

# Executive Summary

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This section summarizes the characteristics of the City of Kerman 2040 General Plan, as well as the 2040 General Plan's environmental impacts and recommended mitigation measures.

## Project Synopsis

### Project Applicant

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### Project Location

The City of Kerman is in the northwest portion of Fresno County in the central San Joaquin Valley. The city is at the junction of State Route (SR) 180 (Whitesbridge Avenue) and SR 145 (South Madera Avenue), approximately 15 miles west of the city of Fresno and 20 miles south of the city of Madera. West Jensen Avenue is located just to the south of Kerman, South Modoc Avenue to the west, and South Goldenrod Avenue to the east. SR 180 runs across the north edge and SR 145 bisects the city. The city is bordered by unincorporated areas of Fresno County. The nearest cities are Fresno to the east, San Joaquin to the southwest, and Madera to the north.

The addresses all lands within the Kerman Planning Area, which includes land within the city limits and the SOI, as well as unincorporated land outside the SOI. The SOI is a boundary defining the probable future physical boundaries and service areas of the City. The Planning Area for the proposed project in this EIR extends beyond the proposed expansion of the City's SOI in addition to the existing city limits and current (2019) SOI. The planning area extends to an area generally bounded by Belmont Avenue to the north, Howard Avenue to the east, Jensen Avenue to the south, and Lassen Avenue to the west.

It is important to note that the planning area in the 2007 General Plan differs from the 2040 General Plan planning area. The City expanded the planning area for the 2040 General Plan Update to include approximately 1,540 additional acres. Existing uses in this area between city limits and the planning area boundary are agriculture and detached dwelling units on large parcels in agricultural areas. The City designated land in the 2007 General Plan planning area that is not included in the new planning area (i.e., land south of Jensen Avenue), of which 446 acres are Undesignated and 11

acres are Ponding Basins. The 2007 planning area is identical to the 2027 Urban Growth Boundary as is identified in the 2007 General Plan.

## **Project Description**

The 2040 General Plan is a comprehensive update of the City's 2007 General Plan which is made up of two parts. Part 1 is the policy document, which includes five elements: Land Use; Circulation; Conservation, Open Space, Parks and Recreation; Safety; and Noise. The 2007 General specifies 16 separate land use designations. These land use designations define the basic categories of land use allowed in the city and are implemented through the City's Zoning Ordinance and Zoning Map, which contain more specific regulations and standards governing development on individual parcels. Under State law, a property's zoning is required to be consistent with its General Plan land use designation (Government Code §65860). Section 65860(c) of the Government Code requires that when a General Plan is amended in a way that makes the Zoning Ordinance inconsistent with the General Plan, "the zoning ordinance shall be amended within a reasonable time so that it is consistent with the general plan as amended" but it does not define a specific time period that would constitute a reasonable time.

The 2040 General Plan is comprised of seven elements: Economic Development; Land Use; Circulation; Housing; Conservation, Open Space, Parks and Recreation; Public Health and Safety; and Public Facilities and Services. The Land Use chapter describes the general distribution, location, and extent of various land uses. It contains a statement of the purpose of the designation, standards for dwelling units' density and non-residential building square footage intensity, types of typical uses, and special development and permit review requirements. Eighteen separate land use designations have been established to provide a mixture of land uses for the city. If the 2040 General Plan is adopted, the City will subsequently need to review the Zoning Ordinance, including its Zoning Map, to make sure it is consistent with the new General Plan.

### *Project Characteristics*

The 2040 General Plan provides a blueprint for the City through 2040 guiding future growth and development. This long-range plan would guide decision-making and establishes rules and standards for new development and city improvements. It reflects the city's vision for the future and is intended to provide direction through the year 2040.

The 2040 General Plan consists of seven elements:

- Economic Development Element
- Land Use Element
- Circulation Element
- Housing Element
- Conservation, Open Space, Parks and Recreation Element
- Public Health and Safety Element
- Public Facilities and Services Element

### *Project Objectives*

California State Law requires that every city prepare and maintain a general plan "for the physical development of the city and any land outside its boundaries that bears relation to its planning." A general plan serves as the jurisdiction's "constitution" or "blueprint" for future decisions concerning

a variety of issues including land use, health and safety, and resource conservation. All specific plans, subdivisions, public works projects, and zoning decisions must be consistent with the local jurisdiction's general plan. The Kerman General Plan contains the goals and policies upon which the City Council and Planning Commission shall base their decisions. Typically, a general plan is designed to address the issues facing the city for the next 15-20 years. The horizon year for Kerman's General Plan Update is 2040.

