

DRAFT

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT

HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ACT OF 1974

APPLICATION REGARDING FIRST YEAR ACTIVITIES

ALKALI FLAT N.D.P. AREA

FEBRUARY 28, 1975

PREPARED BY THE CITY OF SACRAMENTO  
AND THE  
SACRAMENTO HOUSING AND REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY

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## SUMMARY

The City of Sacramento's Environmental Coordinator for Public Works has reviewed the community development proposed first-year activities. The Coordinator has determined that of the activities proposed, the one planned for the Alkali Flat Neighborhood Development Program (N.D.P.) area would require preparation of an Environmental Impact Report (E.I.R.). The remaining projects were determined to be exempt or would not have a significant adverse effect on the environment. Negative Declarations will be filed on the latter projects. The following is a summary of the E.I.R. prepared for the Alkali Flat first-year community development activity.

The proposed project is located in the block bounded by E, F, 10th and 11th Streets in the Alkali Flat N.D.P. area. This neighborhood is in the northwestern section of the "Old City" community. The subject block is zoned "R-4A" (Medium Density Multiple Family Zone), and presently developed with residential structures.

It is proposed the 1975-76 Community Development Block Grant funds will be used to acquire eleven parcels, relocate the residents and ready the site for residential development (see Map #2). Curbs, gutters, and sidewalks will be reconstructed in this block.

Subsequently, the eleven parcels will be developed with an estimated 38-40 low/moderate income housing units under Section 8, Housing and Community Development Act. Off-street parking and open space areas will be developed on the site. Site development and architectural plans for this project have not been prepared.

The Alkali Flat Redevelopment Plan was adopted in May 1973 by the City Council. The adopted Redevelopment Plan, amended "Old City" Community Plan and City General Plan indicated the subject block for residential land uses. The proposed project land use conforms with these adopted plans.

The possible adverse environmental impacts of the proposed projects are:

1. Possible social impact on existing residents due to relocation.
2. Possible loss of unidentified historically and/or architecturally significant structures.
3. Possible loss of mature trees in the area.
4. Short-term nuisance conditions during construction.
5. Short-term nuisance and hazardous conditions due to (unsecured) vacant structures.

## Mitigation Measures

1. The project is designed to meet human environmental needs and therefore it is of a mitigatory nature.

2. A comprehensive survey of significant structures in the Central City and efforts of the City's Preservation Program can reduce possible loss of architecturally and/or historically significant structures.
3. Careful design and review of specific site and architectural plans to reduce or eliminate possible loss of mature trees.
4. Short-term impacts resulting from construction activities may be mitigated by exercising normal safety, construction and demolition practices.
5. Nuisance and hazards of vacant structures may be mitigated by securing those structures to be retained, and by prompt demolition of those structures to be cleared.
6. Landscaping of open spaces in the development will tend to mitigate the effect of possible loss of mature trees.
7. Energy requirements for the proposed activities can be reduced to some degree by the following measures:
  - a. utilization of construction practices which conserve energy
  - b. landscaping designs which reduce solar heat gain in summer and maximize it in winter (e.g., by use of deciduous trees).
  - c. utilize design features which reduce energy consumption (i.e., insulation overhangs for windows).
  - d. construction of the residential units in accordance with requirements of the "Energy Design Manual for Residential Buildings," State of California as mandated by Senate Bill 277.
  - e. schedule activities to provide for efficient use of transportation, manpower and materials.
  - f. utilize energy saving techniques where possible (i.e., solar energy).
  - g. use of recycled materials
  - h. avoid where possible use of materials which require large consumptions of energy to manufacture the material (i.e., aluminum)
  - i. recycling of materials resulting from demolition of existing structures.

Alternatives to the project are:

1. No action - this would result in the continuation of existing inadequate, substandard and deteriorated housing conditions in the area.

2. Alternative site within the area - an alternative site would not result in a significant reduction of impacts and would reduce the effectiveness of other City efforts in the subject area.

## I. INTRODUCTION

This Environmental Impact Report (E.I.R.) has been prepared pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act of 1970 (Public Resources Code Division 13). An E.I.R. is an informational document which, when its preparation is required, shall be considered by affected public agencies and interested parties. The purpose of an E.I.R. is to provide public agencies and interested parties with information about the effects which a proposed project may have on the environment; to list ways in which any adverse effects might be minimized and to discuss alternatives to such a project.

