APPENDIX B

INITIAL STUDY

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APPENDIX G/INITIAL STUDY FOR A NEGATIVE DECLARATION

Environmental Checklist Form for:
EA No. T-6360/P22-00387/P22-00388

1.	**Project title:** Vesting Tentative Tract Map No. 6360 Environmental Assessment Application No. T-6360/P22-00387/P22-00388
2.	**Lead agency name and address:** City of Fresno Planning and Development Department 2600 Fresno Street Fresno, CA 93721
3.	**Contact person and phone number:** Chris Lang, Planner III City of Fresno Planning and Development Dept. (559) 621-8023
4.	**Project location:** Northeast corner of North Armstrong Avenue and East McKinley Avenue (APN: 574-140-04 and 574-140-05)
5.	**Project sponsor's name and address:** Wilson Premier Homes, Inc. 7550 North Palm Avenue, Suite 102 Fresno, CA, 93711
6.	**General & Community plan land use designation:** Low Density Residential
7.	**Zoning:** Residential Single-Family District (RS-3)
8.	**Description of project:** The following describes the proposed Vesting Tentative Tract Map No. 6360 (proposed project). Existing Conditions The project site is approximately 31.29 acres in size, is currently being used to grow agricultural crops, and is located in the City of Fresno, on the northeast corner of the intersection between North Armstrong Avenue and the future extension of East McKinley Avenue. Figure 1 shows the site's regional and local context. The project site

is bounded by North Armstrong Avenue to the west, by Mill No. 36 Canal and TM 6201 to the south, by rural residential uses to the east, and by residential development to the north. Figure 2 depicts an aerial photograph of the project site and surrounding land uses. The project site is undeveloped and does not have any existing structures. The project site is currently being used to grow agricultural crops.

Project Characteristics

The proposed project would consist of the development of approximately 326 residential lots ranging in sizes between approximately 1,979 and 8,474 square feet, with the average lot size being approx. 2,365 square feet. The proposed lots would be developed into single-family residences over time. Thirty-nine outlot spaces would also be included in the project. Although the site plan does not provide details on what would be constructed in these spaces, potential uses for the outlots would include private landscaping, private pool, private road, private park, private parking, public pedestrian, and public utility uses. Figure 3 shows the proposed site plan for the project. The proposed project would include approximately 53,016 square feet of open space, including an approximately 11,777 square-foot park, a 15,207 square-foot pool and recreation area, and a 26,032 square-foot area across East McKinley Avenue parallel to the project site that would be deeded to the City of Fresno for future trail and open space uses. The project site would introduce approximately 7.09 acres of impervious surfaces to the site. The proposed project would remove five existing power poles along North Armstrong Avenue, two existing power poles located along the project site's northern boundary, and two existing power poles located on the northeast corner of the project site.

Access, Circulation and Parking

The proposed project would include approximately 157,367 square feet of parking space, which includes private parking stalls and parking garages attached to proposed residential units. Two parking spaces would be provided for each proposed residential unit, approximately 652 parking spaces in total. Vehicle access to the project site would be provided by two gated 55-foot-wide ingress and egress driveways located on North Armstrong Avenue and on East McKinley Avenue. The proposed project would construct an approximately 861-foot-long eastern extension of McKinley Avenue. This extension of McKinley Avenue would be two-lanes and approximately 64 feet wide within an approximately 88-foot right-of-way, with curbs on both sides of the proposed extension, as well as a 6-foot pedestrian concrete sidewalk along the project frontage with McKinley Avenue. A 25-foot bike and pedestrian easement would also be included across the proposed roadway extension, parallel with the project site. The proposed project would also include the expansion of the North Armstrong Avenue right-of-way and the construction of new curbs on both sides of the portion of North Armstrong Avenue facing the project. The project would also construct a 6-foot pedestrian concrete sidewalk on the project frontage with North Armstrong Avenue. Vehicle circulation within the project site would be provided by a network of two-way, 41.2-foot-wide roadways. Pedestrian circulation would occur through internal pedestrian sidewalks with Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliant access ramps.

Landscaping

The proposed project would include approximately 1.04 acres of landscaping along the perimeter and within the project site.

Lighting

The proposed project would introduce approximately 9 new exterior lights to the project site along the McKinley and Armstrong Avenues' right-of-way (ROW) on the project perimeter. Additionally, the project would include approximately 49 interior lights associated with private street lighting and private lighting systems.

Utilities and Infrastructure

- **Water and Wastewater.** Water supply and wastewater services for the proposed project would be provided by the City of Fresno through the Department of Public Utilities (DPU) Water and Wastewater Management Divisions. The proposed project would connect to an existing water service pipeline located along North Armstrong Avenue, and proposed wastewater service pipelines located along North Armstrong Avenue and the future extension of East McKinley Avenue.

- **Stormwater.** The Fresno Metropolitan Flood Control District (FMFCD) would provide flood control and urban storm water services to the project site. Stormwater from the project site would be directed through internal drainage infrastructure (e.g., manholes, drainage basins, and drainage lines) towards proposed drainage infrastructure located along North Armstrong Avenue and along the future extension of East McKinley Avenue. Stormwater from the project site would then be redirected towards ponding Basin BS, located approximately 0.26-mile southwest of the project site across Mill No. 36 Canal.

- **Solid Waste.** Solid waste collection for the project site would be provided by the City of Fresno through the Department of Public Utilities (DPU) Solid Waste and Recycling Division.

- **Electricity and Telecommunication.** Electricity for the proposed project would be supplied by the Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E) through connections to existing service lines. The proposed project would be all-electric; therefore, the proposed project would not include any new natural gas services. Telecommunication services to the project site would be provided by Comcast and AT&T.

Energy Reduction Strategies

The proposed project would also incorporate the following energy reduction strategies and sustainability features:

- Third party independent inspections would be conducted to assure energy efficiency compliance.

- Heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) equipment for the project would be rated 14 seasonal energy efficiency ratio (SEER), 12 energy efficiency ratio (EER) and 92 percent ultra efficient.

- Solar panels would be provided ranging from 3.71 kilowatts (kW) to 3.98 kW.

- Windows would be argon-filled vinyl low-e, double strength glass to reduce energy and increase ultraviolet (UV) blockage.

Additionally, the project would be designed to include the following water and wastewater conservation measures:

- Install all lead-free plumbing fixtures including water-saving shower heads rated 1.75 gallons per minute (gpm) and sink faucets rated to 1.5 gpm.

- Install water conservation toilets with a flush rate of 1.228 gpm

- Install water-wise landscaping and drought tolerant native California and/or Mediterranean plant species.

- Install Intellisense Environmental sensitive landscape controllers.

<u>Grading and Construction</u>

Construction of the proposed project is expected to occur over a period of 36 months starting on April 2024. Site preparation would include removal of rocks, debris, and vegetation from the project site. The proposed project would have 5,500 cubic yards of cut and 80,000 cubic yards of fill, with a net import of 74,500 cubic yards of soil. Dry utility construction would follow, including construction of electrical utilities consisting of conduit, services, transformers, vaults, boxes and streetlights. Street construction would follow, including subgrade preparation, base rock, concrete curbs gutters, valley gutters, ramps and sidewalks, paving and perimeter landscaping and irrigation. Block walls, fences and amenities, would be installed after grading operations and be completed after paving operations. Construction of the proposed project would comply with City standards, including the City's current building code, landscape standards, and lighting standards. The project would be constructed using a minimum of Tier 3 construction equipment. In addition, the project site would be graded similar to other developments throughout the City. The construction schedule for each project development phase is outlined below.

Project Phase	Development Phase	Estimated Construction Period
I	*Site Development*	April 2024 – September 2024
	Home Building	June 2024 – August 2025
II	*Site Development*	September 2024 – April 2025
	Home Building	April 2025 - April - 2027

Building Program

The proposed project would be constructed in two phases. Phase 1 of the proposed project would include the development of approximately 110 single-family residential units with an average size of approximately 1,514 square feet per unit. Phase 1 would be located on the northeast corner of North Armstrong Avenue and East McKinley Avenue and would be accessed through the two ingress and egress streets located on North Armstrong Avenue and East McKinley Avenue. Phase 1 would include the construction of an approximately 15,207-square-foot pool and recreation area, and construction of North Armstrong and East McKinley Avenues. The proposed project would remove 5 existing power poles along North Armstrong Avenue, and two existing power poles located along the project site's northern boundary under this phase.

Phase 2 of the proposed project would include the development of approximately 216 single-family residential units with an average size of approximately 1,514 square feet per unit. Phase 2 would be located east of Phase 1 and North of East McKinley Avenue and to the west, by Mill No. 36 Canal. Phase 2 would include the construction of the onsite approximately 11,777 square foot park and removal of the two existing power poles located at the northeast corner of the project site.

9. **Surrounding land uses and setting:**

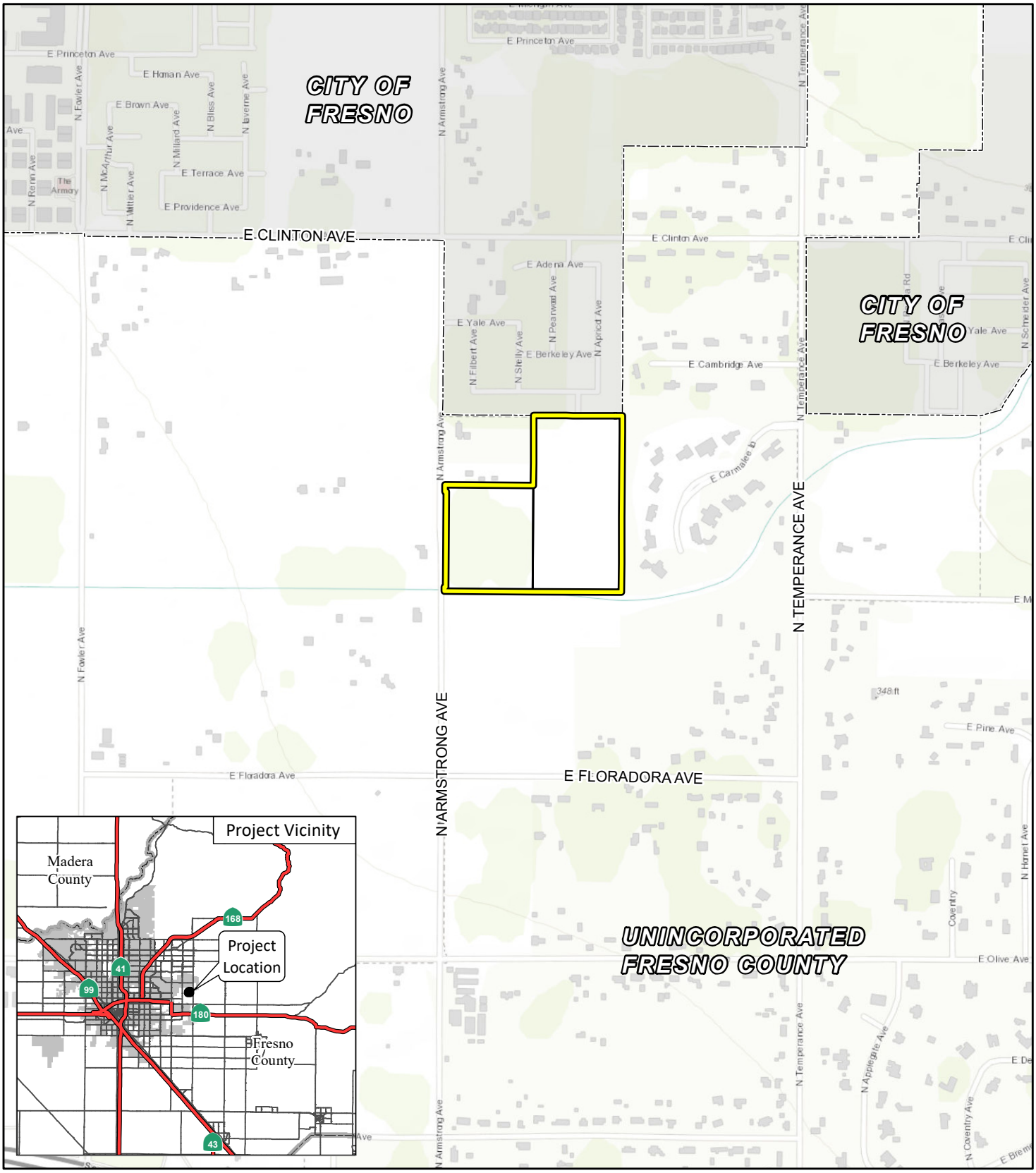
	Planned Land Use	Existing Zoning	Existing Land Use
North	Residential - Low Density/ Medium Low Density	RS-4, Residential Single-Family, Medium Low Density	Residential - Medium Low Density
East	Residential – Medium Low Density/ Open Space/ Elementary School	RR NB, Rural Residential, Neighborhood Beautification (Fresno County)	Rural Residential
South	Residential - Low Density/ Medium Density	RS-5, Residential Single-Family, Medium Density	Agriculture/Rural Residential
West	Residential – Medium Density/ Elementary School	RS-5, Residential Single-Family, Medium Density	Agriculture/Rural Residential

10. **Other public agencies whose approval is required (e.g., permits, financing approval, or participation agreement):**
- Planning & Development Department, General Plan Amendment/Rezone;
- Department of Public Works, Grading Permit;
- Department of Public Utilities, water connection(s)/sanitary sewer connection(s);
- City of Fresno Fire Department;
- Fresno Metropolitan Flood Control District;
- San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District;
- State Water Resources Control Board, National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) General Permit;
- Pacific Gas & Electric, electrical connection.

11. **Have California Native American tribes traditionally and culturally affiliated with the project area requested consultation pursuant to Public Resources Code (PRC) Section 21080.3.1? If so, has consultation begun?**

The State requires lead agencies to consider the potential effects of proposed projects and consult with California Native American tribes during the local planning process for the purpose of protecting Traditional Tribal Cultural Resources through the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines. Pursuant to PRC Section 21080.3.1, the lead agency shall begin consultation with the California Native American tribe that is traditionally and culturally affiliated with the geographical area of the proposed project. Such significant cultural resources are either sites, features, places, cultural landscapes, sacred places, and objects with cultural value to a tribe which is either on

	or eligible for inclusion in the California Historic Register or local historic register, or, the lead agency, at its discretion, and support by substantial evidence, choose to treat the resources as a Tribal Cultural Resources (PRC Section 21074(a)(1-2)). According to the most recent census data, California is home to 109 currently recognized Indian tribes. Tribes in California currently have nearly 100 separate reservations or Rancherias. Fresno County has a number of Rancherias such as Table Mountain Rancheria, Millerton Rancheria, Big Sandy Rancheria, Cold Springs Rancheria, and Squaw Valley Rancheria. These Rancherias are not located within the city limits. Conducting consultation early in the CEQA process allows tribal governments, lead agencies, and project proponents to discuss the level of environmental review, identify and address potential adverse impacts to tribal cultural resources, and reduce the potential for delay and conflict in the environmental review process. (See PRC Section 21083.3.2.) Information may also be available from the California Native American Heritage Commission's Sacred Lands File per PRC Section 5097.96 and the California Historical Resources Information System administered by the California Office of Historic Preservation. Please also note that PRC Section 21082.3(c) contains provisions specific to confidentiality. Pursuant to Senate Bill 18 (SB 18), Native American tribes traditionally and culturally affiliated with the project area were invited to consult regarding the proposed project based on a list of contacts provided by the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC). This list includes tribes that requested notification pursuant to Assembly Bill 52 (AB 52) (Table Mountain Rancheria Tribe and the Dumna Wo Wah Tribe). The City of Fresno mailed notices of the proposed project to each of these tribes on December 22, 2022 which included the required 90-day time period for tribes to request consultation, which ended on March 21, 2023.



LSA

LEGEND

- Project Location
- Parcel Boundary
- Fresno City Limit

0 500 1000
FEET

SOURCE: Esri Streetmap (2021)

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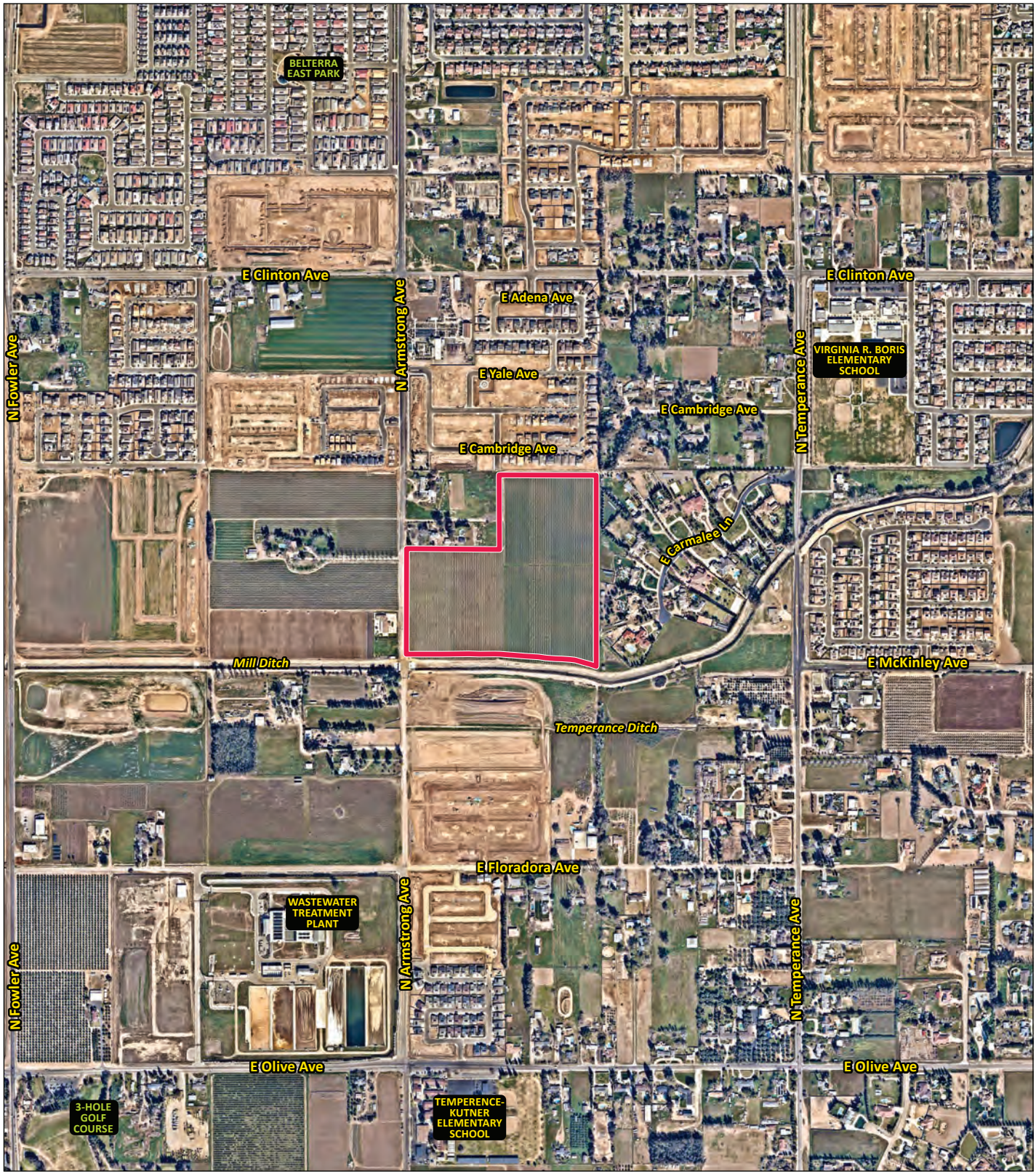
FIGURE 1

Vesting Tentative Tract Map No. 6360

Regional and Local Context



LSA

Project Site Boundary

0 500 1000
FEET

FIGURE 2

Vesting Tentative Tract Map No. 6360
Aerial Photograph of Project Site and Surrounding LU

SOURCE: NearMap, 2/24/2022; LSA, 2022

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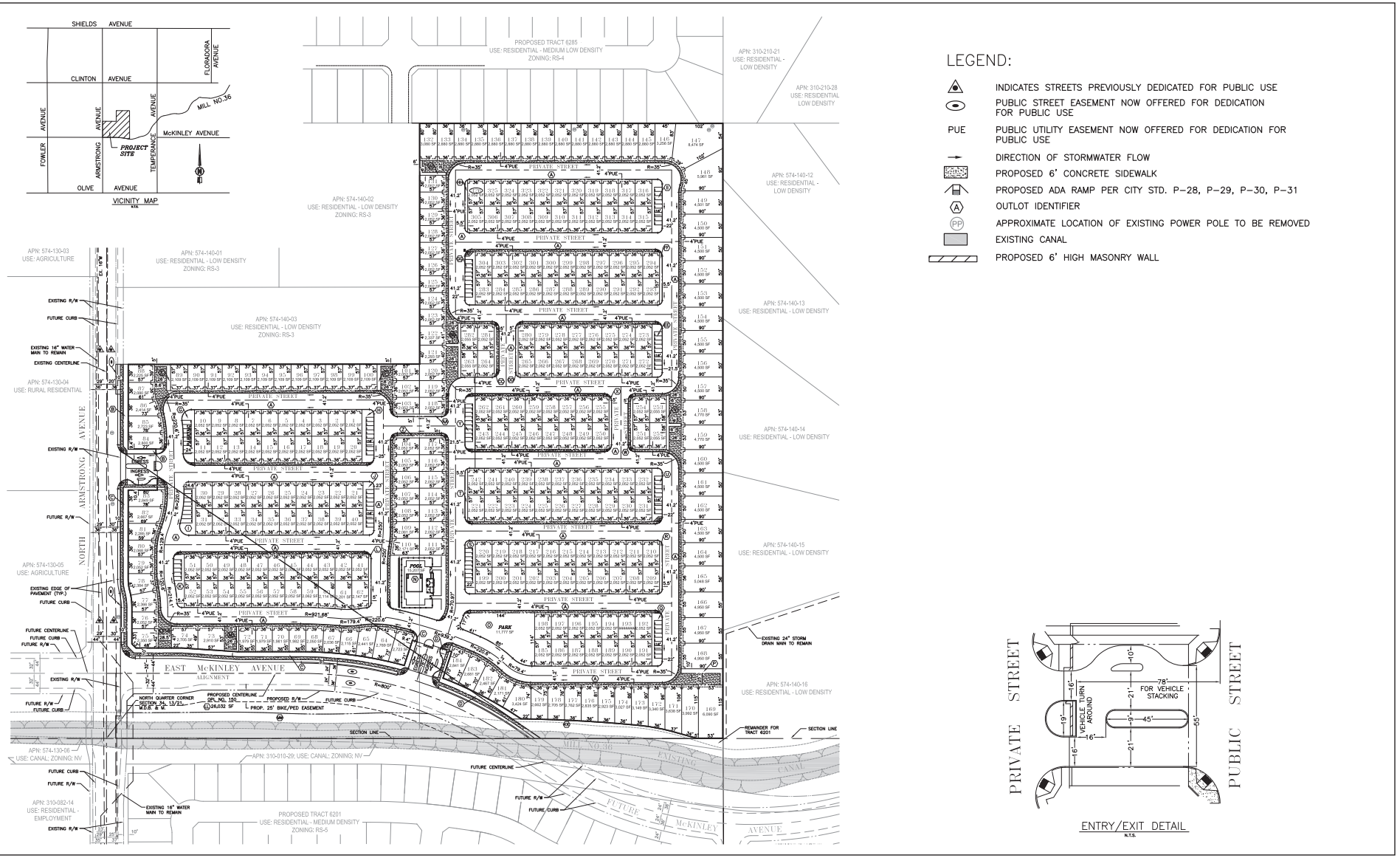

LSA

FIGURE 3

Vesting Tentative Tract Map No. 6360
Site Plan

SOURCE: Harbour & Associates, 11/10/2022

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ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS POTENTIALLY AFFECTED:

The environmental factors checked below would be potentially affected by this project, involving at least one impact that is a "Potentially Significant Impact" as indicated by the checklist on the following pages.

