

COUNTY OF TULARE  
RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AGENCY



5961 South Mooney Boulevard  
Visalia, CA 93277

Initial Study and Mitigated Negative Declaration

Akers Business Park  
(GPA 22-003, PZC 22-010, PPM 23-007)

February 2023

Prepared by  
County of Tulare Resource Management Agency  
Economic Development and Planning Branch  
Environmental Planning Division

## INITIAL STUDY CHECKLIST

1. **Project Title:** Akers Business Park (GPA 22-003, PZC 22-010, PPM 23-007)
2. **Lead Agency:** County of Tulare  
Resource Management Agency  
5961 S. Mooney Blvd.  
Visalia, CA 93277
3. **Contact Persons:** Aaron Bock, Planning Director – 559-624-7000  
Hector Guerra, Chief, Environmental Planning Division – 559-624-7121
4. **Project Location:** Southwest corner of Road 100 (Oaks Street) and Oakdale Avenue, east of State Route 99, APN 149-090-006, near Tulare, CA 93274
5. **Applicant:** NFDI, LLC  
1878 N. Mooney Blvd.  
Tulare, CA, 93724
6. **Owner(s)** J&M Thomas Ranch, Inc.  
714 E. Oakdale Avenue  
Tulare, CA, 93724
7. **General Plan Designation:** Valley Agricultural
8. **Zoning:** AE-20 (Exclusive Agriculture – 20 Acre Minimum)
9. **Description of Project (Describe the whole action involved, including but not limited to later phases of the project, and any secondary, support, or off-site features necessary for its implementation. Attach additional sheets if necessary).** The proposed Project consists of the development of a commercial business park on approximately 65.45 acres located at the southwest corner of Road 100 (Oaks Street) and Oakdale Avenue, east of State Route (SR) 99, APN 149-090-006. The proposed Project includes a General Plan Amendment (“GPA”) to change the Land Use Designation from “Valley Agriculture” to “Mixed Use,” a Zone Change (“PZC”) to change the Zone from AE-20 (Exclusive Agriculture – 20 Acre Minimum) to C-3-MU (Service Commercial with a Mixed-Use Overlay Zone), and a Tentative Parcel Map (“PPM”) to subdivide a 65.45-acre parcel to facilitate the development of the proposed Akers Business Park. The proposed Project is a mixed use commercial development that includes the expansion of the existing Magic Touch Recreational Vehicle Sales facility at the south end of the proposed Project (3567 N. Oaks St. Tulare, CA 93274), contractor offices, boat sales, and other related uses allowed in the C-3-MU Zone.
10. **Surrounding land uses and setting (Brief description):**  
North: Agriculture (row crops)  
South: Commercial (RV sales)  
East: Agriculture (orchard)  
West: Commercial/Agriculture/SR 99

11. **Other public agencies whose approval is required (e.g., permits, financing approval, or participation agreement):** San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, City of Tulare; Regional Water Quality Control Board, County of Tulare Health and Human Services/Environmental Health Services; other to be determined.
  
12. **Have California Native American tribes traditionally and culturally affiliated with the project area requested consultation pursuant to Public Resources Code section 21080.3.1? If so, is there a plan for consultation that include, for example, the determination of significance of impacts to tribal cultural resources, procedures regarding confidentiality, etc?** Pursuant to AB 52 and SB 18, a Sacred Land File request was submitted to the Native American Heritage Commission on August 8, 2022, and was returned with negative results on October 13, 2022. On August 9, 2022, and September 26, 2022, tribal consultation notices were sent to sixteen (16) tribal contacts representing nine (9) Native American tribes. The County received no responses from the tribes within the 30-day response time for AB 52, or SB 18's 90-day response period. In the event that any potential resources are unearthed during construction-related activities, mitigation measures have been included in the project to reduce potential impacts on tribal cultural resources.

Figure 1

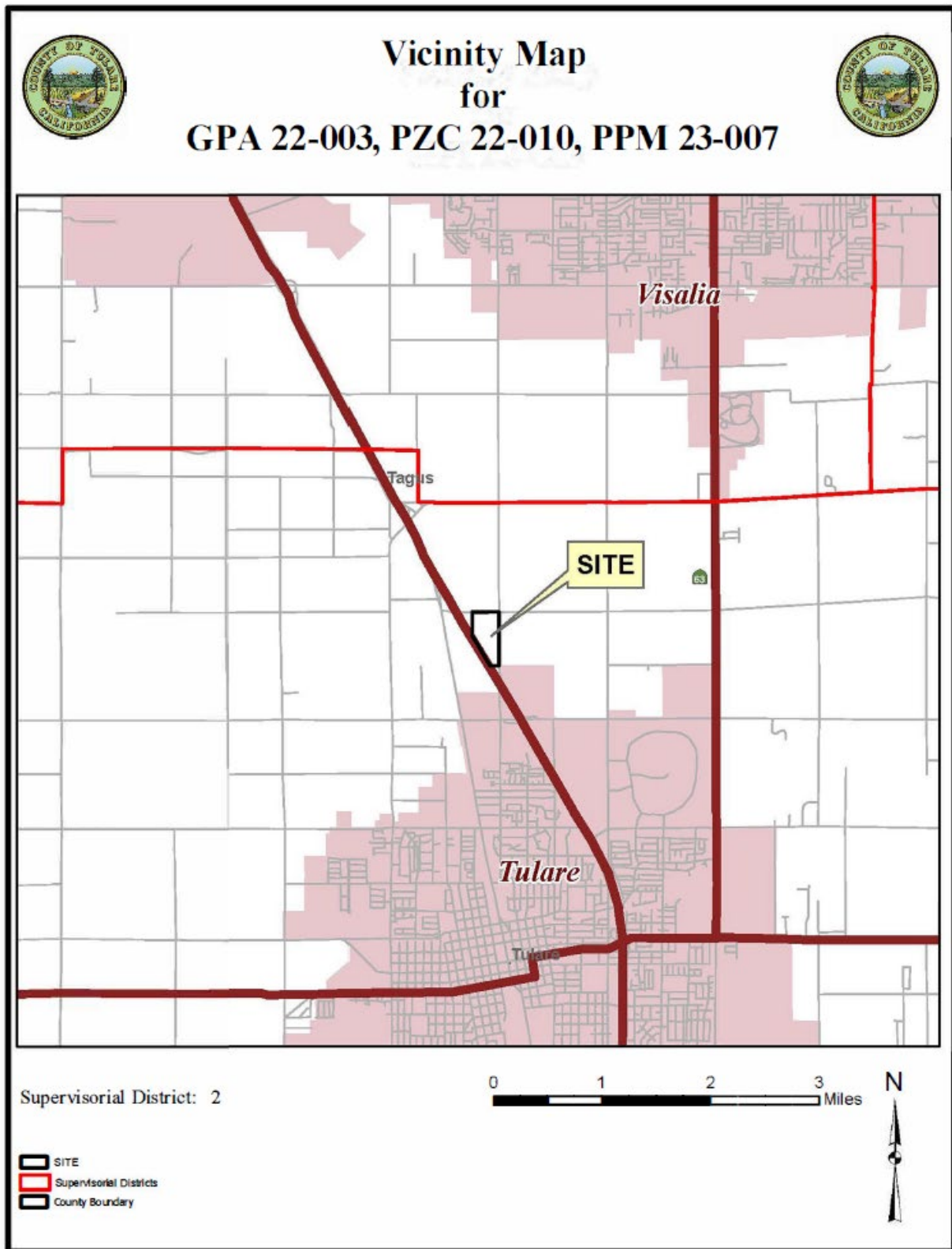




Figure 2



Figure 3

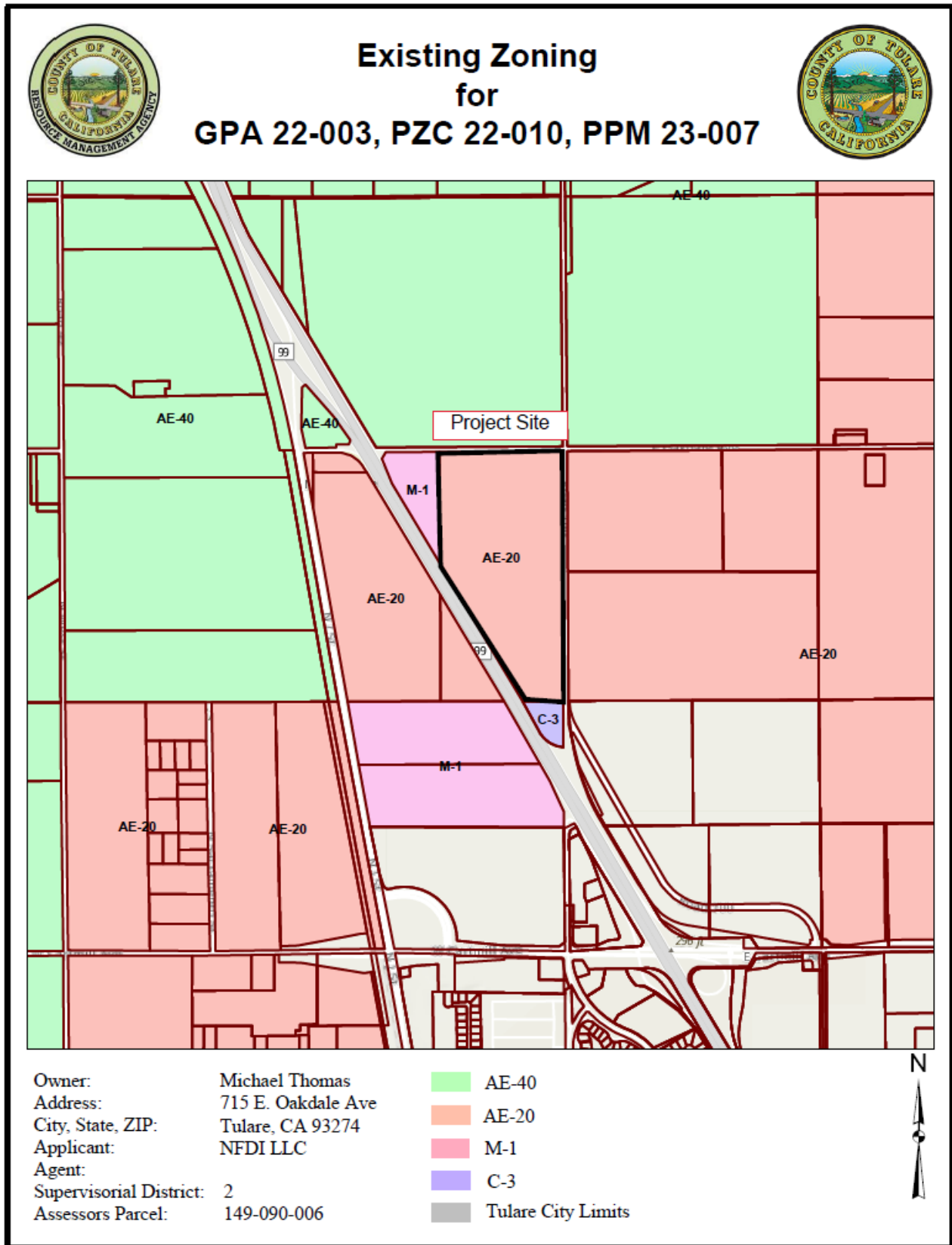


Figure 4

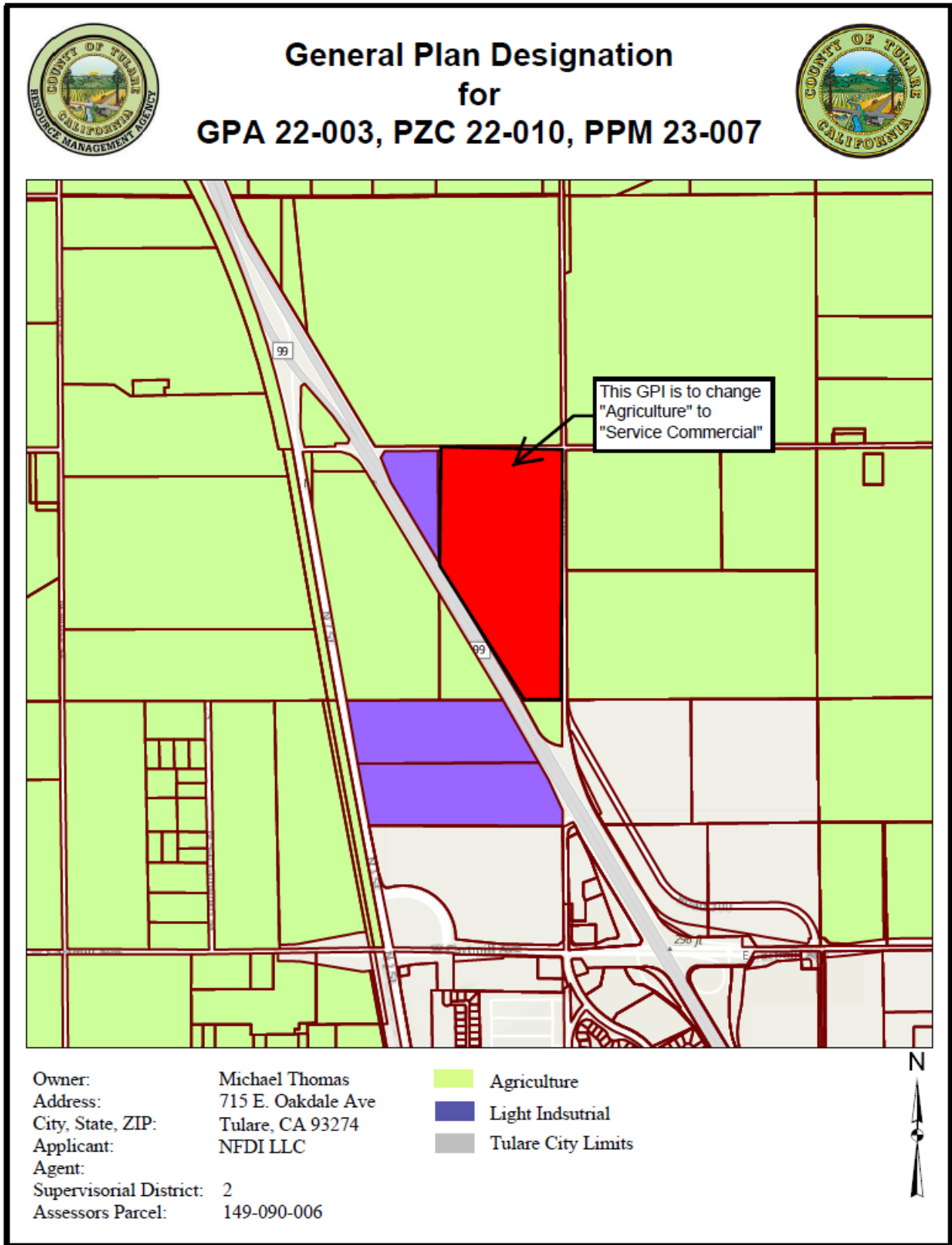
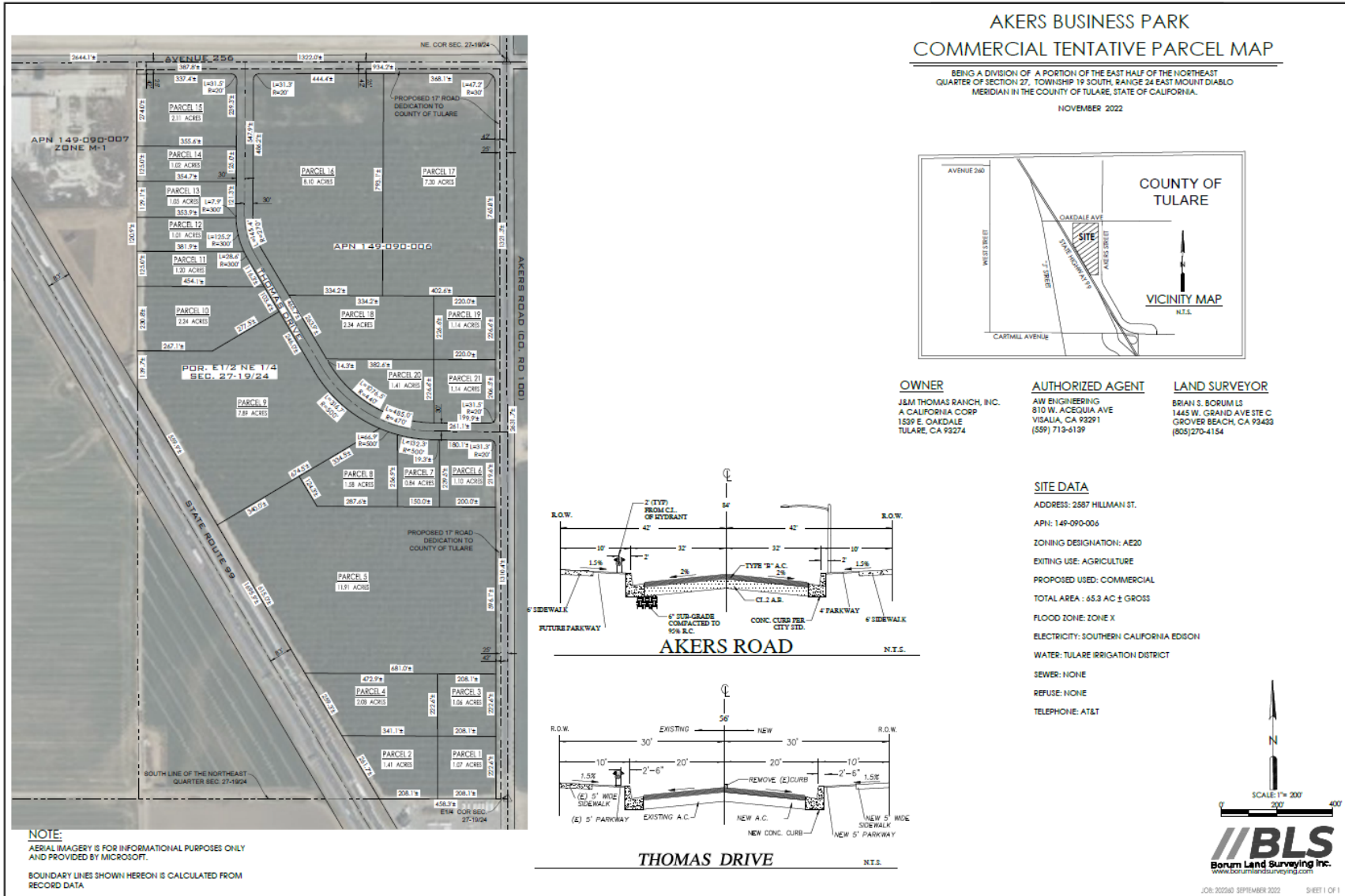




Figure 5



**A. 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.

- |   |  |   |
|---|--|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Aesthetics                  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Agriculture / Forestry Resources | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Air Quality                     |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Biological Resources        | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Cultural Resources               | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Energy                          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Geology / Soils                        | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Greenhouse Gas Emissions         | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Hazards and Hazardous Materials |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hydrology / Water Quality              | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Land Use / Planning              | <input type="checkbox"/> Mineral Resources                          |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Noise                       | <input type="checkbox"/> Population / Housing                        | <input type="checkbox"/> Public Services                            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Recreation                             | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Transportation                   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Tribal Cultural Resources       |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Utilities / Service Systems | <input type="checkbox"/> Wildfire                                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Mandatory Findings of Significance         |

**B. DETERMINATION**

On the basis of this initial evaluation:

- I find that the proposed project **COULD NOT** have a significant effect on the environment, and a **NEGATIVE DECLARATION** will be prepared.
- I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, there **WILL NOT** be a significant effect in this case because revisions in the project have been made or agreed to by the project proponent. A **MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION** will be prepared.
- I find that the proposed project **MAY** have a significant effect on the environment, and an **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT** is required.
- I find that the proposed project **MAY** have a “potentially significant impact” or “potentially significant unless mitigated” impact on the environment, but at least one effect 1) has been adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and 2) has been addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis as described on attached sheets. An **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT** is required, but it must analyze only the effects that remain to be addressed.
- I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, because all potentially significant effects (a) have been analyzed adequately in an earlier **EIR** or **NEGATIVE DECLARATION** pursuant to applicable standards, and (b) have been avoided or mitigated pursuant to that earlier **EIR** or **NEGATIVE DECLARATION**, including revisions or mitigation measures that are imposed upon the proposed project, nothing further is required.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Hector Guerra  
Printed Name

Chief Environmental Planner  
Title

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Reed Schenke, P.E.  
Printed Name

Environmental Assessment Officer  
Title

## C. EVALUATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

- 1) 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).
- 2) 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.
- 3) 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.
- 4) “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 (5) below, may be cross-referenced).
- 5) 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 an 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.
- 6) 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.
- 7) Supporting Information Sources: A source list should be attached, and other sources used or individuals contacted should be cited in the discussion.
- 8) This is only a suggested form, and lead agencies are free to use different formats; however, lead agencies should normally address the questions from this checklist that are relevant to a project’s environmental effects in whatever format is selected.
- 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.

## I. AESTHETICS

Would the project:	SIGNIFICANT IMPACT	LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT WITH MITIGATION	LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT	NO IMPACT
a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) In non-urbanized areas, substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings? (Public views are those that are experienced from publicly accessible vantage point.) If the project is in an urbanized area, would the project conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

The discussions regarding Environmental Setting, Regulatory Setting, CEQA requirements, Aesthetics, etc.; contained in the Tulare County General Plan 2030 Update, Tulare County General Plan Background Report, and the Tulare County General Plan 2030 Update EIR are incorporated herein in their entirety. Where necessary and if available, additional site-specific facts, data, information, etc., are included in this discussion.

### Environmental Setting

Tulare County is located in a predominately agricultural region of central California. The terrain in the County varies. The western portion of the County includes a portion of the San Joaquin Valley (Valley), and is generally flat, with large agricultural areas with generally compact towns interspersed. In the eastern portion of the County are foothills and the Sierra Nevada mountain range. The project site is located on the Valley floor, which is very fertile and has been intensively cultivated for many decades. Agriculture and related industries such as agricultural packing and shipping operations and small and medium sized manufacturing plants make up the economic base of the Valley region. Many communities are small and rural, surrounded by agricultural uses such as row crops, orchards, and dairies. From several locations on major roads and highways throughout the County, electric towers and telephone poles are noticeable. Mature trees, residential, commercial, and industrial development, utility structures, and other vertical forms are highly visible in the region because of the flat terrain. Where such vertical elements are absent, views are expansive. Most structures are small; usually one story in height, though occasionally two-story structures can be seen commercial or industrial agricultural complexes. The County provides a wide range of views from both mobile and stationary locations...<sup>1</sup>

The proposed Project Site (Akers Business Park) is located on the San Joaquin Valley floor in an unincorporated area. The proposed Project's 65.45-acre site is approximately 0.50-mile north of the City of Tulare, east of and adjacent to State Route 99, and south of and adjacent to Oakdale Avenue. The site is currently planted to walnuts. Cameron Creek is located north of Oakdale Avenue flowing in an east-to-west direction. The proposed Project site is surrounded by agricultural lands to the north (currently row crops), agriculture to the east (currently orchard), agricultural land to the south (currently row and orchard), and light manufacturing (Christy Vault Company [burial vault manufacturing]) and SR 99 to the west. The proposed Project will include the development of a commercial business park on approximately 65.45 acres. The proposed project will include a General Plan Amendment ("GPA") to change the Land Use Designation from "Valley Agriculture" to "Mixed Use," a Zone Change ("PZC") to change the Zone from AE-20 (Exclusive Agricultural – 20 Acre Minimum) to C-3-MU (Service Commercial with a Mixed-Use Overlay Zone) to facilitate a Tentative Subdivision Map ("TSM") to subdivide a 65.45-acre parcel and develop the proposed Akers Business Park as a mixed use commercial project that includes the expansion of the

<sup>1</sup> Tulare County 2030 General Plan: Recirculated Draft EIR (RDEIR). Page 3.1-11. Accessed in August 2022 at: <http://generalplan.co.tulare.ca.us/documents/generalplan2010/RecirculatedDraftEIR.pdf>



existing Magic Touch Recreational Vehicle Sales facility at the south end of the proposed Project (3567 N. Oaks St. Tulare, CA 93274), contractor offices, boat sales, and other related uses allowed in the C-3-MU Zone.

## Regulatory Setting

### *Federal*

Aesthetic resources are protected by several federal regulations, none of which are relevant to this Project because it will not be located on lands administered by a federal agency nor is the Project applicant requesting federal funding or any federal permits.

### *State*

#### Title 24 Outdoor Lighting Standards

“The 2019 Building Energy Efficiency Standards improve upon the 2016 Energy Standards for new construction of, and additions and alterations to, residential and nonresidential buildings. Buildings whose permit applications are dated on or after January 1, 2020, must comply with the 2019 Standards. The California Energy Commission updates the standards every three years.”<sup>2</sup> Title 24 Outdoor Lighting Standards were adopted by the State of California Energy Commission (Commission) (Title 24, Parts 1 and 6, Building Energy Efficiency Standards (Standards) went into effect on January 1, 2020. The changes focus on “four key areas: smart residential photovoltaic systems, updated thermal envelope standards (preventing heat transfer from the interior to exterior and vice versa), residential and nonresidential ventilation requirements, and nonresidential lighting requirements.”<sup>3</sup> “The significant changes for outdoor lighting systems in the 2019 update to the Energy Standards include:

- Changes to outdoor lighting power allowances with the allowance values based on LED lighting technologies. Revisions to the general hardscape lighting values in Tables 140.7-A and the specific lighting application values in Table 140.7-B for all Lighting Zones (LZ) – Lighting Zone 1 thru Lighting Zone 4.
- Add separate lighting power allowance values for concrete-surfaced and for asphalt-surfaced hardscape lighting application in Table 140.7-A.
- Add new lighting power allowances for narrow band spectrum light sources used in applications for minimizing outdoor lighting impacts on professional astronomy and nocturnal habitat. (Table 140.7-A)
- Revision and streamlining outdoor lighting control requirements. (§130.2(c))
- Healthcare facilities overseen by the California Office of Statewide Health Planning and Development (OSHPD) have to comply with the Energy Standards including the outdoor lighting requirements for all outdoor areas of healthcare facilities.”<sup>4</sup>

#### Outdoor Lighting Zones

“The basic premise of the Energy Standards is to base allowable outdoor lighting power on the brightness of the surrounding conditions. The Energy Standards contain lighting power allowances for new lighting installations and specific alterations that are dependent on the lighting zone in which the project is located.

Five categories of outdoor lighting zones are defined, and they are LZ0, LZ1, LZ2, LZ3 and LZ4. Lighting zones with lower numbers are darker from LZ0 which is in national parks and other areas intended to be very dark at night to LZ4 for high intensity nighttime use, such as entertainment or commercial districts or areas with special security considerations requiring very high light levels. The eyes adapt to darker surrounding conditions and less light is required to properly see; when the surrounding conditions get brighter, more light is needed to see.”<sup>5</sup>

“The least power is allowed in Lighting Zone 1 and increasingly more power is allowed in Lighting Zones 2, 3, and 4. Lighting Zone 0 is intended for undeveloped spaces in parks and wildlife preserves and is very low ambient illumination.

The following summarizes the default locations for outdoor lighting zones as specified in §10-114:

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<sup>2</sup> California Energy Commission (CEC). Accessed August 2022 at: <https://www.energy.ca.gov/programs-and-topics/programs/building-energy-efficiency-standards/2019-building-energy-efficiency>

<sup>3</sup> CEC. Energy Commission Adopts Standards Requiring Solar Systems for New Homes, First in Nation. Accessed August 2022 at: <https://www.energy.ca.gov/news/2018-05/energy-commission-adopts-standards-requiring-solar-systems-new-homes-first>

<sup>4</sup> CEC. Outdoor Lighting – Overview. 6.1. Overview. What’s new for the 2019 California Energy Code. Page 6-1 Accessed August 2022 at: [https://www.energy.ca.gov/sites/default/files/2020-05/06\\_OutdoorLighting.pdf](https://www.energy.ca.gov/sites/default/files/2020-05/06_OutdoorLighting.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> Ibid. Outdoor Lighting Zones. 6-4.

- Lighting Zone 0 areas are undeveloped areas of government designated parks, recreation areas, and wildlife preserves;
- Lighting Zone 1 areas are developed portions of government designated parks, recreation areas and wildlife preserves;
- Rural areas are Lighting Zone 2;
- Urban areas are Lighting Zone 3;
- Lighting Zone 4 is a special use district that may be created by a local government through application to the Energy Commission.”<sup>6</sup>

### California Scenic Highway Program

The California Scenic Highway Program was established by the state Legislature in 1963 for the purpose of protecting and enhancing the natural scenic beauty of California highways and adjacent corridors through special conservation treatment. The State Scenic Highway System includes a list of highways that are either eligible for designation as scenic highways or have been officially designated. The state laws governing the scenic highways program are found in The Streets and Highways Code Sections 260-263.<sup>7</sup> In Tulare County, portions of State Routes 180, 190, and 198 are designated as state scenic highways.<sup>8</sup>

### *Local*

#### Tulare County General Plan 2030 Update

The Tulare County General Plan Update 2030 Part 1: Goals and Policies Report (GPR) (August 2012) includes a number of goals and policies relating to scenic protection of County resources. The Goals and Policies Report Framework Concept No. 3 addresses Scenic Landscapes:

“The scenic landscapes in Tulare County will continue to be one of the County’s most visible assets. The Tulare County General Plan emphasizes the enhancement and preservation of these resources as critical to the future of the County. The County will continue to assess the recreational, tourism, quality of life, and economic benefits that scenic landscapes provide and implement programs that preserve and use this resource to the fullest extent.”<sup>9</sup>

The Tulare County General Plan 2030 Update: Chapter 7 – Scenic Landscapes, contains the following goals and policies that relate to aesthetics, preservation of scenic vistas and daytime lighting/nighttime glare and which have potential relevance to the Project’s CEQA review: *SL-1.1 Natural Landscapes* which requires new development to not significantly impact or block views of Tulare County’s natural landscapes; *SL-1.2 Working Landscapes* which requires that new non-agricultural structures and infrastructure located in or adjacent to croplands, orchards, vineyards, and open rangelands be sited so as to not obstruct important viewsheds and to be designed to reflect unique relationships with the landscape; *SL-2.1 Designated Scenic Routes and Highways* which is intended to protect views of natural and working landscapes along the County’s highways and roads by maintaining a designated system of County scenic routes and State scenic highways; *LU-5.3 Storage Screening* which shall require adequate landscaping and screening of industrial storage areas to minimize visual impacts and enhance the quality of the environment; *LU-5.6 Industrial Use Buffer* wherein, Unless mitigated, the County shall prohibit new heavy industrial uses to a minimum of 500 feet from schools, hospitals, or populated residential areas (more than 10 dwelling units within a quarter mile diameter area). The buffer area may be used for activities not creating impacts to adjoining sensitive land uses for uses accessory to the heavy industrial use. The establishment of a buffer may not be required when mitigated or may not apply to industrial uses that do not impact adjoining uses identified herein. The buffer area shall be landscaped and maintained; *LU-7.6 Screening* wherein the County shall require landscaping to adequately screen new industrial uses to minimize visual impacts; *ERM-5.19 Night Sky Protection* where Upon demonstrated interest by a community, mountain service center, or hamlet, the County will determine the best means by which to protect the visibility of the night sky; and *ERM-1.15 Minimize Lighting Impacts* where in the County shall ensure that lighting associated with new development or facilities (including street lighting,

<sup>6</sup> Op. Cit.

<sup>7</sup> California Department of Transportation (Caltrans). Scenic Highway Program. Frequently Asked Questions. Accessed July 2022 at: <https://dot.ca.gov/programs/design/lap-landscape-architecture-and-community-livability/lap-liv-i-scenic-highways/lap-liv-i-scenic-highways-faq2>.

<sup>8</sup> County of Tulare. Tulare County General Plan 2030 Update. Goals and Policies Report. Designated Candidate Scenic and County Scenic Routes Figure 7-1. Page 7-5. Accessed July 2022 at: <http://generalplan.co.tulare.ca.us/documents/GP/001Adopted%20Tulare%20County%20General%20Plan%20Materials/000General%20Plan%202030%20Part%20I%20and%20Part%20II/GENERAL%20PLAN%202012.pdf>

<sup>9</sup> Ibid. C. Environment. Environmental Landscapes. Concept 1: Scenic Landscapes. C-1.

recreational facilities, and parking) shall be designed to prevent artificial lighting from illuminating adjacent natural areas at a level greater than one foot candle above ambient conditions.

“Tulare County’s existing General Plan identifies State designated scenic highways and County designated eligible highways. There are three highway segments designated as eligible by the State. These include State Route 198 from Visalia to Three Rivers, State Route 190 from Porterville to Ponderosa, and State Route 180 extending through Federal land in the northern portion of Tulare County. State Route 198 closely follows around Lake Kaweah and the Kaweah River, while State Route 190 follows around Lake Success and the Tule River. Both Scenic Highways travel through agricultural areas of the valley floor to the foothills and the Sierra Nevada Range. Additionally, the General Plan Update identifies preserving the rural agricultural character of SR 99 and SR 63 as valuable to the County and communities.”<sup>10</sup>

### **Project Impact Analysis:**

- a) **Less Than Significant Impact:** For the purposes of this proposed Project, a scenic vista is defined as an area that is designated, signed, and accessible to the public for the purpose of viewing and sightseeing. The Project site is located on the floor of the San Joaquin Valley in south-east Tulare County. The site is adjacent to agricultural (production and/or commercial) uses to the north, south, and east. The Project would be low-profile (that is, no building/structure will be greater than 35’ feet in height) as zoning height limitations would restrict structures to no greater than a two-story equivalent (i.e., 2-½ stories and not to exceed 35 feet maximum). No parts of the Project would obstruct local scenic views or be visually intrusive or incompatible with the surrounding area. There are no designated scenic vistas within visible distance of the Project site (County of Tulare, 2010). Therefore, the proposed Project would have a less than significant impact on a scenic vista.
- b) **No Impact:** There are no rock outcroppings, historic buildings, or other designated scenic resources within or near the proposed Project site. The California Scenic Highway Program allows counties to nominate an eligible scenic highway to be approved by the California Department of Transportation and placed under the scenic corridor protection program. In Tulare County, there is currently one officially designated scenic highway, and two highways that are eligible for designation. Approximately two miles of the officially designated Scenic Highway (State Route) 180 passes through northern Tulare County, but this segment of SR 180 is approximately 33 miles north of the proposed Project site. Additionally, there are two Candidate State Scenic Highways, SR 198 (beginning east of SR 99), and SR 190, approximately 14 miles south of the proposed Project site. As such, the proposed Project is not located within the viewshed of any of the listed designated or eligible highway segments.

