Chapter 4—Agriculture and Forestry Resources

4.1 Introduction

This chapter describes existing conditions (environmental and regulatory) and assesses the potential agriculture and forestry resources impacts that may result from implementation of the 2020 Metropolitan Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (proposed MTP/SCS). Where necessary and feasible, mitigation measures are identified to reduce these impacts.

The information presented in this chapter is based on a review of existing and available information and is regional in scope. Data, analysis, and findings provided in this chapter were considered and prepared at a programmatic level.

This chapter provides a basic summary of the extent, distribution, use, quality, and productivity of agriculture and forest lands in the plan area of the proposed MTP/SCS. This information is informed by SACOG’s Rural-Urban Connections Strategy (RUCS), literature, maps and data published by the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), the California Department of Conservation (DOC), and county agricultural commissioners. Agricultural land and forest land habitat conversion are discussed in Chapter 6 – Biological Resources. Soil quality and conditions are analyzed in EIR Chapter 9 – Geology, Seismicity, Soils and Mineral Resources. Agricultural and forestry resources are also discussed in the proposed MTP/SCS in Chapter 3 and Chapter 4.

In response to the Notice of Preparation (NOP), SACOG received comments related to agriculture from the Sierra Club (Placer County). The commenter expressed that the Draft EIR should consider the following:

- Impacts to agriculture and open space

The CEQA Guidelines note that comments received during the NOP scoping process can be helpful in “identifying the range of actions, alternatives, mitigation measures, and significant effects to be analyzed in depth in an EIR and in eliminating from detailed study issues found not to be important.” (CEQA Guidelines Section 15083.) Neither the CEQA Guidelines or Statutes require a lead agency to respond directly to comments received in response to the NOP, but they do require they be considered. Consistent with these requirements, this comment has been carefully reviewed and considered by SACOG and is reflected in the analysis of impacts in this chapter. Appendix PD-1 includes all NOP comments received.

4.2 Environmental Setting

The SACOG region has a long history of agricultural and forestry activity due to its location, encompassing part of the fertile Central Valley of California and the forested foothills of the Sierra Nevada Mountain Range. There are nearly 1.6 million harvested agricultural acres and 1.1 million acres of forest land in the region, together comprising 67 percent of the plan area of the proposed MTP/SCS (see below for breakdowns of agricultural and forest land by county). The region’s
agricultural value fluctuates with commodity markets, but since 2008, international commodity markets have been strong, supporting a farmgate value of more than $2 billion (CDFA 2017). The farmgate value is the value of the commodity when it is harvested. The region has also seen strong growth in market demand for locally grown food. Further, the agricultural industry generates economic activity beyond just the farmgate value of commodities. For example, tens of thousands of people in the region earn a living working in the agricultural industry, and the industry also supports a robust agri-tourism economy. Many of those jobs are in support services such as agricultural suppliers and processors, but also include others such as attorneys, accountants, and insurance sales.

The following paragraphs describe agriculture and forestry resources in each county in the region. The baseline data used are 2016 data, but to the extent more recent information is available, it is provided. The acreages for agricultural land identified in this chapter were confirmed through crop reports and provide more comprehensive and up to date information than solely relying on California Department of Conservation’s Farmland Monitoring and Mapping Program (FMMP) data. These values represent active, tillable acres of agriculture and do not encompass acres of agricultural land cover suitable as habitat for special-status species (see Chapter 6 – Biological Resources for a discussion of habitat conversion impacts). Table 4-1 summarizes the existing agricultural and forest lands by County within the plan area of the proposed MTP/SCS.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>Agricultural Land</th>
<th>Forest Land Publicly-Owned</th>
<th>Forest Land Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>El Dorado</td>
<td>238,684</td>
<td>414,354</td>
<td>562,660</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Placer</td>
<td>162,620</td>
<td>372,383</td>
<td>455,104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sacramento</td>
<td>208,525</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sutter</td>
<td>356,092</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yolo</td>
<td>328,452</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yuba</td>
<td>266,899</td>
<td>43,015</td>
<td>67,834</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Region</td>
<td>1,561,272</td>
<td>829,752</td>
<td>1,085,597</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


4.2.1 Current and Historical Agricultural, Forest Land, and Timber Production Uses

**El Dorado County**

In El Dorado County, agricultural lands, including pasture and grazing lands, account for 21 percent of the land area, with 238,684 total harvested acres. In 2017, the county had a gross crop value of approximately $71 million. The overall contribution of agriculture to the county’s economy (through employment, sales, tourism, and other related activities) totaled approximately $600 million in 2017 (El Dorado County Department of Agriculture 2017). Lands on the west slope of the county are considered the most valuable for agriculture because of the area’s gentler slopes and richer soils. Historically, grazing of cattle and other livestock was the primary economic contributor in El Dorado County. Recently, production of fruit (including wine grapes) and nuts has become a major contributor to the county’s agricultural economy (El Dorado County Department of Agriculture 2017).
Forest lands account for 562,660 acres of the land in the county (excluding the Tahoe Basin). Of this acreage, approximately 414,354 acres are publicly-owned (see Table 4-1). Timber production is economically important in the county. In 2017, the gross value of timber production in the county was $10 million (El Dorado County Department of Agriculture 2017).

**Placer County**

There are approximately 162,620 acres of harvested agricultural land, including pasture and grazing lands in Placer County, accounting for 17 percent of the land in the county (excludes Tahoe Basin). The county’s primary agricultural products are fruit and nut crops, timber, rice, cattle, poultry, and sheep. In 2017, the total gross value for agricultural products was roughly $58 million (Placer County Department of Agriculture 2017). As in El Dorado County, Placer County’s western lands are the most valuable for agriculture because of the flat to gently sloped topography and richer soils. Due to severe weather impacts and land use changes, for the first time in more than a decade rice was supplanted as Placer County’s top grossing crop. In its place, Cattle and Calves was the top commodity in 2017. Nursery Stock production rose to rank second, while rice production remained the third crop in 2017. Timber and walnuts are also top commodities in the county. Agricultural returns declined in 2017 by $7,147,000, or 11 percent, compared to 2016’s value of $65,206, (Placer County Department of Agriculture 2017).

There are 455,100 acres of forest land in the county, of which 372,383 acres are under public ownership. The US Forest Service controls the largest amount of public lands, controlling over 355,000 acres within Placer County (BLM and USFS 2006). The U.S. Bureau of Reclamation controls a smaller amount of land, about 24,000 acres in central Placer County. Timber harvesting increased by 30 percent from 2016, and had a gross value of approximately $5.9 million in 2017 (Placer County Department of Agriculture 2017).

**Sacramento County**

Although it is the most urbanized county in the region, Sacramento County has a long history of agricultural activity. As of 2017, there were 208,525 acres of land in agricultural production including pasture or grazing lands, comprising 33 percent of the county. The majority of agricultural lands and activities are located in the south and east county areas, including the Sacramento River Delta region. In 2017 the county grossed approximately $496 million in agricultural products. Top producing crops in the county include wine grapes, milk, poultry, Bartlett pears, and cattle and calves. Wine grapes continue to top Sacramento County's crop values and should see an increase in the next few years as newly planted vines come into production (Sacramento County Department of Agriculture & Weights and Measures 2017). Sacramento County has no forest land.

**Sutter County**

Agriculture is the primary industry of Sutter County. Including pasture or grazing lands, agricultural land accounts for 356,092 acres, or 92 percent of the county’s land area (Sutter County Department of Agriculture 2017). The county’s valley floor location between two major rivers has created, over geological time, a broad area of deep, rich agricultural soils with abundant surface and subsurface water. Together with an inland climate that provides for a long growing season, these factors have led to a productive agricultural environment. In 2017, agricultural production grossed approximately $584 million, with rice, walnuts, prunes, peaches, nursery products, and almonds as the leading crops...
commodities. In particular, walnuts, prunes, nursery products, and almonds increased in production and/or value (Sutter County Department of Agriculture 2017). Sutter County has no forest land.

**YOLO COUNTY**

Like Sutter County, Yolo County’s flat valley topography and rich agricultural soils have made agriculture the primary economic development driver of the county. As of 2017 there were 328,452 acres in production, comprising 55 percent of total land in the county. The 2017 gross valuation of agricultural products was approximately $635 million, a decrease of 4.1 percent from 2016. Tomatoes have long been the county’s leading commodity; however, almonds have taken the number one spot in 2017. Wine grapes, organic production, and walnuts are other top crops. (Yolo County Department of Agriculture 2017). Yolo County has no forest land.

**YUBA COUNTY**

Although Yuba County experienced rapid development for several years before the recent recession, agriculture remains a prominent land use in the county, with 266,899 acres, or 68 percent, of the county in agricultural production, including grazing and pasture lands. The gross value for agriculture in Yuba County in 2017 was just over $232 million. Walnuts continue to be the county’s leading crop in 2017 followed by rice, prunes, peaches and milk (Yuba County Department of Agriculture 2018).

There are about 67,834 acres of forest land in the county, primarily in the northeastern portion. Of these, about 43,000 acres are under public ownership and managed by the U.S. Forest Service (U.S. Forest Service 2019). The gross value of timber production in 2016 was approximately $1.4 million (California Department of Food and Agriculture 2017).

### 4.2.2 Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program Lands

The DOC FMMP is one of several sources used to identify existing agricultural lands. FMMP farmland categories are based on local soil characteristics and irrigation status. Farmlands are classified according to soil factors, including available water holding capacity, temperature regime, acidity, depth to the water table, electrical conductivity, flooding potential, erosion hazard, permeability, rock content, and rooting depth. FMMP’s land classification system is outlined in Section 4.3.2. The best quality land is identified as Prime Farmland and Farmland of Statewide Importance.

FMMP data are typically updated every two years and use a minimum mapping unit of 10 acres. The most recent complete and regionally consistent set of data published by the FMMP is for the years 2014–2016. Figure 4-1 depicts areas devoted to Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance, and farmland of local importance (DOC 2016a). Most of the land located west of the Sierra Nevada foothills and east of the Capay Valley is classified as “Important Farmland” (i.e., either Prime Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance, Unique Farmland, or farmland of local importance). Western Yolo County, the eastern third of Sacramento County, the Sutter Buttes region in Sutter County, and the foothill regions of El Dorado, Placer, and Yuba counties are predominantly classified as grazing land.
Figure 4-1
Significant Agricultural Lands in the Plan Area of the Proposed MTP/SCS
An acreage summary by FMMP mapping category for the plan area of the proposed MTP/SCS land is presented in Table 4-2. The table shows that Important Farmland is concentrated in the counties of Sacramento, Sutter and Yolo, due to the fertile soils and flat topography of these valley counties. Although El Dorado, Placer, and Yuba counties contain less Important Farmland, these counties contain significant grazing and “Other” land. Almost 62 percent of the region is classified as farmland and only 11 percent is currently urbanized. Urban development pressures affect agricultural lands throughout the region due to high population and employment growth. Agriculture conversion pressure is greatest at the edge of existing urban development.

### Table 4-2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Farmland Category</th>
<th>El Dorado</th>
<th>Placer</th>
<th>Sacramento</th>
<th>Sutter</th>
<th>Yolo</th>
<th>Yuba</th>
<th>Region</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prime Farmland</td>
<td>697</td>
<td>8,331</td>
<td>92,838</td>
<td>161,159</td>
<td>255,587</td>
<td>45,125</td>
<td>563,738</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farmland of Statewide Importance</td>
<td>1,015</td>
<td>3,963</td>
<td>46,874</td>
<td>103,197</td>
<td>19,127</td>
<td>10,635</td>
<td>184,810</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unique Farmland</td>
<td>3,368</td>
<td>19,211</td>
<td>15,730</td>
<td>16,935</td>
<td>46,192</td>
<td>31,143</td>
<td>132,579</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farmland of Local Importance</td>
<td>59,153</td>
<td>93,948</td>
<td>54,716</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>49,257</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>257,074</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grazing Land</td>
<td>195,881</td>
<td>29,248</td>
<td>149,328</td>
<td>51,059</td>
<td>165,432</td>
<td>136,231</td>
<td>727,179</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Farmland</td>
<td>260,114</td>
<td>154,701</td>
<td>359,487</td>
<td>332,351</td>
<td>535,595</td>
<td>223,133</td>
<td>1,865,380</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban and Built-Up Land</td>
<td>32,190</td>
<td>56,143</td>
<td>152,129</td>
<td>11,258</td>
<td>25,574</td>
<td>13,847</td>
<td>291,141</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Land</td>
<td>234,705</td>
<td>189,195</td>
<td>70,244</td>
<td>29,256</td>
<td>73,057</td>
<td>162,273</td>
<td>758,730</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water</td>
<td>8,906</td>
<td>1,188</td>
<td>5,985</td>
<td>202</td>
<td>5,891</td>
<td>7,340</td>
<td>29,512</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Farmland</td>
<td>275,801</td>
<td>246,526</td>
<td>228,358</td>
<td>40,717</td>
<td>104,522</td>
<td>183,461</td>
<td>1,079,384</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Area Surveyed</td>
<td>535,915</td>
<td>401,227</td>
<td>587,845</td>
<td>373,067</td>
<td>640,116</td>
<td>406,594</td>
<td>2,944,764</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹Approximately 915,000 acres of land within the plan area of the proposed MTP/SCS in eastern Placer and El Dorado counties were not surveyed. The survey area excludes most of the Sierra Nevada, as well as desert and forested parts of California that are less likely to have productive farmland. Some of these locations may be added in the future, while most areas identified as “Local, State, and Federal Owned Land” will not be added. Some small areas of public land are included in the survey area, generally as “Other Land.” See California Farmland Conversion Report 2014–2016 (DOC 2016b).

²Includes Farmland of Local Potential in Yolo County

Source: DOC 2016b; California Farmland Conversion Report 2014–2016

### 4.2.3 Williamson Act Contracts

In 1965, the State Legislature passed the California Land Conservation Act (better known as the Williamson Act) in response to agricultural property tax burdens resulting from rapid land value appreciation (see Section 4.3.2 for a more comprehensive description of the Williamson Act). The DOC’s Williamson Act data were used to analyze agriculture impacts. These data include any lands that are currently enrolled under a California Land Conservation Act contract in 2016. This analysis does not include lands that are in a non-renewal status. Table 4-3 shows the amount of agricultural lands under Williamson Act contract in each of the counties in the SACOG region as of 2016, the most recent year for which data are available.

As of 2016, the SACOG region contained a total of 655,938 acres of land contracted under the Williamson Act. Of those acres, 394,999 acres were Prime Farmland and 260,938 acres were nonprime. Over 50 percent of both prime and nonprime lands under contract are located in Yolo
County. About 25 percent of all contract lands are located in Sacramento County, with the remainder in El Dorado, Placer, and Sutter counties. Yuba County does not participate in the program. Figure 4-2 shows the location of Williamson Act lands in the SACOG region.

### Table 4-3
**Williamson Act Lands within the SACOG Region as of 2016**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>Prime</th>
<th>Nonprime</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Percent of Total Land Acres in Williamson Act Contracts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>El Dorado</td>
<td>7,070</td>
<td>24,734</td>
<td>31,804</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Placer</td>
<td>22,443</td>
<td>1,691</td>
<td>24,134</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sacramento</td>
<td>88,809</td>
<td>72,581</td>
<td>161,390</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sutter</td>
<td>48,610</td>
<td>13,617</td>
<td>62,227</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yolo</td>
<td>228,067</td>
<td>148,316</td>
<td>376,383</td>
<td>57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yuba¹</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SACOG Region</td>
<td>394,999</td>
<td>260,938</td>
<td>655,938</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹ Yuba County does not participate in the Williamson Act program.


### 4.2.4 General Plan Designations and Zoning for Agriculture and Forestry

General plan data from all six counties were used to analyze lands designated for agriculture and forest uses. These data were collected in 2019 and reflect the currently adopted general plans in El Dorado (2018), Placer (2013), Sacramento (2017), Sutter (2011), Yolo (2009), and Yuba (2011) counties and any amendments that have been captured in the spatial files. Zoning data from all six counties were collected in 2019 and used in this analysis to measure impacts to agriculture and forest zoned uses.

