuation routes for Colfax will also likely serve as evacuation routes for surrounding communities, and so potential disruptions may have regional effects.

Disaster Preparedness

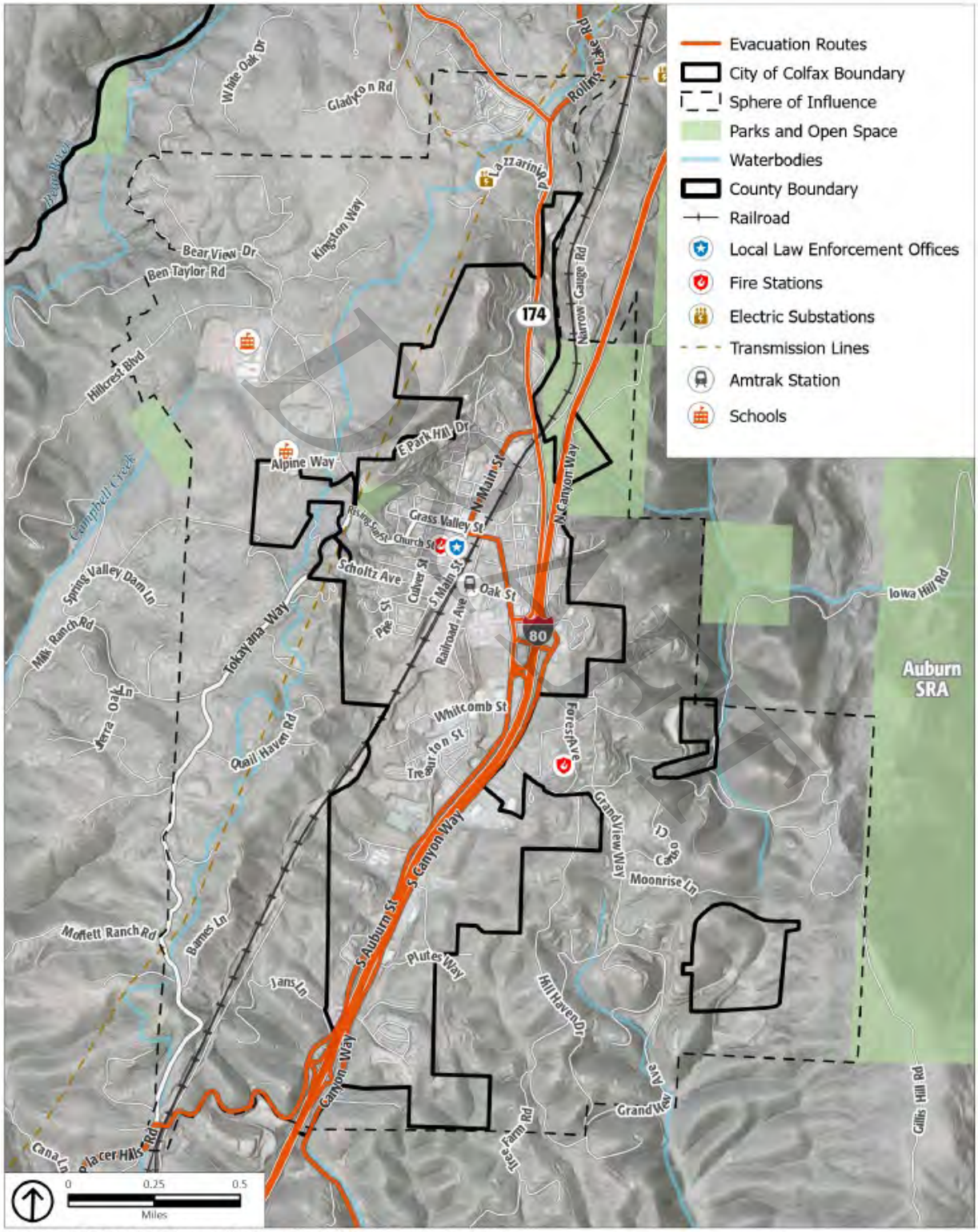
In recent years, Placer County has expanded its emergency preparedness planning. The County is required under state law to prepare and maintain a Standardized Emergency Management System (SEMS) Multi-hazard Functional Plan. The California Governor's Office of Emergency Services has extensive guidelines outlining the requirements of the Placer County SEMS.

FIGURE 7-1
RESIDENTIAL PARCELS WITH EVACUATION CONSTRAINTS



Source: ESRI, 2020; State of California, 2023; PlaceWorks, 2022

FIGURE 7-2
EVACUATION ROUTES



Source: ESRI, 2020; State of California, 2023; PlaceWorks, 2022

7.4.2 Fire Hazards

Fire hazards can come in the form of both wildfires and urban fires. California is recognized as one of the most fire-prone and consequently fire-adapted landscapes in the world. The combination of complex terrain, Mediterranean climate, and productive natural plant communities, along with ample natural ignition sources, has created conditions for extensive wildfires. Wildfire is an ongoing concern for communities in Placer County. Generally, the fire season extends from early spring through late fall of each year during the hotter, dryer months. Fire conditions arise from a combination of high temperatures, low moisture content in the air and fuel, an accumulation of vegetation, and high winds.

Three types of fires are of concern to the City of Colfax: (1) wildfires, (2) wildland-urban interface (WUI) fires, and (3) to a lesser extent, structural fires.

Wildfires

Wildfires occur on mountains, hillsides, and grasslands. Vegetation, wind, temperature, humidity, and slope are all factors that affect how these fires spread. In Colfax, native vegetation, such as chaparral, oak woodlands, and grasslands provide fuel that allows fire to spread easily across large tracts of land. These plant species are capable of regeneration after a fire, making periodic wildfires a natural part of the ecology of these areas. The climate of the Colfax region keeps the grass dry and more readily combustible during fire season. Steep slopes bring grass and brush within reach of upward flames while impeding access of fire-fighting equipment. Seasonal drought conditions exacerbate fire hazards.

Because areas of the city with natural vegetation are extremely flammable during late summer and fall, wildfire is a serious hazard in undeveloped areas. Grassland fires are easily ignited, particularly in dry seasons. These fires are relatively easily controlled if they can be reached by fire equipment, although after a fire, the burned slopes are highly subject to erosion and gullying. While brush-lands are naturally adapted to frequent small fires, fire protection in recent decades has resulted in heavy fuel accumulation on the ground. Brush fires, particularly near the end of the dry season, tend to burn fast and very hot, threatening homes and leading to serious destruction of vegetative cover. A brush fire that spreads to a woodland can generate a destructive crown fire, which burns materials at the top of trees and jumps from treetop to treetop. Crown fires can be very intense and difficult to contain.

Many species of oaks are tolerant to fire and are known to be part of California's fire-dependent ecosystem. In general, oak woodlands are well adapted to periodic fire in the landscape. However, fire suppression in the 20th century led to the buildup of a dense understory of conifers, hardwoods, and shrubs in woodlands throughout the region. The buildup of dense understories and the higher density of small trees, especially conifers, enhance the risk of high-severity fires under hot, dry, and windy conditions. The combustibility of the fuel depends on its moisture content, physical structure, and chemical content. The drier the fuel, the more flammable it will be. Regardless, all vegetation in the region reaches some degree of combustibility during the dry summer months and, under certain conditions, during the winter months.

In addition, tree mortality due to drought and sudden oak death have increased densities of dead fuels and likely contributed to higher fire risk. Under moderate drought conditions, oak woodlands generally present low fire risk, and treatments that remove understory fuels further reduce risk of high-severity fire. High-intensity fires increase the likelihood of a fire growing and spreading quickly. Furthermore, production of burning embers carried through the wind can lead to spot fires beyond the immediate perimeter, and these are often the primary cause of ignition for structures. In Colfax, an oak woodland wildfire has the potential to spread rapidly and may be very difficult to contain due to the community's topography, fuel load, and climatic conditions during the summer and fall.

Wildfire Smoke

Increasing local and regional fire frequency can create recurring air quality degradation events, leading to respiratory health effects. Wildfire smoke consists of a mix of gases and fine particulate matter from burning vegetation and materials. The pollutant of most concern from wildfire smoke is fine particulate matter ($PM_{2.5}$). $PM_{2.5}$ from wildfire smoke is damaging to human health due to its ability to deeply penetrate lung tissue and affect the heart and circulatory system. Although wildfire smoke presents a health risk to everyone, sensitive groups may experience more severe acute and chronic symptoms from exposure to wildfire smoke, such as children, older adults, people with chronic respiratory or cardiovascular disease, or people with low socioeconomic status.

Wildland-Urban Interface Fires

The wildland-urban interface is an area where buildings and infrastructure (e.g., cell towers, schools, water supply facilities) are in or adjacent to areas prone to wildfire. Wildfires and urban interface fires have occurred close to or encroached into the city, especially in the heavily fueled areas. The WUI is composed of both interface and intermix communities. The distinction between these is based on the characteristics and distribution of houses and wildland vegetation across the landscape. Intermix WUI refers to areas where housing and wildland vegetation intermingle, and interface WUI refers to areas where housing is in the vicinity of a large area of dense wildland vegetation. The influence WUI zone refers to an area consisting of wildfire-susceptible vegetation up to 1.5 miles from the WUI. According to a publication in the *International Journal of Wildfire*, 50 percent of all buildings destroyed by wildfires in California are in the interface WUI, compared to 32 percent in the intermix WUI. Wildfires destroyed an average of 15.6 percent of all buildings in the interface WUI compared to 11 to 14 percent of all buildings in other zones. The results demonstrated that the interface WUI is where most buildings were destroyed in California, despite less wildland fuel.[ii] Humans are the leading cause of wildland fires, and with thousands of people living near and visiting wildland areas, the frequency of human-caused fires is growing.

In the wildland-urban interface, efforts to prevent ignitions and limit wildfire losses hinge on hardening structures and creating defensible space through a multi-faceted approach, which includes engineering, enforcement, education, emergency response, and economic incentive. Different strategies in the defense and threat zones of the WUI help to limit the spread of fire and reduce the risk to people and property.

Wildfire is a constant threat to the City of Colfax. Wildfire and wildland-urban interface fires occur relatively frequently. The entire city and surrounding areas are at a very high threat of wildfire.

Structural Fires

Colfax is also at risk from structural fires. These fires occur in built-up environments, destroying buildings and other human-made structures. These disasters are often due to faulty wiring or mechanical equipment, combustible construction materials. The absence of fire alarms and sprinkler systems often exacerbate the damages associated with a structural fire. Structural fires are largely from human accidents, although deliberate fires (arson) may be a cause of some events. Older buildings that lack modern fire safety features may face greater risk of damage from fires. To minimize fire damage and loss, the City's Fire Code, based on the State Fire Code, sets standards for building and construction. They require the provision of adequate water supply for firefighting, fire retardant construction, and minimum street widths, among other things.

Fire Hazard Severity Zones

CAL FIRE establishes Fire Hazard Severity Zones (FHSZ), designating each as moderate, high, or very high severity. CAL FIRE is required to identify all areas in the State that are moderate, high, and very high which includes local responsibility areas (LRA). Incorporated areas, such as Colfax, are considered LRAs. CAL FIRE only designates very high fire hazard severity zones within LRAs. In unincorporated areas where state agencies provide fire protection services (known as State Responsibility Areas or SRAs), the state has identified moderate, high, and very high FHSZs.

