

## SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

The City of Fresno proposes to update their General Plan and Development Code and this Master Environmental Impact Report (Master EIR) has been prepared to assess the potential impacts of those actions on the environment. The General Plan Update includes a comprehensive update of the existing General Plan and includes the following elements: (1) Economic Development and Fiscal Sustainability, (2) Urban Form, Land Use and Design, (3) Mobility and Transportation, (4) Parks, Open Space and Schools, (5) Public Utilities and Services, (6) Resource Conservation and Resilience, (7) Historic and Cultural Resources, (8) Noise and Safety, (9) Healthy Communities, and (10) Implementation.

As a component of the General Plan Update, the City includes amendments to various existing plans including: Bullard Community Plan (this will be renamed to the Pinedale Neighborhood Plan), Sierra Sky Park Land Use Policy Plan, Fresno-Chandler Downtown Airport Master and Environs Specific Plan (formatting revisions for consistency with the ALUC's Plan), Tower District Specific Plan, Butler-Willow Specific Plan, North Avenue Industrial Plan, Sun Garden Acres Specific Plan, Hoover Community Plan (this will be renamed the El Dorado Park Neighborhood Plan). Another component of the General Plan Update includes the repeal of existing plans including: the West Area Community Plan, Roosevelt Community Plan, Fulton/Lowell Specific Plan, Woodward Park Community Plan, Central Area Community Plan, McLane Community Plan, Fresno-High Roeding Plan, Yosemite School Area Specific Plan, Dakota-First Street Specific Plan, Edison Community Plan, Civic Center Master Plan, and the Highway City Specific Plan. The Update to the General Plan also includes a Greenhouse Gas Reduction Plan.

As a component of the Development Code Update, the City includes the repeal of Chapter 12 of the City of Fresno Municipal Code, amendments and repeal of portions of the City of Fresno Municipal Code including Chapter 12, and the inclusion of Chapter 15 of the City of Fresno Municipal Code including the Zone District Consistency Table.

The City of Fresno General Plan, which was last updated in 2002, is a set of policies and programs that form a blueprint for the physical development of the City of Fresno. The General Plan Update is a collaborative effort between the City and its residents to create a vision and a blueprint for development through buildout of the General Plan land uses. The Development Code (i.e., zoning ordinance) is the City of Fresno's most effective legal tool for implementing consistent land use policy. The City has developed an updated zoning code to facilitate revitalization, infill, transit-oriented development, and more sustainable development practices.

### 1.1 - Purpose of this EIR

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requires that all state and local government agencies consider the environmental consequences of programs and projects over which they have discretionary authority before taking action on them. This environmental impact report (EIR) has been prepared in accordance with CEQA to evaluate the potential environmental impacts associated

with the implementation of the proposed City of Fresno General Plan and Development Code Update. This EIR has been prepared in conformance with CEQA, California Public Resources Code Section 21000 et seq; the California CEQA Guidelines (California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Section 15000 et seq); and the rules, regulations, and procedures for implementing CEQA as adopted by the City of Fresno.

This EIR is intended to serve as an informational document for the public agency decision-makers and the public regarding the potential environmental impacts associated with the implementation of the City of Fresno General Plan and Development Code Update. In addition to identifying potential environmental impacts, this EIR also identifies the goals, objectives, policies, and standards that are part of the General Plan and Development Code Update that will reduce potential significant environmental impacts and identifies potential mitigation measures and alternatives, where feasible to reduce potential impacts.

This EIR is the primary reference document for the formulation and implementation of a mitigation monitoring program for the proposed General Plan and Development Code Update. Environmental impacts cannot always be mitigated to a level that is considered less than significant. In accordance with Section 15093(b) of the State CEQA Guidelines, if a lead agency such as the City of Fresno approves a project (i.e., General Plan and Development Code Update) that has significant impacts that are not substantially mitigated (i.e., significant unavoidable impacts), the agency shall state in writing the specific reasons for approving the project, based on the final CEQA documents and any other information in the public record for the project. This is termed in Section 15093 of the state of CEQA Guidelines, “a statement of overriding considerations.” For the proposed General Plan and Development Code Update, the following impacts were found to be significant and unavoidable: aesthetics, agriculture, air quality, cultural resources, greenhouse gases, noise, transportation, and utilities and service systems.

