

**INITIAL STUDY AND
MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION**

**CLEMENTS RANCH TENTATIVE TRACT
MAP No. 5606**



Prepared for:

City of Visalia
Planning and Community Preservation Department
315 East Acequia Avenue
Visalia, CA 93291
Contact Person: Jarred Olsen, AICP
Phone: (559) 713-4449

Consultant :



5080 California Avenue, Suite 220
Bakersfield, CA 93309
Contact: Jaymie Brauer
Phone: (661) 616-2600

May 2026

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING AND INTENT TO ADOPT A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION

This is to advise that the City of Visalia has prepared a Mitigated Negative Declaration for the Project identified below that is scheduled to be held at the Planning Commission of the City of Visalia meeting on **June 8, 2026**.

PLEASE BE ADVISED that the Planning Commission of the City of Visalia will consider a recommendation to adopt the Mitigated Negative Declaration at its meeting to be held on **June 8, 2026**. Presentations will be made at approximately 7:00 p.m. Action on items on the Commission's agenda will occur after the presentations. The meeting will be held at the Visalia Council Chambers, 707 W. Acequia Avenue, Visalia, California 93291.

Project Name

Clements Ranch Tentative Tract Map No. 5606

Project Location

The Project site is located within an area of unincorporated Tulare County, southeast of the City of Visalia (City), adjacent to the City limits. The site consists of two separate Assessor Parcel Numbers (APNs), 127-020-20 and 127-020-21, with a combined approximately 78 acres of land. The Project site area is within the City's Sphere of Influence (SOI) and Urban Development Boundary (UDB) – Tier II. The site is currently zoned AE-20 (Exclusive Agriculture, 20-acre minimum) by Tulare County and designated as Residential Low, Residential Medium, Residential High Density, and Conservation by the City General Plan.

The Project is within Section 3, Township 19S, Range 25E, Mount Diablo Base and Meridian (MDB&M), of the Visalia U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) Quad Map. The site is generally bound by Union Pacific Railroad to the north, Road 148 to the east, East Caldwell Avenue (Avenue 280) to the south, and South Lovers Lane (Road 140) to the west. The surrounding land uses are generally agricultural land to the north, east, and south, and mixed-density residential tracts to the west.

Project Description

The Project site consists of approximately 370 multi-family high-density units, 153 single-family medium-density units in a gated community with a Homeowners Association (HOA), and 139 single-family low-density units in a non-gated community, for a total of approximately 662 units.

The Project site area will have three phases of buildout:

- TD 1 – Phase 1: Development of lots 1-78, outlots A-E, G-I, and L, Sunnyside Avenue and Streets A, B, E, and C

- TD 1 – Phase 2: Development of lots 140-158, 197-231, 252-265, 286-292, and outlots O and P
- TD 2 – Phase 1: Development of lots 79-189, outlots F, J-K, and Streets A, C, E-H
- TD 2 – Phase 2: Development of lots 159-196, 232-251, 266-285, and outlots Q, R, and T

There is no proposed development of the multi-family units at this time; however, this area is considered Phase 3.

On- and off-site improvements include circulation roads, interior local streets, curbs, gutters, sound barriers, sidewalks, streetlights, neighborhood connections to walking trail, open spaces, landscaping, a water well to be maintained by the City of Visalia, and stormwater basins. All streets are to be offered for dedication for public street purposes. All residential units will be equipped with 450-watt solar panels, utilize all electric appliances, and will be EV-ready (pre-wired during construction to allow for installation of an EV residential charger in the future). The multi-family portion of the Project will realign and underground the Tulare Irrigation Canal.

Outlots will be utilized and dedicated as follows:

- Outlots A, B, E, F, and J-L: Dedicated to the City of Visalia for open space, pedestrian, and public landscaping
- Outlots D and H: Dedicated to the City of Visalia for trail purposes
- Outlot C: For a water well that will be maintained by the City of Visalia
- Outlot G: Stormwater basin to be dedicated to the City of Visalia
- Outlot I: Dedicated to Tulare County Irrigation District
- Outlots M-R and T: Maintained by private HOA
- Outlot S: To be deeded to Southern California Edison (SCE)

Water will be provided by the California Water Service Company, and sewer will be provided by the City.

Discretionary Actions:

The following discretionary actions are required for the Project:

- Annexation into the City of Visalia (Annexation No. 2025-02)
- Annexation approval by Tulare County Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCo)
- General Plan Amendment (GPA No. 2025-04) to modify existing General Plan designations to optimize the residential development on the parcel and amend Figure 4-1 of the Circulation Element
- Prezone to R-1-5 (Single-Family Residential), R-M-2 (Medium-Density Multi-Family Residential), R-M-3 (Multi-Family Residential) and QP (Quasi-Public)
- Tentative Tract Map No. 5606
- Conditional Use Permit (CUP) for a Planned Unit Development (PUD) (CUP No. 2025-24)

The Project site would be rezoned as R-1-5, R-M-2, R-M-3, and QP. The General Plan Amendment would modify the existing General Plan designations to optimize the residential development on the parcel and amend the Visalia Circulation Element to remove the “K” Avenue new one-mile-long, two-lane collector from Lovers Lane to Road 248, as referenced in Figure 4-1 Roadway Classifications and Table 4-5 Planned Circulation Improvements of the City’s General Plan. There is an SCE substation approximately 0.50 miles east of the Project site that would not allow for the extension of “K” Avenue. A new Sunnyside Avenue, one-mile-long, two-lane collector from the Lovers Lane/Sunnyside Avenue intersection to Road 248, is to be added to Figure 4-1 and Table 4-5. The CUP/PUD will allow certain deviations of the Visalia Municipal Code standards to develop single-family homes within the Medium-Density land use/R-M-2 designation, allow for reduced setbacks, street sizes, and parcel sizes for the medium-density parcels.

Construction:

Construction of the residential development would occur over a maximum of 18 to 24 months. It is anticipated that the following pieces of equipment would be used during construction activities:

- Roller
- Loaded trucks
- Excavator
- Generator
- Service truck
- Air compressor

The document and documents referenced in the Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration are available for review at the City of Visalia Planning Division, 315 East Acequia Avenue, Visalia, California 93291, Monday through Thursday, 7:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m., and at the website:

<https://www.visalia.gov/277/California-Environmental-Quality-Act-CEQ>

As mandated by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the public review period for this document will be 30 days (CEQA Section 15073[b]). The public review period begins on May 8, 2026, and ends on June 7, 2026. For further information, please contact Jarred Olsen, Principal Planner, at (559) 713-4449 or Jarred.Olsen@visalia.gov.

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

AAQS	Ambient Air Quality Standards
AB	Assembly Bill
AE-20	Exclusive Agriculture, 20-acre minimum
AFY	acre-feet per year
APNS	Assessor Parcel Numbers
APS	Alternative Planning Strategy
AQAP	Air Quality Attainment Plans
AQIA	Air Quality Impact Analysis
AQP	air quality plan
BAU	business as usual
BMPs	best management practices
BSA	Biological Survey Area
C&D	Construction and Demolition
CA MUTCD	California Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices
CAAQS	California Ambient Air Quality Standards
Cal Water	California Water Service Company
CalGEM	California Geologic Energy Management Division
CARB	California Air Resources Board
CBC	California Building Code
CCAA	California Clean Air Act
CDFG	California Department of Fish and Game
CDFW	California Department of Fish and Wildlife
CEQA	California Environmental Quality Act
CESA	California Endangered Species Act
CGC	California Government Code
City	City of Visalia
CNDDB	California and California Natural Diversity Database
CNEL	Community Noise Equivalent Level
CNPS	California Native Plant Society
CO	carbon monoxide
CO ₂ e	carbon dioxide equivalent
CUP	Conditional Use Permit
CWC	California Water Code
dB	decibel
District	Visalia Water District
DNL	Day-Night Average Sound Level
DOC	Department of Conservation
DOF	Department of Finance
DTSC	Department of Toxic Substances Control
DU	dwelling unit
EDD	Employment Development Department
EIR	Environmental Impact Report
ETGSA	Eastern Tule Groundwater Sustainability Agency

FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
FHSZ	Fire Hazard Severity Zone
FMMP	Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program
GAMAQI	Guidance for Assessing and Mitigating Air Quality Impacts
GHG	greenhouse gas
GPA	General Plan Amendment
Gpd	gallons per day
GSAs	Groundwater Sustainability Agencies
GSP	Groundwater Sustainability Plan
HAP	hazardous air pollutant
HARP	Hotspots Analysis and Reporting Program
HI	hazard index
HMBP	Hazardous Materials Business Plan
HOA	Homeowners Association
IRWM	Integrated Regional Water Management
IS	Initial Study
ISO	Insurance Services Office
ITE	Institute of Transportation Engineers
ITP	Incidental Take Permit
KDWCD	Kaweah Delta Water Conservation District
LAFCo	Local Agency Formation Commission
LRA	Local Responsibility Area
MDB&M	Mount Diablo Base and Meridian
MM	Mitigation Measure
MMRP	Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program
MND	Mitigated Negative Declaration
MPOs	Metropolitan Planning Organizations
MWELo	Model Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance
NAAQS	National Ambient Air Quality Standards
NAHC	Native American Heritage Commission
NHD	National Hydrography Dataset
NO ₂	nitrogen dioxide
NO _x	oxides of nitrogen
NPDES	National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System
NWI	National Wetlands Inventory
O ₃	ozone
Pb	lead
PM	particulate matter
PM ₁₀	particulate matter with a diameter of 10 microns or less
PM _{2.5}	particulate matter with a diameter of 2.5 microns or less
PMI	point of maximum impact
PPD	persons per day
PSD	prevention of significant deterioration
PUD	Planned Unit Development
QP	Quasi-Public

R-1-5	Single-Family Residential
R-M-2	Medium-Density Multi-Family Residential
R-M-3	Multi-Family Residential
ROG	reactive organic gases
RTPA	Regional Transportation Planning Agencies
RWQCB	Regional Water Quality Control Board
SB	Senate Bill
SCE	Southern California Edison
SCS	Sustainable Communities Strategy
SIL	Significant Impact Levels
SIP	State Implementation Plan
SJVAB	San Joaquin Valley Air Basin
SJVAPCD	San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District
SMARA	Surface Mining and Reclamation Act
SOI	Sphere of Influence
SOx	sulfur oxides
SR	State Route
SRAs	State Responsibility Areas
SSJVIC	South San Joaquin Valley Information Center
SWMA	Consolidated Waste Management Authority
SWMP	Storm Water Master Plan
SWPPP	Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan
SWRCB	State Water Resources Control Board
TCAG	Tulare County Association of Governments
TCRTA	Tulare County Regional Transportation Agency
TIA	Traffic Impact Analysis
TOD	Transit Oriented Design
TTM	Tentative Tract Map
UBC	Uniform Building Code
UDB	Urban Development Boundary
USFWS	United States Fish and Wildlife Service
USGS	U.S. Geological Survey
UST	Underground storage tank
UTM	Universal Transverse Mercator
UWMP	Urban Water Management Plan
VFD	Visalia Fire Department
VMT	vehicle miles traveled
VPD	Visalia Police Department
VUSD	Visalia Unified School District
WCP	Water Conservation Plant
WSA	Water Supply Assessment
WUI	Wildland Urban Interface

MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION

As Lead Agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the City of Visalia reviewed the Project described below to determine whether it could have a significant effect on the environment because of its development. In accordance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15382, “[s]ignificant effect on the environment” means a substantial, or potentially substantial, adverse change in any of the physical conditions within the area affected by the project, including land, air, water, minerals, flora, fauna, ambient noise, and objects of historic or aesthetic significance.

Project Name

Clements Ranch Tentative Tract Map No. 5606

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- Roller
- Loaded trucks
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- Service truck
- Air compressor

Mailing Address and Phone Number of Contact Person

Jarred Olsen, AICP – Principal Planner
City of Visalia, Planning and Community Preservation Department
315 East Acequia Avenue
Visalia, CA 93291
(559) 713-4449
Email: Jarred.Olsen@visalia.gov

Findings

As Lead Agency, the City of Visalia finds that the Project will not have a significant effect on the environment. The Environmental Checklist (CEQA Guidelines Appendix G) or Initial Study (IS) (see *Section 3 - Environmental Checklist*) identified one or more potentially significant effects on the environment, but revisions to the Project have been made before the release of this Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND), or mitigation measures would be implemented that reduce all potentially significant impacts to less-than-significant levels. The Lead Agency further finds that there is no substantial evidence that this Project would have a significant effect on the environment.

Mitigation Measures Included in the Project to Avoid Potentially Significant Effects

MM AG-1: Prior to the issuance of grading or building permits, the Project proponent shall mitigate impacts for loss of up to 78 acres of Prime Farmland on the Project site at a 1:1 ratio. The amount of land requiring mitigation shall correspond to the amount of land associated with the issuance of the grading or building permit, or for residential land associated with a subdivision map, the amount of land associated with the subdivision map. The Project proponent shall implement one or more of the following measures to mitigate the loss: Payment of in-lieu fees, mitigation banks, fee title acquisition, and/or conservation easements on land(s) within the Southern San Joaquin Valley of California, specifically within Kern County, Tulare County, Kings County, Fresno County, or Madera County. The City shall require, at a minimum, evidence that the preserved land has an adequate water supply, agricultural zoning, evidence of land encumbrance documentation, documentation that the easement/regulations are permanent and monitored, and documentation that the mitigation strategy is appropriately endowed. This mitigation shall be verified by the City prior to issuance of grading or building permits. The Project proponent, at its election, may mitigate for the loss of agricultural land through compliance with the Agricultural Mitigation Program that is adopted by the City in lieu of mitigating on a 1:1 ratio.

MM AG-2: In order to reduce potential conflicts between urban and agricultural uses, the following measures shall be implemented:

- a. Potential residents shall be notified about possible exposure to agricultural chemicals at the time of purchase/lease of property within the development.
- b. A Right-to-Farm Covenant shall be recorded on each residential tract map or be made a condition of each tract map to protect continued agricultural practices in the area.
- c. Potential residents shall be informed of the Right-to-Farm Covenant at the time of purchase/lease of property within the development.

MM BIO-1: Prior to the issuance of grading permits or ground disturbance, a pre-construction clearance survey of the Project footprint shall be conducted for special-status wildlife species and nesting migratory birds and raptors. The survey shall occur no less than 14 days prior to the start of construction activities. If construction is delayed beyond 30 days from the time of the survey or there is a lapse in construction of more than 30 days, then another survey shall be conducted. The survey shall be conducted by a biologist with adequate training and prior experience conducting surveys for special-status wildlife species. If no special-status species are observed, no further action is warranted. If dens or burrows that could support special-status species and/or nesting birds and raptors are discovered during the pre-construction survey, appropriate avoidance buffers shall be established. If no special-status species are observed on or near the Project site, no further surveys are required. A report outlining the results of the preconstruction survey shall be submitted to the lead agency as evidence of compliance.

MM BIO-2: If construction is planned during the nesting season for migratory birds (February 15 to August 31) and nesting birds are identified during the preconstruction

survey, an active Swainson's hawk nest shall be avoided by 0.5 miles, other raptor nests shall be avoided by 500 feet, and all other migratory bird nests shall be avoided by 250 feet. Avoidance buffers may be reduced if a qualified biological monitor determines that encroachment into the buffer area is not affecting nest building, the rearing of young, or otherwise affecting the breeding behaviors of the resident birds. Because nesting birds can establish new nests or produce a second or even third clutch at any time during the nesting season, nesting bird surveys shall be repeated every 30 days as construction activities are occurring throughout the nesting season. If no nesting birds are observed on or near the Project site, no further surveys are required.

MM BIO-3: A Worker Environmental Awareness Program shall be developed and implemented for all personnel who could access the site prior to commencing any disturbance activities. The program shall consist of an on-site or center presentation that will describe the locations and types of sensitive plant, wildlife, and sensitive natural communities (collectively, "Biological Resources") on and near the site, an overview of the laws and regulations governing the protection of Biological Resources, the reasons for protecting the Biological Resources, the specific protection and avoidance measures that are applicable to the site, and the identity of designated points of contact should questions or issues arise, including the qualified biologist. The program shall provide training to recognize, avoid, and report to applicable qualified biologists any Biological Resources on the site.

- a. The Worker Environmental Awareness Program shall emphasize the need to avoid contact with on-site wildlife and avoid entry into areas where Biological Resources have been identified based on pre-disturbance field surveys, and to implement the buffer avoidance or other protection measures established by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) shall be identified by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) or required by the Biological Resource mitigation measures. The training shall emphasize the importance of not feeding or domesticating wildlife and the need to avoid any trash, micro-trash, or potential food waste on-site, except in animal-proof containers emptied daily, to avoid attracting or causing adverse impacts to special-status wildlife.
- b. All on-site personnel must sign a statement verifying that they have completed the Worker Environmental Awareness Program and that they understand and agree to implement the biological requirements for the worksite. If signed employee statements are not available, documentation may be provided by Worker Environmental Awareness Program training records, which shall be kept by the applicant for a minimum of five years. Each applicant shall maintain a list of all persons who have completed the training program and shall provide the list to the County or to State and federal wildlife agency representatives upon request.

MM BIO-4: If protected or special-status species are identified on the Project site during pre-construction surveys, protective buffers shall be used, where effective in the opinion of the qualified biologist. These measures are created to avoid any unauthorized incidental take of these species and to minimize any incidental take. Protective buffers shall be delineated using brightly colored stakes and/or flagging or similar materials and remain until

construction activities are complete, at which time of completion, the buffers must be removed. Protective buffers shall be established around active dens and/or burrows of special-status animal species or populations of special-status plant species to avoid unauthorized take of Protected Species as listed in the table below. The protective buffer distance shall be increased if required to avoid unauthorized incidental take of any Protected Species as determined by a qualified biologist. Protective buffer distances and other avoidance measures that may be implemented to avoid impacts to Protected Species or Sensitive Species must be consistent with the USFWS and/or the CDFW requirements and shall be implemented and overseen by a qualified biologist.

Disturbance Buffers for Sensitive Resources

Sensitive Resource	Buffer Zone from Disturbance (feet)
Potential San Joaquin kit fox den	50
Known San Joaquin kit fox den	100
Natal San Joaquin kit fox den	500
Atypical San Joaquin kit fox den	50
Rodent burrows	50
Special-status bird species' active nests	500 feet to 0.5 miles, depending on species and sight line
American badger: Non-maternity dens	50
American badger: Maternity dens	200

MM BIO-5: If Project activities must occur during the Swainson’s hawk nesting season (February 15 to September 31), pre-activity surveys shall be conducted for Swainson’s hawk nests in accordance with the *Recommended Timing and Methodology for Swainson’s Hawk Nesting Surveys in California’s Central Valley (CDFG, 2000)*. The surveys shall be conducted on the Project site plus a 0.5-mile buffer. To meet the minimum level of protection for the species, surveys shall be conducted during at least two survey periods prior to the start of construction. The survey shall be conducted in accordance with the methodology outlined in existing protocols and should be phased with the construction of the Project.

If no Swainson’s hawk nests are found, no further action is required.

MM BIO-6: If an active Swainson’s hawk nest is discovered at any time within 0.5 miles of active construction, a qualified biologist shall complete an assessment of the potential for current construction activities to impact the nest. The assessment shall consider the type of construction activities, the location of construction relative to the nest, the visibility of construction activities from the nest location, and other existing disturbances in the area that are not related to construction activities of this Project. Based on this assessment, the biologist shall determine if construction activities can proceed and the level of nest monitoring required. Construction activities shall not occur within 500 feet of an active nest, but depending upon conditions at the site, this distance may be reduced. Full-time monitoring to evaluate the effects of construction activities on nesting Swainson’s hawks may be required. The qualified biologist shall have the authority to stop work if it is

determined that Project construction is disturbing the nest. These buffers may need to be increased depending on the sensitivity of the nesting Swainson’s hawk to disturbances and at the discretion of the qualified biologist.

MM BIO-7: If burrows that could support the burrowing owl species are discovered during the pre-construction clearance survey conducted under MM BIO-1, the avoidance buffers outlined below shall be established, and burrow monitoring shall be conducted in accordance with the California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG) *Staff Report on Burrowing Owl Mitigation* (CDFG, 2012). No work would occur within these buffers. If occupied burrowing owl burrows cannot be avoided by the appropriate buffer below, an Incidental Take Permit (ITP) issued by the CDFW under the California Endangered Species Act (CESA) to authorize "take" that is incidental to an otherwise lawful activity, may be required before any work within the buffer.

Location	Time of Year	Level of Disturbance		
		Low	Med	High
Nesting sites	April 1 -Aug 15	200 m*	500 m	500 m
Nesting sites	Aug 16 – Oct 15	200 m	200 m	500 m
Nesting sites	Oct 16- Mar 31	50 m	100 m	500 m

*Meters (m)

MM BIO-8: Occupied American badger dens detected during pre-disturbance surveys shall be flagged, and ground-disturbing activities shall be avoided within 50 feet of the den. Maternity dens shall be avoided, and a minimum 200-foot buffer from disturbance shall be maintained during the pup-rearing season (February 15 through July 1). Maternity dens shall be avoided to the maximum extent feasible in the opinion of a qualified biologist. If an active maternity den is proposed to be disturbed, the qualified biologist shall consult with the CDFW to identify any appropriate additional minimization measures that the qualified biologist determines, with the wildlife agencies, can actually be implemented based on field conditions. All such measures shall be implemented for Project activities.

MM BIO-9: The following additional measures shall be implemented during construction to avoid and minimize potential significant adverse impacts to protected and sensitive species:

- a. All vehicles shall observe a 15-mile-per-hour speed limit in all areas of disturbance and on unpaved roads unless otherwise posted. Off-road traffic outside of designated access routes is prohibited. Speed limit signs shall be posted in visible locations at the point of site entry and at regular intervals on all unpaved access roads.
- b. All disturbance activities, except emergency situations or drilling that may require continuous operations, shall only occur during daylight hours. Nighttime disturbance activity for drilling purposes shall use directed lighting and shielding methods and comply with applicable lighting mitigation measures.
- c. All food-related trash items and all forms of micro trash, such as wrappers, cans, bottles, bottle tops, and food scraps, shall be disposed of in closed, animal-proof containers and removed daily from the site.

- d. Excavations, spoil piles, access roadways, and parking and staging areas shall be subject to dust control as set forth in the dust control mitigation measures.
- e. The use of herbicides for vegetation control shall be restricted to those approved by the USFWS and the CDFW. No rodenticides shall be used on any site unless approved by the USFWS and the CDFW, and shall observe label and other restrictions mandated by the United States Environmental Protection Agency, California Department of Food and Agriculture, and State and federal laws and regulations. For split estates, no herbicides for vegetation control may occur in Tier 2 areas without surface owner approval.
- f. No plants or wildlife shall be collected, taken, or removed from the site or any adjacent locations except as necessary for Project-related vegetation removal or wildlife relocation by a qualified biologist and subject to all applicable permits and authorizations.
- g. All open trenches or excavations shall be covered at the end of each workday to prevent wildlife entrapment. If an excavation is too large to cover, escape ramps shall be installed at an incline ratio of no greater than 2:1. All trenches and pipes shall be inspected for the presence of wildlife each day prior to the commencement of work.
- h. To enable San Joaquin kit foxes and other wildlife to pass through the Project site, any perimeter fencing shall include a four- to eight-inch opening between the fence mesh and the ground, or the fence shall be raised four inches above the ground except for blunt-nosed leopard lizard exclusion fencing. The bottom of the fence fabric shall be knuckled (wrapped back to form a smooth edge) to protect wildlife.
- i. All vertical tubes used in Project construction and chain link fencing poles shall be temporarily or permanently capped to avoid the entrapment and death of special-status wildlife and birds. All pipes 1.5 inches or greater in diameter stored overnight on a Project location must have end caps or other physical barriers that prevent wildlife from entering the pipe.
- j. All dead or injured special-status wildlife shall be left in place and reported to the USFWS and the CDFW within 48 hours of discovery for rescue or salvage. Discovery of State or federal listed species that are injured or dead shall also be managed consistent with regulatory requirements, including being reported immediately via telephone and within 24 hours in writing, and with a copy to the lead agency.
- k. During pre-construction surveys, the qualified biologist shall delineate previously disturbed areas to be used by the applicant to minimize the amount of new disturbance.
- l. No vehicles or construction equipment shall be parked within a wetland or waterbody/dry wash.
- m. Tracked vehicles and other construction equipment must be washed or maintained to be weed-free prior to entering and working within areas of a new disturbance.
- n. All washing of trucks, paint, equipment, or similar activities should occur in areas where runoff is fully contained for collection and off-site disposal. Wash water may not be discharged from the site and shall be located at least 100 feet from any water body or sensitive Biological Resources.

- o. Locate all extra work areas (such as staging areas and additional spoil storage areas) at least 50 feet away from wetland boundaries or waterbody, except where the adjacent upland consists of cultivated or rotated cropland or other disturbed land.
- p. All areas that must be avoided as a result of the pre-disturbance surveys and areas where new disturbance will occur shall be clearly delineated by fencing or staking and flagging and/or rope or cord.
- q. No pets shall be allowed on any site.
- r. No smoking may occur except in designated areas.

MM BIO-10: Prior to the issuance of any grading or building permit, the Project proponent/developer shall conduct a delineation of the Tulare Irrigation Canal and prepare an Aquatic Resources Delineation Report (ARDR). The ARDR shall be submitted with a formal notification to the US Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE), Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB), and California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW). If no comments or requests for additional permitting are received by the agencies, no further action is necessary. A copy of all correspondence shall be submitted to the lead agency.

If a regulatory agency comments or requests additional permitting, the following actions may be taken. A copy of all correspondence and subsequent permitting and/or reports shall be made available to the Lead Agency. The report shall include information as shown below, as a plan if necessary, and shall outline compliance with the following:

- a. Delineation of all jurisdictional features at the project site. Potential jurisdictional features within the project boundary identified in the jurisdictional delineation report may be shown in plan form.
- b. If the Project has a potential to directly or indirectly impact jurisdictional aquatic resources, a formal aquatic resource delineation of these areas shall be performed by a qualified professional to determine the extent of agency jurisdiction and permits/authorizations from the appropriate regulating agencies (Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB), CDFW and US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) shall be obtained prior to disturbance to jurisdictional features. If it is determined that drainage is jurisdictional and cannot be avoided, the Project proponent shall obtain a Section 401 Water Quality Certification from the RWQCB, a Section 404 permit from USACE, and a Lake and Streambed Alteration Agreement under Section 1602 from the CDFW, if required, prior to impacting any waters. As part of these authorizations, compensatory mitigation may be required by the regulating agencies to offset the loss of aquatic resources. If so, and as part of the permit application process, a qualified professional shall draft a Mitigation and Monitoring Plan to address implementation and monitoring requirements under the permit to ensure that the Project would result in no net loss of habitat functions and values. The Plan shall contain, at a minimum, mitigation goals and objectives, mitigation location, a discussion of actions to be implemented to mitigate the impact, monitoring methods and performance criteria, extent of monitoring to be conducted, actions to be taken in the event that the mitigation is not successful, and reporting requirements. The Plan shall be approved by the appropriate regulating agencies, and

compensatory mitigation shall take place either on-site or at an appropriate off-site location.

- c. Any material/spoils generated from project activities containing hazardous materials shall be located away from jurisdictional areas or special-status habitat and protected from storm water run-off using temporary perimeter sediment barriers such as berms, silt fences, fiber rolls, covers, sand/gravel bags, and straw bale barriers, as appropriate. Protection measures should follow project-specific criteria as developed in a Stormwater Pollution Prevention and Protection Plan (SWPPP).
- d. Equipment containing hazardous liquid materials shall be stored on impervious surfaces or plastic ground covers to prevent any spills or leakage from contaminating the ground and at least 50 feet outside the delineated boundary of jurisdictional water features.
- e. Any spillage of material shall be stopped if it can be done safely. The contaminated area shall be cleaned, and any contaminated materials properly disposed. For all spills, the project foreman or designated environmental representative shall be notified.

MM CUL-1: In the event that prehistoric or historic-period archaeological resources are encountered during construction in connection with an individual-specific development proposal, all construction activities associated therewith within 100 feet of the find shall halt, and the City of Visalia and an Archaeologist who meets the Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualification Standards for archaeology shall be notified by the relevant applicant. Prehistoric archaeological materials may include obsidian and chert flaked stone tools (e.g., projectile points, knives, scrapers) or toolmaking debris; culturally darkened soil ("midden") containing heat-affected rocks, artifacts, or shellfish remains; stone milling equipment (e.g., mortars, pestles, hand stones, or milling slabs); and battered stone tools, such as hammerstones and pitted stones. Historic-period materials might include stone, concrete, or adobe footings and walls; filled wells or privies; and deposits of metal, glass, and/or ceramic refuse.

The Archaeologist shall inspect the findings within 24 hours of discovery or as soon thereafter as is reasonable and commercially practicable. If it is determined that the construction associated with the subject individual-specific development proposal could significantly damage a historical resource or a unique archaeological resource (as defined pursuant to the CEQA Guidelines), mitigation shall be implemented in accordance with Public Resources Code Section 21083.2 and Section 15126.4 of the CEQA Guidelines, with a preference for preservation in place. If avoidance is not feasible, a qualified Archaeologist shall prepare, and the relevant applicant shall implement a detailed treatment plan in consultation with the City of Visalia. Treatment of unique archaeological resources shall follow the applicable requirements of Public Resources Code Section 21083.2. Treatment for most resources would consist of (but would not be limited to) sample excavation, artifact collection, site documentation, and historical research, with the aim to target the recovery of important scientific data contained in the portion(s) of the significant resource to be impacted by the proposed Project. The treatment plan shall include provisions for analysis of data in a regional context, reporting of results within a timely manner, curation of artifacts

and data at an approved facility, and dissemination of reports to local and State repositories, libraries, and interested professionals.

MM CUL-2: If human remains are discovered during construction or operational activities, further excavation or disturbance shall be prohibited pursuant to Section 7050.5 of the California Health and Safety Code. The specific protocol, guidelines, and channels of communication outlined by the NAHC, in accordance with Section 7050.5 of the Health and Safety Code, Section 5097.98 of the Public Resources Code (Chapter 1492, Statutes of 1982, Senate Bill 297), and Senate Bill 447 (Chapter 44, Statutes of 1987), shall be followed. Section 7050.5(c) shall guide the potential Native American involvement, in the event of discovery of human remains, at the direction of the County Coroner.

MM GEO-1: If any paleontological resources are encountered during ground-disturbance activities, all work within 25 feet of the find shall halt until a qualified paleontologist, as defined by the Society of Vertebrate Paleontology Standard Procedures for the Assessment and Mitigation of Adverse Impacts to Paleontological Resources (2010), can evaluate the find and make recommendations regarding treatment. Paleontological resource materials may include resources such as fossils, plant impressions, or animal tracks preserved in rock. The qualified paleontologist shall contact the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County or another appropriate facility regarding any discoveries of paleontological resources.

If the qualified paleontologist determines that the discovery represents a potentially significant paleontological resource, additional investigations and fossil recovery may be required to mitigate adverse impacts from Project implementation. If avoidance is not feasible, the paleontological resources shall be evaluated for their significance. If the resources are not significant, avoidance is not necessary. If the resources are significant, they shall be avoided to ensure no adverse effects, or such effects must be mitigated. Construction in that area shall not resume until the resource-appropriate measures are recommended or the materials are determined to be less than significant. If the resource is significant and fossil recovery is the identified form of treatment, then the fossil shall be deposited in an accredited and permanent scientific institution. Copies of all correspondence and reports shall be submitted to the Lead Agency.

MM HAZ-1: In the event that unknown underground storage tank(s) or a septic system are uncovered or damaged during excavation or grading activities, all work in that area shall cease. The State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) and the Tulare County Environmental Health Division shall be contacted to determine what appropriate remediation may be required and to identify the appropriate requirements and approvals. A report of all communication and the determination made by the SWRCB and the County Health Division shall be submitted to the City.

MM TRA-1: Prior to the issuance of building permits, the Project applicant/developer responsible for the construction of the Single-Family Residential Development will pay their pro-rate fair share percentage of 3.1 percent.

MM TRA-2: Prior to the issuance of building permits, the Project applicant/developer responsible for the construction of the Multi-Family Residential Development will pay their pro-rata fair share percentage of 2.4 percent. If at the time of development of the Multi-Family phase the unit count is less than 375, the developer may submit a revised TIA showing the appropriate pro-rate fair share percentage for the reduced number of units.

SECTION 1 - INTRODUCTION

1.1 - Overview

The proposed Project will develop a mixed-use residential subdivision (TTM 5606) on an approximately 78-acre site with a total of approximately 662 units (370 multi-family high-density units, 153 single-family medium-density units in a gated community with a Homeowners Association (HOA), and 139 single-family low-density units in a non-gated community) in an area of unincorporated Tulare County, southeast of the City of Visalia (City), adjacent to the City limits. The Project will require the approval of a Tentative Subdivision Map, General Plan Amendment (GPA), Annexation, Prezone, and a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) to allow for a Planned Unit Development (PUD). Figure 2-1 is a map of the regional location, Figure 2-2 shows the Project site location in relation to the City limits and Sphere of Influence (SOI), and Figure 2-3 shows the Project site location. Figure 2-4 shows the residential area site plan.

1.2 - California Environmental Quality Act

The City of Visalia is the Lead Agency for this Project pursuant to the CEQA Guidelines (Public Resources Code Section 15000 et seq.). The Environmental Checklist (CEQA Guidelines Appendix G) or Initial Study (IS) (see *Section 3 - Initial Study*) provides analysis that examines the potential environmental effects of the construction and operation of the Project. Section 15063 of the CEQA Guidelines requires the Lead Agency to prepare an IS to determine whether a discretionary project will have a significant effect on the environment. A Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) is appropriate when an IS has been prepared, and a determination can be made that no significant environmental effects will occur because revisions to the Project have been made or mitigation measures will be implemented that reduce all potentially significant impacts to less-than-significant levels. The content of an MND is the same as a Negative Declaration, with the addition of identified mitigation measures and a Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP) (see *Section 6 - Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program*).

Based on the IS, the Lead Agency has determined that the environmental review for the proposed application can be completed with an MND.

1.3 - Impact Terminology

The following terminology is used to describe the level of significance of impacts.

- A finding of “no impact” is appropriate if the analysis concludes that the Project would not affect a topic area in any way.
- An impact is considered “less than significant” if the analysis concludes that it would cause no substantial adverse change to the environment and requires no mitigation.
- An impact is considered “less than significant with mitigation incorporated” if the analysis concludes that it would cause no substantial adverse change to the

environment with the inclusion of environmental commitments that have been agreed to by the applicant.

- An impact is considered “potentially significant” if the analysis concludes that it could have a substantial adverse effect on the environment.

1.4 - Document Organization and Contents

The content and format of this IS/MND are designed to meet the requirements of CEQA. The report contains the following sections:

- *Section 1 – Introduction:* This section provides an overview of CEQA requirements, intended uses of the IS/MND, document organization, and a list of regulations that have been incorporated by reference.
- *Section 2– Project Description:* This section describes the Project and provides data on the site’s location.
- *Section 3 – Environmental Checklist:* This section contains the evaluation of 21 different environmental resource factors contained in Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines. Each environmental resource factor is analyzed to determine whether the proposed Project would have an impact. One of four findings is made, which include: no impact, less-than-significant impact, less than significant with mitigation, or significant and unavoidable. If the evaluation results in a finding of significant and unavoidable impacts for any of the 21 environmental resource factors, then an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) will be required.
- *Section 4 – List of Preparers:* This section identifies the individuals who prepared the IS/MND.
- *Section 5 – References:* This section contains a full list of references that were used in the preparation of this IS/MND.
- *Section 6 – Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program:* This section contains the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program.

1.5 - Incorporated by Reference

The following documents and/or regulations are incorporated into this IS/MND by reference:

- City of Visalia General Plan Update (2014)
- City of Visalia Draft Environmental Impact Report (2014)
- City of Visalia 2023-2031 Housing Element Update (2024)
- City of Visalia Climate Action Plan (2013)
- City of Visalia Waterway & Trail Master Plan (2010)
- City of Visalia Municipal Code
- Tulare County Comprehensive Airport Land Use Plan (2012)
- Tulare County Multi-Jurisdictional Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (2023)

SECTION 2 - PROJECT DESCRIPTION

2.1 - Introduction

The proposed Project is to develop a mixed-use residential subdivision (TTM 5606) on an approximately 78-acre site with a total of approximately 662 units on property within unincorporated Tulare County, southeast of the City of Visalia (City), adjacent to the City limits. The Project will require the approval of an Annexation, Tentative Subdivision Map, General Plan Amendment (GPA), Prezone, and a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) to allow for a Planned Unit Development (PUD).

Figure 2-1 shows the regional location, Figure 2-2 shows the Project site location in relation to the City limits and Sphere of Influence (SOI), and Figure 2-3 shows the Project site location. Figure 2-4 is TTM 5606.

2.2 - Project Location

The Project site is located within an area of unincorporated Tulare County, southeast of the City of Visalia (City), adjacent to the City limits. The site consists of two separate Assessor Parcel Numbers (APNs), 127-020-20 and 127-020-21, with a combined approximately 78 acres of land. The Project site area is within the City's Sphere of Influence (SOI) and Urban Development Boundary (UDB) – Tier II. The site is currently zoned AE-20 (Exclusive Agriculture, 20-acre minimum) by Tulare County and designated as Residential Low, Residential Medium, Residential High Density, and Conservation by the City General Plan.