State Responsibility Areas

SRAs are areas where CAL FIRE has responsibility for wildfire protection. SRAs are generally unincorporated areas that are not federally owned, are undeveloped, and are covered by wildland vegetation or rangeland. Most of the land around Colfax city limits is an SRA.

Local Responsibility Areas

LRAs are areas protected by local agencies, including city and county fire departments, local fire protection districts, and CAL FIRE when under contract to local governments. Most land in the City of Colfax is an LRA.

Areas of wildland/urban interface, where high-value structures such as homes meet highly flammable native vegetation, are more vulnerable and, as a result of serious wildland fires throughout the state in recent years, are more stringently subject to fire-prevention regulations on development.

Residential development in the WUI, the introduction and proliferation of exotic species, accumulated fuel because of the exclusion of naturally occurring fire, and climate-change-driven compression of the historical rainy season exacerbate the fire problem. Taken together, these factors result in more people, property, critical infrastructure, and natural resources in harm's way on a more frequent basis.

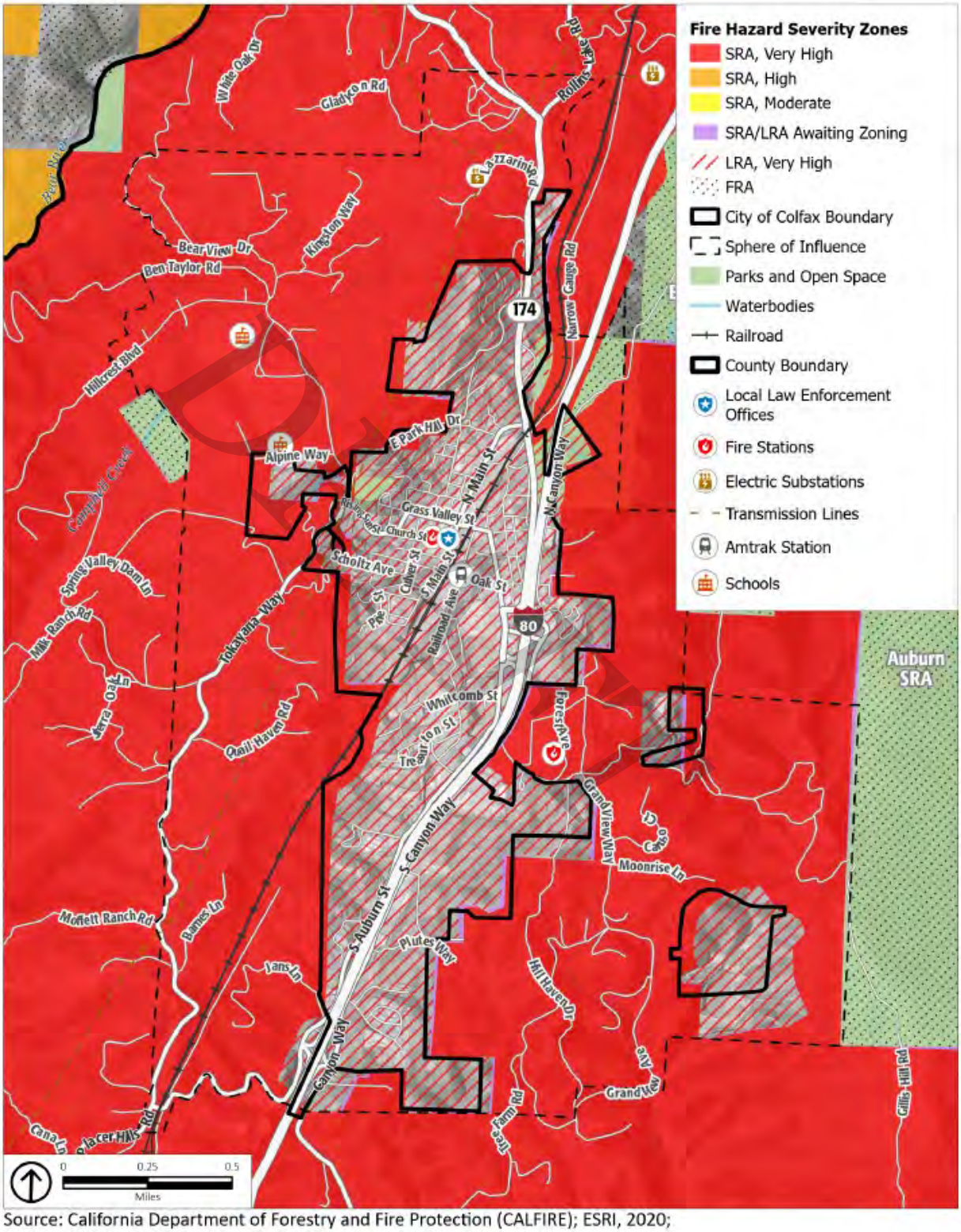
Though large-scale wildfires do not occur every year, wildfire incidents driven by extreme weather conditions have repeatedly been difficult to contain.

A combination of factors, including weather, topography, and vegetation, put Colfax, including both the high FHSZ and the WUI, at a high risk. Figure 7-3 shows the wildfire hazard severity zones in and around Colfax, Figure 7-4 shows the parcels in the very high severity zones, and Figure 7-5 identifies the WUI. CAL FIRE periodically reviews and revises the FHSZ boundaries based on updated modeling and scientific information. Users should consult the most recent available mapping, available from CAL FIRE's Fire and Resource Assessment Program (FRAP) at https://frap.fire.ca.gov/. Future updates to this Safety Element will incorporate new mapping data as it becomes available.

Federal Responsibility Areas

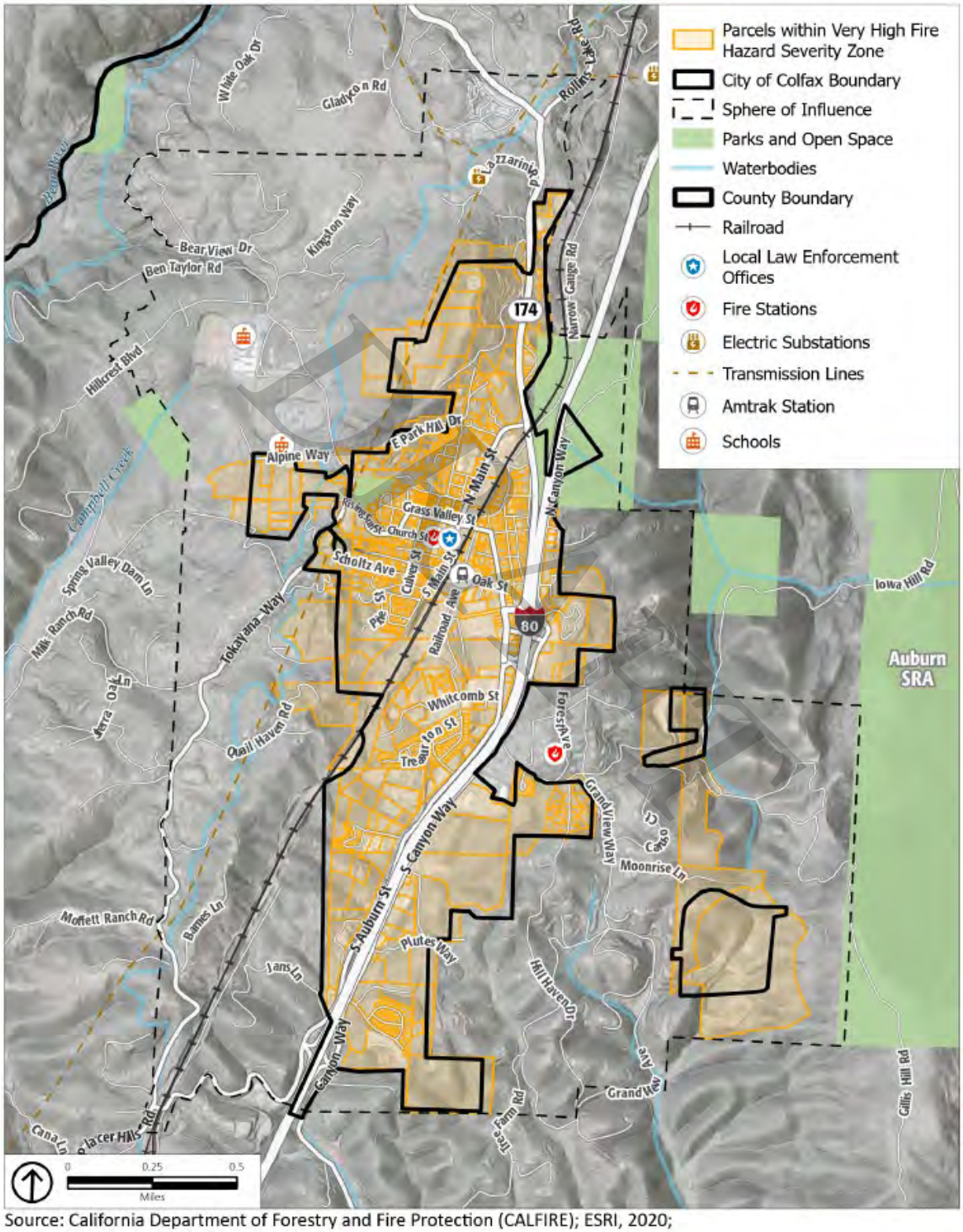
FRAs are areas that are managed by a federal agency, including the USFS, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the Bureau of Land Management. The federally-owned open space along the American River is an FRA.