## 1.2 - Type of EIR

The CEQA Guidelines provide information on the types of environmental analysis that can be used to analyze a project, and one of these is a Master EIR. According to the CEQA Guidelines (Section 15175), the Master EIR procedure is an alternative to preparing a project EIR, staged EIR, or program EIR for certain projects which form the basis for later decision making. This Master EIR is an alternative to preparing a Program EIR for the City of Fresno General Plan and Development Code Update. This Master EIR addresses a series of actions that can be characterized as one large project or series of actions that are linked geographically; logical parts of a chain of contemplated events; rules, regulations, or plans that govern the conduct of a continuing program; or individual activities carried out under the same authorizing statutory authority and having generally similar environmental effects that can be mitigated in similar ways.

## 1.3 - Role of this Master EIR

This Master EIR assesses the level of development within the City of Fresno Planning Area based on reasonable assumptions for development activity anticipated to occur through buildout of the Planning Area. To determine reasonable assumptions for the amount of new residential uses,

employment uses, and population growth, the City assumed various factors such as physical capacity of the General Plan Land Use Diagram, the specific policy direction in the plan, and socioeconomic trends. The results of this analysis include forecasts of the number of new residences, amount of new employment, and increase in population anticipated to occur under buildout of the Planning Area. This Master EIR addresses environmental effects based on the potential development within the Planning Area through buildout of the General Plan Update land uses.

In accordance with Section 15176 of the CEQA Guidelines, this Master EIR includes a description of anticipated subsequent projects that are within the scope of the Master EIR, including information regarding the kind, size, intensity, and location of the subsequent projects. These subsequent projects are described in Section 3.5 of this Master EIR. In addition, there are specific land uses proposed within the Planning Area that are not within an area identified specifically as a subsequent project on Exhibit 3-5 in Section 3.5. These specific land uses for specific parcels could be considered as subsequent projects in accordance with Section 15176(d) of the CEQA Guidelines if the specific type, maximum and minimum intensity, location, and a description of any capital outlay or capital improvement program that may be required to reduce potential significant impacts is provided even if not specifically identified or listed by name in this Master EIR.

After a Master EIR has been prepared and certified, the role of the Master EIR is to streamline the environmental review process for future development projects. As future subsequent projects are proposed, the lead agency will need to determine if the project is within the scope of the Master EIR. If the project is within the scope of the Master EIR, the project will be subject to only limited environmental review. The lead agency for the subsequent project can be lead agency or any responsible agencies identified in the Master EIR. The lead agency for a subsequent project will be required to prepare an initial study that includes written findings to analyze whether the subsequent project was described in the Master EIR and whether the subsequent project may cause any additional significant effect on the environment that was not previously examined in the Master EIR.

After the evaluation, if the lead agency determines that the subsequent project will not result in any additional significant environmental effect or no new mitigation measures or alternatives are required, the lead agency can complete the evaluation. The lead agency shall incorporate all applicable and feasible mitigation measures into written findings for the subsequent project. Once completed, the initial study, which includes the written findings, shall be distributed for public review by the lead agency. Responses to substantive comments received on the evaluation of the subsequent project would be provided to the decision making body prior an action taken on the subsequent project.

If the lead agency cannot make a determination that the subsequent project is within the scope of the Master EIR and the lead agency determines that the cumulative impacts, growth inducing impacts and irreversible significant effects addressed in the Master EIR are adequate for the subsequent project, the lead agency can prepare a mitigated negative declaration or a focused EIR. A mitigated negative declaration could be prepared if any new significant impact can be reduce to less than significant with previously identified mitigation measures in the Master EIR or new mitigation measures not identified in the Master EIR (see CEQA Guidelines Section 15178 [b]). A

focused EIR could be prepared if: (1) substantial new or additional information shows that the adverse environmental effect may be more significant than was described in the Master EIR, or (2) substantial new or additional information shows that mitigation measures or alternatives which were previously determined to be infeasible are feasible and will avoid or reduce the significant effects of the subsequent project to less than significant (see CEQA Guidelines Section 15178 [c]). Such circumstances include a new significant impact that cannot be reduced to less than significant with a mitigation measure or measures.

If the lead agency determines that the cumulative impacts, growth inducing impacts and irreversible significant effects analysis in the Master EIR is inadequate for the subsequent project, the subsequent project is no longer eligible for the limited environmental review available under the Master EIR process. Under these conditions, a new EIR will be required for the subsequent project. The lead agency can tier the project specific EIR upon the Master EIR to the extent feasible under the tiering provisions in Section 15152 of the CEQA Guidelines.

