DRAFT INITIAL STUDY and MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION

FOR

DOWNTOWN TAFT SPECIFIC PLAN & ZONING ORDINANCE AMENDMENT

July 2022

Lead Agency:
City of Taft

Lead Agency Contact:
Mark Staples, Planning and Development Services Director
mstaples@cityoftaft.org

Prepared by:
RICK Engineering Company
1160 Marsh St #150
San Luis Obispo, CA 93401
(805) 544-0707

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I. PROJECT SUMMARY

Date: July 26, 2022, 2022

Project Title: Downtown Taft Specific Plan & Zoning Ordinance Amendment

Lead Agency: City of Taft

Contact: Mark Staples
Planning and Development Services Director
mstaples@cityoftaft.org
661-763-1222 Ext. 124

Location: The Downtown Taft Specific Plan & Zoning Ordinance Amendment Project (Project) is located within the downtown portion of the City of Taft. Taft is located in Kern County near the southwestern edge of the San Joaquin Valley. The City of Taft is located approximately 32 miles southwest of Bakersfield and covers approximately 15 square miles of land. The Downtown Taft Specific Plan boundary is defined by the mid-block alley between Kern Street (State Route 33) and Lucard Street to the north, Front Street to the south, Kern Street/Highway 33 to the east, and 10th Street to the west totaling approximately 212 acres in size. The Zoning Ordinance Amendment boundary is defined by City limits. See Figure 1 Project Location for more information.

Coastal Zone: No

General Plan Land Use Designation:

Existing: Mixed Use (MU), Commercial (C), and Industrial (I)
Proposed: Downtown Taft Specific Plan (DTSP)

Zoning Designation:

Existing: Downtown Commercial (DC), Mixed Use (MU), Public Facilities (CF), General Commercial (GC), Industrial (I), Natural Resources (NR), Single Family Residential (R-1), Two-Family Residential (R-2), Limited Multiple-Family Residential (R-3), Residential Suburban (R-S)

Proposed: Downtown Taft Specific Plan (DTSP), Public Facilities (CF), General Commercial (GC), Industrial (I), Mixed Use (MU), Natural Resources (NR), Single Family Residential (R-1), Limited Multiple-Family Residential (R-3)

Anticipated Permits and Approvals:

Tribal Cultural Resources: Have California Native American tribes traditionally and culturally affiliated with the project area requested consultation pursuant to Public Resources Code section 21080.3.1? If so, is there a plan for consultation that includes, for example, the determination of significance of impacts to tribal cultural resources, procedures regarding confidentiality, etc.?

On April 28, 2022, the City of Taft sent out letters pursuant to AB 52 to the seventeen tribes listed on the NAHC's list pursuant to SB 18. At the time this document has been drafted four tribes have responded to the City's outreach letter with no requests for consultation regarding the project.

As of the date of this Initial Study, no additional responses or other communications have been received from the Native community regarding the project.

CEQA Requirement:

The Project is subject to the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The Lead Agency is the City of Taft. The purpose of this Initial Study (IS) is to provide a basis for determining whether to prepare an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) or a Negative Declaration. This IS intended to satisfy the requirements of the CEQA (Public Resources Code, Div. 13, Sec. 21000-21177) and the State CEQA Guidelines (California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Sec 15000-15387).

CEQA encourages lead agencies and applicants to modify their projects to avoid significant adverse impacts (CEQA Section 20180(c) (2) and State CEQA Guidelines Section 15070(b) (2)).

Section 15063(d) of the State CEQA Guidelines states that an IS shall contain the following information in brief form:

1) A description of the project including the project location
2) Identification of the environmental setting
3) Identification of environmental effects by use of a checklist, matrix, or other method, provided that entries on a checklist or other form are briefly explained to provide evidence to support the entries
4) Discussion of means to mitigate significant effects identified, if any
5) Examination of whether the project would be consistent with existing zoning, plans, and other applicable land use controls
6) The name of the person or persons who prepared and/or participated in the Initial Study

II. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Project Location, Setting, and History:

The City of Taft is located in Kern County near the southwestern edge of the San Joaquin Valley. The City of Taft (City) is located approximately 32 miles southwest of Bakersfield and covers approximately 15 square miles of land. According to 2020 census data, the city has a population of approximately 9,000 people. The Project includes an amendment to the City's Zoning Ordinance and the preparation of a Downtown Taft Specific Plan (DTSP). The Zoning Ordinance Amendments cover citywide, however the DTSP boundary concentrates around the downtown area of Taft and is defined by the alleyway directly south of Lucard Street to the north, Front Street to the south, Kern Street/Adkisson Way/Highway 33 to the east, and 10th Street to the west totaling approximately 212 acres in size as shown in Figure 1, Project Location.

The City of Taft has a number of architecturally significant buildings dating from the early and mid-20th century along with strong historic and economic ties to the oil industry. Many major oil companies have always had a presence in Taft throughout its history. Standard Oil (Chevron) established their corporate headquarters in the northwest part of the project area. Chevron's operation grew and peaked in the 1960s, as well as the City of Taft itself with new residential and commercial development and growth that continued throughout the 1970s and into the 1990s. Along with the oil industry, the Southern Pacific and Santa Fe railroads impacted the physical form of Taft. Southern Pacific laid out the site for the town and by the 1920s, the form of downtown Taft already looked much like it does today. With the arrival of new strip retail development in the mid- to late-20th century much of the economic viability of downtown Taft began to erode. Residents now primarily shop at big-box-anchored shopping centers on the town border or commute out to neighboring cities such as Bakersfield for their shopping and personal service's needs.

Regulatory Setting:

City of Taft General Plan:

The City of Taft General Plan is a comprehensive and long-range policy document of citywide priorities and values developed to guide public decision-making in future years. The General Plan's goals are implemented through policies and actions consistent with its nine elements: Land Use, Circulation, Open Space, Housing, Energy, Noise, Safety, Public Facilities and Services, and Economic Development. The goals, policies, and actions of these elements apply to all areas within the City limits and aim to guide physical, economic, and environmental growth. The General Plan identifies eight "guiding principles" for Taft's vision of the future. The subject of the Specific Plan document, Downtown Taft, is the subject of one of these guiding principles. The General Plan seeks to promote a "vibrant, healthy and active downtown by providing safe multi-family and mixed-use housing" while also encouraging infill development and attractive

residential development. The goals and policies within the General Plan that implement these visions and provide the foundation upon which the Project is based.

According to the City's General Plan and under Government Code Section 65450 et seq., a specific plan must be consistent with the governing general plan goals and policies, including all capital improvements and public works projects.

City of Taft Zoning Ordinance:

The City's Zoning Ordinance includes local regulations that control the use and development of land. As part of the Project, the City's Zoning Ordinance will be amended to assist in the streamlining of development, particularly residential development in the City of Taft. The other key focus of the Zoning Ordinance Amendment is to integrate the new Downtown Taft Specific Plan (DTSP) and associated zoning standards into the Zoning Ordinance. Figure 2 identifies specific zones within the DTSP and their specified development standards.

Downtown Taft Specific Plan:

The City adopted its Downtown Specific Plan in 1994 and incorporated amendments in 1999. The Downtown Specific Plan ensures implementation of the General Plan with respect to the planning and development of downtown Taft. The City's adoption of the General Plan and coinciding Zoning Ordinance in 2010, integrated the standards of the specific plan into a new land use designation and two new zone districts created for the downtown area. This new DTSP and corresponding Zoning Ordinance Amendment will provide a plan for updated land use, development regulations, development incentives, and other related actions aimed at implementing the goals, policies, and actions of the General Plan with regard to downtown Taft, as well as focused Zoning Ordinance Amendments that will assist in streamlining residential development citywide.

Project Background and Characteristics:

The Downtown Taft Specific Plan and Zoning Ordinance Amendment Project (Project) consists of a Specific Plan that focuses on the downtown area of Taft and corresponding Zoning Ordinance Amendment. Analysis for this IS/MND comes largely from the 2009 Taft General Plan EIR and subsequent amendment in 2017. The majority of the findings and conclusions within this document are supported by the analysis in these previous documents.

The Downtown Taft Specific Plan (DTSP)

The DTSP aims to establish downtown as a central zone with street-oriented uses and as a vibrant mixed-use district surrounded by residential uses. The Project supports new development regulations that reflect current and new market demand with development feasibility context, includes contemporary planning principles, and adds more provisions for

adaptive reuse. Additionally, the Project provides a vision and planning framework for future growth and development in the approximately 212-acre Specific Plan Area (SPA) while introducing new Land Use Designations not included in the 1999 Downtown Taft Specific Plan.

The DTSP presents a vision, themes, goals, policies, design standards, and implementation strategies for categories such as land use, mobility, parks and open space, and public facilities. The objectives of the Specific Plan have been prepared to be consistent with the Taft General Plan. The objectives of the DTSP are outlined below:

1. Provide a comprehensive policy and regulatory framework that guides development in Taft's downtown area in accordance with the Taft General Plan.
2. Create development standards that are unique to the Specific Plan area and will enhance developments in the downtown area.
3. Encourage accelerated housing production in the downtown area through streamlining development permitting processes for residential projects.
4. Encourage a diversified downtown economy.

Along with the objectives the DTSP includes goals and policies which provide tangible steps and actions to achieve the vision for downtown Taft. As outlined below, the goals and policies are divided into four themes. Under each theme are a set of goals supported by policies that give the City measurable, implementable actions intended to help accomplish that goal. The four themes are Strong Economy, Active Community, Sustainable Development, and Community Character.

Strong Economy: The City of Taft strives to create a robust and diversified economy that provides community members with a range of employment opportunities and resiliency and adaptability to market changes. The strong economy goals seek to retain existing businesses and attract new business to the area to stimulate job creation, particularly in Downtown Taft.

Strong Economy Goals:
Goal 1-1: Retain existing, and attract new businesses to drive economic development
Goal 1-2: Achieve economic diversification through a mix of shops and services for residents and visitors.

Active Community: The City of Taft is committed to enhancing its parks, trails, and recreational amenities to promote an active community in downtown Taft. The active community goals seek to promote the health and well-being of the community, encourage social interaction, and build upon the Rails to Trails corridor with high quality recreation amenities and community education.

Active Community Goals:
Goal 2-1: Create High-Quality Recreation Opportunities

Goal 2-2: Facilitate Health + Wellness Initiatives
Goal 2-3: Active Streets and Plazas for residents and visitors to gather

Sustainable Development: The Downtown Taft Specific Plan is the foundation for the growth of smart and sustainable housing and improvements to mobility, connectivity, and in the downtown area. The sustainable development goals seek to promote the creation of housing; both diverse and affordable, assess the infrastructure needs to accommodate growth in the city and ensure that Taft is accessible both locally and regionally.

Sustainable Development Goals:
Goal 3-1: Strong mix of compatible land uses in Downtown Taft
Goal 3-2: A diverse range of housing opportunities
Goal 3-3: Sustainable infrastructure systems throughout Downtown Taft
Goal 3-4: A safe, convenient, and accessible mobility network for all ages and abilities

Community Character: The Downtown Taft Specific Plan aims to enhance and protect the community's small town and historic character while attracting new investment and growth. The Community Character goals seek to preserve historic resources, promote historic architecture in downtown areas, and celebrate and encourage arts and culture.

Community Character Goals:
Goal 4-1: Preserve and enhance the historic and cultural heritage of Downtown Taft
Goal 4-2: Provide support for increased public safety measures in Downtown Taft.
Goal 4-3: Support, encourage and develop Taft's Arts and Culture Community

The DTSP provides for a mix of land uses designed to achieve the overarching vision, goals, and policies of creating a thriving, healthy and balanced community with an economically diverse downtown environment. To improve cohesiveness of development within the SPA, the DTSP and Zoning Ordinance sets forth a transition of intensities. The land use designations within the SPA would be reconfigured to the following designations as shown in Figures 3 and 4 Existing and Downtown Specific Plan Proposed Land Use, respectively, with the following new Land Use Designations: Parks & Open Space (OS), Commercial (C), Downtown Core Mixed Use (DC-MU), Downtown Transition Mixed Use (DT-MU), Industrial Light (LI), Live-Work Mixed Use (LW-MU), Office-Medical (OM), and Residential Medium (MDR). The land use designations also act as zones; therefore, development standards have been assigned to each land use designation to guide development in the downtown area. Details of the proposed land use designations and development standards are outlined below:

Land Use Designations

Open Space (OS)

The intent of the Open Space (OS) land use designation is to build upon the current active and passive recreational spaces in downtown Taft. The OS designation generally includes community and neighborhood parks, gardens, linear parks, and trails. Typical building and structure types include park restrooms, recreation and community centers or other ancillary structures such as park benches, tables, exercise stations, and public art installations. New development along the existing Rails to Trails greenway corridor shall integrate into the open space network.

Commercial (C)

The intent of the Commercial (C) land use designation is to provide for a range of locally serving general and neighborhood commercial uses that will provide a wide variety of retail, wholesale, and service uses such as automobile service, eating/drinking establishments, entertainment facilities, retail, office, service establishments and other commercial uses.

Downtown Core Mixed Use (DC-MU)

The downtown Taft area is generally located between North Street to the north, 2nd Street to the east, Main Street to the south and 8th Street to the west and is intended to be the heart of where people live, work, shop and dine in Taft. The Downtown Core Mixed Use (DC-MU) land use designation provides flexibility by allowing a combination of commercial and residential uses within Taft's downtown core that complement each other, creating a vibrant space for residents to enjoy. Developments within the DC-MU land use will grow vertically rather than horizontally and must respect the history and culture of the downtown area by reflecting the historic architecture and design found on Center Street.

Downtown Transition Mixed Use (DT-MU)

The intent of the Downtown Transition Mixed Use (DT-MU) land use designation is to provide a less intense, more neighborhood-scaled mixed-use development that creates a transition into the downtown core. The DT-MU land use designation allows for a combination of commercial and residential uses, similar to the DC-MU, however, it is intended that developments will grow horizontally instead of vertically to provide a transition between the downtown core and surrounding neighborhoods. While development in the DT-MU must still respect the history and culture of the downtown area, there is greater flexibility in the development scale and architectural types allowed.

Light Industrial (LI)

The intent of the Light Industrial (LI) land use designation is to provide suitable locations for light manufacturing and fabrication, research and development, warehousing and distribution, and multi-tenant industrial uses in the eastern area of downtown Taft. The LI land use designation also supports administrative and professional offices and commercial activities on a limited basis. These uses must be generally compatible with those in nearby commercial and residential zones, and not produce substantial environmental nuisances such as noise, odor, dust/smoke or glare. New development in the areas designated as LI shall include high-quality development

standards, such as adequate buffering from less-intensive land uses and access to major transportation routes for truck traffic.

Live-Work Mixed Use (LW-MU)

The intent of the Live-Work Mixed Use (LW-MU) land use designation is to provide workforce housing immediately above, adjacent to, or near employment. The majority of the area designated as LW-MU is intended to be made up of medium density residential housing developments while encouraging live-work housing such as shopkeeper units. Live-work housing is generally described as a residential unit on the second floor above a commercial/office workspace, with both the commercial/office and the residential component being occupied by the same resident. The LW-MU is strategically located between the Downtown Core and the office and medical land uses to allow residents easy access to goods, services, and entertainment.

Office-Medical (O-M)

The intent of the Office Medical (O-M) land use designation is to provide opportunities for expansion of professional offices, medical facilities, supportive care and other compatible uses.

Medium Density Residential (MDR)

The intent of the Medium Density Residential (MDR) land use designation is to provide a range of housing types for residents in an urban setting. This designation allows for a mix of small lot single and multi-family detached and attached residential uses, including duplex, triplex, or multi-plex, townhomes, courtyard or motor court housing, and other types of residential developments. The MDR land use provides a transition in residential densities between the downtown core and surrounding residential neighborhoods. In addition to the residential uses above, the MDR land use also allows for limited neighborhood commercial uses such as convenience stores, restaurants, and other neighborhood-serving uses.

At buildout, the new DTSP could result in up to approximately 3,121 dwelling units, 4,272 employment opportunities, 9.3 acres of recreational open space and 6,180 persons. A majority of the SPA has been previously developed and the Project area is considered an urbanized area according to CEQA Guidelines §15387 as the City has a population density of at least 1,000 persons per square mile, according to the 2020 U.S. Census. One of the main goals of the Project is to revitalize downtown Taft by implementing policies and incentives for infill development. The Project does not propose any specific development; however, Project adoption may attract development proposals. Specific development projects that may be proposed as a result of Project adoption would most likely qualify as an infill project. According to Public Resources Code, § 21094.5(e)(1)(B), a qualifying infill project is one that includes residential, retail/commercial, transit, school, and/or public office buildings and is "located within an urban area on a site that has been previously developed, or on a vacant site where at least 75 percent of the perimeter of the site adjoins, or is separated only by an improved public right-of-way from, parcels that are developed with qualified urban uses." CEQA Guidelines section §15183.3 details the review process for eligible infill projects, a majority of the development projects that would be proposed as a result of Project adoption would qualify for streamlined

review or exemption under Class 32 §15332 in-fill development projects which applies to proposed developments within city limits on sites of five or fewer acres substantially surrounded by urban uses, where the site has no habitat value for special status species, can be adequately served by all required utilities and public services, and the project would not have significant traffic, noise, air quality, or water quality impacts.

Table 1: DTSP Development Standards

Land Use Description	Target Density (FAR or DU/AC)[1]	Minimum Lot Area (Square Feet)	Minimum Lot Width (Feet)	Minimum Lot Depth (Feet)	Setbacks[2] (Feet)				Maximum Building Height (stories)	Frontage Requirements
					Minimum Front	Minimum Interior Side	Minimum Street Side	Minimum Rear[3]		
Medium Density Residential (MDR)	12-24	2,500 SF	25'	100'	10'	5'	5'	5'	45' or 3 stories	See Section 3.11
Commercial (C)	1.0	5,000 SF	25'	100'	-	3'	-	3'	45' or 3 stories	See Section 3.11
Downtown Core Mixed Use (DC-MU)	25-40	2,500 SF	25'	100'	-	-	-	-	45' or 4 stories	See Section 3.11
Downtown Transition Mixed Use (DT-MU)	15-30	2,500 SF	25'	100'	10'	5'	5'	5'	45' or 4 stories	See Section 3.11
Live-Work Mixed Use (LW-MU)	10-20	2,500 SF	25'	100'	-	5'	5'	5'	35'	See Section 3.11
Office-Medical (O-M)	1.0	15,000 SF	100'	100'	10'	10'	5'	10'[3]	35'	-
Light Industrial (LI)	1.0	15,000 SF	75'	100'	15'	10'	15'	10'[4]	50'	-
Open Space (OS)	0.10	1 acre	100'	200'	20'	10'	20'	10'	30'	-

[1] FAR = Floor Area Ratio; DU/AC = Dwelling Unit Per Acre
[2] Upper Story Stepbacks apply. Any portion of the structure exceeding 30 feet in height shall be stepped back from the side property line 5 feet
[3] Where abutting an alley, a zero-foot (0') rear setback shall apply
[4] Where abutting existing residential uses, the rear setback shall be increased by 5 feet

Zoning Ordinance Amendment

A corresponding amendment to the City of Taft Zoning Ordinance is proposed to integrate the changes to the land use and zoning designations within the DTSP but also to add targeted changes citywide to streamline development. These targeted changes as well as the integration of the DTSP are outlined below:

1. Revise the Zoning Ordinance to integrate the new DTSP zone to allow for development within the downtown area to be governed by the new Specific Plan standards.
2. Revise the City's permits and approvals process to include streamlined reviews and ministerial approval for projects that qualify, particularly for residential development to increase housing production in Taft.
3. Create objective design standards for both residential and commercial development that can be used by decision makers in determining if a project qualifies for ministerial approval
4. Update the City's ADU and JADU regulations to align with state regulations to allow for more accessory dwelling units in the City.

Similarly, to the DTSP, the Zoning Ordinance Amendment does not propose any specific development but may attract development proposals. Unlike the DTSP, the Zoning Ordinance Amendment does not include changes that would result in higher land use densities, other than what is proposed for the DTSP. Therefore, any new development resulting from the Zoning Ordinance Amendment is already assumed under the existing General Plan buildout scenario and the Zoning Ordinance Amendments would only assist in achieving that already adopted vision.

As discussed above, the Zoning Ordinance Amendment would reflect the updated design guidelines and changes to the City's zoning ordinance map in accordance with the proposed land use changes from the DTSP. Unless otherwise specified, where the provisions of the DTSP differ from those in the Zoning Ordinance (Title VI), the provisions of the DTSP would take precedence. Where the DTSP is silent on a topic, the requirements of the Zoning Ordinance (Title VI), would remain applicable.

Part of the funding for the Project comes from the SB-2 Planning Grant Program targeted to accelerate housing production and Local Early Action Planning (LEAP); and Regional Early Action Plan (REAP) awarded by the Kern Council of Governments (KernCOG), awarded in 2019, 2020, and 2021 respectively. The City received REAP funding in 2021 from the Kern Council of Governments to supplement the PGP and LEAP funds. The Project will aid in helping the City to achieve its 2023 Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) numbers.

Legend
Specific Plan Boundary
City of Taft Limits

Fellows
Midoil
Wallace Center
Ford City
Taft
Taft Heights
South Taft
Taft-Kern County Airport
Downtown Taft Specific Plan
KERN COUNTY
SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNTY
Elkhorn Plain

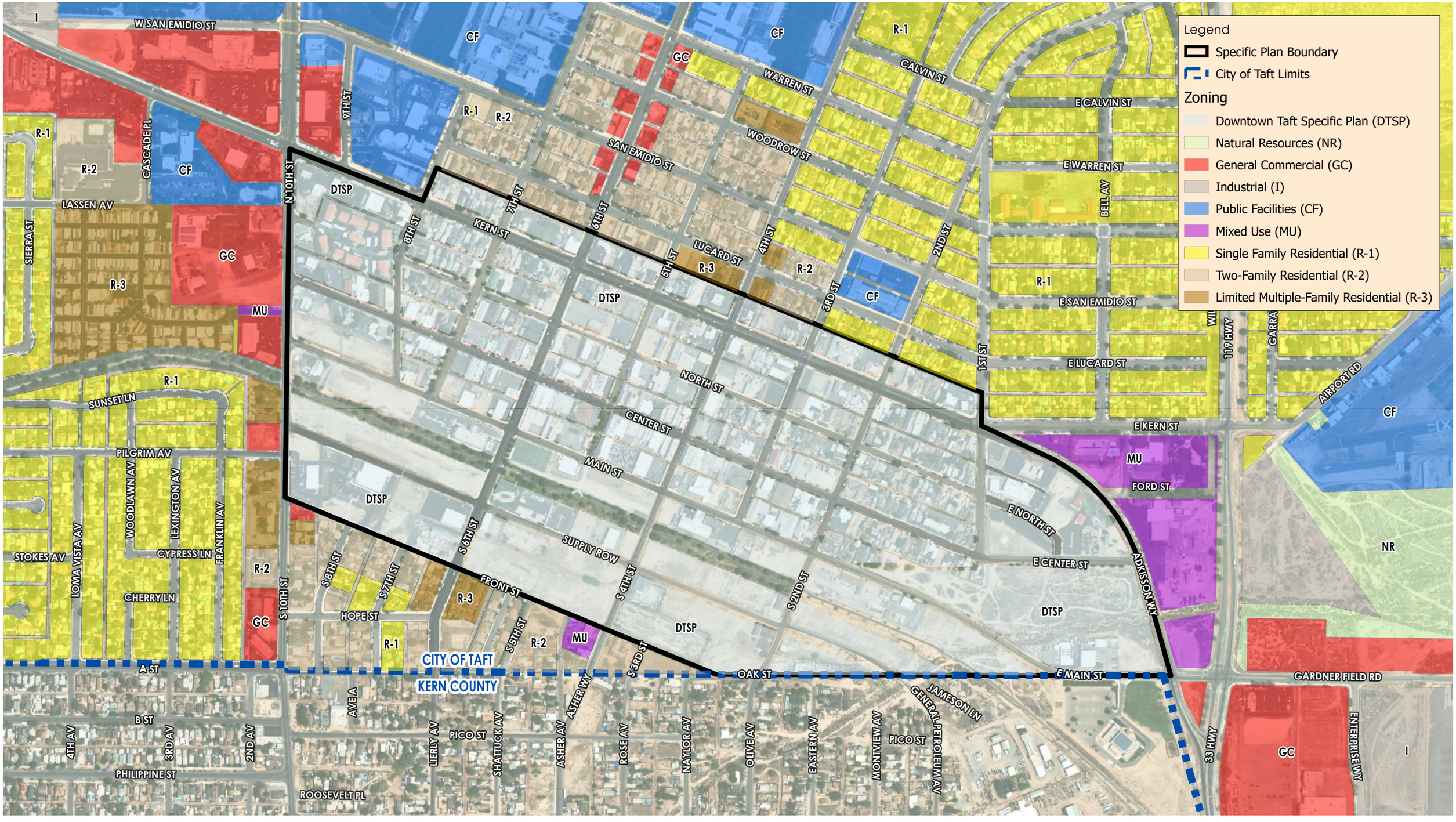
Mocal Rd
Randall Rd
Midway Rd
Highway 119
Airport Rd
Gerald Rd
Isaac Rd
Midway Rd
West Side Hwy
Fir St
Elm St
E Cedar St
South St
Airport Rd
Kern St
Maple Ave
Main St
Wood St
Honolulu Rd
Gardner Field Rd
S Lake Rd
Petroleum Club Rd
Twenty Five Hill Rd
33
Hovey Hills Rd
West Side Hwy
Cadet Rd
Cadet Rd
Gardner Field Rd
Berry Rd
Oleson
Copus Rd
Copus Rd
Alder St
Basic School Rd
Bitter Creek
Kerto Rd

