

## 4.14 Transportation and Traffic

Issues (and Supporting Information Sources):	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<b>14. TRANSPORTATION AND TRAFFIC—</b>				
<b>Would the project:</b>				
a) Cause an increase in traffic which is substantial in relation to the existing traffic load and capacity of the street system (i.e., result in a substantial increase in either the number of vehicle trips, the volume-to-capacity ratio on roads, or congestion at intersections)?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Exceed, either individually or cumulatively, a level of service standard established by the county transportation commission for designated roads or highways?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Result in a change in air traffic patterns, including either an increase in traffic levels or a change in location, that results in substantial safety risks?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d) Substantially increase hazards due to a design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) Result in inadequate emergency access?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f) Result in inadequate parking capacity?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g) Conflict with adopted policies, plans, or programs supporting alternative transportation (e.g., conflict with policies promoting bus turnouts, bicycle racks, etc.)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

### 4.14.1 Setting

#### Roadway Network

The Idaho-Maryland Mine project site (project site) encompasses a total of 146 acres of land within the City of Grass Valley and unincorporated Nevada County. Three properties comprise the project site: (1) the Idaho-Maryland site, (2) the New Brunswick site, and (3) the Round Hole site. See **Figure 3-1** for the project location.

Regional access to the project site is provided by State Routes 20/49 and 174 (SR 20/49 and SR 174). All employee and visitor access to the project properties would be provided via East Bennett Road and Idaho-Maryland Road (with access driveways on Centennial Drive and Whispering Pines Lane). Descriptions of area roadways are presented below:

*State Route 20/49* (SR 20/49), near Grass Valley and Nevada City, is a four-lane north-south freeway through the Sierra Nevada foothills. SR 20/49 has a full interchange at Brunswick Road

and Idaho-Maryland Road and a partial interchange at East Bennett Street (southbound off-ramp and northbound on-ramp only).

*State Route 174* (SR 174), also known as the Colfax Highway, is a two-lane arterial that connects Colfax to Grass Valley. The primary function of SR 174 is to serve local needs within and between the two cities.

*East Bennett Street/Road* runs west to east from East Main Street to Brunswick Road. It is classified as an arterial, and primarily has two lanes, with some segments of three lanes. It is characterized by rural development, narrow right-of-way, and varied topography.

*Idaho-Maryland Road* is a two-lane road that runs west to east from SR 20/29 (a continuation of East Main Street), past Brunswick Road, to Banner Lava Cap Road. It is classified as an arterial west of Centennial Drive, and transitions to a collector street to the east.

*Centennial Drive* is a two-lane road that connects Idaho-Maryland Road with Whispering Pines Lane. The City of Grass Valley Capital Improvements Program for Facilities and Major Equipment for 1995-2015, adopted by reference under the City of Grass Valley 2020 General Plan calls for the extension of Centennial Drive as a two-lane major collector road to East Bennett Road.

*Whispering Pines Lane* is a two-lane road that runs west to east from Idaho-Maryland Road to Brunswick Road. It is characterized by light industrial and office use development.

*Brunswick Road* runs north to south from Nevada City Highway to SR 174. It is classified as an arterial, and primarily has two lanes, widening to four lanes at its entrance into the Brunswick basin (near Sutton Way). Brunswick Road consist of varied topography, but it is a relatively straight roadway with smooth curves.

## Existing Daily Roadway Traffic Volumes

TABLE 4.14-1  
EXISTING DAILY TRAFFIC VOLUMES

Roadway	Segment	Average Daily Traffic Volume
State Route 20/49	SR 174 to Brunswick Road	35,000-47,000 vehicles
State Route 174	Brunswick Road to SR 20/49	4,500-6,200 vehicles
Brunswick Road	SR 174 to Nevada City Highway	10,700-26,200 vehicles
East Bennett Street/Road	East Main Street to Brunswick Road	1,350-5,810 vehicles
Idaho-Maryland Road	SR 20/49 to Banner Lava Cap Road	4,230-12,100 vehicles
Whispering Pines Road	Idaho-Maryland Road to Brunswick Road	2,090 vehicles

SOURCES: Caltrans, 2004 Traffic Volumes on California State Highways, 2005; City of Grass Valley, Final City of Grass Valley Street System Master Plan, October 14, 2004.