Additionally, the County of Tulare identified a number of County Scenic Roads in its 2012 General Plan Update; however, the nearest roads are not near or within the vicinity of the proposed Project site. As a result, the proposed Project would have no impact on existing scenic resources or highways. As noted earlier, the proposed Project is located in a relatively flat area and does not contain scenic resources such as significant trees, rock outcroppings, or historic buildings. Therefore, there would be no impact to an eligible or designated state scenic highway or other scenic resources as a result of the proposed Akers Business Park.

- c) **Less Than Significant Impact:** As noted earlier, the proposed Project site is located in a predominantly agricultural area with existing agricultural uses to the north, west, south, and east. On clear days, the Sierra Nevada Mountains’ highest peaks are visible despite being located more than 35 miles east of the proposed Project site. The proposed Project would result in the planned transition of vacant land (with the exception of the existing RV sales portion) to service commercial uses (in the form of a business park) and will not significantly conflict with the regional viewshed. As such, the site’s transition to service commercial uses would not substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings. Therefore, the proposed Akers Business Park would not conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations regarding scenic quality resulting in a less than significant impact to this resource.
- d) **Less Than Significant Impact:** Lighting impacts are often associated with the use of artificial light during the evening and nighttime hours. Impacts could potentially include light emanating from building interiors (seen through windows) and light from exterior sources, such as security lighting, street lighting, etc. Glare is typically a daytime occurrence caused by light reflecting off highly polished surfaces such as window glass or polished metallic surfaces. The proposed Project will include new street and commercial lighting within the development and all new lighting will be consistent with current City of Tulare standards (as applicable), which will minimize light spillage or other negative lighting impacts. Other than typical

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<sup>10</sup> Tulare County General Plan 2030 Update. August 2012. Recirculated Draft EIR. Page 3.1-11. Accessed in July 2022 at: <http://generalplan.co.tulare.ca.us/documents/generalplan2010/RecirculatedDraftEIR.pdf>

daylight reflecting from commercial windows, no other sources of glare (such as light reflecting off highly polished surfaces) would occur as a result of the proposed Project. Therefore, a less than significant impact to this Checklist Item will occur.

**Cumulative Impact Analysis: Less Than Significant Impact** – The geographic area of this cumulative analysis is Tulare County. This cumulative analysis is based on the information provided in the Tulare County General Plan 2030 Update, Tulare County General Plan Background Report, and the Tulare County General Plan 2030 Update EIR. As the proposed Project would not create any project specific visual impacts, a less than significant cumulative impact on visual character will occur.

## II. AGRICULTURAL AND FOREST RESOURCES

In determining whether impacts to agricultural resources are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to the Rural Valley Lands Plan point evaluation system prepared by the County of Tulare 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:	SIGNIFICANT IMPACT	LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT WITH MITIGATION	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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Conflict with existing zoning for agriculture use, or a Williamson Act contract?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resources code 12220(g), timberland (as defined in Public Resource Code section 4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code section 51104(g))?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d) Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

The discussions regarding Environmental Setting, Regulatory Setting, CEQA requirements, Agriculture and Forest Resources, etc.; contained in the Tulare County General Plan 2030 Update, Tulare County General Plan Background Report, and the Tulare County General Plan 2030 Update EIR are incorporated herein in their entirety. Where necessary and if available, additional site-specific facts, data, information, etc., are included in this discussion.

### Environmental Setting

The proposed Project Site (Akers Business Park) is located on the San Joaquin Valley floor in an unincorporated area. The proposed Project's 65.45-acre site is approximately 0.50-mile north of the City of Tulare, east of and adjacent to State Route 99, and south of and adjacent to Oakdale Avenue. The site is currently planted to walnuts. Cameron Creek is located north of Oakdale Avenue flowing in an east-to-west direction. The proposed Project site is surrounded by agricultural lands to the north (currently row crops), agriculture to the east (currently orchard), agricultural land to the south (currently row and orchard), and light manufacturing (Christy Vault Company [burial vault manufacturing]) and SR 99 to the west. The proposed Project will include the development of a commercial business park on approximately 65.45 acres. The proposed project will include a General Plan Amendment ("GPA") to change the Land Use Designation from "Valley Agriculture" to "Mixed Use," a Zone Change ("PZC") to change the Zone from AE-20 (Exclusive Agricultural – 20 Acre Minimum) to C-3-MU (Service Commercial with a Mixed-Use Overlay Zone) to facilitate a Tentative Subdivision Map ("TSM") to subdivide a 65.45-acre parcel and develop the proposed Akers Business Park as a mixed use commercial project that includes the expansion of the

existing Magic Touch Recreational Vehicle Sales facility at the south end of the proposed Project (3567 N. Oaks St. Tulare, CA 93274), contractor offices, boat sales, and other related uses allowed in the C-3-MU Zone.

As the proposed Project site is located in the San Joaquin Valley portion of Tulare County, this area is characterized by rich, highly productive farmland. Agriculture is the most important sector in Tulare County’s economy, and agriculture and related industries make Tulare County one of the two most productive agricultural counties in the United States, according to Tulare County Farm Bureau statistics.<sup>11</sup> “Agricultural lands (crop and commodity production and grazing) also provide the County’s most visible source of open space lands. As such, the protection of agricultural lands and continued growth and production of agriculture industries is essential to all County residents.”<sup>12</sup>

The 2021 Tulare County Annual Crop and Livestock Report stated “Tulare County’s total gross production value for 2021 as \$8,089,621,300. This represents an increase of \$949,544,800 or 13.3% above 2020’s value of \$7,140,076,500. Milk continues to be the leading agricultural commodity in Tulare County; with a gross value of \$1,943,043,000, an increase of \$76,347,000 or 4%. Milk represents 23% of the total crop and livestock value for 2021. Total milk production increased by 1%. Livestock and Poultry’s gross value of \$732,406,000 represents an increase of 9% above that of 2020, mostly due to the higher per unit value for both cattle and poultry. The total value of all Field Crop production in 2021 was \$571,436,000, an increase of 13% from the previous year. This increase is mostly attributed to better yields and prices for several field crops. Fruit and Nut commodities were valued at \$4,607,905,000 an increase of 20%. This increase can be partially attributed to the increase in Almond, Pistachio, and Tangerine acreage. Nursery Products increased by 9% compared to 2020 with an overall value of \$118,779,000. Vegetable crops were valued at \$20,544,000, representing a 22% decrease. This can be attributed to a decrease in acreage for Sweet Corn compared to 2020.

Tulare County’s agricultural strength is based on the diversity of the crops produced. The 2021 crop report covers more than 150 different commodities, 42 of which have a gross value in excess of \$1,000,000. Although individual commodities may experience difficulties from year to year, Tulare County continues to produce high-quality crops that provide food and fiber to more than 90 countries throughout the world.”<sup>13</sup>

The most recent statewide California Farmland Conversion Report (CFCR) from the California Department of Conservation Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program (FMMP) assesses statewide farmlands from the period 2014-2016. However, Tulare County specific data from the period 2014-2016 indicates that agricultural lands in Tulare County in 2014 included 859,171 acres of important farmland (designated as FMMP Prime, Farmland of Statewide Importance, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Local Importance) and 439,961 acres of grazing land, for a total of 1,299,132 acres of agricultural land.<sup>14</sup>

Acres	Category
565,190	Total prime = Prime active + NR Prime
505,645	Total Nonprime = Nonprime active + NR Prime
11,101	Farmland Security Zone
1,081,936	TOTAL ACRES in Williamson Act and Farmland Security Zone contracts

Farmlands of Statewide Importance are defined as “lands similar to Prime Farmland but with minor shortcomings, such as greater slopes or less ability to store soil moisture. Land must have been used for irrigated agricultural production at some time during the four years prior to the mapping date.”<sup>16</sup>

***Important Farmland Trends***

<sup>11</sup> Tulare County Farm Bureau, “Agricultural Facts,” Accessed August 2022 at: <http://www.tulcofb.org/index.php?page=agfacts>  
<sup>12</sup> Tulare County General Plan 2030 Update. August 2012. Page 3-4.  
<sup>13</sup> 2021 Tulare County Annual Crop and Livestock Report. September 2021. Cover letter from Tom Tucker, Agricultural Commissioner. Accessed September 2022 at: <https://agcomm.co.tulare.ca.us/pest-exclusion-standardization/crop-reports1/crop-reports-2021-2030/crop-and-livestock-report-2021/>  
<sup>14</sup> California Department of Conservation (CA DOC). Division of Land Resource Protection. Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program, *Table 2014-2016. Table A-44, Part I.* Accessed August 2022 at: <http://www.conservation.ca.gov/dlrp/fmmp/Pages/Tulare.aspx>. *The California Farmland Conversion Report 2014-2016* Accessed May 2022 at: [https://www.conservation.ca.gov/dlrp/fmmp/Pages/2014-2016\\_Farmland\\_Conversion\\_Report.aspx](https://www.conservation.ca.gov/dlrp/fmmp/Pages/2014-2016_Farmland_Conversion_Report.aspx).  
<sup>15</sup> Ibid.  
<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

Using data collected by the FMMP, farmland acreage has been consistently decreasing for each two-year period since 1998<sup>17</sup>. In the 2010 FMMP analysis, Tulare County lost 17,502 acres of important farmland, and 17,748 acres of total farmland between 2008 and 2010; 13,815 acres of important farmland, and 14,216 acres of total farmland between 2010 and 2012; and 17,441 acres of important farmland, and 17,678 acres of total farmland between 2012 and 2014.<sup>18</sup> However, as recent as 2014-2016, Tulare County gained 1,469 acres of important farmland, but also lost 2,513 acres of total farmland.<sup>19</sup> Between 2016 and 2018, the county lost 109 acres of important farmland while overall gaining 171 acres across all agricultural land.<sup>20</sup>

Farmland Category	Total Acres Inventoried								
	1998 <sup>21</sup>	2000 <sup>22</sup>	2002 <sup>23</sup>	2004 <sup>24</sup>	2006 <sup>25</sup>	2010 <sup>26</sup>	2012 <sup>27</sup>	2014 <sup>28</sup>	2016 <sup>29</sup>
Prime Farmland	396,130	393,030	387,620	384,340	379,760	370,249	368,527	366,414	366,136
Farmland of Statewide Importance	357,220	351,720	345,760	339,580	332,160	323,599	321,296	320,886	322,355
Unique Farmland	11,790	11,720	12,750	12,530	12,220	11,593	11,474	11,421	11,691
<b>Important Farmland Subtotal</b>	<b>765,140</b>	<b>756,470</b>	<b>746,130</b>	<b>736,450</b>	<b>724,140</b>	<b>705,441</b>	<b>701,297</b>	<b>859,171</b>	<b>858,119</b>
Farmland of Local Importance	110,040	124,140	126,820	137,440	143,830	154,550	158,823	160,450	157,937
Grazing Land	439,960	434,050	440,550	440,620	440,140	440,042	439,940	439,961	439,934
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,315,140</b>	<b>1,314,660</b>	<b>1,313,500</b>	<b>1,314,560</b>	<b>1,308,110</b>	<b>1,300,033</b>	<b>1,300,060</b>	<b>1,299,132</b>	<b>1,298,053</b>

Table 2-3 shows soil information for the proposed Project site.

Map Unit Symbol	Map Unit Name	Non-Irrigated Capability Class	Rating Grade	Acreage/Site Percentage
130	Nord fine sandy loam, 0 to 2% slopes	4	1 Excellent (81-100)	100%

Source: USDA/NRCS 2020 accessed at: <https://websoilsurvey.nrcs.usda.gov/app/WebSoilSurvey.aspx>

<sup>17</sup> CA DOC. Division of Land Resource Protection. "Williamson Act Status Report (2010)". Page 14. Accessed August 2022 at: [https://www.conservation.ca.gov/dlrp/wa/Pages/stats\\_reports.aspx](https://www.conservation.ca.gov/dlrp/wa/Pages/stats_reports.aspx).

<sup>18</sup> CA DOC. Tulare County Land Use Conversion Tables 2008-2010, 2010-2012, 2012-2014, and 2014-2016. Table A-44, Part III. Accessed August 2022 at: <http://www.conservation.ca.gov/dlrp/fmmp/Pages/Tulare.aspx>.

<sup>19</sup> CA DOC. Tulare County Land Use Conversion Tables 2014-2016. Table A-44, Part I. Accessed August 2022 at: <https://www.conservation.ca.gov/dlrp/fmmp/Pages/Tulare.aspx>.

<sup>20</sup> CA DOC. Tulare County Land Use Conversion Tables 2016-2018. Accessed August 2022 at: <https://www.conservation.ca.gov/dlrp/fmmp/Pages/Tulare.aspx>.

<sup>21</sup> Tulare County General Plan 2030 Update Recirculated Draft EIR Sch#2006041162. Table 3.10-4.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

<sup>23</sup> Op. Cit.

<sup>24</sup> Op. Cit.

<sup>25</sup> Op. Cit.

<sup>26</sup> Tulare County Resource Management Agency. Tulare County Subvention Report for Fiscal Year 2012-2013 (submitted to Department of Conservation, November 2012).

<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

<sup>28</sup> California Department of Conservation, Division of Land Resource Protection. Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program, Table 2014-2016. Table A-44, Part I. Accessed August 2022 at: <https://www.conservation.ca.gov/dlrp/fmmp/Pages/Tulare.aspx>.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid.



## ***Forest Lands***

“Timberlands that are available for harvesting are located in the eastern portion of Tulare County in the Sequoia National Forest. Hardwoods found in the Sequoia National Forest are occasionally harvested for fuel wood, in addition to use for timber production. Since most of the timberlands are located in Sequoia National Forest, the U.S. Forest Service has principal jurisdiction, which encompasses over 3 million acres. The U.S. Forest Service leases these federal lands for timber harvests.”<sup>30</sup>

As the proposed Project is located on the Valley floor, there is no timberland or forest in the Project vicinity.

## **Regulatory Setting**

### *Federal*

Federal regulations for agriculture and forest resources are not relevant to this project because it is not a federal undertaking (the Project site is not located on lands administered by a federal agency, and the Project applicant is not requesting federal funding or any federal permits).

### *State*

#### California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Definition of Agricultural Lands

Public Resources Code Section 21060.1 defines “agricultural land” for the purposes of assessing environmental impacts using the FMMP. The FMMP was established in 1982 to assess the location, quality, and quantity of agricultural lands and the conversion of these lands. The FMMP serves as a tool to analyze agricultural land use and land use changes throughout California. As such, this Project is being evaluated using the FMMP pursuant to CEQA.

#### California Department of Conservation, Division of Land Resource Protection Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program

The California Department of Conservation (DOC) applies the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) soil classifications to identify agricultural lands. These agricultural designations are used in planning for the present and future of California’s agricultural land resources. Pursuant to the DOC’s FMMP, these designated agricultural lands are included in the Important Farmland Maps (IFM). As noted earlier the FMMP was established in 1982 to assess the location, quality and quantity of agricultural lands, and the conversion of these lands. The FMMP serves as tool to analyze agricultural land use and land use changes throughout California. The DOC has a minimum mapping unit of 10 acres, with parcels that are smaller than 10 acres being absorbed into the surrounding classifications.

The following list provides a comprehensive description of all the categories mapped by the DOC. Collectively, lands classified as Prime Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance, and Unique Farmland are referred to as Farmland.<sup>31</sup>

- Prime Farmland. Farmland that has the best combination of physical and chemical features able to sustain long-term agricultural production. This land has the soil quality, growing season, and moisture supply needed to produce sustained high yields. Land must have been used for irrigated agricultural production at some time during the four years prior to the mapping date.
- Farmland of Statewide Importance. Farmland similar to Prime Farmland but with minor shortcomings, such as greater slopes or less ability to store soil moisture. Land must have been used for irrigated agricultural production at some time during the four years prior to the mapping date.
- Unique Farmland. Farmland of lesser quality soils used for the production of the State’s leading agricultural crops. This land is usually irrigated, but may include non-irrigated groves or vineyards as found in some climatic zones in California. Land must have been cropped at some time during the four years prior to the mapping date.
- Farmland of Local Importance. Land of importance to the local agricultural economy as determined by each county’s board of supervisors and a local advisory committee.
- Grazing Land. Land on which the existing vegetation is suited to the grazing of livestock. This category was developed in cooperation with the California Cattlemen’s Association, University of California Cooperative

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<sup>30</sup> Ibid. 4-20.

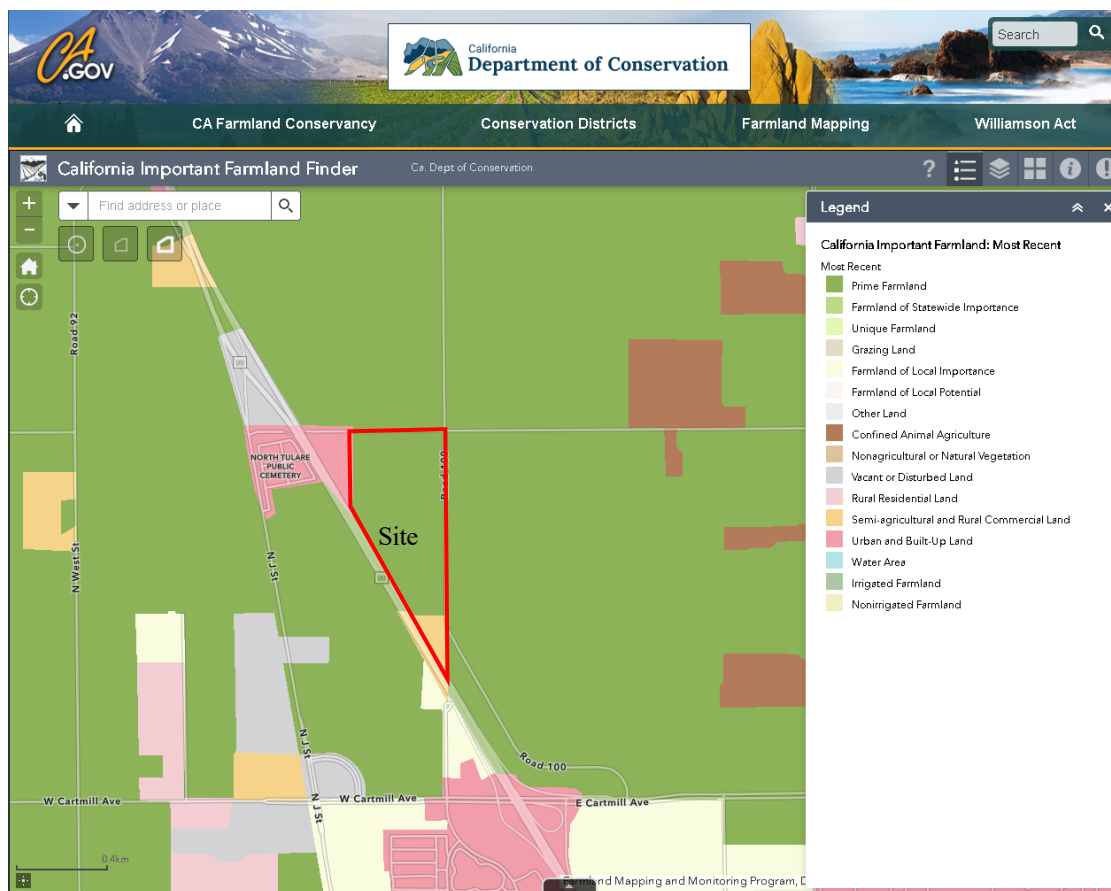
<sup>31</sup> California Department of Conservation. FMMP – Important Farmland Map Categories. Accessed August 2022 at: <https://www.conservation.ca.gov/dlrp/fmmp/Pages/Important-Farmland-Categories.aspx>

Extension, and other groups interested in the extent of grazing activities. The minimum mapping unit for Grazing Land is 40 acres.

- Urban and Builtup Land. Land occupied by structures with a building density of at least 1 unit to 1.5 acres, or approximately 6 structures to a 10-acre parcel. This land is used for residential, industrial, commercial, institutional, public administrative purposes, railroad and other transportation yards, cemeteries, airports, golf courses, sanitary landfills, sewage treatment, water control structures, and other developed purposes.
- Other Land. Land not included in any other mapping category. Common examples include low density rural developments; brush, timber, wetland, and riparian areas not suitable for livestock grazing; confined livestock, poultry or aquaculture facilities; strip mines and borrow pits; and water bodies smaller than 40 acres. Vacant and nonagricultural land surrounded on all sides by urban development and greater than 40 acres is mapped as Other Land.

Figure 2-1 shows the FMMP classifications of the proposed Project area.<sup>32</sup>

Figure 2-1



### California Land Conservation Act (Williamson Act)

The Williamson Act, also known as the California Land Conservation Act of 1965, enables local governments to enter into contracts with private landowners for the purpose of restricting specific parcels of land to agricultural or related open space use. In return, landowners receive property tax assessments which are much lower than normal because they are based upon farming and open space uses as opposed to full market value. The Department of Conservation assists all levels of government, and landowners in the interpretation of the Williamson Act related government code. The Department also researches, publishes and disseminates information regarding the policies, purposes, procedures, and administration of the Williamson Act according to government code. Participating counties and cities are required to establish their own rules and regulations

<sup>32</sup> California Department of Conservation. California Important Farmland Finder. Accessed August 2022 at: <https://maps.conservation.ca.gov/DLRP/CIFF/>

regarding implementation of the Act within their jurisdiction. These rules include but are not limited to: enrollment guidelines, acreage minimums, enforcement procedures, allowable uses, and compatible uses.<sup>33</sup>

Williamson Act Contracts are formed between a county or city and a landowner for the purpose of restricting specific parcels of land to agricultural or related open space use. Private land within locally-designated agricultural preserve areas are eligible for enrollment under a contract. The minimum term for contracts is ten years. However, since the contract term automatically renews on each anniversary date of the contract, the actual term is essentially indefinite. Landowners receive substantially reduced property tax assessments in return for enrollment under a Williamson Act contract. Property tax assessments of Williamson Act contracted land are based upon generated income as opposed to potential market value of the property.<sup>34</sup>

## Forestry Resources

State regulations regarding forestry resources are not relevant to the proposed project because no forestry resources exist at the Project site.

### *Local*

#### Tulare County General Plan 2030 Update

The Tulare County General Plan has a number of policies that apply to projects within the County of Tulare.<sup>35</sup> The following General Plan policies apply to the proposed Project: Policies designed to promote future development patterns that focus growth within established community areas and to mitigate loss of agricultural lands include the following:

*AG-1.4 Primary Land Use* wherein the County shall support non-renewal or cancellation processes that meet State law for lands within UDBs and HDBs; *AG-1.6 Conservation Easements* wherein the County shall consider developing an Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP) to help protect and preserve agricultural lands (including “Important Farmlands”), as defined in this Element; *LU-1.8 Encourage Infill Development* wherein the County shall encourage and provide incentives for infill development to occur in communities and hamlets within or adjacent to existing development in order to maximize the use of land within existing urban areas, minimize the conversion of existing agricultural land, and minimize environmental concerns associated with new development; *LU-2. Agricultural Lands* the County shall maintain agriculturally-designated areas for agriculture use and by directing urban development away from valuable agricultural lands to cities, unincorporated communities, hamlets, and planned community areas where public facilities and infrastructure are available; *LU-2.2 Agricultural Parcel Splits* wherein the County shall deny requests to create parcels less than the minimum allowed size in agricultural designated areas, unless specifically provided by Division of Land Exceptions in the Tulare County Zoning Ordinance, as may be adopted by the Board of Supervisors, based on concerns that these parcels are less viable economic farming units and that the resultant increase in residential density increases the potential for conflict with normal agricultural practices on adjacent parcels. Evidence that the affected parcel may be an uneconomic farming unit due to its current size, soil conditions, or other factors shall not alone be considered a sufficient basis to grant an exception. The RVLP shall be the tool to determine the viability of a given agricultural parcel in the valley and its ability to be subdivided, unless specifically provided by Division of Land Exceptions in the Tulare County Zoning Ordinance; *LU-2.5 Agricultural Support Facilities* wherein the County shall encourage beneficial reuse of existing or vacant agricultural support facilities for new businesses (including non-agricultural uses); *PF-1.1 Maintain Urban Edges* wherein the County shall strive to maintain distinct urban edges for all unincorporated communities within the valley region or foothill region, while creating a transition between urban uses and agriculture and open space; *PF-1.2 Location of Urban Development* wherein the County shall ensure that urban development only takes place in the following areas:

1. Within incorporated cities and CACUDBs;
2. Within the UDBs of adjacent cities in other counties, unincorporated communities, planned community areas, and HDBs of hamlets;
3. Within foothill development corridors as determined by procedures set forth in Foothill Growth Management Plan;
4. Within areas set aside for urban use in the Mountain Framework Plan and the mountain sub-area plans; and
5. Within other areas suited for non-agricultural development, as determined by the procedures set forth in the Rural Valley Lands Plan;

<sup>33</sup> California Department of Conservation. Williamson Act Program. Accessed August 2022 at: <https://www.conservation.ca.gov/dlrp/wa>.

<sup>34</sup> California Department of Conservation. Williamson Act Contracts. Accessed August 2022 at: <https://www.conservation.ca.gov/dlrp/wa/Pages/contracts.aspx>.

<sup>35</sup> Tulare County General Plan 2030 Update, Part 1 – Goals and Policies Report.

*PF-1.3 Land Uses in UDBs/HDBs* wherein the County shall encourage those types of urban land uses that benefit from urban services to develop within UDBs and HDBs. Permanent uses which do not benefit from urban services shall be discouraged within these areas. This shall not apply to agricultural or agricultural support uses, including the cultivation of land or other uses accessory to the cultivation of land provided that such accessory uses are time-limited through Special Use Permit procedures; *PF-1.4 Available Infrastructure* wherein the County shall encourage urban development to locate in existing UDBs and HDBs where infrastructure is available or may be established in conjunction with development. The County shall ensure that development does not occur unless adequate infrastructure is available, that sufficient water supplies are available or can be made available, and that there are adequate provisions for long term management and maintenance of infrastructure and identified water supplies; *PF-1.5 Planning Areas* wherein County policies reflect the unique attributes of the various locations and geographic areas in the County. As such, there are policies applicable to one area of the County that are not applicable to others based on natural setting, topography, habitat, existing development, or other attributes which are unique within the planning context of the County; *PF-1.6 Appropriate Land Uses by Location* wherein the County shall utilize the Land Use Element and adopted CAC General Plans, Community Plans, Hamlet Plans, Planned Communities, Corridor Areas, or Area Plans to designate land uses and intensities that reflect and maintain the appropriate level of urbanized development in each CAC General Plan, Community Plan, Hamlet Plan, Planned Community, Corridor Area, or Area Plan; *PF-2.3 UDB and Other Boundaries* wherein the County shall provide notice and opportunity for special districts, school districts, and other service providers when evaluating the expansion of a Community's UDB; and *PF-2.4 Community Plans* wherein the County shall ensure that community plans are prepared, updated, and maintained for each of the communities. These plans shall include the entire area within the community's UDB and shall address the community's short and long term ability to provide necessary urban services.

### Rural Valley Land Plans

For the unincorporated valley portions of Tulare County, growth is guided by the land use policies in the Rural Valley Lands Plan (RVLP)<sup>36</sup> and Planning Framework Element<sup>37</sup> of the Tulare County General Plan 2030 Update.

"Tulare County has identified land for urbanization according to four categories: 1) lands in and around incorporated cities, 2) lands in and around unincorporated communities, 3) lands in foothill development corridors, and 4) lands that qualify under the RVLP. The county is legally responsible for the planning and regulation of all lands that fall outside incorporated city limits, even though cities adopt their own general plans for the incorporated area and a portion of surrounding unincorporated area."<sup>38</sup>

"The RVLP applies to about 773,500 acres of the valley portion of the County, outside the planned Urban Development Boundaries (UDB) and generally below the 600-foot elevation contour line along the foothills of the Sierra Nevada Mountain Range. ... The purpose of the RVLP is to protect and maintain the agricultural viability of rural valley areas by establishing requirements for exclusive agricultural zoning (containing minimum parcel sizes) appropriate to sustain agriculture and implementing a policy that utilizes resource information to determine the suitability of rural lands for nonagricultural uses. The goal of the RVLP is to "sustain the viability of Tulare County agriculture by restraining division and use of land which is harmful to continued agricultural use." The RVLP utilizes five exclusive agriculture (AE) zones, each requiring a different minimum parcel size (ranging from five to eighty acres). These zones are as follows: AE, AE-10, AE-20, AE-40, and AE-80. The number designation on each zone generally reflects the minimum acres of land needed to productively farm a certain crop at a commercial level."<sup>39</sup>

"In order to grant an exception for the use of the AE zone on properties that have minimal or no agricultural value, a point system is used to evaluate property suitability. Points are awarded for various factors such as parcel size, available public services, and surrounding land uses. Parcels determined to be more suitable for nonagricultural uses may be zoned (discretionary review required) for urban/suburban uses. Parcels that do not meet the requirements for rezoning are not allowed to rezone and must remain agriculturally zoned. ... The RVLP point system [is used] to determine whether a site is suitable to rezone from an agricultural zone on the Valley floor to an urban zone. The county shall not allow re-zoning of parcels that accumulate 17 or more points according to the RVLP Development Criteria. If the number of points accumulated is 11 or less, the parcel may be considered for nonagricultural zoning. A parcel receiving 12 to 16 points shall be determined to have fallen within a "gray" area in which no clear cut decision is readily apparent. In such instances, the Planning Commission and Board

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<sup>36</sup> Tulare County General Plan 2030 Update, Part II – Area Plan Policies, Chapter 1 – Rural Valley Lands Plan.

<sup>37</sup> Tulare County General Plan 2030 Update, Part I – Goals and Policies Report, Chapter 2 – Planning Framework.

<sup>38</sup> Tulare County General Plan 2030 Update Background Report. Page 3-6.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid. 3-13.

of Supervisors shall make a decision based on the unique circumstances pertaining to the particular parcel of land, including factors not covered by this system.”<sup>40</sup>

An RVLP Parcel Evaluation was performed for the project site. After all the factors were applied to the parcel, the project received a preliminary RVLP evaluation of 9 points. According to Policy RVLP-1.4 “Determination of Agriculture Land”, if the number of points accumulated is 11 or less, the parcel may be considered for nonagricultural zoning. (See Attachment 2-RVLP Checklist of Attachment “E” of this MND.)

#### Tulare County Agricultural Conservation Easement Program

The Tulare County Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP, see Appendix “A”) was established to allow the use of agricultural easements to reduce or mitigate any significant impacts resulting from the conversion of certain agricultural land to non-agricultural uses. Resolution 2016-0323, adopted by the Tulare County Board of Supervisors on May 3, 2016, requires the use of farmland conservation easements or other farmland conservation mechanisms for projects requiring County discretionary land use entitlements and the conversion of five (5) or more acres of Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance to non-agricultural uses.

“CRITERIA FOR AN EASEMENT: A "Farmland conservation easement" means for the purposes of this ACEP, an easement over agricultural land for the purpose of restricting its use for the term set forth in this resolution for primarily agricultural and agricultural-compatible uses. Any easement offered or used under this program shall, at a minimum, meet these criteria:

- A) Preferably the easement will be located in Tulare County but other suitable land may be encumbered subject to approval by the Board of Supervisors.
- B) The easement will include Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance, as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency.
- C) The land placed under the easement must be of substantially the same quality, have or could acquire access to water, and could otherwise be feasibly cultivated.
- D) The land placed under the easement must be at a minimum of a one to one (1:1) ratio or its functional equivalent to the loss of defined agricultural lands mitigated.”<sup>41</sup>

#### **Project Impact Analysis:**

a) **Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation:** As noted earlier, the proposed Project (Akers Business Park) site is located on the San Joaquin Valley floor in an unincorporated area. The proposed Project’s 65.45-acre site is approximately 0.50-mile north of the City of Tulare, east of and adjacent to State Route 99, and south of and adjacent to Oakdale Avenue. The site is currently planted to walnuts and according to the FMMP Map (see **Figure 2-1**), the site is predominantly located on Prime Farmland. Cameron Creek is located north of Oakdale Avenue flowing in an east-to-west direction. The proposed Project site is surrounded by agricultural lands to the north (currently row crops), agriculture to the east (currently orchard), agricultural land to the south (currently row crops and orchard), and light manufacturing (Christy Vault Company [burial vault manufacturing]) and SR 99 to the west. The proposed Project will include the development of a commercial business park on approximately 65.45 acres. The proposed project will include a General Plan Amendment (“GPA”) to change the Land Use Designation from “Valley Agriculture” to “Mixed Use,” a Zone Change (“PZC”) to change the Zone from AE-20 (Exclusive Agricultural – 20 Acre Minimum) to C-3-MU (Service Commercial with a Mixed-Use Overlay Zone) to facilitate a Tentative Subdivision Map (“TSM”) to subdivide a 65.45-acre parcel and develop the proposed Akers Business Park as a mixed use commercial project that includes the expansion of the existing Magic Touch Recreational Vehicle Sales facility at the south end of the proposed Project (3567 N. Oaks St. Tulare, CA 93274), contractor offices, boat sales, and other related uses allowed in the C-3-MU Zone.

It is the landowner’s desire to discontinue farming as urban-type development has encroached from the south and there is an existing light industrial use adjacent west of the site. The site is situationally suited for conversion as it provides a contiguous, practical expansion of urban-type uses (in this case, service commercial uses in the form of a business park), can be accessed by westbound traffic on Oakdale Avenue from Oaks Street, and it is also strategically located near the northbound SR 99 on-ramp (from Oakdale Avenue) and SR 99 on-/off-rams approximately ½ south of the proposed Project site at Cartmill Avenue in Tulare. Locating the proposed Project at this site would result in a loss of 0.000050% of 1, 298,053 total acres of agricultural lands and 0.00017% of 366,136 acres of all Prime Farmlands within Tulare County. The Project applicant will be required to comply with Tulare County General Plan policy AG-1.6 Conservation Easements

<sup>40</sup> Op. Cit. 3-14.

<sup>41</sup> Tulare County Agricultural Conservation Easement Program. Pages 6 to 7.

for conservation of important agricultural land to non-agricultural use through an in-lieu fee or other conservation mechanism as the parcel containing the AE-20 zoning is greater than five (5) acres in area. Implementation of Mitigation Measure 2-1 will reduce the Project's impact to less than significant. Therefore, a less than significant impact related to this Checklist Item will occur with mitigation.

