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DRAFT
Recirculated Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration for Fresno Central Southeast Area Specific Plan City of Fresno, Fresno County, California

State Clearinghouse Number 2023020138

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

°F	degrees Fahrenheit
AAQS	Ambient Air Quality Standards
AB	Assembly Bill
AFY	acre-feet per year
ALUC	Airport Land Use Commission
ALUCP	Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan
AQMP	Air Quality Management Plan
AQP	Air Quality Plan
ARB	California Air Resources Board
ARB Handbook	ARB Air Quality and Land Use Handbook: A Community Health Perspective
ARFF	Airport Rescue Fire Fighting
ASCE	American Society of Civil Engineers
ATP	Active Transportation Plan
BERD	Built Environment Resource Directory
BMP	Best Management Practices
BRT	Bus Rapid Transit
BWF	Base Wastewater Flow
CAA	Clean Air Act
CAFE	Corporate Average Fuel Economy
Cal/EPA	California Environmental Protection Agency
CAL FIRE	California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection
CALGreen	California Green Building Standards Code
Cal/OES	California Governor's Office of Emergency Services
CalRecycle	California Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery
Caltrans	California Department of Transportation
CARTS	Cedar Avenue Recycling and Transfer Station
CBC	California Building Standards Code
CCR	California Code of Regulations
CDFW	California Department of Fish and Wildlife
CDMG	California Division of Mines and Geology
CEC	California Energy Commission
CEQA	California Environmental Quality Act
CESA	California Endangered Species Act
CFC	California Fire Code
CH_4	methane
CHL	California Historical Landmarks

CHP	combined heat and power
CMP	Construction Management Plan
CNDDB	California Natural Diversity Database
CNEL	Community Noise Equivalent Level
CNPS	California Native Plant Society
CO	carbon monoxide
CO_2	carbon dioxide
COG	Council of Governments
CPHI	California Points of Historical Interest
CPUC	California Public Utilities Commission
CRHR	California Register of Historical Resources
CSE	Central Southeast
CSMP	Collection System Master Plan
CWA	Clean Water Act
dB	decibel
DPM	diesel particulate matter
DTSC	California Department of Toxic Substances Control
DWR	California Department of Water Resources
EISA	Energy Independence and Security Act
EOC	Emergency Operations Center
EOP	Emergency Operations Plan
EPA	United States Environmental Protection Agency
EPO	Emergency Preparedness Officer
EV	electric vehicle
FAX	Fresno Area Express
FBO	Fixed Base Operator
FCS	FirstCarbon Solutions
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
FFD	Fresno Fire Department
FHSZ	Fire Hazard Severity Zone
FID	Fresno Irrigation District
FIRM	Flood Insurance Rate Map
FMFCD	Fresno Metropolitan Flood Control District
FMMP	Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program
FPD	Fresno Police Department
FPP	Farmland Preservation Program
FTA	Federal Transit Administration
ft-L	footlambert
FUSD	Fresno Unified School District

GHG	greenhouse gas
GSP	Groundwater Sustainability Plan
GWh	gigawatt-hours
HCP	Habitat Conservation Plan
HEPA	high-efficiency particulate air
HRA	Health Risk Assessment
HVAC	heating, ventilation, and air conditioning
KCNP	Kings Canyon National Park
LEED®	Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design
LESA	Land Evaluation and Site Assessment
LOS	Level of Service
LRA	Local Responsibility Area
MBTA	Migratory Bird Treaty Act
MEIR	Master Environmental Impact Report
mgd	million gallons per day
MM	Mitigation Measure
mpg	miles per gallon
mph	miles per hour
MRZ	Mineral Resource Zone
N_2O	nitrous oxide
NAHC	Native American Heritage Commission
NCCP	Natural Community Conservation Plan
NEVs	neighborhood electric vehicles
NIMS	National Incident Management System
NKGSA	North King Groundwater Sustainability Agency
NO_2	nitrogen dioxide
NO_x	oxides of nitrogen
NPDES	National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System
NRHP	National Register of Historic Places
NSR	New Source Review
OEHHA	Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment
PARCS	Parks, After School, Recreation, and Community Services
PG&E	Pacific Gas and Electric Company
PM_{10}	particulate matter less than 2.5 microns in diameter
$PM_{2.5}$	particulate matter less than 10 microns in diameter
POSS	Parks, Open Space, and Schools
ppm	parts per million
PPV	peak particle velocity
PWWF	Peak Wet Weather Flow

ROG	reactive organic gases
RPS	Renewable Portfolio Standard
RTP	Regional Transportation Plan
RWQCB	Regional Water Quality Control Board
RWRF	Regional Wastewater Reclamation Facility
SB	Senate Bill
SCH	State Clearinghouse
SCS	Sustainable Communities Strategy
SEMS	Standardized Emergency Management System
SJVAB	San Joaquin Valley Air Basin
SJVLS	San Joaquin Valley Library System
SMARA	Surface Mining and Reclamation Act
SO_2	sulfur dioxide
SOI	Sphere of Influence
SO_x	sulfur oxides
SR	State Route
SRA	State Responsibility Area
SSJVIC	Southern San Joaquin Valley Information Center
SWPPP	Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan
SWTF	Surface Water Treatment Facility
TAC	toxic air contaminant
T-BACTs	Best Available Control Technologies for Toxics
TCR	Tribal Cultural Resource
TRU	Transport Refrigeration Unit
USACE	United States Army Corps of Engineers
USDA	United States Department of Agriculture
USDOT	United States Department of Transportation
USFWS	United States Fish and Wildlife Service
UST	underground storage tank
UWMP	Urban Water Management Plan
Valley Air District	San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District
VHFHSZ	Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone
VMT	Vehicle Miles Traveled
VOC	volatile organic compounds
WMD	Wastewater Management Division
WWF	Wet Weather Flow
ZEV	Zero-Emission Vehicle

SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 - Purpose

The purpose of this Recirculated Draft Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (Recirculated Draft IS/MND) is to identify any potential environmental impacts that would result from implementation of the Fresno Central Southeast Area Specific Plan Project (proposed project) in the City of Fresno (City), in Fresno County (County), California. Pursuant to California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines Section 15367, the City is the Lead Agency and has discretionary authority over the proposed project and the preparation of this Recirculated Draft IS/MND and any additional environmental documentation required for the proposed project. The intended use of this document is to analyze the proposed project pursuant to the requirements of CEQA and to provide the basis for input from public agencies, organizations, and interested members of the public.

The remainder of this section provides a brief description of the project location and the primary project characteristics. Section 2 includes an environmental checklist that provides an overview of the potential impacts that may result from project implementation, elaborates on the information contained in the environmental checklist, and provides justification for each checklist response, and Section 3 contains the List of Preparers.

1.2 - Project Location

Location

Regional Location

The Central Southeast Area Specific Plan Area (Specific Plan Area) is located in the southeast area of the City, in Fresno County (County), California (Exhibit 1). The City is located in the central San Joaquin Valley, approximately 200 miles north of Los Angeles, and 170 miles south of Sacramento. The City is located on the State Route (SR) 99 corridor.

Local Setting

The Specific Plan Area is approximately 2,067 acres just east and southeast of Downtown Fresno and is bounded by Belmont Avenue to the north, Fourth Street to the west, Church Avenue to the south, and Peach Avenue to the east (Exhibit 2). Additionally, the Specific Plan Area is located within the Roosevelt Community Plan Area.

The Specific Plan Area sits just north of the South Industrial Priority Area and is surrounded to the west by some of the oldest City neighborhoods and to the east by unincorporated County agricultural lands (Exhibit 3). The northernmost portion of the Specific Plan Area is 0.25 mile from access to SR-180, while the southern portion of the Specific Plan Area generally runs along city limits, adjacent to and circumventing several unincorporated lands under the jurisdiction of the County. The Specific Plan Area is located on the *Clovis*, *Fresno South,* and *Malaga*, *California* United States Geological Survey (USGS) 7.5-minute Topographic Quadrangle Map Range 20 East, Township 13 South, Section 36; Range

21 East, Township 13 South, Section 31; Range 20 East, Township 14 South, Sections 1, 2, 11, 13, 14, 23, 24; and Range 21 East, Township 14 South, Sections 5,6, 7, 8, 17, 18, 19.

1.3 - Environmental Setting

Existing Land Use Activities

The Specific Plan Area represents approximately 3 percent of the City. The Specific Plan's Existing Conditions Report (Appendix A) identifies that the Specific Plan Area includes approximately 30,624 people and 9,150 households and is characterized by a blend of older single-family and multi-family housing developments, industrial facilities, public facilities, vacant land, and commercial areas such as Ventura/Cesar Chavez Boulevard. The Specific Plan Area includes several regional and local institutions, including the Fresno Fairgrounds, the Sal Mosqueda Community Center, and Fresno Pacific University. The San Joaquin Valley Railroad operates a local freight distribution line that provides services to existing industrial facilities adjacent to California Avenue. The Specific Plan Area contains approximately 112 acres of parklands and has a park ratio of approximately 1.68 acres per 1,000 residents. Existing uses in the Specific Plan Area include a mix of suburban housing developments, public facilities, strip shopping centers, industrial uses, and vacant land.

The vast majority of commercial uses are located along Ventura/Cesar Chavez Boulevard (Commercial–Community), with very limited neighborhood and general commercial uses along Orange Avenue and Butler Avenue. Most of the Commercial–Community uses are in the form of strip shopping centers and include a mix of discount stores, fast food restaurants, and regional commercial retailers such as Walmart, Home Depot, and Big Lots, with a few smaller independent shops and restaurants scattered throughout. Office uses in the Specific Plan Area are limited to just a few small parcels on either side of Ventura/Cesar Chavez Boulevard.

Vacant and underutilized land also make up a large portion of the Specific Plan Area. Underutilized land includes parcels that are partially vacant, comprised primarily of surface parking lots, have vacant buildings, or where existing buildings are aging and/or lower density than what is allowed on the site.

The Specific Plan Area is primarily delineated by five major arterials and a network of wide collectors that form 0.5-mile-square quarter-tracts as well as local roads with a single lane in each direction. Maple Avenue, a four-lane collector; Chestnut Avenue, a four-lane arterial; and Willow Avenue, a two-lane collector, are the principal north–south roadways within the Specific Plan Area. East Cesar Chavez Boulevard, a four-lane arterial, and East Butler Avenue, a three-lane collector, run parallel to SR-180 and the California Avenue railroad right-of-way and are the principal east–west roadways within the Specific Plan Area. Most roadways in the Specific Plan Area operate acceptably under the City's traffic impact thresholds. There are currently no plans for road widening capacity improvements within the Specific Plan Area except for Willow Avenue (north of Cesar Chavez Boulevard), which is planned to be expanded from two to four lanes. In addition, a roadway segment of Lane Avenue, from Chestnut Avenue to Willow Avenue, is planned to reduce traffic lanes.

The Braley Canal enters the Specific Plan Area from the southeast and flows parallel to California Avenue extending from Orange Avenue, which forms the western border of the Specific Plan Area past Peach Avenue, which forms the eastern border of the Specific Plan Area.

Existing General Plan Land Use Designations and Zoning

The General Plan includes the following key land use designations for the Specific Plan Area: Residential–Medium Density (approximately 27.68 percent of the total acreage); Public Facilities (approximately 24.05 percent of the total acreage); Residential–Medium High Density (approximately 17.51 percent of the total acreage); and Corridor/Center Mixed Use (approximately 10.50 percent of the total acreage) (Exhibit 4). The existing land use designations in the Specific Plan Area are further described in Table 1 below. The acreages included in Table 1 are approximate values and are not intended to reflect the total acreage of the Specific Plan. Uses that are not designated by the General Plan, such as streets, are not reflected in the total acreage.

Table 1: Existing General Plan Land Use Designations in the Specific Plan Area

Land Use Designation	Approximate Acres of Land Use in Specific Plan Area (acres)	Percent of Total Specific Plan Area (%)
Residential–Low Density	1.8	0.11
Residential–Medium Low Density	144.3	8.54
Residential–Medium Density	467.5	27.68
Residential–Medium High Density	295.7	17.51
Neighborhood Mixed Use	2.5	0.15
Corridor/Center Mixed Use	177.4	10.50
Commercial–Community	40.2	2.38
Commercial–General	4.2	0.25
Employment–Office	18.1	1.07
Employment–Heavy Industrial	0.5	0.03
Employment–Light Industrial	27.4	1.62
Open Space	103.2	6.11
Public Facilities	406.3	24.05
Total	**1,689.1**	**100%**

Notes:
All values are approximate.
Source: City of Fresno. 2025.

1.4 - Project Background

City of Fresno General Plan

The City Council adopted the Fresno General Plan (General Plan) and Master Environmental Impact Report (MEIR) in December 2014.

There have been minimal changes to the land use designations within the Specific Plan Area since the 2014 General Plan MEIR was certified. The City adopted a new Development Code in December 2015, establishing new zoning districts, permitted uses, development standards, and procedures to align with the General Plan.

Amendments to the General Plan

Since the General Plan was adopted and the MEIR was certified in 2014, several amendments to the General Plan have been adopted, and new local, State, and/or federal regulations have been enacted, including, but not limited to, the following:

- Downtown Neighborhoods and Community Plan, 2016
- Fulton Corridor Specific Plan, 2016
- Housing Element, 2017, 2024
- Southwest Fresno Specific Plan, 2017
- Active Transportation Plan, 2017
- Parks Master Plan, 2018
- Approximately 32 General Plan Amendments (GPAs) involving over 150 sites
- New airport land use plans and noise contours, 2018

City of Fresno Central Southeast Area Specific Plan

The proposed project would create the City of Fresno Central Southeast Area Specific Plan (Specific Plan), a long-range planning document that provides a vision for growth and development in the community over the next 20 to 30 years. The proposed Specific Plan would address a wide range of topics that impact the quality of life in the community, including affordable housing, jobs and economic development, transportation, parks and open space, and a healthy environment.

Specific Plan Approval Process

The proposed Specific Plan is a policy-level document and does not include any specific development proposals. Therefore, the Specific Plan would be adopted solely by the City Council. The Planning Commission and other decision-making bodies would review the Specific Plan and make recommendations to the City Council. In addition, the Specific Plan may be heard by the Airport Land Use Commission (ALUC). While other agencies may be consulted during the adoption process, their approval is not required for adoption of the proposed Specific Plan. However, subsequent development under the proposed Specific Plan may require approval of State, federal and responsible trustee agencies that may rely on the program-level analysis in this Recirculated Draft IS/MND for decisions in their areas of expertise.

Contents of the Specific Plan

The proposed Specific Plan is organized into the following eight chapters. A set of objectives and implementing policies are provided in each relevant chapter. The Specific Plan's chapters are as follows:

Introduction

This chapter provides a broad overview of the planning context, community engagement process, and organization of the Specific Plan.

Vision and Goals

This chapter outlines the vision and guiding principles for the Specific Plan Area that were articulated during the community engagement process.

Land Use and Urban Design

This chapter describes the proposed land uses in the Specific Plan Area. It also outlines a unique set of goals and strategies that pertain to future desired uses and development in each "change area" or subarea in the Specific Plan Area.

Transportation, Public Realm, and Infrastructure

This chapter outlines priority circulation improvements for all travel modes–including walking, bicycling, driving, and transit–and specific design recommendations to make streets and pathways more walkable and comfortable for residents of the Specific Plan Area. It also includes utility and infrastructure needs in the Specific Plan Area.

Parks and Open Space

This chapter describes the existing context for public parks, open spaces, and recreational facilities within the Specific Plan Area and identifies key opportunities for improvement. Strategies include both new parks on opportunity sites and enhanced programming at existing facilities.

Economic Development

This chapter outlines an inclusive and sustainable economic development strategy that targets growth in key industry sectors, as well as improved economic opportunity for the Specific Plan Area and businesses through job training and workforce development.

Quality of Life

This chapter outlines strategies to improve quality of life in the Specific Plan Area by addressing the social and environmental determinants of health. This multifaceted approach includes improving public safety, promoting healthy lifestyles, mitigating environmental hazards, and building capacity within communities. Topics covered include public health, public safety, environment and environmental justice, and community empowerment.

Next Steps and Funding

This chapter summarizes the community priorities, next steps, and potential funding and financing strategies to implement the Plan's recommended improvements and programs.

1.5 - Project Description

Project Summary

The proposed Specific Plan would address community needs and guide future public and private development to create a more vibrant, attractive, equitable, and healthy community in a way that builds upon the social and cultural strengths of the existing Community Plan Area. The Specific Plan is a continuation of the recent Downtown Neighborhoods Community Plan, adopted in 2016, picking up where the Downtown Neighborhoods Community Plan left off along the northwestern boundary.

Proposed Land Uses

The proposed land use designations of the Specific Plan are consistent with the General Plan; however, the Specific Plan proposes changing the land use designation for some of the Specific Plan Area's parcels, which will require the General Plan Land Use map to be amended. The proposed Specific Plan includes land use changes that would reclassify some parcels to match uses currently on the ground that are likely to remain for the foreseeable future (Exhibit 5). These changes would also change concentrations of vacant lands or facilities along the Cesar Chavez Corridor, reduce oversized parking lots near the Maple Avenue and Butler Avenue intersection, and develop underutilized land near the Cedar Avenue and Butler Avenue intersection. The Specific Plan would also create higher intensity mixed-use infill opportunities along priority corridors and at key opportunity sites, strengthen neighborhoods that provide a range of office types, and include office, clean tech, and other non-nuisance employment generating uses that provide a buffer between industrial neighborhoods. Overall, development consistent with the proposed project would reduce the total amount of the development in the Specific Plan Area compared to what was contemplated by the General Plan.

Table 2 below describes the land use classifications that are proposed with implementation of the Specific Plan. The acreages included in Table 2 are approximate values and are not intended to reflect the total acreage of the Specific Plan. Uses that are not designated by the Specific Plan, such as streets, are not reflected in the total acreages.

Table 2: Proposed Land Uses in the Central Southeast Fresno Specific Plan

Land Use Designation	Proposed Acres of Land Uses in Specific Plan Area	Percent of Total Specific Plan Area
Residential–Low Density	2 acres	0.1%
Residential–Medium Low Density	144 acres	8.0%
Residential–Medium Density	403 acres	23.6%
Residential–Medium High Density	341 acres	19.1%
Residential–Urban Neighborhood	46 acres	2.6%

Land Use Designation	Proposed Acres of Land Uses in Specific Plan Area	Percent of Total Specific Plan Area
Commercial–Community	14 acres	0.8%
Commercial–General	2 acres	0.1%
Employment–Office	89 acres	5.0%
Employment–Light Industrial	0 acres	0%
Employment–Heavy Industrial	0 acres	0%
Mixed Use–Neighborhood	3 acres	0.2%
Mixed Use–Corridor Center	201 acres	11.2%
Open Space	53 acres	3.0%
Park	51 acres	2.8%
Public Facilities	402 acres	22.5%
Railroad	–	–
Vacant	–	–
Total	**1,751 acres**	**100%**
Notes: All values are approximate. Source: City of Fresno. 2025.		

The subareas in the Specific Plan Area that are identified for comprehensive redevelopment include three corridors and three districts. Though unified under a single vision for the entire Specific Plan Area, each subarea possesses its own distinct identity, set of characteristics, and unique opportunity sites that will advance its transformation. The development proposed for each subarea is described in in Table 3.

Table 3: Proposed Subareas in the Central Southeast Fresno Specific Plan

Subarea Types	Subarea Name/Location	Subarea Objective	Major Projects Proposed (if applicable)	Project Descriptions (if applicable)
Corridors	Cesar Chavez Boulevard	Transform Cesar Chavez into an active mixed-use corridor.	Former UMC Hospital	Redevelop the former UMC Hospital Site into a holistic health and wellness center.
			International Shopping and Entertainment Village	Evolve strip shopping centers such as Asian Village into mixed-use/entertainment centers that focus on international food establishments and cultural shopping amenities.

Subarea Types	Subarea Name/Location	Subarea Objective	Major Projects Proposed (if applicable)	Project Descriptions (if applicable)
	Butler Avenue	Create a series of neighborhood centers along Butler Avenue.	Mosqueda Regional Cultural and Community Center	Build on the success of Mosqueda Center to expand this area into a hub for cultural activities, education, and recreation.
			Hanoian Shopping Center	Redevelop Hanoian Shopping Center into a small mixed-use neighborhood center that will meet the daily needs of residents.
	Orange Avenue	Evolve Orange Avenue into a neighborhood "main street."		
Districts	Fairgrounds	Activate and strengthen connections to the Fresno Fairground as an important hub for community, cultural, and recreational activities.		
	IRS Processing Center	Redevelop the IRS site into an education campus and/or tech hub.		
	Employment District	Encourage business park/office/R&D with clean/non-nuisance employment uses.		
Source: City of Fresno. 2021.				

1.6 - Project Objectives

The objectives of the proposed project are to:

- **Emphasize cultural diversity.** Protect and enhance the diverse cultures and ethnicities in the Specific Plan Area through historic preservation and recording of history, supporting multi-cultural events, protecting diverse retail establishments and promoting racial tolerance. This will allow all people, regardless of race, class, income or age, to thrive in the Specific Plan Area.
- **Keep the engaged population active.** Continue the community's history of having an active and engaged citizenry through the Specific Plan process. This includes engaging residents in the decision-making process, building capacity to implement the vision of the community, and engaging youth in civic activities.
- **Support the underserved**. Protect and celebrate Specific Plan Area residents' willingness to help one another and support those in need.
- **Preserve strong and unique neighborhoods.** Preserve the character, identity and sense of place. As part of the process, strive to protect the character of neighborhoods while allowing for growth and change over time.
- **Protect housing affordability and minimize displacement.** Protect existing housing affordability and reduce the potential for the displacement of current residents as the area reaches its full

potential. Strategies include supporting both market rate and affordable housing and creating more housing choice in the neighborhood to serve a diverse demographic of new and existing residents.

- **Enhance connections to Downtown.** Build upon the Specific Plan Area's strategic location in proximity to Downtown to enhance access to jobs, services, cultural, and other community amenities.
- **Improve safety.** Improve safety in and around the Specific Plan Area through a range of strategies including increased pedestrian activity, more "eyes on the street," community policing, better lighting, activation of vacant spaces, and an increased sense of ownership and stewardship by residents, workers, and visitors.
- **Enhance mobility and improve connectivity.** Improve pedestrian, bicycle, transit, and vehicle connections with a focus on improving transportation safety (especially around schools and parks) and inexpensive mobility options. Expand transit service to ensure that residents can quickly and easily access jobs and services throughout the City. Support the recent Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) investment along Cesar Chavez Boulevard as an important strategy to better connect residents to jobs and services in Downtown and other parts of the City.
- **Expand access to educational opportunities**. Seek to improve educational opportunities for residents of all ages. This includes improving youth education to expand access to opportunity, providing vocational training, and supporting on-the-job training at local businesses. As part of this strategy, partner with local educational institutions to ensure access for the Specific Plan Area residents.
- **Support economic vitality.** Encourage an environment where diverse businesses can flourish and thrive. Expand job opportunities, workforce training programs, and support for local businesses.
- **Reduce pollution and protect environmental health.** Improve air quality by supporting innovative programs for environmental sustainability and increase resilience of the community against hazards. Protect residents from the adverse health impacts of nearby industrial land uses.
- **Support health and equity.** Promote equity, health, and well-being by providing a range of community services and access to healthcare, recreational opportunities, and healthy food options. Encourage the development of grocery stores, farmers' markets, and community farming.
- **Build and improve parks and community facilities.** Seek new ways to fund park maintenance and plan for new neighborhood parks, community facilities, and other public spaces that will provide a place for the community to gather, socialize, and play.
- **Invest in maintenance and beautification.** Invest in maintaining and cleaning streets and public spaces. Improve walkability, sense of place, public spaces, and community aesthetics through landscaping, streetscape treatments, and façade improvements. Create a welcoming community that is clean, safe, and inviting.

- **Encourage continued and expanded diversity of uses.** Support a diverse mix of uses including retail, jobs, services, housing, civic spaces, and community facilities, particularly along Cesar Chavez Boulevard, in neighborhood retail areas and in nonresidential areas. Encourage retention of key retail and ethnic establishments while introducing more varied essential goods and services.
- **Utilize the Fairgrounds**. Support existing events and encourage new events and flexible or temporary uses that will activate the Fresno Fairgrounds year-round, attract both local and regional populations and provide a long-term and tangible benefit for the Specific Plan Area residents.

1.7 - Required Discretionary Approvals

As mentioned previously, the City has discretionary authority over the proposed project and is the CEQA Lead Agency for the preparation of the Recirculated Draft IS/MND. In order to implement the proposed project, the City would need to approve the following discretionary actions:

- Approval of the Recirculated Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration
- Adoption of Central Southeast Area Specific Plan and repeal of a portion of the Roosevelt Community Plan
- General Plan Amendment
- Rezone

1.8 - Intended Uses of This Document

This Recirculated Draft IS/MND has been prepared to determine the appropriate scope and level of detail required in completing the environmental analysis for the proposed project. This document will also serve as a basis for soliciting comments and input from members of the public and public agencies regarding the proposed project. The Recirculated Draft IS/MND will be circulated for a minimum of 30 days, during which comments concerning the analysis contained in the Recirculated Draft IS/MND should be sent to:

City of Fresno
Planning and Development Department
Sophia Pagoulatos, Planning Manager
2600 Fresno Street, Room 3065
Fresno, California 93721
Email: longrangeplanning@fresno.gov

Reasons for Recirculation

The CEQA Guidelines indicate that a lead agency is required to recirculate an ND when significant new information is added to the ND after public notice is given of the availability of the Draft ND for public review before adoption. The use of “information” in this guideline can include changes in the project

or environmental setting as well as additional data or other information. However, new information is not "significant" unless the ND is changed in a way that deprives the public of a meaningful opportunity to comment upon a substantial adverse environmental impact of the proposed project or a feasible way to mitigate or avoid such an effect that the project's proponents have declined to implement (CEQA Guidelines Section 15073.5).

A Draft Subsequent MND, dated February 1, 2023 (previously circulated Draft Subsequent MND), was prepared for the proposed project and was circulated for public review between February 6, 2023, and March 7, 2023. During the public review period for the previously circulated Draft Subsequent MND), the City received seven written comment letters. However, a Final Subsequent MND was not finalized or approved for the proposed project.

Prior to the finalization of the previously circulated Subsequent MND, the Lead Agency decided to revise the MND for the proposed project to remove reliance on the City of Fresno 2021 General Plan Program EIR, including both its findings and its mitigation measures that were previously referenced in both documents, as well as the 2021 GHG Reduction Plan. These revisions are considered substantial changes to the environmental setting and thus constitute "significant new information," requiring recirculation of the entire Draft IS/MND for the proposed project.

The City prepared and circulated this Recirculated Draft IS/MND to the State Clearinghouse (SCH), trustee and responsible agencies, the public, and all parties and individuals that submitted comments on the previously circulated Draft Subsequent MND during the public comment period.

This Recirculated Draft IS/MND contains a description of the proposed project, a description of the environmental setting, an identification of the proposed project's direct and indirect impacts on the environment, and the Specific Plan objectives and policies that reduce potential impacts. Comments received in response to the previously circulated Draft Subsequent MND were considered in preparing the Recirculated Draft IS/MND. Copies of these letters are provided in Appendix B of this Revised Draft IS/MND.

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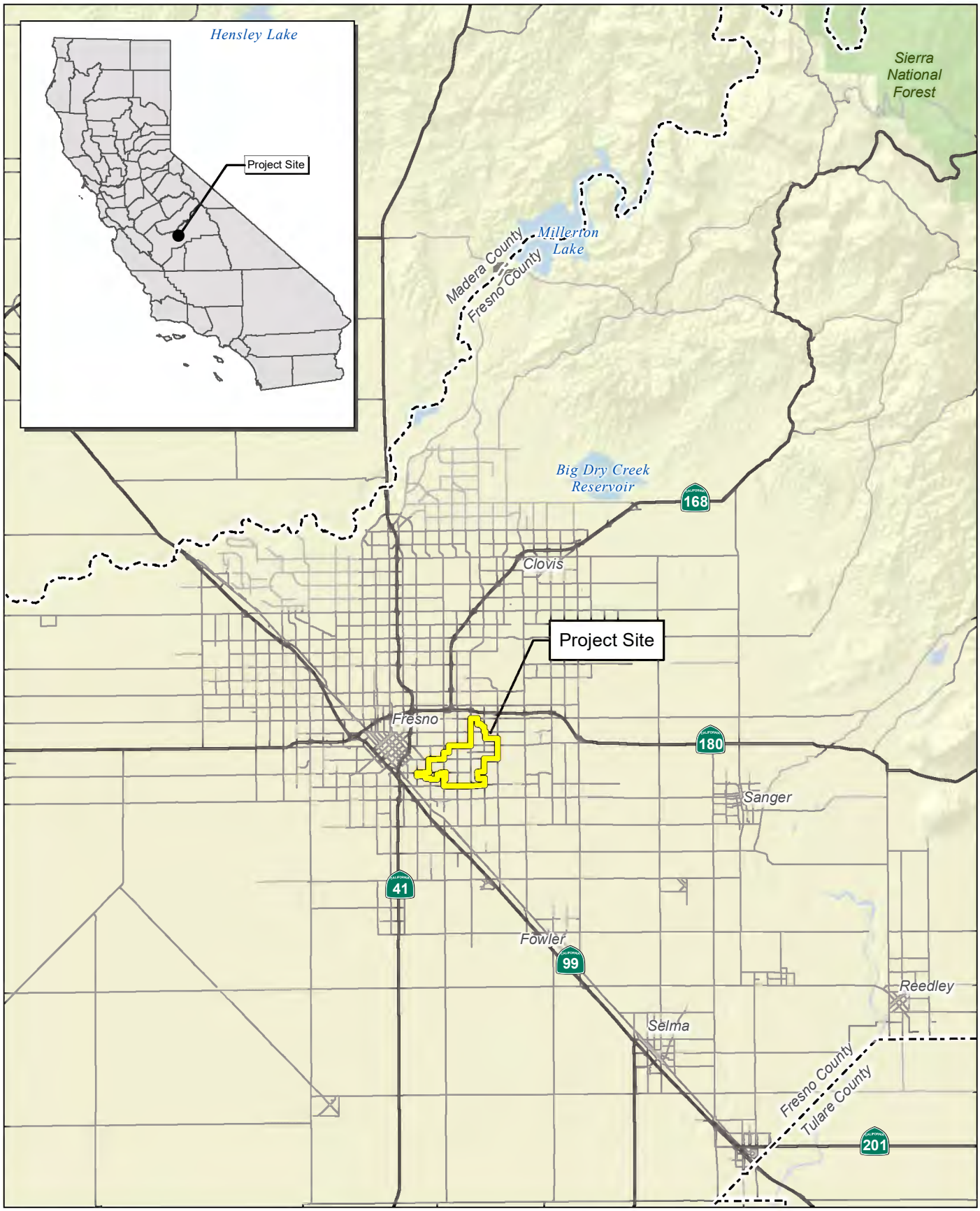

Source: Census 2000 Data, The California Spatial Information Library (CaSIL).

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Exhibit 1
Regional Location Map

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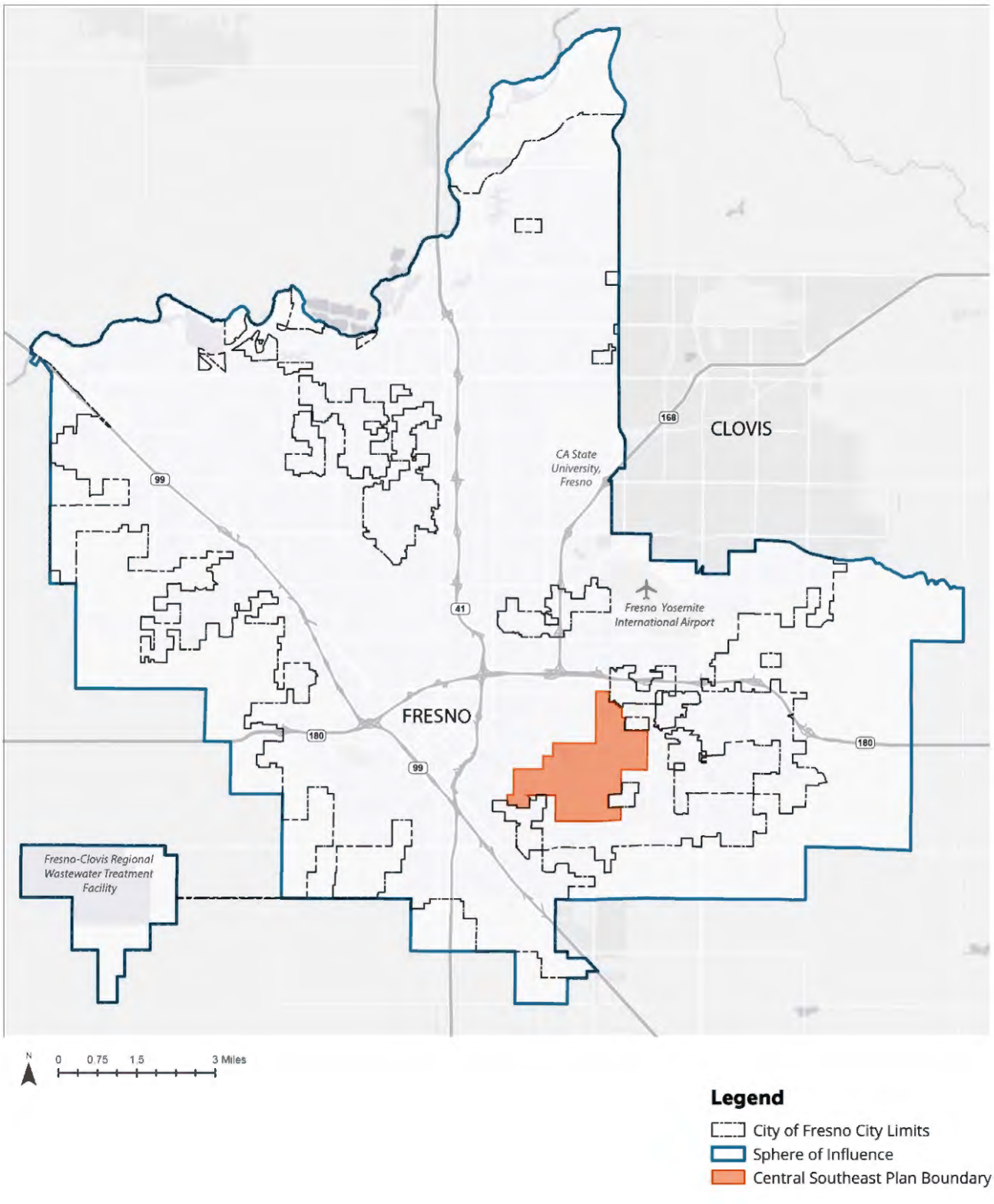

Source: City of Fresno Central Southeast Area Specific Plan, April 2021.

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Exhibit 2
Local Vicinity Map

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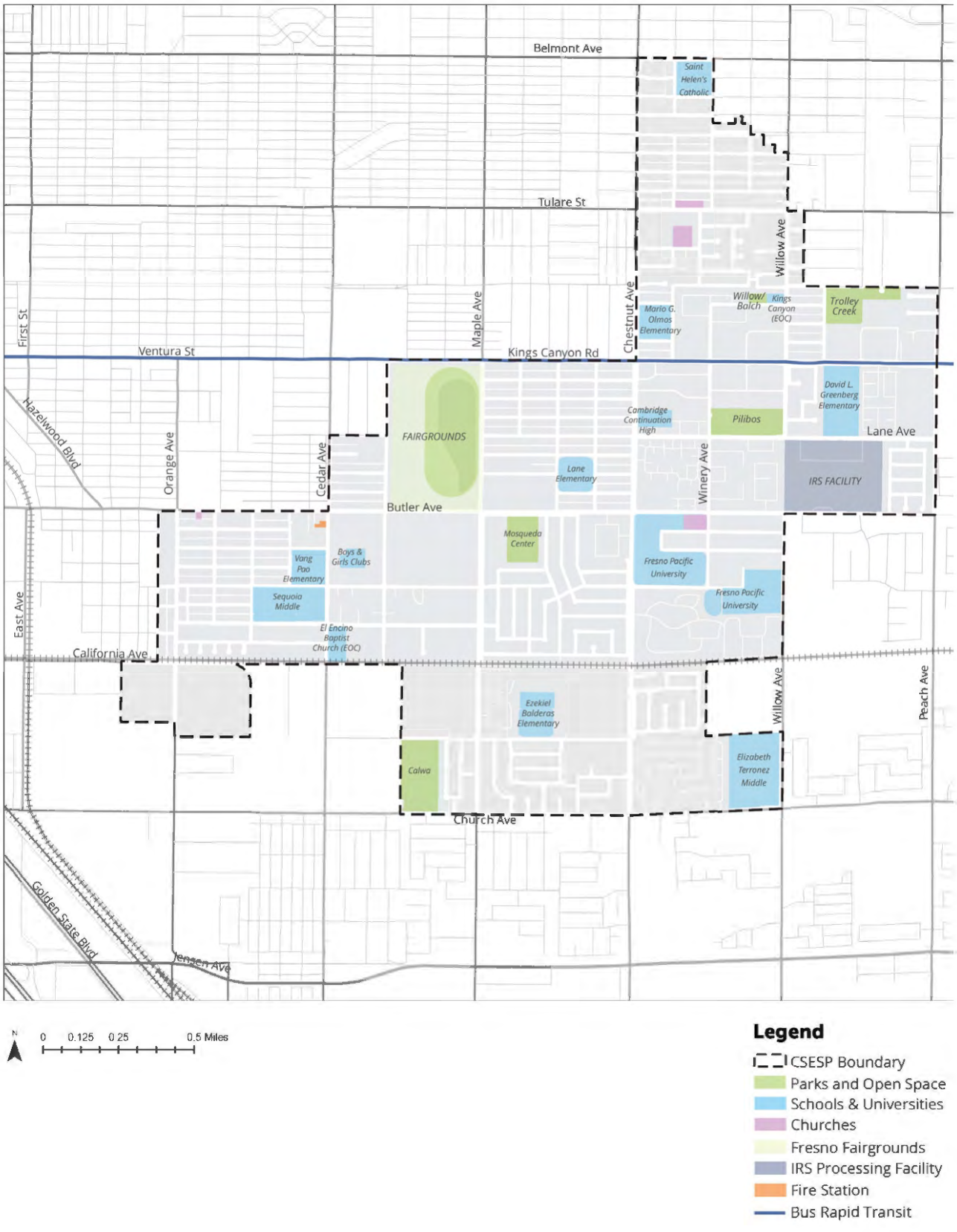

Source: City of Fresno Central Southeast Area Specific Plan, April 2021.

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Exhibit 3
Specific Plan Area Map

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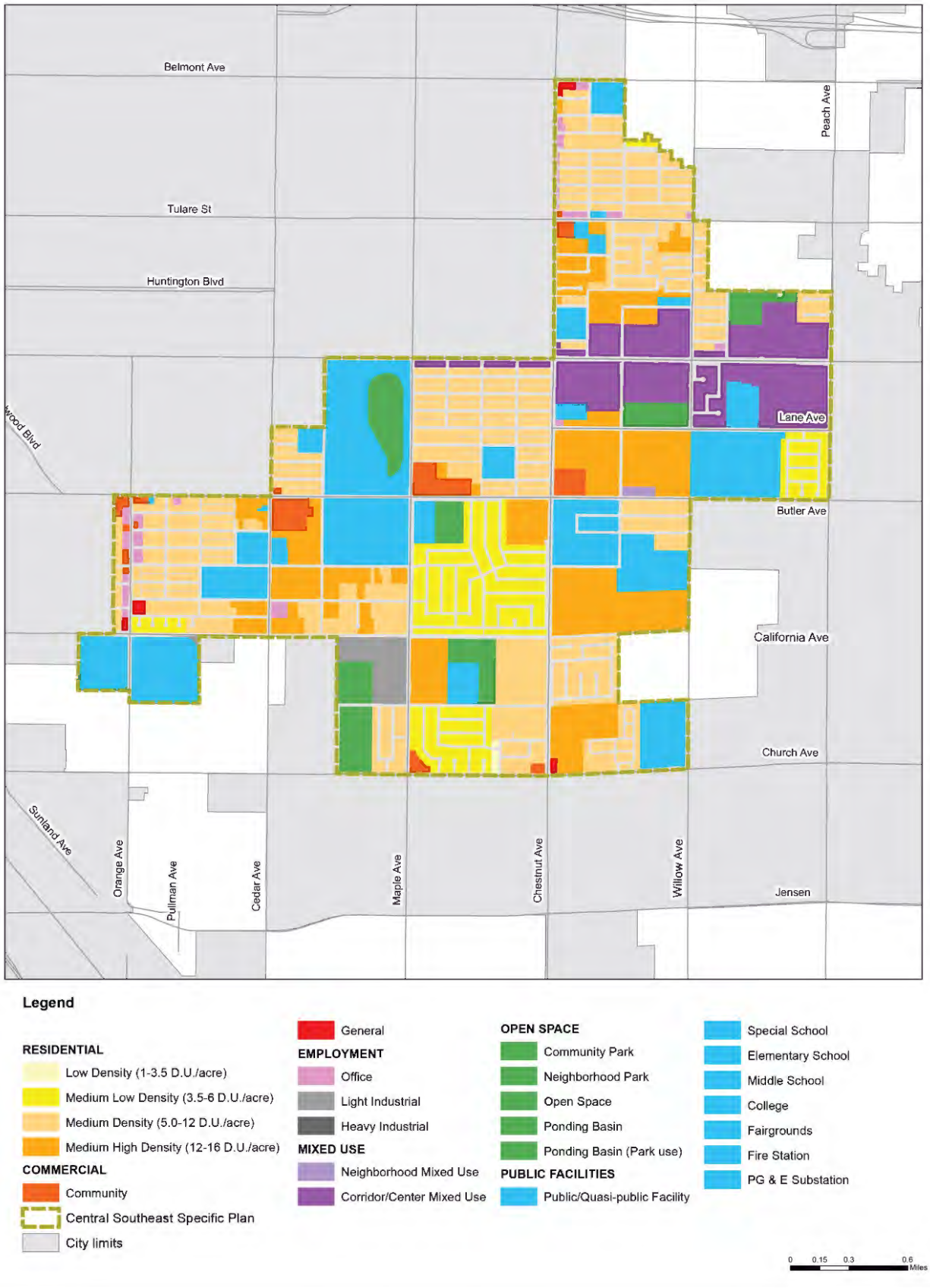

Source: City of Fresno, 2025.

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Exhibit 4
Existing General Plan Land Use Map

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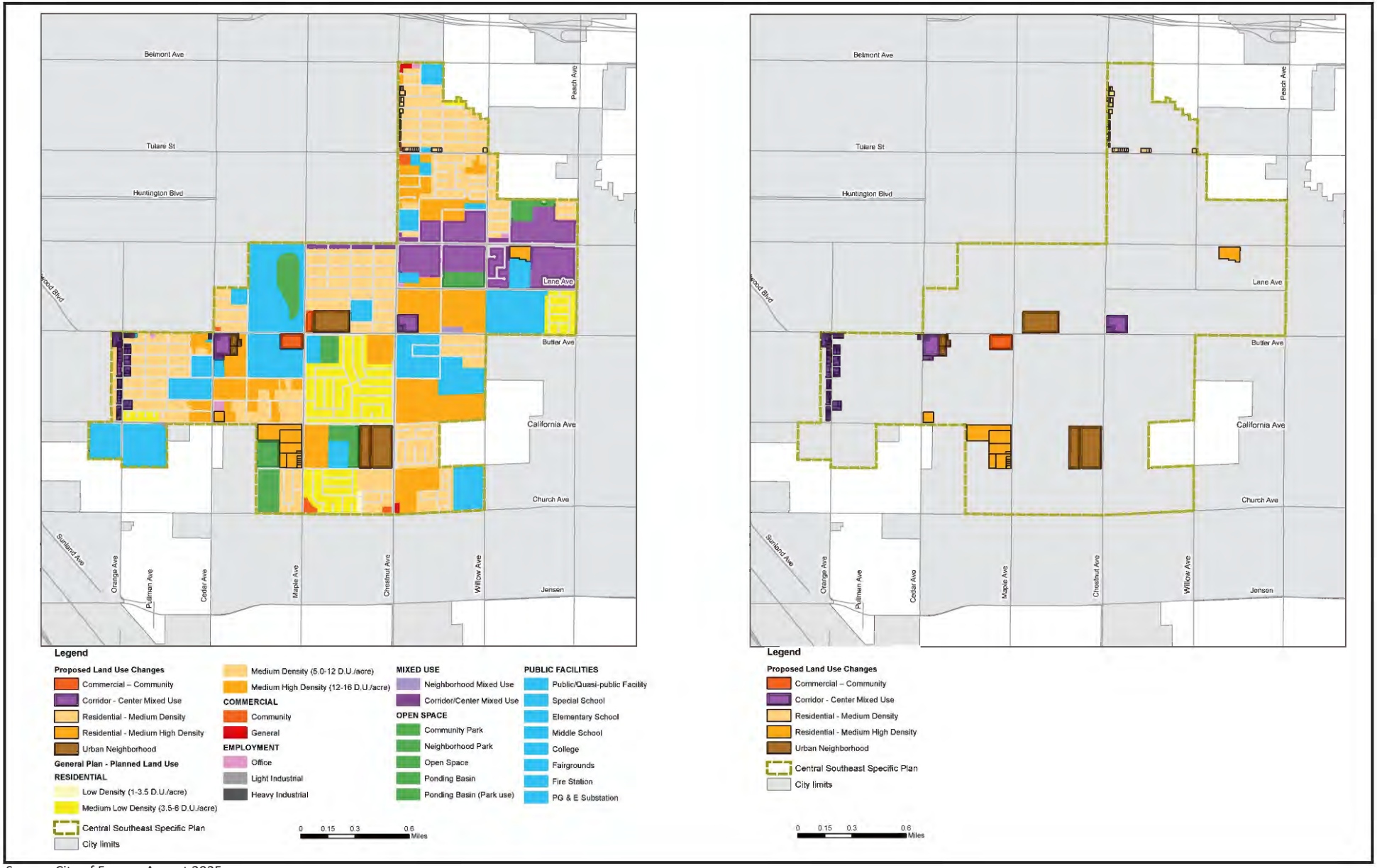

Source: City of Fresno, August 2025.

