

The purpose of this section is to disclose and analyze the potential impacts to agricultural resources associated with the development of the proposed project. This section also discusses the potential conflicts between proposed uses at project site and ongoing agricultural activities in the vicinity of the project site. Comments were received during the public review period for the Notice of Preparation regarding this topic from the following: Yolo LAFCo (May, 11 2017), Eileen M. Samitz (May, 13 2017), County of Yolo (April, 18 2017). Each of the comments related to agricultural resources are addressed within this section, and comments are included within Appendix A.

Information in this section is derived primarily from the following:

- City of Davis General Plan (City of Davis, May 2001, Amended through 2007)
- Soil Survey of Yolo County, California (USDA, Web Soil Survey)
- Yolo County 2030 Countywide General Plan (Yolo County, 2009)
- California Department of Conservation, Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program
- Yolo County Agriculture Department

3.2.1 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

EXISTING SITE CONDITIONS

The project site consists of approximately 74 acres located northwest and adjacent to the City of Davis within the City of Davis Sphere of Influence (SOI) of unincorporated Yolo County. The project also includes approximately 11.53 acres of offsite improvements, as described in greater detail in Section 2.0, Project Description. The project site is bounded by existing agricultural land within unincorporated Yolo County (within the City's SOI) to the west, nine mapped but undeveloped 13- to 23-acre residential lots to the north, the Sutter Davis Hospital and Risling Court to the east, and West Covell Boulevard to the south.

The project site is currently undeveloped and has been previously used for agricultural uses. As shown on Figure 3.2-1, the project site is designated as Farmland of Local Importance by the California Department of Conservation's Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program. The site is nearly level at an elevation of approximately 47 to 50 feet above mean sea level (MSL). Existing trees are located along the western and eastern project site boundaries, as well as within the southeastern corner of the site. Risling Court, an existing public access roadway to the Sutter Davis Hospital, is located along the southernmost portion of the eastern project site boundary. An existing drainage channel (known as the Covell Drain) conveys runoff from west to east, north of Covell Boulevard. Frontage improvements along Covell Boulevard are limited but include a bus shelter, a section of curb, and traffic signs and signals.

ADJACENT AGRICULTURAL USES

Lands to the west and north of the project site are within the City of Davis SOI, and are currently zoned for agricultural purposes. The lands to the north and west of the project site are designated

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as Farmland of Local Importance, as shown on Figure 3.2-1. It is noted that the undeveloped land adjacent north of the project site is currently planned for nine 13- to 23-acre residential lots.

YOLO COUNTY AGRICULTURE

Although the project site is located within the Davis SOI, it is immediately adjacent to active agricultural operations in Yolo County. Agriculture is a major activity within the undeveloped portions of Yolo County. According to the 2015 Yolo County Agricultural Crop Report, published by the Yolo County Department of Agriculture and Weights and Measures, the gross value of Yolo County's agricultural production for 2015 was \$661,752,000. Processing tomatoes were the top agricultural commodity grown in the County, with production values near \$139 million.

As described in the County of Yolo 2030 Countywide General Plan, 92 percent of the land surface in Yolo County is off-limits to residential, commercial, and industrial development uses that are not consistent with the County's agricultural designation. Additionally, 67 percent of the unincorporated area of the County is protected under Williamson Act contracts.

CALIFORNIA AGRICULTURE

The California Department of Conservation Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program identifies lands that have agriculture value and maintains a statewide map of these lands called the Important Farmlands Inventory (IFI). IFI classifies land based upon the productive capabilities of the land, rather than the mere presence of ideal soil conditions.

The suitability of soils for agricultural use is just one factor for determining the productive capabilities of land. Suitability is determined based on many characteristics, including fertility, slope, texture, drainage, depth, and salt content. A variety of classification systems have been devised by the State to categorize soil capabilities. The two most widely used systems are the Capability Classification System and the Storie Index. The Capability Classification System classifies soils from Class I to Class VIII based on their ability to support agriculture with Class I being the highest quality soil. The Storie Index considers other factors such as slope and texture to arrive at a rating. The IFI is in part based upon both of these two classification systems.

Soil Capability Classification System

The Soil Capability Classification System takes into consideration soil limitations, the risk of damage when soils are used, and the way in which soils respond to treatment. Capability classes range from Class I soils, which have few limitations for agriculture, to Class VIII soils that are unsuitable for agriculture. Generally, as the rating of the capability classification increases, yields and profits are more difficult to obtain. A general description of soil classifications, as defined by the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) is provided in Table 3.2-1 below.

TABLE 3.2-1: SOIL CAPABILITY CLASSIFICATION

CLASS	DEFINITION
I	Soils have slight limitations that restrict their use.
II	Soils have moderate limitations that restrict choice plants or that require moderate conservation practices.
III	Soils have severe limitations that restrict the choice of plants or that require special conservation practices, or both.
IV	Soils have very severe limitations that restrict the choice of plants or that require very careful management, or both.
V	Soils are not likely to erode but have other limitations; impractical to remove that limit their use largely to pasture or range, woodland, or wildlife habitat.
VI	Soils have severe limitations that make them generally unsuited to cultivation and limit their use largely to pasture or range, woodland, or wildlife habitat.
VII	Soils have very severe limitations that make them unsuited to cultivation and that restrict their use largely to pasture or range, woodland, or wildlife habitat.
VIII	Soils and landforms have limitations that preclude their use for commercial plans and restrict their use to recreation, wildlife habitat, water supply, or aesthetic purposes.