#### **1.4 - Limitations on the Use of this Master EIR**

According to Section 15179 of the CEQA Guidelines, a certified Master EIR shall not be used for a subsequent project described in the Master EIR if the Master EIR was certified more than five years prior to the filing of an application for a subsequent project except this period may be extended when the lead agency makes certain findings or updates the document as allowed by Section 15179 of the CEQA Guidelines. In addition, a certified Master EIR shall not be used if a project that is not described in the certified Master EIR as an anticipated subsequent project is approved and the approved project affects the adequacy of the Master EIR for future subsequent projects described in the Master EIR (i.e., affects the adequacy of the cumulative analysis). A Master EIR that was certified more than five years prior to the filing of an application for a subsequent project can be used only if the lead agency reviews the adequacy of the Master EIR in accordance with Section 15179(b) of the CEQA Guidelines.

#### **1.5 - Scope of this Master EIR**

The scope of this Master EIR includes issues identified by the City of Fresno during the preparation of the Initial Study and Notice of Preparation (IS/NOP) for the proposed project and issues raised by agencies and the general public in response to the IS/NOP and during the scoping meeting that were held for the project. In addition, the City of Fresno consulted with staff from the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), the Fresno Council of Governments, and the Fresno County Airport Land Use Commission to identify issues and analytical approaches to evaluate potential impacts.

##### **1.5.1 - IS/NOP**

In accordance with Section 15063 of the CEQA guidelines, an Initial Study (IS) was prepared to determine if the project may have a significant effect on the environment. The IS prepared for the project identified that an EIR was required and assisted with identifying the effects determined to be significant and effects determined not to be significant.

After completion of the IS, a Notice of Preparation (NOP) was prepared in accordance with Section 15082 of the CEQA Guidelines. The purpose of the NOP is to provide the responsible and trustee agencies and the State Office of Planning and Research with sufficient information describing the project and the potential environmental effects to assist the agencies to provide a meaningful response.

The NOP, which included the IS, was circulated for agency review as well as public review on November 6, 2012 (see Appendix A-1). In addition, a public notice of the NOP and a Notice of Public Scoping Meeting was published in the Fresno Bee on November 6, 2012 (see Appendix A-2). Responses to the NOP were requested within 30 days after receiving the NOP, or no later than December 6, 2012.

### 1.5.2 - Scoping Meeting

Since the proposed project includes a General Plan and Development Code Update, the project is considered to be of regional or area-wide significance in accordance with Section 15206 of the CEQA Guidelines. For projects of regional or area-wide significance, at least one scoping meeting is required as identified in Section 15082(c) (1) of the CEQA guidelines. During the agency and public review period for the NOP, the City of Fresno held a public scoping meeting on November 27, 2012 at the City of Fresno Council Chambers.

### 1.5.3 - Agency and Public Comments on EIR Scope

Comments on the environmental issues to be addressed in the EIR were provided on the NOP/IS (see Appendix A-3) and during the public scoping meeting (see Appendix A-4). There were 17 comment letters on the NOP/IS that were received and six people from the public provided comments on the scope of the EIR. Table 1-1 provides a summary listing of the comments that were provided on the EIR scope.

**Table 1-1: Summary of Notice of Preparation and Scoping Comments**

Commenter	Summary of Environmental Issues Raised in Comment Letter	Section Where Addressed
Governor’s Office of Planning and Research, State Clearinghouse and Planning Unit	No comment on environmental issues addressed in the NOP/IS. Provided confirmation on the receipt of NOP and distributed NOP to state agencies.	Not Applicable
Native American Heritage Commission	Evaluate the potential effects and significance of historical resources including archaeological resources.	See Section 5.5, Cultural Resources
	Request a Sacred Lands File search	See Section 5.5, Cultural Resources
	Conduct early consultation with Native American tribes	See Section 5.5, Cultural Resources