0 2,500 5,000 10,000 Feet

Date of Exhibit: 4/15/2022
Source: City of Taft, ESRI

VICINITY MAP

DOWNTOWN TAFT SPECIFIC PLAN



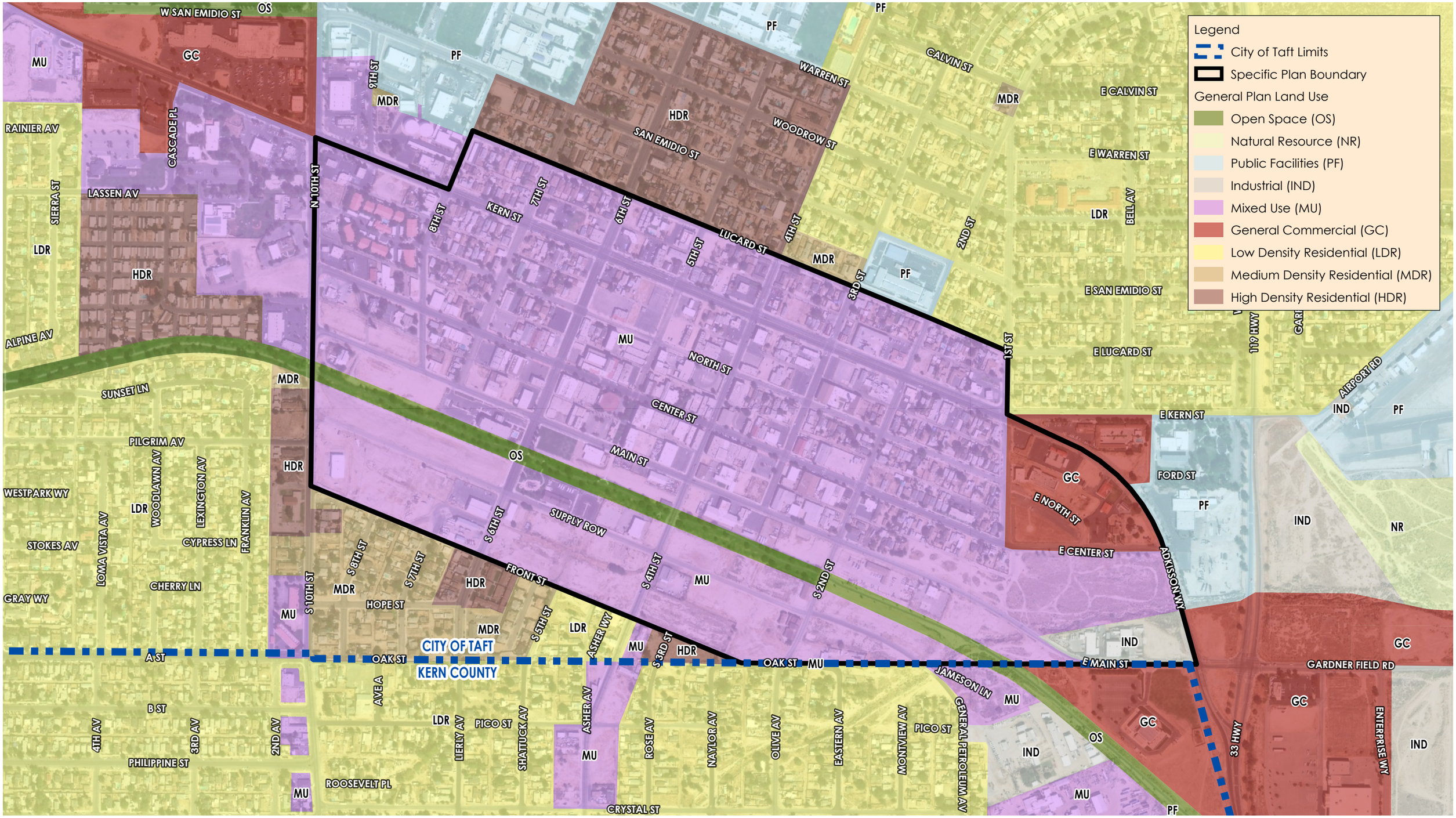
PROPOSED ZONING

DOWNTOWN TAFT SPECIFIC PLAN

RICK Planning + Design

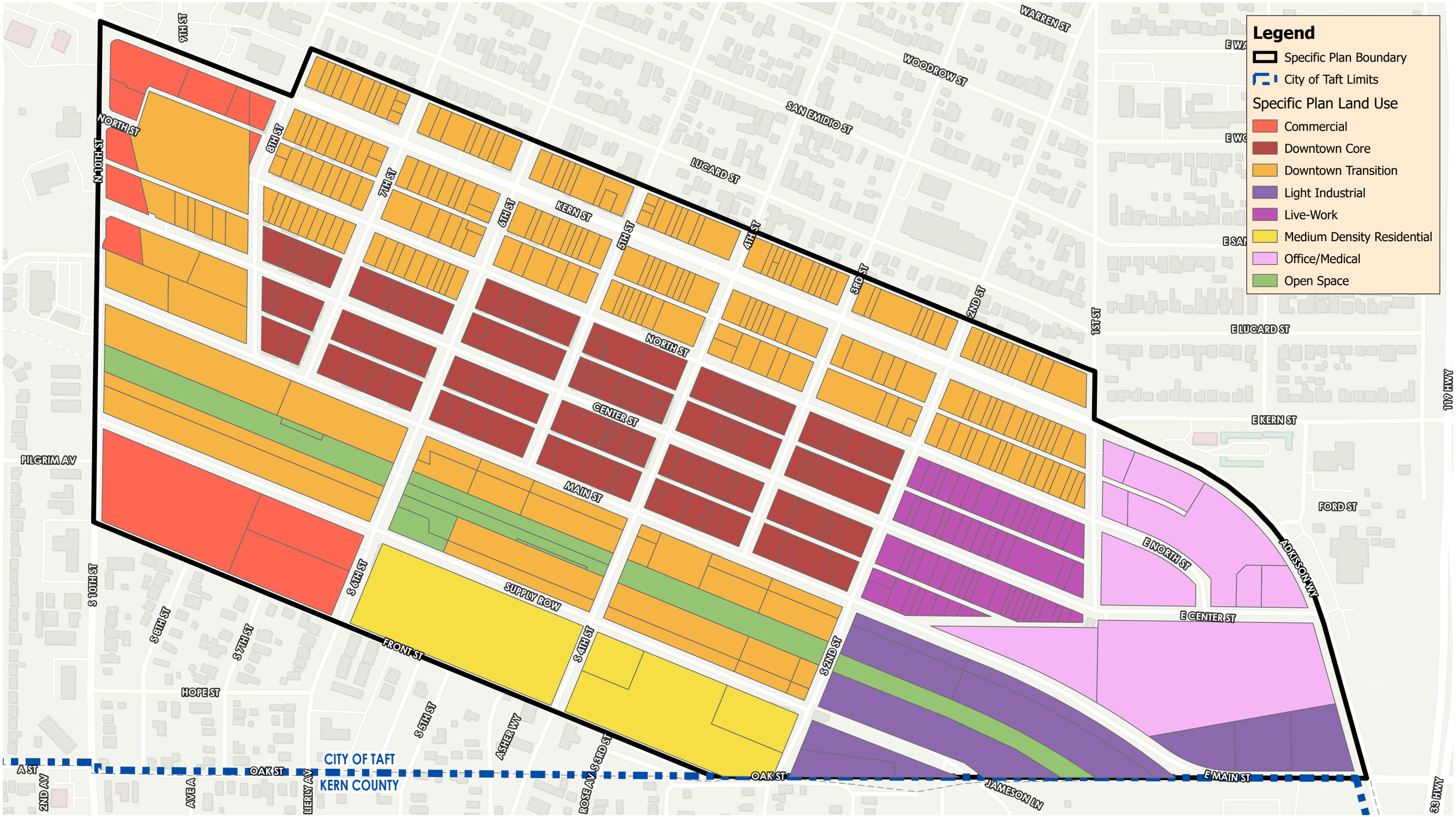
0 250 500 1,000 Feet

Date of Exhibit: 7/21/2022
Source: City of Taft, ESRI



EXISTING GENERAL PLAN LAND USE

DOWNTOWN TAFT SPECIFIC PLAN



DOWNTOWN TAFT SPECIFIC PLAN LAND USE

DOWNTOWN TAFT SPECIFIC PLAN

Date of Exhibit: 4/14/2022
Source: City of Taft, ESRI

III. ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS

An environmental checklist follows this section and addresses all potential adverse effects resulting from the proposed project. No significant adverse effects are expected from any of the proposed activities.

IV. 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 "Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated" as indicated by the checklists on the following pages.

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

An explanation for all checklist responses is included, and all answers take into account the whole action involved and the following types of impacts: off-site and on-site; cumulative and project-level; indirect and direct; and construction and operational. The explanation of each issue identifies (a) the threshold of significance, if any, used to evaluate each question; and (b) the mitigation measure identified, if any, to reduce the impact to less than significance. All project mitigation measures are provided in the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP) (see Appendix D).

In the checklist the following definitions are used:

"Potentially Significant Impact" means there is substantial evidence that an effect may be significant.

"Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated" means the incorporation of one or more mitigation measures can reduce the effect from potentially significant to a less than significant level.

"Less Than Significant Impact" means that the effect is less than significant, and no mitigation is necessary to reduce the impact to a lesser level.

"No Impact" means that the effect does not apply to the proposed project, or clearly will not impact nor be impacted by the proposed project.

V. DETERMINATION: (To be completed by the Lead Agency 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 measures 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.

Signature

Date

Printed Name and Title

I. AESTHETICS. Except as provided in Public Resources Code Section 21099, would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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 buildings 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?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Thresholds of Significance: The project would have a significant effect on aesthetics if it would have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista; substantially damage scenic resources, including but not limited to trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway; substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings (if the project is in a non-urbanized area) or conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality (if the project is in an urbanized area); or create a new source of substantial light or glare, which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area.

DISCUSSION

The Project primarily pertains to downtown Taft, which is considered urbanized and is mostly developed. However, development associated with the Zoning Ordinance Amendment could occur citywide. Development within the downtown core includes a mixture of commercial, retail, public/institutional, and residential uses. A majority of homes along SR 33 are single-family, detached units and the downtown core area consists of a central business district that contains both retail shops and residences, some of which are architecturally significant. According to the City's General Plan and 1999 Downtown Taft Specific Plan, due to fires and natural disasters, many of the potentially architecturally significant buildings in the downtown area were destroyed in the 1940's and 1950's and some were replaced in the 1960's and 1970's, leading downtown Taft to include several different styles of architecture. The predominant architectural styles of the SPA consist of an American Mercantile and Art Deco style buildings. However, the

Project Area is also in aesthetic decline due to age of structures, increased retail presence outside of the project area, and poor maintenance. According to the 1999 Downtown Taft Specific Plan, the City of Taft has suffered from a negative image of an industrial town in decline, hampered by economic conditions associated with the oil industry. The current aesthetic character of downtown Taft reflects a mixed image with some positive aesthetic components such as the Fox Theatre, paseos, and mercantile buildings among other buildings and store fronts that appear abandoned from absentee owners. Outside of the project area, the City is developed with residential and commercial areas and oil fields with associated oil wells, well and equipment pads, paved and unpaved access roads, pipelines, and utility lines.

Chapter 4.0 of the DTSP reviews design guidelines and standards. The chapter sets forth the design guidelines and standards for the consistent promotion of high-quality, well-designed development throughout the SPA. Chapter 4.0 identifies the overarching design guidelines for the Project Area, which are intended to be used in conjunction with Chapter 3.0 Land Use.

I.a) The Project comprises a programmatic, policy-level planning document. The DTSP and Zoning Ordinance Amendment is intended to guide the orderly development and redevelopment of infrastructure, businesses, and housing, downtown and citywide but does not propose any specific development at this time. However, adoption of the Project could attract development proposals. The Project area is primed for residential and commercial growth; thus, it is likely that a majority of the potential development proposed as a result of Project approval, would facilitate infill development, particularly in the downtown area, and would be deemed CEQA exempt according to CEQA Guidelines Class 32 § 15332. In-Fill Development Projects. Approval and implementation of the proposed land use and zoning changes would facilitate development of residential and commercial land uses within the Project Area. Furthermore, site development standards that address site relationships and views are identified within the DTSP in Chapter 4, Design Guidelines and Standards and in the Zoning Ordinance (Title VI) any proposed construction would be regulated by various land use controls, such as the zoning ordinance, design review requirements, and other regulatory constraints. Therefore, a less than significant impact would occur.

I.b) The California Department of Transportation's (Caltrans) Landscape Architecture Program manages the Scenic Highway Program, contained in Streets and Highways Code Sections 260–263. State highways are classified as either Officially Listed or Eligible. According to the Caltrans Scenic Highway Systems Map, there is no officially designated scenic highway within the Project Area (Caltrans 2022). The Project Area is bisected by Highway 33. However, the area is considered urbanized and does not contain major stands of trees, large rock outcroppings, historic buildings or other scenic features. The Project does not include any development, rather it involves various policies through the DTSP and Zoning Ordinance Amendment that are intended to promote the preservation of scenic resources within the Project Area. Historic

preservation is addressed within the Community Character theme and Community Character Goal 1 "Preserve and enhance the historic and cultural heritage of downtown Taft" as many of the historic buildings are located downtown. Policies such as "integrate historic resources, signage and wayfinding to create a historic downtown area and or place" encourage the preservation of existing historical buildings and monuments. Any future physical improvements and site developments would be subject to the City's design review process and would be required to satisfy various criteria, including those related to natural hazards and land feature preservation, historic preservation/infill development, and building scale and design. The design guidelines and standards contained in the DTSP, and Zoning Ordinance are intended to protect, improve, and adaptively manage these resources as the community evolves. As the Project Area is not located adjacent to an officially designated state scenic highway, no impact would occur.

I.c) The proposed Project is located in a developed urbanized setting. The visual character of the Project Area is characterized by the built environment, which features a mix of retail, restaurant, residential, public, and open space uses that are generally designed in the American Mercantile or Art Deco style. Because the specifics of future development projects are not currently known, the extent to which various improvements envisioned in the DTSP and Zoning Ordinance Amendment could result in changes to scenic views or degrade the Project Area's visual character cannot be exactly described at this time. However, future development would likely be located in developed areas and would be consistent with the design guidelines and standards of the DTSP and to the density described in the Zoning Ordinance. Related public realm streetscape improvements, including sidewalk enhancements, bicycle racks and lane/route striping, signage, street furniture, lighting, and landscaping, would be similar in type and scale to existing facilities in the Project area.

Under state law, future development must be consistent with the Land Use Element of the City's General Plan and zone districts to ensure that setbacks, building heights, on-site landscaping and other features are incorporated into each future development project within the Project Area. Furthermore, existing views within the Project Area are intermittent and primarily limited to vehicular roadways and pedestrian facilities. Additionally, the DTSP and Zoning Ordinance Amendment are intended to preserve the Taft small-town character. With the recommended streetscape enhancements and design guidelines and standards included in the DTSP and updates to the Zoning Ordinance, the Project has the potential to improve the visual quality and community character of the area. Therefore, a less than significant impact would occur.

I.d) The Project includes objective design guidelines that address site design and architecture and identifies design approaches and guidelines regarding lighting for the public realm including parking areas; buildings; and streets. The intent of the lighting guidelines is to encourage design that creates visually safe spaces and encourages pedestrian circulation and interaction. Lighting would be provided to ensure a safe environment but would not cause areas of intense light or

glare. Additionally, Chapter 4 section 4.10 of the DTSP states that "Lighting should be sensitive to adjacent land uses and architectural features and lighting fixtures that provide down-lighting and lighting that is shielded from adjacent uses shall be implemented." All lighting would conform to dark sky policies. Similarly, the Zoning Ordinance Amendment includes design standards that intend to limit the amount of light pollution, particularly onto neighboring properties. As future development within the Project Area would occur, projects would be required to adhere to the design guidelines and standards, a less than significant impact would occur.

MITIGATION MEASURES

No mitigation required.

FINDINGS

The proposed project would have a Less Than Significant Impact on Aesthetics.

II. AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY RESOURCES. Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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 non-agricultural 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 PRC 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 non-agricultural use or conversion of forestland to non-forest use?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Thresholds of Significance: The project would have a significant effect on agriculture and forestry resources if it would convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (hereafter "farmland"), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural uses; conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use or a Williamson Act contract; conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code section 12220(g), timberland (as defined by PRC section 4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code section 51104(g)); Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use; or involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland, to non-agricultural use or conversion of forestland to non-forest use.

DISCUSSION

The Project involves a Specific Plan update and corresponding Zoning Ordinance amendment which would serve as a regulatory document to provide a framework for development within the Project Area. The Project sets the foundation for how the City will operate, based upon

identified goals and policies relating to a range of topics, including land use, urban design, parks and open space, transportation, and sustainable infrastructure. It establishes a framework for the land use, intensity, development regulations, and design standards that will support future development. No specific development is proposed as a result of the Project. The Project proposes to update the existing land uses in the DTSP area from Mixed Use, General Commercial, and Open Space to the following new Land Use Designations: Parks & Open Space (OS), Commercial (C), Downtown Core Mixed Use (DC-MU), Downtown Transition Mixed Use (DT-MU), Industrial Light (LI), Live-Work Mixed Use (LW-MU), Office-Medical (OM), and Residential Medium (MDR). In addition, most development proposed as a result of DTSP approval, would facilitate infill development, and would be deemed CEQA exempt according to CEQA Guidelines Class 32 § 15332. In-Fill Development Projects.

According to the City of Taft General Plan (adopted 2010, amended 2017) there are no major agricultural operations or agricultural land uses within the Project Area. According to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program (FMMP, 2016) the Project Area is categorized as Urban and Built-Up Land and there are no Williamson Act contract lands located within the Project Area. Therefore, there is no Farmland of Local Importance within the Project Area.

II.a) As noted above in the discussion, the Project does not contain any agriculture or forest uses. More specifically, in the DTSP where land use changes are proposed as part of the Project, there are no agricultural or forest uses, as shown in Figure's 2 and 4. Therefore, project implementation would have no direct or indirect effect on the conversion of Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance. There would be no impacts.

II.b) The Project is not located within an area covered under a Williamson Act contract and does not propose to change the zoning or land use of any agriculturally zoned property. Therefore, the proposed project would not conflict with any Williamson Act contract or agriculturally zoned property. Therefore, there would be no impact.

II.c-e) The Project area does not contain any agriculture or forest uses. More specifically, in the DTSP where land use changes are proposed as part of the Project, there are no agricultural or forest uses, as shown in Figure 2. Therefore, project implementation would have no direct or indirect effect on agriculture or forest resources. There would be no impacts.

MITIGATION MEASURES

No mitigation required.

FINDINGS

The proposed project would have No Impact on Agriculture and Forestry Resources.

III. AIR QUALITY. Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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 non-attainment 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) adversely affecting a substantial number of people?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Thresholds of Significance: The project would have a significant effect on air quality if it would conflict with or obstruct implementation of applicable air quality plans; result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard; expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations; or result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people.

DISCUSSION

The Project Area is located in Kern County in the San Joaquin Valley Air Basin (SJVAB). The SJVAB is the second largest air basin in the State of California, it is 250 miles long and approximately 35 miles wide. The SJVAB is generally flat with a downward gradient in terrain to the northwest. The SPA is under the jurisdiction of the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District (SVJAPCD).

Local air districts and California Air Resources Board (CARB) monitor ambient air quality to assure that air quality standards are met. Depending on whether the standards are met or exceeded, the SJVAB is classified as being in "attainment" or "nonattainment." Under state law, air districts are required to prepare a plan for air quality improvement for pollutants for when a district is in non-compliance. SVJAPCD operates and maintains an expansive network of air monitoring sites throughout the eight counties of the San Joaquin Valley. A total of 24 sites are currently operated directly by the District or in collaboration with the CARB. In addition, CARB also independently operates a number of air monitoring stations in the Valley, along with additional sites operated by the National Park Service and tribal nations. While there are no monitoring stations in the City of Taft, CARB maintains several air quality monitoring sites in the cities of Bakersfield and Maricopa. The nearest monitoring sites are 40 and 8 miles away from the City, respectively,

these nearby sites were deemed to be generally representative of ambient air quality in the City of Taft and the project area because of their similar climate, meteorology, and topography.

The air monitoring network measures concentrations of pollutants for which the U.S. EPA has established a health-based air quality standard. Pollutants monitored include ozone, PM10 and PM2.5, nitrogen oxides, sulfur oxides, hydrocarbons, and carbon monoxide. In addition to routine monitoring, the SJVAPCD operates a network of five Photochemical Assessment Monitoring Stations (PAMS) focused on capturing volatile organic compounds (VOCs) during the summer season.

The SJVAPCD prepares an annual Air Monitoring Network Plan and a 5-year Air Monitoring Network Assessment, which are both required by EPA. The Annual Network Plan and 5-year Network Assessment include a wealth of information regarding the air monitoring equipment operating in the Valley, along with details of upcoming changes to the monitoring network and analysis of how well the monitoring network covers the needs of the Valley's population.

The SJVAPCD has adopted several attainment plans to achieve state and federal air quality standards to comply with the California Clean Air Act (CCAA) and federal Clean Air Act (CAA). Following are descriptions and the current status of SJVAPCD's various air quality attainment plans.

2018 PM 2.5 Plan

On August 19, 2021, the SJVAPCD Governing Board approved the Attainment Plan Revision for the 1997 Annual PM2.5 Standard to establish a new attainment target for the 1997 annual PM2.5 standard.

Ozone Plans

The CAA mandates the SJVAPCD to develop and submit a new attainment plan for the revised federal 8-hour ozone standard by August 2022 to the U.S. EPA. In October 2015, EPA strengthened the standards for ground-level ozone from 75 parts per billion (ppb) to 70 ppb. The SJVAB is classified as an "extreme" nonattainment area for this revised standard, with an attainment deadline of 2037.

Air Quality Guidelines for General Plans

Assembly Bill 170 (Reyes) was passed in 2003 and requires each City and County within the jurisdiction of SJVAPCD to amend its general plan to include goals, policies, standards, and feasible implementation measures to improve air quality. The Air Quality Guidelines for General Plans is a guidance document published by SJVAPCD in June 2005. The guidelines are intended to serve as a resource to cities and counties located within the SJVAB and to assist local jurisdictions in meeting the requirements of AB 170. The guidelines include recommended

goals, policies, and programs for adoption in general plans to reduce vehicle trips, reduce miles traveled, and improve air quality throughout the region and to promote healthier more livable communities throughout the SJVAB. Taft's 2017 General Plan incorporates goals and policies to reduce emissions of regional criteria pollutants, in accordance with AB 170.

III.a) The Project includes a Specific Plan Update and corresponding Zoning Ordinance amendment that ensures implementation of the City's General Plan with respect to the planning and development of downtown Taft. The DTSP provides a plan for land use, development regulations, development incentives, and other related actions aimed at implementing the goals, policies, and actions of the General Plan. The improvements envisioned in the DTSP, and Zoning Ordinance are suggested conceptual designs intended to be used as guidance for the City in implementing future improvements. The DTSP and Zoning Ordinance amendment does not include any site-specific proposals or development, nor does it grant any entitlements for development. As a policy and regulatory document, the Project would have no physical effect on the environment. Additionally, since the proposed Project would not directly involve any changes to the General Plan, the Project would be consistent with applicable attainment plans. Therefore, the project would not conflict with or obstruct implementation of any applicable attainment or maintenance plans related to air quality ambient standards. Impacts would be less than significant.

III, b, c) The Project is a policy document that does not propose any specific development; therefore, adoption of the DTSP and Zoning Ordinance amendment would not violate any air quality standard, contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation, or result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant. As discussed above in section III the Project would be in compliance with the City's General Plan which is in compliance with the Air Quality plans set forth by the SJVAPCD. Additionally, the DTSP and Zoning Ordinance amendment adoption would not expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations because it is not anticipated to result in a net increase in emissions beyond those anticipated under the City General Plan. Therefore, a less than significant impact would occur.

III.d) The land use and zoning designations proposed for the DTSP, and Zoning Ordinance amendment do not allow for uses that are typically odor generating. Land uses typically producing objectionable odors include agricultural uses, wastewater treatment plants, food processing plants, chemical plants, compost facilities, petrol refineries, fiberglass manufacturing, food processing facilities, and landfills. The DTSP does not support heavy industrial or agricultural uses, the Project Area would be comprised of mostly mixed-use commercial, office, and residential uses. The Zoning Ordinance Amendment does not propose any changes to land uses within the General Plan boundary and therefore future development could include industrial or agricultural uses where already designated. However, these potentially odor

generating land uses have been captured in the General Plan EIR analysis and no increase of these odors is anticipated with the implementation of the Zoning Ordinance Amendment. Other odor emissions from the proposed Project would be limited to those associated with vehicle use and engine exhaust or idling. Future site-specific uses and operations would require project specific CEQA review and compliance with plans and policies set forth by the SJVAPCD. Therefore, a less than significant impact would occur.

MITIGATION MEASURES

No mitigation required.

FINDINGS

The proposed project would have a Less Than Significant Impact on Air Quality.

IV. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES. Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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 Game or U.S. 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 Game or U.S. 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 native 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?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Thresholds of Significance: The project would have a significant effect on biological resources if it 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 California Department of Fish and Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; 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 U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; 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; interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites; conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance; or conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan.

DISCUSSION

The topography of the Project Area is generally flat, with a relatively constant elevation and no major topographical features. According to the 2009 City of Taft General Plan EIR, the Project Area is classified as urbanized. The majority of downtown Taft is developed or disturbed, with the exception of the Rails to Trails open space area at the southern boundary of the downtown region. Parts of the Project Area are surrounded by more urban development comprising of single-family homes, commercial/retail, institutional uses, and light industrial within the City center. The eastern and western portions of the City boundary are comprised of open space and vacant land.

Discussed in the 2009 General Plan EIR, the urban land cover type contains both native and exotic species. Vegetation within these areas consists primarily of introduced ornamental trees and shrubs and manicured lawns as well as invasive weeds in disturbed areas. Wildlife habitat within the urban areas is very low. Animal species that occur in these areas typically include introduced species adapted to human habitation. However, the most densely developed urban areas provide wildlife habitat for western scrubjay, rock dove (*Columba livia*), northern mockingbird (*Mimus polyglottos*), European starling (*Sturnus vulgaris*), house finch (*Carpodacus mexicanus*), house sparrow (*Passer domesticus*), Brewer's blackbird (*Euphagus cyanocephalus*), and American crow (*Corvus brachyrhynchos*). Associated mammals include house mouse (*Mus musculus*), Norway rat, little brown myotis (*Myotis lucifugus*), raccoon, opossum, squirrels, and striped skunk. Suburban areas provide habitat for a greater diversity of native birds and mammals, such as bushtits (*Psaltriparus minimus*), oak titmouse (*Baeolophus inornatus*), chestnut-backed chickadee (*Poecile rufescens*), California quail, and mule deer (Taft General Plan EIR, 2010).

Overall, there is little natural habitat structure present across the urbanized and developed areas. The Project involves a policy document that does not propose any specific development at this time. Future development that may be proposed as a result of Project adoption would be classified as CEQA exempt according to CEQA Guidelines Class 32 § 15332. In-Fill Development Projects. Furthermore, development that could be proposed as a result of project adoption

would aid in reaching the General Plan's development goals. Analysis for this section comes largely from the 2009 Taft General Plan EIR.

