

## **4.8 AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES**

This section includes a description of existing agricultural resources in the planning area and an evaluation of how adoption and implementation of the Draft General Plan and GGRP would affect agricultural resources.

### **4.8.1 REGULATORY SETTING**

#### **FEDERAL PLANS, POLICIES, REGULATIONS, AND LAWS**

No federal plans, policies, regulations or laws pertaining to agricultural resources in Citrus Heights are applicable.

#### **STATE PLANS, POLICIES, REGULATIONS, AND LAWS**

##### **Williamson Act**

The Williamson Act is an agricultural conservation tool. Under the Williamson Act, local governments can enter into contracts with private property owners to protect land for agricultural and open space purposes. Citrus Heights does not contain any parcels that are protected by Williamson Acts contracts.

##### **Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program**

The California Department of Conservation, Division of Land Resource Protection, administers the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program (FMMP). The program produces agricultural resource inventories and maps that rate agricultural lands based on soil quality, irrigation status, and land use within California. These ratings are used to help prioritize farmland conservation efforts. The inventories and maps are updated every two years and were last updated in 2008. The FMMP uses the term “Important Farmland” to describe parcels that meet certain criteria. There is no Important Farmland in Citrus Heights.

#### **REGIONAL AND LOCAL PLANS, POLICIES, REGULATIONS, AND LAWS**

No regional or local plans, policies, regulations or laws pertaining to agricultural resources in Citrus Heights are applicable.

### **4.8.2 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING**

Citrus Heights is located in a primarily urbanized area of northern Sacramento County, adjacent to the southern boundary of Placer County and the City of Roseville. The City is surrounded by the suburban unincorporated communities of Orangevale, Fair Oaks, Carmichael, Foothill Farms, and Antelope. Citrus Heights is approximately 98% built out, making very little vacant land available for development. Existing land uses within the City are dominated by suburban residential development ranging in allowable densities, followed by commercial development, industrial development, open space, and public land uses.

The City does not contain any land that supports commercial agricultural operations. Agricultural uses in Citrus Heights are limited to hobby farming and the keeping of animals in the more rural residential areas of the City, as long as these uses are in harmony with the character of these rural neighborhoods. These areas are comprised of primarily large lots that can accommodate such uses and are designated as Very Low Density Residential in the Draft General Plan. Agriculture is also an allowable use within areas designated as Open Space.

The City contains 1,119 acres of land designated as Very Low Density Residential and 309 acres of designated Open Space. The City does not have a zoning district for agriculture, but the Zoning Code allows for animal keeping and community gardens in all residential zoning districts. Beekeeping is permitted in the RD-1, RD-2, RD-3, RD-4, RD-5, RD-6, RD-7 and OS zoning districts. Minor agricultural operations including crop

production, horticulture, orchards, and vineyards are allowed in the RD-1, RD-2, RD-3, RD-4, and OS zoning districts.

There are no parcels currently under Williamson Act contract and no Important Farmland as defined by the FMMP located in Citrus Heights. Agricultural operations are not considered to be a significant land use within or in areas directly adjacent to the planning area.

### 4.8.3 IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

#### METHODOLOGY

The environmental analysis in this section is based, in part, on a review of FMMP Important Farmland maps, Williamson Act parcel maps, and review of the City’s Zoning Code. As part of the analysis, this EIR examines the Important Farmland classifications that are used by FMMP to determine the agricultural significance of the lands (i.e., Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, and Farmland of Statewide Importance) in the planning area.

#### THRESHOLDS OF SIGNIFICANCE

Based on Appendix G of the State CEQA Guidelines, an impact on agricultural resources is considered significant if the proposed project would:

- ▶ convert Important Farmland (i.e., Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance) as determined by the FMMP Important Farmland criteria;
- ▶ conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or conflict with a Williamson Act contract; or
- ▶ involve other changes in the existing environment that, because of their location or nature, could result in conversion of farmland to nonagricultural use.

#### IMPACT ANALYSIS

**IMPACT 4.8-1**     **Loss of Important Farmland.** *Future land uses consistent with the Draft General Plan would not result in the conversion of Important Farmland to nonagricultural uses. There is **no impact**.*

The planning area does not contain any designated Important Farmland, as defined by the FMMP. The planning area is nearly entirely built out with residential, commercial, industrial, and other nonagricultural land uses, and the only agricultural uses are for hobby farming and animal keeping in some of the lower density residential neighborhoods. Therefore, implementation of the Draft General Plan would not result in the loss of any Important Farmland, there would be **no impact**, and no mitigation is required.

**IMPACT 4.8-2**     **Conflict with Agricultural Zoning or Williamson Act Contracts.** *Future land uses consistent with the Draft General Plan would not result in any conflicts with parcels zoned for agriculture or protected by Williamson Act contracts. There is **no impact**.*

The Citrus Heights Zoning Code does not include zoning districts for agricultural uses, and the planning area does not contain any parcels zoned for agriculture. In addition, the planning area does not contain any parcels that are protected by Williamson Act contracts. Therefore, implementation of the Draft General Plan would not result in any conflicts with parcels zones for agriculture or protected by Williamson Act contracts. There is **no impact** and no mitigation is required.

**IMPACT**      **Changes That Could Result in Conversion of Farmland.** *The planning area does not contain and is not adjacent to any major farmland areas, so adoption and implementation of the Draft General Plan would not result in changes that could result in the conversion of farmland to nonagricultural uses. There is **no impact**.*

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Agricultural uses in Citrus Heights are limited to small-scale hobby farming and animal keeping on larger residential parcels, which are generally located in the more established residential neighborhoods in the north-central portion of the City. The areas surrounding the City are of a similar suburban character, with no major agricultural operations located adjacent to Citrus Heights. The unincorporated communities of Orangevale to the east and Fair Oaks to the southeast contain older, more established rural residential neighborhoods that support similar small-scale hobby farming and animal keeping uses to those neighborhoods in the north-central portion of the City.

In addition to the lack of farmland in and adjacent to the City, the Draft General Plan does not propose substantial land use changes in areas adjacent to areas containing small-scale hobby farming or animal keeping uses. Therefore, implementation of the Draft General Plan would result in **no impact** resulting from changes that could result in the immediate or eventual conversion of farmland to nonagricultural uses. No mitigation is required.

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