A general plan has four defining features:

- **General.** As the name implies, a general plan provides general guidance for future land use, transportation, environmental, and resource decisions.
- **Comprehensive.** A general plan addresses a wide range of social, economic, infrastructure, and natural resource topics. These topics include land use, urban development, housing, transportation, public facilities and services, recreation, agriculture, biological resources, and many other issues that impact the community.
- **Long-Range.** A general plan provides guidance on achieving a long-range vision of the future for a city or county. To reach this envisioned future, the general plan includes goals, policies, and implementation programs that address both near-term and long-term needs.
- **Integrated and Coherent.** The goals, policies, and implementation programs in a general plan present a comprehensive, unified program for development, resource conservation, and other issues that impact the community. A general plan uses a consistent set of assumptions and projections to assess future demands for housing, employment, and public services (e.g., infrastructure). A general plan has a coherent set of policies and implementation programs that enables citizens to understand the vision of the general plan, and enables landowners, businesses, and industries to be more certain about how policies will be implemented.

#### *Required Discretionary Approvals*

With recommendations from the City's Planning Commission, the Kerman City Council will need to take the following discretionary actions in conjunction with the proposed project:

- Certify the Final EIR,
- Approve the proposed 2040 General Plan, and
- Apply for update/revision of the City's Sphere of Influence (SOI) with Fresno LAFCo.

Kerman adopted its current Multi-Jurisdictional Housing Element in April 2016, covering the 2015-2023 planning period. This Housing Element was submitted to the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) for review and comment and was certified by HCD in July 2016. No updates to the Housing Element are necessary or proposed at this time. The City's SOI is proposed to expand east and west to include South Lassen and Howard Avenues for potential future alignment of SR 145, and north to Belmont Avenue to square off and balance the city growth area around the city center.

## Alternatives

As required by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), this EIR examines alternatives to General Plan 2035. Studied alternatives include the following two alternatives. Based on the alternative's analysis, Alternative 2 was determined to be the environmentally superior alternative.

- Alternative 1: No Project Alternative/Build-out of Current 2007 General Plan
- Alternative 2: 2040 General Plan with a Reduction in Residential Growth and Increased Transportation Alternatives

### *Alternative 1*

The No Project Alternative involves continued implementation of the 2007 General Plan. Under this alternative, the 2040 General Plan would not be adopted and the existing General Plan, including the land use map, SOI boundaries, and all of the General Plan goals and policies, would remain in place through the horizon year of 2040. Thus, any new development in Kerman would occur consistent with the existing land use designations and the allowed uses within each designation. Similarly, any new infrastructure would occur as envisioned in the 2007 General Plan without the new 2040 General Plan Circulation Element policies that would address VMT impacts. The 2040 General Plan proposes to expand the 2007 SOI; this new area would remain designated as Agriculture and would not be developed. Growth patterns between the 2007 General Plan and 2040 General Plan would be similar within the City under the No Project Alternative.

Based on the projections for growth in the 2007 General Plan, the overall growth would be greater with implementation of the No Project Alternative as compared to the proposed project due to the population projections of 83,384 and approximately 15,183 dwelling units at buildout. This would be an increase in overall development and growth compared to the 2040 General Plan which anticipates approximately 720 dwelling units and a population of approximately 19,650. However, the growth projections at the time were significantly higher than the actual growth rate for Kerman that occurred. Therefore, growth from the No Project Alternative compared to the proposed project is similar as both land use scenarios are similar. The land use patterns and density allowances within the development areas do not substantially differ and therefore, physical environmental impacts are assumed to be relatively similar for the No Project Alternative compared to the project.

### *Alternative 2*

Alternative 2 would involve re-designating parcels currently designated Medium Density Residential near the northern City limits to either Urban Reserve or Agriculture land use designations. The goal of this re-designation would be to reduce growth by approximately 30 percent. This alternative would also add additional transit incentives and opportunities in the City to reduce the existing single occupancy vehicle commute pattern to Fresno from Kerman by approximately 20 percent.