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

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. 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.
_X_	I find that the proposed project MAY have a significant effect on the environment, and an ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT (EIR) 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.

_____

Planner Name, Title Date

EVALUATION OF ADDITIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS NOT ASSESSED IN PROGRAM ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT SCH NO. 2019050005 PREPARED FOR THE APPROVED FRESNO GENERAL PLAN (GP PEIR):

1. For purposes of this Initial Study, the following answers have the corresponding meanings:

   a. “No Impact” means the specific impact category does not apply to the project, or that the record sufficiently demonstrates that project specific factors or general standards applicable to the project will result in no impact for the threshold under consideration.

   b. “Less Than Significant Impact” means there is an impact related to the threshold under consideration, but that impact is less than significant.

   c. “Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation” means there is a potentially significant impact related to the threshold under consideration, however, with the mitigation incorporated into the project, the impact is less than significant. For purposes of this Initial Study “mitigation incorporated into the project” means mitigation originally described in the GP PEIR and applied to an individual project, as well as mitigation developed specifically for an individual project.

   d. “Potentially Significant Impact” means there is substantial evidence that an effect may be significant related to the threshold under consideration.

2. A brief explanation is required for all answers except "No Impact" answers that are adequately supported by the information sources a lead agency cites in the parentheses following each question. A "No Impact" answer is adequately supported if the referenced information sources show that the impact simply does not apply to projects like the one involved (e.g., the project falls outside a fault rupture zone). A "No Impact" answer should be explained where it is based on project-specific factors as well as general standards (e.g., the project will not expose sensitive receptors to pollutants, based on a project-specific screening analysis).

3. All answers must take account of the whole action involved, including off-site as well as on-site, cumulative as well as project-level, indirect as well as direct, and construction as well as operational impacts.

4. Once the lead agency has determined that a particular physical impact may occur, then the checklist answers must indicate whether the impact is potentially significant, less than significant with mitigation, or less than significant. "Potentially Significant Impact" is appropriate if there is substantial evidence that an effect may be significant. If there are one or more "Potentially Significant Impact" entries when the determination is made, an EIR is required.

5. "Negative Declaration: Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated" applies where the incorporation of mitigation measures has reduced an effect from "Potentially Significant Impact" to a "Less Than Significant Impact." The lead agency must describe the mitigation measures, and briefly explain how they reduce the effect to a less than significant level (mitigation measures from, "Earlier Analyses," as described in (6) below, may be cross-referenced).

6. Earlier analyses may be used where, pursuant to the tiering, Program EIR, or other CEQA process, an effect has been adequately analyzed in an earlier EIR or negative declaration. Section 15063(c)(3)(D). In this case, a brief discussion should identify the following:

    a. Earlier Analysis Used. Identify and state where they are available for review.

    b. Impacts Adequately Addressed. Identify which effects from the above checklist were within the scope of and adequately analyzed in the PEIR or another earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and state whether such effects were addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis.

    c. Mitigation Measures. For effects that are "Less than Significant with Mitigation Measures Incorporated," describe the mitigation measures which were incorporated or refined from the earlier document and the extent to which they address site-specific conditions for the project.

7. Lead agencies are encouraged to incorporate into the checklist references to information sources for potential impacts (e.g., general plans, zoning ordinances). Reference to a previously prepared or outside document should, where appropriate, include a reference to the page or pages where the statement is substantiated.

8. Supporting Information Sources: A source list should be attached, and other sources used or individuals contacted should be cited in the discussion.

9. The explanation of each issue should identify:

a. The significance criteria or threshold, if any, used to evaluate each question; and

b. The mitigation measure identified, if any, to reduce the impact to less than significance.

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
I. AESTHETICS – Except as provided in Public Resources Code Section 21099, would the project:				
a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?			X	
b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock out-croppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?				X
c) In nonurbanized areas, substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality 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?			X	
d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?		X		

DISCUSSION

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

A scenic vista is generally defined as a public vantage point with an expansive view of a

significant landscape feature. The City of Fresno contains views of highly valued features such as the San Joaquin River, Sierra Nevada Mountain foothills, and buildings in Downtown Fresno. Figure POSS-2 in the General Plan has identified six vista points along the San Joaquin River bluff.[1]

The project site is located in a mainly undeveloped area of the City of Fresno, and it is surrounded by residential developments to the north, rural residential uses to the east, rural residential and agricultural uses to the south, and agricultural and rural residential uses to the west. The proposed project would include the construction of a 326-lot residential development for single-family residences. The proposed project would also include landscaped spaces, a private pool, a park area, private streets, pedestrian, and utility infrastructure.

The construction of the proposed project would not affect or block a scenic vista identified in the General Plan. Furthermore, the project site is not located within or in the vicinity of any of the scenic vista points identified in the General Plan. Therefore, the proposed project would have a less-than-significant impact on a scenic vista. This section will not be discussed in the EIR.

b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?

According to the California Department of Transportation mapping of State Scenic Highways,[2] the County of Fresno has one officially designated State Scenic Highway located along State Route 180, east of the City of Fresno, starting approximately 12.6 miles east of the project site. Three eligible State Scenic Highways are also located within the County of Fresno. The nearest one is located along State Route 168, approximately 4.5 miles northwest of the project site. Since there are no eligible or officially designated State Scenic Highways within the immediate vicinity of the project site, the proposed project would not impact a designated or eligible State Scenic Highway or impact scenic resources located within the highway segments or its viewshed. Therefore, no impact on scenic resources within a state scenic highway would occur as a result of the proposed project. This section will not be discussed in the EIR.

c) 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

1 City of Fresno. 2014. Fresno General Plan. Chapter 5: Parks, Open Space, and Schools. Figure POSS-2: San Joaquin River Parkway Path & Trail Access Points. pg.5-19. Website: https://www.fresno.gov/darm/wp-content/uploads/sites/10/2019/07/General-Plan-5-Parks-Open-Space-and-Schools-7-19.pdf (accessed April 14, 2022).

2 California Department of Transportation (Caltrans). State Scenic Highways. Website: https://dot.ca.gov/programs/design/lap-landscape-architecture-and-community-livability/lap-liv-i-scenic-highways (accessed on April 14, 2022).

scenic quality?

The proposed project would include the construction of an approximately 326-lot residential development for single-family residences. The project site is currently undeveloped and used to grow agricultural crops, and is surrounded by residential developments to the north, rural residential uses to the east, rural residential and agricultural uses to the south, and agricultural and rural residential uses to the west. The proposed project would change the existing agricultural use of the site to a residential use. The proposed project contains distant views of the Sierra Nevada mountains which may be affected by development of the project site. However, these views are limited and obstructed by existing development north and east of the site. As such, the proposed project would not significantly affect quality of this view.

Additionally, the proposed project would be constructed in compliance with applicable measurements, height, and design requirements for the proposed Residential Single-Family, Medium Density (RS-5) zoning district, which would be established for the project site subject to completion of the City's rezone process. Furthermore, the single-family residences that would be constructed in the project site would not represent oversized elements that would greatly differ in size and scale with residential uses to the north. Therefore, the proposed project would not substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the project site and its surroundings, and the impact would be less than significant. This section will not be discussed in the EIR.

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

The proposed project would include the construction of approximately 326 new residential units within the project site, as well as landscaped, recreational, and utility areas. Implementation of the proposed project would introduce new sources of light and glare into the project site. The new sources of light and glare introduced by the proposed project (e.g., building interior lighting, exterior lighting fixtures, and reflective surfaces such as windows) would be comparable to the existing light and glare emitted by residential and rural residential uses directly north and east of the project site and would not represent significant adverse effects to day and nighttime views. Furthermore, the proposed project would comply with the California Building Code (Title 24, California Code of Regulations) standards and the City's Municipal Code (Article 25, Section 15-2508 Lighting and Glare).

To ensure that the proposed project's lighting systems do not create a substantial new source of light mitigation measures AES-1 and AES-2 shall be required to provide shielding mechanisms to direct light away from nearby uses. Additionally, mitigation measure AES-3 would ensure that the proposed project's lighting systems do not create a substantial new source of light by imposing a cap on the intensity of lighting systems based on the average intensity of the surrounding streets. As a result, any new sources of light resulting from the proposed project would not be substantial in the context of existing lighting sources.

Additionally, while the project does not propose use of highly reflective glass elements or building materials, mitigation measure AES-4 requires materials used on building facades to be non-reflective. Therefore, any new source of glare would not be substantial. Accordingly, with the incorporation of Mitigation Measures AES-1 through AES-4, the project's potential impacts would be less than significant. This section will not be discussed in the EIR.

MITIGATION MEASURES

Mitigation Measure AES-1: Lighting systems for street and parking areas shall include shields to direct light to the roadway surfaces and parking areas. Vertical shields on the light fixtures shall also be used to direct light away from adjacent light sensitive land uses such as residences.

Mitigation Measure AES-2: Lighting systems for public facilities such as active play areas shall provide adequate illumination for the activity; however, low intensity light fixtures and shields shall be used to minimize spillover light onto adjacent properties.

Mitigation Measure AES-3: Lighting systems for freestanding signs shall not exceed 100 foot Lamberts (FT-L) when adjacent to streets which have an average light intensity of less than 2.0 horizontal footcandles and shall not exceed 500 FT-L when adjacent to streets which have an average light intensity of 2.0 horizontal footcandles or greater.

Mitigation Measure AES-4: Materials used on building facades shall be non-reflective.

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
II. AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY RESOURCES – In determining whether impacts to agricultural resources are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to the California Agricultural Land Evaluation and Site Assessment Model (1997) prepared by the California Dept. of Conservation as an optional model to use in assessing impacts on agriculture and farmland. In determining whether impacts to forest resources, including timberland, are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to information compiled by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection regarding the state's inventory of forest land, including the Forest and Range Assessment Project and the Forest Legacy Assessment project; and forest carbon measurement methodology provided in Forest Protocols adopted by the California Air Resources Board. Would the project:				

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	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?			X	
b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?			X	
c) Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code section 12220(g)), timberland (as defined by Public Resources Code section 4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code section 51104(g))?				X
d) Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?				X
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?			X	

DISCUSSION

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?

The project site is zoned within the Residential Single-Family District (RS-3) of the City of Fresno, indicating that the development of the project site for residential uses is consistent with planned development under the General Plan. The City of Fresno General Plan PEIR identifies that development under the General Plan would result in significant impacts related to the conversion of Important Farmland to non-agricultural uses. The project site is classified as "Prime Farmland" by the California Department of Conservation Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program (FMMP)[3]. The proposed project would develop the 31.29-acre project site into a 326-lot residential development. As such, implementation of the proposed project would result in the conversion of Prime Farmland to a non-agricultural use.

In order to assess the significance of project-specific impacts to agricultural resources, associated with the development of the project site, a California LESA Model was prepared for the project site, and is included as an attachment to this Initial Study. The LESA Model is composed of a Land Evaluation (LE) portion, which measures soil quality, and the Site Assessment (SA) portion, which evaluates other factors that contribute to the site's agricultural importance (e.g., parcel size and on-farm investments). A Final LESA Score of 0 to 39 points is not considered significant. A final score between 40 to 59 points is considered significant only if the LE and SA subscores are each greater than or equal to 20 points. A final score between 60 to 79 points is considered significant unless either the LE or SA subscores is less than 20 points. A final score between 80 to 100 points is considered significant.

The proposed project achieved a Final LESA Score of 68.72 points, with an LE subscore of 49.97 points and a SA subscore of 18.72 points. Because the SA subscore was below 20 points, the conversion of agricultural land associated with implementation of the proposed project would not be considered significant and would not represent a significant impact to agricultural resources under CEQA. Therefore, impacts related to the conversion of Important Farmland to a non-agricultural use would be less than significant. This section will not be included in the EIR.

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

The project site is zoned within the Residential Single-Family District (RS-3) of the City of Fresno. The project is not subject to a Williamson Act contract. Therefore, development of the proposed project would not conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use or with a Williamson Act contract, and the impact would be less than significant. This section will not be included in the EIR.

c) Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code section 12220(g)), timberland (as defined by Public Resources Code section 4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as

3 California Department of Conservation. 2016. California Important Farmland Finder. Website: https://maps.conservation.ca.gov/DLRP/CIFF/ (accessed April 14, 2022).

defined by Government Code section 51104(g))?

The project site is zoned within the Residential Single-Family District (RS-3). The project site is not currently used for timberland production, nor is it zoned for forest land or timberland. No forest lands or timberland are located on the project site. The proposed project would not conflict with the existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest uses. Therefore, the proposed project would have no impact. This section will not be included in the EIR.

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

Please refer to the discussion for c) above. The proposed project would not result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest uses. Therefore, the proposed project would have no impact. This section will not be included in the EIR.

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

Please refer to discussions a) and c) of section. The project site is not used for timberland production or zoned for forest land or timberland. The project site is classified as "Prime Farmland" by the California Department of Conservation Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program (FMMP), and as such, development of the project would result in the conversion of Important Farmland. However, the LESA Model prepared for the project site identifies that the conversion of Important Farmland associated with development of the project site would result in a less-than-significant impact. Thus, the proposed project would have a less than significant impact on Important Farmland. This section will not be included in the EIR.

MITIGATION MEASURES

The proposed project would not result in any potentially significant impacts related to agricultural and forestry resources, and no mitigation is required.

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
III. AIR QUALITY – Where available, the significance criteria established by the applicable air quality management or air pollution control district may be relied upon to make the following determinations. Would the project:				

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	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 (*e.g.*, by having potential emissions of regulated criterion pollutants which exceed the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control Districts (SJVAPCD) adopted thresholds for these pollutants)?	X			
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 (including releasing emissions which exceed quantitative thresholds for ozone precursors)?	X			
c) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?	X			
d) Result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people?	X			

DISCUSSION

The proposed project is located in Fresno County and is within the jurisdiction of the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District (SJVAPCD). The SJVAPCD is responsible for air quality regulation within the eight-county San Joaquin Valley region.

Both the California Air Resources Board (CARB) and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) have established health-based Ambient Air Quality Standards for six criteria air pollutants: carbon monoxide (CO), ozone (O_3), nitrogen dioxide (NO_2), sulfur dioxide (SO_2), lead (Pb), and suspended particulate matter (PM_{10} and $PM_{2.5}$). These standards are designed to protect the health and welfare of the populace with a

reasonable margin of safety. Two criteria pollutants, O_3 and NO_2, are considered regional pollutants because they (or their precursors) affect air quality on a regional scale. Pollutants such as PM, CO, SO_2, and Pb are considered local pollutants because they tend to accumulate in the air locally. The San Joaquin Valley Air Basin (Air Basin) is under State non-attainment status for ozone and particulate matter (PM_{10} and $PM_{2.5}$) standards. The Air Basin is also classified as non-attainment for both the federal ozone 8-hour standard and the federal $PM_{2.5}$ 24-hour standard.

A threshold of significance is defined by the SJVAPCD in its *Guidance for Assessing and Mitigating Air Quality Impacts* (GAMAQI)[4] as an identifiable quantitative, qualitative, or performance level of a particular environmental effect. Non-compliance with a threshold of significance means the effect will normally be determined to be significant. Compliance with a threshold of significance means the effect normally will be determined to be less than significant. The SJVAPCD has established thresholds of significance for criteria pollutant emissions generated during construction and operation of projects as shown in Table 1 below.[5]

Table 1: SJVAPCD Construction and Operation Thresholds of Significance (Tons per Year)

	CO	NO_x	ROG	SO_x	PM_{10}	$PM_{2.5}$
Construction Thresholds	100	10	10	27	15	15
Operation Thresholds	100	10	10	27	15	15

Source: SJVAPCD (2015). Guidance for Assessing and Mitigating Air Quality Impacts.

The emissions thresholds in the SJVAPCD GAMAQI were established based on the attainment status of the air basin in regard to air quality standards for specific criteria pollutants. Because the concentration standards were set at a level that protects public health with an adequate margin of safety, these emission thresholds are regarded as conservative and would overstate an individual project's contribution to health risks.

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

CEQA requires that certain proposed projects be analyzed for consistency with the applicable air quality plan. An air quality plan describes air pollution control strategies to be implemented by a city, county, or region classified as a non-attainment area. The main purpose of the air quality plan is to bring the area into compliance with the requirements of the federal and State air quality standards. To bring the Air Basin into attainment, the SJVAPCD adopted the 2022 Plan for the 2015 8-hour ozone standard in December 2022

4 San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District. 2015a. Guidance for Assessing and Mitigating Air Quality Impacts. Website: https://www.valleyair.org/transportation/GAMAQI.pdf (accessed April 19, 2022).

5 San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District. 2015b. Air Quality Thresholds of Significance – Criteria Pollutants. Website: http://www.valleyair.org/transportation/0714-GAMAQI-Criteria-Pollutant-Thresholds-of-Significance.pdf (accessed on April 19, 2022).

to satisfy Clean Air Act requirements and ensure attainment of the 70 parts per billion (ppb) 8-hour ozone standard.[6]

To assure the Air Basin's continued attainment of the USEPA PM_{10} standard, the SJVAPCD adopted the 2007 PM_{10} Maintenance Plan in September 2007. SJVAPCD Regulation VIII (Fugitive PM_{10} Prohibitions) is designed to reduce PM_{10} emissions generated by human activity. The SJVAPCD adopted the 2016 Moderate Area Plan for the 2012 $PM_{2.5}$ standard to address the USEPA federal annual $PM_{2.5}$ standard of 12 µg/m3, established in 2012. In addition, the SJVAPCD is in the process of developing an attainment strategy to address multiple $PM_{2.5}$ standards (1997, 2006, and 2012 $PM_{2.5}$ standards) and a plan to demonstrate maintenance of the 1987 PM_{10} standard as required under the federal Clean Air Act.

For a project to be consistent with SJVAPCD air quality plans, the pollutants emitted from a project should not exceed the SJVAPCD emission thresholds or cause a significant impact on air quality. Construction and operation of the project may result in an increase in air pollutant emissions. As a result, the project could have a potential adverse effect on the SJVAPCD's implementation of clean air plans. Therefore, the EIR will provide further analysis of the project's consistency with the SJVAPCD's clean air plans.

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?

CEQA defines a cumulative impact as two or more individual effects, which when considered together, are considerable or which compound or increase other environmental impacts. Therefore, if annual emissions of construction- or operational-related criteria air pollutants exceed any applicable threshold established by the SJVAPCD, the proposed project would result in a cumulatively significant impact.

Short-term emissions would occur in association with construction activities, including grading, and vehicle/equipment use. Long-term operational emissions are associated with stationary sources and mobile sources. Stationary source emissions result from the consumption of electricity. Mobile source emissions result from vehicle trips and result in air pollutant emissions affecting the entire air basin. As noted above, specific criteria for determining whether the potential air quality impacts of a project are significant are set forth by the SJVAPCD.

Short-Term (Construction) Emissions. During construction, short-term degradation of air quality may occur due to the release of particulate matter emissions generated by demolition, grading, hauling, and building activities. Emissions from construction

6 San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District (SJVAPCD). 2022. 2022 Plan for the 2015 8-Hour Ozone Standard. December 15. Website: https://ww2.valleyair.org/media/q55posm0/0000-2022-plan-for-the-2015-8-hour-ozone-standard.pdf (accessed April 2023).

equipment are also anticipated and would include CO, NOx, ROG, directly emitted particulate matter (PM2.5 and PM10), and toxic air contaminants (TACs) such as diesel exhaust particulate matter. Construction-related effects on air quality from the proposed project would be greatest during site preparation because most engine emissions are associated with the excavation, handling, and transport of soils on the site. If not properly controlled, these activities would temporarily generate PM10, PM2.5, and to a lesser extent CO, SO2, NOx, and volatile organic compounds. Sources of fugitive dust would include disturbed soils at the construction site. Unless properly controlled, vehicles leaving the site would deposit dirt and mud on local streets, which could be an additional source of airborne dust after it dries. PM10 emissions would vary from day to day, depending on the nature and magnitude of construction activity and local weather conditions. PM10 emissions would depend on soil moisture, the silt content of soil, wind speed, and the amount of operating equipment. Larger dust particles would settle near the source, while fine particles would be dispersed over greater distances from the construction site. These emissions would be temporary and limited to the immediate area surrounding the construction site.

The development of the proposed project would result in the construction of 326 single-family residences over a period of 36 months. The proposed project would also include private landscaping, private pool, private road, private park, private parking, public pedestrian, and public utility uses.

Long-Term (Operational) Emissions. The project would generate long-term air emissions associated with changes in the permanent use of the project site. These long-term emissions are primarily mobile source emissions that would result from vehicle trips associated with the proposed project. The proposed project would also generate energy emissions from electricity usage in the residential development.

Development of the proposed project would result in the construction of a 326-lot residential development for single-family residences that would result in the emission of air pollutants in the Air Basin, which is currently in non-attainment for federal and State air quality standards. Therefore, implementation of the project could potentially contribute to air quality impacts, which could cause a cumulative impact in the Air Basin. Therefore, the EIR will provide further analysis of cumulative air pollutant emissions associated with the project.

c) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?

Sensitive receptors are defined as residential uses, schools, daycare centers, nursing homes, and medical centers. Individuals particularly vulnerable to diesel particulate matter are children, whose lung tissue is still developing, and the elderly, who may have serious health problems that can be aggravated by exposure to diesel particulate matter. Exposure from diesel exhaust associated with construction activity contributes to both cancer and chronic non-cancer health risks. The nearest sensitive receptors to the project site include residential uses located directly adjacent to the project site's eastern

boundary.

Construction of the proposed project may expose surrounding sensitive receptors to airborne particulates, as well as a small quantity of construction equipment pollutants (i.e., usually diesel-fueled vehicles and equipment). Therefore, the EIR will provide further analysis of air pollutant emissions associated with the proposed project.