- b) Less Than Impact:** The proposed Project site is currently zoned AE-20 (Exclusive Agriculture- 40 acre minimum). The Project conflicts with existing zoning as commercial operations are not permitted in the AE-20 Zone. Therefore, the proposed Project applicant seeks a zone change to C-3-MU (Service Commercial with a Mixed-Use Overlay Zone) Zone to facilitate a Tentative Subdivision Map (TSM) to subdivide a 65.45-acre parcel and develop the proposed Akers Business Park as a mixed use commercial project that includes the expansion of the existing Magic Touch Recreational Vehicle Sales facility at the south end of the proposed Project (3567 N. Oaks St. Tulare, CA 93274), contractor offices, boat sales, and other related uses allowed in the C-3-MU Zone. The Project parcel is not under a Williamson Act Contract, as such, there would be no impact to a Williamson Act Contract. As noted in Item a), the site is currently planted to walnuts; however, it is the landowner's desire to discontinue farming as urban-type development has encroached from the south and there is an existing light industrial use adjacent to the site on the west. The site is ideally suited for the proposed Project as it is within a reasonable continuity of urban-type development that is encroaching from the south and an existing light industrial use to the west. As noted earlier, locating the proposed Project at this site would result in a loss of 0.000050% of 1, 298,053 total acres of agricultural lands and 0.00017% of 366,136 acres of all Prime Farmlands within Tulare County. Therefore, the impact is less than significant.
- c) No Impact:** The proposed Project will not occur on land zoned as forest land or timberland, or result in a loss of forest land. As such, the Project would not conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resources code 12220(g), timberland (as defined in Public Resource Code section 4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code section 51104(g)). There is no impact.
- d) No Impact:** As noted above, the proposed Project will not occur on land zoned as forest land or timberland, or result in a loss of forest land. As such, the proposed Project would not conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resources code 12220(g), timberland (as defined in Public Resource Code section 4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code section 51104(g)). There is no impact.
- e) No Impact:** the proposed Project would not 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. There would be no impact.

#### **Cumulative Impact Analysis: Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation**

The geographic area of this cumulative analysis is Tulare County. This cumulative analysis is based on the information provided in the Tulare County General Plan 2030 Update, Tulare County General Plan Background Report, and the Tulare County General Plan 2030 Update EIR. As noted earlier, the Project applicant seeks a zone change to C-3-MU (Service Commercial with a Mixed-Use Overlay Zone) Zone to facilitate a Tentative Subdivision Map (TSM) to subdivide a 65.45-acre parcel and develop the proposed Akers Business Park as a mixed use commercial project that includes the expansion of the existing Magic Touch Recreational Vehicle Sales facility at the south end of the proposed Project (3567 N. Oaks St. Tulare, CA 93274), contractor offices, boat sales, and other related uses allowed in the C-3-MU Zone. The proposed Project parcel is not under a Williamson Act Contract, as such, there would be no impact to a Williamson Act Contract. As noted in Item a), the site is currently planted to walnuts; however, it is the landowner's desire to discontinue farming as urban-type development has encroached from the south and there is an existing light industrial use adjacent to the site on the west. As such, the site is ideally suited for the proposed Project as it is within a reasonable continuity of urban-type development, an existing light industrial use to the west, and it is also strategically located near a northbound SR 99 on-ramp (from Oakdale Avenue) and SR 99 on-/off-ramps approximately ½ south of the proposed Project site at Cartmill Avenue in Tulare. As noted earlier, locating the proposed Project at this site would result in a loss of 0.000050% of 1, 298,053 total acres of agricultural lands and 0.00017% of 366,136 acres of all Prime Farmlands within Tulare County. Also, as the Project must comply with Tulare County General Plan policy AG-1.6 Conservation Easements for conservation of important agricultural land to non-agricultural use through an in-lieu fee or other conservation mechanism, implementation of Mitigation Measure 2-1 will reduce the proposed Project's impact to less than significant. As such, the proposed Akers Business Park would result in a less than significant cumulative impact on this resource.

**Mitigation Measures(s):** See **Mitigation Measure 2-1**

- 2-1 The applicant will be required to create an agricultural land conservation easement at a ratio of 1 acre of developed property for 1 acre of conserved agricultural land (a 1:1 ratio). This amount of 1:1 will be represented by 65.45 acres within the County. Any replacement acreage will be to the satisfaction of the Planning Director of Tulare County. The applicant will purchase an agricultural land conservation easement, of like agricultural land within the County, on the entire 65.45 acres to be maintained and kept in agriculture in perpetuity. The “ultimate” agricultural easement shall be placed on other suitable and agriculturally compatible property, of the same soil types and arability, within Tulare County; at a replacement ratio of 1:1, and to be established as an agricultural land conservation easement in perpetuity.

With the Implementation of Mitigation Measure 2.1 a less than significant impact will occur to this resource.



### III. AIR QUALITY

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

	SIGNIFICANT IMPACT	LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT WITH MITIGATION	LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT	NO IMPACT
Would the project:				
a) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors adversely affecting a substantial number of people)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

The discussions regarding Environmental Setting, Regulatory Setting, CEQA requirements, Air Quality Resource, etc.; contained in the Tulare County General Plan 2030 Update, Tulare County General Plan Background Report, and the Tulare County General Plan 2030 Update EIR are incorporated herein in their entirety. Where necessary and if available, additional site-specific facts, data, information, etc., are included in this discussion.

#### Environmental Setting

The proposed Project (Akers Business Park) is located in the San Joaquin Valley Air Basin (SJVAB), a continuous intermountain air basin. The Sierra Nevada Range forms the eastern boundary; the Coast Range forms the western boundary; and the Tehachapi Mountains form the southern boundary. These topographic features restrict air movement through and beyond the SJVAB. The SJVAB is comprised of San Joaquin, Stanislaus, Merced, Madera, Fresno, Kings, and Tulare Counties and the valley portion of Kern County; it is approximately 25,000 square miles in area. Tulare County lies within the southern portion of the SJVAB. Air resources in the SJVAB is managed by the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District (Air District, District, or SJVAPCD).

The proposed Project will include the development of a commercial business park on approximately 65.45 acres located at the southwest corner of Road 100 and Oakdale Avenue, east of SR 99, APN 149-090-006. The proposed Project will include a General Plan Amendment (“GPA”) to change the Land Use Designation from “Valley Agriculture” to “Mixed Use,” a Zone Change (“PZC”) to change the Zone from AE-20 (Exclusive Agricultural – 20 Acre Minimum) to C-3-MU (Service Commercial with a Mixed-Use Overlay Zone) to facilitate a Tentative Subdivision Map (“TSM”) to subdivide a 65.45-acre parcel and develop the proposed Akers Business Park as a mixed use commercial project that includes the expansion of the existing Magic Touch Recreational Vehicle Sales facility at the south end of the proposed Project (3567 N. Oaks St. Tulare, CA 93274), contractor offices, boat sales, and other related uses allowed in the C-3-MU Zone.

#### Ambient Air Quality Standards

Both the federal government (through the United State Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)) and the State of California (through the California Air Resources Board (CARB or ARB)) have established health-based ambient air quality standards (AAQS) for six air pollutants, commonly referred to as “criteria pollutants.” The six criteria pollutants are: carbon monoxide (CO), ozone (O<sub>3</sub>), sulfur dioxide (SO<sub>2</sub>), nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>), particulate matter (PM<sub>10</sub> and PM<sub>2.5</sub>), and lead (Pb).

#### Criteria Pollutants Assessed

The following criteria air pollutants were assessed in the Technical Memo (included in Attachment “A” of this document): reactive organic gases (ROG), oxides of nitrogen (NO<sub>x</sub>), carbon monoxide (CO), sulfur dioxide (SO<sub>2</sub>), particulate matter less than 10 microns in diameter (PM<sub>10</sub>), and particulate matter less than 2.5 microns in diameter (PM<sub>2.5</sub>). Note that the proposed Project would emit ozone precursors ROG and NO<sub>x</sub>. However, the proposed project would not directly emit ozone since it is

formed in the atmosphere during the photochemical reaction of ozone precursors. General descriptions and most relevant effects from pollutant exposure of the criteria pollutants of concern are listed in **Table 3-1**.

<b>Table 3-1 Descriptions of Criteria Pollutants of Concern<sup>42</sup></b>			
<b>Criteria Pollutant</b>	<b>Physical Description and Properties</b>	<b>Sources</b>	<b>Most Relevant Effects from Pollutant Exposure</b>
Ozone	Ozone is a photochemical pollutant as it is not emitted directly into the atmosphere, but is formed by a complex series of chemical reactions between volatile organic compounds (VOC), nitrous oxides (NO <sub>x</sub> ), and sunlight. Ozone is a regional pollutant that is generated over a large area and is transported and spread by the wind.	Ozone is a secondary pollutant; thus, it is not emitted directly into the lower level of the atmosphere. The primary sources of ozone precursors (VOC and NO <sub>x</sub> ) are mobile sources (on-road and off-road vehicle exhaust).	Irritate respiratory system; reduce lung function; breathing pattern changes; reduction of breathing capacity; inflame and damage cells that line the lungs; make lungs more susceptible to infection; aggravate asthma; aggravate other chronic lung diseases; cause permanent lung damage; some immunological changes; increased mortality risk; vegetation and property damage.
Particulate matter (PM <sub>10</sub> )  Particulate matter (PM <sub>2.5</sub> )	Suspended particulate matter is a mixture of small particles that consist of dry solid fragments, droplets of water, or solid cores with liquid coatings. The particles vary in shape, size, and composition. PM <sub>10</sub> refers to particulate matter that is between 2.5 and 10 microns in diameter, (one micron is one-millionth of a meter). PM <sub>2.5</sub> refers to particulate matter that is 2.5 microns or less in diameter, about one-thirtieth the size of the average human hair.	Stationary sources include fuel or wood combustion for electrical utilities, residential space heating, and industrial processes; construction and demolition; metals, minerals, and petrochemicals; wood products processing; mills and elevators used in agriculture; erosion from tilled lands; waste disposal, and recycling. Mobile or transportation related sources are from vehicle exhaust and road dust. Secondary particles form from reactions in the atmosphere.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Short-term exposure (hours/days): irritation of the eyes, nose, throat; coughing; phlegm; chest tightness; shortness of breath; aggravate existing lung disease, causing asthma attacks and acute bronchitis; those with heart disease can suffer heart attacks and arrhythmias.</li> <li>• Long-term exposure: reduced lung function; chronic bronchitis; changes in lung morphology; death.</li> </ul>
Nitrogen dioxide (NO <sub>2</sub> )	During combustion of fossil fuels, oxygen reacts with nitrogen to produce nitrogen oxides— NO <sub>x</sub> (NO, NO <sub>2</sub> , NO <sub>3</sub> , N <sub>2</sub> O, N <sub>2</sub> O <sub>3</sub> , N <sub>2</sub> O <sub>4</sub> , and N <sub>2</sub> O <sub>5</sub> ). NO <sub>x</sub> is a precursor to ozone, PM <sub>10</sub> , and PM <sub>2.5</sub> formation. NO <sub>x</sub> can react with compounds to form nitric acid and related small particles and result in particulate matter (PM) related health effects.	NO <sub>x</sub> is produced in motor vehicle internal combustion engines and fossil fuel-fired electric utility and industrial boilers. Nitrogen dioxide forms quickly from NO <sub>x</sub> emissions. NO <sub>2</sub> concentrations near major roads can be 30 to 100 percent higher than those at monitoring stations.	Potential to aggravate chronic respiratory disease and respiratory symptoms in sensitive groups; risk to public health implied by pulmonary and extra-pulmonary biochemical and cellular changes and pulmonary structural changes; contributions to atmospheric discoloration; increased visits to hospital for respiratory illnesses.
Carbon monoxide (CO)	CO is a colorless, odorless, toxic gas. CO is somewhat soluble in water; therefore, rainfall and fog can suppress CO conditions. CO enters the body through the lungs, dissolves in the blood, replaces oxygen as an attachment to hemoglobin, and reduces available oxygen in the blood.	CO is produced by incomplete combustion of carbon-containing fuels (e.g., gasoline, diesel fuel, and biomass). Sources include motor vehicle exhaust, industrial processes (metals processing and chemical manufacturing), residential wood burning,	Ranges depending on exposure: slight headaches; nausea; aggravation of angina pectoris (chest pain) and other aspects of coronary heart disease; decreased exercise tolerance in persons with peripheral vascular disease and lung disease; impairment of central nervous system functions; possible increased risk to fetuses; death.

<sup>42</sup> U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Criteria Air Pollutants. Accessed August 2022 at: <https://www.epa.gov/criteria-air-pollutants>.

Criteria Pollutant	Physical Description and Properties	Sources	Most Relevant Effects from Pollutant Exposure
		and natural sources.	
Sulfur dioxide (SO <sub>2</sub> )	Sulfur dioxide is a colorless, pungent gas. At levels greater than 0.5 parts per million (ppm), the gas has a strong odor, similar to rotten eggs. Sulfur oxides (SO <sub>x</sub> ) include sulfur dioxide and sulfur trioxide. Sulfuric acid is formed from sulfur dioxide, which can lead to acid deposition and can harm natural resources and materials. Although sulfur dioxide concentrations have been reduced to levels well below state and federal standards, further reductions are desirable because sulfur dioxide is a precursor to sulfate and PM <sub>10</sub> .	Human caused sources include fossil-fuel combustion, mineral ore processing, and chemical manufacturing. Volcanic emissions are a natural source of sulfur dioxide. The gas can also be produced in the air by dimethyl sulfide and hydrogen sulfide. Sulfur dioxide is removed from the air by dissolution in water, chemical reactions, and transfer to soils and ice caps. The sulfur dioxide levels in the State are well below the maximum standards.	Bronchoconstriction accompanied by symptoms which may include wheezing, shortness of breath and chest tightness, during exercise or physical activity in persons with asthma. Some population-based studies indicate that the mortality and morbidity effects associated with fine particles show a similar association with ambient sulfur dioxide levels. It is not clear whether the two pollutants act synergistically or one pollutant alone is the predominant factor.

National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) and California Ambient Air Quality Standards (CAAQS) have been established for each criteria pollutant to protect the public health and welfare. The federal and state standards were developed independently with differing purposes and methods, although both processes are intended to avoid health-related effects. As a result, the federal and state standards differ in some cases. In general, the California state standards are more stringent. NAAQS and CAAQS are provided in **Table 3-2**.

Pollutant	Averaging Time	California Standards	National Standards	
			Primary	Secondary
Ozone (O <sub>3</sub> )	1-hour	0.09 ppm (180 µg/m <sup>3</sup> )	---	Same as Primary
	8-hour	0.070 ppm (137 µg/m <sup>3</sup> )	0.070 ppm (137 µg/m <sup>3</sup> )	
Respirable Particulate Matter (PM <sub>10</sub> )	24-hour	50 µg/m <sup>3</sup>	150 µg/m <sup>3</sup>	Same as Primary
	Annual Arithmetic Mean	20 µg/m <sup>3</sup>	---	
Fine Particulate Matter (PM <sub>2.5</sub> )	24-hour	---	35 µg/m <sup>3</sup>	Same as Primary
	Annual Arithmetic Mean	12 µg/m <sup>3</sup>	12 µg/m <sup>3</sup>	15 µg/m <sup>3</sup>
Carbon Monoxide (CO)	1-hour	20 ppm (23 mg/m <sup>3</sup> )	35 ppm (40 mg/m <sup>3</sup> )	---
	8-hour	9.0 ppm (10 mg/m <sup>3</sup> )	9 ppm (10 mg/m <sup>3</sup> )	---
Nitrogen Dioxide (NO <sub>2</sub> )	1-hour	0.18 ppm (339 µg/m <sup>3</sup> )	100 ppb (188 µg/m <sup>3</sup> )	Same as Primary
	Annual Arithmetic Mean	0.030 ppm (57 µg/m <sup>3</sup> )	0.053 ppm (100 µg/m <sup>3</sup> )	
Sulfur Dioxide (SO <sub>2</sub> )	1-hour	0.25 ppm (655 µg/m <sup>3</sup> )	75 ppb (196 µg/m <sup>3</sup> )	---
	3-hour	---	---	0.5 ppm (1300 µg/m <sup>3</sup> )

<sup>43</sup> California Air Resources Board. Ambient Air Quality Standards. Accessed August 2022 at: <https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/sites/default/files/2020-07/aaqs2.pdf>.

Pollutant	Averaging Time	California Standards	National Standards	
			Primary	Secondary
	24-hour	0.04 ppm (105 µg/m <sup>3</sup> )	0.14 ppm (certain areas)	---
	Annual Arithmetic Mean	---	0.030 ppm (certain areas)	---
	30-day Average	1.5 µg/m <sup>3</sup>	---	---
Lead (Pb)	Calendar Quarter	---	1.5 µg/m <sup>3</sup> (certain areas)	Same as Primary
	Rolling 3-month Average	---	0.15 µg/m <sup>3</sup>	
Visibility Reducing Particles	8-hour	instrumental equivalents “extinction of 0.23 per kilometer”	No National Standards	
Sulfates	24-hour	25 µg/m <sup>3</sup>		
Hydrogen Sulfide (H <sub>2</sub> S)	1-hour	0.03 ppm (42 µg/m <sup>3</sup> )		
Vinyl Chloride	24-hour	0.01 ppm (26 µg/m <sup>3</sup> )		

### ***Toxic Air Contaminants***

A TAC is defined as an air pollutant that may cause or contribute to an increase in mortality or serious illness, or that may pose a hazard to human health. TACs are usually present in minute quantities in the ambient air; however, their high toxicity or health risk may pose a threat to public health even at low concentrations.

The California Almanac of Emissions and Air Quality—2009 Edition presents the relevant concentration and cancer risk data for the ten TACs that pose the most substantial health risk in California based on available data. The ten TACs are acetaldehyde, benzene, 1,3-butadiene, carbon tetrachloride, hexavalent chromium, para-dichlorobenzene, formaldehyde, methylene chloride, perchloroethylene, and diesel particulate matter (DPM).

Some studies indicate that DPM poses the greatest health risk among the TACs listed above. A 10-year research program demonstrated that DPM from diesel-fueled engines is a human carcinogen and that chronic (long-term) inhalation exposure to DPM poses a chronic health risk. In addition to increasing the risk of lung cancer, exposure to diesel exhaust can have other health effects. Diesel exhaust can irritate the eyes, nose, throat, and lungs, and it can cause coughs, headaches, lightheadedness, and nausea. Diesel exhaust is a major source of fine particulate pollution as well, and studies have linked elevated particle levels in the air to increased hospital admissions, emergency room visits, asthma attacks, and premature deaths among those suffering from respiratory problems.

### **DPM**

For purposes of this analysis, DPM exhaust emissions are represented as PM10.

The proposed Project would generate passenger vehicle and truck trips from employees, visitors, deliveries, and service vehicles traveling to and from the project site. The main source of DPM from the long-term operations of the proposed project would be from combustion of diesel fuel in diesel-powered engines in on-road trucks, while additional DPM would be emitted from on-site equipment. On-site motor vehicle emissions refer to DPM exhaust emissions from the motor vehicle traffic that would travel and idle within the project site each day.

### **Asbestos**

Asbestos is the name given to a number of naturally occurring fibrous silicate minerals that have been mined for their useful properties such as thermal insulation, chemical and thermal stability, and high tensile strength. The three most common types of asbestos are chrysotile, amosite, and crocidolite. Chrysotile, also known as white asbestos, is the most common type of asbestos found in buildings.

Chrysotile makes up approximately 90 to 95 percent of all asbestos contained in buildings in the United States. Exposure to asbestos is a health threat; exposure to asbestos fibers may result in health issues such as lung cancer, mesothelioma (a rare cancer of the thin membranes lining the lungs, chest, and abdominal cavity), and asbestosis (a non-cancerous lung disease that causes scarring of the lungs). Exposure to asbestos can occur during demolition or remodeling of buildings that were constructed prior to the 1977 ban on asbestos for use in buildings. Exposure to naturally occurring asbestos can occur during soil-disturbing activities in areas with deposits present.

### Attainment Status

Air basins are designated as attainment or nonattainment for both federal and state AAQS. Attainment is achieved when monitored ambient air quality data is in compliance with the standards for a specified pollutant. Non-compliance with an established standard will result in a nonattainment designation and an unclassified designation indicates insufficient data is available to determine compliance for that pollutant.

The SJVAB is considered to be in attainment for federal and state air quality standards for carbon monoxide (CO), nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>), sulfur dioxide (SO<sub>2</sub>); attainment for federal and non-attainment for state air quality standards for respirable particulate matter (PM<sub>10</sub>); and non-attainment of state and federal air quality standards for ozone (O<sub>3</sub>) and fine particulate matter (PM<sub>2.5</sub>). Attainment status for listed federal and state criteria pollutant standards in the SJVAB can be found in **Table 3-3**.

Pollutant	Designation/Classification	
	Federal Standards	State Standards
Ozone – one hour	No Federal Standard <sup>1</sup>	Nonattainment/Severe
Ozone – eight hour	Nonattainment/Extreme <sup>2</sup>	Nonattainment
PM <sub>10</sub>	Attainment <sup>3</sup>	Nonattainment
PM <sub>2.5</sub>	Nonattainment <sup>4</sup>	Nonattainment
CO	Attainment/Unclassified	Attainment/Unclassified
Nitrogen Dioxide	Attainment/Unclassified	Attainment
Sulfur Dioxide	Attainment/Unclassified	Attainment
Lead	No Designation/Classification	Attainment
Hydrogen Sulfide	No Federal Standard	Unclassified
Sulfates	No Federal Standard	Attainment
Vinyl Chloride	No Federal Standard	Attainment
Visibility Reducing Particles	No Federal Standard	Unclassified

*1 Effective June 15, 2005, the U.S. EPA revoked the federal 1-hour ozone standard, including associated designations and classifications. However, EPA had previously classified the SJVAB as extreme nonattainment for this standard. Many applicable requirements for extreme 1-hour ozone nonattainment areas continue to apply to the SJVAB.*

*2 Though the Valley was initially classified as serious nonattainment for the 1997 8-hour ozone standard, EPA approved Valley reclassification to extreme nonattainment in the Federal Register on May 5, 2010 (effective June 4, 2010)*

*3 On September 25, 2008, EPA redesignated the San Joaquin Valley to attainment for the PM<sub>10</sub> National Ambient Air Quality Standard (NAAQS) and approved the PM<sub>10</sub> Maintenance Plan.*

*4 The Valley is designated nonattainment for the 1997 PM<sub>2.5</sub> NAAQS. EPA designated the Valley as nonattainment for the 2006 PM<sub>2.5</sub> NAAQS on November 13, 2009 (effective December 14, 2009).*

<sup>44</sup> San Joaquin Valley Unified Air Pollution Control District. Ambient Air Quality Standards & Valley Attainment Status. Accessed August 2022 at: <http://www.valleyair.org/aqinfo/attainment.htm>.

## Regulatory Setting

As noted previously, both the federal government (through the United State Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)) and the State of California (through the California Air Resources Board (ARB)) have established health-based ambient air quality standards (AAQS) for six air pollutants, commonly referred to as “criteria pollutants.” The six criteria pollutants are: carbon monoxide (CO), ozone (O<sub>3</sub>), sulfur dioxide (SO<sub>2</sub>), nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>), particulate matter (PM<sub>10</sub> and PM<sub>2.5</sub>), and lead (Pb).

### *Federal*

#### Federal Clean Air Act

“The Federal Clean Air Act (CAA), adopted in 1970 and amended twice thereafter (including the 1990 amendments), establishes the framework for modern air pollution control. The act directs the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to establish ambient air standards, the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS)... for six pollutants: ozone, carbon monoxide, lead, nitrogen dioxide, particulate matter (less than 10 microns in diameter [PM<sub>10</sub>] and less than 2.5 microns in diameter [PM<sub>2.5</sub>]), and sulfur dioxide. The standards are divided into primary and secondary standards; the former are set to protect human health with an adequate margin of safety and the latter to protect environmental values, such as plant and animal life.

Areas that do not meet the ambient air quality standards are called “non-attainment areas”. The Federal CAA requires each state to submit a State Implementation Plan (SIP) for non-attainment areas. The SIP, which is reviewed and approved by the EPA, must demonstrate how the federal standards will be achieved. Failing to submit a plan or secure approval could lead to the denial of federal funding and permits for such improvements as highway construction and sewage treatment plants. For cases in which the SIP is submitted by the State but fails to demonstrate achievement of the standards, the EPA is directed to prepare a federal implementation plan or EPA can “bump up” the air basin in question to a classification with a later attainment date that allows time for additional reductions needed to demonstrate attainment, as is the case for the San Joaquin Valley.

SIPs are not single documents. They are a compilation of new and previously submitted plans, programs (such as monitoring, modeling, permitting, etc.), district rules, state regulations and federal controls. The California SIP relies on the same core set of control strategies, including emission standards for cars and heavy trucks, fuel regulations and limits on emissions from consumer products. California State law makes the California Air Resources Board (CARB) the lead agency for all purposes related to the SIP. Local Air Districts and other agencies, such as the Bureau of Automotive Repair and the Department of Pesticide Regulation, prepare SIP elements and submit them to CARB for review and approval. The CARB forwards SIP revisions to the EPA for approval and publication in the Federal Register.”<sup>45</sup>

The Federal CAA classifies nonattainment areas based on the severity of the nonattainment problem, with marginal, moderate, serious, severe, and extreme nonattainment classifications for ozone. Nonattainment classifications for PM range from marginal to serious. The Federal CAA requires areas with air quality violating the NAAQS to prepare an air quality control plan referred to as the State Implementation Plan (SIP). The SIP contains the strategies and control measures that states will use to attain the NAAQS. The Federal CAA amendments of 1990 require states containing areas that violate the NAAQS to revise their SIP to incorporate additional control measures to reduce air pollution. The SIP is periodically modified to reflect the latest emissions inventories, planning documents, rules, and regulations of Air Basins as reported by the agencies with jurisdiction over them. The EPA reviews SIPs to determine if they conform to the mandates of the Federal CAA amendments and will achieve air quality goals when implemented. If the EPA determines a SIP to be inadequate, it may prepare a Federal Implementation Plan (FIP) for the nonattainment area and impose additional control measures.

### *State*

#### The California Clean Air Act

“The California CAA of 1988 establishes an air quality management process that generally parallels the federal process. The California CAA, however, focuses on attainment of the State ambient air quality standards (see Table 3.3-1 [of the General Plan RDEIR]), which, for certain pollutants and averaging periods, are more stringent than the comparable federal standards. Responsibility for meeting California’s standards is addressed by the CARB and local air pollution control districts (such as the eight county SJVAPCD, which administers air quality regulations for Tulare County). Compliance strategies are presented in district-level air quality attainment plans.

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<sup>45</sup> Tulare County General Plan 2030 Update REIR. Pages 3.3-1 to 3.3-2.

The California CAA requires that Air Districts prepare an air quality attainment plan if the district violates State air quality standards for criteria pollutants including carbon monoxide, sulfur dioxide, nitrogen dioxide, PM2.5, or ozone. Locally prepared attainment plans are not required for areas that violate the State PM10 standards. The California CAA requires that the State air quality standards be met as expeditiously as practicable but does not set precise attainment deadlines. Instead, the act established increasingly stringent requirements for areas that will require more time to achieve the standards.”<sup>46</sup>

“The air quality attainment plan requirements established by the California CAA are based on the severity of air pollution caused by locally generated emissions. Upwind air pollution control districts are required to establish and implement emission control programs commensurate with the extent of pollutant transport to downwind districts.”<sup>47</sup>

### The California Air Resources Board

The ARB is the state agency responsible for implementing the federal and state Clean Air Acts. ARB established CAAQS, which include all criteria pollutants established by the NAAQS, but with additional regulations for visibility reducing particles, sulfates, hydrogen sulfide (H<sub>2</sub>S), and vinyl chloride.

“The CARB is responsible for establishing and reviewing the State ambient air quality standards, compiling the California State Implementation Plan (SIP) and securing approval of that plan from the U.S. EPA. As noted previously, federal clean air laws require areas with unhealthy levels of ozone, inhalable particulate matter, carbon monoxide, nitrogen dioxide, and sulfur dioxide to develop SIPs. SIPs are comprehensive plans that describe how an area will attain NAAQS. The 1990 amendments to the Federal CAA set deadlines for attainment based on the severity of an area’s air pollution problem. State law makes CARB the lead agency for all purposes related to the SIP. The California SIP is periodically modified by the CARB to reflect the latest emission inventories, planning documents, and rules and regulations of various air basins. The CARB produces a major part of the SIP for pollution sources that are statewide in scope; however, it relies on the local Air Districts to provide emissions inventory data and additional strategies for sources under their jurisdiction. The SIP consists of the emission standards for vehicular sources and consumer products set by the CARB, and attainment plans adopted by the local air agencies as approved by CARB. The EPA reviews the air quality SIPs to verify conformity with CAA mandates and to ensure that they will achieve air quality goals when implemented. If EPA determines that a SIP is inadequate, it may prepare a Federal Implementation Plan for the nonattainment area, and may impose additional control measures.

In addition to preparation of the SIP, the CARB also regulates mobile emission sources in California, such as construction equipment, trucks, automobiles, and oversees the activities of air quality management districts and air pollution control districts, which are organized at the county or regional level. The local or regional Air Districts are primarily responsible for regulating stationary emission sources at industrial and commercial facilities within their jurisdiction and for preparing the air quality plans that are required under the Federal CAA and California CAA.”<sup>48</sup>

### *Local*

#### San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District

The Air District is the local agency charged with preparing, adopting, and implementing mobile, stationary, and area air emission control measures and standards. The Air District has several rules and regulations that may apply to the Project, following is an example of those rules/regulations which likely apply to this Project:<sup>49</sup>

- Rule 2010 (Permits Required) – This rule applies to require any person constructing, altering, replacing or operating any source operation which emits, may emit, or may reduce emissions to obtain an Authority to Construct or a Permit to Operate.
- Rule 2201 (New and Modified Stationary Source Review) – Also known as NSR, this rule requires the review of new and modified stationary sources of air pollution and to provide mechanisms including emission trade-offs by which Authorities to Construct (ATCs) for such sources may be granted, without interfering with the attainment or maintenance of Ambient Air Quality Standards.

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<sup>46</sup> Ibid. 3.3-2 to 3.3-3.

<sup>47</sup> Op. Cit. 3.3-5.

<sup>48</sup> Op. Cit. 3.3-6 to 3.3-7.

<sup>49</sup> A full list of Air District rules and regulation are available on their website at <https://www.valleyair.org/rules/1ruleslist.htm>.



- Rule 3135 (Dust Control Plan Fees) – This rule requires the project applicant to submit a fee in addition to a Dust Control Plan. The purpose of this rule is to recover the Air District’s cost for reviewing these plans and conducting compliance inspections.
- Rule 4002 (National Emission Standards for Hazardous Air Pollutants) – Also known as NESHAPs, this rule applies to all sources of hazardous air pollution and requires developers to comply with federal requirements for handling and usage of hazardous air pollutants (HAPs) to protect the health and safety of the public from HAPs such as asbestos.
- Rule 4101 (Visible Emissions) – This rule applies to any source of air contaminants and prohibits the visible emissions of air contaminants.
- Rule 4102 (Nuisance) – This rule applies to any source of air contaminants and prohibits any activity which creates a public nuisance.
- Rule 4201 (Particulate Matter Concentration) – This rule applies to any source operation that emits or may emit dust, fumes, or total suspended particulate matter.
- Rule 4601 (Architectural Coatings) – This rule specifies requirements for the storage, cleanup, and labeling of architectural coatings. The rule applies to any person who supplies, sells, offers for sale, applies, or solicits the application of any architectural coating, or who manufactures, blends or repackages any architectural coating for use within the Air District.
- Rule 4641 (Cutback, Slow Cure, and Emulsified Asphalt, Paving and Maintenance Operations) – This rule applies to the manufacture and use of cutback asphalt, slow cure asphalt and emulsified asphalt for paving and maintenance operations.
- Rule 4702—Internal Combustion Engines. The purpose of this rule is to limit the emissions of NO<sub>x</sub>, carbon monoxide (CO), VOC, and sulfur oxides (SOX) from internal combustion engines. If the project includes emergency generators, the equipment is required to comply with Rule 4702.
- Regulation VIII (Fugitive PM<sub>10</sub> Prohibitions) – This regulation is a series of eight rules designed to reduce PM<sub>10</sub> emissions by reducing fugitive dust emissions. Regulation VIII requires implementation of control measures to ensure that visible dust emissions are substantially reduced.
- Rule 9510 (Indirect Source Review) – Also known as ISR, this rule requires developers to mitigate project emissions through 1) on-site design features that reduce trips and vehicle miles traveled, 2) controls on other emission sources, and 3) with reductions obtained through the payment of a mitigation fee used to fund off-site air quality mitigation projects. Rule 9510 requires construction-related NO<sub>x</sub> emission reductions of 20 percent and PM<sub>10</sub> exhaust reductions of 45 percent and operation-related NO<sub>x</sub> reductions of 33 percent and PM<sub>10</sub> exhaust reductions of 50 percent.

#### Tulare County General Plan 2030 Update

The following Tulare County General Plan 2030 Update policies for this resource apply to this Project: *AQ-1.1 Cooperation with Other Agencies* requiring the County to cooperate with other local, regional, Federal, and State agencies (e.g., Air District) in developing and implementing air quality plans to achieve State and federal Ambient Air Quality Standards to achieve better air quality conditions locally and regionally; *AQ-1.2 Cooperation with Local Jurisdictions* requiring the County to coordinate with regional agencies, such as the Air District, to address cross-jurisdictional air quality issues; *AQ-1.3 Cumulative Air Quality Impacts* requiring development to be located, designed, and construction in a manner that minimizes cumulative air quality impacts; *AQ-1.4 Air Quality Land Use Compatibility* requiring the County to evaluate compatibility of proposed land uses; *AQ-1.5 California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Compliance* where the County will ensure that air quality impacts identified during the CEQA review process are consistently and reasonably mitigated when feasible; *AQ-2.2 Indirect Source Review* regarding mitigating major development projects, as defined by the SJVAPCD, to reasonably mitigate air quality impacts associated with the project. The County shall notify developers of SJVAPCD Rule 9510 – Indirect Source Review requirements and work with SJVAPCD to determine mitigations, as feasible, that may include, but are not limited to the following:

1. Providing bicycle access and parking facilities,
2. Increasing density,
3. Encouraging mixed use developments,

4. Providing walkable and pedestrian-oriented neighborhoods,
5. Providing increased access to public transportation,
6. Providing preferential parking for high-occupancy vehicles, carpools, or alternative fuels vehicles, and
7. Establishing telecommuting programs or satellite work centers.

*AQ-3.2 Infill near Employment* requiring the County to identify opportunities for infill development near employment areas; *AQ-3.4 Landscape* regarding the use of ecologically based landscape design principles that can improve local air quality by absorbing CO<sub>2</sub>, producing oxygen, providing shade that reduces energy required for cooling, and filtering particulates; *AQ-3.6 Mixed Land Uses* where the County shall encourage the clustering of land uses that generate high trip volumes, especially when such uses can be mixed with support services and where they can be served by public transportation; *AQ-4.1 Air Pollution Control Technology* where the County shall utilize the BACM and RACM as adopted by the County to support SJVAPCD air quality attainment plans to achieve and maintain healthful air quality and high visibility standards. These measures shall be applied to new development approvals and permit modifications as appropriate; and *AQ-4.2 Dust Suppression Measures* regarding implementation of dust suppression measures during excavation, grading, and site preparation activities consistent with Air District Regulation VIII – Fugitive Dust Prohibitions. Techniques may include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Site watering or application of dust suppressants,
2. Phasing or extension of grading operations,
3. Covering of stockpiles,
4. Suspension of grading activities during high wind periods (typically winds greater than 25 miles per hour), and
5. Re-vegetation of graded areas.