The Housing and Community Development Act of 1974 established a program of federal grants replacing a number of previously existing categorical programs. The primary purpose of the Act is stated in the Federal Register, November 13, 1974 - Section 570.2: "The primary objective of the Community Development Program is the development of a viable urban community, including decent housing and a suitable living environment and expanding economic opportunities primarily for those persons of low and moderate income."

Each jurisdiction must develop a program of community development which specifies activities to be undertaken in the first year. The program may also indicate proposed second- and third-year activities.

The City of Sacramento's first-year community development activities have been evaluated for projects which are exempt or which may or may not have a significant adverse effect on the environment. It has, therefore, been determined by the City Environmental Coordinator for Public Works that, of the projects proposed by the City of Sacramento, an Environmental Impact Report must be prepared on the activities planned in the Alkali Flat Neighborhood Development Program (N.D.P.) area. The remaining projects are exempt or will not have a significant adverse environmental effect, and Negative Declarations will be filed on the latter projects.

## II. PROJECT INFORMATION

### PROJECT LOCATION

The proposed community development project is located in the block bounded by E, F, 10th and 11th Streets in the Alkali Flat N.D.P. area in the northwestern section of the "Old City" community (see Maps #1 and 2). The subject block is zoned "R-4A" (Medium Density Multiple Family Zone) and presently developed with residential land uses. The subject block is surrounded by the following land uses and zoning patterns:

North: The existing land uses include a grocery store, commercial establishment and off-street parking facilities for Crystal Creamery. The block is zoned "M-1".

East: The existing land uses and the eastern and western frontage of 11th Street between E and F Streets are residential, and the properties are zoned "R-4A".

South: The existing structures in this area are residential. The eastern portion of the adjacent block face is zoned "R-4A" and the western portion is zoned "O-B".

West: The existing land uses in this area are residential, and the property is zoned "R-4A".

#### PROJECT OBJECTIVES - DESCRIPTION

The project objectives are to expend Community Development Block Grant funds to acquire eleven parcels in the subject block, relocate the residents, and ready the site for development of a housing project. Curbs, gutters and sidewalks will be reconstructed in this block.

After the expenditure of community development funds for acquisition and preparation of the site, the property will be developed for residential uses under the Title II, Section 8, Housing and Community Development Act. The subject parcels will be developed with an estimated 38 to 40 low/moderate income housing units anticipated. The structures may be of one to two stories. However, site or architectural plans have not yet been prepared for this project.

It is anticipated the proposed 38 to 40 housing units will consist of approximately 50% one-bedroom or studio units and the remainder two- and three-bedroom units.

In addition, off-street parking areas will be developed on the site in accordance with the City Zoning Ordinance No. 2550 - Fourth Series, as amended. This Ordinance requires that for each dwelling unit a minimum of one off-street parking space shall be provided. Building setbacks and open space will be provided and landscaped in accordance with the City Zoning Ordinance and the adopted Alkali Flat Redevelopment Plan.

The structure at 1008 E Street has been tentatively identified as possibly significant. The structure therefore should be officially evaluated and, if identified as significant, every effort will be made to preserve or relocate as feasible.

#### PROJECT SITE - EXISTING CONDITIONS

The subject block is presently developed with residential structures constructed in the late 1800's. There are an estimated 32 housing units in the subject eleven parcels. Nine of these parcels are developed with residential structures containing approximately 80 persons. The remaining two parcels are vacant. The structure at 1008 E Street has been indicated on a survey conducted by the Sacramento Museum and History Commission as a residence built in the early 1900's or before. The plant, animal and bird life are typical of those found in highly urbanized areas. (15)

### PROJECT CONFORMITY WITH ADOPTED PLANS

The proposed project is located in the Alkali Flat N.D.P. area. A Redevelopment Plan for this area was adopted by the City Council. The adopted Redevelopment Plan, amended "Old City" Community Plan and City General Plan indicate the subject block for residential land uses. The proposed project is therefore in conformance with these adopted Plans. (1)

### III. SETTING AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

#### NATURAL PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

The climate of the Sacramento region is of the Mediterranean subtropical type, characterized by hot, dry summers and cool, moist winters. Annual rainfall varies from 17" to 18". Southerly winds prevail, although winter frontal systems alter the wind direction. Stagnant air conditions resulting from atmospheric inversions occur relatively frequently, most often during the late summer and early autumn months. (2)

The Sacramento region has the potential for substantial air pollution problems. The region experiences occasions when the oxidant levels exceed Federal Standards. The primary source of this problem is emissions from automobiles. Agricultural burning from within and areas surrounding the County also contribute to the air quality problem. (2)

The City of Sacramento is located in the physiographic provinces of the Great Central Valley. Topography in the County ranges from 15' below sea level on some levee-protected islands in the Delta to 825' in the foothills. Average elevation for the City of Sacramento is 30' above sea level. No known major active faults exist in the County. The 1973 Uniform Building Code considers the entire State of California as Zone III, or high in susceptibility to damage from seismic activity; as such, all buildings are to be constructed to withstand high seismic intensity.