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

During construction, the various diesel-powered vehicles and equipment in use on-site would create localized odors. In addition, once developed, proposed uses in the project site could potentially create objectionable odors that could affect adjacent uses. Potential odor emissions resulting from the project would be evaluated in the EIR.

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
IV. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES – Would the project:				
a) Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?			X	
b) Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Game or US Fish and Wildlife Service?			X	

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
c) Have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?			X	
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?			X	
e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?				X
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?				X

DISCUSSION

Argonaut Ecological Consulting Inc. conducted a Biological Resource Assessment (BRA)[7] to assess potential impacts of the proposed project on biological resources. The following summarizes the resources and methods used to assess the project site.

Resources consulted. Documents and sources of information used to prepare this BRA

7 Argonaut Ecological Consulting Inc. 2021. Biological Resource Assessment Tentative Subdivision Map No. 6360 N. Armstrong at E. McKinley APN 574-140-04 & 05. July 23.

include the following:

- U.S. Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service, Soil Survey of Fresno Area (Soils mapper).
- Aerial photography (Google Earth®, Bing®, and historic aerials).
- California Department of Fish and Wildlife, California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDB/RareFind - Recent version with updates).
- Fresno County Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program (FMMP) 1984-2014.
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Information for Planning Consultation (IPAC).
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, National Wetland Inventory Map.
- U.S. Geological Survey, Historical Topographic Map, Clovis Quadrangle, 1919, University of Texas, Austin, Perry-Castañeda Map Collection.
- Henry Madden Library, Fresno State University. Historical Aerial Photography collection dating back to 1957.

Data and Literature Review. The California Natural Diversity Database/ RareFind (CNDDB) and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) IPAC were consulted to determine the species potentially present within the project site based on location. The purpose of the review was to determine the likelihood of special status species being present on the project site based on the site's distance from documented species occurrences and the presence or absence of habitat types utilized by such species. The CNDDB includes records of reported observations for special status plant and animal species and is queried based on a search radius of USGS quadrangle maps. Table 2 shows the special status species occurrence summary for the project area. High-resolution aerial photographs were reviewed to determine if any areas on the project site appear to support the presence of Waters of the U.S. Aerial photographs and wetland mapping were also reviewed to determine the presence of wetlands in the project site.

Table 2: Special Status Species Summary For Project Area

Common Name	Scientific Name	Status	Effects	Occurrence in the Study Area
Birds				
Swainson's hawk	*Buteo swainsoni*	CT	NE	Absent. No raptor nests were observed. Species may use the site for foraging.
Tricolored blackbird	*Agesaius tricolor*	CT	NE	**Absent.** Suitable breeding habitat is not within the Study Area.
Burrowing owl	*Athene Cunicularia*	BCC	NE	**Likely Absent.** The Study Area is in orchard production and frequent movement of orchard equipment likely precludes occupation. No evidence of occupation or potential occupation found.
Western yellow-billed cuckoo	*Coccyzus americanus occidentalis*	FT/CE	NE	**Absent.** The study area does not support riparian streams or riparian habitat that this species requires.
least Bell's vireo	*Vireo bellii pusillus*	FE/CE FE/CE	NE	**Absent.** Breeding habitat historically found in Southern California and the Central Valley, but population was greatly decreased, and breeding was restricted to Southern California. However, riparian restoration in the Central Valley is beginning to show promise of the species resuming

				breeding in the Central Valley. No suitable breeding habitat is present within the Study Area.
Mammals				
Fresno kangaroo rat	*Dipodomys nitratoides*	CE, FE	NE	**Absent**. Species requires a land surface with hummocks as sites for its extensive, but shallow burrow system, and a substrate of suitable compactness to permit burrowing. Critical habitat limited to area within western Fresno County. Suitable habitat is not present.
San Joaquin kit fox	*Vulpes macrotis mutica*	CT, FE	NE	**Absent**. No suitable habitat is present to support species, no dens.
Plants				
Hartweg's golden Sunburst	*Pseudobahia bahiifolia*	CE, FE 1B	NE	**Absent.** Found in Valley grassland habitat. The study area does not support grassland habitat. Habitat appears to be routinely disturbed by agricultural activities and likely precludes establishment.
San Joaquin adobe sunburst	Pseudobahia peirsonii	CE, FT 1B	NE	**Absent.** Found in Valley grassland habitat. The study area does not support grassland habitat and what nonnative grassland is present is densely populated with non-native species.
Sanford's arrowhead	Sagittaria sandordii	1B	NE	**Likely Absent:** Occurs in slow moving waters and irrigation canals, ditches, and detention basins. Mill Ditch supports suitable habitat, but no plants were observed during the field survey.

Source: Argonaut Ecological Consulting, Inc. (2021)

[1] Status= Listing of special status species, unless otherwise indicated
CE: California listed as Endangered
CT: California listed as Threatened
FE: Federally listed as Endangered
FT: Federally listed as Threatened

[2] Effects = Effect determination
NE: No Effect
ME: May effect, not likely to adversely affect

[3] Definition of Occurrence Indicators
Present/Potentially: Species recorded in area
Absent/Likely Absent: Species not recorded in study area and/or
CNDDB = California Natural Diversity Database provided by CDFG

Field Survey. A site survey was performed on March 10, 2021 and again in June 2021. The majority of the project site was walked, and all habitat features were mapped. Soils, vegetation, and drainage patterns within the project site were inspected to determine the habitat present and the habitat's suitability for species of concern.

Environmental Setting. The project site lies within the San Joaquin Valley and is fairly flat, remaining between 384 and around 390 feet above mean sea level throughout the site. Historically, Dog Creek and Red Bank Slough flowed into what is now Mill No. 36 Canal, located adjacent to the project site's southern boundary. Habitat found in the project site includes agricultural habitat (orchard), and ruderal habitat (ruderal habitat is characterized by sparse, non-native, and typically weedy vegetation) along the Mill No. 36 Canal and along portions of the site that front adjacent roadways. There are no wetlands or drainage features within the project site, other than the Mill No. 36 Canal. No

special-status plants or wildlife are expected to occur within the project site, as the site does not have the conditions or habitat required to support special-status species.

a) Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special-status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?

The project site is located in the City of Fresno, is approximately 31.29 acres in size, and is currently used to grow agricultural crops. The project site is surrounded by agricultural and rural residential uses. Based on the field survey, the project site does not contain critical habitat that could support candidate, sensitive or special-status species. Furthermore, no special-status species have been identified within the project site or in the vicinity of the site. Therefore, the proposed project would not have a substantial adverse effect on a special-status species, and the impact would be less than significant. This section will not be included in the EIR.

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

No riparian habitat or other sensitive natural communities have been identified within the project site, or within the vicinity of the project site. The project site is surrounded by agricultural and rural residential uses. As a result, the impact would be less than significant. This section will not be included in the EIR.

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?

The project site is surrounded by agricultural and rural residential uses. The only aquatic feature occurring in the project site is Mill No. 36 Canal. No federally protected aquatic resource occurs within the project site, or within the vicinity of the project site, as confirmed by the field survey of the project site, and through review of the National Wetland Inventory Map.[8] As a result, the proposed project would not have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands, and a less than significant impact would occur. This section will not be included in the EIR.

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?

8 Argonaut Ecological Consulting Inc. 2021. op. cit.

The project site is currently being used to grow agricultural crops and is surrounded by agricultural and rural residential uses. Refer to discussions a) and c) of this section. No special status or protected species, including native and migratory wildlife, have been identified on the site. Furthermore, the project site does not contain the habitat needed to support wildlife species. Additionally, the project site has not been identified as a corridor for wildlife species. Therefore, the proposed project would not interfere with the movement of native resident or migratory wildlife species, and the impact would be less than significant. This section will not be included in the EIR.

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

As described in the BRA, the project would not conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources. Though the proposed project is subject to provisions of the City's Municipal Code regarding trees on public property (Article 3 of Section 13 of the City of Fresno Municipal Code). The proposed project would require removal of existing orchards trees from the project site for development. However, existing orchard trees are not within the protected tree list outlined in Section 13 of the municipal code. Additional, there are no existing trees within the project site that would need to be removed. As such, the proposed project would not conflict with any of the existing ordinances. As a result, no impact would occur. This section will not be included in the EIR.

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?

The PG&E San Joaquin Valley Operation and Maintenance (O&M) Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) was approved in 2007 and covers portions of nine counties, including Fresno County. This HCP covers PG&E activities which occur as a result of ongoing O&M that would have an adverse impact on any of the 65 covered species and provides incidental take coverage from the USFWS and CDFW. The City of Fresno Planning Area is not located within the boundaries of any approved or draft Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP), Natural Community Conservation Plan (NCCP), or other adopted local, regional or state HCP.

Therefore, the project would not conflict with the provisions of the PG&E HCP, or any other an adopted HCP or NCCP and the proposed project and would have no impact. This section will not be included in the EIR.

MITIGATION MEASURES

The proposed project would not result in any potentially significant impacts related to biological resources, and no mitigation is required.

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

DISCUSSION

Peak & Associates, Inc. conducted a Cultural Resources Assessment (CRA)[9] for the proposed project to assess potential impacts to cultural resources. The following impact discussion summarizes the study and results.

Southern San Joaquin Valley Information Center. A record search was conducted for the project area at the Southern San Joaquin Valley Information Center (SSJVIC) of the California Historical Resources Information System on April 26, 2021 (SSJVIC Records Search File No. 21-147; included as Appendix 2 of CRA). No known archeological sites were found in the project site or within a 0.125-mile radius of the site. No portion of the project site has ever been previously surveyed for prehistoric period cultural resources. Six surveys have been previously conducted within the 0.125-mile search radius.

Field Assessment. A field survey of the project site was conducted on April 27, 2021. The project area is agricultural land currently planted with fruit trees. The Mill No. 36 Canal runs adjacent to the project site's southern boundary. The Mill No. 36 Canal was dry at the time of the survey. The land in the project site is flat and likely leveled for irrigation, with berms spaced evenly apart for rows of orchard trees. The survey employed parallel transects five to seven meters apart, following rows between trees. Closer inspection occurred in areas where soil offered exceptional visibility. No prehistoric or historic period

9 Peak & Associates, Inc. 2021. Cultural Resource Assessment for the Armstrong McKinley Project Area, Tentative Subdivision Map No. 6360, City of Fresno, California. June 27.

cultural resources were observed during the survey. There are no resources eligible for the California Register of Historical Resources within the project site.

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

A historical resource defined by CEQA includes one or more of the following criteria: 1) the resource is listed, or found eligible for listing in, the California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR); 2) listed in a local register of historical resources as defined by Public Resources Code (PRC) Section 5020.1(k); 3) identified as significant in a historical resources survey meeting the requirements of PRC Section 5024.1(g); or 4) determined to be a historical resource by the project's lead agency (PRC Section 21084.1; CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.(a)). Under CEQA, historical resources include built-environment resources and archaeological sites.

No historical resources have been identified in the project site. However, the City has determined that impacts to historical resources could occur as a result of development within the City, and that unknown historical resources may be present in undeveloped parcels. Adherence to Mitigation Measure CUL-1 would require consultation with a qualified historical resource specialist on the event of finding a previously unknown historical resource during construction of the proposed project. Therefore, implementation of Mitigation Measure CUL-1 would reduce potential impacts to unknown historical resources to less than significant. This section will not be included in the EIR.

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

According to the CEQA Guidelines, "When a project will impact an archaeological site, a lead agency shall first determine whether the site is an historical resource" (CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5(c)(1)). Those archaeological sites that do not qualify as historical resources shall be assessed to determine if these qualify as "unique archaeological resources" (California PRC Section 21083.2).

No archeological resources have been identified on the project site. However, there is potential for unknown archaeological resources to be discovered during project construction. Mitigation Measure CUL-2 requires that if unknown archaeological resources are discovered during construction of the proposed project, work in the area would halt and a qualified archaeologist would be consulted. Therefore, adherence to the requirements in Mitigation Measure CUL-2 would reduce potential impacts to archaeological resources to less than significant. This section will not be included in the EIR.

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

Disturbance of human remains interred outside of formal cemeteries would result in a significant impact. If human remains are identified during project construction, Section 7050.5 of the California Health and Safety Code and Section 5097.98 of the Public Resources Code shall apply, as appropriate. In addition, the project would comply with Mitigation Measure CUL-3, which requires notifying the County Coroner and other relevant parties in the event that human remains are found during construction of the proposed project. Therefore, adherence to the requirements in Mitigation Measure CUL-3 would reduce potential impacts to unknown human remains to less than significant. This section will not be included in the EIR.

MITIGATION MEASURES

Mitigation Measure CUL-1: If previously unknown resources are encountered before or during grading activities, construction shall stop in the immediate vicinity of the find and a qualified historical resources specialist shall be consulted to determine whether the resource requires further study. The qualified historical resources specialist shall make recommendations to the City on the measures that shall be implemented to protect the discovered resources, including but not limited to excavation of the finds and evaluation of the finds in accordance with Section 15064.5 of the CEQA Guidelines and the City's Historic Preservation Ordinance. If the resources are determined to be unique historical resources as defined under Section 15064.5 of the CEQA Guidelines, measures shall be identified by the monitor and recommended to the Lead Agency. Appropriate measures for significant resources could include avoidance or capping, incorporation of the site in green space, parks, or open space, or data recovery excavations of the finds.

No further grading shall occur in the area of the discovery until the Lead Agency approves the measures to protect these. Any historical artifacts recovered as a result of mitigation shall be provided to a City-approved institution or person who is capable of providing long-term preservation to allow future scientific study.

Mitigation Measure CUL-2: Subsequent to a preliminary City review of the project grading plans, if there is evidence that a project will include excavation or construction activities within previously undisturbed soils, a field survey and literature search for prehistoric archaeological resources shall be conducted. The following procedures shall be followed:

- If prehistoric resources are not found during either the field survey or literature search, excavation and/or construction activities can commence. In the event that buried prehistoric archaeological resources are discovered during excavation and/or construction activities, construction shall stop in the immediate vicinity of the find and a qualified archaeologist shall be consulted to determine whether the resource requires further study. The qualified archaeologist shall make recommendations to the City on the measures that shall be implemented to protect the discovered resources, including but not limited to excavation of the finds and evaluation of the finds in accordance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5. If the resources are

determined to be unique prehistoric archaeological resources as defined under Section 15064.5 of the CEQA Guidelines, mitigation measures shall be identified by the monitor and recommended to the City of Fresno. Appropriate measures for significant resources could include avoidance or capping, incorporation of the site in green space, parks, or open space, or data recovery excavations of the finds. No further grading shall occur in the area of the discovery until the City of Fresno approves the measures to protect these resources. Any prehistoric archaeological artifacts recovered as a result of mitigation shall be provided to a City-approved institution or person who is capable of providing long-term preservation to allow future scientific study.

- If prehistoric resources are found during the field survey or literature review, the resources shall be inventoried using appropriate State record forms and submit the forms to the Southern San Joaquin Valley Information Center. The resources shall be evaluated for significance. If the resources are found to be significant, measures shall be identified by the qualified archaeologist. Similar to above, appropriate mitigation measures for significant resources could include avoidance or capping, incorporation of the site in green space, parks, or open space, or data recovery excavations of the finds. In addition, appropriate mitigation for excavation and construction activities in the vicinity of the resources found during the field survey or literature review shall include an archaeological monitor. The monitoring period shall be determined by the qualified archaeologist. If additional prehistoric archaeological resources are found during excavation and/or construction activities, the procedure identified above for the discovery of unknown resources shall be followed.

Mitigation Measure CUL-3: In the event that human remains are unearthed during excavation and grading activities of any future development project, all activity shall cease immediately. Pursuant to Health and Safety Code (HSC) Section 7050.5, no further disturbance shall occur until the County Coroner has made the necessary findings as to origin and disposition pursuant to PRC Section 5097.98(a). If the remains are determined to be of Native American descent, the coroner shall within 24 hours notify the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC). The NAHC shall then contact the most likely descendent of the deceased Native American, who shall then serve as the consultant on how to proceed with the remains. Pursuant to PRC Section 5097.98(b), upon the discovery of Native American remains, the landowner shall ensure that the immediate vicinity, according to generally accepted cultural or archaeological standards or practices, where the Native American human remains are located is not damaged or disturbed by further development activity until the landowner has discussed and conferred with the most likely descendants regarding their recommendations, if applicable, taking into account the possibility of multiple human remains. The landowner shall discuss and confer with the descendants all reasonable options regarding the descendants' preferences for treatment.

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

DISCUSSION

a) Result in potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during project construction or operation?

The proposed project would increase the demand for electricity and fuel. The discussion and analysis provided below is based on data included in the California Emissions Estimator Model (CalEEMod) output, which is included in Appendix C of the EIR.

Construction-Period Energy Use. The anticipated construction schedule assumes that the proposed project would be built over approximately 36 months. The proposed project would require grading, site preparation, and building activities during construction. Construction of the proposed project would require energy for the manufacture and transportation of construction materials, preparation of the site for grading activities, and construction of the residences. Petroleum fuels (e.g., diesel and gasoline) would be the primary sources of energy for these activities. Construction activities are not anticipated to result in an inefficient use of energy as gasoline and diesel fuel would be supplied by construction contractors who would conserve the use of their supplies to minimize their costs on the project. Energy usage on the project site during construction would be temporary in nature and would be relatively small in comparison to the State's available energy sources. Therefore, the proposed project would result in a less-than-significant impact during project construction.

Operational Energy Use. Energy use is typically associated with natural gas use, electricity consumption, and fuel used for vehicle and truck trips. The proposed project

would be all-electric; therefore, the proposed project would not consume natural gas. Electricity consumption was estimated for the project using default energy intensities by land use type in CalEEMod.

In addition, the proposed project would result in energy usage associated with gasoline and diesel to fuel project-related trips. Based on the CalEEMod analysis, the proposed project would result in approximately 6,934,713 vehicle miles traveled (VMT) per year. The average fuel economy for light-duty vehicles (autos, pickups, vans, and SUVs) in the United States has steadily increased from about 14.9 miles per gallon (mpg) in 1980 to 22.9 mpg in 2020.[10] The average fuel economy for heavy-duty trucks in the United States has also steadily increased, from 5.7 mpg in 2013 to a projected 8.0 mpg in 2021.[11] Therefore, using the average fuel economy estimates for 2020 and 2021, the proposed project would result in the consumption of approximately 238,675 gallons of gasoline and 184,498 gallons of diesel.

Table 3 shows the estimated potential increased electricity demand and fuel consumption associated with the proposed project.

Table 3: Estimated Annual Energy Use of Proposed Project

Electricity Use (kWh per year)	Natural Gas Use (therms per year)	Gasoline Consumption (gallons per year)	Diesel Fuel Consumption (gallons per year)
3,075,585	0	238,675	184,498

Source: LSA (December 2023).
kWh = kilowatt-hours

As shown in Table 3, the estimated potential increased electricity demand associated with the proposed project is 3,075,585 kilowatt-hours (kWh) per year. In 2021, Fresno County consumed 8,378 GWh or 8,378,047,292 kWh.[12] Therefore, electricity demand associated with the proposed project would be less than 0.1 percent of Fresno County's total electricity demand.

In addition, the proposed project would result in energy usage associated with gasoline and diesel to fuel project-related trips. As shown above in Table 3, vehicle trips associated with the proposed project would consume approximately 238,675 gallons of gasoline and 184,498 gallons of diesel fuel per year. Based on fuel consumption obtained from EMFAC2021, approximately 157 million gallons of diesel and approximately 372 million gallons of gasoline will be consumed from vehicle trips in Fresno County in 2023.

10 U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT). "Table 4-23: Average Fuel Efficiency of U.S. Light Duty Vehicles." Website: https://www.bts.gov/content/average-fuel-efficiency-us-light-duty-vehicles (accessed May 2023).

11 Ibid.

12 California Energy Commission (CEC), 2021a. Energy Consumption Data Management Service. Electricity Consumption by County. Website: www.ecdms.energy.ca.gov/elecbycounty.aspx (accessed May 2023).

Therefore, vehicle and truck trips associated with the proposed project would increase the annual fuel use in Fresno County by less than 0.1 percent for gasoline fuel usage and by less than 0.1 percent for diesel fuel usage.

The proposed project would exceed Title 24 standards and would install energy efficient appliances. The proposed project would also incorporate the following energy reduction strategies: third party independent inspections would be conducted to assure energy efficiency compliance; heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) equipment would be rated 14 seasonal energy efficiency ratio (SEER), 12 energy efficiency ratio (EER) and 92 percent ultra efficient; solar panels would be provided ranging from 3.71 kilowatts (kW) to 3.98 kW; and windows would be argon-filled vinyl low-e, double strength glass to reduce energy and increase ultraviolet (UV) blockage.

In addition, proposed new development would be constructed using energy efficient modern building materials and construction practices, and the proposed project also would use new modern appliances and equipment, in accordance with the Appliance Efficiency Regulations (Title 20, CCR Sections 1601 through 1608). The expected energy consumption during construction and operation of the proposed project would be consistent with typical usage rates for residential uses; however, energy consumption is largely a function of personal choice and the physical structure and layout of buildings.

PG&E is the private utility that would supply the proposed project's electricity services. In 2021, a total of 50 percent of PG&E's delivered electricity came from renewable sources, including solar, wind, geothermal, small hydroelectric and various forms of bioenergy.[13] PG&E reached California's 2020 renewable energy goal in 2017, and is positioned to meet the State's 60 percent by 2030 renewable energy mandate set forth in Senate Bill (SB) 100. In addition, PG&E plans to continue to provide reliable service to their customers and upgrade their distribution systems as necessary to meet future demand.

Therefore, the proposed project would result in a less-than-significant impact during project operation. As such, the proposed project would not result in a potential significant impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources during project construction or operation. This section will not be included in the EIR.

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

In 2002, the Legislature passed SB 1389, which required the California Energy Commission (CEC) to develop an integrated energy plan every two years for electricity, natural gas, and transportation fuels, for the California Energy Policy Report. The plan calls for the State to assist in the transformation of the transportation system to improve air quality, reduce congestion, and increase the efficient use of fuel supplies with the least

[13] PG&E, 2021. *Exploring Clean Energy Solutions*. https://www.pge.com/en_US/about-pge/environment/what-we-are-doing/clean-energy-solutions/clean-energy-solutions.page?WT.mc_id=Vanity_cleanenergy (accessed May 2023).

environmental and energy costs. To further this policy, the plan identifies a number of strategies, including assistance to public agencies and fleet operators in implementing incentive programs for zero emission (ZE) vehicles and their infrastructure needs, and encouragement of urban designs that reduce VMT and accommodate pedestrian and bicycle access.

The most recently CEC adopted energy report is the 2023 Integrated Energy Policy Report[14]. The Integrated Energy Policy Report provides the results of the CEC's assessments of a variety of energy issues facing California. Many of these issues will require action if the State is to meet its climate, energy, air quality, and other environmental goals while maintaining energy reliability and controlling costs. The Integrated Energy Policy Report covers a broad range of topics, including implementation of SB 350, integrated resource planning, distributed energy resources, transportation electrification, solutions to increase resiliency in the electricity sector, energy efficiency, transportation electrification, barriers faced by disadvantaged communities, demand response, transmission and landscape-scale planning, the California Energy Demand Preliminary Forecast, the preliminary transportation energy demand forecast, renewable gas (in response to SB 1383), updates on California electricity reliability, natural gas outlook, and climate adaptation and resiliency.