Commenter	Summary of Environmental Issues Raised in Comment Letter	Section Where Addressed
California Department of Transportation	Caltrans requests the opportunity to remain involved throughout the process.	See Section 5.14, Transportation and Traffic
California Department of Conservation	<p>Requests the agricultural setting of the Planning Area be provided by identifying the location and extent of the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program (FMMP) Important Farmland.</p> <p>Provide data on the types of crops grown.</p> <p>Provide a discussion of the agricultural resource value of the soils.</p> <p>Determine potential impact of prime agricultural resources</p> <p>Determine the project and cumulative impacts of the conversion of Important Farmland</p> <p>Quantify the conversion of Important Farmland</p> <p>Provide a discussion of potential impacts on Williamson Act contracted land.</p> <p>Provide feasible mitigation measures</p>	<p>See Section 5.2, Agricultural Resources</p>
San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District	<p>Provide a discussion of existing and post-project emissions including construction and operational emissions</p> <p>CalEEMod needs to be used to conduct the emissions analysis</p> <p>Qualitatively evaluate nuisance odors</p> <p>Evaluate health impacts through an analysis of toxic air contaminants</p> <p>Include a discussion of the</p>	<p>See Section 5.3, Air Quality</p> <p>See Section 5.3, Air</p>

Commenter	Summary of Environmental Issues Raised in Comment Letter	Section Where Addressed
	<p>methodology, model assumptions, inputs and result that are used to characterizing the potential project impact on air quality</p> <p>Provide mitigation for future development projects that exceeds the District’s thresholds</p>	<p>Quality</p> <p>See Section 5.3, Air Quality</p>
<p>Fresno County Department of Public Health</p>	<p>Concurs with the probable environmental effects outlined in the NOP and has not additional comments</p>	<p>Not Applicable</p>
<p>Madera County Resource Management Agency – Planning Department</p>	<p>Evaluate the potential impacts on the existing visual character of Madera County and in proximity of the San Joaquin River</p> <p>Evaluate the addition of light and glare in the vicinity of Madera County properties and residents</p> <p>Evaluate air quality impacts on sensitive receptors</p> <p>Evaluate air quality impacts from mobile sources on Madera County</p> <p>Evaluate the potential effects on biological resources associated with the off-site infrastructure requirements from growth inducement.</p> <p>Evaluate the potential effects on cultural resources associated with the off-site infrastructure requirements.</p> <p>Requests a discussion of project plan conflicts related to Madera County General Plan Air Quality element</p> <p>Assess the potential impacts to Madera County’s adopted emergency response and evacuation plans.</p> <p>Address the potential hydrological and water quality impacts upon the San Joaquin River Restoration Project</p>	<p>See Section 5.2, Aesthetics</p> <p>See Section 5.2, Aesthetics</p> <p>See Section 5.3, Air Quality</p> <p>See Section 5.3, Air Quality</p> <p>See Section 5.4, Biological Resources</p> <p>See Section 5.5, Cultural Resources</p> <p>See Section 6.2, Growth Inducing Impacts</p> <p>See Section 5.8, Hazards and Hazardous Materials</p> <p>See Section 5.9, Hydrology and Water Quality</p>

Commenter	Summary of Environmental Issues Raised in Comment Letter	Section Where Addressed
	Address the potential impacts on future development from subsidence within the water basin	See Section 5.6, Geology and Soils
	Address the jobs to housing ratio	See Section 5.12, Population and Housing
	Provide a plan consistency analysis with land use plans that regulate development within the Planning Area	See Section 5.10, Land Use and Planning
	Provide a detailed explanation of the proposed amendments and approvals considered for the project	See Section 3, Project Description
	Address impacts upon the regional mineral resources	See Section 8, Effects Found Not to Be Significant
	Evaluate the potential noise effects related to future traffic generated by the project on Madera County roadways	See Section 5.11, Noise
	Evaluate the impacts of the General Plan Update on the County's transportation infrastructure. Address the regional traffic impacts.	See Section 5.14, Transportation and Traffic
	Address internal capture rates	See Section 5.14, Transportation and Traffic
	Evaluate the potential inducement of population beyond the implementation of the General Plan and Development Code Update.	See Section 5.12, Population and Housing
	Request a review of a new bridge crossing San Joaquin River	See Section 5.14, Transportation and Traffic
	Evaluate project impact on emergency medical access along State Route 41	See Section 5.14, Transportation and Traffic