### **Assumptions**

Construction emissions can vary substantially from day to day, depending on the level of activity, the specific type of operation, and prevailing weather conditions. Construction emissions result from on-site and off-site activities. On-site emissions principally consist of exhaust emissions from the activity levels of heavy-duty construction equipment, motor vehicle operation, and fugitive dust (mainly PM<sub>10</sub>) from disturbed soil. Additionally, paving operations and application of architectural coatings would release VOC emissions. Off-site emissions are caused by motor vehicle exhaust from delivery vehicles, worker traffic, and road dust (PM<sub>10</sub> and PM<sub>2.5</sub>). Operational emissions are those emissions that would occur during long-term operations of the proposed project. Construction and operational modeling assumptions are discussed and analyzed in detail in the Technical Memo prepared by RMA staff, Jessica Willis, Planner IV (see Attachment “A”).

### **Project Impact Analysis:**

- a) **Less Than Significant Impact:** Air Quality Plans (AQP) are plans for reaching attainment of air quality standards. The assumptions, inputs, and control measures are analyzed to determine if the Air Basin can reach attainment for the ambient air quality standards. The proposed project site is located within the jurisdictional boundaries of the SJVAPCD. To show attainment of the standards, the SJVAPCD analyzes the growth projections in the Valley, contributing factors in air pollutant emissions and formations, and existing and adopted emissions controls. The SJVAPCD then formulates a control strategy to reach attainment that includes both State and SJVAPCD regulations and other local programs and measures. For projects that include stationary sources of emissions, the SJVAPCD relies on project compliance with Rule 2201—New and Modified Stationary Source Review to ensure that growth in stationary source emissions would not interfere with the applicable AQP. Projects exceeding the offset thresholds included in the rule are required to purchase offsets in the form of Emission Reduction Credits (ERCs).

The CEQA Guidelines indicate that a significant impact would occur if the project would conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan. The SJVAPCD’s *Guidance for Assessing and Mitigating Air Quality Impacts* (GAMAQI) indicates that projects that do not exceed SJVAPCD regional criteria pollutant emissions quantitative thresholds would not conflict with or obstruct the applicable AQP. An additional criterion regarding the project’s implementation of control measures was assessed to provide further evidence of the project’s consistency with current AQPs. This document proposes the following criteria for determining project consistency with the current AQPs:

1. Will the project result in an increase in the frequency or severity of existing air quality violations or cause or contribute to new violations, or delay timely attainment of air quality standards or the interim emission reductions specified in the AQPs? This measure is determined by comparison to the regional and localized thresholds identified by the District for Regional and Local Air Pollutants.
2. Will the project conform to the assumptions in the AQPs?
3. Will the project comply with applicable control measures in the AQPs?

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

- Significant contribution to existing or new exceedances of the air quality standards would be inconsistent with the goal of attaining the air quality standards.
- AQP emissions inventories and attainment modeling are based on growth assumptions for the area within the air district's jurisdiction.
- AQPs rely on a set of air district-initiated control measures as well as implementation of federal and state measures to reduce emissions within their jurisdictions, with the goal of attaining the air quality standards.

### ***Contribution to Air Quality Violations***

As discussed in Impact 3 b) below, emissions of ROG, NO<sub>x</sub>, CO, SO<sub>x</sub>, PM<sub>10</sub>, and PM<sub>2.5</sub> associated with the proposed Project would not exceed the SJVAPCD's significance thresholds (see **Table 3-4** and **Table 3-5**, Table 6 and Table 7 in the Memo; respectively). Therefore, the proposed Project would not be considered to obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan or be in conflict with the applicable air quality plan.

### ***Air Quality Plan Growth Assumptions***

The Project is not anticipated to increase population as future development is not anticipated to require large numbers of highly specialized employees and employees are anticipated to reside the local area (Visalia, Tulare, and surrounding areas). As such, the proposed Project is consistent with the growth projections in the Tulare County General Plan and conforms to the assumptions in the applicable AQPs. Therefore, the proposed Project will have a less than significant impact related to this Checklist Item.

### ***Air Quality Plan Control Measures***

The AQP contains a number of control measures that are enforceable requirements through the adoption of rules and regulations. As previously noted, the following Air District rules and regulations are or may be relevant to the future development of the proposed Project: Rule 2010 (Permits Required); Rule 2201 (New and Modified Stationary Source Review); Rule 3135 (Dust Control Plan Fees); Rule 4002 (National Emission Standards for Hazardous Air Pollutants); Rule 4101 (Visible Emissions); Rule 4102 (Nuisance); Rule 4201 (Particulate Matter Concentration); Rule 4601 (Architectural Coatings); Rule 4641 (Cutback, Slow Cure, and Emulsified Asphalt, Paving and Maintenance Operations); Rule 4702 (Internal Combustion Engines); Rule 9510 (Indirect Source Review); and Regulation VIII (Fugitive PM<sub>10</sub> Prohibitions).

The proposed Project would be required to comply with all applicable CARB and SJVAPCD rules and regulations. Therefore, the proposed Project complies with this criterion and would not conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality attainment plan.

### ***Conclusion***

The proposed Akers Business Park's emissions would be less than significant for all criteria pollutants and would not result in inconsistency with the AQP for this criterion. The project would comply with all applicable rules and regulations from the applicable air quality plans. Considering the proposed Project's less-than-significant contribution to air quality violations and the project's adherence to applicable rules and regulations, the proposed Akers Business Park would not be considered inconsistent with the AQP; the impact would be less than significant.

- b) Less Than Significant Impact:** To result in a less than significant impact, emissions of nonattainment pollutants must be below the SJVAPCD's regional significance thresholds. This is an approach recommended by the SJVAPCD in its GAMAQI. The SJVAB is in nonattainment for ozone, PM<sub>10</sub> (State only), and PM<sub>2.5</sub>. Ozone is a secondary pollutant that can be formed miles from the source of emissions, through reactions of ROG and NO<sub>x</sub> emissions in the presence of sunlight. Therefore, ROG and NO<sub>x</sub> are termed "ozone precursors." As such, the primary pollutants of concern during project construction- and operation-related activities are ROG, NO<sub>x</sub>, PM<sub>10</sub>, and PM<sub>2.5</sub>. The air quality standards were set to protect public health, including the health of sensitive individuals (such as children, the elderly, and the infirm). Therefore, when the concentration of those pollutants exceeds the standard, it is likely that some sensitive individuals in the

population could experience adverse health effects. However, the health effects are a factor of the dose-response curve; that is, concentration of the pollutant in the air (dose), the length of time exposed, and the response of the individual are factors involved in the severity and nature of health impacts. If a significant health impact results from a project's emissions, it does not necessarily mean that 100 percent of the population would experience adverse health effects.

Since the SJVAB is nonattainment for ozone, PM<sub>10</sub>, and PM<sub>2.5</sub>, it is considered to have an existing significant cumulative health impact without the proposed Project. When this occurs, the analysis considers whether the proposed Project's contribution to the existing violation of air quality standards is cumulatively considerable. The SJVAPCD regional thresholds for NO<sub>x</sub>, ROG/VOC, PM<sub>10</sub>, or PM<sub>2.5</sub> are applied as cumulative contribution thresholds. Projects that exceed the regional thresholds would have a cumulatively considerable health impact.

The SJVAPCD GAMAQI (adopted in 2015) contains thresholds for CO, NO<sub>x</sub>, ROG, SO<sub>x</sub>, PM<sub>10</sub>, and PM<sub>2.5</sub>. Air pollutant emissions have both regional and localized effects. The proposed Project's regional emissions are compared to the applicable SJVAPCD significance threshold in **Table 3-4**.

<b>Table 3-4. Air District Criteria Pollutant Significance Thresholds</b>			
<b>Pollutant/ Precursor</b>	<b>Construction Emissions</b>	<b>Operational Emissions</b>	
		<b>Permitted Equipment and Activities</b>	<b>Non- Permitted Equipment and Activities</b>
	<b>Emissions (tpy)</b>	<b>Emissions (tpy)</b>	<b>Emissions (tpy)</b>
<b>CO</b>	100	100	100
<b>NO<sub>x</sub></b>	10	10	10
<b>ROG</b>	10	10	10
<b>SO<sub>x</sub></b>	27	27	27
<b>PM<sub>10</sub></b>	15	15	15
<b>PM<sub>2.5</sub></b>	15	15	15

Source: Air District, <http://www.valleyair.org/transportation/0714-GAMAQI-Criteria-Pollutant-Thresholds-of-Significance.pdf>, accessed February 2023.

Construction Emissions (Regional)

Construction-related emissions associated with the project are provided in **Table 3-5** (Table 6 in the Memo). As shown in **Table 3-5**, the emissions are below the significance thresholds and, therefore, are less than significant on a project basis.

<b>Table 3-5. Construction Criteria Pollutant and Greenhouse Gas Emissions (Tons Per Year)</b>							
	<b>ROG</b>	<b>NO<sub>x</sub></b>	<b>CO</b>	<b>SO<sub>2</sub></b>	<b>PM10 Total</b>	<b>PM2.5 Total</b>	<b>CO<sub>2e</sub></b>
Demo/Site Prep – 2023	0.0653	0.6433	0.5419	1.2300E-03	0.0558	0.0314	110.8237
Demo/Site Prep – 2024	0.0597	0.5930	0.4214	8.9000E-04	0.1866	0.1050	79.3690
Phase 1 – 2024	0.3227	2.4788	3.2145	7.9600E-03	0.4802	0.1995	925.8993
Phase 1 – 2025	1.0670	0.6467	0.9758	2.3300E-03	0.1264	0.0499	212.4296
Phase 2 – 2026	0.2909	2.2722	3.0495	7.7200E-03	0.4653	0.1885	703.2467
Phase 2 – 2027	0.2788	2.2492	2.9495	7.5100E-03	0.4635	0.1857	683.2860
Phase 3 – 2028	1.0620	0.6531	0.9418	2.2700E-03	0.1296	0.0511	206.8526
Phase 3 – 2029	0.2692	1.5105	2.8545	7.9600E-03	0.4115	0.1377	721.5971
Phase 4 – 2030	1.0603	0.4682	0.9281	2.3900E-03	0.1136	0.0375	214.4564
Phase 4 – 2031	0.2616	0.5080	2.8169	7.8700E-03	0.4129	0.1380	712.5830
Phase 5 – 2032	1.0571	0.4606	0.9047	2.3300E-03	0.1121	0.0370	208.6333
Phase 5 – 2033	0.0653	0.6433	0.5419	1.2300E-03	0.0558	0.0314	110.8237

Source: Attachments A & B of the Tech Memo

Operational Emissions (Regional) – Non-Permitted

Operational-related emissions occur over the lifetime of a project. The SJVAPCD considers permitted and non-permitted emission sources separately when making significance determinations. In addition, the annual operational-related emissions are also considered separately from construction-related emissions. Operational-related emissions are shown in

**Table 3-6** (Table 7 in the Memo). As shown in **Table 3-6**, the operational-related emissions would be less than the thresholds of significance for all criteria air pollutants.

<b>Table 3-6. Operational Criteria Pollutant and Greenhouse Gas Emissions (Tons Per Year)</b>							
	<b>ROG</b>	<b>NOx</b>	<b>CO</b>	<b>SO2</b>	<b>PM10 Total</b>	<b>PM2.5 Total</b>	<b>CO2e</b>
Phase 1 – 2025	0.8246	0.4137	1.8277	4.6600E-03	0.4211	0.1211	979.4462
Phase 2 – 2027	0.8059	0.3770	1.6616	4.4000E-03	0.4206	0.1207	954.6981
Phase 3 – 2029	0.7912	0.3482	1.5397	4.1800E-03	0.4200	0.1203	933.9265
Phase 4 – 2031	0.7786	0.3255	1.4459	4.0000E-03	0.4195	0.1199	916.8561
Phase 5 – 2033	0.7685	0.3075	1.3774	3.8500E-03	0.4191	0.1196	903.0626
<b>Total Operations</b>	<b>3.9688</b>	<b>1.7719</b>	<b>7.8523</b>	<b>0.0211</b>	<b>2.1003</b>	<b>0.6016</b>	<b>4,687.9895</b>
Source: Attachments A & B of the Tech Memo							

Operational Emissions (Regional)—Permitted

Specific land uses within the proposed Akers Business Park may include stationary sources that would require SJVAPCD permits, such as an emergency generator. The SJVAPCD will prepare an engineering evaluation of all permitted equipment to determine the controls required to achieve best available control technology (BACT) requirements. The permitted emissions are dependent on the control technology selected and any process limits included in the permit conditions. Permitted sources will be required to comply with SJVAPCD BACT requirements. Compliance with regulations would ensure that the project’s stationary sources would not exceed SJVAPCD thresholds of significance; therefore, the proposed Project’s estimated permitted emissions would be less than significant.

Conclusion

As shown in **Table 3-5** and **Table 3-6**, the proposed Project’s regional emissions would not exceed the applicable regional criteria pollutant emissions quantitative thresholds. In addition, any permitted sources will be required to comply with SJVAPCD BACT requirements. Therefore, the proposed Akers Business Park would not result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant.

- c) Less Than Significant Impact:** Emissions occurring at or near the proposed Project have the potential to create a localized impact that could expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations. Sensitive receptors are considered land uses or other types of population groups that are more sensitive to air pollution than others due to their exposure. Sensitive population groups include children, the elderly, the acutely and chronically ill, and those with cardio-respiratory diseases. The SJVAPCD considers a sensitive receptor to be a location that houses or attracts children, the elderly, people with illnesses, or others who are especially sensitive to the effects of air pollutants. Examples of sensitive receptors include hospitals, residences, convalescent facilities, and schools.

The nearest existing sensitive receptor to the site area is a residential development located approximately 0.50-mile south of the proposed Akers Business Park. The nearest existing worker receptor to the site area is the Christy facility located directly west of the Project sit.

**Localized Criteria Pollutant Impacts**

Emissions occurring at or near the proposed Project have the potential to create a localized impact (also referred to as an air pollutant hotspot). Localized emissions are considered significant if when combined with background emissions, they would result in exceedance of any health-based air quality standard. In locations that already exceed standards for these pollutants, significance is based on a significant impact level (SIL) that represents the amount that is considered a cumulatively considerable contribution to an existing violation of an air quality standard. The pollutants of concern for localized impact in the SJVAB are NO<sub>2</sub>, SO<sub>x</sub>, and CO.

The SJVAPCD has provided guidance for screening localized impacts in the GAMAQI that establishes a screening threshold of 100 pounds per day of any criteria pollutant. If a project exceeds 100 pounds per day of any criteria pollutant, then ambient air quality modeling would be necessary. If the project does not exceed 100 pounds per day of any criteria pollutant, then it can be assumed that it would not cause a violation of an ambient air quality standard.

Localized construction-related impacts would be short-term in nature lasting only during the duration of construction. The maximum daily construction emissions would occur in 2025, the year with the most construction activity and highest emitting equipment.

Localized operational impacts could occur in areas with a single large source of emissions such as a power plant or with multiple sources concentrated in a small area such as a distribution center. The maximum daily operational emissions would occur at project buildout, which was assumed to occur in 2033.

As the proposed project is anticipated to be built out in phases over a 10-year period, construction and operational activities will overlap. To present the cumulative localized impact, construction and operational emissions were added for each year of activity and are shown in **Table 3-7**.

<b>Year</b>	<b>ROG</b>	<b>NOx</b>	<b>CO</b>	<b>SO2</b>	<b>PM10 Total</b>	<b>PM2.5 Total</b>
2023	1.9788	19.4939	16.4212	0.0373	1.6909	0.9515
2024	2.8970	23.2712	27.5447	0.0670	5.0515	2.3068
2025	25.6470	14.8923	31.5880	0.0777	5.4883	1.8247
2026	8.4508	20.3477	36.9485	0.0938	6.7152	2.3455
2027	31.7014	17.7938	43.7941	0.1105	8.7038	2.7500
2028	14.4644	23.0295	48.7788	0.1255	9.8879	3.2386
2029	37.6553	20.5026	55.2221	0.1416	11.9147	3.6723
2030	20.3856	20.0712	59.7235	0.1606	12.6758	3.7864
2031	43.5229	19.6067	65.9268	0.1741	14.8018	4.3333
2032	26.2265	14.9424	70.3924	0.1902	15.8644	4.6970
2033	49.2867	21.7980	75.9362	0.2021	17.9495	5.2303
2034	30.0667	13.4235	59.4871	0.1598	15.9114	4.5576

Year 2023 is construction-related activity only. Year 2034 is operation-related activity only.  
Source: Attachment A of the Tech Memo

As shown in **Table 3-7** (Table 8 in the Memo), the construction and operational emissions resulting from the proposed Project would not exceed 100 pounds per day for each of the criteria pollutants. Therefore, based on the SJVAPCD’s guidance, the operational-related emissions would not cause an ambient air quality standard violation. As such, impacts would be less than significant.

**Toxic Air Contaminants**

The GAMAQI does not currently include recommendations for analysis of toxic air contaminant (TAC) emissions from project construction activities. The Air District’s significance thresholds for TACs have been established for permitted and non-permitted source operation related emissions.

Diesel particulate matter (DPM) represents the primary (TAC) of concern associated with the proposed Project. Project construction related DPM emissions would be the result of the operation of internal combustion engines in equipment (e.g., loaders, backhoes and resurfacing equipment, as well as haul trucks) commonly associated with construction-related activities. Construction related DPM emissions would occur over a short period of time and would cease upon completion of the Project. As such, Project construction related activities would not expose nearby sensitive receptors to substantial DPM emissions and would have a Less Than Significant Impact related to this Checklist Item

As specific uses within the Project site are unknown and Project design has not yet been finalized, quantification of potential health risks would be speculative. However, it is anticipated the operational related emissions would primarily be the result of vehicle trips associated with the Project. Future development proposals within the Project site would be reviewed on a project-by-project basis and evaluated against the screening criteria presented in Table 4 of the Tech Memo. Furthermore, future project design would site truck loading/idling areas such that exposure to exhaust emissions would be minimized. Stationary sources (such as automobile repair/paint shops) would be subject to Air District permitting requirements and issued permits only if the development could demonstrate that it would pass the Air District’s risk management review. As such, Project operation related activities would not expose nearby sensitive receptors to substantial TAC emissions and would have a Less Than Significant Impact related to this Checklist Item.

## Valley Fever

Valley fever, or coccidioidomycosis, is an infection caused by inhalation of the spores of the fungus, *Coccidioides immitis* (*C. immitis*). The spores live in soil and can live for an extended time in harsh environmental conditions. Activities or conditions that increase the amount of fugitive dust contribute to greater exposure, and they include dust storms, grading, and recreational off-road activities.

The San Joaquin Valley is considered an endemic area for Valley fever. The San Joaquin Valley is considered an endemic area for Valley fever. During 2000–2018, a total of 65,438 coccidioidomycosis cases were reported in California; median statewide annual incidence was 7.9 per 100,000 population and varied by region from 1.1 in Northern and Eastern California to 90.6 in the Southern San Joaquin Valley, with the largest increase (15-fold) occurring in the Northern San Joaquin Valley. Incidence has been consistently high in six counties in the Southern San Joaquin Valley (Fresno, Kern, Kings, Madera, Tulare, and Merced counties) and Central Coast (San Luis Obispo County) regions.<sup>50</sup> California experienced 7,392 new probable or confirmed cases of Valley fever in 2020. A total of 311 Valley fever cases were reported in Tulare County in 2020.<sup>51</sup>

The distribution of *C. Immitis* within endemic areas is not uniform and growth sites are commonly small (a few tens of meters) and widely scattered. Known sites appear to have some ecological factors in common suggesting that certain physical, chemical, and biological conditions are more favorable for *C. immitis* growth. Avoidance, when possible, of sites favorable for the occurrence of *C. immitis* is a prudent risk management strategy. Listed below are ecologic factors and sites favorable for the occurrence of *C. immitis*:

- 1) Rodent burrows (often a favorable site for *C. immitis*, perhaps because temperatures are more moderate and humidity higher than on the ground surface)
- 2) Old (prehistoric) Indian campsites near fire pits
- 3) Areas with sparse vegetation and alkaline soils
- 4) Areas with high salinity soils
- 5) Areas adjacent to arroyos (where residual moisture may be available)
- 6) Packrat middens
- 7) Upper 30 centimeters of the soil horizon, especially in virgin undisturbed soils
- 8) Sandy, well-aerated soil with relatively high water-holding capacities

Sites within endemic areas less favorable for the occurrence of *C. immitis* include:

- 1) Cultivated fields
- 2) Heavily vegetated areas (e.g., grassy lawns)
- 3) Higher elevations (above 7,000 feet)
- 4) Areas where commercial fertilizers (e.g., ammonium sulfate) have been applied
- 5) Areas that are continually wet
- 6) Paved (asphalt or concrete) or oiled areas
- 7) Soils containing abundant microorganisms
- 8) Heavily urbanized areas where there is little undisturbed virgin soil.<sup>52</sup>

The proposed Project is located on a currently disturbed site that does not provide a suitable habitat for spores. Specifically, the site has been previously and currently remains disturbed by agricultural-related activities typically used for a walnut orchard. Therefore, implementation of the proposed Akers Business Park would have a low probability of the site having *C. immitis* growth sites and exposure to the spores from disturbed soil.

Although conditions are not favorable, construction-related activities could generate fugitive dust that contain *C. immitis* spores. The proposed Project will minimize the generation of fugitive dust during construction-related activities by complying with SJVAPCD's Regulation VIII. Therefore, this Regulation, combined with the relatively low probability of the presence of *C. immitis* spores would reduce Valley fever impacts to less than significant.

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<sup>50</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). 2020. Regional Analysis of Coccidioidomycosis Incidence—California, 2000–2018. Website: [https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/69/wr/mm6948a4.htm?s\\_cid=mm6948a4\\_e](https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/69/wr/mm6948a4.htm?s_cid=mm6948a4_e). Accessed March 17, 2021.

<sup>51</sup> California Department of Public Health (CDPH). 2021. Coccidioidomycosis in California Provisional Monthly Report January 2021. Website: [https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/CDPH%20Document%20Library/CocciinCA\\_ProvisionalMonthlyReport.pdf](https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/CDPH%20Document%20Library/CocciinCA_ProvisionalMonthlyReport.pdf). Accessed January 15, 2022.

<sup>52</sup> United States Geological Survey (USGS). 2000. Operational Guidelines (Version 1.0) for Geological Fieldwork in Areas Endemic for Coccidioidomycosis (Valley Fever), 2000, Open-File Report 2000-348. Website: <https://pubs.usgs.gov/of/2000/0348/pdf/of00-348.pdf>. Accessed November 8, 2021.



During operations-related activities, dust emissions are anticipated to be relatively small because most of the proposed Project area where operational-related activities would occur would be occupied by future structures and pavement, and the existing Magic Touch Recreational Vehicle Sales facility at the south end of the proposed Project. This condition would decrease the possibility of the proposed Project providing habitat suitable for *C. immitis* spores and for generating fugitive dust that may contribute to Valley fever exposure. Impacts would be less than significant.

Naturally Occurring Asbestos

A review of the map of areas where naturally occurring asbestos in California are likely to occur does not indicate that the proposed Project area would contain naturally occurring asbestos.<sup>53</sup> Therefore, development of the Akers Business Park is not anticipated to expose receptors to naturally occurring asbestos. Impacts would be less than significant.

Conclusion

In summary, the proposed Project would not exceed SJVAPCD localized emission daily screening levels for any criteria pollutant. The proposed Project is not a significant source of TAC emissions during construction or operation. The proposed Project is not in an area with suitable habitat for Valley fever spores and is not in area known to have naturally occurring asbestos. Therefore, Akers Business Park would not result in significant impacts to sensitive receptors.

- d) **Less Than Significant Impact:** Two situations create a potential for odor impact. The first occurs when a new odor source is located near an existing sensitive receptor. The second occurs when a new sensitive receptor locates near an existing source of odor. The proposed Project is of the first type only since it involves a potential new odor source and would not locate any new sensitive receptors.

Odor impacts on residential areas and other sensitive receptors, such as hospitals, day-care centers, schools, etc. warrant the closest scrutiny, but consideration should also be given to other land uses where people may congregate, such as recreational facilities, worksites, and commercial areas. Although the proposed Project is less than one (1) mile from the nearest sensitive receptor, it is not anticipated to be a significant source of odors.

The screening distances for land use types that generally could result in nuisance odors are shown in **Table 3-8** (Table 5 in the Memo).

<b>Table 3-8 Screening Levels for Potential Odor Sources<sup>54</sup></b>	
<b>Odor Generator</b>	<b>Screening Distance</b>
Wastewater Treatment Facilities	2 miles
Sanitary Landfill	1 mile
Transfer Station	1 mile
Composting Facility	1 mile
Petroleum Refinery	2 miles
Asphalt Batch Plant	1 mile
Chemical Manufacturing	1 mile
Fiberglass Manufacturing	1 mile
Painting/Coating Operations (e.g., auto body shop)	1 mile
Food Processing Facility	1 mile
Feed Lot/Dairy	1 mile
Rendering Plant	1 mile
Wastewater Treatment Facilities	2 miles
<i>Sources: Air District, <a href="https://www.valleyair.org/transportation/GAMAQI-2015/GAMAQI-Criteria-Pollutant-Thresholds-of-Odors.pdf">https://www.valleyair.org/transportation/GAMAQI-2015/GAMAQI-Criteria-Pollutant-Thresholds-of-Odors.pdf</a>, accessed February 2023.</i>	

<sup>53</sup> United States Geologic Survey (USGS). Asbestos mines, prospects, and occurrences. Accessed January 2023. <https://mrdata.usgs.gov/asbestos/map-us.html#home>; and California Department of Conservation, California Geological Survey (CGS). A General Location Guide for Ultramafic Rocks in California - Areas More Likely to Contain Naturally Occurring Asbestos (USGS, 2000). Accessed January 2023. [https://www.conservation.ca.gov/cgs/minerals/hazardous\\_minerals/asbestos..](https://www.conservation.ca.gov/cgs/minerals/hazardous_minerals/asbestos..)

<sup>54</sup> Air District, <https://www.valleyair.org/transportation/GAMAQI-2015/GAMAQI-Criteria-Pollutant-Thresholds-of-Odors.pdf>. Accessed February 2023

### ***Construction***

During construction-related activities, various diesel-powered vehicles and equipment in use on-site would create localized odors. These odors would be short-term, temporary, and intermittent which would decrease the likelihood of the odors concentrating in a single area or lingering for any notable period of time. As such, these odors would likely not be noticeable for extended periods of time beyond the project's site boundaries. Therefore, the potential for odor impacts from construction-related activities of the proposed Project would be less than significant.

### ***Operations***

The development of the proposed Project would not substantially increase or introduce objectionable odors to existing or new sensitive receptors to the area that could be affected by any existing objectionable odor sources. Land uses that are typically identified as sources of objectionable odors include landfills, transfer stations, sewage treatment plants, wastewater pump stations, composting facilities, asphalt batch plants, rendering plants, and other land uses outlined in **Table 3-8**. The proposed Project would not result in any of these example activities. Minor sources of odors that would be associated with commercial uses, such as exhaust from mobile sources (including diesel-fueled heavy trucks), are known to have temporary and less concentrated odors. Considering the low intensity of potential odor emissions, the proposed Project's operational-related activities would not expose receptors to objectionable odor emissions. Therefore, the proposed Project would not be considered as a generator of objectionable odors during operations-related activities. As such, impacts would be less than significant.

**Cumulative Impact Analysis: Less Than Significant Impact** – The geographic area of this cumulative analysis is the San Joaquin Valley Air Basin. The proposed Project's emissions would be less than significant for all criteria pollutants and would be consistent with the AQP for this criterion. The proposed Project would comply with all applicable rules and regulations as specified in the applicable air quality plan(s). The proposed Project's less-than-significant contribution to air quality violations and its adherence to applicable rules and regulations would allow the proposed Project to remain consistent with the AQP; therefore, the cumulative impact would be less than significant. As shown in **Table 3 5** and **Table 3-6**, the proposed Project's regional emissions would not exceed the applicable regional criteria pollutant emissions quantitative thresholds. In addition, any permitted sources will be required to comply with SJVAPCD rules, regulations permit conditions, thresholds, (requirements), as applicable. Therefore, the proposed Project would not result in significant cumulative health impacts, it would not exceed SJVAPCD localized emission daily screening levels for any criteria pollutant, and it would not be a significant source of TAC emissions during construction- or operation-related activities. The proposed Project is not in an area with suitable habitat for Valley fever spores, is not in area known to have naturally occurring asbestos, and would not generate a significant source of odors. Therefore, cumulative impacts of the proposed Akers Business Park are less than significant.

**IV. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES**

Would the project:	SIGNIFICANT IMPACT	LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT WITH MITIGATION	LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT	NO IMPACT
a) Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, and regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

The discussions regarding Environmental Setting, Regulatory Setting, CEQA requirements, Biological Resources, etc. contained in the Tulare County General Plan 2030 Update and Tulare County Environmental Impact Report are incorporated herein in their entirety. Where necessary and if available, additional site-specific facts, data, information, etc., are included in this discussion.

**Environmental Setting**

The Rural Valley Lands Plan (RVLP) applies “to the Central Valley generally below the 600-foot elevation contour line along the foothills of the Sierra Nevada (including Valley Agricultural Extensions as described in Part II-Chapter 3) outside the County’s Urban Development Boundaries (UDBs), Hamlet Development Boundaries (HDBs), Urban Area Boundaries (UABs) for cities, and other adopted land use plans which may include urban corridors, planned communities, and the Kings River Plan. Scenic and regional corridor plans may retain the RVLP subject to the policies developed in those plans (Part II-Figure 1-1: Rural Valley Lands Plan). The RVLP was initiated in order to establish minimum parcel sizes for areas zoned for agriculture and to develop a policy that is fair, logical, legally supportable, and which consistently utilizes resource information to determine the suitability of rural lands for non-agricultural uses.”<sup>55</sup>

As noted earlier, the proposed Project will include the development of a commercial business park on approximately 65.45 acres located at the southwest corner of Road 100 (Oaks Street) and Oakdale Avenue, east of SR 99, APN 149-090-006. The proposed Project will include a General Plan Amendment (“GPA”) to change the Land Use Designation from “Valley

<sup>55</sup> Tulare County General Plan 2030 Update, Part II – Area Plan Policies, Chapter 1 – Rural Valley Lands Plan.

Agriculture” to “Mixed Use,” a Zone Change (“PZC”) to change the Zone from AE-20 (Exclusive Agricultural – 20 Acre Minimum) to C-3-MU (Service Commercial with a Mixed-Use Overlay Zone) to facilitate a Tentative Subdivision Map (“TSM”) to subdivide a 65.45-acre parcel and develop the proposed Akers Business Park as a mixed use commercial project that includes the expansion of the existing Magic Touch Recreational Vehicle Sales facility at the south end of the proposed Project (3567 N. Oaks St. Tulare, CA 93274), contractor offices, boat sales, and other related uses allowed in the C-3-MU Zone.

## **Regulatory Setting**

### *Federal*

#### Federal Endangered Species Act

“The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) administers the Federal Endangered Species Act (16 USC Section 153 et seq.) and thereby has jurisdiction over federally listed threatened, endangered, and proposed species. Projects that may result in a “take” of a listed species or critical habitat must consult with the USFWS. “Take” is broadly defined as harassment, harm, pursuing, hunting, shooting, wounding, killing, trapping, capturing, or collection; any attempt to engage in such conduct; or destruction of habitat that prevents an endangered species from recovering (16 USC 1532, 50 CFR 17.3). Federal agencies that propose, fund, or must issue a permit for a project that may affect a listed species or critical habitat are required to consult with the USFWS under Section 7 of the Federal Endangered Species Act. If it is determined that a federally listed species or critical habitat may be adversely affected by the federal action, the USFWS will issue a “Biological Opinion” to the federal agency that describes minimization and avoidance measures that must be implemented as part of the federal action. Projects that do not have a federal nexus must apply for a take permit under Section 10 of the Act. Section 10 of the Act requires that the project applicant prepare a habitat conservation plan as part of the permit application (16 USC 1539).”<sup>56</sup>

“Under Section 4 of the Federal Endangered Species Act, a species can be removed, or delisted, from the list of threatened and endangered species. Delisting is a formal action made by the USFWS and is the result of a determined successful recovery of a species. This action requires posts in the federal registry and a public comment period before a final determination is made by the USFWS.”<sup>57</sup>

#### Habitat Conservation Plans

“Habitat Conservation Plans (HCPs) are required for a non-federal entity that has requested a take permit of a federal listed species or critical habitat under Section 10 of the Endangered Species Act. HCPs are designed to offset harmful effects of a proposed project on federally listed species. These plans are utilized to achieve long-term biological and regulatory goals. Implementation of HCPs allows development and projects to occur while providing conservation measures that protect federally listed species or their critical habitat and offset the incidental take of a proposed project. HCPs substantially reduce the burden of the Endangered Species Act on small landowners by providing efficient mechanisms for compliance with the ESA, thereby distributing the economic and logistic effects of compliance. A broad range of landowner activities can be legally protected under these plans (County of Tulare, 2010 Background Report, pages 9-6 and 9-7, 2010a). There are generally two types of HCPs, project-specific HCPs which typically protect a few species and have a short duration and multi-species HCPs which typically cover the development of a larger area and have a longer duration.”<sup>58</sup>

As noted earlier, there are two habitat conservation plans that apply in Tulare County: The Kern Water Habitat Conservation Plan, which applies to an area in Allensworth; and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife’s “The Recovery Plan for Upland Species in the San Joaquin Valley,” which includes sensitive species in the San Joaquin Valley, several of which may be found in Tulare County. Also as noted earlier, the proposed Project is approximately 27 miles northwest of Allensworth, thus the Kern Water Habitat Conservation Plan would not apply to this Project.

#### Migratory Bird Treaty Act

“The Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA, 16 USC Section 703-711) and the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act (16 USC Section 668) protect certain species of birds from direct “take”. The MBTA protects migrant bird species from take by setting hunting limits and seasons and protecting occupied nests and eggs. The Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act (16 USC

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<sup>56</sup> Tulare County 2030 General Plan RDEIR. Page 3.11-1.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid.

<sup>58</sup> Op. Cit. 3.11-2.

Sections 668-668d) prohibits the take or commerce of any part of Bald and Golden Eagles. The USFWS administers both acts, and reviews federal agency actions that may affect species protected by the acts.”<sup>59</sup> The MBTA implements international treaties devised to protect migratory birds and any of their parts, eggs, and nests from activities such as hunting, pursuing, capturing, killing, selling, and shipping, unless expressly authorized in the regulations or by permit. As authorized by the MBTA, the USFWS issues permits to qualified applicants for the following types of activities: falconry, raptor propagation, scientific collecting, special purposes (rehabilitation, education, migratory game bird propagation, and salvage), take of depredating birds, taxidermy, and waterfowl sale and disposal. The regulations governing migratory bird permits are in 50 CFR part 13 General Permit Procedures and 50 CFR part 21 Migratory Bird Permits. The State of California has incorporated the protection of birds of prey in Sections 3800, 3513, and 3503.5 of the CDFG Code.