As of 2016, the SACOG region contained 1,623,986 acres of land zoned for agricultural uses, 1,522,371 acres of land designated for agriculture in local general plans, and 655,938 acres of farmland under active Williamson Act contracts (see Table 4-3 above). These categories are not mutually exclusive. That is, lands classified in one category can also be classified in one or both of the other categories. In Placer County, there are general plan and zoning land uses that are categorized as agriculture and/or timber/forest. These acres were accounted for in the forestry acres summary and not doubled counted in the agricultural lands acreage summary here. Although there is agricultural land in Placer County, the majority of the land with the combined “agriculture/timber” designation is forested land.

Further, three of the six county general plans within the plan area of the proposed MTP/SCS establish designations that include forests or timberland for production, though each county does so using a different approach (for more information on forest land as a natural resource and habitat, see Chapter 6 – Biological Resources). Only Placer County establishes generalized designations specifically for “Forestry” and “Timberland,” which is further divided into separate designations by minimum parcel acreage (Placer County 2013). Additionally, Placer County has several community plans including similar designations to those of the general plan. When combined, these designations cover 587,427 acres of land within the county.
Figure 4-2
Williamson Act Lands in the Plan Area of the Proposed MTP/SCS
El Dorado County includes forest land in the “Natural Resources” designation, along with “mineral resources, important watershed, lakes and ponds, river corridors, grazing lands, and areas where the encroachment of development would compromise these natural resource values” (El Dorado County 2018). This designation covers 636,651 acres of land within the county. Similarly, Yuba County includes agriculture and forest land in the “Natural Resources” designation, created to “conserve and provide natural habitat, watersheds, scenic resources, cultural resources, recreational amenities, agricultural and forest resources, wetlands, woodlands, minerals, and other resources for sustainable use, enjoyment, extraction, and processing” (Yuba County 2011). This designation covers 288,366 acres of land within the county. Sacramento, Sutter, and Yolo counties do not reference forests or timberland in their general plans.

At the time the NOP was issued in April 2019, the SACOG region contained a total of 1,542,444 acres of land designated for forest or timber in the general plan and 1,146,324 acres of land zoned for forest land or timber production, including areas where the forest/timber designation cannot be separated from agricultural or natural resource designations.

4.2.5 California Land Cover Mapping and Monitoring Program

California’s vegetation is mapped by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection’s (CAL FIRE’s) Land Cover Mapping and Monitoring Program. Land cover data from the Land Cover Mapping and Monitoring Program were used to analyze forest lands. These data are produced using remote sensing and aerial imagery to create a dataset that includes tree size and tree canopy with a minimum map unit of 2.5 acres. Because the Land Cover Mapping and Monitoring data are remote sensing data created to estimate all tree canopy, in some cases, particularly in urban areas, it is likely these are not actual “forest” areas. No screening for tree canopy density was done in this analysis; however, the data were geographically screened so that only forests that actually exist today were used. These areas are within the Rural Residential Communities and the Lands Not Identified for Development in El Dorado, Placer, and Yuba counties. Forest land cover data are also presented in Chapter 6 – Biological Resources for purposes of understanding the impacts of the proposed MTP/SCS on natural community types, habitat uses and values, and biological resources.

According to data provided for 2018, there are 792,441 acres of conifer forests, 467,441 acres of hardwood forests, and 369,257 acres of mixed conifer/hardwood forests in the plan area of the proposed MTP/SCS.

4.3 Regulatory Setting

4.3.1 Federal Regulations


The Farmland Protection Policy Act (FPPA) (7 U.S. Code Section 4201, et seq.) is administered by NRCS. NRCS maps soils and farmland to provide comprehensive information necessary for understanding, managing, conserving, and sustaining the nation’s limited soil resources. NRCS determines impacts to farmland that could occur due to a proposed project. The determination is made through coordination between the federal agency proposing or supporting the project and NRCS. NRCS makes a determination, using set thresholds, as to whether additional project-specific mitigation is required. The FPPA is intended to minimize the impact federal programs have on the
unnecessary and irreversible conversion of farmland to non-agricultural uses. It assures that federal
programs are administered to be compatible with state, local government, and private programs and
policies to protect farmland to the extent possible. Federal agencies are required to develop and review
their policies and procedures to implement the FPPA every two years. For the purpose of the FPPA,
farmland includes Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, and Land of Statewide or Local Importance.
Farmland subject to FPPA requirements does not have to be currently used for cropland. It can be
forest land, pastureland, cropland, or other land, but not water or urban built-up land.

**FEDERAL FARM BILL OF 1990 – FEDERAL FOREST LEGACY PROGRAM**

The federal Forest Legacy Program (FLP) (16 U.S. Code Section 2103c) was part of the 1990
Federal Farm Bill. The purpose of the FLP is to protect environmentally-important forest land
under private ownership from conversion to non-forest uses, such as residential or commercial
development. The FLP promotes the use of voluntary conservation easements on these properties.
Landowners who wish to participate may sell or transfer particular rights, such as the right to
develop the property or to allow public access, while retaining ownership of the property and the
right to use it in any way consistent with the terms of the easement. The agency or organization
holding the easement is responsible for managing the rights it acquires and for monitoring
compliance by the landowner. Forest management activities, including timber harvesting, hunting,
fish, and hiking are encouraged, provided they are consistent with the program’s purpose.

**4.3.2 State Regulations**

**FARMLAND MAPPING AND MONITORING PROGRAM**

In 1982, the State of California created the FMMP within DOC to carry on the mapping activity
from NRCS. The FMMP is a non-regulatory program that provides consistent and impartial analysis
of agricultural land use and land use changes throughout California for use by decision-makers in
assessing present status, reviewing trends, and planning for the future of California’s agricultural
land resources. The FMMP produces Important Farmland Maps, which are a hybrid of resource
quality (soils) and land use information. Information from the FMMP was used to identify
agricultural resources within the SACOG region. The FMMP is the primary system by which the
extent, distribution, and quality of farmland is evaluated and monitored. Maps of Important
Farmland are prepared periodically (approximately every two years) by the FMMP for most of the
state’s agricultural regions, based on soil survey information and land inventory and monitoring
criteria developed by NRCS.

The classification system employed by FMMP consists of eight mapping categories: five categories
of agricultural lands and three categories of nonagricultural lands. The characteristics of these eight
categories are summarized below.

- **Prime Farmland.** Prime farmlands are lands with the combination of physical and chemical
  features best able to sustain long-term production of agricultural crops. The land must be
  supported by a developed water supply that is dependable and of adequate quality during the
  growing season. It must also have been used for the production of irrigated crops at some
time during the four years before the mapping data were collected.
- **Farmland of Statewide Importance.** Farmland of statewide importance are lands with agricultural land use characteristics, irrigation water supplies, and physical characteristics similar to Prime Farmland but with minor shortcomings, such as steeper slopes or less ability to hold and store moisture.

- **Unique Farmland.** Unique farmlands are lands with lesser quality soils used for the production of California’s leading agricultural cash crops. These lands are usually irrigated but may include non-irrigated orchards or vineyards as found in some of the state’s climatic zones.

- **Farmland of Local Importance.** Farmlands of local importance are important to the local agricultural economy, as determined by each county’s board of supervisors and a local advisory committee. In Yolo County, this category includes Farmlands of Local Potential, which are Prime or Statewide soils which are presently not irrigated or cultivated.

- **Grazing Land.** Grazing lands are lands on which the existing vegetation is suited to the grazing of livestock.

- **Urban and Built-Up Land.** This category describes land occupied by structures with a building density of at least one unit to 1.5 acres, or approximately six structures to a 10-acre parcel. This land is used for residential, industrial, commercial, construction, institutional, public administration, railroad and other transportation yards, cemeteries, airports, golf courses, sanitary landfills, sewage treatment, water control structures, and other developed purposes.

- **Other Land.** This category encompasses land not included in any other mapping category. Common examples include low-density rural developments; brush, timber, wetland, and riparian areas not suitable for livestock grazing; vacant and nonagricultural land surrounded on all sides by urban development; confined livestock, poultry, or aquaculture facilities; strip mines; borrow pits; and water bodies smaller than 40 acres.

- **Water.** This category describes perennial bodies of water with an extent of at least 40 acres.

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**THE CALIFORNIA LAND CONSERVATION ACT (WILLIAMSON ACT) OF 1965**

The Williamson Act (Gov. Code Section 51200–51207) was enacted by the California State Legislature in 1965 to encourage the preservation of agricultural lands. The Williamson Act program permits property tax adjustments for landowners who contract with a city or county to keep their land in agricultural production or approved open space uses for at least 10 years. Lands covered by Williamson Act contracts are assessed on the basis of their agricultural value instead of their potential market value under nonagricultural uses. In return for the preferential tax rate, the landowner is required to contractually agree to not develop the land for a period of at least ten years.

Williamson Act contracts historically had a term of 10 years or more with renewal occurring automatically each year. Sacramento and Sutter County participate in Williamson Act contracts. The Farmland Security Zone (FSZ) program added to the Williamson Act in 1998 offers landowners greater property tax reduction in return for an initial contract term of 20 years, with renewal occurring automatically each year. El Dorado, Placer, and Yolo County participate in the FSZ contracts. Yuba County does not participate in the Williamson Act program. Assembly Bill (AB) 1265, discussed below, decreased the duration of the Land Conservation Act and FSZ contracts by one and two years, respectively.
The Williamson Act requires contracts to be renewed annually for 8 to 9 years unless a party to the contract files for non-renewal. The filing of a non-renewal application by a landowner ends the automatic annual extension of a contract and starts a nine-year phase-out of the contract. During the phase-out period, the land remains restricted to agricultural and open-space uses, but property taxes gradually return to levels associated with the market value of the land. At the end of the nine-year non-renewal process, the contract expires, and the owner’s uses of the land are restricted only by applicable local zoning. In 2012 and 2013, 25,874 acres entered into non-renewal (DOC 2015). Though state subventions to backfill lost property tax revenue were eliminated in 2009, the program is still ongoing in the region and remains an important part of farmland conservation strategies.

The Williamson Act defines compatible use of contracted lands as any use determined by the county or city administering the preserve to be compatible with the agricultural, recreational, or open-space use of land within the preserve and subject to contract (Gov. Code Section 51202[e]). However, uses deemed compatible by a county or city government must be consistent with the principles of compatibility set forth in Government Code Sections 51231, 51238, or 51238.1.

**Reinstated Portions of the Williamson Act, Revenue & Tax Code, and Open Space and Subvention Act (2011)**

AB 1265 (Chapter 90, Statutes of 2011) was approved by the Governor in Summer 2011 and essentially reinstated portions of the Williamson Act, Revenue & Tax Code, and Open Space and Subvention Act that allowed eligible counties to recapture 10 percent of the property tax benefits provided to their owners of Williamson Act lands by decreasing the duration of the Land Conservation Act and FSZ contracts by one and two years, respectively. Senate Bill (SB) 1353 (Chapter 322, Statutes of 2014), approved by the Governor on September 15, 2014, eliminates the January 1, 2016 sunset clause and makes the option for participating counties to recapture portions of foregone tax revenue permanent (AgAlert 2011). In the plan area of the proposed MTP/SCS, Sutter and Yolo counties take advantage of this legislation, but do not offer any new Williamson Act contracts without funding for the subvention program.

**Open Space Subvention Act of 1972**

The Open Space Subvention Act (Gov. Code Section 16140 et seq.) was enacted on January 1, 1972 to provide for the partial replacement of local property tax revenue foregone as a result of participation in the Williamson Act program and other enforceable open space restriction programs. Participating local governments receive annual payment on the basis of the quantity (number of acres), quality (soil type and agricultural productivity), and, for Farmland Security Zone contracts, location (proximity to a city) of land enrolled under eligible, enforceable open space restrictions. With implementation of AB 1265, discussed above, counties that receive less than half of their foregone general fund property tax revenue from the Open Space Subvention Act Program the prior year, are eligible to implement a new provision of the Williamson Act to allow both Williamson Act and FMZ contracts to be amended from 10 to 20 years to 9 and 18 years, respectively.

**Z’berg-Nejedly Forest Practice Act of 1973**

The Z’berg-Nejedly Forest Practice Act (Forest Practice Act) (Public Resource Code [PRC], div. 4, ch. 8) established a nine-member Board of Forestry whose mandate is to assure the best economic and environmental practices in timber production in California. The Board requires that a Registered
Professional Forester prepare a Timber Harvest Plan (THP) before harvesting timber on most non-federal forestland. The goal of the THP is to assure that the continual productivity of timberlands is sustained and enhanced by the timber harvesting that takes place on the site, and that related resources are protected to the extent feasible, including watersheds, fisheries, wildlife, recreation, aesthetics, and employment in the region.

**Z’BERG-WARREN-KEENE-COLLIER FOREST TAXATION REFORM ACT OF 1976 – TIMBERLAND PRODUCTION ZONES**

Under the Forest Taxation Reform Act (Gov. Code Section 51110-51119.5), counties must provide for the zoning of land used for growing and harvesting timber as Timberland Preserve Zones (TPZ). A TPZ is a 10-year restriction on the use of timberland, similar to the Williamson Act for agricultural lands. Land use under a TPZ is restricted to growing and harvesting timber or to compatible uses. In return, taxation of timberland under a TPZ will be based only on such restrictions in use.

**THE RIGHT TO FARM ACT OF 1981**

The Right to Farm Act (Civ. Code Section 3482.5) is designed to protect commercial agricultural operations from nuisance complaints that may arise when an agricultural operation is conducting business in a “manner consistent with proper and accepted customs.” The code specifies that established operations that have been in business for three or more years that were not nuisances at the time they began shall not be considered a nuisance as a result of new land use.

**CALIFORNIA TIMBERLAND PRODUCTIVITY ACT OF 1982**

The California Timberland Productivity Act (CTPA) (Gov. Code Sections 51100-51104) describes the powers and duties of local government in protecting timberlands. The law is designed to maintain an optimum amount of timberland, ensuring its current and continued availability by establishing TPZs on all qualifying timberland, which restrict land use to growing and harvesting timber and other compatible uses. The act discourages premature or unnecessary conversion of timberland to urban or other uses and expansion of urban services into timberland, and encourages investment in timberlands based on reasonable expectation of harvest. The CTPA also provides that timber operations conducted in accordance with California forest practice rules shall not be restricted or prohibited due to land uses in or around the location of the timber operations.

**DELTA PROTECTION ACT OF 1992 – DELTA PROTECTION COMMISSION**

The Delta Protection Act of 1992 (PRC Section 29760 et seq.) recognized the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta as a natural resource of statewide, national and international significance, containing irreplaceable resources. The act created the policy to recognize, preserve and protect those resources, designated Primary and Secondary Zones within the legal Delta, and established the Delta Protection Commission (DPC). DPC was charged with creating the Land Use and Resources Management Plan (LURMP) for the Primary Zone, which was adopted in 1995. The LURMP provides direction for local jurisdictions in the Delta region on land use decisions.

The southernmost portions of Sacramento and Yolo counties within the plan area of the proposed MTP/SCS are located within the Delta Primary Zone. Isleton and a portion of West Sacramento are located within the Delta Secondary Zone. Additionally, the city of Sacramento is located...
directly adjacent to the Secondary Zone. DPC has the authority to evaluate all plans, projects, and programs adopted by local governments within the Primary Zone for consistency. DPC requires these plans, projects, and programs to direct development within the existing city limits and designate other areas within the Delta for agricultural use. Local jurisdictions with lands in the Primary Zone have amended their general plans to incorporate the management plan (Sacramento County 2018; Yolo County 2019).