Commenter	Summary of Environmental Issues Raised in Comment Letter	Section Where Addressed
City of Clovis Department of Planning and Development Services	Requests a clarification of the North Growth Area and its relationship to the Planning Area and the future sphere-of-influence	See Section 3, Project Description
Mark Reitz, PE	Requests a specific land use with the South East Growth Area	See Section 3, Project Description
Jeffrey T. Roberts & Granville Homes	<p>Recommended evaluation of Alternative “D” in the Alternatives Section of the Master EIR.</p> <p>Concerned with repeal of Zoning Ordinance and requests an evaluation of the No Project Alternative to not include the repeal of the Zoning Ordinance</p> <p>Asked about the origin of the population estimate for the Planning Area</p> <p>Asked why the environmental review needs to address the projected population of 970,000 persons</p> <p>Requests an alternative to the street and sidewalk standards to incentivize construction of “infill” development.</p> <p>Requests that the sound level standard be raised from 60 dB to 65 dB.</p> <p>Stated that agricultural impacts do not need to be evaluated because the 2025 General Plan and the current General Plan Update do not designate any agricultural land within the Planning Area</p> <p>The reference to the Dry Creek Dam in the impact discussion in the Initial Study is incorrect.</p>	<p>See Section 7, Alternatives to the Proposed Project</p> <p>See Section 7, Alternatives to the Proposed Project</p> <p>See Section 3, Project Description</p> <p>See Section 5, Environmental Impact Analysis</p> <p>See Section 7, Alternatives to the Proposed Project for range of alternatives</p> <p>See Section 5.11, Noise</p> <p>See Section 5.2, Agricultural Resources.</p> <p>See Section 8, Effects Found Not to Be Significant</p>
Baker Manock & Jensen	Concern with the realignment of Golden State Boulevard with the implementation of the High Speed Rail (HSR) project	The realignment is required with the construction of the HSR project. Environmental issues such as traffic

Commenter	Summary of Environmental Issues Raised in Comment Letter	Section Where Addressed
		access, circulation, and drainage would need to be specifically evaluated when the specific realignment plans are proposed to determine the level of impact. The HSR project is considered a cumulative project as discussed in Section 4, General Description of Environmental Setting and qualitatively evaluated in Section 5, Environmental Impact Analysis.
Wild, Carter & Tipton	Concern with the realignment of Golden State Boulevard	See above regarding the realignment of Golden State Boulevard.
Leland Parnagian	Requests that the Buffer designation be reduced in width as an alternative and extend planned uses west of the Buffer designation into the Buffer designation	Based on a qualitative review, the land uses west of the proposed Buffer designation is primarily residential. Increasing residential uses would increase the number of units and increase traffic, air quality, and noise impacts. This alternative would not reduce potential impacts associated with the project, which is one of the primary purposes of an alternative analysis.
Parga Partners	Request that the EIR evaluate alternative land uses on Parga Partners properties as shown on the map provided. Parga Partners also requests an evaluation of alternative land use designations for additional parcels listed in the correspondence to the City.	See Section 7, Alternatives to the Proposed Project for the alternatives considered and evaluated.
P-R Farms	Request the possibility of a mixed-use designation for the northwest corner of Shepard and Willow (APN 568-010-	See Section 7, Alternatives to the Proposed Project

Commenter	Summary of Environmental Issues Raised in Comment Letter	Section Where Addressed
	<p>20) be evaluated and consider the possibility of a commercial land use designation on the northwest corner of Shepard and Willow, as well as the mixed-use designations mentioned above.</p>	
<p>Allen Matkins</p>	<p>Concerned that the project description is incomplete</p> <p>Questioned whether the General Plan Land Use Diagram dated August 2012 is the Preferred Plan.</p> <p>Requests a description of traffic impacts and mitigation measures</p> <p>Requested that the transportation modeling for the project is consistent with regional approaches that are consistent with Senate Bill (SB) 375.</p>	<p>See Section 3, Project Description</p> <p>The proposed project includes the land uses within the August 2012 Land Use Diagram.</p> <p>See Section 5.14, Transportation and Traffic</p> <p>See Section 5.14, Transportation and Traffic</p>
<p>Friant Ranch L.P.</p>	<p>Request an evaluation of an alternative that reduces loss of prime farmland, unique farmland, and farmland of statewide importance</p> <p>Discuss impacts on grazing land</p> <p>Discuss impacts on Storm water detention and percolation, wastewater treatment, and water supply</p> <p>Discuss adequacy of water supply</p> <p>Discuss water quality impacts</p> <p>Discuss impacts on groundwater</p>	<p>See Section 7, Alternatives to the Proposed Project</p> <p>See Section 5.2, Agricultural Resources</p> <p>See and Section 5.15, Utilities and Service Systems</p> <p>See Section 5.9, Hydrology and Water Quality and Section 5.15, Utilities and Service Systems</p> <p>See Section 5.9, Hydrology and Water Quality</p> <p>See Section 5.9, Hydrology and Water Quality</p>