The Project is within Section 3, Township 19S, Range 25E, Mount Diablo Base and Meridian (MDB&M), of the Visalia U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) Quad Map. The site is generally bound by Union Pacific Railroad to the north, Road 148 to the east, East Caldwell Avenue (Avenue 280) to the south, and South Lovers Lane (Road 140) to the west. The surrounding land uses are generally agricultural land to the north, east, and south, and mixed-density residential tracts to the west.

2.3 - Surrounding Land Uses

Surrounding land uses include agricultural development to the north and east, agriculture and single-family residential to the south, and multi-family and single-family residential to the west.

2.4 - Proposed Project

The Project site consists of approximately 370 multi-family high-density units, 153 single-family medium-density units in a gated community with a Homeowners Association (HOA), and 139 single-family low-density units in a non-gated community, for a total of approximately 662 units.

The Project site area will have three phases of buildout:

- TD 1 – Phase 1: Development of lots 1-78, outlots A-E, G-I, and L, Sunnyside Avenue and Streets A, B, E, and C
- TD 1 – Phase 2: Development of lots 140-158, 197-231, 252-265, 286-292, and outlots O and P
- TD 2 – Phase 1: Development of lots 79-189, outlots F, J-K, and Streets A, C, E-H
- TD 2 – Phase 2: Development of lots 159-196, 232-251, 266-285, and outlots Q, R, and T

There is no proposed development of the multi-family units at this time; however, this area is considered Phase 3.

On- and off-site improvements include circulation roads, interior local streets, curbs, gutters, sound barriers, sidewalks, streetlights, neighborhood connections to walking trail, open spaces, landscaping, a water well to be maintained by the City of Visalia, and stormwater basins. All streets are to be offered for dedication for public street purposes. All residential units will be equipped with 450-watt solar panels, utilize all electric appliances, and will be EV-ready (pre-wired during construction to allow for installation of an EV residential charger in the future). The multi-family portion of the Project will realign and underground the Tulare Irrigation Canal.

Outlots will be utilized and dedicated as follows:

- Outlots A, B, E, F, and J-L: Dedicated to the City of Visalia for open space, pedestrian, and public landscaping
- Outlots D and H: Dedicated to the City of Visalia for trail purposes
- Outlot C: For a water well that will be maintained by the City of Visalia
- Outlot G: Stormwater basin to be dedicated to the City of Visalia
- Outlot I: Dedicated to Tulare County Irrigation District
- Outlots M-R and T: Maintained by private HOA
- Outlot S: To be deeded to Southern California Edison (SCE)

Water will be provided by the California Water Service Company, and sewer will be provided by the City.

Discretionary Actions:

The following discretionary actions are required for the Project:

- Annexation into the City of Visalia (Annexation No. 2025-02)
- Annexation approval by Tulare County Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCo)
- General Plan Amendment (GPA No. 2025-04) to modify existing General Plan designations to optimize the residential development on the parcel and amend Figure 4-1 of the Circulation Element
- Prezone to R-1-5 (Single-Family Residential), R-M-2 (Medium-Density Multi-Family Residential), R-M-3 (Multi-Family Residential) and QP (Quasi-Public)
- Tentative Tract Map No. 5606

- Conditional Use Permit (CUP) for a Planned Unit Development (PUD) (CUP No. 2025-24)

The Project site would be rezoned as R-1-5, R-M-2, R-M-3, and QP. The General Plan Amendment would modify the existing General Plan designations to optimize the residential development on the parcel and amend the Visalia Circulation Element to remove the “K” Avenue new one-mile-long, two-lane collector from Lovers Lane to Road 248, as referenced in Figure 4-1 Roadway Classifications and Table 4-5 Planned Circulation Improvements of the City’s General Plan. There is an SCE substation approximately 0.50 miles east of the Project site that would not allow for the extension of “K” Avenue. A new Sunnyside Avenue, one-mile-long, two-lane collector from the Lovers Lane/Sunnyside Avenue intersection to Road 248, is to be added to Figure 4-1 and Table 4-5. The CUP/PUD will allow certain deviations of the Visalia Municipal Code standards to develop single-family homes within the Medium-Density land use/R-M-2 designation, allow for reduced setbacks, street sizes, and parcel sizes for the medium-density parcels.

Construction:

Construction of the residential development would occur over a maximum of 18 to 24 months. It is anticipated that the following pieces of equipment would be used during construction activities:

- Roller
- Loaded trucks
- Excavator
- Generator
- Service truck
- Air compressor



Figure 2-1
Regional Location

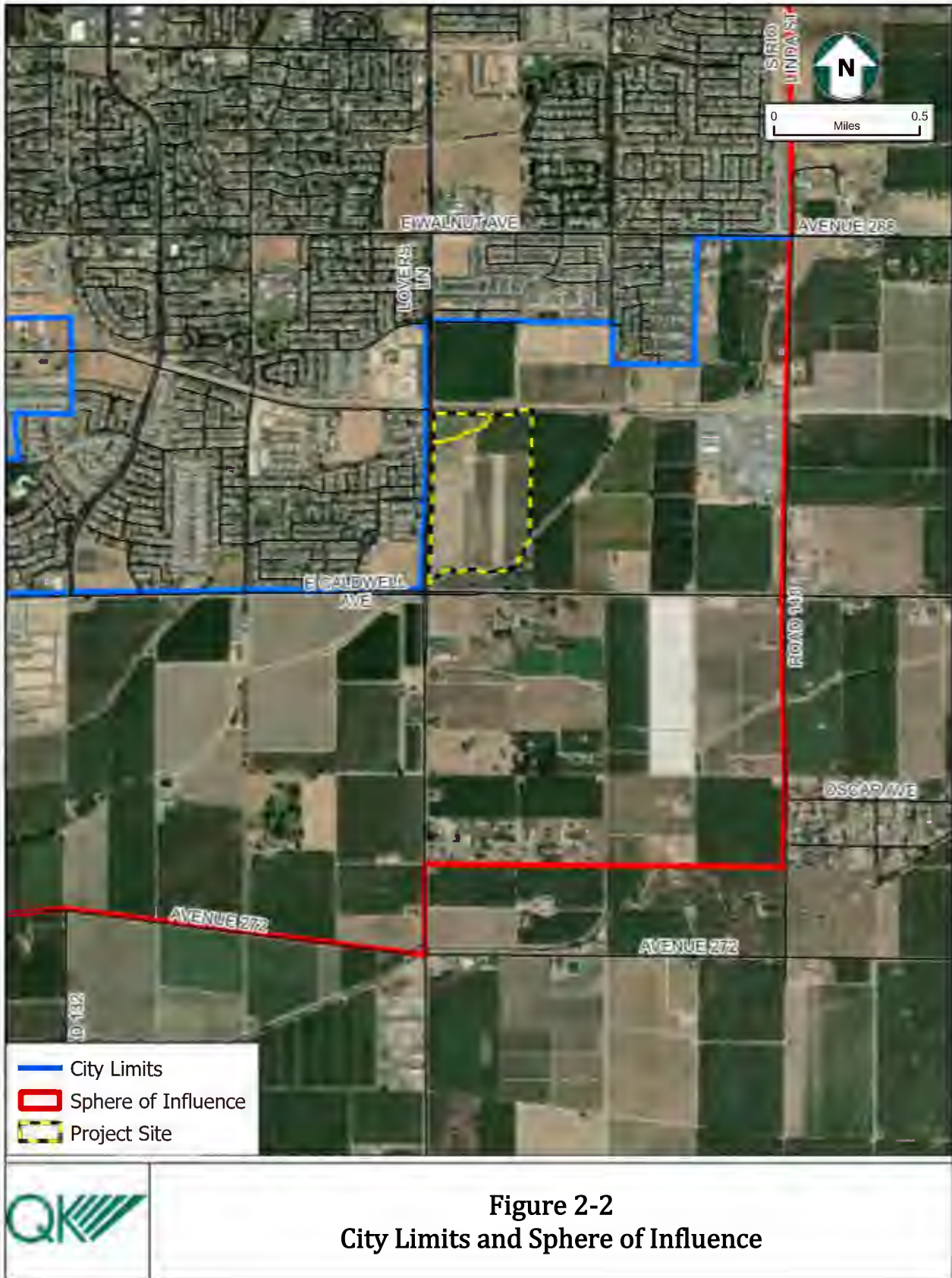
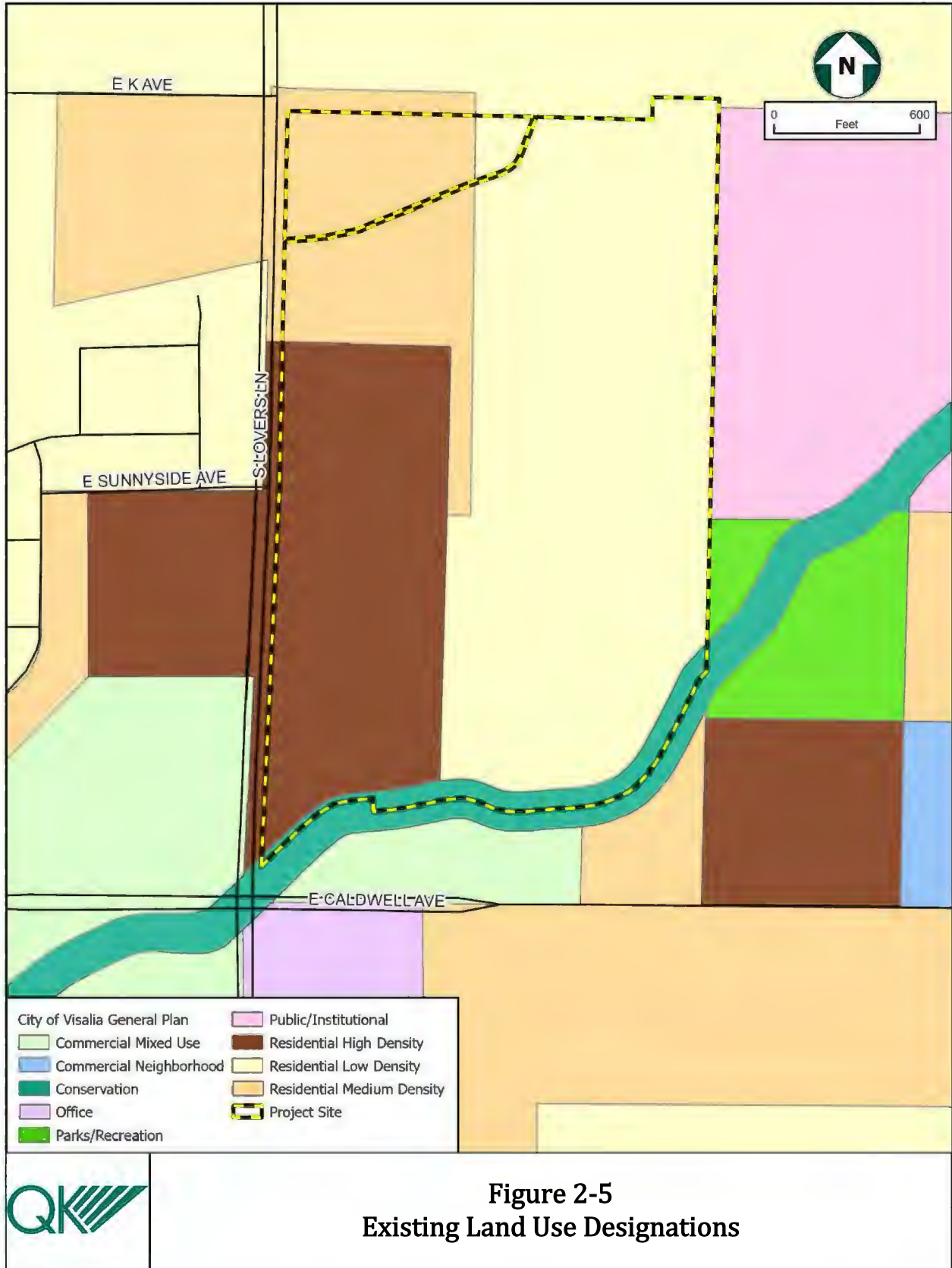




Figure 2-3
Project Site Location



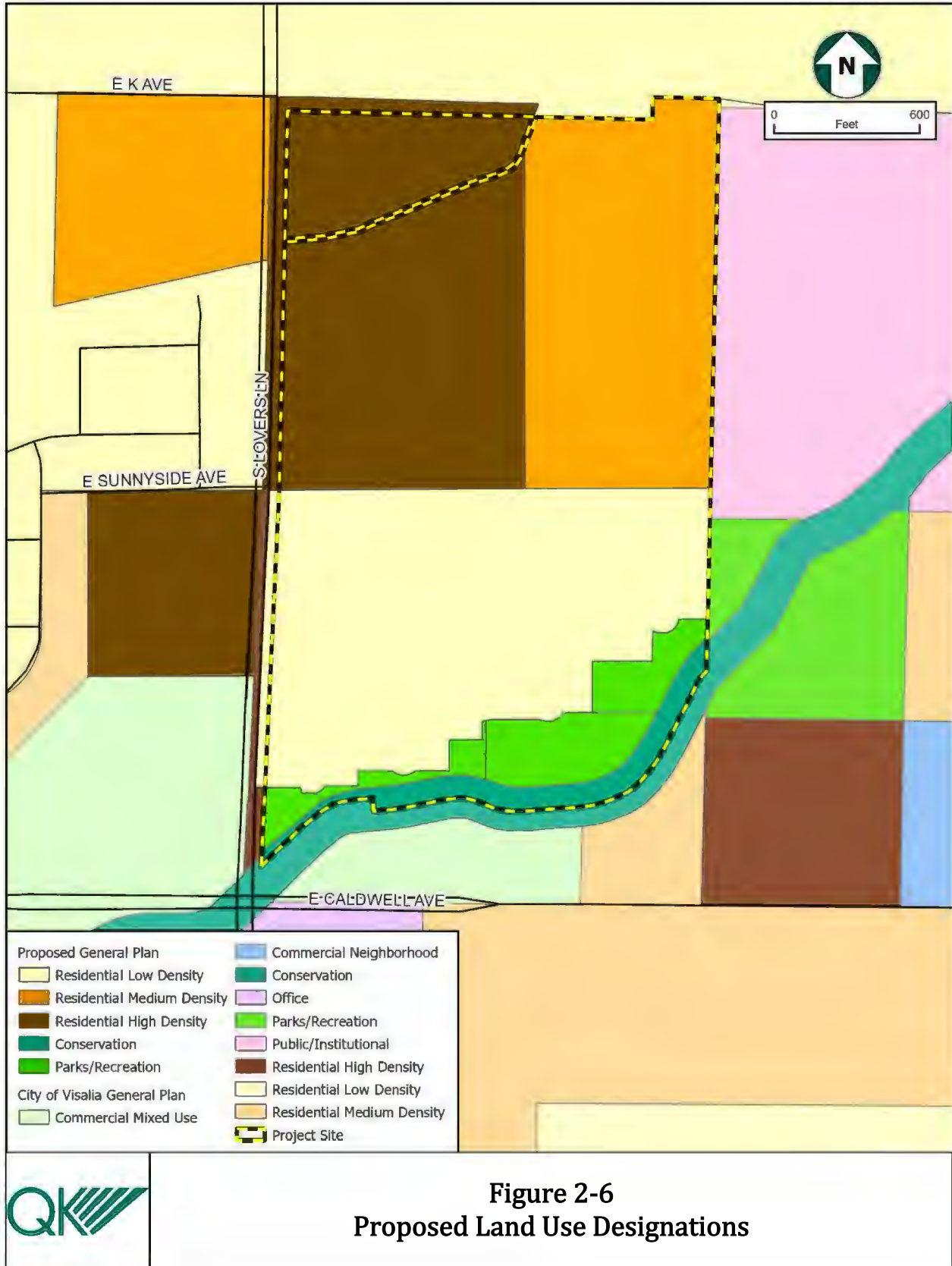
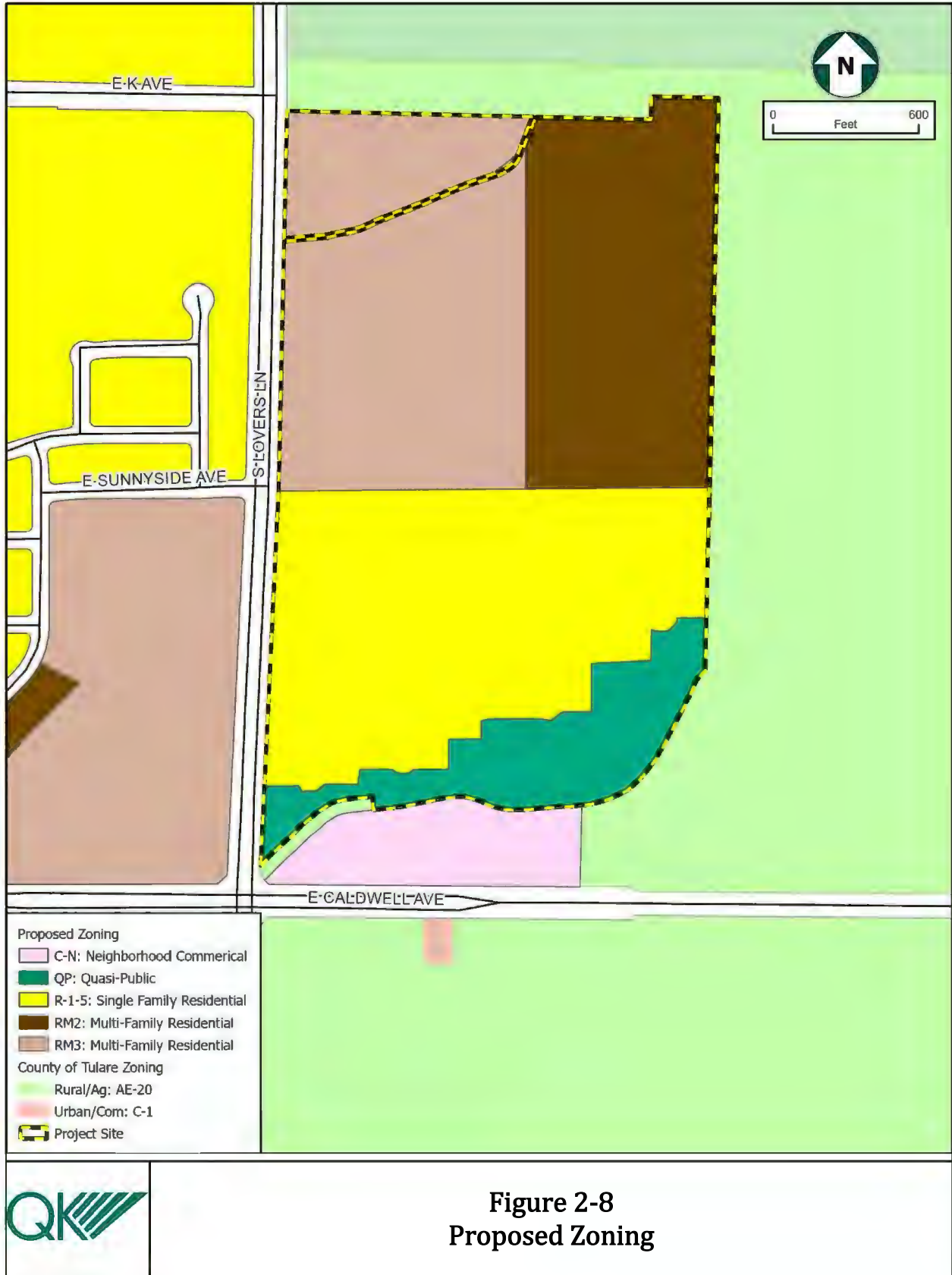


Figure 2-6
Proposed Land Use Designations



Figure 2-7
Existing Zoning





SECTION 3 - INITIAL STUDY

3.1 - Environmental Checklist

1. Project Title:

Clements Ranch Tentative Tract Map No. 5606

2. Lead Agency Name and Address:

City of Visalia, Planning and Community Preservation Department
315 East Acequia Avenue
Visalia, California 93291

3. Contact Person and Phone Number:

City of Visalia, Planning and Community Preservation Department
315 East Acequia Avenue
Visalia, CA 93291
Contact Person: Jarred Olsen, AICP, Principal Planner
Phone : (559) 713-4449

4. Project Location:

The Project site is located within an area of unincorporated Tulare County, southeast of the City of Visalia (City), adjacent to the City limits. The site consists of two separate Assessor Parcel Numbers (APNs), 127-020-20 and 127-020-21, with a combined approximately 78 acres of land. The Project site area is within the City's Sphere of Influence (SOI) and Urban Development Boundary (UDB) – Tier II. The site is currently zoned AE-20 (Exclusive Agriculture, 20-acre minimum) by Tulare County and designated as Residential Low, Residential Medium, Residential High Density, and Conservation by the City General Plan.

The Project is within Section 3, Township 19S, Range 25E, Mount Diablo Base and Meridian (MDB&M), of the Visalia U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) Quad Map. The site is generally bound by Union Pacific Railroad to the north, Road 148 to the east, East Caldwell Avenue (Avenue 280) to the south, and South Lovers Lane (Road 140) to the west. The surrounding land uses are generally agricultural land to the north, east, and south, and mixed-density residential tracts to the west.

5. Project Sponsor's Name and Address:

D.R. Horton
Corine Demetreos
419 W. Murray
Visalia, CA 93291

6. General Plan Designation:

Existing: City of Visalia

- Residential High Density
- Residential Medium Density
- Residential Low Density
- Conservation – Designated on Cameron Creek

Proposed: City of Visalia

- Residential High Density – Approximately 21.80 acres
- Residential Medium Density – Approximately 15.30 acres
- Residential Low Density – Approximately 30.90 acres
- Conservation – Designated along Cameron Creek – No change

7. Zoning:

Existing: Tulare County – AE-20 (Exclusive Agricultural Zone – 20 Acre Minimum)

Proposed Rezoning: City of Visalia

- R-1-5 (Single-Family Residential) – Approximately 30.90 acres
- R-M-2 (Medium Density Multi-Family Residential)- 27.58 acres
- R-M-3 (Multi-Family Residential) – Approximately 31.80 acres
- QP (Quasi-Public) – Approximately 12.19 acres

8. Description of Project:

The Project site consists of approximately 370 multi-family high-density units, 153 single-family medium-density units in a gated community with a Homeowners Association (HOA), and 139 single-family low-density units in a non-gated community, for a total of approximately 662 units.

The Project site area will have three phases of buildout:

- TD 1 – Phase 1: Development of lots 1-78, outlots A-E, G-I, and L, Sunnyside Avenue and Streets A, B, E, and C
- TD 1 – Phase 2: Development of lots 140-158, 197-231, 252-265, 286-292, and outlots O and P
- TD 2 – Phase 1: Development of lots 79-189, outlots F, J-K, and Streets A, C, E-H
- TD 2 – Phase 2: Development of lots 159-196, 232-251, 266-285, and outlots Q, R, and T

There is no proposed development of the multi-family units at this time; however, this area is considered Phase 3.

On- and off-site improvements include circulation roads, interior local streets, curbs, gutters, sound barriers, sidewalks, streetlights, neighborhood connections to walking trail, open spaces, landscaping, a water well to be maintained by the City of Visalia, and stormwater basins. All streets are to be offered for dedication for public street purposes. All residential units will be equipped with 450-watt solar panels, utilize all electric appliances, and will be EV-ready (pre-wired during construction to allow for installation of an EV residential charger in the future). The multi-family portion of the Project will realign and underground the Tulare Irrigation Canal.

Outlots will be utilized and dedicated as follows:

- Outlots A, B, E, F, and J-L: Dedicated to the City of Visalia for open space, pedestrian, and public landscaping
- Outlots D and H: Dedicated to the City of Visalia for trail purposes
- Outlot C: For a water well that will be maintained by the City of Visalia
- Outlot G: Stormwater basin to be dedicated to the City of Visalia
- Outlot I: Dedicated to Tulare County Irrigation District
- Outlots M-R and T: Maintained by private HOA
- Outlot S: To be deeded to Southern California Edison (SCE)

Water will be provided by the California Water Service Company, and sewer will be provided by the City.

Discretionary Actions:

The following discretionary actions are required for the Project:

- Annexation into the City of Visalia (Annexation No. 2025-02)
- Annexation approval by Tulare County Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCo)
- General Plan Amendment (GPA No. 2025-04) to modify existing General Plan designations to optimize the residential development on the parcel and amend Figure 4-1 of the Circulation Element
- Prezone to R-1-5 (Single-Family Residential), R-M-2 (Medium-Density Multi-Family Residential), R-M-3 (Multi-Family Residential) and QP (Quasi-Public)
- Tentative Tract Map No. 5606
- Conditional Use Permit (CUP) for a Planned Unit Development (PUD) (CUP No. 2025-24)

The Project site would be prezoned as R-1-5, R-M-2, R-M-3, and QP. The General Plan Amendment would modify the existing General Plan designations to optimize the residential development on the parcel and amend the Visalia Circulation Element to remove the “K” Avenue new one-mile-long, two-lane collector from Lovers Lane to Road 248, as referenced in Figure 4-1 Roadway Classifications and Table 4-5 Planned Circulation Improvements of the City’s General Plan. There is an SCE substation approximately 0.50 miles east of the Project site that would not allow for the extension of “K” Avenue. A new Sunnyside Avenue, one-mile-long, two-lane collector from the

Lovers Lane/Sunnyside Avenue intersection to Road 248, is to be added to Figure 4-1 and Table 4-5. The CUP/PUD will allow certain deviations of the Visalia Municipal Code standards to develop single-family homes within the Medium-Density land use/R-M-2 designation, allow for reduced setbacks, street sizes, and parcel sizes for the medium-density parcels.

Construction:

Construction of the residential development would occur over a maximum of 18 to 24 months. It is anticipated that the following pieces of equipment would be used during construction activities:

- Roller
- Loaded trucks
- Excavator
- Generator
- Service truck
- Air compressor

9. Surrounding Land Uses and Setting:

Surrounding land uses include agricultural development to the north and east, agriculture and single-family residential to the south, and multi-family and single-family residential to the west.

10. Other Public Agencies Whose Approval is Required:

- Tulare County LAFCo
- San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District (SJVAPCD)

11. Have California Native American tribes traditionally and culturally affiliated with the Project area requested consultation pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21080.3.1? If so, is there a plan for consultation that includes, for example, the determination of significance of impacts to tribal cultural resources, procedures regarding confidentiality, etc.?

On **September 26, 2025**, pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21080.3.1 and Government Code Section 65300 *et seq*, Senate Bill 18 and Assembly Bill 52, letters were sent to each of the Native American tribes within the geographic area as identified by the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) (see Appendix C). The letters included a Project description and location maps. Tribal consultation under AB 52 and SB 18 closed on **December 31, 2025**.

NOTE: Conducting consultation early in the CEQA process allows tribal governments, lead agencies, and Project proponents to discuss the level of environmental review, identify and address potential adverse impacts to tribal cultural resources, and reduce

the potential for delay and conflict in the environmental review process. (See Public Resources Code Section 21083.3.2.) Information may also be available from the California Native American Heritage Commission's Sacred Lands File per Public Resources Code Section 5097.96 and the California Historical Resources Information System administered by the California Office of Historic Preservation. Please also note that Public Resources Code Section 21082.3(c) contains provisions specific to confidentiality.

3.2 - Environmental Factors Potentially Affected

The environmental factors checked below would be potentially affected by this Project, involving at least one impact that is a "Potentially Significant Impact" as indicated by the checklist on the following pages.

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aesthetics | <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture and Forestry Resources | <input type="checkbox"/> Air Quality |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Biological Resources | <input type="checkbox"/> Cultural Resources | <input type="checkbox"/> Energy |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Geology and Soils | <input type="checkbox"/> Greenhouse Gas Emissions | <input type="checkbox"/> Hazards and Hazardous Materials |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hydrology and Water Quality | <input type="checkbox"/> Land Use and Planning | <input type="checkbox"/> Mineral Resources |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Noise | <input type="checkbox"/> Population and Housing | <input type="checkbox"/> Public Services |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Recreation | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation | <input type="checkbox"/> Tribal Cultural Resources |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Utilities and Service Systems | <input type="checkbox"/> Wildfire | <input type="checkbox"/> Mandatory Findings of Significance |

3.3 - Determination

On the basis of this initial evaluation:

- I find that the proposed Project COULD NOT have a significant effect on the environment and a NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.
- I find that although the proposed Project could have a significant effect on the environment, there will not be a significant effect in this case because revisions in the Project have been made by or agreed to by the Project proponent. A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.
- I find that the proposed Project MAY have a significant effect on the environment and an ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required.
- I find that the proposed Project MAY have a "potentially significant impact" or "potentially significant unless mitigated" impact on the environment, but at least one effect (a) has been adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards and (b) has been addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis as described on attached sheets. An ENVIRONMENT IMPACT REPORT is required, but it must analyze only the effects that remain to be addressed.

- I find that although the proposed Project could have a significant effect on the environment, because all potentially significant effects (a) have been analyzed adequately in an earlier ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT or NEGATIVE DECLARATION pursuant to applicable standards and (b) have been avoided or mitigated pursuant to that earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION, including revisions or mitigation measures that are imposed upon the proposed Project, nothing further is required.



May 7, 2026

Date

Jarred Olsen

Principal Planner

Printed Name

Title

3.4 - Evaluation of Environmental Impacts

1. A brief explanation is required for all answers except "No Impact" answers that are adequately supported by the information sources a lead agency cites in the parentheses following each question. A "No Impact" answer is adequately supported if the referenced information sources show that the impact simply does not apply to projects like the one involved (e.g., the project falls outside a fault rupture zone). A "No Impact" answer should be explained where it is based on project-specific factors as well as general standards (e.g., the project will not expose sensitive receptors to pollutants, based on a project-specific screening analysis).
2. All answers must take account of the whole action involved, including off-site as well as on-site, cumulative as well as project-level, indirect as well as direct, and construction as well as operational impacts.
3. Once the lead agency has determined that a particular physical impact may occur, then the checklist answers must indicate whether the impact is potentially significant, less than significant with mitigation, or less than significant. "Potentially Significant Impact" is appropriate if there is substantial evidence that an effect may be significant. If there is one or more "Potentially Significant Impact" entries when the determination is made, an EIR is required.
4. "Negative Declaration: Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated" applies where the incorporation of mitigation measures has reduced an effect from "Potentially Significant Impact" to a "Less-Than-Significant Impact." The lead agency must describe the mitigation measures and briefly explain how they reduce the effect to a less-than-significant level (mitigation measures from "Earlier Analyses," as described in (5) below, may be cross-referenced).
5. Earlier analyses may be used where, pursuant to the tiering, program EIR, or other CEQA process, an effect has been adequately analyzed in an earlier EIR or negative declaration. Section 15063(c)(3)(D). In this case, a brief discussion should identify the following:
 - a. Earlier Analysis Used. Identify and state where they are available for review.
 - b. Impacts Adequately Addressed. Identify which effects from the above checklist were within the scope of and adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and state whether such effects were addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis.
 - c. Mitigation Measures. For effects that are "Less than Significant with Mitigation Measures Incorporated," describe the mitigation measures that were incorporated or refined from the earlier document and the extent to which they address site-specific conditions for the project.

6. Lead agencies are encouraged to incorporate into the checklist references to information sources for potential impacts (e.g., general plans, zoning ordinances). Reference to a previously prepared or outside document should, where appropriate, include a reference to the page or pages where the statement is substantiated.
7. Supporting Information Sources: A source list should be attached, and other sources used, or individuals contacted should be cited in the discussion.
8. This is only a suggested form, and lead agencies are free to use different formats; however, lead agencies should normally address the questions from this checklist that are relevant to a project's environmental effects in whatever format is selected.
9. The explanation of each issue should identify:
 - a. The significance criteria or threshold, if any, used to evaluate each question.
 - b. The mitigation measure identified, if any, to reduce the impact to less than significance.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less-than-Significant Impact	No Impact
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3.4.1 - AESTHETICS

Except as provided in Public Resources Code Section 21099, would the Project:

a. Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. In non-urbanized areas, substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings? (Public views are those that are experienced from publicly accessible vantage point). If the Project is in an urbanized area, would the Project conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Create a new source of substantial light or glare that would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Discussion

Impact #3.4.1a – Except as provided in Public Resources Code Section 21099, would the Project have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?

A scenic vista is defined as a viewpoint that provides expansive views of highly valued landscape for the benefit of the general public. The General Plan Draft EIR discusses views of the Sierra Nevada range, agricultural lands beyond the edges of the City, Valley Oak trees, and waterways as scenic resources in Visalia (City of Visalia, 2014b).

Views of the Sierra Nevada range are variable and dependent on weather and air quality conditions for the mountain range to be visible. The Project site is currently a mix of row crops and orchards, with no oak trees present. The Project would not substantially impede these existing views of the mountains from adjacent viewpoints because of the low-profile nature of the development and because of the lack of existing urban development adjacent to the site that currently has views of the mountains. The City of Visalia does not identify views of these features as required to be “protected.” Therefore, the Project has a less-than-significant impact on scenic vistas.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

No mitigation is required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Impacts would be *less than significant*.

Impact #3.4.1b - Except as provided in Public Resources Code Section 21099, would the Project substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?

See discussion in Impact #3.4.1a.

State Route (SR) 198 is designated as an eligible State Scenic Highway; however, it has not been adopted as a State Scenic Highway at this time. While the City has not requested official designation, it has evaluated the corridor in the Scenic Highways Element of the existing General Plan and has taken steps to preserve and enhance the corridor's scenic quality (City of Visalia, 2014a). Additionally, it is approximately 1.50 miles north of the Project site and not visible from that roadway. Therefore, there will be no impacts related to a scenic highway.

The Project contains no native trees, rock outcroppings, or historic buildings. Therefore, Project impacts would be less than significant.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

No mitigation is required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Impacts would be *less than significant*.

Impact #3.4.1c - Except as provided in Public Resources Code Section 21099, would the Project in non-urbanized areas, substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings? (Public views are those that are experienced from publicly accessible vantage point). If the Project is in an urbanized area, would the Project conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality?

As previously mentioned, the Project site area is within the City's Urban Development Boundary (UDB) – Tier II, currently zoned AE-20 (Exclusive Agriculture, 20-acre minimum) by Tulare County and designated as Residential Low, Residential Medium, Residential High Density, and Conservation by the City General Plan. The Project site is directly adjacent to an urbanized area, within the City's UDB, and as such, would be considered urbanized. Once the General Plan Amendment and Planned Unit Development are approved, the Project would be consistent with the applicable pre-zoning district regulations [R-1-5 (Single-Family

Residential), R-M-2 (Medium Density Multi-Family Residential), R-M-3 (Multi-family Residential), and QP (Quasi-Public)].

Furthermore, the Project design is subject to the City's Design Guidelines adopted for the City's General Plan that apply to site layout, building design, landscaping, interior street design, lighting, parking, and signage. Detailed architectural plans, color palettes, and building materials, as well as landscaping plans, will be submitted by the Project developer to the City of Visalia Planning and Community Preservation Department. The plans shall be required prior to the issuance of any building permits. In addition, landscaping easements will run along the trails and some roadways, and additional landscaping design will accompany the park spaces and bicycle and pedestrian use trails.

As discussed, the Project site is located within an urbanized area and is consistent with the pre-zoning district regulations and other regulations governing scenic quality. Therefore, the Project would have a less-than-significant impact.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

No mitigation is required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Impacts would be *less than significant*.

Impact #3.4.1d - Except as provided in Public Resources Code Section 21099, would the Project create a new source of substantial light or glare that would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?

Nighttime lighting is necessary to provide and maintain safe, secure, and attractive environments; however, these lights have the potential to produce spillover light and glare and waste energy, and if designed incorrectly, could be considered unattractive. Light that falls beyond the intended area is referred to as "light trespass." Types of light trespass include spillover light and glare. Minimizing all these forms of obtrusive light is an important environmental consideration. A less obtrusive and well-designed energy-efficient fixture would face downward, emit the correct intensity of light for the use, and incorporate energy timers.

According to the General Plan, the construction of new buildings may result in nighttime light pollution or daytime glare, but identifies construction impacts as likely insignificant as a result of development. Municipal Code Section 8.36.050(C) prohibits construction equipment from operating between the weekday hours of 7:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m. and between the weekend hours of 7:00 p.m. and 9:00 a.m., thereby reducing any potential light and glare impacts resulting from any construction activities that could occur. Section 17.30.015.G of the Visalia Zoning Ordinance regulates that no on-site lighting should directly or indirectly illuminate adjacent properties or the public street that provides access, and that the light and standards to be used will be approved by a Site Plan Review.

The Project site is located in an area that is becoming increasingly urbanized and is subject to pre-existing exterior lighting from surrounding developments and existing street lighting. The proposed Project would introduce new sources of light and glare to the area in the form of street lighting, nighttime vehicle lights, windows, and porch lights. However, new sources of light and glare associated with the Project would not be substantial in the context of existing lighting sources in the Project vicinity.