IV.a) The Project includes an update to the existing Specific Plan and a corresponding Zoning Ordinance amendment. While the DTSP is centralized to downtown Taft, the Zoning Ordinance update applies to the whole City of Taft. Both the DTSP and Zoning Ordinance amendment ensure implementation of the City's General Plan with respect to the planning and development of downtown Taft and citywide. The vast majority of downtown Taft has been disturbed or developed and contains limited habitat to support native wildlife. Although a few vacant lots within the Specific Plan Area may contain native vegetation, these areas have been heavily degraded by vehicular traffic and pedestrian use. The DTSP provides a plan for land use, development regulations, development incentives, and other related actions aimed at implementing the goals, policies, and actions of the General Plan with regard to downtown Taft. The Zoning Ordinance amendment includes updates to ADA regulations for compliance with State regulations, implements design standards for residential and commercial development, and aids in streamlining ministerial review for development projects assumed under the General Plan. The Project does not propose any specific development at this time, however, development that could occur from implementation of the Project could affect special-status species or their habitat. Therefore, it is recommended that Mitigation Measure BIO-1 be implemented to reduce potential impacts to a less than significant level. Mitigation Measure BIO-1, as detailed below, states that prior to groundbreaking activities development applications shall be reviewed by City staff or third-party inspectors to identify locations where sensitive or special status species or habitat may occur, if the potential development site is flagged then the applicant shall seek the guidance of a qualified third-party inspector or biologist for appropriate recommendations or site-specific mitigation and approval. Therefore, with Mitigation Measure BIO-1, along with future site-specific review of operations, a less than significant impact would occur.

IV.b) The Project includes an update to the existing Specific Plan and a corresponding Zoning Ordinance amendment. The Project ensures implementation of the City's General Plan with respect to the planning and development of downtown Taft. As discussed above in Section IV. Discussion and Response IV.a, the Project does not propose any specific development, however Project adoption may attract development proposals with the potential to affect riparian habitat or other sensitive natural communities. With the incorporation of BIO-1 which calls for site specific review of potential future development proposals, impacts would be less than significant. Furthermore, a majority of the urban area where development proposals are expected to occur, has been previously disturbed and developed, with limited availability for riparian habitat or other sensitive natural communities to occur. Project adoption would be in conformance with the adopted General Plan which it's 2009 Draft EIR, evaluated whether land use and development consistent with the General Plan could result in loss of riparian habitat or

other sensitive natural communities, including Waters of the U.S. The 2009 EIR analysis noted that several policies and actions included in the General Plan Update would reduce potentially significant effects through its policies and associated actions. General Plan policies LU-5, C-3, C-13, C-14, C-15, C-16, C-17, C-18, and C-19 would reduce potential impacts to sensitive natural communities and Waters of the U.S through conservation and resource protection measures. Therefore, with compliance with the General Plan's policies and actions and Mitigation Measure BIO-1, impacts would be less than significant.

IV.c) The Project is located in the City of Taft, primarily affecting the urbanized region of the City. The urbanized area is currently composed of a mix of commercial, retail, residential, open space, and light industrial uses. The Project Area is considered an urbanized setting. The Project involves a policy and regulatory document with updates to the Specific Plan and a corresponding Zoning Ordinance amendment. The Project has been prepared to be in accordance, and consistent with, the Taft General Plan. The Project aims to revitalize downtown Taft as a vibrant mixed-use center for the community. A search of the National Wetlands Inventory from the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) shows the DTSP area contains a riverine along the southeastern portion of the downtown area. Buena Vista Lake is located approximately 5 miles northeast of the City boundary. Project adoption is not expected to impact bodies of water located outside of the City boundary as the Zoning Ordinance amendment aims to promote infill development more centralized to the urbanized setting of Taft. The riverine located within the downtown Taft boundary is classified as intermittent and may contain flowing water for only part of the year. Should a development proposal occur near the riverine, or other jurisdictional waters the adopted policies and action items of the City's General Plan (LU-5, C-14 [actions C-14d, C-14e, and C-14f], C-15 and C-17) would provide adequate mitigation to ensure impacts would be less than significant. Therefore, with conformance to the adopted General Plan, the Project would have a less than significant impact.

IV.d) Wildlife movement corridors are routes frequently utilized by wildlife that provide shelter and sufficient food supplies to support wildlife species during migration. Movement corridors generally consist of riparian, woodland, or forested habitats that span contiguous acres of undisturbed habitat. In addition, open space provides an opportunity for dispersal and migration of wildlife species. As the DTSP and corresponding Zoning Ordinance Amendment is a regulatory and policy document, no development is currently proposed. However, Project adoption may attract development proposals. Specific development projects that may be proposed as a result of Project adoption would be subject to Mitigation Measure BIO-1 and the policies of the adopted General Plan. The following General Plan policies and actions aid in preserving wildlife corridors; Land Use Policy LU-5, and Conservation Policies and Actions C-3, C-3a, C-13, C-13a, C-13b, C-14, C-14a, C-14b, C-14c, C-14d, C-14e, C-14f, C-15, C-15a, C-15b, C-16, C-17, C-17a, C-18, C-19, and C-19a. The DTSP and Zoning Ordinance amendment is in conformance with the adopted General Plan, with implementation of these General Plan

policies and actions impacts to wildlife corridors from future development that may be possible under the Project would be mitigated. Therefore, with implementation of Mitigation Measure BIO-1 and conformance with the City's General Plan, impacts would be less than significant.

IV.e) The City's General Plan Open Space and Conservation Element provides a variety of goals, policies, and actions related to protecting and enhancing the existing habitat and present special-status species. The City has an adopted "Approved Tree List" which details the types of trees approved for planting within the City. Future development proposed to implement the DTSP, and corresponding Zoning Ordinance would be required to comply with all applicable policies included in the General Plan and the Approved Tree List. Therefore, this impact would be less than significant.

IV.f) Habitat Conservation Plans and Natural Community Conservation Plans are site-specific plans to address effects on sensitive species of plants and animals. Land uses and development consistent with the proposed project would not conflict with any adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved conservation plan. No such conservation plans have been adopted encompassing Taft, and no impact would result.

MITIGATION MEASURES

BIO-1: Prior to groundbreaking activities the City shall review development applications and identify locations where habitat suitable for sensitive species may exist. Prior to the pre-permit site inspection applications will be checked against publicly available aerial imagery and databases such as the California Natural Diversity Database, California Native Plant Society Inventory of Rare and Endangered Plants, and United States Fish and Wildlife Service List of Threatened and Endangered Species to evaluate the potential for sensitive habitat on-site. During the pre-permit site inspection City staff and third-party inspectors will determine if sensitive species are present. If it is determined that sensitive species are present or could be present CDFW will be consulted. CDFW may recommend approval of the proposed development, ask to conduct a site inspection, or request additional studies in order to make the determination that no impacts to sensitive species will occur.

FINDINGS

The proposed project would have a Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated on Biological Resources.

V. CULTURAL RESOURCES. Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to §15064.5?	☐	☒	☐	☐
b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to §15064.5?	☐	☒	☐	☐
c) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?	☐	☒	☐	☐

Thresholds of Significance: The project would have a significant effect on cultural resources if it would cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to §15064.5; cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to §15064.5; or disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries.

DISCUSSION

Cultural resources are defined as prehistoric and historic sites, structures, and districts, or any other physical evidence associated with human activity considered important to a culture, a subculture, or a community for scientific, traditional, religious, or any other reason. Significant cultural resources not only include sites and structures that are formally listed on national, State, and local historic registers, they also include places that are eligible for listing, as well as potential for archaeological remains associated with Native American settlement discussed further under Section XVIII, Tribal Cultural Resources.

The Project involves a regulatory and policy document which would serve as a framework for development within the Project Area. It sets the foundation for how the City will operate, based upon identified goals and policies relating to a range of topics specific to downtown Taft, including: land use; urban design; parks and open space; transportation; and sustainable infrastructure. The developed portion of the Project Area consists of mostly mixed-use commercial, retail, and residential uses. Project adoption may attract future development consistent with the current and surrounding land uses.

V.a) State CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5 defines "substantial adverse change" as physical demolition, destruction, relocation, or alteration of the resource or its immediate surroundings such that the significance of an historical resource is materially impaired. CEQA Guidelines, section 15064.5, subdivision (b)(2), defines "materially impaired" for purposes of the definition of "substantial adverse change" as follows:
The significance of an historical resource is materially impaired when a project:

1) demolishes or materially alters in an adverse manner those physical characteristics of an historical resource that convey its historical significance and that justify its inclusion in, or eligibility for, inclusion in the California Register of Historical Resources; or
2) demolishes or materially alters in an adverse manner those physical characteristics that account for its inclusion in a local register of historical resources pursuant to section5020.1(k) of the Public Resources Code or its identification in an historical resources survey meeting the requirements of section 5024.1(g) of the Public Resources Code, unless the public agency reviewing the effects of the project establishes by a preponderance of evidence that the resource is not historically or culturally significant; or
3) demolishes or materially alters in an adverse manner those physical characteristics of a historical resource that convey its historical significance and that justify its eligibility for inclusion in the California Register of Historical Resources as determined by a lead agency for purposes of CEQA.

The Project does not propose any specific development; however, Project adoption may attract development proposals. Future development allowed under the DTSP, and Zoning Ordinance amendment could result in the destruction or remodeling of historic or cultural resources. The DTSP contains policies to which help promote the preservation of historic resources through its Community Character Theme, however it is recommended that future development proposals be evaluated on a site-specific basis if a historical resource could be impacted. Therefore, with the incorporation of mitigation measure CUL-1 as described below, impacts would be less than significant.

V.b) The Project is a regulatory and policy document, as such, no development is currently proposed. However, Project adoption may attract development proposals. Future development allowed under the DTSP, and Zoning Ordinance Amendment could result in the adverse change of an archaeological resource. Actual effects to archaeological resources are known only when an individual project is proposed because those effects depend highly on both the individual project site conditions and the characteristics of the proposed ground-disturbing activity. Future development could affect previously undiscovered archaeological resources that may be present on or below the ground surface. With incorporation of Mitigation Measure CUL-2, which provides guidelines for protecting undiscovered archeological resources from new development involving grading or excavation below the previous level of disturbance, impacts would be less than significant.

V.c) It is unlikely that human remains will be uncovered during any proposed developments, as development is expected to occur within or adjacent to previously disturbed areas. The Project is a regulatory and policy document, and as such, no development is currently proposed. However, project adoption may attract development proposals. If during future development unknown human remains are encountered, a significant impact could occur. Implementation

of Mitigation Measure CUL-3 during future development would establish safeguards to the proper treatment of human remains should any be encountered during construction and groundbreaking activities. Therefore, a less than significant impact associated with human remains would occur.

MITIGATION MEASURES

CUL-1: Future developers within the Project Area, for projects not considered exempt, shall retain a qualified architectural historian to evaluate all historic-age buildings within the proposed project footprint for California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR) eligibility, to determine any potential adverse impacts to historical resources under CEQA. A report of findings shall be prepared and submitted to the City within 30 days of completion of the evaluation, concurrent with the proposed application for development.

CUL-2: For new development that involves grading or excavation below the previous level of disturbance, if cultural resources are encountered during ground-disturbing activities, work in the immediate area shall be halted and an archaeologist meeting the Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualification Standards for archaeology (NPS 1983) shall be contacted immediately to evaluate the find. If necessary, the evaluation may require preparation of a treatment plan and archaeological testing for CRHR eligibility. If the discovery proves to be significant under CEQA and cannot be avoided by the project, additional work such as data recovery excavation may be warranted to mitigate any significant impacts to cultural resources. In the event that archaeological resources of Native American origin are identified during project construction, a qualified archaeologist will consult with the City to begin Native American consultation procedures.

CUL-3: If human remains are discovered, work shall halt in that area and the procedures set forth in the California Public Resources Code (Section 5097.98) and State Health and Safety Code (Section 7050.5) will be followed. The Principal Investigator shall contact the County Coroner.

FINDINGS

The proposed project would have a Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated on Cultural Resources.

VI. ENERGY. Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Result in a potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy, or wasteful use of energy resources, during project construction or operation?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b) Conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Thresholds of Significance: The project would have a significant effect on energy if it would result in a potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy, or wasteful use of energy resources, during project construction or operation.

DISCUSSION

On October 7, 2015, Governor Edmund G. Brown, Jr. signed into law Senate Bill (SB) 350, known as the Clean Energy and Pollution Reduction Act of 2015 (De León, Chapter 547, Statutes of 2015), which sets ambitious annual targets for energy efficiency and renewable electricity aimed at reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. SB 350 requires the California Energy Commission to establish annual energy efficiency targets that will achieve a cumulative doubling of statewide energy efficiency savings and demand reductions in electricity and natural gas final end uses by January 1, 2030. This mandate is one of the primary measures to help the state achieve its long-term climate goal of reducing GHG emissions to 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030. The proposed SB 350 doubling target for electricity increases from 7,286-gigawatt-hours (GWh) in 2015 up to 82,870 GWh in 2029. For natural gas, the proposed SB 350 doubling target increases from 42 million therms (MM) in 2015 up to 1,174 MM in 2029 (CEC, 2017)

The Project involves an update to the existing Specific Plan, and a corresponding Zoning Ordinance amendment. The Project ensures implementation of the City's General Plan with respect to the planning and development of Taft. The DTSP provides a plan for land use, development regulations, development incentives, and other related actions aimed at implementing the goals, policies, and actions of the General Plan with regard to downtown Taft. The Zoning Ordinance amendment provides updates to the City's ADA regulations bringing them into compliance with the State and providing avenues for streamlining development proposals in order to help reach the goals of the Taft General Plan.

Gas and Electric services for Taft are provided by Pacific Gas and Electric (PG&E) and Southern California Gas Company (SoCalGas). PG&E is a publicly traded utility company which generates,

purchases, and transmits energy under contract with the California Public Utilities Commission. Electricity is generated by coal-fired and nuclear power plants, as well as clean energy sources such as hydro-electric plants, solar facilities, wind turbines, and geothermal facilities. Natural gas is mainly utilized for water heaters and heating of homes, as well as a broad range of commercial and industrial equipment. In areas where natural gas is not available, propane gas, stored in on-property tanks, may also be utilized.

VI.a) The proposed Project does not include any site-specific designs or proposals, nor does it grant any entitlements for development. Future development within the Project Area would involve the use of energy during construction and associated operation. Energy use during construction would primarily be in the form of fuel consumption to operate heavy equipment, light-duty vehicles, machinery, and generators for lighting. Temporary grid power may also be provided to construction trailers or electric construction equipment. In addition, construction activities would also result in short-term fuel consumption from worker trips, operation of diesel-powered equipment, and hauling trips. Energy use during construction would be temporary and would be standard for similar construction projects in the region. Long-term operation of development projects would require permanent grid connections for electricity and natural gas service to power internal and exterior building lighting, as well as heating and cooling systems. In addition, the increase in vehicle trips associated with potential development could increase fuel consumption.

Future development in the Project Area would be subject to energy conservation requirements in the California Energy Code (Title 24, Part 6, of the California Code of Regulations [CCR], California's Energy Efficiency Standards for Residential and Nonresidential Buildings) and the California Green Building Standards Code (CalGreen) (Title 24, Part 11, of the CCR). Therefore, compliance with these energy efficiency and energy reduction measures would reduce the use of nonrenewable energy sources for development in the Project Area. Adherence to Title 24 requirements and California Green Building Standards would ensure that future development would not result in wasteful and inefficient use of non-renewable resources due to building operation. Therefore, a less than significant impact would occur.

VI.b) The Project is a policy and regulatory document; future site-specific development that would occur as a result of DTSP and Zoning Ordinance Amendment adoption would be required to comply with the provisions of adopted policies in the General Plan and Climate Action Plan. Project adoption may attract development proposals, with the proposed land use and zoning changes development proposals would primarily consist of infill development which is considered CEQA exempt according to CEQA Guidelines Class 32 § 15332. In-Fill Development Projects. Therefore, the Project would not conflict with or obstruct implementation of a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency. Potential impacts would be less than significant.

MITIGATION MEASURES

No mitigation required.

FINDINGS

The proposed project would have a **Less Than Significant Impact** on Energy.

VII. GEOLOGY AND SOILS. Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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?	☐	☒	☐	☐

Thresholds of Significance: The project would have a significant effect on geology and soils if it would directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving: rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault, strong seismic ground shaking, seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction, or landslides; result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil; 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; 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; 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; or directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature.

DISCUSSION

The Project includes an update to the existing Specific Plan and a corresponding Zoning Ordinance amendment. The Project provides a comprehensive policy and regulatory framework that guides future development in the downtown area and Zoning Ordinance changes involving updates to ADA compliance and avenues for streamlining specified development proposals citywide. The Project ensures implementation of the City's General Plan with respect to the planning and development of downtown Taft and citywide. The DTSP provides a plan for land use, development regulations, development incentives, and other related actions aimed at implementing the goals, policies, and actions of the General Plan with regard to downtown Taft. The Zoning Ordinance aids in streamlining development already assumed under the City's General Plan buildout.

The discussion for this section is based on the Geotechnical Hazards Investigation study done by Krazan & Associates, Inc. in September 2008 for the City of Taft General Plan Update.

Geological Setting:

A site reconnaissance of the City was performed by Krazan and Associates in August 2008. Alluvial fans formed by the Kern River have resulted in a rather flat topography for the Project Area, elevations within the City range from 280 feet to 2,000 feet above median sea level (amsl). The Project Area is located in Kern County, along the west margin of the southern San Joaquin Valley portion of the Great Valley Geomorphic Province of California and borders the Temblor Range portion of the Coast Ranges Geomorphic Province. The San Joaquin Valley is bounded to the north by the Sacramento Valley portion of the Great Valley, to the east by the Sierra Nevada, to the west by the Coast Ranges, and to the south by the Transverse Ranges. The Planning Area is known for significant oil and gas production. Oil fields were discovered in the 1920s and during the 1930s production began to increase significantly (Krazan, 2008).

Subsurface investigations consisting of exploratory drilling has been performed by Krazan & Associates within the City's Planning Area for over 25 years. Based on the findings of the geologic study for the General Plan Update, the subsurface conditions encountered appear typical of those found in the geologic region. In general, the upper soils consist of approximately 6 to 12 inches of very loose silty sand, silty sand with trace clay, sandy silt, clayey sand, or clayey gravel (Krazan, 2008). Soils within the Project Area are primarily disturbed by prior development of downtown Taft.

There is no land within the Project Area designated for mining.

Seismicity:

In 1975 the Kern County Planning Department prepared Seismic Hazard Atlases for a majority of the USGS 7.5-minute topographic quadrangles in the central valley portion of Kern County. The Taft quadrangle shows the Buena Vista Hill Thrust and an unnamed related fault in the vicinity. The Maricopa, Fellows, and Taft quadrangles show the Midway Fault, an inferred surface fault, extending northwest to southeast through the oil fields in the southwest corner of the Planning Area. Several unnamed minor subsurface faults are shown on the Seismic Hazard Atlas maps to be located throughout the oil fields outside of the Project Area. Krazan & Associates deemed most of these faults to not be considered a concern. (Krazan, 2008)

Of the twelve USGS topographic quadrangle maps that cover the Project Area, there are four Fault Rupture Hazard Zone maps that show the location of faults in the vicinity of the City. Figure 5 Regional Geologic Map shows the faults of concern within the City. The Official Fault Rupture Hazard Zone Maps are available at the City of Taft Planning Department for review and reference.

Liquefaction and Landslides:

Liquefaction is a phenomenon in which the strength and stiffness of a soil is reduced by earthquake shaking or other rapid loading. Liquefaction occurs in saturated soils, in which the space between individual particles is completely filled with water. This water exerts a pressure on the soil particles that influences how tightly the particles themselves are pressed together. Prior to an earthquake, the water pressure is relatively low. However, earthquake shaking can cause the water pressure to increase to the point where the soil particles can readily move with respect to each other.

As noted above, the predominant soils within the Project Area consist of varying combinations of very loose/very soft to very dense/hard silts, clays, sands, gravels, and cobbles. According to Krazan's findings, the potential for soil liquefaction within the Project Area ranges from very low to moderate due to the variable density of the subsurface soils and the presence of shallow groundwater.

The majority of the Project Area is relatively level with no major changes in grade. Earthquake induced landslides, seiches, and flooding are not expected as the Project Area does not contain any large bodies of water and is not located adjacent to any hillside areas, nor does it contain any reservoirs which could catastrophically fail during an earthquake.

VII.a.i) The purpose of the Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Act is to mitigate the hazard of surface faulting by preventing the construction of buildings used for human occupancy over an area with known faults. Unlike damage from ground shaking, which can occur at great distances from the fault, impacts from fault rupture are limited to the immediate area of the fault zone where the fault breaks along the grounds surface. The Project Area is not located within or adjacent to an Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zone. The nearest earthquake fault is the Buena Vista Fault, which lies approximately 1.3 miles northeast of downtown Taft. The Project comprises of the adoption of a Downtown Specific Plan and corresponding Zoning Ordinance amendment, a programmatic regulatory and policy document. Future development within the Project Area would be subject to environmental review as required by federal, State and City regulations, and discretionary review, and must be consistent with the policies and regulations of the DTSP and Zoning Ordinance. In addition, any future development proposed for the Project Area would be required to be constructed in accordance with the most recent edition of the California Building Code (CBC) to provide a sound design. Compliance with all applicable regulations and the CBC would ensure that future development would minimize potential impacts. Therefore, there would be a less than significant impact.

VII.a.ii) The Project is located in a seismically active region where earthquakes originating on local and regional seismic faults can produce severe ground shaking. No site-specific development would occur as a result of the Project. However, future development within the Project Area would be subject to environmental review as required by federal, State and City regulations, and discretionary review, and must be consistent with the policies and regulations of the DTSP and Zoning Ordinance. In addition, any future development proposed for the Project Area would be required to be constructed in accordance with the most recent edition of the California Building Code (CBC) to provide a sound design. Compliance with all applicable regulations and the CBC would ensure that future development would minimize potential impacts to people and property in the event of an earthquake. Project-related impacts associated with seismic ground shaking would be less than significant.

VII.a.iii) As mentioned in the discussion above, liquefaction involves a sudden loss in strength of saturated, cohesion-less soils that are subject to ground vibration and results in the temporary transformation of the soil to a fluid mass. Liquefaction typically occurs in areas where the soils below the water table are composed of poorly consolidated, fine- to medium-grained, primarily sandy soil. In addition to the required soil conditions, the ground quickening and duration of the

earthquake must also be of a sufficient level to induce liquefaction if the groundwater levels are within 50 feet of the ground surface. The Project involves a programmatic policy-level document. No development is specifically proposed at this time. However, future development with the project area would be subject to environmental review as required by federal, State and City regulations, discretionary review, and must be consistent with the policies of the DTSP. In addition, any development proposed for the Project Area would be required to be constructed in accordance with the most recent edition of the California Building Code (CBC) to provide a collapse resistant design. Compliance with applicable regulations and the CBC would ensure that future development would minimize potential impacts to people and property in the event of seismic related ground failure. Therefore, project-related impacts associated with seismic related ground failure would be less than significant.

VII.a.iv) The Project Area is located within an urbanized and built-out area. the City of Taft is also located within a relatively flat topographical area that would not be at risk of landslides occurring. Therefore, no impact would occur.

VII.b) The Project is a programmatic policy-level document and does not include any proposals for development projects. However, Project adoption may attract development proposals. Specific development projects that may be proposed as a result of DTSP and Zoning Ordinance Amendment adoption could be considered infill development according to CEQA Guidelines Class 32 § 15332. In-Fill Development Projects. Furthermore, existing state law requires future development projects to obtain coverage under the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) statewide General Construction permit. The NPDES program regulates point source discharges caused by construction activities and the quality of stormwater in municipal stormwater systems. As part of the permit application process, future projects would require a stormwater pollution prevention plan (SWPPP), which would include a list of best management practices (BMPs) to be implemented on the site both during and after construction to minimize erosion and sedimentation. Compliance with state law would minimize potential soil erosion impacts. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

VII.c,d) As discussed under impact discussions (VII.a.i) through (VII.b) of this section, the DTSP and corresponding Zoning Ordinance amendment would not expose forecast residential development to significant impacts associated with seismic hazards, including seismic shaking, surface rupture, liquefaction, or landslides and slope failure. Future development within the Project Area would be required to conform to the CBC as required by State law. The Project does not include current proposals for development projects, nor would the project grant any entitlements for development. Future development would need to comply with existing state and local regulations. Compliance with these regulations would minimize potential risks associated with unstable and expansive soils. This impact would be less than significant.

VII.e) Wastewater service is provided by the City of Taft. Wastewater service is provided to all areas within the City's Municipal Boundary. There are existing gravity pipes that run throughout the Project Area, which could support the intended growth. The Project involves a policy and regulatory document and does not include current site-specific development proposals; however, Project adoption may attract development. Future development would either need to be served by the City's existing wastewater treatment plant or by individual septic tanks in order to treat anticipated wastewater generated potential proposed development. Any future proposals for development within the Project Area would be required to comply with Regional Water Control Board regulations related to wastewater treatment to minimize any potential release into local water sources. Moreover, the City would require project-specific geotechnical engineering analysis as part of the building permit process to determine if soils underlain the site would be able to adequately support the chosen wastewater treatment method. Therefore, a less than significant impact would occur.

VII.f) Paleontological resources include fossil remains, as well as fossil localities and rock or soil formations that have produced fossil material. Fossils are the remains or traces of prehistoric life. The proposed Project does not include any specific developments, nor does it grant any entitlements for development. As a policy and regulatory document, the DTSP would not directly result in potential disturbance of paleontological resources. Therefore, there is low potential for unique paleontological resources or site or unique geological features to be encountered within the Project area due to past ground disturbing construction activities. However, future improvements to implement the DTSP and Zoning Ordinance amendment could adversely affect potential resources. With incorporation of Mitigation Measure GEO-1 below, which provides specific requirements in the event any fossil(s) or paleontological resources are encountered during construction of a future development, a less than significant impact would occur.

MITIGATION MEASURES

Mitigation Measure GEO-1 would reduce the impact of future construction activities on potentially unknown paleontological resources to a less-than-significant level by addressing discovery of unanticipated buried resources and preserving and/or recording those resources consistent with appropriate laws and requirements.