SOURCE: USDA SOIL CONSERVATION SERVICE, SOIL SURVEY OF YOLO COUNTY, CALIFORNIA, 1972.

Storie Index Rating System

The Storie Index Rating system ranks soil characteristics according to their suitability for agriculture from Grade 1 soils (80 to 100 rating) which have few or no limitations for agricultural production, to Grade 6 soils (less than 10) which are not suitable for agriculture. Under this system, soils deemed less than prime can function as prime soils when limitations such as poor drainage, slopes, or soil nutrient deficiencies are partially or entirely removed. The six grades, ranges in index rating, and definition of the grades, as defined by the NRCS, are provided below in Table 3.2-2.

TABLE 3.2-2: STORIE INDEX RATING SYSTEM

GRADE	INDEX RATING	DEFINITION
1	80 - 100	Few limitations that restrict their use for crops
2	60 - 80	Suitable for most crops, but have minor limitations that narrow the choice of crops and have a few special management needs
3	40 - 60	Suited to a few crops or to special crops and require special management
4	20 - 40	If used for crops, severely limited and require special management
5	10 - 20	Not suited for cultivated crops, but can be used for pasture and range
6	Less than 10	Soil and land types generally not suited to farming

SOURCE: USDA SOIL CONSERVATION SERVICE, SOIL SURVEY OF YOLO COUNTY, CALIFORNIA, 1972.

In addition to soil suitability, other factors for determining the agricultural value of land include whether soils are irrigated, the depth of soil, water-holding capacity, and physical and chemical characteristics. Areas considered to have the greatest agricultural potential are designated as Prime Farmland or Farmland of Statewide Importance.

Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program (FMMP)

The FMMP was established in 1982 to continue the Important Farmland mapping efforts begun in 1975 by the USDA Soil Conservation Service (USDA-SCS). The intent of the USDA-SCS was to produce agriculture maps based on soil quality and land use across the nation. As part of the nationwide agricultural land use mapping effort, the USDA-SCS developed a series of definitions known as Land Inventory and Monitoring (LIM) criteria. The LIM criteria classified the land's

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suitability for agricultural production; suitability included both the physical and chemical characteristics of soils and the actual land use. Important Farmland Maps are derived from the USDA-SCS soil survey maps using the LIM criteria.

Since 1980, the State of California has assisted the USDA-SCS with completing its mapping in the state. The FMMP was created within the CDC to carry on the mapping activity on a continuing basis, and with a greater level of detail. The CDC applied a greater level of detail by modifying the LIM criteria for use in California. The LIM criteria in California utilize the Soil Capability Classification and Storie Index Rating systems, but also consider physical conditions such as dependable water supply for agricultural production, soil temperature range, depth of the ground water table, flooding potential, rock fragment content, and rooting depth.

The CDC classifies lands into seven agriculture-related categories: Prime Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance (Statewide Farmland), Unique Farmland, Farmland of Local Importance (Local Farmland), Grazing Land, Urban and Built-up Land (Urban Land), and Other Land. The first four types listed above are collectively designated by the State as Important Farmlands. Important Farmland maps for California are compiled using the modified LIM criteria (as described above) and current land use information. The minimum mapping unit is 10 acres unless otherwise specified. Units of land smaller than 10 acres are incorporated into surrounding classifications. Each of the seven land types is summarized below.

PRIME FARMLAND

Prime farmland is farmland with the best combination of physical and chemical features able to sustain long term agricultural production. This land has the soil quality, growing season, and moisture supply needed to produce sustained high yields. Land must have been used for irrigated agricultural production at some time during the four years prior to the mapping date.

FARMLAND OF STATEWIDE IMPORTANCE

Farmland of statewide importance is farmland with characteristics similar to those of prime farmland but with minor shortcomings, such as greater slopes or less ability to store soil moisture. Land must have been used for irrigated agricultural production at some time during the four years prior to the mapping date.

UNIQUE FARMLAND

Unique farmland is farmland of lesser quality soils used for the production of the state's leading agricultural crops. This land is usually irrigated, but may include non-irrigated orchards or vineyards as found in some climatic zones in California. Land must have been cropped at some time during the four years prior to the mapping date.

FARMLAND OF LOCAL IMPORTANCE

Farmland of local importance is land of importance to the local agricultural economy, as determined by each county's board of supervisors and a local advisory committee.

GRAZING LAND

Grazing land is land on which the existing vegetation is suited to the grazing of livestock. This category was developed in cooperation with the California Cattlemen's Association, University of California Cooperative Extension, and other groups interested in the extent of grazing activities.

URBAN AND BUILT-UP LAND

Land occupied by structures with a building density of at least 1 unit to 1.5 acres, or approximately 6 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

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; confined livestock, poultry or aquaculture facilities; strip mines, borrow pits; and water bodies smaller than forty acres. Vacant and nonagricultural land surrounded on all sides by urban development and greater than 40 acres is mapped as Other Land.

PROJECT SITE SOILS AND FARMLAND CHARACTERISTICS

The project site encompasses approximately 74 acres. Additionally, the project includes approximately 11.53 acres of offsite improvements. The project site is bounded by existing agricultural land within unincorporated Yolo County (within the City's SOI) to the west, nine mapped but undeveloped residential lots to the north (zoned for agricultural purposes), the Sutter Davis Hospital and Risling Court to the east, and West Covell Boulevard to the south. According to the California Department of Conservation's Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program, the entire project site, including the offsite improvement areas, are designated as Farmland of Local Importance (84.27 acres), Farmland of Local Potential (1.56 acres), and Urban and Built-Up Land (2.09 acres), as shown in Figure 3.2-1.