Development under the General Plan would include indoor lighting and outdoor lighting for safety purposes, but would generally not be out of character with the existing urban environment and would not rise to a level of being significant. The resulting light and glare produced by the Project would be similar to existing conditions. In addition, daytime glare would not be substantial because no highly reflective glass elements or building materials are proposed as part of the Project. During the entitlement process, the Project will be required to comply with the City's policies pertaining to light and glare, and City staff will review lighting plans to ensure that lighting plans will minimize spill-over light on neighboring properties. Compliance with California Building Code (Title 24, California Code of Regulations) standards and City development codes would address light and glare impacts to day- and night-time views resulting from the construction of the proposed Project. Therefore, with the Project's compliance with Municipal Code standards and General Plan policies for site lighting, the Project will have a less-than-significant impact.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

No mitigation is required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Impacts would be *less than significant*.

Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less-than- Significant Impact	No Impact
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3.4.2 - AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY RESOURCES

In determining whether impacts to agricultural resources are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to the California Agricultural Land Evaluation and Site Assessment Model (1997), prepared by the California Department of Conservation, as an optional model to use in assessing impacts on agriculture and farmland. In determining whether impacts to forest resources, including timberland, are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to information compiled by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection regarding the state’s inventory of forest land, including the Forest and Range Assessment Project and the Forest Legacy Assessment Project; and forest carbon measurement methodology provided in Forest Protocols adopted by the California Air Resources Board. Would the Project:

a.	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 use?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b.	Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use or a Williamson Act Contract?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c.	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))?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d.	Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
e.	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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Discussion

Impact #3.4.2a – Would the Project 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 use?

CEQA uses the California Department of Conservation Division of Land Resource Protection’s Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program (FMMP) categories of “Prime Farmland,”

“Farmland of Statewide Importance,” and “Unique Farmland” to define “agricultural land” for the purposes of assessing environmental impacts (Public Resources Code Section 21060.1[a]). According to the California Department of Conservation (DOC) Important Farmland Finder, the entire Project site is classified as Prime Farmland (California Department of Conservation, 2022).

The Project site is currently within the boundaries of unincorporated Tulare County, and the Project is requesting the approval of annexation into the Visalia City boundaries for residential development. The site is currently under active agricultural cultivation.

The Project is within the City’s SOI and is within the UDB Tier II, which has been deemed as land to be converted from agricultural land to urban development by the City’s General Plan. Once annexed, the Project would convert 78 acres of Prime Farmland to a non-agricultural land use. According to the City’s Draft EIR, there are 33,991 acres of Prime Farmland within the General Plan Planning Area, and at full buildout of the General Plan, there will be 21,501 acres of Prime Farmland (City of Visalia, 2014b). Given this, the Project would account for a 0.22 percent reduction in Prime Farmland under City jurisdiction.

The City’s Agricultural Land Preservation Program (Visalia Municipal Code 18.04.060), established through City Ordinance No. 2023-02, was created to implement Visalia General Plan Land Use Policy LU-P-34 and applies to projects within the UDB Tiers II and III. The intent of the Agricultural Land Preservation Program is to establish a process for the required preservation of agricultural land through the acquisition of agricultural conservation easements or the payment of an in-lieu fee for projects subject to the provisions of this section. Because the Project includes more than 20 acres of converted important farmland, in-lieu payment of fees is not an available option to compensate for this loss. The Ordinance will require that an equivalent amount of agricultural land converted be preserved outside the urban development boundary and within the southern San Joaquin Valley, or that a project comply with regulations within the Ordinance that will cause an equivalent amount of agricultural land to be preserved. Additionally, the preserved agricultural land must demonstrate adequate water supply and agricultural zoning. Policy LU-P-34 notes that such a program shall, to the extent feasible and practicable, be integrated with the agricultural easement programs adopted by Tulare County and nearby cities. Therefore, to ensure compliance with the applicable standards of Ordinance No. 2023-02, Mitigation Measure AG-1 has been incorporated, which will require Project compliance prior to the issuance of grading permits. Furthermore, implementation of this Project will support LU-P-21 and the General Plan designation for residential development. LU-P-20 states that residential development can occur in Tier II after 5,850 residential building permits have been issued. According to the most recent Housing Element, there was a total of 4,820 building permits (4,396 single-family dwellings and 424 multi-family units) issued as of 2019 (City of Visalia, 2024). The Project would be reviewed by City staff to ensure compliance with this General Plan policy prior to development. Therefore, with implementation of Mitigation Measure AG-1, the impacts of the Project would be less than significant.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

MM AG-1: Prior to the issuance of grading or building permits, the Project proponent shall mitigate impacts for loss of up to 78 acres of Prime Farmland on the Project site at a 1:1 ratio. The amount of land requiring mitigation shall correspond to the amount of land associated with the issuance of the grading or building permit, or for residential land associated with a subdivision map, the amount of land associated with the subdivision map. The Project proponent shall implement one or more of the following measures to mitigate the loss: Payment of in-lieu fees, mitigation banks, fee title acquisition, and/or conservation easements on land(s) within the Southern San Joaquin Valley of California, specifically within Kern County, Tulare County, Kings County, Fresno County, or Madera County. The City shall require, at a minimum, evidence that the preserved land has an adequate water supply, agricultural zoning, evidence of land encumbrance documentation, documentation that the easement/regulations are permanent and monitored, and documentation that the mitigation strategy is appropriately endowed. This mitigation shall be verified by the City prior to issuance of grading or building permits. The Project proponent, at its election, may mitigate for the loss of agricultural land through compliance with the Agricultural Mitigation Program that is adopted by the City in lieu of mitigating on a 1:1 ratio.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Impacts would be *less than significant with mitigation incorporated*.

Impact #3.4.2b – Would the Project conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use or a Williamson Act Contract?

See Impact #3.4.2a, above. The Project site is not subject to the existing Williamson Act Land Use contract pursuant to Government Code Section 51200 et seq. Therefore, there would be no conflict with a Williamson Act contract, and as such, the Project would have no impacts related to this subject area.

The County of Tulare currently classifies the Project site as being within the AE-20(Exclusive Agricultural, 20-acre minimum) zone district and has a General Plan designation of Low-, Medium-, and High-Density Residential and Conservation designated by the City. The Project proposes to annex into the City limits and pre-zone with two residential zoning districts (R-1-5 and R-M-3) for low-, medium-, and high-density residential uses. Therefore, approval of the proposed Project would remedy any conflict with the existing County agricultural zoning. However, in order to ensure that existing agricultural operations in the area can be maintained, a Right-to-Farm Covenant will be required, as identified in MM AG-2. After implementation of the recommended mitigation, the impact is determined to be less than significant.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

MM AG-2: In order to reduce potential conflicts between urban and agricultural uses, the following measures shall be implemented:

- a. Potential residents shall be notified about possible exposure to agricultural chemicals at the time of purchase/lease of property within the development.
- b. A Right-to-Farm Covenant shall be recorded on each residential tract map or be made a condition of each tract map to protect continued agricultural practices in the area.
- c. Potential residents shall be informed of the Right-to-Farm Covenant at the time of purchase/lease of property within the development.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Impacts would be *less than significant with mitigation incorporated*.

Impact #3.4.2c – Would the Project 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))?

Public Resources Code Section 12220(g) defines forest land as land that can support 10-percent native tree cover of any species, including hardwoods, under natural conditions and that allows for the management of one or more forest resources, including timber, aesthetics, fish and wildlife, biodiversity, water quality, recreation, and other public benefits. Public Resources Code Section 4526 defines timberland as land other than land owned by the federal government and land designated by the board as experimental forest land, which is available for and capable of growing a crop of trees of a commercial species used to produce lumber and other forest products. Government Code Section 51104 defines timberland zoned Timberland Production as an area that has been zoned pursuant to Section 51112 or 51113 and is devoted to and used for growing and harvesting timber or for growing and harvesting timber and compatible uses.

The Project site is currently developed with row crop and orchard cultivation and does not contain any trees, so it is not considered forest land or timberland. The proposed Project will not conflict with any forest land or timberland production or result in any loss of forest land. Therefore, the Project will have no impact.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

No mitigation is required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

There would be *no impact*.

Impact #3.4.2d – Would the Project result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?

As discussed, Impact #3.4.2c, the Project area does not include forest land. Therefore, there would not be loss or conversion of forest land as a result of the Project. The Project would have no impact.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

No mitigation is required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

There would be *no impact*.

Impact #3.4.2e – Would the Project 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?

See discussion in Impact #3.4.2a and #3.4.2b.

The proposed Project site is located in an area that is surrounded by agricultural uses to the north, east, and south, and low-density and high-density residential uses to the west. As previously noted, the Project site is within the City’s UDB – Tier II, currently zoned AE-20 (Exclusive Agriculture, 20-acre minimum) by Tulare County and designated as Residential Low, Residential Medium, Residential High Density, and Conservation by the General Plan.

As mentioned in Impact #3.4.2a, once annexed, the Project would convert 78 acres of Prime Farmland to a non-agricultural land use, which would account for a 0.22 percent reduction in Prime Farmland expected under the City’s General Plan at buildout of the Plan. As discussed in Impact #3.4.2a, the Project is required to adhere to requirements of the City’s Agricultural Land Preservation Program (Ordinance No. 2023-02), which would require, prior to the issuance of grading or building permits, the Project proponent shall mitigate impacts for loss of up to 78 acres of Prime Farmland on the Project site at a 1:1 ratio. Therefore, with implementation of MM AG-1, the Project’s conversion of 78 acres of Prime Farmland to a non-agricultural use would be less than significant.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

Implementation of MM AG-1.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Impacts would be *less than significant with mitigation incorporated*.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less-than-Significant Impact	No Impact
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3.4.3 - AIR QUALITY

Where available, the significance criteria established by the applicable air quality management district or air pollution control district may be relied upon to make the following determinations. Would the Project:

a.	Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b.	Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the Project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or State ambient air quality standard?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c.	Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d.	Result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Discussion

The analysis in this section is largely based on the Air Quality Impact Analysis (AQIA) prepared for this Project (QK, 2025a), attached as Appendix A.

Impact #3.4.3a – Would the Project Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?

Plan Consistency

The AQIA was prepared pursuant to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District (SJVAPCD) Guidance for Assessing and Mitigating Air Quality Impacts (GAMAQI) and the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Statute and Guidelines (QK, 2025a). The Project area is located within Tulare County in the San Joaquin Valley Air Basin (SJVAB or Basin). Tulare County is included among the eight counties that comprise the SJVAPCD. The SJVAPCD acts as the regulatory agency for air pollution control in the Basin and is the local agency empowered to regulate air pollutant emissions for the Project area. The SJVAPCD, along with the California Air Resources Board (CARB), operates an air quality monitoring network that provides average concentrations of those pollutants for which State or federal agencies have established ambient air quality standards (AAQS).

CEQA Guidelines and the Federal Clean Air Act (Sections 176 and 316) contain specific references on the need to evaluate consistency between a proposed project and the

applicable Air Quality Attainment Plans (AQAP) for the Project site (QK, 2025a). To accomplish this, CARB has developed a three-step approach to determine project conformity with the applicable AQAP:

1. Determination that an AQAP is being implemented in the area where the project is being proposed. The SJVAPCD has implemented the current, modified AQAP as approved by CARB.
2. The proposed project must be consistent with the growth assumptions of the applicable AQAP. The proposed Project is included in the employment increases projected in the Tulare County General Plan.
3. The project must contain in its design all reasonably available and feasible air quality control measures. The proposed Project incorporates various policy and rule-required implementation measures that will reduce related emissions.

The California Clean Air Act (CCAA) and AQAP identify transportation control measures as methods to further reduce emissions from mobile sources. Strategies identified to reduce vehicular emissions such as reductions in vehicle trips, vehicle use, vehicle miles traveled, vehicle idling, and traffic congestion, in order to reduce vehicular emissions, can be implemented as control measures under the CCAA as well. Additional measures may also be implemented through the building process, such as providing electrical outlets on exterior walls of structures to encourage the use of electrical landscape maintenance equipment or measures such as electrical outlets for electrical systems on diesel trucks to reduce or eliminate idling time.

As the growth represented by the proposed Project was anticipated by the Tulare County General Plan and incorporated into the AQAP, conclusions may be drawn from the following criteria:

- That, by definition, the proposed emissions from the Project are below the SJVAPCD's established emissions impact thresholds.
- That the primary source of emissions from the Project would be motor vehicles, which would be licensed through the State of California and whose emissions are already incorporated into the CARB's Tulare County Emissions Inventory.

Furthermore, the Tulare County Association of Governments (TCAG) Final Conformity Analysis demonstrates that the regional transportation expenditure plans (2022 Regional Transportation Plan and 2025 Federal Transportation Improvement Program) in the Tulare County portion of the San Joaquin Valley air quality attainment areas would not hinder the efforts set out in the CARB's State Implementation Plan (SIP) for each area's non-attainment pollutants [carbon monoxide (CO), ozone (O₃) and particulate matter with a diameter of 10 microns or less (PM₁₀)]. The analysis uses the California Department of Finance (DOF) as the primary county-level forecasting reference for population growth and the California Employment Development Department (EDD), Info USA, and Woods & Poole for forecasting employment growth. Housing forecasts are based on DOF data for the base year and projected using a Planning Center Study from 2012 conducted by the SJVAPCD.

The TCAG Conformity Analysis considers General Plan Amendments (GPA) and zone changes that were enacted at the time of the analysis as projected growth within the area based on land use designations incorporated within the Tulare County General Plan. Land use designations that are altered based on subsequent GPAs that were not included in the Conformity Analysis were not incorporated into the TCAG analysis. Consequently, if a proposed project is not included in the regional growth forecast using the latest planning assumptions, it may not be said to conform to the regional growth forecast.

Under the current City General Plan, the Project site is designated as Residential Low, Residential Medium, and Residential High Density and Conservation. As the Project site was rezoned for residential land uses, the Project's growth was analyzed in the projected growth of the Final Conformity Analysis. Additionally, under current policies, after a GPA is approved, housing and employment assumptions can be updated to reflect the capacity changes. The proposed development does require an approval of the prezone; therefore, the existing growth forecast may be modified to reflect any necessary changes. Therefore, the Project will not be in conflict with the Final Conformity Analysis.

SJVAPCD's specific CEQA air quality thresholds are presented in Table 3.4.3-1.

Table 3.4.3-1
SJVAPCD CEQA Thresholds of Significance

Criteria Pollutant	Operational Emissions		
	Construction Emissions	Permitted Equipment and Activities	Non-Permitted Equipment and Activities
NO _x	10 tons/yr	10 tons/yr	10 tons/yr
ROG	10 tons/yr	10 tons/yr	10 tons/yr
SO _x	27 tons/yr	27 tons/yr	27 tons/yr
PM ₁₀	15 tons/yr	15 tons/yr	15 tons/yr
PM _{2.5}	15 tons/yr	15 tons/yr	15 tons/yr
CO	100 tons/yr	100 tons/yr	100 tons/yr

Source: Appendix A.

Construction

Short-term emissions from the construction phases of the Project would have temporary impacts on air quality (QK, 2025a).

Table 3.4.3-2 presents the Project's short-term emissions based on the anticipated construction period. As calculated with CalEEMod, the estimated short-term construction-related emissions would not exceed SJVAPCD significance threshold levels during any given year and would, therefore, be less than significant.

**Table 3.4.3-2
Short-Term Project Emissions**

Emissions Source	Pollutant (tons/year)					
	ROG	NO _x	CO	SO ₂	PM ₁₀	PM _{2.5}
Construction - 2026	0.374	2.125	3.564	0.005	0.410	0.168
Construction - 2027	3.292	1.371	2.797	0.004	0.287	0.097
Significance Threshold	10	10	100	27	15	15
Is Threshold Exceeded for a Single Year After Mitigation?	No	No	No	No	No	No

Source: (QK, 2025a)

Operational (post-construction)

Upon full buildout, long-term emissions are caused by operational mobile sources and area source emissions from residences. Operation of the Project site at full build-out is not expected to present a substantial source of fugitive dust (PM₁₀) emissions. The main source of PM₁₀ emissions would be from vehicular traffic associated with the Project site.

PM₁₀, on its own and in combination with other pollutants, poses a health hazard. SJVAPCD's Regulation VIII establishes required controls to reduce and minimize fugitive dust emissions. The following SJVAPCD Rules and Regulations apply to the proposed Project (and all projects):

- Rule 4102 – Nuisance – prohibits a facility from posing as a nuisance to surrounding receptors and can impose penalties for nuisance issues such as dust, smoke, excess emissions, etc. Compliance with this rule ensures that the area around the Project site will not be adversely impacted by such issues.
- Regulation VIII – Fugitive PM₁₀ Prohibitions – a series of regulations to reduce and/or eliminate the generation of particulate matter (PM) that can adversely impact visibility as well as the health and safety of people on-site or in the vicinity of the Project.
 - Rule 8011 – General Requirements – this rule is to reduce ambient concentrations of fine particulate matter (PM₁₀) by requiring actions to prevent, reduce, or mitigate anthropogenic (human-caused) fugitive dust emissions.
 - Rule 8021 – Construction, Demolition, Excavation, Extraction, and Other Earthmoving Activities – restricts generation of airborne dust and visibility impacts from these activities. Places limits on opacity and equipment operation under certain adverse weather conditions.
 - Rule 8041 – Carryout and Trackout – requires that equipment and vehicles leaving the construction site control the amount of dirt, soil, or mud that is tracked off-site and onto public roadways. This helps eliminate or minimize dust generation and opacity degradation.
 - Rule 8051 – Open Areas – limits fugitive dust from open areas, i.e., areas on a construction site that are not actively being constructed upon but may generate wind-blown dust.

Project-related transportation activities from residents would generate mobile source reactive organic gases (ROG), oxides of nitrogen (NO_x), sulfur oxides (SO_x), CO, PM₁₀, and PM_{2.5} exhaust emissions. Exhaust emissions would vary substantially from day to day, but would average out over the course of an operational year. The variables factored into estimating total Project emissions include level of activity, site characteristics, weather conditions, and number of visitors. As the Project is not expected to generate an adverse change in current activity levels, substantial emissions are not anticipated. The default trip rates in CalEEMod were used along with an adjusted fleet mix to reflect the SJVAPCD-approved residential fleet mix for the year 2026.

The proposed Project is expected to generate operational emissions as shown in Table 3.4.3-3.

**Table 3.4.3-3
Post-Project Max Year (Operational Emissions)**

Emissions Source	Pollutant (tons/year)					
	ROG	NO _x	CO	SO _x	PM ₁₀	PM _{2.5}
Operational Emissions	7.50	3.24	23.61	0.04	3.83	1.04
SJVAPCD Threshold	10	10	100	27	15	15
Is Threshold Exceeded After Mitigation?	No	No	No	No	No	No

Source: (QK, 2025a)

As shown in Table 3.4.3-3, operations-related emissions would not exceed the SJVAPCD significant threshold levels. Therefore, Project operational emissions impacts are less than significant. Based on these factors, the Project is consistent with the AQAP and, therefore, would result in a less-than-significant impact.

An ambient air quality analysis was also performed to determine if the proposed Project has the potential to impact ambient air quality through a violation of the AAQS or a substantial contribution to an existing or projected air quality standard. The basis for the analysis is dispersion modeling and the Project's long-term air quality impacts shown in Table 3.4.3-4.

Emissions were evaluated for each pollutant on a short-term (correlating to pollutant averaging period) and long-term (annual) basis, with the exception of CO, which was evaluated only for short-term exposures since there are no long-term significance thresholds for CO. The results of the air dispersion modeling, presented in Table 3.4.3-4, demonstrate that the maximum impacts attributable to the Project, when considered in addition to the existing background concentrations, are below the applicable AAQS for NO_x, SO_x, and CO.

**Table 3.4.3-4
Predicted Ambient Air Quality Impacts**

Pollutant	Averaging Period	Background ($\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$)	Project ($\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$)	Project + Background ($\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$)	NAAQS ($\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$)	CAAQS ($\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$)
NO ₂	1-Hour	115.7	6.39	122.09	188.68	338
NO ₂	Annual	13.6	0.72	14.32	100	56
SO ₂	1-Hour	28.0	0.05	28.05	196	655
SO ₂	3-Hour	18.2	0.04	18.24	1,300	---
SO ₂	24-Hour	5.8	0.02	5.82	365	105
CO	1-Hour	2,061	31.8	2,093	40,000	23,000
CO	8-Hour	1,718	22.3	1,740	10,000	10,000
PM ₁₀	24-Hour	172	0.73	172.7	150	50
PM ₁₀	Annual	25.8	0.19	25.99	---	20
PM _{2.5}	24-Hour	64.7	0.33	65.03	35	---
PM _{2.5}	Annual	12.9	0.09	12.99	12	12

If a project's maximum impacts are below the District's significant impact levels (SIL), the project is judged not to cause or contribute significantly to an AAQS or prevention of significant deterioration (PSD) increment violation. A comparison of the proposed impact from the Project to the District SIL values is provided in Table 3.4.3-5.

**Table 3.4.3-5
Comparison of Maximum Modeled Project Impact with Significant Thresholds**

Pollutant	Averaging Period	Predicted Concentration ($\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$)	SIL ($\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$)
PM ₁₀	24-Hour	0.73	10.4
PM ₁₀	Annual	0.19	2.08
PM _{2.5}	24-Hour	0.33	2.5
PM _{2.5}	Annual	0.09	0.63

Because the Project's modelled PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5} are below the SJVAPCD's significance levels for 24-hour and annual concentrations, the Project's contribution to potential violations of AAQS would be less than significant.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

No mitigation is required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Impacts would be *less than significant*.

Impact #3.4.3b – Would the Project result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the Project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or State ambient air quality standard?

SJVAPCD's approach to assessing cumulative impacts dictates that a project's contribution to cumulative impacts to regional air quality would be considered potentially significant if the project's impact would be individually significant (i.e., exceeds the SJVAPCD's quantitative thresholds). For a project that would not individually cause a significant impact, the project's contribution to any cumulative impact may be considered less than significant, provided that the project is consistent with all applicable regional air quality plans (AQPs).

As mentioned in Impact #3.4.3a, the SJVAPCD acts as the regulatory agency for air pollution control in the Basin and is the local agency empowered to regulate air pollutant emissions for the Project area. The SJVACPD, along with the California Air Resources Board (CARB), operates an air quality monitoring network that provides average concentrations of those pollutants for which State or federal agencies have established AAQS.

SJVAPCD uses a single threshold for the determination of significance for both project-specific and cumulative impacts. Air quality in SJVAB has improved over the past decades, which indicates that the single threshold is sufficient for assessing cumulative impacts. Under the established National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) criteria pollutants, SJVAB is classified as non-attainment/extreme for Ozone (8-hour) and non-attainment for PM₁₀. Under the California Ambient Air Quality Standards (CAAQS), the SJVAB is classified as non-attainment/severe for Ozone (1-hour), non-attainment for Ozone (8-hour), and non-attainment for PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5} (QK, 2025a). As indicated in Tables 3.4.3-2 and 3.4.3-3, the proposed Project would generate less-than-significant impacts to criteria air pollutants; therefore, the Project's incremental contribution to cumulative air quality impacts would not be cumulatively considerable (CEQA Guidelines Section 15064(h)(3) (QK, 2025a).

Based on the analysis conducted, this Project is individually less than significant. The AQIA, however, also considered the impacts of the proposed Project in conjunction with the impacts of other projects previously proposed in the area. The following cumulative impacts were considered:

- Cumulative O₃ Impacts (ROG and NO_x) from numerous sources within the region, including transport from outside the region. O₃ is formed through chemical reactions of ROG and NO_x in the presence of sunlight.
- Cumulative CO Impacts produced primarily by vehicular emissions.
- Cumulative PM₁₀ Impacts from within the region and locally from the various projects. Such projects may cumulatively produce a significant amount of PM₁₀ if several projects conduct grading or earthmoving activities at the same time.
- Hazardous Air Pollutant (HAP) Impacts on sensitive receptors.

As shown in Table 3.4.3-6 below, the proposed Project would pose an inconsequential impact on regional O₃ and PM₁₀ formation. Therefore, this Project would not be considered cumulatively considerable in its contribution to regional O₃ and PM₁₀ impacts.

**Table 3.4.3-6
2030 Emissions Projections – Proposed Project, Tulare County and SJVAB**

	ROG	NO _x	PM ₁₀
Proposed Project	7.50	3.24	3.83
Tulare County	20,325.0	8,346.1	14,756.6
SJVAB	104,380.5	38,036.3	99,271.2
Proposed Project Percent of Tulare County	0.037%	0.039%	0.026%
Proposed Project Percent of SJVAB	0.007%	0.009%	0.004%
Tulare County Percent of SJVAB	19.47%	21.94%	14.86%

As discussed above, both construction and operational emissions are not anticipated to exceed SJVAPCD's established emissions thresholds and significance thresholds for all CEQA air quality determinations. Therefore, this Project would not have a significant impact on the SJVAB. The proposed Project would not result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the Project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or State AAQS and would have a less-than-significant impact.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

No mitigation is required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Impacts would be *less than significant*.

Impact #3.4.3c – Would the Project expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?

Sensitive receptors are defined as locations where young children, chronically ill individuals, the elderly, or people who are more sensitive than the general population reside, such as schools, hospitals, nursing homes, and daycare centers (QK, 2025a). The nearest residential sensitive receptor to the proposed Project is located adjacent to portions of the Project's sites. Table 3.4.3-7 lists the known non-residential sensitive receptors within one mile of the Project site.

**Table 3.4.3-7
Sensitive Receptors Located < One Mile from Project**

Receptor	Type of Facility	Distance from Project (miles)	Direction from Project
Blue Oak Academy	School	0.71	E
Annie R Mitchell Elementary School	School	0.46	NW
Janet's Day Care Visalia	Daycare	0.27	W
Little Rainbows Daycare	Daycare	0.36	W

The SJVAPCD's GAMAQI states, "From a health risk perspective, there are basically two types of land use projects that have the potential to cause long-term public health risk impacts:

- Type A Projects: Land use projects that will place new toxic sources in the vicinity of existing receptors.
- Type B Projects: Land use projects that will place new receptors in the vicinity of existing toxic sources."

Descriptions of criteria air pollutants, typical sources, health effects, and recently documented pollutant levels for ozone (O₃), suspended particulate matter (PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5}), carbon monoxide (CO), nitrogen dioxide (NO₂), hydrocarbons, sulfur dioxide, lead (Pb), and suspended sulfate in the Project vicinity can be found in Appendix A (QK, 2025a). Table 3.4.3-8 presents the thresholds of significance used with toxic air contaminants when evaluating HAPs.

**Table 3.4.3-8
Measures of Significance – Toxic Air Contaminants**

Agency	Level	Description
Significance Thresholds Adopted for the Evaluation of Impacts Under CEQA		
SJVAPCD	Carcinogens	Maximally Exposed Individual risk equals or exceeds 20 in one million.
	Non-Carcinogens	Acute: Hazard Index equals or exceeds 1.0 for the Maximally Exposed Individual. Chronic: Hazard Index equals or exceeds 1.0 for the Maximally Exposed Individual.

Source: (QK, 2025a)

The proposed Project would result in emissions of HAPs from construction activities and would be located near existing residents; therefore, an assessment of the potential risk to the population attributable to emissions of hazardous air pollutants from the proposed Project is required.

To predict the potential health risk to the population attributable to emissions of HAPs from the proposed Project, ambient air concentrations were predicted with dispersion modeling to arrive at a conservative estimate of increased individual carcinogenic risk that might occur as a result of continuous exposure over the construction period for construction emissions. Similarly, predicted concentrations were used to calculate non-cancer chronic and acute hazard indices, which are the ratio of expected exposure to acceptable exposure.

SJVAPCD has set the level of significance for carcinogenic risk at 20 in one million, which is understood as the possibility of causing 20 additional cancer cases in a population of one million people. The level of significance for chronic non-cancer risk is a hazard index of 1.0. All receptors were modeled with a two-year exposure to construction activities.

The carcinogenic risk and the health hazard index (HI) for chronic non-cancer risk at the point of maximum impact (PMI) do not exceed the significance levels of 20 in one million (20×10^{-6}) and 1.0, respectively, for the proposed Project. The PMIs are identified by receptor location and risk and are provided in Table 3.4.3-9.

**Table 3.4.3-9
Potential Maximum Impacts Predicted by HARP**

	Cancer Risk	Chronic Hazard Index
Construction	4.12E-06	2.41E-03
SJVAPCD Threshold	20.0E-06	1.0
Exceedance?	No	No
Receptor #	1479	1479
UTM Easting (m)	297503.33	297503.33
UTM Northing (m)	4019827.45	4019827.45

Note: UTM = Universal Transverse Mercator

As shown above in Table 3.4.3-9, the maximum predicted cancer risk for the proposed Project is 4.12E-06. The maximum chronic non-cancer hazard index for the proposed Project is 2.41E-03. Since the PMI remained below the significance threshold for cancer and chronic risk, this Project would not have an adverse effect to any of the surrounding communities.

The potential health risk attributable to the proposed Project is determined to be *less than significant* based on the following conclusions:

- Potential carcinogenic risk from the proposed Project is below the significance level of 20 in a million at each of the modeled receptors.
- The hazard index for the potential chronic non-cancer risk from the proposed Project is below the significance level of 1.0 at each of the modeled receptors.
- The hazard index for the potential acute non-cancer risk was not calculated since there is no acute risk associated with DPM emission; therefore, the proposed Project is considered below the significance level.

Therefore, the potential risk to the population attributable to emissions of HAPs from the proposed Project would be less than significant.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

No mitigation is required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Impacts would be *less than significant*.

Impact #3.4.3d – Would the Project result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people?

The SJVAPCD’s GAMAQI states, “An analysis of potential odor impacts should be conducted for both of the following two situations:

1. Generators – projects that would potentially generate odorous emissions proposed to be located near existing sensitive receptors or other land uses where people may congregate.
2. Receivers – residential or other sensitive receptor projects or other projects built for the intent of attracting people locating near existing odor sources” (QK, 2025a).

According to the GAMAQI, the District has identified some common types of facilities that have been known to produce odors in the San Joaquin Valley Air Basin. These are presented in Table 3.4.3-10 below, along with a reasonable distance from the source within which the degree of odors could possibly be significant. Because the Project’s anticipated land uses and activities are not listed as a source that would create objectionable odors, the Project is not expected to be a source of objectionable odors (QK, 2025a).

**Table 3.4.3-10
Screening Levels for Potential Odor Sources**

Type of Facility	Distance
Wastewater Treatment Facility	2 miles
Sanitary Landfill	1 mile
Transfer Station	1 mile
Composting Facility	1 mile
Petroleum Refinery	2 miles
Asphalt Batch Plant	1 mile
Chemical Manufacturing	1 mile
Fiberglass Manufacturing	1 mile
Painting/Coating Operations (e.g., auto body shops)	1 mile
Food Processing Facility	1 mile
Feed Lot/Dairy	1 mile
Rendering Plant	1 mile

Source: (QK, 2025a)

Based on the provisions of the SJVAPCD’s GAMAQI, the proposed Project would not exceed any screening trigger levels to be considered a source of objectionable odors or odorous compounds. Furthermore, there does not appear to be any significant source of objectionable odors in close proximity that may adversely impact the Project site when it is in operation. Additionally, the Project emissions estimates indicate that it would not be expected to adversely impact surrounding receptors. As such, the proposed Project would not be a source of any odorous compounds, nor would it likely be impacted by any odorous source. Therefore, impacts are less than significant.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

No mitigation is required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Impacts would be *less than significant*.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less-than-Significant Impact	No Impact
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3.4.4 - BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

Would the Project:

- | | | | | | |
|----|--|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| a. | Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special-status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b. | Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| c. | Have a substantial adverse effect on State or federally protected wetlands (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| d. | Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species, or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| e. | Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| f. | Conflict with the provisions of an adopted habitat conservation plan, natural community conservation plan, or other approved local, regional, or State habitat conservation plan? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

This section's analysis is substantiated by a Biological Resource Evaluation prepared for the Project (*QK, 2025b*), attached as Appendix B.

Discussion

Impact #3.4.4a – Would the Project have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special-status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?

The Project site includes two separate parcels, with over half of it being a recently mowed, irrigated agricultural field containing oats and a peach orchard.

Qualified biologists surveyed the Project site on June 16, 2025, for its biotic habitats, the plants and animals that occur in those habitats, and significant habitat values that may be protected by State and federal law. The survey consisted of meandering pedestrian transects spaced 50 to 100 feet apart throughout the Biological Survey Area (BSA), where accessible. Areas with suitable habitat that could not be accessed, such as private residences or adjacent agricultural fields, were surveyed by use of high-power binoculars. Additionally, literature and database reviews were conducted, such as the California Native Plant Society (CNPS) Inventory of Rare and Endangered Plants of California and California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDB), to determine which sensitive biological resources have been recorded within the Project site (*QK, 2025b*).

The results of the database inquiries were reviewed to extract pertinent information on site conditions and evaluate the potential for sensitive biological resources to occur within or near the proposed Project site. Only those resources with the potential to be present and affected by the Project were included and considered in this document. The potential presence of natural communities and special-status species was based on distributional ranges overlapping the Project site and the presence of habitat and/or primary constituent habitat elements.

Special-Status Plant Species

There were 11 special-status plant species identified in the literature and database review that are known or have the potential to occur within the surrounding nine-quadrangles centered on the Project site (Table 3.4.4-1). None of the special-status plant species has historical records occurring on or overlapping the BSA or were observed during the site survey. Furthermore, it was observed that there is no suitable habitat for the 11 special-status plant species identified in literature and database reviews.

Table 3.4.4-1
Special-Status Plant Species Occurring in the Region of the BSA

Scientific Name	Common Name	Status
<i>Atriplex cordulata</i> var. <i>cordulata</i>	heartscale	1B.2
<i>Atriplex cordulata</i> var. <i>erecticaulis</i>	Earlimart orache	1B.2
<i>Atriplex depressa</i>	brittlescale	1B.2
<i>Atriplex minuscula</i>	lesser saltscale	1B.1
<i>Atriplex persistens</i>	vernal pool smallscale	1B.2
<i>Atriplex subtilis</i>	subtle orache	1B.2
<i>Caulanthus californicus</i>	California jewelflower	1B.1
<i>Delphinium recurvatum</i>	recurved larkspur	1B.2
<i>Eryngium spinosepalum</i>	spiny-sepaled button-celery	1B.2
<i>Euphorbia hooveri</i>	Hoover's spurge	1B.2
<i>Helianthus winteri</i>	Winter's sunflower	1B.2
<i>Lasthenia chrysantha</i>	alkali-sink goldfields	1B.1
<i>Lasthenia glabrata</i> ssp. <i>coulteri</i>	Coulter's goldfields	1B.1
<i>Orcuttia inaequalis</i>	San Joaquin Valley Orcutt grass	1B.1
<i>Pseudobahia peirsonii</i>	San Joaquin adobe sunburst	1B.1
<i>Puccinellia simplex</i>	California alkali grass	1B.2
<i>Sagittaria sanfordii</i>	Sanford's arrowhead	1B.2

Source: (QK, 2025b); CNDDDB, 2025; CNPS, 2025; and USFWS, 2025

CRPR (California Rare Plant Rank):

1B Rare, Threatened, or Endangered in California and elsewhere.

2B Plants Rare, Threatened, or Endangered in California, but more common elsewhere.

CRPR Threat Code Extension:

.1 Seriously endangered in California (over 80% of occurrences threatened / high degree and immediacy of threat)

.2 Fairly endangered in California (20-80% occurrences threatened)

Special-Status Wildlife Species

Of the 22 special-status wildlife species identified in the literature and database review that are known or have the potential to occur within the BSA, four special-status wildlife species, Swainson's hawk, western burrowing owl, American badger, and San Joaquin kit fox, are determined to have the potential to occur within the BSA as a transient (Table 3.4.4-2). Nesting birds and raptors have the potential to occur on or near the Project site and surrounding the BSA during the nesting season. Several suitable dens are located in the BSA that can be utilized by burrowing owl, American badger, or San Joaquin kit fox, and these species may be transient foragers at any time. Mitigation Measures BIO-1 through BIO-9 listed below will eliminate or reduce Project impacts to special-status species to a less-than-significant level. Any special-status species that uses the Project as a movement corridor or uses the multiple dens and burrows located on the Project site or vicinity may be directly or indirectly impacted by Project activities.

