

3.2 LAND USE, PLANNING AND AGRICULTURE

This section identifies potential impacts of the Project on Land Use, Planning and Agricultural Resources. This section evaluates the compatibility of the Project with existing or future land uses and adopted plans. The Project site is designated PQ (Public and Quasi-Public) and zoned PQP (Public/Quasi-Public) consistent with the 2030 Yolo County General Plan land use map.

3.2.1 SETTING

The predominant land use designation in the Project vicinity is Agriculture (see **Figure 3.2-1**). Agricultural land extends for substantial distances in most directions from the Project site. Portions of the eastern and southern boundaries of the site are adjacent to the City of Davis wastewater treatment plant lagoons. In 2014, a 320-acre parcel directly to the west of the Project site was purchased by the County for development of an off-site borrow area. Willow Slough By-Pass, an engineered waterway, is located across Road 28H to the south of the landfill. Portions of the City of Davis are about 1.5 miles southwest of the site. Other land uses in the project vicinity include the road grid, utility corridors, farmhouses, and outbuildings. There are several residences on agricultural parcels to the south and west of the Project Site.

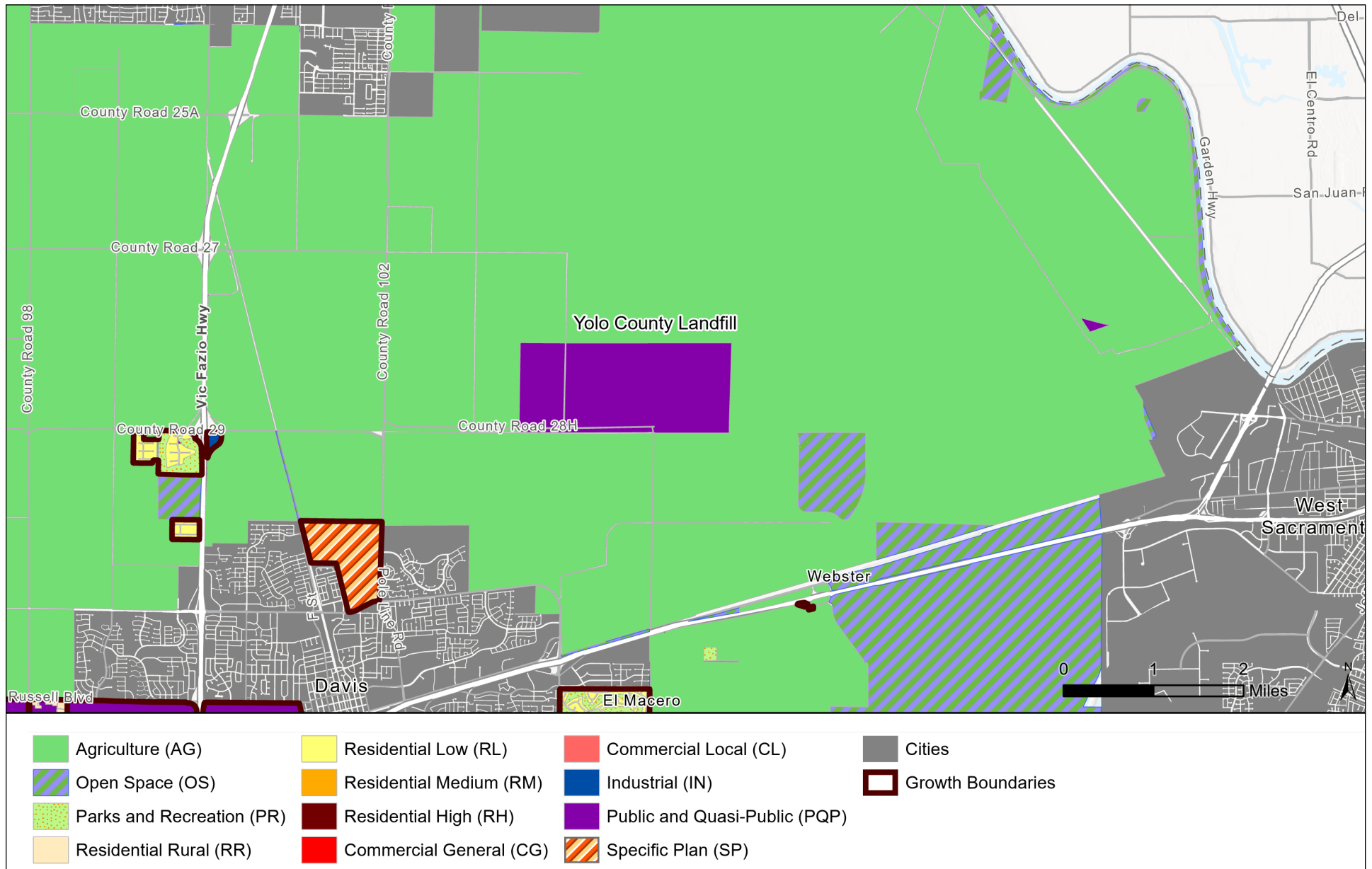
Findings of the 1992 YCCL EIR

The 1992 Yolo County Central Landfill (YCCL) Environmental Impact Report (EIR) evaluated the potential land use/policy effects of previous changes to the landfill. The analysis included one mitigation measure that required the County to respond within 72 hours to any complaints regarding nuisance impacts (wind-blown or illegally dumped refuse, or odors). The analysis concluded that with the implementation of this mitigation measure there would be no significant effects on land use/policy.

Findings of the 2005 YCCL EIR

Like the current EIR, the 2005 YCCL EIR included development of an off-site borrow area. The 2005 YCCL EIR analysis determined that there could be significant impacts related to land use and planning and the use of agricultural land for the off-site borrow area. Mitigation measures for the off-site borrow area included the measures shown directly below, which were determined to reduce the impact to less than significant. The 2005 YCCL EIR determined that with implementation of mitigation measures, land use and policy impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measure 3.6.1a: The