In 2010, DPC amended the LURMP to reflect changes since adoption, such as newly identified endangered species, effects of climate change, flood control issues, increased recreational use, water quality changes, habitat loss, road and utility construction, and urbanization. The amendment adds specific overview, goals, and policies subsections and a glossary of terms to address components of the Delta system, such as: natural resources, utilities, infrastructure, land use, agriculture, water, recreation, and levees. Regarding agriculture, the LURMP sets goals to support the long-term viability of agriculture in the Delta and discourage the inappropriate development of agricultural lands to urban lands. The LURMP directs new non-agricultural development toward existing towns and encourages growth in farms and other agriculturally-related businesses. Policies aim to enhance the economic viability of the Delta’s agriculture through education and legacy programs, land use policies such as parcel size maximization, and acquisition of agricultural conservation easements (DPC 2010). The DPC has initiated an update to the LURMP, and a draft LURMP is currently available for public review. For a discussion of the consistency of the proposed MTP/SCS with the LURMP, see Chapter 12 – Land Use Planning.

**THE CORTESE-KNOX-HERTZBERG LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANIZATION ACT OF 2000**

The Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Local Government Reorganization Act (Gov. Code Section 56000 et seq.) established procedures for local government changes of organization, including city incorporations, annexations to a city or special district, and city and special district consolidations. This act requires that development or use of land for other than open space shall be guided away from existing prime agricultural lands in open space use toward areas containing nonprime agricultural lands, unless that action would not promote the planned, orderly, efficient development of an area.

**OAK WOODLANDS CONSERVATION ACT OF 2004**

The Oak Woodlands Conservation Act of 2004 (SB 1334) PRC Section 21083.4) provides funding for the conservation and protection of California’s oak woodlands. It requires counties, in determining whether CEQA requires an environmental impact report, negative declaration, or mitigated negative declaration, to determine whether a project in its jurisdiction that may result in a conversion of oak woodlands poses a significant effect on the environment. If a potentially significant effect is identified, the Act requires implementation of one or more specified mitigation alternatives to mitigate the conversion of oak woodlands. By imposing new duties on local governments with respect to oak woodlands mitigation, the bill imposes a state-mandated local program.

**CALIFORNIA FOREST LEGACY ACT OF 2007**

Similar to the Federal Forest Legacy Program, the California Forest Legacy Act (PRC Section 12220(G)) is a program of CAL FIRE to promote conservation easements in environmentally-sensitive forest areas. Money to fund the Program is obtained from gifts, donations, federal grants
and loans, other appropriate funding sources, and from the sale of bonds pursuant to Proposition 12, the Safe Neighborhood Parks, Clean Water, Clean Air, and Coastal Protection Bond Act (The Villaraigosa-Kelley Act) of 2000 (PRC div. 5, ch. 1.692).

This act defines “forest land” as “land that can support ten-percent native tree cover of any species, including hardwoods, under natural conditions and that allows for management of one or more forest resources, including timber, aesthetics, fish and wildlife, biodiversity, water quality, recreation, and other public benefits” (California Legislative Information 2019).

**California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection’s Fire and Resource Assessment Program**

CAL FIRE’s Fire and Resource Assessment Program assesses the amount and extent of California’s forest and rangelands. The program analyzes their condition and identifies alternative management and policy guidelines. The assessment links together state requirements for natural resource inventories and strategies and the federal government's desire to rely more heavily on these state programs in determining priorities for funding (CAL FIRE 2012).

**Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Reform Act of 2009**

In November 2009, the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Reform Act (Delta Reform Act) (Wat. Code, Section 10610 et seq.), also known as SB 1 (Stats. 2009, 7th Ex. Sess., ch. 5), was enacted as one of several bills related to water supply reliability, ecosystem health, and the Delta. The Delta Reform Act created the Delta Stewardship Council (DSC). DSC is made up of seven members that are advised by a 10-member board of scientists. DSC adopted the Delta Plan – a comprehensive, long-term management plan for the Delta– in May 2013. The Plan creates new rules and recommendations to address DSC’s coequal goals for the Delta of providing a more reliable water supply for California and protecting, restoring, and enhancing the Delta ecosystem. According to the Delta Reform Act and the Delta Plan, the coequal goals are to be achieved in a manner that protects and enhances the unique cultural, recreational, natural resource, and agricultural values of the Delta as an evolving place. DSC regulates covered actions, as statutorily defined, to address the coequal goals (for more information on what constitutes a covered action, see Chapter 12 – Land Use and Planning). The coequal goals pertaining to agriculture include: 1) maintain Delta agriculture as a primary land use, a food source, a key economic sector, and a way of life; and 2) sustain a vital Delta economy that includes a mix of agriculture, tourism, recreation, related industries and business, and vital components of state and regional infrastructure (DSC 2013).

**California Farmland Conservancy Program Act of 2010**

The California Farmland Conservancy Program Act (PRC Section 10200 et seq.), also known as SB 1142 (Stats. 2010, ch. 323), established the California Farmland Conservancy Program (CFCP), which provides grants for agricultural conservation easements. An agricultural conservation easement aims to maintain agricultural land in active production by preventing development on the subject parcel and prohibiting practices that would damage or interfere with the agricultural use of the land. Because the easement is a restriction on the deed of the property, the easement remains in effect even when the land changes ownership. While other benefits may accrue because the land is not developed (scenic and habitat values, for example), the primary use of the land is agricultural. Easements funded by the CFCP must be of a size and nature suitable for viable commercial agriculture.
**THE FARM AND RANCH LAND PROTECTION PROGRAM**

The Farm and Ranch Land Program provides matching funds to help purchase development rights to keep productive farm and ranchland in agricultural uses. Working through existing programs, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) partners with state, tribal, or local governments and nongovernmental organizations to acquire conservation easements or other interests in land from landowners. USDA provides up to 50 percent of the fair market easement value of the conservation easement. To qualify, farmland must be part of a pending offer from a state, tribe, or local farmland protection program; be privately owned; have a conservation plan for highly erodible land; be large enough to sustain agricultural production; be accessible to markets for what the land produces; have adequate infrastructure and agricultural support services; and have surrounding parcels of land that can support long-term agricultural production. The USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service manages the program.

**SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURAL LANDS CONSERVATION PROGRAM**

The Sustainable Agricultural Lands Conservation Program (SALCP) is a component of the Affordable Housing and Sustainable Communities Program (AHSC), developed and implemented under the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund within the California Budget Act of 2014. The goal of the AHSC is to “reduce greenhouse gas emissions through projects that implement land use, housing, transportation, and agricultural land preservation practices to support infill and compact development…” (Strategic Growth Council 2018). It defines eligible projects to include “the acquisition of easements or other approaches or tools that protect agricultural lands that are under pressure of being converted to nonagricultural uses, particularly those adjacent to areas most at risk of urban or suburban sprawl…” (Strategic Growth Council 2018).

Within the AHSC, the SALCP aims to prevent increases in GHG emissions by “limiting opportunities for expansive, vehicle dependent forms of development in favor of more focused, compact, and transit-oriented development within discrete growth boundaries.” In the future, SALCP will also fund programs that promote on-farm conservation strategies that reduce GHG emissions. Furthermore, the SALCP intends to leverage past and current agricultural land conservation programs, such as the California Farmland Conservancy Program, the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program, the Williamson Act, Revenue and Taxation Code sections 421-430.5, and Public Resources Code Division 9.

The most recent guidelines for the SALCP grant program were approved by the Strategic Growth Council in December 2018 and applications will be accepted in Fall 2019. The guidelines divided project applications into two categories—Sustainable Agricultural Lands Conservation Planning and Agricultural Conservation Easements (Strategic Growth Council 2018).

**DELTA VISION BLUE RIBBON TASK FORCE**

California Executive Order S-17-06 created the Delta Vision Blue Ribbon Task Force and directed the task force to develop a vision statement for sustainable management of the Delta and a strategic plan for the long-term restoration and maintenance of identified functions and values that are determined to be important to the environmental quality of the Delta and the economic and social well-being of the people of California. The Blue Ribbon Task Force released the Delta Vision Strategic Plan in October 2008, a document that describes specific steps and policies to realize the
Delta Vision. It outlined the following goal for agriculture: recognize and enhance the unique cultural, recreational, and agricultural values of the California Delta as an evolving place, an action critical to achieving the co-equal goals (Governor’s Delta Vision Blue Ribbon Task Force 2008).

4.3.3 Local Regulations

GENERAL PLANS

The most comprehensive land use planning for the SACOG region is provided by city and county general plans, which local governments are required by state law to prepare as a guide for future development. The general plans of each city and county contain goals and policies concerning topics that are mandated by state law (i.e., land use, circulation, housing, conservation, open space, noise, safety) or which the jurisdiction has chosen to include (e.g., natural resources, parks and recreation, agricultural). The land use diagram generally illustrates designations that provide general locations for where policies will be implemented by land use type (e.g., residential, commercial, industrial, public, open space), including those pertaining to agricultural resources.

In general, local planning policies related to agriculture and forestry resources are established to conserve and preserve agricultural land; protect natural resources; enhance Delta agriculture; and support, sustain, reinvent, and diversify the agricultural economy. In addition to these general policies, jurisdictions may have more specific policies regarding agricultural lands in the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program, Williamson Act lands, local preference, and/or agribusiness.

Within the six counties comprising the plan area of the proposed MTP/SCS, most agriculture and forestry resources are located within unincorporated county areas. Policies related to agriculture and forestry are established in the following elements of general plans within the region: Agriculture and Forestry (El Dorado County), Agricultural and Forestry Resources (Placer County), Agricultural (Sacramento County), Agricultural Resources (Sutter County), and Agriculture and Economic Development (Yolo County). Yuba County includes these policies in the Farmland and Forests Section of the Natural Resources Element.

Lastly, local planning policies addressing biological resources are also established in each jurisdiction’s general plan. These policies addressing biological resources, also address the protection of forest lands. For more information on forest land as a natural resource and habitat, refer to Chapter 6 – Biological Resources.

ZONING

The city or county zoning code or ordinance is the set of detailed requirements that implement the general plan policies at the level of the individual parcel. The zoning code establishes separate districts or zones (e.g., residential, commercial, industrial, public, open space), presents standards for development in different districts, and identifies which uses are allowed in the various zoning districts to ensure neighboring land uses are compatible with one another. State law requires the city or county zoning code to be consistent with the jurisdiction’s general plan.

The zoning code usually establishes specific districts for agriculture and/or forestry resources to protect farmland and farming activities from incompatible nonfarm uses and vice versa. Agricultural zoning can specify many factors, such as the farm uses allowed, minimum farm size, the number of
nonfarm dwellings allowed, or the size of a buffer separating farm and nonfarm properties. All six counties in the plan area of the proposed MTP/SCS have agricultural zoning districts, including:

- **El Dorado County**: Limited Agricultural, Planned Agricultural (e.g., 20/30/40-acre), Agricultural Grazing, Timber Production, Forest Resource, Rural Lands
- **Placer County**: Agricultural Exclusive, Farm, Forestry, and Timberland Production;
- **Sacramento County**: Permanent Agriculture (e.g., 20/40/80/160-acre) and Interim Agricultural (e.g., 10/20/40-acre);
- **Sutter County**: Agricultural Education and Entertainment, Agricultural Homestays, Agricultural Manufacturing, Agricultural Processing, Agricultural Product Sales, Agricultural Supplies and Services, Agricultural Truck Yards, Agriculture, Animal Processing and Intensive Animal Operations;
- **Yolo County**: Agricultural Intensive, Agricultural Extensive, Clarksburg Agricultural District Overlay Zone; and
- **Yuba County**: Exclusive Agricultural.

Additionally, some counties include agricultural residential designations, with various minimum parcel requirements, as well as agricultural commercial or industrial processing zones.

**COMMUNITY AND SPECIFIC PLANS**

A city or county may also provide land use planning by community or specific plans for smaller, more specific areas within their jurisdiction. These more localized plans provide for focused guidance for developing a specific area, with development standards tailored to the area, as well as systematic implementation of the general plan. Like the general plan, a specific or community plan may include a designated land use for the preservation of agriculture or forestry resources.

**PUBLIC OWNERSHIP, PURCHASE OF DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS, AND OPEN SPACE ACQUISITION**

Local governments and special districts, either on their own or working with land trusts and conservancies, can acquire fee title to agricultural and open space lands or purchase development rights to preserve rural and agricultural areas, watersheds, or critical habitat, or to create public parks and recreational areas.

**OAK WOODLAND MANAGEMENT PLANS**

As discussed above under State Regulations, SB 1334 of 2004, the Oak Woodlands Conservation Act, requires all counties in California to adopt oak woodland management plans and ordinances that require a discretionary permit for oak woodland conversions. It also requires all counties to set minimum mitigation standards. Five of the six counties within the plan area of the proposed MTP/SCS have adopted Oak Woodland Management Plans. Additionally, Sacramento County addresses the protection of oak woodlands in the Conservation Element of the 2011 General Plan.
**RURAL-URBAN CONNECTIONS STRATEGY**

The RUCS was launched at the conclusion of the 2008 MTP in an effort to provide policy and technical approaches to addressing or avoiding impacts to rural resources in the Sacramento region. The RUCS program is an economic and environmental sustainability strategy for rural areas and thus an integral piece of a regional strategy for the region's economic and environmental sustainability and viability. The innovative program supports an in-depth understanding of rural land and agricultural and forestry resources in the region through the application of spatial analysis tools, data collection and monitoring, dissemination of information, coordination with subject-area experts, facilitation of inter-agency collaboration, and technical assistance to member jurisdictions. The program has focused analysis and research on five main study areas:

- Land Use and Conservation: policies and plans that shape rural areas,
- The Infrastructure of Agriculture: challenges to the production process,
- Economic Opportunities: new ways to grow revenue,
- Forest Management: growing economic and environmental value, and
- Regulations: navigating federal and state environmental guidelines.

RUCS has developed tools and supporting data to support policy understanding about the influence of the rural and urban economies on each other. One example is the agricultural cost-and-return tool that the RUCS team created using information about crop data, pesticide use, economic data, and per-acre agricultural cost and return data to assess agricultural production in the region. This toolkit integrates with Geographic Information System (GIS)-based parcel-level crop data that tracks agricultural production and trends over time in the plan area. The model can also test a range of scenarios from simple sensitivities analyses of production input variables— including input demands such as water or labor needs and returns on investment— to large-scale land use changes, to assess possible economic and environmental outcomes at the regional scale. This set of tools provides the capacity to evaluate both urban and rural land use changes when combined with the land use model. These efforts are intended to broaden the region’s understanding of how land use and transportation investments affect rural areas and illustrate the benefit of agriculturally-supportive policies at the local level. The RUCS program monitors change over time in acreage and farmgate value for a comprehensive range of agricultural products, including livestock and timber, in El Dorado, Placer, Sacramento, Sutter, Yolo, and Yuba Counties, as well as changes to rural land patterns and natural resources, such as forest resources and cropping patterns through monitoring of publicly available spatial datasets.

The RUCS program is ongoing, with the ultimate goal of bridging the urban and rural planning needs in the region. In addition to continuing to gather and assess information on agricultural production in the region, other recent RUCS projects include the Food System Multipliers for Specialty Crops in the Sacramento Region study and the Delta Protection Commission Case Study.

The Food System Multipliers project was work conducted through the RUCS to provide updated data, modeling and tools to better demonstrate the important role agriculture and food plays in the Sacramento regional economy. By linking crop production on the farm to a larger food system—aggregation, processing, and distribution—the project developed a series of economic multipliers showing the ripple effect of agricultural industries on the greater regional economy.
In SACOG’s Local Food System Assessment for Yolo and Sacramento County Delta Communities, also referred to as the “Delta Case Study,” SACOG and DPC partnered in deploying the RUCS modeling and analysis tools to help answer questions about how to stimulate agricultural-based economic development in the Delta’s rural communities in a manner that aligns with a shared vision of the Delta: “the ideal synthesis of cultural, ecological, and agricultural values in a sustainable, healthy, and celebrated way of life.” This project provided an assessment of the agricultural systems in Delta communities of Yolo and Sacramento counties, evaluating how the current agricultural system is affected by internal and external changes, and envisioning strategies to preserve and enhance the long-term viability of agriculture in the Delta.