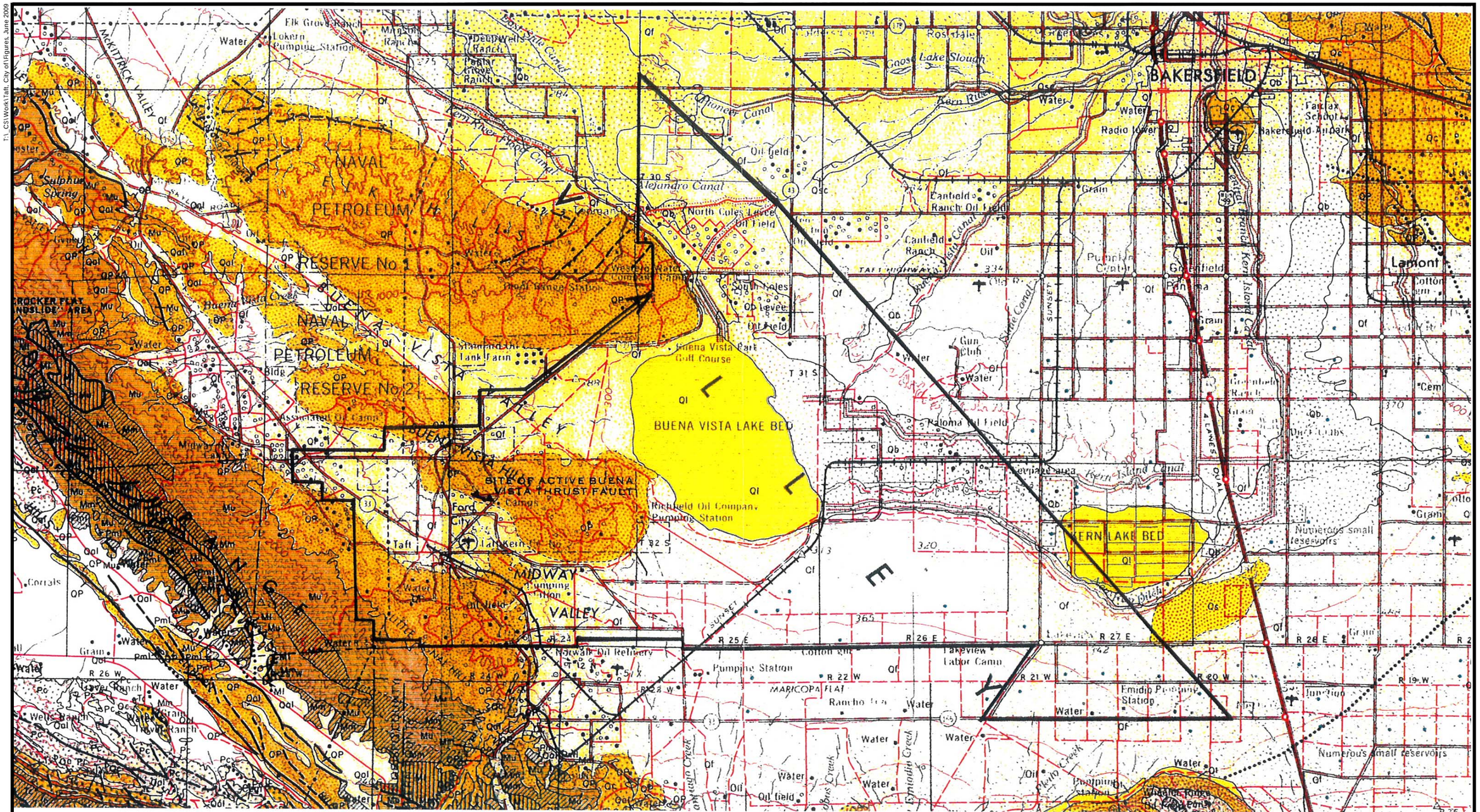
GEO-1: In the event that fossils or fossil-bearing deposits are discovered during Project construction, the contractor shall notify a qualified paleontologist to examine the discovery and excavations within 50 feet of the find shall be temporarily halted or diverted. The area of discovery shall be protected to ensure that fossils are not removed, handled, altered, or damaged until the Site is properly evaluated, and further action is determined. The paleontologist shall document the discovery as needed, in accordance with Society of Vertebrate Paleontology standards (Society of Vertebrate Paleontology 1995), evaluate the

potential resource, and assess the significance of the finding under the criteria set forth in CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5. The paleontologist shall notify the appropriate agencies to determine procedures that would be followed before construction is allowed to resume at the location of the find. If the Project proponent determines that avoidance is not feasible, the paleontologist shall prepare an excavation plan for mitigating the effect of the Project based on the qualities that make the resource important. The plan shall be submitted to the City of Taft for review and approval prior to implementation.

FINDINGS

The proposed project would have a Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated on Geology and Soils.

T:_CS1\Work\Taft, City of\Figures, June 2009



Source: Krazan, Sept 2008

0 3 6

SCALE IN MILES

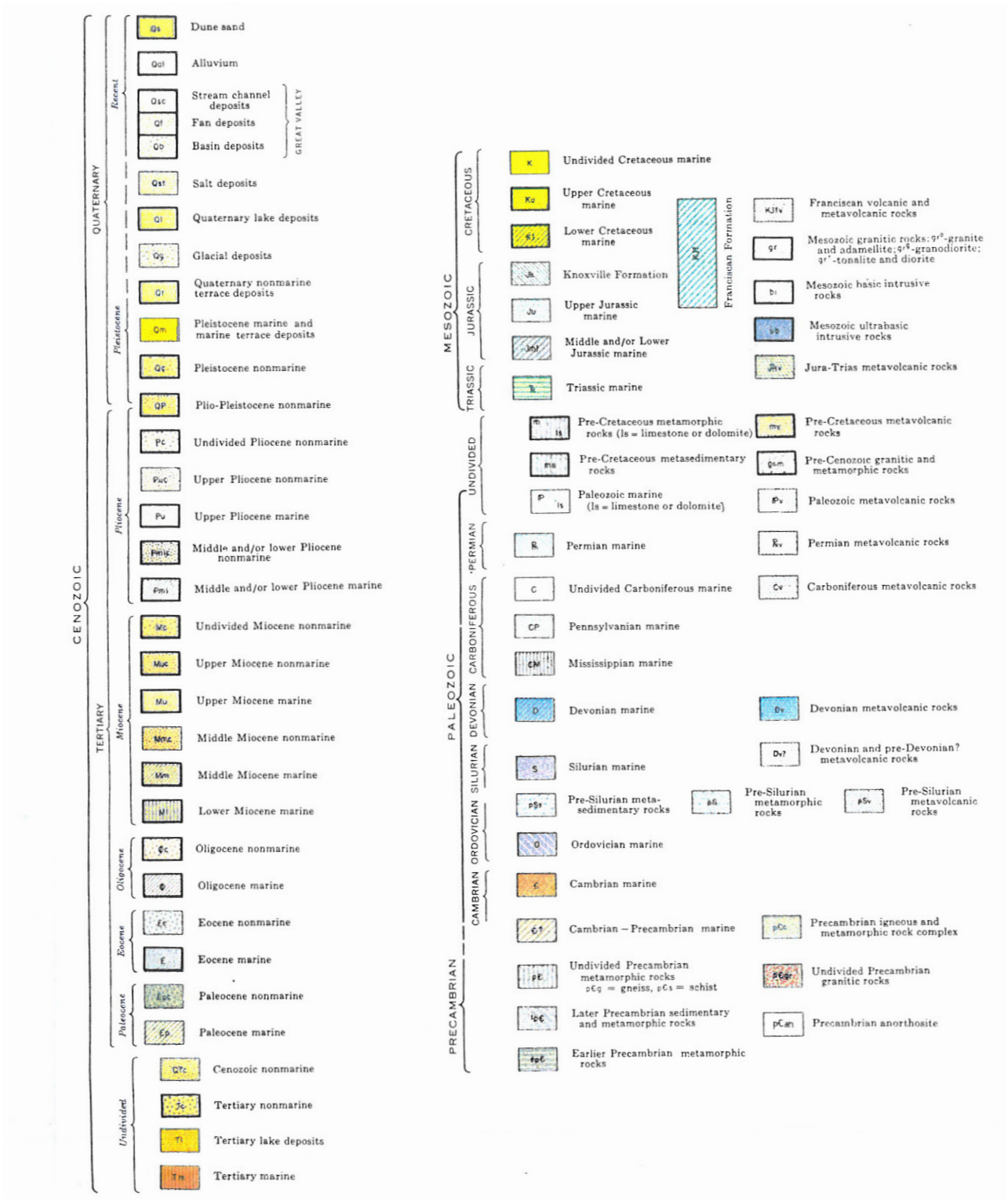
N

REGIONAL GEOLOGIC MAP

FIGURE 5

PMC®

T:_CS\Work\Taft, City of\Figures, June 2009



Source: Krazen, Sept 2009

Regional Geologic Map Key

PMC®

VIII. GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS. Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Generate greenhouse gas emissions (GHG), either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b) Conflict with an applicable plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Thresholds of Significance: The project would have a significant effect on greenhouse gas emissions if it would generate greenhouse gas emissions (GHG), either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment; or conflict with an applicable plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases.

DISCUSSION

The Project is located within the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District (SJVAPCD). The SJVAPCD has direct and indirect regulatory authority over air pollution and GHG emission sources within its jurisdictional boundary, including Taft.

The Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006, also known as Assembly Bill (AB) 32, is a State law that establishes a comprehensive program to reduce GHG emissions from all sources throughout the State. AB 32 requires the State to reduce its total GHG emissions to 1990 levels by 2020, a reduction of approximately 15 percent below emissions expected under a "business as usual" scenario. Pursuant to AB 32, the California Air Resources Board (CARB) must adopt regulations to achieve the maximum technologically feasible and cost effective GHG emission reductions. The following major GHGs and groups of GHGs being emitted into the atmosphere are included under AB 32: carbon dioxide (CO2), methane (CH4), nitrous oxide (N2O), hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs), perfluorocarbons (PFCs), sulfur hexafluoride (SF6), and nitrogen trifluoride (NF3) (ARB, 2014). Assembly Bill (AB) 1803, which became law in 2006, made CARB responsible to prepare, adopt, and update California's GHG inventory. The 2020 GHG emissions limit statewide, equal to the 1990 level, is 431 million metric tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (MTCO2e) (CARB, 2019). Pursuant to Executive Order S-3-05, California has a reduction target to reduce GHG emissions to 80 percent below 1990 levels (CARB, 2014).

In 2017 the City of Taft published its Climate Action Plan (CAP). The CAP is intended to streamline future environmental review of projects in Taft by following CEQA Guidelines and meeting the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District expectations for a Qualified GHG

Reduction Strategy. In addition, the CAP serves as the City's strategy to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, implementing both General Plan and State guidance.

In 2019, California's total GHG emissions were estimated to be 418.2 million metric tons of CO_2e ($MMTCO_2e$) by CARB. As shown in Table 2 below, the transportation sector accounts for the largest percentage of California's GHG emissions, or 41 percent (CARB, 2021).

Table 2. California's GHG Emissions by Economic Sector

Economic Sector	Percentage of California's Total GHG Emissions
Transportation	41%
Industrial	24%
Electricity Generation (in state)	9%
Electricity Generation (imports)	5%
Agriculture	7%
Residential	8%
Commercial	6%
Total	**100%**

Source: California Air Resources Board (CARB). 2021. California Greenhouse Gas Emission Inventory Program. Available at: https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/ghg-inventory-data.

VIII.a) The Project includes policy and regulatory documents and does not directly propose or grant any entitlements for development and thus would not result in any direct physical changes to the environment. However, project adoption may attract development proposals. Specific development projects that may be proposed as a result of DTSP and Zoning Ordinance amendment adoption could be considered infill development. Infill development aids in reducing driving and greenhouse gas emissions by providing options for housing and commercial development nearby an urban core with a multi-modal network of streets, bike paths, sidewalks, trails, and public transportation options. If future development application is proposed that does not meet CEQA Guidelines as infill development, then future site-specific review would be necessary. Construction and implementation of improvements could generate GHG emissions from construction activities, increased vehicle use, natural gas combustion, and other operational sources. Emissions would incrementally contribute to global GHG levels. However, all development within the City would be subject to compliance with the provisions of the City's General Plan and Climate Action Plan. Additionally, future development proposals that would occur under the provisions of the DTSP and/or Zoning Ordinance amendment would be required to comply with the California Green Building Standards Code and the

California Energy Code. Compliance with these requirements would result in lower emissions than produced by the existing buildings in the SPA and greater Project Area. Further, future CEQA review of project-level impacts would evaluate the potential for individual projects to generate GHG emissions that may have a significant impact on the environment and would include feasible mitigation measures as appropriate. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

VIII.b) California has adopted several policies and regulations for the purpose of reducing GHG emissions. AB 32 was enacted in 2006 to reduce statewide GHG emissions to 1990 levels by 2020. Senate Bill (SB) 375 was enacted in 2009 with the goal of reducing GHG emissions by limiting urban sprawl and its associated vehicle emissions. The Project would be consistent with applicable plans adopted for the purpose of reducing GHG emissions, as it prioritizes an integrated, multi-modal network of streets, bike paths, sidewalks, and trails that provide connections between surrounding areas of the city and downtown Taft. The DTSP and corresponding Zoning Ordinance amendment intends to ultimately create a walkable, pedestrian friendly city and downtown that is a lively center and focal point for the community. As such, implementation of the Project would serve to reduce GHG emissions. Furthermore, the Project would not directly propose or grant any entitlements for development. However, Project adoption may attract development proposals. Specific development projects that may be proposed as a result of the DTSP and Zoning Ordinance Amendment adoption would be considered infill development according to CEQA Guidelines Class 32 § 15332. In-Fill Development Projects. Therefore, this impact would be less than significant.

MITIGATION MEASURES

No mitigation required.

FINDINGS

The proposed project would have a Less Than Significant Impact on Greenhouse Gas Emissions.

IX. HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS. Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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 complied 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?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Thresholds of Significance: The project would have a significant effect on hazards and hazardous materials if it were to 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; emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school; be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites complied pursuant to Government

Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would create a significant hazard to the public or the environment; result in a safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing or working in the project area if 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; or impair the implementation of, or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan; or expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires.

DISCUSSION

A material is considered hazardous if it appears on a list of hazardous materials prepared by a federal, state, or local agency, or has characteristics defined as hazardous by a federal, state, or local agency. Chemical and physical properties such as toxicity, ignitability, corrosiveness, and reactivity cause a substance to be considered hazardous. These properties are defined in the California Code of Regulations (CCR), Title 22, §66261.20-66261.24. A "hazardous waste" includes any hazardous material that is discarded, abandoned, or will be recycled. Therefore, the criteria that render a material hazardous also cause a waste to be classified as hazardous (California Health and Safety Code, §25117).

The Project is based in the City of Taft which is classified as an urbanized setting. The Project concerns a policy and regulatory document. The DTSP and Zoning Ordinance Amendment provides for a mix of land uses designed to achieve the overarching vision, goals, and policies of creating a thriving, healthy and balanced community with an economically diverse downtown environment. While the Zoning Ordinance Amendment does not propose any changes to land uses and densities above what was assumed in the General Plan, the DTSP does include changes to the land uses downtown that result in higher densities than assumed under the General Plan. The DTSP could result in additional dwelling units and employment opportunities, and 9 acres of recreational open space. The DTSP would allow for some Light Industrial (LI) uses along the southern and eastern edge of the SPA as shown in Figure 4, Land Use. Allowable uses under this land use would include manufacturing, research and development, warehousing and distribution, and multi-tenant industrial uses. The LI land use designation also supports administrative and professional offices and commercial activities on a limited basis. According to the DTSP, these uses must be generally compatible with those in nearby commercial and residential zones, and not produce substantial environmental nuisances such as noise, odor, dust/smoke or glare.

The Project Area includes three (3) clean-up or permitted hazardous waste site as mapped by the California Department of Toxic Substances Control's (DTSC) EnviroStor database (2022). They include the following:

- County Airport -Taft Airport ID #80000801 – inactive, needs evaluation as of July 1, 2005
- Laidlaw Environmental Services ID #CAD089864805 – Closed
- County Airport ID #80000802 – inactive, needs evaluation as of July 1, 2005

According to the State Water Resources Quality Control Board's (SWRQCB) GeoTracker database (2022) there no active sites within the Project Area, however there are approximately 23 closed sites within the Project Area.

IX.a,b) The Project includes policy and regulatory documents which would allow for additional commercial, residential, and office uses, with some light industrial. As a part of the DTSP and Zoning Ordinance amendment, parking improvements, landscaping, and mobility enhancement would be incorporated into potential development. Construction of the Project components would require the use of hazardous materials such as gasoline, diesel fuel, lubricants, oil, grease, solvents, and paints. Construction of potential development would be conducted in accordance with all applicable State and federal laws. For example, Caltrans and the California Highway Patrol regulate the transportation of hazardous materials and wastes, including container types and packaging requirements, as well as licensing and training for truck operators, chemical handlers, and hazardous waste haulers. Additionally, the Hazardous Materials Transportation Act, Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, the California Hazardous Material Management Act, and the California Code of Regulations (CCR), Title 22, regulate the transport, use, and storage of hazardous materials during the construction. Worker safety regulations cover hazards related to the prevention of exposure to hazardous materials and a release to the environment from hazardous materials use. The California Division of Occupational Safety and Health (Cal-OSHA) also enforces hazard communication program regulations, which contain worker safety training and hazard information requirements, such as procedures for identifying and labeling hazardous substances, communicating hazard information related to hazardous substances and their handling, and preparing health and safety plans to protect workers and employees. Any possible future development proposals within the Project Area would be required to comply with existing hazardous materials laws and regulations, therefore potential impact associated with transport, use, and disposal of hazardous materials is considered less than significant.

Once potential developments are in operation, future improvements and operations could require the use of common materials such as paint, fertilizers and pesticides for landscaping maintenance, and various chemicals, fuels, and oils depending upon the nature of the development. As stated above, hazardous materials are regulated by state, federal, and local agencies, including the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the Occupational Health

and Safety Administration (OSHA), and Kern County Operational Area Hazardous Materials Plan which details safety standards for handling hazardous materials. Therefore, with adherence to local, state, and federal regulations, impacts would be less than significant.

IX.c) The Project Area contains numerous schools. Under the DTSP and corresponding Zoning Ordinance amendment no substantial change in land use is proposed adjacent to the school areas, as shown above in Figure 3 and 4 Existing and Proposed Land Use. As described in section IX (a) and (b), possible future construction consistent with the Project would involve the use of fuels and related materials typical of construction activities. Any future development proposals would be required to comply with all existing hazardous materials laws and regulations. Since no substantial changes in land use are proposed adjacent to the school site, potential operational hazards would comprise of the routine use of minor quantities of chemicals such as paints, cleaning solvents, and ammonia associated with normal residential or retail operations. Therefore, there would be a less-than-significant impact related to the emission or handling of hazardous materials or wastes within one quarter mile of an existing or proposed school site.

IX.d) The provisions in Government Code Section 65962.5 are commonly referred to as the "Cortese List." A search of the Cortese List was completed for the project to determine if any known hazardous waste sites have been recorded on or adjacent to the Project Area. These include:

- - Department of Toxic Substances Control EnviroStor database;
- - List of Leaking Underground Storage Tank Sites from the Water Board GeoTracker database;
- - List of solid waste disposal sites identified by the Water Board with waste constituents above hazardous waste levels;
- - List of "active" Cease and Desist Orders and Cleanup and Abatement Orders from the Water Board; and
- - List of hazardous waste facilities subject to corrective action pursuant to Section 25187.5 of the Health and Safety Code.

A records search was conducted using the State Water Resources Control Board's (SWRCB) GeoTracker database and the State of California Department of Toxic Substance Control's (DTSC) EnviroStor database. A total of 23 Sites were identified in the vicinity of the Project boundary. A majority of these sites are LUST sites for which hazardous materials remediation has been completed and four (4) sites are considered a Cleanup Program Site all of which have been closed and completed. To ensure that future development under the proposed Project would not create a significant hazard to the public or the environment implementation of Mitigation Measure HAZ-1 shall be incorporated. HAZ-1 states that prior to construction or site disturbance at any of the locations where a Cortese List site was recorded, would be subject to

further environmental investigation, including Phase I or Phase II analyses as described below as Mitigation Measure HAZ-1. Therefore, with mitigation incorporated, a less than significant impact would occur.

IX.e) The Taft-Kern County Airport is located approximately 0.30 miles east of downtown Taft. The Project is in conformance with the Kern County Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan (ALUCP), as the DTSP and Zoning Ordinance amendment does not suggest any major changes in land use or zoning adjacent to the Taft-Kern Airport. The ALUCP identifies an airport influence area for each airport and policies that apply to military aviation and the military installations. Proposed development projects within these areas must be reviewed to determine their potential to affect the airport. If a project is proposed nearby the airport, the project would be reviewed for its potential to affect adjacent non-airport land within the airport influence area. The ALUCP describes the existing and planned land uses within the Project Area as "continued infill of mixed urban uses." The Project as proposed is consistent with the ALUCP, therefore impacts would be less than significant.

IX.f) The Project involves a regulatory policy document which would support new development regulations in conjunction with contemporary planning principles. The Project serves to provide a vision and planning framework for future growth and development within downtown Taft and citywide. As such, the DTSP portion of the Project would result in increased intensities in land uses within downtown Taft, above what was assumed in the General Plan buildout. Implementation of the Project could add additional traffic and residences requiring evacuation in case of an emergency. The resulting changes in land use patterns could increase the potential for conflicts with existing emergency response or emergency evacuation plans by making execution of emergency response activities more difficult. An efficient roadway and circulation system is vital for the evacuation of residents and the mobility of fire suppression, emergency response, and law enforcement vehicles. The DTSP addresses the importance of implementing a safe, convenient, and accessible mobility network under Goal 3-4 Policy 5 "*Implement a citywide wayfinding system that highlights unique locations in Downtown Taft and connections to other parts of Taft and the greater region*." In addition to adherence of the DTSP policies for safe and accessible mobility, all new development and modifications would comply with the following emergency response plans.

As required by State law, Kern County has established emergency preparedness procedures to be prepared for and respond to a variety of natural and manmade disasters that could confront the community. The following sections summarize the Project's consistency with applicable emergency response plans or emergency evacuation plans.

<u>County of Kern Emergency Operations Plan:</u>

The intent of the Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) is to provide the concept of operations and strategic activities for responding to any type of emergency incident affecting Kern County. The EOP plan is part of a larger planning framework that supports emergency management within the state and the Operational Area. Additional agency and organization-specific plans support the EOP and annexes. These plans also provide local, regional, and State agencies and entities with a consolidated framework for coordinating activities and resources, thus promoting efficient use of resources during all phases of emergency management.

Kern Multi-Jurisdiction Hazard Mitigation Plan:

The FEMA Disaster Mitigation Act (DMA) of 2000 requires that local governments, as a condition of receiving federal disaster mitigation funds, have a Multi-Jurisdiction Hazard Mitigation Plan (MJHMP) that describes the process for assessing hazards, risks and vulnerabilities, identifying and prioritizing mitigation actions, and soliciting input from key stakeholders. Hazard mitigation is the use of sustained long-term actions that will reduce the loss of life, personal injury, and property damage that can result from a disaster.

By following the mandated local emergency response plans, any future construction and operation of future development within the Project Area would not directly impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan or involve the development of structures that could potentially impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

IX.g) The City of Taft has a Fire Protection Agreement with the Kern County Fire District (KCFD). There are no areas in the City of Taft that are located within a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone. The Project Area is located in a largely urbanized area and downtown Taft and surrounding areas are designated "unzoned"; the rest of Taft is designated as a Moderate Fire Hazard Severity Zone. As stated in the DTSP, and in line with the General Plan, all new development within the Project Area should comply with the Fire Code and be reviewed for adequate water supply and pressure, fire hydrants, and access to structures by firefighting equipment and personnel. With adherence to regular cultivation and weed removal as enforced by KCFD, impacts would be less than significant.

MITIGATION MEASURES

HAZ-1: For projects within the Project Area that require excavation at any of the locations where a Cortese List site was recorded, a Phase I Environmental Site Assessment (and Phase II sampling where appropriate) would be required. If the Phase I Environmental Site Assessment determines that remediation is required, the project sponsor would be required to implement all remediation and abatement work in accordance with the requirements of the Department of

Toxic Substances Control (DTSC), Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB), or other jurisdictional agency.

FINDINGS

The proposed project would have a **Less Than Significant Impact with mitigation** on Hazards and Hazardous Materials.

X. HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY. Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or ground water 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?	☐	☐	☒	☐
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?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Thresholds of Significance: The project would have a significant effect on hydrology and water quality if it would violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or ground water quality; substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin; substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner, which would result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site, substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or off-site, 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 impede or redirect flows; in flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk release of pollutants due to project inundation; or conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan.

DISCUSSION

Regional and Local Hydrology and Water Resources Setting:

According to the Storm Drainage Technical Report for the Taft General Plan Update and EIR prepared by Storm Water Consulting, Inc. (2009), elevations for the City of Taft range from approximately 1,160 feet above mean sea level (msl) near the Sandy Creek crossing of Midoil Road to about 750 feet along Sandy Creek at the east end of the Taft-Kern County Airport. (Storm Water Consulting, 2009, Pgs 6-7).

The most significant stream nearby the project boundary is the Kern River which originates in the Sierra Nevada Mountain range to the east of Bakersfield near Mount Whitney. The Kern River is regulated by Isabella Dam which controls roughly 2,074 square miles of upstream watershed. The Kern River traverses southwesterly and is located approximately 14 miles northeast of Taft. (Storm Water Consulting, 2009, Pg 6).

There is one upstream dam listed by the Department of Water Resources Division of Safety of Dams called the Isabella Dam. The Isabella Dam forms Isabella Lake along the Kern River and its tributaries in the Sierra Nevada to the east of the City's Planning Area. The dam is owned and operated by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and impounds up to 568,000 acre-feet of water originating from a contributing watershed area of 2,074 square miles.

The Project is based in Taft which is classified as an urbanized setting. The City is mostly developed between Taft Highway to the east, Ash Street to the north, Hillard Street to the west, and A street/Oak Street to the South.

Water Service:

Water service is provided by West Kern Water District (WKWD). WKWD was formed in May 1959 and includes many unincorporated communities as well as the cities of Maricopa and Taft. The District has an irregular boundary and encompasses a service area of approximately 300 square miles. WKWD recently updated its Urban Water Management Plan in 2020. The Plan describes the District's water supply, water demands, water reliability, and water conservation efforts. This document provides estimated population growth and water demands through the year 2045 and serves as a long-range planning document for the District.