off-site soil borrow area should be sited in the “possible future expansion” areas identified in the General Plan, located directly east and north of Yolo County Central Landfill. Although these areas are currently designated as A-P, the intent of the general plan is to allow future landfill expansion in the adjacent northern and eastern parcels; therefore, the use of these parcels as a borrow area should not conflict with the General Plan’s intent to preserve agricultural land. Also, the Yolo County Zoning Regulations, Title 8, Chapter 2 Zoning, Sec. 8-2.404 states that upon review and approval, conditional uses such as the operation of a solid waste disposal site shall be authorized by a Minor Use Permit.



Source: Yolo County Community Services Department, 2020

Figure 3.2-1
General Plan Land Use Map

Mitigation Measure 3.6.1b: The County could site the off-site borrow area in a location that is not zoned or designated as agricultural land.

Mitigation Measure 3.6.1c: The County can re-zone and re-designate the borrow area site so the use of the site would not conflict with the land use designation. However, re-designating the site could conflict with other land use policies.

Mitigation Measure 3.6.1d: The County can use alternative sources of daily cover (e.g., fines from the landfill mining operations, the compost generated from the compost operations), which would reduce the need to develop an off-site borrow area.

Mitigation Measure 3.6.1e: In the event that the only feasible borrow area is agricultural land, the County shall purchase agricultural easements on land of at least equal quality and size as partial compensation for the direct loss of agricultural land, as well as for the mitigation of growth inducing and cumulative impacts on agricultural land. This may take the form of outright purchase of conservation easements, or via the donation of mitigation fees to a local, regional, or statewide organization or agency, including land trusts and conservancies, whose purpose includes the purchase, holding, and maintenance of agricultural conservation easements. Mitigation lands may be located within Yolo County or the region of the Central Valley.

Mitigation Measure 3.6.2: The County should not locate the borrow area or areas on prime agricultural land where prime soils may be found. The California Department of Conservation's "important farmlands" designation may be used to identify the areas of prime agricultural soils.