## **REDUCTION TO RESIDENTIAL GROWTH**

Under the 2040 General Plan, an estimated 4,170 new residents and 720 new dwelling units would be added to the City of Kerman through 2040. This alternative proposes to add 2,919 new residents and 504 new dwelling units to the City of Kerman through 2040, a 30 percent reduction in planned growth compared to the 2040 General Plan. This alternative would result in a reduction of 1,251 new residents and 216 new dwelling units when compared to the 2040 General Plan.

In order to facilitate this reduction, under Alternative 2 land uses on the northern side of the City that are currently designated as Medium Density Residential would change to Urban Reserve or

Agriculture. This reduction in residential growth would increase the jobs/housing balance under the assumption that the 780 new jobs would be added between 2018 and 2040, the same as the 2040 General Plan. A reduction in population growth for Kerman proposed under this alternative may have the unintended consequence of increasing growth in other rural areas of the county.

### **TRANSPORTATION OPPORTUNITIES**

The 2040 General Plan's Circulation Element includes goals and policies that would provide a balanced, multimodal transportation network that meets the needs of all users of streets, roads, and highways for safe and convenient travel. These proposed transportation improvements within the City limits would be near existing and proposed active transportation facilities that would incentivize the use of active transportation for internal trips. With Kerman's proximity to the City of Fresno 15 miles to the east, a major employment center for the region, addressing the consistent commute pattern would provide the best way to reduce VMTs.

Under Alternative 2, the City would work with Fresno Council of Governments (FCOG) to increase public transportation service to and from the City by providing more times for fixed-route service to major metropolitan and job centers including Fresno, increase van pooling and carpooling, and collaborate to work with large employers in Fresno to provide incentives for employees to take public transit services for their commutes instead of single occupancy vehicles, in addition to other incentives. To encourage and increase active transportation usage within the City, Alternative 2 proposes to implement a bike share or scooter share program along with associated safety and education for these alternatives to further reduce internal trips. It is anticipated that a combination of effective marketing and increased public transportation options and funds, including incentives such as reduced ridership fees, could potentially increase ridership by approximately 20 percent by 2040.

Under Alternative 2, the reduction in residential housing and population, plus an increase in transit/rideshare options would have the potential to reduce VMT and impacts to GHG and the amount of solid waste generated in Kerman compared to the 2040 General Plan.

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requires that an environmentally superior alternative be identified among those analyzed. It further states that if the No Project Alternative is identified as environmentally superior, the next most environmentally superior alternative must also be identified. When considering the environmental impact areas, Alternative 2 is the environmentally superior alternative followed by Alternative 1.

### **Summary of Impacts and Mitigation Measures**

Table ES-1 lists the environmental impacts of the proposed 2040 General Plan, significance of each impact, the General Plan policies included to mitigate those impacts where necessary and feasible, and residual impacts or significance after mitigation. Impacts defined as significant, unavoidable adverse impacts that require a statement of overriding consideration pursuant to Section 15093 of the CEQA Guidelines are also identified. If the proposed 2040 General Plan is approved; significant, adverse impacts that cannot be feasibly mitigated to less than significant levels will require findings to be made under Section 15091 of the CEQA Guidelines; adverse impacts that are less than those allowed by adopted significance thresholds.

Impacts are categorized as follows:

- **Significant and Unavoidable.** An impact that cannot be reduced to below the threshold level given reasonably available and feasible mitigation measures. Such an impact requires a Statement of Overriding Considerations to be issued if the project is approved per §15093 of the CEQA Guidelines.
- **Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated.** An impact that can be reduced to below the threshold level given reasonably available and feasible mitigation measures. Such an impact requires findings under §15091 of the CEQA Guidelines.
- **Less than Significant.** An impact that may be adverse, but does not exceed the threshold levels and does not require mitigation measures. However, mitigation measures that could further lessen the environmental effect may be suggested if readily available and easily achievable.
- **No Impact:** The proposed project would have no effect on environmental conditions or would reduce existing environmental problems or hazards.