Table 3.4.4-2
Special-Status Wildlife Species Occurring in the Region of the BSA

Scientific Name	Common Name	Status
Invertebrates		
<i>Andrena macswaini</i>	An andrenid bee	- , SSC
<i>Bombus crotchii</i>	Crotch's bumble bee	- , SSC
<i>Bombus pensylvanicus</i>	American bumble bee	- , SSC
<i>Danaus Plexippus</i>	monarch butterfly	FC, SSC
<i>Desmocerus californicus dimorphus</i>	valley elderberry longhorn beetle	FT, SSC
<i>Lytta hoppingi</i>	Hopping's blister beetle	FC, -
Aquatic Invertebrates		
<i>Branchinecta lynchi</i>	vernal pool fairy shrimp	FT, SCC
<i>Lepidurus packardi</i>	vernal pool tadpole shrimp	FE, SCC
<i>Lindieriella occidentalis</i>	California linderiella	- , SSC
Amphibians		
<i>Ambystoma californiense</i> pop 1	California tiger salamander central California DPS	FT, ST/SSC
<i>Lithobates pipiens</i>	northern leopard frog	- , SSC
<i>Spea hammondi</i>	western spadefoot	FC , SSC
Reptiles		
<i>Actinemys marmorata</i>	northwestern pond turtle	- , SSC
<i>Anniella pulchra</i>	Northern California legless lizard	- , SSC
<i>Gambelia silus</i>	blunt-nosed leopard lizard	FE, SSC
Birds		
<i>Agelaius tricolor</i>	tricolored blackbird	- , ST/SSC
<i>Athene cunicularia</i>	burrowing owl	- , SSC
<i>Buteo swainsoni</i>	Swainson's hawk	- , ST/SSC
<i>Coccyzus americanus occidentalis</i>	western yellow-billed cuckoo	FT, SE/SSC
<i>Gymnogyps californianus</i>	California Condor	FE, SSC
<i>Lanius ludovicianus</i>	loggerhead shrike	- , SSC
Mammals		
<i>Antrozous pallidus</i>	pallid bat	FE, SE
<i>Dipodomys nitratooides nitratooides</i>	Tipton kangaroo rat	FE, SE
<i>Eumops perotis californicus</i>	western mastiff bat	- , SSC
<i>Sorex ornatus relictus</i>	Buena Vista Lake ornate shrew	FE, SSC
<i>Taxidea taxus</i>	American badger	FE, SSC
<i>Vulpes macrotis mutica</i>	San Joaquin kit fox	FE, ST

Source: (QK, 2025b); CNDDDB, 2025; and USFWS, 2025

Abbreviations:

FC	Federal Candidate
FE	Federal Endangered Species
FT	Federal Threatened Species
SFP	Fully Protected Animal, CDFW
SE	California Endangered Species
ST	California Threatened Species
SSC	California Department of Fish and Game Species of Special Concern
SCS	California Candidate

SWAINSON'S HAWK

The BSA provides suitable nesting and foraging habitat for Swainson's hawk (*Buteo swainsoni*). There are a few large trees located within the southwestern boundary of the BSA along Cameron Creek that could potentially support nesting raptors, including Swainson's hawk, but no nests were observed during the survey. The BSA provides a suitable prey base along the boundaries where California ground squirrels are located. Agriculture within the BSA consists of a citrus orchard that is not considered foraging habitat for Swainson's hawk. The small portion of agricultural field contains a suitable foraging habitat, but of a very limited size. Agricultural fields located within 0.5 miles of the Project site contain suitable foraging habitat. The nearest CNDDDB record (EONDX 41944) for nesting Swainson's hawk is located approximately 6.5 miles southeast of the BSA in 2000. Two foraging Swainson's hawks were observed in the BSA.

WESTERN BURROWING OWL

Western burrowing owls (*Athene cunicularia*) inhabit grassland, open bare ground, and utilize existing small mammal burrows, typically created by California ground squirrel (*Otospermophilus beecheyi*), for breeding and shelter. There was no diagnostic sign (e.g., whitewash, tracks, prey remains) of a burrowing owl observed, although appropriately sized small mammal burrows are present within the BSA. Burrowing owl may be present as transient foragers and may inhabit appropriately sized burrows at any time. No CNDDDB records of the western burrowing owl are recorded within 10 miles of the BSA.

AMERICAN BADGER

The American badger (*Taxidea taxus*) may occur within the BSA. Several unoccupied burrows were observed with sign of badger digs in the BSA. The nearest CNDDDB record (EONDX 56600) is four miles northeast of the BSA. This record is historical, with observations occurring in 1994; however, the records note that a small population is likely to still be surviving due to the large prey density. There were some potential dens that could have been dug by badgers; however, no other diagnostic sign (e.g., tracks, scat, prey remains) was observed.

SAN JOAQUIN KIT FOX

The San Joaquin kit fox (*Vulpes macrotis mutica*) is unlikely to be present within the BSA. The nearest CNDDDB record (EONDX 67933) is mapped generally within the southwest corner of the BSA and Project site. This record is historical, with the records of San Joaquin kit fox roadkill occurring between 1972 and 1975. The Project site lacks suitable habitat for the species due to the past and current levels of disturbance, and the surrounding BSA has been similarly degraded. No San Joaquin kit fox was observed during the survey, though suitably sized burrows were observed during the field survey. These burrows are likely enlarged California ground squirrel or badger digs.

Furthermore, the active swallow nests under the bridges will not be directly impacted by the Project activities. Impacts by nearby construction activities will include noise, dust, and other human disturbances that may impact nesting behavior if the project occurs during the nesting season. No other nests were observed within the BSA. There is potential for birds to nest outside of the Project site, but nearby in the BSA in existing structures and trees in the future. If there are active nests present during Project activities, nests could be impacted by Project activities that interfere with normal breeding behaviors, which could discourage breeding or lead to nest abandonment or failure. Mitigation Measures BIO-1 through BIO-9 listed below will eliminate or reduce impacts to nesting birds to a less-than-significant level.

As outlined below, MM BIO-1 through MM BIO-9 require appropriate preconstruction clearance surveys of the Project and vicinity to confirm the presence or absence of special status species such as Swainson's hawk, western burrowing owl, American badger, and San Joaquin kit fox. MM BIO-1 would require a pre-construction clearance survey no less than 14 days prior to the start of construction to survey for special-status species and/or nesting birds, MM BIO-2 requires parameters if construction is planned during nesting season, MM BIO-3 requires a worker environmental awareness program related to sensitive species, MM BIO-4 requires disturbance buffers for sensitive resources, MM BIO-5 through BIO-7 requires standard avoidance and minimization measures for western burrowing owl, American Badger and San Joaquin kit fox, and MM BIO-8 requires additional general measures to decrease impacts to protected and sensitive species.

Incorporation of MM BIO-1 through BIO-8 would reduce potential impacts to special status wildlife species, including American Badger and San Joaquin kit fox and nesting birds and raptors, including Swainson's hawk and burrowing owl, to a less-than-significant level and ensure compliance with State and federal laws protecting these species.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

MM BIO-1: Prior to the issuance of grading permits or ground disturbance, a pre-construction clearance survey of the Project footprint shall be conducted for special-status wildlife species and nesting migratory birds and raptors. The survey shall occur no less than 14 days prior to the start of construction activities. If construction is delayed beyond 30 days from the time of the survey or there is a lapse in construction of more than 30 days, then another survey shall be conducted. The survey shall be conducted by a biologist with adequate training and prior experience conducting surveys for special-status wildlife species. If no special-status species are observed, no further action is warranted. If dens or burrows that could support special-status species and/or nesting birds and raptors are discovered during the pre-construction survey, appropriate avoidance buffers shall be established. If no special-status species are observed on or near the Project site, no further surveys are required. A report outlining the results of the preconstruction survey shall be submitted to the lead agency as evidence of compliance.

MM BIO-2: If construction is planned during the nesting season for migratory birds (February 15 to August 31) and nesting birds are identified during the preconstruction survey, an active Swainson's hawk nest shall be avoided by 0.5 miles, other raptor nests shall

be avoided by 500 feet, and all other migratory bird nests shall be avoided by 250 feet. Avoidance buffers may be reduced if a qualified biological monitor determines that encroachment into the buffer area is not affecting nest building, the rearing of young, or otherwise affecting the breeding behaviors of the resident birds. Because nesting birds can establish new nests or produce a second or even third clutch at any time during the nesting season, nesting bird surveys shall be repeated every 30 days as construction activities are occurring throughout the nesting season. If no nesting birds are observed on or near the Project site, no further surveys are required.

MM BIO-3: A Worker Environmental Awareness Program shall be developed and implemented for all personnel who could access the site prior to commencing any disturbance activities. The program shall consist of an on-site or center presentation that will describe the locations and types of sensitive plant, wildlife, and sensitive natural communities (collectively, “Biological Resources”) on and near the site, an overview of the laws and regulations governing the protection of Biological Resources, the reasons for protecting the Biological Resources, the specific protection and avoidance measures that are applicable to the site, and the identity of designated points of contact should questions or issues arise, including the qualified biologist. The program shall provide training to recognize, avoid, and report to applicable qualified biologists any Biological Resources on the site.

- a. The Worker Environmental Awareness Program shall emphasize the need to avoid contact with on-site wildlife and avoid entry into areas where Biological Resources have been identified based on pre-disturbance field surveys, and to implement the buffer avoidance or other protection measures established by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) shall be identified by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) or required by the Biological Resource mitigation measures. The training shall emphasize the importance of not feeding or domesticating wildlife and the need to avoid any trash, micro-trash, or potential food waste on-site, except in animal-proof containers emptied daily, to avoid attracting or causing adverse impacts to special-status wildlife.
- b. All on-site personnel must sign a statement verifying that they have completed the Worker Environmental Awareness Program and that they understand and agree to implement the biological requirements for the worksite. If signed employee statements are not available, documentation may be provided by Worker Environmental Awareness Program training records, which shall be kept by the applicant for a minimum of five years. Each applicant shall maintain a list of all persons who have completed the training program and shall provide the list to the County or to State and federal wildlife agency representatives upon request.

MM BIO-4: If protected or special-status species are identified on the Project site during pre-construction surveys, protective buffers shall be used, where effective in the opinion of the qualified biologist. These measures are created to avoid any unauthorized incidental take of these species and to minimize any incidental take. Protective buffers shall be delineated using brightly colored stakes and/or flagging or similar materials and remain until construction activities are complete, at which time of completion, the buffers must be

removed. Protective buffers shall be established around active dens and/or burrows of special-status animal species or populations of special-status plant species to avoid unauthorized take of Protected Species as listed in the table below. The protective buffer distance shall be increased if required to avoid unauthorized incidental take of any Protected Species as determined by a qualified biologist. Protective buffer distances and other avoidance measures that may be implemented to avoid impacts to Protected Species or Sensitive Species must be consistent with the USFWS and/or the CDFW requirements and shall be implemented and overseen by a qualified biologist.

Disturbance Buffers for Sensitive Resources

Sensitive Resource	Buffer Zone from Disturbance (feet)
Potential San Joaquin kit fox den	50
Known San Joaquin kit fox den	100
Natal San Joaquin kit fox den	500
Atypical San Joaquin kit fox den	50
Rodent burrows	50
Special-status bird species' active nests	500 feet to 0.5 miles, depending on species and sight line
American badger: Non-maternity dens	50
American badger: Maternity dens	200

MM BIO-5: If Project activities must occur during the Swainson's hawk nesting season (February 15 to September 31), pre-activity surveys shall be conducted for Swainson's hawk nests in accordance with the *Recommended Timing and Methodology for Swainson's Hawk Nesting Surveys in California's Central Valley (CDFG, 2000)*. The surveys shall be conducted on the Project site plus a 0.5-mile buffer. To meet the minimum level of protection for the species, surveys shall be conducted during at least two survey periods prior to the start of construction. The survey shall be conducted in accordance with the methodology outlined in existing protocols and should be phased with the construction of the Project.

If no Swainson's hawk nests are found, no further action is required.

MM BIO-6: If an active Swainson's hawk nest is discovered at any time within 0.5 miles of active construction, a qualified biologist shall complete an assessment of the potential for current construction activities to impact the nest. The assessment shall consider the type of construction activities, the location of construction relative to the nest, the visibility of construction activities from the nest location, and other existing disturbances in the area that are not related to construction activities of this Project. Based on this assessment, the biologist shall determine if construction activities can proceed and the level of nest monitoring required. Construction activities shall not occur within 500 feet of an active nest, but depending upon conditions at the site, this distance may be reduced. Full-time monitoring to evaluate the effects of construction activities on nesting Swainson's hawks may be required. The qualified biologist shall have the authority to stop work if it is determined that Project construction is disturbing the nest. These buffers may need to be

increased depending on the sensitivity of the nesting Swainson's hawk to disturbances and at the discretion of the qualified biologist.

MM BIO-7: If burrows that could support the burrowing owl species are discovered during the pre-construction clearance survey conducted under MM BIO-1, the avoidance buffers outlined below shall be established, and burrow monitoring shall be conducted in accordance with the California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG) *Staff Report on Burrowing Owl Mitigation* (CDFG, 2012). No work would occur within these buffers. If occupied burrowing owl burrows cannot be avoided by the appropriate buffer below, an Incidental Take Permit (ITP) issued by the CDFW under the California Endangered Species Act (CESA) to authorize "take" that is incidental to an otherwise lawful activity, may be required before any work within the buffer.

Location	Time of Year	Level of Disturbance		
		Low	Med	High
Nesting sites	April 1 -Aug 15	200 m*	500 m	500 m
Nesting sites	Aug 16 – Oct 15	200 m	200 m	500 m
Nesting sites	Oct 16- Mar 31	50 m	100 m	500 m

*Meters (m)

MM BIO-8: Occupied American badger dens detected during pre-disturbance surveys shall be flagged, and ground-disturbing activities shall be avoided within 50 feet of the den. Maternity dens shall be avoided, and a minimum 200-foot buffer from disturbance shall be maintained during the pup-rearing season (February 15 through July 1). Maternity dens shall be avoided to the maximum extent feasible in the opinion of a qualified biologist. If an active maternity den is proposed to be disturbed, the qualified biologist shall consult with the CDFW to identify any appropriate additional minimization measures that the qualified biologist determines, with the wildlife agencies, can actually be implemented based on field conditions. All such measures shall be implemented for Project activities.

MM BIO-9: The following additional measures shall be implemented during construction to avoid and minimize potential significant adverse impacts to protected and sensitive species:

- a. All vehicles shall observe a 15-mile-per-hour speed limit in all areas of disturbance and on unpaved roads unless otherwise posted. Off-road traffic outside of designated access routes is prohibited. Speed limit signs shall be posted in visible locations at the point of site entry and at regular intervals on all unpaved access roads.
- b. All disturbance activities, except emergency situations or drilling that may require continuous operations, shall only occur during daylight hours. Nighttime disturbance activity for drilling purposes shall use directed lighting and shielding methods and comply with applicable lighting mitigation measures.
- c. All food-related trash items and all forms of micro trash, such as wrappers, cans, bottles, bottle tops, and food scraps, shall be disposed of in closed, animal-proof containers and removed daily from the site.
- d. Excavations, spoil piles, access roadways, and parking and staging areas shall be subject to dust control as set forth in the dust control mitigation measures.

- e. The use of herbicides for vegetation control shall be restricted to those approved by the USFWS and the CDFW. No rodenticides shall be used on any site unless approved by the USFWS and the CDFW, and shall observe label and other restrictions mandated by the United States Environmental Protection Agency, California Department of Food and Agriculture, and State and federal laws and regulations. For split estates, no herbicides for vegetation control may occur in Tier 2 areas without surface owner approval.
- f. No plants or wildlife shall be collected, taken, or removed from the site or any adjacent locations except as necessary for Project-related vegetation removal or wildlife relocation by a qualified biologist and subject to all applicable permits and authorizations.
- g. All open trenches or excavations shall be covered at the end of each workday to prevent wildlife entrapment. If an excavation is too large to cover, escape ramps shall be installed at an incline ratio of no greater than 2:1. All trenches and pipes shall be inspected for the presence of wildlife each day prior to the commencement of work.
- h. To enable San Joaquin kit foxes and other wildlife to pass through the Project site, any perimeter fencing shall include a four- to eight-inch opening between the fence mesh and the ground, or the fence shall be raised four inches above the ground except for blunt-nosed leopard lizard exclusion fencing. The bottom of the fence fabric shall be knuckled (wrapped back to form a smooth edge) to protect wildlife.
- i. All vertical tubes used in Project construction and chain link fencing poles shall be temporarily or permanently capped to avoid the entrapment and death of special-status wildlife and birds. All pipes 1.5 inches or greater in diameter stored overnight on a Project location must have end caps or other physical barriers that prevent wildlife from entering the pipe.
- j. All dead or injured special-status wildlife shall be left in place and reported to the USFWS and the CDFW within 48 hours of discovery for rescue or salvage. Discovery of State or federal listed species that are injured or dead shall also be managed consistent with regulatory requirements, including being reported immediately via telephone and within 24 hours in writing, and with a copy to the lead agency.
- k. During pre-construction surveys, the qualified biologist shall delineate previously disturbed areas to be used by the applicant to minimize the amount of new disturbance.
- l. No vehicles or construction equipment shall be parked within a wetland or waterbody/dry wash.
- m. Tracked vehicles and other construction equipment must be washed or maintained to be weed-free prior to entering and working within areas of a new disturbance.
- n. All washing of trucks, paint, equipment, or similar activities should occur in areas where runoff is fully contained for collection and off-site disposal. Wash water may not be discharged from the site and shall be located at least 100 feet from any water body or sensitive Biological Resources.
- o. Locate all extra work areas (such as staging areas and additional spoil storage areas) at least 50 feet away from wetland boundaries or waterbody, except where the adjacent upland consists of cultivated or rotated cropland or other disturbed land.

- p. All areas that must be avoided as a result of the pre-disturbance surveys and areas where new disturbance will occur shall be clearly delineated by fencing or staking and flagging and/or rope or cord.
- q. No pets shall be allowed on any site.
- r. No smoking may occur except in designated areas.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Impacts would be *less than significant with mitigation incorporated*.

Impact #3.4.4b – Would the Project have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?

Sensitive natural communities are designated by various resource agencies, including the CDFW, USFWS, Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Forest Service, or are designated by local agencies through policies, ordinances, and regulations. Sensitive natural communities generally have important functions or values for plants and wildlife, or are recognized as declining in extent or distribution and warrant some level of protection.

As discussed in Impact #3.4.4b, literature results from the surrounding nine-quadrangle queries for the Project site identified four sensitive natural vegetation communities that may occur in the vicinity: Valley Sacaton Grassland, Valley Hardpan Vernal Pool, Valley Claypan Vernal Pool, and Great Valley Oak Riparian Forest (QK, 2025b). None of these natural communities was present within the BSA. There is no riparian habitat present within the BSA, and it does not provide habitat that would support these communities. Therefore, there would be no impact.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

No mitigation is required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

There would be *no impact*.

Impact #3.4.4c – Would the Project have a substantial adverse effect on State or federally protected wetlands (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?

Furthermore, there are no wetland or non-wetland water features known to exist on the Project site (QK, 2025b). The National Hydrography Dataset (NHD) and National Wetlands Inventory (NWI) identify two water features: the Tulare Irrigation Canal, which bisects the Project site, and Cameron Creek, which runs along the southerly boundary of the site. There will be no work conducted that would impact Cameron Creek.

However, the Project will be required to underground the Tulare Irrigation Canal. No jurisdictional delineation of the canal was completed. A delineation meeting State and federal requirements would be conducted to determine if the canal meets the criteria for either federal or State jurisdiction. MM BIO-8 requires a delineation and a formal notification of the project to be submitted to the pertinent regulatory agencies prior to the issuance of grading permits. In the event drainage is jurisdictional, additional permitting with the appropriate regulatory agencies is also required prior to construction activities. With the implementation of MM BIO-10, the impact of the project related to water features would be less than significant.

Therefore, given the absence of natural communities and riparian habitat in the BSA, the Project would have a less-than-significant impact on riparian habitat or other sensitive natural communities identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations, or by the CDFW or USFWS.

As discussed, the NHD and NWI identify two water features: the Tulare Irrigation Canal, which bisects the Project site, and Cameron Creek, which runs along the southerly boundary of the site (QK, 2025b). The Project is designed to completely avoid Cameron Creek, and this water feature will not be impacted. With implementation of MM BIO-10, potential impacts related to the undergrounding of the Tulare Irrigation Canal, as outlined below, the Project will have a less-than-significant impact.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

MM BIO-10: Prior to the issuance of any grading or building permit, the Project proponent/developer shall conduct a delineation of the Tulare Irrigation Canal and prepare an Aquatic Resources Delineation Report (ARDR). The ARDR shall be submitted with a formal notification to the US Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE), Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB), and California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW). If no comments or requests for additional permitting are received by the agencies, no further action is necessary. A copy of all correspondence shall be submitted to the lead agency.

If a regulatory agency comments or requests additional permitting, the following actions may be taken. A copy of all correspondence and subsequent permitting and/or reports shall be made available to the Lead Agency. The report shall include information as shown below, as a plan if necessary, and shall outline compliance with the following:

- a. Delineation of all jurisdictional features at the project site. Potential jurisdictional features within the project boundary identified in the jurisdictional delineation report may be shown in plan form.
- b. If the Project has a potential to directly or indirectly impact jurisdictional aquatic resources, a formal aquatic resource delineation of these areas shall be performed by a qualified professional to determine the extent of agency jurisdiction and permits/authorizations from the appropriate regulating agencies (Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB), CDFW and US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) shall be obtained prior to disturbance to jurisdictional features.

If it is determined that drainage is jurisdictional and cannot be avoided, the Project proponent shall obtain a Section 401 Water Quality Certification from the RWQCB, a Section 404 permit from USACE, and a Lake and Streambed Alteration Agreement under Section 1602 from the CDFW, if required, prior to impacting any waters.

As part of these authorizations, compensatory mitigation may be required by the regulating agencies to offset the loss of aquatic resources. If so, and as part of the permit application process, a qualified professional shall draft a Mitigation and Monitoring Plan to address implementation and monitoring requirements under the permit to ensure that the Project would result in no net loss of habitat functions and values. The Plan shall contain, at a minimum, mitigation goals and objectives, mitigation location, a discussion of actions to be implemented to mitigate the impact, monitoring methods and performance criteria, extent of monitoring to be conducted, actions to be taken in the event that the mitigation is not successful, and reporting requirements. The Plan shall be approved by the appropriate regulating agencies, and compensatory mitigation shall take place either on-site or at an appropriate off-site location.

- c. Any material/spoils generated from project activities containing hazardous materials shall be located away from jurisdictional areas or special-status habitat and protected from storm water run-off using temporary perimeter sediment barriers such as berms, silt fences, fiber rolls, covers, sand/gravel bags, and straw bale barriers, as appropriate. Protection measures should follow project-specific criteria as developed in a Stormwater Pollution Prevention and Protection Plan (SWPPP).
- d. Equipment containing hazardous liquid materials shall be stored on impervious surfaces or plastic ground covers to prevent any spills or leakage from contaminating the ground and at least 50 feet outside the delineated boundary of jurisdictional water features.
- e. Any spillage of material shall be stopped if it can be done safely. The contaminated area shall be cleaned, and any contaminated materials properly disposed. For all spills, the project foreman or designated environmental representative shall be notified..

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Impacts would be *less than significant with mitigation incorporated.*

Impact #3.4.4d – Would the Project interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species, or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?

Furthermore, the BSA is not within any designated wildlife linkage or movement corridors (QK, 2025b). The nearest wildlife movement corridor is located approximately 9.01 miles north of the BSA, and the nearest wildlife linkage area is approximately 20.13 miles to the southwest. The Project is situated within an area developed for urban and agricultural use and does not provide a linkage between suitable natural habitats for most wildlife species. Due to the disturbed condition of the Project and the surrounding area, there is no substantial movement of wildlife onto or off the BSA. Therefore, the Project will result in

less-than-significant impacts to fish or wildlife movement corridors, linkages, or nursery sites.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

No mitigation is required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Impacts would be *less than significant*.

Impact #3.4.4e – Would the Project conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?

The City’s Valley Oak Ordinance establishes policies for care, trimming, and removal of Valley Oaks. However, the Project does not contain or propose to remove any Valley Oaks, so the ordinance would not apply to this Project.

Therefore, there are no impacts on local policies and ordinances protecting biological resources, such as tree preservation policies or ordinances.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

No mitigation is required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

There would be *no impact*.

Impact #3.4.4f – Would the Project conflict with the provisions of an adopted habitat conservation plan, natural community conservation plan, or other approved local, regional, or State habitat conservation plan?

The Project is not within an adopted habitat conservation plan, natural community conservation plan, or other approved local, regional, or State habitat conservation plan, so there would be no impact.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

No mitigation is required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

There would be *no impact*.

Potentially Significant Impact Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated Less-than-Significant Impact No Impact

3.4.5 - CULTURAL RESOURCES

Would the Project:

- a. Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5?
- b. Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5?
- c. Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?

Discussion

The discussion below is based on a Cultural Resources Technical Memorandum completed for the Project (QK, 2025c), attached as Appendix C.

Impact #3.4.5a – Would the Project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5?

The City has adopted multiple policies for the protection and maintenance of historical resources in the City of Visalia, including the adoption of a Historic Preservation Ordinance, maintenance and update of a Local Register of Historic Places, and establishment of a Historic District. As identified in the Historic Preservation Chapter of the Visalia General Plan, there are four sites listed on the National Register of Historic Places (City of Visalia, 2014a). Table 3.4.5-1 below notes the four sites and their proximity to the Project site. As demonstrated in the table, the Project site is not located on or near the four sites listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

**Table 3.4.5-1
Project Distance from Historic Sites**

Historic Sites Location	Distance from Project	Direction from Project
Bank of Italy Building - 128 East Main Street	2.41 miles	NW
Hyde House - 500 South Court Street	2.23 miles	NW
The Pioneer (statue) - 27000 South Mooney	2.80 miles	SW

Historic Sites Location	Distance from Project	Direction from Project
Boulevard, in Mooney Grove Park		
U.S. Post Office, Visalia Town Center Station - 111 West Acequia Street	2.42 miles	SE

Source: (City of Visalia, 2014a)

A cultural resources records search was conducted by the South San Joaquin Valley Information Center (SSJVIC), California State University, Bakersfield, for the Project. The purpose of the search was to determine whether any known cultural resources were located on or near the proposed Project that might be impacted by Project construction and/or activities. The records search covered an area within one-half mile of the proposed Project and included a review of the *National Register of Historic Places*, *California Points of Historical Interest*, *California Registry of Historic Resources*, *California Historical Landmarks*, *California State Historic Resources Inventory*, and a review of cultural resource reports on file.

The records search indicated that the Project had never been surveyed for cultural resources. One historic cultural resource, the Tulare Irrigation Canal (primary no. P-54-005296), passes through the northwest corner of the Project. The canal was constructed sometime between 1889 and it appeared on the 1892 Thompson County Atlas. However, as shown in Table 3.4.5-1, this water feature is not identified as being a historic resource in the General Plan EIR (City of Visalia, 2014b). While it is historical in nature due to its age, the canal has been systematically altered over time as new subdivisions to the north and south were developed. Therefore, the canal lacks integrity or distinct architectural characteristics/master works to warrant protection as a cultural resource under CEQA (QK, 2025c). Rerouting the canal to go underground would be similar to what has been done along its route and would not be considered a significant impact.

Five cultural resource studies have been conducted within a half mile of the Project. Four historic and one prehistoric cultural resource have been recorded within one-half mile of the Project. The Project will not impact any of these identified cultural resources.

A Sacred Lands File request was also submitted to the NAHC. A response dated July 7, 2025, indicates *negative* results (see Appendix C). SB 18/AB 52 early tribal consultation letters were prepared and distributed by the City on September 26, 2025, pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21080.3.1 and Government Code Section 65300 *et seq*, Senate Bill 18 and Assembly Bill 52, letters were sent to each of the Native American tribes within the geographic area as identified by the NAHC (see Appendix C). The letters included a Project description and location maps. Tribal consultation under AB 52 and SB 18 closed on December 31, 2025. To date, no response has been received. Should the City receive communication with a tribal group, they will work in good faith to address any potential cultural resources concerns.

If cultural resources are encountered during construction activities within any portion of the Project area, all work within 50 feet of the find should be halted until a qualified archaeologist can identify the discovery and assess its significance. In order to account for unanticipated discoveries and the potential to impact previously undocumented or unknown resources, the following mitigation measures are recommended. With the implementation of MM CUL-1, impacts under this criterion would be less than significant with mitigation. With the implementation of the mitigation measures, impacts would be less than significant.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

MM CUL-1: In the event that prehistoric or historic-period archaeological resources are encountered during construction in connection with an individual-specific development proposal, all construction activities associated therewith within 100 feet of the find shall halt, and the City of Visalia and an Archaeologist who meets the Secretary of the Interior’s Professional Qualification Standards for archaeology shall be notified by the relevant applicant. Prehistoric archaeological materials may include obsidian and chert flaked stone tools (e.g., projectile points, knives, scrapers) or toolmaking debris; culturally darkened soil (“midden”) containing heat-affected rocks, artifacts, or shellfish remains; stone milling equipment (e.g., mortars, pestles, hand stones, or milling slabs); and battered stone tools, such as hammerstones and pitted stones. Historic-period materials might include stone, concrete, or adobe footings and walls; filled wells or privies; and deposits of metal, glass, and/or ceramic refuse.

The Archaeologist shall inspect the findings within 24 hours of discovery or as soon thereafter as is reasonable and commercially practicable. If it is determined that the construction associated with the subject individual-specific development proposal could significantly damage a historical resource or a unique archaeological resource (as defined pursuant to the CEQA Guidelines), mitigation shall be implemented in accordance with Public Resources Code Section 21083.2 and Section 15126.4 of the CEQA Guidelines, with a preference for preservation in place. If avoidance is not feasible, a qualified Archaeologist shall prepare, and the relevant applicant shall implement a detailed treatment plan in consultation with the City of Visalia. Treatment of unique archaeological resources shall follow the applicable requirements of Public Resources Code Section 21083.2. Treatment for most resources would consist of (but would not be limited to) sample excavation, artifact collection, site documentation, and historical research, with the aim of targeting the recovery of important scientific data contained in the portion(s) of the significant resource to be impacted by the proposed Project. The treatment plan shall include provisions for analysis of data in a regional context, reporting of results within a timely manner, curation of artifacts and data at an approved facility, and dissemination of reports to local and State repositories, libraries, and interested professionals.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Impacts would be *less than significant with mitigation incorporated.*

Impact #3.4.5b – Would the Project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5?

According to the CEQA Guidelines, “When a project will impact an archaeological site, a lead agency shall first determine whether the site is a historical resource” (CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5(c)(1)). Those archaeological sites that do not qualify as historical resources shall be assessed to determine if they qualify as “unique archaeological resources” (California Public Resources Code Section 21083.2). No archaeological resources were identified on the Project site. However, due to the nominal amount of prehistoric archaeological information within the majority of the City, including the Project site, there is potential to impact prehistoric archaeological resources during grading and construction activities within previously undisturbed soils.

Compliance with MM CUL-1 requires that all work in the immediate vicinity of the find halt until a qualified archaeologist can evaluate the find and make recommendations. With implementation of MM CUL-1, the Project's impact on unknown archaeological resources is less than significant.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

Implementation of MM CUL-1.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Impacts would be less than significant with mitigation incorporated.

Impact #3.4.5c – Would the Project disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?

There are no known cemeteries or burials on or near the Project. Although unlikely, subsurface construction activities, such as trenching and grading, associated with the proposed Project could potentially disturb previously undiscovered human burial sites. Accordingly, this is a potentially significant impact. Although considered unlikely, subsurface construction activities could cause a potentially significant impact to previously undiscovered human burial sites. The cultural resources and Sacred Lands File records searches did not indicate the presence of human remains, burials, or cemeteries within or in the vicinity of the Project site. No human remains have been discovered at the Project site, and no burials or cemeteries are known to occur within the area of the site.

However, if human remains are uncovered during ground-disturbing activities, all work shall immediately cease within 100 feet of the find, and the Fresno County Coroner shall be contacted to evaluate the remains following the procedures and protocols set forth in CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.45(e)(1). If the remains are determined to be those of a Native American person, then the California Health and Safety Code 7050.5 and Public Resources Code 5097.98 require that the County Coroner notify the NAHC within 24 hours of discovery.

The NAHC will then identify the Most Likely Descendant, who will be afforded the opportunity to recommend treatment of the ancestral human remains.

Implementation of MM CUL-2 would ensure that the proposed Project would not directly or indirectly destroy previously unknown human remains. It is unlikely that the proposed Project would disturb any known human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries. With the implementation of the mitigation measures, impacts would be less than significant.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

MM CUL-2: If human remains are discovered during construction or operational activities, further excavation or disturbance shall be prohibited pursuant to Section 7050.5 of the California Health and Safety Code. The specific protocol, guidelines, and channels of communication outlined by the NAHC, in accordance with Section 7050.5 of the Health and Safety Code, Section 5097.98 of the Public Resources Code (Chapter 1492, Statutes of 1982, Senate Bill 297), and Senate Bill 447 (Chapter 44, Statutes of 1987), shall be followed. Section 7050.5(c) shall guide the potential Native American involvement, in the event of discovery of human remains, at the direction of the County Coroner.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Impacts would be *less than significant with mitigation incorporated*.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less-than-Significant Impact	No Impact
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3.4.6 - ENERGY

Would the Project:

- | | | | | |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| a. Result in potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during Project construction or operation? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b. Conflict with or obstruct a State or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Discussion

Impact #3.4.6a – Would the Project result in potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during Project construction or operation?

Construction

Energy usage would be required to construct the proposed Project. Construction would be short-term and temporary in nature. Construction activities include standard construction processes such as grading, paving, trenching, architectural coating, and building construction. There are no unusual Project characteristics or construction processes that would require the use of equipment that would be more energy-intensive than is used for comparable activities. The primary sources of energy for construction activities are diesel and gasoline (i.e., petroleum fuels). All construction equipment is required to conform to current emissions standards and related fuel efficiencies, including applicable California Air Resources Board (CARB) regulations and California Energy Code Standards. Current regulations for construction equipment, heavy-duty equipment, and earthmoving equipment used in construction contribute to reductions in energy as well as reductions in pollutant emissions. California implemented its In-Use Off-Road Diesel Fueled Fleets regulations (off-road regulation) that apply to all self-propelled off-road diesel vehicles 25 horsepower or greater and most two-engine vehicles. The Small Off-Road Engines Program was implemented by California to apply to categories of outdoor powered equipment and specialty vehicles often used in construction.

Operation (post-construction)

Electrical energy for the City of Visalia is supplied by Southern California Edison, and the Project would utilize all electric ENERGY STAR appliances. According to the General Plan's Draft EIR, the availability of electricity services is not expected to become an issue during General Plan implementation. Although the utilization of green building techniques in new structures can result in less energy demand (City of Visalia, 2014b). The Project and proposed residences will not utilize natural gas; all residential units will be equipped with 450-watt solar panels, utilize all electric appliances, and will be EV-ready (pre-wired during construction to allow for installation of EV residential charger in the future). Pre-wiring homes reduces the homeowners' cost to retrofit the home in order to use an EV vehicle.

Furthermore, the Project will adhere to all applicable CBC in design, construction, and waste management. Construction associated with the Project would be required to comply with California's Title 24 energy efficiency requirements, which also includes the 2025 California Green Building Standards Code and other applicable City development standards. Energy demand during the construction phase would result from the transportation of materials, construction equipment, and construction worker vehicle trips. Therefore, the Project is expected to comply with General Plan policies and State energy efficiency requirements and will have a less-than-significant impact.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

No mitigation is required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Impacts would be *less than significant*.

Impact #3.4.6b – Would the Project Conflict with or obstruct a State or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency?

See discussion above for 3.4.6a, above. The Project will not conflict with or obstruct a State or local plan for renewable energy efficiency, given compliance with CBC and other applicable regulations, and will have a less-than-significant impact.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

No mitigation is required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Impacts would be *less than significant*.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less-than-Significant Impact	No Impact
3.4.7 - GEOLOGY AND SOILS				
Would the Project:				
a. Directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:				
i. Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
ii. Strong seismic ground shaking?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
iii. Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
iv. Landslides?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction, or collapse?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Is it located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18.1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial direct or indirect risks to life or property?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems in areas where sewers are not available for the disposal of wastewater?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
f. Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Discussion

Impact #3.4.7a(i) – Would the Project directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault?

The Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Act (formerly the Alquist-Priolo Special Studies Zone Act) requires the delineation of zones along active faults in California. The purpose of the Alquist-Priolo Act is to regulate development on or near active fault traces to reduce the hazard of fault rupture; however, surface fault rupture is not necessarily restricted to the area within the Alquist-Priolo Zone. The Alquist-Priolo Act prohibits the location of most structures for human occupancy across active fault traces. Within these zones, cities and counties must regulate certain development, which includes withholding permits until geologic investigations demonstrate that development sites are not threatened by future surface displacement. There are no designated Alquist-Priolo zones in the City of Visalia.

The Project site is identified in the City General Plan as being located within a seismically stable region of the State (City of Visalia, 2014b). While the southern San Joaquin Valley contains some small faults, the closest of these is 30 miles away, and none are known to be active. In comparison to many regions in California, Visalia exhibits relatively little tectonic activity. The major fault systems in the area include the San Andreas Fault, located 75 miles away from Visalia, and the Owens Valley Fault Group, located east of the Sierras and more than 125 miles away from the City. No active or potentially active faults are known to exist within the Planning Area. The San Andreas and Owens Valley fault systems would not be expected to cause surface fault rupture in the Project area and therefore have a less-than-significant impact.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

No mitigation is required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Impacts would be *less than significant*.

Impact #3.4.7a(ii) – Would the Project expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving strong seismic ground shaking?

Ground movement during an earthquake can vary depending on the overall moment magnitude, distance to the fault, focus of earthquake energy, and type of geologic material. As a rule, the greater the earthquake magnitude and the closer the fault rupture to the site, the greater the intensity of ground shaking. However, different geologic materials respond

differently to earthquake waves. The composition of underlying soils, even those relatively distant from faults, can intensify ground shaking.

The California Geological Survey and U.S. Geological Survey conduct a Probabilistic Seismic Hazard Analysis based on historic earthquakes, slip rates on major faults, and deformation throughout the region, and the potential for amplification of seismic waves by near-surface geologic materials. The resulting earthquake shaking potential is used in developing building code design values, estimating future earthquake losses, and prioritizing earthquake retrofit. According to the City's General Plan, the City experiences low levels of shaking, with less frequency, and is expected to damage only weaker masonry buildings. However, very infrequent earthquakes could still cause strong shaking, but with the implementation of Title 24 building requirements and City development standards, impacts would be minimal. Therefore, Impacts would be less than significant related to seismic events.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

No mitigation is required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Impacts would be *less than significant*.