<b>Commenter</b>	<b>Summary of Environmental Issues Raised in Comment Letter</b>	<b>Section Where Addressed</b>
	Discuss the effects of adding impervious surfaces on groundwater recharge	See Section 5.9, Hydrology and Water Quality
	Evaluate air quality impacts, potential alteration of long-term local and regional air quality conditions, exposure of increased air pollutant concentrations on sensitive receptors and toxic air contaminate impacts	See Section 5.3, Air Quality
	Evaluate air quality impacts from potential construction activities and provide mitigation	See Section 5.3, Air Quality
	Assess the effect on air quality with the overlapping of construction and operational emissions occurring	See Section 5.3, Air Quality
	Evaluate the potential impacts to sensitive habitats and species	See Section 5.4, Biological Resources
	Assess the potential impacts on wetland areas	See Section 5.4, Biological Resources
	Evaluate potential impacts to vernal pools and provide mitigation	See Section 5.4, Biological Resources
	Provide a discussion of housing demand	See Section 5.12, Population and Housing
	Evaluate the potential impacts on existing recreational facilities due to an increase in population	See Section 5.13, Public Services
	Evaluate potential effects associated with long-term energy supply	See Section 5.16, Energy
	Discuss regulations on greenhouse gas emissions, potential impacts associated with greenhouse gas emissions, and provide feasible mitigation measures	See Section 5.7, Greenhouse Gases and the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Plan in Appendix F-2
	Evaluate cumulative utilities/service system impacts	See Section 5.15, Utilities and Service Systems

Commenter	Summary of Environmental Issues Raised in Comment Letter	Section Where Addressed
Vince Correll	Where do you address the transmission of fluids and electricity?	See Section 5.15, Utilities and Service Systems and Section 5.16, Energy
David Wells	Will High Speed Rail be addressed in the Master EIR?	See Sections 4.2, Related Projects. Development of all related projects are addressed in the cumulative analyses of each environmental issue in Section 5, Environmental Impact Analysis
	Status of the High Speed Rail Project.	See Section 4.2, Related Projects
	Address noise from the High Speed Rail Project	See Section 5.11, Noise
	Location of Big Dry Creek Dam	See Section 5.9, Hydrology and Water Quality
	Potential impacts on historic structures and historic districts	See Section 5.5, Cultural Resources
	Annexation of land into the City	See Section 3, Project Description for Annexation discussion
Paul Negrete Jose Luis Barraza	Requests noise standard to change to 65 dB	See Section 5.11, Noise
	Agricultural mitigation	See Section 5.2, Agricultural Resources
	High Speed Rail noise	See Section 5.11, Noise
	Noise levels from freeways	See Section 5.11, Noise
	Truck routes	See Section 5.14, Transportation and Traffic
Dennis Koplis	Request to include an alternative that would reduce impacts to farmland	See Section 7, Alternatives to the See Section 5.9, Proposed

Commenter	Summary of Environmental Issues Raised in Comment Letter	Section Where Addressed
Jeff Roberts	Water availability	Project
	Groundwater impacts	See Section 5.9, Hydrology and Water Quality
	Water quality impacts from percolation of wastewater affluent to rivers	See Section 5.9, Hydrology and Water Quality
	Population projections of 790,000 and 970,000	See Section 3, Project Description
	Asked if the City is rezoning to be consistent with the General Plan Update	See Section 3, Project Description
David Wells	Would like to see public rapid transit	See Section 3, Project Description
Source: FirstCarbon Solutions, 2014.		

**1.5.4 - Effects Found Not to be Significant**

Based on the analysis and findings in the NOP/IS as well as the comments that were received during the scoping process, there was only one environmental issue, mineral resources, that has been scoped out of the Master EIR. A discussion of this issue is provided in Section 8 and Appendix A-1 of this Master EIR.

**1.5.5 - Effects Determined to be Potentially Significant**

Based on the analysis and findings in the NOP/IS as well as the comments that were received during the scoping process, there are environmental issues that will be required to be addressed in the Master EIR. Following are the environmental issues.