**Table ES-1 Summary of Environmental Impacts, Mitigation Measures, and Residual Impacts**

Impact	Mitigation Measure(s)	Residual Impact
<b>Aesthetics</b>		
<b>Impact AES-3.</b> Development facilitated by proposed 2040 General Plan would incrementally increase the amount of light and glare in Kerman, through the introduction of new development and increased number of vehicles. The effects of this gradual increase would be reduced by the policies in the 2040 General Plan as well as the Kerman Municipal Code. Therefore, the project would have a less than significant impact associated with light and glare that would adversely affect daytime or nighttime views.	None required.	Less than significant.
<b>Air Quality</b>		
<b>Impact AQ-2.</b> Construction of new development under the 2040 General Plan would potentially generate significant impacts to air pollutant emissions of ozone precursors, CO, SO <sub>2</sub> , PM <sub>10</sub> , and PM <sub>2.5</sub> . However, implementation of 2040 General Plan policies would result in compliance with SJVAPCD Guidelines and reduce these impacts to a less than significant level.	None required.	Less than significant.
<b>Impact AQ-3.</b> Buildout of the 2040 General Plan may expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations. Construction-related emissions associated with the 2040 General Plan would generate short-term emissions of carbon monoxide and toxic air contaminants, which can contribute to human health hazards. However, implementation of 2040 General Plan policies would reduce sensitive receptors exposure to pollutant concentrations. Impacts would be less than significant (Class II).	None required.	Less than significant.
<b>Cultural Resources</b>		
<b>Impact CUL-1.</b> Development facilitated by the 2040 General Plan has the potential to impact historical and unique archaeological resources. However, implementation of 2040 General Plan policies would reduce impacts to a less than significant level.	None required.	Less than significant.
<b>Greenhouse Gas</b>		
<b>Impact GHG-1.</b> Implementation of the 2040 General Plan would substantially increase GHG emissions at buildout compared to existing conditions. Implementation of 2040 General Plan policies would not reduce GHG emission impacts to below the projected locally appropriate threshold. Impacts would be significant and unavoidable.	None required. It is highly unlikely implementation of the 2040 General Plan policies specifically for GHG reduction emissions and impacts related to short-term GHG emissions would be capable of a 20 MT CO <sub>2</sub> e/SP/year reduction to below the locally appropriate threshold.	Significant and unavoidable.

Impact	Mitigation Measure(s)	Residual Impact
<b>Noise</b>		
<p><b>Impact N-1.</b> Construction-related, operational, and transportation noise generated by development facilitated under the 2040 General Plan would potentially expose sensitive receivers to substantial temporary and permanent increases in ambient noise levels. Implementation of 2040 General Plan policies would be required to reduce impacts to a less than significant level.</p>	<p>None required.</p>	<p>Less than significant.</p>
<b>Transportation</b>		
<p><b>Impact T-2.</b> The 2040 Kerman General Plan sets forth VMT as the standard for the evaluating impacts under CEQA (CIRC-2.1) and a VMT significance threshold of 15 percent below baseline conditions based on the FCOG Regional Transportation Model for addressing transportation impacts (CIRC-2.5) for projects within expansion areas. Even with the incorporation of policies to reduce VMT and promoting alternative transportation (Goal CIRC-5). Impacts would remain significant and unavoidable.</p>	<p>None required. Implementation and adherence to 2040 General Plan policies would not reduce VMT impacts to a less than significant level.</p>	<p>Significant and unavoidable.</p>
<b>Tribal Cultural Resources</b>		
<p><b>Impact TCR-2.</b> The 2040 Kerman General Plan sets forth VMT as the standard for the evaluating impacts under CEQA (CIRC-2.1) and a VMT significance threshold of 15 percent below baseline conditions based on the FCOG Regional Transportation Model for addressing transportation impacts (CIRC-2.5) for projects within expansion areas. Even with the incorporation of policies to reduce VMT and promoting alternative transportation (Goal CIRC-5). Impacts would remain significant and unavoidable.</p>	<p>None required.</p>	<p>Less than significant.</p>
<b>Utilities</b>		
<p><b>Impact UTL-4.</b> Development facilitated by the 2040 General Plan would increase demand for solid waste went to landfills. Landfills serving Kerman have adequate capacity to accept additional waste until August 2036. The City has met the target disposal rate under SB 1016 in 2017. It is anticipated that any additional growth would increase the population disposal rate to above allowable levels. This impact would be significant and unavoidable as the City does not have jurisdiction over County landfill operations and therefore cannot mitigate this impact.</p>	<p>No mitigation measures are available as Kerman does not jurisdiction or control over County landfills.</p>	<p>Significant and unavoidable.</p>