FIGURE 7-3
FIRE HAZARD SEVERITY ZONES



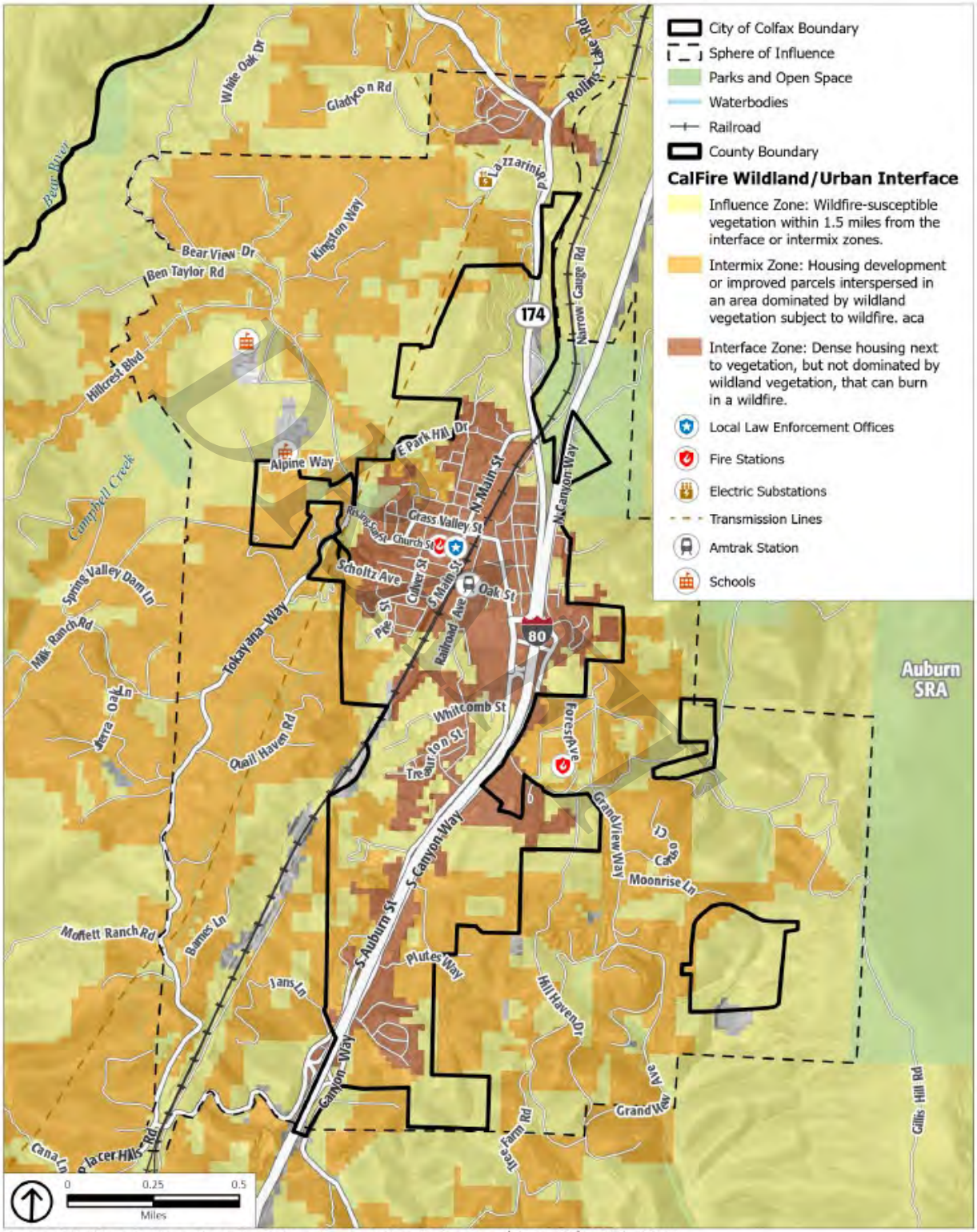
Source: California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CALFIRE); ESRI, 2020; State of California, 2023; PlaceWorks, 2022

FIGURE 7-4
PARCELS IN VERY HIGH FIRE HAZARD SEVERITY ZONES



Source: California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CALFIRE); ESRI, 2020; State of California, 2023; PlaceWorks, 2022

FIGURE 7-5
WILDLAND-URBAN INTERFACE ZONES



Source: California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CALFIRE); ESRI, 2020; State of California, 2023; PlaceWorks, 2022

Analysis results for the City of Colfax are summarized in Table 7-1, including total parcel counts, improved parcel counts, and their improved and land values by property use.

TABLE 7-1
COUNT AND VALUE OF PARCELS BY FIRE SEVERITY ZONE

Total Parcel Count	Improved parcel Count	Total Land Value	Improved Structure Value	Estimated Contents Value	Total Value
Very High Fire Severity					
988	711	$64,997,967	$ 152,168,583	$104,699,837	$321,866,387
High Fire Severity					
0	0	$0	$0		$0
Moderate Fire Severity					
0	0	$0	$0		$0
Urbanized Un-zoned Fire Severity					
0	0	$0	$0		$0
Non-Wildland/Non-Urban Fire Severity					
0	0	$0	$0		$0
None Assigned					
0	0	$0	$0		$0
Total					
988	711	$64,997,967	$ 152,168,583	$104,699,837	$321,866,387

Source: Placer County 2021 Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (LHMP)

Past Occurrences

There is no record of historical fires within the Colfax city limits. However, seven historical fires have occurred near the city. In 1975 and 1977, the Sawmill Fire and another fire occurred three miles north of Colfax. In 2001, the Narrow Gauge Fire burned 30 acres. Notably, in 2004, the Stevens Fire threatened the city and burned 934 acres. In recent years, the River Fire, Bear Fire, Oak Fire, and Mosquito Fire occurred near the City of Colfax. Figure 7-6 shows the areas burned by historic wildfires in and around Colfax dating back to 1975.

1975/1977 Sawmill Fire[1] – The Sawmill Fire and another fire occurred in the area of Cape Horn and the Alpine Meadows subdivision, just three miles northeast of Colfax.

1990 Placer County Fire[1] – This fire burned approximately 300 acres of grass, brush, and oaks in the area of Placer Canyon. The fire resulted in evacuations and destroyed several outbuildings.

2000 Heather Glen Fire[1] – The Heather Glen Fire, caused by sparks from a lost trailer wheel along Interstate (I-) 80, destroyed one home and forced a neighborhood evacuation in Applegate. While only 10 acres in size, this fire resulted in $350,000 in damage.

2000 American Fire – The American Fire occurred below the City of Auburn in what is now known as "China Bar" on the American River. The fire consumed approximately 200 acres and posed a threat to development in the southern portion of Auburn. No structures losses or structure damaged was reported in this incident.

August 12-20, 2001, Narrow Gauge Fire[1] – This fire near Colfax burned 30 acres and forced closure of I-80 for about an hour due to dense smoke. This fire, blamed on a catalytic converter, was quickly contained as CAL FIRE air tankers were already in the area and able to respond quickly.

2002 Sierra Fire – Within the communities of Loomis and Granite Bay, approximately 595 acres of grass, brush, and oaks burned in the area of I-80, Barton Road, Wells Avenue, Morgan Place, Indian Springs, and Cavitt-Stallman Road. The fire destroyed six structures and threatened two schools.

2004 Stevens Fire – The Stevens Fire, located at Cape Horn/Iowa Hill near Colfax, was 100 percent contained at 934 acres.

2007 Ralston Fire – The Ralston Fire was a large wildfire in the area of the North Fork of the Middle Fork of the American River. Approximately 8,400 acres burned.

June-July 2008 American River Complex Fire – Several large wildfires resulted from a system of major lightning storms that impacted the entire Northern California region. In Placer County, approximately 10 wildfires resulted from the lightning storm, and four grew to major fires, which later were collectively labeled the American River Complex (ARC) fires. The ARC fires were in Tahoe National Forest in the North Fork American River watershed northeast of Foresthill, California. The fires consumed approximately 20,500 acres of forest land.

September 2008 Gladding Fire – The wind-driven fire started northeast of Lincoln and consumed approximately 960 acres, 6 residences, and 10 outbuildings.

[1] GIS data for this historical wildfire event is unavailable and is therefore not displayed in Figure 7-3. Wildfire History.

September 2009 49 Fire – The wind-driven fire started about 2 pm near Highway 49 and Rock Creek Road near Auburn. The fire burned 343 acres before being contained. Sixty-three residences and three commercial buildings were destroyed, and another three residences and six commercial properties were severely damaged. The damages were concentrated in neighborhoods east and south of Dry Creek Road. Three people were injured in the wildfire. Most notable about this fire was its location in a well-developed area and the speed at which the fire consumed nearby structures.

2012 Robbers Fire – The Robbers Fire was a human-caused fire that was ignited on July 11, 2012. The fire was located northwest of Foresthill, near Shirttail Canyon Road and Yankee Jims Road. The fire burned 2,650 acres, destroyed one residence and four outbuildings, and caused 12 injuries. 912 fire personnel were involved in the firefighting efforts. A 28-year-old Sacramento man was charged with unlawfully causing a fire. Firefighting costs and damages were estimated at $12.4 million.

2013 American Fire – On August 10, 2013, the American Fire was ignited near Deadwood Ridge, northeast of Foresthill. Located in Tahoe National Forest, the American Fire burned in steep and hazardous terrain as well as timber fuels that had not burned in several decades. Consumption of heavy fuels contributed to heavy smoke in the surrounding areas. Approximately 540 Forest Service and CAL FIRE personnel were assigned to the fire, which burned 27,440 acres.

2014 Iowa Hill Fire – On July 22, 2014, the Iowa Fire ignited near Iowa Hill Road south of Colfax, burning approximately 14 acres. The fire was contained within one day and no death or injuries were reported.

2014 King Fire – Hazard Mitigation Planning Committee representatives from Placer Hills and Foresthill Fire Protection Districts noted damaging wildfires that occurred in the Foresthill and Applegate areas during the winter of 2014. Specific information on this can be found in their respective annexes to this plan. The fire started in El Dorado County and crossed into Placer County. An estimated 97,717 acres burned, 12 residences were destroyed, along with 68 other minor structures. Twelve injuries occurred that can be attributed to the fire.

2014 Applegate Fire – A fire occurred on the east side of I-80 in the Applegate area of Placer County. The fire started on October 8, 2014, and its cause was unknown. The fire burned 459 acres before containment. Six residences and four outbuildings were destroyed. Two injuries were reported; however, no deaths were reported.

2021 River Fire – The River Fire burned 2,619 acres in the Colfax area in Nevada County. The fire was first reported on August 4, 2021, and was fully contained on August 13, 2021. The River Fire destroyed 142 structures, damaged 21 structures, and resulted in four injuries to firefighters and civilians. It was the fifth most destructive fire of 2021 in California. The cause of the fire is unknown, however CAL FIRE officials stated after an investigation that it had been determined to be of human cause, originating in the overnight camping area of Bear River Campground west of Colfax.

2022 Bear Fire – On July 28, 2022, the Bear Fire ignited in the Bear River drainage area near the Bear River Bridge and Highway 174. The fire burned 9.7 acres which briefly caused evacuation warnings in the area of Gladycon Road and Highway 174 outside of Colfax. The fire was contained within one day and no death or injuries were reported.

2022 Oak Fire – On August 15, 2022, the Oak Fire was ignited near Weimar, along Live Oak Road & Smothers Ravine Road. The fire burned 22 acres total. The Oak Fire was contained 16 days later on August 31, 2022. The cause of the fire remains under investigation. No deaths were reported, and no structures were damaged or destroyed.

2022 Mosquito Fire – On September 6, 2022, the Mosquito Fire was ignited near Mosquito Road and Oxbow Reservoir, approximately four miles east of Foresthill. The fire encompassed the Tahoe and Eldorado National Forests in Placer and El Dorado counties, respectively. The fire burned 76,788 acres total. The Mosquito Fire was contained 50 days later on October 27, 2022. The cause of the fire remains under investigation. No deaths were reported as a result of the Mosquito Fire, but at least two firefighter injuries were noted. Additionally, at least 78 structures were destroyed and 13 damaged.