## Existing Peak-Hour Intersection Traffic Volumes

Peak-hour traffic turning movement count data are available for the following area intersections at the Nevada County web site (<http://www.nctc.ca.gov/traffic>):

- Auburn Street at State Route 20/49 Northbound Off-Ramp – Frontage Road
- Auburn Street at State Route 20/49 Southbound On-Ramp – Frontage Road
- Brunswick Road at East Bennett Road
- Idaho-Maryland Road at Centennial Drive
- Idaho-Maryland Road at Brunswick Road

Supplemental traffic volume counts may be required for the project's CEQA analysis if requested and at locations to be identified by the City of Grass Valley.

## Level of Service

Level of Service (LOS) analysis provides an assessment of traffic conditions during peak traffic hours by characterizing the degree of delay that the average motorist experiences traveling through intersections. Levels of Service range from LOS A, which indicates little or no delays, to LOS F, which indicates extreme delays. For the City of Grass Valley, LOS C or better conditions are required.

Roadway levels of service reported in the city's Street System Master Plan, are as follows:<sup>1</sup>

- East Bennett Street east of SR 20/49 = LOS A
- East Bennett Road east of Centennial Drive = LOS A
- Brunswick Road northwest of Bennett Road = LOS B
- Brunswick Road northwest of Loma Rica Drive = LOS E
- Idaho-Maryland Road east of Railroad Avenue = LOS C
- Idaho-Maryland Road west of Brunswick Road = LOS A
- Whispering Pines Lane west of Brunswick Road = LOS A

## 4.14.2 Regulatory Context

### Nevada County General Plan Circulation Element<sup>2</sup>

The Level of Service standards denoted in the Circulation Element of the Nevada County General Plan would apply to area intersections under the jurisdiction of the county, as follows:

**Policy 4.1** The minimum level of service allowable in the *Rural Regions* of the County, as identified in the General Plan, shall be Level of Service (LOS) C, except where the existing LOS is less than C. In those situations, the LOS shall not be allowed to be less than the existing. Level of service shall be based on the typical highest

<sup>1</sup> City of Grass Valley, *Final City of Grass Valley Street System Master Plan*, October 14, 2004.

<sup>2</sup> Under the proposed project, Nevada County plans and policies would only apply to the New Brunswick site, which would not be annexed into the City of Grass Valley as part of this proposed project.

peak hour of weekday traffic. Special events may be permitted which temporarily exceed this minimum level of service.

**Policy 4.3** The minimum acceptable level of service (LOS) for areas identified as *Community Regions* in the General Plan, shall be LOS D, except where the existing LOS is less than D. In those situations, the LOS shall not be allowed to be less than the existing. Level of service shall be based on the typical highest peak hour of weekday traffic.

## City of Grass Valley General Plan

The Circulation Element of the Grass Valley General Plan<sup>3</sup> includes the following Circulation Goals and Objectives, Circulation Policies, and Circulation Implementation Actions and Strategies that pertain to the proposed project:

### ***Circulation Goals and Objectives***

**2-CG** Ensure that street and roadway improvements complement and support land use goals, objectives, policies and plans.

4-CO Placement of public transportation access at convenient locations.

5-CO Convenient, safe and functional facilities for pedestrians, bicyclists and equestrians.

6-CO Flexible standards that respect existing neighborhoods.

7-CO Use of City standards throughout the Planning Area.

**3-CG** Provide for the safe and efficient movement of people and goods in a manner that respects existing neighborhoods and the natural environment.

8-CO Routing of through-traffic around neighborhoods to collector streets.

9-CO Use of traffic calming techniques to protect neighborhoods and residents from adverse traffic impacts.

10-CO Protection of stream courses, riparian areas and other natural features.

11-CO Development and implementation of a comprehensive traffic safety program, including improvement of facilities serving pedestrian needs.

**4-CG** Maintain, improve and expand the existing circulation and transportation system to provide reasonable ingress, egress and internal movement.

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<sup>3</sup> City of Grass Valley, *2020 General Plan* (Chapter 4, Circulation), November 1999.