The Soil Survey of Yolo County, shows that the project site contains Capability Class IV (non-irrigated) soils, and Class I-IV (irrigated soils), as shown in the table below. The Soil Capability Classifications are presented in Table 3.2-3 below. Soils present on the project site are shown in Figure 3.2-2.

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TABLE 3.2-3: ON-SITE SOIL CAPABILITY CLASSIFICATIONS AND STORIE INDEX RATING

SOIL MAP SYMBOL AND NAME	SOIL CAPABILITY CLASSIFICATION ¹		STORIE INDEX	ACRES IN AOI ²	
	IRRIGATED	NON-IRRIGATED		ON-SITE	OFF-SITE
Brentwood silty clay loam (BrA)	I	IVc	90	36.20	1.61
Marvin silty clay loam (Mf)	IIs	IVs	62	26.75	2.88
Pescadero silty clay, saline-alkali (Pb)	IVw	VIw	15	0.56	2.00
Willows clay, alkali (Wc)	IVw	IVw	13	11.44	5.74

NOTES:

1. CAPABILITY SUBCLASSES ARE SOIL GROUPS WITHIN ONE CLASS. THEY ARE DESIGNATED BY ADDING A SMALL LETTER, E, W, S, OR C, TO THE CLASS NUMERAL, FOR EXAMPLE, IIE. THE LETTER 'E' SHOWS THAT THE MAIN HAZARD IS THE RISK OF EROSION UNLESS CLOSE-GROWING PLANT COVER IS MAINTAINED; 'W' SHOWS THAT WATER IN OR ON THE SOIL INTERFERES WITH PLANT GROWTH OR CULTIVATION (IN SOME SOILS THE WETNESS CAN BE PARTLY CORRECTED BY ARTIFICIAL DRAINAGE); 'S' SHOWS THAT THE SOIL IS LIMITED MAINLY BECAUSE IT IS SHALLOW, DROUGHTY, OR STONY; AND 'C', USED IN ONLY SOME PARTS OF THE UNITED STATES, SHOWS THAT THE CHIEF LIMITATION IS CLIMATE THAT IS VERY COLD OR VERY DRY.

2. THE AOI (AREA OF INTEREST) INCLUDES THE ON- AND OFF-SITE IMPROVEMENTS (74.49 ACRES ON-SITE, AND 11.53 ACRES OFF-SITE).

SOURCE: USDA SOIL CONSERVATION SERVICE, SOIL SURVEY OF YOLO COUNTY, CALIFORNIA, 1972.

Brentwood silty clay loam. This soil is found in the southern half of the project site. Brentwood soils are on nearly level to gently sloping fans and formed in valley fill from sedimentary rocks. These soils are well to moderately well drained. They have very slow to medium runoff and moderately slow permeability. Most areas are irrigated and are used for tree fruit, nut crops, vegetables, and field crops. Vegetation is annual grasses, forbs, and scattered oaks.

Marvin silty clay loam. This soil is found in the northern half of the project site. Marvin soils are on nearly level flood plains at elevations of 10 to 100 feet under annual grasses and forbs. They formed in fine textured alluvium from mixed sources. These soils are moderately well to somewhat poorly drained. They have slow runoff and slow permeability. Common uses include: irrigated and dry cropland and pasture; and grain, field crops, sugar beets, alfalfa and rice crops.

Pescadero silty clay, saline-alkali. This soil is found in the northwestern corner of the project site. Pescadero soils are in basins and formed in alluvium from sedimentary rock. These soils are poorly drained or ponded on concave slopes. They have very slow runoff and very slow permeability. These soils are used mainly for livestock grazing. Some reclaimed areas are used for irrigated field, row crops and irrigated pasture. Commonly cultivated crops are sugarbeets, barley, alfalfa, corn and tomatoes.

Willows clay, alkali. This soil is found in the northern third of the project site. Willow soils are in basins and formed in alluvium from mixed rock sources. These soils are poorly drained. They have slow runoff and very slow permeability. These soils are generally used for growing rice, sugar beets and safflower.

3.2.2 REGULATORY SETTING

FEDERAL

Farmland Protection Program

The Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) administers the Farmland Protection Program (FPP). This is a program that is designed to conserve productive farmland. The NRCS provides funds to agencies for the purchase of conservation easements that meet the specific requirements of the program. Landowners that are interested in the program must agree to conserve their farmland for a minimum period of 30 years.

STATE

Williamson Act

The California Land Conservation Act of 1965, commonly known as the Williamson Act, was established based on numerous State legislative findings regarding the importance of agricultural lands in an urbanizing society. Policies emanating from those findings include those that discourage premature and unnecessary conversion of agricultural land to urban uses and discourage discontinuous urban development patterns, which unnecessarily increase the costs of community services to community residents.

The Williamson Act authorizes each County to establish an agricultural preserve. Land that is within the agricultural preserve is eligible to be placed under a contract between the property owner and County that would restrict the use of the land to agriculture in exchange for a tax assessment that is based on the yearly production yield. The contracts have a 10-year term that is automatically renewed each year, unless the property owner requests a non-renewal or the contract is cancelled. If the contract is cancelled the property owner is assessed a fee of up to 12.5 percent of the property value.