Potential Changes to Fire Risk in Future Years

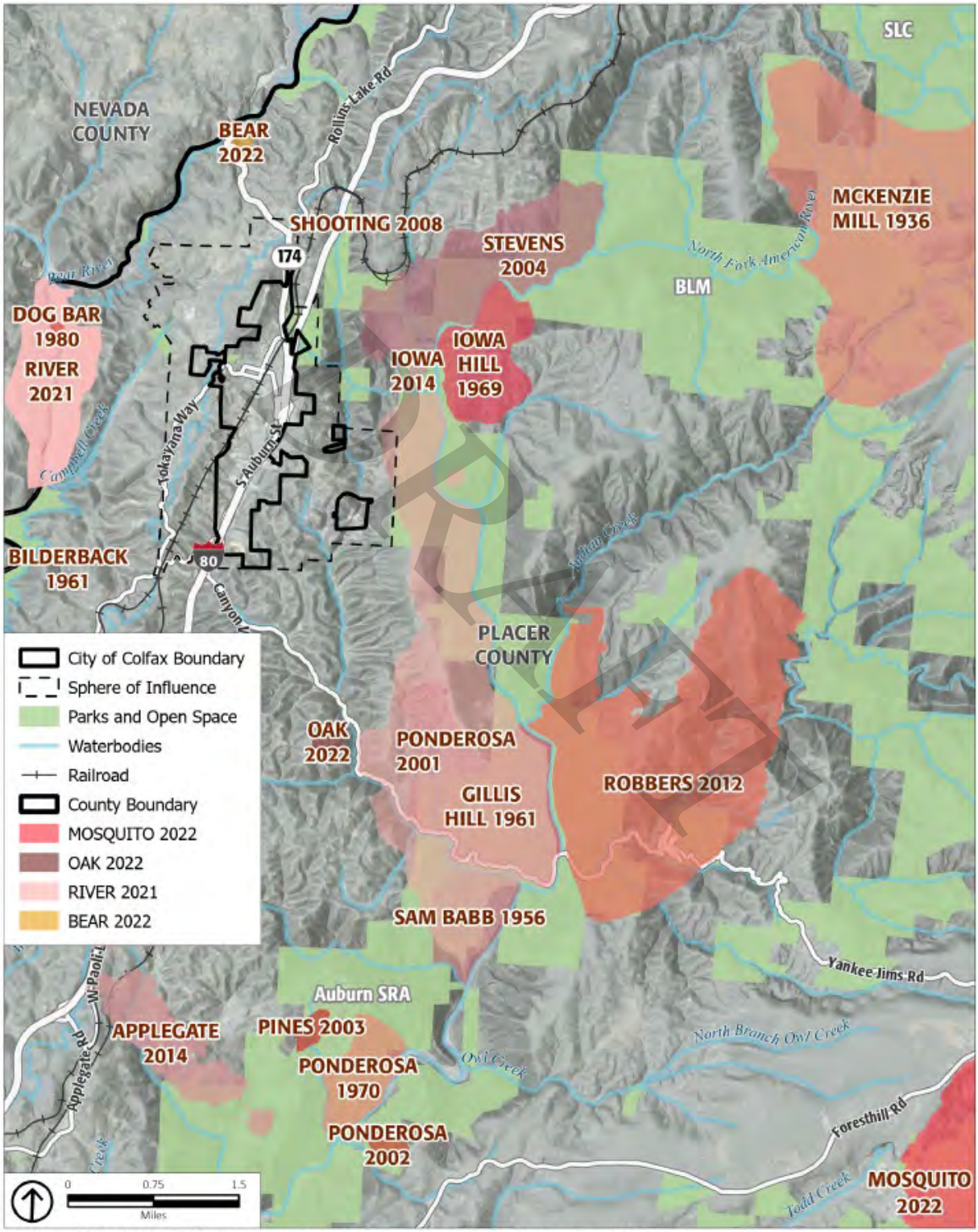
Likelihood of Future Occurrence

The wildfire season in Placer County historically lasts from May through October. Extreme weather conditions during periods of low humidity, low fuel moisture, and high winds also contribute to the severity of any potential wildfires. Extreme weather conditions during periods of low humidity, low fuel moisture, and high winds also contribute to the severity of any potential wildfires. Fires that start during these times typically burn hot and fast and are difficult to control without immediate initial suppression. According to the California Governor's Office of Emergency Services, the wildfire recurrence rate in Colfax is approximately five years. The threat of wildfire and potential losses are constantly increasing as human development and population increase and the wildland-urban interface areas expand. Due to its high fuel load and long, dry summers, most of Placer County continues to be at risk from wildfire, and smoke impacts from local and regional wildfires are likely to remain problematic. The likelihood of structural fires in the city is low since these fires are usually associated with human accidents or mechanical issues in buildings that rarely happen.

Shifts in Climate Norms and Wildfire

Changing climate conditions are expected to increase the wildfire risk in and around Colfax. Warmer temperatures brought on by shifts in climate conditions can exacerbate drought conditions. Droughts can kill or dry out plants, creating more fuel for wildfires. Warmer temperatures are also expected to increase the number of pest outbreaks, such as the western pine beetle, creating more dead trees and increasing the fuel load. Hot, dry spells may also increase disease and insect infestations, resulting in higher fuel loads. Increased winds may result in more erratic fire behavior, making fires harder to contain. Warmer temperatures are also expected to occur later in the year, extending the wildfire season, which is likely to begin earlier in the year and extend later than it has historically.

FIGURE 7-6
COLFAX WILDFIRE HISTORY



Source: ESRI, 2020; California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, 2022.

7.4.3 Seismic and Geologic Hazards

Seismic and geologic hazards are risks caused by the movement of different parts of the Earth's crust, or surface. Seismic hazards are the hazards associated with potential earthquakes in a particular area. Geologic hazards are other hazards involving land movements that are not linked to seismic activity and are capable of inflicting harm to people or property.

Seismic Hazards

The City of Colfax is in a seismically active region, and there is a high potential that the area will be subject to at least moderate earthquakes one or more times over the next century. Seismic activity occurs along boundaries in the Earth's crust, called faults. Pressure along the faults builds over time and is ultimately released, resulting in ground shaking that we refer to as an earthquake. Earthquakes can also trigger other hazards, including surface rupture (cracks in the ground surface), liquefaction (causing loose soil to lose its strength), landslides, and subsidence (sinking of the ground surface). Earthquakes and other seismic hazards often damage or destroy property and public infrastructure, including utility lines, and falling objects or structures pose a risk of injury or death.

Earthquakes

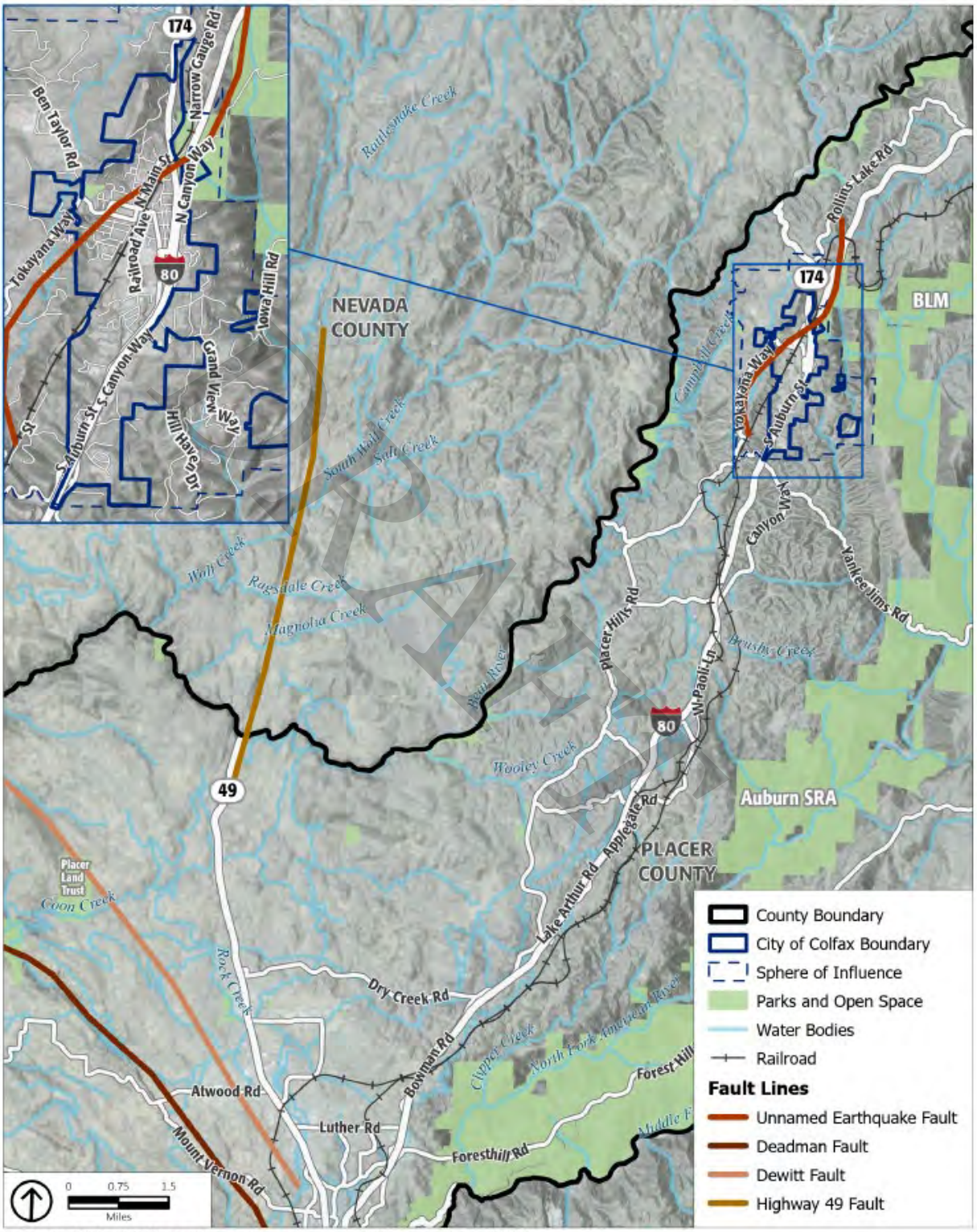
Active and potentially active faults pose risk to the City of Colfax. Active faults have experienced displacement in historic time, suggesting that future displacement may be expected, whereas potentially active faults are those that have shown displacement within the last 1.6 million years and may or may not have a reasonable chance of creating future earthquakes.

- Structures most likely to be affected are those that are old or near earthquake faults, such as the Bear Mountain Fault and Melones Fault. These faults are situated approximately three to four miles west and east from Colfax, respectively. These faults would have the greatest potential for damaging buildings in Colfax, especially the unreinforced masonry structures in the older part of the city and structures built before 1960 without adequate anchorage of framing and foundations.
- The closest identified active fault is the Cleveland Hills fault, approximately 20 miles northwesterly of Colfax. This fault is considered one of the most active in the area in terms of destructive potential and was the source of a strong earthquake in 1975 around the City of Oroville.
- Another potential earthquake source is the Midland Fault Zone to the west, where an 1892 earthquake centered between Vacaville and Winters caused minor damage in nearby Lincoln.
- Active faults located between 50 and 100 miles from Colfax include the Mohawk Valley Fault, the Stampede Valley Fault, and the Fort Sage Fault; all located northeast of Colfax. Given the relationship to these various active faults, there is a high potential that the area will be subject to at least moderate earthquake shaking one or more times over the next century.