Soils in the County vary widely. Capability for agricultural purposes ranges from Class I, or best suited, to Class VIII, or unsuitable for agricultural uses.

The City of Sacramento is drained by two major rivers and numerous creeks and sloughs. All water movement is westward and southward, eventually flowing through the Delta to the ocean. Flooding has historically been a problem, but its extent and frequency has been reduced by levees, dams and other flood control projects. Ground water zones are located at various depths from the ground surface. The different aquifers are located in various geologic formations. Historical records indicate the subsurface water levels have been declining since the 1920's, and declines have exceeded 10' in the ten-year period, 1961-1970. Water quality, both surface and ground water, is generally good to excellent for most purposes. Areas of

surface water quality problems include the Sacramento River, and most small streams which carry runoff. Currently, most sewage wastewater is treated in numerous wastewater treatment plants scattered through the urban areas of the county. A regional wastewater treatment plant and system is proposed which will consolidate most of these treatment systems and initially will provide secondary wastewater treatment.

The American River and its floodplain is the most valuable single resource area in the City for vegetation, wildlife, and fish. Grasslands and wooded areas presently support many species of wildlife, and the river itself is a natural habitat for salmon and steelhead spawning. The Sacramento River contains many species of fish and some species of wildlife which live in the limited grassland areas along its embankments. Measures must be adopted to control the intensity of recreational use along both of these river areas. Other waterways where a natural habitat should be maintained and enhanced, consistent with their function as drainage channels, include the First Bannon Slough, the Natomas East Side Drainage Canal, Arcade and Dry Creeks.

The Sacramento area once contained abundant populations of wildlife and native plants which have been all but replaced with introduced species. Once abundant, the endangered southern bald eagle, the American peregrine falcon, the tule white-fronted goose and the rare giant garter snake now barely survive. Several endangered species of native grasses are facing certain extinction. (19)

#### IV. NATURAL PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ANALYSIS

##### Atmospheric Conditions

The acquisition of the subject property will not have adverse effects on the air quality in the area.

The subject parcels presently contain approximately 32 dwelling units. It is therefore anticipated the proposed construction of approximately 38-40 housing units may generate a slight increase in vehicular activities. The Air Quality Resources Board has indicated the development of the project would have an insignificant impact when considered with the total volume of traffic in this area of the City. (3)

##### GEOLOGY AND SOIL CONDITIONS

The acquisition of the subject property would not adversely affect the geological and soil conditions of the site.

The proposed development of residential units will be in conformance with the City Building Code. No impact on the soil and geological conditions is anticipated which have not already occurred due to the existing highly urbanized development. (5)

The proposed structures must be constructed in conformance with the City Building Code requirements for earthquake construction.

## PLANT AND ANIMAL COMMUNITIES

Since the subject site is already developed with urban land uses and the proposed land acquisition and subsequent development is for residential uses, no significant change is anticipated in the existing animal and bird life. The plant life existing on the site may be altered based on the specific site development plan. However, no specific plan has been developed for the property at this time (see Mitigating Measures).

## V. HISTORICAL FEATURES AND USES

Historically, the subject parcels are part of the original Sutter Grant. The block was originally developed in the late 1850's and early 1860's. Within the eleven parcels, a previously conducted unofficial survey of possible significant structures indicates the building at 1008 E Street may be significant.

The 1008 E Street structure should be officially evaluated. If identified as significant, the City, through the Preservation Program, will attempt to preserve and/or relocate the structure as is feasible.

The subject site is not of ~~architectural~~ <sup>archeological</sup> significance. (2)

## VI. PUBLIC UTILITIES AND SERVICES

The subject site is presently serviced by all public and private utilities and services. SMUD provides electrical power, P.G. & E. provides gas service, and Pacific Telephone provides telephone services. The City of Sacramento provides fire protection, water, sewer and waste removal services as well as recreational facilities. The streets surrounding the subject block are improved. Law enforcement is provided by the City of Sacramento Police Department. The site is located in the Sacramento City Unified School District. The Sacramento Regional Transit District provides bus services to the area residents.