As indicated above, the proposed project would not result in wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during project construction or operation. Because California's energy conservation planning actions are conducted at a regional level, and because the proposed project's total impact to regional energy supplies would be minor, the proposed project would not conflict with California's energy conservation plans as described in the CEC's Integrated Energy Policy Report. Therefore, the impact would be less than significant. This section will not be included in the EIR.

MITIGATION MEASURES

The proposed project would not result in any potentially significant impacts related to energy, and no mitigation is required.

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
VII. GEOLOGY AND SOILS – Would the project:				

[14] California Energy Commission, 2023. *2023 Integrated Energy Policy Report*. California Energy Commission. Docket Number: 23-IEPR-01.

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	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:			X	
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.			X	
ii) Strong seismic ground shaking?			X	
iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?			X	
iv) Landslides?			X	
b) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?			X	
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?			X	
d) Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial risks to life or property?			X	

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
e) Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative waste water disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of waste water?				X
f) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?		X		

DISCUSSION

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 California Geological Survey Special Publication 42.);

Fault ruptures are generally expected to occur along active fault traces that have exhibited signs of recent geological movement (i.e. in the last 11,000 years). Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zones delineate areas around active faults with potential surface fault rupture hazards that would require specific geological investigations prior to approval of certain kinds of development within the delineated area. The project site is not located within an Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zone. In addition, no known active or potentially active faults or fault traces are located in the project vicinity. The closest active faults are the Nunez Fault, located approximately 57 miles from the project site, and the Ortigalita Fault, located approximately 67 miles from the project site. Due to the distance of these known faults, no people or structures would be exposed to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death from the rupture of a known earthquake fault as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map. Therefore, potential impacts related to fault rupture would be less than significant. This section will not be included in the EIR.

ii. Strong seismic ground shaking;

The City of Fresno is located in an area with historically low to moderate level of

seismicity. However, strong ground shaking could occur within the project site during seismic events, and occurrences have the possibility to result in significant impacts. Major seismic activity along the nearby Great Valley Fault Zone, the Nunez Fault, or other associated faults could affect the project site through seismic ground shaking. Strong seismic ground shaking could potentially cause structural damage to the proposed project. However, due to the distance of the project site to the known active faults, hazards due to ground shaking would be minimal. In addition, compliance with the California Building Code (Title 24, California Code of Regulations) would ensure that geotechnical design of the proposed project would reduce potential impacts related to seismic ground shaking to less than significant. This section will not be included in the EIR.

iii. Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction;

Soil liquefaction is a phenomenon primarily associated with saturated soil layers located close to the ground surface. During ground shaking, these soils lose strength and acquire "mobility" sufficient to permit both horizontal and vertical movements. Soils that are most susceptible to liquefaction are clean, loose, uniformly graded, saturated, fine-grained sands that lie relatively close to the ground surface. However, loose sands that contain a significant amount of fines (silt and clay) may also liquefy. Based on the predicted seismic accelerations, and soil and groundwater conditions typically encountered in the region, general liquefaction potential is low in the Fresno Planning Area.[15] Furthermore, compliance with the Fresno Municipal Code and the California Building Code would ensure potential impacts associated with seismic-related ground failure would be less than significant. This section will not be included in the EIR.

iv. Landslides?

A landslide generally occurs on relatively steep slopes and/or on slopes underlain by weak materials. The City of Fresno Planning Area is located within an area that consists of mostly flat topography within the Central Valley. Accordingly, there is no risk of large landslides in the majority of the Planning Area. However, there is the potential for landslides and slumping along the steep banks of rivers, such as the San Joaquin River bluff, creeks, drainage basins and the many unlined basins and canals that trend throughout the Planning Area. The project site is located on a relatively flat area and is not located next to any hills, within 300 feet of the San Joaquin River bluff, or near unlined basins and canals. Therefore, the potential for the proposed project to expose people or structures to risk as a result of landslides would be less than significant. This section will not be included in the EIR.

15 City of Fresno. 2020. General Plan Program Environmental Impact Report - Geology and Soils. Website: https://www.fresno.gov/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/Fresno-GP-Public-Review-Draft-Program-EIR.pdf (accessed July 25, 2023).

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

The total project site is 31.29 acres, which would be disturbed/developed during proposed grading and construction activities. Grading and earthmoving during project construction has the potential to result in erosion and loss of topsoil. Exposed soils could be entrained in stormwater runoff and transported off the project site. However, this impact would be reduced to a less-than-significant level through compliance with water quality control measures, which include preparation of a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) (refer to Section X, Hydrology and Water Quality). Although designed primarily to protect stormwater quality, the SWPPP would incorporate Best Management Practices (BMPs) to minimize erosion. Additional details regarding the SWPPP are provided in Section X, Hydrology and Water Quality of this Initial Study. This impact would be less than significant. This section will not be included in the EIR.

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?

As described in response to a) in this section, soils on the project site would not be subject to liquefaction, lateral spreading, or landslides. Additionally, the proposed project would be required to conform with the California Building Code, which would reduce risks related to unstable soils. Therefore, the proposed project would have a less-than-significant impact related to the potential to 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. This section will not be included in the EIR.

d) Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994, as updated), creating substantial direct or indirect risks to life or property?

Expansive soils are characterized by the potential for shrinking and swelling as the moisture content of the soil decreases and increases, respectively. Shrink-swell potential is influenced by the amount and type of clay minerals present and can be measured by the percent change of the soil volume. The project site contains Ramona loam and Hanford fine sandy loam, soils with medium to low clay content and medium to low shrink-swell potential.[16] Compliance with the California Building Code requirements would ensure the implementation of design features that would reduce potential impacts related to expansive soils to a less-than-significant level. As such, the risk of expansive soils affecting the proposed project is considered low and would represent a less-than-significant impact. This section will not be included in the EIR.

16 Natural Resources Conservation Service. Web Soil Survey. Website: https://websoilsurvey.sc.egov.usda.gov/App/WebSoilSurvey.aspx (accessed April 19, 2022).

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

The project site would be served by a wastewater conveyance system maintained by the Wastewater Management Division (WMD) of the City of Fresno. Wastewater from the City's collection system is treated at the City's wastewater treatment plant. Development of the proposed project would not involve the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems. Therefore, the proposed project would have no impact related to the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems. This section will not be included in the EIR.

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

No paleontological resources or unique geological features are known to exist within or near the project site, and the proposed project is not expected to alter or destroy a paleontological resource, site, or unique geologic feature. However, development of previously undisturbed parcels in the City could result in the discovery of paleontological resources or unique geologic features. Mitigation Measure GEO-1 would require the project to assess the presence of paleontological resources or unique geologic features if construction activities occur in undisturbed soils. Mitigation Measure GEO-1 would also require the implementation of mitigation measures issued by a qualified paleontologist in the event of finding previously unknown resources during project construction. Adherence to the requirements in Mitigation Measure GEO-1 would reduce potential impacts to paleontological resources or unique geologic features to less than significant. This section will not be included in the EIR.

MITIGATION MEASURES

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

- If unique paleontological/geological resources are not found during either the field survey or literature search, excavation and/or construction activities can commence. In the event that unique paleontological/geological resources are discovered during excavation and/or construction activities, construction shall stop in the immediate vicinity of the find and a qualified paleontologist shall be consulted to determine whether the resource requires further study. The qualified paleontologist shall make recommendations to the City on the measures that shall be implemented to protect the discovered resources, including but not limited to, excavation of the finds and evaluation of the finds.

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

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

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

DISCUSSION

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

The *State CEQA Guidelines* indicate that a project would normally have a significant adverse green-house gas emission impact if the project would:

- Generate greenhouse gas emissions, 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.

Section 15064.4 of the *State CEQA Guidelines* states that: "A lead agency should make a good-faith effort, based to the extent possible on scientific and factual data, to describe, calculate or estimate the amount of greenhouse gas emissions resulting from a project." In performing that analysis, the lead agency has discretion to determine whether to use a model or methodology to quantify greenhouse gas emissions, or to rely on a qualitative analysis or performance-based standards. In making a determination as to the significance of potential impacts, the lead agency then considers the extent to which the project may increase or reduce greenhouse gas emissions as compared to the existing environmental setting, whether the project emissions exceed a threshold of significance that the lead agency determines applies to the project, and the extent to which the project complies with regulations or requirements adopted to implement a statewide, regional, or local plan for the reduction or mitigation of greenhouse gas emissions.

Therefore, consistent with the *State CEQA Guidelines,* Section 15183.5, if a project is consistent with an adopted qualified Greenhouse Gas Reduction Strategy that meets required standards, it can be presumed that the project would not have significant greenhouse gas emission impacts.

The City of Fresno Greenhouse Gas Reduction Plan (GHG Reduction Plan), adopted in December 2014 and updated in 2021, meets the requirements for a Qualified Greenhouse Gas Reduction Strategy. Therefore, the proposed project's greenhouse gas emissions would not be considered significant if the proposed project is consistent with the City's GHG Reduction Plan Update.

The EIR will analyze greenhouse gas emissions from the proposed project and determine whether the proposed project would be consistent with the City's GHG Reduction Plan Update to define significance of greenhouse gas emissions.

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

As discussed in discussion a) above, the City of Fresno GHG Reduction Plan Update is Qualified Greenhouse Gas Reduction Strategy (State CEQA Guidelines, Section 15183.5) implemented to reach Statewide, regional, and local greenhouse gas emission reduction goals.

The EIR will determine whether the proposed project would be consistent with the City's GHG Reduction Plan Update and other applicable plans, policies or regulations adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases.

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
IX. HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIAL – Would the project:				
a) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?			X	
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?			X	
c) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?			X	
d) Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?				X

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?			X	
f) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?			X	
g) Expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires?			X	

DISCUSSION

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

Construction activities associated with the proposed project would involve the use of limited amounts of potentially hazardous materials, including but not limited to, solvents, paints, fuels, oils, and transmission fluids. However, all materials used during construction would be contained, stored, and handled in compliance with applicable standards and regulations established by the Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC), the United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA), and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA). The proposed project consists of single-family residential uses and would not introduce manufacturing, industrial, or other uses utilizing large amounts of hazardous materials into the project site. The proposed residential use would utilize small quantities of common hazardous substances, including paints, fuels, oils and cleaning agents during project operation. All storage, handling, and disposal of hazardous materials during project construction and operation would comply with applicable standards and regulations, including General Plan Policies NS-4-a, NS-4-e,

and NS-4-f.[17] Compliance with applicable regulations regarding the handling and storage of hazardous substances would result in a less-than-significant impact. This section will not be included in the EIR.

- **Policy NS-4-a: Processing and Storage.** Require safe processing and storage of hazardous materials, consistent with the California Building Code and the Uniform Fire Code, as adopted by the City.

- **Policy NS-4-e: Compliance with County Program.** Require that the production, use, storage, disposal, and transport of hazardous materials conform to the standards and procedures established by the County Division of Environmental Health. Require compliance with the County's Hazardous Waste Generator Program, including the submittal and implementation of a Hazardous Materials Business Plan, when applicable.

- **Policy NS-4-f: Hazardous Materials Facilities.** Require facilities that handle hazardous materials or hazardous wastes to be designed, constructed, and operated in accordance with applicable hazardous materials and waste management laws and regulations.

b) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and/or accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?

See discussion a) above. Additionally, Phase I Environmental Site Assessments (ESAs)[18] [19]were prepared by Krazan and Associates, Inc. for the project parcels (i.e., APNs 574-140-04 and 574-140-05) to identify recognized environmental conditions (RECs) in connection with the previous ownership and uses of the site. The term recognized environmental conditions means the presence or likely presence of any hazardous substances or petroleum products in, on, or at a property: (1) due to any release to the environment; (2) under conditions indicative of a release to the environment; or (3) under conditions that pose a material threat of a future release to the environment.

The scope of work for the Phase I ESAs included a reconnaissance of existing on-site conditions and observations of adjacent property uses, a review of Project Applicant-provided documents, historical aerial photographs of the site, and pertinent building permit records, cross-referencing directories and historical Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps

17 City of Fresno. 2014. Fresno General Plan - Noise and Safety Element. pp. 9-33, 9-34. Website: https://www.fresno.gov/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/9-Noise-and-Safety-02-03-21.pdf (accessed July 25, 2023).

18 Krazan and Associates, Inc. 2021. Phase I Environmental Site Assessment, Ryan Metzler Agricultural Property, East of North Armstrong Avenue and North of the Mill Ditch, APN 574-140-05, Fresno, California 93727. March 30.

19 Krazan and Associates, Inc. 2021. Phase I Environmental Site Assessment, Hagerty Property, Northeast of N. Armstrong Avenue & Mill Ditch, APN 574-140-04, Fresno, California 93727. May 12.

(SFIMs), interviews with people knowledgeable of the previous and current ownership and uses of the project site, and a review of local regulatory agency records and local, state, and federal regulatory agency lists.

The project site consists of agricultural land currently used for cultivation of fruit orchard. The project site is relatively flat and located approximately 340 to 345 feet above mean sea level. The project site is located within the San Joaquin Valley, which is dominated by sedimentary deposits derived from the erosion of the Sierra Nevada Mountains. Near-surface sediments are dominated by sands and silty sands with lesser silts, minor clays, and gravel. Groundwater in the project vicinity is reported to be first encountered at a depth of approximately 80 feet below ground surface (bgs).

Assessment of the project site did not identify building structures or evidence of hazardous materials storage or waste onsite. The only other structures found on the site include one electrically powered agricultural water well and associated booster pump, agricultural filtration system and pole-mounted electrical transformer located along the site's southern boundary, and another agricultural water well and associated booster pump, as well as two pole-mounted electrical transformers, located along the site's northeastern corner.

Review of historical aerial photographs of the site revealed that the project site has been in agricultural use since at least 1937. Although the potential exists that environmentally persistent pesticides/herbicides were historically applied to the orchards grown on the project site, 1) no material evidence of the use of environmentally persistent pesticides/herbicides was obtained during the course of the site assessment, and 2) it is anticipated that any environmentally persistent pesticides/herbicides potentially located onsite will be dislocated and diluted as a result of the grading and trenching operations which will be conducted in conjunction with the development of the site. As such, the potential for elevated concentrations of environmentally persistent pesticides/herbicides related to crop cultivation to exist in the near-surface soils onsite at concentrations which would require regulatory action is considered low.

One potential area of concern due to a data gap was identified for the site, as one residential unit with associated out-structures was observed in historical aerial photographs of the site between 1937 and 1962. While no underground storage tanks (USTs) for the project site were identified on file with the local regulatory agencies, USTs on rural or agricultural properties historically have been exempt from requirements for registration with regulatory agencies. As such, it is unknown whether subsurface features such as unregistered USTs may exist on the site and remain unknown based upon the absence of any regulatory or municipality data or evidence indicating their presence or location. However, based on review of existing files documenting the project site, review of historical aerial photographs, a site reconnaissance, contacts with the local regulatory agencies, and an interview with a representative of the owner of the project site, there is no evidence that recognized environmental conditions exist in connection with the historical uses of the project site.

Additionally, review of government database reports, and consultation with local regulatory agencies indicates that there is no evidence that RECs exist in connection with the project site from adjacent or vicinity property uses.

Therefore, the proposed project would not result in a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials, or result in a foreseeable upset and/or accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment. Additionally, the proposed project would comply with the General Plan Policies outlined above, which require compliance with local, State and federal standards and procedures to avoid the release or upset of hazardous materials. This impact would be less than significant. This section will not be included in the EIR.

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

The closest existing schools to the project site are the Virginia R. Boris Elementary School, located approximately 0.28-mile northeast of the project site, Temperance-Kutner Elementary School, located approximately 0.55-mile south of the project site and Roger S. Oraze Elementary School, located approximately 1.12 miles north of the project site. Additionally, the Clovis Unified School District (CUSD) is planning the construction of a new elementary school located at the intersection of McKinley and Fowler Avenues20, approximately 0.39-mile west of the site. As previously stated, the proposed project would not result in the use or emission of substantial quantities of hazardous materials that would pose a human or environmental health risk. In addition, all hazardous materials within the project site would be handled, stored, and disposed of in accordance with applicable standards and regulations. Therefore, because the proposed project would not result in the emission of hazardous materials or acutely hazardous substances within one-quarter mile of a school, the impact would be less than significant. This section will not be included in the EIR.

d) Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?

According to the DTSC EnviroStor database,[21] the project site is not located on a federal superfund site, State response site, voluntary cleanup site, school cleanup site, evaluation site, school investigation site, military evaluation site, tiered permit site, or corrective action site. The project site is not included on the list of hazardous materials

20 Clovis Unified School District (CUSD). 2022. Annual Report to the Community. Website: https://www.cusd.com/AnnualReport.aspx (accessed July 25, 2023).

21 California Department of Toxic Substances Control. 2007. EnviroStor. Website: https://www.envirostor.dtsc.ca.gov/public/map/?myaddress=fresno (accessed April 19, 2022).

sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5.[22] As a result, the proposed project would not create a significant hazard to the public or the environment, and there would be no impact. This section will not be included in the EIR.

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 for people residing or working in the project area?

The nearest airports to the project site include the Fresno Yosemite International Airport, located approximately 1.6 miles west of the project site, Fresno Chandler Executive Airport, located approximately 8.3 miles southwest of the project site, and the Sierra Sky Airport, located approximately 11 miles northwest of the project site. The nearest medical center helipads (HP) include the Saint Agnes Medical Center HP, located approximately 7.0 miles northwest of the project site and the Valley Children's Hospital HP located approximately 10.6 miles northwest of the project site.[23] Due to the distance between the project site and local helipads, operations at these locations are not expected to pose a safety hazard for people in the project site.

The project site is within Zone 6 (Traffic Pattern Zone) of the Fresno Yosemite International Airport. Within Zone 6, prohibited uses include outdoor stadiums and similar high intensity uses, as well as uses that would represent hazards to flight including physical (e.g., tall objects), visual, and electronic forms of interference with the safety of aircraft operations.[24] The proposed project would include a 326-lot residential development compliant with the with applicable measurements, height, and design requirements for the proposed RS-5 zoning for the project site, and as such would not introduce an incompatible use that would represent a visual hazard. The project site is currently designated Low-Density Residential in the General Plan and zoned within the RS-3 District. The proposed project would require a General Plan Amendment and Rezone to Medium Density Residential and RS-5 respectively. The Project Applicant would be required to submit a General Plan Amendment and Rezone application and comply with all the City's associated requirements and fees. After fulfilment of a General Plan Amendment and Rezone requirements, the proposed residential density of the project would be compatible with permitted densities for the project site's zoning and General Plan land use designation. Additionally, the proposed residential use is not expected to result in electronic interference to aircrafts in the vicinity. Within Zone 6, there is generally no concern with regard to any object up to 100 feet above ground level (AGL) unless it is located on high ground or it is a solitary object (e.g., an antenna) more than 35 feet AGL. The proposed project is located in a generally flat area and would include

22 California Environmental Protection Agency. 2018. Government Code Section 65962.5(a) Hazardous Waste and Substances Site List. Website: https://calepa.ca.gov/sitecleanup/corteselist/section-65962-5a/ (accessed April 19, 2022).

23 California Department of Transportation (Caltrans). 2019. Caltrans HeliPlates. website: https://heliplates.dot.ca.gov/# (accessed April 19, 2022).

24 Fresno Council of Governments, 2018. *Fresno County Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan*. December.

residential units with dimensions in compliance with proposed zoning for the site. As such, the project would not introduce oversized objects or solitary objects that would result in a physical hazard to aircrafts. Therefore, the proposed project would not expose persons to airport-related hazards, and the potential impact would be less than significant. This section will not be included in the EIR.

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

The California Emergency Services Act requires cities to prepare and maintain an Emergency Plan for natural, manmade, or war-caused emergencies that result in conditions of disaster or in extreme peril to life. The City's full-time Emergency Preparedness Officer (EPO) is responsible for ensuring that Fresno's emergency response plans are up-to-date and implemented properly. The EPO also facilitates cooperation between City departments and other local, State and federal agencies that would be involved in emergency response operations. The City of Fresno Emergency Operations Center (EOC) serves as the coordination and communication between the City of Fresno and Fresno County Operational Area EOC. The proposed project would not result in any alterations of existing roadways that would permanently block the circulation of emergency response services or introduce elements that would conflict with the operations of the EOC. Therefore, the proposed project would not interfere with emergency evacuation plans in the City, and this impact would be less than significant. This section will not be included in the EIR.

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

Wildland fires occur in geographic areas that contain the types and conditions of vegetation, topography, weather, and structure density susceptible to risks associated with uncontrolled fires that can be started by lightning, improperly managed campfires, cigarettes, sparks from automobiles, and other ignition sources. The project site is located in an area mapped as Local Responsibility Area (LRA) Unzoned, indicating that the area is urbanized and not susceptible to wildland conflagrations, and is not located within a very high fire hazard severity zone (VHFHSZ).[25] Therefore, the proposed project would not expose people or structures to a significant loss, injury or death involving wildland fires and the impact would be less than significant. This section will not be included in the EIR.

MITIGATION MEASURES

25 California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE). 2022. Fresno County State Responsibility Area Fire Hazard Severity Zones. Website: https://osfm.fire.ca.gov/fire-hazard-severity-zones-maps-2022/ (accessed April 2023).

The proposed project would not result in any potentially significant impacts related to hazards and hazardous materials, and no mitigation is required.

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
X. HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY – Would the project:				
a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or ground water quality?			X	
b) Substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin?			X	
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:			X	
i) Result in a substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site;			X	
ii) Substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or off-site:			X	
iii) create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff; or			X	

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
iv) impede or redirect flood flows?			X	
d) In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk release of pollutants due to project inundation?			X	
e) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan?			X	

DISCUSSION

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

The State Water Resources Control Board and nine Regional Water Quality Control Boards regulate the water quality of surface water and groundwater bodies throughout California. The proposed project is within the jurisdiction of the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB).

Construction. Pollutants of concern during construction include sediments, trash, petroleum products, concrete waste (dry and wet), sanitary waste, and chemicals. During project construction , there would be an increased potential to expose soils to wind and water erosion, which could result in temporary minimal increases in sediment load in nearby water bodies, including Mill No. 36 Canal, located directly south of the project site.

Because the project would disturb greater than 1 acre of soil, it is required to comply with the State Water Resources Control Board's National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) General Permit for Storm Water Discharges Associated with Construction and Land Disturbance Activities (Order No. 2009-0009-DWQ, as amended by 2010-0014-DWG and 2012-0006-DWQ, NPDES No. CAS000002) (Construction General Permit). The project is also subject to Article 7, Urban Storm Water Quality Management and Discharge Control, Section 6-714, Requirement to Prevent, Control, and Reduce Storm Water Pollutants of the City's Municipal Code.

