

**INITIAL STUDY AND
MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION**

**SHIRK AND RIGGIN ANNEXATION
PROJECT**



VISALIA

Prepared for:

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April 2024

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 City Council of the City of Visalia meeting on Monday, May 20, 2024.

PLEASE BE ADVISED that the City Council of the City of Visalia will consider a recommendation to adopt the Mitigated Negative Declaration at its meeting to be held on Monday, May 20, 2024. 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

Shirk and Riggin Annexation Project (Annexation No. 2023-01)

Project Location

The site is located at the southwest corner of North Shirk Street and West Riggin Avenue, Visalia, California (APNs 077-200-057, -058, -059, -060). The Project is within Section 21, Township 18S, Range 24E, Mount Diablo Base and Meridian.

Project Description

The Project proposes to annex an approximately 75-acre site located within unincorporated Tulare County into the City of Visalia (City) city limits (Project). The Project is within the City's Urban Growth Boundary, and the General Plan designates the site as Industrial (I) and Light Industrial (IL).

Surrounding land uses include industrial development to the south and west, agricultural operations to the north, and residential development to the east. The approximately 32-acre portion of the site designated as Light Industrial is located on the easterly side of the site and is closest to the existing residences. The approximately 43-acre portion designated as Industrial is located on the westerly side of the site. A 0.5-acre portion of the Project site located in the southeast corner will be used by Southern California Edison (SCE) for a substation and is not a part of this Project. Therefore, approximately 31.5 acres will be available for light industrial development (Figure 2-3).

The applicant has not proposed any specific use on the property at this time. For analysis purposes, it is assumed that the proposed uses would include primarily industrial-type warehousing and combined office/warehouse type buildings. An assumed floor area ratio (FAR) of 0.3 for the approximately 75-acre site indicates an allowable square footage of 980,100 square feet of buildable area. Therefore, four approximately 245,025 square-foot warehouse and/or combined office/warehouse type buildings would be allowable on site. Any proposed development would involve necessary infrastructure and improvements to

serve the potential uses consistent with City standards and requirements. Upon annexation, the Project site would be connected to the City wastewater system and to the water system operated by California Water Service Company. Future development on the property will also be required to provide an irrevocable offer of dedication on the west side of North Shirk Street that will ultimately facilitate two southbound through lanes and street frontage improvements.

The following discretionary actions are required for the proposed development:

- Annexation into the City of Visalia
- Annexation Approval by Tulare County Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCo)

The document and documents referenced in the Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration are available for review at City of Visalia Planning Division, 315 East Acequia Avenue, Visalia, California 93291 and at the website:

https://www.visalia.city/depts/community_development/planning/ceqa_environmental_review.asp

As mandated by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the public review period for this document will be 20 days (CEQA Section 15073[b]). The public review period begins on April 25, 2024 and ends on May 15, 2024. For further information, please contact Brandon Smith, Project Manager, at (559) 713-4636 or brandon.smith@visalia.city.

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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

Shirk and Riggin Annexation Project

Project Location

The site is located at the southwest corner of North Shirk Street and West Riggin Avenue, Visalia, California (APNs 077-200-057, -058, -059, -060). The Project is within Section 21, Township 18S, Range 24E, Mount Diablo Base and Meridian.

Project Description

The Project proposes to annex an approximately 75-acre site located within unincorporated Tulare County into the City of Visalia (City) city limits (Project). The Project is within the City’s Urban Growth Boundary, and the General Plan designates the site as Industrial (I) and Light Industrial (IL).

Surrounding land uses include industrial development to the south and west, agricultural operations to the north, and residential development to the east. The approximately 32-acre portion of the site designated as Light Industrial is located on the easterly side of the site and is closest to the existing residences. The approximately 43-acre portion designated as Industrial is located on the westerly side of the site. A 0.5-acre portion of the Project site located in the southeast corner will be used by Southern California Edison (SCE) for a substation and is not a part of the Project. Therefore, approximately 31.5 acres will be available for light industrial development (Figure 2-3).

The applicant has not proposed any specific use on the property at this time. For analysis purposes, it is assumed that the proposed uses would include primarily industrial-type warehousing and combined office/warehouse type buildings. An assumed floor area ratio (FAR) of 0.3 for the approximately 75-acre site indicates an allowable square footage of 980,100 square feet of buildable area. Therefore, four approximately 245,025 square-foot warehouse and/or combined office/warehouse type buildings would be allowable on site. Any proposed development would involve necessary infrastructure and improvements to serve the potential uses consistent with City standards and requirements. Upon annexation, the Project site would be connected to the City wastewater system and to the water system operated by California Water Service Company. Future development on the property will

also be required to provide an irrevocable offer of dedication on the west side of North Shirk Street that will ultimately facilitate two southbound through lanes and street frontage improvements.

The following discretionary actions are required for the proposed development:

- Annexation into the City of Visalia
 - Annexation Initiation by the City of Visalia
 - Annexation Approval by Tulare County Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCo)

Mailing Address and Phone Number of Contact Person

Brandon Smith, AICP- Planner
City of Visalia, Community Development Department
315 East Acequia Avenue
Visalia, CA 93291
(559) 713-4636
Email: brandon.smith@visalia.city

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

CUL-1: Prior to any ground disturbance in connection with project development, a surface inspection of the relevant portion(s) of the project site shall be conducted by a qualified Archaeologist; a Tribal Monitor/Cultural Staff from a culturally affiliated Native American tribe identified by the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) shall be permitted to observe, subject to an executed agreement between the Tribe and the relevant applicant (as noted below). The Archaeologist (and Tribal Monitor/Cultural Staff, subject to an executed agreement with the relevant applicant) shall monitor the relevant portion(s) of the project site during initial ground disturbance activities that occur in connection with the subject proposal.

The relevant applicant shall offer, in good faith and based on commercially reasonable terms, a culturally affiliated Native American tribe identified by the NAHC the opportunity to provide a Native American Monitor during ground disturbing activities that occur in connection with the subject proposal. Tribal participation would be dependent upon the availability and interest of the Tribe as well as the parties being able to reach mutually acceptable terms.

In addition, the relevant applicant shall with diligence and good faith coordinate with the Tribal Monitor/Cultural Staff to enter into an agreement on commercially reasonable terms wherein the Tribal Monitor/Cultural Staff shall provide pre project-related activities training to supervisory personnel and any excavation contractor, which shall include information on potential cultural material finds and on the procedures to be enacted if Tribal Cultural Resources (TCRs) are found. Subject to such an executed agreement, the Tribal Monitor/Cultural Staff shall provide the foregoing activities prior to any ground disturbance in connection with an individual specific development proposal.

In the event that TCRs are discovered during project-related subsurface construction activities, operations shall stop within 100 feet of the find and a qualified Archaeologist shall determine whether the resource requires further study. In consultation with the City of Visalia and consulting tribes, the qualified Archaeologist shall determine the measures that shall be implemented to protect the discovered resources, including, but not limited to, excavation of the finds and evaluation of the finds in accordance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5. Measures may include avoidance, preservation in place, recordation, additional archaeological resting, and data recovery, among other options. Any previously undiscovered resources found during project-related subsurface construction activities shall be recorded on appropriate California Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) forms and evaluated for significance. No further ground disturbance shall occur in the immediate vicinity of the discovery until approved by the qualified Archaeologist.

CUL-2: Prior to the initiation of ground disturbance activities for project development, the relevant developer shall ensure that all construction personnel conducting ground disturbance at the project site in connection with the subject individual specific development proposal shall be provided a Worker Environmental Awareness Program (WEAP) cultural resources “tailgate” training. The training shall include visual aids, a discussion of applicable laws and statutes relating to archaeological resources, types of resources that may be found within the project site, and procedures to be followed in the event such resources are encountered. The training shall be conducted by an Archaeologist who meets the Secretary of the Interior’s Professional Qualification Standards for archaeology. Any Native American Monitors or representatives consulting on the proposed project shall be invited to attend and participate in the training session.

CUL-3: 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.

CUL-4: In the event of the accidental discovery or recognition of any human remains during ground disturbance activities in connection with an individual specific development proposal, CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5, Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5, and Public Resources Code Sections 5097.94 and 5097.98 shall be followed by the relevant applicant. Specifically, the following steps shall be taken:

1. There shall be no further excavation or disturbance within 100 feet of the remains until the County Coroner is contacted to determine whether the remains are Native American and if an investigation of the cause of death is required. If the Coroner determines the remains to be Native American, the Coroner shall contact the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) within 24 hours, and the NAHC shall identify the person or persons it believes to be the Most Likely Descendant (MLD) of the deceased Native American. The MLD may make recommendations to the landowner or the person responsible for the excavation work within 48 hours, for means of treating or disposing of, with appropriate dignity, the human remains, and any associated grave goods as provided in Public Resource Code Section 5097.98.
2. Where any of the following conditions occur, the landowner or his or her authorized representative shall rebury the Native American human remains and associated grave goods with appropriate dignity, either in accordance with the

recommendations of the MLD or on the project site in a location not subject to further subsurface disturbance:

- The NAHC is unable to identify an MLD.
- The identified MLD fails to make a recommendation within 48 hours after being notified by the commission.
- The landowner or his or her authorized representative rejects the recommendation of the identified MLD and mediation by the NAHC fails to provide measures acceptable to the landowner.

Additionally, California Public Resources Code Section 15064.5 requires the following relative to Native American remains:

- When an initial study identifies the existence of, or the probable likelihood of, Native American remains within a project, a lead agency shall work with the appropriate Native Americans as identified by the NAHC as provided in Public Resources Code Section 5097.98. Each relevant applicant in connection with its individual specific development proposal may develop a plan for treating or disposing of, with appropriate dignity, the human remains, and any items associated with Native American burials with the appropriate Native Americans as identified by the NAHC.

NSE-1: The Project developer or contractor shall continuously comply with the following measures throughout construction activities:

- a. 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.
- b. All noise-producing project equipment and vehicles using internal-combustion engines shall be equipped with manufacturers-recommended mufflers and be maintained in good working condition.
- c. All mobile or fixed noise-producing equipment used on the project site that is regulated for noise output by a federal, State, or local agency shall comply with such regulations while in the course of project construction activity.
- d. Electrically powered equipment shall be used instead of pneumatic or internal combustion-powered equipment, where feasible.
- e. Material stockpiles and mobile equipment staging, parking, and maintenance areas shall be located as far as practicable from noise-sensitive receptors.

- f. Project area and site access road speed limits shall be established and enforced during the construction period.
- g. Nearby residences shall be notified of construction schedules so that arrangements can be made, if desired, to limit their exposure to short-term increases in ambient noise levels.

NSE-2: The site developer shall be required to incorporate, at a minimum, design features or reduction measures to be incorporated and noted on all plans and specifications to mitigate any operational noise impact to meet applicable noise performance criteria. These reduction measures and design features may include, but are not limited to:

- a. Orienting the facility so that the warehouse truck loading/unloading areas are located facing away from nearby residential land uses.
- b. Providing gasket loading dock doors to help shield truck loading and unloading noise.
- c. Providing screening, such as a structure or sound wall, to shield truck loading and unloading areas from nearby residential land uses.

SECTION 1 - INTRODUCTION

1.1 - Overview

The Project is summarized as the annexation of an approximately 75-acre site from the County of Tulare into the City of Visalia. The site is within the City's Tier I Urban Development Boundary (UDB), and the General Plan designates the Project as Industrial (I) and Light Industrial (IL).

The site is located at the southwest corner of North Shirk Street and West Riggin Avenue, Visalia, California (APNs 077-200-057, -058, -059, -060). The Project is within Section 21, Township 18S, Range 24E, Mount Diablo Base and Meridian (Figures 1 and 2). Surrounding land uses include industrial development to the south and west, agricultural operations to the north, and residential development to the east.

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 *Appendix A - 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 is 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 chapter 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 for any of the 21 environmental resource factors, then an Environmental Impact Report will be required.
- *Section 4 – List of Preparers:* This chapter identifies the individuals who prepared the IS/MND.
- *Section 5 – Bibliography:* This chapter contains a full list of references that were used in the preparation of this IS/MND.
- *Appendix A – Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program:* This appendix 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 2030 General Plan Update (2014)
- Tulare County General Plan 2030 (2021)
- Visalia City Improvement Standards (Updated Improvement Standard Implementation 2016)
- Visalia Airport Master Plan (1971)
- Tulare County Comprehensive Airport Land Use Plan (2012)
- Mid-Kaweah GSA Groundwater Sustainability Plan (2019)
- Tulare County Association of Governments (TCAG) Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (RTP/SCS)

SECTION 2 - PROJECT DESCRIPTION

2.1 - Introduction

The Project proposes the annexation of an approximately 75-acre site from the County of Tulare into the City of Visalia.

2.2 - Project Location

The site is located at the southwest corner of North Shirk Street and West Riggin Avenue, Visalia, California (APNs 077-200-057, -058, -059, -060). The Project is within Section 21, Township 18S, Range 24E, Mount Diablo Base and Meridian (Figures 2-1 and 2-2).

2.3 - Surrounding Land Uses

Surrounding land uses include industrial development to the south and west, agricultural operations to the north, and residential development to the east.

2.4 - Proposed Project

The Project proposes to annex an approximately 75-acre site located within unincorporated Tulare County into the City of Visalia (City) city limits (Project). The City's General Plan designates the Project site as Industrial and Light Industrial. The site is located at the southwest corner of North Shirk Street and West Riggin Avenue, Visalia, California (APNs 077-200-057, -058, -059, -060). The Project is within Section 21, Township 18S, Range 24E, Mount Diablo Base and Meridian (Figures 2-1 and 2-2).

Surrounding land uses include industrial development to the south and west, agricultural operations to the north, and residential development to the east. The approximately 32-acre portion of the site designated as Light Industrial is located on the easterly side of the site and is closest to the existing residences. The approximately 43-acre portion designated as Industrial is located on the westerly side of the site. A 0.5-acre portion of the Project site located in the southeast corner will be used by Southern California Edison (SCE) for a substation and is not a part of this Project. Therefore, approximately 31.5 acres will be available for light industrial development (Figure 2-3).

The applicant has not proposed any specific use on the property at this time. For analysis purposes, it is assumed that the proposed uses would include primarily industrial-type warehousing and combined office/warehouse type buildings. An assumed floor area ratio (FAR) of 0.3 for the approximately 75-acre site indicates an allowable square footage of 980,100 square feet of buildable area. Therefore, four approximately 245,025 square-foot warehouse and/or combined office/warehouse type buildings would be allowable on site. Any proposed development would involve necessary infrastructure and improvements to serve the potential uses consistent with City standards and requirements. Upon annexation, the Project site would be connected to the City wastewater system and to the water system operated by California Water Service Company. Future development on the property will

also be required to provide an irrevocable offer of dedication on the west side of North Shirk Street that will ultimately facilitate two southbound through lanes and street frontage improvements.

The following discretionary actions are required for the proposed development:

- Annexation into the City of Visalia. Annexation initiated by the City
- Annexation Approval by Tulare County Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCo).