Impact #3.4.7a(iii) – Would the Project expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?

See discussion of Impact #3.4.7a(i) and (ii) above.

Liquefaction is defined as a phenomenon where earthquake-induced ground vibrations increase the pore pressure in saturated, granular soils until it is equal to the confining, overburdened pressure. When this occurs, the soil can completely lose its shear strength and enter a liquefied state. The possibility of liquefaction is dependent upon grain size, relative density, confining pressure, saturation of the soils, and intensity and duration of ground shaking. In order for liquefaction to occur, three criteria must be met: "low density," coarse-grained (sandy) soils, a groundwater depth of less than about 50 feet, and a potential for seismic shaking from nearby large magnitude earthquakes. The General Plan Draft EIR states that no specific liquefaction hazard areas have been identified in the Planning Area; however, the potential for liquefaction is recognized throughout the San Joaquin Valley in locations where the water table is high. Soils in the Visalia area have few limitations with regard to development. Due to low clay content and limited topographic relief, soils in the City have low expansion characteristics. Therefore, considering the Project is not near active faults, as discussed in Impact #3.4.7a(i) and (ii), and would comply with all applicable local, State, and federal regulations, the Project would result in a less-than-significant impact.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

No mitigation is required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Impacts would be *less than significant*.

Impact #3.4.7a(iv) – Would the Project expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving landslides?

The Project site is currently under row crop and orchard cultivation, and is on relatively flat land, with no significant topological features. The Project site is designated as ‘Very Low Landslide Potential’ by the U.S. Landslide Inventory and Susceptibility Inventory (United States Geological Survey, 2025). Therefore, there is a very low to no likelihood of landslides occurring on the Project site, and impacts are less than significant.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

No mitigation is required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Impacts would be *less than significant*.

Impact #3.4.7b – Would the Project result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?

Soil erosion occurs when soil is removed by wind and water at a greater rate than it is formed. Soil erosion removes the topsoil first and can continue to transport lower layers. Future development and creation of new impervious surfaces also have the potential to contribute to increased stormwater runoff, which could make soil erosion more severe if stormwater is not handled properly. Soil erosion at construction sites can increase sedimentation in nearby streams and drainage channels.

Soil erosion can lead to sedimentation of watercourses, eventually having an adverse impact on water quality and aquatic life. Furthermore, once erosion occurs, it may be difficult for natural vegetation to reestablish itself. The loss of topsoil to erosion is detrimental to agriculture and other landscaping. The risk of erosion is greatly increased during grading and construction activities and agricultural practices, when soils are loosened and bare of vegetation. According to the General Plan Draft EIR, a soil’s “K factor” indicates its inherent susceptibility to erosion by water, without taking into consideration slope or groundcover factors (City of Visalia, 2014b). Values of K range from 0.02 to 0.69; the higher the value, the more susceptible the soil is to erosion by water. A majority of the Project site is located within an erosion susceptibility (Kw factor) designation of ‘Medium’(0.24 to 0.37), due to the proximity to Cameron Creek.

Construction activities associated with the proposed Project will disturb surface vegetation and soils and expose these disturbed areas to erosion by wind and water. To reduce the potential for soil erosion and loss of topsoil during construction, the Project would comply with the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) General Construction Permit issued by the State of California Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board

(RWQCB). Under the NPDES, the preparation and implementation of a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) are required for construction activities that would disturb an area of one acre or more. A SWPPP must identify potential sources of erosion or sedimentation and identify and implement best management practices (BMPs) that ensure reduced erosion. Typical BMPs intended to control erosion include sandbags, silt fencing, street sweeping, etc. Any stockpiled soils would be watered and/or covered to prevent loss due to wind erosion as part of the SWPPP during construction.

The Project will comply with all the City's grading requirements outlined in Title 24 and Appendix J of the California Building Code. The Project is not expected to result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil with the incorporation of BMPs required under the SWPPP and grading requirements under the City's development review.

Once constructed, the Project will have both impermeable surfaces and permeable surfaces. Impermeable surfaces would include existing roadways, driveways, and structures. Permeable surfaces would include open areas of the site and landscaped areas. The Project will incorporate permeable surfaces like landscaping areas, open space, and an approximately 1.50-acre stormwater basin (Outlot G) in the southeast corner of the Project site. Stormwater basins are intended to maintain stormwater on the site, reduce erosion, and allow stormwater to percolate for groundwater recharge. Overall, the development of the Project would not result in conditions where substantial surface soil would be exposed or lost due to wind and water erosion. Impacts would be less than significant.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

No mitigation is required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Impacts would be *less than significant*.

Impact #3.4.7c – Would the Project be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the Project and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction, or collapse?

See above discussions under Impact #3.4.7 (a)(i) through (iv) and (b). The Project will have a less-than-significant impact on existing State and local requirements and standards.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

No mitigation is required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Impacts would be *less than significant*.

Impact #3.4.7d – Would the Project be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial direct or indirect risks to life or property?

Expansive soils have the potential to shrink or swell significantly with changes in moisture content, which can limit the development capacity of an area. The type and amount of the silt and clay content in the soil will determine the amount of shrinkage or swelling associated with the various levels of water content. Soils comprised of sand and gravel are not expansive soils.

The General Plan identified approximately 2,840 acres that have a moderate “shrink-swell” potential in the Visalia Planning Area. There are areas located near the SR 99/198 interchange, north of the St. Johns River, and in the northwest near the intersection of Road 80 and Avenue 328 (City of Visalia, 2014a). The Project site is located outside identified moderate shrink-swell potential areas and is not anticipated to be susceptible to expansive soils. Adherence to the California Building Code and City development standards required would allow the Project to develop the site and would not be subject to risk involving expansive soils. Therefore, the impact is considered less than significant.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

No mitigation is required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Impacts would be *less than significant*.

Impact #3.4.7e – Would the Project have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems in areas where sewers are not available for the disposal of wastewater?

The Project proposes to connect to existing public infrastructure for sewer services, and no septic system is proposed. Development of the site will comply with required design standards for connection to existing public infrastructure. Therefore, the Project will have no impact as the Project will not develop an alternative wastewater disposal system.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

No mitigation is required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

There would be *no impact*.

Impact #3.4.7f – Would the Project directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?

Paleontological resources are the mineralized (fossilized) remains of prehistoric plant and animal life, exclusive of human remains or artifacts. Fossil remains such as bones, teeth, shells, and leaves are found in geologic deposits (rock formations) where they were originally buried. Fossil remains are considered to be important as they provide indicators of the Earth's chronology and history. These resources are afforded protection under CEQA and are considered to be limited and nonrenewable, and they provide invaluable scientific and educational data.

The Project site does not have any known paleontological resources or unique geologic features. There is no evidence that cultural resources of any type (including historical, archaeological, paleontological, or unique geologic features) exist on the Project site. Nevertheless, there is some possibility that a buried site may exist in the area and be obscured by vegetation, fill, or other historical activities, leaving no surface evidence.

The adopted General Plan Policies OSC-O-11 and OSC-P-42 seek to preserve and protect paleontological resources that are known to occur or are found within the City. Although unlikely, if fossil remains are discovered during construction activities, the Project would implement MM GEO-1. With implementation, there would not be a significant impact on a unique geological or paleontological resource.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

MM GEO-1: If any paleontological resources are encountered during ground-disturbance activities, all work within 25 feet of the find shall halt until a qualified paleontologist, as defined by the Society of Vertebrate Paleontology Standard Procedures for the Assessment and Mitigation of Adverse Impacts to Paleontological Resources (2010), can evaluate the find and make recommendations regarding treatment. Paleontological resource materials may include resources such as fossils, plant impressions, or animal tracks preserved in rock. The qualified paleontologist shall contact the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County or another appropriate facility regarding any discoveries of paleontological resources.

If the qualified paleontologist determines that the discovery represents a potentially significant paleontological resource, additional investigations and fossil recovery may be required to mitigate adverse impacts from Project implementation. If avoidance is not feasible, the paleontological resources shall be evaluated for their significance. If the resources are not significant, avoidance is not necessary. If the resources are significant, they shall be avoided to ensure no adverse effects, or such effects must be mitigated. Construction in that area shall not resume until the resource-appropriate measures are recommended or the materials are determined to be less than significant. If the resource is significant and fossil recovery is the identified form of treatment, then the fossil shall be deposited in an accredited and permanent scientific institution. Copies of all correspondence and reports shall be submitted to the Lead Agency.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Impacts would be *less than significant with mitigation incorporated.*

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less-than-Significant Impact	No Impact
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3.4.8 - GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

Would the Project:

- | | | | | |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| a. Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b. Conflict with any applicable plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Discussion

The analysis in this section are largely substantiated by the Air Quality Impact Analysis (AQIA) prepared for this Project (QK, 2025a), attached as Appendix A.

Impact #3.4.8a – Would the Project generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?

The proposed Project’s construction and operational greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions were estimated using CalEEMod (QK, 2025a). The Project’s GHG emissions are primarily from mobile source activities. Not all GHGs exhibit the same ability to induce climate change; as a result, GHG contributions are commonly quantified as CO₂e. Table 3.4.8-1 presents the Project’s annual GHG emissions.

**Table 3.4.8-1
Estimated Annual GHG Emissions (MT/Year)**

Source	CO ₂ e
Total Construction Emissions	1,291
<i>Annualized Construction Emissions¹</i>	43
Total Operational Emissions	5,721
Total Project Emissions	5,764

(QK, 2025a)

The SJVAPCD, a CEQA Trustee Agency for this Project, has developed thresholds to determine the significance of a proposed project – either implement Best Performance Standards or achieve a 29 percent reduction from BAU (business as usual, specific numerical threshold) (QK, 2025a). However, the SJVAPCD has established their BAU and baseline emissions based on the years 2002-2004 and 2020, respectively. The 2020 projected baseline has passed, and at this time, no new guidance has been approved for determining the BAU and projected

baseline for the next target year. Therefore, the 29 percent reduction from BAU cannot be applied to the subject Project in order to determine significance. Additionally, a Best Performance Standards threshold has not been established. For this Project, compliance with locally adopted climate plans will be used to determine the level of significance for GHG. Therefore, the GHG analysis for this Project follows the suggestions from the Court's ruling on the Newhall Ranch development project in order to determine the significance of using the project design features.

In the Court's final ruling, it offered suggestions that were deemed appropriate use of the BAU methodology:

- Lead agencies can use the comparison to the BAU methodology if they determine what reduction a particular project must achieve in order to comply with statewide goals.
- Project design features that comply with regulations to reduce emissions may demonstrate that those components of emissions are less than significant.
- Lead agencies could also demonstrate compliance with locally adopted climate plans or apply specific numerical thresholds developed by some local agencies.

Neither the City nor Tulare County has developed specific thresholds for GHGs. In the decade after SJVAPCD adopted their Guidance for Valley Land-use Agencies in Addressing GHG Emission Impacts for New Projects under CEQA, several new laws and executive orders were adopted that require additional reductions in years after 2020. For instance, SB 32 requires that GHG emissions be 40 percent less than 1990 levels by 2030. More drastic still, SB 100, which was signed by the Governor recently, requires 100 percent zero-carbon electricity by 2045. On the day SB 100 was signed into law, the Governor also signed Executive Order B-55-18, which commits California to total, economy-wide carbon neutrality by 2045. Clearly, the 2009 Guidance may be somewhat inadequate in producing a meaningful comparison by today's standards, which propose a grand vision that, if achieved, would fundamentally change how business is conducted and citizens live in the State. Thus, as discussed in the most recent updates to the Scoping Plan, the objectives of the Scoping Plan affect entire sectors of the economy, and it no longer makes sense to evaluate GHG emissions on a project level.

For these reasons, Project GHG emissions levels presented in Table 3.4.8-1 are primarily for disclosure purposes. The Project's largest contributors to GHG emissions are from electricity and exhaust from transportation fuels. Electricity and transportation fuels are, in effect, regulated by requiring providers and importers of electricity and fuel to participate in the GHG Cap-and-Trade Program and other programs (e.g., low-carbon fuel standard, renewable portfolio standard). Each such sector-wide program exists within the framework of AB 32 and its descendant laws, the purpose of which is to achieve GHG emissions reductions consistent with the AB 32 Scoping Plan.

The Project would generate GHGs from electricity use and combustion of gasoline/diesel fuels, each of which is regulated near the top of the supply chain. As such, each citizen of California (including those creating emissions of this Project) will have no choice but to

purchase electricity and fuels produced in a way that is acceptable to the California market. Thus, Project GHG emissions will be consistent with the relevant plan (i.e., AB 32 Scoping Plan). The Project would meet its fair share of the cost to mitigate the cumulative impact of global climate change because energy purchases are from the California market. Thus, consumers of electricity and transportation fuels are, in effect, regulated by higher-level emissions restrictions on the producers of these energy sources. Therefore, the Project would have a less-than-significant impact on applicable GHG reduction plans, and the Project's contribution to cumulative global climate change impacts would not be cumulatively considerable, and impacts would be less than significant.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

No mitigation is required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Impacts would be *less than significant*.

Impact #3.4.8b – Would the Project conflict with any applicable plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?

California passed the California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006. AB 32 requires that statewide GHG emissions be reduced to 1990 levels by 2020. Under AB 32, CARB must adopt regulations by January 1, 2011, to achieve reductions in GHGs to meet the 1990 emission cap by 2020. On December 11, 2008, CARB adopted its initial Scoping Plan, which functions as a roadmap of CARB's plans to achieve GHG reductions in California required by AB 32 through subsequently enacted regulations. CARB's 2017 Climate Change Scoping Plan builds on the efforts and plans encompassed in the initial Scoping Plan.

SB 375 requires Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) to adopt a Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS) or Alternative Planning Strategy (APS) that will prescribe land use allocation in that MPO's regional transportation plan. CARB, in consultation with MPOs, has provided each affected region with reduction targets for GHGs emitted by passenger cars and light trucks in the region for the years 2020 and 2035. For the TCAG region, CARB set targets at a 13 percent per capita decrease in 2020 and a 16 percent per capita decrease in 2035 from a base year of 2005.

Executive Order B-30-15 establishes a California GHG reduction target of 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030 to ensure California meets its target of reducing GHG emissions to 80 percent below 1990 levels by 2050. Executive Order B-30-15 requires MPOs to implement measures that will achieve reductions of GHG emissions to meet the 2030 and 2050 GHG emissions reduction targets.

As required by California law, city and county General Plans contain a Land Use Element that details the types and quantities of land uses that the city or county estimates will be needed for future growth and that designates locations for land uses to regulate growth. TCAG uses

the growth projections and land use information in adopted General Plans to estimate future average daily trips and then VMT, which are then provided to SJVAPCD to estimate future emissions in the AQPs.

TCAG uses the growth projections and land use information in adopted general plans to estimate future average daily trips and then VMT, which are then provided to SJVAPCD to estimate future emissions in the AQPs. Existing and future pollutant emissions computed in the AQP are based on land uses from the area's general plans. AQPs detail the control measures and emission reductions required for reaching attainment of the air standards. A project would be consistent with the SJVAPCD's air quality plan(s) if the pollutants emitted from the construction and operation of the project would not exceed the SJVAPCD emission thresholds or cause a significant impact on air quality.

The Project is consistent with the City of Visalia 2030 General Plan upon approval of the General Plan Amendment, as the GPA would not add or remove the General Plan land uses currently designated, it would allow for the developer to shift the location of the existing map code designations to improve utilization of the Project site. Therefore, the Project is consistent with the growth assumptions used in the applicable AQP.

CARB's 2017 Climate Change Scoping Plan builds on the efforts and plans encompassed in the initial Scoping Plan, which will not conflict with these Plans. The current plan has identified new policies and actions to accomplish the State's 2030 GHG limit. Furthermore, the City's Climate Action Plan provides the strategies required to achieve the State's 2030 mitigation targets (City of Visalia, 2013). Certain GHG emissions reduction measures can be incorporated into an individual project to contribute to the collective GHG reduction goals of the City. As discussed in Impact #3.4.6, the proposed Project will utilize ENERGY STAR appliances, not utilize natural gas, all residential units will be equipped with 450-watt solar panels, utilize all electric appliances, and will be EV-ready (pre-wired during construction to allow for installation of EV residential charger in the future). The Project is consistent with the City's adopted CALGreen building standards and the California Model Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance, which includes but is not limited to incorporating low-flow lavatory faucets, kitchen faucets, toilets, and urinals, and low-water-use landscaping and high-efficiency irrigation systems. The proposed Project includes a high-density residential neighborhood that is within 550 feet of a transit stop, and the Project will construct a Class II Bikeway along the Project's frontage to Lovers Lane and a Class I Bikeway along the Project's frontage to Cameron Creek to increase the neighborhood's Transit Oriented Design (TOD) factors. Therefore, the proposed Project is consistent with all applicable GHG emissions reduction measures within the City's Climate Action Plan.

Based on the assessment above, and the assessment discussed in Impact #3.4.8a, the Project will not conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases. The Project furthers the achievement of the County's greenhouse gas reduction goals. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

No mitigation is required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Impacts would be *less than significant*.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less-than-Significant Impact	No Impact
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3.4.9 - HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

Would the Project:

a. Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Emit hazardous emissions or involve handling hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Be located on a site that is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
e. For a Project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the Project result in a safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing or working in the Project area?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
f. Impair implementation of, or physically interfere with, an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g. Expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving wildland fires?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Discussion

Impact #3.4.9a – Would the Project create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?

Project Construction

Construction of the Project would involve the temporary transport and use of minor quantities of hazardous materials such as fuels, oils, lubricants, hydraulic fluids, paints, and solvents. The types and quantities of hazardous materials to be used and stored on-site would not be of a significant amount to create a reasonably foreseeable upset or accident condition. Transportation, storage, use, and disposal of hazardous materials during construction activities will be required to comply with applicable federal, State, and local statutes and regulations. The U.S. Department of Transportation and Caltrans regulate the transportation of hazardous materials. Any hazardous waste or debris that is generated during the construction of the proposed Project would be collected and transported away from the site and disposed of at an approved off-site landfill or other such facilities. In addition, sanitary waste generated during construction would be managed through portable toilets located at reasonably accessible on-site locations.

In addition to moving people, the roadway system in Visalia carries a substantial number of trucks moving goods. These routes are designed to allow truck traffic to pass through the City with minimal impact on residential neighborhoods, as well as local vehicular and pedestrian traffic (City of Visalia, 2014a). The City has not designated certain routes in the City as hazardous material routes. The Project is located and accessed via Lovers Lane, which is a designated truck route. Close proximity to a designated truck route could allow for quick access and reduced travel distance of temporary hazardous materials along designated truck routes. The VFD would respond to any hazardous materials incident, and additional fire department units would respond as necessary.

A review of the EnviroStor database and the Geotracker database did not identify any active or historic hazardous material site or hazardous material cleanup site on or within 1,000 feet of the Project site

State and local regulatory compliance would require that the use of hazardous materials in excess of certain thresholds (generally 55 gallons of liquid, 200 cubic feet of gas, and 500 pounds of solids) would require the preparation, submission, and receipt of approval of a Hazardous Materials Business Plan (HMBP). The HMBP would contain detailed information, including an inventory of hazardous materials at the facility, emergency response plans and procedures in the event of a reportable release or threatened release of a hazardous material, and safety training for employees. Any operation established on the Project site would be required to comply with an approved HMBP as per State requirements, and compliance would allow operational activities to result in a less-than-significant impact.

Operations

Once constructed, the use of such materials as paint, bleach, etc., is considered common for residential developments. Residential developments are unlikely to have hazardous materials stored or used in such quantities that would be considered a significant hazard. The Project itself will not generate or use hazardous materials outside of Tulare County Environmental Health Department requirements.

Based on the analysis above, Project construction and operation are not anticipated to result in significant impacts due to the transportation, use, or disposal of hazardous materials. Therefore, Project impacts would be less than significant.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

No mitigation is required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Impacts would be *less than significant*.

Impact #3.4.9b – Would the Project create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?

See the discussion on Impact #3.4.9a above.

A review of historical aerial photographs indicates that the Project site was historically utilized for agricultural cultivation as early as 1994, including dwelling-type structures and smaller outbuildings located in the center of the Project site. Although the potential exists that environmentally persistent pesticides/herbicides may have been historically applied to crops grown on the subject site, it is anticipated that residual pesticides/herbicides potentially located on-site will be dislocated and diluted as a result of the grading and trenching operations that will be conducted in connection with the planned residential development of the property. Typically, this does not result in concentrations reported above regulatory screening levels.

There are no historical records or indications that an underground storage tank (UST) is located on the Project site (United States Environmental Protection Agency, 2025). Although there is no evidence of the presence of an underground storage tank, a very low possibility of an unregistered UST can exist due to the historical agricultural nature of the site. Should an unknown underground tank be found during construction activities, MM HAZ-1 requires the developer to stop work in that area and contact the State Water Resources Control Board and the Tulare County Environmental Health Division to discuss the next appropriate steps for the safe removal of the tank.

Per the California Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) EnviroStor database (Cortese List), the Project site is not located on or within 100 feet of a listed hazardous materials/waste facility (California Department of Toxic Substances Control, 2025).

There are no active California Geologic Energy Management Division (CalGEM) identified oil or gas fields on or within 1,000 feet of the Project site (CalGEM, 2025).

Consequently, the Project is not anticipated to create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions. However, should an unknown UST or septic system be uncovered during construction of the Project,

implementation of MM HAZ-1 would reduce impacts that could result in upset or accidental hazardous material spills, which would be less than significant. Furthermore, the contractor or developer would be required to adhere to associated local and State guidelines when removing the existing agricultural well, which are intended to prevent significant upset or accident from potentially hazardous materials.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

MM HAZ-1: In the event that unknown underground storage tank(s) or a septic system are uncovered or damaged during excavation or grading activities, all work in that area shall cease. The State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) and the Tulare County Environmental Health Division shall be contacted to determine what appropriate remediation may be required and to identify the appropriate requirements and approvals. A report of all communication and the determination made by the SWRCB and the County Health Division shall be submitted to the City.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Impacts would be *less than significant with mitigation incorporated.*

Impact #3.4.9c – Would the Project emit hazardous emissions or involve handling hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?

The nearest school to the Project is Annie R. Mitchell Elementary School, located approximately 0.5 miles northwest. There are no schools, existing or proposed, within one-quarter mile of the Project site. As noted in Impact #3.4.9a, above, construction activities for the Project could result in the temporary use of hazardous materials and or substances, such as lubricant and diesel fuel during construction. Exhaust from construction and related activities is expected to be minimal and not significant. All future construction-related activities as a result of the proposed Project would be subject to local, State, and federal laws related to emissions of hazardous materials and substances. However, construction of the Project would require implementation of BMPs when handling any hazardous materials, substances, or waste. Once constructed, the residential development is highly unlikely to generate hazardous materials over an established reporting threshold. Therefore, the Project would comply with State and local regulations for hazardous material handling and would have a less-than-significant impact.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

No mitigation is required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Impacts would be *less than significant.*

Impact #3.4.9d – Would the Project be located on a site that is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5, and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?

As discussed in Impact #3.4.9b, the DTSC EnviroStor database (Cortese List), the Project site is not located on or within 100 feet of a listed hazardous materials/waste facility (California Department of Toxic Substances Control, 2025).

As such, the Project site will not create a significant hazard to the public or the environment and therefore has no impact.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

No mitigation is required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

There would be *no impact*.

Impact #3.4.9e – Would the Project be located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, and would the Project result in a safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing or working in the Project area?

The Project site is located approximately 6.75 miles east of the Visalia Municipal Airport and, therefore, is not located within the Airport Influence Area or Safety Compatibility Zone as indicated in the Tulare County Comprehensive Airport Land Use Plan (Tulare County, 2012). Therefore, the Project would not result in a safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing or working in the Project area from an airport within two miles of the Project.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

No mitigation is required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

There would be *no impact*.

Impact #3.4.9f – Would the Project impair implementation of, or physically interfere with, an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?

The City of Visalia adopted their most recent Safety Element in February 2025. The purpose of the Safety Element is to identify natural and man-made public health and safety hazards within the City and to establish preventive and responsive policies and programs to mitigate their potential impacts. This Element addresses, among other things, emergency services. It also includes policies on natural hazards mitigation planning, in alignment with the Federal Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 and the Federal Emergency Management Agency's

implementing regulations, and supports the County’s Multi- Jurisdictional Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (City of Visalia, 2025a). The Emergency Operations Plan includes policies that would prevent new development from interfering with emergency response and evacuation plans.

The General Plan also provides guidance to City staff in the event of an extraordinary emergency situation associated with natural disasters and technological incidents. The Project would also comply with the appropriate local and State requirements regarding emergency response plans and access. The proposed Project would not inhibit the ability of local roadways to accommodate emergency response and evacuation activities.

Additionally, the proposed Project is required to adhere to the standards set forth in the City Municipal Code, which identifies the design standards for emergency access during both the Project’s construction and operational phases. The Project would also comply with the appropriate local and State requirements regarding emergency response plans and access. The proposed Project would not inhibit the ability of local roadways to continue to accommodate emergency response and evacuation activities.

The proposed Project would not impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

No mitigation is required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Impacts would be *less than significant*.

Impact #3.4.9g – Would the Project expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving wildland fires?

The risk of wildfires is on the rise in California and the Tulare County region. While the possibility of fire within the limits of Visalia is relatively low, the neighboring areas, especially those situated to the east of the City, are expected to experience an increase in risk as climate change exacerbates conditions like prolonged drought and extreme temperatures.

There are no State Responsibility Areas (SRAs) within the vicinity of the Project site, and the Project site is not categorized as a “Very High” Fire Hazard Severity Zone (FHSZ) by Cal Fire (Cal Fire, 2023). The closest location, designated as Moderate Fire Hazard Zone, is located eight miles east of the foothills adjacent to Exeter. The Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) is the zone of transition between unoccupied land and human development. It is the line, area, or zone where structures and other human development meet or intermingle with undeveloped wildland or vegetative fuels (U.S. Fire Administration, 2022). The Project site is not located within the WUI (ESRI, Mark Gilbert, 2021). Furthermore, the Project areas are generally flat, and by implementing State and local fire code requirements, the Project would

not exacerbate the risk of exposure of Project occupants to wildfire. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

No mitigation is required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Impacts would be *less than significant*.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less-than-Significant Impact	No Impact
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3.4.10 - HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

Would the Project:

- | | | | | | |
|------|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| a. | Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or ground water quality? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b. | Substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the Project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c. | Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner which would? | | | | |
| i. | Result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site; | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| ii. | Substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or off-site; | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| iii. | Create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff; or | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| iv. | Impede or redirect flood flows? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| d. | In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk release of pollutants due to Project inundation? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| e. | Conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Discussion

The discussion below is based, in part, on the Water Supply Assessment (WSA) completed for the Project, attached as Appendix E (Woodard & Curran, 2026).

Impact #3.4.10a – Would the Project violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or ground water quality?

Construction

The proposed Project construction and groundbreaking activities have the potential to cause erosion, sedimentation, and discharge of construction debris from the Project site. Clearing of vegetation and grading activities, for example, could lead to exposed or stockpiled soils susceptible to peak stormwater runoff flows. Also, the compaction of soils by heavy equipment may minimally reduce the infiltration capacity of soils (exposed during construction) and increase runoff and erosion potential. The presence of significant amounts of raw materials for construction, including concrete and asphalt, may lead to stormwater runoff contamination. If uncontrolled, these materials could lead to water quality problems, including sediment-laden runoff, prohibited non-stormwater discharges, and ultimately the degradation of downstream receiving water bodies. Materials that could contribute to this impact include, but are not limited to, diesel fuel, gasoline, lubricant oils, hydraulic fluid, antifreeze, transmission fluid, lubricant grease, cement slurry, and other fluids utilized by construction and maintenance vehicles and equipment. Motorized equipment could leak hazardous materials such as motor oil, transmission fluid, or antifreeze due to inadequate or improper maintenance, unnoticed or unrepaired damage, improper refueling, or operator error. To avoid impacts to water quality, the Project would disturb more than one acre and would be required to prepare a SWPPP and ensure implementation of BMPs that address potential issues related to soil erosion and contaminated runoff in local waterways during construction. Implementing BMPs for construction activities, such as the use of straw waddle sandbags, silt fencing, swales, street sweeping, etc., and adherence to local requirements related to storm drain construction and maintenance, will reduce stormwater runoff to a less-than-significant impact during construction activities.

Operation (post-construction)

Water quality could also be degraded by typical residential pollutants, such as lawn fertilizers, residential-grade pesticides, and detergents. During dry periods, impervious surfaces (i.e., hardscape surfaces such as foundations and buildings) can collect grease, oils, and other vehicle-related pollutants. During storm events, these pollutants can mix with stormwater and degrade downstream water quality. The Project will comply with all applicable local requirements related to storm drains and drainage improvement fees, such as Visalia Municipal Code Section 16.36.110, which requires, “Storm drains shall be installed as required by the city engineer, or as required by a specific adopted master storm drain plan,” (City of Visalia, 2025b). Compliance with the adopted City improvement standards would result in a less-than-significant impact on waste discharge requirements associated with the operation of the Project.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

No mitigation is required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Impacts would be *less than significant*.

Impact #3.4.10b – Would the Project substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the Project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin?

The Project site is located in the Visalia Water District (District) of the California Water Service Company (Cal Water). The District is located within the Mid-Kaweah and Tule Subbasins within the Greater San Joaquin Valley Kaweah Subbasin. Groundwater is the sole source of water supply for the Visalia District (Woodard & Curran, 2026).

Historically, the groundwater available to the Visalia District from the underlying Kaweah and Tule Subbasins has consistently met the District’s needs. Due to successful conservation efforts and response to the historic drought spanning water years 2012-2015, water demand (and thus District groundwater pumping volumes) were significantly lower from 2014 through 2019 (i.e., averaging 27,736 AFY) than they had been in the previous 10 years (i.e., averaging 32,502 AFY). Most groundwater pumping in the Kaweah Subbasin is for agricultural use. From a regional perspective, Visalia District pumping represents only a small fraction of total groundwater pumping. It is therefore likely that management of agricultural groundwater use, rather than Municipal and Industrial use, will be a much larger determining factor in maintaining groundwater sustainability in both the Kaweah and Tule Subbasins in the future. Given the District’s proven ability to meet historical and the absence of any indication from Groundwater Sustainability Agencies (GSAs) in the Tule or Kaweah Subbasins that urban pumping will be restricted under Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP) implementation, it is reasonable to conclude that groundwater from the Subbasins will be sufficient to meet the District’s needs, including the proposed Project.

Although a significant amount of growth is projected in the Visalia District over the planning horizon (i.e., the District is projecting that service area population will increase by more than 50 percent over the next 25 years), as discussed in the District’s Urban Water Management Plan (UWMP), it is anticipated that some land currently used for agricultural production will be converted to residential and nonresidential urban uses to accommodate future growth. Irrigated agriculture typically uses more water on a per-acre basis than urban uses; thus, some future growth within the District will likely result in a net decrease in water use within the subbasins. Although the 2020 UWMP anticipates sufficient groundwater supply under all conditions for the District as a whole, given that the demands associated with the proposed Project were not included in the 2020 UWMP demand projections for the District, an analysis of the sufficiency of the groundwater supply to meet Project demands is required pursuant to California Water Code (CWC) Section 10910(f)(5) and California Government Code (CGC) Section 66473.7(a)(2)(E).

Proposed Project Water Supply and Demand Comparisons

The proposed Project site has historically been used for irrigated agricultural production, relying exclusively on groundwater pumped from the underlying Subbasin. A WSA was prepared for the Project (Appendix E), estimating the anticipated amount of water necessary for the proposed Project, and determining if there is sufficient water supply available to service the Project based on available data provided in Cal Water’s Visalia District 2020 UWMP. At full buildout, assumed to be 2030, the proposed Project is estimated to have a total water demand of approximately 209 AFY from the water uses described below in Table 3.4.10-1 (Woodard & Curran, 2026). Tables 3.4.10-2 through 3.4.10-4 demonstrate the District’s projected normal year water, single dry year and multiple dry year comparison of water supply and demand.

**Table 3.4.10-1
Estimated Annual Proposed Project Water Demand (AFY)**

Water Use	Project Characteristics			Demand Factor	Units	GPD	Total Water Demand (AFY)				
	Area (SF)	Area (acres)	# of Units				2030	2035	2040	2045	2050
Single-Family Residential	1,964,556	45	292	409	GPD/unit	119,428	134	134	134	134	134
Multi-Family Residential	949,608	22	370	148	GPD/unit	54,760	61	61	61	61	61
Landscape Water Loss	152,460	4	N/A	2,784,414	Gallons/year	N/A	9	9	9	9	9
Existing Site Demand*							6	6	6	6	6
Net Annual Water Demand							209	209	209	209	209

Source: (Woodard & Curran, 2026)

Notes: GPD = Gallons Per Day, values rounded, *The average historical agricultural demand associated with the Project site was calculated to be 264 AFY; as historical water demands were not supplied by Cal Water, the total Project demands do not consider existing site demands.

**Table 3.4.10-2
Projected Normal Year Water Supply and Demand (AFY)**

	2025	2030	2035	2040	2045
Total Supply	32,520	36,305	39,517	42,923	46,361
Visalia District Demand	32,520	35,276	38,310	41,258	44,529
Clements Ranch Demand	0	209	209	209	209
Other Developments	0	821	999	1,456	1,623
Total Potable Water Demand Inclusive of Project Difference	32,520	36,305	39,517	42,923	46,361
Supply Shortfall (% of Demand)	None	None	None	None	None

Source: (Woodard & Curran, 2026)

Table 3.4.10-3
Projected Single Dry Year Water Supply and Demand (AFY)

Start Year	2025	2030	2035	2040	2045
Total Supply	33,152	36,992	40,265	43,728	47,232
Visalia District Demand	33,152	35,962	39,057	42,063	45,400
Clements Ranch Demand	0	209	209	209	209
Other Developments	0	821	999	1,456	1,623
Total Potable Water Demand Inclusive of Project Difference	0	0	0	0	0
Supply Shortfall (% of Demand)	None	None	None	None	None

Source: (Woodard & Curran, 2026)

**Table 3.4.10-4
Projected Multiple Dry Year Water Supply and Demand (AFY)**

	2025	2030	2035	2040	2045
Total Supply	33,543	37,417	40,728	44,227	47,771
Visalia District Demand	33,543	36,387	39,520	42,562	45,939
Clements Ranch Demand	0	209	209	209	209
Other Developments	0	821	999	1,456	1,623
Total Potable Water Demand Inclusive of Project Difference	0	0	0	0	0
Supply Shortfall (% of Demand)	None	None	None	None	None

Source: (Woodard & Curran, 2026)

Conclusion

The District pumps groundwater within the jurisdictions of the Mid-Kaweah GSA, the Greater Kaweah GSA, and the Eastern Tule Groundwater Sustainability Agency (ETGSA). Groundwater use is consistent with the applicable GSPs. As demonstrated in Tables 3.4.10-1 through 3.4.10-4, the WSA concludes that sufficient water supply is available to the District to meet all future demands associated with current and planned development within its service area, including demands of the proposed Project. The WSA prepared for this Project concludes that sufficient water supply is available to the District to meet all future demands associated with current and planned development within its service area, including those of the proposed Project. As demonstrated in Tables 3.4.10-1 through 3.4.10-4, the District is projected to continue meeting future water demands under normal, single dry, and multiple dry year conditions.

Furthermore, the City of Visalia has adopted green building standards and water-efficient landscaping ordinances consistent with previous versions of the CALGreen Building Standards Code and the California Model Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance (MWELo) (23 CCR 2.2.7 Section 490-495, 2025; CALGreen, 2022). Landscaping will also comply with AB 1572. As part of State requirements, all new developments within the City of Visalia must meet these efficiency standards. Accordingly, the proposed Project will incorporate low-flow lavatory faucets, kitchen faucets, toilets, and urinals in accordance with the CALGreen Code, and include low-water-use landscaping and high-efficiency irrigation systems to minimize outdoor water use in compliance with MWELo.

As concluded above, the proposed Project's estimated water demand would not substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge, such that the Project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin. Therefore, the Project would result in a less-than-significant impact.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

No mitigation is required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Impacts would be *less than significant*.

Impact #3.4.10c(i) – Would the Project substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner which would result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site?

The existing drainage pattern of the site and area would be affected by Project development because of the increase in impervious surfaces at the site, such as residential rooftops, driveways, and sidewalks. As discussed in Impact #3.4.10a above, potential impacts on water quality from erosion and sedimentation are expected to be localized and temporary during

construction. Outlot G will be developed as an approximately 2.5-acre stormwater basin that will be maintained by the City, which will retain stormwater on site and provide intentional pervious surfaces for it to percolate and recharge the groundwater aquifer.

The Project, as designed, complies with the City's Open Space and Conservation Policy OSC-P-23, which requires setbacks from Cameron Creek to protect riparian areas (City of Visalia, 2014a). The Project will not impact this waterway or the vegetation along the creek.

The Project does not propose to alter the course of a stream or river through the addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner that would result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site. The Project would connect to the existing City stormwater sewer infrastructure. The Project will comply with all applicable local building codes and regulations to minimize impacts during construction and post-construction. Construction-related erosion and sedimentation impacts due to soil disturbance would be less than significant after implementing a SWPPP and BMPs required by the NPDES, as well as City standards and requirements. Given this, the Project would result in a less-than-significant impact.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

No mitigation is required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Impacts would be *less than significant*.