Findings of the 2015 YCCL Soil Borrow Site EIR

The project site was located adjacent to the YCCL and surrounded by agricultural land uses, and, therefore, soil borrow activities would not physically divide an established community. The project site is zoned as Public and Quasi Public (PQP), but, at the time, designated as Agriculture (AG) in the 2030 Countywide General Plan. The proposed project included a minor General Plan Amendment to change the land use designation of the project site from AG to Public and Quasi-Public (PQ), to be consistent with the PQP zoning. Although the use of designated agricultural lands for soil borrow activities would conflict with Countywide Plan Policy LU-2.5, directing the conservation of agricultural lands, it complies to the more specific Policy LU-3.7, which specifies that land uses surrounding critical infrastructure such as landfills should be compatible with the existing and planned land operations. Mitigation Measures 3.6.1a through 3.6.1d, implemented as part of the 2005 Yolo County Central Landfill Permit Revision EIR for the landfill (2005 Permit Revision EIR), address this conflict. These measures specify that if a landfill soil borrow area is to be located on prime agricultural land that the project must purchase agricultural easements on land of at least equal quality and size as partial compensation for the direct loss of agricultural land, and the project would comply with this requirement. The Initial Study concluded that impacts related to land use compatibility would be less than significant and therefore no further analysis is included in this Draft EIR. (Yolo County, 2015)

Regulatory Setting

2030 Countywide General Plan

The Land Use and Community Character Element of the 2030 Countywide General Plan seeks to preserve and foster the rural character of the County. The Agriculture and Economic Development Element of the 2030 Countywide General Plan presents policies and actions intended to support, conserve, and protect agricultural resources and seeks to support, sustain, reinvent, and diversify agricultural economy in the County. The use of agricultural conservation easements and/or land dedication to mitigate for loss of farmland from non-agricultural development is required.

The Countywide General Plan relies, in part, on the California Department of Conservation’s Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program (FMMP) to classify and describe Yolo County’s agricultural farmland and soil resource capabilities. The FMMP is a classification system used to map the State’s important farmlands, which, in Yolo County, may include Prime Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance, Unique Farmland, Farmland of Local Importance, and Grazing Land.

The Project site is in the unincorporated area of Yolo County and the site is subject to the policies of the 2030 General Plan. **Table 3.2-1** reviews the consistency of relevant policies pertaining to land use and agriculture.

In addition to policies related to agricultural resources, **Table 3.2-1** includes analysis of relevant policies and action programs in the Public Facilities (PF) and Services Element. These PF Goals and Actions of the General Plan acknowledge the importance of long-term landfill space at YCCL. The PF Goals and Actions also include protection of waste processing from encroaching nearby incompatible uses.

TABLE 3.2-1. PROJECT CONSISTENCY WITH GENERAL PLAN POLICIES

General Plan Policies	Consistent?	Analysis
Goal Agriculture (AG) AG-1: Preservation of Agriculture. Preserve and defend agriculture as fundamental to the identity of Yolo County.	Yes	The Project would not change the agricultural identity of Yolo County or conflict with the County’s mission to preserve and defend agriculture as a fundamental identity.
Policy AG-1.3: Prohibit the division of agricultural land for non-agricultural uses.	Yes	The Project site is designated PQ (public and quasi-public) and zoned PQP (public/quasi-public) consistent with the GP land use and zoning maps. The Project’s footprint is sufficient for the proposed landfill operations and proposed Project elements. Most Project elements would not require conversion of agriculture land to other uses. The proposed future off-site borrow area could be located in an area zoned for agricultural uses, however, it is not anticipated that acquiring land for the future off-site borrow area would result in the division of agricultural land since up to a 640-acre parcel would be needed.
Policy AG-1.4: Prohibit land use activities that are not compatible with agriculturally designated areas.	Yes	The Project is compatible with surrounding agriculture land uses.

TABLE 3.2-1. PROJECT CONSISTENCY WITH GENERAL PLAN POLICIES (Continued)