The project site is not under a Williamson Act contract, nor are any of the parcels that are located immediately adjacent to the project site.

Farmland Security Zones

In 1998 the state legislature established the Farmland Security Zone (FSZ) program. FSZs are similar to Williamson Act contracts, in that the intention is to protect farmland from conversion. The main difference however, is that the FSZ must be designated as Prime Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Local Importance. The term of the contract is a minimum of 20 years. The property owners are offered an incentive of greater property tax reductions when compared to the Williamson Act contract tax incentives; the incentives were developed to encourage conservation of prime farmland through FSZs. The non-renewal and cancellation procedures are similar to those for Williamson Act contracts. The project site and the immediately adjacent parcels are not within the FSZ program.

LOCAL

City of Davis General Plan

The City's General Plan includes goals, policies, standards, and actions that strive to preserve agricultural resources and minimize conflicts between agricultural and urban uses. The following General Plan goals, policies, standards, and actions are relevant to the proposed project.

AGRICULTURE, SOILS AND MINERALS

GOAL HAB 1. Identify, protect, restore, enhance and create natural habitats. Protect and improve biodiversity consistent with the natural biodiversity of the region.

Policy AG 1.1, Action C: Establish a 150-foot minimum agricultural buffer around the City. Require dedication from developers of lands to make up the buffer concurrently with any peripheral development.

Policy AG 1.1, Action F: Define land development guidelines for new projects proposed adjacent to existing agricultural activities, operations, or facilities. Such guidelines may include, but are not limited to, specific mitigation measures such as sound walls, landscaping, berms, and construction standards.

City of Davis Municipal Code

The City's Municipal Code includes the following sections which are relevant to the proposed project.

SECTION 40A.01: RIGHT TO FARM

One goal of the City of Davis General Plan is to work cooperatively with the Counties of Yolo and Solano to preserve agricultural land within the Davis Planning Area, and to encourage agricultural operations on land that has not been identified in the General Plan as necessary for development. Additionally, the City seeks to reduce conflicts between agricultural and nonagricultural land uses, and to protect public health. The Right to Farm and Farmland Preservation Ordinance helps achieve these goals by limiting the circumstances under which agricultural operations may be deemed a nuisance.

As part of this effort, the City provides purchasers and tenants of nonagricultural land adjacent to agricultural land with a notice about the City's support for the preservation of agricultural lands and operations. This notification requirement promotes a "good neighbor" policy by informing these prospective purchasers and tenants of the considerations associated with living in close proximity to agricultural land and operations. In addition, the City requires all new development adjacent to agricultural operations to provide a 150-foot-wide agricultural buffer zone, in order to reduce potential conflicts between agricultural and nonagricultural land uses.

SECTION 40A.02.010: PROPERLY OPERATED FARM NOT A NUISANCE

This section of the Davis Municipal Code states that agricultural operations in compliance with all applicable laws and regulations shall not be considered a nuisance except under California Civil Code Sections 3482.5 and 3482.6. The section further states that any allegations of agricultural nuisance must undergo the agricultural grievance procedure provided in Section 40A.02.020. This section does not interfere with an individual's ability to pursue legal action under other applicable laws.

SECTION 40A.03: FARMLAND PRESERVATION

The purpose of this chapter and this article is to implement the agricultural land conservation policies contained in the Davis general plan with a program designed to permanently protect agricultural land located within the Davis planning area for agricultural uses. This article of the Davis Municipal Code states that the City shall require agricultural mitigation as a condition of approval for any development project that would change the general plan designation or zoning from agricultural land to non-agricultural land and for discretionary land use approvals that would change an agricultural use to a non-agricultural use. Total mitigation for a development project shall not be less than a ratio of two acres of protected agricultural land for each acre converted from agricultural land to nonagricultural land. Developers must first preserve the land directly adjacent to their project (the "Adjacent Mitigation Land"). If this adjacent land is not enough to satisfy the 2:1 agricultural land mitigation requirement, then the developer must look elsewhere within the Davis Planning Area (the "Remainder Mitigation Land"). Both of these categories are briefly discussed below:

- **Adjacent Mitigation Land.** The developer must first protect the land along the entire non-urbanized perimeter of the project. If the developer cannot protect this land for some reason, then the developer must either (i) provide the Adjacent Mitigation Land on the development site itself or (ii) prove that its alternative proposal provides "extraordinary community benefits." The Adjacent Mitigation Land must be of a size that is economically viable as farmland (i.e., it must be a minimum 1/4 mile in width). Developers do not have to mitigate for the land being used as the required on-site agricultural buffer.
- **Remainder Mitigation Land.** If the Adjacent Mitigation Land is not enough to satisfy the 2:1 agricultural land mitigation requirement, then the developer must look to protect land elsewhere within the Davis Planning Area. Incentives, or location-based "credits," are provided to the developer to protect land in areas targeted for permanent protection by the City, such as land within a ¼ mile of the city limits and land within "priority acquisition areas" as determined by the City Council. These priority acquisition areas currently include land adjacent to the city limits, land separating the City from neighboring cities, and land providing particular agricultural, biological/natural and/or scenic benefits.

Location based factors (credits) for Remainder Mitigation Land contained in Section 40A.03.035 may result in ratios greater than 2:1.