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Exhibit 5
Proposed Land Use Changes

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SECTION 2: ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST AND ENVIRONMENTAL EVALUATION

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" or a "Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated" as indicated by the checklist on the following pages.

☒	Aesthetics, Light, and Glare	☐	Agriculture and Forestry Resources	☒	Air Quality
☒	Biological Resources	☒	Cultural Resources and Tribal Cultural Resources	☒	Energy
☒	Geology, Seismicity, and Soils	☒	Greenhouse Gas Emissions	☐	Hazards and Hazardous Materials
☐	Hydrology and Water Quality	☐	Land Use and Planning	☐	Mineral Resources
☒	Noise	☐	Population and Housing	☐	Public Services
☐	Recreation	☒	Transportation	☐	Utilities and Service Systems
☐	Wildfire	☐	Mandatory Findings of Significance		

Environmental 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 1) has been adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and 2) has been addressed by mitigation measure based on the earlier analysis as described on attached sheets. An ENVIRONMENTAL 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.

Date: _____ Signed: _____

Environmental Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
2.1 Aesthetics, Light, and Glare *Except as provided in Public Resources Code Section 21099, would the project:*				
a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic building within a State Scenic Highway?	☐	☐	☐	☒
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?	☐	☐	☒	☐
d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?	☐	☒	☐	☐

Environmental Evaluation

Introduction

As noted in the Project Description, the land use designations of the Specific Plan are consistent with the General Plan buildout assumptions; however, this Specific Plan proposes changing the land use designation for some of the Specific Plan Area's parcels, which would require the General Plan Land Use map to be amended. These proposed land use designation changes would reduce the total amount of development compared to what was contemplated by the General Plan for the Specific Plan Area.

Environmental Setting

A scenic vista is typically a viewpoint that provides expansive views of a highly valued landscape for the benefit of the general public. According to the General Plan, no scenic vistas are identified or designated within the City.[1] Although no scenic vistas have been officially designated, there may be locations within the City that could provide distant views of natural landscape features such as the Sierra Nevada Mountain Range and the San Joaquin River bluffs.

Scenic highways are California highways designated by a local governing body and protected by the State Scenic Highway Program for the purpose of protecting and enhancing the natural scenic beauty of California highways and adjacent corridors through special conservation treatment. The California

[1] City of Fresno. 2020. Fresno General Plan. Website: https://www.fresno.gov/darm/wp-content/uploads/sites/10/2019/07/ConsolidatedGP6182020.pdf. Accessed August 8, 2022.

Department of Transportation (Caltrans) identifies officially designated scenic highways through the California Scenic Highway Mapping System. SR-180 is the only officially designated State Scenic Highway in the Fresno/Tulare County area.[2] The portion of SR-180 that is officially designated begins at the Alta Main Canal near the City of Minkler to near the General Grant Grove section of Kings Canyon National Park (KCNP). There are also three eligible scenic highways in Fresno County (County), including SR-33, beginning at SR-198 to Coalinga; SR-168, beginning at Route 65 near the City of Clovis to the City of Huntington Lake; and SR-198, beginning at Interstate 5 (I-5) to SR-33.[3]

Additionally, the General Plan also identifies scenic corridors within the City and its Sphere of Influence (SOI). Public views of scenic corridors are considered those views as seen along a linear transportation route usually comprised of short-, middle-, and long-range views.[4] The City's General Plan identifies several scenic corridors; however, only four of these corridors are in the vicinity of the Specific Plan Area. These corridors include Peach Avenue from Belmont Avenue to Butler Avenue, which forms part of the Specific Plan Area's eastern boundary; Minnewawa Avenue from Belmont Avenue to Cesar Chavez Boulevard; Butler Avenue from Peach Avenue to Fowler Street; and Huntington Boulevard from First Street to Cedar Avenue. Of the four, only Peach Avenue is located within the Specific Plan Area.[5]

The existing visual character of the Specific Plan Area exhibits a predominantly auto-oriented urban character and is largely characterized by a blend of older single-family and multi-family housing developments, industrial facilities, public facilities, vacant land, and commercial areas such as Ventura/Cesar Chavez Boulevard. Existing development within the City contributes substantial nighttime light. Existing sources of light in the vicinity of the Specific Plan area include streetlights, parking lots, interior lights, and residential and nonresidential buildings along major thoroughfares. Localized glare is the result of roofing materials, polished exteriors, metal, and glass that comprises buildings within the Specific Plan Area.

Would the project:

a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?

Less than significant impact. As mentioned above, the General Plan does not identify any scenic vistas within the City. The San Joaquin River bluffs contain publicly valued scenic features, but the Specific Plan Area is not visible from these vista points. Furthermore, views of the Sierra Nevada mountains are not visible from the Specific Plan Area due to existing development. As discussed above, the General Plan identifies one scenic corridor within the Specific Plan Area. General Plan Policy MT-3-a requires the implementation of measures to preserve and enhance scenic corridors, and Policy MT-3-b requires that street trees lining designated scenic corridors, such as the street trees on both sides of Peach Avenue, be preserved. While the proposed project does not contemplate specific development

[2] California Department of Transportation (Caltrans). 2019. California Scenic Highway Program: List of eligible and officially designated State Scenic Highways. Website: https://dot.ca.gov/programs/design/lap-landscape-architecture-and-community-livability/lap-liv-i-scenic-highways. Accessed August 30, 2022.

[3] Ibid.

[4] City of Fresno. 2020. Fresno General Plan. Website: chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcglclefindmkaj/https://www.fresno.gov/darm/wp-content/uploads/sites/10/2019/07/ConsolidatedGP6182020.pdf. Accessed August 8, 2022.

[5] Ibid.

in the Specific Plan Area, all future development in accordance with implementation of the proposed project on or near the portion of Peach Avenue that is designated a scenic corridor would be required to comply with these General Plan policies. Moreover, development consistent with the proposed project would reduce the total amount of the development in the Specific Plan Area compared to what was contemplated by the General Plan, reducing the potential impact to street trees.

Additionally, the proposed project includes policies to further beautify the major thoroughfares within the Plan Area, including Cesar Chavez Boulevard and Butler Avenue. As a result, impacts to scenic vistas and the scenic corridors identified in the General Plan would be less than significant.

b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic building within a State Scenic Highway?

No impact. As described above, four eligible and officially designated State Scenic Highways are located within the County. The Specific Plan Area is located approximately 15 miles west of the portion of SR-180 that has been officially designated as a State Scenic Highway. The Specific Plan Area is located approximately 4 miles south of the eligible portion of SR-168, approximately 42 miles east from the eligible portion of SR-198, and approximately 45 miles east from the eligible portion of SR-33. Therefore, future development in accordance with implementation of the proposed project would not impact scenic resources within a designated or eligible State Scenic Highway. Therefore, no impact would occur.

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?

Less than significant impact. As discussed above, the Specific Plan Area is characterized as urban as it generally consists of older single-family and multi-family housing developments, industrial facilities, public facilities, vacant land, and commercial areas such as Ventura/Cesar Chavez Boulevard. There are no land uses within the Specific Plan Area that are designated for the protection of scenic views or scenic quality. Additionally, there are no rural or agricultural land uses within the Specific Plan Area.

Moreover, while the proposed project increases the amount of land designated for Residential–Medium Density, Residential–Medium High Density, Employment–Office, and Public Facility, development consistent with the proposed project would reduce the total amount of the development in the Specific Plan Area compared to what was contemplated by the General Plan. Future development would also be required to undergo discretionary review by the City, which would ensure compliance with applicable land use and zoning requirements, and would ensure consistency with the policies and programs included in the General Plan. Future development would also be guided by the Specific Plan's development requirements, which include goals and policies to improve the visual quality of the Specific Plan Area. For example, Specific Plan Policy ED-1.8 establishes a Façade Improvement and Beautification Program in the Specific Plan Area, Policy T-3.1 aims to beautify the streets while improving pedestrian and bicyclist safety, and Policy LU-3.1 implements coordinated

streetscape and frontage enhancements along Orange Avenue to revitalize and activate the public realm.

Furthermore, one of the proposed project's objectives is to invest in the maintenance and beautification of the Specific Plan Area. This objective is achieved by the proposed project through policies that promote cleaning streets and public spaces and improve walkability, sense of place, public spaces, and community aesthetics through landscaping, streetscape treatments, and façade improvements. As such, impacts to visual character and regulations related to scenic quality would be less than significant.

d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?

Less than signficant impact with mitigation incorporated. As discussed above in Impact 2.1(c), the proposed project increases the amount of land designated for Residential–Medium Density, Residential–Medium High Density, Employment–Office, and Public Facility. While future development consistent with the proposed project would be generally consistent with the densities and intensities of the existing land uses within the Specific Plan Area and would overall reduce the total amount of the development in the Specific Plan Area compared to what was contemplated by the General Plan, the proposed project could result in additional sources of light and glare.

New development within the city limits could increase the amount of light from streetlights, exterior lighting systems on private and public property, exterior lighting from buildings, and vehicular headlights, resulting in light spillover onto adjacent properties and substantially illuminating the sky at night. However, all future development in accorandance with the proposed project would be required to be consistent with the City's Development Code and implement Mitigation Measures (MMs) (MM AES-4a through MM AES-4e), which require lighting systems to include shields and direct light away from light-sensitive land uses, minimize light spillover, reduce lighting intensity, and use non-reflective surfaces. Because of the existing urban nature of the Specific Plan Area, implementation of these mitigation measures would reduce potential lighting impacts to a less than signficant level. Additionally, the Specific Plan includes policies that directly address light and glare in the Specific Plan Area. For example, Specific Plan Policy PS-1.3 provides guidance on lighting near schools and parks. Thus, impacts would be less than signficant with mitigation incorporated.

Mitigation Measures

MM AES-4a **Lighting for Street and Parking Areas.** Lighting systems for street and parking areas shall include shields to direct light to the roadway surfaces and parking areas. Vertical shields on the light fixtures shall also be used to direct light away from adjacent light-sensitive land uses such as residences.

MM AES-4b **Lighting for Public Facilities.** Lighting systems for public facilities such as active play areas shall provide adequate illumination for the activity; however, low intensity light fixtures and shields shall be used to minimize spillover light onto adjacent properties.

MM AES-4c **Lighting for Nonresidential Uses.** Lighting systems for non-residential uses, not including public facilities, shall provide shields on the light fixtures and orient the lighting system away from adjacent properties. Low intensity fixtures shall also be used if excessive spillover light onto adjacent properties will occur.

MM AES-4d **Signage Lighting.** Lighting systems for freestanding signs shall not exceed 100 footlamberts (ft-L) when adjacent to streets which have an average light intensity of less than 2.0 horizontal foot-candles and shall not exceed 500 ft-L when adjacent to streets which have an average light intensity of 2.0 horizontal foot-candles or greater.

MM AES-4e **Use of Non-Reflective Materials.** Materials used on building façades shall be non-reflective.

Environmental Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
2.2 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 Dept. 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?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act Contract?	☐	☐	☐	☒
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))?	☐	☐	☐	☒
d) Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?	☐	☐	☐	☒
e) Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland, to nonagricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Environmental Evaluation

Introduction

As noted in the Project Description, the land use designations of the Specific Plan are consistent with the General Plan buildout assumptions; however, this Specific Plan proposes changing the land use designation for some of the Specific Plan Area's parcels, which would require the General Plan Land Use map to be amended. These proposed land use designation changes would reduce the total amount of development compared to what was contemplated by the General Plan for the Specific Plan Area.

As further described below, the following analysis utilizes the California Agricultural Land Evaluation and Site Assessment (LESA) Model (1997) prepared by the California Department of Conservation as a model to use in assessing impacts on agriculture and farmland. The following analysis also utilizes 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 (ARB).

Environmental Setting

The CAlifornia Department of Conservation Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program (FMMP) was established by the State Legislature in 1982 to assess the location, quality, and quantity of agricultural lands and conversion of these lands over time.

The FMMP classifies farmland based on agricultural productivity characteristics, as follows:

- **Prime Farmland:** Land with the best combination of physical and chemical features able to sustain the long-term production of agricultural crops. These lands have the soil quality, growing season, and moisture supply needed to produce sustained high yields.
- **Unique Farmland:** Land of lesser-quality soils used for the production of the State's leading agricultural crops. This land is usually irrigated, but it may include non-irrigated orchards or vineyards as are found in some climatic zones in California.
- **Farmland of Statewide Importance:** Land similar to Prime Farmland but with minor shortcomings, such as greater slopes or less ability to hold and store moisture.
- **Farmland of Local Importance:** Land of importance in the local agricultural economy, as determined by each county's Board of Supervisors and a local advisory committee.
- **Grazing Land:** Land on which the existing vegetation is suited to the grazing of livestock. This category was developed in cooperation with the California Cattlemen's Association, University of California Cooperative Extension, and other groups interested in the extent of grazing activities.

The FMMP also provides the following land classifications for nonagricultural land:[6]

- **Urban and Built-up Land:** Land occupied by structures with a building density of at least 1 unit to 1.5 acres, or approximately six structures to a 10-acre parcel. This land is used for residential, industrial, commercial, construction, institutional, public administration, railroad and other transportation yards, cemeteries, airports, golf courses, sanitary landfills, sewage treatment, water control structures, and other developed purposes.
- **Other Land:** Land not included in any other mapping category. Common examples include low-density rural developments; brush, timber, wetland, and riparian areas not suitable for livestock

[6] California Department of Conservation. 2024. Important Farmland Categories. Website: https://www.conservation.ca.gov/dlrp/fmmp/Pages/Important-Farmland-Categories.aspx. Accessed November 5, 2024.

grazing; confined livestock, poultry, or aquaculture facilities; strip mines; borrow pits; and water bodies smaller than 40 acres. Vacant and nonagricultural land surrounded on all sides by urban development and greater than 40 acres is mapped as Other Land.

- **Water:** Perennial water bodies with an extent of at least 40 acres.
- **Areas Not Mapped:** Area which falls outside of the National Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) soil survey. Not mapped by the FMMP.

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?

Less than significant impact. Presently, the Specific Plan Area does not contain any land designated for agricultural uses. The FMMP identifies the vast majority of the Specific Plan Area as Urban and Built-Up Land, with small portions designated as Farmland of Local Importance (approximately 4.7 acres), Farmland of Statewide Importance (approximately 4.4 acres), and Prime Farmland (approximately 13 acres).[7] According to the FMMP California Important Farmland Finder, there is no Unique Farmland within the Specific Plan Area. While approximately 13 acres of the Specific Plan Area are identified by the FMMP as Prime Farmland and approximately 4.4 acres are identified as Farmland of Statewide Importance (all of which is located on APN 480-080-05), this land was already planned for urbanization as part of buildout of the General Plan. The Specific Plan does not contemplate or approve any specific development; however, agricultural preservation is a guiding principle behind the planning and design of the Specific Plan. The proposed project would be consistent with General Plan Policy RC-9-a, which directs the City to work with the Counties of Fresno and Madera, the City of Clovis, and other public agencies to conserve agricultural land resources. Policy RC-9-c also describes future implementation of a Farmland Preservation Program (FPP). The City does not currently have an FPP, and thus the City is responsible for evaluating potential agricultural impacts from development, including the proposed project, on a case-by-case basis.

The LESA Model was utilized to determine potential impacts on agricultural resources resulting from the potential development of APN 480-080-05 under the proposed Specific Plan (Appendix C). LESA modeling is a point-based system used to evaluate the agricultural value of land when reviewing potential development projects. It combines two key components: Land Evaluation, which scores soil quality and farming suitability, and Site Assessment, which considers factors like water availability, surrounding land use, and proximity to protected resources. Each factor is scored, weighted, and totaled on a 100-point scale. Impacts to land that receives a LESA score between 40 and 59 are considered potentially significant only if the Land Evaluation and Site Assessment sub-scores are each greater than or equal to 20 points. Projects that score between 40 to 59 points and have either a Land Evaluation or Site Assessment sub-score less than 20 are not considered significant for the purposes of CEQA according to the LESA Model significance criteria. APN 480-080-05 has a final LESA score of

[7] California Department of Conservation (DOC). 2016. California Important Farmland Finder. Website: https://maps.conservation.ca.gov/DLRP/CIFF/. Accessed November 15, 2021.

55.8, which is a significant impact only if the individual LESA sub-scores are both greater than or equal to 20 points. APN 480-080-05 has a sub-score of 39.3 for the Land Evaluation; however, it has a sub-score of 16.5 for the Site Assessment. Because the Site Assessment score is less than 20, the conversion of the Important Farmland on APN 480-080-05 is not considered significant according to the California Department of Conservation established thresholds. Therefore, the proposed project's conversion of agricultural land to nonagricultural use is considered less than significant for the purposes of CEQA and no mitigation would be required.

b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act Contract?

No impact. The Specific Plan Area does not contain any parcels that are currently under a Williamson Act Contract, precluding the possibility that the proposed project would conflict with a Williamson Act Contract. Therefore, no impacts related to conflicts with agricultural zoning or Williamson Act Contracts would occur.

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))?

No impact. The Specific Plan Area does not contain land that is used for forestry purposes, and there are no properties that are designated or zoned for forestry use. Implementation of the Specific Plan would not therefore conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land, timberland, or timberland zoned Timberland Production. Therefore, no impact would occur.

d) Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?

No impact. There are no lands within the Specific Plan Area that are used for forestry purposes, so implementation of the proposed project would not result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use. Therefore, the proposed project would not result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use, resulting in no impact.

e) Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland, to nonagricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?

Less than significant impact. A significant impact would occur if the proposed project would indirectly result in the conversion of Farmland to nonagricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use. As discussed previously, the Specific Plan Area contains approximately 13 acres of Prime Farmland, approximately 4.4 acres of Farmland of Statewide Importance, and approximately 4.7 acres of Farmland of Local Importance, which are already planned for urbanization under the General Plan. The proposed project would be consistent with General Plan Policy RC-9-c. The proposed project would not result in changes in the existing environment that would impact agricultural uses within the Specific Plan Area. For example, the proposed project would not result in any physical improvements or changes in land restrictions (such as Williamson Act Contracts) that would result in impacts to agricultural resources. Furthermore, as discussed previously, there are no lands within the Specific

Plan Area that are used or zoned for forestry purposes, so there would be no conversion of forest land to non-forest uses within the Specific Plan Area. Therefore, the proposed project would not involve changes in the existing environment, which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland to nonagricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use, resulting in less than significant impacts.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

Environmental Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
2.3 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?	☐	☒	☐	☐
b) Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is nonattainment under an applicable federal or State ambient air quality standard?	☐	☒	☐	☐
c) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?	☐	☒	☐	☐
d) Result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors or) adversely affecting a substantial number of people?	☐	☒	☐	☐

Environmental Evaluation

Introduction

As noted in the Project Description, the land use designations of the Specific Plan are consistent with the General Plan buildout assumptions; however, this Specific Plan proposes changing the land use designation for some of the Specific Plan Area's parcels, which would require the General Plan Land Use map to be amended. These proposed land use designation changes would reduce the total amount of development compared to what was contemplated by the General Plan for the Specific Plan Area.

Environmental Setting

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

Air Pollutants

Air pollutants relevant to the CEQA checklist questions for Air Quality are briefly described below.[8]

- Ozone is a gas that is formed when reactive organic gases (ROGs) and oxides of nitrogen (NO_X)—both byproducts of internal combustion engine exhaust—undergo slow photochemical reactions in the presence of sunlight. Ozone concentrations are generally highest during the summer months when direct sunlight, light wind, and warm temperature conditions are

[8] California Air Resources Board (ARB). 2022. Common Air Pollutants. Website: https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/resources/common-air-pollutants. Accessed June 7, 2022.

conducive to its formation. Health effects can include, but not be limited to irritated respiratory system, reduced lung function, and aggravated chronic lung diseases.

- ROGs, or volatile organic compounds (VOCs), are defined as any compound of carbon—excluding carbon monoxide (CO), carbon dioxide (CO_2), carbonic acid, metallic carbides or carbonates, and ammonium carbonate—that participates in atmospheric photochemical reactions. Although there are slight differences in the definition of ROGs and VOCs, the two terms are often used interchangeably.
- Nitrogen dioxide (NO_2) forms quickly from NO_X emissions. Health effects from NO_2 can include the following: potential to aggravate chronic respiratory disease and respiratory symptoms in sensitive groups; risk to public health implied by pulmonary and extra-pulmonary biochemical and cellular changes and pulmonary structural changes; contribution to atmospheric discoloration; increased visits to hospital for respiratory illnesses.
- CO is a colorless, odorless gas produced by the incomplete combustion of fuels. CO concentrations tend to be the highest during the winter morning, with little to no wind, when surface-based inversions trap the pollutant at ground levels. Because CO is emitted directly from internal combustion engines—unlike ozone—and motor vehicles operating at slow speeds are the primary source of CO in the project region, the highest ambient CO concentrations are generally found near congested transportation corridors and intersections. Potential health effects from CO depends on exposure and can include slight headaches; nausea; aggravation of angina pectoris (chest pain) and other aspects of coronary heart disease; decreased exercise tolerance in persons with peripheral vascular disease and lung disease; impairment of central nervous system functions; possible increased risk to fetuses; death.
- Sulfur dioxide (SO_2) is a colorless, pungent gas. At levels greater than 0.5 parts per million (ppm), the gas has a strong odor, similar to rotten eggs. Sulfur oxides (SO_X) include SO_2 and sulfur trioxide. Sulfuric acid is formed from sulfur dioxide, which can lead to acid deposition and can harm natural resources and materials. Although SO_2 concentrations have been reduced to levels well below State and federal standards, further reductions are desirable because SO_2 is a precursor to sulfate and particulate matter less than 10 microns in diameter (PM_{10}).
- PM_{10} and particulate matter less than 2.5 microns in diameter ($PM_{2.5}$) consist of extremely small, suspended particles or droplets 10 microns and 2.5 microns or smaller in diameter. Some sources of particulate matter, like pollen and windstorms, are naturally occurring. However, in populated areas, most particulate matter is caused by road dust, diesel soot, combustion products, abrasion of tires and brakes, and construction activities. Health effects from short-term exposure (hours/days) can include the following: irrigation of the eyes, nose, throat; coughing; phlegm; chest tightness; shortness of breath; aggravate existing lung disease, causing asthma attacks and acute bronchitis; those with heart disease can suffer heart attacks and arrhythmias. Health effects from long-term exposure can include the following: reduced lung function; chronic bronchitis; changes in lung morphology; or death.
- Toxic air contaminants (TACs) refer to a diverse group of air pollutants that can affect human health but have not had Ambient Air Quality Standards (AAQS) established for them. Diesel particulate matter (DPM) is a toxic air contaminant that is emitted from construction equipment

and diesel-fueled vehicles and trucks. Some short-term (acute) effects of DPM exposure include eye, nose, throat, and lung irritation, coughs, headaches, light-headedness, and nausea. Studies have linked elevated particle levels in the air to increased hospital admissions, emergency room visits, asthma attacks, and premature deaths among those suffering from respiratory problems. Human studies on the carcinogenicity of DPM demonstrate an increased risk of lung cancer, although the increased risk cannot be clearly attributed to diesel exhaust exposure.

Where available, the significance criteria established by the applicable air quality management or air pollution control district may be relied upon to make the following determinations. For purposes of this assessment, the significance thresholds recommended by the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District (Valley Air District) were applied herein.

Diesel Risk Reduction Plan

The ARB's Diesel Risk Reduction Plan has led to the adoption of new California regulatory standards for all new on-road, off-road, and stationary diesel-fueled engines and vehicles to reduce DPM emissions by about 90 percent overall from year 2000 levels. The projected emission benefits associated with the full implementation of this plan, including federal measures, are reductions in DPM emissions and associated cancer risks of 75 percent by 2010, and 85 percent by 2020.[9]

The ARB Air Quality Land Use Handbook lists the following ARB advisory recommendations that address the issue of siting "sensitive land uses" near specific sources of air pollution:[10]

- Chrome plating facilities
- Distribution centers
- Dry cleaners
- High traffic freeways and roads
- Large gas dispensing facilities
- Ports
- Rail yards
- Refineries

The ARB-recommended screening distances are shown in Table 4 below.

Table 4: Recommendations on Siting New Sensitive Land Uses

Source Category	Advisory Recommendations
Freeways and High Traffic Roads	Avoid siting new sensitive land uses within 500 feet of a freeway, urban roads with 100,000 vehicles/day, or rural roads with 50,000 vehicles/day.
Distribution Centers	Avoid siting new sensitive land uses within 1,000 feet of a distribution center (that accommodates more than 100 trucks per day, more than 40 trucks with operating Transport Refrigeration Units (TRUs) per day, or where TRU unit operations exceed 300 hours per week). Take into account the configuration of existing distribution centers

[9] California Air Resources Board (ARB). 2000. Risk Reduction Plan to Reduce Particulate Matter Emissions from Diesel-fueled Engines and Vehicles. Website: http://www.arb.ca.gov/diesel/documents/rrpfinal.pdf. Accessed September 14, 2022.

[10] California Air Resources Board (ARB). 2005. Air Quality and Land Use Handbook. Website: https://www.arb.ca.gov/ch/handbook.pdf. Accessed September 14, 2022.

Source Category	Advisory Recommendations
	and avoid locating residences and other new sensitive land uses near entry and exit points.
Rail Yards	Avoid siting new sensitive land uses within 1,000 feet of a major service and maintenance rail yard. Within 1 mile of a rail yard, consider possible siting limitations and mitigation approaches.
Ports	Avoid siting of new sensitive land uses immediately downwind of ports in the most heavily impacted zones. Consult local air districts or the ARB on the status of pending analyses of health risks.
Refineries	Avoid siting new sensitive land uses immediately downwind of petroleum refineries. Consult with local air districts and other local agencies to determine an appropriate separation.
Chrome Platers	Avoid siting new sensitive land uses within 1,000 feet of a chrome plater.
Dry Cleaners Using Perchloroethylene	Avoid siting new sensitive land uses within 300 feet of any dry cleaning operation. For operations with two or more machines, provide 500 feet. For operations with three or more machines, consult with the local air district. Do not site new sensitive land uses in the same building with perchloroethylene dry cleaning operations.
Gasoline Dispensing Facilities	Avoid siting new sensitive land uses within 300 feet of a large gas station (defined as a facility with a throughput of 3.6 million gallons per year or greater). A 50-foot separation is recommended for typical gas dispensing facilities.
Notes: These recommendations are advisory. Land use agencies have to balance other considerations, including housing and transportation needs, economic development priorities, and other quality of life issues.	

Would the project:

a) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?

Less than significant with mitigation incorporated. This document proposes the following criteria for determining project consistency with the current Air Quality Plans (AQPs):

1. Will the project conform to the growth assumptions in the AQPs?
2. Will the project comply with applicable control measures in the AQPs?

The use of the criteria listed above is a standard approach for CEQA analysis of projects in the Valley Air District's jurisdiction, as well as within other air districts, for the following reasons:

- AQP emissions inventories and attainment modeling are based on growth assumptions for the area within the air district's jurisdiction.

- AQPs rely on a set of air district-initiated control measures, as well as implementation of federal and State measures, to reduce emissions within their jurisdictions with the goal of attaining the air quality standards.

AQPs are plans for reaching attainment of air quality standards. The assumptions, inputs, and control measures are analyzed to determine whether the San Joaquin Valley Air Basin (SJVAB) can reach attainment for the AAQS. In order to show attainment of the standards, the Valley Air District analyzes the growth projections in the valley, contributing factors in air pollutant emissions and formations, and existing and adopted emissions controls. The Valley Air District then formulates a control strategy to reach attainment that includes both State and Valley Air District regulations and other local programs and measures.

Consistency with Assumptions in AQPs

A method for determining consistency with the AQP's assumptions is determining consistency with the applicable General Plan to ensure that the proposed project's population density and land use are consistent with the growth assumptions used in the AQPs for the SJVAB. The regional emissions inventory for the SJVAB is compiled by the Valley Air District and Fresno Council of Governments (Fresno COG). Regional population, housing, and employment projections developed by Fresno COG are based, in part, on the local jurisdictions' General Plan Land Use designations. These projections form the foundation for the emissions inventory of the Air Quality Management Plan (AQMP). These demographic trends are incorporated into the 2022–2046 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP)/Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS), compiled by Fresno COG in July 2022, to determine priority transportation projects within the Fresno COG region.[11]

The Valley Air District is tasked with implementing programs and regulations required by the federal Clean Air Act (CAA) and the California CAA. The federal CAA of 1970 tasks the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) with setting air quality standards. The State of California also sets air quality standards that are in some cases more stringent than federal standards and address additional pollutants.

The Valley Air District has prepared several plans to attain the National AAQS and California AAQS. Emission reductions achieved through implementation of the Valley Air District's New Source Review (NSR) offset requirements are a major component of the Valley Air District's AQPs. The established thresholds of significance for criteria pollutant emissions are based on the Valley Air District's offset requirements for stationary sources. Therefore, projects with emissions below the thresholds of significance for criteria pollutants would be determined to "not conflict or obstruct implementation of the District's air quality plan." The analysis in Impact AIR-2 demonstrates that it would be too speculative to evaluate air quality impacts of future individual development projects at this time. Therefore, this analysis relies solely on the proposed project's consistency with the General Plan.

Various policies of the General Plan and the proposed Specific Plan would promote Complete Streets, mixed-use and transit-oriented neighborhoods, and increased capacity for alternative transportation modes, which would help reduce air pollutant emissions. These policies include General Plan Policies

[11] Fresno Council of Governments (Fresno COG). 2022. Regional Transportation Plan, Chapter 1.

UF-1c, UF-12a-f, UF-14a and 14b, LU-2, LU-3, LU-5-f, RC-4, HC-3-d, HC-3-f, MT-1, and MT-2. For example, Policy UF-12-a supports transit-oriented development near bus stops and BRT station stops. Policy UF-14-a supports a walkable and pedestrian-scaled environment with solid connections for pedestrians and bicyclists. Policy RC-4-b encourages incorporation of air quality maintenance requirements as conditions of approval for Specific Plans. Policy HC-3-d promotes green standards for affordable housing. Policy MT-2-c aims to reduce VMT through Infill Development. These policies promote active transit and clean air measures and support the reduction in average vehicle trip distances, which contributes to reducing overall per capita VMT in the region.

Proposed Specific Plan Policies LU-1.2 and LU-2.3 aim to convert large strip shopping centers to mixed-use destinations, which would reduce VMT. Furthermore, Transportation Policies such as T-1 aim to create a network of safe, connected, and accessible Complete Streets for all users, including bicyclists, pedestrians, transit vehicles, and motorists. Policy T-2 aims to improve connectivity between residential areas and local and regional destinations. Policy T-3 contains measures to create a safer pedestrian and bicycle environment. Policy T-4 aims to create a more convenient and pleasant pedestrian environment. Policy T-6 contains measures to create greater connectivity within the community and improve bus stops. These policies promote active transit, clean air measures, and support the reduction in average vehicle trip distances, which contribute to reducing overall per capita VMT in the region.

Additionally, the proposed project would implement MM AIR-1a, MM AIR-1b, MM AIR-1c, and MM AIR-1d, which would serve to further reduce emissions generated by future development projects envisioned in the Specific Plan Area. These mitigation measures would ensure that impacts are less than significant.

Control Measures

The AQP contains a number of control measures, which are enforceable requirements through the adoption of rules and regulations. Future individual development projects under the Specific Plan would comply with all applicable District rules and regulations. Therefore, the proposed project complies with this criterion and would not conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality attainment plan.

Impact Summary

The proposed project complies with the criterion established for determining project consistency with the current AQP. The proposed project would not conflict with the underlying General Plan, and the proposed project would comply with the applicable control measures in the current AQP. Impacts would be less than significant with mitigation incorporated.

b) Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is nonattainment under an applicable federal or State ambient air quality standard?

Less than significant impact with mitigation incorporated. This impact is related to the cumulative effect of a project's regional criteria pollutant emissions. By its nature, air pollution is largely a cumulative impact resulting from emissions generated over a large geographic region. The nonattainment status of regional pollutants is a result of past and present development within the

SJVAB, and this regional impact is a cumulative impact. In other words, new development projects (such as the proposed project) within the SJVAB would contribute to this impact only on a cumulative basis. No single project would be sufficient in size, by itself, to result in nonattainment of regional air quality standards. Instead, a project's emissions may be individually limited but cumulatively considerable when taken in combination with past, present, and future development projects. All new development that would result in an increase in air pollutant emissions above those assumed in regional AQPs would contribute to cumulative air quality impacts.

Buildout of future individual development projects under the Specific Plan would result in direct and indirect criteria air pollutant emissions from area, energy, and mobile sources. Area sources would include activities such as landscape maintenance and occasional architectural coatings. Energy sources would include electricity and natural gas combustion for space and water heating. Mobile sources would include vehicle trips associated with passenger cars.

At this time, it is too speculative to determine whether future individual development projects would result in cumulatively considerable net increases in criteria pollutants. The proposed project is a programmatic project and until specific future projects are proposed, the associated cumulative air pollution impacts cannot be determined or modeled at this time. The Valley Air District regional emission significance thresholds would be used to determine the impact significance for future individual development projects.

Furthermore, the proposed Specific Plan policies emphasize development of mixed-use areas and improvements to active and public transit facilities that would contribute to reducing vehicle trips and VMT. As an example, the proposed project would create mixed-use areas and would integrate distinct neighborhood commercial development areas that would provide daily services and amenities for the nearby residences and businesses. Specific Plan policies such as these would reduce impacts related to cumulatively considerable air pollution.

As required by General Plan Policies RC-4-b and RC-4-c, future individual development projects would be required to use computer models used by the Valley Air District to evaluate the air quality impacts of plans and projects that require environmental review. Future individual development projects would be required to develop and incorporate air quality maintenance requirements compatible with Air Quality Attainment and Maintenance Plans, as conditions of approval for development proposals. Future individual development projects would also implement MM AIR-1a, MM AIR-1b, MM AIR-1c, and MM AIR-1d, which would reduce impacts related to construction and operation of future development in the Specific Plan Area. Given that future individual development projects would implement the applicable General Plan policies in addition to mitigation measures discussed above, impacts would be less than significant with mitigation incorporated.

c) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?

Less than significant impact with mitigation incorporated. Those who are sensitive to air pollution include children, the elderly, and persons with preexisting respiratory or cardiovascular illness. The Valley Air District considers a sensitive receptor to be a location that houses or attracts children, the

elderly, people with illnesses, or others who are especially sensitive to the effects of air pollutants. Examples of sensitive receptors include hospitals, residences, convalescent facilities, and schools.

Reactive Organic Gases

Construction

ROG is emitted during the application of architectural coatings (painting). The amount emitted is dependent on the amount of ROG (or VOC) in the paint. ROG emissions are typically an indoor air quality health hazard concern rather than an outdoor air quality health hazard concern. Therefore, exposure to ROG during architectural coatings is a less than significant health impact.

There are three types of asphalt that are typically used in paving: asphalt cements, cutback asphalts, and emulsified asphalts. However, District Rule 4641 prohibits the use of the following types of asphalt: rapid cure cutback asphalt; medium cure cutback asphalt; slow cure asphalt that contains more than 0.5 percent of organic compounds that evaporate at 500°F (degrees Fahrenheit) or lower; and emulsified asphalt containing organic compounds, in excess of 3 percent by volume, that evaporate at 500°F or lower. An exception to this is medium cure asphalt when the National Weather Service official forecast of the high temperature for the 24-hour period following application is below 50°F.

The acute (short-term) health effects from worker direct exposure to asphalt fumes include irritation of the eyes, nose, and throat. Other effects include respiratory tract symptoms and pulmonary function changes. The studies were based on occupational exposure of fumes. Residents are not in the immediate vicinity of the fumes; therefore, they would not be subjected to concentrations high enough to evoke a negative response. In addition, the restrictions that are placed on asphalt in the San Joaquin Valley reduce ROG emissions from asphalt and exposure. The impact to nearby sensitive receptors from ROG during construction is less than significant.

Operation

During operation, ROG would be emitted primarily from motor vehicles. Direct exposure to ROG from project motor vehicles would not result in health effects, because the ROG would be distributed across miles and miles of roadway and in the air. The concentrations would not be great enough to result in direct health effects.

NO_X, PM_{10}, and $PM_{2.5}$

As stated, the planned improvements, objectives and policies under the proposed Specific Plan would generally support a sustainable development pattern in accommodating future growth within the Specific Plan Area, which would generally contribute to reducing long-term criteria air pollutant emissions. In addition, application of the Valley Air District Rule 9510 and Regulation VIII would contribute to reducing operation- and construction-related NO_X and particulate matter emissions. Furthermore, Rule 9410 would also contribute to reducing operation-related mobile source emissions.

Toxic Air Contaminants

During construction and operation, the proposed project could result in emissions of several TACs that could potentially impact nearby sensitive receptors. The Valley Air District has defined health risk

significance thresholds. These thresholds are represented as a cancer risk to the public and a non-cancer hazard from exposures to TACs. Cancer risk represents the probability (in terms of risk per million individuals) that an individual would contract cancer resulting from exposure to TACs continuously over a period of several years. The Valley Air District's latest threshold of significance for TAC emissions is an increase in cancer risk for the maximally exposed individual of 20 in a million (formerly 10 in a million). Exposures to TACs can also result in both short-term (acute) or long-term (chronic) non-cancer health impacts. Such impacts could include illnesses related to reproductive effects, respiratory effects, eye sensitivity, immune effects, kidney effects, blood effects, central nervous system, birth defects, or other adverse environmental effects.

Construction of future individual development projects would involve the use of diesel-fueled vehicles and equipment that emit DPM, which is considered a TAC. Industrial land uses, such as chemical processing facilities, chrome-plating facilities, dry cleaners, and gasoline-dispensing facilities, have the potential to be substantial stationary sources that would require a permit from the Valley Air District for emissions of TACs. However, the Specific Plan does not propose any industrial uses.

Emissions of TACs would be controlled through permits issued by the Valley Air District and would be subject to further study and an HRA prior to the issuance of any necessary air quality permits. In addition to stationary/area sources of TACs, commercial operations could generate a substantial amount of DPM emissions from off-road equipment use and truck idling. New land uses in the proposed Specific Plan Area that use diesel trucks, including trucks with Transport Refrigeration Units (TRUs), could generate an increase in DPM that would contribute to cancer and non-cancer health risk in the SJVAB.

As it is not possible to determine the amount of TAC concentrations at the time of this analysis, it is not possible to calculate the risks for a particular health effect within the Specific Plan Area. The proposed project is a programmatic project and until specific future projects are proposed, the associated TAC emissions cannot be determined or modeled at this time. Through the implementation of MM AIR-1d, future development projects subject to environmental review under CEQA would be required to analyze potential TAC emissions and include mitigation as appropriate.

ARB developed a guidance document, *Air Quality and Land Use Handbook: A Community Health Perspective* (ARB Handbook), to address the siting of sensitive land uses in the vicinity of freeways, distribution centers, rail yards, ports, refineries, chrome-plating facilities, dry cleaners, and gasoline-dispensing facilities. This guidance document was developed to assess compatibility and associated health risks when placing sensitive receptors near existing pollution sources. ARB's recommendations for the siting of new sensitive land uses were based on a compilation of studies that evaluated data on the adverse health effects from proximity to air pollution sources. The key observation in these studies is that proximity to air pollution sources substantially increases both exposure and the potential for adverse health effects. Respiratory and cardiovascular problems including asthma, lung cancer, and premature death have been associated with living near major roadways and freeways. Children who live near major roadways and freeways have been found to have higher asthma rates and reduced lung function. There are three carcinogenic TACs that constitute the majority of the known health risks from motor vehicle traffic: DPM from trucks and benzene and butadiene from

passenger vehicles. It has been found that outdoor concentrations are highest near the roadway and decrease with increasing distance downwind of the source. The ARB recommends avoiding siting new sensitive land uses within 500 feet of urban roads with more than 100,000 vehicles per day or rural roads with more than 50,000 vehicles per day.[12] MM AIR-1d requires that an HRA be performed and potential health impacts be mitigated.

Future development envisioned as a part of the proposed project would be required to comply with AB 2588 and ARB standards for diesel engines. While existing City policies and regulations are intended to minimize impacts associated with sensitive receptors, mitigation measures for future project developments that implement these policies and regulations are identified to ensure that the intended environmental protections are achieved. Compliance with MM AIR-1d would help to ensure that mobile sources of TACs not covered under the Valley Air District permits are considered during subsequent project-level environmental review. This mitigation measure requires the preparation of project-specific technical health risk assessments for certain discretionary large industrial or warehousing uses to evaluate operational-related health risk impacts to further ensure that operational-related emissions are reduced to a less than significant level. However, information regarding operational characteristics of future specific development projects and the associated emissions cannot be determined at the time of this analysis; therefore, cumulative growth within the Specific Plan Area could result in an overall impact above the health-based thresholds established by the Valley Air District.

In addition to operational emissions from new stationary sources of emissions and vehicle trips to and within the Specific Plan Area, the proposed project would locate new sensitive receptors (residents) that could be subject to existing sources of TACs within the proposed project boundary. The California Supreme Court in *California Building Industry Association v. Bay Area Air Quality Management District* concluded that agencies generally subject to CEQA are not required to analyze the impact of existing environmental conditions on a project's future users or residents.

As required by General Plan Policies RC-4-b and RC-4-c, future individual development projects would be required to use computer models used by Valley Air District to evaluate the air quality impacts of plans and projects that require environmental review. Future individual development projects would be required to develop and incorporate air quality maintenance requirements compatible with Air Quality Attainment and Maintenance Plans, as conditions of approval for development proposals. Future individual development projects would also be required to implement MM AIR-1d, which would serve to reduce the health risk impacts of the proposed project. Given that future individual development projects would implement the listed policies and mitigation measures, impacts would be less than significant with mitigation incorporated.

d) Result in other emission (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people?

Less than significant with mitigation incorporated. Odors can cause a variety of responses. The impact of an odor is dependent on interacting factors such as frequency (how often), intensity (strength),

[12] California Air Resources Board (ARB). 2005. Air Quality and Land Use Handbook: A Community Health Perspective. April.

duration (in time), offensiveness unpleasantness), location, and sensory perception. While offensive odors rarely cause any physical harm, they still can be very unpleasant, leading to considerable distress and often generating citizen complaints to local governments and regulatory agencies.

Growth within the proposed Specific Plan Area could generate new sources of odors. Odors from the types of land uses that could generate objectional odors are regulated under Regulation IV, Prohibitions, Rule 4102, Nuisance, which states:

> A person shall not discharge from any source whatsoever such quantities of air contaminants or other materials which cause injury, detriment, nuisance or annoyance to any considerable number of persons or to the public or which endanger the comfort, repose, health or safety of any such person or the public or which cause or have a natural tendency to cause injury or damage to business or property.

Potential sources that may emit odors during construction activities include exhaust from diesel construction equipment. However, because of the temporary nature of these emissions, the intermittent nature of construction activities, and the highly diffusive properties of diesel exhaust, nearby receptors would not be affected by diesel exhaust odors associated with project construction. Odors from these sources would be localized and generally confined to the immediate area surrounding the site of future individual development projects.

Industrial land uses have the potential to generate objectionable odors. Examples of industrial projects are wastewater treatment plants, compost facilities, landfills, solid waste transfer stations, fiberglass manufacturing facilities, paint/coating operations (e.g., auto body shops), dairy farms, petroleum refineries, asphalt batch manufacturing plants, chemical manufacturing, and food manufacturing facilities. Agricultural operations, such as the existing agricultural land uses currently included in the Plan Area, may also generate odors.

Future developments in the Specific Plan Area are not expected to include additional industrial or agricultural uses. The proposed project would develop different types of residential and retail activities, which are not typical odor-generating land uses. Potential impacts from odor sources would be mitigated through compliance with General Plan Policy PU-9-d and by enforcement actions by agencies with regulatory authority over odors. General Plan Policy PU-9-d would ensure that waste and recycling facilities are properly located. The Valley Air District addresses odor issues through Rule 4102– Nuisance. Facilities creating nuisance odors generating public complaints can result in Valley Air District enforcement action.