Figure 2-1
Regional Location

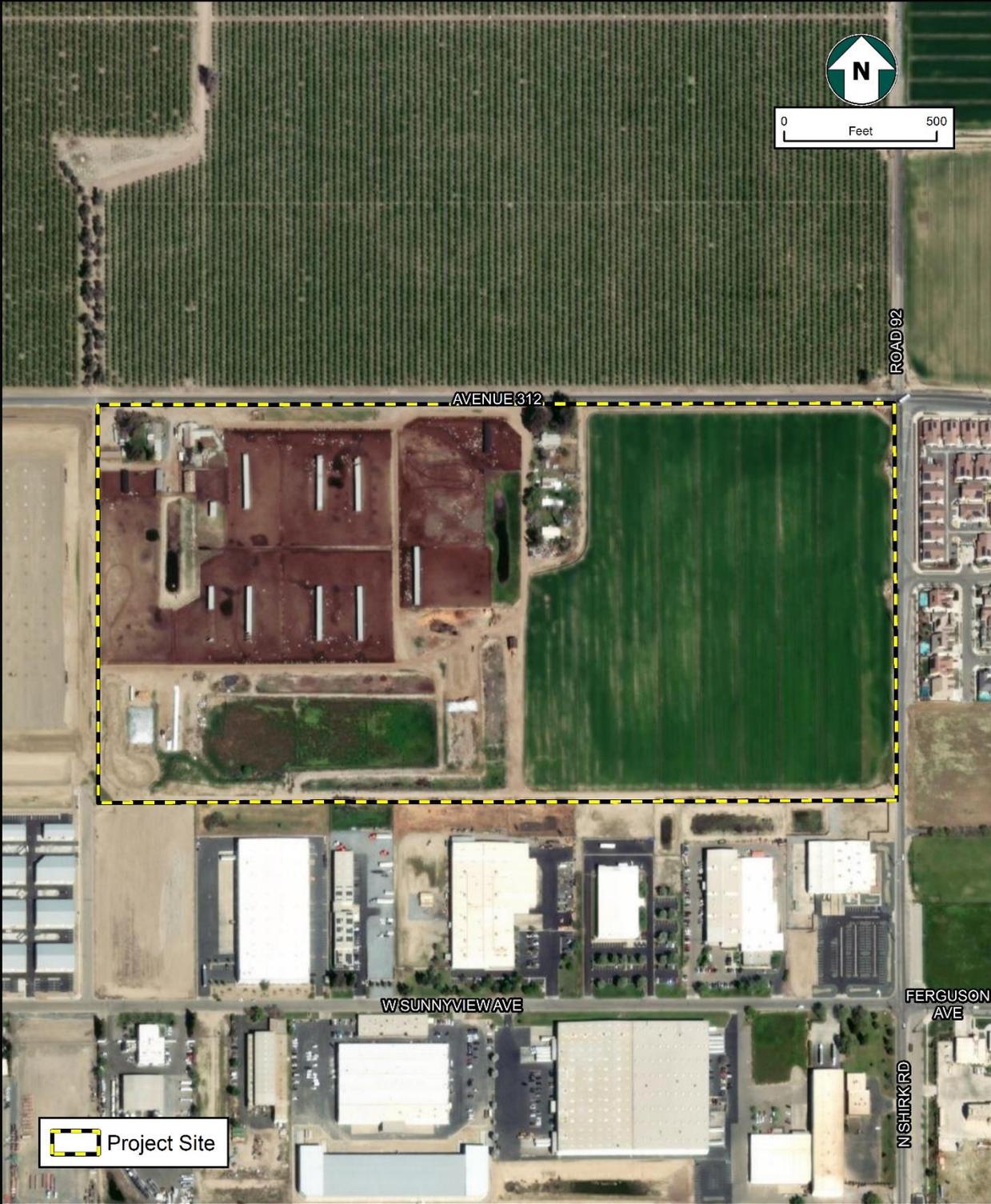
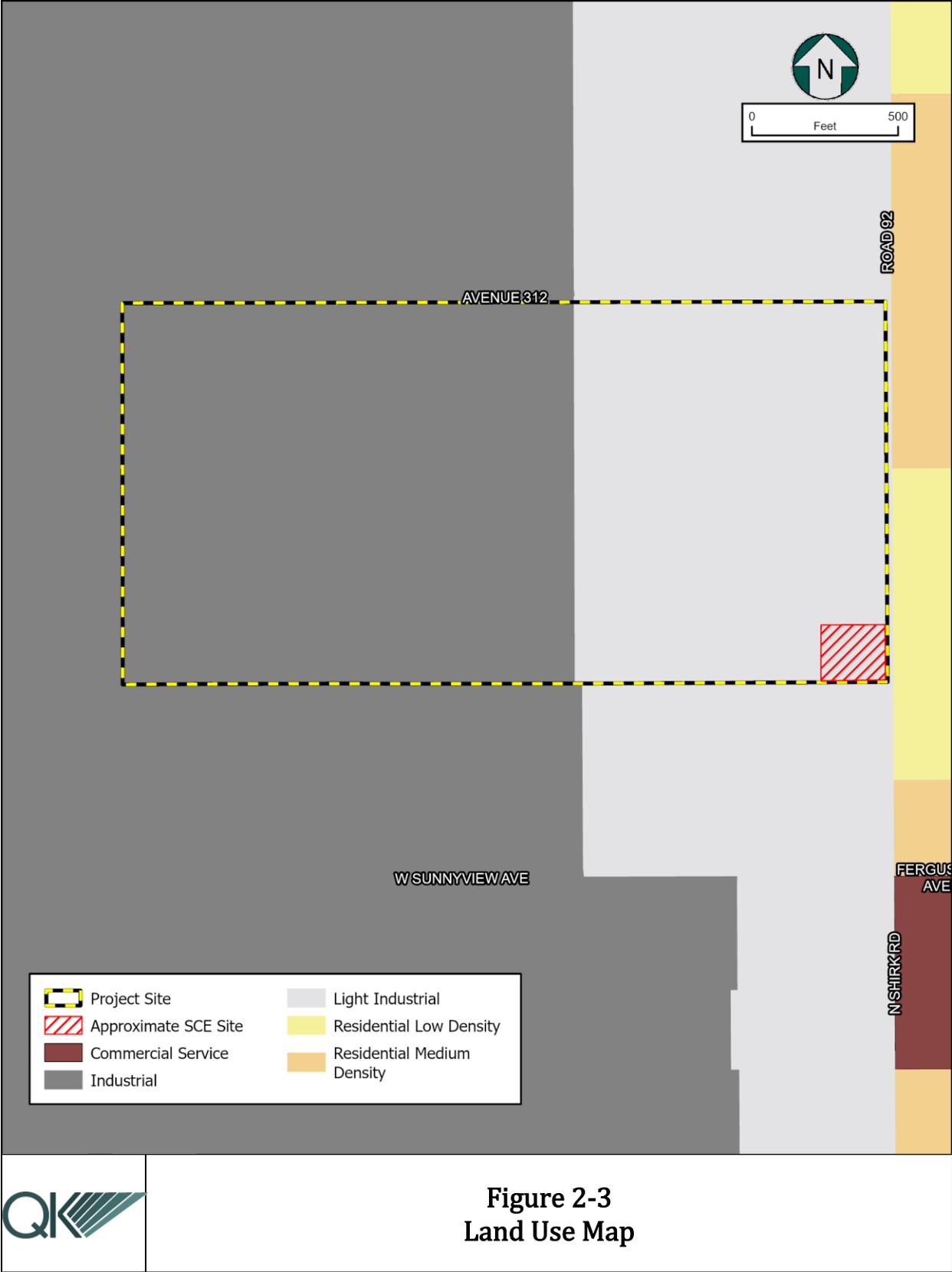


Figure 2-2
Project Location



SECTION 3 - INITIAL STUDY

3.1 - Environmental Checklist

1. Project Title:

Shirk and Riggin Annexation Project

2. Lead Agency Name and Address:

City of Visalia, Community Development Department
315 East Acequia Avenue
Visalia, California 93291

3. Contact Person and Phone Number:

Brandon Smith, AICP (559) 713-4636

4. Project Location:

The site is located at the southwest corner of North Shirk Street and West Riggin Avenue, Visalia, California (APNs 077-200-057, -058, -059, -060). The Project is within Section 21, Township 18S, Range 24E, Mount Diablo Base and Meridian (Figures 2-1 and 2-2).

5. Project Sponsor's Name and Address:

City of Visalia, Community Development Department
315 E. Acequia Avenue
Visalia, CA 93291
Contact Person: Brandon Smith, AICP, Principal Planner
Phone : (559) 713-4636

6. General Plan Designation:

Existing: City of Visalia – Light Industrial – Approximately 32 acres

Existing: City of Visalia – Industrial – Approximately 43 acres

Proposed: No change

7. Zoning:

Existing: Tulare County – AE-20 (Exclusive Agricultural Zone – 20 Acre Minimum) – Approximately 75 acres

Proposed: City of Visalia – Light Industrial– Approximately 32 acres

Proposed: City of Visalia – Industrial – Approximately 43 acres

8. Description of Project:

The Project proposes to annex an approximately 75-acre site located within unincorporated Tulare County into the City of Visalia (City) city limits (Project). The City's General Plan designates the Project site as Industrial and Light Industrial.

Surrounding land uses include industrial development to the south and west, agricultural operations to the north, and residential development to the east. The approximately 32-acre portion of the site designated as Light Industrial is located on the easterly side of the site and is closest to the existing residences. The approximately 43-acre portion designated as Industrial is located on the westerly side of the site. A 0.5-acre portion of the Project site located in the southeast corner will be used by Southern California Edison (SCE) for a substation. Therefore, approximately 31.5 acres will be available for light industrial development (Figure 2-3).

The applicant has not proposed any specific use on the property at this time. For analysis purposes, it is assumed that the proposed uses would include primarily industrial-type warehousing and combined office/warehouse type buildings. An assumed floor area ratio (FAR) of 0.3 for the approximately 75-acre site indicates an allowable square footage of 980,100 square feet of buildable area. Therefore, four approximately 245,025 square-foot warehouse and/or combined office/warehouse type buildings would be allowable on site. Any proposed development would involve necessary infrastructure and improvements to serve the potential uses consistent with City standards and requirements. Upon annexation, the Project site would be connected to the City wastewater system and to the water system operated by California Water Service Company. Future development on the property will also be required to provide an irrevocable offer of dedication on the west side of North Shirk Street that will ultimately facilitate two southbound through lanes and street frontage improvements.

The following discretionary actions are required for the proposed development:

- Annexation into the City of Visalia
 - Annexation initiated by the City
- Annexation Approval by Tulare County Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCo)

9. Surrounding Land Uses and Setting:

Surrounding land uses include industrial development to the south and west, agricultural operations to the north, and residential development to the east. The approximately 32-acre portion of the site designated as Light Industrial is located on the easterly side of the site and is closest to the existing residences.

10. Other Public Agencies Whose Approval is Required:

- Tulare County LAFCO

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.?

Native American Tribal Consultation was completed for the Project in compliance with Assembly Bill 52 (AB 52), the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), and the Public Resources Code. No response from notified tribal governments were received by the City of Visalia.

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.

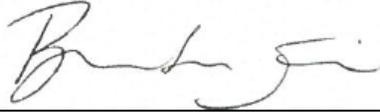
- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aesthetics | <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture and Forestry Resources | <input type="checkbox"/> Air Quality |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Biological Resources | <input type="checkbox"/> Cultural Resources | <input type="checkbox"/> Energy |
| <input 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 EIR 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.



Signature

Brandon Smith

Printed Name

April 23, 2024

Date

For

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 are 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 which 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 type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" 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?

According to the City of Visalia 2030 General Plan (General Plan), there are no designated scenic views within the City’s limits. State Route (SR) 198 is designated as an eligible State scenic highway; it is approximately 1.75 miles south of the Project site and not visible. The site is also outside of the designated West 198 Scenic Corridor and is not located within a designated scenic vista. Therefore, there will be no impacts related to a scenic vista.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

No mitigation is required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

There would be *no impact*.

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?

State Scenic Highway

See discussion under 3.4.1 – AESTHETICS (a). The City of Visalia adopted its Scenic Highways Element in February 1976, in which SR 198 was identified as a scenic resource. Additionally, the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) has listed SR 198 as an eligible scenic highway (Caltrans, 2024). The Project site is located 1.75 miles north of SR 198 and will not be visible from that roadway. The Project will not have an impact on a State scenic highway.

Scenic Resources

The City adopted a Valley Oak Ordinance that provides basic standards, measures, and compliance requirements for the preservation and protection of native Valley oak trees and landmark trees within the City. The Ordinance prohibits the destruction of oak trees except with an oak tree removal permit. If a tree removal permit is granted, the tree must either be replaced by new oak trees on the same property or by paying mitigation fees to be used for the establishment of new oak trees on other property.

The Project site has historically been utilized for dairy and agricultural operations, and there are no Valley oak trees on the site. Therefore, the Project will not conflict with the City’s Valley Oak Ordinance. Therefore, there will be no impact related to conflicts with this ordinance.

Historic Buildings

There are four structures and sites in Visalia currently on the National Register of Historic Places: the Bank of Italy Building, the Hyde House, the U.S. Post Office, Visalia Town Center Station, and the Pioneer Statue in Mooney Grove Park (City of Visalia, 2014). Additionally, the City maintains a Local Register of Historic Structures led by the Historic Preservation Advisory Committee as part of the Historic Preservation Ordinance adopted in 1979 and updated in 2001. A Historic District Overlay was also established and centers around the downtown Visalia area. The Project site is located outside of the Historic District Overlay and would not impact any of the identified historic places. Therefore, the Project would not have an impact.

As discussed in this section, the Project will have no impact on scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

No mitigation is required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

There would be *no impact*.

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?

The area surrounding the Project site consists of urban development to the south, east, and west consisting of industrial and residential development, and agricultural land to the north. The Project is designated for light industrial and industrial development and would be required to be consistent with applicable zoning and development standards including landscaping and screening requirements.

The City adopted PSCU-P-11 and 12 to develop and establish natural corridors, greenways, and scenic corridors throughout the City. The Project site is located adjacent to Shirk Street and is required under General Plan Policy PSCU-P-11 to provide a landscaping buffer zone or parkway between industrial and residential designated areas.

PSCU-P-11 states that consistent with the Parks and Open Space diagram of the General Plan, a landscaped buffer zone or parkway along Shirk Street separating industrial from residential areas be developed. Therefore, the Project will not conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality 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 #3.4.1d - 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?

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 PM and 6:00 AM and between the weekend hours of 7:00 PM and 9:00 AM, thereby reducing any potential light and glare impacts resulting from any construction activities that could occur after the annexation. Section 17.30.015.H of the Visalia Zoning Ordinance regulates that no on-site lighting shall directly or indirectly illuminate adjacent properties or the public street that provides access and that light and standards to be used shall be approved by the Site Plan Review Committee.

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. There are a number of circumstances that mitigate the potential for new or significant sources of light pollution in Visalia through the General Plan policies and development standards as noted above. 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 nonagricultural use?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use or a Williamson Act Contract?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" 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 nonagricultural 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 (PRC Section 21060.1[a]). According to the California Department of Conservation (DOC) Important Farmland Finder, the easterly portion of the site is designated as Prime Farmland and the westerly portion is designated as Confined Animal Agriculture (California Department of Conservation, 2023).

The Project site is currently within Tulare County boundaries, and the intent of the Project is to annex into the City boundaries for industrial development. Although the Project site is partially within Prime Farmland designation, the property is not under an existing Williamson Act Contract. The site is currently used as a dairy and for agricultural cultivation.

The General Plan Agricultural Preservation Ordinance identifies the need for the conversion of agricultural land to urban development. The City has set aside three-tiered areas planned for development that contain land designated as Prime Farmland and Farmland of Statewide Importance. The Project is within the City’s SOI and is within the Tier 1 Urban Development Boundary (UDB), which has been deemed as land to be converted from agricultural land to urban development.

The General Plan has designated the Project site for urban uses under the Tier 1 UDB. Implementation of this Project will support LU-P-20 and the General Plan designation for industrial development. LU-P-20 states to allow annexation and development of residential, commercial, and industrial land within the Tier I UDB at any time, consistent with the City’s Land Use Diagram. Therefore, impacts of the Project would be less than significant.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

No mitigation is required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Impacts would be *less than significant*.

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

The Project site is not subject to a Williamson Act contract; however, the Project is currently utilized as a dairy and for agricultural production. The County of Tulare currently classifies the Project site as being within the AE-20 (Exclusive Agricultural, 20-acre minimum) zone district.

However, the Project proposes to annex the site into the City limits, where the site is designated and zoned for Light Industrial and Industrial use. As noted above, the Project site is located within Tier I UDB. Therefore, approval of the proposed Project would remedy any conflict with the existing County agricultural zoning. As such, the Project will have a less than

significant impact and would not conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use or a Williamson Act Contract.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

No mitigation is required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Impacts would be *less than significant*.

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))?

PRC 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. PRC 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 a dairy and cultivated crops, 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 #3.4.2 (c), 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)

None are 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?

As discussed in Impact #3.4.2 (a), the Project will result in the conversion of Prime Farmland to nonagricultural use; however, the Project site is located within the Tier I UDB, and the City has planned for the eventual conversion and development of Tier I areas to non-agricultural urban uses. As recognized in General Plan Policy LU-P-20, annexation and development of Tier I areas should occur at any time consistent with the City’s land use diagram. It is further noted that the purpose of the three-tier urban growth management system under the General Plan would reinforce the sequencing of growth so that minimal fragmentation of agricultural land would occur.

Therefore, since the Project is located within Tier I UDB it was anticipated to be eventually converted to an urban industrial development. The Project will have a less than significant impact and would not result in the conversion of additional Farmland from non-agricultural use. Additionally, as discussed in Impact #3.4.2 (d), the Project area does not include conversion of forest land to non-forest use. Therefore, Project impacts are considered less than significant.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

None 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
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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

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

The City is located in the San Joaquin Valley Air Basin (SJVAB). Air Quality monitoring has been conducted in the SJVAB for many years. While new and innovative pollution controls have made the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District (SJVAPCD) a leader in the rate of improvement, the region is not in attainment for numerous criteria air pollutants, and the air basin still has poor air quality.