WKWD contracted with Kern County Water Authority (KCWA) in 1966 to receive an allotment of water through the State Water Project (SWP). The 2020 Plan states that WKWD is allocated approximately 31,500 acre-feet of water per year (AFY) by KCWA. However, this number represents the maximum WKWD can request annually as the Department of Water Resources (DWR) determines the amount that will be delivered in a given year. Given this, the supply received each year is generally lower than 31,500 AFY. The Plan projects that between 2020 and 2045 the total supply will decrease from 25,700 AFY to 25,100 AFY and the demand will increase from 16,338 AFY to 17,735 AFY. Additionally, the plan provides analysis for dry years and includes banking groundwater for use in these dry years. This analysis in the Plan shows that WKWD has adequate supplies to meet demands during normal, single-dry, and multiple-dry years throughout the 25-year planning period, particularly due to the long history of banking groundwater for use in dry years.

While the existing water system could support some of the intended growth within the Project Area, future development that proposes a significant increase in the number of residential units or square footage of non-residential use, will need to conduct project-level analysis to determine available water system capacity.

Depending on the intensity, future development may require the upsizing of existing water mains. Exact sizing and location of mains would be determined for each proposed development when project information is known. See Figure 6 Water Map, for more details on location of facilities. Additionally, future development will need to consider the existing connection lines as they could be old and may require replacement in connection with site specific renovation and/or expansion projects.

Wastewater Service:

Wastewater service is provided by the City of Taft. The City of Taft amended its Sewer System Maintenance Plan in 2018. The goal of the plan is to provide high quality and reliable wastewater collection for Taft residents by maintaining, improving, and providing collection infrastructure that has adequate capacity.

The Taft Wastewater Treatment Plant is located at 1120 East Ash Street and is jointly owned by the City of Taft (52%) and the Ford City-Taft Heights Sanitation District (48%). The City of Taft operates the sewer plant through a contract with the Kern Sanitation Authority. The Wastewater Treatment Plant was recently upgraded in 2012. Wastewater service is provided to all areas within the City's Municipal Boundary, which includes the DTSP area. There are existing gravity pipes that run throughout the Project Area which could support some of the intended growth. Proposed developments producing a significant increase in the number of residential units or square footage of non-residential use, will need to be evaluated to determine available system capacity of sewer systems. See Figure 7 Sewer Map, for more information on existing facilities.

Drainage and Storm Water Quality:

Per the City of Taft Sewer Maintenance Plan, the city has a predominantly "surface flow" storm water conveyance system that does not include any underground storm water assets. The majority of storm water flows drains northeastward and are conveyed through a curb and gutter conveyance system that ultimately flow to the Sandy Creek which runs along the northern City boundary. There is only one significant storm drain line within the city limits. Due to the lack of facilities, no service map is available.

The city and surrounding County neighborhoods do not have soils that are conducive for recharging drainage flows into a typical detention/retention basin that is now standard with new developments. New development would need to consider this when siting and grading for buildings to avoid issues with concentration of water and ponding near buildings.

Regulatory Setting:

The Clean Water Act (CWA), initially passed in 1972, regulates the discharge of pollutants into watersheds throughout the nation. Section 402(p) of the act establishes a framework for regulating municipal and industrial stormwater discharges under the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Program (NPDES Program). Section 402(p) requires that stormwater associated with industrial activities that discharge either directly to surface waters or indirectly through municipal storm sewers must be regulated by an NPDES permit. The California Clean Water Act Section 303(d) list identifies water bodies with impaired water quality. None of the rivers, creeks, or streams within the City are on the most recent (2018) California Clean Water Act Section 303(d) list and according to the Tulare Basin Water Quality Control Plan surface water quality in the basin is generally good.

The State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) is responsible for implementing the Clean Water Act and issues NPDES permits to cities and counties through Regional Water Quality Control Boards (RWQCBs). The Project is located within a portion of the state that is regulated by the RWQCB's Central Valley Region. SWRCB has issued a statewide General Permit (Water Quality Order No. 99-08-DWQ) for construction activities within the state. The Construction General Permit (CGP) is implemented and enforced by the RWQCBs. The CGP applies to any construction activity that disturbs one acre or more and requires the preparation and

implementation of a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) that identifies best management practices (BMPs) to minimize pollutants from discharging from a given construction site to the maximum extent practicable (MEP). BMPs may include, straw bales, fiber rolls, and/or silt fencing structures to assure the minimization of erosion resulting from construction and to avoid runoff into sensitive habitat areas, limit ground disturbance to the minimum necessary, and stabilize disturbed soil areas as soon as feasible after construction is completed. Any future development within the Project Area would be designed in accordance with the requirements of the CGP and would implement BMPs during construction.

In addition to federal and state regulations the Project must also align with local plans such as the Kern Urban Water Management Plan, adopted in June 2021, the Urban Water Management Plan serves as s a foundational document and source of information about the Kern River Valley District's historical and projected water demands, water supplies, supply reliability and potential vulnerabilities, water shortage contingency planning, and demand management programs. The Urban Water Management Plan is a long-range planning document utilized by Cal Water for water supply and system planning and offers a source for data on population, housing, water demands, water supplies, and capital improvement projects.

X.a) Future development in the Project Area would generate construction of new structures, which could create additional impermeable surfaces, people, and vehicles that could result in the increase of urban pollutants such as oils, heavy metals, pesticides, and fertilizers into the storm drain system. As discussed above under Section X. Regulatory Setting, water quality is regulated by the SWRCB through the NPDES Program established by the Clean Water Act. The goal of the program is to control and reduce pollutants to water bodies from point and non-point discharges for both long term project activities and construction activities. The Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) issues and enforces NPDES permits for discharges to water bodies in the portion of Kern County where the DTSP is located. Future development proposals that would disturb more than one acre of land during construction are required to file a notice of intent to be covered under the NPDES General Permit for Storm Water Discharges Associated With Construction Activity for discharges of storm water associated with construction activities. Project applicants must propose control measures that are consistent with this permit and consistent with recommendations and policies of the local agency and the RWQCB. The State NPDES General Construction Permit requires development and implementation of a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) that uses storm water "Best Management Practices" to control runoff, erosion and sedimentation from project sites both during and after construction. The SWPPP has two major objectives: (1) to help identify the sources of sediments and other pollutants that affect the quality of storm water discharges; and (2) to describe and ensure the implementation of practices to reduce sediment and other pollutants in storm water discharges. Therefore, with compliance of state and local regulations, impacts would be less than significant.

X.b) Water for the Project Area is provided by the WKWD. WKWD recently updated its Urban Water Management Plan in 2020 which describes the District's water supply, water demands, water reliability, and water conservation efforts. As stated above in the discussion for Section X, Water Service, the Urban Water Management Plan states there is an allotment of up to 31,500 AFY for the City and that projections predict the demand will be approximately 17,735 AFY between the years 2020 and 2045. Leaving the Project Area with a surplus of water. Additionally, the Urban Water Management Plan provides analysis for dry years and includes banking groundwater for use in these dry years. This analysis in the Urban Water Management Plan shows that WKWD has adequate supplies to meet demands during normal, single-dry, and multiple-dry years, therefore impact would be less than significant.

X.c.i, ii, iii, iv) The Project involves regulatory and policy documents but does not propose any specific development; however, Project adoption may attract development proposals. While the Zoning Ordinance amendment does not increase densities above what is assumed in the General Plan, the land use changes in the DTSP increase the densities assumed by the General Plan for the downtown area. At buildout the DTSP area could result in a total of approximately 3,121 dwelling units and 4,272 employment opportunities within downtown Taft. The DTSP is currently primarily developed, and existing drainage patterns are already in use within the area. New development that could be facilitated within the DTSP and entire Project Area would generally follow the existing topography, drainage patterns, and stream courses.

Per the City of Taft Sewer Maintenance Plan, storm water drains via surface flow northeastwardly and the Project Area does not include any underground storm water assets. Storm water is conveyed through a curb and gutter conveyance system that ultimately flows to Sandy Creek along the northern City boundary. During future construction activities, development under the DTSP and Zoning Ordinance amendment could create the potential for additional impervious surfaces, surface soils to erode and sediment transport to occur. Given that the Project Area where development would be anticipated is generally developed, alterations to the existing drainage pattern from future development would be minimal or nonexistent. Adherence to storm water discharge requirements as provided by the City engineer during the permitting process would require new development projects to provide for on-site storm water detention or retention. Therefore erosion, siltation, or flooding on- or off-site is not expected.

Furthermore, any impacts from development projects within the Project Area associated with alteration of site drainage and related erosion from site disturbance such as construction activities, would be substantially lessened to a less than significant level through compliance with the NPDES permit requirements under the Clean Water Act. Through compliance with updated standards in the DTSP and NPDES permit and regulations, impacts associated with erosion, sedimentation, drainage, flow and flooding, would be less than significant.

X.d) The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) establishes base flood elevations for Special Flood Hazard Areas, which indicate 100-year flood zones, or areas that could be inundated by the flood that has a one percent probability of occurring in any given year. The Project site is not located within a FEMA mapped floodplain, as shown in FEMA FIRM Panel 06029C2639E, effective September 26, 2008, as Figure 8, FEMA Flood Insurance Rate Map. The Project is located within an inland area and is not in close proximity to a large body of water that could carry pollutants from a tsunami or seiche. Additionally, future development proposals would be reviewed by the City for compliance with all requirements as they relate to development within a flood hazard area. Applicants may also be required to prepare a project-specific hydrology study and Water Quality Management Plan if a development is proposed in a flood hazard area. Therefore, with continued implementation of City development standards, the impact related to release of pollutants due to project inundation would be minimized. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

X.e) As mentioned above in impact X.b. and X.c., Taft has adopted an Urban Water Management Plan and Sewer System Maintenance Plan which detail the City's water supply, demands, reliability, conservation efforts, and ways to provide and maintain reliable wastewater collection and treatment. As discussed under impact X.c. implementation of the Project would include development standards that would protect the quality of groundwater and surface water through construction runoff controls and enforcement of state regulations. Development within the Project Area would be subject to the NPDES Permit issued by the RWQCB. The NPDES permit requires that permanent post-construction stormwater quality control measures and treatment facilities be implemented as development takes place. Compliance involves a series of BMPs related to erosion control, stormwater treatment, detainment, and infiltration measures, as well as quantity controls. Through compliance with updated standards in the DTSP and NPDES permit and regulations, the Plan would not conflict with or obstruct implementation of applicable water quality or management plans and impacts would be less than significant.

MITIGATION MEASURES

No mitigation required.

FINDINGS

The proposed project would have a Less Than Significant Impact on Hydrology and Water Quality.

Transmission Lines
Distribution Mains
Service Lines
Appurtenance Lines
Abandoned Lines
Project Boundary City of Taft

500 250 0 Feet

N

West Kern Water District
661-763-3151
Engineering Department
Facilities Request

Downtown Taft
Requested by: Hannah Shurance
Associate Planner - Rick Engineering Company
hshurance@rickengineering.com

Drawing By:
Taylor Miller - May 19, 2022
Assistant to Director of Operations

Approved By:
Zak Crabb

Sheet Overview

CITY OF TAFT
energized for the future

SEWER ATLAS

Legend

- Taft Manhole
- Kern Manhole
- Taft Cleanout
- Taft Plug
- Taft ForceMain
- Taft GravityPipe
- Kern Gravity Pipe
- Taft LiftStation
- County Parcels
- Taft City Limits

1 inch = 917 feet

0 500 1,000 Feet

PROJECT NOTES:
BASEMAP PROVIDED BY THE COUNTY OF KERN. SEWER GIS DEVELOPED BY WALLACE GROUP BASED ON AUTOCAD SEWER SYSTEM BASE MAP AND 2009 GPS FIELD SURVEY. MAP DEVELOPED FOR SEWER FACILITY MANAGEMENT. NOT TO BE USED FOR DESIGN OR CONSTUCTION. PUBLISHED DECEMBER 2009.

D5 F5 E6

NOTES TO USERS

This map is for use in administering the National Flood Insurance Program. It does not necessarily identify all areas subject to flooding, particularly from local drainage sources of small size. The **community map repository** should be consulted for possible updated or additional flood hazard information.

To obtain more detailed information in areas where **Base Flood Elevations** (BFEs) and/or **floodways** have been determined, users are encouraged to consult the Flood Profiles and Floodway Data and/or Summary of Stillwater Elevations tables contained within the Flood Insurance Study (FIS) report that accompanies this FIRM. Users should be aware that BFEs shown on the FIRM represent rounded whole-foot elevations. These BFEs are intended for flood insurance rating purposes only and should not be used as the sole source of flood elevation information. Accordingly, flood elevation data presented in the FIS report should be utilized in conjunction with the FIRM for purposes of construction and/or floodplain management.

Coastal Base Flood Elevations shown on this map apply only landward of 0.0' North American Vertical Datum of 1988 (NAVD 88). Users of this FIRM should be aware that coastal flood elevations are also provided in the Summary of Stillwater Elevations table in the Flood Insurance Study report for this jurisdiction. Elevations shown in the Summary of Stillwater Elevations table should be used for construction and/or floodplain management purposes when they are higher than the elevations shown on this FIRM.

Boundaries of the **floodways** were computed at cross sections and interpolated between cross sections. The floodways were based on hydraulic considerations with regard to requirements of the National Flood Insurance Program. Floodway widths and other pertinent floodway data are provided in the Flood Insurance Study report for this jurisdiction.

Certain areas not in Special Flood Hazard Areas may be protected by **flood control structures.** Refer to Section 2.4 "Flood Protection Measures" of the Flood Insurance Study report for information on flood control structures for this jurisdiction.

The **projection** used in the preparation of this map was Universal Transverse Mercator (UTM) zone 11. The **horizontal datum** was NAD83, GRS1980 spheroid. Differences in datum, spheroid, projection or UTM zones used in the production of FIRMs for adjacent jurisdictions may result in slight positional differences in map features across jurisdiction boundaries. These differences do not affect the accuracy of this FIRM.

Flood elevations on this map are referenced to the North American Vertical Datum of 1988. These flood elevations must be compared to structure and ground elevations referenced to the same **vertical datum.** For information regarding conversion between the National Geodetic Vertical Datum of 1929 and the North American Vertical Datum of 1988, visit the National Geodetic Survey website at http://www.ngs.noaa.gov/ or contact the National Geodetic Survey at the following address:

NGS Information Services
NOAA, N/NGS12
National Geodetic Survey
SSMC-3, #9202
1315 East-West Highway
Silver Spring, MD 20910-3282

To obtain current elevation, description, and/or location information for **bench marks** shown on this map, please contact the Information Services Branch of the National Geodetic Survey at **(301) 713-3242,** or visit its website at http://www.ngs.noaa.gov/.

Base map information shown on this FIRM was derived from USDA - Farm Service Agency - Aerial Photography Field Office dated 2005 and from U.S. Geological Survey Digital Orthophoto Quadrangles produced at a scale of 1:12,000 from photography dated 1992 or later.

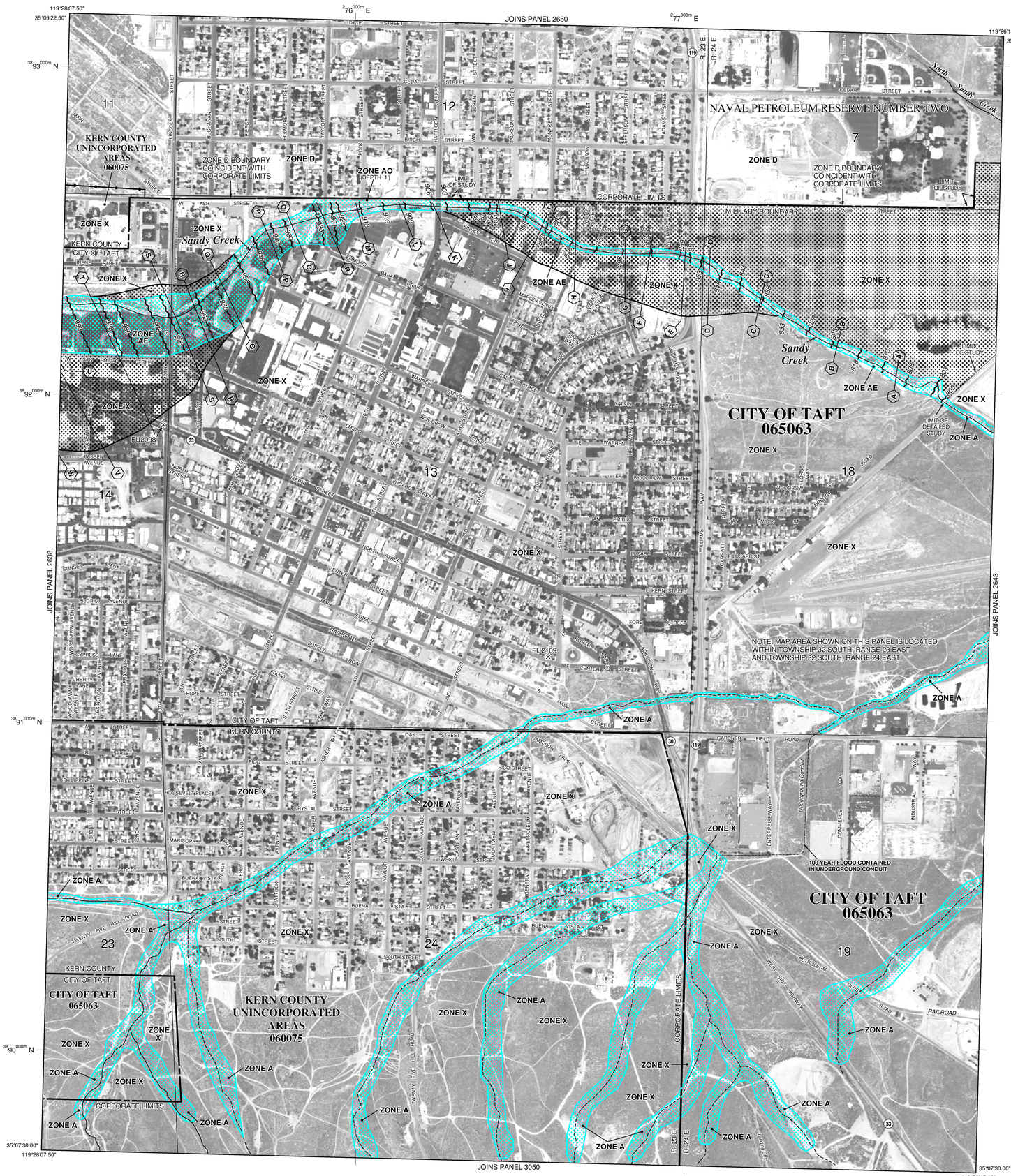
This map reflects more detailed and up-to-date **stream channel configurations** than those shown on the previous FIRM for this jurisdiction. The floodplains and floodways that were transferred from the previous FIRM may have been adjusted to conform to these new stream channel configurations. As a result, the Flood Profiles and Floodway Data tables *in the Flood Insurance Study report (which contains authoritative hydraulic data)* may reflect stream channel distances that differ from what is shown on this map.

Corporate limits shown on this map are based on the best data available at the time of publication. Because changes due to annexations or de-annexations may have occurred after this map was published, map users should contact appropriate community officials to verify current corporate limit locations.

Please refer to the separately printed **Map Index** for an overview map of the county showing the layout of map panels; community map repository addresses; and a Listing of Communities table containing National Flood Insurance Program dates for each community as well as a listing of the panels on which each community is located.

Contact the **FEMA Map Service Center** at 1-800-358-9616 for information on available products associated with this FIRM. Available products may include previously issued Letters of Map Change, *a Flood Insurance Study report,* and/or digital versions of this map. The FEMA Map Service Center may also be reached by Fax at 1-800-358-9620 and its website at http://www.msc.fema.gov/.

If you have **questions about this map** or questions concerning the National Flood Insurance Program in general, please call **1-877-FEMA MAP** (1-877-336-2627) or visit the FEMA website at http://www.fema.gov/.



LEGEND

SPECIAL FLOOD HAZARD AREAS (SFHAs) SUBJECT TO INUNDATION BY THE 1% ANNUAL CHANCE FLOOD

The 1% annual chance flood (100-year flood), also known as the base flood, is the flood that has a 1% chance of being equaled or exceeded in any given year. The Special Flood Hazard Area is the area subject to flooding by the 1% annual chance flood. Areas of Special Flood Hazard include Zones A, AE, AH, AO, AR, A99, V and VE. The Base Flood Elevation is the water-surface elevation of the 1% annual chance flood.

ZONE A No Base Flood Elevations determined.

ZONE AE Base Flood Elevations determined.

ZONE AH Flood depths of 1 to 3 feet (usually areas of ponding); Base Flood Elevations determined.

ZONE AO Flood depths of 1 to 3 feet (usually sheet flow on sloping terrain); average depths determined. For areas of alluvial fan flooding, velocities also determined.

ZONE AR Special Flood Hazard Area formerly protected from the 1% annual chance flood by a flood control system that was subsequently decertified. Zone AR indicates that the former flood control system is being restored to provide protection from the 1% annual chance or greater flood.

ZONE A99 Area to be protected from 1% annual chance flood by a Federal flood protection system under construction; no Base Flood Elevations determined.

ZONE V Coastal flood zone with velocity hazard (wave action); no Base Flood Elevations determined.

ZONE VE Coastal flood zone with velocity hazard (wave action); Base Flood Elevations determined.

FLOODWAY AREAS IN ZONE AE

The floodway is the channel of a stream plus any adjacent floodplain areas that must be kept free of encroachment so that the 1% annual chance flood can be carried without substantial increases in flood heights.

OTHER FLOOD AREAS

ZONE X Areas of 0.2% annual chance flood; areas of 1% annual chance flood with average depths of less than 1 foot or with drainage areas less than 1 square mile; and areas protected by levees from 1% annual chance flood.

OTHER AREAS

ZONE X Areas determined to be outside the 0.2% annual chance floodplain.

ZONE D Areas in which flood hazards are undetermined, but possible.

COASTAL BARRIER RESOURCES SYSTEM (CBRS) AREAS

OTHERWISE PROTECTED AREAS (OPAs)

CBRS areas and OPAs are normally located within or adjacent to Special Flood Hazard Areas.

- 1% annual chance floodplain boundary
- 0.2% annual chance floodplain boundary
- Floodway boundary
- Zone D boundary
- CBRS and OPA boundary
- Boundary dividing Special Flood Hazard Areas of different Base Flood Elevations, flood depths or flood velocities.
- 513 — Base Flood Elevation line and value; elevation in feet*
- (EL 987) — Base Flood Elevation value where uniform within zone; elevation in feet*

* Referenced to the North American Vertical Datum of 1988 (NAVD 88)

- A — A — Cross section line
- 23 — 23 — Transect line
- 97°07'30", 32°22'30" — Geographic coordinates referenced to the North American Datum of 1983 (NAD 83)
- 4275 000m N — 1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks, zone 11
- 6000000 M — 5000-foot grid ticks: California State Plane coordinate system, V zone (FIPSZONE 0405), Lambert Conformal Conic
- DX5510 — Bench mark (see explanation in Notes to Users section of this FIRM panel)
- M1.5 — River Mile

MAP REPOSITORIES
Refer to Map Repositories list on Map Index

EFFECTIVE DATE OF COUNTYWIDE FLOOD INSURANCE RATE MAP
September 26, 2008
EFFECTIVE DATE(S) OF REVISION(S) TO THIS PANEL

For community map revision history prior to countywide mapping, refer to the Community Map History table located in the Flood Insurance Study report for this jurisdiction.

To determine if flood insurance is available in this community, contact your insurance agent or call the National Flood Insurance Program at 1-800-638-6620.

MAP SCALE 1" = 500'
250 0 500 1000 FEET
150 0 150 300 METERS

NFIP

NATIONAL FLOOD INSURANCE PROGRAM

PANEL 2639E

FIRM

FLOOD INSURANCE RATE MAP

KERN COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

AND INCORPORATED AREAS

PANEL 2639 OF 4125
(SEE MAP INDEX FOR FIRM PANEL LAYOUT)

CONTAINS:

COMMUNITY	NUMBER	PANEL	SUFFIX
KERN COUNTY	060075	2639	E
TAFT, CITY OF	065063	2639	E

Notice to User: The **Map Number** shown below should be used when placing map orders; the **Community Number** shown above should be used on insurance applications for the subject community.

MAP NUMBER
06029C2639E

EFFECTIVE DATE
SEPTEMBER 26, 2008

Federal Emergency Management Agency

XI. LAND USE AND PLANNING. Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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?	☐	☐	☒	☐

THRESHOLDS OF SIGNIFICANCE: The project would have a significant effect on land use and planning if it would physically divide an established community or 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.

DISCUSSION

The City of Taft is nestled in a small valley in the southern foothills of the Temblor Mountain Range in the heart of California's oil country. Taft is located seven miles north of Maricopa and thirty-five (35) miles southwest of Bakersfield. The California Department of Finance's 2020 population estimate lists the City of Taft with 8,630 residents. Additionally, there are three unincorporated county neighborhoods contiguous to Taft's City Limits; they are Ford City, South Taft and Taft Heights providing an additional 8,315 residents utilizing city services.

The Project consists of a Specific Plan update and corresponding Zoning Ordinance amendment that primarily focuses on the downtown area of Taft, although parts of the Zoning Ordinance amendment would have Citywide affects. The Project aims to establish downtown as a central zone with street-oriented uses and as a vibrant mixed-use district surrounding by residential uses. A corresponding amendment to the City of Taft Zoning Ordinance is proposed as a result of the changes to the land and zoning designations within downtown Taft as well as updates to the ADA regulations and providing avenues for streamlining ministerial permits for development citywide. The Project supports new development regulations which reflect current and new market demand with development feasibility context, includes contemporary planning principles, and adds additional provisions for adaptive reuse. Additionally, the Project provides a vision and planning framework for future growth and development in the approximately 212-acre downtown Taft region and introduces new Land Use Designations not included in the previously adopted 1999 Downtown Taft Specific Plan.

The DTSP and corresponding Zoning Ordinance amendment presents a vision, themes, goals, policies, design standards, and implementation strategies for categories such as land use, mobility, parks and open space. The Zoning Ordinance Amendment does not include any changes to densities or intensities above what is assumed in the General Plan buildout other than the implementation of the DTSP, however the DTSP does include changes to land uses

and densities assumed in the General Plan. If adopted the DTSP could result in a total of approximately 3,121 dwelling units, 4,272 employment opportunities over 890,000 square feet of retail development complimented with over 1,000,000 square feet of commercial and office space, and 9 acres of recreational open space in downtown Taft.