4.4 Impacts and Mitigation Measures

4.4.1 Methods and Assumptions

This program-level analysis generally evaluates the potential loss of agricultural and forest resources from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS based on the projected land use pattern and planned transportation improvements relative to the known distribution of agricultural and forest resources throughout the plan area of the proposed MTP/SCS.

By 2040, implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS would result in a land use pattern and transportation network that is different from existing conditions. Unless otherwise stated, “existing conditions” in the proposed MTP/SCS refers to conditions in the baseline year of 2016. The proposed MTP/SCS uses 2016 as the baseline year because it is the most recent year for which comprehensive land use, demographic, traffic count, and VMT data are available for the SACOG region. Chapter 1 – Introduction includes a more detailed discussion of the baseline for the proposed MTP/SCS. Exceptions to the 2016 baseline include the following:

- With the exception of the El Dorado Crop Report, prepared in 2016, the most recent year for the crop reports prepared for counties within the plan area of the proposed MTP/SCS is 2017.
- Because more updated data is unavailable, Williamson Act Contract data for Yolo County is from 2013 (other Williamson Act Contract data are from 2016). As such, the impact analysis for Yolo County Williamson Act Contracts is based on 2013 data.

For each impact, implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS is assessed on three levels. First, impacts are assessed at the regional level for the entire plan area. Second, impacts are assessed for the plan area’s five Community Types: Center and Corridor Communities, Established Communities, Developing Communities, Rural Residential Communities, and Lands Not Identified for Development. And third, implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS is assessed in terms of its impacts to the region’s High Frequency Transit Areas (HFTAs). Refer to Chapter 2 – Project Description for a full description of the Community Types and HFTAs and the projected land use pattern and planned transportation improvements within these areas.

The footprints of the projected land use pattern and planned transportation improvements anticipated in the proposed MTP/SCS were overlaid with various farmland and forestry data. Road widenings, new roads, and new or expanded interchanges were analyzed by calculating a 100-foot buffer area around the center line of the proposed projects and measuring the area overlapping various farmland and forestry data because details about the planned transportation improvements identified in the proposed MTP/SCS, such as precise alignment, width, and location in relation
agricultural and forestry resources, are not known at this time. Only road widenings, new roads, and new or expanded interchanges were spatially analyzed this way, and the analysis overestimates potential impacts because many planned transportation improvements, such as road widenings, would not use the entire buffer area. Planned transportation improvements that would be constructed within the footprint of existing roadways (e.g. re-paving; new transit service; bicycle lanes added within existing developed right-of-way) and projects without physical characteristics (e.g. programs) are not analyzed because they would not contribute to adverse effects. New transit infrastructure, Class II (bike lanes) and Class III (bike routes) bicycle projects were included in the roadway buffer analysis because such projects are part of the roadway right-of-way. A buffer analysis was not performed for Class I (separate, multi-use trails) projects. Because Class I trails are much narrower than roadways, performing a programmatic buffer analysis with meaningful results is not feasible, as even small shifts in alignment can result in varying outcomes. However, a majority of new Class I trails in the plan area of the MTP/SCS run parallel to new, expanded, or existing roadways or along waterways and levees. Class I trails that run parallel to new or expanded roadways would be captured by the 100-foot buffer around new or expanded roadway and light rail projects that was used to calculate potential impacts on agricultural lands. Class I trails not covered by the 100-foot buffer are addressed qualitatively in the impact analysis.

For descriptions of the agriculture and forestry environment, 2016 was also used as the baseline in most instances, but to the extent more recent data was available, it is provided. Five data sources were used to analyze the agriculture and forestry environment: the FMMP, the DOC’s Williamson Act, general plans (from all six counties), zoning codes (from all six counties), and CAL FIRE’s Land Cover Mapping and Monitoring Program. In addition, the acreages for agricultural land identified in this chapter were confirmed through county crop reports for all six counties. Using this combination of multiple data sources plus individual county review is more accurate than solely relying on FMMP data, which does not capture information about farms that are less than 10 acres in size or that have been newly put into production during the last 20 years. The method used for this analysis captures all designated farmland in the region.

First, the FMMP data were used to analyze impacts to agricultural resources. These data classify agricultural resources into a number of categories. For purposes of this analysis Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, and Farmland of Statewide Importance were considered. FMMP data are typically updated every two years and use a minimum mapping unit of 10 acres. The most recent complete and regionally consistent set of data published by the FMMP is for the years 2014-2016. Because these data do not account for land use change that has converted these lands to non-agricultural since publication of that data set and the April 2019 publication of the NOP for this Draft EIR, it is possible that farmlands identified as impact areas under the proposed MTP/SCS have already been converted or approved for conversion to non-agricultural use.

Second, Williamson Act data were used to analyze agriculture impacts. These data include any lands that are currently enrolled under a California Land Conservation Act contract in 2014 (with the exception of 2013 data used for Yolo County, which are described above). This analysis does not include lands that are in a non-renewal status. Third, general plan data from all six counties were used to analyze lands designated for agriculture and forest uses. These data were collected in 2019 and reflects the currently adopted general plans in El Dorado (2004), Placer (2013), Sacramento (2011), Sutter (2011), Yolo (2009), and Yuba (2011) and any amendments that have been adopted and mapped. Fourth, zoning data from all six counties were collected in 2019 and used in this analysis to measure impacts to agriculture and forest zoned uses.
Lastly, land cover data from the Land Cover Mapping and Monitoring Program were used to analyze forest lands. These data are produced using remote sensing and aerial imagery to create a dataset that includes tree size and tree canopy with a minimum map unit of 2.5 acres. Because the Land Cover Mapping and Monitoring data are remote sensing data created to estimate all tree canopy, in some cases, particularly in urban areas, it is likely these are not actual “forest” areas. No screening for tree canopy density was done in this analysis; however, the data were geographically screened so that only forests that actually exist today were used. These areas include the Rural Residential Communities and the Lands Not Identified for Development in El Dorado County, Placer County, and Yuba County.

The analysis assumes implementing agencies would ensure agricultural and forestry resources are treated in accordance with applicable federal, state and local laws and regulations as part of project planning, design and engineering.

4.4.2 Criteria for Determining Significance

For the purposes of this EIR, SACOG has determined that adoption and/or implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS would result in significant impacts under CEQA, if any of the following would occur:

AG-1 Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance, as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the FMMP of the DOC, to non-agricultural use.

AG-2 Conflict with existing zoning or general plan land use designations for agricultural use, or with a Williamson Act contract.

AG-3 Conflict with existing zoning or land use designation for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in PRC Section 12220(G)), timberland (as defined by PRC Section 4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Gov. Code Section 51104(G)).

AG-4 Involve other changes in the existing environment, which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of farmland to non-agricultural use.

AG-5 Result in the loss of “Forest Land” as defined in the California Forest Legacy Act of 2007 (PRC Section 12220(G)) or conversion of Forest Land into non-forest use.

AG-6 Result in construction impacts that would convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance to non-agricultural uses; conflict with existing zoning or land use designation for agricultural use or a Williamson Act contract; conflict with existing zoning or land use designations for, or cause rezoning of, forest land, timberland, or timberland zoned Timberland Production; involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of farmland to non-agricultural use; or result in the loss of Forest Land or conversion of Forest Land into non-forest use.
4.4.3 Impacts and Mitigation Measures

**IMPACT AG-1:** CONVERT PRIME FARMLAND, UNIQUE FARMLAND, OR FARMLAND OF STATEWIDE IMPORTANCE, AS SHOWN ON THE MAPS PREPARED PURSUANT TO THE FMMP OF THE DOC, TO NON-AGRICULTURAL USE.

**Regional Impacts**

As of 2016, the SACOG region contained 563,738 acres of Prime Farmland, 132,579 acres of Unique Farmland, and 184,810 acres of Farmland of Statewide Importance, as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the FMMP (see Table 4-2 and Figure 4-1). For this analysis, any acre of Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland or Farmland of Statewide Importance that overlaps with the projected land use pattern and planned transportation improvements of the proposed MTP/SCS is considered a potentially significant impact. Forecasted transportation growth along the urban/rural edge is addressed under Impact TRN-5- Transportation. The potential overlap of the proposed MTP/SCS projected land use pattern and planned transportation improvements with FMMP-designated farmland is shown below in Table 4-4.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community Type</th>
<th>Prime Farmland</th>
<th>Unique Farmland</th>
<th>Farmland of Statewide Importance</th>
<th>Total Acres of Impact</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Projected Land Use Pattern</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Center and Corridor Communities</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Established Communities</td>
<td>349</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>439</td>
<td>789</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developing Communities</td>
<td>330</td>
<td>292</td>
<td>511</td>
<td>1,133</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural Residential Communities</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lands Not Identified for Development in the MTP/SCS Planning Period</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Transportation Projects</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Center and Corridor Communities</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Established Communities</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developing Communities</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>258</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural Residential Communities</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lands Not Identified for Development in the MTP/SCS Planning Period</td>
<td>195</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>376</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Regional Totals</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Projected Land Use Pattern Total</td>
<td>804</td>
<td>380</td>
<td>979</td>
<td>2,163</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation Projects Total</td>
<td>323</td>
<td>154</td>
<td>257</td>
<td>735</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Land Use and Transportation Combined Total</td>
<td>1,127</td>
<td>534</td>
<td>1,236</td>
<td>2,897</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: FMMP = Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program
Numbers may not total due to rounding.
Source: DOC 2016a
By focusing on providing small-lot and attached housing, maximizing infill and redevelopment opportunities, and planning for communities with a mix of uses, the proposed MTP/SCS creates a compact land use pattern, which produces a smaller overall urban footprint that maximizes the land available. By 2040, the projected land use pattern of the proposed MTP/SCS has the potential to impact 804 acres of Prime Farmland, 380 acres of Unique Farmland, and 979 acres of Farmland of Statewide Importance for a total potential impact of approximately 2,163 acres. Planned transportation improvements were analyzed by calculating a 100-foot buffer area around the center line of the planned improvements and measuring the area overlapping FMMP-designated farmland. This analysis indicated that 323 acres of Prime Farmland, 154 acres of Unique Farmland, and 257 acres of Farmland of Statewide Importance could potentially be impacted by proposed MTP/SCS planned transportation improvements, for a total impact of approximately 735 acres.

Together, the projected land use pattern and planned transportation improvements have the potential to impact 1,127 acres of Prime Farmland, 534 acres of Unique Farmland, and 1,236 acres of Farmland of Statewide Importance for a combined potential impact to 2,897 acres of FMMP-designated farmland. The 2,897 acres of FMMP-designated farmland that may be impacted represents approximately 5 percent of the total 56,810 acres of new development land anticipated under the proposed MTP/SCS by 2040. In total, this impact amount of 2,897 acres represents approximately 0.1 percent of all existing FMMP-designated farmland in the region.

While these impacts appear relatively small from a regional perspective, due to the importance of the region’s agricultural resources, these impacts on FMMP-designated farmland related to the projected land use pattern and planned transportation improvements from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS at the regional level are considered potentially significant (PS) for Impact AG-1. Mitigation is required. Mitigation Measure AG-1 is described below.

**Localized Impacts**

**Center and Corridor Communities**

Within Center and Corridor Communities, the projected land use pattern of the proposed MTP/SCS has the potential to impact 57 acres of Prime Farmland, 44 acres of Unique Farmland, and 0 acres of Farmland of Statewide Importance for a total potential impact of approximately 100 acres.

Due to the importance of the region’s agricultural resources, these impacts on FMMP-designated farmland are considered potentially significant. Therefore, localized impacts related to the projected land use pattern from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS in Center and Corridor Communities are considered potentially significant (PS) for Impact AG-1. Mitigation is required. Mitigation Measure AG-1 is described below.

Planned transportation improvements implemented as part of the proposed MTP/SCS in Center and Corridor Communities have the potential to impact 1 acre of Prime Farmland, 1 acre of Unique Farmland, and 1 acre of Farmland of Statewide Importance for a total potential impact of approximately three acres.

Due to the importance of the region’s agricultural resources, these impacts on FMMP-designated farmland are considered potentially significant. Therefore, localized impacts related to planned transportation improvements from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS in Center and
Corridor Communities are considered potentially significant (PS) for Impact AG-1. Mitigation is required. Mitigation Measure AG-1 is described below.

**Established Communities**

Within Established Communities, the projected land use pattern of the proposed MTP/SCS has the potential to impact 349 acres of Prime Farmland, 0 acres of Unique Farmland, and 439 acres of Farmland of Statewide Importance for a total potential impact of approximately 789 acres.

Due to the importance of the region’s agricultural resources, these impacts on FMMP-designated farmland are considered potentially significant. Therefore, localized impacts related to the projected land use pattern from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS in Established Communities are considered potentially significant (PS) for Impact AG-1. Mitigation is required. Mitigation Measure AG-1 is described below.

Planned transportation improvements implemented as part of the proposed MTP/SCS have the potential to impact 19 acres of Prime Farmland, 9 acres of Unique Farmland, and 29 acres of Farmland of Statewide Importance for a total potential impact of approximately 58 acres.

Due to the importance of the region’s agricultural resources, these impacts on FMMP-designated farmland are considered potentially significant. Therefore, localized impacts related to planned transportation improvements from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS in Established Communities are considered potentially significant (PS) for Impact AG-1. Mitigation is required. Mitigation Measure AG-1 is described below.

**Developing Communities**

Within Developing Communities, the projected land use pattern of the proposed MTP/SCS has the potential to impact 330 acres of Prime Farmland, 292 acres of Unique Farmland, and 511 acres of Farmland of Statewide Importance for a total potential impact of approximately 1,133 acres.

Due to the importance of the region’s agricultural resources, these impacts on FMMP-designated farmland are considered potentially significant. Therefore, localized impacts related to the projected land use pattern from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS in Developing Communities are considered potentially significant (PS) for Impact AG-1. Mitigation is required. Mitigation Measure AG-1 is described below.

Planned transportation improvements implemented as part of the proposed MTP/SCS within Developing Communities have the potential to impact 109 acres of Prime Farmland, 64 acres of Unique Farmland, and 86 acres of Farmland of Statewide Importance for a total potential impact of approximately 258 acres.

Due to the importance of the region’s agricultural resources, these impacts on FMMP-designated farmland are considered potentially significant. Therefore, localized impacts related to planned transportation improvements from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS in Developing Communities are considered potentially significant (PS) for Impact AG-1. Mitigation is required. Mitigation Measure AG-1 is described below.
**Rural Residential Communities**

Within Rural Residential Communities, the projected land use pattern of the proposed MTP/SCS has the potential to impact 68 acres of Prime Farmland, 44 acres of Unique Farmland, and 28 acres of Farmland of Statewide Importance for a total potential impact of approximately 140 acres.

Due to the importance of the region’s agricultural resources, these impacts on FMMP-designated farmland are considered potentially significant. Therefore, localized impacts related to the projected land use pattern from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS in Rural Residential Communities are considered potentially significant (PS) for Impact AG-1. Mitigation is required. Mitigation Measure AG-1 is described below.

Planned transportation improvements implemented as part of the proposed MTP/SCS within Rural Residential Communities have the potential to impact 0 acres of Prime Farmland, 14 acres of Unique Farmland and 27 acres of Farmland of Statewide Importance for a total potential impact of approximately 40 acres.

Due to the importance of the region’s agricultural resources, these impacts on FMMP-designated farmland are considered potentially significant. Therefore, localized impacts related to planned transportation improvements from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS in Rural Residential Communities are considered potentially significant (PS) for Impact AG-1. Mitigation is required. Mitigation Measure AG-1 is described below.

**Lands Not Identified for Development in the Proposed MTP/SCS**

Although some housing and employment growth, consistent with historical trends, may occur in this Community Type within the MTP/SCS planning period, the proposed MTP/SCS does not forecast any development in these areas by 2040. Because the growth in these areas would support agricultural uses, such development would not result in the conversion of FMMP-designated lands to other uses.

Therefore, the localized impacts on FMMP-designated farmland related to the projected land use pattern from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS in Lands Not Identified for Development are considered less than significant (LS) for Impact AG-1. No mitigation is required.