The California Air Resources Board (CARB) operates a regional network of air pollution monitoring stations that provide information on ambient concentrations of criteria air pollutants and toxic air contaminants. In Tulare County, CARB measures certain air pollutants, such as carbon monoxide (CO), ozone (O₃), nitrogen dioxide (NO₂), and particulate matter less than 2.5 microns in diameter (PM_{2.5}).

Federal and State laws require emission control measures in areas where air pollution exceeds standards. The San Joaquin Valley is one of these areas. The federal government, primarily through the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the federal Clean Air Act, sets standards, oversees state and local actions, and implements programs for toxic air pollutants, heavy-duty trucks, locomotives, ships, aircraft, off-road diesel equipment, and some types of industrial equipment. Currently, EPA has established national standards for

criteria air pollutants: ozone (O₃); carbon monoxide (CO); nitrogen dioxide (NO₂); sulfur dioxide (SO₂); suspended particulate matter (PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5}); and lead (Pb).

The primary way of determining consistency with an air quality plan (AQP) assumption is determining consistency with the applicable General Plan to ensure that the Project's population density and land use are consistent with the growth assumptions used in the AQPs for the air basin. Tulare County Association of Governments (TCAG) uses the growth projections, and land use information in adopted general plans to estimate future average daily trips and then Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT), which are then provided to San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District (SJVAPCD) to estimate future emissions in the AQPs. Existing and future pollutant emissions computed in the AQP are based on land uses from area general plans. AQPs detail the control measures and emission reductions required for reaching the attainment of the air standards. The following policies are found within the General Plan, which are applicable to this Project:

- AQ-P-2: Require use of Best Management Practices (BMPs) to reduce particulate emission as a condition of approval for all subdivisions, development plans, and grading permits in conformance with the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District Fugitive Dust Rule.
- AQ-P-9: Continue to mitigate short-term construction impacts and long-term stationary source impacts on air quality on a case-by-case basis and continue to assess air quality impacts through environmental review. Require developers to implement Best Management Practices (BMPs) to reduce air pollutant emissions associated with the construction and operation of development projects.

BMPs include transportation demand management strategies for large development projects such as:

- *Providing bicycle access and parking facilities.*
- *Providing preferential parking for high occupancy vehicles, carpools, or alternative fuels vehicles.*
- *Establishing telecommuting programs or satellite work centers.*
- *Allowing alternative work schedules.*
- *Subsidizing public transit costs for employees.*
- *Scheduling Deliveries at off-peak traffic periods; and*
- *Providing recharge stations for plug-in electric vehicles (PEVs).*

The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District Guidelines for Assessing and Mitigating Air Quality Impacts provide BMPs for determining and mitigating project air quality impacts and related thresholds of significance for use in environmental documents.

Therefore, with implementation of appropriate Project BMPs as required by the General Plan and the SJVAPCD, the Project would be consistent with the applicable AQPs. As a result, the Project will not conflict with or obstruct implementation of any air quality plans and, therefore, would have a less than significant impact.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

No mitigation is required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Impacts would be *less than significant*.

Impact #3.4.3b – 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?

The City of Visalia is located within Tulare County, which is designated as nonattainment for Federal and State air quality standards for ozone, in attainment of Federal standards and nonattainment for State standards for PM₁₀, and nonattainment for Federal and State standards for PM_{2.5}. The SJVAPCD has prepared the 2016 and 2013 Ozone Plans, 2007 PM₁₀ Maintenance Plan, and 2012 PM_{2.5} Plan to achieve federal and State standards for improved air quality in the SJVAB regarding ozone and PM. Inconsistency with any of the plans would be considered a cumulatively adverse air quality impact. To meet federal Clean Air Act (CAA) requirements, the SJVAPCD has multiple Air Quality Attainment Plan (AQAP) documents, including:

- 2008 Extreme Ozone Attainment Demonstration Plan (EOADP) for attainment of the 1-hour ozone standard.
- 2007 Ozone Plan for attainment of the 8-hour ozone standard.
- 2007 PM₁₀ Maintenance Plan and Request for Redesignation.
- 2008 PM_{2.5} Plan.

The annexation of the Project property itself would not generate criteria pollutant emissions that would exceed adopted thresholds. Upon annexation into the City, the project site's Industrial and Light Industrial pre-zoning would become the effective zoning for the project site. It is assumed that the proposed uses would include primarily industrial-type warehousing and combined office/warehouse type buildings.

Floor area ratio (FAR) is the measurement of a building's floor area in relation to the size of the lot/parcel that the building is located on. FAR is expressed as a decimal number and is derived by dividing the total area of the building by the total area of the parcel (building area ÷ lot area). The proposed Project would result in a total FAR of 0.30 and indicates an allowable square footage of 980,100 square feet of buildable area. Therefore, four approximately 245,025 square-foot warehouse and/or combined office/warehouse type buildings would be allowable on site. As a result, the proposed project would involve the type of land uses contemplated by the General Plan and would be within the allowable FAR ratio required under and assumed by the General Plan's relevant land use designations. These are permitted uses within the I

and IL zone district and are anticipated to be consistent with all applicable local and regional air quality attainment plans.

Because of the region's federal non-attainment status for ozone and PM_{2.5}, and State non-attainment status for ozone, PM_{2.5} and PM₁₀, if the Project-generated emissions of either the ozone precursor pollutants (reactive organic gases [ROG] or oxides of nitrogen [NO_x]), PM_{2.5} or PM₁₀ were to exceed the SJVAPCD's significance thresholds, then the Project uses would be considered to conflict with the attainment plans. In addition, it is anticipated that the Project uses would not result in a change in land use and corresponding increases in vehicle miles traveled that is unaccounted for in regional emissions inventories contained in regional air quality control plans.

The *Guide to Mitigating and Assessing Air Quality Impacts* (GAMAQI) the SJVAPCD's established thresholds of significance for criteria pollutant emissions. Project-specific emissions that exceed the thresholds of significance for criteria pollutants would be expected to result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the County is in non-attainment under applicable federal or State ambient air quality standards. It should be noted that a project isn't characterized as cumulatively insignificant when project emissions fall below thresholds of significance.

The SJVAPCD has established thresholds of significance for determining environmental significance, which are provided in Table 3.4.3-1 below.

**Table 3.4.3-1
SJVAPCD Air Quality Thresholds of Significance**

Project Type	Ozone Precursor Emissions (tons/year)					
	CO	NO _x	ROG	SO _x	PM ₁₀	PM _{2.5}
Construction Emissions	100	10	10	27	15	15
Operational Emissions (Permitted Equipment and Activities)	100	10	10	27	15	15
Operational Emissions (Non-Permitted Equipment and Activities)	100	10	10	27	15	15

Source: SJVAPCD 2023

The AQAPs contain a number of control measures, including rules and regulations outlined by the SJVAPCD. With the incorporation of the enforceable requirements outlined in the AQAP, the Project is not anticipated to result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the Project region is in non-attainment under any federal or State ambient air quality standards.

The 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.
- Regulation VIII – Fugitive PM₁₀ Prohibitions.
- Rule 8011 – General Requirements.
- Rule 8021 – Construction, Demolition, Excavation, Extraction, and Other Earthmoving Activities.
- Rule 8041 – Carryout and Trackout.
- Rule 8051 – Open Areas.
- Rule 9510 – Indirect Source Review

SJVAPCD's required measures for all projects would also apply:

- Water exposed areas three times per day.
- Reduce vehicle speed to less than 15 miles per hour.

Construction-related Criteria Pollutants

Construction emissions can vary substantially from day to day, depending on the level of activity, the specific type of operation, and prevailing weather conditions. Construction emissions result from on- site and off-site activities. On-site emissions principally consist of exhaust emissions from the activity levels of heavy-duty construction equipment, motor vehicle operation, and fugitive dust (mainly PM₁₀) from disturbed soil. Additionally, paving operations and application of architectural coatings would release VOC emissions. Off-site emissions are caused by motor vehicle exhaust from delivery vehicles, worker traffic, hauling truck trips associated with grading activity, and road dust (PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5}). Dust would be generated within the Project site and at off-site locations along the areas proposed for Project-related infrastructure improvements. To avoid increased adverse health effects from new construction related PM₁₀ and to address significant nuisance concerns (if any), such as visible clouds of dust and soiling of exposed surfaces, the proposed Project would be required to comply with the applicable SJVAPCD rules and regulations for criteria pollutant generation, a few of which have been listed above. With compliance of applicable SJVAPCD rules and regulations as required by General Plan policy and additional General Plan policies adopted for the purposes of reducing air quality impacts, the Project is expected to have a less than significant impact on criteria pollutants. Therefore, construction of the Project will have a less than significant impact.

Operation-related Criteria Pollutants

The major sources of operational emissions that would occur over the long-term operations of the proposed project are summarized below.

On-road Motor Vehicles

Motor vehicle emissions refer to exhaust and road dust emissions from the motor vehicles that would travel to and from and within the Project site. The proposed Project would primarily generate passenger vehicle trips from employees and visitors traveling to and from the site; however, the proposed Project would also be served with daily truck deliveries.

As discussed in Impact #3.4.3a, compliance with General Plan policies adopted for the purposes of reducing air quality impacts as a result of General Plan buildout would help in addressing area and mobile sources. Therefore, the Project is anticipated to result in a less than significant impact.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

No mitigation is required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Impacts would be *less than significant*.

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

Sensitive receptors refer to those segments of the population most susceptible to poor air quality (i.e., children, the elderly, and those with pre-existing serious health problems affected by air quality). Land uses that have the greatest potential to attract these types of sensitive receptors include schools, parks, playgrounds, daycare centers, nursing homes, hospitals, and residential communities. The closest sensitive receptors are single-family residences located east across Shirk Street approximately 100 feet from parcel boundaries. The Project site is currently improved with agricultural production and a dairy.

Light industrial, industrial, and airport industrial land uses have the potential to generate Toxic Air Contaminants (TACs) and can include, but are not limited to, solvents, diesel exhaust, and metals. In general TAC concentrations are typically highest near the emissions source and decline with increased distance. The California Air Resources Board (CARB) recommends that new sensitive land uses should not be sited within 500 feet of freeways/urban roads with 100,000 vehicles/day or rural roads with 50,000 vehicles/day.

LU-P-103 requires buffering land uses adjacent to existing or planned residential areas adjacent to industrial designations. The General Plan designated the westerly Project area closest to the existing residences for light industrial use. This area acts as a buffer from the potential of intensive industrial operations being located in close proximity to residential uses.

Additionally, PSCU-P-11 further requires a buffer zone along Shirk Street between the planned industrial and existing residential areas. Municipal code development standards

will require yard setback standards that further implement General Plan policies for pollutant concentration reduction before it reaches sensitive receptors.

With consideration of General Plan policies and development code standards, the Project will account for buffer zones between the planned industrial zoned areas and the existing residences. Therefore, although the Project anticipates the development of industrial uses, the Project will not result in substantial pollutant concentrations that would have an adverse impact on sensitive receptors.

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 requires that an analysis of potential odor impacts be conducted for the following two situations:

- Generators – projects that would potentially generate odorous emissions proposed to be located near existing sensitive receptors or other land uses where people may congregate, and
- Receivers – residential or other sensitive receptor projects or other projects built for the intent of attracting people located near existing odor sources.

The Project site is currently improved with a dairy and agricultural production. The dairy itself can be considered generation of odorous emissions. The Project can potentially generate odorous emissions proposed to be located near existing residential development located approximately 100 feet east of the Project parcel boundaries. However, as analyzed under Impact #3.4.3 (a) through (c), General Plan policies, municipal code development standards and compliance with SJVAPCD rules and regulations would reduce potential emissions to a less than significant impact. General Plan and municipal code development standards include the use of landscaped buffer areas and yard setbacks to provide further separation between industrial and residential uses. Additionally, compliance with SJVAPCD rules and regulations for construction and operation would allow the Project to further reduce potential pollutant generation. It should also be noted that the City of Visalia has designated the area closest to the residential neighborhood as light industrial eliminating the potential for intensive industrial uses being built close to sensitive receptors. Therefore, it is determined that the odors generated from the development as a result of construction and operation would be considered a less than significant impact.

The SJVAPCD has identified some common types of facilities that have been known to produce odors in the SJVAB. The types of facilities that are known to produce odors are shown in Table 3.4.3-2 below along with a reasonable distance from the source within which the degree of odors could possibly be significant. Manufacturing facilities are known to generate odorous emissions and include a screening distance of one (1) mile. It should be noted that the SJVAPCD has no rules or standards related to odor emissions other than its nuisance rule. As noted, the site is currently improved with a dairy that is located approximately a quarter mile west of existing residential development.

**Table 3.4.3-2
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: SJVAPCD 2021

The Project would allow the closure of the dairy, a listed potential odor source and replace the use with industrial and light industrial uses. There is approximately 1,000 feet that separates the designated industrial area from the existing residences. As noted, the light industrial designated area is closer at approximately 100 feet to the residential area and can be developed with less intensive industrial uses as defined in the City of Visalia municipal code. More intensive industrial uses would be allowed in industrial designated area and is located further away from the existing residences. Intensive industrial land uses including concrete and ready-mix manufacturing, animal refining and rendering, and certain chemical manufacturing are only allowed subject to approval of a conditional use permit and would require further environmental review.

Based on the assessment above, the Project is not expected to generate adverse odorous emissions or attract receptors and other sensitive receptors near existing odor sources. 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 type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" 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"/>

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 has historically been utilized as a dairy site and contains structures pertaining to the dairy, residences, and agricultural crops. Based on the historical disturbance and current conditions no special-status plant or wildlife species are anticipated to occur on the site. California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDDB) records indicate that there are reported occurrences of special-status species within a ten-mile radius of the Project site, however, no reported occurrences of a special-status species are located on the Project site. Figure 6-6 of the Visalia General Plan Update maps out data provided from the CNDDDB and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) for special-status species and indicates that no reported occurrence of a special-status species or habitat.

The General Plan Update included several policies for the protection of sensitive habitats and habitat for special-status species including OSC-P-28 for the protection of Valley Oaks woodlands, OSC-P-31 for the protection and enhancement of habitat for special-status species, and OSC-P-36 for the preparation of a habitat management plan for areas designated Conservation. As discussed above, State and federal data suggest that the Project site does not contain a reported occurrence of a special-status species and based on historical use of the site, does not contain preferred habitat for special-status species. The Project is expected to comply with regulatory rules and regulations including the Valley Oak Ordinance and Migratory Bird Treaty Act to reduce potential impacts on nesting birds and raptors. Therefore, with consideration of the above assessment, and the Project's compliance with regulatory requirements, the Project will not adversely affect special-status species 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 #3.4.4b – 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.

Figure 6-6 of the General Plan identified natural communities within the Visalia planning area and includes Annual Grasslands, Valley Oak Riparian Woodland, Valley Oak Woodland, Vernal Pools, and Wetlands. The Project site has been disturbed due to existing improvements related to the dairy and agricultural operation and does not contain any

identified natural communities. Review of the National Hydrography Dataset (NHD) and National Wetlands Inventory (NWI) suggest that there are two water features on the Project site. Aerial photography of the site indicates that the identified water features are an irrigation ditch and the freshwater pond as a ponding basin associated with the existing dairy.

As discussed, none of the identified sensitive communities were determined to have potential to occur within the Project site because all areas have been previously disturbed and/or are developed and no longer support suitable habitat for sensitive natural communities or riparian habitat. Therefore, the Project would have no impact on sensitive natural communities.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

No mitigation is required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Project would have *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?

See discussion for 3.4.4 - BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES (b).

As discussed, NHD and NWI reviews show that there are two water features present on the Project site. Further review of the water features indicate that both the irrigation ditch and freshwater pond are manmade features associated with the agricultural operation and dairy operation onsite. Although these water features may be altered as a result of the Project, the identified water features are not federal waters or protected wetlands and likely do not have biological importance. Therefore, 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*.

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?

Wildlife movement corridors, also referred to as dispersal corridors or landscape linkages, are generally defined as linear features along which animals can travel from one habitat or

resource area to another. Wildlife movement corridors can be large tracts of land that connect regionally important habitats that support wildlife in general, such as stop-over habitat that supports migrating birds or large contiguous natural habitats that support animals with very large home ranges (e.g., coyotes, mule deer). They can also be small scale movement corridors, such as riparian zones, which provide connectivity and cover to support movement at a local scale.