Additionally, Colfax may experience minor ground shaking from distant major to great earthquakes on faults to the west and east. For example, to the west, both the San Andreas Fault (source of the 8.0-estimated Richter magnitude San Francisco earthquake that damaged Sacramento in 1906) and the closer Hayward Fault have the potential for experiencing major to great events. To the east in Nevada, the several faults associated with the series of earthquakes in 1954, especially the major (7.1 Richter magnitude) December 16, 1954, Fairview Peak event (about 100 miles east of Carson City) could cause minor ground shaking in Colfax. The San Andreas Fault near San Francisco and the Hayward Fault in the East Bay area are 116 and 110 miles, respectively, from Colfax.

Figure 7-7 shows the fault lines in and around Colfax.

FIGURE 7-7
FAULT LINES



Source: ESRI, 2020; California Department of Conservation, 2019.

In case of a major earthquake in the region, critical damage may occur to public and private buildings, homes, and structures, including those that provide emergency services (hospitals, fire stations, schools, emergency shelters) and essential services and infrastructure such as roads and utility lines for water, gas, power, telephone, sewer, and storm drainage. Access and continuity of services may be disjointed, and services could be offline for extended periods. Damage to essential and critical structures require special attention in the public safety programs of the city. Damage to the following infrastructure systems could occur, in addition to the damage to public and private buildings:

- Unreinforced masonry buildings: Unreinforced masonry buildings are vulnerable structures that may be subject to damage or collapse because of an earthquake.
- I-80: There are several overpasses on I-80 that could possibly be threatened in the event of a severe earthquake, greater than those previously experienced. Under such a scenario, the County would be virtually cut in half between the eastern and western portions. Similar conditions have resulted from past winter storms requiring limited emergency measures.
- Train derailments: Union Pacific Railroad tracks run adjacent to I-80. Passenger trains run between Sacramento and Reno through the I-80 corridor. A derailment in the higher elevations would pose logistics problems involved in freeing passengers, especially those caught in snowsheds during winter months. A derailment resulting from an earthquake could also cause a hazardous materials release.
- Telephone communications: Telephone communications could be adversely affected due to overloading resulting from post-earthquake calls within the area and from outside, and the electronics needed to support communication systems could be damaged. The situation could be further complicated by physical damage to equipment due to ground shaking, loss of services due to loss of electrical power, and lack of access to maintain auxiliary power and the subsequent failure of some power sources.
- Propane: Properties in Colfax rely on propane for fuel. Earthquakes could cause damage to propane tanks by knocking them off their foundations, posing potential fire hazards.

Geologic Hazards

Geologic hazards, such as landslides, depend on the geologic composition of the area. Landslides and rock falls may occur in sloped areas, especially areas with steep slopes, and usually in areas of loose and fragmented soil. Landslides, rockfalls, and debris flows occur continuously on all slopes; some processes act very slowly, but others happen very suddenly, often with disastrous results. There are predictable relationships between local geology and landslides, rockfalls, and debris flows. Slope stability is dependent on many factors and interrelationships, including rock type, pore water pressure, slope steepness, and natural or human-made undercutting.

Landslides are often triggered by other natural hazards, such as earthquakes, heavy rain, floods, or wildfires, so landslide frequency is often related to the frequency of these other hazards. In Placer County, landslides typically occur during and after severe storms, so the potential for landslides largely coincides with the potential for sequential severe storms that saturate steep, vulnerable soils. In Placer

County, landslides and mudslides are a common occurrence and have caused damage to homes, public facilities, roads, parks, and sewer lines in particular.

In Colfax, consolidated rocks make up the mountains and rocky buttes while alluvial soils are found on stream beds and the valley floor. Beneath the alluvial soils are the same hard rocks found in the mountain areas. Geologic hazards are present in the form of unstable soils and certain ground formations that render some areas unsuitable for intensive human activity. Colfax has steep and unstable slopes with areas subject to erosion and landslides. Increased excavation on these slopes can expose more weaknesses of the underlying rock mass, creating a greater potential for failure. Lands around major fault zones are exposed to greater geologic hazards as a result of repeated fault movement, which creates looser ground material that is more likely to move. The area around Colfax also includes highly expansive soils, which can shrink and swell as ground moisture levels change.

Figure 7-8 shows the landslide risk in and around Colfax. Rock Strength and slope are combined to create classes of landslide susceptibility which range from 0 to X (i.e., very low to very high). These classes express the generalization that on very low slopes, landslide susceptibility is low even in weak materials, and that landslide susceptibility increases with slope and in weaker rocks. Very high landslide susceptibility, classes VIII, IX, and X, includes very steep slopes in hard rocks and moderate to very steep slopes in weak rocks.

Potential Changes to Geologic and Seismic Risk in Future Years

Likelihood of Future Occurrence

Seismic Risk

Earthquakes are likely to continue to occur on an occasional basis. Most earthquakes are likely to be small. They may cause no substantive damage and may not even be felt by most people. Major earthquakes are rare, but a possibility in the region. If serious shaking does occur, newer construction is in general more earthquake resistant than older construction because of improved building codes. Manufactured housing is very susceptible to damage because their foundation systems are rarely braced for earthquake motions.

Earthquake losses would vary across Placer County depending on the source and magnitude of the event. Although new growth and development corridors would fall in the area affected by earthquake, given the small chance of major earthquake and the building codes in effect, development in the earthquake area would continue to occur.

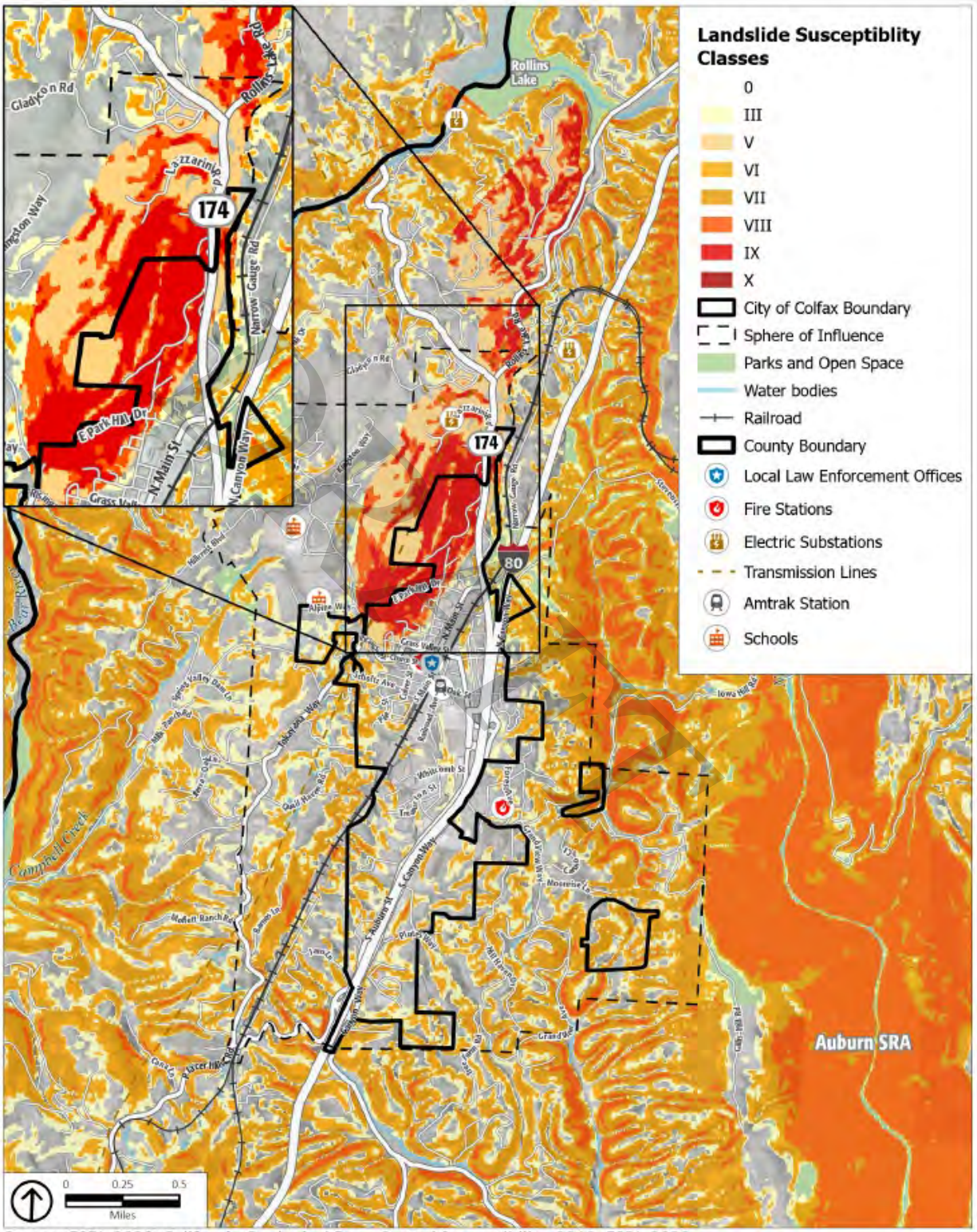
Geologic Risk

Minor landslides and similar geologic hazards have occurred in the past, probably over the last several hundred years, as evidenced both by past deposits exposed in erosion gullies and recent landslide events. With significant rainfall, additional failures are likely to occur within the identified landslide hazard areas. Given the nature of localized problems identified within the county, minor landslides will likely continue to impact the area when heavy precipitation occurs, as they have in the past. In addition, areas affected by recent fires show an increased area of landslide risk.

Shifts in Climate Norms and Geologic and Seismic Hazards

While shifts in climate conditions are unlikely to increase earthquake frequency or strength, the threats from seismic and geologic hazards are expected to continue. Changes to climate conditions may result in precipitation extremes (i.e., wetter wet periods and drier dry periods). Total average annual rainfall may not change significantly, but rainfall may be concentrated into more-intense precipitation events. Heavy rainfall or snowfall could cause an increase in the number of landslides or make landslides larger than normal. Increased wildfire frequency can destabilize hillsides, due to loss of vegetation, and change soil composition, which can contribute to greater runoff and erosion. The combination of a generally drier climate in the future, which will increase the chance of drought and wildfires, and the occasional extreme downpour is likely to cause more mudslides and landslides. Impacts from these conditions would compound landslide potential for the most susceptible locations.

FIGURE 7-8
LANDSLIDE RISK



Source: ESRI, 2020; California Geological Deep Seated Susceptibility, 2019; ESRI, 2020; State of California. 2023; PlaceWorks, 2022

7.4.4 Hazardous Waste and Materials

Hazardous materials pose a significant risk to public safety or human or environmental health. These include toxic chemicals, flammable or corrosive materials, petroleum products, and unstable or dangerously reactive materials. They can be released through human error, malfunctioning or broken equipment, or as an indirect consequence of other emergencies (e.g., if a flood damages a hazardous material storage tank). Hazardous materials can also be released accidentally during transportation, as a consequence of vehicle accidents and train derailment.

Most hazardous materials in the community are transported on truck routes along major roadways that pass through Colfax, such as I-80. The bulk of truck-carried hazardous materials that enter the county do so via I-80. The cargos consist of a wide range of hazardous substances. Although I-80 is well maintained and a controlled access roadway, there are some steep and sharp turns that severely tax the brakes and handling ability of semi-trailer trucks.