Impact #3.4.10c(ii) – Would the Project substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner which would substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or off-site?

See discussion in Impact #3.4.10c(i).

Ground-disturbing activities related to Project construction, such as grading, excavation, placing fill, and trenching, could change existing surface drainage patterns and increase the potential for flooding, particularly during storm events. Regulatory mechanisms in place that would reduce the effects of construction activities on drainage patterns that would result in flooding on or off the construction site include compliance with the City's grading plan check process and the NPDES Construction General Permit.

The potential for the construction of the proposed Project to alter existing drainage patterns would be minimized through compliance with the preparation of an SWPPP and the design and construction of an on-site stormwater basin. With the implementation of such measures, the Project would not substantially increase the amount of runoff to result in flooding on- or off-site. Development of the Project would include landscaping and open space, as well as lawns, which will allow stormwater to percolate back into the groundwater system in addition to the construction of City-compliant storm drain lines that would direct

stormwater into the City's existing system to reduce the rate of surface runoff and avoid flooding on- or off-site. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

No mitigation is required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Impacts would be *less than significant*.

Impact #3.4.10c(iii) – Would the Project substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner which would create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff?

See Impact #3.4.7b and c and Impact #3.4.10a, c(i), and c(ii).

The Project would comply with all applicable State and City codes and regulations. The Project will construct a stormwater retention basin on-site to capture stormwater, and engineering calculations will support the storm drainage plan to ensure that the Project does not create or contribute to runoff water that would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff. Therefore, the Project would not create or contribute runoff water that would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff. Impacts would be less than significant.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

No mitigation is required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Impacts would be *less than significant*.

Impact #3.4.10c(iv) – Would the Project substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner which would impede or redirect flood flows?

As discussed under Impact #3.4.10(a) through (c)(iii), Project construction activities could potentially alter the course of the existing drainage pattern on the site. The Project would be required to comply with the NPDES Construction General Permit by preparing a SWPPP to specify BMPs to prevent construction pollutants.

As discussed in Impact #3.4.10c(i), Outlot G will be developed as approximately a 2.5-acre stormwater basin that will maintain stormwater on the site, and provide intentional pervious surfaces for runoff to recharge into the groundwater.

The majority of the Project site is located within the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) 500-year flood hazard (0.2 percent chance flood hazard) zone, and a small portion of the southwest corner of the site is within Zone AE for Special Flood Hazard Area (Figure 3.4.10-1). Nevertheless, all structures within the Special Flood Hazard Area would be required to adhere to Visalia Municipal Code Chapter 15.60 (Floodplain Management Regulations) and California Building Code, which require structures to be built at or above base flood elevation, so as not to alter the mapped flood hazard area and reduce the risk of flooding to structures. Therefore, the Project Impacts would be less than significant.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

No mitigation is required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Impacts would be *less than significant*.

Impact #3.4.10d – Would the Project in flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk release of pollutants due to Project inundation?

The Project site is not located near the ocean or a steep topographic feature (i.e., mountain, hill, bluff, etc.). Tsunamis are waves generated in oceans from seismic activity. Due to the inland location of the site, tsunamis are not considered a hazard for the site. Therefore, there is no potential for the site to be inundated by a tsunami or mudflow.

A seiche is a wave generated by the periodic oscillation of a body of water whose period is a function of the resonant characteristics of the containing basin as controlled by its physical dimensions. The Project site is not adjacent to a large body of water that would be vulnerable to the development of a seiche. There is no potential for the inundation of the Project site by seiche.

According to the Tulare Multi-Jurisdictional Local Hazard Mitigation Plan, dam failure is extremely unlikely (County of Tulare, 2023).

As noted above, the Project site is within the 500-year and AE flood hazard zones. The Project will comply with applicable local, State, and federal requirements for construction in a flood zone, thereby reducing the impacts of flooding. Therefore, the Project would not contribute to inundation by flood hazard, tsunami, seiche or mudflow. As a result, the impacts would be less than significant.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

No mitigation is required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Impacts would be *less than significant*.

Impact #3.4.10e – Would the Project conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan?

See Impact #3.4.10a regarding water quality.

Since the Project site is not within Cal Water District boundaries, the Project was not included in the 2020 UWMP demand projections for the District, and a WSA was prepared for this Project. The proposed Project water demands of 209 AFY represent less than one percent of the District's annual water demands. As demonstrated in Tables 3.4.10-1 through 3.4.10-4, the District is projected to continue meeting future water demands under normal, single dry, and multiple dry year conditions. Furthermore, as part of State requirements, from CALGreen and MWELo, all new developments within the City of Visalia must meet these efficiency standards. Accordingly, the proposed Project will incorporate low-flow lavatory faucets, kitchen faucets, toilets, and urinals in accordance with CALGreen Code, and include low-water-use landscaping and high-efficiency irrigation systems to minimize outdoor water use in compliance with MWELo.

Implementation of the General Plan policies, California Water Service's 2020 Urban Water Management Plan, the Kaweah Delta Water Conservation District (KDWCD) 2010 Groundwater Management Plan and the City's involvement with the KDWCD Integrated Regional Water Management Planning (IRWM) program, in addition to the City's Stormwater Master Plan and Management Program and the Waterways and Trails Master Plan, will address the issues of providing an adequate, reliable and sustainable water supply for the Project's future urban domestic and public safety consumptive purposes. The proposed Project is consistent with the Central Valley RWQCB and will comply with all applicable rules and regulations regarding water quality and groundwater management. As such, impacts would be less than significant.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

No mitigation is required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Impacts would be *less than significant*.

National Flood Hazard Layer FIRMette



Legend

SEE FIS REPORT FOR DETAILED LEGEND AND INDEX MAP FOR FIRM PANEL LAYOUT

SPECIAL FLOOD HAZARD AREAS

- Without Base Flood Elevation (BFE) Zone A, V, A30
- With BFE or Depth Zone AE, AD, AH, VE, AR
- Regulatory Floodway

OTHER AREAS OF FLOOD HAZARD

- 0.2% Annual Chance Flood Hazard, Areas of 1% annual chance flood with average depth less than one foot or with drainage areas of less than one square mile Zone X
- Future Conditions 1% Annual Chance Flood Hazard Zone X
- Area with Reduced Flood Risk due to Levee. See Notes. Zone X
- Area with Flood Risk due to Levee Zone O

OTHER AREAS

- Area of Minimal Flood Hazard Zone X
- Effective LOMRs
- Area of Undetermined Flood Hazard Zone O

GENERAL STRUCTURES

- Channel, Culvert, or Storm Sewer
- Levee, Dike, or Floodwall

OTHER FEATURES

- Cross Sections with 1% Annual Chance Water Surface Elevation
- Coastal Transect
- Base Flood Elevation Line (BFE)
- Limit of Study
- Jurisdiction Boundary
- Coastal Transect Baseline
- Profile Baseline
- Hydrographic Feature

MAP PANELS

- Digital Data Available
- No Digital Data Available
- Unmapped

The pin displayed on the map is an approximate point selected by the user and does not represent an authoritative property location.

This map complies with FEMA's standards for the use of digital flood maps if it is not void as described below. The basemap shown complies with FEMA's basemap accuracy standards.

The flood hazard information is derived directly from the authoritative NFHL web services provided by FEMA. This map was exported on 6/12/2025 at 2:56 PM and does not reflect changes or amendments subsequent to this date and time. The NFHL and effective information may change or become superseded by new data over time.

This map image is void if the one or more of the following map elements do not appear: basemap imagery, flood zone labels, legend, scale bar, map creation date, community identifiers, FIRM panel number, and FIRM effective date. Map images for unmapped and unmodernized areas cannot be used for regulatory purposes.



Figure 3.4.10-1
FEMA Flood Hazard Zone

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less-than-Significant Impact	No Impact
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3.4.11 - LAND USE AND PLANNING

Would the Project:

a. Physically divide an established community?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b. 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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Discussion

Impact #3.4.11a – Would the Project physically divide an established community?

The physical division of an established community typically refers to the construction of a physical feature (such as an interstate highway or railroad tracks) or the removal of a means of access (such as a local road or bridge) that would impair mobility within an existing community, or between a community and outlying areas. For instance, the construction of an interstate highway through an existing community may constrain travel from one side of the community to another; similarly, such construction may also impair travel to areas outside of the community.

The Project site is surrounded by agricultural uses on the north, east, and south sides and a mix of high-density and low-density housing types to the west. The Project site is located directly east of the City limits, within the City’s Urban Growth Boundary – Tier II, and has residential General Plan designations (Low-, Medium-, and High-Density Residential) by the City General Plan. The proposed mixed-density housing development is a logical progression of urban development anticipated by the City, and would be compatible with housing development to the west. The Project proposes to convert existing agricultural land to residential use, so the proposed Project would not physically divide an established community. Furthermore, residential development on the Project site has been planned for by the City’s General Plan and would not divide an established community. The Project is not being built in a pre-existing community area, and would not create any physical barrier between an established community. These improvements would not affect connectivity and would not divide an established community. Therefore, the Project would have no impact.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

No mitigation is required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

There would be *no impact*.

Impact #3.4.11b – Would the Project 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?

The 2030 General Plan includes the policies related to land use that correlate to the proposed Project:

- LU-P-19: Ensure that growth occurs in a compact and concentric fashion by implementing the General Plan’s phased growth strategy.
- LU-P-21: Allow annexation and development of residential, commercial, and industrial land to occur within the Tier II UGB and the Tier III Urban Growth Boundary consistent with the City’s Land Use Diagram, according to the following phasing thresholds:
 - Tier II: The expansion criteria for land in Tier II to become available for annexation and development are that such annexation and development shall only occur if it does not result in excess of a 10-year supply of undeveloped residential land within the new Tier I. This is intended to be consistent with LAFCo policies discouraging residential annexations exceeding a 10-year housing inventory. Thus, the “inner” tier is distinguished from the GPURC-recommended Tier I in that it is not based on projected capacity and need, but rather on a requirement to be able to demonstrate that less than a 10-year inventory of residential land exists.
- LU-P-40: Use Mill, Packwood, and Cameron Creeks and other waterways as natural amenities and links between neighborhoods.
- LU-P-47: Establish criteria and standards for pedestrian, bicycle, and vehicle circulation networks within new subdivisions and non-residential development.
- LU-P-58: Ensure that natural and open space features, such as Valley Oak trees and community waterways, are treated as special site amenities as part of any residential development.
- LU-P-71: Ensure that noise, traffic, and other potential conflicts that may arise in a mix of commercial and residential uses are mitigated through good site planning, building design, and/or appropriate operational measures.
- OSC-P-23: Where no urban development exists, maintain a minimum riparian habitat development setback from the discernible top of the bank—50 feet for both sides of the Mill, Packwood and Cameron Creek corridors and 25 feet for both sides of Modoc, Persian and Mill Creek Ditches—provided that where riparian trees are located within 100 feet of the discernible top of the banks of the Creek corridors and 50 from the banks for the ditches, the setback shall be wide enough to include five feet outside

the drip line of such trees. Restore and enhance the area within the setback with native vegetation.

As proposed, the Project will be consistent with all relevant General Plan goals, objectives, and policies for Land Use. The Project accomplishes compliance with the General Plan policies listed above through compliance with phased growth thresholds for the UDB, comply with City circulation standards for new subdivisions, designing the Project to include buffers from the Tulare Irrigation Ditch and Cameron Creek in order to protect and highlight the natural features of the waterways and ensure compliance of all applicable local standards for noise related construction activities. Considering the Project would comply with all applicable General Plan policies, city and state regulations, the Project would have a less-than-significant impact.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

No mitigation is required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Impacts would be *less than significant*.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less-than-Significant Impact	No Impact
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3.4.12 - MINERAL RESOURCES

Would the Project:

- | | | | | | |
|----|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| a. | Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| b. | Result in the loss of availability of a locally important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan, or other land use plan? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

Discussion

Impact #3.4.12a – Would the Project result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the State?

Surface mining in California is regulated through the Surface Mining and Reclamation Act (SMARA), a State law adopted in 1975 to address the dual goals of protecting the State’s need for a continuing supply of mineral resources, while protecting public and environmental health. SMARA requires that all cities incorporate into their general plans mapped mineral resource designations approved by the State Mining and Geology Board.

The Visalia Planning Area contains three former sand and gravel mines, but no currently operating mines and no designated Mineral Resource Zones (City of Visalia, 2014b). According to CalGEM, there are no active, inactive, or capped oil wells located within the Project site, and it is not within a recognized oilfield. The Project will not result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the State. Therefore, there would be no impact.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

No mitigation is required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

There would be *no impact*.

Impact #3.4.12b – Would the Project result in the loss of availability of a locally important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan, or other land use plan?

See discussion in Impact #3.4.12a, which discusses Project compliance with relevant elements of the General Plan.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

No mitigation is required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

There would be *no impact*.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less-than-Significant Impact	No Impact
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3.4.13 - NOISE

Would the Project result in:

a. Generation of a substantial temporary or permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the Project in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. For a Project located within the vicinity of a private airstrip or an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the Project expose people residing or working in the Project area to excessive noise levels?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Discussion

Impact #3.4.13a – Would the Project result in generation of a substantial temporary or permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the Project in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?

Noise is often described as unwanted sound. Sound is defined as any pressure variation in air that the human ear can detect. The perceived loudness of sounds is dependent upon many factors, including sound pressure level and frequency content. Community noise is commonly described in terms of the ambient noise level, which is defined as the all-encompassing noise level associated with a given noise environment. The City establishes land use compatibility standards and noise policies in the Safety and Noise Chapter of the City’s General Plan. The following Policies are relevant to the proposed Project:

- N-O-1: Strive to achieve an acceptable noise environment for present and future residents of Visalia.
- N-O-2: Protect the City’s economic base by preventing the encroachment of incompatible land uses near known noise-producing industries, railroads, airports, and other sources.
- N-O-3: Protect noise-sensitive land uses such as schools, hospitals, and senior care facilities from encroachment of and exposure to excessive levels of noise.

- N-P-2: Promote the use of noise attenuation measures to improve the acoustic environment inside residences where existing single-family residential development is located in a noise-impacted environment, such as along an arterial street or adjacent to a noise-producing use.
- N-P-3: Establish performance standards for noise reduction for new housing that may be exposed to community noise levels above 65 dB Day-Night Average Sound Level (DNL)/Community Noise Equivalent Level (CNEL), as shown on the Noise Contour Maps, based on the target acceptable noise levels for outdoor activity levels and interior spaces in Tables 8-2 and 8-3 [of the Noise Element of the General Plan]. Noise mitigation measures that may be considered to achieve these noise level targets include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - Construct façades with substantial weight and insulation.
 - Use sound-rated windows with enhanced noise reduction for primary sleeping and activity areas.
 - Use sound-rated doors for all exterior entries at primary sleeping and activity areas.
 - Use minimum setbacks and exterior barriers.
 - Use acoustic baffling of vents for chimneys, attic, and gable ends.
 - Install a mechanical ventilation system that provides fresh air under closed window conditions.
 - Alternative acoustical designs that achieve the prescribed noise level standards may be approved, provided that a qualified Acoustical Consultant submits information demonstrating that the alternative designs will achieve and maintain the specific targets for outdoor activity areas and interior spaces.
- N-P-4: Where new development of industrial, commercial or other noise-generating land uses (including roadways, railroads and airports) may result in noise levels that exceed the noise level exposure criteria established by Tables 8-2 and 8-3 [of the Noise Element of the General Plan], require a noise study to determine impacts and require developers to mitigate these impacts in conformance with Tables 8-2 and 8-3 as a condition of permit approval through appropriate means. Noise mitigation measures may include, but are not limited to:
 - Screen and control noise sources, such as parking and loading facilities, outdoor activities, and mechanical equipment.
 - Increase setbacks for noise sources from adjacent dwellings.
 - Retain fences, walls, and landscaping that serve as noise buffers.
 - Use soundproofing materials and double-glazed windows.
 - Use open space, building orientation and design, landscaping, and running water to mask sounds.
 - Control hours of operation, including deliveries and trash pickup, to minimize noise impacts.
 - Alternative acoustical designs that achieve the prescribed noise level reduction may be approved, provided a qualified Acoustical Consultant submits information demonstrating that the alternative designs will achieve and maintain the specific targets for outdoor activity areas and interior spaces. As a last resort, developers may propose to construct noise walls along State highways and arterials when

compatible with aesthetic concerns and neighborhood character. This would be a developer's responsibility, with no City funding.

- N-P-5: Continue to enforce applicable State Noise Insulation Standards (California Administrative Code, Title 24) and Uniform Building Code (UBC) noise requirements.
- N-P-7: Use the land use compatibility zone guidelines contained in the Airport Master Plan or more current information on airport noise to assess noise compatibility of airport operation with proposed land uses.

The Project will comply with all applicable City General Plan Policies, such as those notated above, through demonstrating compliance with local and State regulations, such as the Noise Ordinance (Chapter 8.36), the Project site being located a considerable distance from incompatible uses and sensitive receptors, construction of sound barriers along Lovers Lane (adjacent arterial street) and compliance with applicable State Noise Insulation Standards (California Administrative Code, Title 24) and UBC noise requirements in order to reduce noise impacts to future residences in the proposed subdivision.

Construction Noise

During Project construction, heavy equipment would be used for grading, excavation, paving, and building construction, which would increase ambient noise levels when in use. Noise levels would vary depending on the type of equipment used, how it is operated, and how well it is maintained. Noise exposure at any single point outside the Project work area would also vary depending upon the proximity of equipment activities to that point. The nearest existing sensitive uses (single-family and multi-family residential subdivisions) are located approximately 120 feet away from where construction activities could occur within the Project area.

It is possible that Project construction equipment could result in short-term increases over ambient maximum noise levels at nearby existing residential uses, but would remain within the limits defined by the City of Visalia Noise Ordinance. Pursuant to Visalia Municipal Code Section 8.36.050(C), the operation of construction equipment, including jackhammers, portable generators, pneumatic equipment, trenchers, or other such equipment, shall not be operated on the Project site between the weekday hours of 7:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m. and between the weekend hours of 7:00 p.m. and 9:00 a.m.

Furthermore, a majority of the street frontages on Lovers Lane have existing sound barrier walls and vegetative screening materials, such as trees and shrubs, which could help reduce the temporary increase in sound levels experienced during the 18-24 months construction period.

Operations Noise

Once construction is complete, operational noise will be minimal and limited to usual noises exhibited from residential neighborhoods, which would be required to be within the limits outlined by the City's Noise Ordinance.

Therefore, through compliance with local and State noise standards, the temporary increase in noise levels caused by construction activities would be considered less than significant.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

No mitigation is required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Impacts would be *less than significant*.

Impact #3.4.13b – Would the Project result in generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?

See discussion in Impact #3.4.13a.

Groundborne vibrations or noise levels would increase during the temporary 18-24-month construction period. Pursuant to Visalia Municipal Code Section 8.36.050(C), the operation of construction equipment, including jackhammers, portable generators, pneumatic equipment, trenchers, or other such equipment, shall not be operated on the Project site between the weekday hours of 7:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m. and between the weekend hours of 7:00 p.m. and 9:00 a.m. Therefore, on-site construction within the Project area is not expected to result in excessive groundborne vibration levels at nearby existing sensitive uses. Given the Project's compliance with local regulations and the temporary nature of construction, there will not be long-term generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels; therefore, this impact is less than significant.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

No mitigation is required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Impacts would be *less than significant*.

Impact #3.4.13c – Would the Project result in a Project located within the vicinity of a private airstrip or an airport land use plan, or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport? Would the Project expose people residing or working in the Project area to excessive noise levels?

The Project is not within the vicinity of a private airstrip. The Project is located approximately 6.80 miles east of Visalia Municipal Airport, which is not within the airport influence area as identified in the Tulare County Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan (ALUCP) (County of Tulare, 2012). The ALUCP guides local jurisdictions in determining appropriate compatible land uses with detailed findings and policies. The General Plan, other City land use plans, and all City land use decisions must be compatible with the adopted ALUCP. The ALUCP includes CNEL noise contours based on projected airport and aircraft

operations, and the Project site is outside of the 60 dB CNEL noise contour. Therefore, there would be no impact.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

No mitigation is required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

There would be *no impact*.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less- than Significant Impact	No Impact
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3.4.14 - POPULATION AND HOUSING

Would the Project:

a. Induce substantial population unplanned growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Discussion

Impact #3.4.14a – Would the Project induce substantial population unplanned growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)?

Population forecasts adopted by the City’s General Plan indicate growth for the City population of 210,000 people by 2030, with an average annual growth rate of 2.6 percent (City of Visalia, 2014b). As of 2020, the total population of the City of Visalia is 141,384 people, and the average of 2.94 persons per household (City of Visalia, 2024). Given that the Project proposes 662 units, the Project would generate approximately 1,946.28 persons. The General Plan designation is Low-, Medium-, and High-Density Residential, which the Project will be compatible with once the General Plan Amendment and Planned Unit Development are approved.

As noted previously, the City General Plan has designated the Project site for future urban uses under the Urban Growth Development Tier II. General Plan Policy LU-P-21 outlines that the expansion criteria for land in Tier II to become available for annexation and development is that such annexation and development shall only occur if it does not result in excess of a 10-year supply of undeveloped residential land within the new Tier I. This is intended to be consistent with LAFCo policies discouraging residential annexations exceeding a 10-year housing inventory (City of Visalia, 2014b). The City determined in 2023 that additional residential capacity was needed in Tier II.

The Project will comply with all applicable General Plan policies, and the Project will undergo review by City staff to ensure compliance. Given that the Project proposes to develop in areas where planned residential growth is anticipated in the General Plan, the Project would not

likely induce substantial unplanned population growth. Implementation of this Project will support the General Plan designation for future growth of residential land. Therefore, Project impacts are considered to be less than significant.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

No mitigation is required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Impacts would be *less than significant*.

Impact #3.4.14b – Would the Project displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?

The Project site is currently undeveloped agricultural land under row crop and orchard cultivation.

Construction of the Project would likely be completed by construction workers residing in the City or the surrounding area, which would not require new housing. The Project will not result in the displacement of any persons as there are no habitable residential units on the Project site. As such, no impact associated with the displacement of housing or people would occur, and there would be no impacts.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

No mitigation is required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

There would be *no impact*.

Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less-than-Significant Impact	No Impact
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3.4.15 - PUBLIC SERVICES

Would the Project:

a. Result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times, or to other performance objectives for any of the public services:

i. Fire protection?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
ii. Police protection?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
iii. Schools?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
iv. Parks?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
v. Other public facilities?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Discussion

Impact #3.4.15a(i) – Would the Project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times, or to other performance objectives for any of the public services - Fire Protection?

The City Fire Department (VFD) Fire Station 56 is approximately one mile north of the Project site.

Prior to the issuance of any building permits related to future development of the site, the developer will be required to pay development impact fees. A portion of those funds will be specifically earmarked for the use of the VFD to maintain an adequate level of service within its service boundary. The entire Project, whether submitted in phases or not, will be subject to review by the City Engineering, Public Works, and Fire Department in order to determine whether the Project's infrastructure design is in compliance with City policies for development. The Project's water system will be reviewed to verify that the system can

supply the required fire flow for fire protection purposes. The establishment of gallons-per-minute requirements for fire flow shall be based on the review of the VFD.

An Insurance Services Office (ISO) is a private company that inspects and ranks fire departments across the country to help insurance companies determine premiums for homeowners in the areas they serve. The ISO collects and analyzes firefighting capability information on nearly 46,000 areas and rates departments on fire suppression ability, water availability, and communications. ISO's methodology, known as the Fire Suppression Rating Schedule, assigns a class rating on a scale of 1 to 10, with Class 1 given to exemplary fire departments and Class 10 to departments that do not meet minimum criteria (City of Visalia, 2014b). The General Plan, adopted in 2014, states that the VFD had an ISO rating of 4 (City of Visalia, 2014b). In 2021, the Annual Report produced by the Visalia Fire Department stated that the VFD rating was 3, showing improvements in Visalia's ability to be prepared for a fire response.

As previously stated, the Project is within the Tier II UDB, which is an area planned for future residential growth. Furthermore, the Project will be required to adhere to any conditions/policies pertaining to the construction of infrastructure needed for the Fire Department to provide an adequate level of fire protection service and pay development impact fees; therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

No mitigation measures are required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Impacts would be *less than significant*.

Impact #3.4.15a(ii) – Would the Project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times, or to other performance objectives for any of the public services – Police Protection?

The City of Visalia Police Department (VPD) Station is approximately 2.60 miles northwest of the Project site. The VPD provides police protection in the City and collaborates with other law enforcement agencies and the District Attorney's office on crime prevention. According to the General Plan, adopted in 2014, the VFD has 143 sworn officers working out of two districts (City of Visalia, 2014b). According to the VFD 2023 Annual Report, there was an increase to 167 sworn officers working out of two districts (Visalia Police Department, 2023). Police headquarters is at 303 South Johnson Street in Downtown Visalia, adjacent to City Hall West. In 2007, the Department opened two substations and shifted to district-based operations. The District 1 substation, serving northern Visalia, is located at 204 Northwest 3rd Avenue, near Lincoln Oval. District 2, at 4100 South County Center Drive, serves the southern part of the city.

As previously stated, the Project is within the Tier II UDB, which is an area planned for future residential growth. Furthermore, the Project will be required to adhere to any conditions/policies pertaining to the construction of infrastructure needed for the Police Department to provide an adequate level of fire protection service and pay development impact fees; therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

No mitigation measures are required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Impacts would be *less than significant*.

Impact #3.4.15a(iii) – Would the Project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times, or to other performance objectives for any of the public services – Schools?

Visalia Unified School District (VUSD or District) provides public education from kindergarten through 12th grade in the Planning Area. According to VUSD, the Project site is within the boundaries of Annie R. Mitchell Elementary School (approximately 0.46 miles northwest), Divisadero Middle School (approximately 2.75 miles northwest), and Mt. Whitney High School (approximately 2.25 miles northwest) (Visalia Unified School District, 2025). Additionally, Blue Oak Academy, which is a public charter school, is located 0.71 miles east of the Project site.

The City's 2023-2031 Certified Housing Element notes that there were 2.94 persons per household (City of Visalia, 2024). Assuming a two-parent household, the remaining .94 individuals are assumed to be school-age children. Given that the Project is estimating the development of 662 units, the Project would account for approximately 622.28 students who would utilize school services within the City.

In 2024, the VUSD developed a Facilities Plan that proposed school boundary changes to reduce the utilization of overutilized schools. This Plan considered future planned growth near schools in its development (Visalia Unified School District, 2024). As a result of boundary changes, Annie R Mitchell Elementary School's projected 2027-28 utilization rate was reduced from 119.9 percent to 83.5 percent, while both Divisadero Middle School and Mt. Whitney High School would remain below full utilization for 2027-28 at a utilization rate of 69.6 percent and 92.6 percent, respectively.

The Project will be subject to school impact fees to mitigate any impacts on school facilities. Given that the designated schools are projected to have utilization rates under capacity, the developer would need to pay school impact fees to help support future growth of schools, and the Project site area is in a planned residential growth area of the General Plan. Through

local funding, the school district is in a position to accommodate planned population growth for the foreseeable future through the payment and use of developer impact fees. Per Government Code Section 65996, impacts to school facilities are mitigated by Level 1, 2, and 3 developer fee legislative provisions. The Project developer will pay appropriate impact fees at the time of building permits. Therefore, with implementation of standard local requirements for development Projects related to school fees, the Project does not require new or physically altered school facilities to address the increase in the student population associated with the Project. Impacts are considered less than significant.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

No mitigation measures are required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Impacts would be *less than significant*.

Impact #3.4.15a(iv) – Would the Project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times, or to other performance objectives for any of the public services – Parks?

The City’s park standard for neighborhood and community parks in the General Plan is 5.0 acres per 1,000 residents (City of Visalia, 2014a). The buildout of the General Plan Land Use Diagram would result in approximately 85,000 new residents in Visalia, with a total population of about 210,000. To meet the General Plan parks standard, the additional population would require an additional 430 acres of parkland. There are three parks within a mile radius of the Project site (Neighborhood Park, Cherry Meadow Park, and Majestic Park). Parkland is designated directly east of the Project site, which may allow for park development in the future.

As discussed in Impact #3.4.14a, the Project would generate approximately 1,946.28 persons. This would mean that the Project would be required to provide approximately 9.73 acres of open space for recreational purposes (.005 acres per resident x 1,946.28 residents). The Project includes 0.80 acres in open space within the medium-density gated community and 2.73 acres in open space and trail connections in the non-gated low-density single-family neighborhood. The Project’s development of open space and trail connections could be used for recreational purposes, which would support the City’s residents per park acres ratio in the UDB areas.

Furthermore, prior to issuance of a building permit for construction of a new dwelling unit, as defined by Chapter 12.36 (Park and Recreation Development Fees) of the City Municipal Code, or recordation of a final map or parcel map, where applicable, a fee shall be paid to the City for the purpose of constructing park and recreation facilities (City of Visalia, 2025b). Payment of development fees will help the City meet their parkland ratio.

Given the intentional design to add open space features to the proposed Project to support the City's resident-to-parkland ratio and the requirement to pay development fees for parks, the Project would have a less-than-significant impact.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

No mitigation measures are required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Impacts would be *less than significant*.

Impact #3.4.15a(v) – Would the Project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times, or to other performance objectives for any of the public services – Other Public Facilities?

See Impact #3.4.15a(i) through (iv) above.

Community facilities are the network of public and private institutions that support the civic, social, and health needs of the population. They offer a variety of recreational, artistic, and educational programs and special events. The City also provides animal control services, refuse pick-up (via an agreement with Tulare County Resource Management Agency and Consolidated Waste Management Authority), and drainage management (City of Visalia, 2014b). These services receive funds allocated through the General Fund, usage fees, penalties, or impact fees.

The closest library (Tulare County Library) is located approximately 2.60 miles northwest of the Project site. The nearest healthcare centers (Kaweah Health Medical Clinic and Apria Healthcare) are located 1.40 and 1.70 miles northwest of the Project site, respectively. The nearest hospital (Kaweah Delta Hospital) is 2.20 miles northwest of the Project site.

As discussed in Impact #3.4.14a, the Project proposes to develop in areas where planned residential growth is anticipated in the General Plan. Development fees will be paid to offset the increased demand for public services such as animal control, libraries, and other government facilities. The proposed Project would support the General Plan designation for future growth of residential land in the UDB and would be required to offset the increased demand through the payment of development impact fees; therefore, the Project would have a less-than-significant impact as a result of this criterion.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

No mitigation measures are required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Impacts would be *less than significant*.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less-than-Significant Impact	No Impact
3.4.16 - RECREATION				
Would the Project:				
a. Increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities that might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Discussion

Impact #3.4.16a – Would the Project increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?

See discussion in Impact #3.4.15a(iv) regarding parks.

There are three parks within a mile radius of the Project site (Neighborhood Park, Cherry Meadow Park, and Majestic Park). The Project proposes to develop open space and trail connections to serve future residences of the subdivision, and would be required to pay development impact fees to offset the planned growth of the proposed Project.

According to the City’s Waterways and Trails Master Plan, the St. Johns River, Mill, Packwood, and Cameron Creeks are part of the community’s heritage and provide habitat to many species of flora and fauna, and available irrigation water to adjacent farmlands. The preservation and restoration of these waterways for public recreation, habitat, and community enjoyment is a high priority (City of Visalia , 2010). The Project site includes portions of the Cameron Creek Segment 3 trail, which is a preferred Class I Bike trail. Any trail construction or alterations would conform to design criteria in the City’s Waterways and Trails Master Plan and Municipal Code.

Given this discussion, there would be a less-than-significant impact on existing neighborhood parks, regional parks, or other recreational facilities.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

No mitigation measures are required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Impacts would be *less than significant*.

Impact #3.4.16b – Would the Project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities that might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?

See Section 2 – Project Description, the proposed Project does not include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities that might have an adverse physical effect on the environment; therefore, no impact is anticipated.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

No mitigation is required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

There would be *no impact*.

3.4.17 - TRANSPORTATION AND TRAFFIC

Would the Project:

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less-than-Significant Impact	No Impact
a. Conflict with a program plan, ordinance or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle and pedestrian facilities?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3, Subdivision (b)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Result in inadequate emergency access?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Discussion

The analysis in this section is substantiated a Traffic Impact Analysis (TIA) completed for the Project (JLB Traffic Engineering, Inc., 2026) and a Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) Analysis (VRPA Technologies, Inc., 2026), attached as Appendix D.

Impact #3.4.17a – Would the Project conflict with a program plan, ordinance or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle and pedestrian facilities?

Transit System

Visalia Transit and Tulare County Regional Transportation Agency (TCRTA) are the transit operators in this area of the City of Visalia. Visalia Transit has one transit route that operates in the vicinity of the proposed Project site. Route 9 operates on 45-minute intervals between 6:00 a.m. and 8:45 p.m. on weekdays and on 90-minute intervals between 8:00 a.m. and 6:15 p.m. on weekends. The nearest stop to the proposed Project site is located on the east side of Ben Maddox Way, approximately 550 feet north of Walnut Avenue. Retention of the existing and expansion of future transit routes are dependent on transit ridership demand and available funding.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Network

There are Class I and Class III bikeways in the vicinity of the proposed Project site. The Visalia ATP recommends that Class I, Class II, and Class III Bikeways be implemented adjacent to and in the vicinity of the Project site (JLB Traffic Engineering, Inc., 2026). In the vicinity of and adjacent to the Project site, Class I Bikeways are planned on Cameron Creek and K Avenue. Class II Bikeways are planned on Lovers Lane, Caldwell Avenue, and Walnut Avenue. Class III Bikeways along Walnut Avenue. Therefore, it is recommended that the Project construct a Class II Bikeway along the Project's frontage to Lovers Lane and a Class I Bikeway along the Project's frontage to Cameron Creek. As mentioned in Impact #3.4.16a, this bikeway segment is referred to as the Cameron Creek Segment 3 trail. Any trail construction or alterations would conform to design criteria in the City's Waterways and Trails Master Plan and Municipal Code.

Roadway Network

Important roadways serving the Project are discussed below:

- ***Pinkham Street*** is an existing north-south two-lane undivided collector in the vicinity of the Project site. In this area, Pinkham Street exists between State Route 198 and Caldwell Avenue. The Visalia General Plan Circulation Element designates Pinkham Street as a collector between Avenue 320 and Avenue 272.
- ***Lovers Lane*** is an existing north-south four-lane divided arterial adjacent to the Project site. In this area, Lovers Lane exists between the St. Johns River and Avenue 272. The Visalia General Plan Circulation Element designates Lovers Lane as an arterial between Avenue 320 and Avenue 272.
- ***Road 148*** is an existing north-south two-lane undivided roadway in the vicinity of the Project site. In this area, Road 148 exists between Avenue 288 and Avenue 272. The Visalia General Plan Circulation Element designates Lovers Lane as a local roadway between Avenue 288 and Avenue 272.
- ***Walnut Avenue*** is an existing east-west two-lane undivided arterial in the vicinity of the Project site. In this area, Walnut Avenue exists between Road 86 and the eastern boundary of the City of Visalia. The Visalia General Plan Circulation Element designates Walnut Avenue as an arterial between Road 86 through the eastern boundary of the City of Visalia.
- ***K Avenue*** is an existing east-west two-lane undivided collector in the vicinity of the Project site. In this area, K Avenue exists between Santa Fe Street and Lovers Lane. The Visalia General Plan Circulation Element designates K Avenue as a collector between Santa Fe Street and Road 148.

- ***Sunnyside Avenue*** is an existing east-west two-lane undivided local roadway adjacent to the Project site. In this area, Sunnyside Avenue exists in segments throughout the City of Visalia SOI. The Visalia General Plan Circulation Element designates Sunnyside Avenue as a local roadway throughout the City of Visalia SOI. As part of this Project, Sunnyside Avenue will be extended east of Lovers Lane through the Project site. This Project reassigns Sunnyside Avenue as a collector.
- ***Caldwell Avenue*** is an existing east-west divided arterial in the vicinity of the Project site. In this area, Caldwell Avenue exists throughout the City of Visalia SOI. The Visalia General Plan Circulation Element designates Caldwell Avenue as an arterial throughout the City of Visalia SOI.

Project Traffic Analysis

Study intersections analyzed in the referenced TIA were performed under the jurisdiction of Caltrans, City of Visalia, and County of Tulare. Based on the comments received from these agencies, the TIA includes the study intersection of Road 148 at Caldwell Avenue, Project driveways along Sunnyside Avenue, Warrant 1 and Warrant 2 in all study scenarios, corner sight distance evaluations for all Project driveways, and a trip trace for the State Route 198 at Lovers Lane interchange.