Future individual development projects consistent with the proposed project would be required to determine whether odors would be a potentially significant impact as part of CEQA review. In addition, projects containing sensitive receptors are not likely to be proposed near existing odor sources, such as agricultural operations. Projects proposing new receptors within screening level distances would be required to reduce impacts to less than significant levels. Proposal of a new source within the screening distance would require the applicant to demonstrate that the proposed facility includes odor controls within its design and through implementation of odor management practices to reduce odors to less than significant.

Development consistent with the proposed project could also result in sensitive receptors being constructed within the screening level distances from existing odor sources. These potential odor impacts on new sensitive receptors could be significant. When potential odor impacts on these new sensitive receptors occur, the Valley Air District has authority under Rule 4102 to require the owner of the odor-generating source to take actions that would reduce impacts to less than significant.

In addition to the existing regulatory programs described above, the proposed project would implement MM AIR-4, which requires developers of projects with the potential to generate significant odor to prepare an odor impact assessment and to implement odor control measures as a condition of approval. Compliance with this mitigation measure would further reduce potential impacts of objectionable odors to below a level of significance. Additionally, implementation of the proposed project's policies would help to minimize the effects of growth and development on air quality. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant with mitigation incorporated.

Mitigation Measures

MM AIR-1a Prior to future discretionary project approval in the Fresno Central Southeast Specific Plan Area (Specific Plan Area), development project applicants shall prepare and submit to the Director of the Planning and Development Department, or designee, documentation that demonstrates the use of "Super-Compliant" architectural coatings during construction of the proposed project. "Super-Compliant" architectural coatings, also known as low-VOC, are paints which do not exceed 10 grams of reactive organic gas (ROG) per liter of paint.

All architectural coatings shall be applied either by (1) using a high-volume, low-pressure spray method operated at an air pressure between 0.1 and 10 pounds per square inch gauge to achieve a 65 percent application efficiency; or (2) manual application using a paintbrush, hand-roller, trowel, spatula, dauber, rag, or sponge to achieve a 100 percent application efficiency. The construction contractor shall also use precoated/natural colored building materials where feasible.

MM AIR-1b Prior to future discretionary project approval in the Fresno Central Southeast Specific Plan Area, development project applicants shall prepare and submit to the Director of the Planning and Development Department, or designee, a technical assessment evaluating potential project construction phase-related air quality impacts. The evaluation shall be prepared in conformance with the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District (Valley Air District) methodology for assessing construction impacts. If construction-related air pollutants are determined to have the potential to exceed the Valley Air District adopted threshold of significance, project applicants for new development projects shall be required to incorporate mitigation measures into construction plans to reduce air pollutant emissions during construction activities. The identified measures shall be included as part of the Project Conditions of Approval. Possible mitigation measures to reduce construction emissions include but are not limited to:

- Use of off-road construction equipment that meets the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Tier 4 Final off-road engine emissions standards.
- Install temporary construction power supply meters on-site and use these to provide power to electric power tools whenever feasible. If temporary electric power is available on-site, forbid the use of portable gasoline- or diesel-fueled electric generators.
- Use of diesel oxidation catalysts and/or catalyzed diesel particulate traps on diesel equipment as feasible.
- Maintain equipment according to manufacturers' specifications.
- Restrict idling of equipment and trucks to a maximum of 5 minutes (per California Air Resources Board [ARB] regulation).
- Phase grading operations to reduce disturbed areas and times of exposure.
- Avoid excavation and grading during wet weather.
- Limit on-site construction routes and stabilize construction entrance(s).
- Remove existing vegetation only when absolutely necessary.
- Sweep up spilled dry materials (e.g., cement, mortar, or dirt trackout) immediately. Never attempt to wash them away with water. Use only minimal water for dust control.
- Store stockpiled materials and wastes under a temporary roof or secured plastic sheeting or tarp.

MM AIR-1c Prior to future discretionary project approval in the Fresno Central Southeast Specific Plan Area, development project applicants shall prepare and submit to the Director of the Planning and Development Department, or designee, a technical assessment evaluating potential project operation-related air quality impacts. The evaluation shall be prepared in conformance with San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District (Valley Air District) methodology in assessing air quality impacts. If operation-related air pollutants are determined to have the potential to exceed the Valley Air District adopted thresholds of significance, the project applicants for new development projects shall be required to incorporate mitigation measures to reduce air pollutant emissions during operational activities. The identified measures shall be included as part of the Project Conditions of Approval. Possible mitigation measures to reduce long-term emissions include, but are not limited to:

- For site-specific development that requires refrigerated vehicles, the construction documents shall demonstrate an adequate number of electrical service connections including the use of electric-powered forklifts and/or other interior vehicles at loading docks for plugging in the anticipated number of refrigerated trailers to reduce idling time and emissions.
- Applicants for manufacturing and light industrial uses shall consider energy storage (i.e., battery) and combined heat and power (CHP, also known as cogeneration) in appropriate applications to optimize renewable energy generation systems and avoid peak energy use.

- Site-specific developments with truck delivery and loading areas and truck parking spaces shall include signage as a reminder to limit idling of vehicles while parked for loading/unloading in accordance with ARB Rule 2845 (13 California Code of Regulations [CCR] Chapter 10, § 2485).
- Electric vehicle (EV) charging shall be provided as specified in Section A4.106.8.2 (Residential Voluntary Measures) of the California Green Building Standards Code (CALGreen) Code.
- Bicycle parking shall be provided as specified in Section A4.106.9 (Residential Voluntary Measures) of the CALGreen Code.
- Projects shall be required to implement, at a minimum, an increase in each building's energy efficiency 15 percent beyond Title 24, and reduce indoor water use by 25 percent.
- Maximize use of solar energy including solar panels; installing the maximum possible number of solar energy arrays on building roofs throughout the City to generate solar energy.
- Maximize the planting of trees in landscaping and parking lots.
- Use light-colored paving and roofing materials.
- Require use of electric or alternatively fueled street-sweepers with high-efficiency particulate air (HEPA) filters.
- Require use of electric lawn mowers and leaf blowers.
- Utilize only Energy Star heating, cooling, and lighting devices, and appliances.
- Use of water-based or low volatile organic compound (VOC) cleaning products.
- For buildings with more than 10 tenant-occupants, changing/shower facilities shall be provided as specified in Section A5.106.4.3 (Nonresidential Voluntary Measures) of the CALGreen Code.
- Long-term and short-term bicycle parking shall be provided as specified in Section A5.106.4 (Nonresidential Mandatory Measure) of the CALGreen Code.
- Preferential parking for low-emitting, fuel-efficient, and carpool/van vehicles shall be provided as specified in Section A5.106.5.1 (Nonresidential Voluntary Measures) of the CALGreen Code.
- Facilities shall be installed to support future EV charging at each nonresidential building with 30 or more parking spaces. Installation shall be consistent with Section A5.106.5.3 (Nonresidential Voluntary Measures) of the CALGreen Code.

MM AIR-1d Prior to future discretionary project approval in the Fresno Central Southeast Specific Plan Area, development project applicants proposing a project with the potential to introduce sources of diesel particulate matter (DPM) and/or toxic air contaminants (TACs) (such as diesel backup generators or significant truck trips) within 1,000 feet of a sensitive land use (e.g., residential, schools, hospitals, or nursing homes), as measured from the property line of the project to the property line of the nearest sensitive use, shall prepare and submit to the Director of the Planning and Development Department, or a designee, a Health Risk Assessment (HRA). The HRA shall be prepared in accordance with policies and procedures of the most current California Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA) and the San

Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District (Valley Air District). If the HRA shows that the incremental health risks exceed their respective thresholds, as established by the SJVAPCD at the time a project is considered, the project applicant will be required to identify and demonstrate that Best Available Control Technologies for Toxics (T-BACTs), including appropriate enforcement mechanisms to reduce risks to an acceptable level. T-BACTs may include, but are not limited to:

- Restricting idling on-site or electrifying warehousing docks to reduce DPM;
- Requiring use of newer tier equipment and/or vehicles;
- Provide charging infrastructure for: electric forklifts, electric yard trucks, local drayage trucks, last mile delivery trucks, electric and fuel-cell heavy-duty trucks; and/or
- Install solar panels, zero-emission backup electricity generators, and energy storage to minimize emissions associated with electricity generation at the project site.

T-BACTs identified in the HRA shall be identified as mitigation measures in the environmental document and/or incorporated into the site plan.

MM AIR-4 Prior to future discretionary project approval in the Fresno Central Southeast Specific Plan Area, development project applicants proposing a project with the potential to generate significant odor impacts as determined through review of the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District (Valley Air District) odor complaint history for similar facilities and consultation with the Valley Air District, shall prepare an odor impact assessment and shall implement odor control measures recommended by the Valley Air District or the City as needed to reduce the impact to a level deemed acceptable by the Valley Air District.

Environmental Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
2.4 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 United States Fish and Wildlife Service?	☐	☒	☐	☐
b) Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, and regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or United States Fish and Wildlife Service?	☐	☒	☐	☐
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?	☐	☒	☐	☐
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 wildlife nursery sites?	☐	☐	☒	☐
e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?	☐	☐	☒	☐
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?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Environmental Evaluation

Introduction

As noted in the Project Description, the land use designations of the Specific Plan are consistent with the General Plan buildout assumptions; however, this Specific Plan proposes changing the land use designation for some of the Specific Plan Area's parcels, which would require the General Plan Land Use map to be amended. These proposed land use designation changes would reduce the total amount of development compared to what was contemplated by the General Plan for the Specific Plan Area.

This section describes the existing biological setting and potential effects from project implementation in the Specific Plan Area. Descriptions and analysis in this section are based, in part, on the General

Plan, proposed Specific Plan, the City of Fresno Municipal Code (Municipal Code), aerial photographs and maps, the existing conditions report prepared for the proposed project, and the results of database searches.

Environmental Setting

Vegetation Communities and Wildlife Habitats

For the purposes of the evaluation contained in the following analysis, vegetation communities are classified according to the California Department of Fish and Wildlife's (CDFW) Natural Communities List.

Overall, the Specific Plan Area is mainly comprised of previously disturbed urban and developed areas and includes several types of vegetation communities as shown on Exhibit 6, which includes a map of the vegetation communities' locations in the Specific Plan Area.

There are a total of five vegetation communities within the Specific Plan Area. Of these vegetation communities identified, none are considered special-status natural communities by CDFW. Table 5, below, describes the vegetation communities identified in the Specific Plan Area as well as their associated acreages and percentages of the total Specific Plan Area.[13]

Table 5: Vegetation Communities Within the Specific Plan Area

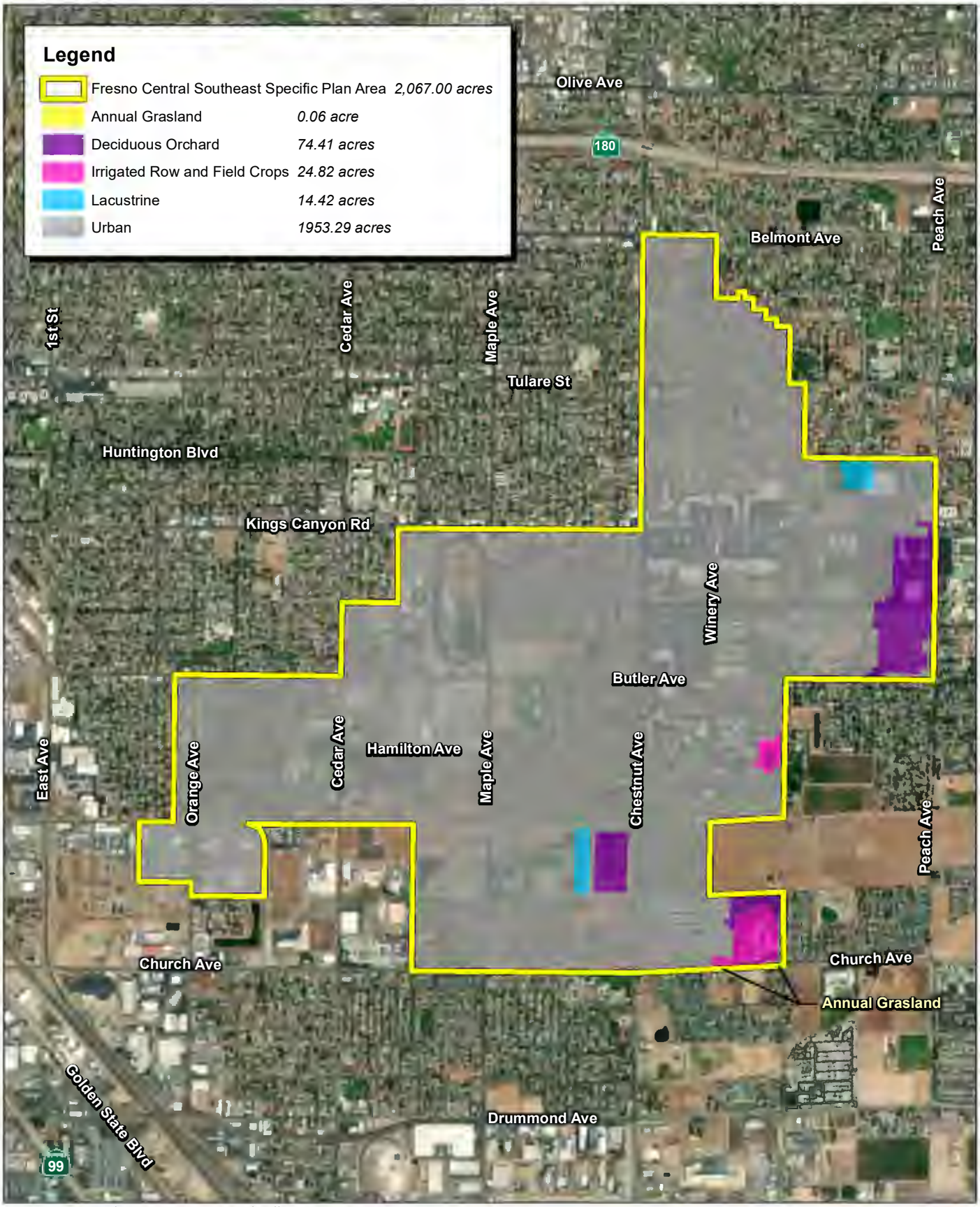
Vegetation Community Type	Total Acreage Within the Specific Plan Area (acres)	Approximate Percentage of the Total Specific Plan Area
Urban	2,054.4	95%
Irrigated Row and Field Crops	25.05	1%
Deciduous Orchard	74.41	3%
Annual Grassland	0.06	Less than 1%
Lacustrine	14.42	Less than 1%
Source: California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDB). 2022. United States Department of Agriculture, Forest Service. 2025.		

As described above, approximately 95 percent of land cover in the Specific Plan Area includes urban, developed land, consisting of commercial and residential development as well as roadways and parking lots. Approximately 4 percent of the Specific Plan Area includes previously disturbed agricultural lands and orchards. Generally, as shown on Exhibit 6, the majority of the deciduous orchard and irrigated row and field crop communities are concentrated at the eastern boundary of the Specific Plan Area.

Further description of these vegetation communities and their suitability for special-status species are included in Table 6**,** below.[14]

[13] California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW). 2022. California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDB). Website: https://wildlife.ca.gov/Data/CNDDB/Maps-and-Data. Accessed July 7, 2022.

[14] California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW). 2022. California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDB). Website: https://wildlife.ca.gov/Data/CNDDB/Maps-and-Data. Accessed July 7, 2022.



Source: ESRI Aerial Imagery. USFS Central Valley Vegetation Cover Types

FIRSTCARBON SOLUTIONS™

2,400 1,200 0 2,400 Feet

Exhibit 6
Land Cover Types and Vegetation Communities

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Table 6: Vegetation Community Types and Description

Vegetation Community Type	Description	Suitability for Special-Status Species
Urban	Urban (developed area) lands have been constructed upon or otherwise covered with a permanent, unnatural surface (e.g., concrete, asphalt, buildings, homes, etc.) or large amounts of debris or other materials.	This community provides poor quality habitat for any special-status species. Special-status species are unlikely to occur within this vegetation community.
Irrigated Row and Field Crops	Irrigated Row and Field Crops land occurs most frequently in floodplains or upland areas with high soil quality. Irrigated row and field crows include annual and perennial crops, grown in rows, with open space between the rows. Row and field crops are artificially irrigated and feature a moderate disturbance rate by vehicle and pedestrian encroachment typically associated with farming activities. Species composition changes frequently, both by season and by year.	This community contains active agriculture and is significantly disturbed with altered substrates. This vegetation community does not provide suitable habitat for any special-status plant species and provides limited habitat for two special-status wildlife species: burrowing owl, California horned lark.
Deciduous Orchard	Deciduous orchard communities primarily occur where there are flat alluvial soils on valley floors, rolling foothills and relatively steep slopes. Orchard communities are typically comprised of artificially irrigated habitat dominated by one, sometimes several, tree or shrub species planted for cultivation. Trees are typically low and bushy, and the understory is open, with little groundcover. In the City and its SOI, deciduous orchards include a variety of fruit trees (e.g., apples, apricots, cherries, citrus, kiwi, peaches, nectarines, pears, persimmons, plums, pluots, pomegranates, etc.) and/or nut trees and shrubs (e.g., almonds, olives, pistachios, walnuts, etc.). Understory species generally consist of short native and non-native grasses and other herbaceous species.	This community is relatively disturbed, containing very little groundcover and planted trees that provide moderately suitable habitat for only one special-status species: California horned lark.
Lacustrine	Lacustrine communities consist of standing/open waters in topographic depressions (i.e., lakes) or dammed river channels. Lacustrine communities lack persistent emergent vegetation but may have submerged or floating-leaved aquatic vegetation. Generally, lacustrine systems are surrounded by hydrophytic plants, grasses, and trees.	This community provides a suitable habitat for species that need standing/open waters: western spadefoot, tricolored blackbird, hoary bat, spotted bat, western pond turtle, dwarf downingia, and Sanford's arrowhead.
Annual Grassland	Annual grassland communities includes a mix of native and non-native, annual grasses, which often occur in association with ruderal herbs and occasional native annual forbs. The dominant plant species within the annual grassland vegetation community typically include black needlegrass (*Nasella sp*.), fescue (*Vulpia sp.*), brome (*Bromus sp.*), and wild oats (*Avena spp*), with mustard (*Brassica nigra*), dove weed *(Eremocarpus setigerus*), and poppy (*Eschscholzia*	This community supports several special-status species that have the potential to occur in the Specific Plan Area. These special-status species include the American Badger, Burrowing owl, California horned lark, California tiger salamander, Fresno kangaroo rat, Pallid bat, San Joaquin kit fox, San

Vegetation Community Type	Description	Suitability for Special-Status Species
	sp.). These grasses germinate with the fall rains, grow during the winter and spring, and wither in the early summer.	Joaquin pocket mouse, Swainson's hawk, Western mastiff bat, Western spadefoot, Hartweg's golden sunburst, Caper-fruited tropidocarpum, California jewel flower, Dwarf downingia, Spiny-sepaled button-celery, Succulent owl's clover, and Greene's tuctoria.
Source: Esri Imagery. 2022. California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDB). 2022. United States Department of Agriculture, Forest Service. 2025.		

The special-status species, including plants and wildlife in the Specific Plan Area, are further discussed in detail below.

Special-status Plant Species

A special-status plant species is defined as any plant species which is listed, or proposed for listing, as threatened or endangered by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) under the provisions of the Endangered Species Act.[15] This includes any species designated by USFWS as a "candidate" or "species of concern" or species identified on California Native Plant Society's Lists 1A, 1B, or 2, implying potential danger or extinction.

According to the California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDB), six special-status plants have the potential to occur in the Specific Plan Area. Table 7 describes the three special-status plant species listed for the Specific Plan Area and their legal status as shown on Exhibit 7, as well as the three plant species and their legal status that are not shown on Exhibit 7 but which are also known to occur within this 4-quad radius of the Specific Plan Area.[16]

Table 7: Special-status Plant Species Within the Plan Area

Special-status Species Name	Federal Legal Status	State Legal Status	CNPS List and Threat
Shown on Exhibit 7			
California satintail (*Imperata brevifolia*)	None	None	CNPS 2B.1
California jewel flower (*Caulanthus californicus*)	FE	SE	CNPS 1B.1
Madera leptosiphon (*Leptosiphon serrulatus*)	None	None	CNPS 1B.2

[15] City of Fresno. 2014. Fresno General Plan. Website: https://www.fresno.gov/darm/wp-content/uploads/sites/10/2019/07/ConsolidatedGP6182020.pdf. Accessed September 27, 2022.

[16] California Native Plant Society (CNPS). 2022. Rare Plant Program. Rare Plant Inventory (online edition, v9-01 1.5). Website: https://www.rareplants.cnps.org. Accessed September 27, 2022.

Special-status Species Name	Federal Legal Status	State Legal Status	CNPS List and Threat
Not Shown on Exhibit 7			
Succulent owl's clover (*Castilleja campestris ssp. succulenta*)	FT	SE	CNPS 1B.2
Sanford's arrowhead (*Sagittaria sanfordii*)	None	None	CNPS 1B.2
Greene's tuctoria (*Tuctoria greenei*)	FE	SR	CNPS 1B.1

Notes:
CNPS = California Native Plant Society
Listing Status:
FE = Federally Listed Endangered
FT = Federally Listed Threatened
FC = Federal Species of Concern
SE = State Listed Endangered
ST = State Listed Threatened
SR = State Rare
SSC = California Species of Special Concern
SP = State Fully Protected Species

CNPS Lists:
Rank 1A: Plants presumed extirpated in California and either rare or extinct elsewhere
Rank 1B: Plants rare, threatened, or endangered in California and elsewhere
Rank 2A: Plants presumed extirpated in California but common elsewhere
Rank 2B: Plants rare, threatened, or endangered in California but more common elsewhere
Rank 3: Plants about which more information is needed
Rank 4: Watch List: Plants of limited distribution

CNPS Treat Code Extensions:
1 = Seriously endangered in California
2 = Fairly endangered in California
3 = Not very endangered in California
Sources: California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDB). 2022.
California Native Plant Society (CNPS). 2022.

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Exhibit 7: CNDDB Special-status Species Occurrences

This exhibit contains sensitive information relating to biological resources and is not intended for public distribution pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21082.3(C)(2). A copy of confidential Exhibit 7: CNDDB Special-Status Species Occurrences is on file with the City of Fresno and is available to qualified professionals upon request.

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Special-status Wildlife Species

A special-status wildlife species is defined as any wildlife species which is listed, or proposed for listing, as threatened or endangered by the USFWS or National Marine Fisheries Service under the provisions of the Endangered Species Act.[17] It also includes any species designated by the CDFW as a "candidate" or "species of concern."

According to the CNDDB, 21 special-status wildlife species have the potential to occur in the Specific Plan Area. Table 8 describes the nine special-status wildlife species listed for the Specific Plan Area and their legal status as shown on Exhibit 7 as well as the 12 special-status wildlife species and their legal status that are not shown on Exhibit 7, but which are also known to occur within this 4-quad radius of the Specific Plan Area.

Table 8: Special-status Wildlife Species Within the Plan Area

Special-status Species Name	Federal Legal Status	State Legal Status
Shown on Exhibit 7		
Swainson's hawk *(Buteo swainsoni*)	None	ST
Northern California legless lizard (*Anniella pulchra*)	None	SSC
California glossy snake (*Arizona elegans occidentalis*)	None	SSC
Coast horned lizard (*Phrynosoma blainvillii*)	None	SSC
California tiger salamander–Central California DPS (*Ambystoma californiense pop. 1*)	FT	None
Molestan blister beetle (*lytta molesta*)	–	–
Crotch's bumble bee (*bombus crotchii*)	–	–
Antioch efferian robberfly (*Efferia antiochi*)	–	–
Hurd's retapogon robberfly (*Metapogon hurdi*)	–	–
Not Shown on Exhibit 7		
Burrowing owl (*Athene cunicularia*)	None	SSC
Vernal pool fairy shrimp (*Branchinecta lynchi*)	FT	None
Pallid bat (*Antrozous pallidus*)	None	SSC
Great egret (A*rdea alba*)	–	–
Western pond turtle (*Emys marmorata*)	None	SSC
California linderiella (*Linderiella occidentalis*)	–	–
Double-crested cormorant (*Phalacrocorax auritus*)	–	–
Snowy egret (Egretta thula)	–	–

[17] City of Fresno. 2014. Fresno General Plan. December 18 Website: https://www.fresno.gov/darm/wp-content/uploads/sites/10/2019/07/ConsolidatedGP6182020.pdf. Accessed July 7, 2022.

Special-status Species Name	Federal Legal Status	State Legal Status
Hoary bat (Lasiurus cinereus)	–	–
Black-crowned night heron (Nycticorax nycticorax)	–	–
Western spadefoot (*Spea hammondii*)	None	SSC
American badger (*Taxidea taxus*)	None	SSC

Notes:
Listing Status:
FE = Federally Listed Endangered
FT = Federally Listed Threatened
FC = Federal Species of Concern
SE = State Listed Endangered
ST = State Listed Threatened
SR = State Rare
SSC = California Species of Special Concern
SP = State Fully Protected Species

California Native Plant Society (CNPS) Lists:
Rank 1A: Plants presumed extirpated in California and either rare or extinct elsewhere
Rank 1B: Plants rare, threatened, or endangered in California and elsewhere
Rank 2A: Plants presumed extirpated in California but common elsewhere
Rank 2B: Plants rare, threatened, or endangered in California but more common elsewhere
Rank 3: Plants about which more information is needed
Rank 4: Watch List: Plants of limited distribution

CNPS Treat Code Extensions:
.1 = Seriously endangered in California
.2 = Fairly endangered in California
.3 = Not very endangered in California

Source: California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDB). 2022.

Project-related impacts, including future development project-level impacts, to the Specific Plan Area's vegetation communities and special-status species are further described in the analysis below.

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 United States Fish and Wildlife Service?

Less than significant impact with mitigation incorporated. This analysis evaluates the potential for the Specific Plan Area to support special-status plant and wildlife species. The description and legal status of these species is presented in Table 7 and Table 8 above. Exhibit 7 shows the records for special-status plants and animals contained within the CNDDB as of September 2022 within a 4-quad radius of the Specific Plan Area.

Development under the proposed project would result in additional new residential and nonresidential land use development throughout the Specific Plan Area. The proposed project may result in other private and public improvements throughout the Specific Plan Area with the potential for environmental effects related to Biological Resources. Thus, development consistent with the proposed project could result in the direct and indirect loss of natural vegetation communities that provide suitable habitat for 27 special-status plant and wildlife species that have the potential to occur or are known to occur within the Specific Plan Area. The vegetation communities within the Specific Plan Area that provide suitable habitat for listed and other special-status species are described above. Development within the Specific Plan Area could result in the loss or degradation of natural habitats such as lacustrine, riverine, and pasture, which may support special-status plant and wildlife species. Project-related impacts, including future development project-level impacts, to any of these habitat types may result in a substantial adverse effect if it is determined that a special-status species would be impacted, either directly or through habitat modifications.

Special-status Plant Species

A significant impact to special-status plant species would occur if future development under the proposed project would 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 CDFW or USFWS.

Special-status and rare plant surveys were not conducted within the Specific Plan Area. However, as shown on Exhibit 7, a database search was conducted to identify where rare plants occurences are located within the Specific Plan Area. The results of that search determined that six special-species plants have limited potential to occur in the Specific Plan Area, as shown in Table 7. If individuals of these species are present in the Specific Plan Area, plants could be adversely impacted from development (e.g., soil compaction, trampling, or earthmoving activities) of the Specific Plan Area.

Special-status Wildlife Species

A significant impact would occur if future development under the proposed project would 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 CDFW or USFWS.

Special-status wildlife surveys were not conducted within the Specific Plan Area. However, as shown on Exhibit 7, a database search was conducted to identify where special-status wildlife is located within the Specific Plan Area. The results of that search determined that 21 special-species wildlife have limited potential to occur in the Speciifc Plan Area, as shown in Table 8.

Direct project impacts to species listed as a candidate, sensitive, or special-status species by local, State, and federal agencies should be avoided to the greatest extent feasible; however, it is acknowledged it may not be feasible for future projects to avoid these species. Project-related impacts, including future development project-level impacts, that result in the direct take of a special-status species may be considered a significant impact. The presence or absence of a special-status species on a project site and the potential to impact a special-status species must be determined prior

to project construction. If development within the Specific Plan Area results in the direct take or loss of suitable habitat for any of the 27 special-status species that have the potential to occur in the Specific Plan Area, project-level site-specific mitigation would be required to reduce the potential impacts to less than significant levels. Project impacts to special-status species listed as threatened or endangered by CDFW and/or USFWS may also require agency consultation and/or take permits. However, future development in the Specific Plan Area would be required to comply with the following General Plan policies pertaining to biological resources, specifically within the Parks, Open Space, and Schools Element (POSS), as outlined above. Project-level implementation of the General Plan Policies POSS-5-a through POSS-5-f would reduce potential project impacts to special-status species and their associated habitats. Furthermore, the proposed project would incorporate MM BIO-1a through MM BIO-1d, which would ensure that if one or more of these special-status species occur in the Specific Plan Area, their presence would be detected and the risk of mortality would be avoided to the maximum extent feasible.

Additionally, all future development in the Specific Plan Area would be required to comply with the proposed Specific Plan policies pertaining to biological resources, including Policy OS-2.2, which protects passive open space, and Policy OS-5.2, which protects habitat corridors.

The Municipal Code also includes policies pertaining to biological resources that relate to future development within the Specific Plan Area, such as Section 12-4.1302 and 12-4.1303 that prevent infill developments from occurring within habitats that can be used for endangered, rare, or threatened species.

Implementation of the City's relevant General Plan policies pertaining to biological resources (POSS-5-a through POSS-5-f); MM BIO-1a through MM BIO-1d; Specific Plan policies (OS-2.2 and OS-5.2); and Sections 12-4.1302 and 12-4.1303 of the Municipal Code would reduce impacts to special-status species to a less than significant level. Avoidance and mitigation to protect said species would reduce all impacts to less than significant.

b) Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, and regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or United States Fish and Wildlife Service?

Less than significant impact with mitigation incorporated. Sensitive natural communities are vegetation communities or special wildlife habitats that are rare or occur in limited distributions or provide specific habitat requirements for special-status plant or wildlife species. The CDFW maintains a list of natural communities which attempts to classify vegetation types found within the State of California and rank them based on rarity. Communities ranked S1-S3 are considered sensitive natural communities.[18] Riparian habitat is defined as any habitat with characteristic vegetation relating to or located on the bank of a natural watercourse, often described as riparian corridors.

A significant impact would occur if the proposed project would have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional habitat or other

[18] California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW). 2022. Natural Communities List, Sacramento: California Department of Fish and Wildlife. Website: https://wildlife.ca.gov/Data/VegCAMP/Natural-Communities. Accessed September 27, 2022.

sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, and regulations or by the CDFW or USFW.

The Specific Plan Area contains approximately 14 acres of riparian habitats (riverine and lacustrine communities), which provide suitable habitat for a number of special-status plant and wildlife species known to occur in the region. The vast majority of future development within the Specific Plan Area is limited to existing disturbed and developed land and within areas that are unlikely to support special-status species.

However, the presence of riparian habitat and/or a sensitive natural community on a project site must be evaluated prior to project approval. Any project-related impacts, including future development project-level impacts, to riparian habitat and/or a sensitive natural community are considered a significant impact and require mitigation. Project-level implementation of the approved General Plan Objective (POSS-6) and Policies (POSS-6-a and POSS-6-b), and Objective (POSS-7) and Policies (POSS-7-a through POSS-7-d) would reduce potential project impacts to riparian habitats. Further, implementation of MM BIO-2a and MM BIO-2c would ensure that sensitive natural communities and/or riparian habitats are not significantly impacted. Thus, impacts would be reduced to a less than significant level.

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?

Less than significant impact with mitigation incorporated. Wetlands are defined as areas that are permanently wet or periodically covered with shallow water, such as saltwater and freshwater marshes, open or closed brackish marshes, swamps, mud flats, and fens.[19] A significant impact would occur if the construction or operations of the proposed project produced a substantial adverse effect on State or federally protected wetlands including marshes, vernal pools, coastal, etc., through direct removal, filling hydrological interruption, or other means.

Development within the Specific Plan Area, particularly in undeveloped areas with the potential to support wetland habitat (e.g., pasture/grassland), could result in the loss of jurisdictional wetland habitat, which includes vernal pool habitats, seasonal wetlands and waters of the United States or intermittent/permanent water bodies. Any project-related impacts, including future development project-level impacts, that result in the significant alteration or fill of a State or federally protected wetland is considered a significant impact.

Additionally, special-status species associated with wetlands and vernal pool habitats, such as vernal pool fairy shrimp, may be impacted as a result of project impacts to protected wetlands. Project-specific agency (i.e., CDFW, Regional Water Quality Control Board [RWQCB], and/or USACE) coordination and/or regulatory permitting would be required to reduce potential project impacts to wetland habitat. The implementation of Policies (POSS-6-a through POSS-7-d) would reduce potential project impacts to wetlands and wetland habitat. Further, implementation of MM BIO-3a and MM

[19] City of Fresno. 2014. Fresno General Plan. December 18. Website: https://www.fresno.gov/darm/wp-content/uploads/sites/10/2019/07/ConsolidatedGP6182020.pdf. Accessed September 27, 2022.

BIO-3b would ensure that wetlands are not significantly impacted. Thus, impacts would be reduced to a less than significant level.

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 wildlife nursery sites?

Less than significant impact. A wildlife corridor is defined as a natural corridor, such as an undeveloped ravine, that is frequently used by wildlife to travel from one area to another.[20] A significant impact would occur if any construction or operations of the proposed project would interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with an established native resident or migratory wildlife corridor or impede the use of wildlife nursery sites.

As previously discussed, the majority of the Specific Plan Area includes disturbed land. These areas are mainly surrounded by existing development and disturbed habitat areas resulting in habitat fragmentation. Because of the isolation of these areas, there are not many substantive linkages to consider them as part of a wildlife movement corridor. Regardless, all future development would be required to comply with the approved General Plan, including Policies (POSS-6-a through POSS-7-d) that would reduce impacts to wildlife movement corridors by providing buffer zones, control stormwater runoff, and providing periodic monitoring of the biological resource conditions. These policies would reduce potential impacts to wildlife movement corridors to a less than significant level.

The Municipal Code also includes policies pertaining to fish and wildlife movement corridors that relate to future development within the Plan Area such as Section 12-5.510, which also dictates that all practical and reasonable measures should be taken to protect fish and wildlife and preserve wildlife corridors.

Additionally, all future development in the Specific Plan Area resulting from the proposed project must comply with the proposed Specific Plan policies pertaining to biological resources, including Policy OS-2.2, which protects passive open space, and Policy OS-5.2, which protects habitat corridors. As such, impacts would be less than significant.

e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?

Less than significant impact. A significant impact would occur if any construction or operation within the proposed project would conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance. Future development projects must meet restrictions mandated by Section 13-305 of the Municipal Code which defines “Protected Trees” and sets forth the requirements for mitigating impacts to protected trees.

[20] City of Fresno. 2014. Fresno General Plan. December 18 Website: https://www.fresno.gov/darm/wp-content/uploads/sites/10/2019/07/ConsolidatedGP6182020.pdf. Accessed September 27, 2022.

Project development within the Specific Plan Area may result in the removal or alteration of existing street and public trees within the boundaries of the Specific Plan Area. Existing preserved trees and landscaped trees within public property, including parkways, must be preserved in order to beautify the City, purify its air, and provide shade for its inhabitants.

Project development within the Specific Plan Area could have the potential to impact trees on public property; however, future development would be required to comply with Article 3 of Chapter 13 of the Municipal Code, as discussed above, which establishes regulations governing the preservation of trees on public property. Compliance with the Municipal Code would reduce any impacts related to conflicts with local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance. Moreover, development consistent with the proposed project would reduce the total amount of development in the Specific Plan Area compared to what was contemplated by the General Plan. Therefore, potential impacts related to conflict with the City's public tree ordinance would be less than significant.

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?

No impact. A significant impact would occur if the proposed Plan would conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP), Natural Community Conservation Plan (NCCP), or other approved local, regional, or State HCP. The Specific Plan Area is not located within the boundaries of any approved or draft HCP, NCCP, or other adopted local, regional or State HCP. Therefore, development within the Specific Plan Area would not result in any impacts to an adopted HCP or NCCP. As such, no impact would occur.

Mitigation Measures

MM BIO-1a Construction of a future discretionary project within the Fresno Central Southeast Area (Specific Plan Area) shall avoid, where possible, vegetation communities that provide suitable habitat for special-status species known to occur within the Specific Plan Area. If construction within potentially suitable habitat must occur, the presence/absence of any special-status plant or wildlife species must be determined prior to construction, to determine whether the habitat supports any special-status species. If special-status species are determined to occupy any portion of a project site, avoidance and minimization measures shall be incorporated into the construction phase of a project to avoid direct or incidental take of a listed species to the greatest extent feasible. Specific mitigation measures for direct or incidental impacts to special-status species shall be determined on a case-by-case basis through agency consultation during the review process for discretionary projects and shall be consistent with survey protocols and mitigations measures recommended by the agency at the time of consultation.

MM BIO-1b Direct or incidental take of any State or federally listed species shall be avoided to the greatest extent feasible. If construction of a future discretionary project within the Fresno Central Southeast Area (Specific Plan Area) will result in the direct or incidental

take of a listed species, consultation with the resource agencies and/or additional permitting may be required. Agency consultation through the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) 2081 and United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Section 7 or Section 10 permitting processes shall take place prior to any action that may result in the direct or incidental take of a listed species. Specific mitigation measures for direct or incidental impacts to a listed species will be determined on a case-by-case basis through agency consultation during the review process for discretionary projects and shall be consistent with survey protocols and mitigations measures recommended by the agency at the time of consultation.

MM BIO-1c Development within the Specific Plan Area shall avoid, where possible, special-status natural communities and vegetation communities that provide suitable habitat for special-status species. If a future discretionary project within the Specific Plan Area will result in the loss of a special-status natural community or suitable habitat for special-status species, compensatory habitat-based mitigation is required under CEQA and California Endangered Species Act (CESA). Mitigation shall consist of preserving on-site habitat, restoring similar habitat or purchasing off-site credits from an approved mitigation bank. Compensatory mitigation shall be determined through consultation with the City and/or resource agencies. An appropriate mitigation strategy and ratio shall be agreed upon by the developer and lead agency to reduce project impacts to special-status natural communities to a less than significant level. Agreed-upon mitigation ratios shall depend on the quality of the habitat and presence/absence of a special-status species. Specific mitigation measures for direct or incidental impacts to special-status natural communities and vegetation communities shall be determined on a case-by-case basis through agency consultation during the review process for discretionary projects and shall be consistent with survey protocols and mitigations measures recommended by the agency at the time of consultation.

MM BIO-1d Future discretionary projects within the Fresno Central Southeast Area (Specific Plan Area) should avoid, if possible, construction within the general nesting season of February through August for avian species protected under Fish and Game Code 3500 and the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA), if it is determined that suitable nesting habitat occurs on a project site. If construction cannot avoid the nesting season, a pre-construction clearance survey shall be conducted by a qualified Biologist to determine whether any nesting birds or nesting activity is observed on or within 500 feet of a project site. If an active nest is observed during the survey, a biological monitor shall be on-site to ensure that no project activities would impact the active nest. A suitable buffer shall be established around the active nest until the nestlings have fledged and the nest is no longer active. Project activities may continue in the vicinity of the nest only at the discretion of the biological monitor. Prior to commencement of grading activities and issuance of any building permits, the Director of the City of Fresno Planning and Development Department, or designee, shall verify that all proposed project grading and construction plans include specific documentation regarding the

requirements of the MBTA and California Fish and Game Code Section 5303, that pre-construction surveys have been completed and the results reviewed by staff, and that the appropriate buffers (if needed) are noted on the plans and established in the field. Specific mitigation measures for direct or incidental impacts to avian species protected under Fish and Game Code 3500 and the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) shall be determined on a case-by-case basis through agency consultation during the review process for discretionary projects and shall be consistent with survey protocols and mitigations measures recommended by the agency at the time of consultation.

MM BIO-2a A pre-construction clearance survey, following current California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) protocols, shall be conducted by a qualified Biologist to determine whether a future discretionary project within the Fresno Central Southeast Area (Specific Plan Area) will result in the removal or impact to any riparian habitat and/or a special-status natural community with potential to occur in the Planning Area. Compensatory habitat-based mitigation shall be required to reduce project impacts. Compensatory mitigation must involve the preservation or restoration or the purchase of off-site mitigation credits for impacts to riparian habitat and/or a special-status natural community. Mitigation must be conducted in-kind or within an approved mitigation bank in the region. The specific mitigation ratio for habitat-based mitigation shall be determined through consultation with the appropriate agency (i.e., CDFW or United States Fish and Wildlife Service [USFWS]) on a case-by-case basis. The project applicant/developer for a discretionary project shall develop and implement appropriate mitigation regarding impacts on their respective jurisdictions.

MM BIO-2b A pre-construction clearance survey, following current California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) protocols, shall be conducted by a qualified Biologist to determine whether a future discretionary project within the Fresno Central Southeast Area (Specific Plan Area) will result in significant impacts to streambeds or waterways protected under Section 1600 of Fish and Wildlife Code and Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (CWA). The project applicant/developer for a discretionary project shall consult with partner agencies such as CDFW and/or United States Army Corp of Engineers (USACE) to develop and implement appropriate mitigation regarding impacts on their respective jurisdictions, determination of mitigation strategy, and regulatory permitting to reduce impacts, as required for projects that remove riparian habitat and/or alter a streambed or waterway. The project applicant/developer shall implement mitigation as directed by the agency with jurisdiction over the particular impact identified.

MM BIO-2c Prior to project approval, a pre-construction clearance survey, following current California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) protocols, shall be conducted by a qualified Biologist to determine whether a future discretionary project within the Fresno Central Southeast Area (Specific Plan Area) would result in project-related impacts to riparian habitat or a special-status natural community or if it may result in direct or incidental impacts to special-status species associated with riparian or

wetland habitats. The project applicant/developer for a discretionary project shall be obligated to address project-specific impacts to special-status species associated with riparian habitat through agency consultation, development of a mitigation strategy, and/or issuing incidental take permits for the specific special-status species, as determined by the CDFW and/or United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS).

MM BIO-3a If a future discretionary project within the Fresno Central Southeast Area (Specific Plan Area) will result in the significant alteration or fill of a federally protected wetland, a formal wetland delineation conducted according to the United States Army Corp of Engineers (USACE)-accepted methodology is required for each project to determine the extent of wetlands on a project site. The delineation shall be used to determine whether federal permitting and mitigation strategy are required to reduce project impacts. Acquisition of permits from USACE for the fill of wetlands and USACE approval of a wetland mitigation plan would ensure a "no net loss" of wetland habitat within the Planning Area. Appropriate wetland mitigation/creation shall be implemented at a ratio according to the size of the impacted wetland.

MM BIO-3b In addition to regulatory agency permitting, Best Management Practices (BMPs) identified from a list provided by the United States Army Corp of Engineers (USACE) shall be incorporated into the design and construction phase of a future discretionary project within the Fresno Central Southeast Area (Specific Plan Area) to ensure that no pollutants or siltation drain into a federally protected wetland. Project design features such as fencing, appropriate drainage, and incorporation of detention basins shall assist in ensuring project-related impacts to wetland habitat are minimized to the greatest extent feasible.

Environmental Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
2.5 Cultural Resources and Tribal Cultural Resources *Would the project:*				
a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as pursuant to Section 15064.5?	☐	☒	☐	☐
b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to Section 15064.5?	☐	☒	☐	☐
c) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?	☐	☒	☐	☐
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:				
d) 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	☐	☒	☐	☐
e) 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.	☐	☒	☐	☐

Environmental Evaluation

Introduction

As noted in the Project Description, the land use designations of the Specific Plan are consistent with the General Plan buildout assumptions; however, this Specific Plan proposes changing the land use designation for some of the Specific Plan Area's parcels, which would require the General Plan Land Use map to be amended. These proposed land use designation changes would reduce the total amount of development compared to what was contemplated by the General Plan for the Specific Plan Area.

Environmental Setting

This section describes the existing cultural and Tribal Cultural Resources (TCRs) setting and potential effects from project implementation in the Specific Plan Area. Descriptions and analysis in this section

are based on the General Plan, Fresno Municipal Code, the Office of Historic Preservation Directory of Properties in the Historic Property Data File for Fresno County, the Southern San Joaquin Valley Information Center (SSJVIC) records search for the Specific Plan Area, the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), the California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR), the California Built Environment Resource Directory (BERD), and the California Points of Historical Interest (CPHI) list. The non-confidential record search results, Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) correspondence, and pedestrian survey photographs are provided in Appendix D.

Southern San Joaquin Valley Information Center

On October 6, 2021, a records search for the project site and a 0.5-mile radius beyond the Specific Plan Area boundaries, was conducted at the SSJVIC located at California State University, Bakersfield. To identify additional historic properties or resources, the current inventories of the NRHP, the CRHR, the California Historical Landmarks (CHL) list, the CPHI list, and the BERD for Fresno County were reviewed to determine the existence of previously documented local historical resources. Ethnographic resources were also reviewed for information regarding reported Native American village sites located within the City.