## VII. PUBLIC AND PRIVATE UTILITIES AND SERVICES IMPACT ANALYSIS

The acquisition and subsequent planned development of the subject parcels would not adversely affect the public and private utility services in the area (see Bibliography #5, 6, 7, 8 and 9). The City Water and Sewer Department noted several pipe relocations may be necessary based on development of specific site plans; however, this would not constitute an adverse environmental effect. The City Waste Removal Department indicated no impact on refuse collection would result if proper access to and storage of refuse is provided. (9)

The Pacific Telephone Company indicated possible undergrounding and re-routing of lines may be required. They further indicated existing telephone cable appears adequate subject to review of specific development plans. (8)

Surface drainage resulting from off-street parking areas will not adversely affect existing drainage systems. (18)

The site is presently served with fire protection from Fire Station No. 2, located adjacent to the City Hall. The proposed land acquisition and housing development would not adversely affect the fire protection level of the area. Adequate fire protection will be available to the development. In order to insure this level of fire protection, the proposed development include north-south and east-west fire vehicular access lanes through the development. Additional fire hydrant needs will be evaluated upon preparation of specific site plans. (11)

The City Traffic Engineer has reviewed the proposed acquisition and development of the property with residential uses. He has determined that this would have a minimal adverse effect on the vehicular circulation in and through the neighborhood. The City Traffic Engineer indicated the cumulative effects of the traffic generated by the proposed development and utilizing the adjacent streets would not exceed the capacity of these streets. (4)

A letter from the Sacramento City Unified School District is attached regarding the proposed residential development, and indicates that no significant adverse impact is expected.

The City of Sacramento Police Department indicates that, at such time as specific plans and designs are confirmed, the Police Department will need to determine the feasibility of design in relation to visibility and access for patrol vehicles. (13)

Sacramento Regional Transit Authority indicated that the proposed project would not have any adverse impact on the regional transit system. (14)

#### VIII. DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTER

The subject site is located in Census Tract No. 6. <sup>U.S.</sup> The U.C. Census indicates the population was 1,371 in 1970 and 2,605 in 1960.

The proposed property acquisition and development would tend to increase the population in this Census Tract through the increase of standard housing potentials and elimination of blight. (10)

The relocation of area residents may have a social and economic impact upon these persons. The occupants of the existing structures will be relocated, and replacement housing payments will be made to the individuals and families. These persons, in accordance with the Redevelopment Plan, will have first priority to move back into the completed units.

The Sacramento Housing and Redevelopment Agency has determined that the majority of structures in the eleven parcels are substandard. (12) Persons living in these structures are disadvantaged in that they do not have safe, decent and adequate housing. Their relocation would be to standard housing in conformance with the adopted Redevelopment Plan and applicable Federal regulations. (12)

#### IX. AESTHETIC AND NUISANCE CONDITIONS

The subject site is located in the "R-4A" zone and the Alkali Flat N.D.P. area. The proposed development will be required to conform to the setback requirements of this zone and open space requirements of the adopted Redevelopment Plan.

In addition, the Sacramento Housing and Redevelopment Agency Resolution 2394, March 14, 1974, indicates the Agency policy is to include a covenant in land disposition agreements which would require the developers to expend, on aesthetic improvement in the development, 2% of the gross construction costs. (16)

The construction of the proposed project will create some short-term nuisance impacts. These impacts would include increased noise levels, dust and truck traffic. The construction phase will also involve hazardous equipment for which safety precautions should be taken by the developer. The clearance and construction phase will generate waste materials and by-products. These materials would include debris from building and site demolitions and from building waste materials used during the construction of the new complex. This waste material will be disposed of by the contractors during the progress of the activities.

Adverse effects of increased noise, dust and truck activity in the area will be of a short-term nature and conducted generally during the normal working hours of 7:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday.

A potential danger and unattractive nuisance condition will exist in the subject area until vacated structures are secured or demolished. Vacant structures, if unsecured, encourage vandalism and become unsafe play areas for children.

#### X. HOUSING CHARACTERISTICS

The Alkali Flat neighborhood is generally characterized as a disadvantaged area with a high percentage of inadequate and substandard residential structures. The area was designated as a blighted area by the City Council and Neighborhood Development Program activities undertaken in 1972.