**I2-CO** Establishment of and adherence to a functional hierarchy of streets and highways, both within the city and throughout the Planning Area.

**13-CO** Improvement of the transportation system to facilitate commerce and economic development.

**5-CG** Maintain Adequate Emergency Access

**I2-CO** Improvement and maintenance of adequate emergency access throughout the city.

### ***Circulation Policies***

**3-CP** Improve public transportation to better link existing and future residential areas with high traffic generating commercial/industrial nodes.

**8-CP** Incorporate separated, non-motorized paths in street cross-section designs whenever feasible.

**12-CP** Adhere to high safety standards where pedestrians and bicyclists are exposed to motorized vehicles.

**13-CP** Assure the continuity of sidewalks by instituting a city-wide sidewalk planning/construction programs.

**15-CP** Avoid environmentally sensitive areas, to the extent feasible, when expanding the roadway network.

**16-CP** Eliminate curb cuts and other vehicular encroachments along arterial and collector streets where feasible and practical, to promote both efficient traffic flow and traffic safety.

**21-CP** Defer to preservation of community character, including historical and architectural features, when planning and implementing transportation improvements.

**22-CP** Remove impediments to emergency access from public streets and rights-of-way.

**24-CP** Coordinate circulation and development plans with public safety agencies, fire departments/districts and emergency service providers.

### ***Circulation Implementation Actions and Strategies***

**1-CI** Adopt the roadway classification system outlined in the Circulation Element. The City shall plan, design and regulate roadways in accordance with the functional classification system reflected in Figure 4-1 and Table 4-1 (of the General Plan Circulation Element).

**2-CI** Regularly update Development Impact Fees.

**5-CI** Continue to refine and improve the design standards for the roadway system. The design standards shall reflect functional classification and include the following elements:

- Right-of-way requirements
- Roadway cross-sections including landscaping and bikeways
- Signalization and access control
- Land use compatibility, orientation and design standards
- Vehicle and pedestrian safety
- Variable local street widths based on traffic demands

Exceptions to the standards may be necessary but should be kept to a minimum and should be evaluated on a case by case basis.

**6-CI** Monitor truck traffic. As conditions warrant, develop, enforce, evaluate and update a truck route system to ensure safe and efficient routes through the City.

**7-CI** Continue to update the Capital Improvement Program to implement policy which strives to maintain LOS "D" at all locations during the weekday P.M. peak hour. Define "normally accepted maximum" improvements that are consistent with the character and terrain of Grass V alley. If forecast traffic volumes cannot maintain LOS "D", the City Council may consider additional "extraordinary" improvements. The City Council may determine, on a case by case basis, that "extraordinary" improvements are not feasible or desirable and may relax the LOS "D" standard for a particular intersection or roadway segment. In considering exceptions to the LOS "D" standard, the City shall consider the following factors:

- The number of hours per day that the intersection or roadway segment would operate at conditions worse the LOS "D".
- The ability of the improvement to reduce peak hour delay and improve traffic operations.
- The impact on accessibility to surrounding properties.
- The right-of-way needs and the physical impact on surrounding properties.
- The visual aesthetics of the required improvements and its impact on community identity and character.
- Environmental impacts including air quality and noise impacts.

- Construction and right-of-way acquisition costs.
- Impacts on pedestrian and bicycle accessibility and safety.
- The impacts of the required construction phasing and traffic maintenance.

In no case should the City plan for worse than LOS "E" at any intersection or roadway segment during the afternoon peak hour.

**14-CI** Coordinate with surrounding jurisdictions to provide acceptable and compatible levels of service on roadways connecting the City. Work with the Nevada County Transportation Commission to implement applicable Level of Service standards. Work with appropriate air pollution control agencies to implement transportation improvements and measures that help meet the established air goals and standards.

**15-CI** Ensure adequate funding to meet established Level of Service policies. Continue to implement and update traffic impact fees on new development and to obtain gas tax and other revenues to fund the Capital Improvement Program. Explore funding for transit and for non-motorized circulation improvements, to be identified in the Trails-Sidewalks-Bikeways Master Plan. Consider alternative funding sources, such as establishment of assessment district(s). Work with regional planning agencies to explore funding opportunities for all components of its transportation system that are required to meet Level of Service standards.