Results from the records search indicate 68 resources (67 of which are historic, one of which is both historic and pre-contact, and one of which is an informal resource) have been recorded within a 0.5-mile radius of the Specific Plan Area as shown on Table 9. Thirty-five of those resources are located within the Specific Plan Area. In addition, 40 previous studies are on file with the SSJVIC within a 0.5-mile radius of the Specific Plan Area, 18 of which address locations within the Specific Plan Area itself as shown on Table 10.

Table 9: Cultural Resources Recorded Within a 0.5-mile Radius of the Specific Plan Area

Resource No.	Resource Description	Date Recorded	Within the Specific Plan Area?
P-10-003930	Southern Pacific Railroad, Historic AH07 (Roads/trails/railroad grades), HP11 (Engineering structure)	1998, 1999, 2002, 2004, 2009, 2010, 2013, 2015, 2016, 2018	Yes
P-10-004248	California Products Co. HP02 (Single-family property)	1978	No
P-10-004249	The Giffen Home, HP02 (Single-family property)	Unknown	Yes
P-10-004253	Shuttera Residence, HP02 (Single-family property)	1978	No
P-10-004274	Sckitchfield Residence; Hughes Residence, HP02 (Single-family property)	Unknown	No
P-10-004280	San Joaquin Grocers Wholesale Warehouse, HP06 (1-3 story commercial building)	1978	No
P-10-004286	Sun Maid Raisin Plant, HP33 (Farm/ranch); HP95 (Concrete Construction)	1978	No
P-10-004287	Old Barn, HP39 (Other)–Barn/Garage	Unknown	No

Resource No.	Resource Description	Date Recorded	Within the Specific Plan Area?
P-10-004299	Mingle Transportation and Warehouse Company; Fresno Brewery, HP06 (1-3 story commercial building)	1978, 1983	No
P-10-004310	The Robinson Home, HP02 (Single-family property)	Unknown	No
P-10-004312	The Euless Home, HP02 (Single-family property)	Unknown	No
P-10-004349	Van Ness Entrance Gate, HP46 (Walls/gates/fences)	1978	No
P-10-004675	Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railway, HP19 (Bridge); HP37 (Highway/trail)–Rail Road	2000, 2019	Yes
P-10-004677	Central Canal, HP20 (Canal/aqueduct)	2000, 2003, 2004	No
P-10-004762	133 S. Peach Avenue, HP02 (Single-family property); HP04 (Ancillary building)	2001	No
P-10-004763	144 S. Peach Avenue, HP02 (Single-family property); HP04 (Ancillary building)	2001	No
P-10-004764	145 S. Peach Avenue, HP02 (Single-family property)	2001	No
P-10-004765	The Steinwand Home, HP02 (Single-family property); HP04 (Ancillary building); HP33 (Farm/ranch)	2001	No
P-10-004766	317 S. Peach Avenue, HP02 (Single-family property); HP04 (Ancillary building)	2001	No
P-10-004767	358 S. Peach Avenue, HP02 (Single-family property); HP04 (Ancillary building)	2001	No
P-10-004768	The John M. Euless Home, HP02 (Single-family property); HP04 (Ancillary building)	1994	No
P-10-004769	270 N. Peach Avenue, HP02 (Single-family property)	2001	No
P-10-004770	284 N. Peach Avenue, HP02 (Single-family property); HP04 (Ancillary building)	2001	No
P-10-005120	Martin Dedkian Residence; Mardiros S. Asadoorian Residence, HP02 (Single-family property)	1992	No
P-10-005121	Cesar Chavez-Peach Site; Mosesian & Sons; San Joaquin Winery, HP08 (Industrial building)–Packing facility	1992	No
P-10-005225	The Lindstrom Residence; The Olivas Residence, HP02 (Single-family property)	1997	No
P-10-005305	USDA [United States Department of Agriculture] Horticultural Field Station, HP04 (Ancillary building); HP14 (Government building); HP30 (Trees/vegetation); HP33 (Farm/ranch); HP35 (New Deal Public Works Project)	2003, 2005	No
P-10-005306	4808 E. Balch Avenue, HP02 (Single-family property)	2003	Yes
P-10-005307	4814 E. Balch Avenue; Lot 8 in Block 2 of Mitchell Simpson Tract, HP02 (Single-family property)	2003	Yes

Resource No.	Resource Description	Date Recorded	Within the Specific Plan Area?
P-10-005308	4818 E. Balch Avenue; Lot 7 in Block 2 of Mitchell Simpson Tract, HP02 (Single-family property)	2003	Yes
P-10-005309	4826 E. Balch Avenue; Lot 5 in Block 2 of Mitchell Simpson Tract, HP02 (Single-family property)	2003	Yes
P-10-005310	4830 E. Balch Avenue; Lot 4 in Block 2 of Mitchell Simpson Tract, HP02 (Single-family property)	2003	Yes
P-10-005311	4836 E. Balch Avenue; Lot 3 in Block 2 of Mitchell Simpson Tract, City of Fresno, HP02 (Single-family property)	2003	Yes
P-10-005312	4844 E. Balch Avenue; Lot 1 in Block 2 of Mitchell Simpson Tract, HP02 (Single-family property)	2003	Yes
P-10-005313	4845 E. Inyo Avenue; Lot 20 in Block 2 of Mitchell Simpson Tract, HP02 (Single-family property)	2003	Yes
P-10-005314	4841 E. Inyo Avenue; Lot 19 in Block 2 of Mitchell Simpson Tract, HP02 (Single-family property); HP04 (Ancillary building)	2003	Yes
P-10-005315	4835 E. Inyo Avenue; Lot 18 in Block 2 of Mitchell Simpson Tract, HP02 (Single-family property)	2003	Yes
P-10-005316	4831 E. Inyo Avenue, HP02 (Single-family property)	2003	Yes
P-10-005317	4827 E. Inyo Avenue; Lot 16 in Block 2 of Mitchell Simpson Tract, in the City of Fresno, HP02 (Single-family property)	2003	Yes
P-10-005318	4821 E. Inyo Avenue; Lot 15 in Block 2 of Mitchell Simpson Tract, HP02 (Single-family property)	2003	Yes
P-10-005319	4817 E. Inyo Avenue; Lot 14 in Block 2 of Mitchell Simpson, HP02 (Single-family property)	2003	Yes
P-10-005320	4813 E. Inyo Avenue; Lot 13 in Block 2 of Mitchell Simpson Tract, HP02 (Single-family property)	2003	Yes
P-10-005321	4808 E. Inyo Avenue; Lot 9 and the East 20 feet of Lot 10 in Block 3 of Mitchell Simpson Tract, HP02 (Single-family property)	2003	Yes
P-10-005322	4812 E. Inyo Avenue; Lot 8 in Block 3 of Mitchell Simpson Tract, HP02 (Single-family property)	2003	Yes
P-10-005323	4816 E. Inyo Avenue; Lot 7 in Block 3 of Mitchell Simpson Tract, HP02 (Single-family property)	2003	Yes
P-10-005324	4822 E. Inyo Avenue; Lot 6 in Block 3 of Mitchell Simpson Tract, HP02 (Single-family property)	2003	Yes
P-10-005325	4826 E. Inyo Avenue; Lot 5 in Block 3 of Mitchell Simpson Tract, HP02 (Single-family property)	2003	Yes
P-10-005326	4830 E. Inyo Avenue; Lot 4 in Block 3 of Mitchell Simpson Tract, HP02 (Single-family property)	2003	Yes

Resource No.	Resource Description	Date Recorded	Within the Specific Plan Area?
P-10-005327	4834 E. Inyo Avenue; Lot 3 in Block 3 of Mitchell Simpson Tract, HP02 (Single-family property)	2003	Yes
P-10-005328	4840 E. Inyo Avenue; Lot 2 in Block 3 of Mitchell Simpson Tract, HP02 (Single-family property)	2003	Yes
P-10-005329	4844 E. Inyo Avenue; Lot 1 in Block 3 of Mitchell Simpson Tract, HP02 (Single-family property)	2003	Yes
P-10-005330	4845 E. Mono Avenue; Lot 20 in Block 3 of Mitchell Simpson Tract, HP02 (Single-family property)	2003	Yes
P-10-005331	4841 E. Mono Avenue; Lot 19 in Block 3 of Mitchell Simpson Tract, HP02 (Single-family property)	2003	Yes
P-10-005332	4835 E. Mono Avenue; Lot 18 in Block 3 in Mitchell Simpson Tract, HP02 (Single-family property)	2003	Yes
P-10-005333	4831 E. Mono Avenue; The East 1/2 of Lot 16 and all of Lot 17 in Block 3 of Mitchell Simpson Tract, HP02 (Single-family property)	2003	Yes
P-10-005334	4817 E. Mono Avenue, HP02 (Single-family property)	2003	Yes
P-10-005335	4815 E. Mono Avenue; Lot 13 in Block 3 of Mitchell Simpson Tract, HP02 (Single-family property)	2003	Yes
P-10-005336	4809 E. Mono Avenue; Lot 12 in Block 3 of Mitchell Simpson Tract, HP02 (Single-family property)	2003	Yes
P-10-006224	Berberian Residence; Map Reference No.1; Portion of Lot 24 of the Newhall Tract, HP02 (Single-family property)	2003	No
P-10-006225	Map Reference No.2; Garza Residence, HP02 (Single-family property)	2003	No
P-10-006594	S-31, HP02 (Single-family property) – Craftsman	1992	No
P-10-006595	S-32, HP02 (Single-family property)–Modern	1992	No
P-10-006596	S-33, HP02 (Single-family property)–Craftsman	1992	No
P-10-006599	S-68, HP02 (Single-family property)–Tudor Revival	1992	No
P-10-006600	S-69, HP03 (Multiple-family property)–Tudor Revival	1992	No
P-10-006601	S-70, HP02 (Single-family property)–Modern	1992	No
P-10-007094	APN 478-162-01 Historical Deposit, AH04 (Privies/dumps/trash scatters)	2018	No
Source: Southern San Joaquin Valley Information Center (SSJVIC) Records Search. October 18, 2021.			

Table 10: Previous Investigations Within a 0.5-mile Radius of the Specific Plan Area

Resource No.	Report Title	Author	Date	Within the Specific Plan Area?
FR-00135	Cultural Resources Inventory Report for the Proposed Mojave Northward Expansion Project	Hatoff, Brian, Voss, Barb, Waechter, Sharon, Benté, Vance, and Wee, Stephen	1995	No
FR-00257	Historic Property Survey Report Route 180 Chestnut Avenue to Highland Avenue; 06-FRE-180, R60.9/R6736 06250- 342400		1990	Yes
FR-00296	Cultural Resources Assessment for the Fresno Unified School District, Southeast Fresno High School, Middle School, and Elementary School	Bissonnette, Linda Dick	1992	Yes
FR-01231	Negative Archaeological Survey Report for the Construction of Route 180 Urban Project	Nissen, Karen, Comeyne, Dominique, and Aguilar-Luna, Judy	1994	No
FR-01651	Cultural Resources Survey for the Level (3) Communications Long Haul Fiber Optics Project: Segment WS04: Sacramento to Bakersfield	Nelson, Wendy J.	2000	Yes
FR-01686	Cultural Resources Assessment for the Pacific Bell Site, CV-600-01, and the Fairgrounds Site, City of Fresno, Fresno County, California	Peak, Melinda A.	2000	No
FR-01694	Supplementary Historic Building Survey, Historic Resources Survey (Ratkovich Plan), Fresno, California	Powell, John Edward and McGuire, Michael J.	1994	No
FR-01696	A Cultural Resource Study for the Self-Help Housing Project In the Southeast Fresno Area, Fresno County, California	Varner, Dudley M.	2001	No
FR-01723	An Archaeological Survey of the Qualls Property, Fresno County, California–EA 4101	Wren, Donald G.	1995	Yes
FR-01742	Archaeological Survey and Record Search for WorldCom Fresno 180 Aerial Project (800-25)	Sutch, Cordelia	2001	Yes
FR-01800	Archaeological Survey and Architectural Evaluation for the Peach Avenue Widening Project, Belmont to Butler Avenues, Fresno County, California	Nettles, Wendy M. and Baloian, Mary Clark	2002	Yes
FR-01850	Nextel Communications Wireless Telecommunications Service Facility, Fresno County	Billat, Lorna	2000	No

Resource No.	Report Title	Author	Date	Within the Specific Plan Area?
FR-01979	Historic Property Survey for Fresno Unified School District, Proposed Elementary School Site D-2 Fresno, California	Livingstone, David M.	2003	Yes
FR-02000	Cultural Resources Survey and Inventory of the USDA Peach Avenue Property in Fresno, California	Nettles, Wendy M. and Baloian, Randy	2003	No
FR-02002	Cultural Resources Survey Report for Level 3 Long Haul Fiber Optic Project: WS04 Connection to Fresno 3R Facility, in the City of Fresno, Fresno County, California	Mason, Roger D. and Shepard, Richard S.	2000	No
FR-02073	Environmental Assessment No. PW-2004-08 Acquire and Construct an Intermodal Facility On the Southeast Corner of East Cesar Chavez and South Alder Avenues	Fraser, Becky	2004	Yes
FR-02076	Historic Architecture Survey Report for the "Bungalow" Court Project, Fresno, California	Hattersley-Drayton, Karana	2004	Yes
FR-02106	Request for SHPO Review of FCC Undertaking (FAT-0064 Cesar Chavez + Cedar)	Parker, Lori D.	2005	No
FR-02109	Archaeological Survey for a Multi-Family and Single-Family Homes Project (APN 472-021-01), East Cesar Chavez Boulevard and South Adler Avenue, Fresno, California	Brady, Jon L.	2005	Yes
R-02143	A Cultural and Paleontological Resources Study for the KB Home Summit Hills Project	Kaptain, Neal and Matzen, Ben	2005	No
FR-02169	Records Search Results and Site Visit for Cricket Telecommunications Facility Candidate FAT-040B (Butler/Willow), 5130 East Lane, Fresno, Fresno County, California	Bonner, Wayne H.	2005	Yes
FR-02172	New Tower Submission Packet, FCC Form 620–Cedar-Butler, SC-10132B	Supernowicz, Dana E.	2006	No
FR-02192	New Tower Submission Packet, FCC Form 620–South Peach, SC-10122A	Billat, Lorna	2006	No
FR-02194	Cultural Resources Assessment–Dedekian Property (APN 481-060-02S) Parcel at the Northwest Corner, E.	Busby, Colin I.	2005	Yes

Resource No.	Report Title	Author	Date	Within the Specific Plan Area?
	California and S. Willow Avenues, City of Fresno, Fresno County			
FR-02217	National Register of Historic Places Evaluation of the USDA Horticultural Field Station on Peach Avenue in Fresno, California	Nettles, Wendy M. and Baloian, Randy	2005	No
FR-02228	New Tower Submission Packet, FCC Form 620 for 5189 East Cesar Chavez Boulevard	Losee, Carolyn	2005	Yes
FR-02238	Cultural Resource Records Search and Site Visit Results for Cricket Telecommunications Facility Candidate FAT-017C (Chestnut/Belmont), 4765 East Belmont, Fresno, Fresno County, California	Bonner, Wayne H.	2006	No
FR-02287	Cultural Resources Final Report of Monitoring and Findings for the Qwest Network Construction Project, State of California	Arrington, Cindy, Bass, Bryon, Brown, Joan, Corey, Chris, and Hunt, Kevin	2006	No
FR-02332	Records Search and Site Visit Results for T-Mobile Omnipoint Communications Facility Candidate SC40140 (Marks Kitchen), 4828 East Belmont Avenue, Fresno, Fresno County, California, 93727	Bonner, Wayne H.	2008	Yes
FR-02496	Historic Resource Survey for the Placement of Verizon Cell Tower at 5339 East Butler Ave, Fresno, Fresno County, California	Hatoff, Brian	2009	No
FR-02504	Historic Property Survey for the Home Project for Self Help on South Willow and East Jensen Avenues in Fresno, California	Brady, Jon and Hobbs, Kelly	2003	No
FR-02620	Records Search and Site Visit Results for T-Mobile Omnipoint Communications Facility Candidate SC40140 (Mark's Kitchen), 4828 East Belmont Avenue, Fresno, Fresno County, California 93727	Bonner, Wayne	2008	Yes
FR-02628	Cultural Resources Analysis for E Ventura Ensite #10768 (211849) 4066 East Ventura Avenue, Fresno, Fresno County, California	Way, Michael A.	2012	No
FR-02653	Cultural Resources Survey Big Fresno Fair/CVU0729 1121 South Chance	Ocampo, Gabriel	2014	Yes

Resource No.	Report Title	Author	Date	Within the Specific Plan Area?
	Avenue, Fresno, Fresno County, California 93702			
FR-02655	Cultural Resources Survey S Winery/Ensite #17717 (263603) 5080 East Tulare Avenue, Fresno, Fresno County, California 93727	Willers, David	2014	No
FR-02722	Fresno Recycled Water Distribution System Project, Phase I Cultural Resources Study, Fresno County, California	Anderson, Katherine and Vader, Michael	2015	No
FR-02806	Cultural Resources Inventory for the Proposed Lennar Tract No. 5449 Residential Development in the City of Fresno, Fresno County, California	Tibbet, Josh and Baloian, Mary	2016	No
FR-02896	Fresno Fulton Corridor Specific Plan and Downtown Neighborhoods Community Plan Project	Slawson, Dana N. and Kay, Michael	2012	No
FR-02972	Cultural Resources Records Search and Site Visit Results for AT&T Mobility, LLC Candidate CL01406_CVU3017 (Fresno Pacific University), 1890 South Willow Avenue, Fresno, Fresno County, California, CASPR NO 3101A0D73E	Davis, Shane and Wills, Carrie D.	2018	Yes
FR-02992	Basin Training Center 8 FUDS Project	Highland, Steven	2018	Yes
Source: Southern San Joaquin Valley Information Center (SSJVIC) Records Search. October 18, 2021.				

Native American Heritage Commission Record Search

On October 6, 2021, FirstCarbon Solutions (FCS) sent a request to the NAHC in an effort to determine whether any sacred sites are listed on its Sacred Lands File for the Specific Plan Area. A response was received on November 14, 2021, indicating that the Sacred Lands File was negative for the presence of Native American cultural resources in the Specific Plan Area. The NAHC included a list of 12 Tribal representatives available for consultation who may have additional knowledge of the Specific Plan Area. To ensure that all Native American knowledge and concerns over potential TCRs that may be affected by the proposed project are addressed, a letter containing project information requesting any additional information was sent by FCS to each Tribal representative on November 15, 2021. No responses have been received to date. Correspondence related to the NAHC letters and Tribal representatives can be found in Appendix D.

Cultural Resources

Would the project:

a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as pursuant to Section 15064.5?

Less than significant impact with mitigation incorporated. A substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource is defined at Section 15064.5(b)(1) of the CEQA Guidelines as the "physical demolition, destruction, relocation, or alteration of the resource or its immediate surroundings such that the significance of a historical resource would be materially impaired." Known historic structures are located throughout the Specific Plan Area as described in the preceding sections.

While development consistent with the proposed project would reduce the total amount of the development in the Specific Plan Area compared to what was contemplated by the General Plan, development under the proposed project would result in additional residential and nonresidential development throughout the Specific Plan Area that could have significant environmental impacts related to historic resources. Therefore, subsequent development under the proposed project could affect known historic resources or previously unidentified or undesignated resources, creating a potentially significant impact.

General Plan includes policies intended to conserve and reduce impacts to historical resources. For example, Policy HCR-2-g requires that the City review all demolition permits to determine whether buildings scheduled for demolition are potentially eligible for listing on the Local Register of Historic Resources and refer potentially eligible resources to the Historic Preservation Commission. The proposed project would also be required to comply with the City's Historic Preservation Ordinance, which is incorporated as Article 16 in the City's Municipal Code.

As the City receives development applications for subsequent development under the proposed project, those applications will be reviewed by the City for compliance with the objectives and policies in the General Plan and the Specific Plan related to the protection of historical resources. The City's Municipal Code and Zoning Ordinance, which implement the City's General Plan, would be reviewed when development applications are received.

Therefore, compliance with General Plan policies would ensure that future development projects are appropriately reviewed in terms of potential impacts to historic resources. Furthermore, the proposed project would implement MM CUL-1, which would ensure that future development projects are appropriately reviewed in terms of potential impacts to historic resources. Thus, implementation of MM CUL-1 would reduce impacts to a less than significant level.

b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to Section 15064.5?

Less than significant with mitigation incorporated. Based on a review of information available at the SSJVIC, portions of the Specific Plan Area have been previously surveyed for archaeological resources.

While no known archaeological resource sites have been recorded within the Specific Plan Area, archaeological sites have been recorded within 0.5-mile and the possibility exists that additional undiscovered archaeological sites could be present within the Specific Plan Area.

While development consistent with the proposed project would reduce the total amount of the development in the Specific Plan Area compared to what was completed by the General Plan, construction activities within previously undisturbed soils could result in a significant impact to unknown archaeological resources.

The potential for additional archaeological sites to be present within the Specific Plan Area exists but varies by location. Prehistoric habitation sites tend to be situated in proximity to creeks and other areas with a reliable water supply. Task-specific sites or resource procurement sites can be situated in almost any environment conducive to human activity. Buried prehistoric archaeological sites tend to be found on Holocene-era landforms, particularly alluvial fans, floodplains, and areas along rivers and streams. There are no naturally occurring rivers and streams within the Specific Plan Area. The proposed project would also be required to comply with the City's Historic Preservation Ordinance, which is incorporated as Article 16 in the City's Municipal Code.

As the City receives development applications for subsequent development under the proposed project, those applications would be reviewed by the City for compliance with General Plan Policies as well as the regulations of the Historic Preservation Ordinance related to archaeological resources. In particular, proposed new developments in the Specific Plan Area would be required to conduct an updated records search with the SSJVIC to determine the archaeological sensitivity of the site, as well as be referred to the NAHC and local Native American Tribes. If required, an archaeological survey of the site would be conducted and/or accidental discovery procedures for archaeological resources would be required.

In conclusion, development envisioned by the proposed project could affect known or previously unidentified archaeological resources within the Specific Plan Area, creating a potentially significant impact. However, compliance with General Plan policies, as well as the regulations of the Historic Preservation Ordinance, would ensure that future development projects are appropriately reviewed and designed in terms of potential impacts to archaeological resources. Furthermore, the proposed project would implement MM CUL-2, which would ensure that future development projects are appropriately reviewed and designed in terms of potential impacts to archaeological resources. Future individual development projects would be required to undergo project-specific environmental review, which may require additional site-specific or project-specific measures to reduce any potential impacts and would ensure that impacts remain less than significant.

c) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?

Less than significant with mitigation incorporated. While development consistent with the proposed project would reduce the total amount of the development in the Specific Plan Area compared to what was completed by the General Plan, there is always a possibility that ground-disturbing activities associated with future development may uncover previously unknown buried human remains that may not be marked in formal burial locations. Therefore, as future individual development and

infrastructure projects are reviewed by the City, each project would be evaluated for conformance with the General Plan, the Historic Preservation Ordinance, and other applicable State regulations.

Public Resources Code Section 5097 has specific stop-work and notification procedures to follow when Native American human remains are inadvertently discovered during excavation and construction activities. Section 7050.5 of the California Health and Safety Code sets forth provisions related to the treatment of human remains, including the treatment of human remains found in locations other than a dedicated cemetery and the responsibilities of the Coroner. These requirements apply to all construction projects within the Specific Plan Area.

It is always possible that subsurface construction activities associated with future developments under the proposed project, such as trenching and grading, could potentially damage or destroy previously undiscovered human remains, creating a potentially significant impact. Compliance with adopted State, federal, and local regulations for the protection of archaeological resources and human remains, would ensure that future development under the proposed project would not result in significant adverse effects to human remains. Future development under the proposed project would implement MM CUL-3. MM CUL-3 would require construction to halt in the event that human remains are uncovered during construction activities and that the County Coroner be notified. If the remains are determined to be those of Native American descent, the NAHC shall be notified, and the landowner will take appropriate steps to prevent further disturbance or damage to the remains until the landowner has discussed and conferred with the most likely descendants regarding their recommendations, if applicable. Implementation of this mitigation measure would reduce impacts to a less than significant level.

Tribal Cultural Resources

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:

d) 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).

Less than significant with mitigation incorporated. Grading and construction activities within previously undisturbed soils within the Specific Plan Area could result in a significant impact to unknown Native American artifacts and human remains.

On October 6, 2021, a letter was sent to the NAHC to determine whether any sacred sites are listed on its Sacred Lands File for the Specific Plan Area. A response was received on November 14, 2021, indicating the search returned negative results for TCRs in the Specific Plan Area (Appendix D). Additionally, in accordance with requirements promulgated by SB 18 and AB 52, the City sent

notifications to Tribal representatives from the Amah Mutsun Tribal Band, Kitanemuk & Yowlumne Tejon Indians, North Fork Rancheria of Mono Indians, Northern Valley Yokut/Ohlone Tribe, Picayune Rancheria of the Chukchansi Indians, Southern Sierra Miwuk Nation, Table Mountain Rancheria, Traditional Choinumni Tribe, Tule River Indian Tribe, and Wuksachi Indian Tribe/Eshom Valley Band on July 7, 2025. One letter was received on July 31, 2025, from the Table Mountain Rancheria requesting more project information, which was provided. No further inquiries were made, and no consultation was requested. However, it is always possible that subsurface excavation activities may encounter previously undiscovered TCRs that may meet the eligibility requirements for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources. Therefore, any unidentified TCRs could be adversely affected by development under the proposed project and create a potentially significant impact.

While the proposed project does not directly propose any adverse changes to any recorded TCRs, future development allowed under the proposed project could affect known or previously unidentified TCRs. In addition, the potential for additional undiscovered eligible TCRs to be present within the Specific Plan Area exists but varies by location.

The General Plan includes policies intended to conserve and reduce impacts to TCRs. Policy HCR-2-d requires that the City works with local Native American Tribes to protect recorded and unrecorded cultural and sacred sites, as required by State law. The proposed project would also be required to comply with the City's Historic Preservation Ordinance, which is incorporated as Article 16 in the City's Municipal Code.

By adhering to the policies and actions in the General Plan and the City's Historic Preservation Ordinance, the provisions under State and federal law, and implementing MM CUL-1, MM CUL-2, and MM CUL-3, potential impacts to existing or undiscovered eligible TCRs within the Specific Plan Area would be reduced to less than significant.

e) 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.

Less than significant with mitigation incorporated. As stated above, grading and construction activities within previously undisturbed soils within the City could result in a significant impact to unknown Native American artifacts and human remains.

On October 6, 2021, a letter was sent to the NAHC to determine whether any sacred sites are listed on its Sacred Lands File for the Specific Plan Area. A response was received on November 14, 2021, indicating the search returned negative results for TCRs in the Specific Plan Area, and recommended contacting Tribal representatives from 12 Tribes for additional information. A letter containing project information was sent by FCS to each Tribal representative on November 15, 2021. No responses have been received to date (Appendix D).

Additionally, in accordance with requirements promulgated by SB 18 and AB 52, the City sent notifications to Tribal representatives from the Amah Mutsun Tribal Band, Kitanemuk & Yowlumne Tejon Indians, North Fork Rancheria of Mono Indians, Northern Valley Yokut/Ohlone Tribe, Picayune Rancheria of the Chukchansi Indians, Southern Sierra Miwuk Nation, Table Mountain Rancheria, Traditional Choinumni Tribe, Tule River Indian Tribe, and Wuksachi Indian Tribe/Eshom Valley Band on July 7, 2025. One letter was received on July 31, 2025, from the Table Mountain Rancheria requesting more project information, which was provided. No further inquiries were made, and no consultation was requested.

At this time, the City, in its capacity as Lead Agency, has not identified any TCRs meeting the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1 that would be adversely impacted by the proposed project. Nonetheless, as described under Impact 2.5(d) future development allowed under the proposed project could affect previously unidentified TCRs.

As discussed under Impact 2.5(d), the General Plan includes policies to conserve and reduce impacts to TCRs, such as Policy HCR-2-d. By adhering to the policies in the General Plan, the provisions under State and federal law, as well as implementing MM CUL-1, MM CUL-2, and MM CUL-3, potential impacts to existing or undiscovered eligible TCRs within the Specific Plan Area would be reduced to less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

MM CUL-1 Individual development projects which proposed to alter a building or structure greater than 45 years of age at the time an application is submitted would be required to undergo project-specific environmental review, in compliance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5, in order for the City to determine whether the building or structure may be a historic resource and take appropriate action such as requiring additional site-specific or project-specific measures to reduce any potential impacts. These measures include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Prior to project development that may affect historical resources (i.e., structures 45 years or older), a historical resources assessment shall be performed by an architectural historian or historian who meets the Secretary of the Interior's Professionally Qualified Standards in architectural history or history. This shall include a records search to determine whether any resources that may be potentially affected by the project have been previously recorded, evaluated, and/or designated in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR), or a local register. Following the records search, the qualified architectural historian shall conduct a survey in accordance with the California Office of Historic Preservation (OHP) guidelines to identify any previously unrecorded potential historical resources that may be potentially affected by the project. The criteria for determining a historically significant building or structure shall meet one or more of the following criteria:
  - Is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of local, regional, or national history; or

  - Is associated with the lives of persons significant in local, regional, or national history; or
  - Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a significant architectural style, property type, period, or method of construction; represent the work of an architect, designer, engineer, or builder who is locally, regionally, nationally significant, or it is a significant visual feature of the City; possess high artistic values, represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or
  - That have yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.
- Properties identified as historically significant resources, shall contain proper documentation meeting the Historic American Building Survey (HABS) Guidelines that shall be prepared and implemented, as approved by the qualified Historian meeting the Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualifications Standards. Such documentation shall include drawings, photographs, and written data for each building/structure/element, and provide a detailed mitigation plan, including a monitoring program, recovery, rehabilitation, redesign, relocation, and/or in situ preservation plan.
- To ensure that projects requiring the relocation, rehabilitation, or alternation of a historical resource do not impact the resource's significance, the Secretary of Interior's Standards for the Treatments of Historic Properties shall be used to the maximum extent possible. The application of the standards shall be overseen by a qualified Architectural Historian or Historic Architect meeting the Professional Qualified Standards. Prior to any construction activities that may affect the historical resource, a report identifying and specifying the treatment of character-defining features and construction activities shall be provided to the City of Fresno for review and approval.

If a future discretionary project would result in the demolition or significant alteration of historical resource, such demolition cannot be mitigated to a less than significant level. However, recordation of the resource prior to construction activities will assist in reducing adverse impacts to the resource to the greatest extent possible. Recordation shall take the form of Historic American Buildings Survey, Historic American Engineering Record, or Historic American Landscape Survey documentation and shall be performed by an Architectural Historian or Historian who meets the Professional Qualified Standards. Documentation shall include an architectural and historical narrative; medium- or large-format black and white photographs, negatives, and prints; and supplementary information such as building plans and elevations, and/or historical photographs. Documentation shall be reproduced on archival paper and placed in appropriate local, State, or federal institutions. The specific scope and details of documentation are to be developed in coordination with the City of Fresno.

MM CUL-2 To determine the archaeological sensitivity for individual development projects within the City, an archaeological resources assessment shall be performed under the

supervision of an Archaeologist that meets the Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualified Standards for their role. The assessment shall include a California Historical Resources Information System (CHRIS) records search at the Southern San Joaquin Valley Information Center (SSJVIC) and a search of the Sacred Lands File (SLF) maintained by the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC). The records searches shall determine if the project has been previously surveyed for archaeological resources, identify and characterize the results of previous cultural resource surveys, and disclose any cultural resources that have been recorded and/or evaluated. A Phase I pedestrian survey shall be undertaken in areas that are developed and undeveloped to locate any surface cultural materials.

- If potentially significant archaeological resources are identified through an archaeological resources assessment, and impacts to these resources cannot be avoided, a Phase II Testing and Evaluation investigation shall be performed by an Archaeologist who meets the Secretary of the Interior's Standards prior to any construction-related ground-disturbing activities to determine significance. If resources determined significant or unique through Phase II testing, and site avoidance is not possible, appropriate site-specific mitigation measures shall be established and undertaken. These might include a Phase III data recovery program that would be implemented by a qualified Archaeologist and shall be performed in accordance with the Office of Historic Preservation's (OHP) Archaeological Resource Management Reports (ARMR). The Archaeologist must prepare an archaeological data recovery plan to be reviewed and approved by the Lead Agency prior to the excavation of resources.
- If the archaeological assessment did not identify potentially significant archaeological resources within the project area but indicated the area to be highly sensitive for archaeological resources, this shall be followed by monitoring of all ground-disturbing construction and pre-construction activities in areas with previously undisturbed soil by a qualified Archaeologist. The Archaeologist shall inform all construction personnel prior to construction activities of the proper procedures in the event of an archaeological discovery. The training shall be held in conjunction with the project's initial on-site safety meeting and shall explain the importance and legal basis for the protection of significant archaeological resources. In the event that archaeological resources (artifacts or features) are exposed during ground-disturbing activities, construction activities within 100 feet of the discovery shall be halted while the resources are evaluated for significance by an Archaeologist who meets the Secretary of the Interior's Standards. If the discovery proves to be significant, the qualified Archaeologist shall make recommendations to the Lead Agency (City of Fresno) on 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 Section 15064.5 of the CEQA Guidelines.
- If the archaeological assessment did not identify potentially significant archaeological resources but indicates the area to be of medium sensitivity for

archaeological resources, an Archaeologist who meets the Professional Qualified Standards shall be retained on an on-call basis. The Archaeologist shall inform all construction personnel prior to construction activities about the proper procedures in the event of an archaeological discovery. The training shall be held in conjunction with the project's initial on-site safety meeting and shall explain the importance and legal basis for the protection of significant archaeological resources. In the event that archaeological resources (artifacts or features) are exposed during ground-disturbing activities, construction activities within 100 feet of the discovery shall be halted while the on-call Archaeologist is contacted. If the discovery proves to be significant, the qualified Archaeologist shall make recommendations to the Lead Agency (City of Fresno) on 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 Section 15064.5 of the CEQA Guidelines.

- Potentially significant cultural resources consist of, but are not limited to, stone, bone, fossils, wood, or shell artifacts or features, including hearths, structural remains, or historic dumpsites. Any previously undiscovered resources found during construction within the project site should be recorded on appropriate California Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) 523 forms and evaluated for significance in terms of CEQA Guidelines. Appropriate mitigation measures for significant resources could include avoidance or capping, incorporation of the site in green space, parks, or open space, or data recovery excavations of the finds. No further grading shall occur in the area of the discovery until the Lead Agency (City of Fresno) approves the measures to protect these resources. The excavation, study, curation, and/or repatriation of archaeological artifacts recovered as a result of mitigation shall be undertaken in close consultation with the lead agency (City of Fresno) and representatives from consulting Native American Tribes, as appropriate. All Reports and DPR forms shall be submitted to the Lead Agency (City of Fresno), the Southern San Joaquin Valley Information Center (SSJVIC), and the California Office of Historic Preservation (OHP), as required.

MM CUL-3 In the event of the accidental discovery or recognition of any human remains, CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5; Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5; Public Resources Code Section 5097.94 and Section 5097.98 must be followed. If during the course of any future development project there is accidental discovery or recognition of any human remains, 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 appropriate treatment and disposition of, with appropriate dignity, the human remains and any associated grave goods as provided in Public Resources Code Section 5097.98.

2. Where 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 a MLD or the MLD failed to make a recommendation within 48 hours after being notified by the commission.
   - The descendant identified fails to make a recommendation.
   - The landowner or his authorized representative rejects the recommendation of the descendant, 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 site, a lead agency shall work with the appropriate Native Americans as identified by the NAHC as provided in Public Resources Code Section 5097.98. The applicant 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.

Environmental Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
2.6 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?	☐	☒	☐	☐
b) Conflict with or obstruct a State or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Environmental Evaluation

Introduction

As noted in the Project Description, the land use designations of the Specific Plan are consistent with the General Plan buildout assumptions; however, this Specific Plan proposes changing the land use designation for some of the Specific Plan Area's parcels, which would require the General Plan Land Use map to be amended. These proposed land use designation changes would reduce the total amount of development compared to what was contemplated by the General Plan for the Specific Plan Area.

Environmental Setting

End-use electricity and gas customers in Fresno County (County) are served solely by Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E) to meet electrical power and natural gas demands. As of 2021, PG&E's electric power mix contains 48 percent electricity generated from renewable sources.[21]

The smallest scale at which electricity consumption information is readily available is the County level. Therefore, electricity consumption in Fresno County is used herein to generally characterize the City's existing electricity consumption. Fresno County includes several incorporated cities and a large unincorporated area. According to the California Energy Commission (CEC), Fresno County consumed approximately 7,444.9 gigawatt-hours (GWh) in 2019.[22] Note that year 2019 was used over reporting year 2020 to present a pre-COVID-19 pandemic level of energy usage. Similarly, the smallest scale at which natural gas consumption information is readily available is at the County level; therefore, natural gas consumption in the County is used herein to also characterize the City's existing natural gas consumption. According to the CEC, Fresno County consumed approximately 352.2 million U.S. therms

[21] Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E). 2022. Corporate Sustainability Report, Executive Summary. Website: https://www.pgecorp.com/corp_responsibility/reports/2022/assets/PGE_CSR_2022_Executive_Summary.pdf. Accessed September 12, 2022.

[22] California Energy Commission (CEC). 2020. "Electricity Consumption by County." Website: https://ecdms.energy.ca.gov/elecbycounty.aspx. Accessed September 12, 2022.

of natural gas in 2019, or approximately 35,220 billion BTU.[23] As with electricity consumption, the year 2019 was used over reporting year 2020 to present a pre-COVID-19 pandemic level of natural gas usage.

The Specific Plan Area is in an urbanized area, located just to the east and southeast of Downtown Fresno, and is characterized by a blend of older single-family and multi-family housing developments, industrial facilities, public facilities, vacant land, and commercial areas. Existing development within the Specific Plan Area currently uses electricity and natural gas from existing utilities, as well as generate vehicle trips and subsequent fuel use.

Energy-Related Regulations

Federal and State agencies regulate energy use and consumption through various means and programs. At the federal level, the United States Department of Transportation (USDOT), the United States Department of Energy, and the EPA are three federal agencies with substantial influence over energy policies and programs. Generally, federal agencies influence and regulate transportation energy consumption through establishment and enforcement of fuel economy standards for automobiles and light trucks, through funding of energy-related research and development projects, and through funding for transportation infrastructure improvements. At the State level, the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) and the CEC are two agencies with authority over different aspects of energy. The CPUC regulates privately owned utilities in the energy, rail, telecommunications, and water fields. The CEC collects and analyzes energy-related data, prepares statewide energy policy recommendations and plans, promotes and funds energy efficiency programs, and adopts and enforces appliance and building energy efficiency standards. California is exempt under federal law from setting State fuel economy standards for new on-road motor vehicles. Some of the more relevant federal and State energy-related laws and plans are discussed below.

Federal Energy Independence and Security Act, Corporate Average Fuel Efficiency Standards

In response to *Massachusetts et al. vs. Environmental Protection Agency et al.*, the Bush Administration issued an Executive Order on May 14, 2007, directing the EPA and USDOT to establish regulations that reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from motor vehicles, nonroad vehicles, and nonroad engines by 2008. On December 19, 2007, the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007 was signed into law, requiring an increased Corporate Average Fuel Economy (CAFE) standard of 35 miles per gallon (mpg) for the combined fleet of cars and light trucks by the 2020 model year.

In addition to setting increased CAFE standards for motor vehicles, the Energy Independence and Security Act (EISA) includes the following additional provisions:

- Renewable Fuel Standard (Section 202)
- Appliance and Lighting Efficiency Standards (Sections 301–325)
- Building Energy Efficiency (Sections 411–441)

[23] California Energy Commission (CEC). 2020. Gas Consumption by County. Website: https://ecdms.energy.ca.gov/gasbycounty.aspx. Accessed September 12, 2022.

Additional provisions of the EISA address energy savings in government and public institutions, promoting research for alternative energy, additional research in carbon capture, international energy programs, and the creation of green jobs.

California Building Energy Efficiency Standards, Title 24 and California Green Building Standards Code

The California Building Energy Efficiency Standards, Title 24, Part 6 provides efficiency standards for residential and nonresidential buildings under the California Green Building Standards Code (CALGreen). The standards are updated periodically to allow for incorporation of new energy-efficient technologies and methods. The existing 2016 California Building Energy Efficiency Standards, Title 24 (2016 California Standards) became effective on January 1, 2017. The 2019 California Building Energy Efficiency Standards (2019 California Energy Code) went into effect on January 1, 2020, and are applicable to building permit applications submitted on or after that date. The 2019 California Energy Code requires solar photovoltaic systems for new homes, establishes requirements for newly constructed healthcare facilities, encourages demand responsive technologies for residential buildings, and updates indoor and outdoor lighting for nonresidential buildings.

The CEC anticipates that single-family homes built with the 2019 California Energy Code will use approximately 7 percent less energy compared to the residential homes built under the 2016 California Standards. Additionally, after implementation of solar photovoltaic systems, homes built under the 2019 California Energy Code will consume about 53 percent less energy than homes built under the 2016 California Standards. Nonresidential buildings will use consume approximately 30 percent less energy due to lighting upgrades.

California Assembly Bill 1007 (Pavley, Chapter 371, Statutes of 2005)

Assembly Bill (AB) 1007 required the CEC to prepare a State plan (State Alternative Fuels Plan) to increase the use of alternative fuels in California. To comply with this requirement, the CEC prepared the State Alternative Fuels Plan in partnership with the ARB and in consultation with other State, federal, and local agencies. The final State Alternative Fuels Plan, published in December 2007, attempts to achieve an 80 percent reduction in GHG emissions associated with personal transportation, even as California's population increases.

California Code of Regulations Title 13, Motor Vehicles, Section 2449(d)(2)

No vehicle or engines subject to this regulation may idle for more than 5 consecutive minutes. The idling limit does not apply to:

- idling when queueing,
- idling to verify that the vehicle is in safe operating condition,
- idling for testing, servicing, repairing or diagnostic purposes,
- idling necessary to accomplish work for which the vehicle was designed (such as operating a crane),
- idling required to bring the machine system to operating temperature, and
- idling necessary to ensure safe operation of the vehicle.

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?

Less than significant with mitigation incorporated. While overall the proposed project includes less development than contemplated in the General Plan, the proposed project does include the reclassification of land use designations of some parcels within the Specific Plan Area to accommodate residential development and higher intensity mixed-use infill along priority corridors. Future development under the proposed project would consume energy throughout the construction and operation of such new development, in addition to energy consumption associated with existing development in the Specific Plan Area. Energy would be required during construction for the transportation of building materials, manufacturing of building materials, and the actual construction of buildings and infrastructure. During the operation, energy would be associated with building heating and cooling, use of consumer products, lighting, and vehicular traffic. Thus, future development under the proposed project would result in additional electricity and natural gas use. However, the General Plan includes policies and programs to ensure that new development is constructed and operated in a manner that uses fuel and energy in an efficient manner.

Furthermore, the electricity provider, PG&E, is subject to California Renewables Portfolio Standard (RPS). The RPS requires investor-owned utilities, electric service providers, and community choice aggregators to increase procurement from eligible renewable energy resources to 33 percent of total procurement by 2020 and to 50 percent of total procurement by 2030. Renewable energy is generally defined as energy that comes from resources, which are naturally replenished within a human timescale such as sunlight, wind, tides, waves, and geothermal heat. The proposed project would be served with electricity provided by PG&E. Given PG&E's power mix,[24] the increase in reliance on such energy resources further ensures the proposed project would not result in the waste of the finite energy resources. Finally, in addition to compliance with applicable federal, State, and local standards regarding energy consumption, future development within the Specific Plan Area would be required to assess the potential energy impacts on a project-specific basis.

Construction Energy Usage

During construction, the proposed project would result in energy consumption through the combustion of fossil fuels in construction vehicles, worker commute vehicles, and construction equipment and the use of electricity for temporary buildings, lighting, and other sources. It is not anticipated that natural gas would be consumed as part of project construction. Fossil fuels used for construction vehicles and other energy-consuming equipment would be used during site clearing, grading, paving, and building construction. The types of equipment could include gasoline- and diesel-powered construction and transportation equipment, including trucks, bulldozers, frontend loaders, forklifts, and cranes. Limitations on idling of vehicles and equipment and requirements that equipment be properly maintained would result in fuel savings. California Code of Regulations, Title 13, Sections

[24] Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E). 2018. Where your electricity comes from. Website: https://www.pge.com/pge_global/common/pdfs/your-account/your-bill/understand-your-bill/bill-inserts/2018/10-18_PowerContent.pdf. Accessed September 9, 2022.

2449 and 2485, limit idling from both on-road and off-road diesel-powered equipment and are enforced by the ARB. Additionally, given the cost of fuel, contractors and owners have a strong financial incentive to avoid wasteful, inefficient, and unnecessary consumption of energy during construction.

Other equipment could include construction lighting, field services (office trailers), and electrically driven equipment such as pumps and other tools. Because of the temporary nature of construction and the financial incentives for developers and contractors to use energy-consuming resources in an efficient manner, the construction phase of the proposed project would not result in wasteful, inefficient, and unnecessary consumption of energy.