In addition to highway traffic, other hazardous materials are transported through Colfax on the Union Pacific Railroad. Hazardous materials are regularly shipped via the rail line and, while unlikely based on past occurrences, an incident involving a rail accident within the city could have devastating effects. The City has little control over the types of materials that are shipped via the rail line. With regard to government activities, the content of shipments may be confidential for reasons of security and/or is generally unknown to the City. While the City has little influence over the types of material transported via the rail line, the potential for rail incidents can be reduced by ensuring that at-grade crossings within the city are operating in a safe and effective manner. In the event of an emergency involving hazardous materials, there is potential for extreme risk to life and property.

Federal, State, and local laws regulate the production, storage, handling, and disposal of hazardous materials and waste. These are materials that pose a significant hazard to human health and safety or to the environment, including industrial wastes, pesticides, radioactive wastes, asbestos, and combustible fuels. Hazardous materials commonly used in the home include garden pesticides, waste oil, paint supplies, car batteries, and pool chemicals. Limited quantities of household hazardous waste may be transported to and dropped off at a recycling center.

Both the State and the federal government require businesses that store or handle hazardous materials to comply with inventory and reporting programs. Businesses that store more than 55 gallons of hazardous liquids, 500 pounds of solids, or 200 cubic feet of compressed gases must also file an annual business plan to establish incident prevention measures, hazardous-materials handling protocols, and emergency response and evacuation procedures.

Hazardous materials and waste within Colfax are managed by the Certified Unified Program Agency (CUPA), a local administrative agency within the Placer County Environmental Division of Environmental Health. The CUPA consolidates, coordinates, and makes consistent the regulatory activities of several hazardous materials and hazardous waste programs, including Hazardous Materials Management, California Accidental Release Prevention, Hazardous Waste Management, Underground Storage Tanks, Aboveground Storage Tanks, and Emergency Response.

Several state agencies monitor hazardous materials/waste facilities. Potential and known contamination sites are monitored and documented by the Department of Health Services (DHS) and the Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB). A review of the leaking underground storage tank list produced by the RWQCB, and the Hazardous Waste and Substances Sites List produced by the Office of Planning and Research indicates no hazardous waste sites in Colfax.

If a hazardous material spill poses an imminent public health threat, the City will support local regulating agencies in notifying the public. The transport of hazardous materials/wastes and explosives through the planning area is regulated by the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans). Transporters of hazardous wastes are required to be certified by the United States Department of Transportation, and manifests are required to track the hazardous waste during transport. The danger of hazardous materials/waste spills during transport does exist and will potentially increase as transportation of these materials increases on I-80 and the railroad. The Placer County Office of Emergency Services (OES), Placer County Division of Environmental Health, the Placer County Sheriff's Office, and CAL FIRE are responsible for hazardous materials accidents at all locations within the city.

Potential Changes to Hazardous Materials in Future Years

Likelihood of Future Occurrence

The Union Pacific Railroad line passes through the City of Colfax. Hazardous materials are regularly shipped via the rail line and, while unlikely based on past occurrences, an incident involving a rail accident within the city could have devastating effects.

The City has little control over the types of materials that are shipped via the rail line. With regard to government activities, the content of shipments may be confidential for reasons of security and/or is generally unknown to the City. While the City has little influence over the types of material transported via the rail line, the potential for rail incidents can be reduced by ensuring that at-grade crossings within the city are operating in a safe and effective manner. I-80 passes through the city which is a designated Caltrans haz-mat route. According to Caltrans, most incidents are related to releases of fluids from the transporting vehicles themselves and not the cargo. The likelihood of a significant hazardous materials release within the city from either transportation or stationary sources is considered low, but possible.

Shifts in Climate Norms and Hazardous Materials

Shifts in climate conditions are unlikely to affect hazardous materials transportation incidents. However, increases in the frequency and intensity of severe storms may create a greater risk of hazardous materials releases during these events.

7.4.5 Crime

Crime and other acts of violence undermine the community's sense of security and threaten public safety. As Colfax develops, the increasing concentration of population will bring increasing criminal activities, although not necessarily increasing the crime rate (number of crimes per 1,000 population). While it is expected that individuals will take normal precautions to protect themselves from danger, the City provides additional protection from harm brought on by the malicious intent of others. The Sheriff's Office plays a significant role in the safety and quality of life within the community. Some of the Police Department's crime prevention programs include Business Watch, Crime Stoppers, Identify Theft, Chaplaincy, Megan's Law, National Night Out, and Neighborhood Watch.

7.4.6 Additional Climate-Related Hazards

Drought

A drought is an extended period when precipitation levels are well below normal. Drought is a normal part of the climate cycle. Drought may contribute to wildfire or affect domestic water supply, energy production, public health, and wildlife. Like most of California and the western United States, Colfax chronically experiences drought cycles. Drought impacts the city's water supply, which may, in severe instances, make less water available for people, businesses, and natural systems.

Less snow falling in mountainous areas causes water levels in lakes and reservoirs to drop, which can affect recreation activities. Local ecosystems that are not well adapted to drought conditions can be more easily harmed by it. During drought events, the flow of water in creeks and streams is reduced, creating more slow-moving or standing water. This can concentrate sediment and toxins in the low water levels, causing harm to plants and animals. Many fish species also prefer specific stream flow speeds, especially for spawning and egg incubation, and changes to stream velocity as a result of drought conditions can affect reproduction. Droughts can also indirectly lead to more wildfires, and the stress caused by water shortages can weaken plants, making them more susceptible to pests and diseases.

The US Drought Monitor recognizes a five-point scale for drought events: D0 (abnormally dry), D1 (moderate drought), D2 (severe drought), D3 (extreme drought), and D4 (exceptional drought). According to the US Drought Monitor, the most intense drought conditions in recent years were during most of 2016, when all of Placer County was classified in "exceptional" drought. More recently, in 2021, from May through the end of the year, the county was also classified in "extreme" drought. As of November 2022, Placer County, including Colfax, was classified in "severe" drought. During severe drought conditions, water shortages are common, and water restrictions may be imposed so as to meet essential community needs.

Domestic water for the City of Colfax is provided by the Placer County Water Agency. The source of water for the City of Colfax is the South Fork of the Yuba River and the Bear River. The water is conveyed from Lake Spaulding via the PG&E Drum Canal, into the Agency's Boardman Canal, and

then in a pipe to the Colfax Water Treatment Plant. Near the City's ballpark, the Agency has an additional 1.0-million-gallon reservoir.

A multiple year drought can severely compromise the water supply within the district and adversely impact natural resources. In 2014, after 2 years of below-average rainfall and very low snowmelt run off, Governor Brown declared a state of emergency for drought conditions statewide. The final California Department of Water Resources showed snowpack water content at only 5 percent of normal. On October 19, 2021, Governor Newsome declared a drought emergency for the entire state of California. With the unknowns of drought and globally changing climate conditions, the City continues to promote water conservation throughout the community.

Potential Changes to Drought in Future Years

Likelihood of Future Occurrence

Drought is different than many of the other natural hazards in that it is not a distinct event and usually has a slow onset. Drought can severely impact a region both physically and economically, affecting different sectors in different ways and with varying intensities. Adequate water is the most critical issue for commercial and domestic use. As the population in the city continues to grow, so will the demand for water.

Based on historical information, the occurrence of drought in California, including Placer County, is cyclical, driven by weather patterns. Drought has occurred in the past and will occur in the future. Periods of actual drought with adverse impacts can vary in duration, and the period between droughts is often extended. Although an area may be under an extended dry period, determining when it becomes a drought is based on comparing observed precipitation with what is normal (climatologic), comparing soil moisture and crop conditions with what is normal (agricultural), or by looking at how much water is contained in snow, the level or flow rate of moving water, water in reservoirs, or groundwater levels (hydrologic). However, how individuals recognize drought depends on the ways in which it affects them. The impacts from drought include reduction in water supply and an increase in dry fuels.

Shifts in Climate Norms and Drought

Although droughts are a regular feature of California's climate, scientists expect that climate change will lead to more frequent and intense droughts statewide. Overall, precipitation levels are expected to stay similar and may even increase in some places. However, the state's current data say that there will be more years with extreme levels of precipitation, both high and low, as a result of climate change. This is expected to cause more frequent and intense droughts, compared to historical norms, that cause soil to dry out and become hard. When precipitation does return, more water runs off the surface than is absorbed into the ground, which can lead to floods. Higher air temperatures are expected to increase evaporation, causing more water loss from lakes and reservoirs and exacerbating drought conditions. Reduced winter precipitation levels and warmer temperatures have greatly decreased the Sierra Nevada snowpack (the volume of accumulated snow), which in turn makes less fresh water available for communities throughout California. Continued decline in the Sierra Nevada

snowpack is expected, which may lead to lower volumes of available imported water. Depending on the location and emissions levels, the state Cal-Adapt database indicates the snowpack (i.e., snow water equivalent) for the Tahoe-Sierra Integrated Regional Water Management Region in the spring is expected to decline from a historical average of 16.1 inches to an average of 7.8 inches (a 52 percent decrease) by the middle of the century (2035 to 2064) and an average of 2.9 inches (an 82 percent decrease) by the end of the century (2070 to 2099).

If heat-trapping emissions continue unabated, more precipitation will fall as rain instead of snow, and the snow that does fall will melt earlier, reducing the Sierra Nevada spring snowpack by as much as 70 to 90 percent. How much snowpack will be lost depends in part on future precipitation patterns, the projections for which remain uncertain. However, even under wetter climate projections, the loss of snowpack would pose potential water shortage issues and exacerbate drought conditions.

Extreme Heat

While there is no universal definition of extreme heat, California guidance documents define extreme heat as temperatures that are hotter than 98 percent of the historical high temperatures for the area, as measured between April and October of 1961 to 1990. Days that reach this level are called extreme heat days. In Colfax, the extreme heat threshold is 100.1°F. An event with five extreme heat days in a row is called a heat wave.

In the foothills of Placer County, monthly average maximum temperatures in the warmest months (May through October) range from the mid-70s to the low 90s. From late spring through fall, it is not unusual for temperatures to exceed 90°F and higher. The highest recorded daily extreme was 118°F in August of 1933. In a typical year, maximum temperatures exceed 90°F on 89 days.

Health impacts are the primary concern with this hazard, though economic impacts are also an issue. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recognize extreme heat as a substantial public health concern. Historically, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration data indicate that about 175 Americans succumb to summer heat, although this number has increased in recent years. From 2004 to 2018, studies by the US Department of Health and Human Services indicate an average of 702 deaths annually that are directly or indirectly linked to extreme heat.

Extreme heat events are dangerous because people exposed to extreme heat can suffer a number of heat-related illnesses, including heat cramps, heat exhaustion, and (most severely) heat stroke. As reflected in the Vulnerability Assessment, elderly persons, small children, chronic invalids, those on certain medications or drugs, and persons with weight and alcohol problems are particularly susceptible to heat reactions. The elderly and individuals below the poverty level are the most vulnerable to extreme heat. Nursing homes and elder-care facilities are especially vulnerable to extreme heat events if power outages occur and air conditioning is not available. Individuals below the poverty level may be at increased risk to extreme heat if air conditioning is not affordable. Areas with lower extreme heat thresholds are not necessarily at lower risk, because persons and community assets used to cooler temperatures may be less prepared for extreme heat events.