The General Plan Environmental Impact Report (EIR) noted that perennial and ephemeral drainages in the planning area represent important wildlife corridors connections riparian woodlands within undeveloped land. Several General Plan policies including OSC-O-7 call to preserve and enhance water ways and adjacent corridors within the planning area. OCS-P-8 and 9 further protect, restore, and enhance identified riparian vegetation and waterways including St. Johns River, Mill, Packwood, Cameron Creeks, and Evans Ditch.

There are no identified riparian habitats, waterways or movement corridors on or near the Project site, however the open agricultural field may be used by transient foragers for some species. The Project site does not contain an identified waterway as outlined above. Further, the identified water feature on the site shown as a freshwater pond per the National Hydrography Dataset (NHD) and the National Wetlands Inventory (NWI) was man-made pond related to the dairy, and no longer visible on aerial photography. The riverine feature running along the easterly boundary of the Project site is an irrigation canal. Neither feature hold significant biological importance. Therefore, the Project will result in less than significant impacts to fish or wildlife movement corridors, linkages, or nurse 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 General Plan contains policies aimed at the preservation of biological resources and promotes coordination with federal and State resource agencies (OSC-P-30). The General Plan outlines a work plan with implementation measures by which to uphold these policies, including biological resource review for proposed projects and development of protection measures for special-status species and their habitat.

The City’s Valley Oak Ordinance establishes policies for care, trimming, and removal of Valley Oaks. However, the Project does not conflict with the City of Visalia 2030 General Plan, the Valley Oak Tree Ordinance, or any other local ordinances.

Therefore, there are no impacts with respect to local policies and ordinance, and no measures are warranted adopted or approved plans related to the Project.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

No mitigation is required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Project would have *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 proposed Project would have a significant effect on biological resources if it would:

- a) *Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Conservation Community Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan.*

According to the California Department of Fish and Wildlife BIOS Map Viewer, the Project is not located within an area covered by Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) or natural Conservation Community Plan (NCCP), or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan (California Department of Fish and Wildlife, 2024). Therefore, no Project impacts related to adopted or approved plans would occur, no measures are warranted, and the Project has no impacts.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

No mitigation is required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Project would have *no impact*.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less-than-Significant Impact	No Impact
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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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Discussion

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 of Visalia has adopted multiple policies for the protection and maintenance of historical resources in the City of Visalia and includes 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. The Project site does not contain any historical resources identified in the General Plan.

The Project site is currently developed with an operating dairy, agricultural production, and associated structures. Due to the historical disturbance related to development of the site, underground cultural resources are not expected on the site. However, General Plan Policy OSC-P-39 establishes requirements to avoid potential impacts to sites suspected of being archaeologically, paleontologically, or historically significant and requires a records review, determination of potential effects of development and construction on resources, requiring pre-construction surveys and monitoring during ground disturbance, and implementing appropriate measures to avoid identified impacts as conditions of approval. As there is still a possibility that historical or archaeological materials may be exposed during construction, the Project implementation of Mitigation Measure CUL-1 would require an inspection monitoring by a qualified Archaeologist and a Native American Monitor during initial ground disturbance but before digging and trenching, when any historic or cultural resources would be visible, and establishment of procedure should a historical or archaeological resource be found during ground-disturbing activities.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

CUL-1: . Prior to any ground disturbance in connection with project development, a surface inspection of the relevant portion(s) of the project site shall be conducted by a qualified Archaeologist; a Tribal Monitor/Cultural Staff from a culturally affiliated Native American tribe identified by the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) shall be permitted to observe, subject to an executed agreement between the Tribe and the relevant applicant (as noted below). The Archaeologist (and Tribal Monitor/Cultural Staff, subject to an executed agreement with the relevant applicant) shall monitor the relevant portion(s) of the project site during initial ground disturbance activities that occur in connection with the subject proposal.

The relevant applicant shall offer, in good faith and based on commercially reasonable terms, a culturally affiliated Native American tribe identified by the NAHC the opportunity to provide a Native American Monitor during ground disturbing activities that occur in connection with the subject proposal. Tribal participation would be dependent upon the availability and interest of the Tribe as well as the parties being able to reach mutually acceptable terms.

In addition, the relevant applicant shall with diligence and good faith coordinate with the Tribal Monitor/Cultural Staff to enter into an agreement on commercially reasonable terms wherein the Tribal Monitor/Cultural Staff shall provide project-related activities training to supervisory personnel and any excavation contractor, which shall include information on potential cultural material finds and on the procedures to be enacted if Tribal Cultural Resources (TCRs) are found. Subject to such an executed agreement, the Tribal Monitor/Cultural Staff shall provide the foregoing activities prior to any ground disturbance in connection with an individual specific development proposal.

In the event that TCRs are discovered during project-related subsurface construction activities, operations shall stop within 100 feet of the find and a qualified Archaeologist shall determine whether the resource requires further study. In consultation with the City of Visalia and consulting tribes, the qualified Archaeologist shall determine the measures that shall be implemented to protect the discovered resources, including, but not limited to, excavation of the finds and evaluation of the finds in accordance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5. Measures may include avoidance, preservation in place, recordation, additional archaeological resting, and data recovery, among other options. Any previously undiscovered resources found during project-related subsurface construction activities shall be recorded on appropriate California Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) forms and evaluated for significance. No further ground disturbance shall occur in the immediate vicinity of the discovery until approved by the qualified Archaeologist.

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?

See discussion for Impact #3.4.5(a). Although considered unlikely since there is no indication of any historical or archaeological resources on the Project site, subsurface construction activities associated with the proposed Project could potentially damage or destroy previously undiscovered archaeological resources. This is considered a potentially significant impact. As discussed, through compliance of General Plan Policy OSC-P-39 and MM CUL-1, the Project would be required to address cultural resources should a previously unidentified cultural resource be discovered during construction and/or grading activity. Implementation of MM CUL-2 and CUL-3 would further reduce potential impacts to archaeological resources through construction employee training and discovery procedure should a resource be discovered during future site development. Impacts would be less than significant.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

CUL-2: Prior to the initiation of ground disturbance activities for project development, the relevant developer shall ensure that all construction personnel conducting ground disturbance at the project site in connection with the subject individual specific development proposal shall be provided a Worker Environmental Awareness Program (WEAP) cultural resources “tailgate” training. The training shall include visual aids, a discussion of applicable laws and statutes relating to archaeological resources, types of resources that may be found within the project site, and procedures to be followed in the event such resources are encountered. The training shall be conducted by an Archaeologist who meets the Secretary of the Interior’s Professional Qualification Standards for archaeology. Any Native American Monitors or representatives consulting on the proposed project shall be invited to attend and participate in the training session.

CUL-3: 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.

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?

See discussion for Impact #3.4.5 - (a).

The Project site has historically been utilized for dairy and agricultural operations. There are no indications that the site contains remains and was utilized as a cemetery. However, construction would involve earth-disturbing activities, and it is still possible that human remains may be discovered, possibly in association with archaeological sites. Should discovery of human remains occur during site development, MM CUL-4 establishes accepted procedure for identifying and addressing human remains. Accordingly, the Project will have a less than significant impact with implementation of MM CUL-4.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

CUL-4: In the event of the accidental discovery or recognition of any human remains during ground disturbance activities in connection with an individual specific development proposal, CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5, Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5, and Public Resources Code Sections 5097.94 and 5097.98 shall be followed by the relevant applicant. Specifically, the following steps shall be taken:

1. There shall be no further excavation or disturbance within 100 feet of the remains until the County Coroner is contacted to determine whether the remains are Native American and if an investigation of the cause of death is required. If the Coroner determines the remains to be Native American, the Coroner shall contact the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) within 24 hours, and the NAHC shall identify the person or persons it believes to be the Most Likely Descendant (MLD) of the deceased Native American. The MLD may make recommendations to the landowner

or the person responsible for the excavation work within 48 hours, for means of treating or disposing of, with appropriate dignity, the human remains, and any associated grave goods as provided in Public Resource Code Section 5097.98.

2. Where any of the following conditions occur, the landowner or his or her authorized representative shall rebury the Native American human remains and associated grave goods with appropriate dignity, either in accordance with the recommendations of the MLD or on the project site in a location not subject to further subsurface disturbance:
 - The NAHC is unable to identify an MLD.
 - The identified MLD fails to make a recommendation within 48 hours after being notified by the commission.
 - The landowner or his or her authorized representative rejects the recommendation of the identified MLD and mediation by the NAHC fails to provide measures acceptable to the landowner.

Additionally, California Public Resources Code Section 15064.5 requires the following relative to Native American remains:

- When an initial study identifies the existence of, or the probable likelihood of, Native American remains within a project, a lead agency shall work with the appropriate Native Americans as identified by the NAHC as provided in Public Resources Code Section 5097.98. Each relevant applicant in connection with its individual specific development proposal may develop a plan for treating or disposing of, with appropriate dignity, the human remains and any items associated with Native American burials with the appropriate Native Americans as identified by the NAHC.

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?

CEQA Guidelines require consideration of the potentially significant energy implications of a project. CEQA requires mitigation measures to reduce “wasteful, inefficient and unnecessary” energy usage (Public Resources Code Section 21100, subdivision [b][3]). The means to achieve the goal of conserving energy include decreasing overall energy consumption, decreasing reliance on natural gas and oil, and increasing reliance on renewable energy sources. In particular, the proposed Project would be considered “wasteful, inefficient, and unnecessary” if it were to violate State and federal energy standards and/or result in significant adverse impacts related to Project energy requirements, energy inefficiencies, energy intensiveness of materials, cause significant impacts on local and regional energy supplies or generate requirements for additional capacity, fail to comply with existing energy standards, otherwise result in significant adverse impacts on energy resources, or conflict or create an inconsistency with applicable plan, policy, or regulation. Electrical energy for the City of Visalia is supplied by Southern California Edison while Southern California Gas Company provides natural gas. The availability of electricity and gas services is not expected to become an issue during General Plan implementation.

The City of Visalia 2030 General Plan discusses how new development would result in increased energy use, in the form of new building energy use and transportation. Both residential and nonresidential development use electricity, natural gas, and petroleum products for power, lighting, heating, and other indoor and outdoor services, while cars use both oil and gas. Energy demand during the construction phase would result from the transportation of materials, construction equipment, and construction worker vehicle trips.

Construction associated with the Project would be required to comply with California's Title 24 energy efficiency requirements which also includes the 2022 California Green Building Standards Code and other applicable City development standards.

Operation of industrial uses associated with the Project would be required to comply with energy efficiency standards as dictated by State and federal regulations including Title 24 energy efficiency requirements and adopted energy efficiency standards by the California Energy Commission.

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 3.4.6 – (a). The Project will not conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy efficiency 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
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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 offsite landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction, or collapse? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| d. | 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? | <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?

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. While the southern San Joaquin Valley contains some small faults, the closest of these is 40 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 closest potentially active fault is located approximately 40 miles south of Visalia. The San Andreas and Owens Valley fault systems would not be expected to cause surface fault rupture in the Project area and therefore has 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 US Geological Survey conducts 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, are expected to damage only weaker masonry buildings. However, very infrequent earthquakes could still cause strong shaking but with implementation of Title 24 building requirements and local standards. 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?

The susceptibility of land sliding/slope failure is dependent on the slope and geology as well as the amount of rainfall, excavation, or seismic activities. Land that has experienced sliding in the past is often more slide-prone and more sensitive to both human-induced changes and to earthquakes. Earthquake-induced ground failures are unlikely to occur in the City of Visalia because of its relatively stable geologic formation and lack of active faults. Therefore, the Project would have less than significant impact related to seismic-related liquefaction.

Settlement of the ground surface can be accelerated and accentuated by earthquakes. During an earthquake, settlement can occur as a result of the relatively rapid compaction and settling of subsurface materials (particularly loose, non-compacted, and variable sandy sediments) due to the rearrangement of soil particles during prolonged ground shaking. Settlement can occur both uniformly and differentially (i.e., where adjoining areas settle at different rates). Typically, areas underlain by artificial fills, unconsolidated alluvial sediments, slope wash, and areas with improperly engineered construction fills are susceptible to this type of settlement. During an earthquake, some settlement of soil materials in Visalia may occur. However, very infrequent earthquakes occur within the City of Visalia and the surrounding region. With implementation of Title 24 building

requirements and local standards, impacts would be less than significant related to earthquakes.

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?

Surface soils exhibit various characteristics dependent on location, slope, parent rock, climate, and drainage. According to the General Plan, surface soils in the City of Visalia range from fine sandy loam and loam to alkali soils. The most prevalent soils are Nord fine sandy loam; Grangeville sandy loam, drained; Tagus loam; and Akers-Akers, saline-sodic, complex. Some soils have the potential to present moderate geologic hazards to building, due to their susceptibility to erosion or to expansion and contraction.

In general, soil containing high amounts of silt can be easily eroded, while sandy soils are less susceptible. Erosion is most likely to occur on sloped areas with exposed soil, especially where unnatural slopes are created by cut-and-fill activities. Soil erosion rates can be higher during the construction phase. Excessive soil erosion can eventually damage building foundations and roadways. Per the Natural Resources Conservation Service, Web Soil Survey, the Project site is comprised of Akers-Akers, saline-sodic complex and Grangeville sandy loam (U.S. Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service, 2023). Akers-Akers, saline-sodic soil is characterized with fine sandy loam and is classified as well drained with a likely depth to water table of more than 80 inches. Grangeville sandy loam is characterized with sandy loam at 0 to 27 inches and stratified loamy sand to silt loam at 27 to 67 inches and is classified as somewhat poorly drained with a general depth to water table at more than 80 feet. The groundwater depth in the vicinity of the Project is approximately 90-100 feet below ground surface (Humphrey, 2022)

The City adopted the 2022 California Building Code as the City's building code and ordinance (Title 15: Buildings and Construction). The City will make a recommendation for necessary adjustments to project plans that offset potential soil problems. Adherence to these requirements reduces this impact to a level that is 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 has 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.

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 from the State of California Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) during construction. 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. An SWPPP must identify potential sources of erosion or sedimentation and identify and implement best management practices (BMPs) that ensure reduced erosion. If an SWPPP was not required, the Project would implement the standard BMPs. 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. Overall, the development of the Project would not result in conditions where substantial surface soil would be exposed to wind and water erosion.

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 offsite landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction, or collapse?

See above discussions under Impact #3.4.7 (a)(i) - (iv) & (b). The Project will have a less than significant impact with 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 shrink or swell 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 Highway 99/198 interchange, north of the St. Johns River, and in the northwest near the intersection of Road 80 and Avenue 328 with Figure 6-5 of the General Plan depicting these areas (City of Visalia, 2014). The Project site is located outside identified moderate shrink-swell potential areas and is not 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.

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 annexation of the site and will be located within the city limits of the City of Visalia. After annexation is completed, the site is expected to be serviced by existing public infrastructure for wastewater disposal. 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

The Project would have **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. As discussed in Impact 3.4.5a, b, and c, the adopted General Plan Policy OSC-P-39, which accounts for previously unidentified historical, archaeological, or paleontological resources that are discovered during construction activities are implemented as mitigation measures. The Project will comply with General Plan Policy OSC-P-39 through implementation of CUL-1 through 3 and would not significantly impact a unique geological or paleontological resource.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

Implement MM CUL-1 through CUL-3..

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
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

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 SJVAPCD does not have an established threshold for GHG emission impacts. The City of Visalia has adopted Objectives and Policies with the goal of reducing emissions of greenhouse gases that contribute to global climate change in accordance with federal and State laws.

- Objective AQ-O-3: Reduce emissions of greenhouse gases that contribute to global climate change in accordance with federal and State law.
- Policy AQ-P-12: Support the implementation of Voluntary Emissions Reduction Agreements (VERA) with the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District (the District) for individual development projects that may exceed District significance thresholds. A VERA is a voluntary mitigation measure where a project proponent provides pound-for-pound mitigation of emissions increases through a process that develops, funds, and implements emissions reduction projects, with the District serving a role of administrator of emissions reduction programs and verifier of successful mitigation effort. To implement a VERA, the project proponent and the District entered into a contractual agreement in which the project proponent agrees to mitigate project-specific emissions by providing funds for the District’s Strategies and Incentives Program. The funds are disbursed in the form of grants for projects that achieve emissions reductions.