The Construction General Permit requires the preparation of a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) and implement Construction Best Management Practices (BMPs). Construction BMPs would include, but not be limited to, erosion and sediment

control, designed to minimize erosion and retain sediment on site, and good housekeeping practices to prevent spills, leaks, and discharge of construction debris and waste into receiving waters. Section 6-714 of the City's Municipal Code also requires the implementation of BMPs to the maximum extent technologically and economically feasible to prevent and reduce pollutants from entering stormwater during construction. Therefore, adherence to the required SWPPP and the City's Municipal Code and implementation of construction BMPs, would reduce the potential for the discharge of pollutants into Mill No. 36 Canal during construction and impacts associated with the violation of water quality standards or waste discharge requirements would be less than significant.

Operation. Operation of the proposed project could result in surface water pollution associated with chemicals, liquid products, petroleum products (such as paints, solvents, and fuels), and waste that may be spilled or leaked and have the potential to be transported via runoff during periods of heavy precipitation into nearby water bodies.

The City of Fresno operates under the California Regional Water Quality Control Board Central Valley Regional National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Permit and Waste Discharge Requirements General Permit for Discharges from Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems (MS4) (Order No. R5-2016-0040-014, NPDES No. CAS0085324). Consistent with the City of Fresno's MS4 Permit, the project would implement storm water quality controls recommended in the Fresno-Clovis Storm Water Quality Management Construction and Post-Construction Guidelines. Adherence to the City of Fresno's MS4 Permit would reduce the potential for the discharge of pollutants during project operations and impacts associated with the violation of water quality standards or waste discharge requirements would be less than significant.

Infiltration of stormwater could have the potential to affect groundwater quality. The majority of the project site would be impervious surface; and therefore, it is not expected that stormwater would infiltrate during project operations. Because stormwater would be collected and diverted to the storm drain system, there is not a direct path for pollutants to reach groundwater. Therefore, project operations would not violate groundwater quality standards or waste discharge requirements and impacts would be less than significant.

Therefore, impacts associated with the proposed project would be less than significant. This section will not be included in the EIR.

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

The City of Fresno overlies the Kings Subbasin, which is part of the greater San Joaquin Valley Groundwater Basin. Temporary dewatering from excavations could be necessary during construction. Construction-related dewatering would be temporary and limited to the area of excavations on the project site and would not substantially contribute to

depletion of groundwater supplies. Operation of the project would not require groundwater extraction. Following project implementation, there would be an increase in impervious surface area given that the project site would be mostly built out aside from planting areas located internally and around the perimeter of the project site. An increase in impervious surface area decreases infiltration, which can decrease the amount of water that is able to recharge the aquifer/groundwater. However, the stormwater from the project site would be collected and directed to the Fresno Metropolitan Flood Control District's (FMFCD) storm drain system, which includes infiltration facilities to replenish groundwater supplies in the basin. Therefore, the project would not impede the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board's ability to manage groundwater. Thus, this project would not substantially deplete groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project would impede sustainable management of the Kings Subbasin. Impacts would be less than significant, and no mitigation is required.

Additionally, as discussed below in Section XIX, Utilities and Service Systems, the City receives its water supply from groundwater and surface water. The City has indicated that groundwater wells, pump stations, recharge facilities, water treatment and distribution systems shall be expanded incrementally to mitigate increased water demands. One of the primary objectives of Fresno's future water supply plans detailed in the City's current Urban Water Management Plan (UWMP) is to balance groundwater operations through a host of strategies. Through careful planning, Fresno has designed a comprehensive plan to accomplish this objective by increasing surface water supplies and surface water treatment facilities, intentional recharge, and conservation, thereby reducing groundwater pumping. The City continually monitors impacts of land use changes and development project proposals on water supply facilities by assigning fixed demand allocations to each parcel by land use as currently zoned or proposed to be rezoned.

The City relies on groundwater and surface water supplies to meet water demands. In 2006, Fresno updated its Metropolitan Water Resources Management Plan designed to ensure the Fresno metro area has a reliable water supply through 2050. The plan implements a conjunctive use program, combining groundwater, treated surface water, artificial recharge, and an enhanced water conservation program.

The General Plan policies require the City to maintain a comprehensive conservation program to help reduce per capita water usage, and includes conservation programs such as landscaping standards for drought tolerance, irrigation control devices, leak detection and retrofits, water audits, public education and implementing U.S. Bureau of Reclamation Best Management Practices for water conservation to maintain surface water entitlements.

Implementation of the Fresno General Plan policies, the Kings Basin Integrated Regional Water Management Plan, the City of Fresno UWMP, the Fresno-Area Regional Groundwater Management Plan, and the City of Fresno Metropolitan Water Resource Management Plan would address the issues of providing an adequate, reliable, and sustainable water supply for the proposed project. Therefore, the proposed project would

not decrease groundwater supplies, interfere substantially with groundwater recharge or impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin. The impact would be less than significant. This section will not be included in the EIR.

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?

Construction of the proposed project would result in grading on the site that would expose native soils that could be subject to the effects associated with wind and water erosion unless adequate measures are taken to limit the transport of soils in surface water from the site to downstream locations.

Stormwater collection and disposal, and flood control for the City of Fresno, City of Clovis, and the unincorporated areas within the City of Fresno's sphere of influence are provided by the FMFCD. Stormwater from the project site would be directed through internal drainage infrastructure (e.g., manholes, drainage basins, and drainage lines) towards proposed drainage infrastructure located along North Armstrong Avenue and along the future extension of East McKinley Avenue. Stormwater from the project site would then be redirected towards ponding Basin BS, located 0.26-mile southwest of the project site, across Mill No. 36 Canal.

As discussed previously, the Construction General Permit requires preparation of a SWPPP to identify construction BMPs to be implemented as part of the project to reduce impacts to water quality during construction, including those impacts associated with soil erosion and siltation. With compliance with the requirements in the Construction General Permit and implementation of the construction BMPs, and with compliance with the City's Municipal Code, construction impacts related to on- or off-site erosion or siltation would be less than significant.

The project would increase the amount of impervious surface, which would increase the volume of runoff during a storm, and which can more effectively transport sediments to receiving waters. At project completion, much of the project site would be impervious surface area and not prone to onsite erosion or siltation because no exposed soil would be present in these areas. The remaining portion of the site would consist of pervious surface area, which would contain landscaping that would minimize onsite erosion and siltation by stabilizing the soil. Additionally, the Project Applicant would be required to establish and maintain existing drainage patterns. Therefore, the proposed project would not alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner that would result in an impact related to substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site. This section will not be included in the EIR.

ii. Substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or offsite?

During construction, soil would be disturbed and compacted, and drainage patterns would be temporarily altered, which can increase the volume and velocity of stormwater runoff and increase the potential for localized flooding compared to existing conditions. As discussed above, the Construction General Permit requires the preparation of a SWPPP and implementation of construction BMPs to control and direct surface runoff on site. With adherence to the Construction General Permit, construction impacts related to altering the existing drainage pattern of the site or area or increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner that would result in flooding on site or off site would be less than significant.

While the project would permanently increase the impervious surface area in the project site, the project would be required to direct runoff towards proposed drainage infrastructure along North Armstrong Avenue and East McKinley Avenue. In addition, prior to final development approval, the project applicant shall submit a Grading Plan and Drainage Report to the FMFCD for review and approval. According to the City's preliminary review, permanent drainage service is available for the project area, provided that the Project Applicant can verify to the satisfaction of the City that runoff can be safely conveyed to existing and proposed Master Plan inlets and drainage infrastructure. The FMFCD's existing Master Plan drainage system is designed to serve medium density residential uses, and the proposed project would introduce a medium density residential use in the site. As such, the runoff from the project site would be able to be safely conveyed through proposed Master Plan drainage infrastructure on North Armstrong Avenue and East McKinley Avenue. Additionally, the project would be required to maintain the existing drainage pattern of the site. Therefore, the project would not increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or off-site and impacts would be considered less than significant.

iii. Create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff?

Construction. The proposed project would result in an increase in impervious surfaces given that the project site would be mostly built out aside from planting areas located internally and around the perimeter of the project site. However, compliance with pre-existing regulatory requirements, including compliance with the Construction General Permit and implementation of a SWPPP, would reduce or eliminate the potential for project construction to cause substantial additional polluted runoff or runoff in excess of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems. Therefore, construction would not result in additional sources of polluted runoff to be discharged to the storm drain system and impacts would be less than significant. No mitigation is required.

Operations. As discussed above, the proposed project would result in an increase in impervious surfaces. However, compliance with existing regulatory requirements, including the MS4 Permit, would reduce or eliminate the potential for project operations to cause substantial additional polluted runoff or runoff in excess of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems. Therefore, project operations would not result in additional sources of polluted runoff to be discharged to the storm drain system and impacts would be less than significant. This section will not be included in the EIR.

iv. Impede or redirect flood flows?

Title 44 of the Code of Federal Regulations, Part 60 regulations (44CFR60), and the floodplain ordinance of the City of Fresno require that placement and flood provision structures within a floodplain not result in a cumulative change in the floodplain water surface that exceeds one foot. In addition, the regulations under 44CFR60 do not allow placement of structures within a regulatory floodway unless that placement would not result in any increase in the floodplain water surface elevation, meaning that there is no displacement or redirection of the floodway. The City's floodplain ordinance (Chapter 11, Article 6 of the City's Municipal Code) requires that a registered Civil Engineer in the State of California certify that no displacement of floodwater would result from the flood proofing of a structure within a floodplain or a regulatory floodway. The majority of the project site is not located within the 100-year flood hazard area as mapped by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).[26] However, the project site is located adjacent to Mill No. 36 Canal, which is a 100-year flood hazard area (i.e., Zone AE). Construction in the vicinity of Mill No. 36 Canal would be compliant with applicable requirements of the City's floodplain ordinance (Fresno Municipal Code, Chapter 11, Article 6), including specifications for residential uses (e.g., elevation of structures constructed in Zone AE up to or six inches above base flood elevation), and 44CFR60 requirements (e.g., for non-residential and utility structures, be designed so that below the base flood level the structure is watertight with walls substantially impermeable to the passage of water and with structural components having the capability of resisting hydrostatic and hydrodynamic loads and effects of buoyancy). The Project Applicant would obtain necessary development permits and comply with applicable design and pre- and post-construction inspection requirements. As a result, the impact would be less than significant. This section will not be included in the EIR.

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

26 Federal Emergency Management Agency. 2020. FEMA Flood Map Service Center: Search By Address. Website: https://msc.fema.gov/portal/search?AddressQuery#searchresultsanchor (accessed April 20, 2022).

The project site is not located in tsunami, or seiche zones. Refer to discussion c) iv regarding flood hazards. Refer to discussion a) in Section IX, Hazards and Hazardous Materials regarding the use of hazardous materials within the project site. As a result, a less-than-significant impact would occur related to the release of pollutants due to project inundation in flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones. This section will not be discussed in the EIR.

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

The City is located within the Kings Sub-basin, which is part of the larger San Joaquin Valley Groundwater Basin. The planning documents regarding water resources for the City include City of Fresno Urban Water Management Plan, and City of Fresno Metropolitan Water Resources Management Plan. The project would be required to adhere to the City's water resources planning documents, NPDES drainage control requirements during construction and operation, as well as to FMFCD drainage control requirements. Furthermore, the project would be required to implement a SWPPP, which would control water quality of runoff from the project site. As a result, the project would not conflict with any applicable water quality control plan or groundwater management plan, and the impact would be less than significant. This section will not be included in the EIR.

MITIGATION MEASURES

The proposed project would not result in any potentially significant impacts related to hydrology and water quality, and no mitigation is required.

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
XI. LAND USE AND PLANNING – Would the project:				
a) Physically divide an established community?				X
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?			X	

Discussion

a) Physically divide an established community?

The physical division of an established community typically refers to the construction of a physical feature (such as an interstate highway or railroad tracks) or removal of a means of access (such as a local road or bridge) that would impair mobility within an existing community, or between a community and outlying areas.

The proposed project would consist of a 326-lot residential development for single-family residences. The development would potentially include landscaped spaces, a private pool, a park area, private streets, pedestrian, and utility infrastructure. The project site is bounded by residential developments to the north, rural residential uses to the east, rural residential and agricultural uses to the south, and agricultural and rural residential uses to the west. The proposed project would not construct features that would divide an established community or remove means of access that would impair mobility in a community. Therefore, the proposed project would have no impact. This section will not be included in the EIR.

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?

The project site is designated Low Density Residential in the City of Fresno General Plan and zoned within the Residential Single-Family District (RS-3). The project would require a change to the General Plan land use designation and zoning of the project site. The Project Applicant would need to submit a Plan Amendment and Rezone application and comply with all of the City's associated requirements and fees. The impact of this land use change would be less than significant with implementation of the City's applicable requirements. This section will not be included in the EIR.

MITIGATION MEASURES

The proposed project would not result in any potentially significant impacts related to land use and planning, and no mitigation is required.

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
XII. MINERAL RESOURCES – Would the project:				

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	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?			X	
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?			X	

DISCUSSION

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?

The principal area for mineral resources in the City of Fresno Planning Area is located along the San Joaquin River Corridor. The California Department of Mines and Geology classifies lands along the San Joaquin River Corridor as Mineral Resource Zone (MRZ) 1, MRZ 2, and MRZ 3. The project site is not located in the vicinity of the San Joaquin River Corridor, is not a MRZ, and it doesn't contain a MRZ. Therefore, the proposed project would not result in the loss of availability of known mineral resources.[27] [28] The impact would be less than significant. This section will not be included in the EIR.

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?

Please refer to the discussion for a). The proposed project would not result in the loss of availability of any known locally important mineral resource recovery sites. Therefore, the proposed project would have a less-than-significant impact. This section will not be included in the EIR.

MITIGATION MEASURES

27 Fresno County. 2000. Fresno County General Plan Background Report. Website: 8398-background_report_june04.pdf (fresnocountyca.gov) (accessed November 2023).

28 California Department of Conservation. 2016. Mines & Mineral Resource Related Data & Maps. Website: https://maps.conservation.ca.gov/mineralresources/ (accessed May 2, 2022).

The proposed project would not result in any potentially significant impacts related to mineral resources, and no mitigation is required.

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
XIII. NOISE – Would the project result in:				
a) Generation of a substantial temporary or permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the project in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?		X		
b) Generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?			X	
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?			X	

DISCUSSION

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 in other applicable local, state, or federal standards?

Noise is usually defined as unwanted sound. Noise consists of any sound that may produce physiological or psychological damage and/or interfere with communication, work, rest, recreation, or sleep. Several noise measurement scales exist that are used to describe noise in a particular location. A decibel (dB) is a unit of measurement that indicates the relative intensity of a sound. Sound levels in dB are calculated on a

logarithmic basis. An increase of 10 dB represents a 10-fold increase in acoustic energy, while 20 dB is 100 times more intense and 30 dB is 1,000 times more intense. Each 10 dB increase in sound level is perceived as approximately a doubling of loudness; and similarly, each 10 dB decrease in sound level is perceived as half as loud. Sound intensity is normally measured through the A-weighted sound level (dBA). This scale gives greater weight to the frequencies of sound to which the human ear is most sensitive. The A-weighted sound level is the basis for 24-hour sound measurements that better represent human sensitivity to sound at night.

As noise spreads from a source, it loses energy so that the farther away the noise receiver is from the noise source, the lower the perceived noise level would be. Geometric spreading causes the sound level to attenuate or be reduced, resulting in a 6 dB reduction in the noise level for each doubling of distance from a single point source of noise to the noise sensitive receptor of concern.

There are many ways to rate noise for various time periods, but an appropriate rating of ambient noise affecting humans also accounts for the annoying effects of sound. Equivalent continuous sound level (L_{eq}) is the total sound energy of time varying noise over a sample period. However, the predominant rating scales for human communities in the State of California are the L_{eq}, the community noise equivalent level (CNEL), and the day-night average level (L_{dn}) based on dBA. CNEL is the time varying noise over a 24-hour period, with a 5 dBA weighting factor applied to the hourly L_{eq} for noises occurring from 7:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. (defined as relaxation hours) and 10 dBA weighting factor applied to noise occurring from 10:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m. (defined as sleeping hours). L_{dn} is similar to the CNEL scale, but without the adjustment for events occurring during the evening relaxation hours. CNEL and L_{dn} are within one dBA of each other and are normally exchangeable. The noise adjustments are added to the noise events occurring during the more sensitive hours.

A project would have a significant noise effect if it would substantially increase the ambient noise levels for adjoining areas or conflict with adopted environmental plans and goals of applicable regulatory agencies, including, as appropriate, the City of Fresno.

The City of Fresno addresses noise in the Noise Element of the General Plan and in Chapter 10, Article 1 (Noise Regulations), of the Fresno Municipal Code. Listed below are objectives and policies related to noise that are presented in the Noise Element of the General Plan. In addition, the Noise Element sets noise standards for transportation and stationary noise sources as shown in Table 4 and Table 5, below.

Table 4: Transportation (Non-Aircraft) Noise Sources

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

Source: City of Fresno General Plan (2014).

[1] Where the location of outdoor activity areas is unknown or is not applicable, the exterior noise level standard shall be applied to the property line of the receiving land use.

[2] As determined for a typical worst-case hour during periods of use.

CNEL = community noise equivalent level

dB = decibel(s)

L_{dn} = day-night average noise level

L_{eq} = equivalent continuous sound level

Table 5: Stationary Noise Sources

	Daytime (7:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.)	Nighttime (10:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m.)
Hourly Equivalent Sound Level (L_{eq}), dBA	50	45
Maximum Sound Level (L_{max}), dBA	70	60

Source: City of Fresno General Plan (2014).

[1] The Planning and Development Director, on a case-by-case basis, may designate land uses other than those shown in this table to be noise-sensitive, and may require appropriate noise mitigation measures.

[2] As determined at outdoor activity areas. Where the location of outdoor activity areas is unknown or not applicable, the noise exposure standard shall be applied at the property line of the receiving land use. When ambient noise levels exceed or equal the levels in this table, mitigation shall only be required to limit noise to the ambient plus five dB.

dB = decibel(s)

dBA = A-weighted decibel(s)

L_{dn} = day-night average noise level

L_{eq} = equivalent continuous sound level

L_{max} = maximum A-weighted sound level

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

line of parcels where noise is generated which may impinge on neighboring properties.

- **Policy NS-1-c: Generally Unacceptable Exterior Noise Exposure Range.** Establish the exterior noise exposure of greater than 65 dB L_{dn} or CNEL to be generally unacceptable for residential and other noise sensitive uses for noise generated by sources in Policy NS-1-a, and study alternative less noise-sensitive uses for these areas if otherwise appropriate. Require appropriate noise reducing mitigation measures as determined by a site specific acoustical analysis to comply with the generally desirable or generally acceptable exterior noise level and the required 45 dB interior noise level standards set in Table 4 as conditions of permit approval.

- **Policy NS-1-g:** Noise mitigation measures which help achieve the noise level targets of this plan include, but are not limited to, the following:

    - Façades with substantial weight and insulation;
    - Installation of sound-rated windows for primary sleeping and activity areas;
    - Installation of sound-rated doors for all exterior entries at primary sleeping and activity areas;
    - Greater building setbacks and exterior barriers;
    - Acoustic baffling of vents for chimneys, attic and gable ends;
    - Installation of mechanical ventilation systems that provide fresh air under closed window conditions.

- **NS-1-i Mitigation by New Development.** Require an acoustical analysis where new development of industrial, commercial or other noise generating land uses (including transportation facilities such as roadways, railroads, and airports) may result in noise levels that exceed the noise level exposure criteria established by Tables 4 and 5 to determine impacts, and require developers to mitigate these impacts in conformance with Tables 4 and 5 as a condition of permit approval through appropriate means.

  Noise mitigation measures may include:

    - The screening of noise sources such as parking and loading facilities, outdoor activities, and mechanical equipment;
    - Providing increased setbacks for noise sources from adjacent dwellings;
    - Installation of walls and landscaping that serve as noise buffers;
    - Installation of soundproofing materials and double-glazed windows; and

- Regulating operations, such as hours of operation, including deliveries and trash pickup.

Alternative acoustical designs that achieve the prescribed noise level reduction may be approved by the City, provided a qualified Acoustical Consultant submits information demonstrating that the alternative designs will achieve and maintain the specific targets for outdoor activity areas and interior spaces. As a last resort, developers may propose to construct noise walls along roadways when compatible with aesthetic concerns and neighborhood character. This would be a developer responsibility, with no City funding.

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

Chapter 10, Article 1 (Noise Regulations), of the Fresno Municipal Code establishes excessive noise guidelines and exemptions. Section 10-109 states that construction noise is exempted from City noise regulations provided such work takes place between the hours of 7:00 a.m. and 10:00 p.m. on any day except Sunday.

Certain land uses are considered more sensitive to noise than others. Examples of these land uses include residential areas, educational facilities, hospitals, childcare facilities, and senior housing. The closest sensitive receptors include single-family residential uses located adjacent to the northern and eastern boundaries of the project site and the single-family residential uses located across North Armstrong Avenue, approximately 75 feet west of the project site.

The following section describes how the short-term construction and long-term operational noise impacts of the proposed project would be less than significant with mitigation.

Short-Term (Construction) Noise Impacts. Project construction would result in short-term noise impacts on the nearby sensitive receptors. Maximum construction noise would be short-term, generally intermittent depending on the construction phase, and variable depending on receiver distance from the active construction zone. The duration of noise impacts generally would be from one day to several days depending on the phase of construction. The level and types of noise impacts that would occur during construction are described below.

Short-term noise impacts would occur during grading and site preparation activities. Table 6 lists typical construction equipment noise levels (L_{max}) recommended for noise impact assessments, based on a distance of 50 feet between the equipment and a noise receptor, obtained from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Roadway

Construction Noise Model. Construction-related short-term noise levels would be higher than existing ambient noise levels currently in the project area but would no longer occur once construction of the proposed project is completed.

Table 6: Typical Construction Equipment Noise Levels

Equipment Description	Acoustical Usage Factor (%)	Maximum Noise Level (L_{max}) at 50 Feet[1]
Backhoes	40	80
Compactor (ground)	20	80
Compressor	40	80
Cranes	16	85
Dozers	40	85
Dump Trucks	40	84
Excavators	40	85
Flat Bed Trucks	40	84
Forklift	20	85
Front-end Loaders	40	80
Graders	40	85
Impact Pile Drivers	20	95
Jackhammers	20	85
Pick-up Truck	40	55
Pneumatic Tools	50	85
Pumps	50	77
Rock Drills	20	85
Rollers	20	85
Scrapers	40	85
Tractors	40	84
Welder	40	73

Source: Roadway Construction Noise Model (FHWA 2006).
Note: Noise levels reported in this table are rounded to the nearest whole number.
[1] Maximum noise levels were developed based on Spec 721.560 from the Central Artery/Tunnel (CA/T) program to be consistent with the City of Boston's Noise Code for the "Big Dig" project.
L_{max} = maximum instantaneous sound level

Two types of short-term noise impacts could occur during construction of the proposed project. The first type involves construction crew commutes and the transport of construction equipment and materials to the site, which would incrementally increase noise levels on roads leading to the site. As shown in Table 6, there would be a relatively high single-event noise exposure potential at a maximum level of 84 dBA L_{max} with trucks passing at 50 feet.