Furthermore, as required by the Municipal Code, Chapter 11, Article 1, SEC. 11-108 and SEC. 11-109, new development would be subject to energy conservation requirements in the California Energy Code (Title 24, Part 6, of the California Code of Regulations, California's Energy Efficiency Standards for Residential and Nonresidential Buildings) and CALGreen (CCR Title 24, Part 11). Based on standards for new construction established by the State and adherence to the development standards in the Municipal Code, activities associated with implementation of the proposed project would not result in wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy. Pursuant to the Municipal Code, the City would review development proposals prior to the approval of development plans to ensure that sufficient energy resources and facilities are available and that the development complies with energy conservation and efficiency standards of Title 24 and the Municipal Code. Additionally, implementation of the proposed project's policies would help to minimize the effects of growth and development on energy resources. Therefore, implementation of the proposed project would have a less than significant impact under this criterion.

Operation Energy Usage

Operation of future developments envisioned as a part of the proposed project would consume natural gas and electricity for building heating and power, lighting, and water conveyance, among other operational requirements.

Future development projects would be designed and constructed in accordance with the City's latest adopted energy efficiency standards, which are based on the California Title 24 energy efficiency standards. Title 24 standards include a broad set of energy conservation requirements that apply to the structural, mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems in a building. For example, the Title 24 Lighting Power Density requirements define the maximum wattage of lighting that can be used in a building based on its square footage. Title 24 additionally requires new low-rise residential developments to include rooftop solar systems meeting a minimum system capacity consistent with calculations contained in Title 24, Part 6, Subchapter 8. Title 24 standards, widely regarded as the most advanced energy efficiency standards, would help to reduce the amount of energy required for lighting, water heating, and heating and air conditioning in buildings and promote energy conservation. Additionally, implementation of the General Plan and the proposed project's policies would help to minimize the effects of growth and development on energy resources. The plans and policies in the General Plan as well as the Specific Plan encourage alternative transit options through the creation of bicycle and pedestrian paths to improve the bikeability and walkability in the Plan Area.

Additionally, the General Plan includes numerous policies and implementation programs focused on improving the sustainability of the City, including reducing the consumption of non-renewable energy resources by requiring and encouraging conservation measures and the use of alternative energy sources (Policies RC-8-a through RC-8-k) and incentives for affordable housing providers, agencies, and non-profit and market rate developers to use Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED®) and CALGreen Tier 1 or Tier 2 standards or third party equivalents (Policy HC-3-d). Moreover, the energy efficiency of buildings is expected to continue to increase and improve throughout the life of the project as new energy efficiency standards are established. Similarly, the proposed project includes Policy RC-1.4, which includes Energy Conservation Strategies and incentives for residential projects.

Plans submitted for building permits of development projects in the Specific Plan Area would be required to include verification demonstrating compliance with the Building and Energy Efficiency Standards for Residential and Non-Residential Buildings in effect at the time building permits are issued. These standards are updated every 3 years, with the latest update (2022) having gone into effect on January 1, 2023. The proposed project would also be required to adhere to the provisions of CALGreen, which established planning and design standards for sustainable site development, energy efficiency (beyond the California Energy Code requirements), water conservation, material conservation, and internal air contaminants. Additionally, because developments that would be considered under the proposed project have not been designed or proposed at this time, potential improvements to the current energy and natural gas facilities would be identified at the time such projects are considered. Therefore, with adherence to Title 24 regulations and the objectives and policies included in the approved General Plan and the proposed Specific Plan, the proposed project would not result in potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources during project construction or operation.

Furthermore, implementation of MM AIR-1b, MM AIR-1c, and MM AIR-1d would reduce fuel and energy usage from the proposed project by requiring the use of more efficient and cleaner-burning equipment during construction and/or operation of future development projects constructed within the Specific Plan Area. Implementation of these mitigation measures would further reduce the potential energy impacts of the proposed project.

Transportation Energy Usage

In addition to increasing demand for electricity and natural gas from the construction and operation of future development under the proposed project, increased energy use would also result from project-related trips. As the Specific Plan is a long-range planning project, forecasting future energy use related to travel for specific projects is speculative. Rather, the more appropriate measure of estimating energy use is to consider the VMT associated with the proposed project. A VMT analysis was conducted on August 16, 2022 for the proposed project by LSA (Appendix E). Because the proposed project is a Specific Plan, it qualifies as a land use plan, and therefore, the proposed project's VMT analysis was prepared using the criteria set forth in the City's 2020 VMT Guidelines for land use plans. VMT Metrics for the entire Specific Plan Area were estimated both with and without the proposed land use changes. The analysis concluded that for both per capita and per employee VMT, the proposed project would have lower VMT as compared to the no-project scenario within the entire Specific Plan Area. With the continued implementation of the approved General Plan, in 2035 the City

VMT per capita (16.5 miles) is forecast to be 17 percent less than the County VMT per capita (19.9 miles). The City's threshold for potential VMT impacts is 13 percent less than the County's existing average VMT. Corresponding numbers for VMT per employee indicate that the City average is forecast to be 13 percent lower than the approved General Plan (2035) County average. Additionally, development consistent with the proposed project would reduce the total amount of the development in the Specific Plan Area compared to what was completed by the General Plan. Moreover, the fuel efficiency of vehicles is expected to continue to increase and improve throughout the life of the project as new fuel economy standards are established. Lastly, the impact of future development projects on transportation energy demand would be assessed for specific projects. Therefore, the proposed project would have a less than significant impact transportation energy demands.

b) Conflict with or obstruct a State or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency?

Less than significant impact. The proposed project would be subject to all relevant provisions of the most recent update of CALGreen, including the current California Standards, which would ensure that the project would consume energy efficiently through the incorporation of energy-efficient features, such as door and window interlocks, direct digital controls for heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) systems, and high-efficiency outdoor lighting. Furthermore, compliance with CALGreen in connection with the goals and policies set forth in the General Plan would ensure that the building energy use associated with the project would not be wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary.

In addition, PG&E would supply electricity and natural gas to the project, and as per PG&E compliance with the State's RPS, a portion of the energy consumed during project operations would originate from renewable sources. Therefore, the project would not conflict with or obstruct a State or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency and impacts would be less than significant.

Construction

As previously discussed, the proposed project would result in energy consumption through the combustion of fossil fuels in construction vehicles, worker commute vehicles, construction equipment and through the use of electricity for temporary buildings, lighting, and other sources. California Code of Regulations Title 13, Sections 2449 and 2485, limit idling from both on-road and off-road diesel-powered equipment and are enforced by the ARB. Future development under the proposed project would comply with these regulations. There are no policies at the local level applicable to energy conservation specific to the construction phase; thus, it is anticipated that implementation of the proposed project would not conflict with any applicable plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing energy use or increasing the use of renewable energy. Therefore, construction-related energy efficiency and renewable energy standards consistency impacts would be less than significant.

Operation

The General Plan aims to promote mixed-use development and encourage alternative modes of transportation to reduce vehicle trip lengths and reliance on the automobile, which in turn would reduce the transportation energy demand in the Specific Plan Area. The General Plan also encourages

development of housing near employment and transportation, which supports reductions in per capita VMT. Implementation of the policies in the General Plan, as well as the guiding principles and policies included in the proposed project, would also promote land use patterns that would improve walking and bicycling facilities to be more prominent, comfortable, and safe throughout the City. Compliance with the policies included in the General Plan, including Policy RC-8-j, would support the development of a network of integrated charging and alternate fuel station for both public and private vehicles that would also serve to reduce the overall transportation energy demand. The proposed project includes policies to promote the use of sustainable design features and renewable energy sources and to promote energy efficiency, conservation, and waste reduction measures.

As discussed above, California's RPS requires that 33 percent of electricity retail sales be served by renewable energy sources by 2020. The proposed project would be served with electricity provided by PG&E. A total of 48 percent of PG&E's delivered electricity comes from renewable sources, including solar, wind, geothermal, small hydroelectric and various forms of bioenergy. PG&E reached California's 2020 renewable energy goal in 2017 and is positioned to meet the State's 60 percent by 2030 renewable energy mandate set forth in Senate Bill (SB) 100.[25]

The State's Title 24 energy efficiency standards establish mandatory measures for residential buildings, including material conservation and resource efficiency. Development consistent with the proposed project would be required to comply with these mandatory measures. The proposed project would also comply with the California Building Standards Code (CBC) requiring proposed low-rise residential buildings to include rooftop solar systems. In addition, per the CBC, the proposed buildings would be required to provide wiring that would allow installation of electric vehicle (EV) charging equipment in any private garages or carports. Mandatory compliance with the applicable provisions of CALGreen would ensure that development consistent with the proposed project uses energy efficiently.

Compliance with the above measures would ensure that development consistent with the proposed project would not conflict with any applicable plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing energy use or increasing the use of renewable energy. Therefore, operational energy efficiency and renewable energy standards consistency impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

Implement MM AIR-1b, MM AIR-1c, and MM AIR-1d.

[25] Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E). 2022. Renewable Energy and Storage web page. Website: https://www.pgecorp.com/corp_responsibility/reports/2022/pf03_renewable_energy_storage.html. Accessed December 15, 2022.

Environmental Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
2.7 Geology, Seismicity, 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.	☐	☒	☐	☐
ii) Strong seismic ground shaking?	☐	☐	☒	☐
iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?	☐	☒	☐	☐
iv) Landslides?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?	☐	☐	☒	☐
c) Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse?	☐	☒	☐	☐
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?	☐	☒	☐	☐
e) Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of wastewater?	☐	☐	☐	☒
f) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?	☐	☒	☐	☐

Environmental Evaluation

Introduction

As noted in the Project Description, the land use designations of the Specific Plan are consistent with the General Plan buildout assumptions; however, this Specific Plan proposes changing the land use designation for some of the Specific Plan Area's parcels, which would require the General Plan Land Use map to be amended. These proposed land use designation changes would reduce the total

amount of development compared to what was contemplated by the General Plan for the Specific Plan Area.

Environmental Setting

According to the General Plan, the City does not lie within a known active Earthquake Fault Zone. Although a number of faults are located within the Sierra Nevada Mountain Range to the east of the Specific Plan Area, none are considered active. Numerous active faults are present within the central Coast Ranges west of the Specific Plan Area including the San Andreas Fault located approximately 68 miles west of the area. There is an active fault approximately 78 miles east of the Specific Plan Area near the census-designated place of Independence, California along the Fresno County-Inyo County border. The Great Valley Fault Zone also represents a source of seismotectonic forces. The Great Valley Fault Zone exists at the boundary of the Coastal Range and the Central Valley, approximately 40 miles west of the Specific Plan Area.[26] Overall, seismic-related concerns (including liquefaction and subsidence) are considered fairly minor within the City. The City is not located in an Alquist-Priolo Special Fault Study Zone, that is, it has not been identified as a zone of special study around active faults. Hidden faulting in western Fresno County did manifest itself in the Coalinga Earthquake of 1983, causing ground shaking in Fresno, but resulted in minimal damage. Ground shaking represents the principal potential earthquake hazard for the City, which could cause damage to buildings and infrastructure. However, the distance between the City and major faults minimizes this potential hazard.[27] Surface faulting is absent within the Specific Plan Area and the majority of the area is relatively flat. The general soil profile within the City consists predominately of silty sands, sandy silts, clayey sands, sandy clayey silts, and sands.

The State has established minimum standards for building design through the CBC, which contain specific requirements for seismic safety, excavation, foundations, retaining walls, and site demolition. The American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) has also published standards for minimum design loads for buildings in the 2010 ASCE-7 standards. The CBC also contains standards for grading activities, including drainage and erosion control (Chapter 18, Appendix J).

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.

Less than significant impact with mitigation incorporated. Historically, ground surface displacements closely follow the trace of geologically young faults. As previously described, the Specific Plan Area is

[26] United States Geological Service (USGS). 2022. Evidence of Active Quaternary Deformation on the Great Valley Fault System Near Winters, Northern California. Website: https://www.usgs.gov/publications/evidence-active-quaternary-deformation-great-valley-fault-system-near-winters-northern. Accessed January 21, 2025.

[27] City of Fresno. 2014. City of Fresno General Plan, Noise and Safety. December.

not within an Earthquake Fault Zone as defined by the Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Act, and no known active or potentially active faults occur within the Specific Plan Area. All active faults in the surrounding vicinity of the Specific Plan Area are located over 30 miles in any direction. The nearest source of seismotectonic forces is the Great Valley Fault Zone, approximately 40 miles west of the Plan Area. The Great Valley Fault Zone has the potential to produce a 6.1 moment magnitude earthquake. However, due to distance, the potential impact is relatively low. Further, future development under the proposed project would comply with the 2022 CBC, which contains seismic safety requirements. Lastly, the proposed project would implement MM GEO-1a, which requires future development to conduct a field survey and literature review, and project-specific MM GEO-1b, which would require future development under the proposed project to conduct a design-level geotechnical study and incorporate all construction-related recommendations to address site-specific conditions, which would reduce potential impacts to less than significant. Therefore, the proposed project would have a less than significant impact.

ii) Strong seismic ground shaking?

Less than significant impact. As with most areas within the State, the Specific Plan Area would be exposed to ground shaking from seismic events on local and regional faults. However, the Fresno area has historically experienced a low to moderate degree of seismicity. The nearest source of seismotectonic forces to the project area is the Great Valley Fault Zone located over 40 miles to the southwest, which is capable of producing a 6.1 moment magnitude earthquake. Therefore, the seismicity of the project area is governed by the activity of the Great Valley Fault, although ground shaking from future earthquakes on other faults could also be felt at the site. The intensity of earthquake ground motion at the site would depend upon the characteristics of the generating fault, distance to the earthquake epicenter, and magnitude and duration of the earthquake. Strong to very strong ground shaking could occur at the site during a large earthquake on one of the nearby faults. Future development in the Specific Plan Area would be designed to withstand strong ground shaking, because all built projects are required to comply with the CBC to minimize the potential effects of ground shaking and other seismic activity. To reduce ground shaking impacts, the proposed project would also be consistent with General Plan Objective NS-2 and policies NS-2-a through NS-2-d, which aim to minimize risks of property damage and personal injury posed by geologic and seismic risks. Therefore, the proposed project would have a less than significant impact related to strong seismic ground shaking.

iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?

Less than significant impact with mitigation incorporated. As previously discussed, the soil profile within the City consists predominately of silty sands, sandy silts, clayey sands, sandy clayey silts, and sands. The potential for soil liquefaction in the Specific Plan Area ranges from very low to moderate due to the variable density of the subsurface soils and the presence of shallow groundwater. In addition, the Specific Plan Area could be susceptible to induced settlement of loose unconsolidated soils or lateral spread during seismic shaking events. However, based on the nature of the subsurface materials and the relatively low to moderate seismicity of the region, the seismic settlement and/or lateral spread are not anticipated to represent a substantial hazard within the Specific Plan Area during

seismic events. Further, future development within the Specific Plan Area would comply with CBC seismic design standards, MM GEO-1a, and MM GEO-1b. As previously discussed, General Plan Objective NS-2 and Policies NS-2-a through NS-2-d also require the City to minimize risks by implementing a series of measures to reduce impacts to new development. Therefore, the proposed project would have a less than significant impact related to seismic-related ground failure with mitigation incorporated.

iv) Landslides?

Less than significant impact. As previously discussed, the City is generally flat. Therefore, there is not a significant risk of landslides in the City or the Specific Plan Area. The Specific Plan Area has not been identified as an area of high landslide hazard.[28] Future development under the proposed project would be required to comply with the CBC, General Plan policies, and the City's Municipal Code. Therefore, the proposed project would have a less than significant impact related to landslide hazards.

b) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?

Less than significant impact. Development and land use activities contemplated by the Specific Plan Area would result in site preparation activities, such as grading and trenching, at future project sites located throughout the Specific Plan Area. Future projects would also result in the addition of impervious surfaces within the Specific Plan Area, and depending on the location of the project, could possibly result in the alteration of topographic features at the project site. The alteration of topographic features could lead to increased erosion by creating unstable rock or soil surfaces. Because much of the Specific Plan Area is relatively flat and the locations of projects that would substantially alter topography are limited, there would be minimal geotechnical effects related to erosion. Moreover, development consistent with the proposed project would reduce the total amount of development in the Specific Plan Area compared to what was contemplated by the General Plan.

Future development under the proposed project would be required to comply with the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permitting program as well as the Fresno Municipal Code and General Plan. Fresno Municipal Code Section 15-3302 requires every approved map to be conditioned on compliance with the requirements for grading and erosion control, including the prevention of sedimentation or damage to off-site property. All future projects on sites larger than 1 acre within the Specific Plan Area are required to submit a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) and Grading Plan to the City that identify specific actions and Best Management Practices (BMPs) to prevent stormwater pollution from construction sources. The plans would identify a practical sequence for site restoration, BMP implementation, contingency measures, responsible parties, and agency contacts. Compliance with these policies and with other pertinent regulations will ensure that potential soil erosion impacts, or the potential loss of topsoil, would be less than significant.

[28] Fresno County. 2018. Fresno County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan, Figure 4.23 Landslide Hazards and Areas of Subsidence in Fresno County. May.

c) Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse?

Less than significant impact with mitigation incorporated. Damage caused by subsidence or collapse has been primarily associated with significant changes in gradients of canals and aqueducts and breakage of deep-water well casings. Furthermore, portions of the San Joaquin Valley have experienced land subsidence or collapse due to groundwater and petroleum extraction, as noted in the City of Fresno General Plan. Within the San Joaquin Valley, subsidence or collapse is concentrated in the southern part and the west side of the valley where rainfall is sparse and groundwater recharge is minimal. Although subsidence or collapse is a significant concern in western Fresno County, as well as other portions of the San Joaquin Valley, the Specific Plan Area is not known to be subject to such subsidence or collapse hazards. Future development as envisioned in the Specific Plan is required to comply with building code requirements to mitigate and minimize liquefaction and landslide hazards. Finally, development consistent with the proposed project would reduce the total amount of development in the Specific Plan Area compared to what was contemplated by the General Plan. With implementation of MM GEO-1a and MM GEO-1b, which requires a geotechnical study with preventive measures for liquefaction and landslides, and compliance with General Plan policies and the Municipal Code, the proposed project would have a less than significant impact related to landslides, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction, or collapse.

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?

Less than significant impact with mitigation incorporated. There are localized areas within City that contain expansive soils, though the specific locations of these areas are not known. As previously discussed, the general soil profile within the City consists predominately of silty sands, sandy silts, clayey sands, sandy clayey silts, and sands. The clayey soils are slightly to moderately expansive.

Because the Specific Plan Area may contain expansive soils, which can cause movement and cracking of foundations, pavement, and slabs, future development under the proposed project would be required to implement MM GEO-1a and MM GEO-1b. In general, the effects of expansive soil can be mitigated by moisture-conditioning the expansive soil, providing non-expansive fill below slabs, and either supporting foundations below the zone of severe moisture change or by providing a stiff, shallow foundation that can limit deformation of the superstructure as the underlying soil shrinks and swells. Future development under the proposed project would comply with the CBC and General Plan, as well as the Municipal Code Ordinance Section 12-1022, which requires preliminary soil reports be prepared to identify potential site-specific soil issues such as expansive soils, and to include foundation support and grading parameters in the project design to address site-specific soil conditions. Preliminary soil reports may include measures that should be incorporated into project plans that reduce potential impacts related to expansive soil or other potentially hazardous soil conditions. Further, grading and erosion control measures are required under Section 15-1603 of the Municipal Code. Moreover, development consistent with the proposed project would reduce the total amount of development in the Specific Plan Area compared to what was contemplated by the General Plan, thus reducing the amount of development that would potentially be located on expansive soils as

compared to what was considered in the General Plan. Therefore, the proposed project would have a less than significant impact related to expansive soils with mitigation incorporated.

e) Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of wastewater?

No impact. The City's General Plan mandates the abatement of existing septic systems, requiring the removal of septic systems and the installation of public sewage collection and disposal systems as part of the buildout process.

Because the proposed project is consistent with the General Plan, there would be no septic tank systems included in the buildout of the Specific Plan Area. Sewer services in the Specific Plan Area are provided by the City. Thus, no impact would occur.

f) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?

Less than significant impact with mitigation incorporated. There are two primary surficial deposits in the Specific Plan Area: (1) Pleistocene non-marine; and (2) Quaternary non-marine fan deposits. The Pleistocene non- marine deposits are considered to have a high potential sensitivity. The Quaternary non-marine deposits consist of Pleistocene-Holocene alluvial sediments. Since these deposits include Pleistocene sediments, they are also considered to have a high potential for sensitivity. Therefore, excavation and/or construction activities within the Specific Plan Area that are associated with continued implementation of the approved General Plan have the potential to impact paleontological/geological resources during excavation and construction activities within previously undisturbed soils. Thus, the potential to impact paleontological resources during excavation and construction activities is considered potentially significant. However, the proposed project would implement MM GEO-1a and MM GEO-6, which requires a qualified Paleontological Monitor to be retained prior to initiation of excavation procedures and would reduce impacts to a less than significant level. Therefore, the proposed project would have a less than significant impact on unique paleontological resources or geologic features.

Mitigation Measures

MM GEO-1a Subsequent to a preliminary City review of the grading plans for future discretionary projects within the Specific Plan Area, if there is evidence that a project will include excavation or construction activities within previously undisturbed soils, a field survey and literature search for unique paleontological/geological resources shall be conducted. The following procedures shall be followed:

- If unique paleontological/geological resources are not found during either the field survey or literature search, excavation and/or construction activities can commence. In the event that unique paleontological/geological resources are discovered during excavation and/or construction activities, construction shall stop in the immediate vicinity of the find and a qualified Paleontologist shall be consulted to determine whether the resource requires further study. The qualified

Paleontologist shall make recommendations to the City on 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. If the resources are determined to be significant, mitigation measures shall be identified by the monitor and recommended to the Lead Agency. Appropriate mitigation measures for significant resources could include avoidance or capping, incorporation of the site in green space, parks, or open space, or data recovery excavations of the finds. No further grading shall occur in the area of the discovery until the Lead Agency approves the measures to protect these resources. Any paleontological/geological resources recovered as a result of mitigation shall be provided to a City-approved institution or person who is capable of providing long-term preservation to allow future scientific study.

- If unique paleontological/geological resources are found during the field survey or literature review, the resources shall be inventoried and evaluated for significance. If the resources are found to be significant, mitigation measures shall be identified by the qualified Paleontologist. Similar to above, appropriate mitigation measures for significant resources could include avoidance or capping, incorporation of the site in green space, parks, or open space, or data recovery excavations of the finds. In addition, appropriate mitigation for excavation and construction activities in the vicinity of the resources found during the field survey or literature review shall include a Paleontological Monitor. The monitoring period shall be determined by the qualified Paleontologist. If additional paleontological/geological resources are found during excavation and/or construction activities, the procedure identified above for the discovery of unknown resources shall be followed.

MM GEO-1b Prior to issuance of building permits for new construction on any property within the Specific Plan Area, the project applicant shall submit a design-level geotechnical study and building plans to the City of Fresno Planning and Development Department for review and approval. The building plans shall demonstrate that they incorporate all applicable recommendations of the design-level geotechnical study and comply with all applicable requirements of the most recent version of the California Building Standards Code (CBC). A licensed Professional Engineer shall prepare the plans, including those that pertain to soil engineering and structural foundations. The approved plans shall be incorporated into the project. All on-site soil engineering activities shall be conducted under the supervision of a licensed Geotechnical Engineer or Certified Engineering Geologist.

MM GEO-6 Prior to approval of any discretionary project that could result in an adverse change to a potential paleontological resource, the City shall require a site-specific evaluation of paleontological resources by a professional who meets the Society of Vertebrate Paleontology qualification standards. The evaluation shall provide recommendations to mitigate potential impacts to paleontological resources and shall be approved by the City of Fresno Planning and Development Department.

Environmental Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
2.8 Greenhouse Gas Emissions *Would the project:*				
a) Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b) Conflict with any applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?	☐	☒	☐	☐

Environmental Evaluation

Introduction

As noted in the proposed project, the land use designations of the Specific Plan are consistent with the General Plan buildout assumptions; however, this Specific Plan proposes changing the land use designation for some of the Specific Plan Area's parcels, which would require the General Plan Land Use map to be amended. These proposed land use designation changes would reduce the total amount of development compared to what was contemplated by the General Plan for the Specific Plan Area.

Environmental Setting

GHGs are generated from natural geological and biological processes and through human activities, including the combustion of fossil fuels and industrial and agricultural processes. GHGs include CO_2, nitrous oxide (N_2O), methane (CH_4), chlorofluorocarbons, hydrofluorocarbons and perfluorocarbons.

While GHGs are emitted locally, they have global implications. GHGs trap heat in the atmosphere, which heats up the surface of Earth. This concept is known as global warming and is contributing to climate change. Changing climatic conditions pose several potential adverse impacts including sea level rise, increased risk of wildfires, degraded ecological systems, deteriorated public health, and decreased water supplies.

To address GHGs at the State level, the California legislature passed the California Global Warming Solutions Act in 2006 (AB 32), which requires Statewide GHG emissions be reduced to 1990 levels by 2020. Executive Order S-3-05 provides the California Environmental Protection Agency (Cal/EPA) with the regulatory authority to coordinate the State's effort to achieve GHG reduction targets. Executive Order S-3-05 goes beyond AB 32 and calls for an 80 percent reduction below 1990 levels by 2050. SB 375 was adopted in 2008, which seeks to curb GHGs by reducing urban sprawl and VMT.

The Governor signed SB 32 in September of 2016, giving ARB the statutory responsibility to include the 2030 target previously contained in Executive Order B-30-15 in the 2017 Climate Change Scoping

Plan Update. SB 32 states that "[i]n adopting rules and regulations to achieve the maximum technologically feasible and cost-effective greenhouse gas emissions reductions authorized by this division, the state [air resources] board shall ensure that statewide greenhouse gas emissions are reduced to at least 40 percent below the statewide greenhouse gas emissions limit no later than December 31, 2030."[29] The 2017 Climate Change Scoping Plan Update addressing the SB 32 targets was adopted by the ARB on December 14, 2017. The recently adopted 2022 Climate Change Scoping Plan, adopted by the ARB in December 2022, includes measures to further reduce GHG emissions, supporting State goals of carbon neutrality by 2045.

The City is located in the in the SJVAB. The SJVAB consists of Kings, Madera, San Joaquin, Merced, Stanislaus, and Fresno Counties, as well as a portion of Kern County. The local agency with jurisdiction over air quality in the SJVAB is the Valley Air District. The City developed its first GHG Plan in 2014, which includes GHG reduction targets and emissions inventories for the years 2020 and 2035. An updated GHG Plan (the GHG Plan Update) was adopted on September 30, 2021, pursuant to a certified General Plan Program EIR (State Clearinghouse Number 2019050005). However, the General Plan Program EIR and the associated 2021 GHG Reduction Plan were rescinded by City Council Resolution in March 2025. The City's previously adopted GHG Reduction Plan (2014) has not been the subject of a legal challenge and has not rescinded. As stated, the 2014 GHG Plan includes reduction targets for 2035; however, the full 25-year buildout of the proposed project goes beyond the year 2035 and is anticipated to be fully operational in the year 2050. Therefore, this analysis will evaluate the consistency of the proposed project with ARB's latest 2022 Scoping Plan including the proposed project's consistency with relevant Scoping Plan measures and the latest RTP/SCS for the region within which the Plan is located. The 2022 Scoping Plan is consistent with the State's longer-term AB 1279 GHG reduction targets of achieving carbon neutrality by 2045 and reducing GHG emissions to 85 percent below 1990 levels by 2045. Therefore, consistency with the 2022 Scoping Plan would also demonstrate consistency with the State's long-term GHG reduction targets encapsulated by AB 1279

The analysis provides a qualitative assessment of the proposed project's compliance with the applicable plans, policies, and regulations for the purposes of reducing GHG emissions to determine whether the proposed project would have a significant impact on the environment relative to GHGs.

Would the project:

a) Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?

Less than significant impact. Implementation of the proposed project would contribute to global climate change through direct emissions of GHG from on-site area sources and vehicle trips generated by the proposed project, and indirectly through off-site energy production required for on-site activities, water use, and waste disposal. Estimated GHG emissions attributable to future development

[29] California Legislative Information. 2015–2016. SB-32 California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006: Emissions limit. Website: https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billNavClient.xhtml?bill_id=201520160SB32. Accessed September 9, 2022.

would be primarily associated with increases of CO_2 and other GHG pollutants, such as CH_4 and N_2O, from mobile sources and utility usage.

Construction

Construction activities associated with future development under the proposed project would generate temporary short-term GHG emissions from heavy-duty construction equipment, worker trips, and material delivery and hauling. On-site activities would consist of the operation of off-road construction equipment as well as on-site truck travel (e.g., haul trucks, dump trucks, and concrete trucks). Off-site sources would include emissions from construction vehicles used for hauling materials and worker vehicle trips. Future development under the proposed project would comply with the requirements of the City's General Plan policies and programs related to GHG emissions as well as applicable Valley Air District regulations. Short-term construction GHG emissions are a one-time release of GHGs and are not expected to significantly contribute to global climate change. Therefore, future development under the proposed project at construction would not result in significant adverse effects related to GHG emissions. As such, the implementation of the proposed project would result in a less than significant impact relative to this topic.

Operation

Operational or long-term emissions occur over the life of the project. Sources of emissions may include motor vehicles and trucks, energy usage, water usage, waste generation, and area sources, such as landscaping activities. While implementation of the proposed project would generate an increase in GHG emissions, its guiding principles, design guidelines, and proposed land use designations for the Specific Plan Area would contribute to minimizing emissions to the extent feasible. Guiding principles and objectives of the proposed project include promoting sustainable development and encouraging modes of transportation other than vehicles. Applicable General Plan policies support the installation of electric infrastructure to support electric vehicles (EVs) at residential, commercial, and industrial land uses. Future developments under the proposed project would be subject to State regulations that would reduce emissions from project construction and operation, including Title 24 and CALGreen standards and the California Code of Regulations, which the City has adopted. As such, the implementation of the proposed project would result in a less than significant impact relative to this topic**.**

b) Conflict with any applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?

Less than significant impact with mitigation incorporated. Applicable plans adopted for the purpose of reducing GHG emissions include ARB's Scoping Plan and the Fresno COG RTP/SCS. A consistency analysis with these plans is presented below.

Consistency with the 2022 Scoping Plan

ARB's 2022 Scoping Plan (which is the latest version of the Scoping Plan) provides policies that are considered needed to meet the State's mid-term and long-term GHG emissions reduction targets. Specifically, ARB's Final 2022 Scoping Plan identifies that it ". . . lays out the sector-by-sector roadmap for California, the world's fifth largest economy, to achieve carbon neutrality by 2045 or earlier . . . ."

The 2022 Scoping Plan addresses recent legislation and direction from Governor Newsom by extending and expanding upon earlier Scoping Plans with a target of reducing anthropogenic emissions to 85 percent below 1990 levels by 2045 and adding carbon neutrality as a science-based guide and touchstone for California's climate work. Under the 2022 Scoping Plan, local government plays a supporting role through its land use authority and control over local transportation infrastructure. The 2022 Scoping Plan includes reductions from implementation of SB 375 that apply to VMT from passenger vehicles. Fresno County targets for SB 375 are a 5 percent per capita reduction by 2020 and a 10 percent per capita reduction by 2035 relative to 2005 levels. (SB 375 is implemented with the Fresno COG RTP/SCS). The RTP/SCS envisions an increase in development density that would encourage fewer and shorter trips and more trips by transit, walking, and bicycling in amounts sufficient to achieve the SB 375 targets. The strategies included in the proposed project are consistent with the measures included in the RTP/SCS and would serve to support a per capita reduction in VMT in the Plan Area after the implementation of the proposed project.

Appendix D of the 2022 Scoping Plan contains three tables which outline various measures that would reduce impacts related to GHG emissions pursuant to the State's GHG reduction goals. Table 1, Priority GHG Reduction Strategies, provides programmatic priority areas and measures that local governments can use to address the largest sources of GHGs within their jurisdiction. Appendix D of the 2022 Scoping Plan states, "When developing local climate plans, measures, policies, and actions, local jurisdictions should incorporate the recommendations described in Table 1 to the extent appropriate to ensure alignment with State climate goals." While the proposed project is not a local climate plan, it is a policy-level document that includes actions to reduce GHG emissions in accordance with State climate goals. Therefore, the proposed project is evaluated against each of the "Priority GHG Reduction Strategies" contained within Table 1.

Table 3, Key Residential and Mixed-Use Project Attributes that Reduce GHGs, of Appendix D of the 2022 Scoping Plan, provides more project-level measures than Table 1. These project-level attributes include, but are not limited to, providing EV charging infrastructure, consisting of transit-supportive densities, being located in proximity to existing transit stops, providing at least 20 percent affordable housing to lower-income residents, and using all-electric appliances. Because the proposed project is a policy-level document, it is not possible to determine consistency with all of the measures required at an individual project-level.

Furthermore, according to Appendix D, Table 3 specifically only applies to residential and mixed-use projects, with a mixed-use project being defined as "development including both residential and nonresidential uses with at least two-thirds of the square footage designated for residential use." As shown in Table 2 of this IS/MND, Proposed Land Uses, the proposed project would include uses other than residential and mixed-use, including public facilities, commercial, and office space. Proposed uses, as detailed in Table 3 of this IS/MND, include redevelopment of the former UMC Hospital Site into a holistic health and wellness center and expansion of the Mosqueda Center into a hub for cultural activities, education, and recreation. Therefore, the proposed project does not consist of strictly residential and mixed-uses land uses, and while some portion of the mixed-use land uses may include residential uses, it is not possible to quantify what percentage of residential would be included in the mixed-use land uses at this time to ensure it would meet the definition of mixed-use (two-thirds

residential) as defined by ARB in Appendix D of the 2022 Scoping Plan. Therefore, Table 3 is not applicable to the proposed project at the programmatic level.

Nevertheless, MM GHG-2a would require future individual development projects to comply with all applicable requirements and policies, such as the 2022 Scoping Plan, including demonstrating consistency with Table 3 of Appendix D. The proposed project's consistency with the applicable 2022 Scoping Plan policies is discussed in Table 11 below.

Table 11: Consistency with the 2022 Scoping Plan

Scoping Plan Measure	Project Consistency
Convert local government fleets to ZEVs [Zero-Emission Vehicles] and provide EV [electric vehicle] charging at public sites.	**Not applicable.** While this goal is not applicable to private development plans or projects, development pursuant to the proposed project will comply with the requirements of the California Energy Code (California Code of Regulations [CCR] Title 24, Part 6) as it relates to EV charging and parking spaces.
Create a jurisdiction-specific ZEV ecosystem to support deployment of ZEVs statewide (such as building standards that exceed state building codes, permit streamlining, infrastructure siting, consumer education, preferential parking policies, and ZEV readiness plans).	**Not applicable**. While this goal is not applicable to private development plans or projects, development pursuant to the proposed project will comply with the requirements of the California Energy Code (CCR Title 24, Part 6) as it relates to EV charging and parking spaces.
Reduce or eliminate minimum parking standards.	**Consistent**. The proposed project includes a number of goals and initiatives to support a variety of transportation options with parking requirements that encourage non-automotive travel modes within the Specific Plan Area, including improving connectivity between residential areas and local and regional destinations and providing comfortable and reliable transit service that meets community needs. In addition, MM GHG-2b would require the unbundling of parking from multi-family residential uses within the proposed project.
Implement Complete Streets policies and investments, consistent with general plan circulation element requirements.	**Consistent**. The Specific Plan Area proposes a series of transportation improvements to make travel in and around the Plan Area safe, efficient, convenient, and accessible to pedestrians, bicyclists and transit riders. This includes adding new street connections, creating a robust network of primary bicycle corridors, and implementing a series of major and minor street and streetscape improvements.
Increase access to public transit by increasing density of development near transit, improving transit service by increasing service frequency, creating bus priority lanes, reducing or eliminating fares, micro transit, etc.	**Consistent**. The Specific Plan Area proposes a series of transportation improvements to make travel in and around the Plan Area safe, efficient, convenient, and accessible to pedestrians, bicyclists and transit riders. For example, Goal LU-1 calls for the transformation of Cesar Chavez Boulevard into a walkable and lively corridor with

Scoping Plan Measure	Project Consistency
	a diverse mix of retail, service, residential, cultural, and institutional uses that will attract both local residents and regional visitors.
Increase public access to clean mobility options by planning for and investing in electric shuttles, bike share, car share, and walking.	**Consistent**. The Specific Plan Area proposes a series of transportation improvements to make travel in and around the Specific Plan Area safe, efficient, convenient, and accessible to pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit riders. This includes adding new street connections, creating a robust network of primary bicycle corridors, and implementing a series of major and minor street and streetscape improvements.
Implement parking pricing or transportation demand management pricing strategies.	**Consistent**. The proposed project includes a number of goals and initiatives to support a variety of transportation options with parking requirements that encourage non-automotive travel modes within the Specific Plan Area, including improving connectivity between residential areas and local and regional destinations and providing comfortable and reliable transit service that meets community needs. In addition, MM GHG-2b would require the unbundling of parking from multi-family residential uses within the proposed project.
Amend zoning or development codes to enable mixed-use, walkable, transit-oriented, and compact infill development (such as increasing the allowable density of a neighborhood).	**Consistent**. The Specific Plan Area proposes a series of transportation improvements to make travel in and around the Specific Plan Area safe, efficient, convenient, and accessible to pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit riders. For example, Goal LU-1 calls for the transformation of Cesar Chavez Boulevard into a walkable and lively corridor with a diverse mix of retail, service, residential, cultural, and institutional uses that will attract both local residents and regional visitors.
Preserve natural and working lands by implementing land use policies that guide development toward infill areas and do not convert "greenfield" land to urban uses (e.g., green belts, strategic conservation easements).	**Consistent**. The proposed project is one of several growth areas identified in the City's General Plan and aligns with the General Plan's policy of balancing growth with infill development. The proposed land use changes in the Specific Plan Area allow for higher intensity mixed-use infill along priority corridors and at key opportunity sites. In addition, the proposed project includes a number of goals and objectives to preserve natural and working lands. For example, Objective POSS-2 ensures that adequate land, in appropriate locations, is designated and acquired for park and recreation uses in infill and growth areas.
Adopt all-electric new construction reach codes for residential and commercial uses.	**Not applicable.** While this goal is not applicable to private development plans or projects, development pursuant to the proposed project would comply with the requirements of the California Energy Code (CCR Title 24, Part 6) as it relates to new construction. In addition, MM

Scoping Plan Measure	Project Consistency
	GHG-2c would require all future residential development within the proposed project to be all-electric unless full electrification is deemed infeasible through a project-specific analysis.
Adopt policies and incentive programs to implement energy efficiency retrofits for existing buildings, such as weatherization, lighting upgrades, and replacing energy-intensive appliances and equipment with more efficient systems (such as Energy Star-rated equipment and equipment controllers).	**Consistent**. The Specific Plan Area proposes a number of goals and initiatives to implement energy efficiency retrofits for existing buildings. For example, Goal T-9.4 promotes the use of sustainable design features and renewable energy sources in new public facilities, capital improvement projects and private development. Goal T-9.4 further notes that the City should collaborate with partner agencies, utilities and businesses to support a range of energy efficiency, conservation, and waste reduction measures in new and private development projects.
Adopt policies and incentive programs to electrify all appliances and equipment in existing buildings such as appliance rebates, existing building reach codes, or time of sale electrification ordinances.	**Consistent.** Goal T-9.4 promotes the use of sustainable design features and renewable energy sources in new public facilities, capital improvement projects, and private development. In addition, MM GHG-2c would require all future residential development within the proposed project to be all-electric unless full electrification is deemed infeasible through a project-specific analysis.
Facilitate deployment of renewable energy production and distribution and energy storage on privately owned land uses (e.g., permit streamlining, information sharing).	**Consistent.** Goal T-9.4 promotes the use of sustainable design features and renewable energy sources in new public facilities, capital improvement projects, and private development.
Deploy renewable energy production and energy storage directly in new public projects and on existing public facilities (e.g., solar photovoltaic systems on rooftops of municipal buildings and on canopies in public parking lots, battery storage systems in municipal buildings).	**Not applicable.** This measure does not directly apply to private development projects.
Source: California Air Resources Board (ARB). 2012. Appendix D Local Actions. November. Website: https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/sites/default/files/2022-11/2022-sp-appendix-d-local-actions.pdf. Accessed December 20, 2024.	

Consistency with the Fresno COG 2022 RTP/SCS

The Fresno COG's 2022 RTP/SCS envisions an increase in development density that would encourage fewer and shorter trips and more trips by transit, walking, and bicycling in amounts sufficient to achieve the SB 375 targets. The strategies included in the Specific Plan are consistent with the measures included in the RTP/SCS and would serve to support a per capita reduction in VMT in the Specific Plan Area after the implementation of the proposed project.

Additionally, the Fresno COG's 2022 RTP/SCS includes five goals with corresponding policies for improving mobility and accessibility, connecting communities with accessible transportation options,

creating a safe, well-maintained, efficient, and climate-resilient multimodal transportation network, adding to a transportation network that supports a sustainable and vibrant economy, and embracing clean transportation, technology, and innovation. These goals include similar measures to the 2022 Scoping Plan. The proposed project's consistency with the applicable 2022 RTP/SCS strategies is discussed in Table 12, below.

Table 12: Consistency with Fresno COG's 2022 RTP/SCS

RTP/SCS Measure	Project Consistency
Goal 1: Improved mobility and accessibility for all.	**Consistent**. The proposed project includes a number of goals and initiatives to support a variety of transportation options with parking requirements that encourage non-automotive travel modes within the Specific Plan Area, including improving connectivity between residential areas and local and regional destinations; and providing comfortable, and reliable transit service that meets community needs. The vision statement for the Specific Plan notes that "over the next 30 years, the CSE Fresno will become a lively, beautiful, walkable and healthy community for its residents and all Fresnans, supported by enhances mobility options and an activated public realm, the community will feature safe and complete neighborhoods that provide a range of amenities essential to a high quality of life."
Goal 2: Vibrant communities that are accessible by sustainable transportation options.	**Consistent**. The proposed project includes a number of goals and initiatives to support a variety of transportation options with parking requirements that encourage non-automotive travel modes within the Specific Plan Area, including improving connectivity between residential areas and local and regional destinations and providing comfortable and reliable transit service that meets community needs. For example, Goal E-1 proposes to create a more livable, resilient, and sustainable community by promoting sustainable transportation choices, such as walking, biking, and taking transit.
Goal 3: A safe, well-maintained, efficient, and climate-resilient multimodal transportation network.	**Consistent**. The proposed project includes a number of goals and initiatives to support a variety of transportation options with parking requirements that encourage non-automotive travel modes within the Specific Plan Area, including improving connectivity between residential areas and local and regional destinations and providing comfortable and reliable transit service that meets community needs. For example, Goal T-1.4 seeks to prioritize complete streets over current measures for transportation performance by developing multimodal level of service standards.
Goal 4: A transportation network that supports a sustainable and vibrant economy.	**Consistent**. The proposed project includes a number of goals and initiatives to support a variety of

RTP/SCS Measure	Project Consistency
	transportation options with parking requirements that encourage non-automotive travel modes within the Specific Plan Area, including improving connectivity between residential areas and local and regional destinations and providing comfortable and reliable transit service that meets community needs.
Goal 5: A region embracing clean transportation, technology, and innovation.	**Consistent**. The proposed project includes a number of goals and initiatives to support a variety of transportation options, including improving connectivity between residential areas and local and regional destinations and providing comfortable and reliable transit service that meets community needs. For example, Goal T-9.4 promotes the use of sustainable design features and renewable energy sources, including incorporating green technology and renewable energy into new and existing public facilities.
Source: Fresno COG 2022 RTP/SCS	

Conclusion

In conclusion, the proposed project would be consistent with relevant plans, policies, and regulations associated with GHGs, notably the most recent version of the ARB's Scoping Plan (the 2022 Scoping Plan), and the Fresno 2022 RTP/SCS. This would ensure that the proposed project would be consistent with, and would not impair, the State's carbon neutrality standard by year 2045 as established under AB 1279. The State is making progress toward reducing GHG emissions in key sectors such as transportation, industry, and electricity. Since the proposed project would be consistent with State GHG Plans, it would not impede the State's goals of reducing GHG emissions 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030 and of achieving carbon neutrality by 2045. In addition, the implementation of MM AIR-1b, MM AIR-1c, and MM AIR-1d would serve to further reduce GHG emissions along with criteria air pollutants and toxic air contaminants. The proposed project would make a reasonable fair share contribution to the State's GHG reduction goals by implementing a wide array of project features that would substantially reduce GHG emissions; therefore, the proposed project's GHG emissions would be considered to have a less than significant impact with the implementation of mitigation with respect to Impacts GHG-1 and GHG-2.

Mitigation Measures

MM GHG-2a Prior to the issuance of demolition or grading permits, whichever comes first, by the City of Fresno for development projects subject to CEQA (California Environmental Quality Act) review (i.e., non-exempt projects), project applicants shall prepare and submit a technical assessment evaluating potential project operational greenhouse gas (GHG) impacts to the City of Fresno for review and approval. The evaluation shall be prepared to demonstrate consistency with Table 3 of Appendix D of the 2022 Scoping Plan or the policies contained within the currently adopted Scoping Plan at

the time of the development application. If operation-related GHGs are determined to be inconsistent with the applicable California Air Resources Board (ARB) Scoping Plan, the City of Fresno shall require that applicants for new development projects incorporate mitigation measures to reduce GHG impacts during operational activities. The identified measures shall be included as part of the conditions of approval.