- Policy AQ-P-16: Support State efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions through local action that will reduce motor vehicle use, support alternative forms of transportation, require energy conservation in new construction, and energy management in public buildings, in compliance with AB 32. By proposing compact development, mixed use centers, walkable neighborhoods, green building technology, and jobs-housing balance, the City will be helping to implement many of the strategies and programs in the San Joaquin Valley 2007 Ozone Plan.
- Policy AQ-P-17: Prepare and adopt a Climate Action Plan that incorporates a Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Emissions Reduction Plan. The GHG Emissions Reduction Plan will quantify current and anticipated future emissions and focus on feasible actions the City can take to minimize the adverse impacts of General Plan implementation on climate change and air quality.

The City of Visalia Climate Action Plan (CAP) was adopted in December 2013 and provides a policy document that includes strategies for reducing GHG emissions. The CAP includes objectives and policies from the General Plan that address long-term emissions reduction efforts and the timeframe of the CAP extends through 2030. Visalia’s CAP includes a baseline GHG emissions inventory of community and municipal sector GHG emissions, identification and analysis of existing and proposed GHG reduction measures, and GHG emissions reduction targets to help Visalia work toward the State’s goal of an 80 percent reduction below baseline emissions by 2050. The City’s community activities emitted approximately 906,337 metric tons of CO₂e in 2005. The transportation sector was the most significant of all community sectors, comprising 55 percent, followed by the commercial/industrial sector (23 percent), and then closely by the residential sector (22 percent). In addition, the City’s municipal operations emitted approximately 16,446 metric tons of CO₂e in 2005. Per the Visalia General Plan EIR, the rate of greenhouse gas emissions under proposed Plan buildout is estimated to be below baseline conditions including the effect of federal and statewide reduction measures in addition to CAP GHG reduction measures and less than the targets set under AB 32 and Executive Order S-3-05. Transportation GHG emissions are estimated to also decrease, from baseline conditions of 3.23 MTCO₂e to buildout emissions of 0.81 MTCO₂e per service population. Therefore, the impact of General Plan implementation on greenhouse gas emissions would be less than significant (City of Visalia, 2014). As the proposed annexation is within the Tier 1 Urban Development Boundary for Visalia that is planned for further industrial development, the anticipated annexation and any subsequent development would be within General Plan assumptions 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 greenhouse gas (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 MPOs to adopt an SCS or 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 thirteen (13) percent per capita decrease in 2020 and a sixteen (16) percent per capita decrease in 2035 from a base year of 2005.

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

The Project would be consistent with the City of Visalia 2030 General Plan upon preparation and approval of the annexation. 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. The current plan has identified new policies and actions to accomplish the State’s 2030 GHG limit.

Based on the assessment above, 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, any 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 type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

Discussion

The impact analyses in this section are based on a *Phase I Environmental Site Assessment Report* (Humphrey, 2022) attached as Appendix E.

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

Project construction-related activities may involve the use and transport of hazardous materials. These materials may include fuels, oils, mechanical fluids, and other chemicals used during construction-related activities. These materials could expose human health or the environment to undue risks associated with their use, and no significant impacts will occur during construction activities.

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. U.S. Department of Transportation and Caltrans regulate the transportation of hazardous materials. Additionally, the City's routes that have been designated for hazardous materials transport would be used. 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 offsite landfill or other such facilities. In addition, sanitary waste generated during construction would be managed through portable toilets located at reasonably accessible onsite locations.

Federal and State laws require detailed planning to ensure that hazardous materials are properly handled, used, stored, transported and disposed of, and in the event that such materials are accidentally released, to prevent or mitigate injury to health or the environment. Laws and regulations require hazardous materials users to train employees to manage them safely. The primary Federal agencies with responsibility for hazardous materials management include the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), U.S. Department of Labor Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), and the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT). In many cases, California State law mirrors or is more restrictive than federal law, and enforcement of these laws has been delegated to the State or a local agency. The General Plan reflects the following objective:

- S-O-3: Protect soil, surface water, and groundwater from contamination from hazardous materials.

Construction activities associated with the proposed Project may involve the temporary transport and use of minor quantities of hazardous materials such as fuels, oils, lubricants, hydraulic fluids, paints and solvents as a result of construction build-out related to residential development. The handling and transport of all hazardous materials onsite would be required to perform in accordance with all applicable federal, State, and local laws and regulations. Construction of the Project would require preparing and implementing an SWPPP, as noted in Impact #3.4.7b. The SWPPP is a State requirement under the National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit for construction sites over one acre.

Project Operation

State and local regulatory compliance would require that 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 be required to prepare, submit, and receive 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.

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, the Impacts would be less than significant.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

No mitigation is required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Impacts would be *less than significant*.

Impact #3.4.9b – 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?

A Phase I ESA prepared for the Project reviewed available historical records and a site survey was conducted to identify recognized environmental conditions (RECs), controlled recognized environment condition (CREC), historical recognized environmental conditions (HREC), or Business Environmental Risk (BER) (Humphrey, 2022). Based on the data available and observations made at the site, no on-site RECs, CRECs, HRECs were identified. It was noted that at least two septic systems, an irrigation well, a water well associated with the milking barn, and one domestic well were present on site. It was recommended that as part of redevelopment activities, the on-site water wells and septic systems should be properly closed in accordance with State and local guidelines.

Land uses such as confined animal space lots and dairy facility effluent ponding basins can impact groundwater and include elevated nitrate levels. The RWQCB was contacted and based on their review, will not require investigation of groundwater beneath dairy and confined animal sites unless a known impact has been identified that has compromised water quality of a site. It was further stated by RWQCB personnel that site closure of dairy and confined animal sites for conversion to industrial or commercial use, would be limited to surface soils of corral areas, effluent ponds, and any stockpiled manure. These closure activities target removal of manure on surface soils and within effluent ponds (Humphrey,

2022). Development of the Project site for industrial uses will require connecting to the City's existing infrastructure, and a will serve letter will be obtained prior to development of the site.

The Project site is currently and was historically used for agricultural purposes. There is a potential that agricultural related chemicals may have been used onsite. During site redevelopment activities, near surface soils (where residual agricultural chemical concentrations would have most likely been present, if at all) are likely generally mixed with fill material or disturbed during grading. Also, it is common that engineered fill material is placed over underlying soils as part of site development activities. These additional variables serve to further reduce the potential for exposure to residual agricultural chemicals (if any). Planned use of the property has been identified as light industrial, industrial or warehouse space and not residential. Based on these reasons, it is anticipated that the previous use of agricultural chemicals is not expected to represent a significant environmental concern (Humphrey, 2022).

Hazardous materials handling on the Project site as a result of the development may result in soil and groundwater contamination from accidental spills. Construction of the Project would require preparing and implementing an SWPPP, as noted in Impact #3.4.7b. The SWPPP is a State requirement under the National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit for construction sites over one acre. The SWPPP identifies potential sources of pollution from the Project that may affect the quality of stormwater discharge and requires that best management practices (BMPs) be implemented to prevent contamination at the source. By implementing BMPs during any future construction activities, accidental spills of hazardous materials would be contained, and soil and groundwater contamination would be minimized or prevented. Development of a SWPPP and associated BMPs shall be determined by the city engineer through standard permitting processes for the Project. Additionally, any proposed operation on the Project will be required to prepare and receive approval of a HMBP should the proposed operation handle hazardous materials in excess of established reporting thresholds. The HMBP would include emergency response plans in the event of a release or threatened release of a hazardous material in addition to employee safety training.

The proposed Project is not anticipated to create a significant hazard to the public or the environment; as mentioned previously, the Project would be subject to State and local requirements for construction and operation including the preparation and approval of a SWPPP and HMBP per State and local requirements and 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 #3.4.9c – 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 Denton Elementary School, approximately 0.2 miles southeast of the Project site. 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 are 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 Project will be required to report and handle hazardous materials over an established reporting threshold per an approved HMBP; therefore, although the Project is located within a one-quarter mile radius of an existing school, 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?

According to EnviroStor (Department of Toxic Substances Control, 2023) the Project site is not included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5.

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

The Project would have *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 two miles northeast of the Visalia Municipal Airport and is partially located within the proposed Airport Influence Area as indicated in the Tulare County Comprehensive Airport Land Use Plan (Tulare County, 2012). Further review indicates that the Project site is located outside of the safety compatibility zone. Per Table 3-1 of the Tulare County Comprehensive Airport Land Use Plan, indoor processes, industrial manufacturing, and warehousing and distribution are compatible uses for areas within the Airport Influence Area, but outside a safety zone. Therefore, the Project will have no impact.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

No mitigation is required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Project would have *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 utilized Tulare County’s Emergency Operations Plan, which includes planning and response scenarios for seismic hazards, extreme weather conditions, landslides, dam failure, other flooding, wildland fires, hazardous materials incidents, transportation emergencies, civil disturbance, and terrorist attacks. In addition, the Project would also comply with the appropriate local and State requirements regarding emergency response plans and access (City of Visalia, 2022). 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 Project site and surrounding area are relatively flat, with little to no topography that might obscure visibility to motorists. Additionally, roadway improvements are planned under the General Plan to maintain traffic safety with the anticipated increase in vehicle trips. Therefore, the Impacts would be less than significant.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

No mitigation is required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Impacts would be *less than significant*.

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

The land surrounding the Project site is primarily developed with a mix of urban and agricultural uses. The area is not considered to have impacts from wildfires. Further, the Project site is located within the Urban Growth Boundary and the Visalia Sphere of Influence for future development, outside of any natural vegetative community. The Visalia General Plan includes policies that would protect any future development on the Project site and the community from fire dangers.

The Project site is less than one mile southwest of the Visalia Fire Department Station 55, the closest fire station. The Project will comply with all applicable State and local building standards as required by local fire codes and impact fees to support additional fire protection services. The Project would not expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving wildland fires.

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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3.4.10 - 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 checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" 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

Surface Water

Visalia is in the center of the Kaweah River Delta System, resulting in many rivers and creeks flowing through the city. The St. Johns River is the City's primary surface water feature. Other significant surface water features include Modoc Ditch, Mill Creek Ditch, Mill Creek, Tulare Irrigation District (TID) Canal, Packwood Creek, Cameron Creek, Deep Creek, Evans Creek, Persian Ditch, and several other local ditches. These receive a significant amount of water during the rainy season and help drain stormwater.

Groundwater

Groundwater in Tulare County is present in valley deposits of alluvium that are several thousand feet thick and occurs in both confined and unconfined conditions. The creeks in Visalia are tied to the groundwater system. The creeks lose water in the winter while they feed the groundwater, and gain water in the summer when the groundwater feeds the creeks. The depth to groundwater varies significantly throughout the valley floor area of Tulare County. In the area around Visalia, depth to groundwater varies from about 120 feet below ground surface along the western portion of the city to approximately 100 feet below ground surface to the east, as measured in spring 2010. Groundwater levels measured in the city have declined since the 1940s, from approximately 30 feet below ground surface in 1940 to 120 feet below ground surface in 2010. The water quality of the groundwater that underlies the Planning Area is excellent for domestic and agricultural uses. This is most likely due to the abundant snowmelt that originates in the Sierra Nevada. Groundwater is the primary source of drinking water for the planning area residents.

Stormwater Drainage

The City, in conjunction with Kaweah Delta Water Conservation District and Tulare Irrigation District, operates and maintains a vast municipal storm drainage system that consists of drainage channels, 23 detention and retention basins, 33 pump stations and 250 miles of pipe. Stormwater from the project site will be collected and conveyed to an on-site stormwater basin.

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 activities related to development of the Project site including grading could temporarily increase soil erosion rates during and shortly after site construction. Construction-related erosion could result in the loss of soil and could adversely affect water quality in nearby surface waters. As noted in Impact 3.4.7a, construction of the proposed Project will be required to prepare a site-specific SWPPP as required by the RWQCB. The SWPPP is required to be approved by the RWQCB prior to construction that identifies project-specific best management measures that are designed to control drainage and erosion.

The Project site is located 350 feet north of the Mill Creek Ditch and will not impact this waterway as related to the goals and policies of the General Plan and the updated City of Visalia Waterways and Trails Master Plan, as the site is not adjacent to or within a water corridor.

Therefore, implementation of Project-specific drainage improvements as identified in the city's standard requirements would reduce the potential for the proposed Project to violate water quality standards during construction to a less than significant impact.

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 Visalia area is located within the Kaweah Groundwater Subbasin of the San Joaquin Valley Groundwater Basin. The Subbasin's 696 square miles generally comprises lands in the Kaweah Delta Water Conservation District (KDWCD), and include the Kaweah and St. Johns Rivers, with the former being the primary source of groundwater recharge. The alluvial fans of waterways provide highly permeable areas in which groundwater is readily replenished. Annual rainfall in Visalia usually ranges from eight to 12 inches; however, there is no estimate of what percentage of rainfall reaches the groundwater supply. Groundwater flow is generally southwestward. Based on groundwater elevation maps, horizontal groundwater barriers do not appear to exist in the subbasin.

According to the Department of Water Resources, groundwater levels in the subbasin have declined about 12 feet on average from 1970 to 2000, with periodic fluctuations. As population continues to grow and farming practices continue at the current rate, groundwater levels may also decline unless recharge is increased.

Visalia has implemented a Groundwater Overdraft Mitigation Ordinance, which imposes a groundwater mitigation fee on new development and a groundwater impact fee on water suppliers. The fees are used to construct and improve groundwater recharge facilities and to purchase water for groundwater recharge. Recharge efforts are coordinated by the City with KDWCD and local irrigation districts.

According to California Water Service's 2020 UWMP for the City of Visalia (California Water Service, 2021), the actual water used for single-family residential in 2020 was 19,359-acre feet (AF). Commercial water demand in 2020 was 5,239 AF and for industrial water demand 305 AF. The projected water demand for industrial uses for 2030 is 308 AF. The proposed Project does not include water-intensive uses such as High Density Residential homes.

Industrial and Light Industrial uses that include warehousing would be considered to have a low demand for water. When annexed, the Project would be consistent with the City's General Plan land use designation. As such, the Project would not affect groundwater supplies beyond what has already been analyzed in the most current General Plan EIR or Urban Water Management Plan.

The Project would result in nearly full development of the site, which could convert approximately 75 acres from pervious surfaces to impervious surfaces. However, this would not significantly interfere with groundwater recharge because all stormwaters would be collected and diverted to new stormwater basins located on the Project site for groundwater recharge. Because the addition of impervious surfaces would not interfere substantially with groundwater recharge and the project would not utilize groundwater resources beyond what has been previously analyzed in the Visalia Planning Area General Plan EIR or the Urban Water Management Plan, the impact would be less than significant.

The City has adopted numerous policies to reduce water demand through conservation and other means and to increase surface water imports to the City and surrounding areas. These include the Groundwater Recharge Fee, Groundwater Impact Fee, Groundwater Mitigation Fee, and the Water Conservation Ordinance. The developer will be responsible for paying the City's Groundwater Overdraft Mitigation Fee.

The proposed Project is located within the Tier I UDB and is part of the planned growth of the City as indicated in the General Plan Land Use Element. Therefore, as the site is anticipated and planned for urbanized growth. The developer of the site is expected to pay the City's Groundwater Overdraft Mitigation Fee, and therefore, will likely 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 Project site is mostly flat and would not substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area. The Project site does not have a stream or river and is approximately 350 feet away from the Mill Creek Ditch. It is anticipated that the Project will install stormwater retention basin(s) that will maintain stormwater runoff on the site. The Project would develop areas of impervious surfaces that would reduce the rate of percolation at the site, but areas of open space would allow for the percolation of stormwater to recharge the

aquifer, or the water would be directed into the City's existing stormwater sewer system. The Project would comply with applicable City development standards and codes. Therefore, the Project would have a less than significant impact on drainage patterns or cause substantial erosion or siltation on or off the site.

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. Construction-related erosion and sedimentation impacts due to soil disturbance would be less than significant after implementing an SWPPP and BMPs required by the NPDES. No drainages or other water bodies are present on the Project site, and therefore, the proposed project would not change the course of any such drainages.

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. The Project design includes natural features such as landscaping and vegetation that would allow for the percolation of stormwater. However, there will be an addition in impervious surfaces that could increase the potential for stormwater runoff and soil erosion. The Project would connect to 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.

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?

No drainages or other water bodies are present on the Project site. Therefore, the development of the site would not change the course of any such drainages that may potentially result in on or offsite flooding. Water would be used during the temporary construction phase of the Project (e.g., for dust suppression). However, any water used for dust control would be mechanically and precisely applied and would generally infiltrate or evaporate prior to running off.