The second type of short-term noise impact is related to noise generated during grading and construction on the project site. Construction is performed in discrete steps, or phases, each with its own mix of equipment and, consequently, its own noise characteristics. These various sequential phases would change the character of the noise generated on site. Therefore, the noise levels vary as construction progresses. Despite the variety in the type and size of construction equipment, similarities in the dominant noise sources and patterns of operation allow construction-related noise ranges to be categorized by work phase.

Table 6 lists maximum noise levels recommended for noise impact assessments for typical construction equipment, based on a distance of 50 feet between the equipment and a noise receptor. Typical noise levels range up to 88 dBA L_{max} at 50 feet during the noisiest construction phases. The site preparation phase, which includes excavation and grading of the project site, tends to generate the highest noise levels because the noisiest construction equipment is earthmoving equipment. Earthmoving equipment includes excavating machinery such as backfillers, bulldozers, draglines, and front loaders. Earthmoving and compacting equipment includes compactors, scrapers, and graders. Typical operating cycles for these types of construction equipment may involve 1 or 2 minutes of full-power operation followed by 3 or 4 minutes at lower power settings.

Construction details (e.g., construction fleet activities) are not yet known; therefore, this analysis assumes that scrapers, bulldozers, and water trucks/pickup trucks would be operating simultaneously during construction of the proposed project. As discussed above, noise levels associated with this equipment operating simultaneously would be approximately 88 dBA L_{max} at 50 feet.

As noted above, the closest sensitive receptors to the project site include single-family residential uses located directly adjacent to the project site's northern and eastern boundaries. Based on building setbacks, the closest sensitive receptors include the adjacent single-family residential uses north of the project site, which are approximately 35 feet from project construction activities. Based on a reduction in noise of 6 dBA per doubling of distance, there would be in increase of approximately 3 dBA from the active construction area to the nearest residence. In addition, these residences have a solid wood fence, which would reduce noise levels by approximately 5 dBA. Therefore, the closest off-site sensitive receptor may be subject to short-term construction noise reaching 86 dBA L_{max} (88 dBA L_{max} + 3 dBA – 5 dBA) when construction is occurring.

However, construction equipment would operate at various locations within the 31.29-acre project site and would only generate maximum noise levels when operations occur closest to the receptor. To ensure that the project's potential construction-related noise impacts are less than significant, Mitigation Measure NOI-1 requires the project to equip all construction equipment, fixed or mobile, with properly operating and maintained mufflers consistent with manufacturers' standards, which would reduce the potential impacts associated with construction equipment. Additionally, Mitigation Measure NOI-1 requires the project to designate a "disturbance coordinator" at the City who would be responsible for responding to any local complaints about construction noise. The disturbance coordinator would determine the cause of the noise complaint (e.g., starting too early, bad muffler) and would determine and implement reasonable measures warranted to correct the problem. These measures would ensure that the project's potential construction-related noise impacts are mitigated to less-than-significant levels.

Operational Noise Impacts The proposed project would include the construction of 326 new single-family residential units**.** Motor vehicles with their distinctive noise characteristics are the dominant noise source in the project vicinity. The amount of noise

varies according to many factors, such as volume of traffic, vehicle mix (percentage of cars and trucks), average traffic speed, and distance from the observer. Implementation of the proposed project would result in new daily trips on local roadways in the project site vicinity. A characteristic of sound is that a doubling of a noise source is required in order to result in a perceptible (3 dBA or greater) increase in the resulting noise level.

As discussed in the Traffic Impact Study (TIS) prepared for the proposed project[29], the proposed project would generate approximately 3,074 daily trips. The adjacent Armstrong Avenue carries approximately 10,580 average daily trips. Project trips would represent a small increase in noise level, up to approximately 1.1 dBA CNEL along Armstrong Avenue based on the following equation:

$$Change\ in\ (dBA) = 10 * \log_{10}\left(\frac{Current\ Volume}{\text{Future Volume}}\right)$$

In general, noise level changes of less than 3 dBA are not perceptible in an outdoor environment. Therefore, since project trips would not result in a doubling of traffic volumes along any roadway segment in the project vicinity, project trips would not result in a perceptible (3 dBA) increase in traffic noise levels at receptors in the project vicinity.

In addition, with implementation of the proposed project, there would be an increase in activity at the project site. The project site itself is surrounded by residential, rural residential and agricultural uses. Noise from the proposed project would be similar to the existing surrounding residential uses and would generally include noise from vehicles, air conditioner units, and other similar equipment. It is not expected that the proposed project would result in a perceptible (3dBA) increase in noise to surrounding land uses. Therefore, it is not expected that the proposed project would substantially increase noise levels over existing conditions. Operation of the proposed project would result in similar noise levels as existing conditions and, therefore, it is not expected that the proposed project would substantially increase noise levels over existing conditions, and impacts would be less than significant with mitigation.

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

Vibration refers to groundborne noise and perceptible motion. Groundborne vibration is almost exclusively a concern inside buildings and is rarely perceived as a problem outdoors. Vibration energy propagates from a source, through intervening soil and rock layers, to the foundations of nearby buildings. The vibration then propagates from the foundation throughout the remainder of the structure. Building vibration may be perceived by the occupants as the motion of building surfaces, rattling of items on shelves or hanging on walls, or as a low-frequency rumbling noise. The rumbling noise is caused by the vibrating walls, floors, and ceilings radiating sound waves. Annoyance from vibration often occurs when the vibration exceeds the threshold of perception by 10 dB or less.

29 LSA, 2023. *Traffic Impact Study Tract Map 6360 Project, City of Fresno, Fresno County, California*. March.

This is an order of magnitude below the damage threshold for normal buildings.

Typical sources of groundborne vibration are construction activities (e.g., pavement breaking and operating heavy-duty earthmoving equipment), and occasional traffic on rough roads. In general, groundborne vibration from standard construction practices is only a potential issue when within 25 feet of sensitive uses. Groundborne vibration levels from construction activities very rarely reach levels that can damage structures; however, these levels are perceptible near the active construction site. With the exception of old buildings built prior to the 1950s or buildings of historic significance, potential structural damage from heavy construction activities rarely occurs. When roadways are smooth, vibration from traffic (even heavy trucks) is rarely perceptible.

The streets surrounding the project area are paved, smooth, and unlikely to cause significant groundborne vibration. In addition, the rubber tires and suspension systems of buses and other on-road vehicles make it unusual for on-road vehicles to cause groundborne noise or vibration problems. It is, therefore, assumed that no such vehicular vibration impacts would occur and, therefore, no vibration impact analysis of on-road vehicles is necessary. Therefore, once constructed, the proposed project would not contain uses that would generate groundborne vibration. This impact would be less than significant.

Construction Vibration. Construction of the proposed project could result in the generation of groundborne vibration. This construction vibration impact analysis discusses the level of human annoyance using vibration levels in VdB and will assess the potential for building damages using vibration levels in peak particle velocity (PPV) (in/sec) because vibration levels calculated in root-mean-square (RMS) are best for characterizing human response to building vibration, while vibration level in PPV is best used to characterize potential for damage. The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Transit Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment guidelines indicate that a vibration level up to 102 VdB (an equivalent to 0.5 in/sec in PPV) is considered safe for buildings consisting of reinforced concrete, steel, or timber (no plaster), and would not result in any construction vibration damage. For a non-engineered timber and masonry building, the construction vibration damage criterion is 94 VdB (0.2 in/sec in PPV).

Table 7 shows the PPV and VdB values at 25 feet from a construction vibration source. As shown in Table 7, bulldozers and other heavy-tracked construction equipment (except for pile drivers and vibratory rollers) generate approximately 87 VdB of groundborne vibration when measured at 25 feet, based on the Transit Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment. At this level, groundborne vibration would result in potential annoyance to residents and workers but would not cause any damage to the buildings.

Table 7: Vibration Source Amplitudes for Construction Equipment

Equipment	Reference PPV/L_V at 25 feet	
	PPV (in/sec)	L_V (VdB)[1]
Pile Driver (Impact), Typical	0.644	104
Pile Driver (Sonic), Typical	0.170	93
Vibratory Roller	0.210	94
Hoe Ram	0.089	87
Large Bulldozer	0.089	87
Caisson Drilling	0.089	87
Loaded Trucks	0.076	86
Jackhammer	0.035	79
Small Bulldozer	0.003	58
Pile Driver (Impact), Typical	0.644	104

Source: Transit Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment (FTA 2018).
Note: Noise levels reported in this table are rounded to the nearest whole number.
[1] RMS vibration velocity in decibels (VdB) is 1 µin/sec.
µin/sec = micro-inches per second
FTA = Federal Transit Administration
in/sec = inches per second
L_V = velocity in decibels
PPV = peak particle velocity
RMS = root-mean-square
VdB = vibration velocity decibels

Construction vibration, similar to vibration from other sources, would not have any significant effects on outdoor activities (e.g., those outside of residences and commercial/ office buildings in the project vicinity). Outdoor site preparation for the proposed project is expected to include the use of bulldozers and loaded trucks. The greatest levels of vibration are anticipated to occur during the site preparation phase. All other phases are expected to result in lower vibration levels. The distance to the nearest buildings for vibration impact analysis is measured between the nearest off-site buildings and the project boundary (assuming the construction equipment would be used at or near the project boundary) because vibration impacts occur normally within the buildings. The formula for vibration transmission is provided below.

$$L_V dB\ (D) = L_V dB\ (25\ ft) - 30\ Log\ (D/25)$$

$$PPV_{equip} = PPV_{ref} \times (25/D)^{1.5}$$

As shown in Table 7, for typical construction activity, the equipment with the highest vibration generation potential is the large bulldozer, which would generate 87 VdB at 25 feet. As noted above, the closest sensitive receptors to the project site include single-family residential uses located directly adjacent to the project site's northern and eastern boundaries. Based on building setbacks, the closest sensitive receptors include the adjacent single-family residential uses north of the project site, which are approximately 35 feet from project construction activities.

At 35 feet, these single-family residences would experience vibration levels of up to 83 VdB (0.054 PPV [in/sec]), which would not exceed the FTA threshold of 94 VdB (0.2 in/sec PPV) for non-engineered timber and masonry building damage when bulldozers

and loaded trucks operate at or near the project construction boundary. Although construction vibration levels at surrounding uses would have the potential to result in annoyance, these vibration levels would no longer occur once construction of the project is completed and impacts would be considered less than significant. No mitigation is required.

c) 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 expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?

The nearest medical center helipads (HP) include the Saint Agnes Medical Center HP, located approximately 7.0 miles northwest of the project site and the Valley Children's Hospital HP located approximately 10.6 miles northwest of the project site. Due to the distance, operations at these heliports are not expected to result in excessive noise levels at the project site. The nearest airports to the project site include the Fresno Yosemite International Airport, located approximately 1.6 miles west of the project site, Fresno Chandler Executive Airport, located approximately 8.3 miles southwest of the project site, and the Sierra Sky Airport, located approximately 11 miles northwest of the project site. Each of these airports has an Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan (ALUCP) which guides local jurisdictions in determining appropriate compatible land uses with detailed findings and policies. In addition, although aircraft-related noise is occasionally audible on the project site, the site does not lie within the 65 dBA CNEL noise contours of any of these airports or helipads, including the Fresno Yosemite International Airport[30]. Therefore, the proposed project would not result in the exposure of sensitive receptors to the excessive noise levels from aircraft noise sources. The impact would be less than significant. This section will not be included in the EIR.

MITIGATION MEASURES

Mitigation Measure NOI-1: The project contractor shall implement the following measures during construction of the project:

- Equip all construction equipment, fixed or mobile, with properly operating and maintained mufflers consistent with manufacturers' standards.
- Place all stationary construction equipment so that emitted noise is directed away from sensitive receptors nearest the active project site.
- Locate equipment staging in areas that would create the greatest possible distance between construction-related noise sources and noise-sensitive receptors nearest the active project site during all construction activities.

30 Fresno Yosemite International Airport, 2022. *Forecast Conditions (2022) Noise Exposure Map*. Website: https://flyfresno.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/2022-NEM_Contour.pdf (accessed May 2023).

- Ensure that all general construction-related activities are restricted to between the hours of 7:00 a.m. and 10:00 p.m. Monday through Saturday. No construction shall occur on Sunday.

- Designate a "disturbance coordinator" at the City who would be responsible for responding to any local complaints about construction noise. The disturbance coordinator would determine the cause of the noise complaint (e.g., starting too early, bad muffler) and would determine and implement reasonable measures warranted to correct the problem.

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
XIV. POPULATION AND HOUSING – Would the project:				
a) Induce substantial unplanned population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)?			X	
b) Displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?			X	

DISCUSSION

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)?

The project site is currently designated Low-Density Residential in the General Plan and zoned within the Residential Single-Family District (RS-3), which is intended to provide for a variety of single-family residences built to urban or suburban standards to suit a spectrum of individual lifestyles and needs, and to ensure availability throughout the city of the range of housing types necessary for all segments of the community, consistent with the General Plan . The proposed project would require a General Plan Amendment and Rezone to Medium Density Residential and Residential Single-Family, Medium Density (RS-5). The project site does not currently contain any permanent residents.

Although the project site is zoned and designated for residential use, the proposed zoning would introduce higher-density residential uses on the site. Therefore, implementation of the proposed project would potentially result in an increase in unplanned population growth in the City.

The proposed project would introduce 326 single-family residences into the project site, which would increase population in the project site by approximately 988 residents.[31, 32] The addition of 988 new residents represents approximately 0.2 percent of Fresno's 2020 population of 542,107.[33] As such, population growth in the area as a result of residential land uses would be negligible.

The Project Applicant would need to submit a Plan Amendment and Rezone application and comply with all the City's associated requirements and fees. Population growth resulting from site re-zoning and land use change would be less than significant after implementation of the City's applicable requirements. This section will not be included in the EIR.

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

The project site is currently used to grow agricultural crops. The proposed project would introduce 326 new single-family residential units into the project site and would not necessitate the displacement or removal of existing housing. Therefore, the proposed project would not require the construction of replacement housing, and the impact would be less than significant. This section will not be included in the EIR.

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
XV. PUBLIC SERVICES – Would the project:				

31 Based on an average of 3.03 persons per household in the City of Fresno , as identified by the Census Bureau.

32 United States Census Bureau. QuickFacts. Fresno City, California. Website: https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fresnocitycalifornia (accessed February 2023).

33 Ibid.

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for any of the public services:			X	
Fire protection?			X	
Police protection?			X	
Schools?			X	
Parks?			X	
Other public facilities?			X	

DISCUSSION

a) Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, or 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 any of the public services:

Fire protection

The City of Fresno Fire Department (FFD) would provide fire protection services to the proposed project. There are 20 FFD fire stations in Fresno, with the closest fire station, Fire Station 10, located approximately 3 miles northwest from the project site. Planned growth under the General Plan would increase calls for fire protection service in the City. The project would introduce 326 single-family residences into the project site. The Project Applicant would need to submit a General Plan Amendment (GPA) and rezone application and comply with all associated requirements and fees. The

project would be consistent with the General Plan after implementation of GPA and rezone requirements.

The project could result in an incremental increase in the demand for fire protection services. However, the proposed project would be required to comply with all applicable codes for fire safety and emergency access. In addition, the project applicant would be required to submit plans to the FFD for review and approval prior to the issuance of building permits to ensure the project would conform to applicable building codes. Furthermore, the Project Applicant would be required to pay a Fire Facilities Fee pursuant to Chapter 12, Article 4.9 of the Fresno Code of Ordinances to account for the potential impacts to fire service facilities.

The FFD would continue providing services to the project site and would not require additional firefighters to serve the proposed project. The construction of a new or expanded fire station would not be required.[34] The proposed project would not result in a significant impact on the physical environment due to the incremental increase in demand for fire protection and life safety services. The incremental increase in demand for services is not expected to adversely affect existing responses times to the site or within the City. Therefore, construction and operation of the proposed project would have a less-than-significant impact on fire protection.

Police protection

The City of Fresno Police Department (FPD) provides police protection to the project site. The Police Department Patrol Division is divided into five policing districts with the nearest being the Northeast Policing District, located approximately 11 miles northwest of the project site. Planned growth under the General Plan would increase calls for police protection service in the City. The Project Applicant would need to submit a GPA and rezone application and comply with all associated requirements and fees. The project would be consistent with the General Plan after implementation of GPA and rezone requirements.

The project could result in an incremental increase in the demand for police protection services. The Project Applicant would be required to pay a Police Facilities Fee pursuant to Chapter 12, Article 4.8 of the Fresno Code of Ordinances to account for the potential impacts to police protection services.

The FPD would continue to provide services to the project site and would not require additional officers to serve the project site.[35] [36] The construction of new or expanded police facilities would not be required. Therefore, the proposed project would not result in a substantial adverse impact associated with the provision of additional police

34 City of Fresno. November 9, 2023. Chris Lang, Supervising Planner, personal communication.

35 Ibid.

36 City of Fresno. November 13, 2023. Chris Lang, Supervising Planner, personal communication.

facilities or services and impacts to police protection would represent a less-than-significant impact.

Schools

Clovis Unified School District (CUSD) would provide school services to the proposed project. The proposed project involves a residential use that might generate an increase in demand for school services in the City. The CUSD currently serves approximately 43,000 students and operates 34 elementary schools, five intermediate schools, five high schools, one adult school and six alternative education campuses. Planned growth under the General Plan would increase demand for school services. The Project Applicant would need to submit a GPA and rezone application and comply with all associated requirements and fees. The project would be consistent with growth under the General Plan after implementation of GPA and rezone requirements

The proposed project would increase the demand for school services in the vicinity. The Project Applicant would be required to pay appropriate school developer fees at time of building permits to address potential impacts to CUSD services, as set forth in Education Code Section 17620, pursuant to Government Code 65995.

Payment of school developer fees will address potential impacts related to constructing school facilities. Therefore, the proposed project would not result in a substantial adverse impact associated with the provision of additional school facilities or services and impacts related to increased demand for school services would represent a less-than-significant. This section will not be included in the EIR.

Parks

The proposed project would consist of a 326-lot residential development for single-family residences. The proposed project would also include the construction of a 11,777 square-foot community park, and a 15,207 square-foot private pool and recreation area. Planned growth under the General Plan would increase demand for parks in the City. The Project Applicant would need to submit a GPA and rezone application and comply with all associated requirements and fees. The project would be consistent with growth under the General Plan after implementation of GPA and rezone requirements.

The proposed project could increase the demand for park services and nearby recreational facilities. However, the proposed project would include the construction of a private park and recreation area that would offset the demand for public parks in the project vicinity. Furthermore, the Project Applicant would be required to pay a Park Facilities Fee, pursuant to Chapter 12, Article 4.7 of the Fresno Code of Ordinances at the time building permits are obtained. Therefore, the proposed project would not result in a substantial adverse impact associated with the provision of additional park facilities, and impacts to parks would represent a less-than-significant impact.

Other public facilities

Planned growth under the General Plan would increase the demand for public facilities in the City. The Project Applicant would need to submit a GPA and rezone application and comply with all associated requirements and fees. The project would be consistent with growth under the General Plan after implementation of GPA and rezone requirements.

Development of the proposed project could also increase demand for other public services, including libraries, community centers, and public health care facilities. The Project Applicant would be required to coordinate with the City the payment of applicable impact fees to mitigate impacts to public facilities resulting from the proposed project. As such, the impact would be less than significant. This section will not be included in the EIR.

MITIGATION MEASURES

The proposed project would not result in any potentially significant impacts related to public services, and no mitigation is required.

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

DISCUSSION

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?

The proposed project would consist of a 326-lot residential development for single-family residences. The development would potentially include landscaped spaces, a private pool, a park area, private streets, pedestrian, and utility infrastructure. The development of the project would result in population growth which could increase the demand for nearby recreational facilities. Nearby parks that may be affected by increased demand for recreational facilities resulting from the project include Al Radka Park, a 14.35-acre community park located approximately 1.12 miles southwest from the project site, Airways Pool Complex, a 1.35-acre special use facility located approximately 2.0 miles northwest from the project site, Reedy Discovery Center, a 5.64-acre special use facility located approximately 3.2 miles west from the project site and Pilibos Park, a 13.22-acre community park located approximately 3.75 miles southwest from the project site.

The Project Applicant would be required to pay a Park Facility Fee pursuant to Chapter 12, Article 4.7 of the Fresno Code of Ordinances at the time building permits are obtained. The impact fee would serve to offset project impact on existing recreational facilities. Therefore, the impact would be less than significant. This section will not be included in the EIR.

b) Include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities that might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?

The proposed project would introduce 326 single-family residences into the project site, which would increase population in the project site by approximately 988 residents.[37][38] The population growth resulting from the proposed project could increase the demand for nearby recreational facilities. As identified in the City's Parks Master Plan[39], the City of Fresno owns and operates a park system that includes more than 80 public parks, trails, regional parks, neighborhood parks, educational facilities, community pools, splash parks, and dual-use ponding basins. The Parks Master Plan identified a level of service (LOS) goal for pocket, neighborhood and community parks of 3 acres of parks per 1,000 residents. For regional, open space/natural areas, and special use parks, a LOS goal of 2 acres of parks per 1,000 residents was identified. The project site is within the service area of Al Radka Park, a 14.35-acre community park located 1.12 miles southwest from the project site, Airways Pool Complex, a 1.35-acre special use facility located approximately 2.0 miles northwest from the project site, Reedy Discovery Center, a 5.64-

37 Based on an average of 3.03 persons per household in the City of Fresno , as identified by the Census Bureau.

38 United States Census Bureau. QuickFacts. Fresno City, California. Website: https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fresnocitycalifornia (accessed February 2023).

39 City of Fresno. 2017. Fresno Parks Master Plan. Website: https://www.fresno.gov/wp-content/themes/cityoffresno/_largefiles/FresnoPMPFinalDocumentwithAppA051818_S.pdf (accessed July 25, 2023).

acre special use facility located approximately 3.2 miles west from the project site and Pilibos Park, a 13.22-acre community park located approximately 3.75 miles southwest from the project site. The community and special-use recreational facilities located in the vicinity of the project site would have sufficient capacity to serve the additional 988 residents resulting from the proposed project. Therefore, the proposed project would not require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities that might have an adverse physical effect on the environment, and the impact would be less than significant. This section will not be included in the EIR.

MITIGATION MEASURES

The proposed project would not result in any potentially significant impacts related to recreation, and no mitigation is required.