MM GHG-2b Unbundle parking costs.

Require that parking costs be unbundled from costs to rent or own a residential unit in any multi-family residential unit. This measure shall be documented and enforced through project lease agreements, condominium bylaws, or tenant materials. Prior to issuance of final occupancy permits, the City of Fresno shall verify that unbundling provisions are included in all lease or sales documents and marketing materials.

MM GHG-2c Restrict use of natural gas in new residential development.

Future design and operation of residential sites within the Specific Plan Area shall be all-electric. Natural gas infrastructure shall not be included in new residential development unless the applicant demonstrates to the satisfaction of the City of Fresno's Planning Director, or designee, that full electrification is infeasible due to specific site constraints or utility limitations. If the application demonstrates and the City agrees that full electrification is infeasible, any use of natural gas must be limited and justified through a project-specific analysis demonstrating that electrification would result in greater environmental impacts or violate applicable legal requirements.

Environmental Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
2.9 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?	☐	☐	☒	☐
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?	☐	☐	☒	☐
c) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?	☐	☐	☒	☐
d) Be located on a site which 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?	☐	☐	☒	☐
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?	☐	☐	☒	☐
f) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	☐	☐	☒	☐
g) Expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Environmental Evaluation

Introduction

As noted in the Project Description, the land use designations of the Specific Plan are consistent with the General Plan buildout assumptions; however, this Specific Plan proposes changing the land use designation for some of the Specific Plan Area's parcels, which would require the General Plan Land Use map to be amended. These proposed land use designation changes would reduce the total amount of development compared to what was contemplated by the General Plan for the Specific Plan Area.

Environmental Setting

Hazardous materials are substances that, because of their chemical or physical properties, quantity, concentration, or other characteristics, may present a potential hazard to human health or environment if improperly treated or disposed (CCR Title 22, Division 4.5, Chapter 10, Article 2, § 66260.10). Similarly, hazardous waste refers to hazardous materials that are no longer in use and awaiting disposal. Hazardous materials and waste are classified by the EPA and the California Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) according to four properties: toxicity, ignitability, corrosivity, and reactivity. Potential hazards and the use and transportation of hazardous substances are regulated by an overlapping set of adopted City, County, State, and federal plans, policies and regulations. The City addresses issues related to potential hazards and the use and transportation of hazardous materials in its Municipal Code and the 2025 General Plan. Hazardous materials are also regulated by the City of Fresno Fire Department (FFD), the Fresno County Environmental Health Division, and the Valley Air District.

Emergency Response

In addition to emergency response to hazardous materials incidents, both the City and the County implement programs to facilitate emergency preparedness for other types of incidents within the Specific Plan Area. Specifically, the City has an Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) that describes what the City's actions will be during a response to an emergency. This plan also describes the role of the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) and the coordination that occurs between the EOC, City Departments, and other response agencies. The EOP establishes a requirement for the emergency management organization to mitigate any significant emergency disaster affecting the City. The EOP also identifies the policies, responsibilities, and procedures required to protect the health and safety of City communities, public and private property, and the environmental effects of natural or technological disasters. In addition, the EOP establishes the operation concepts and procedures associated within initial response operations (field response) to emergencies, the extended response operations (City of Fresno EOC Activities), and the recovery process. Furthermore, the EOP complies with the State of California Emergency Operations Plan "Cross Walk" checklist for determining whether an emergency plan has addressed critical elements of California's Standardized Emergency Management System (SEMS) and the National Incident Management System (NIMS).

The County of Fresno has a Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan, which is a plan that aims to reduce or eliminate long-term risk to people or property from natural hazards. The plan, which covers all territory within Fresno County's jurisdictional boundaries, was adopted by the City in 2009, and an update was completed in 2018. The plan was prepared pursuant to the requirements of the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 so that Fresno County and the jurisdictions within it would be eligible for the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) Hazard Mitigation Assistance Grants.

Existing Schools

The proposed project is located within the Fresno Unified School District (FUSD). Presently, there are a number of schools, universities, and child care facilities located within the Specific Plan boundary as shown on Exhibit 3.

Airport Hazards

There are three airports located within the City: Fresno Yosemite International Airport, Fresno Chandler Executive Airport, and Sierra Sky Park. None of the airports are located in the Specific Plan Area.

Fresno Yosemite International Airport is located approximately 1.34 miles northeast of the Specific Plan Area, along East Clinton Way. The airport is a joint use civilian/military airport. It is used by commercial air carriers, air cargo operators, charter operators, the State of California, general aviation, and the United States Military. The California Air National Guard occupies a 58-acre area adjacent to East McKinley Avenue in the southeast portion of the airport. A helicopter repair and maintenance unit of the Army National Guard, the California Division of Forestry, and a number of corporate aviation businesses occupy facilities north of the runways. About 250 general aviation aircraft are based at Fresno Yosemite International Airport and two Fixed Base Operators (FBOs) offer a wide range of aeronautical services.

According to the Fresno Yosemite International Airport Safety Compatibility Zones Map, no portion of the Specific Plan Area is located within the 60 decibel (dB) Community Noise Equivalent Level (CNEL) contour.[30] A small northern portion of the Plan Area is located within the Traffic Pattern Zone.[31]

Wildland Fire Hazard

The California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) designates the Specific Plan Area as a Local Responsibility Area (LRA).[32] There are no wildlands located within or adjacent to the Specific Plan Area.[33]

The Specific Plan Area is located within the Central Valley and is relatively flat. The Specific Plan Area is located within a developed area of the City, with current land use designations consisting of mostly commercial, residential, and public facilities. The Sierra Nevada foothills to the north and east of the City provide the nearest areas where large expanses of undeveloped properties occur. Because of the topography and the distance between the developed portions of the City and undeveloped areas, the primary fire hazard concern within the City consists of the potential for structure fires in developed areas.

[30] Fresno Council of Governments (Fresno COG). Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan. Exhibit D2 Future Noise Contours. Fresno Yosemite International Airport. Website: https://www.fresno.gov/darm/wp-content/uploads/sites/10/2020/04/ALUCP-Fresno-Yosemite-International-Airport.pdf. Accessed September 1, 2022.

[31] Fresno Council of Governments (Fresno COG). Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan. Exhibit D1- Fresno Yosemite Intl. – Airport Influence Area and Safety Zones. Website: https://www.fresno.gov/darm/wp-content/uploads/sites/10/2020/04/ALUCP-Fresno-Yosemite-International-Airport.pdf. Accessed September 1, 2022.

[32] California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE). FHSZ Viewer. Website: https://egis.fire.ca.gov/FHSZ/. Accessed September 1, 2022.

[33] City of Fresno. 2018. Fresno County Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan. Figure 4.53 Fresno County's Wildfire Severity Zones. Website: https://www.co.fresno.ca.us/home/showdocument?id=24743. Accessed September 1, 2022.

Would the project:

a) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?

Less than significant impact. Construction activities associated with future development consistent with the proposed project could include the use of limited quantities of hazardous substances and therefore, could expose people to potentially hazardous materials related to short-term construction impacts and long-term operational impacts. All future development that would be constructed under the Specific Plan that involves routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials will be required to comply with applicable federal, State, and local regulations regarding the transport, use and disposal of hazardous materials. Future development under the proposed project could include the use of small quantities of hazardous materials typical for residential uses, including cleaning solvents, paints, household cleaners, disinfectants, and fertilizers. The use of such substances would occur in compliance with applicable storage, handling, usage, and disposal requirements. The potential risk would be limited to the immediate vicinity of the materials. Furthermore, potential risks involving soil contamination exposure would be minimized by managing old underground storage tanks (USTs), if applicable, according to the Fresno County standards as enforced by the Department of Environmental Health. If groundwater contamination has been identified, remediation activities would be required by the RWQCB, DTSC, or other appropriate regulatory agency prior to the start of any new construction activities. With implementation of the General Plan policies, as well as compliance with applicable federal and State law, project impacts regarding the exposure of hazards to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials would remain less than significant. Therefore, the proposed project would have a less than significant impact.

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?

Less than significant impact. The proposed project would include minor land use changes and subsequent redevelopment that could potentially create hazards, emit hazardous materials, or develop on hazardous sites. The FFD recognizes the potential for a large chemical release to occur which could expose thousands of people to hazardous/toxic vapors. Therefore, the FFD Hazardous Materials Response Team has embraced an all-hazards approach to emergency response to ensure that the community receives adequate service to all hazardous materials events. To reduce potential impacts from the accidental release of hazardous materials into the environment within the Specific Plan Area, all future development must comply with General Plan policies and adhere to local programs within the County's Hazardous Waste Generator Program and Hazardous Materials Incident Response Plan. Evaluation of hazards and hazardous materials would be considered at the time of planning and development for individual sites. Therefore, the proposed project would have a less than significant impact.

c) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?

Less than significant impact. As discussed previously, the proposed project is located within the FUSD, and a number of schools, universities, and child care facilities are located within the Specific Plan Area. Specifically, there are five elementary schools, two middle schools, one high school, and Fresno Pacific University, as well as child care facilities, such as the Boys & Girls Club, within the Specific Plan Area. The proposed project would include minor land use changes and subsequent redevelopment that could potentially create hazards, emit hazardous materials, or develop on hazardous sites. Evaluation of hazards and hazardous materials would be considered at the time of planning and development for individual sites. These individual sites may be located within 0.25 mile of an existing or proposed school. However, all generation, transport, and treatment of hazardous materials would be required to comply with applicable federal, State, and local requirements. Additionally, any future projects would be reviewed by the City of Fresno in light of their potential impacts and location in relation to existing and/or proposed schools. All future development would be subject to environmental review to ensure significant impacts are reduced to a less than significant level or are avoided entirely. As such, the proposed project would have a less than significant impact.

d) Be located on a site which 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?

Less than significant impact. As previously mentioned, the proposed project would include minor land use changes and subsequent redevelopment that could potentially create hazards, emit hazardous materials, or develop on sites included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and would be required to review other available similar hazardous materials sites data management systems, such as DTSC's EnviroStor. Hazardous sites would be identified during subsequent CEQA review of all future discretionary development. Further, before a development would be permitted to occur on such a site, the site would be required to be remediated to address any on-site hazardous materials consistent with the requirements of the DTSC, Fresno County Division of Environmental Health, and/or RWQCB, to a level that would permit development on-site depending on the site characteristics. Additionally, new development would have to comply with General Plan policies and these policies would require facilities that handle hazardous materials or hazardous wastes to be designed, constructed, and operated in accordance with applicable hazardous materials and waste management laws and regulations. Additionally, General Plan Policy NS-4-c would require investigations of potential soil or groundwater contamination whenever justified due to past uses. Evaluation of hazards and hazardous materials would be considered at the time of planning and development for individual sites. Therefore, the proposed project would have a less than significant impact.

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?

Less than significant impact. As previously discussed, there are three public or public use airports located within the Specific Plan Area: Fresno Yosemite International Airport; Fresno Chandler Executive Airport, and Sierra Sky Park. The Fresno Yosemite International Airport is located approximately 1.34 miles northeast of the Specific Plan Area, and a portion of the Specific Plan Area is located within Traffic Pattern Zone.[34] The Fresno County Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan (ALUCP) also establishes the planning boundaries around each of these airport facilities that define safety areas, noise contours, and height/airspace protection for policy implementation. The ALUCP is intended to protect and promote the safety and welfare of residents, businesses, and airport users near the public use airports and Naval Air Station Lemoore in Fresno County. Future development under the proposed project would have to comply with General Plan policies and the Fresno County ALUCP. Therefore, the impacts would be less than significant.

f) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?

Less than significant impact. The City's Police and Fire Departments are the lead agencies for all local emergency response efforts. The City's full-time Emergency Preparedness Officer (EPO) is responsible for ensuring that Fresno's emergency response plans are up-to-date and implemented properly. The EPO also facilitates cooperation between City departments and other local, State and federal agencies that would be involved in emergency response operations. With adequate services provided by the City's Police and Fire Departments and implementation of General Plan policies, potential interference with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan would be reduced to a less than significant level. Any future development within the Specific Plan Area of the proposed project would comply with all fire codes and regulations regarding emergency access and evaluation of the impact on adopted emergency response plans would be considered at the time of planning and development for individual sites. Therefore, the proposed project would have a less than significant impact.

g) Expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires?

Less than significant impact. Although the City is located near high and very high fire hazard designated areas, the City is largely categorized as little or no threat or moderate fire hazard. Some small areas along the San Joaquin River Bluff area in northern Fresno are prone to wildfires due to relatively steep terrain/vegetation. The San Joaquin River is more than 8 miles north of the Specific Plan Area. The Specific Plan Area is designated as an LRA,[35] and there are no wildlands located within

[34] Fresno Council of Governments (Fresno COG). Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan. Exhibit D1- Fresno Yosemite Intl. – Airport Influence Area and Safety Zones. Website: https://www.fresno.gov/darm/wp-content/uploads/sites/10/2020/04/ALUCP-Fresno-Yosemite-International-Airport.pdf. Accessed September 1, 2022.

[35] California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE). 2025. Fire Hazard Severity Zones in State Responsibility Area. Website: https://calfire-forestry.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=988d431a42b242b29d89597ab693d008. Accessed July 30, 2025.

or adjacent to the Specific Plan Area.[36] As previously discussed, because of the topography and the distance between the developed portions of the City and undeveloped areas, the primary fire hazard concern within the City consists of the potential for structure fires in developed areas. Impacts relating to wildfires would be discussed and evaluated during the environmental review process for future site development under the proposed plan. Future development under the proposed project would comply with General Plan policies and the 2022 CBC; thus, potential significant impacts related to wildland fires would be reduced to a less than significant level.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

[36] City of Fresno. 2018. Fresno County Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan. Figure 4.53 Fresno County's Wildfire Severity Zones. Website: https://www.co.fresno.ca.us/home/showdocument?id=24743. Accessed September 1, 2022.

Environmental Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
2.10 Hydrology and Water Quality *Would the project:*				
a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or groundwater quality?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b) Substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin?	☐	☐	☒	☐
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;	☐	☐	☒	☐
(ii) substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or off-site;	☐	☐	☒	☐
(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	☐	☐	☒	☐
(iv) impede or redirect flood flows?	☐	☐	☒	☐
d) In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk release of pollutants due to project inundation?	☐	☐	☒	☐
e) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Environmental Evaluation

Introduction

As noted in the Project Description, the land use designations of the Specific Plan are consistent with the General Plan buildout assumptions; however, this Specific Plan proposes changing the land use designation for some of the Specific Plan Area's parcels, which would require the General Plan Land Use map to be amended. These proposed land use designation changes would reduce the total amount of development compared to what was contemplated by the General Plan for the Specific Plan Area.

Environmental Setting

At the federal level, the Clean Water Act (CWA) is the primary federal law that governs and authorizes water quality control. Section 303 of the CWA requires states to adopt water quality standards for all surface waters of the United States. The CWA establishes the NPDES permit program to regulate municipal and industrial discharge, including those from municipal storm sewer systems, which require Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) permits. At the State level, the Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act oversees California's water quality control. The act establishes the California State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board) and the nine regional offices, each having jurisdiction to regulate and protect waters in each region. More importantly, the State Water Board and RWQCB) issue and enforce waste discharge permits, NPDES permits, and CWA Section 401 quality permits. At the Regional level, the Central Valley RWQCB serves all or part of 38 of the State's 58 counties, including Fresno County.[37]

The Specific Plan Area is located within the Upper Dry Subbasin of the Tulare-Buena Vista Lakes Watershed.[38] The San Joaquin River and the Kings River are the principal rivers that influence the hydrology in the City, and thus the Plan Area. Three dams control flows on the two rivers. The Friant and Mendota Dams on the San Joaquin River are reservoirs for municipal and agricultural irrigation supply and provide some flood control. The Pine Flat Dam is a flood control dam on the Kings River.[39] The Plan Area is within the Fresno Metropolitan Flood Control District's (FMFCD) urban flood control system consisting of 158 drainage areas, each 1 to 2 square miles in area; all but five of the drainage areas are served by a detention or retention basin.[40] Stormwater drainage systems within the Plan Area are constructed and maintained by the FMFCD.

The Specific Plan Area is underlain by the Kings Groundwater Subbasin within the San Joaquin Valley Groundwater Basin. The Kings Groundwater basin spans 1,530 square miles and serves Fresno, Kings, and Tulare Counties with groundwater flowing generally to the southwest.[41] The City of Fresno is also located within the jurisdiction of the North King Groundwater Sustainability Agency (NKGSA).

The Specific Plan Area falls entirely within the service area of the FMFCD,[42] which is responsible for developing and implementing the Storm Drain Master Plan for the City. As land is developed, the FMFCD works with developers and the City to implement the storm drainage system to collect and

[37] Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board (Central Valley RWQCB). Region 5. 2022. About Us. Website: https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralvalley/about_us/. Accessed September 5, 2022.

[38] United States Geological Survey (USGS). 2022. The National Map – Advanced Viewer. Website: https://apps.nationalmap.gov/viewer/. Accessed September 5, 2022.

[39] California State Water Resources Control Board. 2016. Water Quality Control Planning for the San Francisco Bay/Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Estuary. Website: https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/waterrights/water_issues/programs/bay_delta/bay_delta_plan/water_quality_control_planning/2016_sed/docs/ch_02_water.pdf. Accessed January 2, 2025.

[40] Fresno Metropolitan Flood Control District (FMFCD). 2022. Urban Basins, Sandbags, Dams and Streams. Website: https://www.fresnofloodcontrol.org/urban-basins-sandbags-dams-streams/. Accessed September 5, 2022.

[41] California Department of Water Resources (DWR). 2006. California's Groundwater Bulletin 118. Website: https://water.ca.gov/-/media/DWR-Website/Web-Pages/Programs/Groundwater-Management/Bulletin-118/Files/2003-Basin-Descriptions/5_022_08_KingsSubbasin.pdf. Accessed September 5, 2022.

[42] Fresno Metropolitan Flood Control District (FMFCD). 2022. District Service Area. Website: www.fresnofloodcontrol.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/district_service_area.pdf. Accessed October 4, 2022.

dispose of the increased runoff rates and volumes and prevent them from entering local surface waters.

FEMA issues Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs) that identifies land areas that are subject to flooding. The Specific Plan Area is predominantly designated as Flood Zone X, 0.2 percent Annual Chance Flood Hazard, Areas of 1 percent annual change flood with average depth less than one foot or with drainage areas of less than 1 square mile.[43] According to the California Governor's Office of Emergency Services (Cal/OES) MyHazards website, the Specific Plan Area is located outside of a Tsunami Emergency Response Planning Zone.[44]

Would the project:

a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or groundwater quality?

Less than significant impact. Future development under the proposed project would require grading and construction of new structures. Additionally, future development under the proposed project has the potential to increase the amount of paved, impervious surfaces within the Specific Plan Area. However, development proposed in the Specific Plan is less than what was contemplated by the General Plan and is therefore consistent with the stormwater rates and volumes anticipated in the General Plan.

Development within the Specific Plan Area would be required to comply with the requirements of all applicable rules and regulations, including the NPDES Construction General Permit, which would reduce the effects of construction and operational activities on water quality.

Construction

Extensive soil removal during the construction period may cause erosion and temporary impacts to water quality. As previously identified, any new development that would disturb more than 1 acre of soil would be required to obtain the NPDES Construction General Permit, which requires development and implementation of a SWPPP, which would include BMPs to eliminate contact of rainfall and stormwater runoff with sources of pollution. Compliance with this permit would ensure that impacts related to new development under the Specific Plan are less than significant.

Operation

During operation of any new project within the Specific Plan Area, changes to the amount of stormwater infiltration that occurs on the site would have the potential to affect long-term water quality by increasing the amount of pollutants that are discharged from the site. However, implementation of permanent stormwater quality features as and implementation of post-

[43] Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). FEMA Flood Map Service Center. Website: https://msc.fema.gov/portal/search?AddressQuery=Fresno%2C%20CA#searchresultsanchor. Accessed September 5, 2022.

[44] State of California Governor's Office of Emergency Services. 2015. MyHazards. Website: https://myhazards.caloes.ca.gov. Accessed September 5, 2022.

construction BMPs as required under the NPDES Permit would ensure that no stormwater discharge requirements are violated.

Additionally, implementation of General Plan Policies POSS-6-b, PU-5-a through PU-5-c, PU-7-a through PU-7-f, RC-6-e through RC-6-h, NS-3-e, and NS-3-i would reduce long-term project impacts associated with water quality standards and wastewater discharge requirements to less than significant levels. For example, General Plan Policy NS-3-I requires that new development implement conditions of approval as project mitigation as recommended by the FMFCD. Three locations within the Specific Plan Area were identified by FMFCD as potential areas for mitigation. Individual future developments would comply with project mitigation as required by the General Plan and FMFCD.

Future development would be required to prepare, implement, and be consistent with the NPDES Permit, as well as continued implementation of General Plan and Specific Plan policies, which would reduce project operational impacts associated with water quality standards and wastewater discharge requirements to less than significant.

b) Substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin?

Less than significant impact. Implementation of the proposed project would result in the use of less groundwater than anticipated by the General Plan because the Specific Plan would include less development than what was contemplated for the Specific Plan Area by the General Plan as described in the Project Description. Therefore, the groundwater demand of new development in the Specific Plan Area has been accounted for by the General Plan.

As discussed above, the Specific Plan Area is underlain by the Kings Groundwater Subbasin. The City's water supply is made up of approximately 47 percent groundwater and 53 percent surface sources. The Kings Subbasin has been identified as critically overdrafted basin by the Department of Water Resources (DWR). However, the City has invested in other water supplies such as surface water, recycled water and conservation, and groundwater levels in the Kings Subbasin have begun to recover.[45] Groundwater is recharged through natural recharge, subsurface inflow, and intentional recharge. Natural recharge in the City was about 24,970 acre-feet per year (AFY) in 2020. Subsurface inflow into the aquifer below the City was estimated at about 47,510 AFY in 2020. The City has averaged over 60,000 AFY the previous five years with the exception of 2021 and 2022 and plans to gradually increase recharge by about 540 AFY each year. However, during wet years the City will recharge more water when it is available to allow the City to draw on additional groundwater during dry years.[46] According to the 2020 Urban Water Management Plan (UWMP), which plans for the full buildout of the General Plan, the City has enough projected supply to meet demand in normal years, single dry years, and multiple dry year scenarios through 2045. Under single dry year and multiple dry year scenarios, groundwater recharge is reduced.[47] Thus, assuming all water allocations are available to the City, the available supply of groundwater and surface water would be sufficient because the

[45] City of Fresno. 2021. 2020 Urban Water Management Plan. July.
[46] Ibid.
[47] Ibid.

proposed project would result in less development for the Specific Plan Area than accounted for in the General Plan.

Additionally, the proposed project would implement General Plan Objective RC-6, Policies RC-6-a through RC-6-e and RC-6-I, Objective RC-7, Policies RC- 7-a through RC-7-h, Policy PU-7-d, Policy PU-7-d, Objective PU-8, and Policies PU-8-a and PU-8-g, which would reduce the potential for groundwater overdraft impacts.

Water demand for the Specific Plan Area is within the projected water demands for General Plan buildout in a normal year and dry year scenarios, and therefore impacts on groundwater supplies would be less than significant.

c) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of 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;

Less than significant impact. As previously discussed, regulatory requirements such as the City's grading plan check process, the FMFCD Storm Drainage and Flood Control Master Plan, and the NPDES Construction General Permit would reduce the impacts of construction activities on drainage patterns and erosion.[48]

Development within the Specific Plan Area would be required to comply with the City's grading plan check process. The grading plan check process is a review process that requires anyone who develops property to properly grade their property in accordance with the CBC, submit a grading plan showing the proposed grading of the development, obtain approval of the FMFCD indicating conformance of the grading plan with the FMFCD, and obtain coverage under the NPDES Construction General Permit and comply with the requirements of the permit, including developing an erosion control site plan. Therefore, short-term construction impacts associated with grading land or erosion would be less than significant.

The proposed project would also implement the approved General Plan Policies POSS-6-b, NS-3-a, NS-3-b, NS-3-d, NS-3-e, NS-3-i, and Objective NS-3, which would reduce long-term project impacts associated with alteration of grading patterns or creeks or streams and erosion to a less than significant level. General Plan Policy RC-5.2 also requires an erosion and sedimentation control plan and runoff control measures to prevent erosion on construction sites. Therefore, with the implementation of relevant General Plan Policies, and compliance with the NPDES Construction General Permit program and other applicable City, State, and federal regulations regarding construction and grading, the proposed project would have a less than significant impact.

[48] City of Fresno Planning and Development Department Building and Safety Services Division. 2021. Grading Plan Process. Website: https://www.fresno.gov/darm/wp-content/uploads/sites/10/2021/09/GRADING_PLAN_REQUIREMENTS_2021.pdf. Accessed July 6, 2022.

(ii) substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or off-site;

Less than significant impact. As previously discussed, future development under the Specific Plan could include ground-disturbing activities, which could change existing surface drainage patterns and increase the potential for flooding, particularly during storm events. Temporary, ground-disturbing construction activities that substantially compact the development site soils could increase runoff volumes that could result in flooding on or off the construction site.

Regulatory mechanisms in place that would reduce the impacts of construction activities on drainage patterns that could result in flooding on or off the construction site include compliance with the City's grading plan check process, the Storm Drainage and Flood Control Master Plan, and the NPDES Construction General Permit. Discussion of these regulatory processes is included in the previous section's discussion of erosion and siltation. Compliance with these required regulations would reduce the project construction impacts on drainage patterns and flooding on and off the construction site to less than significant levels.

Operationally, future development under the proposed project has the potential to increase the amount of paved, impervious surfaces within the Specific Plan Area. However, development proposed in the Specific Plan is less than what was contemplated by the General Plan and is therefore consistent with the stormwater rates and volumes anticipated in the General Plan.

Objective NS-3 and Policies NS-3-a, NS-3-b, NS-3-e, NS-3-h, and NS-3-i of the approved General Plan were designed to reduce flooding impacts. Implementation of the grading plan check process, and compliance with General Plan policies would ensure that surface runoff and long-term project flooding impacts associated with alteration of grading patterns are less than significant.

(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

Less than significant impact. Continued implementation of the General Plan is projected to increase the impervious surface area within the City and its SOI. The proposed project would redevelop a number of vacant parcels to other uses. While the proposed project has the potential to increase impervious surface and, as such, increase the amount of stormwater runoff, development consistent with the proposed project would reduce the total amount of development in the Specific Plan Area compared to what was contemplated by the General Plan. FMFCD has identified potential areas for mitigation within the Specific Plan Area. Individual future developments would comply with project mitigation as required by the General Plan and FMFCD.

Additionally, the proposed project includes future storm drain improvements in California Avenue between Cedar and Chestnut Avenues and the detention basin to the south of the Specific Plan Area. A 25-foot-wide storm drain easement shall be dedicated by APNs 480-080-03 and -05 (along California Avenue west of Chestnut Avenue) at such time as development occurs for a future 36-inch storm drain

pipeline. No encroachments into the easement would be permitted, including, but not limited to, foundations, roof overhangs, swimming pools, and trees.

Participation in the NPDES Permit process would reduce impacts to surface waters to acceptable levels, and long-term project impacts to surface or groundwater quality would not exceed acceptable levels. Continued implementation of the approved General Plan Policies NS-3-a, NS-3-b, NS-3-e, NS-3-h, NS-3-i, and POSS-6-b, along with preparation, implementation, and participation in the NPDES Permit process, would reduce project-specific impacts on water quality associated with the significant increase in stormwater runoff. Additionally, Chapter 6, Article 7, Urban Storm Water Quality Management and Discharge Control, of the Fresno Municipal Code establishes provisions regarding stormwater discharges to ensure the health, safety, and general welfare of citizens and protect the water quality of watercourses and water bodies by reducing pollutants in urban stormwater discharges to the maximum extent practicable and by effectively prohibiting non- stormwater discharges to the storm drain system.[49] Because development associated with the proposed project would result in less development within the Specific Plan Area as compared to what was considered in the General Plan, and future development would comply with General Plan policies and the NPDES Permit requirements, the proposed project would have a less than significant impact on stormwater drainage system capacity or stormwater quality.

(iv) impede or redirect flood flows?

Less than significant impact. Constructing buildings in floodplains puts those structures in danger of repeated flooding.

FEMA prepares Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs) to map flood zones in order to assist communities with floodplain management regulations and flood insurance requirements. FEMA has prepared multiple FIRMs for the City that show floodplain zones throughout Fresno and surrounding areas. According to the FIRMs that include the Specific Plan Area, the Specific Plan Area is not located in an area that has been identified as a 100-year flood zone. Additionally, implementation of the approved General Plan includes Objective NS-3 and Policies NS-3-a, NS-3-b, NS-3-f, and NS-3-h through NS-3-m to address potential flood impacts. Compliance with federal, State, and local regulations and requirements to prevent development within the 100-year floodplain would reduce impacts to a less than significant level. Thus, the proposed project would have a less than significant impact on flood flows.

d) In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk release of pollutants due to project inundation?

Less than significant impact. As discussed above, the Specific Plan Area is not located in a 100-year flood zone and is not within a Tsunami Emergency Response Planning Zone. A seiche is a "standing" wave oscillating in a body of water. This phenomenon occurs in large bodies of water such as bays and lakes. A seiche may occur in any semi- or fully enclosed body of water. They can be caused by strong

[49] City of Fresno. 2022. Fresno Municipal Code. Chapter 6 Municipal Services and Utilities, Article 7, Urban Storm Water Quality Management and Discharge Control.

winds and earthquakes.[50] The nearest body of water capable of producing a seiche is Big Dry Creek Dam and Reservoir, over 9 miles northeast of the Specific Plan Area. Implementation of the Specific Plan would not introduce new land uses near the reservoir that could be inundated. Additionally, this is a relatively small reservoir, and it would not be subject to strong oscillations during an earthquake event. Further, the Noise and Safety Element of the approved General Plan includes Objective NS-2 and Policies NS-2-a, NS-2-b, and NS-2-d that would minimize potentially hazardous conditions posed by geologic and soils risks. Therefore, the proposed project would have a less than significant impact with respect to release of pollutants due to project inundation in flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones. Impacts would be less than significant.

e) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan?

Less than significant impact. As previously discussed, the Specific Plan Area is within the jurisdiction of the NKGSA. In November 2019, the NKGSA adopted the North Kings Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP) with the sustainability goal to ensure that by 2040, the Kings Groundwater Subbasin is being managed in a sustainable manner to maintain a reliable water supply by balancing water demand with available water supply. The North Kings GSP determined that the NKGSA will reach sustainability by 2040 if groundwater flows from within the NKGSA to neighboring Groundwater Sustainability Agencies (GSAs) and basins are reduced, and projects are developed to mitigate present and future projected impacts.[51] Implementation of the Specific Plan would not conflict with or obstruct implementation of projects and management actions included in the North Kings GSP. Furthermore, development under the proposed project would be required to comply with the NPDES program and other local requirements, ensuring that impacts related to consistency with a water quality control plan or groundwater management plan would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

[50] National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). 2022. What is a seiche? Website: https://oceanservice.noaa.gov/facts/seiche.html. Accessed September 6, 2022.

[51] North Kings Groundwater Sustainability Agency (NKGSA). 2019. Groundwater Sustainability Plan. November 21.

Environmental Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
2.11 Land Use and Planning *Would the project:*				
a) Physically divide an established community?	☐	☐	☒	☐
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?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Environmental Evaluation

Introduction

As noted in the Project Description, the land use designations of the Specific Plan are consistent with the General Plan buildout assumptions; however, this Specific Plan proposes changing the land use designation for some of the Specific Plan Area's parcels, which would require the General Plan Land Use map to be amended. These proposed land use designation changes would reduce the total amount of development compared to what was contemplated by the General Plan for the Specific Plan Area.

Environmental Setting

The overall purpose of the Specific Plan is to refine the vision for the Specific Plan Area established in the General Plan. As previously discussed, the Specific Plan includes proposed land use changes that would reclassify some parcels to match uses currently on the ground that are likely to remain for the foreseeable future. These changes would facilitate revitalization of vacant lands or facilities along the Cesar Chavez Corridor, reduce oversized parking lots near the Maple and Butler intersection, and develop publicly controlled underutilized land near the Cedar Avenue and California Avenue intersection. The Specific Plan would also create higher intensity mixed-use infill along priority corridors and at key opportunity sites, strengthen neighborhoods that provide a range of office types, and include office, clean tech, and other non-nuisance employment generating uses that provide a buffer between industrial neighborhoods.

The Specific Plan Area sits on 2,067 acres of land. While the proposed project increases the amount of land designated for Residential–Medium Density, Residential–Medium High Density, Employment–Office, and Public Facility, development consistent with the proposed project would reduce the total amount of the development in the Specific Plan Area compared to what was contemplated by the General Plan.

Would the project:

a) Physically divide an established community?

Less than significant impact. The physical division of an established community typically refers to the construction of a linear feature, such as an interstate highway or railroad tracks, or removal of a means of access, such as a local bridge that would impact mobility within an existing community or between a community and outlying area. The Specific Plan does not contemplate or authorize any such physical changes to an established community.

As discussed in Section 1, Project Description, the proposed project increases the amount of land designated for medium density residential, office uses, and public facilities and reduces the amount of land designated for commercial and industrial uses as well as vacant land. The Specific Plan does not propose or approve specific development; rather, the Specific Plan provides a framework for the cohesive development of the Specific Plan Area. In addition, the Specific Plan includes general goals and policies which will regulate future development. Implementation of the proposed project would allow for planned development and growth while promoting the emergence of new communities.

The proposed project would not alter development patterns or activities and would not include the addition of new roadways, which precludes the possibility of dividing an established community. Therefore, the proposed project would not physically divide an established community and impacts would be less than significant.

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?

Less than significant impact. A significant impact would occur if the proposed project would conflict with various federal, State, and local plans, policies, and regulations. While the proposed project increases the amount of land designated for Residential – Medium Density, Residential – Medium High Density, Employment – Office and Public Facility, development consistent with the proposed project would reduce the total amount of development in the Specific Plan Area compared to what was contemplated by the General Plan. The proposed project would be consistent with the General Plan; therefore, it would be consistent with various federal, State, and local plans, policies, and regulations. Therefore, potential conflicts with land use plans, policies, and regulations would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

Environmental Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
2.12 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?	☐	☐	☒	☐
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?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Environmental Evaluation

Introduction

As noted in the Project Description, the land use designations of the Specific Plan are consistent with the General Plan buildout assumptions; however, this Specific Plan proposes changing the land use designation for some of the Specific Plan Area's parcels, which would require the General Plan Land Use map to be amended. These proposed land use designation changes would reduce the total amount of development compared to what was contemplated by the General Plan for the Specific Plan Area.

Environmental Setting

The Surface Mining and Reclamation Act of 1975 (SMARA) is the primary California law concerning mineral resources, including sand, gravel, and building stone which are important for commercial purposes. Because of the economic importance of mineral resources, SMARA limits new development in areas with significant mineral deposits. SMARA also requires State Geologists to classify specified areas into Mineral Resource Zones (MRZs). According to the General Plan, most areas outside of the San Joaquin and Kings River Resource Areas have been designated as MRZ-3 by the California Department of Conservation Division of Mines and Geology (CDMG). The Specific Plan Area is located in an area designated as MRZ-3.[52] The MRZ-3 designation represents areas that may contain, but are not proven to contain, economically recoverable mineral resources. The Specific Plan Area is not designated as an area of significant mineral deposits, but it is approximately 8.19 miles southeast of MRZ-1 and MRZ-2 areas located along the San Joaquin River Corridor containing known mineral occurrences of undetermined mineral resource significance.[53] The MRZ-1 designation represents an area where adequate information indicates that no significant mineral deposits are present, or where

[52] Fresno County. 2000. Fresno County General Plan Background Report, Figure 7-9 Generalized Mineral Resource Zone Classification Website:https://www.fresnocountyca.gov/files/sharedassets/county/v/1/vision-files/files/8398-background_report_june04.pdf. Accessed December 31, 2024. .

[53] Fresno County. 2000. Fresno County General Plan Background Report, Figure 7-10 Mineral Resource Zone Designated Lan Along San Joaquin River. Website:https://www.fresnocountyca.gov/files/sharedassets/county/v/1/vision-files/files/8398-background_report_june04.pdf. Accessed January 16, 2025. .

it is judged that little likelihood exists for their presence. The MRZ-2 designation represents areas where adequate information indicates that significant mineral deposits are present, or where it is judged that a high liklihood exists for their presence. There are no mineral resource recovery sites within the Specific Plan Area, which is located to the east and southeast of Downtown Fresno, and is surrounded by urbanized areas as well as unincorporated County agricultural lands to the east. According to the Fresno County General Plan, the Kings River area is another area rich with mineral deposits and that is currently being used for mining operations and mineral extraction, with lands in the area primarily classified as MRZ-2.[54] The Kings River is approximately 11.30 miles east of the Specific Plan Area.

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?

Less than significant impact. As described above, the Specific Plan Area is not designated as an area of significant mineral deposits, indicating that no significant mineral resources are present. While areas to the north and east of the Specific Plan Area are classified as MRZ-2 (where known mineral occurrences of undetermined mineral resource significance are present), the Specific Plan Area is already developed and surrounded by urban and agricultural land use so future mineral deposit designations would not affect development. Therefore, development of the proposed project would not result in the loss of availability of known mineral resources and impacts would be less than significant.

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?

Less than significant impact. The Specific Plan Area is on developed land to the east and southeast of Downtown Fresno and as described above, there are no mineral resource recovery sites within the Specific Plan Area. The Specific Plan Area is not designated as an area of significant mineral deposition and is already developed and surrounded by urban and agricultural land uses, so future mineral deposit designations would not affect development. Additionally, as described above, areas to the north and east of the Specific Plan Area are designated MRZ-2 and are located along the San Joaquin River and Kings River. Any future development within the Specific Plan Area would comply with General Plan objectives and policies, including Objective RC-10 which aims to conserve aggregate mineral resources identified by the Division of Mines and Geology. Furthermore, development consistent with the proposed project would reduce the total amount of development in the Specific Plan Area compared to what was contemplated by the General Plan. Therefore, implementation of the proposed plan would not result in the loss of availability of a locally important mineral resource recovery site, and impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

[54] Fresno County. 2000. Fresno County General Plan Background Report, Pages 7-64 to 7-66. Website: https://www.fresnocountyca.gov/files/sharedassets/county/v/1/vision-files/files/8398-background_report_june04.pdf. Accessed January 16, 2025.

Environmental Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
2.13 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?	☐	☒	☐	☐
b) Generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?	☐	☒	☐	☐
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?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Environmental Evaluation

Introduction

As noted in the Project Description, the land use designations of the Specific Plan are consistent with the General Plan buildout assumptions; however, this Specific Plan proposes changing the land use designation for some of the Specific Plan Area's parcels, which would require the General Plan Land Use map to be amended. These proposed land use designation changes would reduce the total amount of development compared to what was contemplated by the General Plan for the Specific Plan Area.

Setting

Noise is defined as unwanted sound. Sound levels are usually measured and expressed in decibels (dB), with 0 dB corresponding roughly to the threshold of hearing. Most of the sounds that we hear in the environment do not consist of a single frequency, but rather a broad band of frequencies, with each frequency differing in sound level. The intensities of each frequency add together to generate a sound. Noise is typically generated by transportation, specific land uses, and ongoing human activity.

The standard unit of measurement of the loudness of sound is the dB. The 0 point on the dB scale is based on the lowest sound level that the healthy, unimpaired human ear can detect. Changes of 3 dB or less are only perceptible in laboratory environments. A change of 3 dB is the lowest change that can be perceptible to the human ear in outdoor environments, while a change of 5 dBA is considered to be the minimum readily perceptible change to the human ear in outdoor environments.

Since the human ear is not equally sensitive to sound at all frequencies, the dBA was derived to relate noise to the sensitivity of humans, as it gives greater weight to the frequencies of sound to which the human ear is most sensitive. The A-weighted sound level is the basis for a number of various sound level metrics, including the L_{dn} and the CNEL, both of which represent how humans are more sensitive to sound at night. In addition, the L_{eq} is the average sound energy of time-varying noise over a sample period and the L_{max} is the maximum instantaneous noise level occurring over a sample period.

Regulatory Framework

Fresno General Plan

The following are the General Plan noise policies applicable to the proposed project:

Policy NS–1–a Desirable and Generally Acceptable Exterior Noise Environment. Establish 65 dBA L_{dn} or CNEL as the standard for the desirable maximum average exterior noise levels for defined usable exterior areas of residential and noise-sensitive uses for noise but designate 60 dBA L_{dn} or CNEL (measured at the property line) for noise generated by stationary sources impinging upon residential and noise-sensitive uses. Maintain 65 dBA L_{dn} or CNEL as the maximum average exterior noise levels for non-sensitive commercial land uses and maintain 70 dBA L_{dn} or CNEL as maximum average exterior noise level for industrial land uses, both to be measured at the property line of parcels where noise is generated which may impinge on neighboring properties.

Policy NS–1–b Conditionally Acceptable Exterior Noise Exposure Range. Establish the conditionally acceptable noise exposure level range for residential and other noise-sensitive uses to be 65 dBA L_{dn} or require appropriate noise reducing mitigation measures as determined by a site-specific acoustical analysis to comply with the desirable and conditionally acceptable exterior noise level and the required interior noise level standards set in Table 9–2 [Table 13].

Policy NS–1–c Generally Unacceptable Exterior Noise Exposure Range. Establish the exterior noise exposure of greater than 65 dBA L_{dn} or CNEL to be generally unacceptable for residential and other noise-sensitive uses for noise generated by sources in Policy NS–1–a, and study alternative less noise-sensitive uses for these areas if otherwise appropriate. Require appropriate noise reducing mitigation measures as determined by a site-specific acoustical analysis to comply with the generally desirable or generally acceptable exterior noise level and the required 45 dBA interior noise level standards set in Table 9–2 [Table 13] as conditions of permit approval.

Policy NS–1–f Performance Standards. Implement performance standards for noise reduction for new residential and noise-sensitive uses exposed to exterior community noise levels from transportation sources above 65 dBA L_{dn} or CNEL, as shown on Figure NS–3: Future Noise Contours, or as identified by a project-specific acoustical analysis based on the target acceptable noise levels set in Table 9–2 [Table 13] and Policies NS–1–a through NS–1–c.

Policy NS–1–l Mitigation by New Development. Require an acoustic analysis where new development of industrial, commercial or other noise generating land uses (including transportation facilities such as roadways, railroads, and airports) may result in noise levels that exceed the noise level exposure criteria established by Tables 9–2 and 9–3 [Table 13 and Table 14] to determine impacts, and require developers to mitigate these impacts in conformance with Tables 9–2 and 9–3 [Table 13 and Table 14] as a condition of permit approval through appropriate means. Noise mitigation measures may include:

- The screening of noise sources such as parking and loading facilities, outdoor activities, and mechanical equipment.
- Providing increased setbacks for noise sources from adjacent dwellings.
- Installation of walls and landscaping that serve as noise buffers.
- Installation of soundproofing materials and double–glazed windows.
- Regulating operations, such as hours of operation, including deliveries and trash pickup.
- Alternative acoustical designs that achieve the prescribed noise level reduction may be approved by the City, 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 roadways when compatible with aesthetic concerns and neighborhood character. This would be a developer responsibility, with no City funding.

Policy NS–1–j Significance Threshold. Establish, as a threshold of significance for the City's environmental review process, that a significant increase in ambient noise levels is assumed if the project would increase noise levels in the immediate vicinity by 3 dBA L_{dn} or CNEL or more above the ambient noise limits established in this General Plan Update.

Policy NS–1–o Sound Wall Guidelines. Acoustical studies and noise mitigation measures for projects shall specify the heights, materials, and design for sound walls and other noise barriers. Aesthetic considerations shall also be addressed in these studies and mitigation measures such as variable noise barrier heights, a combination of a landscaped berm with wall, and reduced barrier height in combination with increased distance or elevation differences between noise source and noise receptor, with a maximum allowable height of 15 feet. The City will develop guidelines for aesthetic design measures of sound walls, and may commission area wide noise mitigation studies that can serve as templates for acoustical treatment that can be applied to similar situations in the urban area.

Table 13: Transportation (Non-aircraft) Noise Source

Noise-Sensitive Land Use[1]	Outdoor Activity Areas[2] CNEL/L_{dn} dB	Interior Spaces	
		CNEL/L_{dn} dB	CNEL/L_{dn} dB[3]
Residential	65	45	—
Transient Lodging	65	45	—
Hospitals, Nursing Homes	65	45	—
Theaters, Auditoriums, Music Halls	—	—	35
Churches, Meeting Halls	65	—	45
Office Buildings	—	—	45
Schools, Libraries, Museums	—	—	45

Notes:
CNEL = Community Noise Equivalent Level
dB = decibel
L_{dn} = day/night average sound level
[1] Where the location of outdoor activity areas is unknown or is not applicable, the exterior noise level standard shall be applied to the property line of the receiving land use.
[2] As determined for a typical worst–case hour during periods of use.
[3] As determined for a typical worst–case hour during periods of use.
Source: Fresno General Plan, Noise and Safety Element. 2014.