General Plan Policies	Consistent?	Analysis
<p>Policy AG-1.5: Strongly discourage the conversion of agricultural land for other uses. No lands shall be considered for redesignation from Agricultural or Open Space to another land use designation unless all of the following findings can be made:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. There is public need or net community benefit derived from the conversion of the land that outweighs the need to protect the land for long-term agricultural use. b. There are no feasible alternative locations for the proposed project that are either designated for non-agricultural land uses or are less productive agricultural lands. c. The use would not have a significant adverse effect on existing or potential agricultural activities on surrounding lands designated Agricultural. 	Yes	<p>The Project’s footprint is sufficient for the proposed landfill operations and proposed Project elements. Most Project elements would not require conversion of agriculture land to other uses. The proposed future off-site borrow area could be in an area zoned for agricultural uses, but:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Sufficient land for soil cover is specifically identified in Action PF-A50. There is a public need and a net community benefit derived from the conversion because the borrow area is needed for the YCCL to continue landfilling operations. b. The soil borrow area would only be sited in a location designated for agricultural land if there are no other feasible alternative locations. c. The future soil borrow activities would not have a significant adverse effect on existing or potential agricultural activities on surrounding lands designated Agricultural.
<p>Policy AG-1.6: Strongly continue to mitigate a ratio of no less than 1:1 the conversion of farm land and/or the conversion of land designated or zoned for agriculture, to other uses.</p>	Yes	<p>The Project proposes a future off-site borrow area in an area that has not yet been established. Future conversion of farm land for an off-site borrow area would be mitigated at a ratio of no less than 1:1. See Mitigation Measure 3.2.2b.</p>
<p>Goal PF-9: Solid Waste and Recycling. Provide safe, cost-effective, and environmentally responsible solid waste management.</p>	Yes	<p>The Project elements are proposed to achieve on-going safe, cost-effective, and environmentally responsible solid waste management.</p>
<p>Policy PF-9.1: Meet or exceed State waste diversion requirements.</p>	Yes	<p>The Project elements would assist the County in meeting or exceeding State waste diversion requirements.</p>
<p>Policy PF-9.2: Manage property to ensure adequate landfill space for existing and planned land uses.</p>	Yes	<p>The Project site has adequate space for all proposed modifications occurring on-site.</p>
<p>Policy PF-9.3: Employ innovative strategies to ensure efficient and cost-effective solid waste and other discarded materials collection, disposal, transfer and processing.</p>	Yes	<p>The Project elements would increase efficiency and allow the YCCL to operate more economically.</p>
<p>Policy PF-9.4: Prioritize disposal and processing capacity at the landfill for waste materials generated within Yolo County, but accept waste materials from outside the county when capacity is available and the rates cover the full cost of disposal and processing.</p>	Yes	<p>The increased daily permitted tonnage at the YCCL proposed by the Project would ensure that in-County waste disposal is prioritized while allowing out-of-County wastes to be accepted, such as increased organics acceptance to provide feedstock for Project elements and support waste diversion requirements.</p>
<p>Policy PF-9.5: Promote technologies, including biomass or biofuels, which allow the use of solid waste as an alternative energy source.</p>	Yes	<p>Several of the Project Elements promote technologies and the use of solid waste as an alternative energy source, such as the waste gasification facility, expanded biogas utilization options, peaking power plant, thermal pressure hydrolysis system and biogas to methanol pilot facility.</p>
<p>Policy PF-9.6: Treat waste materials as potential revenue sources for the County, and maximize the revenue potential associated with the waste stream as new products, economies, needs, and technologies emerge.</p>	Yes	<p>Several of the Project Elements would allow waste to be treated as a revenue source for the County, such as the wood pellet facility, waste gasification facility, expanded biogas utilization options, peaking power plant, organic waste fertilizer facility, thermal pressure hydrolysis system and biogas to methanol pilot facility.</p>

TABLE 3.2-1. PROJECT CONSISTENCY WITH GENERAL PLAN POLICIES (Continued)