XI.a) The Zoning Ordinance Amendment does not include any changes to land uses, intensities or densities above what was assumed in the General Plan buildout. However, the DTSP includes land use changes that consist primarily of mixed-use. commercial/retail, office, and residential uses, some light industrial. The DTSP and Zoning Ordinance amendment seeks to create a walkable, pedestrian-friendly city and a lively downtown center that is the focal point for the community. The mix of land uses proposed by the DTSP would be compatible with the other existing uses in the immediate vicinity of downtown and its main thoroughfares, including areas both north of Kern Street/Highway 33, west of 10th street, and south of Supply Row and Front Street.

In addition, as a part of the DTSP and Zoning Ordinance Amendment, objective design guidelines/standards are set in place to ensure high-quality, well-designed and cohesive development throughout the City. The Design Guidelines and Standards, of the DTSP and Zoning Ordinance detail general design policies, site design, architectural design, building form and articulation, parking, building frontage and access, building materials and colors, streetscape, public realm design policies, pedestrian design, hardscape and furnishings, lighting, signage and wayfinding, gateways and monuments, and landscape design policies. Although the DTSP could encourage street redesign, no new major roads or other large linear facilities would be constructed that would physically divide existing neighborhoods. As such, the Project would not divide an established community and impacts would be less than significant.

XI.b) Under Government Code Section 65450 et seq., a specific plan implements and must be consistent with the governing general plan. The City of Taft General Plan lays the framework for how the city will grow and develop moving into the future. The General Plan identifies eight "guiding principles" for Taft's vision of the future. The Taft General Plan includes supportive references to the Specific Plan. For example, the General Plan states "Promote a vibrant, healthy, active downtown by providing safe multi-family and mixed-use housing with a harmonious mix of uses and transportation options available" while also encouraging infill development and attractive residential development. The goals and policies within the General Plan that implement these visions provide the foundation upon which the Project is based and therefore, the DTSP has been prepared to be in accordance, and consistent with, the Taft General Plan. If adopted, the updated DTSP would replace and supersede the previous 1999 Specific Plan for downtown Taft. The updated DTSP is also intended to be adopted with minor amendments to the City's Zoning Ordinance, since it does not propose a substantial change to existing land uses in the Project Area. Consequently, the updated DTSP and Zoning Ordinance would serve

as an extension of the City's General Plan, providing both policy and regulatory direction specific to downtown Taft and avenues to streamlining ministerial permits through the Zoning Ordinance updates. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

MITIGATION MEASURES

No mitigation required.

FINDINGS

The proposed project would have a **Less Than Significant Impact** on Land Use and Planning.

XII. MINERAL RESOURCES. Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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?	☐	☐	☒	☐

THRESHOLDS OF SIGNIFICANCE: The project would have a significant effect on mineral resources if it would 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 or 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.

DISCUSSION

The California Department of Conservation Surface Mining and Reclamation Act of 1975 (Section 2710), also known as SMARA, provides a comprehensive surface mining and reclamation policy that permits the continued mining of minerals, as well as the protection and subsequent beneficial use of the mined and reclaimed land. The SMARA directs the State Geologist to identify and map the non-fuel mineral resources of the State in order to show where economically significant mineral deposits occur and where they are likely to occur based upon the best available scientific data. As such, the California Geological Survey and the State Mining and Geology Board are the state agencies responsible for the classification and designation of areas containing, or potentially containing, a significant mineral resource. Areas known as Mineral Resource Zones (MRZs) are classified based on geologic factors, without regard to existing land use and land ownership. The primary objective of the process is to provide local agencies with information on the location, need, and importance of minerals within their respective jurisdictions. The areas are categorized into four general classifications (MRZ-1 through MRZ-4) and are defined as follows:

- MRZ-1 Areas where adequate information indicates that no significant mineral deposits are present, or where it is judged that little likelihood exists for their presence.

- MRZ-2 Areas where adequate information indicates that significant mineral deposits are present, or where it is judged that a high likelihood for their presence exists.

- MRZ-3 Areas containing mineral deposits, the significance of which cannot be evaluated from available data.

- MRZ-4 Areas where available data is inadequate for assignment to any other MRZ.

XII.a and b) As noted in the project description above, this analysis is incorporating by reference and using previously prepared General Plan Update EIR for this project. The General Plan Update Draft EIR evaluated whether implementation of the General Plan Update could result in the loss of potentially valuable mineral resources. While there is no land within the proposed General Plan Update Land Use Map designated for mining, the analysis noted that mineral resource areas are known to exist within the Planning Area, and that development under the General Plan Update could preclude the exploration for and extraction of mineral resources, such as oil and gas drilling. While General Plan Update policies and actions would help minimize impacts to mineral resources, there was no mitigation available to prevent the permanent loss of mineral resources. Therefore, this impact was determined to be significant and unavoidable. The General Plan Update Draft EIR came to these conclusions based on the "Mineral Lands Classification" maps published by the State in Special Report 147. The report showed that there were hundreds of MRZ-2 sites identified in the entire General Plan area.

The Project includes both a Specific Plan and Zoning Ordinance Amendment. The Project is a policy-level document and does not include any site-specific development designs or proposals. However, there may be impacts to mineral resources from projects resulting from the buildout of the Project. The report referenced above "Special Report 147" Mineral Land Classification: Aggregate Materials in the Bakersfield Production-Consumption Region, was published by Judy Wiedenheft Cole in 1988. Further review of the map from this report shows that although there may be other extraction sites and/or MRZ-2 lands within the General Plan area itself, it does not appear that there are any existing or former extraction sites within the DTSP area. Additionally, in 2009, "Special Report 210" was published by Busch, L.L which was an Update of the 1988 Mineral Land Classification: Aggregate Materials in the Bakersfield Production-Consumption Region, Kern County, California. The maps from this report show no MRZ-1, 2 or 3 areas within the City of Taft or the DTSP area.

The DTSP is located in the urban core of the City. No properties in the immediate vicinity of the DTSP Area are used for mineral recovery. Development of the DTSP is not likely to result in loss of availability of a locally important mineral resource and as stated above, it does not appear that there are any extraction sites or MRZ-1,2, or 3 areas mapped by the State within the DTSP area. While the DTSP area may not include any mineral resources, the Zoning Ordinance Amendment includes policy changes Citywide, and implementation may result in development on lands that have mineral resources. As such, future development would require further CEQA review of project-level impacts prior to implementation to ensure that the individual projects do not result

in a significant impact to mineral resources and conform to the regulations established in the General Plan, in particular policy E-10 which supports the reduction of conflicts between potential mineral resource lands and urban uses. Therefore, a less than significant impact would occur

MITIGATION MEASURES

No mitigation required.

FINDINGS

The proposed project would have **less than significant impact** on Mineral Resources.

XIII. NOISE. Would the project result in:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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?	☐	☐	☒	☐

THRESHOLDS OF SIGNIFICANCE: The project would have a significant effect on noise if it would result in the 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; or generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels; or expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels (for a project located within the vicinity of a private airstrip or an airport or an airport land use plan, or where such as plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport).

DISCUSSION

Criteria for determining the significance of noise impacts were developed based on information contained in CEQA Guidelines Appendix G and the City's noise standards and guidelines.

The City of Taft standards for construction noise are as follows:

- Restrict noise-generating construction activities that would result in increased levels of annoyance to nearby noise-sensitive land uses to between the hours of 6 a.m. and 7 p.m. Monday through Friday, and between 6 a.m. and 5 p.m. on weekends.
- Require the use of temporary construction noise control measures including the use of temporary noise barriers, if necessary, as mitigation for noise generated during construction of public and/or private projects.

The City of Taft noise thresholds are included in Table 8.0-1 of the General Plan and are as follows in Table 3:

Table 3: Land Use Compatibility for New Development Near Transportation and Non-Transportation Noise Sources

Land Use	Interior Spaces Ldn/CNEL, dB	Outdoor Activity Areas Ldn/CNEL, dB			
		Acceptable	Conditionally Acceptable	Conditionally Unacceptable	
Residential, Low Density Single-Family, Duplex, Mobile Homes	45	55–65	65–75	75–Above	INTERPRETATION ACCEPTABLE: (Mitigation Not Required) Specified land use is acceptable. CONDITIONALLY ACCEPTABLE: (Mitigation Required) Use should be permitted only after careful study and inclusion of mitigation as needed to satisfy policies of Noise Element. CONDITIONALLY UNACCEPTABLE: (Mitigation Required) Use may be infeasible. Use should be permitted only after careful study and inclusion of mitigation as needed to satisfy policies of Noise Element.
Residential, Multi-Family	45	55–65	65–75	75–Above	
Transient Lodging – Hotels, Motels	45	55–65	65–75	75–Above	
Mixed Use	45	55–65	65–75	75–Above	
Schools, Libraries, Churches, Hospitals, Nursing Homes	45	55–65	60–70	70–Above	
Auditoriums, Concert Halls, Amphitheaters	--	--	55-70	--	
Sports Area, Outdoor Spectator Sport	--	--	55-75	--	
Playgrounds, Neighborhood Parks	--	55-70	70-75	--	
Office Buildings, Business, Commercial, and Professional	--	55-70	70-75	75-Above	
Industrial, Manufacturing, Agriculture	--	55-70	70-80	75-Above	

Source: City of Taft General Plan Update (2017)

The buildout of the Project will result in an increase in noise and sensitive receptors. All future development will need to adhere to the City of Taft's zoning ordinance Chapter 6-13-12, 6-11-18 and other applicable sections referring to noise as well as the General Plan thresholds and policies to ensure minimal impacts.

Existing sensitive receptors in the Project vicinity include residential neighborhoods to the north, west and south of the Project area. Existing noise generators within the Project area include scattered industrial uses and restaurants/bars.

XIII.a) As noted in the project description above, this analysis is incorporating a previously prepared General Plan Update EIR as reference for this project. The General Plan Update Draft EIR evaluated whether activities associated with construction of land uses allowed under the General Plan Update could result in elevated noise levels at noise-sensitive land uses. The analysis noted that increases in ambient noise levels, particularly during the nighttime hours, could result in increased levels of annoyance and potential sleep disruption. Future development in the DTSP area and as a result of the Zoning Ordinance Amendment would be subject to General Plan policies N-4 and Action N-4a which would help mitigate construction noise impacts of future development through limiting hours of operation and noise controls. The General Plan Update Draft EIR also evaluated whether implementation of the General Plan Update could result in increased traffic noise levels that could adversely affect existing and future noise-sensitive land uses. The analysis noted that future noise-sensitive land uses could be exposed to roadway noise levels in excess of the City's noise standards. Future development would be subject to General Plan policies N-1, N-2, N-3, and N-6 and noise thresholds which would help mitigate traffic noise impacts through site design, truck routes, and noise barriers.

The improvements and development envisioned to implement the DTSP are expected to generate noise levels compatible with the surrounding urban environment. Future projects would be required to comply with Caltrans standards that establish construction and operations requirements related to transportation noise, as well as the City's noise standards contained in the General Plan Noise Element including the following requirements:

- Action N-1b: Require an acoustical analysis as part of the environmental review process when proposed development is likely to produce noise levels that exceed the City's noise standards.
- Action N-1c: Identify potential noise impacts during the acoustical analysis to be mitigated in the project design to the maximum extent.
- Action N-9a: Require new noise-sensitive uses proposed in or adjacent to areas designated for commercial, industrial, natural resources, or agriculture to be provided a disclosure statement notifying them of existing and/or potential noise-producing uses.
- Action N-9b: Require new noise-sensitive uses proposed adjacent to existing and/or potential noise-producing operations, including oil drilling islands, to be provided a disclosure statement, where possible.
- Action N-10a: Require design and construction standards that minimize noise conflicts between residents with shared walls or floors/ceilings.

As such, future development would require further CEQA review of project-level impacts prior to implementation to ensure that the individual projects do not result in a significant noise level and conform to the regulations established in the General Plan. Light industrial uses, and residential adjacent to light industrial uses would have to adhere to the mitigation measures below in order to minimize noise and conflicts of land uses. Additionally, the City may require the preparation of a noise impact study or acoustical analysis with future development applications for projects within the Project area as described below in Mitigation Measure NOI-1. Based on the results of the noise impact study, the applicant's project may be conditioned, by requiring noise studies prior to project approval and sound attenuation features to reduce noise exposure. Implementation of these policies would ensure that people within the DTSP area or projects as a result of the Zoning Ordinance Amendment are not subjected to unacceptable noise levels. A less than significant impact would occur.

XIII.b) There are no allowable uses in the DTSP Area that are associated with the generation of excessive vibration or groundborne noise. However, there may be projects resulting from the Zoning Ordinance Amendment that would contribute to the generation of vibration or groundborne noise during construction. Construction of future development in the Project area may temporarily generate potential short-term noise or vibration impacts. Because impacts would generally be short-term, development would be subject to General Plan policies Policy N-4 and Action N-4a which help to minimize impacts on adjacent uses through limiting hours of operation and construction controls. Depending on the type of development proposed, the City may require the preparation of a noise impact study with future development applications for projects within the DTSP Area. Based on the results of the noise impact study, the applicant's project may be conditioned, and by requiring noise studies prior to project approval. Noise studies would address noise impacts including groundborne vibration. Additionally, light industrial uses, and residential adjacent to light industrial uses would have to adhere to the mitigation measures below in order to minimize noise and conflicts of land uses. Implementation of this policy and mitigation would ensure that people within the DTSP area, or projects as a result of the Zoning Ordinance Amendment are not subjected to unacceptable groundborne vibration or noise levels. A less than significant impact would occur.

XIII.c) The General Plan Update Draft EIR evaluated whether implementation of the General Plan Update could expose noise-sensitive land uses to aircraft noise in excess of applicable noise standards for land use compatibility. The analysis noted that while the land uses in the General Plan Update are consistent with the noise policies and recommended land uses identified within the Kern County Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan, it is conceivable that future development within the City, as well as future expansion of airport activities and associated noise contours, could occur in future years, which may result in increased exposure to aircraft noise levels at some nearby noise-sensitive land uses. The DTSP area is within two (2) miles of the Taft-Kern County Airport, and projects resulting from the Zoning Ordinance Amendment may be within

two (2) miles of the airport. Given the distance to this airport, the Project would likely be exposed to noise levels associated with airport operation. Implementation of General Plan policies N-1, N-2, N-3, and N-5 would ensure that future development near Taft-Kern County Airport would meet applicable noise criteria for land use compatibility and/or include noise attenuation features to meet applicable noise standards. This impact was determined to be less than significant.

MITIGATION MEASURES

NOI-1: Prior to the issuance of a building permit any light industrial adjacent to residential, the Planning Director, or designee, shall insure that uses are limited to activities that would not exceed 75 CNEL. The Applicant shall submit a final acoustical memorandum for review and approval by the Planning Director, or designee, to confirm that standard building noise reductions shall be achieved. The memorandum shall calculate the exterior-to-interior noise reduction which will account for the specific window and glass door sizes and types to confirm interior noise level standard are less than 45 A-weighted decibels (dBA) Community Noise Equivalent Level (CNEL). The Planning Director, or designee, shall ensure that the project plans include perimeter noise barrier walls for sensitive receptors.

FINDINGS

The proposed project would have a Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated on Noise.

XIV. POPULATION AND HOUSING. Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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?	☐	☐	☒	☐

THRESHOLDS OF SIGNIFICANCE: The project would have a significant effect on population and housing if it would induce substantial unplanned population growth in an area, either directly (e.g., by proposing new homes and/or businesses) or indirectly (e.g., through extension of roads or other infrastructure); or displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere.

DISCUSSION

According to the U.S. Census Bureau 2020 decennial census, the population of Taft in 2020 was approximately 8,546. The Kern Council of Governments (Kern COG) adopted the 2018 Regional Transportation Plan (2018 RTP), which integrates the Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) to ensure consistency between low-income housing needs and transportation planning. As discussed in the 2018 RTP, the Kern region's official regional housing need from California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) for the projection period January 2013 – December 2023 was a minimum of 67,675 housing units.

The 2018 RTP identifies the vacant land capacity for jurisdictions in the Kern region, stating that Kern region has more than enough vacant land capacity for housing at a variety of densities to accommodate the regional housing needs for the existing and projected housing population. The 2018 RTP indicates a 2017 population for Taft of 9,492 people and a 2042 forecasted population of 13,680 people, meaning the 2018 RTP anticipates population growth of 4,188 people over 24 years. To the same effect, using existing General Plan land use designations, the General Plan buildout for the Project area would result in a population of approximately 5,280 people, or 2,808 dwelling units[5].

[5] Existing General Plan Buildout and Project Buildout populations of the Project Area were calculated using UrbanFootprint, which estimates values for population using the dwelling unit counts multiple by census rates (ACS 2019 5-Uear Estimates) for occupancy to estimate households. Population is then calculated using census-derived rates for household size by dwelling unit type at the tract level (UrbanFootprint 2022, https://help.urbanfootprint.com/methodology-documentation/base-parcel-canvas-creation#population-and-households.)

XIV.a) As previously discussed, the General Plan buildout for the Project area would result in a population of approximately 5,280 people, or 2,808 dwelling units, and buildout of the DTSP and Zoning Ordinance Amendment would result in a population of approximately 6,180 people, or 3,121 dwelling units[1]. Therefore, the Project has the potential to provide approximately 900 more residents or 313 dwelling units, than under existing General Plan conditions. Considering the 2018 RTP estimated approximately 4,188 additional people by 2042, the Project would provide approximately 21.5% of the RTP planned growth for Taft, and thus would be within the Kern COG 2042 population forecast for Taft. In addition, the proposed project does not directly propose extension of roads or other infrastructure that would encourage development beyond what is already planned elsewhere in the City. Therefore, the proposed project would not directly or indirectly induce substantial unplanned population growth, and impacts would be less than significant.

XIV.b) The Project would accommodate anticipated future growth through a compact urban form that seeks to make efficient use of existing infrastructure and public services, thus minimizing expansion that could be the impetus for the removal of existing housing units and/or businesses. Future improvements constructed in the Project area would primarily consist of infill development. Project implementation would not directly result in new construction; however, implementation of the Project over time would allow for potential future development of approximately 900 more residents or 313 dwelling units over that currently allowed under buildout of the General Plan.

There are a few existing houses that are sited for new development areas. However, Project implementation would encourage undeveloped and underutilized lands to be converted to mixed-use and residential housing that would substantially increase the City's existing housing stock. Conversion of existing residential uses to nonresidential uses that could potentially displace a substantial number of people or housing units is not anticipated. Therefore, implementation of the Project would not displace substantial numbers of existing residents or housing units and would not necessitate the construction of replacement housing elsewhere. The Project does not directly propose the demolition of existing uses located in the Project area, nor does it propose a substantial change in land use designations that would result in the displacement of large numbers of people or housing within the Project area. As such, impacts in this regard would be less than significant.

MITIGATION MEASURES

No mitigation required.

FINDINGS

The proposed project would have a Less Than Significant impact on Population and Housing.

XV. 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:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Fire protection?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b) Police protection?	☐	☐	☒	☐
c) Schools?	☐	☐	☒	☐
d) Parks?	☐	☐	☒	☐
e) Other public facilities?	☐	☐	☒	☐

THRESHOLDS OF SIGNIFICANCE: The project would have a significant effect on public services if it would result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, or result in the 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 (a) fire protection, (b) police protection, (c) schools, (d) parks, or (e) other public facilities.

DISCUSSION

The City of Taft maintains Fire Protection through the Kern County Fire Department (KCFD), Police Protection through the Taft Police Department and has schools and parkland throughout the city that would serve future development, discussed in more detail below. The DTSP and Zoning Ordinance Amendment project are policy documents and does not provide any project specific proposals or entitlements.

XV.a) Fire Protection

In 2007, the City of Taft entered into a Fire Protection Agreement with the Kern County Fire Department (KCFD). As a result of the Agreement, the KCFD became the exclusive provider of fire protection services to the City of Taft and the City's fire personnel were absorbed within the KCFD. The KCFD serves approximately 8,000 square miles, which includes the City of Taft. The City of Taft is primarily served by the KCFD fire station 21 located at 303 N. 10th Street in Taft. This station has a response area of 172 square miles. The staff and equipment at this station includes Engine 21 with a Captain, Engineer, and Firefighter, Truck 21 with a Captain, Engineer, and Firefighter, and a Battalion Chief as Battalion 2. The Taft Station 21 is the Battalion 2 headquarters station. There are no official service standards, however, the KCFD recommended response time standards are 4 minutes in suburban areas.

The City of Taft General Plan EIR states that the Kern County Fire Department's (KCFD) unofficial goal of 1 on-duty firefighter per 3,000 population, the General Plan Update could result in the need for 23 firefighters within the Planning Area by project buildout (2050). The General Plan states that all residential, commercial, and industrial developments would be subject to California Fire Code regulations regarding fire-resistance-rated construction, fire protection systems such as alarm and sprinkler systems, fire services features such as fire apparatus access roads, means of egress, fire safety during construction and demolition, and wildland-urban interface areas. The General Plan EIR also determined that implementation of General Plan policies would ensure that new development would fund new public facilities such as those needed for fire protection and emergency medical services (Policies PF-7 and PF-8), that development projects would be reviewed for concerns associated with the provision of fire protection services (policies PF12, S-20, and S-22), and that the City would coordinate with the appropriate service providers to ensure adequate fire protection and emergency medical services (Policies PF-16 and S-20). In addition, Policy S-21 requires the promotion of fire prevention. Compliance with these policies, along with the California Fire Code, would assist in reducing impacts associated with increased demand for fire protection and emergency services. Therefore, this impact was determined to be less than significant.

The DTSP and Zoning Ordinance Amendment are policy-level documents and do not include any site-specific development designs or proposals. However, future build out of the Project could increase the number of persons and buildings in the project area, thereby increasing the future demand police protection services. The buildout of the Project estimates a population of 6,180 persons in the Downtown area, approximately 900 more than under General Plan conditions. Using the KCFD unofficial goal of one fire fighter per 3,000 persons, the buildout of the Project could result in the need for one additional firefighter above that assumed in the General Plan. In line with the General Plan and General Plan EIR, future development will be subject to all California and City Building Codes, Fire Codes to minimize risks of fires and wildfires. Adherence to applicable codes would decrease the demand for fire services and ensure that there is adequate emergency access on site. The implementation of the proposed Project would not result in unacceptable response times or other performance objectives. The construction of new or expanded fire protection facilities that occur due to Project buildout would not cause significant environmental impacts. Therefore, impacts associated with fire protection services would be less than significant.

XV.b) Police Protection

The Taft Police Department provides protection to approximately 10 square miles and over 9,000 people. The Taft Police Department building is located at 320 Commerce Way, approximately half a mile east of the eastern DTSP boundary. Additionally, the Kern County Sheriff's Office is located at 315 N Lincoln St, approximately one mile north of the northern DTSP boundary.

The General Plan EIR analysis discussed that increased development and associated population growth to 68,018 persons would increase the demand for law enforcement services, which could in turn generate the need for new law enforcement personnel. The Taft Police Department estimated needing an additional seven (7) to 10 officers by project buildout including new equipment (i.e., vehicles, pistols, radios, etc.). Furthermore, the Taft Police Department anticipated that no expansion or construction of new facilities would be necessary to accommodate the additional officers and equipment needed. In addition, implementation of the General Plan policies would ensure that, if new law enforcement personnel, equipment, or facilities are needed, new development would fund new public facilities and personnel such as those needed for law enforcement services (policies PF-7 and PF-8), that development projects would be reviewed for concerns associated with the provision of law enforcement services (Policy S-19), and that the City would review police services regularly to ensure adequate levels of service (Policy S-18). Compliance with these policies would ensure that additional personnel and equipment needs resulting from buildout of the General Plan Update would be planned for and funded.

The DTSP and Zoning Ordinance Amendment are policy-level documents and do not include any site-specific development designs or proposals. However, future build out of the Project could increase the number of persons and buildings in the project area, thereby increasing the future demand fire protection services. Project buildout estimates a population of 6,180 persons in the Downtown area, approximately 900 more than under General Plan conditions. Using the same assumptions as the General Plan, it comes out to approximately 1 law enforcement personnel per 6,800 persons. Using that same calculation, the buildout of the DTSP could result in the need for 1 additional law enforcement personnel above that assumed in the General Plan. Therefore, the implementation of the DTSP would not result in unacceptable response times or other performance objectives. As stated in the General Plan EIR the construction of new or expanded police protection facilities is not anticipated to occur and therefore would not cause significant environmental impacts. Therefore, impacts associated with police protection services would be less than significant.

XV.c) Schools

The Project is located within the boundaries of the Taft City School District. The Taft City School District is located in the western portion of Kern County and comprises an area of approximately 116 square miles. The Taft City School District operates five (5) elementary schools and one (1) junior high school. Additionally, the DTSP area is within the Taft Union High School District which includes Buena Vista High School and Taft Union High School. Additionally, Taft has a public community college, Taft College which is part of the West Kern Community College District. The closest schools to the Project area are Taft Primary Elementary School and Taft Union High School. Taft Primary Elementary School is the located at 212 Lucard St,

approximately half a block north of the DTSP area. Taft Union High School is located at 701 Wildcat Way, approximately two blocks north of the Project area.

The General Plan EIR evaluated whether that the projected growth under the General Plan Update would require new or expanded school facilities to serve the increased demand. Project buildout estimates a population of 6,180 persons, approximately 900 more than under General Plan conditions. As such, the buildout of the DTSP could result in the need for new or expanded school facilities. However, the environmental effects of construction of such facilities within the Project area were programmatically evaluated in the technical analyses of the certified EIR as part of overall development of the Planning Area and the applicable school district would be required to conduct the appropriate environmental review prior to any significant expansion of school facilities or the development of new school facilities. Future development would be subject to General Plan policies PF-18 and PF-19, which encourage school siting that minimizes land use and environmental conflicts and ensures coordination with school districts regarding new development and other planning issues (policies PF-4, PF-9, and LU-88). Future school sites would also be subject to California Department of Education (CDE) standards for school sites. In addition, future site-specific development would be required to pay State-mandated school fees to offset the impact associated with new students generated by new growth. At present, there are no impact fees other than for schools. Furthermore, future development would also require further CEQA review of project-level impacts prior to implementation to ensure that the individual projects do not result in a significant demand on existing school facilities. Therefore, potential impacts on schools would be less than significant.

XV.d) Parks

The City of Taft along with the West Side Recreation and Park District (WSRPD) currently maintain the majority of parkland within the City of Taft. The only recreational facility within the DTSP area is the Rails to Trails shared use corridor that runs east-west through the Plan area, which is maintained by the City of Taft Public Works Department.

Project buildout estimates a population of 6,180 persons, approximately 900 more than under General Plan conditions. As such, the buildout of the DTSP could result in the need for new or expanded park facilities. Per General Plan policy, OS-7, parks shall be provided at a minimum of 2.5 acres of park land per 1,000 persons through dedication of land or payment of in-lieu fees to contribute to the acquisition and development of parks or recreation facilities. As such, the Project would require 2.25 acres of park land due to the additional 900 residents. However, the DTSP and Zoning Ordinance Amendment are policy-level documents, and do not include any site-specific development designs or proposals. As such, potential impacts on parks would be less than significant.