Trees and other vegetation in the natural and urban environment help to lower surface and air temperatures by providing shade and through evapotranspiration. Evapotranspiration, alone or in combination with shading, can help reduce peak summer temperatures by 2°F to 9°F.[iii, iv]

Very high temperatures can harm plants and animals that are not well adapted to them, including natural ecosystems. Extreme heat can increase the temperature of water in lakes, streams, creeks, and other water bodies, especially during drought events when water levels are lower. In some cases, water temperatures may exceed comfortable levels for several plants and animals, causing ecological harm. Outdoor workers in construction or landscaping are also much more exposed to the elements than most people, so they are more susceptible to extreme heat conditions and the potential illnesses associated with very high temperatures.

Indirectly, extreme heat puts more stress on power lines, causing them to run less efficiently. The heat also causes more demand for electricity (usually to run air conditioning units), and in combination with the stress on the power lines, may lead to brownouts and blackouts.

Potential Changes to Extreme Heat in Future Years

Likelihood of Future Occurrence

Extreme heat occurs on an annual basis, most commonly at the peak of the summer season. From late spring through fall, days with temperatures exceeding 90°F and higher will increase.

Shifts in Climate Norms and Extreme Heat

The warmer temperatures brought on by shifts in climate conditions are likely to cause an increase in extreme heat events. Depending on the location and emissions levels, the state Cal-Adapt database indicates the number of extreme heat days is expected to rise from a historical annual average of 4 to 26 by the middle of the century (2035 to 2064), and an average of 53 by the end of the century (2070 to 2099), with some years occasionally experiencing much more extreme heat days.

Overall, Colfax is expected to see an increase in the average daily high temperatures. Depending on the future severity of climate change, the state Cal-Adapt database indicates the annual average maximum temperature is expected to increase from a historical annual average of 71.2°F to an average of up to 75.3°F by the middle of the century (2035 to 2064), and an average of up to 76.9°F by the end of the century (2070 to 2099). Although the temperature increases may appear modest, the projected high temperatures are substantially greater than historical norms. These increases also make it more likely that an above-average high temperature will cross the extreme heat threshold. As temperatures increase, Colfax is expected to face increased risk of death from dehydration, heat stroke, heat exhaustion, heart attack, stroke, and respiratory distress caused by extreme heat.

Severe Weather

Severe weather includes strong winds, hail, and lightning. Severe weather is usually caused by intense storm systems, although types of strong winds can occur without a storm. The types of dangers posed by severe weather vary widely and may include injuries or deaths, damage to buildings and structures, fallen trees, roads and railways blocked by debris, and fires sparked by lightning. In Placer County, most severe weather is linked to high winds. Hail events are rare, and there have been no reported injuries from hail in Colfax. Lightning happens occasionally, although there has been no direct injury or damage from lightning reported in Colfax.

According to the Placer County Sustainability Plan, severe winter weather includes heavy snowfall, ice storms, extreme cold, and similar events. In Placer County these events are usually limited to the Sierra Nevada region, although in rare cases severe winter weather can occur at lower elevations, such as the City of Colfax.

Potential Changes to Severe Weather in Future Years

Likelihood of Future Occurrence

According to historical hazard data, severe weather is an annual occurrence in the City of Colfax. Damage and disaster declarations related to severe weather have occurred and will continue to occur in the future. Heavy rain and thunderstorms are the most frequent type of severe weather occurrence in the area. Wind and lightning often accompany these storms and have caused damage in the past and could contribute to future wildfires. Although unlikely, severe winter storms may also bring heavy snowfall to the City of Colfax. In addition to localized flooding issues, the storms can cause several mudslides and lightning can cause many electrical poles to short with a resultant loss of power, hazardous downed lines, and the potential for fire.

Problems associated with the primary effects of severe weather include flooding, pavement deterioration, and debris clogging of drainages and roadways. Areas located on S. Main Street are the areas of the city most often affected during these heavy storm events.

Shifts in Climate Norms and Severe Weather

Shifts in climate norms are expected to cause an increase in intense rainfall, and in some instances snowfall, which is usually associated with strong storm systems. This means that Colfax could see more intense storms in the coming years and decades. Such an increase may not affect all forms of severe weather and may not always be apparent. For example, hail is rare enough in Colfax that even if it does become more common, the increase and any effects may not be apparent. Overall, shifts in climate norms are expected to increase average temperatures, so the total number of days with cooler temperatures is expected to drop. However, a change in global climate conditions may increase the number of severe storms affecting Placer County, including Colfax. These intense storm systems could create severe winter weather conditions in the Sierra Nevada and more severe winter weather events in areas such as Colfax.

7.5 Safety Goals, Policies, and Implementation Measures

Goal 7.1	Protect the life and property of residents, businesses, and visitors to Colfax from natural and human-caused hazards.
Policy 7.1.1	Require a review of all potential hazards in areas identified for development.
Policy 7.1.2	Continue to partner with Placer County and other cities within the county to regularly update and implement the Placer County LHMP.
Policy 7.1.3	Incorporate by reference the current Placer County Local Hazard Mitigation Plan and subsequent local updates into the Safety Element.
Policy 7.1.4	Enhance public education and awareness of natural and climate-related induced hazards and public understanding of disasters.
Policy 7.1.5	Identify and, as feasible, retrofit any City-owned buildings and facilities in areas prone to landslide/debris flows or wildfire to maximize defensible space and outdoor fireproofing, stabilize nearby slopes, and take other actions to harden the property as needed.
Policy 7.1.6	Work with local and regional transportation agencies to help protect primary evacuation routes from being blocked or damaged by a hazard event.
Policy 7.1.7	Provide the public with information on specified emergency evacuation routes.
Policy 7.1.8	Maintain inter-jurisdictional cooperation and coordination, including automatic aid agreements, with fire protection and suppression agencies in Placer County.
Policy 7.1.9	Continue to cooperate with other public agencies to ensure adequate medical and other emergency services needs.
Policy 7.1.10	Design and site critical facilities to minimize potential damage and increase their ability to remain operational during and after hazard events.
Policy 7.1.11	Coordinate with Placer County Fire Department and CAL FIRE to conduct emergency services training in support of appropriate goals and standards for training efforts.

Policy 7.1.12 Work with the County on the next revision to the LHMP to ensure AB 747 requirements are integrated into the next update of the Safety Element. AB 747 requires that safety elements must identify evacuation routes, their capacity, safety, and viability under a range of emergency scenarios.

Policy 7.1.13 Provide information to members of the public about evacuation concerns, including designated evacuation routes and evacuation plan details, through multiple formats and in multiple languages.

Implementation Measures

7.1.A Make information relating to potential hazards on site specific areas in the City available to all City agencies and staff.

7.1.B Continue to work with the County to update the LHMP upon its expiration to ensure that Colfax maintains eligibility for pre-disaster mitigation funding.

7.1.C Review and update as needed the Safety Element at least once every eight years, ideally concurrent with updates to the County's LHMP or the Colfax Housing Element so that the best available hazard data is concurrently incorporated into the Safety Element. The LHMP, most recently approved by FEMA in June 2021, is incorporated by reference into this Safety Element, as permitted by California Government Code Section 65302.6.

7.1.D Encourage all persons in hazard-prone areas, especially those living in neighborhoods along single-access roads to prepare and keep an emergency and evacuation kit.

7.1.E Create a community support network in partnership with community-based organizations to check on socially vulnerable or isolated persons during dangerous conditions. Similarly, the City will use said network to provide information and services related to hazard mitigation and emergency preparation to persons with limited access to transportation, communication, and other lifeline resources and services.

7.1.F When identifying projects for inclusion in the Capital Improvements Program list, note any potential vulnerabilities to climate-related hazards and ensure that the project maximizes its resilience potential and minimizes any climate vulnerabilities.

7.1.G Provide the public with information and training on what to do until help arrives in emergency situations.

Goal 7.2	**Minimal risk of injuries, loss of life, property damage, and economic and social disruption resulting from seismic and geologic hazards in Colfax.**

Policy 7.2.1 Identify opportunities to strengthen or relocate existing weak critical structures and lifeline utilities to increase public safety and minimize or avoid potential damage from seismic and geologic hazards.

Policy 7.2.2 Incorporate resilient design features for roads and trails that are on or below steep slopes and have a history of being damaged or blocked by landslide events.

Policy 7.2.3 Continually identify areas of Colfax susceptible to damage from seismic shaking, liquefaction, subsidence, and other geologic risks.

Policy 7.2.4 Require detailed soils and geologic studies prior to approval for development in potentially hazardous areas. Require mitigation measures if significant hazards are identified.

Policy 7.2.5 Avoid development in areas of steep slope and high erosion potential.

Policy 7.2.6 Encourage upgrading of unreinforced masonry buildings to prevent disastrous earthquake damage.

Implementation Measures

7.2.A Work to stabilize burned slopes located above developed areas, important infrastructure, or key transportation corridors as soon as possible after a wildfire event. The City will cooperate with the Placer County Department of Public Works and/or Caltrans when necessary.

7.2.B Work to make single-access roads and key trails less vulnerable to landslides and mudflows through the use of retaining walls, slope stabilization techniques, and other strategies.

7.2.C Ensure that site development on steep slopes is designed to avoid creating areas that may be subject to slippage or movement from storm events.

7.2.D Continue to implement the California Building Code.

7.2.E Encourage clustering of development away from areas considered geologically unstable.

Goal 7.3	**Minimal risk of injuries, property damage, and economic loss resulting from urban and wildland fires in Colfax.**
Policy 7.3.1	Continually identify any areas of likely wildfire risks or urban conflagration in Colfax.
Policy 7.3.2	Prevent fuel accumulation around any City-owned infrastructure where fires are known to occur.
Policy 7.3.3	Maintain an adequate peak load water supply for fire suppression efforts in Colfax.
Policy 7.3.4	Continue to enforce and, as necessary, adopt new development standards to reduce fire hazard risks for new and existing development to minimize property damage and loss of life.
Policy 7.3.5	Continue to work with Placer County, state agencies, and federal agencies to support wildfire fuel management activities in areas devastated by bark beetle and other pests.
Policy 7.3.6	Continue to partner with Placer County and other entities within the County to regularly update and implement the Placer County Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP).
Policy 7.3.7	Promote the use of fire-resistant landscaping in public and private developments.
Policy 7.3.8	Require fire protection plans for all new development projects, including plans for long-term, comprehensive, fuel reduction and management. The main components of a fire protection plan include: 1. Risk Analysis 2. Fire Response Capabilities 3. Fire Safety Requirements – Defensible Space, Infrastructure, and Building Ignition Resistance 4. Mitigation Measures and Design Considerations for Non-Conforming Fuel Modification 5. Wildfire Education Maintenance and Limitations

Policy 7.3.9 Require review by the Planning Department prior to the issuance of development permits for proposed construction projects and conceptual landscaping plans. Plans for proposed development shall include, at a minimum:

1. Site plan, planting plan, planting palette, and irrigation plan to reduce the risk of fire hazards and with consideration to site conditions, including slope, structures, and adjacencies.
2. Development and maintenance of defensible space.
3. Multiple points of ingress and egress to improve evacuation, emergency response, and fire equipment access, and adequate water infrastructure for water supply and fire flow.
4. Class A roof materials for new and replacement roofs.
5. Location and source of anticipated water supply.