**16-CI** Monitor the status of regional planning efforts and Caltrans design work in order to be cognizant of future right of way requirements and local responsibilities. Maintain a current record of Caltrans and Nevada County Transportation Commission activity for major facilities so future right of way needs can be addressed when reviewing development proposals. Consider future Caltrans right of way needs when evaluating development proposals and shall incorporate measures to preserve rights way into development agreements and conditions of approval.

The City of Grass Valley (City Council Resolution No. 06-21) recently adopted revisions to the City Traffic Policy regarding traffic study methodology and evaluation criteria. Included in Resolution No. 06-21 were recognition of the City's need to better gauge the level of impacts on intersections operating at LOS D or worse, specifically to ensure that thresholds of significance would not restrict flexibility for the Idaho-Maryland Road / East Main Street intersection and for development projects. A March 22, 2006 written opinion by special legal counsel recommended the following amendment to option #4 (in Exhibit "A") to mitigate traffic impacts of a project to a less-than-significant level per CEOA:

4. Roadway/intersection meets criteria of "Traffic Improvement Phasing Policy". The impacts of a project can be determined to be mitigated to a level of insignificance if the impacted intersection or roadway met the criteria of the City's "Traffic Improvement Phasing Policy". The City hereby establishes a "Traffic Improvement Phasing Policy" for those projects

which exceed the City's threshold of significance at a critical intersection, but the traffic impacts of such an intersection or road has been determined to be effectively mitigated by a reasonable plan of actual mitigation that the relevant agency commits itself to implementing. *Anderson First Coalition v. City of Anderson* (2005) 130 Cal.App.4th 1173. A reasonable plan shall include (i) a City commitment to an identified improvement as reflected in a CIP or other document (ii) a schedule for funding: through impact fees and/or other funding: sources as necessary to fund improvement cost (iii) a general timetable for implementation. As an added option, a development may be required to provide traffic control staff at identified intersections to efficiently move traffic through specified intersections, or by implementation of other transportation demand measures, until the improvement is complete, and/or other physical improvements.

The March 22, 2006 opinion also confirmed the following:

- 1) The Council may amend the Policy to follow judicial precedent as it relates to what actions constitute effective mitigation;
- 2) The Council may amend the Policy as recommended above without CEOA review;
- 3) The Council may amend the Policy without consultation with other agencies;
- 4) The effect of the policy change would mean that in circumstances where a funding strategy is in place to construct a transportation improvement the traffic impacts from projects contributing: traffic to the intersection or roadway would be considered mitigated for "CEOA" purposes, and an EIR would not be required; and
- 5) Policy 7-CI, as discussed on February 14, is applicable to approvals/amendments of the City's CIP and not to this Policy amendment.

The traffic and circulation section of the CEQA analysis for the proposed project in consultation with City staff, assess potential project impacts in a manner consistent with the City Traffic Policy, as revised. The evaluation criteria are described below. Gaps in available information necessary to provide a thorough analysis of project impacts are identified at the end of this section.

## 4.14.3 Impacts Discussion

### Methods

The effort to describe existing transportation facilities in the project area and to identify potential transportation impacts associated with the proposed project (with identification of additional analysis required in the project application's EIR), included review of existing documents and reference materials.

Documents and reference materials reviewed included the City of Grass Valley's 2020 General Plan/EIR, Street System Master Plan (updated October 2004), and traffic impact study policy (updated January 2006); 2004 estimate of project trip generation and distribution by Crane Transportation Group for the project applicant (in Appendix N of Volume III of the Application for Mineral Exploration and Mining Use Permit); the Traffic and Circulation section of the 1995 Idaho-Maryland Gold Mine Draft EIR; and Idaho-Maryland Mining Corporation's responses to City data request. In addition, various on-line resources were reviewed (e.g., traffic count data available on the Nevada County Transportation Commission [NCTC] website).