#### Federal Clean Water Act (CWA)

“Wetlands and other waters of the U.S. are subject to the jurisdiction of the U.S. Army Corp of Engineers (USACE) and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (33 U.S.C. 1251 et seq., 1972). Together, the EPA and the USACE determine whether they have jurisdiction over the non-navigable tributaries that are not relatively permanent based on a fact-specific analysis to determine if there is a significant nexus. These non-navigable tributaries include wetlands adjacent to non-navigable tributaries that are not relatively permanent and wetlands adjacent to but that does not directly abut a relatively permanent non-navigable tributary.”<sup>60</sup> The definition of waters of the United States includes rivers, streams, estuaries, the territorial seas, ponds, lakes, and wetlands. Wetlands are defined as those areas “that are inundated or saturated by surface or groundwater at a frequency and duration sufficient to support, and that under normal circumstances do support, a prevalence of vegetation typically adapted for life in saturated soil conditions (33 CFR 328.3 7b).” The U.S. EPA also has authority over wetlands and may override an USACE permit. Substantial impacts to wetlands may require an individual permit. Projects that only minimally affect wetlands may meet the conditions of one of the existing Nationwide Permits. A Water Quality Certification or Waiver pursuant to Section 401 of the CWA is required for Section 404 permit actions; this certification or waiver is issued by the Regional Water Quality Control Board.

#### *State of California*

#### California Department of Fish and Wildlife (formerly Dept. of Fish and Game)

The California Department of Fish and Wildlife (DFW) regulates the modification of the bed, bank, or channel of a waterway under Sections 1601-1607 of the California Fish and Game Code. Also included are modifications that divert, obstruct, or change the natural flow of a waterway. Any party who proposes an activity that may modify a feature regulated by the Fish and Game Code must notify DFW before project construction. DFW will then decide whether to enter into a Streambed Alteration Agreement with the project applicant either under Section 1601 (for public entities) or Section 1603 (for private entities) of the Fish and Game Code.

#### California Endangered Species Act

The California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFE or DFW) administers the California Endangered Species Act 9 (CESA OR ESA) of 1984 (Fish and Game Code Section 2080), which regulates the listing and “take” of endangered and threatened State-listed species. A “take” may be permitted by California Department of Fish and Game [Wildlife] through implementing a management agreement. “Take” is defined by the California Endangered Species Act as “hunt, pursue, catch, capture, or kill, or attempt to hunt, pursue, catch, capture, or kill” a State-listed species (Fish and Game Code Sec. 86). Under State laws, DFW is empowered to review projects for their potential impacts to State-listed species and their habitats.

The DFW maintains lists for Candidate-Endangered Species (SCE) and Candidate-Threatened Species (SCT). California candidate species are afforded the same level of protection as State-listed species. California also designates Species of Special Concern (CSC) that are species of limited distribution, declining populations, diminishing habitat, or unusual scientific, recreational, or educational value. These species do not have the same legal protection as listed species, but may be added to official lists in the future. The CSC list is intended by DFW as a management tool for consideration in future land use decisions (Fish and Game Code Section 2080).<sup>61</sup>

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<sup>59</sup> Tulare County 2030 General Plan RDEIR. Page 3.11-2.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid. 3.11-1 and -2.

<sup>61</sup> General Plan Background Report. Pages 9-7 and 9-8.

All State lead agencies must consult with DFW under the California Endangered Species Act when a proposed project may affect State-listed species. DFW would determine if a project under review would jeopardize or result in taking of a State-listed species, or destroy or adversely modify its essential habitat, also known as a “jeopardy finding” (Fish and Game Code Sec. 2090). For projects where DFW has made a jeopardy finding, DFW must specify reasonable and prudent alternatives to the proposed project to the State lead agency (Fish and Game Code Sec. 2090 et seq.).<sup>62</sup>

### Fully Protected Species

The State of California first began to designate species as fully protected prior to the creation of the CESA and FESA. Lists of fully protected species were initially developed to provide protection to those animals that were rare or faced possible extinction, and included fish, amphibians, reptiles, birds, and mammals. Most fully protected species have since been listed as threatened or endangered pursuant to the CESA and/or FESA. The regulations that implement the Fully Protected Species Statute (CDFG Code Section 4700) provide that fully protected species may not be taken or possessed at any time. Furthermore, the CDFG prohibits any state agency from issuing incidental take permits for fully protected species, except for necessary scientific research.

### Native Plant Protection Act

Regarding listed rare and endangered plant species, the CESA defers to the California Native Plant Protection Act (NPPA) of 1977 (CDFG Code Sections 1900 to 1913), which prohibits importing of rare and endangered plants into California, and the taking and selling of rare and endangered plants. The CESA includes an additional listing category for threatened plants that are not protected pursuant to NPPA. In this case, plants listed as rare or endangered pursuant to the NPPA are not protected pursuant to CESA, but can be protected pursuant to the CEQA. In addition, plants that are not state listed, but that meet the standards for listing, are also protected pursuant to CEQA (Guidelines, Section 15380). In practice, this is generally interpreted to mean that all species on lists 1B and 2 of the CNPS Inventory potentially qualify for protection pursuant to CEQA, and some species on lists 3 and 4 of the CNPS Inventory may qualify for protection pursuant to CEQA. List 3 includes plants for which more information is needed on taxonomy or distribution. Some of these are rare and endangered enough to qualify for protection pursuant to CEQA. List 4 includes plants of limited distribution that may qualify for protection if their abundance and distribution characteristics are found to meet the standards for listing.

### Natural Communities Conservation Planning Act

The Natural Communities Conservation Planning Act allows a process for developing natural community conservation plans (NCCPs) under DFW direction. NCCPs allow for regional protection of wildlife diversity, while allowing compatible development. DFW may permit takings of State-listed species whose conservation and management are provided in a NCCP, once a NCCP is prepared (Fish and Game Code Secs. 2800 et seq.).<sup>63</sup>

### Federally and State-Protected Lands

Ownership of California’s wildlands is divided primarily between federal, state, and private entities. State-owned land is managed under the leadership of the Departments of Fish and Game (DFW), Parks and Recreation, and Forestry and Fire Protection (CDF). Tulare County has protected lands in the form of wildlife refuges, national parks, and other lands that have large limitations on appropriate land uses. Some areas are created to protect special status species and their ecosystems.<sup>64</sup>

### California Wetlands Conservation Policy

The California Wetlands Conservation Policy’s goal is to establish a policy framework and strategy that will ensure no overall net loss and achieve a long-term net gain in the quantity, quality, and permanence of wetlands acreage and values in California. Additionally, the policy aims to reduce procedural complexity in the administration of State and federal wetlands conservation programs and to encourage partnerships with a primary focus on landowner incentive programs and cooperative planning efforts. These objectives are achieved through three policy means: statewide policy initiatives, three geographically based regional strategies in which wetland programs can be implemented, and creation of interagency wetlands task force to direct and coordinate administration and implementation of the policy. Leading agencies include the Resources Agency and the California Environmental Protection Agency (Cal/EPA) in cooperation with Business, Transportation and Housing Agency,

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<sup>62</sup> Ibid. 9-8.

<sup>63</sup> Op. Cit.

<sup>64</sup> Op. Cit. 9-9.

### Birds of Prey

Birds of Prey are protected under the California Fish and Game Code Section 3503.5, which states:

*"It is unlawful to take, possess, or destroy any birds in the orders Falconiformes or Strigiformes (birds-of-prey) or to take, possess, or destroy the nest or eggs of any such bird except as otherwise provided by this code or any regulation adopted pursuant thereto."*

This includes any construction disturbance which could lead to nest abandonment, which is considered a "taking" by the DFW.

### CEQA and Oak Woodland Protection

CEQA Statute Section 21083.4, "Counties; Conversion of Oak Woodlands; Mitigation Alternatives," requires that counties determine whether a development will have potential impacts on oak woodlands:

21083.4(a): "For purposes of this section, "oak" means a native tree species in the genus *Quercus*, not designated as Group A or Group B commercial species pursuant to regulations adopted by the State Board of Forestry and Fire Protection pursuant to Section 4526, and that is 5 inches or more in diameter at breast height."

21083.4(b): "...a county shall determine whether a project within its jurisdiction may result in a conversion of oak woodlands that will have a significant effect on the environment. If a county determines that there may be a significant effect to oak woodlands, the county shall require o

### Local

The following Tulare County General Plan 2030 Update policies for this resource apply to this Project such as:

*ERM-1.1 Protection of Rare and Endangered Species* which protects environmentally sensitive wildlife and plant life, including those species designated as rare, threatened, and/or endangered by State and/or Federal government, through compatible land use development; *ERM-1.2 Development in Environmentally Sensitive Areas* where the County shall limit or modify proposed development within areas that contain sensitive habitat for special status species and direct development into less significant habitat areas. Development in natural habitats shall be controlled so as to minimize erosion and maximize beneficial vegetative growth; *ERM-1.4 Protect Riparian Areas* where the County shall protect riparian areas through habitat preservation, designation as open space or recreational land uses, bank stabilization, and development controls; *ERM-1.6 Management of Wetlands* where the County shall support the preservation and management of wetland and riparian plant communities for passive recreation, groundwater recharge, and wildlife habitats; *ERM-1.7 Planting of Native Vegetation* where the County shall encourage the planting of native trees, shrubs, and grasslands in order to preserve the visual integrity of the landscape, provide habitat conditions suitable for native vegetation and wildlife, and ensure that a maximum number and variety of well-adapted plants are maintained; *ERM-1.16 Cooperate with Wildlife Agencies* which states that the County shall cooperate with State and federal wildlife agencies to address linkages between habitat areas; and *ERM-2.7 Minimize Adverse Impacts* where the County will minimize the adverse effects on environmental features such as water quality and quantity, air quality, flood plains, geophysical characteristics, biotic, archaeological, and aesthetic factors.

### **Project Impact Analysis:**

- a) **Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation:** As noted previously, the proposed Project will include the development of a commercial business park on approximately 65.45 acres located at the southwest corner of Road 100 (Oaks Street) and Oakdale Avenue, east of SR 99, APN 149-090-006. The proposed Project will include a General Plan Amendment ("GPA") to change the Land Use Designation from "Valley Agriculture" to "Mixed Use," a Zone Change ("PZC") to change the Zone from AE-20 (Exclusive Agricultural – 20 Acre Minimum) to C-3-MU (Service Commercial with a Mixed-Use Overlay Zone) to facilitate a Tentative Subdivision Map ("TSM") to subdivide a 65.45-acre parcel and develop the proposed Akers Business Park as a mixed use commercial project that includes the expansion of the existing Magic

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<sup>65</sup> Op. Cit.



Touch Recreational Vehicle Sales facility at the south end of the proposed Project (3567 N. Oaks St. Tulare, CA 93274), contractor offices, boat sales, and other related uses allowed in the C-3-MU Zone.

According to the CNDDDB search and as described in the Bio Memo in Attachment “B” of this MND, no Special Status plant species, Special Status animal species, or special habitats are known to occur in the general proposed Project vicinity.

#### *On-site Special Status Plant Species*

The current nature of the site and its long disturbance history does not provide suitable habitat for any of the Special Status plant species that are listed in the CNDDDB. As the proposed Project site is currently planted to walnuts and remains actively farmed, the intensive active use of the walnut orchard has permanently changed any habitat suitable for special status plant species. Among the activities that have rendered the site as unsuitable habitat are weed control (through disking and application of herbicides), leveling for irrigation, scouring to allow percolation of flood irrigation, irrigation (i.e., flood irrigation), tree shaking during harvest, walnut sweeping machine, etc.; and other related activities necessary for economic and efficient production of a walnut crop. The seasonality (timing) of these activities is scattered throughout the year with only the winter months (December-February) as the least active periods to conduct these activities. As such, it is highly unlikely that a special status plant would inhabit the proposed Project site. The recent CNDDDB search conducted by RMA staff for the proposed Project may show the proposed Project site as an historical area of special status plants, however; as noted earlier, the intensive active use of the walnut orchard has permanently changed any habitat suitable for special status plants.

The Project will not require removal of any native valley oaks or other trees. However, there is a possibility that migratory birds and raptors may be present within the vicinity of the Project site, or due to the transient nature of some species, the Project site could provide habitat or foraging areas for special status species such as kit fox and Swainson’s hawk. Project development could potentially impact one of these sensitive species; however, with incorporation of mitigation measures, impacts to this Checklist Item will remain less than significant.

#### *On-site Special Status Animal Species*

As noted earlier, no Special Status animal species are known to occur in the general vicinity of the. However, as noted earlier, the intensive active use of the walnut orchard has permanently changed any habitat suitable for special status animal species. Among the activities that have rendered the site as unsuitable habitat are weed control (through disking and application of herbicides), leveling for flood irrigation, scouring to allow percolation of flood irrigation, flood irrigation, tree shaking during harvest, and other related activities (e.g., walnut peeling machine, a walnut brush washer, dryer loading conveyor, and the dryer itself) necessary for economic and efficient production of a walnut crop. The seasonality (timing) of these activities is scattered throughout the year with only the winter months (December-February) as the least active periods to conduct these activities. As such, it is highly unlikely that a special status animal would use the proposed Project site other than transiting the site and possibly for foraging. Nests, dens, burrows, etc., on this highly disturbed and active site are not conducive to special status animals.

However, it is possible that significant impacts to Special Status species could occur because of proposed Project construction-related activities. As such, incorporation of **Mitigation Measures 4-1** through **4-9** would reduce potential Project-specific impacts related to this Checklist Item to less than significant with mitigation.

- b) – d) No Impact:** The proposed Project would not have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, and regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; would not result in an 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; and it would not 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. The nearest body of water is Cameron Creek located north of the proposed Project site (north of Oakdale Avenue). Cameron Creek conveys water for seasonal agricultural-related purposes but will not be impacted by the proposed Project as Oakdale Avenue provides a separation between the proposed Akers Business Park and the creek. As such, there would be no impact.
- e) – f) No Impact:** The proposed Project will not conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinances. Moreover, the proposed Project is not anticipated to conflict with the

goals or policies of the Tulare County General Plan that protect biological resources. Also, as the proposed Project is not within or in the vicinity of any approved habitat conservation plans, natural community conservation plans, or regional or state habitat conservation plans in effect, the proposed Akers Business Park would result in no impact to these resources within the vicinity of the proposed Project site.

**Cumulative Impact Analysis: Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation**– The geographic area of this cumulative analysis is the San Joaquin Valley. While the study area is limited to Tulare County, sensitive species with similar habitat requirements may exist in other portions of the San Joaquin Valley, and therefore cumulative impacts would extend beyond Tulare County’s jurisdictional boundaries. As noted previously, the proposed Project will include the development of a commercial business park on approximately 65.45 acres located at the southwest corner of Road 100 and Oakdale Avenue, east of State Route 99, APN 149-090-006. The proposed Project will include a General Plan Amendment (“GPA”) to change the Land Use Designation from “Valley Agriculture” to “Mixed Use,” a Zone Change (“PZC”) to change the Zone from AE-20 (Exclusive Agricultural – 20 Acre Minimum) to C-3-MU (Service Commercial with a Mixed-Use Overlay Zone) to facilitate a Tentative Subdivision Map (“TSM”) to subdivide a 65.45-acre parcel and develop the proposed Akers Business Park as a mixed use commercial project that includes the expansion of the existing Magic Touch Recreational Vehicle Sales facility at the south end of the proposed Project (3567 N. Oaks St. Tulare, CA 93274), contractor offices, boat sales, and other related uses allowed in the C-3-MU Zone. The proposed Project would only contribute to cumulative impacts related to this Checklist Item if Project-specific impacts were to occur. As the proposed Project does not result in significant loss of habitat or direct impact to these special status species, a less than significant cumulative impact with mitigation will occur.

**Mitigation Measure(s):** See **Mitigation Measure 4-1** through **4-9** in Attachment “F” (in their entirety)

The Mitigation Measures contained in the Bio Memo have been sequenced differently and numbered rather than using the format contained in the Bio Memo. Following is a summarized version of the mitigation measures; the full text is available in Attachment “F” Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP).

Surveys/Education

- 4-1 Pre-construction plant surveys.
- 4-2 Pre-construction animal surveys (San Joaquin kit fox, nesting raptors/birds, burrowing owl).
- 4-3 Employee education program.

San Joaquin kit fox:

- 4-4 Avoidance.
- 4-5 Minimization.
- 4-6 Mortality reporting.

Nesting Raptors and Migratory Birds, including loggerhead shrike and tricolor blackbird

- 4-7 Avoidance.
- 4-8 Buffers.
- 4-9 Mortality reporting.

Therefore, implementation of **Mitigation Measure 4-1** through **4-9**, as applicable, would reduce impacts to less than significant.

**V. CULTURAL RESOURCES**

Would the project:	SIGNIFICANT IMPACT	LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT WITH MITIGATION	LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT	NO IMPACT
a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to Section 15064.5?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to Section 15064.5?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

The discussions regarding Environmental Setting, Regulatory Setting, CEQA requirements, Cultural Resources, etc. contained in the Tulare County General Plan 2030 Update and Tulare County Environmental Impact Report are incorporated herein in their entirety. Where necessary and if available, additional site-specific facts, data, information, etc., are included in this discussion.

**Environmental Setting**

“Tulare County lies within a culturally rich province of the San Joaquin Valley. Studies of the prehistory of the area show inhabitants of the San Joaquin Valley maintained fairly dense populations situated along the banks of major waterways, wetlands, and streams. Tulare County was inhabited by aboriginal California Native American groups consisting of the Southern Valley Yokuts, Foothill Yokuts, Monache, and Tubatulabal. Of the main groups inhabiting the Tulare County area, the Southern Valley Yokuts occupied the largest territory.”<sup>66</sup>

“California’s coast was initially explored by Spanish (and a few Russian) military expeditions during the late 1500s. However, European settlement did not occur until the arrival into southern California of land-based expeditions originating from Spanish Mexico starting in the 1760s. Early settlement in the Tulare County area focused on ranching. In 1872, the Southern Pacific Railroad entered Tulare County, connecting the San Joaquin Valley with markets in the north and east. About the same time, valley settlers constructed a series of water conveyance systems (canals, dams, and ditches) across the valley. With ample water supplies and the assurance of rail transport for commodities such as grain, row crops, and fruit, a number of farming colonies soon appeared throughout the region.”<sup>67</sup>

“The colonies grew to become cities such as Tulare, Visalia, Porterville, and Hanford [in Kings County]. Visalia, the [Tulare] County seat, became the service, processing, and distribution center for the growing number of farms, dairies, and cattle ranches. By 1900, Tulare County boasted a population of about 18,000. New transportation links such as SR 99 (completed during the 1950s), affordable housing, light industry, and agricultural commerce brought steady growth to the valley. The California Department of Finance estimated the 2007 Tulare County population to be 430,167.”<sup>68</sup>

**Existing Cultural and Historic Resources**

“Tulare County’s known and recorded cultural resources were identified through historical records, such as those found in the National Register of Historic Places, the Historic American Building Survey/Historic American Engineering Record (HABS/HAER), the California Register of Historic Resources, California Historical Landmarks, and the Tulare County Historical Society list of historic resources.”<sup>69</sup>

Due to the sensitivity of many prehistoric, ethnohistoric, and historic archaeological sites, locations of these resources are not available to the general public. The Information Center at California State University, Bakersfield houses records associated with reported cultural resources surveys, including the records pertinent to sensitive sites, such as burial grounds, important village sites, and other buried historical resources protected under state and federal laws.

<sup>66</sup> Tulare County General Plan Update 2030. Page 8-5.  
<sup>67</sup> Ibid.  
<sup>68</sup> Op. Cit. 8-6.  
<sup>69</sup> Tulare County General Plan 2030 Update *Background Report*. Page 9-56.

The California Historical Resources Information Center (CHRIS), Southern San Joaquin Valley Historical Resources Information Center (SSJVIC) located at California State University, Bakersfield (Center) conducted a search for the proposed Project location as requested by Tulare County RMA. In summary, the Center’s search response letter indicated, “According to the information in our files, there has been two previous cultural resource studies conducted within the project area: TU-00130, & 01677. There have been five cultural resource studies conducted within the one-half mile radius: TU-00102, 01008, 01310, 01311, 01324. It should be noted that the two studies conducted with the project area only intersect the APE on a small sliver of the southern portion, leaving %98 of the project area unstudied.”<sup>70</sup> The CHRIS results letter further noted, “According to the information in our files, there are no recorded resources within the project area, and it is unknown if any exist there. There are three known resources within the one-half mile radius: P-54-002181, 004626, 004894. These resources consist of historic era irrigation ditches, and the Southern Pacific Railroad. There are no recorded cultural resources within the project area or radius that are listed in the National Register of Historic Places, the California Register of Historical Resources, the California Points of Historical Interest, California Inventory of Historic Resources, for the California State Historic Landmarks.”<sup>71</sup> The Center also recommended that the NAHC be contacted regarding cultural resources that may not be included in the CHRIS inventory (see Attachment “C”). Tulare County RMA also requested a Sacred Lands File (SLF) search from the California Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC). The NAHC provided a letter dated February 13, 2023, showing “negative” results which indicates there are no documented Sacred Lands within the Project area (see NAHC response letter dated February 13, 2023; also in Attachment “C”). Prior to release of this MND, CHRIS, NAHC, and SLF searches for the proposed Project have not been received from the respective agencies who generate the search results.

### ***Natural Setting***

#### **The Windmill Pattern**

According to the Society for California Archaeology (SCA), there are many chronological and cultural units (i.e., periods, phases, horizons, stages, traditions, etc.) that define California prehistory. “The literature on prehistoric California contains numerous designations for units referring to chronological, geographical, cultural, technological, or functional diversity in the archaeological record. These dimensions have often been invoked in overlapping or inconsistent ways.”<sup>72</sup> The Windmill pattern was identified in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta and is thought to be one of the oldest archaeological complexes (Lillard et al. 1939). As defined by SCA, a Pattern is “A geographically and chronologically extended cultural unit within a region, characterized by similar technology, economy, and burial practices.”<sup>73</sup>

The Windmill pattern is identified as “A middle to late Holocene tradition, pattern, facies, or culture in central California, particularly in the Sacramento delta, dated between 5000-2500 and 2000-500 B.C. The Windmill tradition has been identified with the Early horizon or period and classified within the late Archaic period. Locally, the Windmill facies was followed by the Morse, Deterding, Brazil, Need, or Orwood facies. The pattern has been identified with the Utian ethnolinguistic group. The type site is the Windmill Mound Site (SAC-107). (Beardsley 1954; Bennyhoff and Fredrickson 1994; Chartkoff and Chartkoff 1984; Fredrickson 1994; Lillard et al. 1939; Ragir 1972).”<sup>74</sup> The Windmill Pattern represents an important facet of Tulare County’s prehistory.

As noted previously, the proposed Project will include the development of a commercial business park on approximately 65.45 acres located at the southwest corner of Road 100 and Oakdale Avenue, east of SR 99, APN 149-090-006. The proposed Project will include a General Plan Amendment (“GPA”) to change the Land Use Designation from “Valley Agriculture” to “Mixed Use,” a Zone Change (“PZC”) to change the Zone from AE-20 (Exclusive Agricultural – 20 Acre Minimum) to C-3-MU (Service Commercial with a Mixed-Use Overlay Zone) to facilitate a Tentative Subdivision Map (“TSM”) to subdivide a 65.45-acre parcel and develop the proposed Akers Business Park as a mixed use commercial project that includes the expansion of the existing Magic Touch Recreational Vehicle Sales facility at the south end of the proposed Project (3567 N. Oaks St. Tulare, CA 93274), contractor offices, boat sales, and other related uses allowed in the C-3-MU Zone

### **Regulatory Setting**

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<sup>70</sup> California Historical Resources Information System (CHRIS). Southern San Joaquin Valley Information Center. California State University, Bakersfield. Record Search 22-319. Akers Business Park (GPA 22-003). See Attachment “C” of this MND.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid.

<sup>72</sup> Society for California Archaeology. Chronological and Cultural Units. A Glossary of Proper Names in California History. Accessed August 2022 at: <https://scahome.org/public-resources/glossary-of-terms/chronological-and-cultural-units/>

<sup>73</sup> Ibid.

<sup>74</sup> Ibid.

## *Federal*

Cultural resources are protected by several federal regulations, none of which are relevant to this project because it will not be located on lands administered by a federal agency and the proposed Project applicant is not requesting federal funding and does not require any permits from any federal agencies.

## *State*

### California State Office of Historic Preservation (OHP)

“The California State Office of Historic Preservation (OHP) is responsible for administering federally and state mandated historic preservation programs to further the identification, evaluation, registration and protection of California's irreplaceable archaeological and historical resources under the direction of the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO), a gubernatorial appointee, and the State Historical Resources Commission.

OHP's responsibilities include:

- Identifying, evaluating, and registering historic properties;
- Ensuring compliance with federal and state regulatory obligations;
- Encouraging the adoption of economic incentives programs designed to benefit property owners;
- Encouraging economic revitalization by promoting a historic preservation ethic through preservation education and public awareness and, most significantly, by demonstrating leadership and stewardship for historic preservation in California.

### Architectural Review and Incentives

OHP administers the Federal Historic Preservation Tax Incentives Program and provides architectural review and technical assistance to other government agencies and the general public in the following areas:

- Interpretation and application of the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for the Treatment of Historic Properties;
- General assistance with and interpretation of the California Historical Building Code and provisions for qualified historic properties under the Americans with Disabilities Act;
- Developing and implementing design guidelines;
- Preservation incentives available for historic properties;
- Sustainability and adaptive reuse of historic properties.”<sup>75</sup>

### Information Management

The California Historical Resources Information System (CHRIS) consists of the California Office of Historic Preservation (OHP), nine Information Centers (ICs), and the State Historical Resources Commission (SHRC). The OHP administers and coordinates the CHRIS and presents proposed CHRIS policies to the SHRC, which approves these policies in public meetings. The CHRIS Inventory includes the State Historic Resources Inventory maintained by the OHP as defined in California Public Resources Code § 5020.1(p), and the larger number of resource records and research reports managed under contract by the nine ICs.”<sup>76</sup> “The CHRIS Information Centers (ICs) are located on California State University and University of California campuses in regions throughout the state. The nine ICs provide historical resources information, generally on a fee-for-service basis, to local governments, state and federal agencies, Native American tribes, and individuals with responsibilities under the National Environmental Policy Act, the National Historic Preservation Act, and the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), as well as to the general public.”<sup>77</sup> Tulare, Fresno, Kern, Kings and Madera counties are served by the Southern San Joaquin Valley Historical Resources Information Center (Center), located at California State University, Bakersfield in Bakersfield, CA. The Center provides information on known historic and cultural resources to governments, institutions, and individuals.

### “Local Government Assistance

<sup>75</sup> California State Parks. Office of Historic Preservation. Mission and Responsibilities. Accessed August 2022 at: [Mission and Responsibilities \(ca.gov\)](https://www.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=1068)

<sup>76</sup> California State Parks. Office of Historic Preservation August 2022 at: [http://ohp.parks.ca.gov/?page\\_id=1068](http://ohp.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=1068).

<sup>77</sup> California State Parks. Office of Historic Preservation. About the CHRIS Information Centers. Accessed August 2022 at: [http://ohp.parks.ca.gov/?page\\_id=28730](http://ohp.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=28730).

OHP works with California's city and county governments to aid them in integrating historic preservation into the broader context of overall community planning and development activities by adopting a comprehensive approach to preservation planning which combines identification, evaluation, and registration of historical resources with strong local planning powers, economic incentives, and informed public participation.

OHP provides guidance and technical assistance to city and county governments in the following areas:

- Drafting or updating preservation plans and ordinances;
- Planning for and conducting architectural, historical, and archeological surveys;
- Developing criteria for local designation programs, historic districts, historic preservation overlay zones (HPOZs), and conservation districts;
- Developing design guidelines using the Secretary of the Interior's Standards;
- Developing economic incentives for historic preservation;
- Training local commissions and review boards;
- Meeting CEQA responsibilities with regard to historical resources.

OHP also administers the Certified Local Government (CLG) Program and distributes at least 10% of its annual federal Historic Preservation Fund allocation to CLGs through a competitive grant program to them in achieving their historic preservation goals.

#### Environmental Compliance: Section 106, PRC 5024, and CEQA

OHP reviews and comments on thousands of federally sponsored projects annually pursuant to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act and state programs and projects pursuant to Sections 5024 and 5024.5 of the Public Resources Code. OHP also reviews and comments on local government and state projects pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

The purpose of OHP's project review program is to promote the preservation of California's heritage resources by ensuring that projects and programs carried out or sponsored by federal and state agencies comply with federal and state historic preservation laws and that projects are planned in ways that avoid any adverse effects to heritage resources. If adverse effects cannot be avoided, the OHP assists project sponsors in developing measures to minimize or mitigate such effects.

#### State and Federal Registration Programs

OHP administers the National Register of Historic Places, the California Register of Historical Resources, the California Historical Landmarks, and the California Points of Historical Interest programs. Each program has different eligibility criteria and procedural requirements; all register nominations must be submitted to the Commission for review and approval.

Eligible and listed resources may be eligible for tax benefits and are recognized as part of the environment under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).<sup>78</sup>

A historical resource may be eligible for inclusion in the California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR) if it meets the following Criteria for Designation:

- Associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of local or regional history or the cultural heritage of California or the United States (Criterion 1).
- Associated with the lives of persons important to local, California or national history (Criterion 2).
- Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region or method of construction or represents the work of a master or possesses high artistic values (Criterion 3).
- Has yielded, or has the potential to yield, information important to the prehistory or history of the local area, California or the nation (Criterion 4).<sup>79</sup>

#### Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC)

"In 1976, the California State Government passed AB 4239, establishing the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) as the primary government agency responsible for identifying and cataloging Native American cultural resources. Up until this

<sup>78</sup> Ibid.

<sup>79</sup> California Register: Criteria for Designation. August 2022 at: [https://ohp.parks.ca.gov/?page\\_id=21238](https://ohp.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=21238)

point, there had been little government participation in the protection of California's cultural resources. As such, one of the NAHC's primary duties, as stated in AB 4239, was to prevent irreparable damage to designated sacred sites, as well as to prevent interference with the expression of Native American religion in California. Furthermore, the bill authorized the Commission to act in order to prevent damage to and insure Native American access to sacred sites. Moreover, the Commission could request that the court issue an injunction for the site, unless it found evidence that public interest and necessity required otherwise. In addition, the bill authorized the commission to prepare an inventory of Native American sacred sites located on public lands and required the commission to review current administrative and statutory protections accorded to such sites. In 1982, legislation was passed authorizing the Commission to identify a Most Likely Descendant (MLD) when Native American human remains were discovered any place other than a dedicated cemetery. MLDs were granted the legal authority to make recommendations regarding the treatment and disposition of the discovered remains. These recommendations, although they cannot halt work on the project site, give MLDs a means by which to ensure that the Native American human remains are treated in the appropriate manner. Today, the NAHC provides protection to Native American human burials and skeletal remains from vandalism and inadvertent destruction. It also provides a legal means by which Native American descendants can make known their concerns regarding the need for sensitive treatment and disposition of Native American burials, skeletal remains, and items associated with Native American burials."<sup>80</sup>

As noted in their website, "The California Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC or Commission), created in statute in 1976 (Chapter 1332, Statutes of 1976), is a nine-member body whose members are appointed by the Governor. The NAHC identifies, catalogs, and protects Native American cultural resources -- ancient places of special religious or social significance to Native Americans and known ancient graves and cemeteries of Native Americans on private and public lands in California. The NAHC is also charged with ensuring California Native American tribes' accessibility to ancient Native American cultural resources on public lands, overseeing the treatment and disposition of inadvertently discovered Native American human remains and burial items, and administering the California Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (CalNAGPRA), among many other powers and duties."<sup>81</sup>

Additional State regulatory requirements regarding tribal cultural resources (such as AB 52 and SB 18 Tribal Consultation Guidelines) can be found at Item 18 Tribal Cultural Resources.

#### CEQA Guidelines: Historical Resources Definition

CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5(a) defines a historical resource as:

- (1) A resource listed in, or determined to be eligible by the State Historical Resources Commission, for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources (Pub. Res. Code §5024.1, Title 14 CCR, Section 4850 et seq.).
- (2) A resource included in a local register of historical resources, as defined in section 5020.1(k) of the Public Resources Code or identified as significant in an historical resource survey meeting the requirements section 5024.1(g) of the Public Resources Code, shall be presumed to be historically or culturally significant. Public agencies must treat any such resource as significant unless the preponderance of evidence demonstrates that it is not historically or culturally significant.
- (3) Any object, building, structure, site, area, place, record, or manuscript which a lead agency determines to be historically significant or significant in the architectural, engineering, scientific, economic, agricultural, educational, social, political, military, or cultural annals of California may be considered to be an historical resource, provided the lead agency's determination is supported by substantial evidence in light of the whole record. Generally, a resource shall be considered by the lead agency to be "historically significant" if the resource meets the criteria for listing on the California Register of Historical Resources (Pub. Res. Code §5024.1, Title 14 CCR, Section 4852) including the following:
  - (A) Is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of California's history and cultural heritage;
  - (B) Is associated with the lives of persons important in our past;
  - (C) Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region, or method of construction, or represents the work of an important creative individual, or possesses high artistic values; or
  - (D) Has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.
- (4) The fact that a resource is not listed in, or determined to be eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, not included in a local register of historical resources (pursuant to section 5020.1(k) of the Public Resources Code), or identified in an historical resources survey (meeting the criteria in section 5024.1(g) of the Public Resources

<sup>80</sup> California Native American Heritage Commission. About The Native American Heritage Commission. Accessed August 2022 at: <http://nahc.ca.gov/about/>.

<sup>81</sup> Ibid. Welcome. Accessed August 2022 at: <http://nahc.ca.gov/>.



Code) does not preclude a lead agency from determining that the resource may be an historical resource as defined in Public Resources Code sections 5020.1(j) or 5024.1.”<sup>82</sup>

#### CEQA Guidelines: Archaeological Resources

Section 15064.5(c) of CEQA Guidelines provides specific guidance on the treatment of archaeological resources as noted below.