- Aesthetics
- Agriculture and Forestry Resources
- Air Quality
- Biological Resources
- Cultural Resources
- Geology and Soils
- Greenhouse Gas Emissions
- Hazards and Hazardous Materials
- Hydrology and Water Quality
- Land Use and Planning
- Noise
- Population and Housing
- Public Services
- Recreation
- Transportation and Traffic
- Utilities and Service Systems
- Energy Conservation

This Master EIR addresses Recreation in the Parks discussion of the Public Services topic due to the relationship of recreational facilities and parks within the Planning Area.

## 1.6 - Organization of this Draft Master EIR

This Master EIR is organized into the following sections, which contain the contents of an EIR as required by Sections 15120 through 15132 of the CEQA Guidelines.

- **Section 1: Introduction.** This section includes an introduction and overview describing the purpose of this Draft Master EIR, along with its scope and components.
- **Section 2: Executive Summary.** This section provides a summary of the project and the project alternatives that will be addressed in this Master EIR, including a summary table of project and cumulative impacts, recommended mitigation measures, and the level of significance after mitigation for each environmental issue. This section includes the project and cumulative issues addressed in Section 5, Environmental Impact Analysis.
- **Section 3: Project Description.** This section provides a detailed description of the project, including the location and project characteristics. A discussion of the intended uses of this Draft EIR, project background, project objectives, and project approvals needed for the project are also included.
- **Section 4: Overview of Environmental Setting.** This section provides an overview of the project and cumulative environmental setting. The project setting focuses on the environmental conditions within the Planning Area. The cumulative setting identifies the environmental conditions within the cumulative study area. Since the proposed project is a General Plan and Development Code Update, a summary of projections contained in adopted local, regional, or related document will be the basis for the cumulative impact evaluation. This section will include the appropriate projection summaries
- **Section 5: Environmental Impact Analysis.** This section analyzes the environmental impacts of the project. Impacts are organized into major topical areas. Each topical area includes a description of the environmental setting, regulatory setting, significance criteria, project impacts, cumulative impacts, mitigation measures, and level of significance after mitigation.
- **Section 6: Other CEQA Considerations.** This section provides a summary of significant environmental impacts, including those that are significant prior to mitigation, significant and unavoidable, growth-inducing, and irreversible impacts.
- **Section 7: Alternatives to the Proposed Project.** This section includes a discussion of potential alternatives that could meet the basic objectives of the project and reduce potential significant environmental impacts of the proposed project.
- **Section 8: Effects Found Not To Be Significant.** This section includes a discussion of the environmental issues that were found to be less than significant during the scoping process.

- **Section 9: Information Resources.** This section provides a list of personnel who prepared this EIR, the organizations and persons consulted during the preparation of this EIR, a listing of the references used to prepare this EIR, and a listing of the acronyms and abbreviations used within this EIR.
- **Appendices.** The appendices contain the NOP/IS, comments on the NOP/IS, and the technical studies and information that were prepared and used to support the analyses and conclusions in this EIR.

The Final Master EIR will be prepared after the public review period for this Draft Master EIR has been completed. The Final Master EIR will include comments and recommendations received on the Draft Master EIR during the public review period; a list of persons, organizations, and public agencies commenting on the Draft Master EIR; written responses to significant environmental issues identified in the comments received; and any other information added by the City of Fresno.

## 1.7 - Project Applicant and Lead, Responsible, and Trustee Agencies

The project applicant and lead agency for the General Plan and Development Code Update is the City of Fresno. The City is the public agency that has the principal responsibility for carrying out or disapproving the project.

The responsible agencies are state and local public agencies other than the lead agency that have authority to carry out or approve a project or that are required to approve a portion of a project for which the lead agency is preparing or has prepared an EIR or Negative Declaration. There are no agencies other than the City of Fresno that have approval or permitting authority for the adoption of the General Plan and Development Code Update. Implementation of the project would involve many responsible agencies depending upon the specifics of the subsequent projects. Following are some of the agencies that could be required to act as responsible agencies for subsequent projects:

- Caltrans including the Division of Aeronautics
- California Air Resources Board
- California Department of Fish and Wildlife
- California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection
- California Department of Housing and Community Development
- California Department of Parks and Recreation
- California Department of Toxic Substances Control
- California Public Utilities Commission
- California State Office of Historic Preservation
- California State Lands Commission
- California State University, Fresno
- California State Water Resources Control Board
- Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board
- County of Fresno
- County of Fresno Local Agency Formation Commission
- Fire Districts (Various)

- Fresno Airport Land Use Commission
- Fresno Council of Governments
- Fresno Metropolitan Flood Control District
- Fresno Irrigation District
- San Joaquin River Conservancy
- San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District
- School Districts (Various)
- Sewer Districts (Various)
- Water Districts (Various)

The trustee agencies under CEQA are public agencies with legal jurisdiction over natural resources that are held in trust for the people of California and that would be affected by a project, whether or not the agencies have authority to approve or implement a project. It is anticipated that development under the General Plan and Development Code Update could affect lands under the jurisdiction of a Trustee Agency such as the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, California State Lands Commission, and the California State Department of Parks and Recreation.