The Project site is flat, and the proposed grading would not substantially alter the overall topography of the Project site. Although the amount of surface runoff on the Project site would not substantially increase with the construction of the Project, runoff patterns and concentrations could be altered by grading activities associated with the Project. Improper design of the access road or building pads could alter drainage patterns that would cause

flooding on or offsite. 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. With the implementation of such measures, the Project would not substantially increase the amount of runoff to result in flooding on or offsite. Impacts would be reduced to less-than-significant levels.

Additionally, with the approval of grading plans and site development requirements by the City Building Division that incorporates BMPs and design standards, the new development operations would not substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner that would result in flooding on or offsite. 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 #3.4.7a and Impact #3.4.10a. Water would be used during the temporary construction phase of the proposed Project (e.g., for dust suppression). However, any water used for dust control would be mechanically and precisely applied and would generally infiltrate or evaporate prior to running off.

The Project would comply with all applicable State and City codes and regulations. The Project will construct a stormwater retention basin onsite to capture stormwater, and engineering calculations will support the storm drainage plan to ensure that the Project does 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. 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) – (c)(iii), Project construction activities could potentially alter the course of existing drainage pattern on 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. The proposed Project does not include any construction activities that would direct excess surface waters or impede or redirect any potential flood flows.

Once constructed, there will be impervious surfaces created by buildings, roads, driveways, etc. However, there are anticipated to be open spaces such as setbacks and basins that will allow stormwater to percolate back into the aquifer. The Project would comply with all applicable State and City codes and regulations related to stormwater during construction and post-construction.

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 is located inland and is not located near an ocean or large body of water, and therefore, would not be affected by a tsunami. Since the Project is located in an area that is not susceptible to inundation, the Project would not risk the release of pollutants.

There is no potential for the inundation of the Project site by seiche. Therefore, the Project would not contribute to inundation by seiche, tsunami, or mudflow. The Project would have no impact.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

No mitigation is required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Project would have *no impact*.

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 #3.4.10b.

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 City of Visalia obtains the majority of its domestic water from California Water Service.

The City Public Works Department will review any future development as a result of the Project approval and associated water demand analysis to determine if water service will be available through City of Visalia. The future development will be required to show water infrastructure connections to the nearest water main and water mains would be extended within the proposed lot to provide service to each unit created, subject to payment of applicable water charges.

Further, the City’s General Plan includes policies and initiatives to ensure the City promotes water conservation, such as the use of low flow toilets, drip irrigation, and drought resistant landscaping. The Project developer would also pay the City’s Groundwater Overdraft Mitigation Fees. 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*.

	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 Project is surrounded by residentially developed property to the east, agricultural fields to the north, and various industrial uses to the west and south.

The Project intends to annex into the City limits, which is planned by the General Plan. The site is located within the urban development boundaries of the City. The Project would not physically divide an established community nor create any physical barrier between an established community.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

No mitigation is required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Project would have *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-20: Allow annexation and development of residential, commercial, and industrial land to occur within the Tier I Urban Development Boundary (UDB) at any time, consistent with the City's Land Use Diagram.
- LU-P-28: Continue to use natural and man-made edges, such as major roadways and waterways within the city's Urban Area Boundary, as urban development limit and growth phasing lines.
- 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.
- LU-P-47: Establish criteria and standards for pedestrian, bicycle, and vehicle circulation networks within new subdivisions and non-residential development.

As proposed, the Project will be consistent with the General Plan goals, objectives and policies for Land Use. As noted previously, the General Plan establishes three new growth boundaries to reflect current conditions and available population and job growth data. The first Tier, also known as Tier I UDB, is largely coterminous with the 2012 city limits. It comprises slightly over half of the potentially developable land under the Plan and could support a target buildout population of approximately 160,000. The second Tier, known as the Tier II UDB comprises 27,936 acres and could support a target population of approximately 178,000. The third Tier, known as the Tier III UDB, comprises 32,648 acres and full buildout of the General Plan and could support a target buildout population of approximately 210,000. The Project site is located in the Tier I UDB and is appropriately designated and zoned for industrial use.

The Project will not cause a significant environmental impact due to a conflict with a land use plan, policy, or regulation, as the Project site has been identified for future industrial development build-out. 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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3.4.12 - 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?

According to the General Plan, the Project site is not located in an area designated for mineral resource preservation or recovery; therefore, 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.

According to the Department of Conservation Division of Mine Reclamation SMARA mapping tool, the nearest open mine (Kaweah South 91-54-0036) to the Project site is approximately 10 miles to the southeast (Department of Conservation, 2023a). Additionally, the Department of Conservation, well finder tool does not identify an active oil or gas well in close proximity to the Project site (Department of Conservation, 2023b). However, there is a dry and plugged well approximately 800 feet north of the Project site, which will not be impacted by the implementation of the Project. There is no impact.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

No mitigation is required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Project would have *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?

There are no known mineral resources of importance to the region and the Project site is not designated under the City's or County's General Plan as an important mineral resource recovery site. Therefore, it will not result in the loss of availability of a locally important mineral resource and 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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3.4.13 - 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input 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.

- 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 DNL/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. 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, 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 responsibility, with no City funding.
- 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 Visalia Municipal Code, Chapter 8.36 contains a number of regulations that would apply to noise generated by a proposed project's temporary construction activity and long-term operation. Regulations that are relevant to the proposed project's potential industrial development and operation are addressed below:

Section 8.36.040: Exterior Noise Standards – Fixed Noise Sources

- A. It is unlawful for any person at any location within the City to create any noise, or to allow the creation of any noise, on property owned, leased, occupied or otherwise controlled by such person which causes the exterior noise level, when measured at the property line of any affected noise-sensitive land use, to exceed any of the categorical noise level standards as set forth in the following table:

Noise Level Standards, dBA, Exterior Noise Standards for Fixed Noise Sources

Category	Cumulative Number of minutes in any one-hour time period.	Evening and Daytime (6 AM to 7 PM)	Nighttime (7 PM to 6)AM
1	30	50	45
2	15	55	50
3	5	60	55
4	1	65	60

5

0

70

65

Source: City of Visalia Municipal Code

- B. In the event the measured ambient noise level without the alleged offensive source in operation exceeds an applicable noise level standard in any category above, the applicable standard or standards shall be adjusted so as to equal the ambient noise level.
- C. Each of the noise level standards specified above shall be reduced by five dB for pure tone noises, noises consisting primarily of speech or music, or for recurring impulsive noises.
- D. If the intruding noise source is continuous and cannot reasonably be discontinued or stopped for a time period whereby the ambient noise level without the source can be measured, the noise level measured while the source is in operation shall be compared directly to the noise level standards.

The Visalia Municipal Code defines a “fixed noise source” as “a device, machine or combination thereof which creates sound, which is affixed or installed on real property, including but not limited to residential, agricultural, industrial and commercial machinery and equipment, pumps, fans, compressors, air conditioners and refrigeration equipment.” Based on this definition, the proposed project’s construction vehicles would not be considered “fixed noise sources.” Thus, Section 8.36.040 standards would not apply to the proposed project’s construction vehicle activities.

Section 8.36.050: Exterior Noise Standards–Mobile Noise Sources Prohibition Against Use

According to Municipal Code Section 8.36.050, it is unlawful to operate any of the below-listed devices, appliances, equipment or vehicles on public or private property abutting noise-sensitive land uses between the weekday hours of 7:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m., or between the weekend hours of 7:00 p.m. and 9:00 a.m.

- A. Power-assisted leaf blowers, lawn mowers, edgers or other power equipment used for the maintenance of property.
- B. Vehicle equipment, which equipment is not expressly regulated by State or federal statute, such as car radios or sound amplification equipment which is audible more than twenty-five (25) feet from the exterior of the vehicle.
- C. Construction equipment including jackhammers, portable generators, pneumatic equipment, trenchers, or other such equipment, except for emergency repair purposes as provided in Section 8.36.070.

8.36.060: Residential Interior Noise Standards

Municipal Code Section 8.36.060 sets out noise standards based on noise levels experienced within a dwelling unit. Relevant portions of that section are set out below.

- A. It is unlawful for any person, at any location within the City, to operate or cause to be operated, any source of sound or to allow the creation of any noise which causes the noise level when measured inside a dwelling unit to exceed any of the categorized noise level standards as set forth in the following table:

Noise Level Standards dBA, Residential Interior Noise Standards

Category	Cumulative Number of minutes in any one-hour time period	Evening and Daytime (6 AM to 7 PM)	Nighttime (7 PM to 6 AM)
1	5	45	35
2	1	50	40
3	0	55	45

Source: Visalia Municipal Code

- B. In the event the measured ambient noise level without the alleged offensive source in operation exceeds an applicable noise level standard in any category above, the applicable standard or standards shall be adjusted so as to equal the ambient noise level.
- C. Each of the noise level standards specified above shall be reduced by five dB for pure tone noises, noises consisting primarily of speech or music, or four recurring impulsive noises.

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 (residential) are located approximately 100 feet away from where construction activities could occur within the Project area.

The General Plan exterior noise level standard of 65 dB DNL applicable to transportation noise sources affecting residential uses. Therefore, it is possible Project construction equipment could result in short-term increases over ambient maximum noise levels at nearby existing residential uses. Further, it is possible that those noise levels could exceed the applicable Visalia General Plan and Municipal Code noise level limits. As a result, noise impacts associated with Project's construction activities are identified as being potentially significant. Therefore, mitigation measures have been proposed to reduce noise impacts to less than significant levels. NSE-1 requires the Project developer or contractor to continuously comply with measures to reduce noise impacts from the Project. This includes restricting construction activities to daylight hours, the use of noise baffles or mufflers on construction equipment, the use of electric equipment, locating equipment in areas away

from sensitive receptors, and neighboring property owners will be notified of construction schedules prior to the start of construction. Implementation of MM NSE-1 will reduce noise impacts to less than significant levels.

Industrial Operations Noise

Anticipated industrial development as a result of the proposed annexation are required and expected to comply with the listed performance standards for noise generation. The City of Visalia also includes development standards for industrial and light industrial development where increased yard setbacks and masonry wall requirements along property lines where a site abuts R-1 or R-M zone districts. As noted, the nearest sensitive receptors are located approximately 100 feet east of the subject site across Shirk Street where a masonry wall exists. To further reduce potential noise generation, design features or reduction measures are recommended to be incorporated and noted on all plans and specifications to mitigate any operational noise impact to meet applicable noise performance criteria. The reduction measures and design features may include, but are not limited to the following:

- Orienting facilities so that truck loading and unloading areas are located facing away from nearby residential land uses.
- Providing gasket loading dock doors to help shield truck loading and unloading noise.
- Providing screening, such as a structure or sound wall, to shield truck loading and unloading areas from nearby residential uses.

With the implementation of MM NSE-2, the design features and/or reduction measure on future plans and specifications would allow potential light industrial and industrial uses to operate at acceptable noise levels and result in a less than significant impact.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

NSE-1: The Project developer or contractor shall continuously comply with the following measures throughout construction activities:

- a. 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.
- b. All noise-producing project equipment and vehicles using internal-combustion engines shall be equipped with manufacturers-recommended mufflers and be maintained in good working condition.
- c. All mobile or fixed noise-producing equipment used on the project site that is regulated for noise output by a federal, State, or local agency shall comply with such regulations while in the course of project construction activity.

- d. Electrically powered equipment shall be used instead of pneumatic or internal combustion-powered equipment, where feasible.
- e. Material stockpiles and mobile equipment staging, parking, and maintenance areas shall be located as far as practicable from noise-sensitive receptors.
- f. Project area and site access road speed limits shall be established and enforced during the construction period.
- g. Nearby residences shall be notified of construction schedules so that arrangements can be made, if desired, to limit their exposure to short-term increases in ambient noise levels.

NSE-2: The project applicant shall be required to incorporate, at a minimum, design features or reduction measures to be incorporated and noted on all plans and specifications to mitigate any operational noise impact to meet applicable noise performance criteria. These reduction measures and design features may include, but are not limited to:

- a. Orienting the facility so that the warehouse truck loading/unloading areas are located facing away from nearby residential land uses.
- b. • Providing gasket loading dock doors to help shield truck loading and unloading noise.
- c. • Providing screening, such as a structure or sound wall, to shield truck loading and unloading areas from nearby residential land uses.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

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

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

During Project construction, heavy equipment would be used for grading, excavation, paving, and building construction, which would generate localized vibration in the immediate vicinity of the construction. The nearest existing sensitive receptors have been identified as residential structures located approximately 100 feet from construction activities that would occur within the Project area.

The City does not currently have adopted standards for groundborne vibration. As a result, the noise study prepared for this Project indicated that the vibration impact criteria developed by the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) was applied to the Project. Equipment or activities typical of continuous vibration include excavation equipment, static compaction equipment, tracked vehicles, traffic on a highway, vibratory pile drivers, pile-extraction equipment, and vibratory compaction equipment. Equipment or activities typical of single-impact (transient) or low-rate repeated impact vibration include

impact pile drivers, blasting, drop balls, “pogo stick” compactors, and crack-and-seat equipment. Table 3.4.13-1 below has identified construction equipment proposed to be utilized for this Project’s construction activities.

**Table 3.4.13-1
Vibration Source Levels for Construction Equipment and Projected Levels at 30 Feet**

Equipment	Maximum Vibration Level at 25 Feet (PPV)¹	Predicted Maximum Vibration Level at 30 Feet (PPV)
Vibratory roller	0.210	0.160
Hoe ram	0.089	0.068
Large bulldozer	0.089	0.068
Caisson drilling	0.089	0.068
Loaded trucks	0.076	0.058
Jackhammer	0.035	0.027
Small bulldozer	0.003	0.002

¹ PPV = Peak Particle Velocity

Source: 2020 FTA Transit Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment Manual and BAC calculations

As shown above in Table 3.4.13-1, vibration levels generated from on-site construction activities at the nearest existing sensitive structures located approximately 100 feet away (residences) are predicted to be below the strictest Caltrans thresholds. Further, construction activities are not expected to result in adverse human response relative to the vibration annoyance criteria. Therefore, on-site construction within the Project area is not expected to result in excessive groundborne vibration levels at nearby existing sensitive uses.

It is expected that the Project would not result in the exposure of persons to excessive groundborne vibration levels at proposed uses of the Project; 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 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?

The Project is located approximately two miles to the northeast of Visalia Municipal Airport. The Project is geographically located outside of the established 55 dB CNEL airport noise

contour not within a safety zone identified in the ALUCP (County of Tulare, 2012). 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 indicates growth for the City population of 210,000 people by 2030, with an average annual growth rate of 2.6 percent (City of Visalia, 2014). The total population of the City of Visalia is 141,384 people, and the average persons per household is 3.02 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2022).

As noted previously, the City General Plan has designated the Project site for future urban uses under the Urban Growth Development Tier 1. As the Project intends to further develop planned General Plan growth, the Project would not likely induce substantial unplanned population growth. Implementation of this Project will support the General Plan designation for future industrial 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 surrounding parcels are developed with residential uses to the east of the Project. The properties to the south and west are industrial and land to the north is undeveloped agricultural land. The General Plan’s existing land use designations for the Project site are Industrial and Light Industrial.

Construction of the Project would likely be completed by construction workers residing in the City or the surrounding area; they would not require new housing. The Project will not result in the displacement of any persons as there are no residential units on the Project site. As such, no impact associated with displacement of housing or people would occur. In conclusion, with the implementation of the Project, the Project will not result in any population and housing 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 of Visalia Fire Station 55 is less than 0.16 miles south 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 Fire Department 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 Projects 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 City Fire Department.

Development of the Project will increase the need for fire protection services and expand the service area and response times of the local City Fire Department. As previously mentioned, 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.