Table 14: Stationary Noise Sources

Category	Daytime (7:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.)	Nighttime (10:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m.)
Hourly Equivalent Sound Level (L_{eq}), dB	50	45
Maximum Sound Level (L_{max}), dB	70	65

Notes:
dB = decibel
L_{dn} = day/night average sound level
L_{max} = maximum noise/sound level
[1] The Department of Development and Resource Management Director, on a case-by-case basis, may designate land uses other than those shown in this table to be noise-sensitive and may require appropriate noise mitigation measures.
[2] As determined at outdoor activity areas. Where the location of outdoor activity areas is unknown or not applicable, the noise exposure standard shall be applied at the property line of the receiving land use. When ambient noise levels exceed or equal the levels in this table, mitigation shall only be required to limit noise to the ambient plus 5 dB.
Source: Fresno General Plan, Noise and Safety Element. 2014.

City of Fresno Municipal Code

Chapter 10, Article 1 (Noise Regulations), of the Fresno Municipal Code establishes excessive noise guidelines and exemptions. The following portions of the Municipal Code are applicable to the proposed project:

SEC. 10–102: Definitions

(b) Ambient Noise. "Ambient noise" is the all–encompassing noise associated with a given environment, being usually a composite of sounds from many sources near and far. For the purpose of this ordinance, ambient noise level is the level obtained when the noise level is averaged over a period of 15 minutes, without inclusion of the offending noise, at the location and time of day at which a comparison with the offending noise is to be made as shown on Table 7 [Table 15]. Where the ambient noise level is less than that designated in this section, however, the noise level specified herein shall be deemed to be the ambient noise level for that location.

Table 15: Ambient Noise Levels

District	Time	Sound Level Decibels
Residential	10:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m.	50
Residential	7:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.	55
Residential	7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.	60
Commercial	10:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m.	60
Commercial	7:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.	65
Industrial	anytime	70

Chapter 15, Article 25 (Performance Standards), of the Fresno Municipal Code establishes noise and vibration performance standards. The following portions of the Municipal Code are applicable to the proposed project:

SEC. 15–2506 Noise

The provisions of this section apply to noise sources resulting from and relating to new development or the expansion of a use or activity. Section 15–2506 establishes noise exposure thresholds from transportation–related noise sources for new noise-sensitive land use development. The maximum allowable exterior noise level for noise-sensitive land uses is 65 dBA L_{dn}/CNEL, and the maximum allowable interior noise level for noise-sensitive land uses is 45 dBA L_{eq}.

Section 15–2506 also establishes land use compatibility standards for new development proposed near transportation noise sources. For example, environments with traffic noise levels ranging up to 65 dBA L_{dn}/CNEL are considered satisfactory for new residential or similar noise-sensitive land use development and may be permitted without requiring noise attenuation. Environments with traffic noise levels between 65 dBA and 70 dBA CNEL would require analysis and integration of noise reduction measures in the project design. Environments with traffic noise levels between 70 dBA and 75 dBA CNEL would require a site-specific acoustical study

and implementation of noise attenuation measures. Environments with traffic noise levels above 75 dBA CNEL are not acceptable for new residential or similar noise-sensitive development.

Section 15–2506 further establishes noise performance standards for stationary noise sources. The daytime noise performance standards are 50 dBA L_{eq} (hourly) and 70 dBA L_{max}; and the nighttime standards are 45 dBA L_{eq} (hourly) and 60 dBA L_{max}.

SEC. 15–2507 Vibration

No vibration shall be produced that is transmitted through the ground and is discernible without the aid of instruments by a reasonable person at the lot lines of the site. Vibrations from temporary construction, demolition, and vehicles that enter and leave the subject parcel (e.g., construction equipment, trains, trucks, etc.) are exempt from this standard.

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?

Less than significant with mitigation incorporated. The analysis below discusses both potential construction and operational noise impacts.

Temporary Construction Noise Impacts

A significant impact would occur if project-related, noise-producing construction activities result in a substantial temporary increase in ambient noise levels in excess of the established standards. The City's Noise Ordinance identifies that construction, repair, or remodeling work accomplished pursuant to a building, electrical, plumbing, mechanical, or other construction permit issued by the City or other governmental agency, or by site preparation and grading, are exempt from the noise performance standards of the Noise Ordinance provided such work takes place between the hours of 7:00 a.m. and 10:00 p.m. on any day except Sunday.

Development that could occur from implementation of the Specific Plan is expected to result in construction activities within the Specific Plan Area. Noise impacts from construction activities would be a function of the noise generated by construction equipment, equipment location, sensitivity of nearby land uses, and the timing and duration of the construction activities.

For future development projects, temporary short-term noise impacts are related to noise generated during site preparation, grading, and construction activities. Construction is performed in discrete steps, each of which has its own mix of equipment and, consequently, its own noise characteristics. These various sequential phases would change the character of the noise generated on-site. Thus, the noise levels vary as construction progresses. Despite the variety in the types and sizes of construction

equipment, similarities in the dominant noise sources and patterns of operation allow construction noise ranges to be categorized by work phase.

The site preparation phase, which includes excavation and grading activities, generates the highest noise levels because the noisiest construction equipment is earthmoving equipment. Earthmoving equipment includes excavating machinery and compacting equipment, such as bulldozers, draglines, backhoes, front loaders, roller compactors, scrapers, and graders. Typical operating cycles for these types of construction equipment may involve 1 or 2 minutes of full power operation followed by 3 or 4 minutes at lower power settings.

Development projects that could occur with implementation of the Specific Plan would be expected to require the use of some of the loudest pieces of construction equipment. For example, the maximum noise level generated by bulldozers would generate 85 dBA L_{max} at 25 feet, the maximum noise level generated by graders is approximately 85 dBA L_{max} at 25 feet, and large vibratory rollers produce noise levels of up to 85 dBA L_{max} at 25 feet. Each doubling of sound sources with equal strength increases the noise level by 3 dBA. Assuming that each piece of construction equipment operates at some distance from the other equipment, a reasonable worst–case combined noise level during this phase of construction would be 90 dBA L_{max} at a distance of 50 feet from the acoustical center of a construction area. This would result in a reasonable worst–case hourly average of 86 dBA L_{eq}. The acoustical center reference is used because construction equipment must operate at some distance from one another on a project site and the combined noise level as measured at a point equidistant from multiple sources operating simultaneously would represent the worst–case noise levels.

There are no site-specific development plans; however, project development in the Specific Plan Area could result in the potential for relatively high single event construction noise resulting in temporary substantial increases in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of an active construction site, potentially resulting in exceedance of the City's established construction noise standards. As noted previously, the City's Noise Ordinance identifies that construction, repair, or remodeling work accomplished pursuant to a building, electrical, plumbing, mechanical, or other construction permit issued by the City or other governmental agency, or to site preparation and grading, are exempt from the noise performance standards of the Noise Ordinance provided such work takes place between the hours of 7:00 a.m. and 10:00 p.m. on any day except Sunday.

Therefore, mitigation is required to reduce this potential impact. Restrictions on permissible hours of construction and requirements to prepare a construction noise mitigation plan that includes implementation of best management noise reduction measures, would ensure that potential temporary construction noise impacts would comply with the City's construction noise standards and these temporary construction noise impacts would be reduced to less than significant.

Therefore, implementation of MM NOI–1a and MM NOI–1b, would ensure that temporary construction noise impacts would be reduced to less than significant.

Operational Mobile Source Noise Impacts

A significant impact would occur if project–generated traffic would result in a substantial increase in ambient noise levels compared with those that would exist without the proposed project. The City

does not define "substantial increase" or specific thresholds related to mobile source noise impacts; therefore, for purposes of this analysis, a substantial increase is based on the following criteria. A characteristic of noise is that audible increases in noise levels generally refer to a change of 3 dBA or more as this level has been found to be barely perceptible to the human ear in outdoor environments. A change of 5 dBA is considered the minimum readily perceptible change to the human ear in outdoor environments. Therefore, for purposes of this analysis, a significant impact would occur if the proposed project would cause the CNEL to increase by any of the following:

- 5 dBA or more even if the CNEL would remain below normally acceptable levels for a receiving land use.
- 3 dBA or more, thereby causing the CNEL to exceed normally acceptable levels for a receiving land use.

A characteristic of noise is that a doubling of sound sources with equal strength is required to result in a perceptible increase (defined to be a 3 dBA or greater) in noise levels. As is identified in the Final Traffic Study (see Appendix E) prepared by Stantec for this project, the Specific Plan would not result in any changes to the roadway segment peak-hour levels of service. In addition, the anticipated trip generation with implementation of the Specific Plan would result in a reduction of 8,102 total average daily trips compared to the trips that would be generated with development anticipated under the General Plan. Development consistent with the proposed project would reduce the total amount of development in the Specific Plan Area compared to what was contemplated by the General Plan. Therefore, implementation of the Specific Plan would not result in any increase in traffic noise levels compared to the traffic noise levels that will occur with the level of development anticipated under the General Plan. Therefore, project-related traffic noise impacts on off-site receptors would be less than significant.

Operational Stationary Source Noise Impacts

A significant impact would occur if operational noise levels generated by stationary noise sources associated with development projects within the Specific Plan Area would exceed the noise performance standards of Section 15–2506 of the Municipal Code.

Development projects that could occur with implementation of the Specific Plan would include new stationary noise sources. These stationary noise sources could involve a wide spectrum of uses and activities, including various industrial uses, commercial operations, agricultural production, school playgrounds, high school football games and marching bands, HVAC units, generators, lawn maintenance equipment, and swimming pool pumps. These would be potential point sources of noise that could affect noise-sensitive receptors in the Specific Plan Area.

Typical maximum noise levels from truck loading and unloading activity are 65 dBA to 75 dBA L_{max} as measured at 50 feet. These maximum noise levels include noise from associated truck loading/unloading activities, including maneuvering, trailer loading and unloading, backup alarms or beepers, and docking noise. Parking activities including vehicles cruising at slow speeds, doors shutting, or cars starting, would generate noise levels of approximately 60 dBA to 70 dBA L_{max} at 50 feet. Current market-available residential mechanical ventilation equipment has rated operational

noise levels up to 70 dBA L_{eq} at a distance of 3 feet. Current market-available commercial grade mechanical ventilation equipment is rated as having operational noise levels up to 80 dBA L_{eq} at 3 feet from the operating equipment.

These stationary source operational noise levels could exceed the City's noise performance thresholds if they were to occur in areas adjacent to sensitive receptor land uses. Therefore, mitigation would be required to reduce this potential impact. Operational activity noise levels can be mitigated either at the source or at the receiving land use using setbacks, soundwalls, acoustic–rated windows, or by siting loading/parking areas on sides of buildings opposite sensitive receptors (using buildings as shielding). For example, at a distance of 300 feet, unobstructed truck loading activity noise levels would attenuate to below 60 dBA L_{max}, while properly sited structural shielding (building or sound wall) can provide 15 dBA or greater additional noise reduction.

Therefore, implementation of MM NOI–1c, which requires preparation of a stationary source noise reduction plan to identify appropriate design measures, where required, would ensure stationary source operational noise impacts generated by future development projects would be reduced to less than significant.

b) Generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?

Less than significant impact with mitigation incorporated. This section analyzes both construction and operational groundborne vibration impacts. The City prohibits groundborne vibration that is discernible without the aid of instruments by a reasonable person at the lot lines of the site; however, vibrations from temporary construction activities are exempt from this standard. Therefore, for purposes of this analysis, the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) vibration impact criteria are utilized to analyze construction vibration impacts. The FTA has established industry accepted standards for vibration impact criteria and impact assessment. These guidelines are published in its Transit Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment Manual.

A significant impact would occur if existing structures at the project site or in the project vicinity would be exposed to groundborne vibration levels in excess of levels established by the FTA's Construction Vibration Impact Criteria. Development of the Specific Plan would require the use of construction equipment which are vibration generators.

Short-term Construction Vibration Impacts to Off-site Receptors

Construction activity can result in varying degrees of ground vibration, depending on the equipment used on the site. Operation of construction equipment causes ground vibrations that spread through the ground and diminish in strength with distance. Buildings in the vicinity of a construction site respond to these vibrations with varying results ranging from no perceptible effects at the low levels to slight damage at the highest levels.

Of the variety of equipment used during construction, impact pile drivers that could be used in the site preparation phase of construction would produce the greatest groundborne vibration levels. Impact pile drivers produce groundborne vibration levels ranging up to 0.644 inch per second (in/sec) peak particle velocity (PPV) at 25 feet from the operating equipment. The heaviest type of mobile

equipment that would produce the highest vibration levels would be a large vibratory roller producing groundborne vibration levels ranging up to 0.201 in/sec PPV as measured at 25 feet.

However, implementation of MM NOI-2, which requires preparation of a Construction Vibration Reduction Plan for any nearby structure, would ensure that these vibration level impacts generated by future development projects would be reduced to a less than significant impact. Furthermore, development consistent with the proposed project would reduce the total amount of development in the Specific Plan Area compared to what was contemplated by the General Plan. Therefore, with implementation of MM NOI-2, construction vibration impacts generated by future development projects would be reduced to a less than significant impact.

Operational Vibration Impacts

Based on the proposed types of land uses of the Specific Plan, future related development projects are not anticipated to include any permanent sources of vibration that would expose persons in the project vicinity to excessive groundborne vibration levels, and development consistent with the proposed project would reduce the total amount of development in the Specific Plan Area compared to what was contemplated by the General Plan. In addition, there are no existing significant permanent sources of groundborne vibration located within the Specific Plan development area to which future development projects would be exposed. Therefore, project operational groundborne vibration level impacts would be considered less than significant.

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?

No impact. The Fresno Yosemite International Airport is located approximately 1.34 miles northeast of the Plan Area. At this distance, the entire Specific Plan Area is located outside of the airport's 65 dBA CNEL noise contours. Therefore, implementation of the project would not expose persons residing or working in the Plan Area to noise levels from airport activity that would be in excess of normally acceptable standards. Therefore, no impact would occur.

Mitigation Measures

MM NOI–1a **Construction Activity Hours Restriction.** Construction activity which requires a permit issued by the City of Fresno shall be limited to the hours between 7:00 a.m. and 10:00 p.m. on weekdays and Saturdays. Any construction activity outside of these hours must comply with the City's noise performance standards of Section 15.2506 of the Municipal Code.

MM NOI–1b **Construction Noise Reduction Plan.** Prior to the issuance of demolition, grading, and/or construction permits, applicants for individual development projects within 500 feet of noise-sensitive receptors (e.g., residences, hospitals, schools) shall conduct a project-level construction noise analysis to evaluate potential impacts on sensitive receptors. The analysis shall be conducted once the final construction equipment list that will be used for demolition and grading activities is determined.

The project-level noise analysis shall be prepared, reviewed, and approved by the City of Fresno Planning and Development Department Director. If the analysis determines that demolition and construction activities would result in an impact to identified noise-sensitive receptors, then specific measures to attenuate the noise impact shall be outlined in the analysis and reviewed and approved by the City of Fresno Planning and Development Department Director. Specific measures may include, but are not limited to, the following Best Management Practices (BMPs):

- Post a construction site notice near the construction site access point or in an area that is clearly visible to the public. The notice shall include the following: job site address; permit number, name, and phone number of the contractor and owner; dates and duration of construction activities; construction hours allowed; and the City of Fresno Planning and Development Department Director and construction contractor phone numbers where noise complaints can be reported and logged.
- Consider the installation of temporary sound barriers for construction activities immediately adjacent to occupied noise-sensitive structures.
- Restrict haul routes and construction-related traffic to the least noise-sensitive times of the day.
- Reduce non–essential idling of construction equipment to no more than 5 minutes.
- Ensure that all construction equipment is monitored and properly maintained in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations to minimize noise.
- Fit all construction equipment with properly operating mufflers, air intake silencers, and engine shrouds, no less effective than as originally equipped by the manufacturer, to minimize noise emissions.
- If construction equipment is equipped with back–up alarm shut offs, switch off back–up alarms and replace with human spotters, as feasible.
- Stationary equipment (such as generators and air compressors) and equipment maintenance and staging areas shall be located as far from existing noise-sensitive land uses, as feasible.
- To the extent feasible, use acoustic enclosures, shields, or shrouds for stationary equipment such as compressors and pumps.
- Shut off generators when generators are not needed.
- Coordinate deliveries to reduce the potential of trucks waiting to unload and idling for long periods of time.
- Grade surface irregularities on construction sites to prevent potholes from causing vehicular noise.
- Minimize the use of impact devices such as jackhammers, pavement breakers, and hoe rams. Where possible, use concrete crushers or pavement saws rather than hoe rams for tasks such as concrete or asphalt demolition and removal.
- The final noise reduction measures to be implemented and their associated details shall be determined by the construction–level noise analysis. The final noise reduction measures shall be included on all construction and building documents and/or construction management plans and submitted for verification to the City; implemented by the construction contractor through the duration of the construction phase; and discussed at the pre-demolition, -grade, and/or –construction meetings.

MM NOI–1c **Stationary Noise Source Noise Reduction Plan.** Prior to issuance of building permits, the property owner/developer shall be responsible for implementing the following measures to limit operational stationary noise source impacts:

- Any proposed development projects that include unshielded parking areas within 175 feet, or unshielded truck loading docks within 300 feet, or unshielded mechanical ventilation equipment systems within 35 feet of a noise-sensitive receptor, shall demonstrate compliance with Municipal Code Section 15–2506 by submitting a site-specific acoustic study. These reports shall demonstrate that the project incorporates sufficient noise attenuation features, if needed, to meet the City of Fresno's exterior/interior noise performance standards. The individual project owner/developer shall submit the acoustic study to the Planning Director for review and approval. Upon approval by the City, the proposed acoustical design features shall be incorporated into the proposed development. Noise reduction design features may include, but are not limited to, locating stationary noise sources on the site to be shielded by structures (buildings, enclosures, or sound walls) or by using equipment that has a quieter rating.

MM NOI–2 **Construction Vibration Reduction Plan**

Prior to issuance of grading and/or building permits, a note shall be provided on grading and building plans indicating that during grading and construction the property owner/developer shall be responsible for requiring contractors to implement the following measures to limit construction-related vibration impacts:

- For any future development projects that would necessitate the use of pile driving within 200 feet of an off-site structure, the applicant shall submit a Construction Vibration Reduction Plan that identifies specific techniques, such as the depth and location of temporary trenching, that would reduce potential vibration impacts to less than significant for the impacted structure.
- For any future development projects that would necessitate the use of large vibratory rollers within 30 feet of an off-site structure, or the use of other heavy construction equipment within 15 feet of an off-site structure, the applicant shall submit a Construction Vibration Reduction Plan that identifies specific techniques, such as the depth and location of temporary trenching that would reduce potential vibration impacts to less than significant for the impacted structure.
- The individual project owner/developer shall submit the Construction Vibration Reduction Plan to the Planning and Development Department Director for review and approval prior to issuance of building permits. Upon approval by the City, the construction vibration reduction measures shall be incorporated into the construction documents.

Environmental Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
2.14 Population and Housing *Would the project:*				
a) Induce substantial unplanned population 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)?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b) Displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Environmental Evaluation

Introduction

As noted in the Project Description, the land use designations of the Specific Plan are consistent with the General Plan buildout assumptions; however, this Specific Plan proposes changing the land use designation for some of the Specific Plan Area's parcels, which would require the General Plan Land Use map to be amended. These proposed land use designation changes would reduce the total amount of development compared to what was contemplated by the General Plan for the Specific Plan Area.

Environmental Setting

The City experienced significant growth from 2000 to 2010, adding 6,700 residents per year, a population increase of 16 percent.[55] According to the California Department of Finance, the City of Fresno had a population of 542,206 as of April 1, 2020.[56] The Fresno General Plan projects that the City of Fresno will add 76,000 housing units for a total of 267,000 units and an additional 226,000 residents by buildout in 2035.[57]

The General Plan includes a range of policies designated to accommodate this future growth, including policies to enhance the character of neighborhoods and districts and provide a diversity of districts, neighborhoods, and housing types to meet the affordable housing needs of Fresno's communities. General Plan Goals UF-1-d and UF-1-e emphasize the opportunity for a diversity of districts, neighborhoods, and housing types. The City has also made significant efforts to support housing needs for low-income residents. General Plan Objective H-2 commits the City to assist in the development of adequate housing to meet the needs of extremely low-, very low-, low-, and moderate-income households.

[55] City of Fresno. 2014. Fresno General Plan, Introduction, page 1–23. Website: https://www.fresno.gov/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/upload_temp_Consolidated-GP-10-13-2022_compressed.pdf. Accessed December 31, 2024.
[56] California Department of Finance. 2020. Report E-5, Population and Housing Estimates for Cities, Counties, and the State. Website: https://dof.ca.gov/forecasting/demographics/estimates/e-5-population-and-housing-estimates-for-cities-counties-and-the-state-2020-2024/ Accessed December 31, 2024. .
[57] City of Fresno. 2014. Fresno General Plan, Introduction, page1–21. Website: https://www.fresno.gov/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/upload_temp_Consolidated-GP-10-13-2022_compressed.pdf. Accessed December 31, 2024.

Would the project:

a) Induce substantial unplanned population 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)?

Less than significant impact. Presently, the Specific Plan Area includes approximately 30,624 people, which is approximately 6.8 percent of the City's total population, and approximately 9,150 homes, which is approximately 4.8 percent of the City's housing units. At buildout of the proposed project, the Specific Plan Area could include up to approximately 18,849 homes; however, this number represents the maximum number of dwelling units permitted in the Specific Plan Area. The actual number of dwelling units at buildout would likely be less. Given the City's average household size of approximately 2.97 persons per household,[58] the Specific Plan Area is anticipated to have up to approximately 56,000 residents at buildout. Conservatively, the proposed project could increase the number of dwelling units in the Specific Plan Area by approximately 9,699 and increase the number of residents by approximately 28,806 people.

As previously discussed, the growth generated by the Specific Plan was anticipated by the General Plan. At its buildout, the General Plan anticipated that it would add 76,000 housing units for a total of 267,000 units and an additional 226,000 residents. The growth projected for the Specific Plan Area is within planned growth for the City. Furthermore, it is important to note that development consistent with the proposed project would reduce the total amount of the development in the Specific Plan Area compared to what was contemplated by the General Plan. Additionally, the proposed project does not propose any extension of roads or major infrastructure projects that would indirectly create unplanned growth. Thus, impacts would be less than signifcant.

b) Displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?

Less than significant impact. As discussed above, the proposed project would increase the number of homes in the Specific Plan Area by up to 9,699 dwelling units and increase the number of residents by approximately 28,806 people. Additionally, the proposed project would create a more diverse range of housing in the Specific Plan Area. Therefore, it would not result in the displacement of substantial numbers of existing people or housing. Moreover, development consistent with the proposed project would reduce the total amount of development in the Specific Plan Area compared to what was contemplated by the General Plan. As a result, the construction of replacement housing would not be necessary due to the development of a net increase of new housing units and potential impacts would be reduced to a less than significant level.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

[58] United States Census Bureau. 2020. QuickFacts: Fresno City, California. Website: https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fresnocitycalifornia. Accessed January 3, 2025.

Environmental Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
2.15 Public Services *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 other performance objectives for any of the public services:*				
a) Fire protection?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b) Police protection?	☐	☐	☒	☐
c) Schools?	☐	☐	☒	☐
d) Parks?	☐	☐	☒	☐
e) Other public facilities?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Environmental Evaluation

Introduction

As noted in the Project Description, the land use designations of the Specific Plan are consistent with the General Plan buildout assumptions; however, this Specific Plan proposes changing the land use designation for some of the Specific Plan Area's parcels, which would require the General Plan Land Use map to be amended. These proposed land use designation changes would reduce the total amount of development compared to what was contemplated by the General Plan for the Specific Plan Area.

Environmental Setting

The City provides public facilities and services to its residents that will support existing and future development. Public services include fire and police protection, education, parks and recreation, and other public facilities such as libraries.

Fire Protection

The FFD provides the following services within the City limits: fire prevention, fire suppression, hazardous material mitigation, rescue, and emergency medical services. The FFD serves a population of more than 540,000 in the City and the Fig Garden Fire Protection District (over 128 square miles) with 21 fire stations, including the Airport Rescue Fire Fighting (ARFF) station. The FFD staffs 27 fire companies, consisting of 19 engines, five ladder trucks, and three squads.[59] There is one FFD station within the Specific Plan Area located at 1428 South Cedar.[60] Station 8 houses an engine company and

[59] City of Fresno. 2022. Fire Suppression. Website: https://www.fresno.gov/fire/fire-suppression/. Accessed January 2, 2025.
[60] City of Fresno. 2022. Station Address. Website: https://www.fresno.gov/fire/station-locations/. Accessed January 2, 2025.

is the home of the FFD Communications Team. Station 8's first-in district covers the Fresno Fairgrounds and Fresno Pacific University.[61]

Police Protection

The Fresno Police Department (FPD) provides the City with police protection services, including uniformed patrol response to both emergency and non-emergency calls for service, crime prevention, pro-active tactical crime enforcement, and investigation of crimes utilizing District Detectives.[62] The FPD operates out of five policing districts: Northeast, Northwest, Central, Southwest, and Southeast. The Specific Plan Area falls entirely within the Southeast Policing District. The Southeast Policing District is located south of Ashlan Avenue (east of Clovis Avenue), south of Clinton Avenue between Fourth Street and Clovis Avenue, east of SR-99 (south of Church Avenue) to the southern City limit.[63] In addition to the Fresno Police Headquarters, located at 2323 Mariposa Mall, the FPD operates five police stations within the City:[64]

- Southwest: 1211 Fresno Street, Fresno, CA 93706
- Southeast: 1617 South Cedar Avenue, Fresno, CA 93702
- Northeast: 1450 East Teague Avenue, Fresno, CA 93720
- Northwest: 3781 North Hughes Avenue, Fresno, CA 93705
- Central: 3502 North Blackstone, Suite 201, Fresno, CA 93726

Schools

The Specific Plan Area falls entirely within FUSD.[65] The FUSD serves more than 74,000 students and operates 64 elementary schools, 15 middle schools, eight high schools, four alternative schools, and three special education schools.[66] The FUSD has a maximum enrollment capacity of 78,648 students while FUSD (charter) has a maximum enrollment of 2,247 students. Between 2019 and 2020, FUSD had a total enrollment of 73,381.[67] Eight FUSD schools are located within the Specific Plan Area, which include two middle schools, five elementary schools, and one high school.[68] The Specific Plan Area also contains Fresno Pacific University and three community facilities offering child care.

Parks and Other Public Facilities

The City provides residents with several types of parks and facilities. Park types in the General Plan are classified as follows: pocket park, neighborhood park, community park, regional park, and trail/greenway/parkway.[69] The General Plan states that the City's parkland standard is 3 acres per 1,000 residents for Pocket, Neighborhood, and Community parks. There are currently 50.8 acres of

[61] City of Fresno. 2022. Station Address. Website: https://www.fresno.gov/fire/station-locations/. Accessed January 2, 2025.
[62] City of Fresno General Plan, 2014. Chapter 6: Public Utilities and Services. December.
[63] City of Fresno. 2022. Policing District Locator. Website: https://www.fresno.gov/police/#police-district-locator.Accessed January 2, 2025.
[64] Ibid.
[65] City of Fresno General Plan, 2014. Chapter 5: Parks, Open Space, and Schools. Figure POSS-3: Schools and School Districts. December.
[66] Fresno Unified School District (FUSD). 2022. History of Fresno Unified. Website: https://www.fresnounified.org/history/. Accessed September 1, 2022.
[67] Ed Data. 2024. Fresno Unified. Website: https://www.ed-data.org/district/Fresno/Fresno-Unified. Accessed January 9, 2025.
[68] Fresno Unified School District (FUSD). 2025. School Locator. Website: https://apps.fresnounified.org/schoollocator. Accessed January 2, 2025.
[69] City of Fresno General Plan, 2014. Chapter 5: Parks, Open Space, and Schools. December.

parkland within the Specific Plan Area, with a ratio of 1.68 acres of park per 1,000 residents, above the current City average of 1.06 (pocket, neighborhood, and community parks) but below the General Plan goal of 3 acres per 1,000 residents.[70] A majority of the Specific Plan Area is within walking distance (0.5 mile) of a park or open space, with the exception of the neighborhoods around the western and southeastern boundary of the Specific Plan Area.[71] Additional recreational facilities can be found at many of the 12 schools located within the Specific Plan Area. The City's park and recreation facilities are maintained by the Parks, After School, Recreation, and Community Services (PARCS).[72] The Mosqueda Community Center is located within the Plan Area at 4670 East Butler Avenue.[73]

The City is served by the Fresno County Library system. The Fresno County Library system is part of the San Joaquin Valley Library System (SJVLS), a cooperative network of 10 public library jurisdictions in the counties of Fresno, Kern, Kings, Madera, Mariposa, Merced, and Tulare.[74] Fresno County Public Library provides collections and services through its Central Resource Library and 34 branches. The Mosqueda Branch Library is within the Specific Plan Area, and the Sunnyside Regional Library is approximately 0.95 mile to the east.[75]

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 other performance objectives for any of the public services:

a) Fire protection?

Less than significant impact. The proposed project would be located east and southeast of Downtown Fresno, which is served by the FFD. As discussed above, the Specific Plan Area includes one fire station. Location of fire stations will become more dependent on density and availability rather than "running distances" between fire stations. Because implementation of the proposed project would result in an increased demand for fire protection services, fire stations will require commensurate increases in firefighter staffing and facilities and equipment. However, this increase in demand can be met with additional staffing requirements at the existing fire stations that serve the Specific Plan Area. It would not result in the need to construct additional government facilities. Moreover, development consistent with the proposed project would reduce the total amount of development in the Specific Plan Area compared to what was contemplated by the General Plan.

Additionally, development projects within the Specific Plan Area would be required to comply with the Municipal Code, which requires each development to pay a Fire Facilities Fee in order to mitigate

[70] City of Fresno. 2021. Public Draft Central Southeast Area Specific Plan. April.
[71] City of Fresno. 2021. Public Draft Central Southeast Area Specific Plan Figure 5-1 Park Facilities within a Half Mile Radius. April.
[72] City of Fresno. 2022. Parks, After School, Recreation and Community Services. Website: https://www.fresno.gov/parks/. Accessed January 2, 2025.
[73] City of Fresno. 2022. Parks, Trails and Facilities. Visiting Our Parks. Website: https://www.fresno.gov/parks/parks-trails-facilities/#tab-1. Accessed January 2, 2025. .
[74] Fresno County Public Library. 2022. About the Library. Website: https://fresnolibrary.org/about/index.html. Accessed September 2, 2022.
[75] Fresno County Library. 2022. Map of Fresno County and Branches. Website: https://fresnolibrary.org/branch/county.html. Accessed January 2, 2025.

the impacts on fire protection facilities caused by future development in the City. Payment of the appropriate development impact fees would offset the construction and acquisition costs of required fire facility improvements.

Therefore, because development associated with the proposed project would amount to less development than was considered by the General Plan and because any future development under the proposed project would undergo individual environmental review, as well as pay the appropriate development impact fees, the proposed project would have a less than significant impact associated with the provision of fire protection services.

b) Police protection?

Less than significant impact. As detailed above, the proposed project area is served by FPD. The Specific Plan Area falls entirely within the Southeast Policing District with one police station located within the Specific Plan Area at 1617 South Cedar Avenue. The City uses a minimum level of service of 1.5 officers per 1,000 residents. As growth occurs with the Specific Plan Area, FPD may require additional personnel and additional facilities to provide adequate police protection services. Development projects within the Specific Plan Area would be subject to the Municipal Code, which requires each development to pay a Police Facilities Fee in order to mitigate the impacts on police protection services caused by future development within the City. Payment of the appropriate development impact fees would offset the construction and acquisition costs of required police facility improvements. Lastly, development consistent with the proposed project would reduce the total amount of development in the Specific Plan Area compared to what was contemplated by the General Plan.

Therefore, because development associated with the proposed project would amount to less development than was considered by the General Plan and because any future development under the proposed project would undergo individual environmental review, as well as pay the appropriate development impact fees, the proposed project would have a less than significant impact associated with the provision of police protection services.

c) Schools?

Less than significant impact. As discussed above, the proposed project is located entirely within the FUSD. Based on the existing capacities of FUSD, including the charter schools and the projected additional dwelling units from the proposed project, students generated by the proposed project would not exceed FUSD's maximum enrollment capacity. As of 2022, the FUSD projects that approximately 300 single-family-units and 800 multiple-family units will be constructed in the district in the next five years. FUSD has a student generation rate of 0.625 students per single-family unit, and 0.405 students per multiple-family unit. Therefore, the FUSD projects enrollment of an additional 511.5 students over the next five years.[76] Implementation of the proposed project would result in additional residential development. This would generate additional students who would attend

[76] Fresno Unified School District (FUSD). 2022. Development Fee Justification Study. Website: https://facilities.fresnounified.org/wp-content/uploads/FUSD-Fee-Study-2022.pdf. Accessed October 3, 2022.

schools within the FUSD. However, development consistent with the proposed project would reduce the total amount of development in the Specific Plan Area compared to what was contemplated by the General Plan. Furthermore, all development would be subject to State-mandated development fees in compliance with SB 50 requirements. Section 12-805, Dedication and Fees, of the Municipal Code allows for school districts within the City to negotiate school impact fees with developers per square footage for residential units in order to fund school improvements. As such, future projects under the proposed project would be required to comply with the provision of school developer fees for new or altered facilities, and new or expanded school facilities would be funded by fees collected by future development projects. Additional school resources would also continue to be funded by an increase in tax revenue as a result of future population growth. In addition, future school facilities would be required to undergo individual environmental review in accordance with CEQA. Therefore, impacts of the proposed project related to student generation and the potential need for additional school facilities would be less than significant.

d) Parks?

Less than significant impact. Implementation of the proposed project would result in the redevelopment and development of residential, office, mixed-use and other land uses and would potentially increase the City's residential population. This projected growth in the Specific Plan Area would result in an increased demand for parks and recreational facilities.

The Parks Master Plan was updated in 2017 pursuant to General Plan Parks, Open Space and Schools Element Policy POSS-1-b. The Fresno General Plan states that the City's parkland standard is 3 acres per 1,000 residents for Pocket, Neighborhood, and Community parks, with an aspirational goal of 5 acres per 1,000 residents for all parks throughout the City if additional funding for regional parks and trails is identified. There are currently 50.8 acres of parkland within the Specific Plan Area, with a ratio of 1.68 acres of park per 1,000 residents, above the current City average of 1.06 (pocket, neighborhood, and community parks) but below the General Plan goal of 3 acres per 1,000 residents. A majority of the Specific Plan Area is within walking distance (0.5 mile) of a park or open space with the exception of the neighborhoods around the western and southeastern boundary of the Plan. Parks are distributed throughout the Specific Plan Area in the form of two community parks (Calwa and Mosqueda), and several smaller neighborhood parks nestled among low-density residential areas.

The proposed project would include improvements to existing parks as well as conceptual locations for new parks, open spaces, and/or recreational facilities. Future development in the Specific Plan Area would be subject to Specific Plan Goal P-1.1, which promotes an increase in the amount of parkland in the Specific Plan Area to ensure all residents are within a 5-minute walk of a park or open space.

Additionally, future development projects within the Specific Plan Area would be required to comply with the Municipal Code, which requires each development to pay a Park Facilities Fee in order to mitigate the impacts on park facilities caused by future development in the City. Payment of the appropriate development impact fees would offset the construction and acquisition costs of required park facility improvements. However, the provision of new or physically altered park facilities proposed under the Plan could result in adverse environmental impacts. The construction or

expansion of park facilities would be required to undergo environmental review to meet the requirements of CEQA.

Therefore, because development associated with the proposed project would amount to less development than was considered by the General Plan and because any future development under the proposed project would undergo individual environmental review, as well as pay the appropriate development impact fees, the impacts associated with the proposed project would be considered less than significant.

e) Other public facilities?

Less than significant impact. As discussed above, the Specific Plan Area is currently served by a number of park and recreation facilities, as well as the Mosqueda Community Center and the Mosqueda Branch Library. Implementation of the proposed project would result in the redevelopment and development of residential, office, industrial, mixed-use and other land uses, and would potentially increase the City's residential population. However, development consistent with the proposed project would reduce the total amount of development in the Specific Plan Area compared to what was contemplated by the General Plan. In order to meet the increased demand for neighborhood and regional parks and other recreational facilities, the proposed project includes several goals to improve and provide parks, open space, and recreational facilities as well as improve connectivity between residential areas and local and regional destinations such as schools and community centers. This includes Specific Plan Policy P-1.1 which proposes to build new parks, open spaces, and recreational facilities, prioritizing underserved areas, and Policy P-2.1 which aims to renovate and upgrade existing park facilities to support the recreational, physical, and social needs of residents. However, future development would be subject to General Plan policies and the Municipal Code, and all future development would be subject to CEQA environmental review. Therefore, the proposed project would have a less than significant impact.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

Environmental Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
2.16 Recreation				
a) 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?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b) Does the project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities, which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Environmental Evaluation

Introduction

As noted in the Project Description, the land use designations of the Specific Plan are consistent with the General Plan buildout assumptions; however, this Specific Plan proposes changing the land use designation for some of the Specific Plan Area's parcels, which would require the General Plan Land Use map to be amended. These proposed land use designation changes would reduce the total amount of development compared to what was contemplated by the General Plan for the Specific Plan Area.

Setting

As previously discussed, the City provides residents with several types of parks and facilities. Park types in the General Plan are classified as follows: pocket park, neighborhood park, community park, regional park, and trail/greenway/parkway.[77] The General Plan states that the City's parkland standard is 3 acres per 1,000 residents for Pocket, Neighborhood, and Community parks, with an aspirational goal of 5 acres per 1,000 residents for all parks throughout the City, if additional funding for regional parks and trails is identified. The Specific Plan Area currently has 50.8 acres of parkland, with a ratio of 1.68 acres of park per 1,000 residents, above the current City average of 1.06 (pocket, neighborhood, and community parks) but below the General Plan goal of 3 acres per 1,000 residents.[78] A majority of the Specific Plan Area is within walking distance (0.5 mile) of a park or open space, with the exception of the neighborhoods around the western and southeastern boundary of the Plan Area.[79] Additional recreational facilities can be found at many of the 12 schools located within the Plan Area. The City's park and recreation facilities are maintained by the PARCS Department.[80]

[77] City of Fresno General Plan, 2014. Chapter 5: Parks, Open Space, and Schools. December.
[78] City of Fresno. 2021. Public Draft Central Southeast Area Specific Plan. April.
[79] City of Fresno. 2021. Public Draft Central Southeast Area Specific Plan Figure 5-1 Park Facilities within a Half Mile Radius. April.
[80] City of Fresno. 2022. Parks, After School, Recreation and Community Services. Website: https://www.fresno.gov/parks/. Accessed January 2, 2025.

a) 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?

Less than significant impact. Development under the proposed project would result in additional residential and nonresidential development throughout the Specific Plan Area which would result in population growth. The projected growth would result in an increased demand for parks and recreational facilities. However, development consistent with the proposed project would reduce the total amount of development in the Specific Plan Area compared to what was contemplated by the General Plan.

As previously discussed, the proposed project would include improvements to existing parks as well as conceptual locations for new parks, open spaces, and/or recreational facilities. Future development in the Specific Plan Area would be subject to Specific Plan Goal P-1.1, which promotes an increase in the amount of parkland in the Specific Plan Area to ensure all residents are within a 5-minute walk of a park or open space. Specific Plan Policy P-1.1 recommends that the proposed project develop approximately 40 additional acres of parkland and open space to the meet the City's ratio.

Future individual development projects within the Specific Plan Area would be required to comply with Sections 12-4.701 through 12-4.706 of the Fresno Municipal Code, which requires each development to pay a Park Facilities Fee in order to mitigate the impacts on park facilities caused by future development in the City. Therefore, the proposed project would have a less than significant impact on existing recreational facilities.

b) Does the project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities, which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?

Less than significant impact. Development under the proposed project would result in additional residential and nonresidential development throughout the Specific Plan Area. However, development consistent with the proposed project would reduce the total amount of development in the Specific Plan Area compared to what was contemplated by the General Plan. Future development under the proposed project would include additional parks and recreational facilities. As previously discussed, Specific Plan Policy P-1.1 proposes to build new parks, open spaces, and recreational facilities, prioritizing underserved areas while Policy P-2.1 aims to renovate and upgrade existing park facilities to support the recreational, physical, and social needs of residents. As previously discussed, development under the proposed project would be required to comply with General Plan objectives and policies related to parks. Future specific development projects within the Plan Area would be assessed on an individual basis to determine their impact with respect to recreational facilities. Therefore, the proposed project would have a less than significant impact with respect to the construction or expansion of recreational facilities.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

Environmental Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
2.17 Transportation *Would the project:*				
a) Conflict with a program plan, ordinance or policy of the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle and pedestrian facilities?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b) Would the project conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3, subdivision (b)?	☐	☐	☒	☐
c) Substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?	☐	☐	☒	☐
d) Result in inadequate emergency access?	☐	☒	☐	☐

Environmental Evaluation

Introduction

As noted in the Project Description, the land use designations of the Specific Plan are consistent with the General Plan buildout assumptions; however, this Specific Plan proposes changing the land use designation for some of the Specific Plan Area's parcels, which would require the General Plan Land Use map to be amended. These proposed land use designation changes would reduce the total amount of development compared to what was contemplated by the General Plan for the Specific Plan Area.

Environmental Setting

The following analysis is based on the VMT Analysis Memorandum dated August 16, 2022, prepared by LSA and included in Appendix E.

Changes to the CEQA Guidelines were adopted in December 2018 to implement SB 743. Guideline 15064.3, which describes criteria for evaluating a project's transportation impacts, provides that VMT is generally "the most appropriate measure of transportation impacts," and that except for roadway capacity projects, a project's effect on traffic delays "shall not constitute a significant environmental impact." These provisions went into effect July 1, 2020.

While Guideline 15064.3 governs a lead agency's assessment of traffic impacts under CEQA, it does not preclude a discussion of Level of Service (LOS) for informational purposes or other traffic analysis based on general plan or zoning standards, or on other agency policies. Therefore, while this

Recirculated Draft IS/MND does not include an analysis of LOS, Appendix E[81] does provide this analysis for informational purposes only. As outlined in Appendix E, the 18 roadway segments analyzed are forecast to operate at acceptable levels under the General Plan with Circulation Element conditions based on the City's LOS standards and the proposed project would not result in any changes to the roadway segment peak-hour levels contained within the General Plan. Pursuant to CEQA Guideline 15064.3, the City can use this analysis to evaluate traffic impacts in support of General Plan consistency, apart from CEQA's evaluation of environmental impacts.

Street Network

The Specific Plan Area encompasses approximately 14 city blocks in the southeast portion of the City. The Specific Plan Area is bordered by Belmont Avenue to the north, Fourth Street to the west, Church Avenue to the south, and Peach Avenue to the east.

East Cesar Chavez Boulevard and Belmont Avenue are arterial roads running east–west through the Specific Plan Area. Cedar Avenue, Peach Avenue, and Chestnut Avenue are arterial roads running north and south through the Specific Plan Area.

Bicycle Facilities

As described in the Specific Plan, the Specific Plan Area has a very limited bicycle and trail network and one of the lowest bike ridership rates as well as some of the highest concentration areas for bicycle and vehicle collisions in the City. The Specific Plan Area has two continuous bike lanes along Cesar Chavez Boulevard, which connects to Downtown, and along Chestnut Avenue, but they do not provide any buffer from fast-moving vehicular traffic. Trails, or Class I bike paths, are multiuse pathways separated from vehicle traffic and shared between bicyclists and pedestrians. Currently, there is one trail segment in the northern part of the Specific Plan Area along McKenzie Avenue between Willow and Clovis Avenues.

Bicycle facilities consist of the following four classifications:

- **Bike Paths (Class I)** are often referred to as shared-use paths or trails, or multiuse paths, which are off-street facilities that provide exclusive use for non-motorized travel, including bicyclists and pedestrians. Class I facilities are typically 10- to 12-foot-wide concrete/asphalt paved surfaces with 2-foot-wide shoulders. Bike paths have minimal cross flow with motorists and are typically located along landscaped corridors. Bike paths can be utilized for both recreational and commute trips. These paths provide an important recreational amenity for bicyclists, pedestrians, dog walkers, runners, skaters, and all residents using other non-motorized forms of travel.
- **Bike Lanes (Class II)** are designated on-street facilities that use striping, stencils, and signage to denote preferential or exclusive use by bicyclists. On-street bikes lanes are typically 5 feet wide

[81] The Final Traffic Study, prepared by Stantec, dated February 15, 2022, references the General Plan Program EIR, which was decertified by court order in 2024, and the traffic analysis and underlying data remain independently valid. The study does not rely on the Program EIR's impact determinations; rather, it refers to the adopted General Plan land use assumptions (2035 buildout) as the basis for modeling and provides a comparison to expected conditions. This approach ensures the analysis reflects current planning assumptions without incorporating conclusions from the decertified EIR.

and are adjacent to motor vehicle traffic. Bike lanes are intended to alert drivers about the predictable movements of bicyclists and provide adequate space for comfortable bicycle riding. Current City standards require Class II bike lanes on all new Collectors and Arterials; many existing Collectors are already constructed with Class II bike lanes.