XV.e) Other Facilities

The Taft Library is a branch of the Kern County Library and is centrally located near Taft College, Taft Union High School, Lincoln Junior High School and Roosevelt Elementary. The Taft library provides services to Taft residents and College students. The library is located at 27 Cougar Court, Taft, CA 93268. It is not anticipated that buildout of the Project will have an impact on library services.

MITIGATION MEASURES

No mitigation required.

FINDINGS

The proposed project would have a **Less Than Significant** on Public Services.

XVI. RECREATION. Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?	☐	☐	☒	☐
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?	☐	☐	☐	☒

THRESHOLDS OF SIGNIFICANCE: The project would have a significant effect on recreation if it would 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; or include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment.

DISCUSSION

The City of Taft along with the West Side Recreation and Park District (WSRPD) currently maintain the majority of parkland within the City of Taft. The only recreational facility within the DTSP area is the Rails to Trails shared use corridor that runs east-west through the Plan area.

XVI.a) The City of Taft General Plan Update Draft EIR (Impact 4.13.4.1) evaluated whether implementation of the General Plan Update would increase the demand for existing facilities and require additional parks and recreational facilities to accommodate the anticipated growth associated with buildout of the Planning Area. The analysis noted that implementation of the General Plan Update to increase the population within the Planning Area at buildout by 49,948 persons over existing conditions, requiring additional parkland and facilities to accommodate anticipated increased demand.

While the City does not currently have an adopted standard relative to parkland, the General Plan establishes a standard of 2.5 acres of neighborhood parks, community parks, and recreational facilities per 1,000 persons residing in the City through dedication of land or payment of in-lieu fees. Based on that standard, the General Plan Update would result in the need for a total of 170 acres of parkland within the Planning Area at buildout. The DTSP is anticipated to have approximately 6,180 persons at buildout. This is approximately 900 persons above what was anticipated in the General Plan for this area. Based on the 2.5 acres per 1,000 persons park standard discussed above, the DTSP area would need to contribute a total of 15.45-

acres of parkland. The DTSP area already supports approximately 7.5-acres of parkland in the form of the Rails to Trails shared use corridor that runs through the Plan area, leaving a deficit of 7.95 acres of parkland. The City of Taft envisions the extension of this corridor to the east which would add approximately 1.8-acres of parkland to the area for a total of 9.3-acres of parkland. Although there are no specific open space, parks or other public realm improvements specifically cited in the DTSP, the DTSP promotes and incentivizes the incorporation of parks and open space into future development. Due to the urban nature of the Plan area, it is anticipated that the 6.1-acres of required parkland is expected to occur over time as the Plan area builds out. Through a variety of ways as identified in the DTSP; including acquisition of property by the City, public improvements may be funded by grants and through the City's Capital Improvement Program, public/private and public/public joint ventures, and through private development. Future development resulting from the DTSP, or Zoning Ordinance Amendment would be evaluated and would be required to comply with the provisions of adopted policies in the General Plan that would ensure that adequate park facilities are provided. Therefore, this would be considered less than significant.

XVI.b) As previously stated, there are no specific open space, parks or other public realm improvements specifically cited in the DTSP area or Zoning Ordinance Amendment, the Project promotes and incentives the incorporation of parks and open space into future development. There would be no adverse physical effect on the environment. Therefore, this would result in no impact.

MITIGATION MEASURES

No mitigation required.

FINDINGS

The proposed project would have a Less than Significant on Recreation.

XVII. TRANSPORTATION. Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Conflict with a program, plan, ordinance or policy addressing 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?	☐	☐	☒	☐

THRESHOLDS OF SIGNIFICANCE: The project would have a significant effect on transportation if it would conflict with a program, plan, ordinance or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle and pedestrian facilities; conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines section 15064.3, subdivision (b); substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design features (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment); or result in inadequate emergency access.

DISCUSSION

This section analyzes the transportation and traffic impacts that may result due to development of the proposed Project. The discussion and analysis provided in this section is based on the Traffic Impact Analysis for The Downtown Taft Specific Plan, Taft, California (TIA) (May 2022) (provided in Appendix C of this IS/MND).

The Local Transportation Analysis and Vehicle Miles Travelled Analysis has been prepared for the Project in accordance with the Kern County Standards for Traffic Engineering (February 23, 2010), the City of Taft General Plan Circulation Element (June 2010, Amended April 2017) and Technical Advisory on Evaluating Transportation Impacts in CEQA (State of California Office of Planning and Research, December 2018). The studies evaluate the potential level of service (LOS) deficiencies and transportation improvements that may need to be considered in association with the traffic generated by the proposed Downtown Taft Specific Plan project, includes an Active Transportation and Public Transit Assessment and evaluates the project's potential Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) impacts as required by CEQA.

The VMT analysis examined the following scenarios:

- The average VMT per capita resident, average VMT per employee, and total VMT without the Downtown Taft Specific Plan were calculated for the entire Greater Taft Area subarea of the Kern COG model for both the Baseline Year 2020 and Horizon Year 2042 scenarios
- The average VMT per capita resident, VMT per employee, and total VMT with the Downtown Taft Specific Plan.

VMT per capita resident is used for all residential land use types, VMT per employee is used for the office and industrial uses, and total VMT is used for the retail uses, as recommended by the State of California Office of Planning and Research (OPR).

Roadways

There are five main roadways identified by the report.

Kern Street/State Route 33 (SR-33) is classified as an Arterial Highway and extends from the northwest to the southeast boundaries of the City of Taft. The roadway is currently constructed with two travel lanes in each direction from approximately 500 feet west of Cascade Place to the intersection with 1st Street and East Kern Street. Southeast of 1st Street, SR-33 is reduced to one travel lane in each direction. A striped center two-way left-turn lane is currently provided along Kern Street/SR-33 from 500 feet of Cascade Place to 10th Street. No left-turn lanes are provided along Kern Street/SR-33 southeast of 9th Street within the Specific Plan area and opposing travel lanes are separated by a striped double yellow line. On-street parking along Kern Street/SR-33 is generally permitted between 10th Street and 1st Street but is prohibited along SR-33 southeast of 1st Street. Bicycle facilities are currently not provided along Kern Street/SR-33. The posted speed limit on Kern Street/SR-33 is 35 miles per hour between 10th Street and 1st Street and is 40 miles per hour southeast of 1st Street.

10th Street is classified as an Arterial and extends from Ash Street to A Street/Oak Street within the City of Taft. The roadway is currently constructed with two travel lanes in each direction and a striped center two-way left-turn lane from Ash Street to Main Street. 10th Street narrows from four travel lanes to three travel lanes with a center two-way left-turn lane between Main Street and Front Street. South of Front Street, 10th Street is striped with one travel lane in each direction without a center two-way left-turn lane. On-street parking is generally prohibited along 10th Street from Ash Street to Front Street. South of Front Street, on-street parking is generally permitted along the east side of the street. Bicycle facilities are currently not provided along 10th Street. The posted speed limit on 10th Street is 35 miles per hour.

6th Street is classified as a Collector and extends from Ash Street to Oak Street within the City of Taft. The roadway is currently constructed with two travel lanes in each direction from Ash Street to Main Street. 6th Street narrows from four travel lanes to two travel lanes south of Main

Street. The opposing travel lanes are separated by striped double yellow lines. No left-turn lanes are provided along 6th Street. On-street parking is generally permitted along 6th Street from Ash Street to Front Street. South of Front Street, on-street parking is generally permitted along the east side of the street. Bicycle facilities are currently not provided along 6th Street. The posted speed limit on 6th Street is 35 miles per hour.

Center Street is classified as a Local Street and extends from 10th Street to SR-33 within the City of Taft. The roadway is currently constructed with one travel lane in each direction, and the opposing travel lanes are separated by a dashed yellow line. No left-turn lanes are provided along Center Street. On-street parking is generally permitted on both sides of Center Street, and angled parking spaces are provided along one or both sides of the street between 10th Street and 2nd Street. Bicycle facilities are currently not provided along Center Street. The posted speed limit on Center Street is 25 miles per hour.

Main Street is classified as a Local Street and extends from 10th Street to SR-33 within the City of Taft. The roadway is currently constructed with one travel lane in each direction, and the opposing travel lanes are separated by a dashed yellow line. No left-turn lanes are provided along Main Street. On-street parking is generally permitted on one or both sides of Main Street between 10th Street and 2nd Street. On-street parking is generally prohibited along Main Street between 2nd Street and SR-33, except for a short section between 300 feet and 600 feet west of SR-33 where on-street parking is permitted along the north side of the roadway. Bicycle facilities are currently not provided along Main Street between 10th Street and 2nd Street. A Class II bicycle lane is currently provided in each direction of travel along Main Street between 2nd Street and SR-33. The posted speed limit on Main Street is 25 miles per hour between 10th Street and 2nd Street and is 35 miles per hour between 2nd Street and SR-33.

Pedestrian Facilities

Sidewalks are generally provided along both sides of most roadways within the Specific Plan area. Below are descriptions of the existing pedestrian facilities along key roadways within the Specific Plan:

Kern Street/West Side Highway (SR-33)

Sidewalk widths range from 12 feet to 15 feet along both sides of Kern Street (SR-33) between 10th Street and 8th Street. Sidewalks along Kern Street (SR-33) between 8th Street and 1st Street are primarily non-contiguous on both sides of the roadway and are approximately five (5) feet in width. Several wide sections of sidewalk 12-15 feet in width are also provided along Kern Street (SR-33) between 8th Street and 1st Street. No pedestrian facilities are provided along West Side Highway (SR-33) southeast of the Kern Street (SR-33)/East Kern Street/1st Street intersection.

Pedestrian crossings are provided at most intersections along the Kern Street (SR-33) corridor between 10th Street and 1st Street. Signalized pedestrian crossings with high-visibility ladder crosswalks are provided across all four legs of the Kern Street (SR-33)/10th Street intersection. There are also several uncontrolled pedestrian crossings across Kern Street (SR-33) where high-visibility ladder crosswalks are provided and solar-powered LED enhanced pedestrian crossing signs with push-button activation, which are provided at the following intersections: Kern Street (SR-33)/8th Street, Kern Street (SR-33)/7th Street, Kern Street (SR-33)/5th Street, Kern Street (SR-33)/3rd Street, Kern Street (SR-33)/2nd Street, and Kern Street (SR-33)/East Kern Street/1st Street. High-visibility ladder crosswalks are also provided across all four legs of the all-way-stop controlled intersections of Kern Street (SR-33)/6th Street and Kern Street (SR-33)/4th Street.

Center Street

Contiguous sidewalks treated with stamped concrete decorative pavers are provided along both sides of Center Street between 10th Street and 2nd Street adjacent to primarily commercial uses, and range between 6 feet and 12 feet in width. East of 2nd Street, land uses transition from commercial to residential, and the standard 5-foot-wide contiguous sidewalks are provided on both sides of Center Street between 2nd Street and 1st Street. No sidewalks are provided along Center Street between 1st Street and SR-33, where adjacent properties are primarily undeveloped. Both controlled and uncontrolled pedestrian crossings are provided at several intersections and at mid-block locations along Center Street between 10th Street and 2nd Street. High-visibility ladder crosswalks and/or crosswalks treated with pavers are provided at uncontrolled mid-block crossings between 7th Street and 6th Street, between 6th Street and 5th Street, between 5th Street and 4th Street, between 4th Street and 3rd Street, and between 3rd Street and 2nd Street. High-visibility ladder crosswalks are also provided across Center Street and other intersection legs at the intersections of Center Street/7th Street, Center Street/6th Street, Center Street/4th Street, Center Street/3rd Street, and Center Street/2nd Street. Crosswalks treated with stamped concrete decorative pavers are provided across all four legs of the Center Street/5th Street intersection.

Main Street

Most of the segment of Main Street between 10th Street and 7th Street is currently lacking sidewalks along one or both sides of the roadway. Along Main Street between 7th Street and 3rd Street, a mix of contiguous and non-contiguous sidewalks are provided on both sides of the street, with a few missing gaps along undeveloped parcels. Sidewalk widths range from 5 feet to 10 feet along Main Street between 7th Street and 3rd Street. Along Main Street between 3rd Street and 2nd Street, sidewalks are only provided along the north side of the street, and along Main Street between 2nd Street and SR-33, where adjacent properties are primarily undeveloped, sidewalks are not provided except for short sections along developed parcels.

An uncontrolled mid-block pedestrian crossing with a crosswalk treated with pavers is provided across Main Street between 6th Street and 4th Street on the east leg of the former Main Street/5th Street intersection. The former 5th Street between Center Street and Main Street was converted to a linear park in which vehicular traffic is prohibited.

10th Street

Contiguous sidewalks ranging between 5 feet and 10 feet in width are currently provided on both sides of 10th Street between Kern Street (SR-33) and Main Street. Contiguous sidewalks are only provided along the west side of 10th Street between Main Street and Supply Row, and along 10th Street south of Supply Row, contiguous sidewalks are provided on both sides of the street. An uncontrolled mid-block pedestrian crossing with a high-visibility ladder crosswalk is provided across 10th Street at the location where the Taft Rails to Trails Multi-Use Path crosses 10th Street.

6th Street

Contiguous sidewalks approximately 10 feet in width are currently provided on both sides of 6th Street between Kern Street (SR-33) and Main Street. Between Main Street and Supply Row, contiguous sidewalks approximately five (5) feet in width are currently provided on both sides of 6th Street. Contiguous sidewalk is currently only provided along the west side of 6th Street between Supply Row and Front Street. High-visibility ladder crosswalks are provided across 6th Street at the intersections of 6th Street/Kern Street (SR-33), 6th Street/North Street, 6th Street/Center Street, and at an uncontrolled mid-block pedestrian crossing at the location where the Taft Rails to Trails Multi-Use Path crosses 6th Street between Main Street and Supply Row.

Existing Bicycle Network

Most of the roadways within the Specific Plan area are currently lacking bicycle facilities except for Main Street between 2nd Street and SR-33, where a narrow shoulder with "bike lane" signage is provided in both directions of travel, but the shoulder lane is discontinuous in the eastbound direction. The lane widths of the existing bicycle lanes and associated signage along Main Street between 2nd Street and SR-33 are substandard, and therefore these existing bicycle lanes are not considered Class II bicycle lanes.

A Class I bike path (Taft Rails to Trails) is currently provided within the Specific Plan area between Main Street and Supply Row. The Taft Rails to Trails bike path is oriented in a general east-west direction and is approximately two (2) miles in length. The bike path is approximately 12 feet wide and is divided by a dashed line along the western and eastern sections but is undivided through the middle section of the bike path. There are no current plans to extend the existing Taft Rails to Trails Class I bike path, although the City of Taft General Plan Circulation Element identifies future trail connections to the community of Fellows to the northwest and the community of Maricopa to the southeast.

Existing Transit Network

Taft Area Transit (TAT) and Kern Transit currently provide the following transit bus routes within the Specific Plan area and through the City of Taft:

- TAT Taft-Maricopa Route: The Taft-Maricopa Route extends between the Cities of Taft and Maricopa via Kern Street/SR-33. Within the City of Taft, the Taft-Maricopa Route extends north from Kern Street (SR-33) onto Wildcat Way (aligned with 7th Street) and provides transit access to Taft High School, Taft College, and the Albertsons shopping center. The route continues west along Ash Street, heads south on 10th Street back to Kern Street (SR-33), and then proceeds southeast along Kern Street (SR-33) through the Specific Plan area toward Maricopa.

  Service is currently provided Monday through Friday between 7:12am and 6:05pm and runs three (3) times daily. During the morning peak hour, the Taft-Maricopa Route begins at the Maricopa Post Office at 7:12am and ends at the bus stop along eastbound Kern Street (SR-33) at 2nd Street at 7:42am. The Taft-Maricopa Route runs again in the afternoon, beginning at Kern Street (SR-33) at 2nd Street at 1:34pm. The afternoon route circulates through the City of Taft and heads to Maricopa, then returns to circulate through Taft a second time and ends at the bus stop along eastbound Kern Street (SR-33) at 2nd Street at 2:25pm. A third route runs during the evening peak hour, beginning at Kern Street (SR-33) at 2nd Street at 5:14pm. The evening route circulates through the City of Taft then heads to Maricopa, and then returns to circulate through Taft a second time and ends at the bus stop along eastbound Kern Street (SR-33) at 2nd Street at 6:05pm.

  The Taft Area Transit also offers curb-to-curb, reservation-based Dial-a-Ride services that is open to the public. The service is limited to the City of Taft and does not travel to the City of Maricopa. The TAT operates out of the Taft Transit Center located in the Project Area at 550 Supply Row with administrative offices and a storage yard for transit vehicles.

- Kern Transit Route 120 (Taft-Bakersfield): Kern Transit Route 120 extends between Taft and Bakersfield via 6th Street, Harrison Street, Highway 119, Highway 43, and Highway 58. Within the City of Taft and the Specific Plan area, Route 120 heads south on 6th Street, heads west on Kern Street (SR-33), heads south on 8th Street, heads east on Main Street, heads south on 4th Street, heads west on Supply Row to the Taft Transit Center, continues west on Supply Row, and then heads north on 6th Street back to Highway 119 and Bakersfield. Within the City of Taft, stops are provided at Taft College, the Heritage Park Senior Complex, (8th Street at North Street), and the Taft Transit Center.

Service is currently provided Monday through Friday between 6:10am and 9:02pm and runs four (4) times daily. Service is also provided on Saturday between 7:50am and 6:57pm and runs three (3) times daily from Taft to Bakersfield, and two (2) times daily from Bakersfield to Taft. During the weekday morning hours, westbound Route 120 departs the Downtown Bakersfield Transit Center at 6:10am and arrives at the Taft Transit Center at 7:16am. Eastbound Route 120 during the morning hours departs Taft College at 7:40am and arrives at the Downtown Bakersfield Transit Center at 9:07am. Headways during the morning peak period are approximately every two (2) hours. Route 120 also operates afternoon service between Taft and Bakersfield from 12:47pm to 3:57pm. During the evening hours, westbound Route 120 departs the Downtown Bakersfield Transit Center at 5:47pm and arrives at the Taft Transit Center at 7:09pm. Eastbound Route 120 during the evening hours departs Taft College at 7:35pm and arrives at the Downtown Bakersfield Transit Center at 9:02pm.

The Taft Area Transit (TAT) Taft-Maricopa Route and Kern Transit Route 120 maps and schedules as described above are provided in Appendix F.

A total of four (4) transit bus stops for the Taft Area Transit (TAT) Taft-Maricopa Route are currently provided along Kern Street (SR-33) within the Specific Plan area, which are listed below:

- Eastbound Kern Street (SR-33) at 5th Street: No shelter or amenities provided.
- Eastbound Kern Street (SR-33) at 2nd Street: No shelter or amenities provided.
- Westbound Kern Street (SR-33) at 2nd Street: No shelter or amenities provided.
- Westbound Kern Street (SR-33) at 4th Street: Bench, shelter and trash receptacle provided.

The Taft Transit Center serves Kern Transit Route 120 between Taft and Bakersfield. One transit bus stop is also provided for Kern Transit Route 120 within the Specific Plan area along southbound 8th Street at North Street next to the Heritage Park Senior Complex, where a bench and shelter is provided.

XVII.a) As policy-level documents, the DTSP and Zoning Ordinance Amendment do not include any site-specific designs or proposals, nor do they grant any entitlements for development that may impact the circulation system. However, future improvements within the Project Area may include the development of new housing or businesses that may directly or indirectly increase those utilizing the circulation system within the Project area.

The proposed Project does not contemplate adding new roadways, however, the DTSP may enhance existing pedestrian and bicycle facilities, as well as improve the roadways within the Project area to meet the standards included in the General Plan. The Project designates Kern

Street as an arterial highway, 10th Street as an arterial, 6th Street and 2nd Street as collectors, and the remaining streets in the DTSP area as local streets, consistent with General Plan Policy CI-6, which outlines the desired roadway system for the outlined in the General Plan and would not change any other roadway classifications within the City boundaries. New development would need to be consistent with General Plan policies CI-2, CI-7, CI-8, CI-9, CI-14, and CI-24 which would include improvement of roadways and highways as well as measures to reduce vehicle trips,

Future development that would exceed any of the thresholds determined in the Technical Advisory on Evaluating Transportation Impacts in CEQA (State of California Office of Planning and Research, December 2018) would prepare the appropriate project-level traffic impact study and submit it to the City for review and approval. As no development is proposed under the Project and future development would be consistent with all applicable plans and policies, the Project is not expected to conflict with a program, plan, ordinance or policy addressing the circulation system. Furthermore, future development would also require further CEQA review of project-level impacts prior to implementation to ensure that the individual projects do not result in a significant impact to traffic. The City may require the preparation of a traffic impact study with future development applications for projects within the Project area. Based on the results of the traffic impact study, the applicant's project may be conditioned to mitigate traffic impacts. Therefore, no conflicts with a program plan, ordinance or policy addressing the circulation system will occur. No impact is anticipated.

KernCOG - Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), the Kern Council of Governments (Kern COG) is developing comprehensive Local Road Safety Plans (LRSPs) for the Cities of Arvin, Bakersfield, California City, Delano, Maricopa, Shafter, Taft, Tehachapi, and Wasco. These LRSPs are a part of the ongoing safety effort as per the Regional Transportation Plan (2018). An LRSP is a means for providing local and rural road owners with an opportunity to address unique roadway safety needs in their jurisdictions. The process of preparing the LRSPs will help create a framework to systematically identify and analyze safety problems and recommend safety improvements for the 9 Cities of Kern COG. The LRSPs would enable the 9 cities to enhance safety for all modes of transportation and for all ages and abilities.

XVII.b) The DTSP and Zoning Ordinance Amendment are not anticipated to conflict with CEQA Guidelines section 15064.3 (b) criteria for analyzing transportation impacts concerning vehicle miles travelled (VMT). The analysis of VMT impacts described below meets the requirements stipulated by CEQA Guidelines section 15064.3 (b) and incorporates relevant advice contained in the Technical Advisory on Evaluating Transportation Impacts in CEQA published by the Governor's Office of Planning & Research (OPR).

<u>VMT Analysis Methodology</u>

A VMT analysis was prepared in accordance with the Technical Advisory on Evaluating Transportation Impacts in CEQA (State of California Office of Planning and Research, December 2018). The analysis was conducted using the Kern Council of Governments (Kern COG) regional travel demand model for Baseline Year 2020 and Horizon Year 2042. RICK provided Kern COG the proposed land uses to input into the five Travel Analysis Zones (TAZs) that make up the Downtown Taft Specific Plan area in the Kern COG model, which are listed below:

- TAZ 1805
- TAZ 1806
- TAZ 1816
- TAZ 1817
- TAZ 1819

As discussed above, the average VMT per capita resident, average VMT per employee, and total VMT without the DTSP were calculated for the entire Greater Taft Area subarea of the Kern COG model for both the Baseline Year 2020 and Horizon Year 2042 scenarios to compare against the VMT per capita resident, VMT per employee, and total VMT with the DSTP. VMT per capita resident is used for all residential land use types, VMT per employee is used for the office and industrial uses, and total VMT is used for the retail uses, as recommended by the State of California Office of Planning and Research (OPR).

VMT Analysis Findings

Table 4, VMT Analysis below summarizes the findings of the VMT analysis. Based on the results shown in table 4:

- The "Project-Specific" VMT per capita resident for the Downtown Taft Specific Plan is approximately 50.5% of the Horizon Year 2042 Without Project Greater Taft subregional average VMT per capita resident. Therefore, based on the CEQA significance threshold of 85% of the subregional average VMT per capita resident, the VMT per capita resident for the Downtown Taft Specific Plan residential land uses is presumed to be less than significant.
- "Project-Specific" VMT per employee for the Downtown Taft Specific Plan is approximately 62.5% of the Horizon Year 2042 Without Project Greater Taft subregional average VMT per employee. Therefore, based on the CEQA significance threshold of 85% of the subregional average VMT per employee, the VMT per employee for the Downtown Taft Specific Plan office and industrial land uses is presumed to be less than significant.
- Horizon Year 2042 Total Greater Taft Subregional VMT with the buildout of the Downtown Taft Specific Plan is forecast to increase by 232,888 miles versus the Horizon Year 2042 Total Greater Taft Subregional VMT without the project. Based on the CEQA

significance threshold of "net increase in total regional VMT" for retail uses, the Total Greater Taft Subregional VMT with the buildout of the DTSP is presumed to be significant.

Although the identified significant VMT impact based on net increase in the Total Greater Taft Subregional VMT is associated with the CEQA significance threshold for retail uses, the increase in the Total Greater Taft Subregional VMT is attributed to the increase in the total resident and employee population in the Greater Taft Subregion. The Horizon Year 2042 Without Project total resident and employee populations are 27,213 and 15,514, respectively, and the total resident and employee populations increase to 35,729 and 20,659, respectively with the buildout of the Project.

The less-than-significant project-specific VMT per capita resident and VMT per employee is attributed to the mix of residential, office/industrial and retail in the same area. While there are no significant impacts attributed to the VMT per capita resident or VMT per employee, the net increase in the Total Greater Taft Subregional VMT does result in a significant impact per CEQA and mitigation measures are required to reduce to a level below significant.

Table 4: VMT Analysis

Scenario	VMT Per Land Use		
	VMT per Capita Resident	VMT per Employee (For Office/ Industrial Uses)	Total Subregion VMT (For Retail Use)
Baseline Year 2020 Without Project: (Subregional Average VMT)	88.40	136.41	1,808,842
Horizon Year 2042 Without Project: (Subregional Average VMT)	94.62	165.98	2,575,003
Horizon Year 2042 With Project: (Subregional Average VMT)	78.59	135.92	2,807,891
Horizon Year 2042 With Project: (Project-Specific VMT)	47.77	103.78	443,188
Project % of Subregional Average: (Project-Specific VMT/ Baseline Year 2042 Without Project VMT)	50.5%	62.5%	NA
Change in Total Subregional VMT:	NA	NA	+232,888
CEQA Significance Threshold:	80.4 (85%)	141.1 (85%)	Net Increase
Significant Impact?	No	No	Yes

Mitigation

The increase in the total Greater Taft Subregion resident and employee populations result in a net increase of 232,888 miles, which is a net increase of 9.04% over the Horizon Year 2042

Total Greater Taft Subregional VMT without the project. Therefore, VMT-reducing mitigation measures that provide a 9.04% or more reduction in VMT are required. Table 5, VMT Reduction Measures below outlines the measures selected to minimize VMT impacts to less than significant. VMT reduction measures were selected from the 2021 CAPCOA manual and are included in the DTSP as Goal 3-4, Policies 6, 7 and 8. As shown in Table 5, the total percent VMT reduction with the recommended additional mitigation measures is calculated to be 13.90%. The minimum percent VMT reduction that is needed to mitigate the project's VMT impact is 9.04%. Therefore, the VMT impact associated with the buildout of the Project would be reduced to a level that is less than significant with the mitigation described below.