The proposed project would upgrade housing conditions and opportunities in the neighborhood. An additional positive impact would be the upgrading of neighborhood characteristics resulting from new development.

XI. ADVERSE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

1. Possible social impact on area residents due to relocation
2. Possible loss of unidentified significant structures
3. Possible loss of mature trees in the area
4. Short-term nuisance conditions during construction phase
5. Short-term nuisance and hazardous conditions due to (unsecured) vacant structures.

XII. ADVERSE IRREVERSIBLE CHANGES

Possible loss of unidentified significant structures.

XIII. SHORT-TERM USES - LONG-TERM PRODUCTIVITY

This section regards the relationship between local short-term uses of man's environment and enhancement of long-term productivity.

The cumulative effect of the subject projects and similar redevelopment projects planned for the area will be positive. (12) The elimination of blighted conditions and the increase in the number of standard housing units in the area will be beneficial to the neighborhood and City. There should be no long-term risks to health and safety.

XIV. GROWTH INDUCING

The proposed project would be growth inducing. This development in conjunction with the developments already completed and planned in the area are intended to induce the revitalization of the Alkali Flat area as indicated in the adopted Redevelopment Plan. (10) These developments are planned to increase the availability of standard housing and eliminate blight in conformance with the adopted Alkali Flat Redevelopment Plan. (10)

XV. ECONOMIC CONDITIONS

The Alkali Flat area was designated as a Neighborhood Development Project due to a generally depressed economic and physical condition. The residential portion of this area has not attracted private investment or renovation activities until recent rezoning and subsequent renewal activities.

One economic impact resulting from the proposed activities would be an increased City tax base due to increased property values of the project site. Another positive impact could be a temporary increase in employment during the construction of the proposed project. The increased residents in the area would have a minor effect on increased demands for goods and services for the area.

XVI. ALTERNATIVES

No Action: This alternative would result in the continuation of existing inadequate substandard and deteriorated housing conditions existing in the area.

Alternative site within the area: An alternative site would not result in any significant reduction of impacts, and would reduce the effectiveness of other City efforts in the area.

#### XVII. MITIGATION MEASURES

Since the activities previously described are designed to meet human environmental needs, they are in themselves of a mitigatory nature.

Short-term impacts resulting from construction activities can be mitigated to a degree by exercising normal safety, construction and demolition practices to reduce adverse effects during the construction period.

Careful consideration and review of specific site plans for the proposed development can reduce, if not eliminate, the possible loss of mature trees in the subject area.

The comprehensive survey of significant structures in the Central City and efforts of the City can reduce the possible loss of significant structures in the area.

The nuisance and hazard of vacant structures can be mitigated by the following:

1. securing those structures to be retained as soon as possible after building is vacated
2. demolition as soon as possible of those structures to be cleared

Landscaping of open spaces in the proposed development will tend to mitigate effects of possible loss of mature trees.

#### XVIII. ENERGY MITIGATION MEASURES

Energy requirements for the proposed activities can be reduced to some degree by the following measures:

1. utilization of construction practices which conserve energy
2. landscaping designs which reduce solar heat gain in summer and maximize it in winter (e.g., by use of deciduous trees)
3. utilize design features which reduce energy consumption (i.e., insulation, overhangs at windows, etc.)
4. avoid where possible use of materials which require large consumption of energy to manufacture the material (i.e., aluminum)
5. schedule activities to provide for efficient use of transportation, manpower and materials
6. utilize energy-saving techniques where feasible (i.e., solar energy)

7. recycling of materials resulting from demolition of existing structures
8. use of recycled materials

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9. Mr. Reginald Young, Waste Removal Division  
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11. Chief William Powell, City Fire Department  
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13. Lieutenant Robert Benton, City Police Department  
City of Sacramento
14. Mr. William Borne  
Sacramento Regional Transit Authority
15. P. Bell, Environmental Section  
City of Sacramento, Planning Department
16. Tim Quintero, Director  
Alkali Flat Project Area Committee
17. William Aguirre, Project Coordinator (Alkali Flat N.D.P.)  
Sacramento Housing and Redevelopment Agency
18. Ed Lial, Supervising Engineer  
City of Sacramento, Engineering Department
19. Applied Science and Resource Planning  
Natomas Storm Sewer and Sanitary Sewer Improvement District E.I.R.