General Plan Policies	Consistent?	Analysis
Policy PF-9.8: Require salvage, reuse or recycling of construction and demolition materials and debris at all construction sites.	Yes	Construction and demolition materials from development of Project elements would be recycled consistent with local and State regulations.
Policy PF-9.11: Expand opportunities for energy and/or fuel production resulting from the solid waste disposal process.	Yes	Several of the Project Elements expand opportunities for energy and/or fuel production from solid waste, such as the waste gasification facility, expanded biogas utilization options, peaking power plant, thermal pressure hydrolysis system and biogas to methanol pilot facility.
Action PF-A50: Acquire sufficient land to maintain long-term landfill operations, including property for mitigation and soil cover.	Yes	The Project's current footprint has sufficient area to implement the operations of the Project elements. The off-site soil borrow area would be consistent with this action.
Action PF-A59: Designate lands in the vicinity of the landfill and other waste-related processing and transfer facilities through Yolo County Zoning Code to ensure that potential incompatible land uses which may lead to safety hazards and/or which may imperil the continued operation of these facilities are prohibited.	Yes	Land uses surrounding the Project are zoned for agriculture, except for the Davis Wastewater Treatment Plant and the adjacent off-site borrow area, which are zoned PQP. This ensures that surrounding uses would not be hazardous to Project operations.
Action PF-A60: Acquire easements of properties adjacent to the Central Landfill to ensure that farming operations emphasize crops that require low or no irrigation to help continue successful operation of the landfill under high groundwater conditions.	Not Applicable to the Project	The Project elements would be developed at the YCCL, except for the future off-site borrow area. Future easements would be obtained as necessary to ensure that adjacent properties utilize farm crops of low or no irrigation at the discretion of the County.
Goal Land Use LU-1: Range and Balance of Land uses. Maintain an appropriate range and balance of land uses to maintain the variety of activities necessary for a diverse, healthy and sustainable society.	Yes	The County manages the YCCL for safe disposal of solid wastes. This goal is supported by Policy LU-1.1 which specifically identifies landfills as an acceptable use in PQ land use designations.
Goal LU-2: Agricultural Preservation. Preserve farmland and expand opportunities for related business and infrastructure to ensure a strong local agricultural economy.	Partly	The Project elements would not affect the surrounding agricultural uses. However, the proposed off-site borrow area could be in an area zoned for agriculture. Use of agriculture land for soil mining is not consistent with this policy to preserve such land for agriculture.
Policy LU-2.3: Prohibit the division of land in an agricultural area if the division is for non-agricultural purposes and/or if the result of the division will be parcels that are infeasible for farming. Projects related to clustering and/or transfers of development rights are considered to be compatible with agriculture.	Yes	The Project elements would not affect the surrounding agricultural uses. However, the proposed off-site borrow area could be in an area zoned for agriculture, however, it is not anticipated that acquiring land for the future off-site borrow area would result in the division of agricultural land since up to a 640-acre parcel would be needed.
Goal LU-3: Growth Management. Manage growth to preserve and enhance Yolo County's agricultural, environment, rural setting and small town character.	Yes	The Project would not encourage growth and would preserve the County's rural setting.
Policy LU-3.6: Maintain the compatibility of surrounding land uses and development, so as not to impede the existing and planned operation of public airports, landfills and related facilities and community sewage treatment facilities.	Yes	The Project would not result in incompatible uses with the existing YCCL or the adjacent Davis Wastewater Treatment Plant.

SOURCE: Yolo County General Plan 2030, RCH Group 2021

Yolo County Code

The land surrounding Yolo County Central Landfill is utilized for either agricultural activities or wastewater treatment operations. Overall, the landfill facility is compatible with these surrounding land uses and the corresponding zoning. Zoning of the site and adjacent land is summarized in **Table 3.2-2**.

TABLE 3.2-2. SUMMARY OF ADJACENT ZONING FOR THE YOLO COUNTY CENTRAL LANDFILL

Area (and extent of applicable zoning)	Zoning
Yolo County Central Landfill	PQP
North of YCCL (1 mile)	A-N
West of YCCL (½ mile)	PQP/A-N
East of YCCL (2 miles)	PQP/A-N
South of YCCL (½ mile)	A-N

SOURCE: Yolo County Zoning Map

The following are zoning definitions for A-N and PQP designations, as stated in the Yolo County Zoning Regulations, Title 8, Chapter 2 (Yolo County, 2014):

Agricultural Intensive (A-N) Zone:

The A-N zone is applied to preserve lands best suited for intensive agricultural uses typically dependent on higher quality soils, water availability, and relatively flat topography. Uses in A-N zones are primarily limited to intensive agricultural production and other activities compatible with agricultural uses. Minimum lot size for newly created parcels in the A-N zone is 40 acres for irrigated parcels primarily planted in permanent crops (i.e., orchards and vineyard), 80 acres for irrigated parcels that are cultivated and 160 acres for parcels that are generally uncultivated and/or not irrigated.

Public and Quasi-Public (PQP) Zone:

The PQP zone is applied to lands that are occupied or used for public and governmental offices. The PQP zone implements the Public and Quasi-Public (PQ) land use designation in the 2030 Countywide General Plan.