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
XVII. TRANSPORTATION – Would the project:				
a) Conflict with a program, plan, ordinance or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle and pedestrian facilities?	X			
b) Conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines § 15064.3, subdivision (b)?	X			
c) Substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?	X			
d) Result in inadequate emergency access?			X	

DISCUSSION

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

The Mobility and Transportation Element of the City of Fresno General Plan outlines the

necessary transportation system and infrastructure standards needed to serve planned land use and development in the City. This Element includes objectives and policies for all modes of transportation, and for all users of streets and highways, transit, sidewalks and trails.

The 2016 City of Fresno Active Transportation Plan (ATP) is a comprehensive guide outlining the vision for active transportation in the City of Fresno. The ATP envisions a complete, safe, and comfortable network of trails, sidewalks, and bikeways that serves all residents of Fresno. This plan seeks to achieve the following goals:

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

Vehicular access to the project site includes North Armstrong Avenue to the west, and East McKinley Avenue, to the south. The nearest bus stop is located near the intersection of East Princeton Drive and North Fowler Avenue, approximately 0.8 miles northwest of the project site. No walking trails or bike trails are present in the project vicinity.

The proposed project is located within Traffic Impact Zone (TIZ) III, as defined in the Mobility and Transportation Element of the City of Fresno General Plan.[40] According to the Mobility and Transportation Element, projects in TIZ III that generate more than 100 peak hour trips would require a detailed traffic analysis. The proposed project would introduce 988 residents to the project, and it's expected to surpass the 100 peak hour trips threshold for TIZ III as determined in the General Plan. This would be a potentially significant impact. The EIR will further analyze potential conflict between the proposed project and the City's transportation programs and policies.

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

Senate Bill (SB) 743 requires that relevant CEQA analysis of transportation impacts be conducted using a metric known as vehicle miles traveled (VMT) instead of Level of Service (LOS). VMT measures how much actual auto travel (additional miles driven) a proposed project would create on California roads. If the project adds excessive car travel onto our roads, the project may cause a significant transportation impact.

The State CEQA Guidelines were amended to implement SB 743, by adding Section

40 City of Fresno. 2014. Fresno General Plan - Mobility and Transportation Element. p. 4-32. Website: https://www.fresno.gov/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/upload_temp4-Mobility-and-Transportation-9-30-2021.pdf (accessed July 25, 2023).

15064.3. Among its provisions, Section 15064.3 confirms that, except with respect to transportation projects, a project's effect on automobile delay shall not constitute a significant environmental impact. Therefore, LOS measures of impacts on traffic facilities is no longer a relevant CEQA criteria for transportation impacts.

CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3(b)(4) states that "[a] lead agency has discretion to evaluate a project's vehicle miles traveled (VMT), including whether to express the change in absolute terms, per capita, per household or in any other measure. A lead agency may use models to estimate a project's VMT and revise those estimates to reflect professional judgment based on substantial evidence. Any assumptions used to estimate used to estimate vehicle miles traveled and any revision to model outputs should be documented and explained in the environmental document prepared for the project. The standard of adequacy in Section 15151 shall apply to the analysis described in this section."

On June 25, 2020, the City of Fresno adopted CEQA Guidelines for Vehicle Miles Traveled Thresholds, dated June 25, 2020, pursuant to Senate Bill 743 to be effective of July 1, 2020. The thresholds described therein are referred to herein as the City of Fresno VMT Thresholds. The City of Fresno VMT Thresholds document was prepared and adopted consistent with the requirements of CEQA Guidelines Sections 15064.3 and 15064.7. The December 2018 Technical Advisory on Evaluating Transportation Impacts in CEQA (Technical Advisory) published by the Governor's Office of Planning and Research (OPR), was utilized as a reference and guidance document in the preparation of the Fresno VMT Thresholds.

The proposed project would consist of the construction of a 326-lot residential development for single-family residences. The proposed project would also include landscaped spaces, a private pool, a park area, private streets, pedestrian, and utility infrastructure. According to the City's VMT Thresholds, projects generating less than 500 daily trips could be screened out of a detailed VMT analysis. As discussed in the Traffic Impact Study (TIS) prepared for the proposed project[41], the proposed project would generate approximately 3,074 daily trips.

Therefore, the proposed project does not qualify for a streamlined project VMT analysis under the screening criteria identified by the City. The EIR will further analyze project VMT impacts and, if possible, provide mitigation measures to reduce impacts below significance levels.

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

The proposed project would consist of a 326-lot residential development for single-family

41 LSA, 2023. *Traffic Impact Study Tract Map 6360 Project, City of Fresno, Fresno County, California*. March.

residences. The development would potentially include landscaped spaces, a private pool, a park area, private streets, pedestrian, and utility infrastructure. Currently, there is not enough information to determine whether the project would introduce hazardous geometric design features to the vicinity. The EIR will further analyze project design features, and, if applicable, identify mitigation measures for potential hazards.

d) Result in inadequate emergency access?

The proposed project would consist of a 326-lot residential development for single-family residences. The development would potentially include landscaped spaces, a private pool, a park area, private streets, pedestrian, and utility infrastructure. Emergency vehicles would have access to the project site via North Armstrong Avenue, and East McKinley Avenue. Furthermore, the proposed project's site plan would be subject to review and approval by the FFD to ensure the project includes adequate emergency access. In addition, as discussed in Section IX, Hazards and Hazardous Materials, project implementation would not physically interfere with emergency evacuation to and from the project site. Therefore, the proposed project would result in less-than-significant impacts related to inadequate emergency access, and no mitigation is required. This section will not be included in the EIR.

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	**Potentially Significant Impact**	**Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated**	**Less Than Significant Impact**	**No Impact**
XVII. TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES – Would the project:				
a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in PRC section 21074 as either a site, feature, place, cultural landscape that is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American tribe, and that is:		X		
i) Listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, or in a local register of historical resources as defined in PRC section 5020.1(k), or,		X		

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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 PRC section 5024.1. In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of PRC section 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.		X		

DISCUSSION

a) Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in Public Resources Code section 21074 as either a site, feature, place, cultural landscape that is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American tribe, and that is:

Listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, or in a local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code section 5020.1(k), or

A resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1. In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resource Code Section 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.

The State requires lead agencies to consider the potential effects of proposed projects and consult with California Native American tribes during the local planning process for the purpose of protecting Traditional Tribal Cultural Resources through the CEQA Guidelines. Pursuant to PRC Section 21080.3.1, the lead agency shall begin consultation with the California Native American tribe that is traditionally and culturally affiliated with the geographical area of the proposed project. Such significant cultural resources are either sites, features, places, cultural landscapes, sacred places, and objects with cultural value to a tribe which is either on or eligible for inclusion in the California Historic Register

or local historic register, or, the lead agency, at its discretion, and support by substantial evidence, choose to treat the resources as a Tribal Cultural Resources (PRC Section 21074(a)(1-2)).

Additional information may also be available from the California Native American Heritage Commission's Sacred Lands File per PRC Section 5097.96 and the California Historical Resources Information System administered by the California Office of Historic Preservation. Please also note that PRC Section 21082.3(c) contains provisions specific to confidentiality.

Pursuant to Senate Bill 18 (SB 18), Native American tribes traditionally and culturally affiliated with the project area were invited to consult regarding the proposed project based on a list of contacts provided by the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC). These tribes included: Big Sandy Rancheria of Western Mono Indians, Cold Springs Rancheria of Mono Indians, Dumna Wo-Wah Tribal Government, Kings River Choinumni Farm Tribe, Table Mountain Rancheria, Traditional Choinumni Tribe, Tule River Indian Tribe, North Fork Rancheria of Mono Indians, North Valley Yokuts Tribe, Picayune Rancheria of Chukchansi Indians, and Wuksache Indian Tribe/Eshom Valley Band.

Assembly Bill (AB) 52, which became law January 1, 2015, requires that, as part of the CEQA review process, public agencies provide early notice of a project to California Native American Tribes to allow for consultation between the tribe and the public agency. The purpose of AB 52 is to provide the opportunity for public agencies and tribes to consult and consider potential impacts to Tribal Cultural Resources (TCR's), as defined by the Public Resources Code (PRC) Section 2107(a). Under AB 52, public agencies shall reach out to California Native American Tribes who have requested to be notified of projects in areas within or which may have been affiliated with their tribal geographic range. Pursuant to Assembly Bill 52 (AB 52), Table Mountain Rancheria and Dumna Wo Wah Tribes were invited to consult. The contracted Tribes did not request consultation.

No tribal cultural resources or historical resources were identified on the project site. If any artifacts are inadvertently discovered during ground-disturbing activities, existing federal, State, and local laws and regulations would require construction activities to cease until such artifacts are properly examined and determined not to be of significance by a qualified cultural resources professional. In addition, Mitigation Measures CUL-1, CUL-2 and CUL-3 included above in Section V, Cultural Resources, would apply to the project and would reduce potential impacts to unknown historical resources to less than significant. This section will not be included in the EIR.

MITIGATION MEASURES

Refer to Mitigation Measures CUL-1, CUL-2 and CUL-3.

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
XIX. UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS – Would the project:				
a) Require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment or storm water drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effect?			X	
b) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry and multiple dry years?			X	
c) Result in a determination by the waste water 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?			X	
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?			X	
e) Comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste?			X	

DISCUSSION

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?

Water supply and wastewater services for the proposed project would be provided by the City of Fresno through the Department of Public Utilities (DPU) Water and Wastewater Management Divisions. The proposed project would connect to an existing water service pipeline located along North Armstrong Avenue, and proposed wastewater service pipelines located along North Armstrong Avenue and the future extension of East McKinley Avenue. The Department of Public Utilities has determined that adequate sanitary sewer and water services would be available to serve the proposed project subject to the payment of any applicable connection charges and/or fees and extension of services in a manner which is compliant with the Department of Public Utilities standards, specifications, and policies. The Project Applicant would need to contact the Department of Public Utilities to determine service requirements.

Electric power and telecommunication facilities would require connections to the project site. However, because the project site is located near existing infrastructure, connection to these facilities would not cause significant environmental effects.

Stormwater from the project site would be directed through internal drainage infrastructure (e.g., manholes, drainage basins, and drainage lines) towards proposed drainage infrastructure located along North Armstrong Avenue and along the future extension of East McKinley Avenue. Stormwater from the project site would then be redirected towards Ponding Basin BS, located southwest of the project site. Impacts to storm drainage facilities have been previously discussed in Section X, Hydrology and Water Quality. Compliance with the FMFCD Master Plan would ensure that the proposed project would not exceed capacity of existing and planned stormwater drainage systems. The project would not result in the construction of new drainage facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which would cause significant environmental effects. The Project Applicant would be required to pay drainage fees to the FMFCD to address impacts to storm drainage infrastructure resulting from the proposed project.

Therefore, the impact would be less than significant. This section will not be included in the EIR.

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

The City of Fresno Department of Public Utilities would supply water to the project site. Based on the City's 2020 Urban Water Management Plan, the water supplies under normal conditions for the City from 2025 (329,030 Acre Feet (AF)/year) to 2045 (357,330

AF/year) would be sufficient to cover the potable water demand (i.e., 136,504 AF by 2025 and 167,947 AF by 2045) for each normal year respectively.[42]

During a single dry year, water supplies for the City from 2025 (188,852 AF/year) to 2045 (211,158 AF/year) would be sufficient to cover the potable water demand for each year (i.e., 136,504 AF by 2025 and 167,947 AF by 2045) respectively.

After a 5-year dry period, water supplies for the City from 2025 (315,000 AF/year) to 2045 (340,000 AF/year) would be sufficient to cover the potable water demand for each year (i.e., 136,504 AF by 2025 and 167,947 AF by 2045) respectively.

After submitting a GPA and rezone application and complying with all associated requirements and fees related to the GPA and rezone progress, the proposed project would be consistent with growth under the City's General Plan and would be accounted for in the City's UWMP projections. Therefore, the proposed project would have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry and multiple dry years, and the impact would be less than significant. This section will not be included in the EIR.

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?

Water supply and wastewater services for the proposed project would be provided by the City of Fresno through the Department of Public Utilities (DPU) Water and Wastewater Management Divisions. The City of Fresno owns and operates two wastewater treatment facilities. They are the Fresno/Clovis Regional Wastewater Reclamation Facility and the North Fresno Wastewater Reclamation Facility. The RWRF currently has a capacity of 87 million gallons per day (mgd).[43] The North Fresno Facility has a capacity of 1.07 mgd.[44] The Department of Public Utilities has determined that adequate sanitary sewer and water services would be available to serve the proposed project subject to the payment of any applicable connection charges and/or fees and extension of services in a manner which is compliant with the Department of Public Utilities standards, specifications, and policies. The Project Applicant would need to contact the Department of Public Utilities to determine service requirements. This impact would be less than significant. This section will not be included in the EIR.

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?

42 City of Fresno. 2021. 2020 Urban Water Management Plan. Website: https://www.fresno.gov/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/Fresno-2020-UWMP_Final_2021-07-21.pdf (accessed July 25, 2023).

43 Ibid.

44 Ibid.

Garbage disposed of in the City of Fresno is taken to Cedar Avenue Recycling and Transfer Station. Once trash has been off-loaded at the transfer station, it is sorted, and non-recyclable solid waste is loaded onto large trucks and taken to the American Avenue Landfill located approximately 6 miles southwest of Kerman.

The American Avenue Landfill (i.e. American Avenue Disposal Site 10-AA-0009) has a maximum permitted capacity of 32,700,000 cubic yards and a remaining capacity of 29,358,535 cubic yards, with an estimated closure date of August 31, 2031. The maximum permitted throughput is 2,200 tons per day.

Other landfills within the County of Fresno include the Clovis Landfill (City Of Clovis Landfill 10-AA-0004) with a remaining capacity of 7,740,000 cubic yards, a maximum permitted throughput of 2,000 tons per day, and an estimated closure date of April 30, 2047.[45,46]

According to the CalEEMod Analysis prepared for the project, operation of the proposed project would generate approximately 86.78 tons of solid waste per year, or approximately 0.24 tons per day. Given the available capacity at the landfills, the additional solid waste generated by the proposed project is not anticipated to cause the facility to exceed its daily permitted capacity. As such, the project would be served by a landfill with sufficient capacity to accommodate the project's waste disposal needs, and impacts associated with the disposition of solid waste would be less than significant. This section will not be included in the EIR.

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

The proposed project would comply with Cal Green, the City's Construction and Demolition (C&D) Waste Management Guide, and with waste management policies and recommendations from the General Plan and the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Plan Update. The proposed project would dispose of waste in accordance with applicable federal, state, and local recycling, reduction, and waste requirements and policies. Therefore, the proposed project would not conflict with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste, and the impact would be less than significant. This section will not be included in the EIR.

MITIGATION MEASURES

The proposed project would not result in any potentially significant impacts related to recreation, and no mitigation is required.

45 CalRecycle. n.d. SWIS Facility/Site Summary. American Avenue Disposal Site (10-AA-0009). Website: https://www2.calrecycle.ca.gov/SolidWaste/Site/Summary/352 (accessed April 19, 2022).

46 CalRecycle. n.d. SWIS Facility/Site Summary. City Of Clovis Landfill (10-AA-0004). Website: https://www2.calrecycle.ca.gov/SolidWaste/SiteActivity/Details/4529?siteID=347 (accessed April 19, 2022).

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
XX. WILDFIRE – If located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, would the project:				
a) Substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?			X	
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 wldfire?			X	
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?			X	
d) Expose people or structures to significant risks, including downslope or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes?			X	

DISCUSSION

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

The proposed project would consist of a 326-lot residential development for single-family residences. The development would potentially include landscaped spaces, a private pool, a park area, private streets, pedestrian, and utility infrastructure. The project site is

bounded by residential developments to the north, rural residential uses to the east, rural residential and agricultural uses to the south, and agricultural and rural residential uses to the west.

The proposed project would construct an extension of McKinley Avenue to facilitate access to, and circulation around the project site. Although construction of the roadway extensions would affect circulation of vehicles along intersecting roadways near the construction site, such as North Armstrong Avenue, these impacts would be temporary and would not substantially or permanently impair emergency evacuation in the City of Fresno.

Therefore, would not substantially impair any nearby roadways that may serve as emergency evacuation routes or interfere with any emergency evacuation routes within the City of Fresno or an adopted emergency response plan. Therefore, the impact would be less than significant. This section will not be included in the EIR.

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?

The project site is located in an area mapped by CAL FIRE as Local Responsibility Area (LRA) Unzoned, indicating that the area is urbanized and not susceptible to wildland conflagrations, and is not located within a very high fire hazard severity zone (VHFHSZ). and is not located within a VHFHSZ.[47] The project site would comply with City and County fire safety regulations for project construction and operation. Therefore, the proposed project would not exacerbate wildfire risks and potentially expose project occupants to wildfires. The impact would be less than significant. This section will not be included in the EIR.

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?

The project site is located in an LRA Unzoned area, and is not located within a VHFHSZ. Although the proposed project may require the installation of infrastructure to serve the site, the installation of this infrastructure would not exacerbate fire risk in the project vicinity. The installation of wastewater and stormwater infrastructure to serve the project site would comply with design and construction requirements of the City and FMFCD. The project applicant would also pay for applicable impact fees and connection fees for utilities that would serve the project site. Compliance with utility installation requirements of the

47 California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE). 2022. Fresno County State Responsibility Area Fire Hazard Severity Zones. Website: https://osfm.fire.ca.gov/fire-hazard-severity-zones-maps-2022/ (accessed April 2023).

City and utility providers would reduce potential impacts to less than significant. This section will not be included in the EIR.

d) Expose people or structures to significant risks, including downslope or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes?

As discussed above, the project is not located within a VHFHSZ. The project site is also located on a relatively flat area and is not adjacent to any hills. In general, the potential for land sliding or slope failure in the City is very low, and the project site would not be susceptible to landslides. The project site is also not located on a flood hazard zone and would not be susceptible to flooding due to post-fire drainage changes. Therefore, the proposed project would not expose people or structures to significant post-fire risks, and the impact would be less than significant. This section will not be included in the EIR.

MITIGATION MEASURES

The proposed project would not result in any potentially significant impacts related to wildfires, and no mitigation is required.

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
XIX. MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE				
a) Does the project have the potential to degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, 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?		X		

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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)?	X			
c) Does the project have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?	X			

DISCUSSION

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 an endangered, rare, or threatened species, or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?

The project site does not provide suitable habitat for special-status animal species. Common wildlife species that are adapted to urban environments are expected to continue to use the project site and vicinity. The project site is not occupied by, or suited for, any special-status species. As a result, the proposed project would not have direct or indirect adverse effects on special-status plants or wildlife. The project site is not in an area where there are important examples of California history or prehistory. Additionally, with implementation of Mitigation Measures CUL-1 through CUL-3, the proposed project would not result in impacts to previously undiscovered resources. As a result, a less-than-significant impact with mitigation would occur.

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.)

The proposed project's impacts would be individually limited and not cumulatively considerable due to the site-specific nature of the potential impacts. The potentially significant impacts that can be reduced to less-than-significant levels with implementation of recommended mitigation measures include the topics of Aesthetics, Cultural Resources, Geology and Soils, Noise and Tribal Cultural Resources. These impacts would primarily be related to construction-period activities, would be temporary in nature, and would not substantially contribute to any potential cumulative impacts associated with these topics.

For the topics of Biological Resources, Agriculture and Forestry Resources, Energy, Hazards and Hazardous Materials, Hydrology and Water Quality Land Use and Planning, Mineral Resources, Population and Housing, Public Services, Recreation, and Utilities and Service Systems, and Wildlife, the proposed project would have no impacts or less-than-significant impacts, and therefore, the proposed project would not substantially contribute to any potential cumulative impacts for these topics.

The proposed project could potentially contribute to cumulatively considerable impacts for the topics of Air Quality, Greenhouse Gas Emissions, and Transportation. The EIR will further analyze the proposed project's contribution to potentially cumulative impacts with these topics.

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

The proposed project's potential to result in environmental effects that could directly or indirectly impacts human beings has been evaluated in this Initial Study. The project could potentially have significant environmental effects that could adversely impact human beings and the environment. The project will require an EIR to analyze potentially significant impacts.

Environmental Assessment Application No. T-6360/P22-00387/P22-00388

Attachment:

Land Evaluation and Site Assessment Model

LSA

CARLSBAD
CLOVIS
IRVINE
LOS ANGELES
PALM SPRINGS
POINT RICHMOND
RIVERSIDE
ROSEVILLE
SAN LUIS OBISPO

MEMORANDUM

DATE: October 18, 2023

TO: Jeff Harris, Chief Operating Officer
Wilson Homes, Inc.
7550 North Palm, Suite 102
Fresno, CA 93711

FROM: Pamela Reading, Principal, LSA
Nathaly Granda Bustamante, Environmental Planner, LSA

SUBJECT: Land Evaluation and Site Assessment Model (LESA Model) for Assessor's Parcel Numbers (APNs) 574-140-04 and 574-140-05 in Fresno, California

Wilson Homes, Inc. (project applicant) is proposing to develop two parcels in the City of Fresno (APNs 574-140-04 and 574-140-05) with 326 single-family homes. In performing due diligence for this project, the project applicant determined that according to the California Department of Conservation Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program (FMMP), 30.77 acres of the 31.29-acre project site is designated Prime Farmland and Farmland of Local Importance. Therefore, the California Agricultural Land Evaluation and Site Assessment (LESA) model prepared by the California Department of Conservation (refer to Appendix A) was prepared to determine if the conversion of Prime Farmland and Farmland of Local Importance to a non-agricultural use would constitute a significant impact pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Statute and Guidelines.

The information used to prepare the LESA Model was based on information obtained from the California Department of Conservation FMMP, the United States Department of Agriculture, the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), and Geographic information system (GIS) tools.

LESA is a term used to define an approach for rating the relative quality of land resources based on specific measurable features. The formulation of a California LESA Model is the result of Senate Bill 850 (Chapter 812/1993), which charged the Resource Agency (in consultation with the Governor's Office of Planning and Research) with developing an amendment to Appendix G of the State CEQA Guidelines concerning agricultural lands. Such an amendment is intended "to provide lead agencies with an optional methodology to ensure that significant effects on the environment of agricultural land conversions are quantitatively and consistently considered in the environmental review process" (Public Resources Code [PRC] Section 21095). A LESA analysis is based on the definition of agricultural land contained in CEQA, PRC Section 21060.1:

21060.1 (a) “Agricultural land” means prime farmland, farmland of statewide importance, or unique farmlands, as defined by the United States Department of Agriculture land inventory and monitoring criteria as modified for California.

21060.1 (b) In those areas of the state where lands have not been surveyed for the classifications specific in subdivision (a), “agricultural land” means land that meets the requirement of “prime agricultural land” as defined in paragraph (1), (2), (3), or (4) of subdivision (c) of Section 51201 of the Government Code [the Williamson Act].