The focus for investments in these areas is on road maintenance, safety enhancements, other roadway operational improvements, and targeted capacity improvements to existing facilities that accommodate increased travel between urban areas. Planned transportation improvements implemented as part of the proposed MTP/SCS have the potential to impact 195 acres of Prime Farmland, 67 acres of Unique Farmland, and 115 acres of Farmland of Statewide Importance for a total potential impact of approximately 376 acres.

Due to the importance of the region’s agricultural resources, these impacts on FMMP-designated farmland are considered potentially significant. Therefore, localized impacts related to planned transportation improvements from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS in Lands Not Identified for Development are considered potentially significant (PS) for Impact AG-1. Mitigation is required. Mitigation Measure AG-1 is described below.
High Frequency Transit Area Impacts

Impacts to Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, and Farmland of Statewide Importance, as defined by the FMMP, within HFTAs are described in Table 4-5.

Table 4-5
Proposed MTP/SCS Land Use and Transportation Overlap with Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program Farmland in High Frequency Transit Areas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>High Frequency Transit Area</th>
<th>Acres of Impact</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Prime Farmland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High Frequency Transit Area</td>
<td>Prime Farmland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Projected Land Use Pattern</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Placer County HFTAs</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sacramento County HFTAs</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yolo County HFTAs</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation Projects</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Placer County HFTAs</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sacramento County HFTAs</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regional Totals</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: FMMP = Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program
Numbers may not total due to rounding.
Source: DOC 2016a

Placer County High Frequency Transit Areas
Within Placer County HFTAs, the projected land use pattern of the proposed MTP/SCS has the potential to impact 4 acres of Prime Farmland, 0 acres of Unique Farmland, and 9 acres of Farmland of Statewide Importance for a total potential impact of approximately 12 acres.

Due to the importance of the region’s agricultural resources, these impacts on FMMP-designated farmland are considered potentially significant. Therefore, impacts related to the projected land use pattern from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS in the Placer County HFTAs are considered potentially significant (PS) for Impact AG-1. Mitigation is required. Mitigation Measure AG-1 is described below.

Planned transportation improvements implemented as part of the proposed MTP/SCS have the potential to impact 5 acres of Prime Farmland, 3 acres of Unique Farmland, and 11 acres of Farmland of Statewide Importance for a total potential impact of approximately 19 acres within Placer County.

Due to the importance of the region’s agricultural resources, these impacts on FMMP-designated farmland are considered potentially significant. Therefore, impacts related to planned transportation improvements from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS in the Placer County HFTAs are
considered potentially significant (PS) for Impact AG-1. Mitigation is required. Mitigation Measure AG-1 is described below.

Sacramento County High Frequency Transit Areas
Within Sacramento County HFTAs, the projected land use pattern of the proposed MTP/SCS has the potential to impact 0 acres of Prime Farmland, 0 acres of Unique Farmland, and 44 acres of Farmland of Statewide Importance for a total potential impact of approximately 44 acres.

Due to the importance of the region’s agricultural resources, these impacts on FMMP-designated farmland are considered potentially significant. Therefore, impacts related to the projected land use pattern from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS in the Sacramento County HFTAs are considered potentially significant (PS) for Impact AG-1. Mitigation is required. Mitigation Measure AG-1 is described below.

Planned transportation improvements implemented as part of the proposed MTP/SCS have the potential to impact 0 acres of Prime Farmland, one acre of Unique Farmland, and two acres of Farmland of Statewide Importance for a total potential impact of approximately three acres.

Due to the importance of the region’s agricultural resources, these impacts on FMMP-designated farmland are considered potentially significant. Therefore, impacts related to planned transportation improvements from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS in the Sacramento County HFTAs are considered potentially significant (PS) for Impact AG-1. Mitigation is required. Mitigation Measure AG-1 is described below.

Yolo County High Frequency Transit Areas
Within Yolo County’s HFTAs, the projected land use pattern of the proposed MTP/SCS has the potential to impact 57 acres of Prime Farmland, 11 acres of Unique Farmland, and 0 acres of Farmland of Statewide Importance for a total potential impact of approximately 67 acres.

Due to the importance of the region’s agricultural resources, these impacts on FMMP-designated farmland are considered potentially significant. Therefore, impacts related to the projected land use pattern from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS in the Yolo County HFTAs are considered potentially significant (PS) for Impact AG-1. Mitigation is required. Mitigation Measure AG-1 is described below.

Planned transportation improvements implemented as part of the proposed MTP/SCS have the potential to impact 17 acres of Prime Farmland, 0 acres of Unique Farmland, and 0 acres of Farmland of Statewide Importance for a total potential impact of approximately 17 acres.

Due to the importance of the region’s agricultural resources, these impacts on FMMP-designated farmland are considered potentially significant. Therefore, impacts related to planned transportation improvements from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS in the Yolo County HFTAs are considered potentially significant (PS) for Impact AG-1. Mitigation is required. Mitigation Measure AG-1 is described below.

**Mitigation Measures**

SACOG does not have authority to require the implementing agencies to adopt the identified mitigation measures; the mitigation measures are within the responsibility and jurisdiction of another
public agency. However, implementation of the following mitigation measure(s) at a project-level would reduce the impacts to FMMP farmland, and agencies with jurisdiction to adopt these measures can and should do so (PRC Section 21081).

**Mitigation Measure AG-1: Mitigate for loss of farmland.**

The implementing agency shall mitigate for loss of farmland by adopting measures that include but are not limited to the following:

- provide permanent protection of in-kind farmland at a minimum 1:1 ratio of comparable quality land, in the form of easements, fees, or elimination of development rights/potential;
- if feasible, locate the easement within or in close proximity to the same city or community in which the conversion occurs; and
- integrate SACOG RUCS tools and strategies—such as application of spatial analysis tools, dissemination of information, coordination with subject-area experts, facilitation of inter-agency collaboration, and technical assistance to member jurisdictions—generally, and on a project-specific basis where applicable, to improve the economic and environmental sustainability of resources lands including agricultural land.

**SIGNIFICANCE AFTER MITIGATION**

Due to the importance of the region’s agricultural resources, these impacts on FMMP-designated farmland are considered significant and unavoidable (SU). If the implementing agency adopts this mitigation measure, Impact AG-1 may be reduced, but not to a less than significant level, because net loss of agricultural land would still occur. For projects proposing to streamline environmental review, lead agencies must conduct project-level analysis for each project to analyze whether, based on substantial evidence in the record, the proposed mitigation would reduce the impact to less than significant. Additionally, SACOG cannot require the implementing agency to adopt this mitigation measure, and it is ultimately the responsibility of the implementing agency to determine and adopt project-specific mitigation. Therefore, Impact AG-1 remains significant and unavoidable (SU) for purposes of this program-level review.

**IMPACT AG-2: CONFLICT WITH EXISTING ZONING OR GENERAL PLAN LAND USE DESIGNATIONS FOR AGRICULTURAL USE, OR WITH A WILLIAMSON ACT CONTRACT.**

**Regional Impacts**

For this analysis, any acre of an existing zoning or general plan land use designation for agricultural use, or with a Williamson Act Contract that overlaps with the proposed MTP/SCS is considered a potentially significant impact. Forecasted transportation growth along the urban/rural edge is addressed under Impact TRN-5- Transportation. The potential overlap of the proposed MTP/SCS projected land use pattern and planned transportation improvements with these lands is shown in Table 4-6 below.
### Table 4-6

**Proposed MTP/SCS Land Use and Transportation Overlap with Agricultural Zoning, Agricultural General Plan Designations, and Williamson Act Lands**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community Type</th>
<th>Acres of Impact</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Zoning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Projected Land Use Pattern</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Center and Corridor Communities</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Established Communities</td>
<td>259</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developing Communities</td>
<td>1,394</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural Residential Communities</td>
<td>2,126</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lands Not Identified for Development in the MTP/SCS Planning Period</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Planned Transportation Improvements</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Center and Corridor Communities</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Established Communities</td>
<td>146</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developing Communities</td>
<td>504</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural Residential Communities</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lands Not Identified for Development in the MTP/SCS Planning Period</td>
<td>632</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Regional Totals</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Projected Land Use Pattern Total</td>
<td>3,828</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation Projects Total</td>
<td>1,378</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Land Use and Transportation Combined Total</td>
<td>5,206</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹ Overlap with Williamson Act lands does not include lands that are currently in non-renewal.

Note: Zoned agricultural lands, agricultural lands designated in general plans, and Williamson Act lands cannot be “totaled,” as some lands may fit in more than one category. Therefore, totaling the three categories would overestimate the actual amount of agricultural land.

Note: Numbers may not total due to rounding.


By focusing on providing small-lot and attached housing, maximizing infill and redevelopment opportunities, and planning for communities with a mix of uses, the proposed MTP/SCS creates a compact land use pattern, which produces a smaller overall urban footprint that maximizes the land available. The projected land use pattern of the proposed MTP/SCS has the potential to impact 3,828 acres of agricultural zoning, 2,879 acres of agricultural general plan designations, and 4,130 acres of farmland under active Williamson Act contracts. Planned transportation improvements were analyzed by calculating a 100-foot buffer area around the center line of the proposed projects and measuring the area overlapping agricultural zoning, agricultural general plan designations, and farmland under active Williamson Act contracts. This analysis indicated that 1,378 acres of agricultural zoning, 994 acres of agricultural general plan designations, and 394 acres of farmland under active Williamson Act contracts could potentially be impacted by proposed MTP/SCS planned transportation improvements. Together, the projected land use pattern and planned transportation improvements have the potential to impact 5,206 acres of agricultural zoning, 3,873 acres of agricultural general plan designations, and 4,522 acres of Williamson Act contracted lands. As a total of all agricultural land within the region, agricultural land that has the potential to be impacted by the projected land use pattern and planned transportation improvements associated
with implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS includes approximately 0.3 percent of land with an agricultural zoning designation, 0.3 percent of land designated as agricultural in an applicable general plan, and 0.87 percent of land currently under a Williamson Act contract.

While these impacts appear relatively small from a regional perspective, due to the importance of the region’s agricultural resources, these impacts on zoned or general plan designated agricultural lands and Williamson Act lands are considered potentially significant. Therefore, impacts related to the projected land use pattern and planned transportation improvements from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS are considered potentially significant (PS) for Impact AG-2. Mitigation is required. Mitigation Measures AG-2 and AG-3 are described below.

**Localized Impacts**

*Center and Corridor Communities*

Within Center and Corridor Communities, the projected land use pattern of the proposed MTP/SCS has the potential to impact 50 acres of agricultural zoning, 571 acres of agricultural general plan designations, and 495 acres of Williamson Act lands.

Due to the importance of the region’s agricultural resources, these impacts on zoned or general plan designated agricultural lands are considered potentially significant. Therefore, localized impacts related to the projected land use pattern from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS in Center and Corridor Communities are considered potentially significant (PS) for Impact AG-2. Mitigation is required. Mitigation Measures AG-2 and AG-3 are described below.

Planned transportation improvements within Center and Corridor Communities implemented as part of the proposed MTP/SCS have the potential to impact 6 acres of agricultural zoning, 40 acres of general plan designations, and 0 acres of Williamson Act lands.

Due to the importance of the region’s agricultural resources, these impacts on zoned or general plan designated agricultural lands are considered potentially significant. Therefore, localized impacts related to planned transportation improvements from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS in Center and Corridor Communities are considered potentially significant (PS) for Impact AG-2. Mitigation is required. Mitigation Measures AG-2 and AG-3 are described below.

*Established Communities*

Within Established Communities, the projected land use pattern of the proposed MTP/SCS has the potential to impact 259 acres of agricultural zoning, 76 acres of general plan designations and 40 acres of farmland under active Williamson Act contracts.

Due to the importance of the region’s agricultural resources, these impacts on zoned or general plan designated agricultural lands and Williamson Act lands are considered potentially significant. Therefore, localized impacts related to the projected land use pattern from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS in Established Communities are considered potentially significant (PS) for Impact AG-2. Mitigation is required. Mitigation Measures AG-2 and AG-3 are described below.

Planned transportation improvements within Established Communities implemented as part of the proposed MTP/SCS have the potential to impact 146 acres of agricultural zoning, 28 acres of general plan designations, and 24 acres of farmland under active Williamson Act contracts.
Due to the importance of the region’s agricultural resources, these impacts on zoned or general plan designated agricultural lands and Williamson Act lands are considered potentially significant. Therefore, localized impacts related to planned transportation improvements from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS in Established Communities are considered potentially significant (PS) for Impact AG-2. Mitigation is required. Mitigation Measures AG-2 and AG-3 are described below.

**Developing Communities**
Within Developing Communities, the projected land use pattern of the proposed MTP/SCS has the potential to impact 1,394 acres of agricultural zoning, 2,089 acres of agricultural general plan designations, and 3,492 acres of farmland under active Williamson Act contracts.

Due to the importance of the region’s agricultural resources, these impacts on zoned or general plan designated agricultural lands and Williamson Act lands are considered potentially significant. Therefore, localized impacts related to the projected land use pattern from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS in Developing Communities are considered potentially significant (PS) for Impact AG-2. Mitigation is required. Mitigation Measures AG-2 and AG-3 are described below.

Planned transportation improvements within Developing Communities implemented as part of the proposed MTP/SCS have the potential to impact 504 acres of agricultural zoning, 185 acres of agricultural general plan designations, and 298 acres of farmland under active Williamson Act contracts.

Due to the importance of the region’s agricultural resources, these impacts on zoned or general plan designated agricultural lands and Williamson Act lands are considered potentially significant. Therefore, localized impacts related to planned transportation improvements from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS in Developing Communities are considered potentially significant (PS) for Impact AG-2. Mitigation is required. Mitigation Measures AG-2 and AG-3 are described below.

**Rural Residential Communities**
Within Rural Residential Communities, the projected land use pattern of the proposed MTP/SCS has the potential to impact 2,126 acres of agricultural zoning, 144 acres of agricultural general plan designations, and 102 acres of farmland under active Williamson Act contracts.

Due to the importance of the region’s agricultural resources, these impacts on zoned or general plan designated agricultural lands and Williamson Act lands are considered potentially significant. Therefore, localized impacts related to the projected land use pattern from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS in Rural Residential Communities are considered potentially significant (PS) for Impact AG-2. Mitigation is required. Mitigation Measures AG-2 and AG-3 are described below.

Planned transportation improvements within Rural Residential Communities implemented as part of the proposed MTP/SCS have the potential to impact 90 acres of agricultural zoning, 29 acres of agricultural general plan designations, and 13 acres of farmland under active Williamson Act contracts.

Due to the importance of the region’s agricultural resources, these impacts on zoned or general plan designated agricultural lands and Williamson Act lands are considered potentially significant. Therefore, localized impacts related to planned transportation improvements from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS in Rural Residential Communities are considered potentially significant (PS) for Impact AG-2. Mitigation is required. Mitigation Measures AG-2 and AG-3 are described below.
Lands Not Identified for Development in the Proposed MTP/SCS

Although some housing and employment growth, consistent with historical trends, may occur in this Community Type within the proposed MTP/SCS planning period, the proposed MTP/SCS does not forecast any development in these areas by 2040. Because the growth in these areas would support agricultural uses, such development would not result in the conversion of zoned or general plan designated agricultural lands and Williamson Act lands to other uses.

Because development related to projected land use pattern in Lands Not Identified for Development in the MTP/SCS would not impact any farmland, the localized impacts on zoned or general plan designated lands or Williamson Act lands related to the projected land use pattern from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS in Lands Not Identified for Development are considered less than significant (LS) for Impact AG-2. No mitigation is required.

The focus for investments in these areas is on road maintenance, safety enhancements, other roadway operational improvements, and targeted capacity improvements to existing facilities that accommodate increased travel between urban areas. Planned transportation improvements within Lands Not Identified for Development in the MTP/SCS implemented as part of the proposed MTP/SCS have the potential to impact 632 acres of agricultural zoning, 712 acres of agricultural general plan designations, and 57 acres of farmland under active Williamson Act contracts. In addition to the direct effects identified here, indirect effects could also occur if proposed transportation improvements or the traffic associated with those improvements resulted in impediments to the ability to move agricultural vehicles and equipment from one location to another.