- “(1) When a Project will impact an archaeological site, a lead agency shall first determine whether the site is an historical resource, as defined in subdivision (a).
- (2) If a lead agency determines that the archaeological site is an historical resource, it shall refer to the provisions of Section 21084.1 of the Public Resources Code, and this section, Section 15126.4 of the Guidelines, and the limits contained in Section 21083.2 of the Public Resources Code do not apply.
- (3) If an archaeological site does not meet the criteria defined in subdivision (a), but does meet the definition of a unique archeological resource in Section 21083.2 of the Public Resources Code, the site shall be treated in accordance with the provisions of section 21083.2. The time and cost limitations described in Public Resources Code Section 21083.2 (c–f) do not apply to surveys and site evaluation activities intended to determine whether the Project location contains unique archaeological resources.
- (4) If an archaeological resource is neither a unique archaeological nor an historical resource, the effects of the Project on those resources shall not be considered a significant effect on the environment. It shall be sufficient that both the resource and the effect on it are noted in the Initial Study or EIR, if one is prepared to address impacts on other resources, but they need not be considered further in the CEQA process.”<sup>83</sup>

#### CEQA Guidelines: Human Remains

Public Resources Code Sections 5097.94 and 5097.98 provide guidance on the disposition of Native American burials (human remains), and fall within the jurisdiction of the Native American Heritage Commission:

- “(d) When an initial study identifies the existence of, or the probable likelihood, of Native American human remains within the Project, a lead agency shall work with the appropriate Native Americans as identified by the Native American Heritage Commission as provided in Public Resources Code Section 5097.98. The applicant may develop an agreement for treating or disposing of, with appropriate dignity, the human remains and any Items associated with Native American burials with the appropriate Native Americans as identified by the Native American Heritage Commission. Action implementing such an agreement is exempt from:
  - (1) The general prohibition on disinterring, disturbing, or removing human remains from any location other than a dedicated cemetery (Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5).
  - (2) The requirements of CEQA and the Coastal Act.<sup>84</sup>
- “(e) In the event of the accidental discovery or recognition of any human remains in any location other than a dedicated cemetery, the following steps should be taken:
  - (1) There shall be no further excavation or disturbance of the site or any nearby area reasonably suspected to overlie adjacent human remains until:
    - (A) The coroner of the county in which the remains are discovered must be contacted to determine that no investigation of the cause of death is required, and
    - (B) If the coroner determines the remains to be Native American:
      1. The coroner shall contact the Native American Heritage Commission within 24 hours.
      2. The Native American Heritage Commission shall identify the person or persons it believes to be the most likely descended from the deceased Native American.
      3. The most likely descendent may make recommendations to the landowner or the person responsible for the excavation work, for means of treating or disposing of, with appropriate dignity, the human remains and any associated grave goods as provided in Public Resources Code Section 5097.98, or

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<sup>82</sup> California Natural Resources Agency. California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines. Section 15064.5(a). Statute and Guidelines - California Association of Environmental Professionals. Accessed August 2022 at: [https://www.califaep.org/statute\\_and\\_guidelines.php](https://www.califaep.org/statute_and_guidelines.php)

<sup>83</sup> Ibid. Section 15064.5(c).

<sup>84</sup> Op. Cit. Section 15064.5(d).

- (2) Where the following conditions occur, the landowner or his authorized representative shall rebury the Native American human remains and associated grave goods with appropriate dignity on the property in a location not subject to further subsurface disturbance.
  - (A) The Native American Heritage Commission is unable to identify a most likely descendent or the most likely descendent failed to make a recommendation within 24 hours after being notified by the commission.
  - (B) The descendant identified fails to make a recommendation; or
  - (C) The landowner or his authorized representative rejects the recommendation of the descendant, and the mediation by the Native American Heritage Commission fails to provide measures acceptable to the landowner.<sup>85</sup>

“(f) As part of the objectives, criteria, and procedures required by Section 21082 of the Public Resources Code, a lead agency should make provisions for historical or unique archaeological resources accidentally discovered during construction. These provisions should include an immediate evaluation of the find by a qualified archaeologist. If the find is determined to be an historical or unique archaeological resource, contingency funding and a time allotment sufficient to allow for implementation of avoidance measures or appropriate mitigation should be available. Work could continue on other parts of the building site while historical or unique archaeological resource mitigation takes place.”<sup>86</sup>

#### CEQA Guidelines: Paleontological Resources

Public Resources Code Section 5097.5 prohibits excavation or removal of any “vertebrate paleontological site... or any other archaeological, paleontological or historical feature, situated on public lands, except with express permission of the public agency having jurisdiction over such lands.”

#### CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.4(b)

“(b) Mitigation Measures Related to Impacts on Historical Resources.

- (1) Where maintenance, repair, stabilization, rehabilitation, restoration, preservation, conservation or reconstruction of the historical resource will be conducted in a manner consistent with the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating, Restoring, and Reconstructing Historic Buildings (1995), Weeks and Grimmer, the project’s impact on the historical resource shall generally be considered mitigated below a level of significance and thus is not significant.
- (2) In some circumstances, documentation of an historical resource, by way of historic narrative, photographs or architectural drawings, as mitigation for the effects of demolition of the resource will not mitigate the effects to a point where clearly no significant effect on the environment would occur.
- (3) Public agencies should, whenever feasible, seek to avoid damaging effects on any historical resource of an archaeological nature. The following factors shall be considered and discussed in an EIR for a project involving such an archaeological site:
  - (A) Preservation in place is the preferred manner of mitigating impacts to archaeological sites. Preservation in place maintains the relationship between artifacts and the archaeological context. Preservation may also avoid conflict with religious or cultural values of groups associated with the site.
  - (B) Preservation in place may be accomplished by, but is not limited to, the following:
    1. Planning construction to avoid archaeological sites;
    2. Incorporation of sites within parks, greenspace, or other open space;
    3. Covering the archaeological sites with a layer of chemically stable soil before building tennis courts, parking lots, or similar facilities on the site.
    4. Deeding the site into a permanent conservation easement.
  - (C) When data recovery through excavation is the only feasible mitigation, a data recovery plan, which makes provisions for adequately recovering the scientifically consequential information from and about the historical resource, shall be prepared and adopted prior to any excavation being undertaken. Such studies shall be deposited with the California Historical Resources Regional Information Center. Archeological sites known to contain human remains shall be treated in accordance with the provisions of Section 7050.5 Health and Safety Code. If an artifact must be removed during project excavation or testing, curation may be an appropriate mitigation.
  - (D) Data recovery shall not be required for an historical resource if the lead agency determines that testing or studies already completed have adequately recovered the scientifically consequential information from and

<sup>85</sup> Op. Cit. Section 15064.5 (e).

<sup>86</sup> Op. Cit. Section 15064.5(f).

about the archaeological or historical resource, provided that the determination is documented in the EIR and that the studies are deposited with the California Historical Resources Regional Information Center.”<sup>87</sup>

### Public Resources Code §5097.5

California Public Resources Code §5097.5 prohibits excavation or removal of any “vertebrate paleontological site...or any other archaeological, paleontological or historical feature, situated on public lands, except with express permission of the public agency having jurisdiction over such lands.” Public lands are defined to include lands owned by or under the jurisdiction of the state or any city, county, district, authority or public corporation, or any agency thereof. Section 5097.5 states that any unauthorized disturbance or removal of archaeological, historical, or paleontological materials or sites located on public lands is a misdemeanor.

### Human Remains

Section 7050.5 of the California Health and Safety Code states that in the event of discovery or recognition of any human remains in any location other than a dedicated cemetery, there shall be no further excavation or disturbance of the site or any nearby area reasonably suspected to overlie adjacent remains until the coroner of the county in which the remains are discovered has determined whether or not the remains are subject to the coroner’s authority. If the human remains are of Native American origin, the coroner must notify the Native American Heritage Commission within 24 hours of this identification. The Native American Heritage Commission will identify a Native American Most Likely Descendant (MLD) to inspect the site and provide recommendations for the proper treatment of the remains and associated grave goods.

### *Local*

The following Tulare County General Plan 2030 Update policies for this resource apply to this Project: *ERM-6.1 Evaluation of Cultural and Archaeological Resources* which states that the County shall participate in and support efforts to identify its significant cultural and archaeological resources using appropriate State and Federal standards; *ERM-6.2 Protection of Resources with Potential State or Federal Designations* wherein the County shall protect cultural and archaeological sites with demonstrated potential for placement on the National Register of Historic Places and/or inclusion in the California State Office of Historic Preservation’s California Points of Interest and California Inventory of Historic Resources. Such sites may be of Statewide or local significance and have anthropological, cultural, military, political, architectural, economic, scientific, religious, or other values as determined by a qualified archaeological professional; *ERM-6.3 Alteration of Sites with Identified Cultural Resources* which states that when planning any development or alteration of a site with identified cultural or archaeological resources, consideration should be given to ways of protecting the resources. Development can be permitted in these areas only after a site specific investigation has been conducted pursuant to CEQA to define the extent and value of resource, and mitigation measures proposed for any impacts the development may have on the resource; *ERM-6.4 Mitigation* – which states that if preservation of cultural resources is not feasible, every effort shall be made to mitigate impacts, including relocation of structures, adaptive reuse, preservation of facades, and thorough documentation and archival of records; *ERM-6.7 Cooperation of Property Owners* where the County should encourage the cooperation of property owners to treat cultural resources as assets rather than liabilities, and encourage public support for the preservation of these resources; *ERM-6.8 Solicit Input from Local Native Americans* (which is consistent with AB 52 in regards to Tribal Consultation) wherein the County shall continue to solicit input from the local Native American communities in cases where development may result in disturbance to sites containing evidence of Native American activity and/or to sites of cultural importance; *ERM-6.9 Confidentiality of Archaeological Sites* which is also consistent with AB 52) where the County shall, within its power, maintain confidentiality regarding the locations of archaeological sites in order to preserve and protect these resources from vandalism and the unauthorized removal of artifacts; and *ERM-6.10 Grading Cultural Resources Sites* wherein the County shall ensure all grading activities conform to the County’s Grading Ordinance and California Code of Regulations, Title 20, § 2501 et. seq.

### **Project Impact Analysis:**

**a)– b) Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation:** As noted previously, information provided by the Southern San Valley Historical Resources Information Center, at California State University, Bakersfield (Center) and the California Native American Heritage Commission (NHAC) Sacred Lands File (SLF) search (included in Attachment “C” of this document) were used as the basis for determining that the proposed Project would result in a less than significant impact with mitigation. Although no cultural resources were identified within the proposed Project area in the records search, there is a possibility that subsurface resources could be uncovered during proposed Project construction-related activities.

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<sup>87</sup> Op. Cit. Section 15126.4(b).

In such an unlikely event, potentially significant impacts to previously unknown subsurface resources may occur. However, implementation of the **Mitigation Measures 5-1** through **5-3** will reduce potential impacts in the unlikely event of encountering an historical or archaeological resource to a less than significant impact with mitigation.

- c) **Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation:** As noted in Items a) and b), CHRIS, NAHC, SLF searches, and consultation with Native American tribes did not identify any known remains or formal cemeteries. However unlikely, there is a possibility that subsurface resources could be uncovered during construction-related activities. In such an unlikely event, potentially significant impacts to previously unknown subsurface resources may occur. With the implementation of **Mitigation Measure 5-3**, inadvertent disturbance of any human remains (including those interred outside of formal cemeteries) resulting in the discovery of human remains would require work to halt in the vicinity of a find until the County coroner determines whether the remains are Native American in origin and, if they are, contacting the Native American Heritage Commission.

**Cumulative Impact Analysis: Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation** – The geographic area of this cumulative analysis is Tulare County. This cumulative analysis is based on the information provided in the Tulare County 2030 General Plan, General Plan background Report, and the Tulare County 2030 General Plan EIR.

It is not anticipated that cultural resources or Native American remains will be found at the proposed Project site. However, consistent with CEQA requirements, **Mitigation Measures 5-1** through **5-3** are included in the unlikely event that if cultural resources or Native American remains are unearthed/discovered during any ground disturbance activities, such finds will be mitigated to less than significant Project-specific and Cumulative Impacts.

**Mitigation Measure(s)**                      See **Mitigation Measures 5-1** through **5-3** in Attachment “F” (in their entirety)

**5-1**    Discovery.

**5-2**    Cessation of Work/Preservation/Treatment Plan/PRC 21074

**5-3**    Implementation of Health and Safety Code section 7050.5, CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5, PRC 5097.98

Therefore, implementation of **Mitigation Measure 5-1** through **5-3**, as applicable, would reduce impacts to less than significant.

## VI. ENERGY

Would the project:	SIGNIFICANT IMPACT	LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT WITH MITIGATION	LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT	NO IMPACT
a) Result in potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during project construction or operation?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

The discussions regarding Environmental Setting, Regulatory Setting, CEQA requirements, Cultural Resources, etc. contained in the Tulare County General Plan 2030 Update and Tulare County Environmental Impact Report are incorporated herein in their entirety. Where necessary and if available, additional site-specific facts, data, information, etc., are included in this discussion.

### Environmental Setting

The proposed Project (Akers Business Park) area is located approximately 0.5 miles north of the City of Tulare, in a predominantly, yet transitional, agricultural area of the San Joaquin Valley. The site is currently planted to walnuts, except at the southernmost portion of the site which currently has an existing RV sales development. Surrounding areas include agricultural production, light industrial, and SR 99 is immediately west of the site.

The proposed Project would be served with electricity provided by SCE. SCE’s 2019 Green Rate 50 percent option includes 67.5 percent eligible renewable resources, including wind, geothermal, solar, eligible hydroelectric, and biomass and biowaste; 4 percent large hydroelectric; 8.1 percent natural gas; 4.1 percent nuclear; 0.1 percent other; and 16.3 percent unspecified sources of power<sup>88</sup> SCE’s 2019 Green Rate 100 percent option includes 100 percent eligible renewable resources, composed entirely of solar. Approximately 43 percent of the electricity that SCE delivered in 2020 was a combination of renewable and GHG-emissions-free resources.<sup>89</sup> SCE was ahead of schedule in meeting the California’s RPS 2020 mandate of serving their load with at least 33 percent RPS-eligible resources. SCE would be required to meet California’s RPS standards of 60 percent by 2030 and carbon-free sourced-electricity by 2045.<sup>90</sup>

As noted previously, the proposed Project will include the development of a commercial business park on approximately 65.45 acres located at the southwest corner of Road 100 (Oaks Street) and Oakdale Avenue, east of SR 99, APN 149-090-006. The proposed Project will include a General Plan Amendment (“GPA”) to change the Land Use Designation from “Valley Agriculture” to “Mixed Use,” a Zone Change (“PZC”) to change the Zone from AE-20 (Exclusive Agricultural – 20 Acre Minimum) to C-3-MU (Service Commercial with a Mixed-Use Overlay Zone) to facilitate a Tentative Subdivision Map (“TSM”) to subdivide a 65.45-acre parcel and develop the proposed Akers Business Park as a mixed use commercial project that includes the expansion of the existing Magic Touch Recreational Vehicle Sales facility at the south end of the proposed Project (3567 N. Oaks St. Tulare, CA 93274), contractor offices, boat sales, and other related uses allowed in the C-3-MU Zone

### Regulatory Setting

#### Federal

#### Energy Policy Act of 2005

<sup>88</sup> “Unspecified sources of power” means electricity from transactions that are not traceable to specific generation sources.

<sup>89</sup> Renewable sources included solar, wind, geothermal, biomass, and small hydroelectric sources. GHG-emissions-free sources of energy included nuclear and large hydroelectric. “GHG-emissions-free resources” refers to energy sources other than renewable energy resources that also do not result in GHG emissions, such as non-emitting nuclear and hydroelectric.

<sup>90</sup> Southern California Edison (SCE). 2020. 2019 Power Content Label. Accessed August 2022 at: [https://www.sce.com/sites/default/files/inline-files/SCE\\_2019PowerContentLabel.pdf](https://www.sce.com/sites/default/files/inline-files/SCE_2019PowerContentLabel.pdf).

The Energy Policy Act of 2005 seeks to reduce reliance on non-renewable energy resources and provide incentives to reduce current demand on these resources. For example, under the Act, consumers and businesses can obtain federal tax credits for purchasing fuel-efficient appliances and products, including buying hybrid vehicles, building energy-efficient buildings, and improving the energy efficiency of commercial buildings. Additionally, tax credits are available for the installation of qualified fuel cells, stationary microturbine power plants, and solar power equipment.

*State*

### California Energy Commission

The California Energy Commission (CEC) was created in 1974 to serve as the state's primary energy policy and planning agency. The CEC is tasked with reducing energy costs and environmental impacts of energy use - such as greenhouse gas emissions - while ensuring a safe, resilient, and reliable supply of energy.

### State of California Integrated Energy Policy (SB 1389)

In 2002, the Legislature passed Senate Bill 1389, which required the 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 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 Vehicles and their infrastructure needs, and encouragement of urban designs that reduce vehicles miles traveled and accommodate pedestrian and bicycle access. The CEC adopted the 2013 Integrated Energy Policy Report on February 20, 2014. The 2013 Integrated Energy Policy Report provides the results of the CEC's assessment of a variety of issues, including:

- Ensuring that the state has sufficient, reliable, and sage energy infrastructure to meet current and future energy demands;
- Monitoring publicly-owned utilities' progress towards achieving 10-year energy efficiency targets; defining and including zero-net-energy goals in state building standards;
- Overcoming challenges to increased use of geothermal heat pump/ground loop technologies and procurement of biomethane;
- Using demand response to meet California's energy needs and integrate renewable technologies;
- Removing barriers to bioenergy development; planning for California's electricity infrastructure needs given potential retirement of power plants and the closure of the San Onofre Nuclear Generating Station;
- Estimating new generation costs for utility-scale renewable and fossil-fueled generation;
- Planning for new or upgraded transmission infrastructure;
- Monitoring utilities' progress in implementing past recommendations related to nuclear power plants;
- Tracking natural gas market trends;
- Implementing the Alternative and Renewable Fuel and Vehicle Technology Program;
- Addressing the vulnerability of California's energy supply and demand infrastructure to the effects of climate change; and
- Planning for potential electricity system needs in 2030.

### Renewable Portfolio Standard (SB 1078 and SB 107)

Established in 2002 under SB 1078, the State's Renewables Portfolio Standard (RPS) was amended under SB 107 to require accelerated energy reduction goals by requiring that by the year 2010, 20 percent of electricity sales in the state be served by renewable energy resources. In years following its adoption, Executive Order S-14-08 was signed, requiring electricity retail sellers to provide 33 percent of their service loads with renewable energy by the year 2020. In 2011, SB X1-2 was signed, aligning the RPS target with the 33 percent requirement by the year 2020. This new RPS applied to all state electricity retailers, including publicly owned utilities, investor-owned utilities, electrical service providers, and community choice aggregators. All entities included under the RPS were required to adopt the RPS 20 percent by year 2020 reduction goal by the end of 2013, adopt a reduction goal of 25 percent by the end of 2016, and meet the 33 percent reduction goal by the end of 2020. In addition, the Air Resources Board (ARB), under Executive Order S-21-09, was required to adopt regulations consistent with these 33 percent renewable energy targets.

### California Energy Code (Title 24, Part 6, Building Energy Efficiency Standards)

California Code of Regulations Title 24, Part 6 comprises the California Energy Code, which was adopted to ensure that building construction, system design and installation achieve energy efficiency. The California Energy Code was first established in 1978

by the CEC in response to a legislative mandate to reduce California’s energy consumption, and apply to energy consumed for heating, cooling, ventilation, water heating, and lighting in new residential and non-residential buildings. The standards are updated periodically to increase the baseline energy efficiency requirements. The 2013 Building Energy Efficiency Standards focus on several key areas to improve the energy efficiency of newly constructed buildings and additions and alterations to existing buildings and include requirements to enable both demand reductions during critical peak periods and future solar electric and thermal system installations. Although it was not originally intended to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, electricity production by fossil fuels results in GHG emissions and energy efficient buildings require less electricity. Therefore, increased energy efficiency results in decreased GHG emissions.

#### California Green Building Standards Code (Title 24, Part II, CALGreen)

The California Building Standards Commission adopted the California Green Buildings Standards Code (CALGreen in Part 11 of the Title 24 Building Standards Code) for all new construction statewide on July 17, 2008. Originally, a volunteer measure, the code became mandatory in 2010 and the most recent update (2013) went into effect on January 1, 2014. CALGreen sets targets for energy efficiency, water consumption, dual plumbing systems for potable and recyclable water, diversion of construction waste from landfills, and use of environmentally sensitive materials in construction and design, including eco-friendly flooring, carpeting, paint, coatings, thermal insulation, and acoustical wall and ceiling panels. The 2013 CALGreen Code includes mandatory measures for non-residential development related to site development; water use; weather resistance and moisture management; construction waste reduction, disposal, and recycling; building maintenance and operation; pollutant control; indoor air quality; environmental comfort; and outdoor air quality. Mandatory measures for residential development pertain to green building; planning and design; energy efficiency; water efficiency and conservation; material conservation and resource efficiency; environmental quality; and installer and special inspector qualifications.

#### California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006 (Assembly Bill 32)

Assembly Bill 32 (Health and Safety Code Sections 38500–38599; AB 32), also known as the California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006, commits the state to achieving year 2000 GHG emission levels by 2010 and year 1990 levels by 2020. To achieve these goals, AB 32 tasked the CPUC and CEC with providing information, analysis, and recommendations to the ARB regarding ways to reduce GHG emissions in the electricity and natural gas utility sectors.

“In 2006, the Legislature passed the California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006 [Assembly Bill 32 (AB 32)], which created a comprehensive, multi-year program to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in California. AB 32 required the California Air Resources Board (ARB or Board) to develop a Scoping Plan that describes the approach California will take to reduce GHGs to achieve the goal of reducing emissions to 1990 levels by 2020. The Scoping Plan was first approved by the Board in 2008 and must be updated every five years. The First Update to the Climate Change Scoping Plan was approved by the Board on May 22, 2014. In 2016, the Legislature passed SB 32, which codifies a 2030 GHG emissions reduction target of 40 percent below 1990 levels. With SB 32, the Legislature passed companion legislation AB 197, which provides additional direction for developing the Scoping Plan.”<sup>91</sup> California’s 2017 Climate Change Scoping Plan was adopted in December 2018. The plan identifies the State’s strategy for achieving the 2030 emission reduction targets.

#### Clean Energy and Pollution Reduction Act (SB 350)

The Clean Energy and Pollution Reduction Act (SB 350) was passed by California Governor Brown on October 7, 2015, and establishes new clean energy, clean air, and GHG reduction goals for the year 2030 and beyond. SB 350 establishes a GHG target of 40 percent below 1990 levels for the State of California, further enhancing the ability for the state to meet the goal of reducing GHG emissions by 80 percent below 1990 levels by the year 2050.

#### Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Requirements

“In 1974, the Legislature adopted the Warren-Alquist State Energy Resources Conservation and Development Act. (Pub. Resources Code, § 25000 et seq.) That act created what is now known as the California Energy Commission, and enabled it to adopt building energy standards. (See, e.g., id. at § 25402.) At that time, the Legislature found the “rapid rate of growth in demand for electric energy is in part due to wasteful, uneconomic, inefficient, and unnecessary uses of power and a continuation of this trend will result in serious depletion or irreversible commitment of energy, land and water resources, and potential threats to the state’s environmental quality.” (Id. at § 25002; see also § 25007 (“It is further the policy of the state and the intent of the Legislature to employ a range of measures to reduce wasteful, uneconomical, and unnecessary uses of energy, thereby reducing

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<sup>91</sup> Air Resources Board. AB 32 Scoping Plan. Accessed August 2022 at: <https://ww3.arb.ca.gov/cc/scopingplan/scopingplan.htm>.



the rate of growth of energy consumption, prudently conserve energy resources, and assure statewide environmental, public safety, and land use goals”))

The same year that the Legislature adopted Warren-Alquist, it also added section 21100(b)(3) to CEQA, requiring environmental impact reports to include “measures to reduce the wasteful, inefficient, and unnecessary consumption of energy.” As explained by a court shortly after it was enacted, the “energy mitigation amendment is substantive and not procedural in nature and was enacted for the purpose of requiring the lead agencies to focus upon the energy problem in the preparation of the final EIR.” (People v. County of Kern (1976) 62 Cal.App.3d 761, 774 (emphasis added)). It compels an affirmative investigation of the project’s potential energy use and feasible ways to reduce that use.

Though Appendix F of the CEQA Guidelines has contained guidance on energy analysis for decades, implementation among lead agencies has not been consistent. (See, e.g., California Clean Energy Committee v. City of Woodland, supra, 225 Cal.App.4th 173, 209.) While California is a leader in energy conservation, the importance of addressing energy impacts has not diminished since 1974. On the contrary, given the need to avoid the effects of climate change, energy use is an issue that we cannot afford to ignore. As the California Energy Commission’s Integrated Energy Policy Report (2016) explains:

Energy fuels the economy, but it is also the biggest source of greenhouse gas emissions that lead to climate change. Despite California’s leadership, Californians are experiencing the impacts of climate change including higher temperatures, prolonged drought, and more wildfires. There is an urgent need to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and increase the state’s resiliency to climate change. With transportation accounting for about 37 percent of California’s greenhouse gas emissions in 2014, transforming California’s transportation system away from gasoline to zero emission and near-zero-emission vehicles is a fundamental part of the state’s efforts to meet its climate goals. Energy efficiency and demand response are also key components of the state’s strategy to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. (Id. at pp. 5, 8, 10.) Appendix F was revised in 2009 to clarify that analysis of energy impacts is mandatory. OPR today proposes to add a subdivision in section 15126.2 on energy impacts to further elevate the issue, and remove any question about whether such an analysis is required.”<sup>92</sup>

Further, an “Explanation of Proposed Amendments” contained in the Proposed Update (and now adopted amendments) to the CEQA Guidelines documents stated that OPR proposed to add a new subdivision (b) to section 15126.2 which discusses the required contents of an environmental impact report. The new subdivision would specifically address the analysis of a project’s potential energy impacts. This addition is necessary for several reasons explained as follows.<sup>93</sup>

“The first sentence clarifies that an EIR must analyze whether a project will result in significant environmental effects due to “wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy.” This clarification is necessary to implement Public Resources Code section 21100(b)(3). Since the duty to impose mitigation measures arises when a lead agency determines that the project may have a significant effect, section 21100(b)(3) necessarily requires both analysis and a determination of significance in addition to energy efficiency measures. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002.)

The second sentence further clarifies that all aspects of the project must be considered in the analysis. This clarification is consistent with the rule that lead agencies must consider the “whole of the project” in considering impacts. It is also necessary to ensure that lead agencies consider issues beyond just building design. (See, e.g., California Clean Energy Com. v. City of Woodland, supra, 225 Cal.App.4th at pp. 210-212.) The analysis of vehicle miles traveled provided in proposed section 15064.3 (implementing Public Resources Code section 21099 (SB 743)) on transportation impacts may be relevant to this analysis.

The third sentence signals that the analysis of energy impacts may need to extend beyond building code compliance. (Ibid.) The requirement to determine whether a project’s use of energy is “wasteful, inefficient, and unnecessary” compels consideration of the project in its context. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21100(b)(3).) While building code compliance is a relevant factor, the generalized rules in the building code will not necessarily indicate whether a particular project’s energy use could be improved. (Tracy First v. City of Tracy (2009) 177 Cal.App.4th 912, 933 (after analysis, lead agency concludes that project proposed to be at least 25% more energy efficient than the building code requires would have a less than significant impact); see also CEQA Guidelines, Appendix F, § II.C.4 (describing building code compliance as one of several different considerations in determining the significance of a project’s energy impacts).) That the Legislature added the energy analysis requirement in CEQA at the same time that it created

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<sup>92</sup> State of California. Office of Planning and Research. Proposed Update to the CEQA Guidelines. November 2017. Pages 65-66. Accessed August 2022 at: [http://opr.ca.gov/docs/20171127\\_Comprehensive\\_CEQA\\_Guidelines\\_Package\\_Nov\\_2017.pdf](http://opr.ca.gov/docs/20171127_Comprehensive_CEQA_Guidelines_Package_Nov_2017.pdf)

<sup>93</sup> Ibid. 66.

an Energy Commission authorized to impose building energy standards indicates that compliance with the building code is a necessary but not exclusive means of satisfying CEQA's independent requirement to analyze energy impacts broadly.

The new proposed [now adopted] subdivision (b) also provides a cross-reference to Appendix F. This cross-reference is necessary to direct lead agencies to the more detailed provisions contained in that appendix. Finally, new proposed subdivision (b) cautions that the analysis of energy impacts is subject to the rule of reason, and must focus on energy demand actually caused by the project. This sentence is necessary to place reasonable limits on the analysis. Specifically, it signals that a full "lifecycle" analysis that would account for energy used in building materials and consumer products will generally not be required. (See also Cal. Natural Resources Agency, Final Statement of Reasons for Regulatory Action: Amendments to the State CEQA Guidelines Addressing Analysis and Mitigation of Greenhouse Gas Emissions Pursuant to SB97 (Dec. 2009) at pp. 71-72.)<sup>94</sup>

Specifically, Section 15121.6 added new sub-section (b), to wit: "(b) Energy Impacts. If the project may result in significant environmental effects due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy, the EIR shall analyze and mitigate that energy use. This analysis should include the project's energy use for all project phases and components, including transportation-related energy, during construction and operation. In addition to building code compliance, other relevant considerations may include, among others, the project's size, location, orientation, equipment use and any renewable energy features that could be incorporated into the project. (Guidance on information that may be included in such an analysis is presented in Appendix F.) This analysis is subject to the rule of reason and shall focus on energy demand that is caused by the project. This analysis may be included in related analyses of air quality, greenhouse gas emissions or utilities in the discretion of the lead agency."<sup>95</sup>

#### CEQA Thresholds of Significance

- Result in significant environmental effects due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy.
- The project's energy use for all project phases and components, including transportation-related energy, during construction and operation.
- The project's size, location, orientation, equipment use and any renewable energy features that could be incorporated into the project.
- Analysis is subject to the rule of reason and shall focus on energy demand that is caused by the project.

#### *Local*

The following Tulare County General Plan 2030 Update policies for this resource apply to this proposed Project: *ERM-4.1 Energy Conservation and Efficiency Measures* wherein the County encourages the use of solar energy, solar hot water panels, and other energy conservation and efficiency features; *ERM-4.2 Streetscape and Parking Area Improvements for Energy Conservation* – wherein the County shall promote the planting and maintenance of shade trees along streets and within parking areas of new urban development to reduce radiation heating; and *ERM-4.3 Local and State Programs* wherein the County shall participate, to the extent feasible, in local and State programs that strive to reduce the consumption of natural or man-made energy sources.

#### **Project Impact Analysis:**

- a) **Less Than Significant Impact:** The energy requirements for the proposed project were determined using the construction- and operational-related estimates generated from the Air Quality Analysis Memorandum (Memo, refer to Attachment "A" for related CalEEMod output files). The calculation worksheets for diesel fuel consumption rates for off-road construction equipment and on-road vehicles are provided in Attachment C of Attachment "A" of this MND. Short-term construction-related energy consumption is discussed below.

#### ***Short Term Construction***

##### Off-Road Equipment

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<sup>94</sup> Op. Cit. 66-67.

<sup>95</sup> Op. Cit. 67-68.

“The proposed project is anticipated to begin construction in 202?. For modeling purposes, construction was assumed to be completed in a four-month period. Based on applicant-provided information, it is anticipated that the project would be constructed over a three (3) to four (4) month period. Table 10 [in the Air Quality, Health Risk Analysis, Greenhouse Gas, and Energy Technical Memorandum (Memo), Attachment “A” of this MND] provides estimates of the project’s construction fuel consumption from off-road construction equipment for the entire project, categorized by construction activity.

As shown in the Table 22 [in the Memo, **Table 6-1** in this MND], use of off-road equipment associated with construction of the proposed project is estimated to consume approximately 14,333 gallons of diesel fuel over the entire construction duration. There are no unusual project characteristics that would necessitate the use of construction equipment that would be less energy efficient than at comparable construction sites in the Tulare County region or other parts of California. Therefore, it is expected that construction fuel consumption associated with the proposed Project would not be any more inefficient, wasteful, or unnecessary than at other construction sites in the region.”<sup>96</sup>

<b>Project Component</b>	<b>Construction Activity</b>	<b>Fuel Consumption (gallons)</b>
Proposed Project (On-site, Off-road Equipment Use)	Site Preparation	352
	Grading	441
	Building Construction	12,811
	Paving	618
	Architectural Coating	111
<b>Total</b>		<b>14,333</b>
<i>Note: Totals may not appear to sum correctly due to rounding.</i>		
<i>Source: Energy Consumption Calculations (Attachment C of Attachment “A” of this MND).</i>		

#### On-Road Vehicles

“On-road vehicles for construction workers, vendors, and haulers would require fuel for travel to and from the site during construction. Table 11 [in the Memo, **Table 6-2** in this document]) provides an estimate of the total on-road vehicle fuel usage during construction. There are no unusual project characteristics that would necessitate the use of construction equipment that would be less energy efficient than at comparable construction sites in other parts of the state. Therefore, it is expected that construction fuel consumption associated with the proposed project would not be any more inefficient, wasteful, or unnecessary than at other construction sites in the region.”<sup>98</sup>

<b>Project Component</b>	<b>Total Annual Fuel Consumption (gallons)</b>
Site Preparation	77
Grading	318
Building Construction	4,963
Paving	243
Architectural Coating	118
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,719</b>
<i>Note: Totals may not appear to sum correctly due to rounding.</i>	
<i>Source: Energy Consumption Calculations (Attachment C of Attachment “A” of this MND).</i>	

<sup>96</sup> Air Quality, Health Risk Analysis, Greenhouse Gas, and Energy Technical Memorandum for the Setton Project. January 25, 2022. PDF Page 49 (included in Attachment A of this document).

<sup>97</sup> Ibid. 50.

<sup>98</sup> Op. Cit.

<sup>99</sup> Op. Cit.

Other Energy Consumption Anticipated During Project Construction

“Other equipment could include construction lighting, field services (office trailers), and electrically driven equipment such as pumps and other tools. As the on-site construction activities would be restricted to the permissible hours allowed in Tulare County, it is anticipated that the use of construction lighting would be minimal. Singlewide mobile office trailers, which are commonly used in construction staging areas, generally range in size from 160 square feet to 720 square feet. A typical 720-square-foot office trailer would consume approximately 2,744 kWh during the approximate 4-month construction phase.”<sup>100</sup>

Construction Energy Demand

As summarized in **Table 6-1** and **Table 6-2**, the proposed project would require 14,333 gallons of diesel fuel for construction-related off-road equipment and 5,719 gallons of gasoline and diesel for on-road vehicles during construction-related activities. There are no unusual project characteristics that would necessitate the use of construction-related equipment that would be less energy efficient than at comparable construction sites in the region or other parts of the state. In addition, the overall construction-related schedule and process is already designed to be efficient in order to avoid excess monetary costs. For example, equipment and fuel are not typically used wastefully due to the added expense associated with renting the equipment, maintaining it, and fueling it. Therefore, it is anticipated that construction-related fuel consumption associated with the proposed Project would not be any more inefficient, wasteful, or unnecessary than at other construction sites in the region, and as such, impacts would be less than significant.