The developer may satisfy up to 50% of the agricultural land mitigation requirement by paying an in-lieu fee based on the appraised value of agricultural land near the city limits.

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The proposed project is subject to the requirements of this section of the Municipal Code since the project site is currently zoned for agricultural uses.

SECTION 40A.01.050: AGRICULTURAL BUFFER REQUIREMENTS

This section of the Municipal Code states that all new developments adjacent to designated agricultural, agricultural reserve, agricultural open space, greenbelt/agricultural buffer, Davis greenbelt, or environmentally sensitive habitat areas shall be required to provide an agricultural buffer/agricultural transition area. The transition/buffer areas meet the policy objectives of the City of Davis General Plan and contribute to the area's aesthetic qualities by providing for unobstructed views of farmland, and allowing recreational use through the incorporation of bicycle and pedestrian trails.

The ordinance states that agricultural buffer/agricultural transition areas shall be a minimum of 150 feet measured from the edge of the agricultural, greenbelt, or habitat area; however, in consideration of the 500-foot aerial spray setback established by the Counties of Yolo and Solano, a buffer wider than 150 feet is encouraged. The transition/buffer areas shall be comprised of a 50-foot wide agricultural transition area located contiguous to a 100-foot wide agricultural buffer, which shall be directly adjacent to the agricultural, greenbelt, or habitat area. The transition/buffer areas may not be used as farmland mitigation.

Various uses are permitted in the 100-foot wide agricultural buffer areas. These uses include native plants, tree or hedgerows, drainage channels, storm retention ponds, natural areas such as creeks or drainage swales, railroad tracks or other utility corridors, and any other use determined by the planning commission to be consistent with the use of the property as an agricultural buffer. The 100-foot wide buffer area does not allow for public access, unless permitted uses such as railroad tracks already exist in the buffer area. Buffer areas shall be developed under a plan approved by the Parks and General Services Director, and the plan must provide for the establishment, management, and maintenance of the area. In addition, the City shall obtain either an easement for the transition/buffer area, or dedication of the property in fee title.

Unlike the 100-foot wide agricultural buffer areas, the 50-foot agricultural transition areas provide for public use. Uses permitted in the transition area include bike paths, native plants, tree and hedgerows, benches, lights, trash enclosures, fencing, and any other use determined by the Planning Commission to be of the same general character. As with the buffer areas, the 50-foot agricultural transition areas must be developed under a plan approved by the Parks and General Services Director. Once developed, the land shall be dedicated to the City. The City shall maintain the agricultural transition area.

Yolo County Municipal Code Sec. 8-2.404 Agricultural Conservation and Mitigation Program

The purpose of this section is to implement the agricultural land conservation policies contained in the Yolo County General Plan with a program designed to permanently protect agricultural land located within the unincorporated area.

3.2.3 IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

THRESHOLDS OF SIGNIFICANCE

Consistent with Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, the proposed project will have a significant impact on agricultural or forest resources if it will:

- Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Important Farmlands), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use;
- Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract;
- Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code section 12220(g)), timberland (as defined by Public Resources Code section 4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code section 51104(g));
- Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use;
- 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 conversion of forest land to non-forest use.

As described in the Initial Study, there are no forest resources or zoning for forest lands located on the project site. Therefore, there is *no impact*. This environmental issue is not addressed further in this EIR.

IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

Impact 3.2-1: Project implementation may result in the conversion of Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, and Farmland of Statewide Importance, as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural uses (Significant and Unavoidable)

The project site is designated as Farmland of Local Importance (84.27 acres), Farmland of Local Potential (1.56 acres), and Urban and Built-Up Land (2.09 acres), as shown in Figure 3.2-1. The project site is not designated as Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance.

While the project site is designated as Farmland of Local Importance by the California Department of Conservation, the project site does contain prime soils as defined by the Yolo County Agricultural Conservation and Mitigation Program. According to the Agricultural Conservation and Mitigation Program Farmland shall be considered prime farmland if it meets the definition of "prime agricultural land" in Government Code Section 51201. Government Code Section 51201 states that prime agricultural land means any of the following:

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- (1) All land that qualifies for rating as class I or class II in the Natural Resource Conservation Service land use capability classifications.
- (2) Land which qualifies for rating 80 through 100 in the Storie Index Rating.
- (3) Land which supports livestock used for the production of food and fiber and which has an annual carrying capacity equivalent to at least one animal unit per acre as defined by the United States Department of Agriculture.
- (4) Land planted with fruit- or nut-bearing trees, vines, bushes, or crops which have a nonbearing period of less than five years and which will normally return during the commercial bearing period on an annual basis from the production of unprocessed agricultural plant production not less than two hundred dollars (\$200) per acre.
- (5) Land which has returned from the production of unprocessed agricultural plant products an annual gross value of not less than two hundred dollars (\$200) per acre for three of the previous five years.