Due to the importance of the region’s agricultural resources, these impacts on zoned or general plan designated agricultural lands and Williamson Act lands are considered potentially significant. Therefore, localized impacts related to planned transportation improvements from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS on Lands Not Identified for Development in the MTP/SCS are considered potentially significant (PS) for Impact AG-2. Mitigation is required. Mitigation Measures AG-2 and AG-3 are described below.

High Frequency Transit Area Impacts

Impacts to agricultural zoning, agricultural general plan designations, and farmland under active Williamson Act contract in HFTAs are shown below in Table 4-7.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community Type</th>
<th>Acres of Impact</th>
<th>Zoning</th>
<th>General Plans</th>
<th>Williamson Act</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Projected Land Use Pattern</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Placer County HFTAs</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Sacramento County HFTAs</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yolo County HFTAs</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation Projects</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Placer County HFTAs</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sacramento County HFTAs</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Placer County High Frequency Transit Areas
The projected land use pattern does not overlap with agricultural zoning or farmland under active Williamson Act contracts in the Placer County HFTAs. As such, within the Placer County HFTAs, the projected land use pattern of the proposed MTP/SCS would not result in impacts to agricultural zoning, or Williamson Act contracts. Nonetheless, the project has the potential to impact 104 acres of general plan designated agricultural land.

Due to the importance of the region’s agricultural resources, these impacts on zoned or general plan designated agricultural lands are considered potentially significant. Therefore, impacts related to the projected land use pattern from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS in the Placer County HFTAs are considered potentially significant (PS) for Impact AG-2. Mitigation is required.

Mitigation Measures AG-2 and AG-3 are described below.

Planned transportation improvements within the Placer County HFTAs implemented as part of the proposed MTP/SCS have the potential to impact 110 acres of agricultural zoning, 60 acres of agricultural general plan designations, and 0 acres of farmland under active Williamson Act contracts.

Due to the importance of the region’s agricultural resources, these impacts on zoned or general plan designated agricultural lands are considered potentially significant. Therefore, impacts related to planned transportation improvements from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS in the Placer County HFTAs are considered potentially significant (PS) for Impact AG-2. Mitigation is required. Mitigation Measures AG-2 and AG-3 are described below.

Sacramento County High Frequency Transit Areas
The projected land use pattern does not overlap with agricultural zoning, agricultural general plan designations, or farmland under active Williamson Act contracts in the Sacramento County HFTAs.

Because development related to land use within the Sacramento County HFTAs would not impact any farmland, the impacts on zoned or general plan designated agricultural lands and Williamson Act land related to the projected land use pattern from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS in the Sacramento HFTAs are considered less than significant (LS) for Impact AG-2. No mitigation is required.

Planned transportation improvements within the Sacramento County HFTAs implemented as part of the proposed MTP/SCS have the potential to impact 15 acres of agricultural zoning, 18 acres of agricultural general plan designations, and three acres of Williamson Act contracts.
Due to the importance of the region’s agricultural resources, these impacts on zoned or general plan designated agricultural lands or Williamson Act contract lands are considered potentially significant. Therefore, impacts related to planned transportation improvements from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS in the Sacramento County HFTAs are considered potentially significant (PS) for Impact AG-2. Mitigation is required. Mitigation Measures AG-2 and AG-3 are described below.

**Yolo County High Frequency Transit Areas**

Within the Yolo County HFTAs, the projected land use pattern of the proposed MTP/SCS has the potential to impact 50 acres of agricultural zoning, 50 acres of agricultural general plan designations, and 0 acres of farmland under active Williamson Act contracts.

Due to the importance of the region’s agricultural resources, these impacts on zoned or general plan designated agricultural lands are considered potentially significant. Therefore, impacts related to the projected land use pattern from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS in the Yolo County HFTAs are considered potentially significant (PS) for Impact AG-2. Mitigation is required. Mitigation Measures AG-2 and AG-3 are described below.

Planned transportation improvements within the Yolo County HFTAs implemented as part of the proposed MTP/SCS have the potential to impact 16 acres of agricultural zoning, 16 acres of agricultural general plan designations, and 0 acres of farmland under active Williamson Act contracts.

Due to the importance of the region’s agricultural resources, these impacts on zoned or general plan designated agricultural lands are considered potentially significant. Therefore, impacts related to planned transportation improvements from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS in the Yolo County HFTAs are considered potentially significant (PS) for Impact AG-2. Mitigation is required. Mitigation Measures AG-2 and AG-3 are described below.

**Mitigation Measures**

SACOG does not have authority to require the implementing agencies to adopt the identified mitigation measures; the mitigation measures are within the responsibility and jurisdiction of another public agency. However, implementation of the following measures at a project-level would reduce the impacts to zoned, general plan designated, or Williamson Act, and agencies with jurisdiction to adopt these measures can and should do so (PRC Section 21081).

**Mitigation Measure AG-2: Implement Mitigation Measure AG-1**

**Mitigation Measure AG-3: Design proposed projects to avoid or minimize, to the greatest extent feasible, conflicts and inconsistencies with land protected by agricultural zoning or a Williamson Act contract, taking into account the terms of the applicable zoning and/or contract.**

The implementing agency shall mitigate for impacts to land protected by agricultural zoning or a Williamson Act contract by adopting measures that include but are not limited to the following:

- align corridors, incorporate buffer zones and setbacks, and integrate berms and fencing to avoid agricultural lands and to reduce conflicts with agricultural lands;
- minimize severance and fragmentation of agricultural land by constructing underpasses and overpasses at reasonable intervals to provide property access;
- provide buffers, berms, setbacks, fencing, or other project design measures to protect surrounding agriculture, and to reduce conflict with farming that could result from implementation of transportation improvements and/or projected land use pattern included as a part of the MTP/SCS; and
- implement other feasible conservation tools, such as those recommended by the California Department of Conservation Division of Land Resource Protection and the SACOG RUCS Strategy.

**Significance after Mitigation**

Due to the importance of the region’s agricultural resources, these impacts on zoned or general plan designated agricultural lands and Williamson Act lands are considered significant and unavoidable (SU). If the implementing agency adopts Mitigation Measures AG-1 and AG-2, Impact AG-2 may be reduced, but not to a less than significant level, because net loss of agricultural land would still occur. For projects proposing to streamline environmental review, lead agencies must conduct project-level analysis for each project to analyze whether, based on substantial evidence in the record, the proposed mitigation would reduce the impact to less than significant. Additionally, because SACOG cannot require the implementing agency to adopt these mitigation measures, and it is ultimately the responsibility of the implementing agency to determine and adopt project-specific mitigation. Therefore, Impact AG-2 remains significant and unavoidable (SU) for purposes of this program-level review.

**Impact AG-3: Conflict with existing zoning or land use designation for, or cause rezoning of, forest land, timberland, or timberland zoned timberland production.**

**Regional Impacts**

For this analysis, any land designated by an existing zoning ordinance or general plan for forest land, timberland, or timberland zoned timberland production that overlaps with the proposed MTP/SCS is considered a potentially significant impact. The potential overlap of the proposed MTP/SCS projected land use pattern and planned transportation improvements with these lands is shown below in Table 4-8.

By focusing on providing small-lot and attached housing, maximizing infill and redevelopment opportunities, and planning for communities with a mix of uses, the proposed MTP/SCS creates a compact land use pattern, which produces a smaller overall urban footprint that maximizes the land available. As shown in Table 4-8, the projected land use pattern of the proposed MTP/SCS does not overlap with any land designated by an existing zoning ordinance or general plan for forest land, timberland or timberland zoned timberland production. Therefore, regional impacts related to the projected land use pattern from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS are considered less than significant (LS) for Impact AG-3. No mitigation is required.
### Table 4-8

#### Proposed MTP/SCS Land Use and Transportation Overlap with Timberland/Forest Zoning and General Plan Designations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community Type</th>
<th>Acres of Impact</th>
<th>Forest Land, Timberland, or Timberland Production Zoning Designation</th>
<th>Forest Land, Timberland, or Timberland Production General Plan Designation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Projected Land Use Pattern</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Center and Corridor Communities</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Established Communities</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developing Communities</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural Residential Communities</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lands Not Identified for Development in the MTP/SCS Planning Period</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Transportation Projects</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Center and Corridor Communities</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Established Communities</td>
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<td></td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developing Communities</td>
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<td></td>
<td>176</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural Residential Communities</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lands Not Identified for Development in the MTP/SCS Planning Period</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Regional Totals</strong></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Projected Land Use Pattern Total</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation Projects Total</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td>259</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Land Use and Transportation Combined Total</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td>259</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Sacramento, Sutter, and Yolo counties do not have forest or timberland general plan designations.
Numbers may not total due to rounding.

Source: Yuba County 2019; El Dorado County 2019; Placer County 2019

Planned transportation improvements were analyzed by calculating a 100-foot buffer area around the center line of the proposed projects and measuring the area overlapping forest land, timberland, and timberland zoned timberland production zoning and general plan designations. As shown in Table 4-8, the planned transportation improvements of the proposed MTP/SCS would potentially conflict with or cause general plan land use amendments for approximately 259 acres of land designated forest land, timberland, or timberland zoned for timberland production. No timberlands or forest lands designated within zoning would be affected by the planned transportation improvements of the proposed MTP/SCS. Therefore, the regional impacts related to the planned transportation improvements of the proposed MTP/SCS are considered potentially significant (PS) for Impact AG-3. Mitigation is required. Mitigation Measure AG-4 is described below.

### Localized Impacts

**Center, Corridor, Established, and Developing Communities, and Lands Not Identified for Development in the Proposed MTP/SCS**

As shown in Table 4-8, the projected land use pattern of the proposed MTP/SCS does not overlap with any land designated by an existing zoning ordinance or general plan for forest land, timberland, or timberland zoned timberland production. Therefore, localized impacts related to the projected land use pattern from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS in Center, Corridor, Established,
and Developing Communities, and Lands Not Identified for Development in the proposed MTP/SCS are considered less than significant (LS) for Impact AG-3. No mitigation is required.

As shown in Table 4-8, no timberlands or forest lands designated in zoning would be affected by the planned transportation improvements of the proposed MTP/SCS; however the planned transportation improvements of the proposed MTP/SCS would potentially conflict with or cause general plan amendments for land designated forest land, timberland, or timberland as follows: 0 acres in Center and Corridor Communities, 7 acres in Established Communities, 176 acres in Developing Communities, 50 acres in Rural Residential Communities; and 26 acres in Lands Not Identified for Development.

Therefore, the localized impacts related to the planned transportation improvements of the proposed MTP/SCS in Established, Developing, and Rural Residential Communities, and Lands Not Identified for Development are considered potentially significant (PS) for Impact AG-3. Mitigation is required. Mitigation Measure AG-4 is described below.

**High Frequency Transit Area Impacts**

*Placer County, Sacramento County, and Yolo County High Frequency Transit Areas*

The HFTAs do not contain any land designated by an existing zoning ordinance or general plan for forest land, timberland, or timberland zoned timberland production. Therefore, the impacts on zoned or general plan designated forest land/timberland related to the projected land use pattern and planned transportation improvements from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS in the HFTAs are considered less than significant (LS) for Impact AG-3. No mitigation is required.

**Mitigation Measures**

SACOG does not have authority to require the implementing agencies to adopt the identified mitigation measures; the mitigation measures are within the responsibility and jurisdiction of another public agency. However, implementation of the following measure at a project-level may reduce the impacts to zoned or general plan designated forest land/timberland, and agencies with jurisdiction to adopt these measures can and should do so (PRC Section 21081).

**Mitigation Measure AG-4: Mitigate for loss of forest land or timberland.**

The implementing agency shall mitigate for loss of forestland or timberland by adopting measures that include but are not limited to:

- provide permanent protection of in-kind forestland or timberland at a minimum 1:1 ratio of comparable quality land, in the form of easements, fees, or elimination of development rights/potential;
- if feasible, the easement should be located within or in close proximity to the same city or community in which the conversion occurs; and
- integrate SACOG RUCS tools and strategies—such as application of spatial analysis tools, dissemination of information, coordination with subject-area experts, facilitation of inter-agency collaboration, and technical assistance to member jurisdictions—generally, and on a project-specific basis where applicable, to improve the economic and environmental sustainability of resources lands including forested lands.
**Significance After Mitigation**

Due to the importance of the region's timberland and forestry resources, these impacts on land zoned or designated in a general plan for forest land, timberland, and timberland zoned timberland production are considered significant and unavoidable. If the implementing agency adopts this mitigation measure, Impact AG-3 may be reduced, but not to a less than significant level, because net loss of forest land or timberland would still occur. For projects proposing to streamline environmental review, lead agencies must conduct project-level analysis for each project to analyze whether, based on substantial evidence in the record, the proposed mitigation would reduce the impact to less than significant. Additionally, because SACOG cannot require the implementing agency to adopt this mitigation measure, and it is ultimately the responsibility of the implementing agency to determine and adopt project-specific mitigation. Therefore, Impact AG-3 remains significant and unavoidable (SU) for purposes of this program-level review.

**Impact AG-4: Involve other changes in the existing environment, which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of farmland to non-agricultural use.**

**Regional Impacts**

The projected population and housing unit growth indicate that implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS would result in more compact development than existing conditions. By developing more compactly, the proposed MTP/SCS directs more growth to areas that are already urbanized and prevents undeveloped land from being converted to urban uses. Keeping growth contained to areas that are already developed limits the amount of growth that takes place at the urban edge, adjacent to agricultural areas.

However, as discussed in Impact AG-1 and AG-2, implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS would result in the conversion of 2,897 acres of farmland, 5,206 acres of zoned agricultural land, 3,873 acres of general plan designated agricultural land, and 4,522 acres of land under Williamson Act contracts. Lands that remain agricultural lands, but are located near to lands that would be converted to urban uses, may feel pressure to develop, as nearby land values increase or as nuisances from urban development spread to agricultural lands.

While much of the planned transportation improvements in the proposed MTP/SCS would serve urban uses in urbanized areas of the region, it is likely that implementation of planned transportation improvements at the urban edge could increase urban traffic patterns on roads that serve urban development and agricultural lands. Frequently, these increased traffic volumes are indirectly the result of spillover from congested roads near the exterior of urbanized areas. Increased urban traffic on transitional roads can lead to increased conflict between urban and agricultural uses. Forecasted transportation growth along the urban/rural edge is addressed under Impact TRN-5-Transportation.

As discussed above, the proposed MTP/SCS would result in more compact development than existing conditions. The proposed MTP/SCS is designed to improve transportation options and increase capacity within urbanized areas. Owners of agricultural lands nearest to these urbanized areas may feel pressure to develop as planned transportation improvements within proximity of these lands are rehabilitated or further developed. Such pressure would also increase as land uses surrounding these properties continue to urbanize. Nonetheless, because the proposed MTP/SCS
would result in conversion of farmland to non-agricultural use, impacts on conversion of farmland to non-agricultural use related to the projected land use pattern and planned transportation improvements from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS at the regional level are considered potentially significant (PS) for Impact AG-4. Mitigation is required. Mitigation Measures AG-5 and AG-6 are described below.

Localized Impacts

Center and Corridor Communities

Center and Corridor Communities are already urbanized and are typically surrounded by other urban land uses like Established Communities or Developing Communities. As discussed in Impact AG-1 and Impact AG-2, implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS would result in the conversion of agricultural land to urban uses, but that amount is anticipated to be less than six percent of the total amount of agricultural land impacted by development in all Community Types. Similarly, because Center and Corridor communities elsewhere in the region are surrounded by urban uses, development in those areas would be unlikely to result in the conversion of additional farmland to urban uses.

Therefore, the localized impacts on conversion of farmland to non-agricultural use related to the projected land use pattern from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS in Center and Corridor Communities are considered less than significant (LS) for Impact AG-4. No mitigation is required.