Policy 7.3.10 Enforce fire-resistant landscaping and defensible space requirements for new residential and commercial development and require development standards that meet or exceed Title 14, CCR, Division 1.5, Chapter 7, Subchapter 2, Articles 1-5 (commencing with section 1270) (SRA Fire Safe Regulations) and Title 14, CCR, Division 1.5, Chapter 7, Subchapter 3, Article 3 (commencing with section 1299.01) (Fire Hazard Reduction Around Buildings and Structures Regulations). All new residential development must comply with California Fire Safe Regulations (Section 1276 of the California Code of Regulations – Title 24, Division 1.5, Chapter 7, Article 5), as well as Chapter 17.122 of the Municipal Code, which requires a landscape design plan for projects in fire-prone areas that addresses fire safety and prevention, as well as defensible space.

Policy 7.3.11 Coordinate with CAL FIRE and Placer County Fire Department to identify and maintain evacuation routes to ensure adequate capacity, safety, and viability of those routes in the event of an emergency.

Policy 7.3.12 Coordinate with CAL FIRE and Placer County Fire Department, fire safe councils, and other agencies to maintain existing fuel breaks and emergency access routes for effective fire suppression.

Policy 7.3.13 Support measures that help firefighting crews and emergency response teams respond to fire hazards or work under low-visibility conditions, such as high-visibility signage for streets and building addresses that meet or exceed the standards in the California Fire Safe Regulations (Sections 1273

and 1274 of the California Code of Regulations – Title 24, Division 1.5, Chapter 7, Articles 2 and 3).

Policy 7.3.14 Ensure that new development be located where fire and emergency services have sufficient capacity to meet project needs or require that they be upgraded to provide necessary capacity as part of the proposed development activities to ensure new development has adequate fire protection.

Policy 7.3.15 Develop and update programs as needed that ensure recovery and redevelopment after a large fire and that reduce future vulnerabilities to fire hazard risks through site preparation, redevelopment layout design, fire-resistant landscape planning, and home hardening building design and materials.

Policy 7.3.16 Provide information to the community about wildland and urban fire hazards, evacuation routes, and ways to minimize damage caused by fires such as through defensible space. The City shall identify and map at-risk populations within the community and prioritize public outreach, as well as fire education and training among these populations.

Policy 7.3.17 Identify existing public and private roadways in fire hazard areas not in compliance with contemporary fire-safe standards, including road standards, vegetation clearance, and other requirements of Sections 1273 and 1274 of the California Code of Regulations to the extent resources are available. Work at retrofitting City-owned roadways as needed to meet current standards and require private property owners to do the same, to the extent feasible and given the absence of other site constraints.

Policy 7.3.18 Require proposed development to provide adequate access for fire and emergency vehicles and equipment that meets or exceeds the standards in the California Fire Safe Regulations (Sections 1273 and 1274 of the California Code of Regulations – Title 24, Division 1.5, Chapter 7, Articles 2 and 3).

Policy 7.3.19 Coordinate with the Placer County Water Agency to maintain an adequate, long-term water supply for fire suppression needs for the community.

Implementation Measures

7.3.A Require each new large-scale development to submit a water usage plan showing that Colfax's water system can supply the new development with minimum water amounts while maintaining optimal water supply for fire suppression work.

7.3.B Continue to enforce requirements to provide defensible space around homes and other buildings in fire-prone areas, and strengthen standards as needed to provide adequate protection in response to changing fire regimes.

7.3.C Seek to develop a fire-safe assessment to use prior to issuing a building permit or other formal approval for significant retrofits to buildings, including installation of sprinklers and fire-safe exterior materials as feasible.

7.3.D Require new developments to include fuel reduction plans. These plans must include a finance plan, necessary fees for maintenance of fuel break areas, and maintenance requirements in any applicable covenants, conditions, and restrictions.

7.3.E Continue to work with the County to update the CWPP upon its expiration to ensure that Colfax maintains eligibility for pre-disaster mitigation funding and applies mitigation measures to protect the City of Colfax from wildfire.

Goal 7.4 Work to reduce crime levels in Colfax.

Policy 7.4.1 Work with the Sheriff's Office to maintain response times sufficient to rapidly respond to 911 calls.

Policy 7.4.2 Ensure that new development projects use environmental design to reduce the risk of crime.

Policy 7.4.3 Promote citizen engagement in crime awareness in existing crime reduction programs.

Implementation Measures

7.4.A Work with the Placer County Sheriff's Office to address law enforcement personnel needs in Colfax resulting from future population growth.

7.4.B Work with the Placer County Sheriff's Office to evaluate new project design to reduce the potential for crime. The City and Sheriff's Office may draft and adopt a set of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) guidelines for use by project applicants during project design and by City staff during permit and plan review.

7.4.C Coordinate with the Placer County Sheriff's Office to continue its Citizens Awareness Academy and Neighborhood-Business Watch Program.

Goal 7.5	Reduced likelihood of hazardous materials release, exposure, and contamination in Colfax.
Policy 7.5.1	Encourage commercial or industrial development using hazardous materials in areas away from residential uses and discourage commercial and industrial development using hazardous materials in areas of identified wildfire risk.
Policy 7.5.2	Collaborate with other cities/towns, Placer County, and regional hazardous waste management organizations to limit the risk of hazardous materials release.
Policy 7.5.3	Reduce the risk of exposure to hazardous materials in Colfax.
Goal 7.6	City and ecological resiliency to climate-related hazards.
Policy 7.6.1	Encourage collaboration with regional organizations and agencies to increase resilience.
Policy 7.6.2	Work with Placer County Office of Emergency Services to ensure that there are safe places for community members to gather during hazardous events like extreme heat.
Policy 7.6.3	Prepare for a reduced long-term water supply resulting from more frequent and severe drought events, including working with regional water providers to implement extensive water conservation measures and ensure sustainable water supplies, including for fire suppression needs.
Policy 7.6.4	Reduce health and economic risks associated with extreme heat and human health hazards.

Implementation Measures

7.6.A	Coordinate climate resiliency efforts with the Capital Region Climate Readiness Collaborative, the Sierra Climate Adaptation and Mitigation Partnership, and other regional bodies.
7.6.B	Engage in partnerships and support local and regional interagency efforts to assess climate-related impacts and to develop and implement strategies that increase resilience of vulnerable ecosystems.
7.6.C	Work with regional, state, and federal plant and wildlife management agencies and organizations to protect vulnerable habitat and improve ecosystem connectivity.

7.6.D **Work to ensure that its facilities used as cooling centers or resilience hubs are equipped with backup power supplies, including on-site renewable energy generation and energy storage systems.**

7.6.E **Provide shaded areas, air conditioners, and other features at City community centers, parks, and other outdoor spaces that can offer refuge from extreme heat and weather events.**

7.6.F **Continue to promote water conservation programs to reduce water use in the City of Colfax.**

7.6.G **Support and cooperate with the Placer County Water Agency during updates to its urban water management plan to support ongoing efforts to plan for sustainable, long-term drinking water supply for City residents and businesses.**

7.6.H **Encourage projects that include landscaping to use plants that will continue to be viable in the area under long-term future climate conditions.**

7.6.I **Coordinate with Placer County Public Health Department to ensure that free or reduced-cost vaccinations for vector-borne diseases are widely available for Colfax residents.**

[1] Louise Bedsworth, Dan Cayan, Guido Franco, Leah Fisher, and Sonya Ziaja, "Statewide Summary Report," in California's Fourth Climate Change Assessment, publication number: SUMCCCA4-2018-013, California Governor's Office of Planning and Research, Scripps Institution of Oceanography, California Energy Commission, California Public Utilities Commission, 2018.

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[iii] Huang, J., H. Akbari, and H. Taha. 1990. The Wind-Shielding and Shading Effects of Trees on Residential Heating and Cooling Requirements. ASHRAE Winter Meeting, American Society of Heating, Refrigerating and Air-Conditioning Engineers. Atlanta, Georgia.

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8.0 Economic Development Element

8.1 Authority and Purpose

The Economic Development Element of the General Plan is directed toward fostering a healthy, balanced year-round economy in Colfax to provide a broad range of economic opportunities for all Colfax residents. This element supports the Vision for Colfax by providing a framework of guiding principles, goals, polices, and implementation measures that encourage a diverse and sustainable year-round economy in Colfax while maintaining the City's community character and high quality of life, and ability to maintain superior community services. Although economic development is not a topic required to be addressed in a General Plan, its inclusion in the Colfax General Plan reflects the City's commitment to maintaining a balanced mix of economic sectors, encouraging high-wage jobs, and supporting businesses and commercial activities that build upon and enhance Colfax's unique character and natural environment.

8.2 Economic Development Goals, Policies, and Implementation Measures

Goal 8.1	**Establish and maintain a diverse and sustainable economy.**
Policy 8.1.1	**Encourage a full range of commercial establishments and facilities to serve the residents of the community, to provide local employment opportunities, and to improve and diversify the community's tax base.**
Policy 8.1.2	**Encourage destination-style shopping allowing customers to park once and shop at several locations.**
Policy 8.1.3	**Support and encourage the expansion of existing commercial uses and businesses.**
Policy 8.1.4	**Support the efforts of the Colfax Chamber of Commerce to promote Colfax as a place to visit, live, and do business.**
Policy 8.1.5	**Encourage new development to shop at local businesses for goods and services.**

Implementation Measures

8.1.A	**Coordinate a business group of staff and community members to oversee, coordinate and promote all economic development efforts for the City.**
8.1.B	**Adopt a policy which establishes some degree of preference for locally-owned and operated businesses to provide goods and services to the City of Colfax.**

8.1.C	Study ways in which the City can streamline its processes or alter its fee structures so as to encourage small, locally-owned or desired types of businesses to establish themselves in Colfax.
8.1.D	Provide space on the City's webpage to promote local businesses.

Goal 8.2	**Maintain the vitality of Downtown Colfax.**
Policy 8.2.1	Continue redevelopment and improvement efforts in Downtown Colfax, including programs to preserve the unique historic character of the Downtown, and expand upon the Downtown's vibrant mixed-use character.
Policy 8.2.2	Support public activities and community events in Downtown Colfax.
Policy 8.2.3	Support formation of a Tourism Council, or Downtown Committee, or similar organization to promote and encourage tourism within the city.

Implementation Measures

8.2.A	Establish a priority of existing parcels in older areas of the city and provide incentives to utilize these parcels for infill development.
8.2.B	Develop a "way-finding" sign program to help draw visitors from the freeway into Downtown Colfax.
8.2.C	Devise a capital improvement plan for infrastructure improvement and development. Including the implementation of objective design standards for downtown development.

Goal 8.3	**Maintain a supportive business climate and economic atmosphere that encourages retention of jobs and business within the city.**
Policy 8.3.1	Maintain and implement a program to help tenants obtain building permits in a timely manner, with a goal of providing certain tenant improvements and building permits within one to two days.
Policy 8.3.2	Attract new industries and promote commercial uses that provide employment for the resident labor force.

Implementation Measures

8.3.A	Require that the Economic Development Committee develop an economic development plan and strategy for the city.
8.3.B	Develop an internal ombudsman program with staff and materials that would help new businesses connect with essential services, and existing businesses with help with expansion or development.

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