

**TULARE COUNTY RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AGENCY
NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY OF DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT,
DRAFT CUTLER-OROSI COMMUNITY PLAN 2021 UPDATE
(SCH # 2021040258)**

Project Title:

General Plan Amendment No. 18-003 to Update the Cutler-Orosi Community Plan (State Clearinghouse # 2021040258)

Project Location:

The unincorporated community of Cutler is generally bound by Avenue 402 in the south, Avenue 408 in the north, Road 120 in the west, and the Bowhay Ditch in the east and encompasses approximately 0.8 square miles in area. Cutler is located south of and adjacent to the community of Orosi. Orosi is generally bound by Avenue 402 in the south, Avenue 408 in the north, Road 120 in the west, and the Bowhay Ditch and Sand Creek in the east and encompasses approximately 2.4 square miles in area. It has direct access to/from State Route (SR) 63. Orosi is located north of and adjacent to the community of Cutler.

Project Description:

In December 2016, the Tulare County Board of Supervisors (BOS) approved the Planning Branch proposal to update the Cutler-Orosi Community Plan. The project Study Area Boundary will assess the potential project impacts from the proposed land use changes, for the areas south of Avenue 422 and north of Avenue 400, east of Road 116 and west of Road 134. The project EIR is based on a projected annual population growth rate of 1.3%. Additional growth beyond the 1.3% annual growth rate will require further growth analysis pursuant to CEQA. “The proposed 2021 Cutler-Orosi Community Plan Update is consistent with the General Plan 2030 Update (2021) and will include the following primary goals and objectives.

- 1) Land Use and Environmental Planning - Promote development within planning areas next to the Regional State Route 63 Corridor in order to implement the following General Plan goals:
 - a) Ensure that the text and mapping of the Community Plan Designations and Zoning Reclassifications address various development matters such as encouraging Agricultural Adaptive Reuse activities, recognizing Non-Conforming Use activities, and facilitating Ministerial Permit approvals;
 - b) Encourage infill development within Urban Development Boundaries, thereby discouraging leapfrog development within Tulare County;
 - c) Reduce development pressure on agriculturally-designated lands within the Valley Floor, thereby encouraging agricultural production to flourish;
 - d) Reduce vehicle miles travelled throughout the County, thereby positively affecting air quality and greenhouse gas reduction; and
 - e) Help to improve the circulation, transit and railroad transportation system within this community, including, but not limited to, laying the groundwork for the construction of key projects such as Safe Routes to Schools, Complete Streets, and Bike Lanes/Pedestrian Paths.

- 2) Improvements for a “disadvantaged community” - It is expected that the community planning areas will be improved for the following reasons:
 - a) With faster project processing resulting from an updated community plan, increased employment opportunities are more likely to be provided by the private sector as proposed project developments can be approved as expeditiously as possible;
 - b) Increased housing grant awards are more likely to occur based on updated community plans that are consistent with the policies of the recently adopted (August 2013) General Plan Update and Housing Element; and

- c) With updated community plans, enhanced infrastructure grant awards are more likely, thereby providing access to funding to install or upgrade road, water, wastewater, and storm water facilities.
- 3) Strengthening Relationship with TCAG - An important benefit of this expedited community plan process will be the opportunity for RMA to strengthen the County's relationship with the Tulare County Association of Governments (TCAG) in that this and other community plans will help to facilitate the funding and implementation of several key transportation programs such as Safe Routes to Schools, Complete Streets, and Bike/Pedestrian Projects.

By pursuing these transportation programs through a heightened collaborative process, the likelihood of getting actual projects in the ground will be realized faster than historically achieved. In doing so, these communities and others can become safer and healthier by providing a more efficient transportation network.

The proposed 2020 Cutler-Orosi Community Plan amends the 1988 Cutler-Orosi Community Plan with this proposed General Plan Amendment and implements the 2012 Tulare County General Plan 2030 Update:

Planning Framework Element (Urban Boundaries). The Planning Framework Element is revised to update the Urban Development Boundary Part 1, of the Tulare County General Plan. The intent is that the County's UDB is coterminous, as administratively feasible, with the Sphere of Influence (SOI) adopted by Tulare County Local Agency Formation Commission.

Open Space Element. The Environmental Resources Management Element is amended to revise the "Urban Expansion Area" designation on the Open Space Map Part 1, Figure 8-1 of the Tulare County General Plan to reflect the area within the revised Urban Development Boundary of Cutler-Orosi.

Land Use, Transportation and Circulation Elements Part 1. This Plan Amendment incorporates the following: The County's General Plan land use designations, circulation functional classification, and development policies into the 2020 Cutler-Orosi Community Plan.

Community Plan Updates Part III. The proposed Community Plan for Cutler-Orosi is updated with this proposed amendment."

Potentially Significant Environmental Impact: The Project's potentially significant environmental impacts include: Biological Resources, Cultural Resources, Hydrology and Water Quality, Noise, and Tribal Cultural Resources. Mitigation measures will be recommended, where feasible, to mitigate potentially significant impacts.

EIR Availability:

A copy of the DEIR for the Cutler-Orosi Community Plan Update will be available for review (by appointment only due to COVID-19 precautions) at the Tulare County Resource Management Agency, 5961 South Mooney Blvd., Visalia, CA 93277, (559) 624-7000, (Monday – Thursday: 9:00 am to 4:30 pm) and (Friday: 9:00 am to 11:00 am).

A copy of the DEIR may also be obtained and/or reviewed at the following locations:

Orosi Branch Library
12646 Avenue 416
Orosi, CA 93647

Tuesday through Thursday: 10:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.;
2:00 p.m. – 5:30 p.m.

Tulare County Web Site: <https://tularecounty.ca.gov/rma/index.cfm/planning-building/environmental-planning/environmental-impact-reports/cutler-orosi-community-plan-2021-update/>

Contact for More Information: Hector Guerra, Chief Environmental Planner (559) 624-7121 (**para Español llame Jose Saenz (559) 624-7102**)).

The DEIR has a review period of **45** days, starting on **Wednesday, September 22, 2021** and ending **Friday, November 5, 2021** which has been approved by the State of California, Office of Planning and Research. Any written comments on the DEIR should be sent to the Tulare County Resource Management Agency at the address noted above, to the attention of: Hector Guerra, Chief Environmental Planner.

After the close of the public comment review period on the DEIR established by this notice, this matter will be set for public hearing before the Tulare County Planning Commission at a date to be determined later. Notice of the date, time and place for such public hearing will be published and/or mailed as provided by law.

Please take notice that - pursuant to Public Resource Code § 21177, Government Code § 65009, and other applicable law - if you challenge the proposed action described above in court, then you may be limited to raising only those issues or objections you or someone else raised during the public comment period or the public hearing, or in written correspondence delivered to the Tulare County Resource Management Agency within the review period, or to the Planning Commission during the public hearing.

Reed Schenke, Director, Resource Management Agency