Table 5: VMT Reduction Measures

CAPCOA VMT Reduction Measure	Description of Measure	Calculated VMT Reduction (%)
Future Planned and Recommended Improvements from Local Transportation Analysis[1]		
Measure T-18: Provide Pedestrian Network Improvement	Recommended improvements to improve existing sidewalks and to construct new sidewalks along roadways where sidewalks currently do not exist.	2.12%
Measure T-20: Expand Bikeway Network	Includes the planned bikeway network improvements within the Specific Plan area per the Kern Region Active Transportation Plan, and the additional recommended bikeway improvements within the Specific Plan area (includes only Class I, II and IV bikeway facilities).	0.53%
Measure T-25: Extend Transit Network Coverage or Hours	Recommended transit network improvements to expand the Taft Area Transit route and the Kern Transit Route 120 within the Specific Plan area. Recommendations also include expanding the hours of operation for both Taft Area Transit and Kern Transit Route 120.	2.68%
Recommended Additional Mitigation Measures		
Measure T-7: Implement Commute Trip Reduction Marketing	Require larger employers within Specific Plan area to implement a marketing strategy to promote a commute trip reduction program that would educate employees about their transportation options to their places of employment such as carpooling, transit, bicycling or walking.	4.00%
Measure T-8: Provide Rideshare Program	Require larger employers within Specific Plan area to implement a rideshare program for employees to encourage carpooling and reduce single-occupancy vehicle trips.	4.00%

Measure T-10: Provide End-of-Trip Bicycle Facilities	Assumes bicycle parking (racks) would be provided for all places of employment in Specific Plan area, with up to 25% of employers providing showers and lockers.	0.23%
Measure T-11: Provide Employer-Sponsored Vanpool	Assumes vanpools would be provided by the larger employers within Specific Plan.	2.27%
Measure T-23: Provide Community-Based Travel Planning	Travel advisors would visit all households within Specific Plan area to educate residents about various and alternative transportation options available to them.	0.59%
Measure T-26: Increase Transit Service Frequency	Increase transit service frequency to 30-minute headways throughout the day for both Taft Area Transit and Kern Transit Route 120.	0.96%
Total Percent VMT Reduction with Additional Mitigation Measures:		13.90%[2]

Source: CAPCOA Handbook for Analyzing Greenhouse Gas Emission Reductions, Assessing Climate Vulnerabilities, and Advancing Health and Equity (Final Draft, December 2021)

[1] DRAFT Downtown Taft Specific Plan Local Transportation Analysis (Rick Engineering Company, May 27, 2022)

[2] Subtotal and total percent VMT reductions were calculated using the CAPCOA diminishing effectiveness equation, and these values do NOT reflect the sum of the percent VMT reductions for the individual measures.

XVII.c) The DTSP and Zoning Ordinance are not anticipated to substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment). Vehicular traffic would utilize the existing network of regional and local roadways that serve the Project. The Project supports transportation improvements along the key corridors and the TIA recommends transportation improvements including restriping, left turn lanes, signs and pavement markings, improve existing sidewalks, provide high visibility crosswalks at all intersections, and improved bicycle infrastructure along roadways and at intersections. As such, the Project aims to reduce hazards by reducing pedestrian crossing distances, providing high visibility crossing treatments, and reducing vehicular conflict zones. Additionally, the General Plan EIR includes polices that would ensure efficient circulation and adequate access are provided in the City, reducing cross-traffic conflicts. Future development, as part of the City's project approval process, would be required to comply with existing regulations, including General Plan policies and Zoning regulations that have been prepared to minimize impacts related to design features, including General Plan policies and actions CI-14, CI-14b, Action CI-25d, Policy CI-31, Policy CI-32. Therefore, the Project would not increase hazards due to geometric design features or incompatible uses and this would be less than significant.

XVII.d) The DTSP and Zoning Ordinance are not anticipated to result in inadequate emergency services. The City, throughout the buildout period of the Project, would ensure relevant coordination with local emergency response providers, particularly during construction periods where temporary road closures may be expected. The Project would also comply with General

Plan Policy PF-16 in regard to response times and emergency access. Adherence to State and City requirements, combined by compliance with the City's General Plan polices and Zoning regulations, would ensure that the adoption of the Project would result in less-than-significant impacts with regards to inadequate emergency access.

MITIGATION MEASURES

As defined in Table 5 above.

FINDINGS

The proposed project would have a Less Than Significant Impact on Transportation and Traffic.

XVIII. TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES. Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, as defined in Public Resources Code §21074 as either a site, feature, place, or cultural landscape that is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American tribe, and that is:				
i) Listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, or in a local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code §5020.1(k)?	☐	☐	☐	☒
ii) A resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code §5024.1? In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code §5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.	☐	☐	☒	☐

Thresholds of Significance: The project would have a significant effect on Tribal Cultural Resources if it would cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in Public Resources Code §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 Places or in a local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code §5020.1(k), or is a resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code §5024.1.

DISCUSSION

The City, as lead agency, is also required to coordinate with Native American Tribes through the SB18 consultation when an amendment or adoption of a general plan or specific plan, or designation of open space. On April 28, 2022, the City of Taft sent out letters pursuant to AB 52

to the seventeen tribes listed on the NAHC's list pursuant to SB 18. At the time this document has been drafted four tribes have responded to the City's outreach letter.

On April 28, 2022, the Tejon Tribe declined consultation and recommended the City reach out to the Tejon Tribe. On April 29, 2022, the Fernandeño Tataviam Band of Mission Indians and San Manuel Band of Mission Indians responded to the SB 18 request for consultation saying the proposed project is outside of their ancestral territory. On June 9, 2022, the Tubatulabal Tribe responded with a request to change their mailing address with the City's records, and no further comment. To date, no other responses from any of the tribes contacted under AB 52 or SB 18 have been received.

XVIII.a.i) There are no historic resources within the DTSP area that are listed in the California register of Historical Resources, or in a local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code §5020.1(k). There is one historic resource identified within the City of Taft, Fort Taft. The Project would not impact this historic resource. Therefore, no impacts are anticipated.

XVII.a.ii) A sacred lands search was requested from the NAHC during the preparation of the City's General Plan in 2009. The results of the sacred lands search were received December 23, 2007, and did not identify any Native American sacred lands within the General Plan Planning Area. A total of 17 Native American individuals and organizations were contacted to elicit information on Native American resources within the project area. As of July 18, 2022, 4 responses were received. Given the Sacred Lands File review was negative and no request for consultation from Native American Tribes were received, the potential to encounter historic or archaeological materials during project-related construction activities is considered less than significant.

MITIGATION MEASURES

No mitigation required.

FINDINGS

The proposed project would have a Less Than Significant Impact on Tribal Cultural Resources.

XVIX. UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS. Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment or storm water drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities, the construction or relocation of which 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?	☐	☐	☒	☐

THRESHOLDS OF SIGNIFICANCE: The project would have a significant effect on utilities and service systems if it would 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; not have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry, and multiple dry years; result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider, which serves or may serve the project that it does not have adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments; 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; or not comply with federal, State, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste.

DISCUSSION

Water Supply

Water service is provided by West Kern Water District (WKWD). WKWD recently updated its Urban Water Management Plan (UWMP) in 2020. The UWMP describes the District's water supply, water demands, water reliability, and water conservation efforts. The UWMP provides estimated population growth and water demands through the year 2045 and serves as a long-range planning document for WKWD. WKWD contracted with Kern County Water Authority (KCWA) in 1966 to receive an allotment of water through the State Water Project (SWP). The 2020 UWMP states that WKWD is allocated approximately 31,500 acre-feet of water per year (AFY) by KCWA. However, this number represents the maximum WKWD can request annually, the Department of Water Resources (DWR) determines the amount that will be delivered in a given year. Typically, the supply received each year is generally lower than 31,500 AFY.

The UWMP projects that between 2020 and 2045 the total supply will decrease from 25,700 AFY to 25,100 AFY and the demand will increase from 16,338 AFY to 17,735 AFY. Additionally, the UWMP provides analysis for dry years and includes banking groundwater for use in these dry years. The UWMP shows that WKWD has adequate supplies to meet demands during normal, single-dry, and multiple-dry years throughout the 25-year planning period, particularly due to the long history of banking groundwater for use in dry years.

Water Use	Water Use (AFY)					
	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040	2045
Surface Water (100% of Normal)	18,600	18,600	18,600	18,600	18,600	18,600
Surface Water Transfers/Exchanges	7,150	7,150	7,150	7,150	6,500	6,500
Total Supply	25,750	25,750	25,750	25,750	25,100	25,100
Total Demand	16,338	17,356	17,448	17,542	17,637	17,735
Difference from Banked Groundwater	0	0	0	0	0	0

Table 6 and 7 below shows the water supply and demand projections included in the WKWD's 2020 UWMP for both normal years and single year drought conditions.

Table 6: Water - Normal Year Supply and Demand Comparison

Source: 2020 UMWP

Table 7: Water - Single Dry Year Supply and Demand Comparison

Water Use	Water Use (AFY)					
	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040	2045
Surface Water (8% of Normal)	1,600	1,600	1,600	1,600	1,600	1,600
Surface Water Transfers/Exchanges	7,150	7,150	7,150	7,150	7,150	6,500
Total Supply	8,750	8,750	8,750	8,750	8,100	8,100
Total Demand	16,338	17,356	17,448	17,542	17,637	17,735
Difference from Banked Groundwater	7,588	8,606	8,698	8,792	9,537	9,635

Source: 2020 UMWP

Year	Description		Water Use (AFY)				
		2020	2025	2030	2035	2040	2045
Year 1	Surface Water (19% of Normal)	3,500	3,500	3,500	3,500	3,500	3,500
	Surface Water Transfers/Exchanges	7,150	7,150	7,150	7,150	6,500	6,500
	Total Supply	10,650	10,650	10,650	10,650	10,000	10,000
	Total Demand	16,338	17,356	17,448	17,542	17,637	17,735
	Difference (from Banked Groundwater	5,688	6,706	6,798	6,892	7,637	7,735
Year 2	Surface Water (78% of Normal)	14,500	14,500	14,500	14,500	14,500	14,500
	Surface Water Transfers/Exchanges	7,150	7,150	7,150	7,150	6,500	6,500
	Total Supply	21,650	21,650	21,650	21,650	21,000	21,000
	Total Demand	16,338	17,356	17,448	17,542	17,637	17,735
	Difference (from Banked Groundwater	0	0	0	0	0	0
Year 3	Surface Water (24% of Normal)	4,400	4,400	4,400	4,400	4,400	4,400
	Surface Water Transfers/Exchanges	7,150	7,150	7,150	7,150	6,500	6,500
	Total Supply	11,550	11,550	11,550	11,550	10,900	10,900
	Total Demand	14,704	15,620	15,703	15,788	15,873	15,962
	Difference (from Banked Groundwater	3,154	4,070	4,153	4,238	4,973	5,062
Year 4	Surface Water (42% of Normal)	7,900	7,900	7,900	7,900	7,900	7,900
	Surface Water Transfers/Exchanges	7,150	7,150	7,150	7,150	6,500	6,500
	Total Supply	15,050	15,050	15,050	15,050	14,400	14,400
	Total Demand	14,704	15,620	15,703	15,788	15,873	15,962

	Difference (from Banked Groundwater	0	570	653	738	1,473	1,562
Year 5	Surface Water (29% of Normal)	5,400	5,400	5,400	5,400	5,400	5,400
	Surface Water Transfers/Exchanges	7,150	7,150	7,150	7,150	6,500	6,500
	Total Supply	12,550	12,550	12,550	12,550	11,900	11,900
	Total Demand	14,704	15,620	15,703	15,788	15,873	15,962
	Difference (from Banked Groundwater	2,154	3,070	3,153	3,238	3,973	4,062

Source: 2020 UMWP

Wastewater System

Wastewater service is provided by the City of Taft. The City of Taft amended its Sewer System Maintenance Plan in 2018. The goal of the plan is to provide high quality and reliable wastewater collection for Taft residents by maintaining, improving, and providing collection infrastructure that has adequate capacity. The Taft Wastewater Treatment Plant, is located at 1120 East Ash Street, is jointly owned by the City of Taft (52%) and the Ford City-Taft Heights Sanitation District (48%). The City of Taft operates the sewer plant through a contract with the Kern Sanitation Authority. The Wastewater Treatment Plant was recently upgraded in 2012. Wastewater service is provided to all areas within the City's Municipal Boundary, which includes the DTSP area. There are existing gravity pipes that run throughout the DTSP area.

Drainage and Storm Water Quality

Per the City of Taft Sewer Maintenance Plan, the City has a predominantly "surface flow" storm water conveyance system that does not include any underground storm water assets. The majority of storm water flows drains northeastward and are conveyed through a curb and gutter conveyance system that ultimately flow to the Sandy Creek which runs along the northern City boundary. There is only one significant storm drain line within the City limits, but there is no segment of it that is within or even crosses through the DTSP area.

The City and surrounding County neighborhoods do not have soils that are conducive for recharging drainage flows into a typical detention/retention basin that is now standard with new developments. New development will need to consider this when siting and grading for buildings to avoid issues with concentration of water and ponding near buildings.

Solid Waste

In 2021 the City of Taft entered into a solid waste franchise agreement with Westside Waste Management. Westside Waste Management is contracted to collect trash from local residents and businesses & deliver it to the landfill. Solid waste facilities serving the Project area include

the J & D Recycling located at 1277 Kern St, Taft, CA 93268, and the Kern County Landfills (Taft Landfill) located at 13351 Elk Hills Rd, Taft, CA 93268

XVIX.a) The DTSP and Zoning Ordinance Amendment do not include any site-specific designs or proposals. As noted in Section XIV, population growth anticipated by the Project is 900 persons above that anticipated in the General Plan. While the existing water, wastewater treatment or storm water drainage, electric power, natural gas, and telecommunications facilities system could support some of this intended growth within the Project area, future development that proposes significant increase in the number of residential units or square footage of non-residential use, will need to conduct project-level analysis to determine available water system capacity. Depending on the intensity, future development may require the upsizing of existing facilities. Exact sizing and location would be determined for each proposed development when project information is known and, on a project-project basis. As noted above the WKWD Urban Water Management Plan states that WKWD has adequate supplies to meet demands during normal, single-dry, and multiple-dry years throughout the 25-year planning period outlined in the plan. The existing wastewater gravity pipes run throughout the Project area which could support some of the intended growth, proposed developments producing a significant increase in the number of residential units, or square footage of non-residential use, will need to be evaluated to determine available system capacity of sewer systems on a project-by-project basis. Future improvements would require site-specific design and engineering as well as further CEQA review of project-level impacts prior to implementation. Furthermore, future improvements would be subject to the City's development standards, which would minimize impacts to runoff or impacts to the existing surface flow drainage system. As the DTSP and Zoning Ordinance Amendment is a policy-level document, it does not include the construction or relocation of any utilities. Therefore, this would be considered a less than significant impact.

XVIX.b) As discussed above, the UWMP states that WKWD has adequate supplies to meet demands during normal, single-dry, and multiple-dry years throughout the 25-year planning period outlined in the plan. Table 6 and 7 show the capacity to meet the demand both in normal years and dry years. The DTSP and Zoning Ordinance Amendment are policy-level documents and are not proposing any development that would impact the existing water system. Any future development would require further CEQA review for impacts to the water system to determine if any new lines, extensions or line size modifications and would be designed in coordination with the City Engineer. Therefore, this would be considered a less than significant impact.

XVIX.c) As previously noted, wastewater service is provided to all areas within the City's Municipal Boundary, which includes the DTSP area, and any areas covered in the Zoning Ordinance Amendment. There are existing gravity pipes that run throughout the Project area. The DTSP and Zoning Ordinance Amendment are policy-level documents and are not proposing any

development that would impact the existing wastewater system. Future development will need to be evaluated to determine available system capacity of sewer systems or size modifications necessary. Any new wastewater treatment systems would be designed in coordination with the City Engineer and abide by all relevant laws and regulations governing wastewater treatment. Therefore, this would be considered a less than significant impact.

XVIX.d) The proposed DTSP and Zoning Ordinance Amendment does not include any site-specific development or design and therefore no additional waste is generated by implementation. However, the Project anticipates approximately 3,121 residential units at buildout. Many sites within the DTSP area are vacant and therefore would result in minimal amount of demolition waste during construction. Future construction activities envisioned by the Project could generate solid waste in the form of waste asphalt and structure demolition. These activities would be required to comply with federal, State, and local statutes and regulations governing solid waste. Additionally, per section 5-1-12 of the City of Taft Municipal Code, projects shall reuse, recycle, or divert from landfills or disposal sites at least 65%, or per current CalGreen and California Building Code requirements, of all construction and demolition waste unless a lower rate is approved by the City as a part of the project's Waste Management Plan. Therefore, the construction and demolition waste associated with future development contemplated by the DTSP and Zoning Ordinance Amendment would have less-than-significant impacts on landfills.

The operation of future development within the Project area would likely generate higher volumes of solid waste than what is currently generated, due to the increase in population associated with development. The majority of this population increase is assumed to be captured in the City's current General Plan. Solid waste collection would continue to be collected in the Project area and taken to the nearby Taft Landfill.

In 2021 the City of Taft entered into a solid waste franchise agreement with Westside Waste Management until May 31, 2031. Westside Waste Management would collect solid waste from residents and businesses in the Project area and deliver it to the Taft Landfill. The Taft Landfill is operated by the Kern County Public Works Department and is located approximately 5-miles north of the DTSP area. Additional capacity, if needed, could be provided by either the expansion of the Taft Recycling and Sanitary Landfill or diversion to one or more of the six additional regional landfills in Kern County. Additional regional landfills are located between 14 - 60 miles from Taft. Future site-specific development would require further CEQA review and would abide by relevant laws and regulations governing solid waste disposal treatment. Future site-specific development would abide by relevant laws and regulations governing solid waste disposal treatment. Impacts associated with solid waste are expected to be less than significant.

XVIX, e) The DTSP and Zoning Ordinance Amendment would comply with existing or future statutes and regulations, including waste diversion programs mandated by City, State, or federal law. As discussed above, it is not anticipated that future development resulting from the DTSP, or Zoning Ordinance Amendment would result in an excessive production of solid waste that would exceed the capacity of the existing landfills serving the City of Taft. Therefore, the Project would result in a less than significant impact related to federal, State, and local statutes and regulations related to solid wastes.

MITIGATION MEASURES

No mitigation required.

FINDINGS

The proposed project would a Less Than Significant Impact on Utilities and Service Systems.

XX. WILDFIRE. If located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	☐	☐	☒	☐
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 challenges?	☐	☐	☒	☐

THRESHOLDS OF SIGNIFICANCE: The project would have a significant effect on wildfire if it would impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan; 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; 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; or 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 challenges.

DISCUSSION

The DTSP is in the City's urban core, while the Zoning Ordinance Amendment covers citywide policy updates. Per CalFire's Fire Hazard Severity maps the downtown and surrounding areas are not in proximity to any High or Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones. The rest of the city is

within the "Moderate" Fire Hazard Severity Zone. CalFire's maps also identify the Project area as being in a "Local Responsibility Area" (LRA) which indicates that fire protection is provided by local agencies.

In 2007, the City of Taft entered into a Fire Protection Agreement with the Kern County Fire Department (KCFD). As a result of the Agreement, the KCFD became the exclusive provider of fire protection services to the City of Taft and the City's fire personnel were absorbed within the KCFD.

The Kern County Fire Department updated its Emergency Operations Plan in 2022. The Kern County Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) is an all-hazards document that provides for the integration and coordination of planning efforts of the County with those of its cities, special districts, and the state region. It provides a framework for the County of Kern to use in performing emergency functions before, during, and after an emergency event, natural disaster, or technological incident.

XX.a) The DTSP and Zoning Ordinance Amendment do not include any site-specific designs or proposals or grant any entitlement for development. The graphics shown throughout the DTSP are intended to be conceptual and provide guidance for developers and City implementation. The majority of uses in the DTSP will likely be in-fill development in an already developed area, and therefore is not anticipated to negatively impact emergency response or evacuation plans. Future development as a result of the Zoning Ordinance Amendment could impact emergency response or evacuation plans depending on the location and will need to be assessed on a case-by-case basis. Future development would require further CEQA review to ensure that proposed improvements do not significantly impact emergency response or evacuation plans. In line with the City of Taft General Plan, all new development within the Project area will comply with the Fire Code and be reviewed for adequate water supply and pressure, fire hydrants, and access to structures by firefighting equipment and personnel. Therefore, a less than significant impact would occur.

XX.b) The DTSP and Zoning Ordinance Amendment areas are generally flat and are not adjacent to any mountains or hillsides that would increase wildfire risk. It is intended that the majority of the development types in the Project area will mostly be residential and commercial uses that include minimal hazardous materials. Due to this it is unlikely that in the event of a wildfire that would expose occupants to pollutant concentrations. Furthermore, future development would require further CEQA review to ensure that proposed improvements do not significantly exacerbate wildfire risks and thereby expose occupants to pollutant concentrations. Impacts would be less than significant.

XX.c) The DTSP and Zoning Ordinance Amendment do not include any site-specific development or infrastructure upgrades. However, future developments may require improvements to, or installation of new infrastructure as part of their design. Additionally, future development would require further CEQA review to ensure that proposed improvements do not require infrastructure that would exacerbate wildfire risks. All development will comply with the Fire Code and would not exacerbate fire risk. As no development is currently proposed, impacts would be less than significant.

XX.d) The City of Taft is generally flat and due to this is not at risk for downslope flooding or landslides. The majority of the Project area is not within FEMA flood hazard areas. However, there are portions of the City within Special Flood Hazard Areas, Zone A and Regulatory Floodway (Zone AE). The Zone AE study area runs along the Sandy Creek in the northwest portion of the city. The downtown area, specifically, is generally undesignated however there is a small portion on the southeast corner of the plan area designated as Zone A and a small portion at the northwest corner designated as Zone X. Future projects that occur as a result of the Project, that are located in or around any flood hazard areas would need to be evaluated to assess any risks prior to approval. Further CEQA analysis may be necessary on a project-by-project basis. However, since no development is currently proposed, impacts would be less than significant.

MITIGATION MEASURES

No mitigation required.

FINDINGS

The proposed project would have a Less Than Significant Impact on Wildfire.

XXI. MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE.	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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?	☐	☐	☒	☐

THRESHOLDS OF SIGNIFICANCE: The project would have a significant effect on mandatory findings of significance if it would 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; 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.); or have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly.

DISCUSSION

XXI.a) The Project is located within the jurisdiction of what will be the Kern County Valley Floor Habitat Conservation Plan (VFHCP), however this Habitat Conservation Plan has not yet been adopted by the County Board of Supervisors. The intent of the VFHCP is to conserve federally protected species, State-protected species, and/or other species of concern. As described in Section IV Biological Resources, the Project would have no direct impact on biological resources, and future improvements envisioned in the Project would be subject to applicable federal, state, and local regulations that protect such resources, as well as to further CEQA review of project-level impacts. Mitigation Measure BIO-1 would ensure protection of sensitive habitat and species by requiring a site-specific biological study, where appropriate, conducted by a qualified biologist. In addition, Mitigation Measures CUL-1, CUL-2, and CUL-3 ensure a qualified historian or archeologist to evaluate all historic-age buildings within a proposed project footprint, or for an applicant to provide a cultural resources report for development proposals which would excavate below the previously disturbed level. Mitigation Measure CUL-3 describes the proceedings for if human remains are discovered, pursuant to California Public Resources Code (Section 5097.98) and State Health and Safety Code (Section 7050.5).

There are no important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory found at the site. Therefore, the project, with the implementation of the identified conditions of approval, best management practices, and mitigation measures, would not have the potential to degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, 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.

XXI.b) CEQA Guidelines Section 15130(b) identifies the following two elements as necessary for an adequate cumulative analysis:

- A list of past, present, and probable future projects producing related or cumulative impacts, including, if necessary, those projects outside the control of the agency; or
- A summary of projections contained in an adopted local, regional, or statewide plan, or related planning document, that describes or evaluates conditions contributing to the cumulative effect. Such plans may include: a general plan, regional transportation plan, or plans for the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions. A summary of projections may also be contained in an adopted or certified prior environmental document for such a plan. Such projections may be supplemented with additional information such as a regional modeling program. Any such document shall be referenced and made available to the public at a location specified by the lead agency.

Past, present, and future projects in proximity to the project were considered and evaluated as part of this Initial Study. The impacts of the DTSP and Zoning Ordinance Amendment implementation may have cumulatively considerable impacts with regard to Biological Resources, Cultural Resources, Geology and Soils, Hazards and Hazardous Materials, and Noise. Although incremental changes in certain environmental topics can be expected as a result of future improvements envisioned in the proposed Project, all foreseeable potential environmental impacts would be considered less than significant or would be reduced to a less than significant level through implementation of the mitigation measures recommended in this Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration or in future CEQA review of project-level impacts. This would also ensure that any contribution to cumulative impacts would be less than cumulatively considerable.

XXI.c) Construction of future improvements envisioned in the DTSP and Zoning Ordinance Amendment would have the potential to cause adverse environmental impacts related to Biological Resources, Cultural Resources, Geology and Soils, Hazards and Hazardous Materials, and Noise. Although the Project itself does not include development and construction, it would provide a guide to future development of the downtown area and citywide. This Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration mandates compliance with all required regulations and laws that would reduce potential impacts to Biological Resources, Cultural Resources, Geology and Soils, Hazards and Hazardous Materials, and Noise. Further, the Mitigation Measure HAZ-1 included in this Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration requires the preparation of a Phase I Initial Site Assessment for sites that may encounter hazardous materials during construction. Additionally, future developments and improvements would be required to complete project-specific CEQA review that would analyze project-level impacts and would likely include mitigation measures that would address site-specific impacts. This would ensure minimization of substantial adverse effects on human beings. Therefore, with the incorporation of the proposed and future mitigation measures, the Project would not result in environmental effects that would cause substantial direct or indirect adverse effects on human beings.

FINDINGS

The proposed project would have a Less Than Significant Impact on Mandatory Findings of Significance.

VI. REFERENCES

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VI. APPENDICIES