The timing of when new fire service facilities would be required or details about size and location cannot be known until such facilities are planned and proposed, and any attempt to analyze impacts to a potential future facility would be speculative. As new or expanded fire service facilities become necessary, construction or expansion projects would be subject to their own separate CEQA review in order to identify and mitigate any potential environmental impacts. According to the General Plan and the standard review procedures for development projects within the City, the Project's plans and permits will be reviewed for input from the Fire Department. The Project's proposed construction would be located adjacent to existing residential areas, which the City Fire Department already serves. The developer will be required to pay development impact fees to offset increased demands for impact fire protection. Impacts would be less than significant.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

None 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 Visalia Police Department (VPD) provides police protection in the City and collaborates with other law enforcement agencies and the District Attorney's office on crime prevention. The City has approximately 143 sworn officers working out of two districts. The City of Visalia Police Station - District 1 office is located approximately 4 miles east, and District 2 office is approximately 4.8 miles southeast. The District 1 office serves northern Visalia. The Project is proposing development in an area that is adjacent to residential development to east, industrial land to the west and south, and undeveloped agricultural land to the north. The Project proposes to annex land for industrial purposes in a previously location utilized for dairy and agricultural purposes, which will increase the need for police services. The timing of when new police service facilities would be required or details about size and

location cannot be known until such facilities are planned and proposed, and any attempt to analyze impacts to a potential future facility would be speculative. As new or expanded police service facilities become necessary, construction or expansion projects would be subject to their own separate CEQA review in order to identify and mitigate any potential environmental impacts. However, the Project will pay appropriate development fees based on the adopted fee calculations and is responsible for constructing any infrastructure needed to serve the Project. Impacts would be less than significant.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

None 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. The nearest schools to the Project site include Denton Elementary School, located 0.2 miles southeast, Ridgeview Middle School, located 0.9 miles northeast, and Sequoia High School, located 3 miles southeast.

The Project will implement the City’s new development and subdivision requirements related to schools. Pursuant to Government Code Section 66006, school districts must maintain separate capital facilities accounting for reportable fees and must make available to the public within 180 days after the last day of each fiscal year a Reportable Fees Report. Pursuant to Government Code Section 66001, school districts must make findings every five years with respect to unexpended funds.

The finalized and most recent Developer Fees Report was made available to the public by the Visalia Unified School District website (Visalia Unified School District, 2022) that includes the School Facility Needs Analysis (SFNA). According to the VUSD Website (Visalia Unified School District, 2022), new commercial and industrial construction school fees established for developers within the City of Visalia is \$0.78 per square foot. The purpose of Developer Fees is for the construction and/or reconstruction of facilities necessary to accommodate the students generated by new residential, commercial, and industrial development.

According to Government Code Section 65996, the development fees authorized by SB 50 are deemed “full and complete school facilities mitigation.” School districts would utilize the General Plan and codes to establish new school sites and make decisions on school amenities

and facility size. The development will be subject to school impact fees to mitigate any increased impacts on school facilities. Project impacts will be less than significant.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

None 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 maintains several types of parks and facilities. Almost all parkland described here is owned by the City or another public body and used for public recreational purposes, though some small parks are maintained by local landscaping and lighting and lighting district. The General Plan sets forth goals, objectives, policies and actions that are relevant to providing parks and recreational opportunities throughout the planning area, once of which establishes a parkland standard of five acres per 1,000 residents.

The industrial uses that would occur over time through implementation of the proposed project are part of the anticipated growth contemplated by the City in its General Plan, as indicated by the project site's current Industrial and Light Industrial General Plan land use designations. Indirect population growth that occurs as a result of new employment opportunities (such as those that would occur pursuant to the proposed project) is considered planned growth. The closest park to the Project site is Lions Park, located approximately 0.17 mile southeast of the project site; this is a neighborhood park that contains amenities such as a playground and basketball court. While it is reasonable to assume that some employees would utilize park facilities during their workday to a certain degree, this use would be limited given the nature of the industrial and related commercial uses and the location of the project site. Project employees and their families would utilize the City's park and recreational amenities, but the limited amount of demand generated by the proposed project would not trigger the need to construct new or expand existing park facilities. Based on the foregoing reasons, operational impacts related to need for new or altered park and recreational facilities would be less than significant

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

None 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?

Community facilities are the network of public and private institutions that support the civic and social 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, 2014). These services receive funds allocated through the General Fund, usage fees, penalties, or impact fees.

These facilities within the City include community centers, civic buildings, libraries, visual and performing arts venues, medical facilities, and other social and community services. Additional development fees will be paid to offset the increased demand for public services related to transportation, water, wastewater, groundwater recharge, storm drainage, and general governmental services. Fees for transportation, water, wastewater, and general government are based on building square footage and will be calculated prior to the issuance of building permits. While the payment of development fees could result in the construction of new or altered public service facilities, no specific projects have been identified at this time. As new or expanded public service facilities become necessary, construction or expansion projects would be subject to their own separate CEQA review in order to identify and mitigate any potential environmental impacts. The Project is required to implement the City's new development requirements related to public facilities, which would reduce Project impacts to be less than significant.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

None 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
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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 type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" 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?

Visalia has a number of parks dispersed throughout City neighborhoods. The closest park is Lions Park located approximately 0.17 miles southeast and Willow Glen Park located approximately 1.6 miles southeast of the Project site. The Riverway Sports Park is approximately 3.5 miles east, Plaza Park is approximately 2 miles south, West Main Park is 2.9 miles southeast, and Constitution Park is less than 2.5 miles south of the Project site.

The Project will annex approximately 75 acres of land under industrial zone designations and is not anticipated to significantly increase population growth, and therefore, would not increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks. The Project will have no impact as the Project does not induce population growth where the demand on existing parks and other recreational facilities would occur.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

None are required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Project would have *no impact*.

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 discussion under Impact #3.4.16a. The Project's does not include or require development of recreational facilities that could have an adverse physical effect on the environment. The Project intends to annex the site into the City and would develop permitted industrial uses. While the payment of development fees could result in the construction of new or altered public service facilities, no specific projects have been identified at this time. As new or expanded public service facilities become necessary, construction or expansion projects would be subject to their own separate CEQA review in order to identify and mitigate any potential environmental impacts. The industrial designation does not warrant the need for construction or expansion of recreational facilities; therefore, no impact is anticipated.

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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3.4.17 - TRANSPORTATION AND TRAFFIC

Would the Project:

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

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 Services

Visalia Transit (VT) is the transit operator in the City. The closest is VT Route 15, which runs on Shirk Street and Doe Avenue, located approximately 0.5 miles south of the Project site. VT operates several fixed routes that serve city residents with some routes serving the outlying cities and communities. VT operates fixed route service 7 days a week with operational hours Monday through Friday between 6:00 a.m. and 9:30 p.m., 9:00 a.m. and 6:30 p.m. on Saturdays, and between 8:00 a.m. and 6:30 p.m. on Sundays.

The Project is not expected to disrupt or impede existing transit facilities and therefore has a less than significant impact.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities

The General Plan Update identifies bicycling and walking as inexpensive, energy-conserving, healthful, and non-polluting modes of transportation. Visalia’s flat topography and dry, moderate climate make choosing to walk or bicycle an attractive transportation option

during much of the year. The City's Bikeway Plan was adopted in February 2011 and is intended to guide bikeway policies, programs and facility improvements to improve safety, comfort and convenience for all bicyclists in the City of Visalia.

The Bikeway Plan has identified new bike lanes along Riggin Avenue and Class II bike lanes along Kelsey Street, Clancy Street, and Shirk Street. The Project would not have an impact on planned bicycle facility improvements. Therefore, operational impacts related to circulation system performance in terms of bicycle facilities would be less than significant. At the time of development, the City will review the Project to identify whether or not a bike lane would be required to be constructed along the Project's frontage of Shirk Street and Riggin Avenue.

The Project is not expected to disrupt or impede existing or planned bicycle facilities with implementation of the City's requirements, and therefore has a less than significant impact.

Pedestrian

The Project proponent will be responsible for implementing all applicable requirements for updating sidewalks and other related infrastructure as directed by the City of Visalia. As stated above under Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities, implementation of the City's Bikeway Plan will be required as reflected in the General Plan for North Shirk Street and West Riggin Avenue.

Roadway

Access to and from the Project site will be from Shirk Street, located on the east side of the Project boundary, and from Riggin Avenue, located on the north side of the Project boundary. The General Plan indicates that Shirk Street adjacent to the Project is considered a Deferred Arterial that will eventually connect with a proposed upgraded interchange south of the Project on SR 198. Riggin Avenue between Plaza Drive and Demaree Street is also designated a Deferred Arterial. The General Plan established level of service (LOS) "D" as the minimum acceptable LOS standard on city roadways. Although Caltrans has not designated a LOS standard, Caltrans' *Guide for the Preparation of Traffic Impact Studies* indicates that when the LOS of a State highway facility falls below the LOS "C/D" in rural areas and the LOS "D/E" in urban areas, additional traffic may have a significant impact (Caltrans, 2002).

The City lists planned improvements to their circulation system in General Plan Circulation Element (Chapter 4). Improvements that would affect the circulation system surrounding the Project site include the widening of Shirk Street from a 2-lane to 4-lane arterial, the widening of Riggin Avenue from a 2-lane to 4-lane arterial, and traffic signalization of the Riggin Avenue and Shirk Street intersection. The Tulare County Council of Governments (TCAG) Regional Travel Demand Forecast Model (RTDFM) was utilized to identify future traffic volumes along local, collector, and arterial roads and freeways based on each City's and the County's general plans. Table 4.7 of the Visalia General Plan forecasts that the AM and PM peak hour traffic LOS at Riggin Avenue and Shirk Street would both be designated level of service (LOS) C at year 2030 with the signalization of the intersection. Moreover, the General Plan EIR found the General Plan buildout for intersection LOS and roadway segment

LOS would meet or be above the LOS D standard. These improvements, as found in the General Plan and General Plan EIR, determined that General Plan buildout would meet or be above the LOS D standard. Pursuant to Chapter 16.44 *Transportation Impact Fee* of the Visalia Municipal Code, transportation impact fees are imposed to fund the portion of the total cost of the planned transportation facilities allocated for new development. Per the City of Visalia Transportation Impact Fees, the following impact fees shown in Table 3.4.17-1 would apply to the site at time of development:

**Table 3.4.17-1
Transportation Impact Fee**

Industrial Use	Unit	Fee Amount
Industrial/Service Commercial	1,000 sq. ft.	\$2,467
Warehouse/Distribution	1,000 sq. ft. (0-20,000 sq. ft.)	\$2,252
	1,000 sq. ft (20,000 to 100,000 sq. ft.)	\$1,670
	1,000 sq. ft. (100,000 + sq. ft.)	\$1,089
Mini-Storage	1,000 sq. ft.	\$1,158

Source: (City of Visalia, 2023)

Based on the City of Visalia General Plan and General Plan EIR, the planned improvements for right-of-way improvements throughout General Plan buildout would meet the LOS threshold. Eventual development of the site would be required to contribute towards these improvements via the City's Transportation Impact Fees.

While the payment of development fees could result in additional transportation projects related to the development of the site, no specific projects have been identified at this time. As new or expanded public service facilities become necessary, construction or expansion projects would be subject to their own separate CEQA review in order to identify and mitigate any potential environmental impacts. Contribution of fees to this program will directly or indirectly contribute to the improvements as well as general roadway improvements in the City of Visalia and result in a less than significant impact.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

No mitigation is required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Impacts would be *less than significant*.

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

Under SB 743, vehicle miles traveled (VMT) is a key measure used for gauging the environmental impacts of projects under CEQA. The City adopted their VMT thresholds and *Implementation Guidelines* to address the shift from delay-based LOS CEQA traffic analyses to VMT CEQA traffic analyses (City of Visalia, 2021). It is noted in the City VMT Guidelines that the metric should be VMT per capita for residential projects, VMT per employee for office projects, VMT per service population for mixed-use projects, and total VMT for retail projects. For mixed-use projects, the City may allow use of the predominant land use and corresponding metric on a case-by-case basis. For all other uses, the metric used should be VMT per employee. A screening method based on maps created with VMT data illustrating areas that are currently below threshold VMT and because new development in such locations would likely result in a similar level of VMT, these maps may be used to screen out project from needing to prepare a detailed VMT analysis.

Based on Figure 7 of the City VMT Guidelines, the Project site is located within the seven or less VMT per employee area and would be under the Tulare County average VMT per employee of 8.3. Therefore, based on the screening methods established under the VMT Guidelines, the Project is screened out from a detailed VMT analysis, is consistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3 Subdivision (b) and would not result in a significant impact.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

None 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.

Landscaping associated with driveways could impede such views if improperly installed. 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.

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

State and City Fire Codes establish standards by which emergency access may be determined. A network of local roads within the proposed Project property provides full access to all buildings within the development. The Project would have no impact on emergency access. The proposed Project would have to provide adequate unobstructed space for fire trucks to turn around. 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, 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 Resource 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)?

The Project area is in the Southern Valley Yokuts ethnographic territory of the San Joaquin Valley. According to the Native American Heritage Commission, six Native American tribal

groups are currently associated with the Project area, including the Tubatulabals of Kern Valley, Wuksache Indian Tribe/Eshom Valley Band, the Kern Valley Indian Community, the Santa Rosa Rancheria Tachi Yokut Tribe, and the Tule River Indian Tribe.

Native American Tribal Consultation was completed for the Project in compliance with Assembly Bill 52 (AB 52), the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), and the Public Resources Code. No responses were received from notified tribal governments by the City of Visalia.

Although considered unlikely, since there is no indication of any tribal cultural resources on the Project site, subsurface construction activities associated with the proposed Project could potentially damage or destroy previously undiscovered tribal cultural resources. This is considered a potentially significant impact.

With implementation of mitigation measures CUL-1 and CUL-4, the Project would not cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource that is listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, or in a local register of historical resources and therefore impacts would be considered less than significant.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

Implement MM CUL-1 and MM CUL-4

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 Resource 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 #3.41.18(i) above.

With implemented mitigation measures CUL-1 and CUL-4, 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 CUL-1 and CUL-4

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"/>

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?

Wastewater

Sewer services are provided to the site by the City. Visalia owns a Water Reclamation Facility (WRF) located West of SR 99 and South of SR 198. Presently, the WRF’s permitted capacity as established by the Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) is 20 million gallons per day (mgd). A planned upgrade will increase the capacity to 26 mgd. The WRF has a daily

flow of 13 mgd. The City of Visalia operates a sewer system divided into eight service areas. The system currently has over 468 miles of sewer pipe.

Solid Waste

The City provides solid waste collection, and the County of Tulare provides disposal services via landfills. Sunset Wastepaper is contracted to process residential and commercial recycling. The Tulare County Resource Management Agency manages solid waste disposal. Programs include household hazardous waste disposal, electronics recycling, tire recovery, yard waste recycling, metal recycling and appliance recovery programs. The county landfills approximately 300,000 tons of waste per year, which is equivalent to about 5 pounds per person per day or one ton per county resident per year. The County operates three disposal sites: the Visalia Disposal Site, northwest of Visalia; the Woodville Disposal Site, southeast of Tulare; and the Teapot Dome Disposal Site, southwest of Porterville. These sites have a remaining capacity of 24,258,052 cubic yards, with a total capacity of 37,101,523 cubic yards (California Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery, 2024).

Water

The California Water Service Company (Cal Water) distributes groundwater supply. Cal Water's Visalia District supply wells extract groundwater from the Kaweah Groundwater Subbasin. The Cal Water system includes 75 operational groundwater wells, about one third of which have auxiliary power for backup. There are 519 miles of main pipeline in the system. The system includes two elevated 300,000-gallon storage tanks, an ion exchange treatment plant, four granular activated carbon filter plants and one nitrate blending facility. The system currently has the capacity to pump 100,829 acre-feet per year (afy), all from groundwater. This will be able to supply a growing population, as in 2010, 31,762 AF was needed. By 2030, the City is expected to use 43,002 afy.

The Project proposes to construct new wet and dry utility infrastructure to connect to the existing City and private service provider infrastructure. Services that will be installed during the construction of the Project include water, wastewater, storm drain drainage connections, natural gas, electric power, and telecommunications facilities. The proper sizing and placement of the utilities will be designed per the City and other utility development design standards. All proposed wet infrastructure will be connected to existing infrastructure already located within the City road rights of way.

New development has the potential to cause erosion sediment and surface water run-off that will enter the City's storm drainage system. As the City expands, more area is made impervious, and urban runoff increases. In order to minimize these impacts, General Plan policies focus on requiring future development projects to minimize runoff into the City's drainage system and establish development fees from development projects in order to pay for the construction and maintenance of the drainage system.

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. Natural gas service is primarily provided by the Southern California Gas Company. 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 proposed Project would be subject to the payment of any applicable connection charges and/or fees and extension of services in a manner that is compliant with the Visalia standards, specifications, and policies. To compensate for these

services, new development will be required to pay impact fees. It is not anticipated that implementation of the proposed project would result in increased demand for any utility services beyond the planned conditions. All applicable local, State, and federal requirements and best management practices will be incorporated into the construction and operation of the Project.