As described in Table 3.2-3, Brentwood silty clay loam (BrA) and Marvin silty clay loam (Mf) (if irrigated) both qualify as prime agricultural land under the Yolo County Agricultural Conservation and Mitigation Program. Conversion of important farmland as a result of project implementation is considered a **potentially significant** impact.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

Mitigation Measure 3.2-1: *Prior to initiation of grading activities for each phase of development of the project, the project applicant shall set aside in perpetuity, at a minimum ratio of 2:1 of active agricultural acreage, an amount equal to the current phase. The applicant may choose to set aside in perpetuity an amount equal to the remainder of the project site instead of at each phase. The agricultural land shall be elsewhere in the Davis Planning Area, through the purchase of development rights and execution of an irreversible conservation or agricultural easement, consistent with Section 40A.03.025 of the Davis Municipal Code. The location and amount of active agricultural acreage for the proposed project is subject to the review and approval by the City Council. The amount of agricultural acreage set aside shall account for farmland lost due to the conversion of the project site, as well as some of the off-site improvements, including but not necessarily limited to the off-site stormwater detention pond and the off-site Risling Court improvements. The amount of agricultural acreage set aside shall not include conversion of the agricultural buffer. The amount of agricultural acreage that needs to be set aside for off-site improvements shall be verified for each phase of the project during improvement plan review. Pursuant to Davis Code Section 40A.03.040, the agricultural mitigation land shall be comparable in soil quality with the agricultural land being changed to nonagricultural use. The easement land must conform with the policies and requirements of LAFCO including a LESA score no more than 10 percent below that of the project site.*

SIGNIFICANCE AFTER MITIGATION

The proposed project would directly result in the conversion of project site farmlands to non-agricultural uses. The conversion of these locally important farmlands requires mitigation through the City of Davis Farmland Preservation Program, as described previously. While implementation of Mitigation Measure 3.2-1 would reduce the above-identified impact through preservation of agricultural land at a 2:1 ratio, the impact would not be reduced to a less-than-significant level due to the fact that active agricultural land would still be permanently converted to urban uses. Consistent with the Davis General Plan EIR, feasible mitigation measures do not exist to reduce the above impact to a less-than-significant level. Therefore, the impact would remain ***significant and unavoidable***.

Impact 3.2-2: Project implementation may conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use (Less than Significant)

As described in Section 2.0 (Project Description), the proposed project would require a City of Davis General Plan Amendment to the Land Use Element to change land uses on the project site. Changes to the Land Use Element would include changing the entire approximately 74-acre project site from Agriculture to Residential – Medium Density, Residential – High Density, Neighborhood Mixed Use, Public/Semi-Public, and Urban Agriculture Transition Area. Figure 2.0-6 illustrates the current County General Plan land uses within the project site. Proposed General Plan land uses are also shown on Figure 2.0-6. The project site is currently within the jurisdiction of Yolo County. Current County zoning for the project site is Agriculture-Intensive (A-N). The Yolo LAFCo would require the project site to be pre-zoned by the City of Davis in conjunction with the proposed annexation. The City's pre-zoning for the project site would be Planned Development (PD). The pre-zoning would go into effect upon annexation into the City of Davis. The existing and proposed zoning for the project site is shown on Figure 2.0-7. Upon annexation into the City of Davis, the General Plan and zoning map for the City of Davis would be consistent with the intended use of the site and thus not conflict with the current agricultural site designations.

Additionally, the proposed project has been designed to comply with all applicable buffer and setback requirements between urban and agricultural lands. Specifically, the project includes a multi-use agricultural buffer transition area along the northern and western project site boundary adjacent to existing agricultural lands. The proposed agricultural buffer along the northern and western boundaries of the project site would be a minimum of 150-foot wide and would be planted with Californian native plants. Additionally, the transition area would include an approximately 50-foot wide multiuse trail, adjacent to the agricultural buffer area. The perimeter trail would loop around the north and west edges of the project site, connecting to off street paths proposed within the development and connecting to Risling Court and Covell Boulevard. These buffers would comply with the agricultural buffer requirements specified in Section 40A.01.050 of the Davis Municipal Code.

Overall, this would be considered a ***less than significant*** impact.

Impact 3.2-3: Project implementation may conflict with a Williamson Act Contract (Less than Significant)

The project site is not under a Williamson Act Contract, nor are any of the parcels immediately adjacent to the project site under a Williamson Act Contract. Implementation of the proposed project would not conflict with a Williamson Act Contract. Therefore, this would be considered a *less than significant* impact.

Impact 3.2-4: Project implementation may lead to the indirect conversion of adjacent agricultural lands to non-agricultural uses (Significant and Unavoidable)

As described above, lands to the north and west of the project site are within Yolo County and are currently designated for agricultural operations. The land to the west of the project site is currently farmed. Although the area to the north is designated for agricultural purposes, this area is not currently farmed and is planned for nine 13- to 23-acre residential lots. Approval of the proposed project would directly result in the approval of development on the site and direct loss of agricultural lands.

Implementation of the proposed project would place urban development more proximate to the nine mapped, but undeveloped, 13- to 23-acre residential lots to the north of the site. Additionally, the project includes development of utility infrastructure in close proximity to this mapped but undeveloped residential area. It is noted, however, that the utility lines would not be oversized. Nevertheless, development of the project and associated infrastructure may create pressure to sell the separate residential lots which, although consistent with existing zoning, would reduce the effectiveness as agricultural land.

The City of Davis has numerous ordinances and programs in place that are aimed at reducing potential land use conflicts between urban and agricultural lands. As noted above, the proposed project has been designed to comply with all applicable buffer and setback requirements between urban and agricultural lands. The proposed agricultural buffer would help minimize conflicts between the project site and existing agricultural lands to the north and west.