Other relevant sections of the Yolo County Code include:

Sec. 8-2.404. Agricultural Conservation and Mitigation Program.

(a) Purpose.

- (1) 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.

(c) Mitigation requirements.

- (1) Agricultural mitigation shall be required for conversion or change from agricultural use to a predominantly non- agricultural use prior to, or concurrent with, approval of a zone change from agricultural to urban zoning, permit, or other discretionary or ministerial approval by the County.

- (2) The following uses and activities shall be exempt from, and are not covered by, the Agricultural Conservation and Mitigation Program:
- (ii) Public uses such as parks, schools, cultural institutions, and other public agency facilities and infrastructure that do not generate revenue. The applicability of this exemption to public facilities and infrastructure that generate revenue shall be evaluated by the approving authority on a case-by-case basis. The approving authority may partly or entirely deny the exemption if the approving authority determines the additional cost of complying with this program does not jeopardize project feasibility and no other circumstances warrant application of the exemption;

Yolo County Integrated Waste Management Plans

Yolo County’s waste management plan consists of the following elements:

- Siting Element for Yolo County (2012)
- Summary Plan for Yolo County (1995)
- Source Reduction and Recycling Elements (SRRE) for each City within the County and for the Unincorporated Area
- Non-disposal Facility Elements for each City within the County and for the Unincorporated Area

Together these plans establish county-wide goals and objectives for integrated waste management planning, describe the current system of solid waste management in the county and its cities, and summarize the programs and facilities selected in the multi-jurisdictional planning documents prepared for Yolo County and its cities. **Table 3.2-3** evaluates the Project consistency with the County’s solid waste management plan goals and policies that are relevant to the Project:

TABLE 3.2-3. PROJECT CONSISTENCY WITH INTERGRATED WASTE MANAGEMENT PLAN GOALS AND POLICIES

Yolo County Integrated Waste Management Plan Goals & Policies	Consistent With Waste Management Plan?	Analysis
Siting Element Goal 2: Ensure compliance with all state and federal standards for locating and operating solid waste disposal facilities.	Yes	Waste disposal would continue at YCCL. The Project includes elements to address high groundwater and extracted water.
Siting Element Goal 3: Operate and maintain solid waste facilities that ensure protection of public health and minimize environmental impacts and nuisances.	Yes	Potential environmental impacts and nuisances are subject to this EIR. Refer to impact analyses presented in Chapter 3, including mitigation measures.
Siting Element Goal 4 Policy A: Maintain a hazardous waste exclusion program using trained technicians at disposal facilities for loads inspection and removal of inappropriate materials.	Yes	The Project would continue its hazardous waste exclusions program at YCCL, which use trained technicians for load inspection and removal of inappropriate materials. There is a permanent Household Hazardous Waste Collection Facility on-site.
Siting Element Goal 5: Ensure availability of solid waste disposal facility capacity to meet Yolo County’s long-term needs.	Yes	The Siting Element requires a minimum of 15 years solid waste disposal capacity for Yolo County. Additional landfill capacity is not required to ensure that Yolo County maintains adequate landfill capacity through the year 2032.

TABLE 3.2-3. PROJECT CONSISTENCY WITH INTERGRATED WASTE MANAGEMENT PLAN GOALS AND POLICIES (Continued)