The following intersections were studied:

- Lovers Lane/Walnut Avenue
- Pinkham Street/K Avenue
- Lovers Lane/K Avenue
- Lovers Lane/Project Driveway A
- Lovers Lane/Sunnyside Avenue
- Project Driveway B/Sunnyside Avenue
- Project Driveway C/Sunnyside Avenue
- Project Driveway D/Sunnyside Avenue
- Lovers Lane/Project Driveway E
- Pinkham Street/Caldwell Avenue
- Lovers Lane/Caldwell Avenue
- Road 148/Caldwell Avenue

LEVEL OF SERVICE (LOS) THRESHOLD

The potential traffic impacts of the proposed Project were evaluated in accordance with the standards set forth by the LOS policies of the City of Visalia, County of Tulare, and Caltrans. While LOS is no longer the criterion of significance for traffic impacts under CEQA, the Visalia General Plan includes policies that utilize LOS to determine traffic-related improvements that are needed for a project. The Tulare County General Plan has established LOS D as the acceptable level of traffic congestion on county roads and streets that fall entirely outside the SOI of a city. The Visalia General Plan has established LOS D as the acceptable level of

traffic congestion on most major streets that fall within the SOI of the City of Visalia. All but one study intersection falls completely within the City of Visalia SOI.

Project Trip Generation

The trip generation rates for the proposed Project were obtained from the 11th Edition of the Trip Generation Manual published by the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE). Table 3.4.17-1 presents the trip generation for the proposed Project with trip generation rates for Single Family Detached Housing and Multi-family Housing (Low-Rise). At buildout, the proposed Project is estimated to generate approximately 5,248 daily trips, 352 AM peak hour trips, and 463 PM peak hour trips. Table 3.4.17-1 summarizes the Project trip generation.

Traffic Signal Warrants

The California Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (CA MUTCD) indicates that an engineering study of traffic conditions, pedestrian characteristics, and physical features of an intersection shall be conducted to determine whether installation of traffic signal controls is justified. The CA MUTCD provides a total of nine warrants to evaluate the need for traffic signal controls. Signalization of an intersection may be appropriate if one or more of the signal warrants are satisfied. These warrants include:

- Eight-Hour Vehicular Volume
- Four-Hour Vehicular Volume
- Peak Hour
- Pedestrian Volume
- School Crossing
- Coordinated Signal System
- Crash Experience
- Roadway Network
- Intersection Near a Grade Crossing.

Existing Conditions

The existing intersection peak hour turning movement counts were conducted at the study facilities in September 2025 and October 2025, while schools in the vicinity of the Project site were in session. The intersection turning movement counts included pedestrian and bicycle volumes. Results of the existing conditions intersection analysis are shown in Table 3.4.17-2. At present, the study intersection of Lovers Lane at Walnut Avenue generates an LOS of E, which exceeds the LOS D threshold during the AM peak period.

**Table 3.4.17-1
Project Trip Generation Estimate**

Land Use	Size	Unit	Daily			A.M. Peak Hour					PM Peak Hour					
			Rate	Total	Trip Rate	In %	Out %	In	Out	Total	Trip Rate	In %	Out %	In	Out	Total
Phases 1 & 2: Single-Family Detached Housing (210)	292	d.u.	9.43	2,754	0.70	26	74	53	151	204	0.94	63	37	173	101	274
Phase 3: Multi-family Housing (Low-Rise)	375	d.u.	6.24	2,494	0.40	24	76	36	112	148	0.51	63	37	119	70	189
TOTAL				5,248				89	263	352				292	171	463

(JLB Traffic Engineering, Inc., 2026), d.u. = dwelling unit

**Table 3.4.17-2
Existing Intersection LOS Results**

Intersection – ID No.	Intersection Control	A.M. (7-9) Peak Hour		P.M. Peak Hour	
		Av. Delay (sec/veh)	LOS	Delay (sec)	LOS
Lovers Lane/Walnut Avenue – 1	S	60.3	E	44.6	D
	S (Improved)	32.4	C	27.2	C
Pinkham Street/K Avenue – 2	AWS	12.5	B	9.4	A
Lovers Lane/K Avenue – 3	TWS	14.2	B	13.4	B
Lovers Lane/Driveway A – 4	Doesn't Exist	-	-	-	-
Lovers Lane/Sunnyside Avenue – 5	TWS	19.4	C	17.9	C
Driveway B/Sunnyside Avenue – 6	Doesn't Exist	-	-	-	-
Driveway C/Sunnyside Avenue – 7	Doesn't Exist	-	-	-	-
Driveway D/Sunnyside Avenue – 8	Doesn't Exist	-	-	-	-
Lovers Lane/Driveway E – 9	Doesn't Exist	-	-	-	-
Pinkham Street/Caldwell Avenue – 10	TWS	12.6	B	11.8	B
Lovers Lane/Caldwell Avenue – 11	S	25.2	C	26.1	C
Road 148/Caldwell Avenue – 12	TWS	24.1	C	16.0	C

S – Signalized, AWS- All-Way Stop, TWS – Two-Way Stop, LOS = Level of Service based on average delay on signalized intersections, and All-Way STOP Controls LOS for two-way and one-way STOP-controlled intersections are based on the worst approach/movement of the minor street.

Opening Year No Project Traffic Conditions

The Opening Year No Project traffic volumes were obtained by using a combination of a portion of the TCAG model (Base Year 2015 and Cumulative Year 2046), a portion of the near-term traffic, and existing traffic volumes. The opening year for this Project is anticipated to be 2028. The Opening Year No Project traffic conditions scenario assumes the same roadway geometrics and traffic controls as those assumed in the existing traffic conditions scenario. It is anticipated that the intersection of Lovers Lane at Walnut Avenue will be constructed with additional lanes in the Year 2028, but these additional lanes were not assumed to take place in this scenario as a conservative measure. Table 3.4.17-3 presents a summary of the Opening Year No Project peak hour LOS at the study intersections. Under this scenario, the study intersection of Lovers Lane at Walnut Avenue is projected to continue exceeding its LOS threshold during the AM peak period.

OPENING YEAR PLUS PHASES 1 & 2 TRAFFIC CONDITIONS

This scenario evaluates total traffic volumes and roadway conditions based on the opening year (2028), plus Phase 1 (292 single-family units) traffic conditions. The opening year plus Phase 1 traffic volumes were obtained by adding the Phase 1 Project only trips to the opening year no Project traffic volumes. The Phases 1 & 2 Project Only Trips to the study facilities were developed based on existing travel patterns, the Project Select Zone, the surrounding roadway network, engineering judgment, existing residential and commercial densities, and the Visalia General Plan Circulation Element in the vicinity of the Project site. Table 3.4.17-4 presents a summary of the Opening Year plus Phases 1 & 2 peak hour LOS at the study intersections. Under this scenario, the study intersections of Lovers Lane at Walnut Avenue and Lovers Lane at Sunnyside Avenue are projected to exceed their LOS threshold during one of the peak periods. With improvements, both intersections achieve an LOS less than the threshold, as reflected in Table 3.4.17-4.

CUMULATIVE 5-YEAR NO PROJECT TRAFFIC CONDITIONS

The cumulative 5-year No Project traffic volumes were obtained by using a combination of a portion of the TCAG model (Base Year 2015 and Cumulative Year 2046), the near-term traffic, and existing traffic volumes. Under this scenario, the increment method was utilized to determine the growth in the area. Table 3.4.17-5 illustrates the summary of the Cumulative 5-Year No Project LOS at the study intersections. Under this scenario, the study intersection of Road 148 at Caldwell Avenue is projected to exceed its LOS threshold during the AM peak period. Cumulative 5-Year plus Phases 1 & 2 Project Traffic Conditions.

**Table 3.4.17-3
Opening Year No Project Intersection LOS Results**

Intersection – ID No.	Intersection Control	A.M. (7-9) Peak Hour		P.M. Peak Hour	
		Av. Delay (sec/veh)	LOS	Delay (sec)	LOS
Lovers Lane/Walnut Avenue – 1	S	65.3	E	47.0	D
	S (Improved)	34.8	C	28.4	C
Pinkham Street/K Avenue – 2	AWS	13.1	B	9.6	A
Lovers Lane/K Avenue – 3	TWS	14.7	B	13.9	B
Lovers Lane/Driveway A – 4	Doesn't Exist	-	-	-	-
Lovers Lane/Sunnyside Avenue – 5	TWS	20.8	C	18.8	C
Driveway B/Sunnyside Avenue – 6	Doesn't Exist	-	-	-	-
Driveway C/Sunnyside Avenue – 7	Doesn't Exist	-	-	-	-
Driveway D/Sunnyside Avenue – 8	Doesn't Exist	-	-	-	-
Lovers Lane/Driveway E – 9	Doesn't Exist	-	-	-	-
Pinkham Street/Caldwell Avenue – 10	TWS	13.0	B	12.1	B
Lovers Lane/Caldwell Avenue – 11	S	25.9	C	26.7	C
Road 148/Caldwell Avenue – 12	TWS	31.6	D	18.6	C

S – Signalized, AWS- All-Way Stop, TWS – Two-Way Stop, LOS = Level of Service based on average delay on signalized intersections, and All-Way STOP Controls LOS for two-way and one-way STOP-controlled intersections are based on the worst approach/movement of the minor street.

**Table 3.4.17-4
Opening Year (2028) Plus Phases 1 & 2 LOS Intersection Results**

Intersection – ID No.	Intersection Control	A.M. (7-9) Peak Hour		P.M. Peak Hour	
		Av. Delay (sec/veh)	LOS	Delay (sec)	LOS
Lovers Lane/Walnut Avenue – 1	S	66.8	E	49.8	D
	S (Improved)	35.8	D	30.0	C
Pinkham Street/K Avenue – 2	AWS	14.2	B	9.6	A
Lovers Lane/K Avenue – 3	TWS	16.6	C	15.9	C
Lovers Lane/Driveway A – 4	Doesn't Exist	-	-	-	-
Lovers Lane/Sunnyside Avenue – 5	TWS	34.0	D	41.0	E
	S (Improved)	16.0	B	16.1	B
Driveway B/Sunnyside Avenue – 6	Doesn't Exist	-	-	-	-
Driveway C/Sunnyside Avenue – 7	TWS	8.9	A	8.7	A
Driveway D/Sunnyside Avenue – 8	TWS	9.3	A	10.2	B
Lovers Lane/Driveway E – 9	TWS	10.1	B	10.9	B
Pinkham Street/Caldwell Avenue – 10	TWS	13.5	B	12.5	B
Lovers Lane/Caldwell Avenue – 11	S	26.6	C	27.5	C
Road 148/Caldwell Avenue – 12	TWS	32.9	D	19.1	C

S – Signalized, AWS- All-Way Stop, TWS – Two-Way Stop, LOS = Level of Service based on average delay on signalized intersections, and All-Way STOP Controls LOS for two-way and one-way STOP-controlled intersections are based on the worst approach/movement of the minor street.

**Table 3.4.17-5
Cumulative 5-Year No Project Intersection LOS Results**

Intersection – ID No.	Intersection Control	A.M. (7-9) Peak Hour	P.M. Peak Hour		
		Av. Delay (sec/veh)	LOS	Delay (sec)	LOS
Lovers Lane/Walnut Avenue – 1	S	27.2	C	24.6	C
Pinkham Street/K Avenue – 2	AWS	14.1	B	10.0	A
Lovers Lane/K Avenue – 3	TWS	15.9	C	14.9	B
Lovers Lane/Driveway A – 4	Doesn't Exist	-	-	-	-
Lovers Lane/Sunnyside Avenue – 5	TWS	23.4	C	20.8	C
Driveway B/Sunnyside Avenue – 6	Doesn't Exist	-	-	-	-
Driveway C/Sunnyside Avenue – 7	Doesn't Exist	-	-	-	-
Driveway D/Sunnyside Avenue – 8	Doesn't Exist	-	-	-	-
Lovers Lane/Driveway E – 9	Doesn't Exist	-	-	-	-
Pinkham Street/Caldwell Avenue – 10	TWS	13.7	B	12.7	B
Lovers Lane/Caldwell Avenue – 11	S	27.2	C	26.8	D
Road 148/Caldwell Avenue – 12	TWS	65.2	F	26.3	D
	TWS (Improved)	32.7	D	22.7	C

S – Signalized, AWS- All-Way Stop, TWS – Two-Way Stop, LOS = Level of Service based on average delay on signalized intersections, and All-Way STOP Controls LOS for two-way and one-way STOP-controlled intersections are based on the worst approach/movement of the minor street.

This scenario evaluates total traffic volumes and roadway conditions based on the cumulative 5-year plus Phases 1 & 2 traffic conditions. The cumulative 5-year period for this Project is anticipated to be 2033. The cumulative 5-year plus Phases 1 & 2 traffic volumes were obtained by adding Phases 1 & 2 Project only trips to the cumulative 5-year no Project traffic volumes. The Phases 1 & 2 Project only trips to the study facilities were developed based on existing travel patterns, the Project Select Zone, the surrounding roadway network, engineering judgment, existing residential and commercial densities, and the Visalia General Plan Circulation Element in the vicinity of the Project site. Table 3.4.17-6 presents a summary of the cumulative 5-year-plus Phases 1 & 2 peak-hour LOS at the study intersections. Under this scenario, the study intersections of Lovers Lane at Sunnyside Avenue and Road 148 at Caldwell Avenue are projected to exceed their LOS threshold during one or both peak periods. With improvements, both intersections achieve an LOS less than the threshold, as reflected in Table 3.4.17-6.

CUMULATIVE 5-YEAR PLUS PROJECT BUILDOUT LOS

This scenario evaluates total traffic volumes and roadway conditions based on the cumulative 5-year plus buildout Project traffic conditions. The cumulative 5-year plus buildout traffic volumes were obtained by adding the Phase 3 Project only trips to the cumulative 5-year plus Phases 1 & 2 traffic volumes. The Phase 3 Project only trips to the study facilities were developed based on existing travel patterns, the Project Select Zone, the surrounding roadway network, engineering judgment, existing residential and commercial densities, and the Visalia General Plan Circulation Element in the vicinity of the Project site. Table 3.4.17-7 illustrates a summary of the Cumulative 5-Year Plus Buildout LOS at the study intersections. Under this scenario, the study intersections of Lovers Lane at Sunnyside Avenue and Road 148 at Caldwell Avenue are projected to exceed their LOS threshold during one or both peak periods. With improvements, both intersections achieve an LOS less than the threshold, as reflected in Table 3.4.17-7.

**Table 3.4.17-6
Cumulative 5-Year Plus Phases 1 & 2 Intersection LOS Results**

Intersection – ID No.	Intersection Control	A.M. (7-9) Peak Hour		P.M. Peak Hour	
		Av. Delay (sec/veh)	LOS	Delay (sec)	LOS
Lovers Lane /Walnut Avenue – 1	S	28.4	C	25.4	C
Pinkham Street/K Avenue – 2	AWS	15.6	C	10.1	B
Lovers Lane/K Avenue – 3	TWS	18.3	C	17.3	C
Lovers Lane/Driveway A – 4	Doesn't Exist	-	-	-	-
Lovers Lane/Sunnyside Avenue – 5	TWS	41.6	E	49.5	E
	S (Improved)	16.0	B	17.1	B
Driveway B/Sunnyside Avenue – 6	Doesn't Exist	-	-	-	-
Driveway C/Sunnyside Avenue – 7	TWS	8.9	A	8.7	A
Driveway D/Sunnyside Avenue – 8	TWS	9.3	A	10.2	B
Lovers Lane/Driveway E – 9	TWS	10.3	B	11.1	B
Pinkham Street/Caldwell Avenue – 10	TWS	14.4	B	13.2	B
Lovers Lane/Caldwell Avenue – 11	S	27.8	C	29.0	C
Road 148/Caldwell Avenue – 12	TWS	69.8	F	27.3	D
	TWS (Improved)	33.8	D	23.2	C

S – Signalized, AWS- All-Way Stop, TWS – Two-Way Stop, LOS = Level of Service based on average delay on signalized intersections, and All-Way STOP Controls LOS for two-way and one-way STOP-controlled intersections are based on the worst approach/movement of the minor street.

**Table 3.4.17-7
Cumulative 5-Year Plus Project Buildout Intersection LOS Results**

Intersection – ID No.	Intersection Control	A.M. (7-9) Peak Hour		P.M. Peak Hour	
		Av. Delay (sec/veh)	LOS	Delay (sec)	LOS
Lovers Lane/Walnut Avenue – 1	S	30.3	C	26.2	C
Pinkham Street/K Avenue – 2	AWS	17.5	C	10.2	B
Lovers Lane/K Avenue – 3	TWS	22.1	C	20.1	C
Lovers Lane/Driveway A – 4	TWS	11.2	B	11.4	B
Lovers Lane/Sunnyside Avenue – 5	TWS	62.6	F	>120.0	F
	S (Improved)	15.8	B	21.6	C
Driveway B/Sunnyside Avenue – 6	TWS	9.5	A	9.0	A
Driveway C/Sunnyside Avenue – 7	TWS	8.9	A	8.7	A
Driveway D/Sunnyside Avenue – 8	TWS	9.3	A	10.2	B
Lovers Lane/Driveway E – 9	TWS	10.4	B	11.4	B
Pinkham Street/Caldwell Avenue – 10	TWS	15.0	C	13.6	B
Lovers Lane/Caldwell Avenue – 11	S	28.4	C	30.4	C
	TWS	73.9	F	27.8	D
Road 148/Caldwell Avenue – 12	TWS	34.8	D	23.5	C

S – Signalized, AWS- All-Way Stop, TWS – Two-Way Stop, LOS = Level of Service based on average delay on signalized intersections, and All-Way STOP Controls LOS for two-way and one-way STOP-controlled intersections are based on the worst approach/movement of the minor street.

PROJECT'S PRO-RATA FAIR SHARE OF FUTURE TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENTS

The Project's fair share percentage impact on study intersections projected to fall below their LOS threshold and which are not covered by an existing impact fee program is provided in Table 3.4.17-8 and Table 3.4.17-9. The pro-rata fair shares were calculated using the Existing, Project-Only Trips, and Cumulative 2046 Year plus Buildout volumes. Since the critical peak period for the study facilities was determined to be during the AM peak, the AM peak volumes are used to determine the Project's pro-rata fair share.

It is recommended that the Project contribute its equitable fair share as listed in Table 3.4.17-8 and Table 3.4.17-9 for the future improvements necessary to maintain an acceptable LOS. However, fair share contributions should only be made for those facilities or portions thereof currently not funded by the responsible agencies' roadway impact fee program(s) or grant funding, as appropriate. For those improvements not presently covered by local and regional roadway impact fee programs or grant funding, it is recommended that the Project contribute its equitable fair share. Payment of the Project's equitable fair share, in addition to the local and regional impact fee programs, would satisfy the Project's traffic impacts.

Table 3.4.17-8
Single-Family Residential Fair Share of Future Roadway Improvements

Intersection	Existing Traffic Volumes (AM Peak)	Project Only Trips (PM Peak)	Cumulative 5-Year Plus Buildout Traffic Volumes (AM Peak)	Project's Fair Share (%)
Road 148/ Caldwell Avenue	814	13	1,236	3.1

Note: Project's Fair Share (%) = ((Project Only Trips) / (Cumulative 2046 Year + Buildout Traffic Volumes) - (Existing Traffic Volumes)) x 100

Table 3.4.17-9
Multi-Family Residential Fair Share of Future Roadway Improvements

Intersection	Existing Traffic Volumes (AM Peak)	Project Only Trips (PM Peak)	Cumulative 5-Year Plus Buildout Traffic Volumes (AM Peak)	Project's Fair Share (%)
Road 148/ Caldwell Avenue	814	10	1,236	2.4

Multi-family development of this Project has been included in the Project for environmental analysis purposes only. Phases 1 & 2 (Single-Family Residential Development) will be constructed by the applicant, and Phase 3 (Multi-Family Residential Development) will be constructed by a different developer. Therefore, Table 3.4.17-8 demonstrates the Fair Share

percentage of improvement costs for Phases 1 & 2, and Table 3.4.17-9 demonstrates the Fair Share percentage of improvement costs for Phase 3.

To mitigate for the Project's direct transportation impacts and off-site road improvements, MM TRA-1 and TRA-2 has been incorporated, which requires that the Project applicant/developer responsible for the construction of each phase will pay their pro-rata fair share percentage of 3.1 percent for Phases 1 & 2 (Single-Family Residential Development) and the 2.4 percent for Phase 3 (Multi-Family Residential Development), assuming a full buildout of 375 units per the TIA prepared for this Project, prior to the issuance of building permits. If at the time of development of Phase 3 (Multi-Family Residential Development), the unit count is less than 375, the developer may submit a revised TIA showing the appropriate pro-rate fair share percentage for the reduced number of units. With mitigation incorporated, impacts will be reduced to less than significant, and the proposed Project would not conflict with a program, plan, ordinance, or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

MM TRA-1: Prior to the issuance of building permits, the Project applicant/developer responsible for the construction of the Single-Family Residential Development will pay their pro-rate fair share percentage of 3.1 percent.

MM TRA-2: Prior to the issuance of building permits, the Project applicant/developer responsible for the construction of the Multi-Family Residential Development will pay their pro-rata fair share percentage of 2.4 percent. If at the time of development of the Multi-Family phase, the unit count is less than 375, the developer may submit a revised TIA showing the appropriate pro-rate fair share percentage for the reduced number of units.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Impacts would be *less than significant with mitigation incorporated.*

Impact #3.4.17b – Would the Project conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3, Subdivision (b)?

Under SB 743, VMT is a key measure used for gauging the environmental impacts of projects under CEQA. As part of the SB 375 land use/transportation integration process and the GHG goal setting, the State and Regional Transportation Planning Agencies (RTPA) have agreed to reduce GHG through integrated land use and transportation planning by a statewide average of approximately 15 percent by 2035 (City of Visalia, 2025c). According to the City's VMT Threshold and Implementation Guidelines, a proposed (residential) project exceeding a level of 15 percent below the existing regional average VMT per capita may indicate a significant transportation impact. The VMT per capita threshold for residential projects in Tulare County is 11.1.

The Project site is located in traffic impact zone 1421 and does not qualify for screening out of a VMT analysis because the Project site is in an area of the City where there is currently no population. The VMT analysis used the average of adjacent traffic impact zones (1402, 1439, 1440, and 1478) to determine that the Project's VMT per capita is 11.03, which is below the 11.1 VMT per capita threshold for residential projects in Tulare County (VRPA Technologies, Inc., 2026). Therefore, the Project would not conflict with or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3 Subdivision (b) and would result in a less-than-significant impact.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

No mitigation measures are required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Impacts would be *less than significant*.

Impact #3.4.17c – Would the Project substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?

The Project does not propose any incompatible uses or include any design features that could increase traffic hazards. Future development of the site will be designed to meet current standards and safety regulations for transportation. All right-of-way and internal circulation improvements will be constructed to comply with the State and local regulations and design and safety standards of Chapter 33 of the CBC and Title 24 guidelines to create safe and accessible roadways.

Specific circulation patterns and roadway designs will incorporate all applicable safety measures to ensure that hazardous design features or inadequate emergency access to the site or other areas surrounding the Project area would not occur. The TIA prepared for this Project analyzed and recommended, "To ensure that motorists have the appropriate corner sight distance, the Project should ensure that it does not build any obstructions greater than two feet above street grade within the hatched triangular areas as depicted in the figures included in Appendix H of the TIA."

Therefore, with the incorporated design features and compliance with all applicable rules and regulations, impacts would be less than significant.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

No mitigation is required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Impacts would be *less than significant*.

Impact #3.4.17d – Would the Project result in inadequate emergency access?

See the discussion in Impact #3.4.9f, regarding emergency response plans.

State and City Fire Codes establish standards by which emergency access may be determined and designed. Furthermore, Visalia Municipal Code 16.36.120 (Water mains, fire hydrants, and Fire Department access) requires that subdividers provide fire department access, as required by the current Fire Code. A network of local roads within the proposed Project property provides full access to all buildings within the development.

As previously discussed, the Project includes a General Plan Amendment which would modify the existing General Plan designations to optimize the residential development on the parcel and amend the Visalia Circulation Element to remove the “K” Avenue new one-mile-long, two-lane collector from Lovers Lane to Road 248, as referenced in Figure 4-1 Roadway Classifications and Table 4-5 Planned Circulation Improvements of the City’s General Plan. An SCE substation, approximately 0.50 miles east of the Project site, is directly in the planned pathway of “K” Avenue, which would not allow for the extension of “K” Avenue. A new Sunnyside Avenue, one-mile-long, two-lane collector from the Lovers Lane/Sunnyside Avenue intersection to Road 248, is to be added to Figure 4-1 and Table 4-5. All roadway development and design will meet State and City requirements.

The proposed Project site would have adequate internal circulation capacity, including entrance and exit routes to provide adequate unobstructed space for fire trucks and other emergency vehicles to gain access and to turn around. The proposed Project would not inhibit the ability of local roadways to continue to accommodate emergency response and evacuation activities. Therefore, the impacts of the Project would be less than significant regarding emergency access.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

No mitigation is required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Impacts would be *less than significant*.

Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less-than-Significant Impact	No Impact
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3.4.18 - TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES

Would the Project:

a. Would the Project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in Public Resources Code Section 21074 as either a site, feature, place, cultural landscape that is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American tribe and that is:

i. Listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, or in a local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code Section 5020.1(k), or

ii. A resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1. In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.

Discussion

Impact #3.4.18a(i) – Would the Project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in Public Resources Code Section 21074 as either a site, feature, place, cultural landscape that is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American tribe and that is listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, or in a local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code Section 5020.1(k)?

See the discussion presented in Section 3.4.5 - *Cultural Resources*, Impacts #3.4.5a through 3.4.5c. SB 18/AB 52 early tribal consultation letters were prepared and distributed by the

City, on September 26, 2025, pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21080.3.1 and Government Code Section 65300 *et seq*, Senate Bill 18 and Assembly Bill 52, letters were sent to each of the Native American tribes within the geographic area as identified by the NAHC (see Appendix C). The letters included a Project description and location maps. Tribal consultation under AB 52 and SB 18 closed on December 31, 2025. To date, no response has been received. Should the City receive communication with a tribal group, they will work in good faith to address any potential cultural resources concerns.

Upon any ground-breaking activity, there is the possibility of uncovering an object of cultural value. Mitigation Measures MM CUL-1 and MM CUL-2 must be implemented if any artifacts or human remains are discovered. Therefore, the Project would have a less-than-significant impact with mitigation incorporated.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

Implement MM CUL-1 and MM CUL-2.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Impacts would be *less than significant with mitigation incorporated*.

Impact #3.4.18a(ii) – Would the Project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in Public Resources Code Section 21074 as either a site, feature, place, cultural landscape that is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American tribe and that is a resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1. In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.

See discussion in Section 3.4.5, *Cultural Resources* and Impact #3.4.1.18(i) above.

With implemented mitigation measures CUL-1 and CUL-2, the Project would not cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource. Therefore, impacts are considered less than significant with mitigation measures incorporated.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

Implement MM CUL-1 and MM CUL-2

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Impacts would be *less than significant with mitigation incorporated*.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less-than-Significant Impact	No Impact
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3.4.19 - UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

Would the Project:

a. Require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment or storm water drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities, the construction or relocation of which would cause significant environmental effects?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the Project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry and multiple dry years?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider that serves or may serve the Project that it has adequate capacity to serve the Project’s projected demand in addition to the provider’s existing commitments?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Generate solid waste in excess of State or local standards, or in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure, or otherwise impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. Comply with federal, state and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

The discussion below is based, in part, on the Water Supply Assessment (WSA) completed for the Project, attached as Appendix E (Woodard & Curran, 2026).

Discussion

Impact #3.4.19a – Would the Project require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment or storm water drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities, the construction or relocation of which would cause significant environmental effects?

The Project proposes a gated medium-density neighborhood and non-gated low-density and high-density residential neighborhoods. The gated community would have a Homeowners

Association (HOA), responsible for some services, such as road maintenance, open space maintenance, etc.

Sanitary Sewer System

Sewer services are provided to the Project site by the City. The Sewer System Master Plan for the City, completed in 1994, divided the system into eight service areas based on existing and proposed sewer trunklines, based on the growth pattern established by the previous General Plan. Visalia owns a Water Conservation Plant (WCP), located West of State Route 99 and South of State Route 198 (City of Visalia, 2014b). The General Plan Draft EIR concludes, based on the 2005 Sanitary Sewer Collection System Master Plan, the total load of the General Plan at full build-out would be 25,034,050 gallons per day (gpd), which would be below the total system capacity of 25,949,996 gpd.

The City uses the most current General Plan to aid in the development of its Capital Improvement Program for sanitary sewer facilities in subsequent years. This program is funded through the payment of Impact Fees associated with new development. The Project is in an area of the UGB that is planned for mixed-density residential growth and would pay development and connection fees. As previously mentioned, the Project is requesting a General Plan Amendment (GPA No. 2025-04) to modify existing General Plan designations to optimize the residential development on the parcel and amend the Circulation Element. The residential land use designations are not changing in acreage value, only shifting in the location of the subject parcel. The Circulation Element amendment will not impact sanitary sewer systems. The Project's land use designations were within the sanitary sewer system capacity analysis performed in the General Plan EIR, and the Project would contribute to the Capital Improvement Program through the payment of Impact Fees. The Project would not directly require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded wastewater treatment facilities. Therefore, the Project would generate a less-than-significant impact on City sanitary sewer systems.

Wastewater or Stormwater Drainage

In the Planning Area, storm and urban runoff drainage is provided by natural rivers and watercourses, irrigation ditches, storage reservoirs, and discharge locations (City of Visalia, 2014a). Components of the drainage system on private property, or within private drainage easements, are maintained by the underlying property owner. The City's Storm Water Master Plan (SWMP), from 1994, identified seven waterways as well as the Goshen Drain that convey stormwater toward the southeast into a number of large basins on the west side of the City. The stormwater system is sufficient to accommodate the classifications and densities in the proposed General Plan without any substantial changes or additional improvements beyond those already identified in the SWMP (City of Visalia, 2014b).

The Project proposes to develop approximately 1.50 acres for a storm basin to accommodate runoff from impervious surfaces created as a result of the additional built environment the Project is proposing. The Project would be required to install City storm water drainage lines and street runoff that is consistent with the current SWMP. The Project's land use

designations were within the stormwater drainage system capacity analysis performed in the General Plan EIR, and the Project would contribute to the Capital Improvement Program through the payment of Impact Fees. Therefore, the Project's impact on the City's stormwater drainage system would be less than significant.

Water

As discussed in Impact #3.4.10b, the Visalia District of Cal Water would provide water to the Project site. The 2020 UWMP anticipates sufficient groundwater supply under all conditions for the District as a whole, given that the demands associated with the proposed Project were not included in the 2020 UWMP demand projections for the District, an analysis of the sufficiency of the groundwater supply to meet Project demands is required pursuant to CWC Section 10910(f)(5) and CGC Section 66473.7(a)(2)(E). This WSA concludes that sufficient water supply is available to the District to meet all future demands associated with current and planned development within its service area, including those of the proposed Project. As demonstrated in Tables 3.4.10-1 through 3.4.10-4, the District is projected to continue meeting future water demands under normal, single dry, and multiple dry year conditions, with inclusion of the proposed Project. The proper sizing and placement of water lines will be designed per the City and other utility development design standards.

Electricity, Natural Gas, and Telecommunications

Southern California Edison provides electric service to Visalia residents. The electrical facilities network includes both overhead and underground lines, with new development required to install underground service lines. The Project is not anticipated to use natural gas services, as all appliances will be electric. There are three major companies that provide communications services in Visalia: AT&T, Sprint, and Verizon. Comcast is the primary cable television and internet provider.

The Project is expected to connect to SCE utilities via infrastructure extensions and connections that are acceptable to both SCE and the City. All residential units will be equipped with 450-watt solar panels, utilize all electric appliances, and will be EV-ready (pre-wired during construction to allow for installation of an EV residential charger in the future). Therefore, the Project's electricity use will be offset by the rooftop solar, and natural gas will not be utilized by residences. The Project is not anticipated to result in additional construction related to new or expanded electrical facilities.

Conclusion

The Project site area is within the City's SOI and UDB – Tier II. Low-, medium-, and high-density residential land uses are planned under the City's General Plan and adopted Environmental Impact Report. Given the discussions above in various utility categories, the Project would not require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment or storm water drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities, the construction or relocation of which would cause significant environmental effects, as utilities in the region have reasonable capacity to

accommodate the proposed residential development. Therefore, the impacts would be less than significant.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

No mitigation measures are required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Impacts would be *less than significant*.

Impact #3.4.19b – Would the Project have sufficient water supplies available to serve the Project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry, and multiple dry years?

As discussed in Impact 3.4.10b, Tables 3.4.10-2 through 3.4.10-4 demonstrate that the District’s projected normal year water, single dry year, and multiple dry year comparison of water supply and demand would have sufficient water supplies available to serve the Project and District for the reasonable foreseeable future. Therefore, the impacts are considered to be less than significant.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

No mitigation is required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Impacts would be *less than significant*.

Impact #3.4.19c – Would the Project result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider that serves or may serve the Project that it has adequate capacity to serve the Project’s projected demand in addition to the provider’s existing commitments?

See Impact #3.4.19a, subsection *Wastewater*.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

No mitigation is required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Impacts would be *less than significant*.

Impact #3.4.19d – Would the Project generate solid waste in excess of State or local standards, or in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure, or otherwise impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals?

Solid Waste

Project construction and operational activities that generate solid waste are handled, transported, and disposed of in accordance with applicable federal, State, and local regulations pertaining to municipal waste. The 1989 California Integrated Waste Management Act requires jurisdictions to attain specific waste diversion goals (AB 939, 2019). In addition, the California Solid Waste Reuse and Recycling Access Act of 1991, as amended, requires expanded or new development Projects to incorporate storage areas for recycling bins into the proposed Project design. Reuse and recycling of construction debris would reduce operating expenses and save valuable landfill space. With development in accordance with the General Plan, solid waste will continue to be handled, transported, and disposed of according to all applicable federal, State, and local regulations pertaining to municipal waste disposal. The City has a number of provisions that require or promote recycling and waste reduction, including the Construction and Demolition Recycling Ordinance that requires contractors to recycle construction and demolition debris. AB 939 requires the implementation of integrated waste management plans and mandates that local jurisdictions divert at least 50 percent of all solid waste. The recycling of construction and demolition materials is required for any City-issued building, relocation, or demolition permit that generates at least eight cubic yards of material by volume. The Project would generate solid waste during the construction and operation of the new residences. Common construction waste may include metals, masonry, plastic pipe, rocks, dirt, cardboard, or green waste related to land development.

The Consolidated Waste Management Authority (CWMA) is a joint powers authority that is recognized by the State and collectively manages the solid waste recycling and diversion activities for eight local area members, including Tulare County, Tulare, Visalia, Dinuba, Exeter, Farmersville, Lindsay, and Porterville (City of Visalia, 2014b). The CWMA has continued to improve its diversion rate as established by the State. The State recently changed its diversion calculation method from a percentage of waste diverted from the landfill to a calculation of pounds per person per day (PPD) that goes to the landfills. Most recent data shows that the CWMA has a base rate to achieve of 6.2 PPD, and the CWMA has been able to successfully achieve an annual PPD significantly lower than the benchmark established by the State. In 2008, the CWMA achieved a diversion rate of 5.2 PPD, and in 2009, it lowered it even further to 4.4PPD. Visalia waste collection efforts indicate that the city's recycling rate calculated as PPD is consistently decreasing year to year and is consistently below the PPD calculated for the CWMA (note that there is no established benchmark for the City of Visalia so a determination cannot be made as to whether or not the City of Visalia is meeting State goals for diversion on its own).

Sunset Waste Systems provides solid waste collection in Visalia, and the County of Tulare Resource Management Agency provides disposal services at three landfills (the Visalia Disposal Site, northwest of Visalia; the Woodville Disposal Site, southeast of Tulare; and the Teapot Dome Disposal Site, southwest of Porterville). Solid Waste collection and disposal are in accordance with the Tulare County Integrated Waste Management Plan. Programs include household hazardous waste disposal, electronics recycling, tire recovery, yard waste recycling, metal recycling, and appliance recovery programs. According to the General Plan,

the three County landfills receive approximately 300,000 tons of waste per year, which is equivalent to about five pounds per person per day or one ton per county resident per year. The Teapot Dome Disposal Site was in the closure process and set to cease accepting municipal solid waste on July 11, 2025, according to CalRecycle (CalRecycle, 2025a). The Visalia Disposal Site and the Woodville Disposal Site have a combined total remaining capacity of 18,810,624 cubic yards, with a maximum capacity of 31,750,866 cubic yards (CalRecycle, 2025b).

The Project proposes to develop a maximum of 662 units, with an average of 2.94 persons per household and an average of one ton of solid waste produced per county resident per year, the Project would produce approximately 1,946.28 tons annually. Given the available capacity at the Visalia Disposal Site and the Woodville Disposal Site, which have a combined total remaining capacity of 18,810,624 cubic yards, the additional solid waste generated by the proposed Project is not anticipated to cause the facility to exceed capacity. The proposed Project would comply with Cal Green, the City's Construction and Demolition (C&D) Waste Management Guide, and with waste management policies and recommendations from the General Plan. The Project does not propose any new or expanded uses and is therefore not anticipated to result in increased generation of solid waste beyond what has already been analyzed in the City's General Plan EIR. Because the City's existing infrastructure has the capacity to accommodate the solid waste currently planned for UDB Tier II growth, and given the calculation performed above, the existing solid waste infrastructure has adequate capacity to serve the proposed Project. The Project would comply with any applicable city and state requirements for waste collection and attainment of local State solid waste reduction goals. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

No mitigation is required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Impacts would be *less than significant*.

Impact #3.4.19e – Would the Project comply with federal, state and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste?

See Impact #3.4.19a, subsection *Solid Waste* and Impact #3.4.19d.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

No mitigation is required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Impacts would be *less than significant*.