## Standards of Significance

For the purpose of this evaluation, traffic and circulation impacts would be considered significant if the project would meet any of the following criteria:<sup>4</sup>

1. The project would not be consistent with the 2020 General Plan and NCTC Traffic Model or future Citywide Traffic Model relative to land use and generation of higher traffic projections.
2. There would be no feasible mitigation measures to reduce the impact of the project to less-than-significant levels. "Feasible" means mitigation has been identified in the City's General Plan, Street System Master Plan, Capital Improvement Program or Regional/Local Transportation Fee Program.
3. The project would cause a roadway/intersection operating at an acceptable level of service (LOS) to deteriorate to an unacceptable LOS D or worse. If no mitigation measures were identified in a document cited in criterion #2 above, then the project would be 100 percent responsible for restoring the LOS to an acceptable level.
4. The traffic study prepared for the project reports that the total intersection traffic volumes would exceed the thresholds listed below for an intersection operating at an unacceptable level (LOS D or worse).
  - a. An increase of the volume-to-capacity ratio by more than 0.02 for signalized intersections.
  - b. An increase of the average intersection delay by more than 2.0 seconds for unsignalized intersections.

In addition, for the purpose of this evaluation, the project would cause a significant impact if it would substantially increase traffic hazards due to a roadway design feature or incompatible uses, result in inadequate emergency access and/or inadequate parking capacity, or conflict with adopted policies, plans, or programs supporting alternative transportation.

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<sup>4</sup> City of Grass Valley, *Policy Adopting Traffic Impact Study Methodology and Evaluation Criteria for Critical Intersections*, Adopted March 2002, Updated January and March 2006 (City of Grass Valley, 2006).

## Planned Roadway Improvements

The City has plans to extend Centennial Drive to East Bennett Road by 2015 (Figure 3-2 shows the future right-of-way through the project site), see Section 4.9. *Land Use and Planning* for a further discussion of the Centennial Drive extension and potential project impacts.

## Results

**Impact 4.14-1: The proposed project would increase traffic volumes on area roadways. This would be a potentially significant impact.**

### ***Idaho-Maryland Site<sup>5</sup>***

As part of the proposed project, shift change times would be set for all activities so that, to the maximum extent possible, project auto and truck traffic on the local roadway network would be minimized between 7:00 and 9:00 a.m., 12 noon to 1:00 p.m. and 4:00 to 6:00 p.m. All shift changes, other than for half of the mining and ceramics administrative staffs, would be moved to other (off-peak) time periods. Typical weekday trip generation during peak operation years (2010 through 2013) would total about 1,190 daily vehicle trips (930 auto trips and 260 truck trips).<sup>6</sup> On a Saturday or Sunday, there would be about 950 daily vehicle trips (710 auto trips and 240 truck trips). Based on the above-described limits to peak-hour trip generation external to the site, during the a.m. peak hour, the project site would add about 30 vehicles to East Bennett Road west of the site and 5 vehicles (trucks only) to Idaho-Maryland Road between Centennial Drive and the freeway. During the p.m. peak hour, the project site would add about 35 vehicles to East Bennett Road west of the site and 5 vehicles (trucks only) to Idaho-Maryland Road between Centennial Drive and the freeway. The principal site access roads to the Idaho-Maryland site are from the Whispering Pines Lane / Centennial Drive on the north, and from East Bennett Road at the south.

Additional access is provided via dirt roads, one off Idaho-Maryland Road west of Centennial Drive, and another off Bennett Road.

### ***New Brunswick Site***

Trip generation estimate for this site will be needed to complete total project trip generation.

### ***Round Hole Site***

Trip generation estimate for this site will be needed to complete total project trip generation.

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<sup>5</sup> This section was prepared using information and analysis findings (modified and/or augmented as deemed appropriate) contained in a technical resource document (Crane Transportation Group, *Traffic Impact Report, Idaho-Maryland Mining Corporation Proposed Project, Trip Generation and Distribution*, December 13, 2004). The Crane traffic assessment focused on the Idaho-Maryland Mine site.

<sup>6</sup> The project trip generation estimate by Crane Transportation Group (CTG), for the Idaho-Maryland Site only, was based on provision of four work shifts, whereas the project description stipulates there would be up to three shifts. If the latter is correct, then CTG's numbers will have to be revised.