Yolo County Integrated Waste Management Plan Goals & Policies	Consistent With Waste Management Plan?	Analysis
Siting Element Goal 6: Manage solid waste disposal facilities to maximize cost effectiveness and convenience to county residents.	Yes	One of the objectives of the Project is to allow the YCCL to operate more economically to avoid future landfill tipping fee increases, even after considering the construction and development of the Project elements. Siting additional solid waste facilities at the same location would maximize convenience to County residents.
Siting Element Goal 8: Consider regional approaches to solid waste disposal that are mutually convenient and beneficial to those involved.	Yes	This EIR considers development of new landfill facilities that would be beneficial for the region in the management of solid waste.
Siting Element Goal 9: Prevent the development of new or expanded solid waste facilities in incompatible land use areas. Protect existing facilities from encroachment of incompatible land uses.	Yes	The proposed Project does not involve new or expanded solid waste facilities in incompatible areas. Development of new landfill facilities would occur within the current footprint and would be compatible with surrounding land uses.
Siting Element Goal 10: Maintain an integrated waste management system for Yolo County based on the waste management hierarchy and optimizing the use of economically feasible source reduction, recycling, and composting to conserve existing landfill capacity at YCCL. &	Yes	The Project elements address waste streams that can benefit from new processing elements and operations. Several of the Project elements would provide more beneficial opportunities for organics.
Summary Plan Goal 1: To conserve natural resources, energy and disposal capacity, the cities and counties will minimize the quantity of solid waste requiring disposal using the hierarchy of: (1) source reduction (2) recycling and composting; and (3) transformation and land disposal.	Yes	The Project changes would be undertaken to allow the County greater flexibility in developing and implementing processes and operations that would reduce waste from the landfill, reduce environmental impacts of landfill operations, increase the recovery of materials and energy from waste, and address challenges related to soil availability and high groundwater that affect land disposal.
Summary Plan Goal 2: All integrated waste management programs will continue to be implemented so as to reduce the maximum extent possible environmental impacts and nuisances and ensure public safety.	Yes	The purpose of this EIR is to identify potential environmental impacts of the project and identify mitigation measures to minimize those impacts and ensure public safety.
Summary Plan Goal 3: The cities and counties will seek to increase interagency cooperation and cooperation with institutions and the private sector to achieve efficient and cost effective integrated waste management services in Yolo County.	Yes	The successful development of the Project elements would benefit cost effective integrated waste management services in Yolo County.
Summary Plan Goal 4: To minimize the improper disposal of hazardous wastes, Yolo County residents and appropriate businesses will be provided reasonable access to programs for safe and efficient management of Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) and small quantity generator (SQG) wastes. Where technically and/or economically feasible, HHW materials will be reused or recycled and the remainder disposed of in an environmentally friendly manner.	Yes	The permanent HHW facility will continue to provide reasonable access to efficient HHW disposable.

SOURCE: Summary Plan of the Yolo County Integrated Waste Management Plan (2005), Yolo Countywide Siting Element (2012), RCH Group (2021).

3.2.2 IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

Significance Criteria

For the purposes of the EIR, consistent with Appendix G of the *CEQA Guidelines*, the Project could have a significant impact to Land Use Planning and Agricultural Resources if the Project would:

- Physically divide an established community;
- Cause a significant environmental impact due to a conflict with any land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect;
- Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural uses;
- Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract;
- Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of forest land, timberland, or timberland zoned Timberland Production;
- Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use; or,
- 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.

The Project would not physically divide an established community. Therefore, there are no impacts to the division of established communities. There are no forest or timberland resources or forest land resources on-site. Therefore, there are no impacts to forest land, timberland and timberland zoning. These issues are not discussed further in this analysis.

Impact 3.2.1: Development of an off-site borrow area could result in conflicts with agricultural uses or Williamson Act contract. (Significant)

Since most of the non-urban land within the radius of the Project site is agricultural land, the off-site borrow area will most likely be located on a parcel currently used for agriculture, designated as Agriculture (AG) in the General Plan, and zoned for agriculture. The use of agriculture lands for non-agriculture uses conflicts with the 2030 General Plan's Goal LU-2. The use of agriculture land for non-agricultural use could also conflict with the existing land use designation. The off-site borrow area could also be located on a parcel under a Williamson Act Contract. However, if a parcel under a Williamson Act contract is selected for the future off-site borrow area, the County would be required to follow the Department of Conservation's Public Acquisition Notification Procedures and would be required to cancel the Williamson Act contract prior to soil borrow operations. To the extent that locating the off-site borrow area in a location where this use conflicts with the intent to preserve agricultural land and with the existing land use designation and zoning, impacts would be significant.

Mitigation Measures

Mitigation Measure 3.2.1a: The County shall site the off-site borrow area in a location not zoned or designated as agriculture land to the extent feasible. In the event that the only feasible off-site borrow area is zoned or designated as agricultural land, the County shall re-zone and re-designate the off-site borrow area site (to PQP and PQ, respectively) so the use of the site would not conflict with the land use designation.