## 1.8 - Incorporation by Reference

Section 15150 of the CEQA Guidelines permits documents of lengthy technical detail to be incorporated by reference in an EIR. Section 15150 states that an EIR may “incorporate by reference all or portions of another document which is a matter of public record or is generally available to the public...” Incorporated documents are to be briefly summarized in the EIR and made available to the public for inspection or reference. The City of Fresno General Plan and Development Code Update Master EIR incorporates by reference the documents identified below and are available for review at the City of Fresno, City Clerk, 2600 Fresno Street, Fresno, CA 93721. Summaries of important parts of these documents will be provided throughout this Master EIR in appropriate places.

- City of Fresno 2025 General Plan
- City of Fresno 2025 General Plan Master EIR
- City of Fresno 2008 Urban Water Management Plan
- City of Fresno 2010 Urban Water Management Plan
- City of Fresno 2006 Wastewater Collection System Master Plan
- 2012 City of Fresno Metropolitan Water Resources Management Plan
- Fresno Metropolitan Flood Control District Storm Drainage Master Plan
- Fresno Metropolitan Flood Control District 2004 District Services Plan Master EIR
- City of Fresno 2009 Sewer System Management Plan

## 1.9 - Review of this Draft Master EIR

Upon completion of this Draft Master EIR, the City of Fresno prepared and filed a Notice of Completion (NOC) with the California Office of Planning and Research/State Clearinghouse to begin the public review period (Public Resources Code, Section 21161). Concurrent with the NOC, the City of Fresno distributed a Notice of Availability (NOA) in accordance with Section 15087 of the CEQA

Guidelines. The NOA was mailed to the organizations and individuals who previously requested such a notice to comply with Public Resources Code Section 21092(b)(3). This Draft Master EIR was distributed to the California Office of Planning and Research/State Clearinghouse and the Fresno Council of Governments in accordance with Section 15206 of the CEQA Guidelines. This Draft Master EIR was also published in the Fresno bee newspaper to comply with Section 15087(a) of the State CEQA Guidelines and was distributed to affected agencies, surrounding cities and municipalities, and all interested parties. During the public review period, this Draft Master EIR, including the appendices, is available for review at the following locations:

City of Fresno  
Development and Resources Management Department  
2600 Fresno Street, Room 3043, at the Front Counter  
Fresno, CA 93721  
Monday through Friday: 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.  
Saturday and Sunday: Closed

City of Fresno Central Library  
2420 Mariposa Street  
Fresno, CA 93721  
Monday through Thursday: 10:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.  
Friday and Saturday: 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.  
Sunday: 12:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

In addition, the Draft Master EIR, including the appendices, is available for review at the following City of Fresno website.

<http://www.fresno.gov/Government/DepartmentDirectory/DARM/AdvancedPlanning/Downloads.htm>

In addition, the documents identified in Section 1.8, Incorporated by Reference, are available for review at the City of Fresno Development and Resources Management Department at the addressed shown above.

Agencies, organizations, individuals, and all other interested parties not previously contacted, or who did not respond to the NOP/IS or attended the scoping meeting, currently have the opportunity to comment on this Draft Master EIR during the 45-day public review period. Written comments on this Draft Master EIR should be addressed to:

Eric VonBerg, Planner III  
City of Fresno  
DARM, Long Range Planning  
2600 Fresno Street  
Fresno, CA 93721

Comments may also be sent by email to Eric VonBerg at:

Email: [Eric.VonBerg@fresno.gov](mailto:Eric.VonBerg@fresno.gov)

Upon completion of the public review period, written responses to all substantive environmental issues raised will be prepared and made available for review at least 10 days prior to the public hearing on the project before the City of Fresno City Council, at which the certification of the Final Master EIR will be considered. Comments received and the responses to comments will be included as part of the record for consideration by decision-makers for the project.