As part of the annexation process, LAFCo will coordinate urban growth management planning with public and private utilities to determine infrastructure needs, feasibility, timing, and financing. As previously stated, the Project is located within the General Plan's Tier 1 area identified for expanding urban development; therefore, the Project will have a less than significant impact with implementation of all required federal, State, and local requirements and standards for general utilities.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

None 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?

See Impact #3.4.10b.

As noted above, the groundwater supply is distributed by Cal Water. Cal Water Visalia District supply wells extracting groundwater from the Kaweah Groundwater Subbasin. The Cal Water system includes 75 operational groundwater wells, about one-third of which have auxiliary power for backup. There are 519 miles of main pipeline in the system, ranging from two inches in diameter to 12 inches in diameter. The Cal Water system includes two elevated 300,000-gallon storage tanks, an ion exchange treatment plant, four granular activated carbon filter plants, and one nitrate blending facility. In addition to the system serving the City of Visalia, Cal Water also operates three other small systems in the Visalia area, defined as Oak Ranch (wells with distribution pipeline), Post Mitts (two wells with distribution pipeline), and Fairway (well with distribution pipeline). These systems are within Cal Water's Visalia District system but outside Visalia city limits (City of Visalia, 2014).

The system serves an estimated population of 147,000, which could grow to 226,850 by 2045, according to the adopted 2020 UWMP. Cal Water estimated that it was serving 45,325 residential, commercial, and industrial customers in 2020, with expected growth to 79,818 service connections (households and businesses) by 2045. The UWMP indicates that water demand for industrial uses would not exceed supply.

The timing of when new water facilities would be required or details about size and location cannot be known until such facilities are planned and proposed, and any attempt to analyze impacts to a potential future facility would be speculative. As new or expanded services become necessary, construction or expansion projects would be subject to their own separate CEQA review in order to identify and mitigate any potential environmental impacts. To compensate for these services, new developments will be required to pay impact fees for new water services, along with the reduced water use implementations from the polices set forth in the Visalia General Plan. 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?

The existing Waste Discharge Requirements placed on the City Water Reclamation Facility (WRF) limit discharge to an average flow of 20 million gallons per day (mgd) and require that the ammonia concentration in the discharge be reduced to 0.025 mg/l by 2011. The certified EIR for the WRF analyzed impacts for average flow volumes of 22 mgd and 26 mgd (City of Visalia, 2014).

With the proposed upgrades to the plant processing capabilities and the rerouting of the discharge stream away from Mill Creek, the WRF has sufficient capacity to process the expected flows from land use classifications noted in the proposed General Plan for the near future and would expand its treatment capacity as the need dictates. The projected sanitary sewer flows entering the WRF at the proposed General Plan buildout (25,034,050 gpd in 2030) is expected to be less than the volume previously anticipated for the SWMP (25,949,996 gpd in 2030), meaning further expansions could be delayed. In 2014, the WRF was upgraded to provide the ability to increase capacity to 26 mgd as the demand increases. Additional mandated water conservation measures will likely cause reductions in average daily flows to the WRF. This will also help delay the need for future expansions of the Water Reclamation Facility and give the City more flexibility in determining the types of development that are appropriate.

Because the City's sewer system has the capacity to meet the Project site's expected demand for wastewater treatment, and it is not anticipated that the project will increase the site's demand for wastewater treatment, it can be inferred that the existing wastewater treatment system has adequate capacity to serve the proposed Project. The impact will be less than significant.

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?

The Tulare County Resource Management Agency manages solid waste disposal in accordance with the Tulare County Integrated Waste Management Plan. The County landfills accumulate 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 County operates three disposal sites: the Visalia Disposal Site, northwest of Visalia; the Woodville Disposal Site, southeast of Tulare; and the Teapot Dome Disposal Site, southwest of Porterville (City of Visalia, 2014). The City operates its own solid waste disposal fleet.

The California Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery's Solid Waste Information System (SWIS) manages information regarding the operations and disposal of all solid waste sites throughout California. According to the SWIS database, the Teapot and Visalia Landfills are operationally active. (California Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery, 2024). The City will require the appropriate solid waste receptacles (compliance with the California Solid Waste Reuse and Recycling Access Act of 1991) to be provided to the Project. In addition, the Project will be required to pay solid waste development impact fees, thus reducing the perceived impact the Project may generate. The impact will be less than significant.

The Project does not and would not conflict with federal, State, or local regulations related to solid waste. The proposed Project would be served by a landfill with sufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the Project's solid waste disposal needs in compliance with federal, State, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste.

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 #3.4.19d, above.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

No mitigation is required.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Impacts would be *less than significant*.

3.4.20 - WILDFIRE

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?

Access for emergency vehicles to the site would be maintained throughout the construction period. 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 and area circulation system. The City has established emergency response and evacuation plans based on the Tulare Emergency Operations Plan. 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?

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 CalFire. This CEQA topic only applies to areas within an SRA or a Very High FHSZ. The potential for fire hazard is dependent on the extent and type of vegetation, known as surface fuels, which exists within the region. Fire hazards probability is typically highest in undeveloped, heavily wooded areas, as trees are a greater source of fuel rather than low-lying brush or grassland (City of Visalia, 2014).

The City General Plan indicates that a few very small portions of the City are classified by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CDF) as having moderate fire hazards. In general, the threat of wildland fires in Visalia is minimal because of the area’s flat topography and the relative absence of forests, grassland, and brush. In addition, the CDF designates the Project site as non-wildland/non-urban and adjacent to the urban unzoned area.

In addition, the City requires that any construction complies with the Uniform Fire Code provisions and is subject to review and approval by the City’s Fire Department. Therefore, the impacts related to the Project are considered less than significant.

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 annex an approximately 75-acre site designated for light industrial and industrial uses. Potential uses of the site include up to 980,100 square feet of warehousing and/or combined office/warehousing and would also provide for the development of infrastructure (water, sewer, electrical power lines, and storm drainage)

required to support industrial uses. The Project site is surrounded by existing and future urban development.

The Project would require installing or maintaining additional electrical distribution lines and natural gas lines to connect future industrial development to the existing utility grid. However, the Project would be constructed in accordance with all local, State, and federal regulations regarding power lines and other related infrastructure, as well as fire suppression requirements. 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 for the Project would be considered as less than significant.

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?

The topography of the site and surrounding area is relatively flat with little topographic variation and no water features are present within the vicinity of the Project area. The surrounding area is predominantly developed with agricultural, residential, and industrial uses. The site is not located in an area designated as a Fire Hazard Severity Zone and lands associated with the Project site are relatively flat. Therefore, the project would not be susceptible to downslope or downstream flooding or landslides as a result of post-fire instability or drainage changes. Therefore, there is minimal risk of landslides.

The Project area is partially located in a 0.2% Annual Chance of Flood Hazard Zone and Area of Minimal Flood Hazard Zone as determined by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Flood Maps and is further surrounded by properties that are identified as 0.2 Annual Chance of Flood Hazard and Area of Minimal Flood Hazard. As the Project is a relatively flat area and is not located near a water feature, impacts would be considered as 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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3.4.21 - 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 period of California history or prehistory including important examples of the major period of California history

or prehistory including paleontological resources. Mitigation measures have been included to reduce the significance of potential impacts related to cultural resources. Similar mitigation measures would be expected of other projects in the surrounding areas, most of which share similar cultural, paleontological, and biological resources. Consequently, the incremental effects of the proposed Project, after mitigation, would not contribute to an adverse cumulative impact on these resources. Therefore, with implementation of the below Mitigation Measures MM CUL-1 through MM CUL-4, the Project impacts would be reduced to less than significant.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

Implement MM CUL-1 through MM CUL-4.

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 analysis in Sections 3.4.1 through 3.4.20 of this IS/MND, any potentially significant impacts of the proposed Project would be reduced to a less-than-significant level following incorporation of the mitigation measures listed in Appendix A – Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program. All planned projects in the vicinity of the proposed Project would be subject to review in separate environmental documents and required to conform with the applicable General Plan and City development standards. The Project would be required to mitigate Project-specific impacts and provide appropriate engineering to ensure the Project meets all applicable federal, State, and local regulations and codes. As currently designed, and with compliance of the recommended mitigation measures, the proposed Project would not contribute to a cumulative impact. Thus, the cumulative impacts of past, present and reasonably foreseeable future projects would be less than cumulatively considerable with implementation of Mitigation Measures MM CUL-1 through MM CUL-4, MM NSE-1, and MM NSE-2.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

Implement MM CUL-1 through MM CUL-4, MM NSE-1, and MM NSE-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?

The ways which people can be subject to substantial adverse effects from Projects include potential exposure to significant levels of local air pollutants; potential exposure to significant levels of local air pollutants; potential exposure to seismic and flooding hazards; potential exposure to hazardous materials; potential exposure to traffic hazards; and potential exposure to excessive noise levels. The risks from these potential hazards would be avoided or reduced to less-than-significant levels through compliance with existing laws, regulations, or requirements. All of the Project's impacts, both direct and indirect, that are attributable to the Project were identified and mitigated to a less-than-significant level. As shown in the Appendix A – *Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program*, the Project proponent has agreed to implement mitigation substantially reducing or eliminating 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 impacts with mitigation incorporated related to cultural resources and noise; however, with implementation of the below Mitigation Measures MM CUL-1 through MM CUL-4, and MM NSE-1- MM NSE-2 the Project impacts would be reduced to less than significant.

MITIGATION MEASURE(S)

Implement MM CUL-1 through MM CUL-4, MM NSE-1, and MM NSE-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

- Brandon Smith – Principal Planner

4.2 - QK

- Jaymie Brauer – Project Manager/QAQC
- Thomas Kobayashi – Lead Author

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APPENDIX A
MITIGATION MONITORING AND REPORTING PROGRAM

MITIGATION MONITORING AND REPORTING PROGRAM

Mitigation Measure	Timeframe	Responsible Monitoring Agency	Date	Initial
<p>CUL-1: Prior to any ground disturbance in connection with project development, a surface inspection of the relevant portion(s) of the project site shall be conducted by a qualified Archaeologist; a Tribal Monitor/Cultural Staff from a culturally affiliated Native American tribe identified by the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) shall be permitted to observe, subject to an executed agreement between the Tribe and the relevant applicant (as noted below). The Archaeologist (and Tribal Monitor/Cultural Staff, subject to an executed agreement with the relevant applicant) shall monitor the relevant portion(s) of the project site during initial ground disturbance activities that occur in connection with the subject proposal.</p> <p>The relevant applicant shall offer, in good faith and based on commercially reasonable terms, a culturally affiliated Native American tribe identified by the NAHC the opportunity to provide a Native American Monitor during ground disturbing activities that occur in connection with the subject proposal. Tribal participation would be dependent upon the availability and interest of the Tribe as well as the parties being able to reach mutually acceptable terms.</p> <p>In addition, the relevant applicant shall with diligence and good faith coordinate with the Tribal</p>	Prior to ground-disturbing activities	Contractor/Lead Agency		

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<p>Monitor/Cultural Staff to enter into an agreement on commercially reasonable terms wherein the Tribal Monitor/Cultural Staff shall provide pre project-related activities training to supervisory personnel and any excavation contractor, which shall include information on potential cultural material finds and on the procedures to be enacted if Tribal Cultural Resources (TCRs) are found. Subject to such an executed agreement, the Tribal Monitor/Cultural Staff shall provide the foregoing activities prior to any ground disturbance in connection with an individual specific development proposal.</p> <p>In the event that TCRs are discovered during project-related subsurface construction activities, operations shall stop within 100 feet of the find and a qualified Archaeologist shall determine whether the resource requires further study. In consultation with the City of Visalia and consulting tribes, the qualified Archaeologist shall determine the measures that shall be implemented to protect the discovered resources, including, but not limited to, excavation of the finds and evaluation of the finds in accordance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5. Measures may include avoidance, preservation in place, recordation, additional archaeological resting, and data recovery, among other options. Any previously undiscovered resources found during project-related subsurface construction activities shall be recorded on appropriate California Department of Parks and</p>				

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<p>Recreation (DPR) forms and evaluated for significance. No further ground disturbance shall occur in the immediate vicinity of the discovery until approved by the qualified Archaeologist.</p>				
<p>CUL-2: Prior to the initiation of ground disturbance activities for project development, the relevant developer shall ensure that all construction personnel conducting ground disturbance at the project site in connection with the subject individual specific development proposal shall be provided a Worker Environmental Awareness Program (WEAP) cultural resources “tailgate” training. The training shall include visual aids, a discussion of applicable laws and statutes relating to archaeological resources, types of resources that may be found within the project site, and procedures to be followed in the event such resources are encountered. The training shall be conducted by an Archaeologist who meets the Secretary of the Interior’s Professional Qualification Standards for archaeology. Any Native American Monitors or representatives consulting on the proposed project shall be invited to attend and participate in the training session.</p>	<p>Prior to ground-disturbing activities</p>	<p>Contractor/Lead Agency</p>		
<p>CUL-3: 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</p>	<p>Throughout ground-disturbance activities</p>	<p>Contractor/Lead Agency</p>		

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<p>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.</p>				
<p>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</p>				

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<p>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</p>				
<p>CUL-4: In the event of the accidental discovery or recognition of any human remains during ground disturbance activities in connection with an individual specific development proposal, CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5, Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5, and Public Resources Code Sections 5097.94 and 5097.98 shall be followed by the relevant applicant. Specifically, the following steps shall be taken:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. There shall be no further excavation or disturbance within 100 feet of the remains until the County Coroner is contacted to determine 	<p>Throughout ground-disturbance activities</p>	<p>Contractor/Lead Agency</p>		

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<p>whether the remains are Native American and if an investigation of the cause of death is required. If the Coroner determines the remains to be Native American, the Coroner shall contact the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) within 24 hours, and the NAHC shall identify the person or persons it believes to be the Most Likely Descendant (MLD) of the deceased Native American. The MLD may make recommendations to the landowner or the person responsible for the excavation work within 48 hours, for means of treating or disposing of, with appropriate dignity, the human remains, and any associated grave goods as provided in Public Resource Code Section 5097.98.</p>				
<p>2. Where any of the following conditions occur, the landowner or his or her authorized representative shall rebury the Native American human remains and associated grave goods with appropriate dignity, either in accordance with the recommendations of the MLD or on the project site in a location not subject to further subsurface disturbance:</p>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The NAHC is unable to identify an MLD. 				

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- The identified MLD fails to make a recommendation within 48 hours after being notified by the commission.
- The landowner or his or her authorized representative rejects the recommendation of the identified MLD and mediation by the NAHC fails to provide measures acceptable to the landowner.

Additionally, California Public Resources Code Section 15064.5 requires the following relative to Native American remains:

- When an initial study identifies the existence of, or the probable likelihood of, Native American remains within a project, a lead agency shall work with the appropriate Native Americans as identified by the NAHC as provided in Public Resources Code Section 5097.98. Each relevant applicant in connection with its individual specific development proposal may develop a plan for treating or disposing of, with appropriate dignity, the human remains, and any items associated with Native American

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burials with the appropriate Native Americans as identified by the NAHC.				
<p>NSE-1: The Project developer or contractor shall continuously comply with the following measures throughout construction activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. 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. b. All noise-producing project equipment and vehicles using internal-combustion engines shall be equipped with manufacturers-recommended mufflers and be maintained in good working condition. c. All mobile or fixed noise-producing equipment used on the project site that is regulated for noise output by a federal, State, or local agency shall comply with such regulations while in the course of project construction activity. 	Ongoing	Contractor		

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> d. Electrically powered equipment shall be used instead of pneumatic or internal combustion-powered equipment, where feasible. e. Material stockpiles and mobile equipment staging, parking, and maintenance areas shall be located as far as practicable from noise-sensitive receptors. f. Project area and site access road speed limits shall be established and enforced during the construction period. g. Nearby residences shall be notified of construction schedules so that arrangements can be made, if desired, to limit their exposure to short-term increases in ambient noise levels. 				
<p>NSE-2: The site developer shall be required to incorporate, at a minimum, design features or reduction measures to be incorporated and noted on all plans and specifications to mitigate any operational noise impact to meet applicable noise performance criteria. These reduction measures and design features may include, but are not limited to:</p>	<p>Prior to issuance of grading or building permits</p>	<p>Contractor/Lead Agency</p>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Orienting the facility so that the warehouse truck loading/unloading areas are located facing away from nearby residential land uses. 				

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b. Providing gasket loading dock doors to help shield truck loading and unloading noise.				
c. Providing screening, such as a structure or sound wall, to shield truck loading and unloading areas from nearby residential land uses.				