On the transportation side, Center and Corridor Communities would see a variety of planned transportation improvements by 2040, including new HOV lanes, auxiliary lanes, roadway widenings, bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure improvements, transit facilities, increased transit service, and roadway maintenance and rehabilitation projects. These planned transportation improvements would primarily serve urban uses. However, such projects would serve existing and future urban developments and would not likely have impacts that would result in the conversion of additional agricultural land to transportation uses.

Therefore, the impacts on conversion of farmland to non-agricultural use related to planned transportation improvements from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS in Center and Corridor Communities are considered less than significant (LS) for Impact AG-4. No mitigation is required.

Established Communities

Like Center and Corridor Communities, Established Communities already have a significant amount of urban development, but these areas are generally not as dense as Center and Corridor Communities. The projected land use pattern would primarily occur through building out existing subdivisions and filling in empty lots. For the most part, these areas are located in the interior portions of incorporated cities or unincorporated communities. However, as stated in Impact AG-1 and Impact AG-2, implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS would result in the conversion of farmland to urban uses in Established Communities. Lands that remain agricultural lands, but are located near lands that would be converted to urban uses, may feel pressure to develop, as nearby land values increase or as nuisances from urban development spread to agricultural lands.

Therefore, the localized impacts on conversion of farmland to non-agricultural use related to the projected land use pattern from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS in Established
Communities are considered potentially significant (PS) for Impact AG-4. Mitigation is required. Mitigation Measures AG-5 and AG-6 are described below.

On the transportation side, Established Communities would experience planned transportation improvements similar to those found in Center and Corridor Communities. Planned transportation improvements may include new HOV lanes, auxiliary lanes, roadway widenings, bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure improvements, transit facilities, increased transit service, and roadway maintenance and rehabilitation projects. These projects would serve existing and new development in Established Communities.

It is likely that implementation of planned transportation improvements in Established Communities could increase urban traffic patterns on roads that serve urban development and agricultural lands. Frequently, these increased traffic volumes are indirectly the result of spillover from congested roads near the exterior of urbanized areas. Increased urban traffic on transitional roads can lead to increased conflict between urban and agricultural uses.

Therefore, the localized impacts on conversion of farmland to non-agricultural use related to planned transportation improvements from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS in Established Communities are considered potentially significant (PS) for Impact AG-4. Mitigation is required. Mitigation Measures AG-5 and AG-6 are described below.

Developing Communities

Developing Communities are communities that are just starting to develop or would begin to develop during the planning period and are often located at or near the edge of the existing urbanized area of the region. In many cases, the current zoning in these areas is agriculture and they have been proposed to rezone for residential, commercial, or industrial development. As stated in Impact AG-1 and Impact AG-2, implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS would result in the conversion of farmland to urban uses in Developing Communities. Lands that remain agricultural lands, but are located near to lands that would be converted to urban uses, may be subject to development pressures, as nearby land values increase or as nuisances from urban development spread to agricultural lands.

Therefore, the localized impacts on farmland related to the projected land use pattern from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS in Developing Communities are considered potentially significant (PS) for Impact AG-4. Mitigation is required. Mitigation Measures AG-5 and AG-6 are described below.

On the transportation side, Developing Communities experience more road widening projects and newly constructed road projects to serve the new residential and employment developments. These areas would see road maintenance and rehabilitation projects, but because these areas have less transportation infrastructure to begin with, these projects would not be as prevalent as in Center and Corridor Communities and Established Communities. Developing Communities generally are not served by transit today, but new transit service would be added incrementally to align with the completion of new housing and employment centers. Pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure would be similarly phased in over the life of the proposed MTP/SCS.

It is likely that implementation of planned transportation improvements in Developing Communities could increase urban traffic patterns on roads that serve urban development and
agricultural lands. Frequently, these increased traffic volumes are indirectly the result of spillover from congested roads near the exterior of urbanized areas. Increased urban traffic on transitional roads can lead to increased conflict between urban and agricultural uses.

Therefore, the localized impacts on farmland related to planned transportation improvements from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS in Developing Communities are considered potentially significant (PS) for Impact AG-4. Mitigation is required. Mitigation Measures AG-5 and AG-6 are described below.

**Rural Residential Communities**

Rural Residential Communities are predominantly residential with some small-scale hobby or commercial farming. The predominant form of development anticipated by the proposed MTP/SCS in these areas would be incremental development on large parcels, typically one unit or parcel at a time. The projected land use pattern in these areas would be largely isolated from urban areas. As stated in Impact AG-1 and AG-2, implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS in this Community Type would result in the conversion of farmland to urban uses.

This Community Type includes residential uses that coexist with agricultural uses. This Community Type generally includes a land use pattern consisting of large homes on large lots (typically consisting of more than one acre) with some smaller scale agricultural operations scattered throughout the area. The proposed MTP/SCS assumes additional units within these areas as they are already designated for rural residential uses at the local level. The proposed MTP/SCS growth footprint does not assume the rezoning of any land from agriculture to rural residential uses. Conflicts that already exist between uses would continue with implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS, and because relatively few new homes are added to this area that is predominately already rural residential it is unlikely to exacerbate these existing nuisances in such a way as to cause additional secondary conversion of farmland. Also, these homes are situated on very large lots, resulting in space between the residents of the homes and potential nearby small scale or hobby farming, which serves to buffer and further minimize the potential for conflicts.

Therefore, the impacts on farmland related to the projected land use pattern from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS in Rural Residential Communities are considered less than significant (LS) for Impact AG-4. No mitigation is required.

Planned transportation improvements in Rural Residential Communities consists primarily of roads serving automobile traffic with very limited transit service in a few places in the region. Implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS would result in the construction of roadway improvements including road maintenance and rehabilitation, roadway widenings, newly constructed roadways, and freeway improvements. There may also be limited improvements to transit service.

Rural residential developments and agricultural lands already coexist on existing roadway infrastructure. As noted in Impact AG-1 and Impact AG-2, implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS would result in the conversion of farmland to transportation uses. However, the amount of land converted is expected to be small and would be unlikely to cause conflict or development pressure that would result in the additional secondary conversion of additional farmland.

Therefore, the impacts on farmland related to planned transportation improvements from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS in Rural Residential Communities are considered
potentially significant (PS) for Impact AG-4. Mitigation is required. Mitigation Measures AG-5 and AG-6 are discussed below.

**Lands Not Identified for Development in the Proposed MTP/SCS**

The land use forecast does not overlap with farmlands, agricultural zoning, agricultural general plan designations, or farmland under active Williamson Act contracts in Lands Not Identified for Development in the MTP/SCS. Although some housing and employment growth, consistent with historical trends, may occur in this Community Type within the MTP/SCS planning period, the proposed MTP/SCS does not forecast any development in these areas by 2040. Conflicts that already exist between uses are likely to continue with implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS, but because the increment of growth is minor, and is not directly related to any land use actions taken in the proposed MTP/SCS, it is unlikely to exacerbate these existing nuisances in such a way as to cause additional secondary conversion of farmland. Because no projected land use pattern is proposed for this Community Type, no further conversions of farmland would occur beyond what is already occurring under baseline conditions.

Therefore, the impacts on farmland related to the projected land use pattern from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS in Lands Not Identified for Development are considered less than significant (LS) for Impact AG-4. No mitigation is required.

The focus for investments in these areas is on road maintenance, safety enhancements, other roadway operational improvements, and targeted capacity improvements to existing facilities that accommodate increased travel between urban areas. As noted in Impact AG-1 and Impact AG-2, implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS would result in the conversion of farmland to transportation uses. It is likely that implementation of planned transportation improvements in Lands Not Identified for Development could increase urban traffic patterns on roads that serve agricultural lands. Frequently, these increased traffic volumes are indirectly the result of spillover from congested roads near the exterior of urbanized areas. Increased urban traffic on transitional roads can lead to increased conflict between urban and agricultural uses.

Therefore, the localized impacts on farmland related to planned transportation improvements from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS in Lands Not Identified for Development are considered potentially significant (PS) for Impact AG-4. Mitigation is required. Mitigation Measures AG-5 and AG-6 are described below.

**High Frequency Transit Area Impacts**

**Placer County High Frequency Transit Areas**

The projected land use pattern overlaps with agricultural general plan designations in the Placer County HFTAs. Additionally, the planned transportation improvements 100-foot buffer also overlaps with farmlands, agricultural zoning, and agricultural general plan designations in the Placer County HFTAs. Therefore, the localized impacts on farmland related to planned projected land use pattern and planned transportation improvements from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS in Placer County HFTAs are considered potentially significant (PS) for Impact AG-4. Mitigation is required. Mitigation Measures AG-5 and AG-6 are described below.
Sacramento County High Frequency Transit Areas

The Sacramento County HFTAs are already urbanized and are typically surrounded by other urban land uses like Established or Developing Communities. As discussed in Impact AG-1 and Impact AG-2, implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS would result in the conversion of agricultural land to urban uses. However, because the Sacramento County HFTAs are surrounded by urban uses, development in those areas would be unlikely to result in the conversion of additional farmland to urban uses. Therefore, the impacts on farmland related to the projected land use pattern from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS in the Sacramento County HFTAs are considered less than significant (LS) for Impact AG-4. No mitigation is required.

On the transportation side, the Sacramento County HFTAs would see a variety of planned transportation improvements by 2040, including new HOV lanes, auxiliary lanes, roadway widenings, bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure improvements, transit facilities, increased transit service, and roadway maintenance and rehabilitation projects. These planned transportation improvements would primarily serve urban uses. Planned transportation improvements would likely result in the conversion of agricultural lands to transportation uses. However, such projects would serve existing and future urban developments and would not likely have impact that would result in the conversion of additional agricultural lands to transportation uses. Therefore, the impacts on farmland related to transportation improvements from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS in the Sacramento County HFTAs are considered less than significant (LS) for Impact AG-4. No mitigation is required.

Yolo County High Frequency Transit Areas

The projected land use pattern does overlap with agricultural general plan designations in the Yolo County HFTAs. Additionally, planned transportation improvements 100-foot buffer also overlaps with farmlands, agricultural zoning, and agricultural general plan designations in the Yolo County HFTAs. Therefore, the localized impacts on farmland related to planned projected land use pattern and planned transportation improvements from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS in Yolo County HFTAs are considered potentially significant (PS) for Impact AG-4. Mitigation is required. Mitigation Measures AG-5 and AG-6 are described below.

Mitigation Measures

SACOG does not have authority to require the implementing agencies to adopt the identified mitigation measures; the mitigation measures are within the responsibility and jurisdiction of another public agency. However, implementation of the following measures at a project-level would reduce the potential conversion of farmland to nonfarm uses, and agencies with jurisdiction to adopt these measures can and should do so (PRC Section 21081).

Mitigation Measure AG-5: Minimize conversion of farmland to non-agricultural use.

Implementing agencies shall require project proponents to adopt measures that include but are not limited to:

- design proposed projects to minimize, to the greatest extent feasible, the loss of the highest valued agricultural land;
- redesign project features to minimize fragmenting or isolating farmland. Where a project involves acquiring land or easements, ensure that the remaining farmland is of a size sufficient to allow economically viable farming operations. The project proponents shall be
responsible for acquiring easements, making lot line adjustments, and merging affected land parcels into units suitable for continued commercial agricultural management;

- reconnect utilities or infrastructure that serve agricultural uses if these are disturbed by project construction. If a project temporarily or permanently cuts off roadway access or removes utility lines, irrigation features, or other infrastructure, the project proponents shall be responsible for restoring access as necessary to ensure that economically viable farming operations are not interrupted; and

- manage project operations to minimize the introduction of invasive species or weeds that may affect agricultural production on adjacent agricultural land. Where a project has the potential to introduce sensitive species or habitats or have other spill-over effects on nearby agricultural lands, the project proponents shall be responsible for acquiring easements on nearby agricultural land and/or financially compensating for indirect effects on nearby agricultural land. Easements (e.g., flowage easements) shall be required for temporary or intermittent interruption in farming activities (e.g., because of seasonal flooding or groundwater seepage). Acquisition or compensation would be required for permanent or significant loss of economically viable operations.

Mitigation Measure AG-6: Inventory innovative ideas and best practices from the RUCCS toolkit, EPA, and USDA Supporting Sustainable Rural Communities publication, and other sources and implement a locally appropriate strategy to manage growth issues at the rural-urban interface to support the long-term viability of agriculture in the SACOG region.

The implementing agency shall avoid or minimize general pressure to convert agriculture land at the urban edge to non-agricultural uses by adopting regulations that enforce the innovations and best practices identified to minimize conversion pressures on farmland. Examples of this might include but are not limited to:

- **Agriculture Buffers:** Buffers, generally imposed on new development, can assist in reducing urban land use conflicts with farming operations. Invest in urban edge agricultural operations that reinforce the effectiveness and permanence of buffers, create education and training opportunities, and generate a revenue stream that supports buffer acquisition and maintenance.

- **Right-to-Farm Ordinances:** These ordinances require project applicants to agree to provide real estate disclosures explaining farmers’ rights to purchasers or lessees as a condition of project approval for projects located in active farming areas. The intent of such an ordinance is to protect farmers from nuisance complaints and enforcement actions.

- **Infill and Redevelopment Policies:** These policies, which are supportive of infill and redevelopment and consistent with the policy objectives of the proposed MTP/SCS and SB 375, would direct population growth to urban communities, or in established rural communities, thereby reducing pressure to convert agricultural land to development.

**Significance After Mitigation**

Due to the importance of the region’s agricultural resources, these impacts on farmland are considered significant and unavoidable (SU). If the implementing agency adopts this mitigation measure, Impact AG-4 may be reduced, but not necessarily to a less than significant level, because net loss of farmland would still occur. For projects proposing to streamline environmental review,
lead agencies must conduct project-level analysis for each project to analyze whether, based on substantial evidence in the record, the proposed mitigation would reduce the impact to less than significant. Additionally, because SACOG cannot require implementing agencies to adopt this mitigation measure, and it is ultimately the responsibility of a lead agency to determine and adopt project-specific mitigation. Therefore, Impact AG-4 remains significant and unavoidable (SU).

**IMPACT AG-5: RESULT IN THE LOSS OF “FOREST LAND” AS DEFINED IN THE CALIFORNIA FOREST LEGACY ACT OF 2007 (PRC SECTION 12220(G)) OR CONVERSION OF FOREST LAND TO NON-FOREST USE.**

**Regional Impacts**

The California Forest Legacy Act of 2007 defines “forest land” as “land that can support ten-percent native tree cover of any species, including hardwoods, under natural conditions, and that allows for management of one or more forest resources, including timber, aesthetics, fish and wildlife, biodiversity, water quality, recreation, and other public benefits.” For purposes of analysis, it is assumed that lands mapped as conifer forest, hardwood, or mixed forest by the California Land Cover Mapping and Monitoring Program fall under the definition of “forest land.” The overlap between projected land use pattern and planned transportation improvements anticipated in the proposed MTP/SCS with the region’s forest land is shown in Table 4-9.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community Type</th>
<th>Acres of Impact</th>
<th>Total Forest Overlap</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Conifer Forest</td>
<td>Hardwood Forest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Projected Land Use Pattern</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Center and Corridor Communities</td>
<td>n/a¹</td>
<td>n/a¹</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Established Communities</td>
<td>n/a¹</td>
<td>n/a¹</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developing Communities</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1,090</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural Residential Communities</td>
<td>231</td>
<td>3,841</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lands Not Identified for Development in the MTP/SCS Planning Period</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Transportation Projects</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Center and Corridor Communities</td>
<td>n/a¹</td>
<td>n/a¹</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Established Communities</td>
<td>n/a¹</td>
<td>n/a¹</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developing Communities</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural Residential Communities</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lands Not Identified for Development in the MTP/SCS Planning Period</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Regional Totals</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Projected Land Use Pattern Total</td>
<td>231</td>
<td>4,931</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation Projects Total</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Land Use and Transportation Combined Total</td>
<td>232</td>
<td>5,012</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹Because the Land Cover Mapping and Monitoring data are remote sensing data created to estimate all tree canopy, in some cases, particularly in urban areas, it is likely these are not actual "forest" areas. No screening for tree canopy density was done in this analysis; however, the data were geographically screened so that only forests
that actually exist today were used. Therefore, tree canopy in Center and Corridor and Established Communities were not analyzed as forested areas.