**Long-Term Operations**

Transportation Energy Demand

“Table 12 (in the Memo, **Table 6-3** in this document) provides an estimate of the daily and annual fuel consumed by vehicles traveling to and from the proposed Project. These estimates were derived using the same assumptions used in the operational air quality analysis for the proposed project.”<sup>101</sup>

<b>Table 6-3</b>							
<b>Long-Term Operational Vehicle Fuel Consumption<sup>102</sup></b>							
<b>Vehicle Type</b>	<b>Total Daily Trips</b>	<b>Percent of Vehicle Trips</b>	<b>Daily VMT</b>	<b>Annual VMT</b>	<b>Average Fuel Economy (miles/ gallon)</b>	<b>Total Daily Fuel Consumption (gallons)</b>	<b>Total Annual Fuel Consumption (gallons)</b>
Passenger Vehicles	368	68.15%	2,643	964,833	28.45	95.4	34,824
Heavy-Heavy Trucks (HHDT)	172	31.85%	8,576	3,130,400	7.00	1,226.0	447,498
<b>Total</b>	<b>540</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>11,219</b>	<b>4,095,233</b>	—	<b>1,321.4</b>	<b>482,322</b>

*Notes: Percent of Vehicle Trips and VMT provided by CalEEMod.  
VMT = vehicle miles traveled  
Source: Energy Consumption Calculations (Attachment C of Attachment “A” of this MND).*

“The daily vehicular fuel consumption is estimated to be 1,321 gallons of both gasoline and diesel fuel (95.4 gallons from passenger vehicles and 1,226 gallons from heavy trucks). Annual consumption is estimated at 482,322 gallons (34,824 from passenger vehicles and 447,498 gallons from heavy trucks). In addition, the proposed project would constitute development within very near proximity of an established community and would not be opening a new geographical area for development. As such, the proposed project would not result in unusually long trip lengths for future employees, vendors, or visitors. The property is located along a major highway (State Route 99), within 0.50 miles of the City of Tulare, less than one mile from extensive single- and multi-family residential development, and less than 1.5 miles from the Tulare Outlets Mall. The proposed project would be well-positioned to accommodate an existing community. Vehicles accessing the site would be

<sup>100</sup> Op. Cit.

<sup>101</sup> Op. Cit. 51.

<sup>102</sup> Op. Cit.

typical of vehicles accessing similar warehouse-type uses in the Tulare County and surrounding areas. For these reasons, it would be expected that vehicular fuel consumption associated with the proposed project would not be any more inefficient, wasteful, or unnecessary than for any other similar land use activities in the region, and impacts would be less than significant.”<sup>103</sup>

**Building Energy Demand**

“As shown in Table 25 and Table 26 [in the Memo, **Tables 6-4** and **6-5** in this document; respectively], the proposed Project is estimated to demand 500,500 kilowatt-hours (KWhr) of electricity and 851,500 1,000-British Thermal Units (KBTU) of natural gas, respectively, on an annual basis.”<sup>104</sup>

<b>Table 6-4 Long-Term Electricity Usage<sup>105</sup></b>	
<b>Land Use</b>	<b>Total Electricity Demand (KWhr/year)</b>
Industrial Park	483,000
Parking Lot	17,500
Other Asphalt Surfaces	0
Other Non-Asphalt Surfaces	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>500,500</b>
<i>Source: Energy Consumption Calculations (Attachment C of Attachment A).</i>	

<b>Table 6-5 Long-Term Natural Gas Usage<sup>106</sup></b>	
<b>Land Use</b>	<b>Total Natural Gas Demand (KBTU/year)</b>
Industrial Park	851,500
Parking Lot	0
Other Asphalt Surfaces	0
Other Non-Asphalt Surfaces	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>851,500</b>
<i>Source: Energy Consumption Calculations (Attachment C of Attachment A).</i>	

“Buildings and infrastructure constructed pursuant to the proposed Project would comply with the versions of CCR Titles 20 and 24, including California Green Building Standards (CALGreen), that are applicable at the time that building permits are issued. The proposed Project is estimated to demand 500,500 KWhr of electricity per year and 851,500 KBTU of natural gas per year. This would represent an increase in demand for electricity and natural gas.

It would be expected that building energy consumption associated with the proposed Project would not be any more inefficient, wasteful, or unnecessary than for any other similar buildings in the region. Current state regulatory requirements for new building construction contained in the 2019 CALGreen and Title 24 standards would increase energy efficiency and reduce energy demand in comparison to existing commercial structures, and therefore would reduce actual environmental effects associated with energy use from the proposed Project. Additionally, the CALGreen and Title 24 standards have increased efficiency standards through each update.

<sup>103</sup> Op. Cit. 53.

<sup>104</sup> Op. Cit.

<sup>105</sup> Ibid.

<sup>106</sup> Air Quality, Health Risk Analysis, Greenhouse Gas, and Energy Technical Memorandum for the Setton Project. January 25, 2022. Attachment A.

Therefore, while the proposed Project would result in increased electricity and natural gas demand, the electricity and natural gas would be consumed more efficiently and would be typical of existing commercial development.

Based on the above information, the proposed Akers Business Park would not result in the inefficient or wasteful consumption of electricity or natural gas, and impacts would be less than significant. As such, Project-specific impacts related to this Checklist Item to a level considered less than significant.”<sup>107</sup>

**b) Less Than Significant Impact:** “The Tulare County General Plan contains policies that aim to reduce GHG emissions. The Tulare County CAP (the 2018 CAP Update) references the General Plan policies as tools for reducing GHG emissions. These policies are divided into the categories of Transportation Strategies, Building Energy Efficiency, Water Conservation Energy Savings, Solid Waste Reduction and Recycling, and Agricultural Programs and Incentives. Policies identified in the CAP under the Building Energy Efficiency section are provided below.

- AQ-3.5 Alternative Energy Design. The County shall encourage all new development, including rehabilitation, renovation, and redevelopment, to incorporate energy conservation and green building practices to maximum extent feasible. Such practices include, but are not limited to: building orientation and shading, landscaping, and the use of active and passive solar heating and water systems.
- LU-7.15 Energy Conservation. The County shall encourage the use of solar power and energy conservation building techniques in all new development.
- ERM-4.1 Energy Conservation and Efficiency Measures. The County shall encourage the use of solar energy, solar hot water panels, and other energy conservation and efficiency features in new construction and renovation of existing structures in accordance with State law.
- ERM-4.2 Streetscape and Parking Area Improvements for Energy Conservation. The County shall promote the planting and maintenance of shade trees along streets and within parking areas of new urban development to reduce radiation heating.
- ERM-4.3 Local and State Programs. The County shall participate, to the extent feasible, in local and State programs that strive to reduce the consumption of natural or man-made energy sources.
- ERM-4.4 Promote Energy Conservation Awareness. The County should coordinate with local utility providers to provide public education on energy conservation programs.
- HS-1.4 Building and Codes. Except as otherwise allowed by State law, the County shall ensure that all new buildings intended for human habitation are designed in compliance with the latest edition of the California Building Code, California Fire Code, and other adopted standards based on risk (e.g., seismic hazards, flooding), type of occupancy, and location (e.g., floodplain, fault).
- ERM-4.6 Renewable Energy. The County shall support efforts, when appropriately sited, for the development and use of alternative energy resources, including renewable energy such as wind and solar, biofuels and co-generation.
- ERM-4.7 Reduce Energy Use in County Facilities. Continue to integrate energy efficiency and conservation into all County functions.
- ERM-4.8 Energy Efficiency Standards. The County shall encourage renovations and new development to incorporate energy efficiency and conservation measures that exceed State Title 24 standards. When feasible, the County shall offer incentives for use of energy reduction measures such as expedited permit processing, reduced fees, and technical assistance.

The policies are aimed at County action and do not specifically mandate action at the project level. Therefore, compliance with established and applicable regulations would ensure consistency with GHG reduction measures contained in the Tulare County 2030 General Plan. Moreover, compliance with Title 24 standards would ensure that the proposed Project would not conflict with any of the General Plan energy conservation policies related to the proposed Project’s building envelope, mechanical systems, and indoor and outdoor lighting. As noted earlier, the property is located along a major highway (State Route 99), within 0.50 miles of the City of Tulare, less than one mile from extensive single- and multi-family residential development, and less than 1.5 miles from the Tulare Outlets Mall. The proposed Project would be well-positioned to accommodate an existing community. As such, the proposed Project would not be opening a new geographical area for development such that it would not result in unusually long trip lengths for future employees or vendors.

For the above reasons, the proposed Akers Business Park would not conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency, and impacts would be less than significant.”<sup>108</sup>

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<sup>107</sup> Op. Cit. 53-54.

<sup>108</sup> Op. Cit.

**Cumulative Impact Analysis: Less Than Significant Impact** - The geographic area of this cumulative analysis is Tulare County. This cumulative analysis is based on the information provided in the Tulare County 2030 General Plan, General Plan background Report, Tulare County 2030 General Plan EIR, and technical study provided in Attachment A.

The proposed Project would incrementally contribute to adverse impacts on energy resource demand and conservation when considering the cumulative impact of concurrently planned projects; however, like the proposed Project, discretionary actions requiring agency approval are required to comply with local, regional, state, and federal policies designed to reduce wasteful energy consumption, and improve overall energy conservation and sustainability. For instance, all local projects involving the development of new buildings must be designed to conform to CALGreen and the current California Energy Code (for this Project it will be the 2019 Code). Therefore, it is anticipated that the proposed Project's contribution to cumulative impacts would not result in a significantly considerable wasteful use of energy resources, such that the proposed Project (and other cumulative projects), would not have a cumulative effect on energy conservation. The proposed Project will not have a direct or cumulative impact, or create wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources during project construction-related activities or operations, nor will it conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency. Therefore, Project-specific and Cumulative Impacts as of a result of the proposed Project would be less than significant.



## VII. GEOLOGY/SOILS

Would the project:	SIGNIFICANT IMPACT	LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT WITH MITIGATION	LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT	NO IMPACT
a) Directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:				
i) Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication No. 42.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
ii) Strong seismic ground shaking?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
iv) Landslides?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d) Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial direct or indirect risks to life or property?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

The discussions regarding Environmental Setting, Regulatory Setting, CEQA requirements, Geology and Soils, etc.; contained in the Tulare County General Plan 2030 Update and Tulare County Environmental Impact Report are incorporated herein in their entirety. Where necessary and if available, additional site-specific facts, data, information, etc., are included in this discussion.

### Environmental Setting

The proposed Project (Akers Business Park) area is located approximately 0.50 miles north of the City of Tulare, in a predominantly agricultural, yet transitional, area of the San Joaquin Valley. The site is currently planted to walnuts, except at the southernmost portion of the site which currently has an RV sales development. Surrounding areas include agricultural production, light industrial, and SR 99 is immediately west of the site.

“Tulare County is divided into two major physiographic and geologic provinces: the Sierra Nevada Mountains and the Central Valley. The Sierra Nevada Physiographic Province, in the eastern portion of the county, is underlain by metamorphic and igneous rock. It consists mainly of homogeneous granitic rocks, with several islands of older metamorphic rock. The central and western parts of the county are part of the Central Valley Province, underlain by marine and non-marine sedimentary rocks. It is basically a flat, alluvial plain, with soil consisting of material deposited by the uplifting of the mountains. The foothill area of the county is essentially a transition zone, containing old alluvial soils that have been dissected by the west-

flowing rivers and streams that carry runoff from the Sierra Nevada Mountains. This gently rolling topography is punctured in many areas by outcropping soft bedrock. The native mountain soils are generally quite dense and compact”<sup>109</sup>

“The Central Valley is an asymmetrical structural trough filled with marine and continental sediments up to 15-kilometers (km) thick covering an area of more than 50,000 square kilometers (km<sup>2</sup>), bounded by the Cascade Range to the north, the Sierra Nevada ranges to the east, the Klamath Mountains and Coast Ranges to the west, and the Tehachapi Mountains to the south. The aquifer system in the Central Valley comprises unconfined, semi-confined, and confined aquifers, which are primarily contained within the upper 300 meters (m; though some wells exceed that depth) of alluvial sediments deposited by streams draining the surrounding Sierra Nevada and Coast Ranges (Page, 1986; California Department of Water Resources, 2003; Faunt, 2009). The [Sacramento] SAC occupies the northern third of the Central Valley and the [San Joaquin Valley] SJV occupies the southern two-thirds of the Central Valley (Fig. 1 [in the Scientific Investigations Report 2019-506]). The SJV is often further divided into the San Joaquin River Basin, which occupies the northern half of the SJV, and the Tulare Basin, which occupies the southern half of SJV. The Tulare Basin is, hydrologically, a closed basin, but it receives imported water from the San Joaquin and Sacramento Rivers. These will collectively be referred to as the SJV. In much of the western side of the SJV, the aquifer system is divided into an upper and lower zone by the Corcoran Clay Member of the Tulare Formation, a regionally extensive clay layer that limits vertical movement of groundwater (Page, 1986; Williamson and others, 1989; Belitz and Heimes, 1990; Burow and others, 2004). Both zones of the aquifer in the area of the Corcoran Clay generally are tapped for groundwater withdrawals (Shelton and others, 2013; Fram, 2017).”<sup>110</sup>

### ***Geology & Seismic Hazards***

Seismic hazards, such as earthquakes, can cause loss of human life and property damage, disrupt the local economy, and undermine the fiscal condition of a community. Secondary seismic hazards, including subsidence and liquefaction, can cause building and infrastructure damage.

#### Seismicity

“Seismicity varies greatly between the two major geologic provinces represented in Tulare County. The Central Valley is an area of relatively low tectonic activity bordered by mountain ranges on either side. The Sierra Nevada Mountains, partially located within Tulare County, are the result of movement of tectonic plates which resulted in the creation of the mountain range. The Coast Range on the west side of the Central Valley is also a result of these forces, and the continued uplifting of Pacific and North American tectonic plates continues to elevate these ranges. The remaining seismic hazards in Tulare County generally result from movement along faults associated with the creation of these ranges.

Earthquakes are typically measured in terms of magnitude and intensity. The most commonly known measurement is the Richter Scale, a logarithmic scale which measures the strength of a quake. The Modified Mercalli Intensity Scale measures the intensity of an earthquake as a function of the following factors:

- Magnitude and location of the epicenter;
- Geologic characteristics;
- Groundwater characteristics;
- Duration and characteristic of the ground motion;
- Structural characteristics of a building.”<sup>111</sup>

#### Faults

“Faults are the indications of past seismic activity. It is assumed that those that have been active most recently are the most likely to be active in the future. Recent seismic activity is measured in a geologic timescale. Geologically recent is defined as having occurred within the last two million years (the Quaternary Period). All faults believed to have been active during Quaternary time are considered “potentially active.”<sup>112</sup>. “In 1973, five counties within the Southern San Joaquin Valley undertook the preparation of the Five County Seismic Safety Element to assess seismic hazards... In general, zones C1, S1,

<sup>109</sup> Tulare County 2030 General Plan 2030 Update Background Report. Page 8-4 through 8-5.

<sup>110</sup> United States Department of the Interior United States Geologic Survey. “Delineation of Spatial Extent, Depth, Thickness, and Potential Volume of Aquifers Used for Domestic and Public Water-Supply in the Central Valley, California. Scientific Investigations Report 2019-5076 (SIR). Page 2. Accessed August 2021 at: <https://pubs.usgs.gov/sir/2019/5076/sir20195076.pdf>.

<sup>111</sup> Tulare County General Plan 2030 Update. General Plan Background Report. Page 8-5. Accessed August 2022 at: <http://generalplan.co.tulare.ca.us/documents.html>, locate “Recirculated Draft Environmental Impact Report (February 2010 Draft)” then click on “Appendix B-Background Report.”

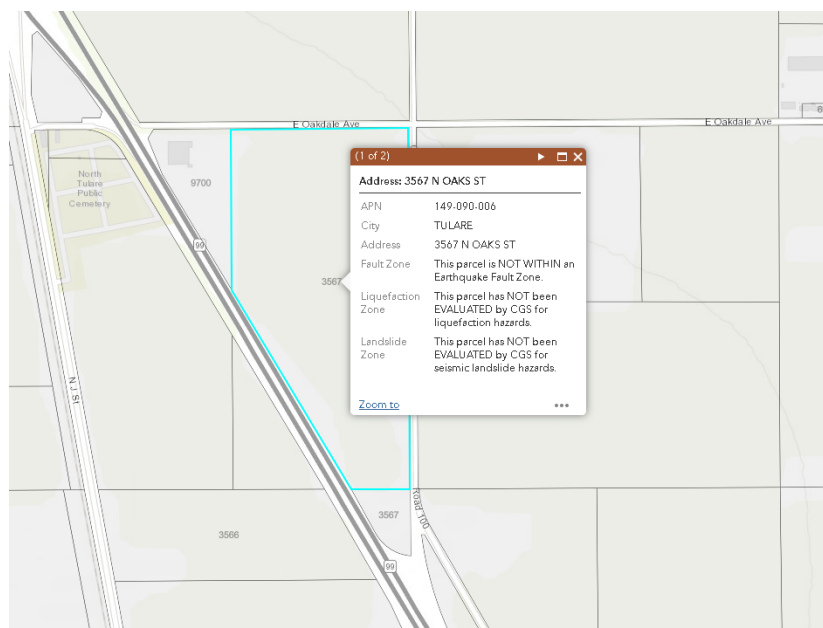
<sup>112</sup> Ibid.

and V1 are safer than zones C2, S2, and V2. Hazards due to groundshaking are considered to be “minimal” in the S1 Zone and “minimal” to “moderate” in the S2 and S2S Zones. Development occurring within the S1 Seismic Zone must conform to the Uniform Building Code-Zone II; while development within the S2 Zone must conform to Uniform Building Code-Zone III. There are three faults within the region that have been, and will be, principal sources of potential seismic activity within Tulare County. These faults are described below:

- **San Andreas Fault** is located approximately 40 miles west of the Tulare County boundary and [approximately] 60 miles west of the project area. This fault has a long history of activity, and is thus the primary focus in determining seismic activity within the County. Seismic activity along the fault varies along its span from the Gulf of California to Cape Mendocino. Just west of Tulare County lays the “Central California Active Area,” section of the San Andreas Fault where many earthquakes have originated.
- **Owens Valley Fault Group** is a complex system containing both active and potentially active faults, located on the eastern base of the Sierra Nevada Mountains approximately [approximately] 60 miles east of the project area. The Group is located within Tulare and Inyo Counties and has historically been the source of seismic activity within Tulare County.
- **Clovis Fault** is considered to be active within the Quaternary Period, although there is no historic evidence of its activity, and is therefore classified as “potentially active.” This fault lies approximately six miles south of the Madera County boundary in Fresno County and [approximately] 70 miles north of the project area. Activity along this fault could potentially generate more seismic activity in Tulare County than the San Andreas or Owens Valley fault systems. In particular, a strong earthquake on the Fault could affect northern Tulare County. However, because of the lack of historic activity along the Clovis Fault, inadequate evidence exists for assessing maximum earthquake impacts.”<sup>113</sup>

There are other unnamed faults north of Bakersfield and near Tulare Buttes (about 30 miles north of Porterville). These faults are small and have exhibited activity in the last 1.6 million years, but not in the last 200 years. It is also possible, but unlikely, that previously unknown faults could become active in the area.<sup>114</sup> As shown in **Figure 7-1**, the proposed Project parcel site is not within an earthquake fault zone.<sup>115</sup> Although not shown on this map, the Earthquake Hazard Zone map notes the same information for 3567 N. Oaks Street where the RV sales development is located.

**Figure 7-1  
Earthquake Hazard Zone**



<sup>113</sup> Op. Cit. 8-5 through 8-7.

<sup>114</sup> California Geological Survey. Fault Activity Map. Accessed August 2022 at: <https://maps.conservation.ca.gov/cgs/fam/>

<sup>115</sup> California Department of Conservation. EQ Zapp: California Earthquake Hazards Zone Application. Earthquake Zones of Required Investigation. Accessed August 2022. See: <https://maps.conservation.ca.gov/cgs/EQZApp/app/>

## Groundshaking

“Ground-shaking is the primary seismic hazard in Tulare County because of the county’s seismic setting and its record of historical activity. Thus, emphasis focuses on the analysis of expected levels of ground-shaking, which is directly related to the magnitude of a quake and the distance from a quake’s epicenter. Magnitude is a measure of the amount of energy released in an earthquake, with higher magnitudes causing increased ground-shaking over longer periods of time, thereby affecting a larger area. Ground-shaking intensity, which is often a more useful measure of earthquake effects than magnitude, is a qualitative measure of the effects felt by population.”<sup>116</sup> “The San Joaquin Valley portion of Tulare County is located on alluvial deposits, which tend to experience greater ground-shaking intensities than areas located on hard rock. Therefore, structures located in the valley will tend to suffer greater damage from ground-shaking than those located in the foothill and mountain areas. However, existing alluvium valleys and weathered or decomposed zones are scattered throughout the mountainous portions of the county which could also experience stronger intensities than the surrounding solid rock areas. The geologic characteristics of an area can therefore be a greater hazard than its distance to the epicenter of the quake.”<sup>117</sup> “Older buildings constructed before current building codes were in effect, and even newer buildings constructed before earthquake resistance provisions were included in the current building codes, are most likely to suffer damage in an earthquake. Most of Tulare County’s buildings are no more than one or two stories in height and are of wood frame construction, which is considered the most structurally resistant to earthquake damage. Older masonry buildings (without earthquake resistance reinforcement) are the most susceptible to structural failure, which causes the greatest loss of life. The State of California has identified unreinforced masonry buildings (URMs) as a safety issue during earthquakes. In high risk areas (Bay Area), inventories and programs to mitigate this issue are required. Because Tulare County is not a high-risk area, state law only recommends that programs to retrofit URMs are adopted by jurisdictions.”<sup>118</sup>

## Liquefaction

“Liquefaction is a process whereby soil is temporarily transformed to a fluid form during intense and prolonged groundshaking. Areas most prone to liquefaction are those that are water saturated (e.g., where the water table is less than 30 feet below the surface) and consist of relatively uniform sands that are low to medium density. In addition to necessary soil conditions, the ground acceleration and duration of the earthquake must be of sufficient energy to induce liquefaction. Scientific studies have shown that the ground acceleration must approach 0.3g before liquefaction occurs in a sandy soil with relative densities typical of the San Joaquin alluvial deposits.”

“Liquefaction during major earthquakes has caused severe damage to structures on level ground as a result of settling, tilting, or floating. Such damage occurred in San Francisco on bay-filled areas during the 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake, even though the epicenter was several miles away. If liquefaction occurs in or under a sloping soil mass, the entire mass may flow toward a lower elevation, such as that which occurred along the coastline near Seward, Alaska during the 1964 earthquake. Also of particular concern in terms of developed and newly developing areas are fill areas that have been poorly compacted. No specific countywide assessments to identify liquefaction hazards have been performed in Tulare County. Areas where groundwater is less than 30 feet below the surface occur primarily in the valley. However, soil types in the area are not conducive to liquefaction because they are either too coarse or too high in clay content. Areas subject to 0.3g acceleration or greater are located in a small section of the Sierra Nevada Mountains along the Tulare-Inyo County boundary. However, the depth to groundwater in such areas is greater than in the valley, which would minimize liquefaction potential as well. Detailed geotechnical engineering investigations would be necessary to more accurately evaluate liquefaction potential in specific areas and to identify and map the areal extent of locations subject to liquefaction.”

## Settlement

“Settlement can occur in poorly consolidated soils during ground-shaking. During settlement, the soil materials are physically rearranged by the shaking and result in reduced stabling alignment of the individual minerals. Settlement of sufficient magnitude to cause significant structural damage is normally associated with rapidly deposited alluvial soils, or improperly founded or poorly compacted fill. These areas are known to undergo extensive settling with the addition of irrigation water, but evidence due to ground-shaking is not available. Fluctuating groundwater levels also may have changed the local soil characteristics. Sufficient subsurface data is lacking to conclude that settlement would occur during a large earthquake; however, the data is sufficient to indicate that the potential exists in Tulare County.”

## ***Other Geologic Hazards***

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<sup>116</sup> Tulare County General Plan 2030 Update. General Plan Background Report. Page 8-7.

<sup>117</sup> Ibid.

<sup>118</sup> Op. Cit.8-8.

## Landslides

“Landslides are a primary geologic hazard and are influenced by four factors:

- Strength of rock and resistance to failure, which is a function of rock type (or geologic formation);
- Geologic structure or orientation of a surface along which slippage could occur;
- Water (can add weight to a potentially unstable mass or influence strength of a potential failure surface); and,
- Topography (amount of slope in combination with gravitation forces).

“As of June 2009, the California Geological Survey had not developed landslide hazard identification maps for Tulare County. However, it is reasonable to assume that certain areas in Tulare County are more prone to landslides than other areas... [As such,] There is no risk of large landslides in the valley area of the county due to its relatively flat topography.”<sup>119</sup>

## Subsidence

“Subsidence occurs when a large portion of land is displaced vertically, usually due to the withdrawal of groundwater, oil, or natural gas. Soils that are particularly subject to subsidence include those with high silt or clay content. Subsidence caused by groundwater withdrawal generally presents a more serious problem, since it can affect large areas. Oil and gas withdrawal, on the other hand, tends to affect smaller, localized areas. Some areas of the Central Valley have subsided more than 20 feet during the past 50 years.”<sup>120</sup>

## Seiche

“A seiche is a standing wave produced in a body of water such as a reservoir, lake, or harbor, by wind, atmospheric changes, or earthquakes. Seiches have the potential to damage shoreline structures, dams, and levees... Since this is less than wave heights that could be expected from wind induced waves, earthquake-induced seiches are not considered a risk in Tulare County. In addition, the effects from a seiche would be similar to the flood hazard for a particular area, and the risk of occurrence is perceived as considerably less than the risk of flooding.”<sup>121</sup>

## Volcanic Hazard

“The nearest volcanoes lie to the northeast of Tulare County in Mono County, in the Mammoth Lakes/Long Valley area. The most serious effect on Tulare County of an eruption in the Mammoth Lakes, area according to the California Geological Survey, would be ash deposition.”<sup>122</sup> “A volcanic eruption during the winter could result in snowmelt and lead to flooding. The state has formulated a contingency plan, the “Long Valley Caldera Response Plan,” designed to notify the public in the event of an earthquake in the Long Valley area (outside of Tulare County).”<sup>123</sup>

## Paleontology

“Paleontological resources are any fossilized remains, traces, or imprints of organisms, preserved in or on the earth’s crust, that are of paleontological interest and that provide information about the history of life on earth, with the exception of materials associated with an archaeological resource (as defined in Section 3(1) of the Archaeological Resources Protection Act of 1979 (16 U.S.C. 470bb[1]), or any cultural item as defined in Section 2 of the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (25 U.S.C. 3001).”<sup>124</sup> “According to the University of California Museum of Paleontology (UCMP), 12 paleontological resources have been recorded in Tulare County, generally within the valley portion of the County. These resources primarily consist of invertebrates, vertebrate, and plant fossils (UCMP, 2009).”<sup>125</sup> CEQA requires that a determination be made as to whether a project would directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geological feature (CEQA Appendix G(v)(c)). If an impact is significant, CEQA requires feasible measures to minimize the impact (CCR Title 14(3) §15126.4 (a)(1)). California Public Resources Code §5097.5 also applies to paleontological resources.

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<sup>119</sup> Op. Cit. 8-10.

<sup>120</sup> Op. Cit. 8-10 through 8-11.

<sup>121</sup> Op. Cit. 8-11.

<sup>122</sup> Op. Cit.

<sup>123</sup> Op. Cit.

<sup>124</sup> Op. Cit. 9-43.

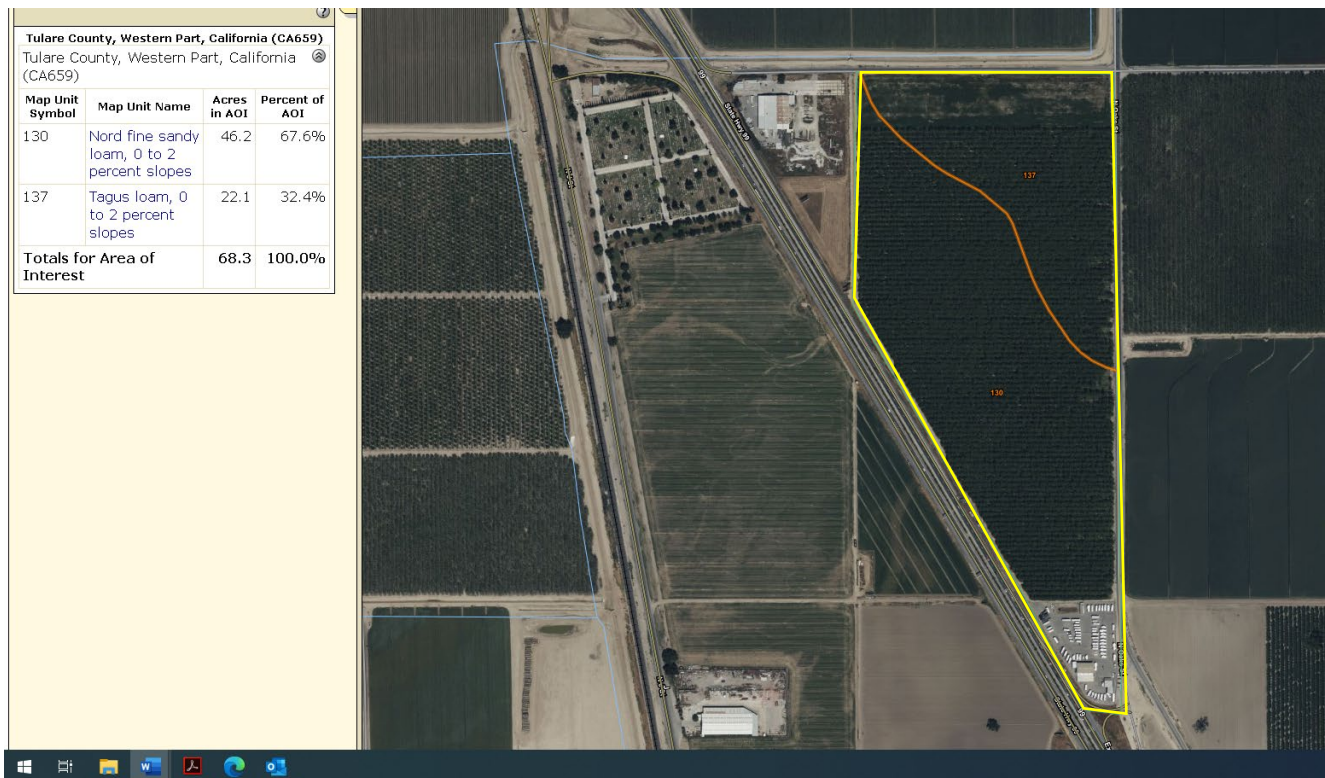
<sup>125</sup> Op. Cit. 9-53.

## Soil Characteristics

“The San Joaquin Valley portion of Tulare County is located on alluvial deposits, which tend to experience greater groundshaking intensities than areas located on hard rock. Therefore, structures located in the valley will tend to suffer greater damage from groundshaking than those located in the foothill and mountain areas. However, existing alluvium valleys and weathered or decomposed zones are scattered throughout the mountainous portions of the county which could also experience stronger intensities than the surrounding solid rock areas. The geologic characteristics of an area can therefore be a greater hazard than its distance to the epicenter of the quake.”<sup>126</sup>

**Figure 7-2** shows the soil types found on the site as provided by the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service.<sup>127</sup> The Nord fine sandy loam series consists of deep, well drained soils that formed from mixed alluvium. Nord fine sandy loam soils are on alluvial fans and flood plains. They have slope gradients from 0 to 2 percent. Elevations are 190 to 520 feet. Nord fine sandy loam soils are well drained with negligible runoff and moderate to moderately slow permeability.<sup>128</sup> The Tagus loam series consists of very deep; well drained soils drained; negligible to low runoff; moderate permeability formed in alluvium derived from granitic rock sources. Tagus soils are on terraces and have slopes of 0 to 2 percent. Elevations are 230 to 400 feet.<sup>129</sup>

**Figure 7-2**



## Regulatory Setting

### Federal

None that apply to the Project.

### State

<sup>126</sup> Tulare County General Plan 2030 Update. Background Report. Page 8-7.

<sup>127</sup> United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). Accessed August 2022 at: <https://websoilsurvey.sc.egov.usda.gov/App/WebSoilSurvey.aspx>

<sup>128</sup> USDA. NRCS. Official Soil Series. Accessed August 2022 at: [https://soilseries.sc.egov.usda.gov/OSD\\_Docs/N/NORD.html](https://soilseries.sc.egov.usda.gov/OSD_Docs/N/NORD.html).

<sup>129</sup> Ibid. Tagus Series. Accessed August 2022 at: [https://soilseries.sc.egov.usda.gov/OSD\\_Docs/T/TAGUS.html](https://soilseries.sc.egov.usda.gov/OSD_Docs/T/TAGUS.html)

## Seismic Hazards Mapping Act

“Under the Seismic Hazards Mapping Act, the State Geologist is responsible for identifying and mapping seismic hazards zones as part of the California Geologic Survey (CGS). The CGS provides zoning maps of non-surface rupture earthquake hazards (including liquefaction and seismically induced landslides) to local governments for planning purposes. These maps are intended to protect the public from the risks associated with strong ground shaking, liquefaction, landslides or other ground failure, and other hazards caused by earthquakes. For projects within seismic hazard zones, the Seismic Hazards Mapping Act requires developers to conduct geological investigations and incorporate appropriate mitigation measures into project designs before building permits are issued.”<sup>130</sup>

## California Building Code

“The California Building Code is another name for the body of regulations known as the California Code of Regulations (C.C.R.), Title 24, Part 2, which is a portion of the California Building Standards Code. Title 24 is assigned to the California Building Standards Commission, which, by law, is responsible for coordinating all building standards.”<sup>131</sup>

## State Water Resources Control Board and Regional Water Quality Control Board

National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) General Permit for Storm Water Discharges Associated with Construction Activity- Water Quality Order 99-08 DWQ.

Typically, General Construction Storm Water NPDES permits are issued by the RWQCB for grading and earth-moving activities. The General Permit is required for construction activities that disturb one or more acres. The General Permit requires development and implementation of a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP), which specifies practices that include prevention of all construction pollutants from contacting stormwater with the intent of keeping all products of erosion from moving off site into receiving waters. The NPDES permits are issued for a five-year term. NPDES general permits require adherence to the Best Management Practices (BMPs) including:

### ***Local***

#### Tulare County General Plan

The General Plan has a number of policies that apply to projects within Tulare County. General Plan policies that relate to the Project include: *HS-1.11 Site Investigations* wherein the County shall conduct site investigations in areas planned for new development to determine susceptibility to landslides, subsidence/settlement, contamination, and/or flooding; *HS-2.1 Continued Evaluation of Earthquake Risks* wherein the County shall continue to evaluate areas to determine levels of earthquake risk; *HS-2.4 Structure Siting* wherein the County shall permit development on soils sensitive to seismic activity permitted only after adequate site analysis, including appropriate siting, design of structure, and foundation integrity; *HS-2.7 Subsidence* wherein the County shall confirm that development is not located in any known areas of active subsidence; *HS-2.8 Alquist-Priolo Act Compliance* wherein The County shall not permit any structure for human occupancy to be placed within designated Earthquake Fault Zones; *WR-2.2 NPDES Enforcement* wherein the County shall continue to support the State in monitoring and enforcing provisions to control non-point source water pollution contained in the U.S. EPA NPDES program as implemented by the Water Quality Control Board; *WR-2.3 Best Management Practices* wherein the County shall continue to require the use of feasible BMPs and other mitigation measures designed to protect surface water and groundwater from the adverse effects of construction activities, agricultural operations requiring a County Permit and urban runoff in coordination with the Water Quality Control Board; and *WR-2.4 Construction Site Sediment Control* wherein the County shall continue to enforce provisions to control erosion and sediment from construction sites.