The LESA Model is composed of a Land Evaluation (LE) portion, which measures soil quality, and the Site Assessment (SA) portion, which evaluates other factors that contribute to the site’s agricultural importance (e.g., parcel size and on-farm investments). A Final LESA Score of 0 to 39 points is not considered significant. A final score between 40 to 59 points is considered significant only if the LE and SA subscores are each greater than or equal to 20 points. A final score between 60 to 79 points is considered significant unless either the LE or SA subscores is less than 20 points. A final score between 80 to 100 points is considered significant. The proposed project achieved a Final LESA Score of 68.72 points, with an LE subscore of 49.97 points and a SA subscore of 18.72 points. Because the SA subscore was below 20 points, the the conversion of Prime Farmland and Farmland of Local Importance associated with implementation of the proposed project would not result in a significant impact pursuant to CEQA.

Attachment: A: LESA Model
B: Figures

ATTACHMENT A

LESA MODEL

Appendix A. California Agricultural LESA Worksheets

NOTES

The Vesting Tentative Tract Map No. 6360 Project is a 31.29 acre project site located in the City of Fresno. Three soil types have been identified on the project site: Greenfield sandy loam (GtA), 0 to 3 percent slopes, Hanford fine sandy loam (Hm), and Ramona loam (Rc). (refer to Figure 1: Soils, at the end of the worksheets). The acreage of each soil type is divided by the total project acreage (31.29 acres) to determine the proportion of each soil type on the project site. The Land Capability Classification (LCC) and Storie Index for the on-site soils were found on the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Web Soil Survey.

According to the USDA NRCS Web Soil Survey, the LCCs for the three soil types are as follows: I for GtA, Hm, and Rc for irrigated land; and IVc for GtA, Hm, and Rc for nonirrigated land. The LCC value for irrigated land was used for each soil type, as the project site is irrigated through Fresno Irrigation District (FID) water deliveries and groundwater.

According to the USDA NRCS Web Soil Survey, Greenfield sandy loam, 0 to 3 percent slopes, has a Storie Index of 93; Hanford fine sandy loam has a Storie Index of 100; and Ramona loam has a Storie Index of 100.

Calculation of the Land Evaluation (LE) Score

Part 1. Land Capability Classification (LCC) Score:

(1) Determine the total acreage of the project.
(2) Determine the soil types within the project area and enter them in **Column A** of the **Land Evaluation Worksheet** provided on page 2-A.
(3) Calculate the total acres of each soil type and enter the amounts in **Column B**.
(4) Divide the acres of each soil type (**Column B**) by the total acreage to determine the proportion of each soil type present. Enter the proportion of each soil type in **Column C**.
(5) Determine the LCC for each soil type from the applicable Soil Survey and enter it in **Column D**.
(6) From the LCC Scoring Table below, determine the point rating corresponding to the LCC for each soil type and enter it in **Column E**.

LCC Scoring Table

LCC Class	I	IIe	IIs,w	IIIe	IIIs,w	IVe	IVs,w	V	VI	VII	VIII
Points	100	90	80	70	60	50	40	30	20	10	0

(7) Multiply the proportion of each soil type (**Column C**) by the point score (**Column E**) and enter the resulting scores in **Column F**.
(8) Sum the LCC scores in **Column F**.
(9) Enter the LCC score in box <1> of the **Final LESA Score Sheet** on page 10-A.

Part 2. Storie Index Score:

(1) Determine the Storie Index rating for each soil type and enter it in **Column G**.
(2) Multiply the proportion of each soil type (**Column C**) by the Storie Index rating (**Column G**) and enter the scores in **Column H**.
(3) Sum the Storie Index scores in **Column H** to gain the Storie Index Score.
(4) Enter the Storie Index Score in box <2> of the **Final LESA Score Sheet** on page 10-A.

Land Evaluation Worksheet

Land Capability Classification (LCC) and Storie Index Scores

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Soil Map Unit	Project Acres	Proportion of Project Area	LCC	LCC Rating	LCC Score	Storie Index	Storie Index Score
GtA	0.5	0.016	I	100	1.6	93	1.488
Hm	1.96	0.063	I	100	6.3	100	6.3
Rc	28.83	0.921	I	100	92.1	100	92.1
Totals	31.29	(Must Sum to 1.0)		***LCC Total Score***	100	***Storie Index Total Score***	99.888

Site Assessment Worksheet 1.

Project Size Score

	I	J	K
	LCC Class I - II	LCC Class III	LCC Class IV - VIII
	0.5		
	1.96		
	28.83		
Total Acres	31.29		
Project Size Scores	50		

Highest Project Size Score 50

NOTES

Column I - 31.29 acres of Class I soils corresponds to a score of 50 points.

Calculation of the Site Assessment (SA) Score

Part 1. Project Size Score:.

(1) Using **Site Assessment Worksheet 1** provided on page 2-A, enter the acreage of each soil type from **Column B** in the **Column - I, J or K** - that corresponds to the LCC for that soil. (Note: While the Project Size Score is a component of the Site Assessment calculations, the score sheet is an extension of data collected in the Land Evaluation Worksheet, and is therefore displayed beside it).
(2) Sum **Column I** to determine the total amount of class I and II soils on the project site.
(3) Sum **Column J** to determine the total amount of class III soils on the project site.
(4) Sum **Column K** to determine the total amount of class IV and lower soils on the project site.
(5) Compare the total score for each LCC group in the Project Size Scoring Table below and determine which group receives the highest score.

Project Size Scoring Table

Class I or II		**Class III**		**Class IV or Lower**	
Acreage	Points	Acreage	Points	Acreage	Points
>80	100	>160	100	>320	100
60-79	90	120-159	90	240-319	80
40-59	80	80-119	80	160-239	60
20-39	50	60-79	70	100-159	40
10-19	30	40-59	60	40-99	20
10<	0	20-39	30	40<	0
		10-19	10		
		10<	0		

(6) Enter the **Project Size Score** (the highest score from the three LCC categories) in box <3> of the **Final LESA Score Sheet** on page 10-A.

NOTES

The 31.29 project site is currently irrigated as follows: 60 percent of the site is irrigated via FID surface water deliveries, and approximately 40 percent with groundwater.

The property owner has indicated that irrigation of the site has been physically feasible during regular rainfall years; however, increasing utility costs for water supply have placed economic restrictions on irrigation of the project site.

Additionally, the property owner has indicated that due to the installation of a Municipal water well in the vicinity of the property, the local aquifer has been heavily impacted, a condition that is exacerbated during drought years. As such, during drought years, physical restrictions impede reliable groundwater extraction for irrigation of the project site. Similarly, during drought years, FID surface water deliveries are greatly reduced, making this source unreliable for irrigation. Furthermore, increasing utility costs for water supply also present economic restrictions for irrigation of the property during drought years. As such, a Water Availability Score of 45 points was assigned to the project site.

Part 2. Water Resource Availability Score:

(1) Determine the type(s) of irrigation present on the project site, including a determination of whether there is dryland agricultural activity as well.

(2) Divide the site into portions according to the type or types of irrigation or dryland cropping that is available in each portion. Enter this information in **Column B** of **Site Assessment Worksheet 2. - Water Resources Availability**.

(3) Determine the proportion of the total site represented for each portion identified, and enter this information in **Column C**.

(4) Using the Water Resources Availability Scoring Table, identify the option that is most applicable for each portion, based upon the feasibility of irrigation in drought and non-drought years, and whether physical or economic restrictions are likely to exist. Enter the applicable Water Resource Availability Score into **Column D**.

(5) Multiply the Water Resource Availability Score for each portion by the proportion of the project area it represents to determine the weighted score for each portion in **Column E**.

(6) Sum the scores for all portions to determine the project's total Water Resources Availability Score

(7) Enter the Water Resource Availability Score in box <4> of the **Final LESA Score Sheet** on page 10-A.

Site Assessment Worksheet 2. - Water Resources Availability

A	B	C	D	E
Project Portion	Water Source	Proportion of Project Area	Water Availability Score	Weighted Availability Score (C x D)
1	FID Surface Water Delivery	0.6	45	27
2	Groundwater	0.4	45	18
3				
4				
5				
6				
		(Must Sum to 1.0)	***Total Water Resource Score***	45

Water Resource Availability Scoring Table

Option	Non-Drought Years			Drought Years			WATER RESOURCE SCORE
	RESTRICTIONS			RESTRICTIONS			
	Irrigated Production Feasible?	Physical Restrictions ?	Economic Restrictions ?	Irrigated Production Feasible?	Physical Restrictions ?	Economic Restrictions ?	
1	YES	NO	NO	YES	NO	NO	100
2	YES	NO	NO	YES	NO	YES	95
3	YES	NO	YES	YES	NO	YES	90
4	YES	NO	NO	YES	YES	NO	85
5	YES	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES	80
6	YES	YES	NO	YES	YES	NO	75
7	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	65
8	YES	NO	NO	NO	-- --	-- --	50
9	YES	NO	YES	NO	-- --	-- --	45
10	YES	YES	NO	NO	-- --	-- --	35
11	YES	YES	YES	NO	-- --	-- --	30
12	Irrigated production not feasible, but rainfall adequate for dryland production in both drought and non-drought years						25
13	Irrigated production not feasible, but rainfall adequate for dryland production in non-drought years (but not in drought years)						20
14	Neither irrigated nor dryland production feasible						0

NOTES

As shown in Figure 2, the total acreage of the Zone of Influence (ZOI) is 304.76 acres, and 152.14 acres of the ZOI are under agricultural production (based on the California Department of Conservation Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program). Approximately 50 percent of the ZOI is under agricultural production. Therefore, the Surrounding Agricultural Land Score equates to 30 points.

Part 3. Surrounding Agricultural Land Use Score:

(1) Calculate the project's Zone of Influence (ZOI) as follows:

(a) a rectangle is drawn around the project such that the rectangle is the smallest that can completely encompass the project area.

(b) a second rectangle is then drawn which extends one quarter mile on all sides beyond the first rectangle.

(c) The ZOI includes all parcels that are contained within or are intersected by the second rectangle, less the area of the project itself.

(2) Sum the area of all parcels to determine the total acreage of the ZOI.

(3) Determine which parcels are in agricultural use and sum the areas of these parcels

(4) Divide the area in agriculture found in step (3) by the total area of the ZOI found in step (2) to determine the percent of the ZOI that is in agricultural use.

(5) Determine the Surrounding Agricultural Land Score utilizing the Surrounding Agricultural Land Scoring Table below.

Surrounding Agricultural Land Scoring Table

Percent of ZOI in Agriculture	Surrounding Agricultural Land Score
90-100	100
80-89	90
75-79	80
70-74	70
65-69	60
60-64	50
55-59	40
50-54	30
45-49	20
40-44	10
<40	0

(5) Enter the Surrounding Agricultural Land Score in box <5> of the **Final LESA Score Sheet** on page 10-A.

Site Assessment Worksheet 3.
Surrounding Agricultural Land and Surrounding Protected Resource Land

A	B	C	D	E	F	G
Zone of Influence						
Total Acres	Acres in Agriculture	Acres of Protected Resource Land	Percent in Agriculture (A/B)	Percent Protected Resource Land (A/C)	Surrounding Agricultural Land Score (From Table)	Surrounding Protected Resource Land Score (From Table)
304.76	152.14	0	49.9	0	30	0

Part 4. Protected Resource Lands Score:

The Protected Resource Lands scoring relies upon the same Zone of Influence information gathered in Part 3, and figures are entered in Site Assessment Worksheet 3, which combines the surrounding agricultural and protected lands calculations.

(1) Use the total area of the ZOI calculated in Part 3. for the Surrounding Agricultural Land Use score.
(2) Sum the area of those parcels within the ZOI that are protected resource lands, as defined in the California Agricultural LESA Guidelines.
(3) Divide the area that is determined to be protected in Step (2) by the total acreage of the ZOI to determine the percentage of the surrounding area that is under resource protection.
(4) Determine the Surrounding Protected Resource Land Score utilizing the Surrounding Protected Resource Land Scoring Table below.

Surrounding Protected Resource Land Scoring Table

Percent of ZOI Protected	Protected Resource Land Score
90-100	100
80-89	90
75-79	80
70-74	70
65-69	60
60-64	50
55-59	40
50-54	30
45-49	20
40-44	10
<40	0

(5) Enter the Protected Resource Land score in box <6> of the **Final LESA Score Sheet** on page 10-A.

NOTES

As shown in Figure 3, the total acreage of the ZOI is 304.76 acres. No portion of the ZOI consists of protected resource lands, defined as Williamson Act contracted lands; publicly owned lands maintained as park, forest, or watershed resources; and lands with agricultural, wildlife habitat, open space, or other natural resource easements that restrict the conversion of such land to urban or industrial uses. As such, the Surrounding Protected Resource Score equates to 0 points.

NOTES

The component LE and SA factors have been entered into the Final LESA Score Sheet.

The LE factor scores are multiplied by the factor weights to determine the weighted score for each. The weighted LE factor scores are summed to determine the LE portion of the Final LESA score.

The SA factor scores are multiplied by the factor weights to determine the weighted score for each. The weighted SA factor scores are summed to determine the SA portion of the Final LESA score.

The LE and SA subtotals are summed to determine the Final LESA Score. The Final LESA Score for the proposed project is 68.72 points. A final score between 60 to 79 points is considered significant unless either the LE or SA subscores is less than 20 points. While the LE subtotal (49.97 points) is greater than 20 points, the SA subtotal (18.75 points) is below 20 points. Therefore, the LESA Model concludes that the conversion of the agricultural land (Prime Farmland and Farmland of Local Importance) on the project site to a non-agricultural use would constitute a less-than-significant impact.

Final LESA Score Sheet

Calculation of the Final LESA Score:

(1) Multiply each factor score by the factor weight to determine the weighted score and enter in Weighted Factor Scores column.
(2) Sum the weighted factor scores for the LE factors to determine the total LE score for the project.
(3) Sum the weighted factor scores for the SA factors to determine the total SA score for the project.
(4) Sum the total LE and SA scores to determine the Final LESA Score for the project.

	Factor Scores	Factor Weight	Weighted Factor Scores
LE Factors			
Land Capability Classification	<1> 100	0.25	25
Storie Index	<2> 99.888	0.25	24.97
LE Subtotal		***0.50***	49.97
SA Factors			
Project Size	<3> 50	0.15	7.5
Water Resource Availability	<4> 45	0.15	6.75
Surrounding Agricultural Land	<5> 30	0.15	4.5
Protected Resource Land	<6> 0	0.05	0
SA Subtotal		***0.50***	18.75
		Final LESA Score	68.72

For further information on the scoring thresholds under the California Agricultural LESA Model, consult Section 4 of the Instruction Manual.

ATTACHMENT B

FIGURES

LSA

Project Location (31.29 acres)

Soils

GtA - Greenfield sandy loam, 0 to 3 percent slopes (0.50 acres)

Hm - Hanford fine sandy loam (1.96 acres)

Rc - Ramona loam (28.83 acres)

N

0 100 200

FEET

FIGURE 1

Vesting Tentative Tract Map No. 6360 Project

Soils

SOURCE: Nearmap (2023), USDA NRCS (2023)

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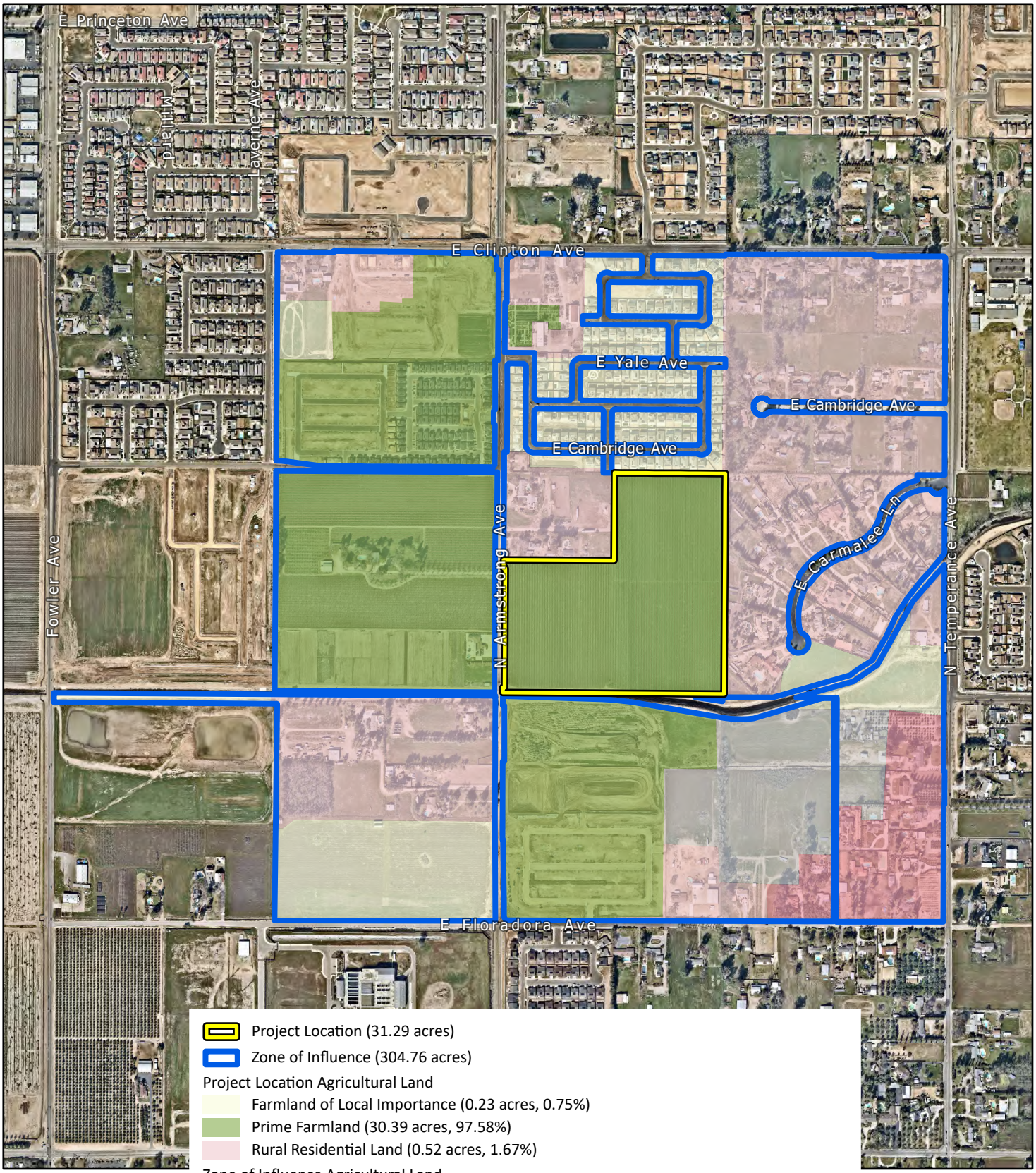

LSA

FIGURE 2

SOURCE: Nearmap (2023), USDA NRCS (2023)

Vesting Tentative Tract Map No. 6360 Project

Zone of Influence Agricultural Lands

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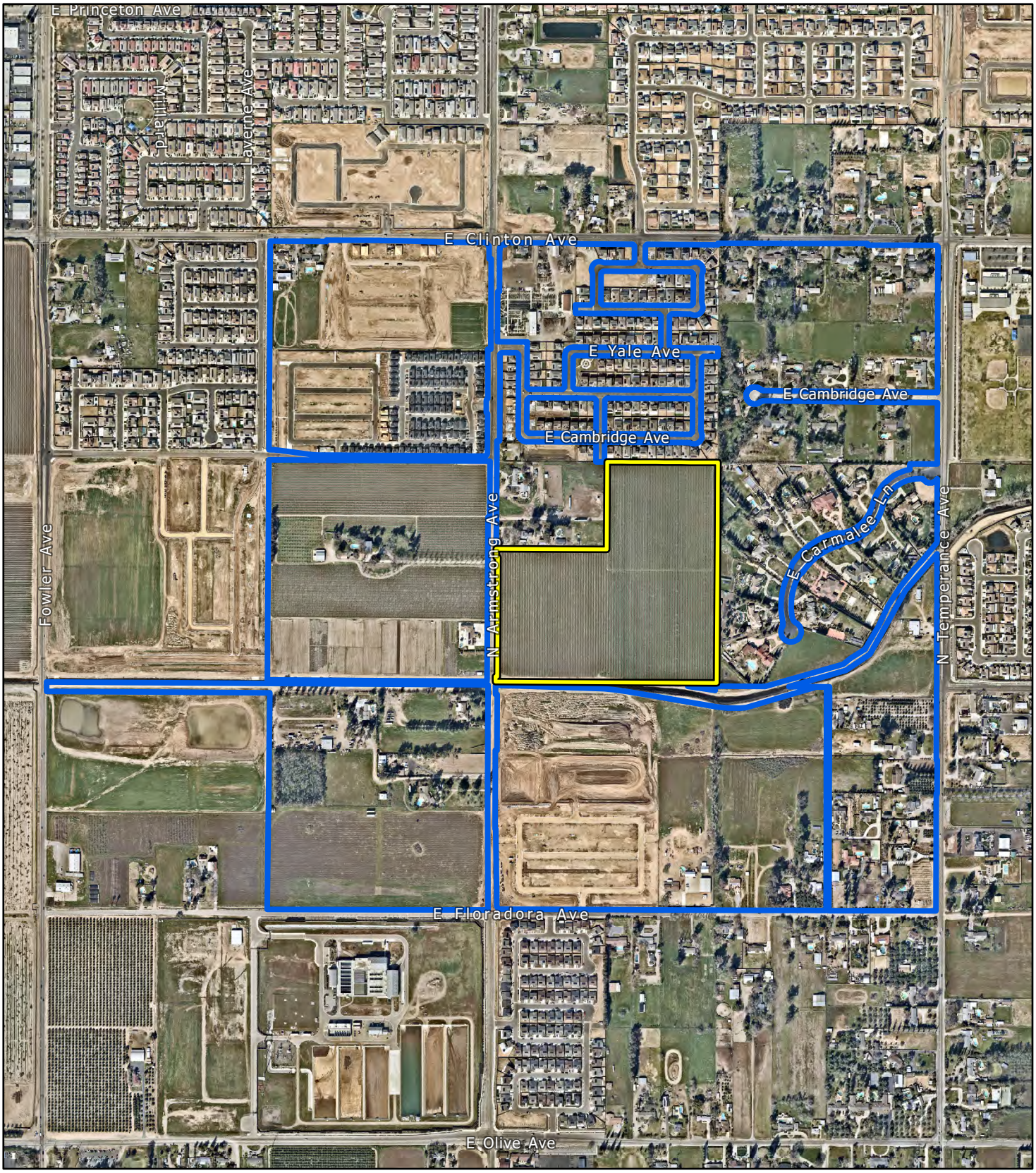

LSA

Project Location (31.29 acres)

Zone of Influence (304.76 acres)

FIGURE 3

N

0 400 800

FEET

SOURCE: Nearmap (2023), USDA NRCS (2023)

Vesting Tentative Tract Map No. 6360 Project

Zone of Influence Protected Lands

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