The Yolo County Agricultural Commissioner has established conditions covering the use of restricted materials, the purposes of which are to minimize undue hazards and risks associated with the application and handling of restricted materials. Condition #1 addresses the use of restricted materials in the proximity of environmentally sensitive areas. Examples given for environmentally sensitive areas include residential areas (cities, towns, rural neighborhoods), schools, playgrounds, bus stops (when in use), parks, hospitals, shopping centers, occupied labor camps, organic crops, estuaries, reservoirs, lakes, waterways, livestock, state wildlife management areas, and critical habitats of rare, endangered or threatened species. According to Condition #1, restricted pesticides shall not be applied in close proximity to environmentally sensitive areas unless the minimum distance between the closest operating nozzle and the sensitive area is shown in Table 3.2-4.

TABLE 3.2-4: THE USE OF RESTRICTED MATERIALS IN PROXIMITY TO ENVIRONMENTALLY SENSITIVE AREAS

TYPE OF PESTICIDE APPLICATION EQUIPMENT	MINIMUM DISTANCE BETWEEN CLOSEST OPERATING NOZZLE AND THE NON-TARGET AREA	
	DANGER	WARNING/CAUTION
Aircraft	500 Feet	300 Feet
Air Blast Orchard Sprayer	300 Feet	50 Feet
Ground Rigs	100 Feet	50 Feet

SOURCE: YOLO COUNTY, YOLO COUNTY AGRICULTURAL COMMISSIONER. CONDITIONS COVERING THE USE OF RESTRICTED MATERIALS. JANUARY 1, 2017

The juxtaposition of agricultural lands next to residential and mixed uses can be a land-use compatibility issue. For example, agricultural activities may result in noise, dust, or odors that may be perceived as nuisances by nonagricultural neighbors. As required by Section 40A.01 of the Davis Municipal Code (the Right to Farm Ordinance) the City provides purchasers and tenants of nonagricultural land adjacent to agricultural land with notice about the City's support for the preservation of agricultural lands and operations. This notification requirement promotes a “good neighbor” policy by informing these prospective purchasers and tenants of the considerations associated with living in close proximity to agricultural land and operations.

In order for the proposed project to develop, it would require annexation into the City of Davis in order to receive key public services such as water, sewer, police protection and fire protection.

Article 41 of the Davis Municipal Code establish procedures and protocols that must be followed prior to the approval of annexation and the development of urban uses on this site. The approval of the proposed project would not negate or remove any of these requirements, nor would approval of the proposed project increase the likelihood of voter approval of a ballot measure to approve annexation and development of adjacent areas. While it is conceivable that development and annexation of lands adjacent to the proposed project site may be approved by Davis voters sometime in the future, these actions would be subject to a comprehensive and detailed CEQA review process, which would assess the potential loss and conversion of agricultural lands to a non-agricultural use.

Given the project’s compliance with the City’s buffer and agricultural setback requirements, and Right to Farm Ordinance, implementation of the proposed project would not result in indirect pressure to convert agricultural lands to a non-agricultural use or conflict with agricultural operations other than the aerial application of pesticides. As noted in the above table, aerial application of “danger” labeled pesticides requires a 500-foot buffer from environmentally sensitive areas. The proposed project includes a 150-foot agricultural buffer. However, 350 feet of the required 500-foot setback would need to encroach onto the adjacent agricultural land. Therefore, if aerial application of pesticides is deemed necessary on the adjacent farmlands, the proposed project would indirectly disrupt farming operations on the adjacent property. This is a **potentially significant** impact.

3.2 AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

Mitigation Measure 3.2-2: *Prior to the issuance of occupancy permits, the applicant shall consult with adjacent agricultural property owners and attempt to purchase a “no aerial spray” easement. The applicant shall submit the written proof of the easement, or a statement indicated an agreement has not been reached to the Department of Community Development and Sustainability.*

SIGNIFICANCE AFTER MITIGATION

The mitigation measure identified above would reduce the above identified impact. However, it is not guaranteed that an agreement will be reached, or that it would fully eliminate the potential burden placed on the adjacent agricultural lands from an operational perspective. Therefore, this is a **significant and unavoidable** impact.

Impacts to Farmland from Proposed Improvements

	Existing Trail to be Improved	Proposed Ag Buffer	Proposed Covell Improvements	Proposed Detention Basin	Proposed Perimeter Multi-Use Trail	Proposed Rising Court ROW Addition	Total
Urban and Built-Up Land			1.70			0.39	2.09
Farmland of Local Importance	0.01	6.43		0.74	1.42	0.71	9.32
Farmland of Local Potential	0.26	0.94		0.36			1.56
TOTAL	0.27	7.37	1.70	1.10	1.42	1.09	12.96



Legend

Farmland Category

- Prime Farmland
- Farmland of Statewide Importance
- Unique Farmland
- Grazing Land
- Farmland of Local Importance (74.95 ac onsite)
- Farmland of Local Potential
- Urban and Built-Up Land

Proposed Offsite Improvements

- Ag Buffer
- Detention Pond
- Covell Blvd Improvements
- Rising Ct ROW Addition
- Perimeter Multi Use Trail
- Existing Trail to be Improved