### **Total Project**

Although trip generation estimates for the New Brunswick and Round Hole sites have not been determined yet, it is anticipated that the total p.m. peak-hour trip generation for the three project sites would exceed (or at least be within ten percent of) the City's 50 p.m. peak-hour trip threshold for determining when a traffic impact study is required (Criteria #2 in Resolution No. 06-21).

### **Site Construction**

Traffic-generating construction activities would include trucks hauling equipment and materials to and from the work site, and the daily arrival and departure of construction workers. Construction activities would generate up to about XX (see Data Gap #2) truck trips per day. At peak construction, there would be up to about 250 construction workers and equipment operators at the construction site on a daily basis for a period of 12 to 14 months. Workers would begin work by 6:30 a.m. and would leave the site no later than 3:30 p.m.; there would be no scheduled construction work on weekends.

The CEQA analysis will determine the project's impact (i.e., whether or not the proposed project would exceed the level of standard established for designated roadways in the project vicinity), using the City's latest traffic policy/methodology for such evaluations. Intersection improvements (e.g., deceleration/acceleration lanes) might be required by the City as a result of the analysis.

### **Site Reclamation**

It would be anticipated that site reclamation would take about one year (mid-2028 to mid-2029). It is expected that about 20 workers would be needed to complete the reclamation. Future use of the site after reclamation has not yet been determined, and potential traffic impacts as a result of that future use are unknown.

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**The proposed project would not result in a change in air traffic patterns. There would be no impact.**

The project sites are in proximity (to the west) of the Nevada County Air Park, but the project construction and operations would extend no higher than 30-50 feet in elevation, and would have no effect on air traffic patterns.

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**Impact 4.14-2: The proposed project would potentially affect traffic safety on area roadways. This would be a potentially significant impact.**

### ***Idaho-Maryland Site***

The project's access for employees and the visitor's center would be located at a point on Bennett Street with restricted sight distance; therefore the reduced visibility coupled with relatively high vehicle speeds on Bennett Street would cause potential traffic hazards. In addition, large trucks turning from the Idaho-Maryland site onto Idaho-Maryland Road from stop-sign-controlled Centennial Way could create a traffic hazard because of the relatively high speed of the traffic in that section. The CEQA analysis will evaluate current and future conditions at all access intersection, and will explore possible measures that would mitigate this potential hazard to a less-than-significant level. The possible mitigation measures include warning signs posted on affected roads (e.g., Idaho-Maryland Road and Bennett Street) to slow traffic and/or traffic signals, at access road intersections, if warranted.

### ***New Brunswick Site***

Field investigation of site access characteristics will be needed to complete this assessment.

### ***Round Hole Site***

Field investigation of site access characteristics will be needed to complete this assessment.

### ***Total Project***

Although site access characteristics related to traffic safety for the New Brunswick and Round Hole sites have not been determined at this time, the above-described potential traffic hazards associated with the Idaho-Maryland site would satisfy the City's "hazards to public safety" threshold for determining that a traffic impact study is required (Criteria #3 in Resolution No. 06-21 ).

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### **Impact 4.14-3: The proposed project would require adequate site access for general and emergency vehicles. This would be a potentially significant impact.**

As part of the project, access roads to all properties would be designed for two or more lanes to accommodate emergency vehicle access. All roads would be built to City standards (e.g., with pavement structure to accommodate expected truck traffic volumes, and with turning radii to meet Caltrans standards). There would be three access points for the Idaho-Maryland Site – at the northwest corner on Idaho-Maryland Road, the northeast corner at the intersection of Centennial Drive / Whispering Pines Lane, and the southeast corner on East Bennett Road. There would be only one access point for the New Brunswick and Round Hole sites. The CEQA analysis will evaluate access considerations for the latter project properties, and will explore possible measures that would mitigate this potential hazard to a less than significant level.

**Impact 4.14-4: The proposed project would generate demand for parking spaces. This would be a potentially significant impact.**

#### ***Idaho-Maryland Site***

On the Idaho-Maryland site, there would be 170 employee parking spaces and 9 visitor center parking spaces. Because the operations work force would work in three shifts, and work 24 hours per day, 7 days per week, a maximum of 145 employees would be onsite during any one shift.<sup>7</sup> Starting times for each shift would be staggered to accommodate parking during overlap of adjacent shifts (i.e., to minimize time when workers for the following shift are onsite before workers of the preceding shift leave).