Note: This analysis includes all overlapping and non-overlapping vegetation cover in conifer, hardwood, and mixed forests. Source: SACOG, MTP/SCS Preferred Scenario Land Use Forecast, June 2019; California Land Cover Mapping and Monitoring Program 2018

By focusing on providing small-lot and attached housing, maximizing infill and redevelopment opportunities, and planning for communities with a mix of uses, the proposed MTP/SCS creates a compact land use pattern, which produces a smaller overall urban footprint that maximizes the land available. The projected land use pattern of the proposed MTP/SCS has the potential to impact 231 acres of conifer forest, 4,931 acres of hardwood forest, and 1,873 acres of mixed forest, for a total forest overlap of 7,034 acres. Planned transportation improvements implemented as part of the proposed MTP/SCS have the potential to impact 1 acre of conifer forest, 81 acres of hardwood forest, and 4 acres of mixed forest for a total potential impact of 86 acres.

Together, the projected land use pattern and planned transportation improvements have the potential to impact 232 acres of conifer forest 5,012 acres of hardwood forest, and 1,877 acres of mixed forest for a total of 7,120 acres. As a total of all state-designated forest land within the region, forest land that has the potential to be impacted by the projected land use pattern and planned transportation improvements associated with implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS includes approximately 0.03 percent of conifer forest, 1 percent of hardwood forest, and 0.5 percent of mixed forest in the plan area of the proposed MTP/SCS.

While these impacts appear relatively small from a regional perspective, due to the importance of the region’s forestry resources, these impacts on forest land are considered potentially significant. Therefore, impacts related to the projected land use pattern and planned transportation improvements at the regional level are considered potentially significant (PS) for Impact AG-5. Mitigation Measure AG-7 is described below.

**Localized Impacts**

**Center and Corridor Communities and Established Communities**
Because there were no forest lands identified in Center and Corridor Communities and Established Communities, forest lands are not impacted by implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS. Therefore, the impacts on forest land related to the projected land use pattern and planned transportation improvements from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS in Center and Corridor Communities and Established Communities are considered less than significant (LS) for Impact AG-5. No mitigation is required.

**Developing Communities**
Within Developing Communities, the projected land use pattern of the proposed MTP/SCS has the potential to impact 1,090 acres of hardwood forest and 17 acres of mixed forest, for a total impact of 1,107 acres.

Due to the importance of the region’s forestry resources, these impacts on forest land are considered potentially significant. Therefore, localized impacts related to the projected land use pattern from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS in Developing Communities are considered potentially significant (PS) for Impact AG-5. Mitigation is required. Mitigation Measure AG-7 is described below.
Planned transportation improvements implemented as part of the proposed MTP/SCS have the potential to impact 1 acres of conifer forest, 50 acres of hardwood forest, and 2 acres of mixed forest for a total potential impact of 53 acres.

Due to the importance of the region’s forestry resources, these impacts on forest land are considered potentially significant. Therefore, localized impacts related to planned transportation improvements from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS in Developing Communities are considered potentially significant (PS) for Impact AG-5. Mitigation is required. Mitigation Measure AG-7 is described below.

**Rural Residential Communities**

Within Rural Residential Communities, the projected land use pattern of the proposed MTP/SCS has the potential to impact 231 acres of conifer forest, 3,841 acres of hardwood forest, and 1,856 acres of mixed forest for a total impact of 5,927 acres.

Due to the importance of the region’s forestry resources, these impacts on forest land are considered potentially significant. Therefore, impacts related to the projected land use pattern from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS in Rural Residential Communities are considered potentially significant (PS) for Impact AG-5. Mitigation is required. Mitigation Measure AG-7 is described below.

Planned transportation improvements implemented as part of the proposed MTP/SCS have the potential to impact 0 acres of conifer forest, 28 acres of hardwood forest, and 2 acres of mixed forest for a total potential impact of 30 acres.

Due to the importance of the region’s forestry resources, these impacts on forest land are considered potentially significant. Therefore, localized impacts related to planned transportation improvements from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS in Rural Residential Communities are considered potentially significant (PS) for Impact AG-5. Mitigation is required. Mitigation Measure AG-7 is described below.

**Lands Not Identified for Development in the Proposed MTP/SCS**

Although some housing and employment growth, consistent with historical trends, would occur in this Community Type within the proposed MTP/SCS planning period, the proposed MTP/SCS does not forecast any development in these areas by 2040. Thus, the projected land use pattern of the proposed MTP/SCS does not overlap with any hardwood or mixed forest.

Therefore, the localized impacts on forest land related to the projected land use pattern from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS in Lands Not Identified for Development are considered less than significant (LS) for Impact AG-5. No mitigation is required.

The focus for investments in these areas is on road maintenance, safety enhancements, other roadway operational improvements, and targeted capacity improvements to existing facilities that accommodate increased travel between urban areas. Planned transportation improvements implemented as part of the proposed MTP/SCS have the potential to impact 0 acres of conifer forest, 3 acres of hardwood forest, and 0 acres of mixed forest for a total potential impact of three acres.

Due to the importance of the region’s forestry resources, these impacts on forest land are considered potentially significant. Therefore, localized impacts related to planned transportation

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improvements from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS in Lands Not Identified for Development are considered potentially significant (PS) for Impact AG-5. Mitigation is required. Mitigation Measure AG-7 is described below.

High Frequency Transit Area Impacts

Placer County, Sacramento County, and Yolo County High Frequency Transit Areas
The projected land use pattern and planned transportation improvements 100-foot buffer do not overlap forest land in the HFTAs. Therefore, the impacts on forest land related to the projected land use pattern and planned transportation improvements from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS in the HFTAs are considered less than significant (LS) for Impact AG-5. No mitigation is required.

Mitigation Measures

SACOG does not have authority to require the implementing agencies to adopt the identified mitigation measures; the mitigation measures are within the responsibility and jurisdiction of another public agency. However, implementation of the following measure at a project level would reduce the impacts to forest land, and agencies with jurisdiction to adopt these measures can and should do so (PRC Section 21081).

Mitigation Measure AG-7: Implement Mitigation Measure AG-4.

Significance After Mitigation

Due to the importance of the region’s forestry resources, these impacts on forest land are considered significant and unavoidable (SU). If the implementing agency adopts this mitigation measure, Impact AG-5 may be reduced but not to a less than significant level, because net loss of forest land would still occur. For projects proposing to streamline environmental review, lead agencies must conduct project-level analysis for each project to analyze whether, based on substantial evidence in the record, the proposed mitigation would reduce the impact to less than significant. Additionally, because SACOG cannot require the implementing agency to adopt this mitigation measure, and it is ultimately the responsibility of the implementing agency to determine and adopt project-specific mitigation. Therefore, Impact AG-5 remains significant and unavoidable (SU) for purposes of this program-level review.

Impact AG-6: Result in construction impacts that would convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance; conflict with existing zoning or land use designation for agricultural use or a Williamson Act contract; conflict with existing zoning or land use designations for, or cause rezoning of, forest land, timberland, or timberland zoned Timberland Production; involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of farmland to non-agricultural use; or result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land into non-forest use.

Regional Impacts

By focusing on providing small-lot and attached housing, maximizing infill and redevelopment opportunities, and planning for communities with a mix of uses, the proposed MTP/SCS creates a
compact land use pattern, which produces a smaller overall urban footprint that maximizes the land available. However, implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS would never-the-less result in the conversion of agricultural land and forest land to other uses. The projected land use pattern would convert 2,163 acres of farmland (Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, and Farmland of Statewide Importance); 3,828 acres of zoned agricultural land; 1,335 acres of general plan designated agricultural land; 4,130 acres of Williamson Act lands; and 7,034 acres of state-designated forest land. Note, these impacts are not additive – each category includes overlapping acres.

Planned transportation improvements would convert 735 acres of farmland (Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, and Farmland of Statewide Importance); 1,378 acres of zoned agricultural land; 994 acres of general plan designated agricultural land; 392 acres of Williamson Act lands; 86 acres of state-designated forest land; and 259 acres of general plan designated timberland or forest land. These impacts are not additive – each category includes overlapping acres.

There would be impacts to agricultural land and forest land during the construction of the projected land use pattern and planned transportation improvements in the proposed MTP/SCS. Forecasted transportation growth along the urban/rural edge is addressed under Impact TRN-5—Transportation. Permanent conflicts with or conversions of agricultural lands and forestry resources are considered part of implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS and are analyzed under Impacts AG-1 through AG-5 and mitigation is recommended where appropriate. Construction impacts would include effects from grading, paving, clearing, landscaping, staging, access routing, excavation, earthmoving, and other related construction activities. If construction activities and staging occurs on agricultural land, forest land, and timberland these activities would result in temporary short-term impacts by using these lands for other uses or causing conflict with typical operations. Depending on locations of staging areas, construction-related impacts to agriculture and forestry resources could occur outside of the footprints proposed for development and analyzed in Impact AG-1 through AG-5 for both the projected land use pattern and planned transportation improvements.

Construction-related impacts are typically short-term and can be mitigated through actions of the implementing agency. However, it is not possible to reasonably estimate the size, location, magnitude, or length of construction period associated with the projected land use pattern and planned transportation improvements that would occur under the proposed MTP/SCS.

Due to the importance of the region’s agricultural and forestry resources, construction impacts to these resources are considered potentially significant. Therefore, construction-related impacts on agricultural and forestry resources related to the projected land use pattern and planned transportation improvements from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS at the regional level are considered potentially significant (PS) for Impact AG-6. Mitigation is required. Mitigation Measure AG-8 is described below.

**Localized Impacts**

**Center and Corridor Communities, Established Communities, Developing Communities, and Rural Residential Communities**

The localized impacts associated with implementation of the projected land use pattern assumed as part of the proposed MTP/SCS would be the same in each of the Community Types as described in the regional impacts discussion above. These activities could temporarily impact agricultural land and forestry resources by converting agricultural land and forestry resources for other uses or
causing conflict between uses. Permanent conflicts with or conversions of agricultural lands and forestry resources are considered part of implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS and are analyzed under Impacts AG-1 through AG-5.

Due to the importance of the region’s agricultural and forest resources, these impacts on agricultural and forestry resources are considered potentially significant. Therefore, the localized construction-related impacts on agricultural and forestry resources related to the projected land use pattern from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS in Center and Corridor Communities, Established Communities, Developing Communities, and Rural Residential Communities are considered potentially significant (PS) for Impact AG-6. Mitigation is required. Mitigation Measure AG-8 is described below.

The construction of planned transportation improvements could result in construction-related impacts could require use of staging areas outside of the proposed development footprint. If these additional areas are located within agricultural or forest land, temporarily and/or short-term impacts could occur resulting from using agricultural land and forestry resources for other uses or causing conflict between uses. Permanent conflicts with or conversions of agricultural lands and forestry resources are considered part of implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS and are analyzed under Impacts AG-1 through AG-5.

Due to the importance of the region’s agricultural and forestry resources, these impacts on agricultural and forestry resources are considered potentially significant. Therefore, the construction-related impacts on agricultural and forestry resources related to planned transportation improvements from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS in Center and Corridor Communities, Established Communities, Developing Communities, and Rural Residential Communities are considered potentially significant (PS) for Impact AG-6. Mitigation is required. Mitigation Measure AG-8 is described below.

Lands Not Identified for Development in the Proposed MTP/SCS

Although some housing and employment growth, consistent with historical trends, may occur in this Community Type within the MTP/SCS planning period, the proposed MTP/SCS does not forecast development in these areas by 2040. As a result, there is no potential to result in land-use-related construction impacts that would convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance; conflict with existing zoning or land use designation for agricultural use or a Williamson Act contract; conflict with existing zoning or land use designations for, or cause rezoning of, forest land, timberland, or timberland zoned Timberland Production; involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location of nature, could result in conversion of farmland to non-agricultural use; or result in the loss of Forest Land or conversion of Forest Land into non-forest use.

Therefore, the construction-related impacts on agricultural and forestry resources related to the projected land use pattern from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS in Lands Not Identified for Development are considered less than significant (LS) for Impact AG-6. No mitigation is required.

The proposed MTP/SCS would make a number of planned transportation improvements in this Community Type by 2040, including road maintenance, road widenings and safety enhancements, and other roadway improvements. The construction of planned transportation improvements in Lands
Not Identified for Development in the MTP/SCS could require use of staging areas outside of the proposed development footprint. If these additional areas are located on agricultural or forest land, these activities could result in temporarily impacts resulting from using agricultural land and forestry resources for other uses or causing conflict between uses. Permanent conflicts with or conversions of agricultural lands and forestry resources are analyzed under Impacts AG-1 through AG-5.

Due to the importance of the region’s agricultural and forestry resources, these impacts on agricultural and forestry resources are considered potentially significant. Therefore, the construction-related impacts on agricultural and forestry resources related to planned transportation improvements assumed as part of the proposed MTP/SCS in Lands Not Identified for Development in the MTP/SCS are considered potentially significant (PS) for Impact AG-6. Mitigation is required. Mitigation Measure AG-8 is described below.

**High Frequency Transit Area Impacts**

**Placer County, Sacramento County, and Yolo County High Frequency Transit Areas**

The impacts associated with implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS are the same in each of the HFTAs as described in the localized impact discussion above. Additional impacts to agriculture and forestry resources compared to what was analyzed in Impacts AG-1 through AG-5 could occur if construction and staging areas for future land and transportation development projects within HFTAs are located on agricultural or forest land. These activities could temporarily impact these resources by using the land for other uses or causing conflict between uses in HFTAs, and would have the potential to result in temporary or short-term construction impacts that could convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance; conflict with existing zoning or land use designation for agricultural use or a Williamson Act contract; conflict with existing zoning or land use designations for, or cause rezoning of, forest land, timberland, or timberland zoned timberland production; involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location of nature, could result in conversion of farmland to non-agricultural use; or result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land into non-forest use.

Therefore, the construction-related impacts on agricultural and forestry resources related to the projected land use pattern and planned transportation improvements from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS in HFTAs are considered potentially significant (PS) for Impact AG-6. Mitigation is required. Mitigation Measure AG-8 is described below.

**Mitigation Measures**

SACOG does not have authority to require the implementing agencies to adopt the identified mitigation measures; the mitigation measures are within the responsibility and jurisdiction of another public agency. However, implementation of the following measure at a project level would reduce the impacts to agricultural land, forest land, and timberland, and agencies with jurisdiction to adopt these measures can and should do so (PRC Section 21081).

**Mitigation Measure AG-8: Minimize construction-related impacts to agricultural and forestry resources.**

The implementing agency shall require project proponents to mitigate for construction-related impacts by adopting measures that include but are not limited to:
- restrict construction activities to permitted hours in accordance with local jurisdiction regulations;
- locate materials and stationary equipment (e.g., generators, compressors, rock crushers, cement mixers) as far from conflicting uses as possible;
- locate materials and stationary equipment in such a way as to prevent conflict with agricultural and forestry resources; and
- minimize conflict between construction vehicles and agricultural operations on roads that facilitate agricultural operations.

**Significance After Mitigation**

Due to the importance of the region’s agricultural and forestry resources, these impacts on agricultural and forestry resources are considered significant and unavoidable (SU). If the implementing agency adopts these mitigation measures, Impact AG-6 may be reduced, but not to a less than significant level, because net loss of agricultural and forest land would still occur. For projects proposing to streamline environmental review, lead agencies must conduct project-level analysis for each project to analyze whether, based on substantial evidence in the record, the proposed mitigation would reduce the impact to less than significant. Additionally, because SACOG cannot require the implementing agency to adopt this mitigation measure, and it is ultimately the responsibility of the implementing agency to determine and adopt project-specific mitigation. Therefore, Impact AG-6 remains significant and unavoidable (SU) for purposes of this program-level review.