Level of Significance After Mitigation

Implementation of Mitigation Measure 3.2.1 would reduce this impact to a less-than-significant level. However, this impact may have to be re-visited in a project-level environmental review when a location is established for the off-site borrow area.

Impact 3.2.2: Development of an off-site borrow area could result in conversion of farmland (including Prime Farmland, and non-prime farmland mapped as Unique Farmland or Farmland of Statewide Importance) to non-agricultural use. (Significant)

To continue long-term disposal operations at YCCL, the County would need to acquire a new off-site borrow area. The Project includes acquiring a parcel for mining of soil to be used as daily, intermediate, and final cover material, but a specific site has not yet been identified. As discussed above, in 2014, the DIWM purchased a 320-acre parcel directly to the west of the landfill as a soil borrow source (County of Yolo, 2015). Although no additional parcel of land has yet been identified, the DIWM estimates that up to an additional 640 acres would be needed. The use of soil for daily cover from an off-site borrow area located on agricultural land would conflict with the 2030 General Plan's Goal LU-2, which discourages the conversion of agricultural land for other uses. Most of the properties in the vicinity of the YCCL are identified as Prime Farmland but may also include non-prime soils mapped as Unique Farmland or Farmland of Statewide Importance. Trucking soil from further distances would be uneconomical and create significant environmental impacts, while still likely being from agricultural lands mapped as Prime, Unique, or Farmland of Statewide Importance. Therefore, the expected use of a nearby agricultural property as an off-site borrow area would be a **significant impact**.

The off-site borrow area would be a key component of long-term landfill operations that provide a benefit to County residents and are consistent with General Plan Goal PF-9 and Policies PF-9.2, -9.3, -9.4, -9.6, and Action PF-A50 (see above in Table 3.2-1). To the extent that the costs of purchasing agricultural conservation easements to offset the conversion of agricultural land under the County's Agricultural Conservation and Mitigation Program (Yolo County Code Sec. 8-2.404) could jeopardize long-term economic viability of the landfill, the Board of Supervisors could determine as part of the project approval that the Project is exempt from the ordinance's requirements per Yolo County Code Sec. 8-2.404(c)(2)(ii).

Mitigation Measures

Mitigation Measure 3.2.2: The County shall not locate the off-site borrow area or areas on agriculture farmland identified as Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance, to the extent feasible. The California Department of Conservation's

“important farmlands” designation shall be used to identify the areas mapped as Prime, Unique, or Farmland of Statewide Importance. If the off-site borrow area includes Prime, Unique, or Farmland of Statewide Importance, then the County shall comply with the Agricultural Conservation and Mitigation Program, which requires up to three (3) acres of agricultural land shall be preserved for each acre of prime farmland converted to a predominantly non-agricultural use or zoning classification (3:1 ratio), or up to two (2) acres of agricultural land shall be preserved for each acre of non-prime farmland converted to a predominantly non-agricultural use or zoning classification (2:1 ratio). If the Project is determined exempt per Yolo County Code Sec. 8-2.404(c)(2)(ii), a minimum of one (1) acre of agricultural land shall be preserved for each acre of prime or non-prime farmland converted at the off-site borrow area to a predominantly non-agricultural use (1:1 ratio).

Level of Significance After Mitigation

Implementation of Mitigation Measure 3.2.2 would reduce this impact, but the conversion of the farmland would nonetheless be a significant environmental impact. Furthermore, cumulative impacts of farmland conversion are considered significant and unavoidable (see Chapter 4 Impact Overview for Cumulative Impacts Discussion).

3.2.3 REFERENCES

- Yolo County. 1992. *Final Environmental Impact Report Yolo County Central Landfill State Clearinghouse No. 91123015*. October 1992.
- Yolo County. 2005. *Yolo County Central Landfill Permit Revisions Final Subsequent Environmental Impact Report SCH No. 1991073040*. May 2005.
- Yolo County. 2009. *2030 Countywide General Plan, Agriculture and Economic Development Element*. November 2009.
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- Yolo County. 2020. *Zoning Map Yolo County GIS Viewer*. <https://yolo.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=07aafdb9df8b40fea378723de601c69b&extent=-13651962.5683%2C4642419.391%2C-13505203.474%2C4708996.0427%2C102100>. Accessed December 29, 2020.