- **Bike Routes (Class III)** are on-street pavement markings or signage that connect the bicycle roadway network. Class III bike routes can be utilized to connect bicycle lanes or paths along corridors that do not provide enough space for dedicated lanes on low-speed and low-volume streets.
- **Separated Bikeways (Class IV)** are designated on-street bicycle facilities separated by a physical boundary such as a vertical curb, a painted buffer with flexible posts, parked cars, a landscape area, or a fixed barrier. Separate Bikeways (Class IV), also called cycle tracks, are typically 7 feet wide with 3-foot-wide shoulders and can include one-way or two-way lanes, accommodating a single direction of travel or both. Cycle tracks can be utilized along streets with high vehicular volumes and speeds and located in areas with fewer driveways.

Pedestrian Network

The pedestrian network in the Specific Plan Area currently has long block lengths, wide streets, unmarked and unsignalized intersections, and few street trees. While most streets have sidewalks, there are gaps in the sidewalk network in the areas near the northern and southern limits of the Specific Plan Area.

Transit Facilities

Fresno Area Express (FAX) provides transit service in the Specific Plan Area, as well as adjacent communities in the City of Fresno. FAX operates 18 bus routes throughout the City, with six routes serving the Specific Plan Area (Routes 1, 22, 26, 33, 38, and 41). Routes 1 and 38 operate at 10- and 15-minute peak period frequencies respectively, with the rest operating at 30-minute frequencies on weekdays and reduced frequencies on weekends.

Local Regulations

City of Fresno Active Transportation Plan.

The City's Active Transportation Plan (ATP), adopted in March 2017, provides a comprehensive guide outlining the vision for active transportation in Fresno. This plan lays out specific goals to improve bicycle and pedestrian access and connectivity in Fresno. These goals include the following:

- Equitably improve the safety and perceived safety of walking and bicycling in Fresno;
- Increase walking and bicycling trips in Fresno by creating user-friendly facilities;
- Improve the geographical equity of access to walking and bicycling facilities in Fresno; and
- Fill key gaps in Fresno's walking and bicycling networks.

General Plan Policy MT-1-g: Complete Streets Concept Implementation.

Provide transportation facilities based upon a Complete Streets concept that facilitates the balanced use of all viable travel modes (pedestrians, bicyclists, motor vehicle and transit users), meeting the

transportation needs of all ages, income groups, and abilities and providing mobility for a variety of trip purposes, while also supporting other City goals.

General Plan Policy MT-2-l: Region-Wide Transportation Impact Fees.
Continue to support the implementation of metropolitan-wide and region-wide transportation impact fees sufficient to cover the proportional share of a development's impacts and need for a comprehensive multimodal transportation system that is not funded by other sources.

General Plan Policy MT-4-c: Bikeway Linkages.
Provide linkages between bikeways, trails and paths, and other regional networks such as the San Joaquin River Trail and adjacent jurisdiction bicycle systems wherever possible.

General Plan Policy MT-4-d: Prioritization of Bikeway Improvements.
Prioritize bikeway components that link existing separated sections of the system, or that are likely to serve the highest concentration of existing or potential cyclists, particularly in those neighborhoods with low vehicle ownership rates, or that are likely to serve destination areas with the highest demand such as schools, shopping areas, recreational and park areas, and employment centers.

General Plan Policy MT-5-a: Sidewalk Development.
Pursue funding and implement standards for development of sidewalks on public streets, with priority given to meeting the needs of persons with physical and vision limitations; providing safe routes to school; completing pedestrian improvements in established neighborhoods with lower vehicle ownership rates; or providing pedestrian access to public transportation routes.

General Plan Policy MT-5-b: Sidewalk Requirements.
Assure adequate access for pedestrians and people with disabilities in new residential developments per adopted City policies, consistent with the California Building Code and the Americans with Disabilities Act.

General Plan Policy MT-5-d: Pedestrian Safety.
Minimize vehicular and pedestrian conflicts on both major and non-roadways through implementation of traffic access design and control standards addressing street intersections, median island openings and access driveways to facilitate accessibility while reducing congestion and increasing safety. Increase safety and accessibility for pedestrians with vision disabilities through the installation of Accessible Pedestrian Signals at signalized intersections.

Would the project:

a) Conflict with a program plan, ordinance or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle and pedestrian facilities?

Less than significant impact. This section assesses whether the proposed project would be consistent with applicable regional and local transportation programs, plans, ordinances, and policies that were summarized above. The proposed project would not conflict with the City's adopted ATP.

Transit Facilities

The proposed project includes strategies to improve multimodal connections to local transit stops in and around the Specific Plan Area, as well as street design recommendations to encourage increased transit ridership. For example, Exhibit 8 illustrates the existing transit network in the Specific Plan Area. Specific Plan Policy T-6.1 supports pedestrian and bicycle improvements that would increase access to transit stops. Policy T-6.2 encourages protected, well-lit, and attractive bus stops and amenities along bus routes. Therefore, the proposed project would comply with General Plan Policy MT-1-g, described above, and impacts to transit facilities would be less than significant.

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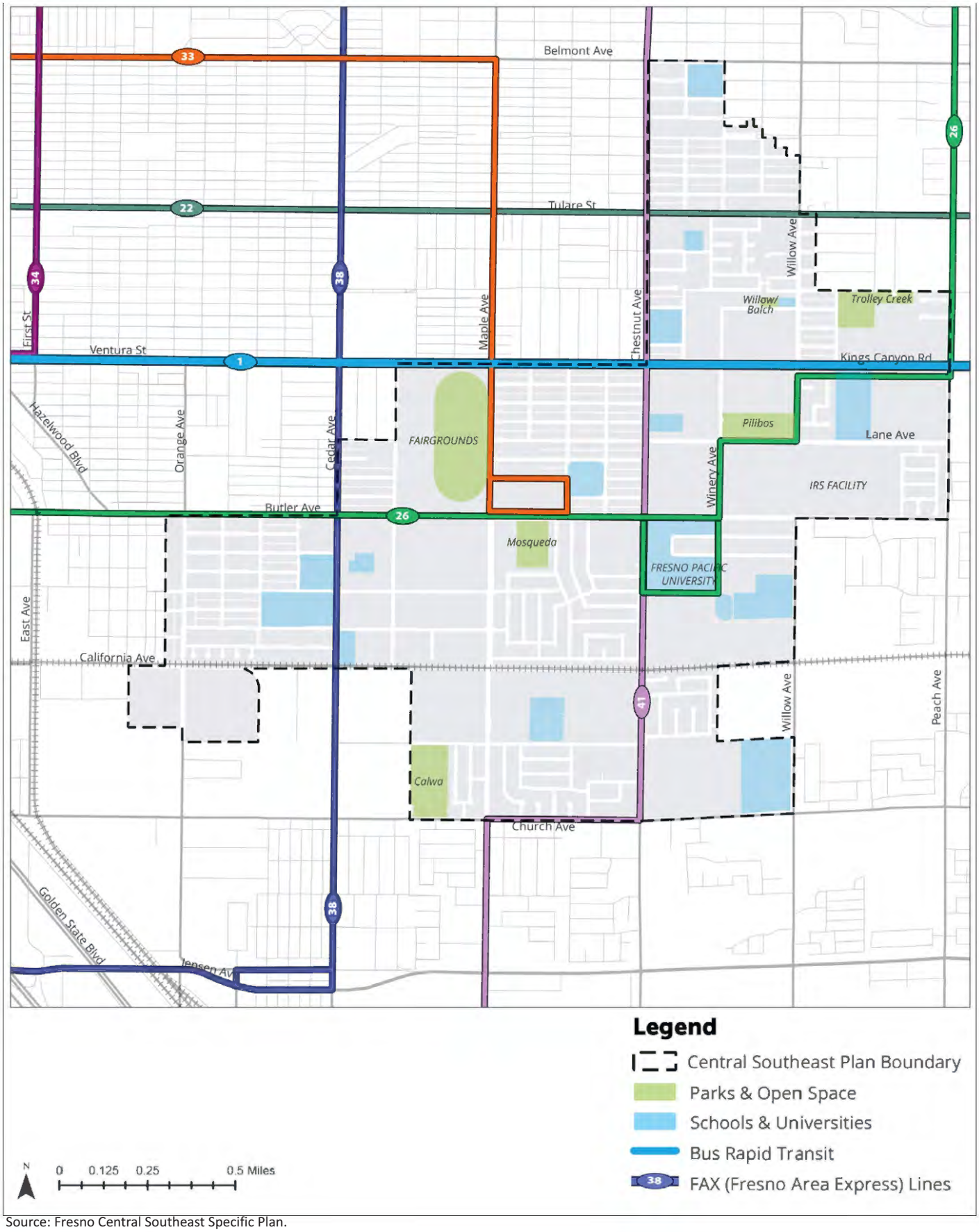

Source: Fresno Central Southeast Specific Plan.

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Exhibit 8
Existing and Proposed Transit Network

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Bicycle Facilities

Exhibit 9 illustrates the existing and proposed bicycle network. As depicted, the Specific Plan proposes Class I through Class IV bicycle facilities along several streets within the Plan Area. This would be consistent with General Plan Policies MT-4-c and MT-4-d and therefore, impacts to bicycle facilities would be less than significant.

Pedestrian Facilities

As described above, the pedestrian network in the Specific Plan Area is currently insufficient. The Specific Plan proposes Policy T-3.1 to implement traffic calming measures around parks and schools and Policy T-3.2 to install crossing enhancements at priority intersections. Policy T-4.1 requires the City to identify gaps and build sidewalks to complete the pedestrian network and Policy T-4.2 requires the City to prioritize street furnishings and other pedestrian amenities along key corridors to create a better pedestrian experience. Exhibit 10 illustrates the proposed pedestrian network and identifies several intersections as priorities for improvements. It also illustrates proposed sidewalks where they are currently missing. These pedestrian improvements would be consistent with General Plan Policies MT-5-a, MT-5-b, and MT-5-d, described above. Therefore, impacts to pedestrian facilities would be less than significant.

Because site-specific designs for transit, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities have not been developed, there are no specific details to review and assess impacts on pedestrian, bicycle, and transit facilities. As part of the standard development review process, the City would require all future proposed development of parcels to go through a review of pedestrian, bicycle, and transit facilities in the area surrounding the individual development project to ensure that future developments do not conflict with existing or planned facilities supporting those travel modes. All pedestrian, bicycle, and transit facilities proposed would be designed using the appropriate design standards. Furthermore, per General Plan Policy MT-2-i, developers of future projects in the Specific Plan Area would be required to pay proportional share impact fees to fund a comprehensive multimodal transportation system. The impact on these facilities would be less than significant.

b) Would the project conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3, subdivision (b)?

Less than significant impact. The primary components of Section 15064.3 include:

- Identifies VMT (amount and distance of automobile traffic attributable to a project) as the most appropriate measure of transportation impacts;
- Declares that a project's effect on automobile delay shall not constitute a significant environmental impact (except for projects increasing roadway capacity);
- Creates a rebuttable presumption of no significant transportation impacts for (a) land use projects within 0.5 mile of either an existing major transit stop or a stop along an existing high quality transit corridor, (b) land use projects that reduce VMT below existing conditions, and (c) transportation projects that reduce or have no impact on VMT;

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Source: Fresno Central Southeast Specific Plan.

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Exhibit 9
Proposed Bicycle Network

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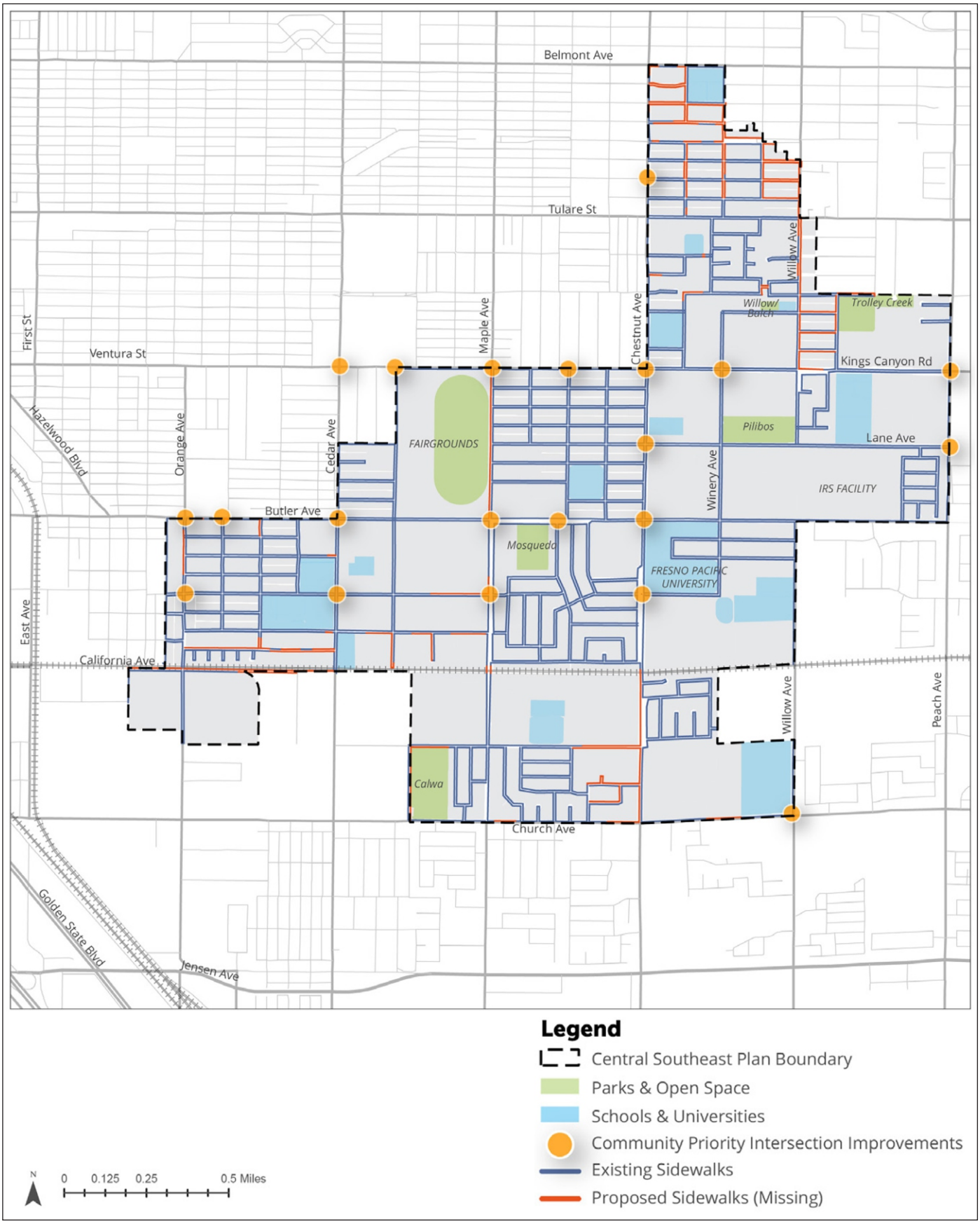

Source: Fresno Central Southeast Specific Plan.

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Exhibit 10
Proposed Pedestrian Network

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- Allows a lead agency to qualitatively evaluate VMT if existing models are not available; and
- Gives lead agencies discretion to select a methodology to evaluate a proposed project's VMT but requires lead agencies to document that methodology in the environmental document prepared for the proposed project (Governor's Office of Planning and Research [OPR's] technical advisory provides recommendation on preferable methodology).

The Vehicle Miles Traveled Analysis Memorandum prepared by LSA analyzes VMT resulting from the proposed project using the criteria set forth in the City's CEQA Guidelines for VMT Thresholds.[82] The City's VMT guidelines require that, for land use plans, the proposed project's VMT per capita and VMT per employee under forecast/cumulative scenario be compared to the corresponding base year VMT per capita/employee to determine whether the proposed project would have a significant VMT impact.

The City's threshold for a significant VMT impact is 14.0 VMT per capita and 22.3 VMT per employee, 13 percent below the County's existing average VMT. The estimated VMT for 2035 including the entire Specific Plan Area and regional VMT Metrics *without* implementation of the proposed project would be 9.2 VMT per capita and 20.7 VMT per employee. The estimated VMT for 2035 including the entire Specific Plan Area and Regional VMT Metrics *with* implementation of the proposed project would be 8.7 VMT per capita and 20.4 VMT per employee. The VMT for the proposed project with implementation would be below the City's significance thresholds (14.0 VMT per capita and 22.3 VMT per employee) and would be less than the no-project scenario. Additionally, development consistent with the proposed project would reduce the total amount of development in the Specific Plan Area compared to what was contemplated by the General Plan. Additionally, future development projects would be required to comply with the City's VMT Guidelines and new VMT Reduction Program, including completing project-level evaluations to determine project-specific VMT impacts if they do not screen out under the City's thresholds. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

c) Substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?

Less than significant impact. The proposed project does not approve or entitle any specific development, and specific project design is unknown at this time. Development consistent with the proposed project would undergo individual design review at the time of application and additional project-specific environmental review may be required. It is not anticipated that development would substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature or incompatible uses because the City would require design review of proposed future developments for consistency with applicable regulations and General Plan policies that are designed to ensure safety. This would eliminate any such hazards. The impacts would be less than significant.

d) Result in inadequate emergency access?

Less than significant impact with mitigation incorporated. The proposed project may require temporary lane closures or detours during construction activity of future development projects.

[82] City of Fresno. June 2020. CEQA Guidelines for Vehicle Miles Traveled Thresholds.

However, all lane closures or detours would be coordinated with the police and fire departments to ensure that access to existing businesses and through circulation are maintained as well as emergency access. The construction contractor would provide signage, cones, and/or flag persons as deemed necessary through a project-specific Construction Management Plan (CMP) to ensure adequate emergency access. All development would be required to prepare a CMP to demonstrate to the City and the associated police and fire departments that emergency access would be maintained at all times during construction. Therefore, preparation of a CMP is incorporated as MM TRANS-4.

Furthermore, operation of future development projects resulting from implementation of the Specific Plan could result in an increased amount of vehicle traffic, which could impact emergency access. However, the City would require review of proposed future developments for consistency with applicable regulations that secure adequate emergency access. Moreover, development consistent with the proposed project would reduce the total amount of development in the Specific Plan Area compared to what was contemplated by the General Plan. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant with mitigation incorporated.

Mitigation Measures

MM TRANS-4 At the time of planning application submittal, the project applicant shall prepare a Construction Management Plan (CMP) that will specify traffic controls required to maintain adequate circulation and access throughout the Central Southeast (CSE) Specific Plan Area. At least one lane shall remain open in each direction during construction and access to all existing businesses shall be maintained. This plan shall be subject to approval by the jurisdictional police and fire departments prior to commencement of construction.

Environmental Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
2.18 Utilities and Service Systems *Would the project:*				
a) Require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment or stormwater drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry and multiple dry years?	☐	☐	☒	☐
c) Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider which 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?	☐	☐	☒	☐
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?	☐	☐	☒	☐
e) Comply with federal, State, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Environmental Evaluation

Introduction

As noted in the Project Description, the land use designations of the Specific Plan are consistent with the General Plan buildout assumptions; however, this Specific Plan proposes changing the land use designation for some of the Specific Plan Area's parcels, which would require the General Plan Land Use map to be amended. These proposed land use designation changes would reduce the total amount of development compared to what was contemplated by the General Plan for the Specific Plan Area.

Environmental Setting

The City provides residents with potable water, sewage collection and treatment, and solid waste pickup while the FMFCD provides storm drainage and flood control. The City's Department of Public Utilities—Water Division manages and operates the City's water system and delivers drinking water to approximately 500,000 urban residential, commercial, and industrial customers in over 114 square

miles of the City, as well as many County islands within the City's SOI.[83] The City relies on groundwater from the North Kings Subbasin, surface water and recycled water. Water production in the City has consisted of 100 percent groundwater prior to the commissioning of the City's first Surface Water Treatment Facility (SWTF) in 2004. Since 2004, the City has invested in expanding its surface water treatment capabilities and now has three SWTFs that provide approximately half of all potable water demands in the service area.[84] Recycled water is not yet utilized in the Specific Plan Area but is planned and would be provided by the City.

The City's Wastewater Management Division (WMD) provides wastewater collection, conveyance, treatment, and reclamation services for residential, commercial, and industrial sewer customers in the Fresno-Clovis metropolitan area. The wastewater collection system consists of approximately 1,600 miles of pipes which convey over 60 million gallons of wastewater per day. Almost all wastewater generated in the metropolitan area travels to the Fresno-Clovis Regional Wastewater Reclamation Facility (RWRF).[85] The RWRF includes preliminary, primary, secondary, and tertiary treatment units with disinfection with a permitted treatment capacity of 91.5 million gallons per day to secondary standards and 5 million gallons per day to tertiary standards.[86,87]

As discussed previously in Section 2.10, Hydrology and Water Quality, the FMFCD has primary responsibilities for managing local stormwater runoff in the Fresno metropolitan area and the Plan Area. Most stormwater in the City drains to urban stormwater basins, where the water is retained to attenuate peak flow runoff and recharge stormwater or is pumped to local irrigation canals for conveyance away from the municipal areas. Stormwater capture and infiltration are considered an integral component of natural groundwater recharge.[88]

The City's Solid Waste Management Division is responsible for the collection of residential solid waste, recyclables, green waste, and Operation Clean Up for approximately 116,000 residential customers. The City had also granted exclusive franchise agreements for the collection of large multi-family developments, commercial and industrial solid waste, recyclables, and green waste to two franchise haulers: Allied Waste Services (formerly Republic Services), which is responsible for servicing the northern portion of the City, and Mid Valley Disposal, which is responsible for the southern portion of the City.[89] Ashlan Avenue is the dividing line between the two service areas; therefore, the Specific Plan Area is located fully within the Mid Valley Disposal service area.[90] Garbage disposed of in the City is taken to Cedar Avenue Recycling and Transfer Station (CARTS). Once trash has been off-loaded at the transfer station, it is sorted and non-recyclable solid waste is loaded onto large trucks and taken

[83] City of Fresno. 2022. About DPU. Website: https://www.fresno.gov/publicutilities/about-dpu/. Accessed September 6, 2022.
[84] City of Fresno. 2021. 2020 Urban Water Management Plan. July.
[85] City of Fresno. 2022. Sewer and Wastewater. Website: https://www.fresno.gov/publicutilities/sewer-wastewater/. Accessed September 6, 2022.
[86] City of Fresno. 2021. 2020 Urban Water Management Plan. July.
[87] City of Fresno. 2022. Sewer and Wastewater. Website: https://www.fresno.gov/publicutilities/sewer-wastewater/. Accessed September 6, 2022.
[88] City of Fresno. 2021. 2020 Urban Water Management Plan. July.
[89] City of Fresno. Multi-Family & Commercial Collection Service. Website: https://www.fresno.gov/publicutilities/trash-disposal-recycling/multi-family-commercial-services/#:~:text=Multi%2DFamily%20&%20Commercial%20Collection%20Service,6%20cubic%20yards%20in%20size. Accessed January 16, 2025.
[90] City of Fresno. 2022. Department of Public Utilities, Trash Disposal & Recycling, Multi-Family & Commercial Services. Website: https://www.fresno.gov/publicutilities/trash-disposal-recycling/multi-family-commercial-services/. Accessed December 19, 2022.

to the American Avenue Landfill, which has been operated by the County since 1993. It is estimated that the landfill will be able to continue operation until 2031 when it expected to reach capacity and close.[91] The American Avenue Landfill has a permitted capacity of 36,700,000 cubic yards and a max permitted throughput of 2,200 tons per day.[92]

The City receives its natural gas and electricity from PG&E. PG&E owns and maintains gas and electrical service and transmission lines, as well as several electrical substations, within the General Plan Planning Area. Telecommunication services are provided by multiple providers, with Verizon being the largest provider of cellular and fixed telephone services.[93]

Would the project:

a) Require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment or stormwater drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects?

Less than significant impact. According to the Specific Plan, utility providers currently serving existing needs in the Specific Plan Area have plans in place to serve future needs in accordance with the General Plan. Future projects facilitated by the proposed project would be evaluated for project-specific impacts to utilities and service systems at the time they are proposed. Moreover, development consistent with the proposed project would reduce the total amount of development in the Specific Plan Area compared to what was contemplated by the General Plan; therefore, creating less demand on utilities and services than was previously anticipated. Therefore, the proposed project would have a less than significant impact with respect to the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment or stormwater drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities.

The need for new or expanded water, wastewater, storm drainage, electricity, gas and telecommunication facilities are addressed below.

Water

The City's 2020 UWMP provides potable and nonpotable water demand projections through 2045 for normal water use. The demand for potable water is projected to be 167,947 AFY in 2045, while demand for nonpotable water, which would be used for groundwater recharge, is projected to be 73,500 AFY. This represents a total demand of 241,447 AFY. The 2020 UWMP projects a "reasonably available volume" of 357,330 AFY in 2045, exceeding the projected demand.[94] Because the proposed project contains less development than anticipated in the General Plan, the proposed project would

[91] City of Fresno. 2022. Solid Waste Facilities. Website: https://www.fresno.gov/publicutilities/trash-disposal-recycling/solid-waste-facilities/#tab-2. Accessed September 6, 2022.

[92] California Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery (CalRecycle). 2019. SWIS Facility/Site Activity Details. Website: https://www2.calrecycle.ca.gov/SolidWaste/SiteActivity/Details/4535?siteID=352. Accessed September 6, 2022.

[93] Federal Communications Commission. 2024. FCC National Broadband Map. Website: https://broadbandmap.fcc.gov/area-summary/fixed?version=dec2022&zoom=4&br=r&speed=100_20&tech=1_2_3_4_5_6_7_8,. Accessed January 16, 2025.

[94] City of Fresno. 2021. 2020 Urban Water Management Plan. July.

not require the construction of additional water facilities. The impact of future development on potable water infrastructure would be assessed on an individual basis for specific projects.

Wastewater

As discussed above, the City's WMD provides wastewater collection and treatment services to the City, including the Specific Plan Area. The WMD manages and maintains approximately 1,600 miles of gravity sewer lines up to 84-inches in diameter, 15 active lift stations, and associated force mains. Nearly all of the wastewater generated within the sewer service area is conveyed to the City's RWRF for treatment. The City's 2015 Wastewater Collection System Master Plan (CSMP) Update identified 2015 wastewater flows and projected wastewater flows at General Plan buildout. In general, wastewater consists of Base Wastewater Flow (BWF) and Wet Weather Flow (WWF). BWF is flow generated by routine water usage in the residential, commercial, business and industrial sectors of the collection system. WWF includes stormwater inflow, trench infiltration, and wet weather ground water infiltration. Peak Wet Weather Flow (PWWF) is the highest observed hourly flow that occurs following the design storm event. The City's BWF is projected to roughly double from 64.1 million gallons per day (mgd) to 129.9 mgd by buildout, whereas the PWWF is projected to increase from 123.9 mgd to about 202.4 mgd by buildout (an increase of approximately 63 percent). Therefore, the City's PWWF to BWF peaking factor is projected to decrease from roughly 1.93 to 1.56, which is relatively low for sanitary sewer collection systems.[95]

The CSMP Update concluded that, in general, the City's existing collection system has sufficient capacity to convey current PWWFs without exceeding the established flow depth criterion. However, there are a few areas where capacity restrictions lead to flow depths that exceed allowable levels. The 2015 CSMP Update identified improvements to address current and future deficiencies in the sewer collection system. The majority of improvements are driven by future development, which consist of new sewers that serve future growth or improvements to existing facilities that are needed to serve future growth. When fully implemented, the capital projects will allow the conveyance of PWWFs to the RWRF during buildout conditions. The primary impact identified within the Plan Area was the Orange Avenue trunk sewer main. The needed capacity improvements consist of replacing approximately 6,050 feet of 36-inch diameter pipeline with a new 42-inch diameter sewer on segments of 8th Street, Woodward Avenue, and Orange Avenue in the Specific Plan Area. No major sewer pipeline structural deficiencies were identified within the Specific Plan Area.

The approved General Plan includes several policies to address wastewater generation and reduction of wastewater flows including PU-7-a, PU-7-b and PU-7-f. In addition, continual update of the Sewer System Management Plan and CSMP and capital improvement projects would serve to ensure that wastewater flows would be accommodated.[96] The impact of future development on wastewater infrastructure would be assessed on an individual basis for specific projects. Additionally, because the proposed project contains less development than anticipated in the General Plan, the proposed project would not require the construction of additional wastewater facilities.

[95] City of Fresno. 2015. Wastewater Collection System Master Plan Update. September.

[96] City of Fresno. 2009. Revised 2019. Sewer System Management Plan. Website: https://www.fresno.gov/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/2019RevisionoftheSewerSystemManagementPlan.pdf. Accessed January 16, 2025.

Stormwater

As previously discussed, the Specific Plan Area is within the FMFCD. According to the Specific Plan, California Avenue between Cedar Avenue and Chestnut Avenue and the detention basin to the south of the Plan Area have been identified for future storm drain improvements. A 25-foot-wide storm drain easement shall be dedicated by APNs 480-080-03 and 05 (along California Avenue west of Chestnut Avenue) at such time as development occurs for a future 36-inch storm drain pipeline. No encroachments into the easement would be permitted, including, but not limited to, foundations, roof overhangs, swimming pools, and trees. The FMFCD approved the 2016 District Services Plan which addresses flood control, and local stormwater drainage. It is continually updated to take into account the addition of new impervious surface, including impervious surfaces resulting from the continued implementation of the approved General Plan.[97] The impact of future development on stormwater infrastructure would be assessed on an individual basis for specific projects.

Electricity, Gas, and Telecommunication

As discussed above, the Specific Plan Area would receive its natural gas and electricity from PG&E. Telecommunication services are provided by multiple providers; however, Verizon is the largest provider of cellular and fixed telephone services. Future development under the proposed project would likely connect to existing electric, natural gas and telecommunication facilities. Should the creation of new or relocated electric, natural gas and telecommunications facilities be required, construction would be subject to compliance with the City's and service provider's regulations and standard conditions for new construction-related to infrastructure improvements. These regulations and conditions would require construction of gas and electric lines to include BMPs that require construction areas to minimize dust generation, limit construction noise to daytime hours to limit impacts to sensitive receptors and use modern equipment to limit emissions. In addition, such work would be subject to compliance with applicable regulations and standard conditions of approval for construction projects, including City permits/review for construction (e.g., grading permits, private development review, encroachment permits, etc.). The impact of future development resulting from constructing new or relocating electric, natural gas and telecommunication facilities would be assessed on an individual basis for specific projects.

b) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry and multiple dry years?

Less than significant impact. New residential, commercial, mixed use, and industrial land uses in the Planning Area would increase demand for water. As previously discussed, total demand for 2045 is projected to be 241,447 AFY. The 2020 UWMP projects a "reasonably available volume" of 357,330 AFY in 2045, exceeding the projected demand. Further, supply and demand comparisons for normal-water-year, single-dry-water-year, and five-consecutive-year drought-period scenarios show that there are sufficient water supplies to serve future development.[98] Because the proposed project contains

[97] Fresno Metropolitan Flood Control District. 2020. Notice of Subsequent Project within the Scope of the Subsequent Environmental Impact Report for the 2016 District Services Plan Update: Basin 'CF' Groundwater Recharge and Flood Control Project (SCN: 1999111132). Website: https://files.ceqanet.opr.ca.gov/192224-10/attachment/F2ugSAoi8X8c0sP-IWbsUovLbFFx3y3XsSqnvHiD8Y_rBv3m0mxyUm-QkDwG5-56kXrg42oo8jg9yJff0. Accessed January 16, 2025.

[98] City of Fresno. 2021. 2020 Urban Water Management Plan. July.

less development than anticipated in the General Plan, the proposed project would not require the construction of additional water facilities.

The impact of future development on water service reliability during normal, dry, and multiple dry years would be assessed on an individual basis for specific projects. Therefore, implementation of the proposed project would have a less than significant impact related to water supplies.

c) Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider which 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?

Less than significant impact. The 2015 CSMP Update identified improvements to address current and future deficiencies in the sewer collection system. The majority of improvements are driven by future development, which consist of new sewers that serve future growth or improvements to existing facilities that are needed to serve future growth. When fully implemented, the capital projects would allow the conveyance of PWWFs to the RWRF during buildout conditions. The primary impact identified within the Specific Plan Area was the Orange Avenue trunk sewer main. The needed capacity improvements consist of replacing approximately 6,050 feet of 36-inch diameter pipeline with a new 42-inch diameter sewer on segments of 8th Street, Woodward Avenue, and Orange Avenue in the Specific Plan Area. The Specific Plan identified no major sewer pipeline structural deficiencies within the Specific Plan Area. Furthermore, utility providers currently serving the Specific Plan Area have plans in place to serve future needs in accordance with the General Plan. Therefore, the proposed project would have a less than significant impact on the adequacy of the wastewater treatment provider's capacity to serve the Plan Area.

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?

Less than significant impact. New residential, commercial, mixed use, and industrial land uses in the Specific Plan Area would increase the amount of solid waste generated by residents and businesses. As discussed above, the City's Solid Waste Management Division is responsible for the collection of residential municipal solid waste in the Specific Plan Area. Mid Valley Disposal is responsible for the collection of solid waste, recyclables, and green waste for large multi-family, commercial, and industrial developments in the Planning Area. The American Avenue Landfill has a permitted capacity of 36,700,000 cubic yards and a maximum permitted throughput of 2,200 tons per day. However, the landfill is expected to close in 2031.

Continued development under the approved General Plan would result in the generation of approximately 2,223 tons of solid waste per day. Based on the estimated closure dates of the American Avenue Landfill in 2031 there is a potential for additional landfill capacity needed to accommodate future development under the proposed project. However, AB 939 mandates the reduction of solid waste disposal in landfills, and the City is currently achieving a 71 percent diversion rate (based on 2009 data) which is anticipated to increase due to a Fresno City Council resolution that commits the City to a Zero Waste goal by 2025. Because the proposed project contains less development than

anticipated in the General Plan, the proposed project would not generate more solid waste than anticipated by the General Plan.

Additionally, all future development under the proposed project would be consistent with General Plan Objective PU-9 and Policies PU-9-a through PU-9-e and would be evaluated by the City to determine whether the proposed development could contribute solid waste to a landfill that is at capacity until additional capacity is provided. Thus, the impact of future development with respect to constructing new solid waste infrastructure would be assessed on an individual basis for specific projects. As such, the proposed project would have a less than significant impact on solid waste capacity of local infrastructure.

e) Comply with federal, State, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste?

Less than significant impact. As previously discussed, the Solid Waste Management Division is responsible for the collection of residential solid waste in the Specific Plan Area, and Mid Valley Disposal would be responsible for the collection of solid waste, recyclables, and green waste for large multi-family, commercial, and industrial developments in the Specific Plan Area. Construction and operational activities that generate solid waste are handled, transported, and disposed of in accordance with applicable federal, State, and local regulations pertaining to municipal waste. In accordance with the approved General Plan, solid waste would continue to be handled, transported, and disposed of according to all applicable federal, State, and local regulation pertaining to municipal waste disposal. The City currently has a number of provisions that require or promote recycling and waste reduction. Development consistent with the proposed project would reduce the total amount of development in the Specific Plan Area compared to what was contemplated by the General Plan. This would result in a lesser impact related to solid waste than what would have occurred under the development scenario considered in the General Plan. Therefore, the proposed project would have a less than significant impact with regard to compliance with federal, State, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

Environmental Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
2.19 Wildfire *If located in or near State Responsibility Areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, would the project:*				
a) Substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	☐	☐	☒	☐
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?	☐	☐	☒	☐
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?	☐	☐	☒	☐
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?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Environmental Evaluation

Introduction

As noted in the Project Description, the land use designations of the Specific Plan are consistent with the General Plan buildout assumptions; however, this Specific Plan proposes changing the land use designation for some of the Specific Plan Area's parcels, which would require the General Plan Land Use map to be amended. These proposed land use designation changes would reduce the total amount of development compared to what was contemplated by the General Plan for the Specific Plan Area.

Environmental Setting

The City consists largely of urbanized or working agricultural land and lacks steep slopes, thus wildfire threats are minimal. Although the City is near to high and very high fire hazard designated areas, the City is largely categorized as little or no threat or moderate fire hazard, which is largely attributed to paved areas. The Specific Plan Area is in an urbanized area, located just to the east and southeast of Downtown Fresno, and is characterized by a blend of older single-family and multi-family housing developments, industrial facilities, public facilities, vacant land, and commercial areas. Further, according to CAL FIRE's Fire Hazard Severity Zone (FHSZ) Viewer, the City does not contain any lands

within the State Responsibility Area (SRA) or lands classified as Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone (VHFHSZ) within the LRA.[99,100]

Would the project:

a) Substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?

Less than significant impact. The California Emergency Services Act requires cities to prepare and maintain an emergency plan for natural, manmade, or war-caused emergencies that result in conditions of disaster or in extreme peril to life. According to the General Plan, the City does have an adopted Emergency Operations Plan (EOP); however, the EOP does not designate evacuation routes. The Noise and Safety Element of the General Plan addresses emergency events, including those associated with wildfire hazards. Objectives PU-2 and PU-3 of the General Plan relate to maintaining the level of fire protection and emergency service level objectives in the City. While the proposed project does not include any specific plans for development, future construction under the proposed project would be required to comply with the California Fire Code (CFC). Further, design and construction or alteration of roadways would be consistent with applicable State and City standards for roadway widths, turning radii, and sightlines and would not impair emergency response or emergency evacuation. Therefore, the proposed project would have a less than significant impact on an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan.

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?

Less than significant impact. As previously discussed, the Specific Plan Area does not contain any lands within the SRA or lands classified as VHFHSZ within the LRA.[101] According to the Noise and Safety Element of the General Plan, the City's high temperatures and sunlight during summer months combined with low rainfall could exacerbate wildfire risk by drying and pre-heating combustible material, which would encourage the spontaneous combustion of such material. Additionally, the City's estimated maximum wind speed is 70 miles per hour (mph), which could also exacerbate wildfire risks. However, given that the City is largely urbanized and paved, wildfire threats in the City are minimal. Further, rural agricultural lands located outside of the city limits lack steep topographies, thus the risk of the uncontrolled spread of wildfire is limited. Finally, the Specific Plan Area itself is in an urbanized area, located just to the east and southeast of Downtown Fresno, and is surrounded by existing development. Therefore, the proposed project would have a less than significant impact on wildfire risk and the spread of associated pollutants.

[99] California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE). 2025. Fire Hazard Severity Zones in State Responsibility Area. Website: https:// calfire-forestry.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=988d431a42b242b29d89597ab693d008. Accessed July 30, 2025.

[100] County of Fresno. 2018. Fresno County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan, Fresno Annex. Website: https://www.fresno.gov/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/FresnoCountyHMPFinal.pdf. Accessed July 30, 2025.

[101] Ibid.

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?

Less than significant impact. Future development under the proposed project may 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. Therefore, future discretionary projects facilitated by the proposed project would be evaluated for project-specific wildfire impacts at the time they are proposed. As previously discussed, the Specific Plan Area is located in a developed, urban area within the City and in its existing state is characterized by single-family and multi-family housing developments, industrial facilities, public facilities, vacant land, and commercial areas. The Specific Plan Area is currently served by multiple utility providers. Water and sewer services are provided by the City of Fresno; stormwater drainage systems are constructed and maintained by the FMFCD; irrigation water is supplied by the Fresno Irrigation District (FID); electricity and gas utilities are provided by PG&E; and telephone, fiber, and cable service is provided by Verizon/AT&T/Comcast/Xfinity. Utility providers currently serving existing needs in the Specific Plan Area have plans in place to serve future needs in accordance with the Fresno General Plan.[102] Future development facilitated by the proposed project would be evaluated for project-specific wildfire impacts at the time they are proposed. Should any future development under the proposed project require the construction of associated infrastructure, the installation and maintenance of said infrastructure would comply with applicable local, State, and federal requirements, including the CBC and CFC. Therefore, the proposed project would have a less than significant impact on infrastructure that may exacerbate fire risk or impacts to the environment.

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?

Less than significant impact. As previously discussed, the City is relatively flat with agricultural lands outside of the City limits also lacking steep slopes. The Specific Plan Area is largely categorized as little or no threat or moderate fire hazard, with no lands within the SRA or lands classified as VHFHSZ within the LRA.[103] As discussed in Section 2.7, Geology, Seismicity, and Soils, because of its flat topography, the City and the Specific Plan Area are not considered to be in area which could be impacted by landslides. Further, the Specific Plan Area is not located within a 100-year flood zone.[104] Therefore, the proposed project would have a less than significant impact.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

[102] City of Fresno. 2021. Public Draft Central Southeast Area Specific Plan. April.
[103] California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE). 2022. FHSZ Viewer. Website: https://egis.fire.ca.gov/FHSZ/. Accessed September 11, 2022.
[104] City of Fresno General Plan, 2014. Chapter 9: Noise and Safety. Figure NS-17: Existing Flood Plains. December.

Environmental Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
2.20 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?	☐	☒	☐	☐
b) Does the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? ("Cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects)?	☐	☒	☐	☐
c) Does the project have environmental effects, which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?	☐	☒	☐	☐

Environmental Evaluation

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?

Less than significant impact with mitigation incorporated. The proposed project would involve the construction of new residential and nonresidential land uses and the implementation of a range of mitigation and actions designed to reduce impacts. With implementation of proposed mitigation measures (MM AIR-1a, MM AIR-1b, MM AIR-1c, MM AIR-2a, MM AIR-2b, MM AIR-2c, AIR-2d, AIR-2e, AIR-2f, AIR-2g, AIR-2h, MM BIO-1a, MM BIO-1b, MM BIO-1c, MM BIO-1d, MM BIO-2a, MM BIO-2b, MM BIO-2c, MM BIO-3a, MM BIO-3b, MM CUL-1, MM CUL-2 MM CUL-3, MM GHG-2a, MM GHG-2b, and MM GHG-2c), impacts to air quality, biological resources, cultural resources, and GHG emissions would also be reduced to less than significant levels. While unlikely, there is the potential to uncover undiscovered archaeological, paleontological or human remains in the course of construction activities on-site, and accordingly the cultural resources mitigation identified above and MM GEO-6 would be required to avoid the accidental destruction or disturbance of previously undiscovered cultural resources. Overall, with implementation of these mitigation measures, the proposed project

would not substantially degrade the quality of the environment and associated impacts would be less than significant.

b) Does the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? ("Cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects)?

Less than significant impact with mitigation incorporated. The proposed project is a document that provides a vision for growth and development in the Central Southeast Fresno community over the next 20 to 30 years. This long-range planning document addresses a wide range of topics including affordable housing, jobs and economic development, transportation, parks and open space, and a healthy environment. As the proposed project is a policy-level document, it does not include any specific development proposals. The Specific Plan proposes changing land use designations for some of the Specific Plan Area's parcels, which would require an amendment to the General Plan Land Use map. Potentially significant impacts related to aesthetics, air quality, biological resources, cultural resources, geology and soils, noise, and transportation would be mitigated to less than significant levels with the implementation of MM AES-4a, MM AES-4b, MM AES-4c, MM AES-4d, MM AES-4e, MM AIR-1a, MM AIR-1b, MM AIR-1c, MM AIR-2a, MM AIR-2b, MM AIR-2c, AIR-2d, AIR-2e, AIR-2f, AIR-2g, AIR-2h, MM BIO-1a, MM BIO-1b, MM BIO-1c, MM BIO-1d, MM BIO-2a, MM BIO-2b, MM BIO-2c, MM BIO-3a, MM BIO-3b, MM CUL-1, MM CUL-2, MM CUL-3, MM GEO-1a, MM GEO-1b, MM GEO-6, MM GHG-2a, MM GHG-2b, MM GHG-2c, MM NOI-1a, MM NOI-1b, MM NOI-1c, MM NOI-2, and MM TRANS-4. Overall, with the implementation of these mitigation measures, impacts associated with the proposed project would be less than significant. The implementation of other projects in the City would be required to demonstrate regulatory compliace and implement similar mitigation measures, as applicable. Therefore, the proposed project would not have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable.

c) Does the project have environmental effects, which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?

Less than significant impact. Compliance with existing regulations and implementation of the City of Fresno standard permit conditions, as well as implementation of MM GEO-1a, MM GEO-1b, MM NOI-1a, MM NOI-1b, MM NOI-1c, and MM NOI-2, would ensure that the proposed project, and future development consistent with the proposed project, would not result in substantial adverse effects on human beings, including effects related to air pollution, seismic and geologic hazards, hazardous materials, flooding and natural disasters, or noise and vibration. Therefore, impacts associated with the proposed project would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

Implement MM AES-4a, MM AES-4b, MM AES-4c, MM AES-4d, MM AES-4e, MM AIR-1a, MM AIR-1b, MM AIR-1c, MM AIR-2a, MM AIR-2b, MM AIR-2c, AIR-2d, AIR-2e, AIR-2f, AIR-2g, AIR-2h, MM BIO-1a, MM BIO-1b, MM BIO-1c, MM BIO-1d, MM BIO-2a, MM BIO-2b, MM BIO-2c, MM BIO-3a, MM BIO-3b, MM CUL-1, MM CUL-2, MM CUL-3, MM GEO-1a, MM GEO-1b, MM GEO-6, MM GHG-2a, MM GHG-2b, MM GHG-2c, MM NOI-1a, MM NOI-1b, MM NOI-1c, MM NOI-2, and MM TRANS-4.

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