3.4.20 - WILDFIRE

If located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, would the Project:

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less-than-Significant Impact	No Impact
a. Substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Due to slope, prevailing winds and other factors, exacerbate wildfire risks and thereby expose Project occupants to, pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Require the installation or maintenance of associated infrastructure (such as roads, fuel breaks, emergency water sources, power lines or other utilities) that may exacerbate fire risk or that may result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Expose people or structures to significant risks, including downslope or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Discussion

Impact #3.4.20a – Would the Project substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?

See Impact #3.4.9f regarding emergency response.

According to available data from Cal Fire, the Project site is within the Local Responsibility Area (LRA) of the Visalia Fire Department. The site is not within a Fire Hazard Severity Zones (FHSZ) categorized as Very High, High or Moderate, as the area is either urban or agricultural with a low risk of wildfire (Cal Fire, 2023). The Project is within the Planning Area of the 2025 Safety Element Update and 2023 Tulare County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation.

The Project site is adjacent to an existing mixed density subdivision to the west. Access for emergency vehicles to the site would be maintained throughout the construction period and would comply with any applicable requirements, such as an encroachment permit. The

Project would not interfere with any local or regional emergency response or evacuation plans and would not result in a substantial alteration to the adjacent area circulation system. The City has established emergency response and evacuation plans based on the 2023 Tulare County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation and any other applicable plans. Impacts related to fire hazards and emergency response plans would be less than significant.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

No mitigation is required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Impacts would be *less than significant*.

Impact #3.4.20b – Would the Project due to slope, prevailing winds and other factors, exacerbate wildfire risks and thereby expose Project occupants to, pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire?

See discussion in Impact #3.4.4g regarding wildland fire risk analysis. The Project site has relatively no slope or is historically known for prevailing winds. Therefore, the Project would have a less-than-significant impact on the pollutant concentrations from wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of wildfire.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

No mitigation is required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Impacts would be *less than significant*.

Impact #3.4.20c – Would the Project require the installation or maintenance of associated infrastructure (such as roads, fuel breaks, emergency water sources, power lines or other utilities) that may exacerbate fire risk or that may result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment?

See discussion in Impact #3.4.20a-b.

The Project proposes to develop public and private roadways, emergency water sources, electrical connections, and other utilities commonly found in a residential subdivision, all of which will be developed to local and state regulations.

The design of all proposed utilities will be subject to the review and approval of the City. This will ensure the viability of the utility infrastructure's ability for fire protection and suppression activities. Therefore, the impact would be considered less than significant with adherence to all applicable local and State regulations.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

No mitigation is required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Impacts would be *less than significant*.

Impact #3.4.20d – Would the Project expose people or structures to significant risks, including downslope or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes?

As discussed in Impact #3.4.7a(iii), the Project site is flat, and a small portion of the lower southwest area of the Project site is recognized by FEMA to be within the Zone AE for Special Flood Hazard Area (Figure 3-1).

Nevertheless, all structures within the Special Flood Hazard Area would be required to adhere to Visalia Municipal Code Chapter 15.60 (Floodplain Management Regulations) and California Building Code, which require compaction and soil tests, when applicable.

As discussed in Impact # 3.4.7b, erosion generated during construction would be controlled through implementation of a General Construction Permit from the State of California Central Valley RWQCB. Under the NPDES, the preparation and implementation of a SWPPP are required for construction activities that would disturb an area of one acre or more. A SWPPP must identify potential sources of erosion or sedimentation and identify and implement BMPs that ensure reduced erosion.

Given Project adherence to local and state regulations that govern Flood Hazard Areas and erosion control, the Project would have a less-than-significant impact.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

No mitigation is required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Impacts would be *less than significant*.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
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3.4.21 - MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE

- | | | | | | |
|----|--|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| a. | Does the Project have the potential to substantially degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, substantially reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal, or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b. | Does the Project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? (“Cumulatively considerable” means that the incremental effects of a Project are significant when viewed in connection with the effects of past Projects, the effects of other current Projects and the effects of probable future Projects.) | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c. | Does the Project have environmental effects that would cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Discussion

Impact #3.4.21a – Does the Project have the potential to degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, substantially reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal, or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?

As evaluated in this IS/MND, the proposed Project would not substantially degrade the quality of the environment; substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species; cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels; threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community; reduce the number or restrict the range of an endangered, rare, or

threatened species; or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory. With implementation of the Mitigation Measures BIO-1 through BIO-9 and CUL-1 and CUL-2, the proposed Project would not have the potential to degrade the quality of the environment, significantly impact biological resources, or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California's history or prehistory. Therefore, with the following mitigation measures, the Project would have a less-than-significant impact.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

Implement MM BIO-1 through BIO-9 and MM CUL-1 and MM CUL-2.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Impacts would be *less than significant with mitigation incorporated*.

Impact #3.4.21b - Does the Project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? (“Cumulatively considerable” means that the incremental effects of a Project are significant when viewed in connection with the effects of past Projects, the effects of other current Projects and the effects of probable future Projects.)?

As described in the impact analyses in Impact Sections 3.4.1 through 3.4.21 of this IS/MND, any potentially significant impacts of the proposed Project would be reduced to a less-than-significant level following the incorporation of the mitigation measures listed. The proposed Project would not otherwise combine with the impacts of related development to add considerably to any cumulative impacts in the region. With the implementation of MM AG-1 and AG-2, BIO-1 through BIO-9, CUL-1 and CUL-2, GEO-1, HAZ-1, TRA-1 and TRA-2, the proposed Project would not have impacts that are individually limited but cumulatively considerable. Therefore, the Project would have a less than cumulatively considerable impact with mitigation incorporated.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

Implement MM AG-1 and MM AG-2, MM BIO-1 through MM BIO-9, MM CUL-1 and MM CUL-2, MM GEO-1, MM HAZ-1, MM TRA-1 and MM TRA-2.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Impacts would be *less than significant with mitigation incorporated*.

Impact #3.4.21c - Does the Project have environmental effects that would cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?

All of the Project’s impacts, both direct and indirect, that are attributable to the Project were identified and mitigated. Implementation of Project Mitigation Measures AG-1 and AG-2, BIO-1 through BIO-9, CUL-1 and CUL-2, GEO-1, HAZ-1, TRA-1 and TRA-2 will substantially reduce or eliminate the impacts of the Project. Therefore, the proposed Project would not either directly or indirectly cause substantial adverse effects on human beings because all

potentially adverse direct impacts of the proposed Project are identified as having no impact, less-than-significant impact, or less-than-significant impact with mitigation.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

Implement MM AG-1 and MM AG-2, MM BIO-1 through MM BIO-9, MM CUL-1 and MM CUL-2, MM GEO-1, MM HAZ-1, MM TRA-1 and MM TRA-2.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Impacts would be *less than significant with mitigation incorporated.*

SECTION 4 - LIST OF PREPARERS

4.1 - Lead Agency - City of Visalia

- Jarred Olsen, AICP – Principal Planner

4.2 - QK

- Jaymie Brauer – Project Manager/QAQC
- Bella Hedtke – Lead Author

SECTION 5 - REFERENCES

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SECTION 6 - MITIGATION MONITORING AND REPORTING PROGRAM

Mitigation Monitoring Program					
Impact	Mitigation Measure	Time Frame for Implementation	Responsible Monitoring Agency	Date	Initials
Aesthetics					
	No Mitigation required.				
Agriculture and Forest Resources					
#1	<p>AG-1: Prior to the issuance of grading or building permits, the Project proponent shall mitigate impacts for loss of up to 78 acres of Prime Farmland on the Project site at a 1:1 ratio. The amount of land requiring mitigation shall correspond to the amount of land associated with the issuance of the grading or building permit, or for residential land associated with a subdivision map, the amount of land associated with the subdivision map. The Project proponent shall implement one or more of the following measures to mitigate the loss: Payment of in-lieu fees, mitigation banks, fee title acquisition, and/or conservation easements on land(s) within the Southern San Joaquin Valley of California, specifically within Kern County, Tulare County, Kings County, Fresno County, or Madera County. The City shall require, at a minimum, evidence that the preserved land has an adequate water supply, agricultural zoning, evidence of land encumbrance documentation, documentation that the easement/regulations are permanent and monitored, and documentation that the mitigation strategy is appropriately endowed. This mitigation shall be verified by the City prior to issuance of grading or building permits. The Project proponent, at its election, may mitigate for the loss of agricultural land through compliance with the Agricultural Mitigation Program that is adopted by the City in lieu of mitigating on a 1:1 ratio.</p>	Prior to the issuance of grading or building permits	Project developer and Lead Agency		
#2	<p>AG-2: In order to reduce potential conflicts between urban and agricultural uses, the following measures shall be implemented:</p> <p>a. Potential residents shall be notified about possible exposure to agricultural chemicals at the time of purchase/lease of property within the development.</p>	Prior to Final Map Approval	Project developer and Lead Agency		

Mitigation Monitoring Program					
Impact	Mitigation Measure	Time Frame for Implementation	Responsible Monitoring Agency	Date	Initials
	<p>b. A Right-to-Farm Covenant shall be recorded on each residential tract map or be made a condition of each tract map to protect continued agricultural practices in the area.</p> <p>c. Potential residents shall be informed of the Right-to-Farm Covenant at the time of purchase/lease of property within the development.</p>				
Air Quality					
	No Mitigation required.				
Biological Resources					
#3	<p>BIO-1: Prior to the issuance of grading permits or ground disturbance, a pre-construction clearance survey of the Project footprint shall be conducted for special-status wildlife species and nesting migratory birds and raptors. The survey shall occur no less than 14 days prior to the start of construction activities. If construction is delayed beyond 30 days from the time of the survey or there is a lapse in construction of more than 30 days, then another survey shall be conducted. The survey shall be conducted by a biologist with adequate training and prior experience conducting surveys for special-status wildlife species. If no special-status species are observed, no further action is warranted. If dens or burrows that could support special-status species and/or nesting birds and raptors are discovered during the pre-construction survey, appropriate avoidance buffers shall be established. If no special-status species are observed on or near the Project site, no further surveys are required. A report outlining the results of the preconstruction survey shall be submitted to the lead agency as evidence of compliance.</p>	<p>Within 14 days prior to any construction-related activities.</p>	<p>Project developer and Lead Agency</p>		
		<p>Steps to Compliance:</p> <p>A. A qualified biologist shall be responsible for a preconstruction survey.</p> <p>B. If necessary, the qualified biologist shall contact CDFW and USFWS to determine next steps.</p> <p>C. If necessary, the qualified biologist shall implement next steps in consultation with the wildlife agencies. Next steps may include implementing avoidance buffers.</p> <p>D. The qualified biologist shall prepare a brief report to be submitted to the wildlife agencies within 5 days of completion of the preconstruction survey.</p> <p>E. Lead Agency shall verify compliance.</p>			

Mitigation Monitoring Program

Impact	Mitigation Measure	Time Frame for Implementation	Responsible Monitoring Agency	Date	Initials
#4	<p>BIO-2: If construction is planned during the nesting season for migratory birds (February 15 to August 31) and nesting birds are identified during the preconstruction survey, an active Swainson’s hawk nest shall be avoided by 0.5 miles, other raptor nests shall be avoided by 500 feet, and all other migratory bird nests shall be avoided by 250 feet. Avoidance buffers may be reduced if a qualified biological monitor determines that encroachment into the buffer area is not affecting nest building, the rearing of young, or otherwise affecting the breeding behaviors of the resident birds. Because nesting birds can establish new nests or produce a second or even third clutch at any time during the nesting season, nesting bird surveys shall be repeated every 30 days as construction activities are occurring throughout the nesting season. If no nesting birds are observed on or near the Project site, no further surveys are required.</p>	<p>Prior to and during construction activities occurring between February 15 and August 31</p>	<p>Project developer and Lead Agency</p>		
		<p>Steps to Compliance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. If active nests are found during pre-construction surveys required in MM BIO-1 or at any time during construction of the Project, an avoidance buffer range may be required. Active Swainson’s hawk nests shall be avoided by 0.5 miles, other raptor nests shall be avoided by 500 feet, and all other migratory bird nests shall be avoided by 250 feet. B. Nesting bird surveys shall be repeated every 30 days as construction activities are occurring throughout the nesting season. C. Work is to continue under the approval and guidance of a qualified biologist. 			
#5	<p>BIO-3: A Worker Environmental Awareness Program shall be developed and implemented for all personnel who could access the site prior to commencing any disturbance activities. The program shall consist of an on-site or center presentation that will describe the locations and types of sensitive plant, wildlife, and sensitive natural communities (collectively, “Biological Resources”) on and near the site, an overview of the laws and regulations</p>	<p>Prior to commencing any disturbance activities or within one week of being</p>	<p>Project developer and Lead Agency</p>		

Mitigation Monitoring Program					
Impact	Mitigation Measure	Time Frame for Implementation	Responsible Monitoring Agency	Date	Initials
	<p>governing the protection of Biological Resources, the reasons for protecting the Biological Resources, the specific protection and avoidance measures that are applicable to the site, and the identity of designated points of contact should questions or issues arise, including the qualified biologist. The program shall provide training to recognize, avoid, and report to applicable qualified biologists any Biological Resources on the site.</p> <p>a. The Worker Environmental Awareness Program shall emphasize the need to avoid contact with on-site wildlife and avoid entry into areas where Biological Resources have been identified based on pre-disturbance field surveys, and to implement the buffer avoidance or other protection measures established by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) shall be identified by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) or required by the Biological Resource mitigation measures. The training shall emphasize the importance of not feeding or domesticating wildlife and the need to avoid any trash, micro-trash, or potential food waste on-site, except in animal-proof containers emptied daily, to avoid attracting or causing adverse impacts to special-status wildlife.</p> <p>b. All on-site personnel must sign a statement verifying that they have completed the Worker Environmental Awareness Program and that they understand and agree to implement the biological requirements for the worksite. If signed employee statements are not available, documentation may be provided by Worker Environmental Awareness Program training records, which shall be kept by the applicant for a minimum of five years. Each applicant shall maintain a list of all persons who have completed the training program and shall provide the list to the County or to State and federal wildlife agency representatives upon request.</p>	<p>deployed to the Project site</p>			
		<p>Steps to Compliance:</p> <p>A. A Worker Environmental Awareness Training and Education Program will be developed and presented to all construction works prior to them starting work on the site.</p> <p>B. A sign-in sheet will be submitted to the lead agency as evidence of compliance.</p> <p>C. A copy of the training will be maintained on the Project site throughout construction.</p>			

Mitigation Monitoring Program																			
Impact	Mitigation Measure	Time Frame for Implementation	Responsible Monitoring Agency	Date	Initials														
#6	<p>BIO-4: If protected or special-status species are identified on the Project site during pre-construction surveys, protective buffers shall be used, where effective in the opinion of the qualified biologist. These measures are created to avoid any unauthorized incidental take of these species and to minimize any incidental take. Protective buffers shall be delineated using brightly colored stakes and/or flagging or similar materials and remain until construction activities are complete, at which time of completion, the buffers must be removed. Protective buffers shall be established around active dens and/or burrows of special-status animal species or populations of special-status plant species to avoid unauthorized take of Protected Species as listed in the table below. The protective buffer distance shall be increased if required to avoid unauthorized incidental take of any Protected Species as determined by a qualified biologist. Protective buffer distances and other avoidance measures that may be implemented to avoid impacts to Protected Species or Sensitive Species must be consistent with the United States Fish and Wildlife Service and/or the California Department of Fish and Wildlife requirements and shall be implemented and overseen by a qualified biologist.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Disturbance Buffers for Sensitive Resources</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="text-align: left;">Sensitive Resource</th> <th style="text-align: left;">Buffer Zone from Disturbance (feet)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Potential San Joaquin kit fox den</td> <td>50</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Known San Joaquin kit fox den</td> <td>100</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Natal San Joaquin kit fox den</td> <td>500</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Atypical San Joaquin kit fox den</td> <td>50</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Rodent burrows</td> <td>50</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Special-status bird species' active nests</td> <td>500 feet to 0.5 miles depending on species and sight line</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Sensitive Resource	Buffer Zone from Disturbance (feet)	Potential San Joaquin kit fox den	50	Known San Joaquin kit fox den	100	Natal San Joaquin kit fox den	500	Atypical San Joaquin kit fox den	50	Rodent burrows	50	Special-status bird species' active nests	500 feet to 0.5 miles depending on species and sight line	Prior to and during construction	Project developer and Lead Agency		
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Atypical San Joaquin kit fox den	50																		
Rodent burrows	50																		
Special-status bird species' active nests	500 feet to 0.5 miles depending on species and sight line																		
		<p>Steps to Compliance:</p> <p>A. If protected or special-status species are found during pre-construction surveys required in MM BIO-1 or at any time during construction of the Project, an avoidance buffer range may be required. Protective buffers shall be established around active dens and/or burrows of special-status animal species or populations of special-status plant species to avoid unauthorized take of Protected Species as listed in the table list in this mitigation measure.</p> <p>B. Work is to continue under approval and guidance of qualified biologist.</p>																	

Mitigation Monitoring Program

Impact	Mitigation Measure	Time Frame for Implementation	Responsible Monitoring Agency	Date	Initials
	American badger: Non-maternity dens 50 American badger: Maternity dens 200				
#7	<p>BIO-5: If Project activities must occur during the Swainson’s hawk nesting season (February 15 to September 31), pre-activity surveys shall be conducted for Swainson’s hawk nests in accordance with the <i>Recommended Timing and Methodology for Swainson’s Hawk Nesting Surveys in California’s Central Valley (CDFG 2000)</i>. The surveys shall be conducted on the Project site plus a 0.5-mile buffer. To meet the minimum level of protection for the species, surveys shall be conducted during at least two survey periods prior to the start of construction. The survey shall be conducted in accordance with the methodology outlined in existing protocols and should be phased with the construction of the Project.</p> <p>If no Swainson’s hawk nests are found, no further action is required.</p>	Prior to and during construction activities between February 15 and September 31	Project developer and Lead Agency		

- Steps to Compliance:**
- A. The preconstruction survey required in MM BIO-1 shall be performed in compliance with methodologies and resources identified in this mitigation measure for Swainson hawk nests.
 - B. If a Swainson’s hawk nest is discovered during the preconstruction survey required in MM BIO-1, an avoidance buffer range may be required, with the avoidance buffer from any specific nest being determined by a qualified biologist and existing protocols.
 - C. Work is to continue under the approval and guidance of a qualified biologist.

Mitigation Monitoring Program																		
Impact	Mitigation Measure	Time Frame for Implementation	Responsible Monitoring Agency	Date	Initials													
#8	<p>BIO-6: If an active Swainson’s hawk nest is discovered at any time within 0.5 miles of active construction, a qualified biologist shall complete an assessment of the potential for current construction activities to impact the nest. The assessment shall consider the type of construction activities, the location of construction relative to the nest, the visibility of construction activities from the nest location, and other existing disturbances in the area that are not related to construction activities of this Project. Based on this assessment, the biologist shall determine if construction activities can proceed and the level of nest monitoring required. Construction activities shall not occur within 500 feet of an active nest, but depending upon conditions at the site, this distance may be reduced. Full-time monitoring to evaluate the effects of construction activities on nesting Swainson’s hawks may be required. The qualified biologist shall have the authority to stop work if it is determined that Project construction is disturbing the nest. These buffers may need to be increased depending on the sensitivity of the nesting Swainson’s hawk to disturbances and at the discretion of the qualified biologist.</p>	Prior to and during construction	Project developer and Lead Agency															
						<p>Steps to Compliance:</p> <p>A. If an active Swainson’s hawk nest is found at any time during construction of the Project, an avoidance buffer range may be required, with the avoidance buffer from any specific nest being determined by a qualified biologist and existing protocols. Construction activities shall not occur within 500 feet of an active nest.</p> <p>B. Work is to continue under the approval and guidance of a qualified biologist.</p>												
#9	<p>BIO-7: If burrows that could support the burrowing owl species are discovered during the pre-construction clearance survey conducted under Measure BIO-1, the avoidance buffers outlined below shall be established, and burrow monitoring shall be conducted in accordance with the California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG) <i>Staff Report on Burrowing Owl Mitigation</i> (CDFG 2012). No work would occur within these buffers. If occupied burrowing owl burrows cannot be avoided by the appropriate buffer below, an ITP issued by the CDFW under the California Endangered Species Act (CESA) to authorize "take" that is incidental to an otherwise lawful activity, may be required before any work within the buffer.</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="172 1317 1247 1396"> <thead> <tr> <th rowspan="2">Location</th> <th rowspan="2">Time of Year</th> <th colspan="3">Level of Disturbance</th> </tr> <tr> <th>Low</th> <th>Med</th> <th>High</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td> </td> <td> </td> <td> </td> <td> </td> <td> </td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Location	Time of Year	Level of Disturbance			Low	Med	High						Prior to and during construction	Project developer and Lead Agency		
				Location	Time of Year	Level of Disturbance												
Low	Med	High																
<p>Steps to Compliance:</p> <p>A. If burrows that could support the burrowing owl species are found during the preconstruction survey required in BIO-1 or at any time during construction of the Project, an avoidance buffer range may be required, with the avoidance buffer from any specific burrow being determined by a qualified biologist and existing protocols.</p>																		

Mitigation Monitoring Program									
Impact	Mitigation Measure					Time Frame for Implementation	Responsible Monitoring Agency	Date	Initials
	Nesting sites	April 1 -Aug 15	200 m*	500 m	500 m	Protective buffers shall be established as listed in the table in this mitigation measure. B. Work is to continue under the approval and guidance of a qualified biologist.			
	Nesting sites	Aug 16 – Oct 15	200 m	200 m	500 m				
	Nesting sites	Oct 16- Mar 31	50 m	100 m	500 m				
	*Meters (m)								
#10	<p>BIO-8: Occupied American badger dens detected during pre-disturbance surveys shall be flagged, and ground-disturbing activities shall be avoided within 50 feet of the den. Maternity dens shall be avoided, and a minimum 200-foot buffer from disturbance shall be maintained during the pup-rearing season (February 15 through July 1). Maternity dens shall be avoided to the maximum extent feasible in the opinion of a qualified biologist. If an active maternity den is proposed to be disturbed, the qualified biologist shall consult with the CDFW to identify any appropriate additional minimization measures that the qualified biologist determines, with the wildlife agencies, can actually be implemented based on field conditions. All such measures shall be implemented for Project activities.</p>					Prior to and during construction	Project developer and Lead Agency		
						<p>Steps to Compliance:</p> <p>A. If dens that could support the American badger species are found during the preconstruction survey required in MM BIO-1 or at any time during construction of the Project, an avoidance buffer range may be required. Ground-disturbing activities are avoided within 50 feet of the den. Maternity dens shall be avoided, and a minimum 200-foot buffer from disturbance shall be maintained during the pup-rearing season (February 15 through July 1).</p> <p>B. Work is to continue under the approval and guidance of a qualified biologist.</p>			

Mitigation Monitoring Program					
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#11	<p>BIO-9: The following additional measures shall be implemented during construction to avoid and minimize potential significant adverse impacts to Protected and Sensitive Species:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. All vehicles shall observe a 15-mile-per-hour speed limit in all areas of disturbance and on unpaved roads unless otherwise posted. Off-road traffic outside of designated access routes is prohibited. Speed limit signs shall be posted in visible locations at the point of site entry and at regular intervals on all unpaved access roads. b. All disturbance activities, except emergency situations or drilling that may require continuous operations, shall only occur during daylight hours. Nighttime disturbance activity for drilling purposes shall use directed lighting and shielding methods and comply with applicable lighting mitigation measures. c. All food-related trash items and all forms of micro trash, such as wrappers, cans, bottles, bottle tops, and food scraps, shall be disposed of in closed, animal-proof containers and removed daily from the site. d. Excavations, spoil piles, access roadways, and parking and staging areas shall be subject to dust control as set forth in the dust control mitigation measures. e. The use of herbicides for vegetation control shall be restricted to those approved by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife. No rodenticides shall be used on any site unless approved by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, and shall observe label and other restrictions mandated by the United States Environmental Protection Agency, California Department of Food and Agriculture, and State and federal laws and regulations. For split estates, no herbicides for vegetation control may occur in Tier 2 areas without surface owner approval. 	Prior to and during construction	Project developer and Lead Agency		
		<p>Steps to Compliance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. The Project proponent and/or developer shall ensure compliance with applicable construction rules and regulations, including but not limited to, those set forth in the mitigation. 			

Mitigation Monitoring Program

Impact	Mitigation Measure	Time Frame for Implementation	Responsible Monitoring Agency	Date	Initials
	<p>f. No plants or wildlife shall be collected, taken, or removed from the site or any adjacent locations except as necessary for Project-related vegetation removal or wildlife relocation by a qualified biologist and subject to all applicable permits and authorizations.</p> <p>g. All open trenches or excavations shall be covered at the end of each workday to prevent wildlife entrapment. If an excavation is too large to cover, escape ramps shall be installed at an incline ratio of no greater than 2:1. All trenches and pipes shall be inspected for the presence of wildlife each day prior to the commencement of work.</p> <p>h. To enable San Joaquin kit foxes and other wildlife to pass through the Project site, any perimeter fencing shall include a four- to eight-inch opening between the fence mesh and the ground, or the fence shall be raised four inches above the ground except for blunt-nosed leopard lizard exclusion fencing. The bottom of the fence fabric shall be knuckled (wrapped back to form a smooth edge) to protect wildlife.</p> <p>i. All vertical tubes used in Project construction and chain link fencing poles shall be temporarily or permanently capped to avoid the entrapment and death of special-status wildlife and birds. All pipes 1.5 inches or greater in diameter stored overnight on a Project location must have end caps or other physical barriers that prevent wildlife from entering the pipe.</p> <p>j. All dead or injured special-status wildlife shall be left in place and reported to the United States Fish and Wildlife Service and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife within 48 hours of discovery for rescue or salvage. Discovery of State or federal listed species that are injured or dead shall also be managed consistent with regulatory requirements, including being reported immediately via telephone and within 24 hours in writing, and with a copy to the lead agency.</p>				

Mitigation Monitoring Program					
Impact	Mitigation Measure	Time Frame for Implementation	Responsible Monitoring Agency	Date	Initials
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> k. During pre-construction surveys, the qualified biologist shall delineate previously disturbed areas to be used by the applicant to minimize the amount of new disturbance. l. No vehicles or construction equipment shall be parked within a wetland or waterbody/dry wash. m. Tracked vehicles and other construction equipment must be washed or maintained to be weed-free prior to entering and working within areas of a new disturbance. n. All washing of trucks, paint, equipment, or similar activities should occur in areas where runoff is fully contained for collection and off-site disposal. Wash water may not be discharged from the site and shall be located at least 100 feet from any water body or sensitive Biological Resources. o. Locate all extra work areas (such as staging areas and additional spoil storage areas) at least 50 feet away from wetland boundaries or waterbody, except where the adjacent upland consists of cultivated or rotated cropland or other disturbed land. p. All areas that must be avoided as a result of the pre-disturbance surveys and areas where new disturbance will occur shall be clearly delineated by fencing or staking and flagging and/or rope or cord. q. No pets shall be allowed on any site. r. No smoking may occur except in designated areas. 				
Biological Resources					
#12	<p>MM BIO-10: Prior to the issuance of any grading or building permit, the Project proponent/developer shall conduct a delineation of the Tulare Irrigation Canal and prepare an Aquatic Resources Delineation Report (ARDR). The ARDR shall be submitted with a formal notification to the US Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE), Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB), and California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW). If no comments or requests for additional</p>	<p>Prior to issuance of grading or building permits</p>	<p>Project developer and Lead Agency</p>		
		Steps to Compliance:			

Mitigation Monitoring Program

Impact	Mitigation Measure	Time Frame for Implementation	Responsible Monitoring Agency	Date	Initials
	<p>permitting are received by the agencies, no further action is necessary. A copy of all correspondence shall be submitted to the lead agency. If a regulatory agency comments or requests additional permitting, the following actions may be taken. A copy of all correspondence and subsequent permitting and/or reports shall be made available to the Lead Agency. The report shall include information as shown below, as a plan if necessary, and shall outline compliance with the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Delineation of all jurisdictional features at the project site. Potential jurisdictional features within the project boundary identified in the jurisdictional delineation report may be shown in plan form. b. If the Project has a potential to directly or indirectly impact jurisdictional aquatic resources, a formal aquatic resource delineation of these areas shall be performed by a qualified professional to determine the extent of agency jurisdiction and permits/authorizations from the appropriate regulating agencies (Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB), CDFW and US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) shall be obtained prior to disturbance to jurisdictional features. <p>If it is determined that drainage is jurisdictional and cannot be avoided, the Project proponent shall obtain a Section 401 Water Quality Certification from the RWQCB, a Section 404 permit from USACE, and a Lake and Streambed Alteration Agreement under Section 1602 from the CDFW, if required, prior to impacting any waters.</p> <p>As part of these authorizations, compensatory mitigation may be required by the regulating agencies to offset the loss of aquatic resources. If so, and as part of the permit application process, a qualified professional shall draft a Mitigation and Monitoring Plan to address implementation and monitoring requirements under the permit to ensure that the Project would result in no net loss of habitat functions and values. The Plan shall contain, at a minimum, mitigation goals and objectives, mitigation location, a discussion of actions to be</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A delineation of the Tulare Irrigation Canal will be conducted by a qualified biologist. • An Aquatic Resources Delineation Report (ARDR) will be prepared and submitted to the appropriate regulatory agencies for comment. • Implementation of the outlined requirements will be completed. 			

Mitigation Monitoring Program					
Impact	Mitigation Measure	Time Frame for Implementation	Responsible Monitoring Agency	Date	Initials
	<p>implemented to mitigate the impact, monitoring methods and performance criteria, extent of monitoring to be conducted, actions to be taken in the event that the mitigation is not successful, and reporting requirements. The Plan shall be approved by the appropriate regulating agencies, and compensatory mitigation shall take place either on-site or at an appropriate off-site location.</p> <p>c. Any material/spoils generated from project activities containing hazardous materials shall be located away from jurisdictional areas or special-status habitat and protected from storm water run-off using temporary perimeter sediment barriers such as berms, silt fences, fiber rolls, covers, sand/gravel bags, and straw bale barriers, as appropriate. Protection measures should follow project-specific criteria as developed in a Stormwater Pollution Prevention and Protection Plan (SWPPP).</p> <p>d. Equipment containing hazardous liquid materials shall be stored on impervious surfaces or plastic ground covers to prevent any spills or leakage from contaminating the ground and at least 50 feet outside the delineated boundary of jurisdictional water features.</p> <p>e. Any spillage of material shall be stopped if it can be done safely. The contaminated area shall be cleaned, and any contaminated materials properly disposed. For all spills, the project foreman or designated environmental representative shall be notified.</p>				
Cultural Resources					
#13	CUL-1: If prehistoric or historic-era cultural materials are encountered during construction activities, all work in the immediate vicinity of the find shall halt	During construction	Project developer and Lead Agency		

Mitigation Monitoring Program					
Impact	Mitigation Measure	Time Frame for Implementation	Responsible Monitoring Agency	Date	Initials
	until a qualified archaeologist can evaluate the find and make recommendations. Cultural resource materials may include prehistoric resources such as flaked and ground stone tools and debris, shell, bone, ceramics, and fire-affected rock, as well as historic resources such as glass, metal, wood, brick, or structural remnants. If the qualified archaeologist determines that the discovery represents a potentially significant cultural resource, additional investigations may be required to mitigate adverse impacts from Project implementation. These additional studies may include avoidance, testing, and evaluation, or data recovery excavation.	Steps to Compliance: A. If necessary, work shall cease and the project proponent shall retain a qualified archaeologist to assess finds and recommended procedures. B. The qualified archaeologist and/or paleontologist shall assess the significance of the find and determine next steps. C. A copy of the additional studies shall be submitted to the Lead Agency to verify compliance.			
#14	CUL-2: If human remains are discovered during construction or operational activities, further excavation or disturbance shall be prohibited pursuant to Section 7050.5 of the California Health and Safety Code. The specific protocol, guidelines, and channels of communication outlined by the Native American Heritage Commission, in accordance with Section 7050.5 of the Health and Safety Code, Section 5097.98 of the Public Resources Code (Chapter 1492, Statutes of 1982, Senate Bill 297), and Senate Bill 447 (Chapter 44, Statutes of 1987), shall be followed. Section 7050.05(c) shall guide the potential Native American involvement, in the event of a discovery of human remains, at the direction of the county coroner.	During construction	Project developer and Lead Agency		
		Steps to Compliance: A. If necessary, work shall cease and the project proponent shall retain a qualified archaeologist to assess finds and recommended procedures. B. The qualified archaeologist and/or paleontologist shall assess the significance of the find and determine next steps. C. The Lead Agency shall verify compliance.			
Energy					
	No Mitigation required.				
Geology and Soils					
#15	GEO-1: If any paleontological resources are encountered during ground-disturbance activities, all work within 25 feet of the find shall halt until a qualified paleontologist, as defined by the Society of Vertebrate Paleontology	During construction	Project developer and Lead Agency		

Mitigation Monitoring Program					
Impact	Mitigation Measure	Time Frame for Implementation	Responsible Monitoring Agency	Date	Initials
	<p>Standard Procedures for the Assessment and Mitigation of Adverse Impacts to Paleontological Resources, can evaluate the find and make recommendations regarding treatment. Paleontological resource materials may include resources such as fossils, plant impressions, or animal tracks preserved in rock. The qualified paleontologist shall contact the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County or another appropriate facility regarding any discoveries of paleontological resources.</p> <p>If the qualified paleontologist determines that the discovery represents a potentially significant paleontological resource, additional investigations and fossil recovery may be required to mitigate adverse impacts from Project implementation. If avoidance is not feasible, the paleontological resources shall be evaluated for their significance. If the resources are not significant, avoidance is not necessary. If the resources are significant, they shall be avoided to ensure no adverse effects, or such effects must be mitigated. Construction in that area shall not resume until the resource-appropriate measures are recommended or the materials are determined to be less than significant. If the resource is significant and fossil recovery is the identified form of treatment, then the fossil shall be deposited in an accredited and permanent scientific institution. Copies of all correspondence and reports shall be submitted to the Lead Agency.</p>	<p>Steps to Compliance:</p> <p>A. In the event that paleontological resources are encountered during ground disturbance activities, all work within 25 feet shall halt.</p> <p>B. If required, the project proponent shall contact the qualified paleontologist to assess the find.</p> <p>C. The operator shall include a standard inadvertent discovery clause in every construction contract to inform contractors of this requirement.</p> <p>D. The Lead Agency shall verify compliance with the mitigation measure.</p>			
Greenhouse Gas Emissions					
	No Mitigation required.				
Hazardous Materials					
#16	HAZ-1: In the event that unknown underground storage tank(s) or a septic system are uncovered or damaged during excavation or grading activities, all work in that area shall cease. The State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) and the Tulare County Environmental Health Division shall be contacted to determine what appropriate remediation may be required and to identify the	During construction	Project developer and Lead Agency		

Mitigation Monitoring Program					
Impact	Mitigation Measure	Time Frame for Implementation	Responsible Monitoring Agency	Date	Initials
	appropriate requirements and approvals. A report of all communication and the determination made by the SWRCB and the County Health Division shall be submitted to the City.	Steps to Compliance: A. In the event unknown underground storage tank(s) are uncovered or damaged during excavation or grading activities, all work in that area shall cease. B. The Lead Agency, State Water Resources Control Board, and Tulare County Environmental Health Division shall be contacted to determine appropriate remediation and to identify necessary permits and approvals. C. All correspondence and determinations made by the SWRCB and County Health Division shall be provided to the Lead Agency to provide evidence of compliance.			
Hydrology and Water Quality					
	No mitigation required.				
Land Use and Planning					
	No Mitigation required.				
Mineral Resources					
	No Mitigation required.				
Noise					
	No Mitigation required.				
Population and Housing					
	No Mitigation required.				

Mitigation Monitoring Program					
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Public Services					
	No Mitigation required.				
Recreation					
	No Mitigation required.				
Traffic and Transportation					
#17	MM TRA-1: Prior to the issuance of building permits, the Project applicant/developer responsible for the construction of the Single-Family Residential Development will pay their pro-rate fair share percentage of 3.1 percent.	Prior to issuance of building permit	Project proponent/developer, Lead agency		
		Steps to Compliance: A. The Project proponent shall pay their fair share cost for intersection improvements and roadway segment improvements as indicated in the Mitigation Measure prior to issuance of building permits.			
#18	MM TRA-2: Prior to the issuance of building permits, the Project applicant/developer responsible for the construction of the Multi-Family Residential Development will pay their pro-rata fair share percentage of 2.4 percent. If at the time of development of the Multi-Family phase, the unit count is less than 375, the developer may submit a revised TIA showing the appropriate pro-rate fair share percentage for the reduced number of units.	Prior to issuance of building permit	Project proponent/developer, Lead agency		
		Steps to Compliance: A. The Project proponent shall pay their fair share cost for intersection improvements and roadway segment improvements as indicated in the Mitigation Measure prior to issuance of building permits.			
Tribal Cultural Resources					
	Implementation of MM CUL-1 and MM CUL-2.				

Mitigation Monitoring Program					
Impact	Mitigation Measure	Time Frame for Implementation	Responsible Monitoring Agency	Date	Initials
	Utilities and Service Systems				
	No Mitigation required.				
	Wildfire				
	No Mitigation required.				