#### ***New Brunswick Site***

Proposed parking supply and work force characteristics will be needed.

#### ***Round Hole Site***

Proposed parking supply and work force characteristics will be needed.

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**Impact 4.14-5: The proposed project could affect alternative transportation modes. This would be a less than significant impact.**

Conflicts with adopted policies, plans, or programs supporting alternative transportation are not anticipated. The project applicant would cooperate with the local transit agency to explore public transit options for the project.

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### **4.14.4 Data Gaps**

1. The project trip generation estimate by Crane Transportation Group (CTG), in Appendix N of Volume III of the Application for Mineral Exploration and Mining Use Permit, for the Idaho-Maryland Site only, was based on provision of four work shifts, whereas the project description stipulates there would be up to three shifts. If the latter is correct, then CTG's numbers will have to be revised.
2. The CTG report will need to be revised to include an estimate for project construction truck trip generation.
3. Trip generation information and parking supply/workforce characteristics are missing for the Round Hole and the New Brunswick site, and will be required to complete the analysis.
4. Expected (assumed?) post-reclamation land use is needed if assessments of potential future impacts are to be presented.

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<sup>7</sup> See Data Gap 1 regarding question of the number of work shifts, and the effect on the CTG analysis.

5. The CTG report is not in compliance with the City's Traffic Impact Study Methodology (as updated in January and March 2006 per Resolution 06-21), and the following will need to be completed in order to comply with the City's policy:
- a. A full estimate of project vehicle trip generation to determine, among other things, whether a full traffic impact study is required. As discussed above (under Impact 4.16-1 and 4.16-2), it is anticipated that a traffic impact study will be required.
  - b. A Volume/Capacity Analysis (VCA), which shall include, as a minimum, p.m. peak-hour trip generation, distribution, assignment, in/out percentage and project location (relative to critical intersections), the increase in delay (at unsignalized intersections, using the Highway Capacity Software [HCS] 2000 methodology) or volume-to-capacity (v/c) ratio (at signalized intersections, using the Intersection Capacity Utilization [ICU] methodology) that will be created by the proposed project on the critical intersections tied to a comparison of existing versus existing plus project conditions. Upon review of this data by City staff, a determination will be made if the project has the potential to exceed the thresholds of significance (defined above, under Standards of Significance, on page 4.16-8). If the results of the VCA show that the project would exceed the LOS thresholds for any intersection, then a Comprehensive Traffic Study (CTS) will be required.
  - c. Analysis for a CTS will expand upon the VCA by including, as a minimum, any intersection (in addition to critical intersections) where the project would generate more than 50 p.m. peak-hour trips, and cumulative and cumulative plus project analysis scenarios (in addition to existing and existing plus project scenarios). The City Engineer could also require an analysis of the capacity of any adjoining or connecting roadway. The NCTC or City traffic model's assumed trip generation for the project site should be backed out of the projections, and project generation shall be manually assigned to cumulative plus project projections. The CTS shall identify the extent of the project's traffic impacts and shall include recommended measures to mitigate such impacts. The CTS shall address the information and formatting provisions for preparing a Traffic Report as specified in the City's Public Improvement Standards, Section 3, Subsections 3-2.01 to 3-2.14, excluding the subsection on "Significant Adverse Impacts."

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## References – Transportation and Traffic

Crane Transportation Group, 2004. *Traffic Impact Report, Idaho-Maryland Mining Corporation Proposed Project, Trip Generation and Distribution*, December 13, 2004

City of Grass Valley, 2006. *Policy Adopting Traffic Impact Study Methodology and Evaluation Criteria for Critical Intersections*, adopted March 2002, updated January and March 2006.

City of Grass Valley, 2004. *Final City of Grass Valley Street System Master Plan*, October 14, 2004.

City of Grass Valley, 1999. *City of Grass Valley 2020 General Plan*, adopted November 1999.

Nevada County, 1996. *Nevada County General Plan Circulation Element*, 1996.