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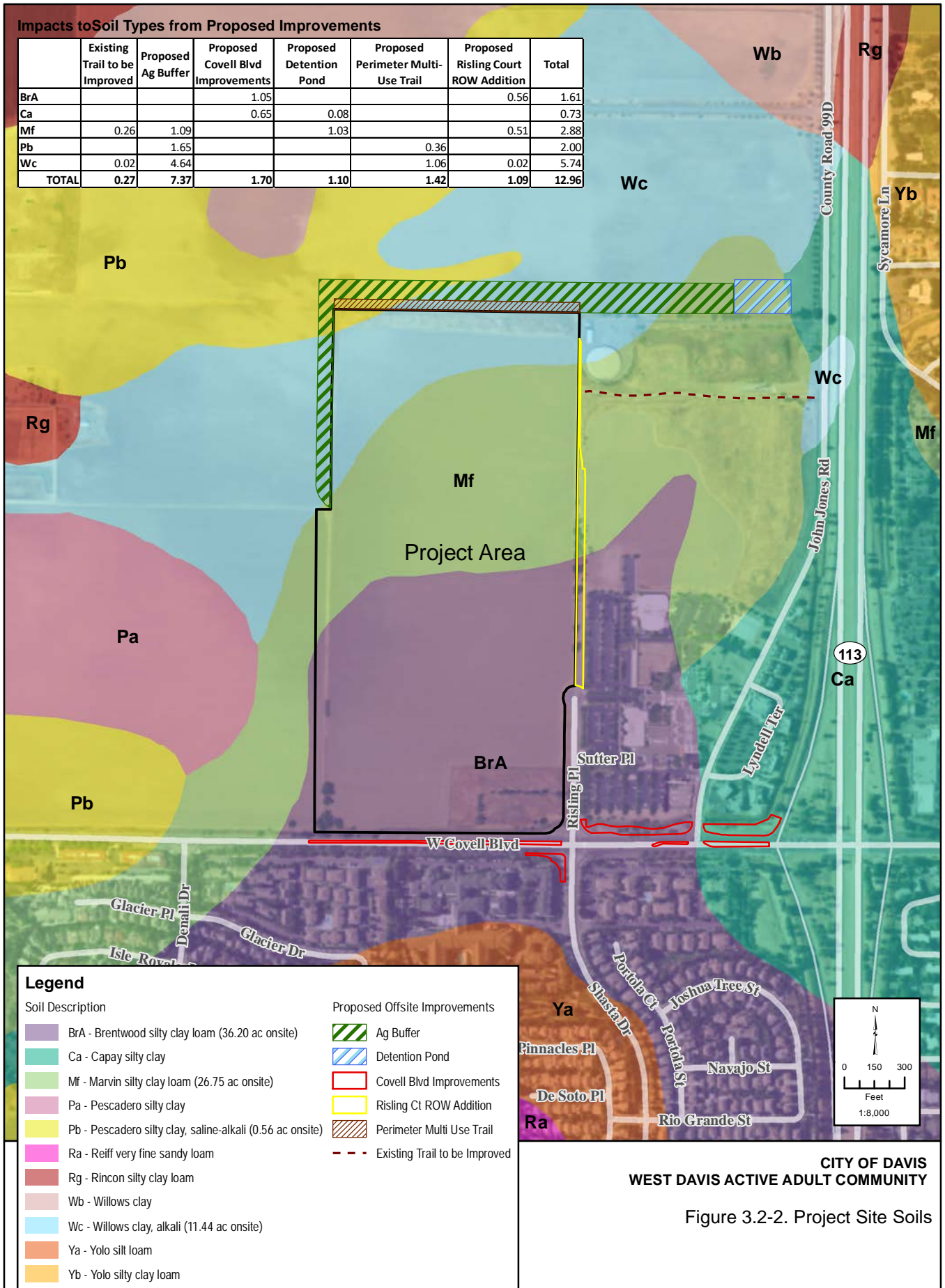
Figure 3.2-1. Project Site Farmland Classifications

Source: California Department of Conservation's Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program, Yolo County 2014; Cunningham Engineering, 10/13/2017; Yolo County GIS; ArcGIS Online World Imagery Map Service. Map date: October 16, 2017.

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Impacts to Soil Types from Proposed Improvements

	Existing Trail to be Improved	Proposed Ag Buffer	Proposed Covell Blvd Improvements	Proposed Detention Pond	Proposed Perimeter Multi-Use Trail	Proposed Risling Court ROW Addition	Total
BrA			1.05			0.56	1.61
Ca			0.65	0.08			0.73
Mf	0.26	1.09		1.03		0.51	2.88
Pb		1.65			0.36		2.00
Wc	0.02	4.64			1.06	0.02	5.74
TOTAL	0.27	7.37	1.70	1.10	1.42	1.09	12.96



Legend

Soil Description	Proposed Offsite Improvements
BrA - Brentwood silty clay loam (36.20 ac onsite)	Ag Buffer
Ca - Capay silty clay	Detention Pond
Mf - Marvin silty clay loam (26.75 ac onsite)	Covell Blvd Improvements
Pa - Pescadero silty clay	Risling Ct ROW Addition
Pb - Pescadero silty clay, saline-alkali (0.56 ac onsite)	Perimeter Multi Use Trail
Ra - Reiff very fine sandy loam	Existing Trail to be Improved
Rg - Rincon silty clay loam	
Wb - Willows clay	
Wc - Willows clay, alkali (11.44 ac onsite)	
Ya - Yolo silt loam	
Yb - Yolo silty clay loam	

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WEST DAVIS ACTIVE ADULT COMMUNITY**

Figure 3.2-2. Project Site Soils

Source: Cunningham Engineering, 10/13/2017; NRCS Web Soil Survey; Yolo County GIS; ArcGIS Online World Imagery Map Service. Map date: October 16, 2017.

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