#### Subdivision of Land

The County subdivision regulations, contained in Chapter 1 of Part VII of the Ordinance Code, require that preliminary and final geological and hydrological reports be prepared by a registered civil engineer or registered professional geologist for all subdivisions. Section 7-01-1610 requires the preparation of a preliminary report to provide an analysis of potential geological hazards, stability of soils, seismicity, potential erosion and sedimentation. Section 7-01-1725 requires the preparation of a final

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<sup>130</sup> Op. Cit. 3.6-9.

<sup>131</sup> Op. Cit.



report which is to include more definitive evaluation of these factors and to recommend solutions for all identified hazards and problems. Section 7-01-1740 provides that if the final geological hydrological report indicates the presence of critically expansive or loosely deposited soils or other soil problems that could lead to structural defects, a soil investigation shall be prepared to recommend corrective action.<sup>132</sup>

### Tulare County Building and Grading Regulations

The Tulare County Code, at Section 7-15-1066, adopts and incorporates by reference the 2019 Edition of the California Building Code (CBC) as the Tulare County Building Regulations.<sup>133</sup> The CBC is described earlier in this section. Appendix J of the CBC requires the issuance of grading permits prior to commencement of site grading, and provides for the submittal of a soils report and engineering geology report, as required by the Building Official, in support of grading plans. The recommendations contained in the reports and approved by the Building Official are required to be incorporated into the grading plans or specifications.

Ordinance Code Article 7 – Excavation and Grading, sets forth additional requirements including provisions for sediment control and revegetation details.<sup>134</sup> Ordinance Code Article 27 – Storm Water Quality and Regulation, addresses the control of storm water discharges and compliance with the provisions of the County’s National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit, including preparation of Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plans (SWPPPs) and implementation of Best Management Practices (BMPs).<sup>135</sup> (See Item 10 Hydrology and Water Quality for discussion and analysis related to storm water runoff and water quality.)

### Five County Seismic Safety Element (FCSSE)

The FCSSE report represents a cooperative effort between the governmental entities within Fresno, Kings, Madera, Mariposa and Tulare Counties to develop an adoptable Seismic Safety Element as required by State law. Part I, the Technical Report, is designed to be used when necessary to provide background for the Summary document. Part II, the Summary Report, establishes the framework and rationale for evaluation of seismic risks and hazards in the region. Part II of the Seismic Safety Element, the Policy Report, has been prepared as a “model” report designed to address seismic hazards as delineated in the Technical Report. The intent has been to develop a planning tool for use by county and city governments in implementing their seismic safety elements. The planning process utilized to develop the Element was developed through the efforts of Technical and Policy Committees, composed of both staff and elected representatives from Cities, Counties, and Special Districts or Areawide Planning Organizations in cooperation with the consulting firms of Envicom Corporation and Quinton-Redgate.<sup>136</sup>

### **Project Impact Analysis:**

- a) **Less Than Significant Impact:** According to the Tulare County General Plan, the proposed Project area lies in the V-1 seismic study area, characterized by a relatively thin section of sedimentary rock overlying a granitic basement.

The V-1 seismic zone, which is characterized by a relatively thick section of sedimentary rock overlying a granitic basement, has “low” risks for shaking hazards, “minimal” risk for landslides, “low to moderate” risk for subsidence, “low” risks for liquefaction and “minimal” risk for seiching.

The distance to area faults i.e.; the Clovis Group, Pond-Poso, and San Andreas, expected sources of significant shaking, is sufficiently great that shaking effects should be minimal.

- i) **Fault Rupture:** Less Than Significant - No substantial faults are known to traverse Tulare County according to the Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Maps and the State of California Department of Conservation (**Figure 7-1**). The nearest major fault line, which lies outside of Tulare County, is the San Andreas fault zones; approximately 40

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<sup>132</sup> Tulare County. Chapter 1 of Part VII of the Ordinance Code. ARTICLE 7. PRELIMINARY MAP. Section 7-01-1610; ARTICLE 9 TENTATIVE MAP. Sections 7-01-1725 and 7-01-1740. Accessed August 2022 at: <https://www.codepublishing.com/CA/TulareCounty/html/TulareCounty07/TulareCounty0701.html>

<sup>133</sup> Ibid. Section 7-15-1066 ADOPTION OF CALIFORNIA BUILDING CODE, PART 2, AND VOLUMES 1 AND 2, INCLUDING APPENDICES C, F, G, H, I AND J. Accessed August 2022 at: <https://www.codepublishing.com/CA/TulareCounty/html/TulareCounty07/TulareCounty0715.html>

<sup>134</sup> Op. Cit. ARTICLE 7 EXCAVATION AND GRADING.

<sup>135</sup> Op. Cit. ARTICLE 27 CALIFORNIA REFERENCED STANDARDS CODE, TITLE 24, PART 12

<sup>136</sup> Five County Seismic Safety Element. Fresno, Kings, Madera, Mariposa, & Tulare Counties. 1974. Pages 4-7. Prepared by Envicom Corporation. Available upon request at the RMA Administrative Office.

miles west of the Tulare County line. According to the Five County Seismic Safety Element (FCSSE), Tulare County is located in the V-1 zone. This zone includes most of the eastern San Joaquin Valley and is characterized by a relatively thin section of sedimentary rock overlying a granitic basement. Amplification of shaking that would affect low to medium-rise structures is relatively high, but the distance of the faults that are expected sources of the shaking is sufficiently great that the effects should be minimal. The requirements of Zone II of the Uniform Building Code should be adequate for normal facilities.<sup>137</sup>

Therefore, as noted earlier, no Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zones or known active faults are in or near the Project area. As such, the risk of rupture of a known earthquake fault will be less than significant.

- ii) *Ground Shaking: Less Than Significant* - The California Geological Survey maintains a web-based computer model that estimates probabilistic seismic ground motions for any location with California. The computer model estimates the “Design Basis Earthquake” ground motion, which is defined as the peak horizontal ground acceleration with a 10-percent chance of exceedance in 50 years (475-year return period). For an alluvium soil type, the project site’s estimated peak ground acceleration is approximately 0.175g or 0.175 times the acceleration of gravity.

The proposed Project site is 0.5 miles north of the City of Tulare and utilizes Seismic Design Category D<sup>138</sup>. The proposed Project would not consist of housing or permanent structures for employee occupancy, and thus would fall under Group U (Utility and Miscellaneous).

The proposed Project expansion area is located on alluvial deposits, which tend to experience greater ground shaking intensities than areas located on hard rock. However, the site is located in an area of low seismic activity. While the Great Valley thrust fault system which lies some distance to the west of the Project site and the unnamed faults near Rag Gulch which lie to the south, as well as other regional faults, have the potential to produce high-magnitude earthquakes throughout the County, the distance to the faults that are the expected sources of the shaking would be sufficiently great that the effects should be minimal.<sup>139</sup> Ground shaking would cause dynamic loading resulting in stress to buildings and structures. However, structures designed and built in accordance with the California Building Code (which is incorporated into the Tulare County Code) would include a high degree of seismic strength and resistance to lateral forces (strong shaking) in building construction in order to minimize risks to public safety and damage to property. Project compliance with California Building Code requirements would be a standard condition of building permit issuance for all project structures. Incorporation of seismic construction standards would reduce the potential for catastrophic effects of ground shaking, such as complete structural failure, and would reduce the impact of strong ground shaking. Therefore, the impact due to ground shaking would be less than significant.

- iii) *Ground Failure and Liquefaction: No Impact* - As noted earlier, the proposed Project site is located in the Five County Seismic Safety Element’s V-1 zone, and therefore has a low risk of liquefaction. No subsidence-prone soils or oil or gas production is involved with the proposed Project. Soil liquefaction is the phenomenon which occurs in uniform, clean, loose, fine sandy and silty soil which is saturated by relatively shallow groundwater conditions. Severe ground shaking during seismic events increases the pore pressure in the soil resulting in groundwater moving upward, which essentially transforms the soil to a quicksand-like state. The resulting ground failure or surface deformation can cause total and differential settlement of structures. Ground accelerations of at least 0.10g and ground shaking durations of at least 30 seconds are needed to initiate liquefaction. The occurrence of liquefaction is generally limited to areas where the groundwater table is higher than 50 feet below ground surface (bgs). The sandy soils that cover the proposed Project site are susceptible to liquefaction. However, given the absence of near-surface groundwater (the groundwater table is approximately 125 feet below ground surface at the site) the potential for liquefaction at the proposed Project site is low.

The potential for liquefaction to occur on the site will be investigated in the preliminary and final geological and hydrological reports required to be prepared for the project prior to construction under Sections 7-01-1610 and 7-01-1725 of the County Code (described in Regulatory Setting). These reports would identify any unforeseen potential for liquefaction at the site and recommend corrective engineering measures as required. Given the anticipated low potential for liquefaction at the site, and compliance with Code requirements to provide a detailed evaluation of

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<sup>137</sup> Ibid. Summary & Policy Recommendations II. 1974. Pages 3 and 15. Prepared by Envicom Corporation. Available upon request at the RMA Administrative Office.

<sup>138</sup> United States Department of Homeland Security, Federal Emergency Management Agency, Earthquake Hazard Maps. Accessed August 2022 at: <https://www.fema.gov/earthquake-hazard-maps>

<sup>139</sup> United States Geological Survey, U.S. Quaternary Faults Map. Accessed August 2022 at: <https://usgs.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=5a6038b3a1684561a9b0aadf88412fcf>

potential geologic hazards at the project site, with recommendations for corrective measures as needed, the potential impact to project structures and improvements due to liquefaction is less than significant.

Lateral spreading can occur with seismic ground shaking on slopes where saturated soils liquefy and flow toward the open slope face. There is little or no potential for lateral spreading within the proposed Project site since it is essentially flat and does not include significant slopes, and does not have saturated soil conditions.

Liquefaction in soils and sediments occurs during earthquake events, when soil material is transformed from a solid state to a liquid state, generated by an increase in pressure between pore space and soil particles. Earthquake induced liquefaction typically occurs in low-lying areas with soils or sediments composed of unconsolidated, saturated, clay-free sands and silts, but it can also occur in dry, granular soils or saturated soils with partial clay content. Based on available subsurface data, the proposed Project site is underlain by shallow rock that would not liquefy. As such, there would be less than significant impact caused by seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction

- iv) *Landslides*: The flat terrain of the site and surrounding areas, and the general absence of hills or exposed slopes in the vicinity (such as those found along river terraces, bluffs, and foothills), makes landslides highly unlikely. Therefore, the proposed Project would result in no impact.

The existing proposed Project area is not located within a published Earthquake Fault Zone and the potential for ground rupture is low. As earthquakes are possible throughout the State of California, the Project will be required to comply with the Tulare County General Plan and Zone II of the Uniform Building Code. In addition, the existing proposed Project area is not located within an area mapped to have a potential for soil liquefaction. As the proposed Akers Business Park area is relatively flat, there is no potential for landslides. Both no and less than significant project specific impacts related to this Checklist Item would occur.

- b) **No Impact**: The proposed Project area is primarily flat and as such, soil erosion is not anticipated. As required by the Clean Water Act (CWA) and the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board (CVRWQCB), a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) will be developed by a qualified engineer or erosion control specialist and implemented before construction begins.

Construction of a future business park, parking stalls, buildings, landscaping, etc., will ultimately serve to anchor native soils in place through the laying of foundations, parking surfaces, lawns, etc. Prior to initiation of construction-related activities, a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) will be developed and kept on site during construction-related activities and will be made available upon request to representatives of the CVRWQCB. The objectives of the SWPPP will be to identify pollutant sources that may affect the quality of stormwater associated with construction activity and to identify, construct, and implement stormwater pollution prevention measures to reduce pollutants in stormwater discharges during and after construction. To meet these objectives, the SWPPP will include a description of potential pollutants, a description of methods of management for dredged sediments, and hazardous materials present on site during construction (including vehicle and equipment fuels).

The SWPPP will also include details for best management practices (BMPs) for the implementation of sediment and erosion control practices. Implementation of the SWPPP will comply with state and federal water quality regulations and will reduce this impact to less-than-significant. Compliance with local grading and erosion control ordinances will also help minimize adverse effects associated with erosion and sedimentation.

Any stockpiled soils will be watered and/or covered to prevent loss due to wind erosion as part of the SWPPP during construction-related activities and reclamation. As a result of these efforts, loss of topsoil and substantial soil erosion during the construction-related activities and reclamation periods are not anticipated.

In addition, depending upon activity, the Project would be subject to the San Joaquin Valley Unified Air Pollution Control District's (Air District) Regulation VIII (Fugitive PM10 Prohibitions)<sup>140</sup> to prevent, minimize, avoid, and clean up dust generated during construction-related activities. Likely applicable Regulation VIII rules include Rule 8021 (Construction, Demolition, Excavation, Extraction, and Other Earthmoving Activities) for construction and earthmoving activities; Rule 8031 (Bulk Materials) which limits fugitive dust emissions from the outdoor handling, storage, and transport of bulk materials (such a topsoil); Rule 8041 (Carryout and Trackout) which requires prevention and/or cleanup of soil that is

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<sup>140</sup> San Joaquin Valley Unified Air Pollution Control District. Current Rules and Regulations. Regulation VIII-FUGITIVE PM10 PROHIBITIONS. Rules 8011 through 8071. Accessed August 2022 at: <https://www.valleyair.org/rules/1ruleslist.htm#reg8>

tracked out by vehicle tires exiting the site or carried out by vehicles exiting the site; Rule 8051 (Open Areas) requiring stabilization of areas cleared of vegetation in anticipation of construction-related activities; Rule 8061 (Paved and Unpaved Roads) such as unpaved access/haul roads, that is, any road or path that is not covered by one of the materials described in the Air District's paved road definition that is associated with any construction, demolition, excavation, extraction, and other earthmoving activity and used by vehicles, equipment, haul trucks, or any conveyances to travel within a site, to move materials from one part of a site to another part within the same site, or to provide temporary access to a site; and 8071 (Unpaved Vehicle/Equipment Traffic Areas) to limit fugitive dust emissions from unpaved vehicle and equipment traffic areas within the Project's construction-related areas. As a result of these efforts, loss of topsoil and substantial soil erosion during construction-related activities are not anticipated.

- c) **No Impact:** The proposed Project site is not 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. According to the USDA, NRCS, Soil Survey of Tulare County, The Nord fine sandy loam series consists of deep, well drained soils that formed from mixed alluvium. Nord fine sandy loam soils are on alluvial fans and flood plains. They have slope gradients from 0 to 2 percent. Elevations are 190 to 520 feet. Nord fine sandy loam soils are well drained with negligible runoff and moderate to moderately slow permeability.<sup>141</sup> The Tagus loam series consists of very deep, well drained soils drained; negligible to low runoff; moderate permeability formed in alluvium derived from granitic rock sources. Tagus soils are on terraces and have slopes of 0 to 2 percent. Elevations are 230 to 400 feet.<sup>142</sup> Therefore, the native soils identified on the site do not contain the characteristics of an expansive soil. As such, the proposed Akers Business Park would result in no impact and would not create substantial direct or indirect risks to life or property.
- d) **Less Than Significant Impact:** As described in Impact 7 c), the majority of the site is Nord fine sandy loam and Tagus loam soils are not considered expansive soils. As such, the proposed Project would result in a less than significant impact
- e) **Less Than Significant Impact:** The proposed Project includes the installation of an On-Site Wastewater Treatment System (OWTS) sufficient to meet the wastewater demands of future uses. The OWTS would be installed in accordance with appropriate regulations (e.g., Tulare County Environmental Health Services requirements) and as such, would be designed to ensure proper function. Therefore, the proposed Project would result in a less than significant impact.
- f) **Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation:** There are no known paleontological resources within the Project area, nor are there any known geologic features in the proposed Project area. The CHRIS and NAHC/SLF searches did not identify any paleontological (or cultural) resources. Additionally, no paleontological resources or sites, or unique geologic features have previously been encountered in the proposed Project area. Project construction will not be anticipated to disturb any paleontological resources not previously disturbed; however unlikely, there is a possibility that subsurface resources could be uncovered during construction-related activities. In such an event, potentially significant impacts to previously unknown subsurface resources may occur. With the implementation of Mitigation Measures 5-1 through 5-3, as specified in Item 5 Cultural Resources (as applicable), will ensure that any impact from the proposed Akers Business Park will be less than significant.

**Cumulative Impact Analysis: Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation** - The geographic area of this cumulative analysis is Tulare County. This cumulative analysis is based on the information provided in the Tulare County 2030 General Plan, Tulare County General Plan Background Report and/or Tulare County 2030 General Plan EIR. As noted previously, the Project applicant seeks a zone change to C-3-MU (Service Commercial with a Mixed-Use Overlay Zone) Zone to facilitate a Tentative Subdivision Map (TSM) to subdivide a 65.45-acre parcel and develop the proposed Akers Business Park as a mixed use commercial project that includes the expansion of the existing Magic Touch Recreational Vehicle Sales facility at the south end of the proposed Project (3567 N. Oaks St. Tulare, CA 93274), contractor offices, boat sales, and other related uses allowed in the C-3-MU Zone. Based upon the analysis above, including compliance with Tulare County General Plan policies, Tulare Ordinance Code, Building Codes, Regional Water Quality Control Board, San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District rules and Regulations, Mitigation Measures 5-1 through 5-3, etc., the proposed Akers Business Park will in a range of no- to less than significant impacts to this resource.

**Mitigation Measure(s)** See **Mitigation Measures 5-1 through 5-3** (which can be found in their entirety in Attachment "F" of this IS/MND)

<sup>141</sup> USDA. NRCS. Official Soil Series. Accessed August 2022 at: [https://soilseries.sc.egov.usda.gov/OSD\\_Docs/N/NORD.html](https://soilseries.sc.egov.usda.gov/OSD_Docs/N/NORD.html).

<sup>142</sup> Ibid. [https://soilseries.sc.egov.usda.gov/OSD\\_Docs/T/TAGUS.html](https://soilseries.sc.egov.usda.gov/OSD_Docs/T/TAGUS.html)

### VIII. GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

Would the project:	SIGNIFICANT IMPACT	LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT WITH MITIGATION	LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT	NO IMPACT
a) Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Conflict with any applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

The discussions regarding Environmental Setting, Regulatory Setting, CEQA requirements, Greenhouses Gases, etc.; contained in the Tulare County General Plan 2030 Update Tulare County General Plan Background Report, and Tulare County Environmental Impact Report are incorporated herein in their entirety. Where necessary and if available, additional site-specific facts, data, information, etc., are included in this discussion

#### Environmental Setting

As noted previously, the proposed Project (Akers Business Park) area is located approximately 0.50 miles north of the City of Tulare, in a predominantly agricultural, yet transitional, area of the San Joaquin Valley. The site is currently planted to walnuts, except at the southernmost portion of the site which currently has an RV sales development. Surrounding areas include agricultural production, light industrial, and SR 99 is immediately west of the site. The proposed Project’s applicant seeks a zone change to C-3-MU (Service Commercial with a Mixed-Use Overlay Zone) Zone to facilitate a Tentative Subdivision Map (TSM) to subdivide a 65.45-acre parcel and develop the proposed Akers Business Park as a mixed use commercial project that includes the expansion of the existing Magic Touch Recreational Vehicle Sales facility at the south end of the proposed Project (3567 N. Oaks St. Tulare, CA 93274), contractor offices, boat sales, and other related uses allowed in the C-3-MU Zone.

“An increase in the near surface temperature of the earth. Global warming has occurred in the distant past as the result of natural influences, but the term is most often used to refer to the warming predicted to occur as a result of increased emissions of greenhouse gases. Scientists generally agree that the earth’s surface has warmed by about 1 degree Fahrenheit in the past 140 years, but warming is not predicted evenly around the globe. Due to predicted changes in the ocean currents, some places that are currently moderated by warm ocean currents are predicted to fall into deep freeze as the pattern changes.”<sup>143</sup> “The warming of the earth’s atmosphere attributed to a buildup of CO<sub>2</sub> or other gases; some scientists think that this build-up allows the sun’s rays to heat the earth, while making the infra-red radiation atmosphere opaque to infrared radiation, thereby preventing a counterbalancing loss of heat. Ibid. Gases that trap heat in the atmosphere are called greenhouse gases (GHGs). The major concern is that increases in GHGs are causing global climate change. Global climate change is a change in the average weather on earth that can be measured by wind patterns, storms, precipitation and temperature. The gases believed to be most responsible for global warming are water vapor, carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>), methane (CH<sub>4</sub>), nitrous oxide (N<sub>2</sub>O), hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs), perfluorocarbons (PFCs), and sulfur hexafluoride (SF<sub>6</sub>).”<sup>144</sup> “Enhancement of the greenhouse effect can occur when concentrations of GHGs exceed the natural concentrations in the atmosphere. Of these gases, CO<sub>2</sub> and methane are emitted in the greatest quantities from human activities. Emissions of CO<sub>2</sub> are largely by-products of fossil fuel combustion, whereas methane primarily results from off-gassing associated with agricultural practices and landfills. SF<sub>6</sub> is a GHG commonly used in the utility industry as an insulating gas in transformers and other electronic equipment. There is widespread international scientific agreement that human-caused increases in GHGs has and will continue to contribute to global warming, although there is much uncertainty concerning the magnitude and rate of the warming.”<sup>145</sup> “Some of the potential resulting effects in California of global warming may include loss in snow pack, sea level rise, more extreme heat days per year, more high ozone days, more large forest fires, and more drought years (CARB, 2006). Globally, climate change has the potential to impact numerous environmental resources through potential, though uncertain, impacts related to future air temperatures and precipitation patterns. The projected effects of global warming on weather and climate are likely to vary regionally, but are expected to include the following direct effects (IPCC, 2001):

- Higher maximum temperatures and more hot days over nearly all land areas;

<sup>143</sup> Tulare County General Plan 2030 Update Background Report. Page 6-31.

<sup>144</sup> Ibid. 6-16 and 6-20.

<sup>145</sup> Op. Cit. 6-31.

- Higher minimum temperatures, fewer cold days and frost days over nearly all land areas;
- Reduced diurnal temperature range over most land areas; o Increase of heat index over land areas; and
- More intense precipitation events.”<sup>146</sup>

“Snowpack and snowmelt may also be affected by climate change. Much of California’s precipitation falls as snow in the Sierra Nevada and southern Cascades Mountain ranges, and snowpack represents approximately 35 percent of the state’s useable annual water supply.”<sup>147</sup> “The snowmelt typically occurs from April through July; it provides natural water flow to streams and reservoirs after the annual rainy season has ended.”<sup>148</sup> “As air temperatures increase due to climate change, the water stored in California’s snowpack could be affected by increasing temperatures resulting in: (1) decreased snowfall, and (2) earlier snowmelt.”<sup>149</sup>

“In 2007, Tulare County generated approximately 5.2 million tonnes of Carbon Dioxide Equivalent (CO<sub>2</sub>e). The largest portion of these emissions (63 percent) is attributed to dairies/feedlots, while the second largest portion (16 percent) is from mobile sources, the third largest portion (11%) is from electricity sources.”<sup>150</sup> Table 6-7 [Table 8-1 in this document] identifies Tulare County’s emissions by sector in 2007.”<sup>151</sup>

Sector	CO <sub>2</sub> e (tons/year)	% of Total
Electricity	542,690	11%
Natural Gas	321,020	6%
Mobile Sources	822,230	16%
Dairy/Feedlots	3,294,870	63%
Solid Waste	227,250	4%
Total	5,208,060	100%
<i>Per Capita</i>	<i>36.1</i>	

“In 2030, Tulare County is forecast to generate approximately 6.1 million tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>e. The largest portion of these emissions (59%) is attributed to dairies/feedlots, while the second largest portion (20%) is from mobile sources, and third largest portion (11%) is from electricity as shown on Table 6-8 [Table 8-2 in this document]. Per capita emissions in 2030 are projected to be approximately 27 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>e per resident.”<sup>153</sup>

Sector	CO <sub>2</sub> e (tons/year)	% of Total
Electricity	660,560	11%
Natural Gas	384,410	6%
Mobile Sources	1,212,370	20%
Dairy/Feedlots	3,601,390	59%
Solid Waste	246,750	4%
Total	6,105,480	100%
<i>Per Capita</i>	<i>27.4</i>	

The Tulare County General Plan contains the following: Enhancement of the greenhouse effect can occur when concentrations of GHGs exceed the natural concentrations in the atmosphere. Of these gases, CO<sub>2</sub> and methane are emitted in the greatest quantities from human activities. Emissions of CO<sub>2</sub> are largely by-products of fossil fuel combustion, whereas methane

<sup>146</sup> Op. Cit.

<sup>147</sup> Op. Cit. 8-85.

<sup>148</sup> Op. Cit.

<sup>149</sup> Op. Cit.

<sup>150</sup> Op. Cit. 6-36.

<sup>151</sup> Op. Cit. 6-38.

<sup>152</sup> Op. Cit.

<sup>153</sup> Op. Cit.

<sup>154</sup> Op. Cit.



primarily results from off-gassing associated with agricultural practices and landfills. SF6 is a GHG commonly used in the utility industry as an insulating gas in transformers and other electronic equipment. There is widespread international scientific agreement that human-caused increases in GHGs has and will continue to contribute to global warming, although there is much uncertainty concerning the magnitude and rate of the warming.<sup>155</sup>

The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District (Air District) proposed, and subsequently adopted, the following process for determining the cumulative significance of project specific GHG emissions on global climate change when issuing permits for stationary source projects:

- “Projects determined to be exempt from the requirements of CEQA would be determined to have a less than significant individual and cumulative impact for GHG emissions and would not require further environmental review, including analysis of project specific GHG emissions. Projects exempt under CEQA would be evaluated consistent with established rules and regulations governing project approval and would not be required to implement [Best Performance Practices] BPS.
- Projects complying with an approved GHG emission reduction plan or GHG mitigation program which avoids or substantially reduces GHG emissions within the geographic area in which the project is located would be determined to have a less than significant individual and cumulative impact for GHG emissions. Such plans or programs must be specified in law or approved by the lead agency with jurisdiction over the affected resource and supported by a CEQA compliant environmental review document adopted by the lead agency. Projects complying with an approved GHG emission reduction plan or GHG mitigation program would not be required to implement BPS.
- Projects implementing Best Performance Standards would not require quantification of project specific GHG emissions. Consistent with CEQA Guideline, such projects would be determined to have a less than significant individual and cumulative impact for GHG emissions.
- Projects not implementing Best Performance Standards would require quantification of project specific GHG emissions and demonstration that project specific GHG emissions would be reduced or mitigated by at least 29%, compared to [Business As Usual] BAU, including GHG emission reductions achieved since the 2002-2004 baseline period, consistent with GHG emission reduction targets established in ARB’s AB 32 Scoping Plan. Projects achieving at least a 29% GHG emission reduction compared to BAU would be determined to have a less than significant individual and cumulative impact for GHG.
- Project requiring preparation of an Environmental Impact Report would require quantification of project specific GHG emissions. Projects implementing BPS or achieving at least a 29% GHG emission reduction compared to BAU would be determined to have a less than significant individual and cumulative impact for GHG.”<sup>156</sup>

## Regulatory Setting

### *Federal*

While climate change has been a concern since at least 1988, as evidenced by the establishment of the United Nations and World Meteorological Organization’s Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), the efforts devoted to greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions reduction and climate change research and policy have increased dramatically in recent years.

The USEPA Mandatory Reporting Rule (40 CFR Part 98), which became effective December 29, 2009, requires that all facilities that emit more than 25,000 metric tons CO<sub>2</sub>-equivalent per year beginning in 2010, report their emissions on an annual basis. On May 13, 2010, the USEPA issued a final rule that established an approach to addressing GHG emissions from stationary sources under the CAA permitting programs. The final rule set thresholds for GHG emissions that define when permits under the New Source Review Prevention of Significant Deterioration and Title V Operating Permit programs are required for new and existing industrial facilities.

In addition, the Supreme Court decision in *Massachusetts v. EPA* (Supreme Court Case 05-1120) found that the USEPA has the authority to list GHGs as pollutants and to regulate emissions of GHGs under the CAA. On April 17, 2009, the USEPA found that CO<sub>2</sub>, CH<sub>4</sub>, nitrous oxide, hydrofluorocarbons, perfluorocarbons, and sulfur hexafluoride may contribute to air pollution and may endanger public health and welfare. This finding may result in the USEPA regulating GHG emissions; however, to date the USEPA has not proposed regulations based on this finding.

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<sup>155</sup> Op. Cit. 6-31.

<sup>156</sup> SJVAPCD. District Policy. Addressing GHG Emission Impacts for Stationary Source Projects Under CEQA When Serving as Lead Agency. Page 8 and 9. Accessed in August 2022 at: <https://www.valleyair.org/Programs/CCAP/12-17-09/2%20CCAP%20-%20FINAL%20District%20Policy%20CEQA%20GHG%20-%20Dec%2017%202009.pdf>



## State

In 2002, with the passage of Assembly Bill 1493 (AB 1493), California launched an innovative and pro-active approach to dealing with GHG emissions and climate change at the state level. AB 1493 requires the Air Resources Board (ARB) to develop and implement regulations to reduce automobile and light truck GHG emissions; these regulations applied to automobiles and light trucks beginning with the 2009 model year.

California has taken action to reduce GHG emissions. In June 2005, Governor Schwarzenegger signed Executive Order S-3-05 to address climate change and GHG emissions in California. This Order sets the following goals for statewide GHG emissions:

- Reduce to 2000 levels by 2010
- Reduce to 1990 levels by 2020
- Reduce to 80 percent below 1990 levels by 2050

“In 2006, the Legislature passed the California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006 [Assembly Bill 32 (AB 32 Opens in New Window)], which created a comprehensive, multi-year program to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in California. AB 32 required the California Air Resources Board (ARB or Board) to develop a Scoping Plan that describes the approach California will take to reduce GHGs to achieve the goal of reducing emissions to 1990 levels by 2020. The Scoping Plan was first approved by the Board in 2008 and must be updated every five years. Since 2008, there have been two updates to the Scoping Plan. Each of the Scoping Plans have included a suite of policies to help the State achieve its GHG targets, in large part leveraging existing programs whose primary goal is to reduce harmful air pollution.”<sup>157</sup>

“The First Update to the Scoping Plan was approved by the Board on May 22, 2014, and builds upon the initial Scoping Plan with new strategies and recommendations. The First Update identifies opportunities to leverage existing and new funds to further drive GHG emission reductions through strategic planning and targeted low carbon investments. The First Update defines ARB’s climate change priorities for the next five years, and also sets the groundwork to reach long-term goals set forth in Executive Orders S-3-05 and B-16-2012. The Update highlights California’s progress toward meeting the "near-term" 2020 GHG emission reduction goals defined in the initial Scoping Plan. It also evaluates how to align the State's "longer-term" GHG reduction strategies with other State policy priorities for water, waste, natural resources, clean energy, transportation, and land use.”<sup>158</sup>

“On April 29, 2015, the Governor issued Executive Order B-30-15 establishing a mid-term GHG reduction target for California of 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030. All state agencies with jurisdiction over sources of GHG emissions were directed to implement measures to achieve reductions of GHG emissions to meet the 2030 and 2050 targets. ARB was directed to update the AB 32 Scoping Plan to reflect the 2030 target, and therefore, is moving forward with the update process. The mid-term target is critical to help frame the suite of policy measures, regulations, planning efforts, and investments in clean technologies and infrastructure needed to continue driving down emissions.”<sup>159</sup>

“This Scoping Plan for Achieving California’s 2030 Greenhouse Gas Target (Scoping Plan or 2017 Scoping Plan) identifies how the State can reach our 2030 climate target to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by 40 percent from 1990 levels, and substantially advance toward our 2050 climate goal to reduce GHG emissions by 80 percent below 1990 levels. By selecting and pursuing a sustainable and clean economy path for 2030, the State will continue to successfully execute existing programs, demonstrate the coupling of economic growth and environmental progress, and enhance new opportunities for engagement within the State to address and prepare for climate change.”<sup>160</sup>

“This Scoping Plan builds on and integrates efforts already underway to reduce the State’s GHG, criteria pollutant, and toxic air contaminant emissions. Successful implementation of existing programs has put California on track to achieve the 2020 target. Programs such as the Low Carbon Fuel Standard and Renewables Portfolio Standard are delivering cleaner fuels and energy, the Advanced Clean Cars Program has put more than a quarter million clean vehicles on the road, and the Sustainable Freight Action Plan will result in efficient and cleaner systems to move goods throughout the State. Enhancing and implementing these ongoing efforts puts California on the path to achieving the 2030 target. This Scoping Plan relies on these,

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<sup>157</sup> ARB. AB 32 Scoping Plan. Accessed August 2022 at: <https://www.arb.ca.gov/cc/scopingplan/scopingplan.htm>.

<sup>158</sup> ARB. First Update to the AB 32 Scoping Plan. Accessed August 2022 at: <https://www.arb.ca.gov/cc/scopingplan/document/updatedscopingplan2013.htm>.

<sup>159</sup> ARB. Scoping Plan Update to Reflect 2030 Target. Accessed August 2022 at: <https://www.arb.ca.gov/cc/scopingplan/scopingplan.htm>.

<sup>160</sup> ARB. California’s 2017 Climate Change Scoping Plan. Page 1. Accessed August 2022 at: [https://ww3.arb.ca.gov/cc/scopingplan/scoping\\_plan\\_2017.pdf](https://ww3.arb.ca.gov/cc/scopingplan/scoping_plan_2017.pdf).

and other, foundational programs paired with an extended, more stringent Cap-and-Trade Program, to deliver climate, air quality, and other benefits.”<sup>161</sup>

### California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Requirements

#### Section 15064.4 Determining the Significance of Impacts from Greenhouse Gas Emissions

(a) The determination of the significance of greenhouse gas emissions calls for a careful judgment by the lead agency consistent with the provisions in section 15064. 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. A lead agency shall have discretion to determine, in the context of a particular project, whether to:

(1) Use a model or methodology to quantify greenhouse gas emissions resulting from a project, and which model or methodology to use. The lead agency has discretion to select the model or methodology it considers most appropriate provided it supports its decision with substantial evidence. The lead agency should explain the limitations of the particular model or methodology selected for use; and/or

(2) Rely on a qualitative analysis or performance based standards.

(b) A lead agency should consider the following factors, among others, when assessing the significance of impacts from greenhouse gas emissions on the environment:

(1) The extent to which the project may increase or reduce greenhouse gas emissions as compared to the existing environmental setting;

(2) Whether the project emissions exceed a threshold of significance that the lead agency determines applies to the project.

(3) 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. Such requirements must be adopted by the relevant public agency through a public review process and must reduce or mitigate the project’s incremental contribution of greenhouse gas emissions. If there is substantial evidence that the possible effects of a particular project are still cumulatively considerable notwithstanding compliance with the adopted regulations or requirements, an EIR must be prepared for the project.<sup>162</sup>

### *Regional*

#### California Air Pollution Control Officers Association (CAPCOA)

“In January 2008, the California Air Pollution Control Officers Association (CAPCOA) issued a “white paper” on evaluating GHG emissions under CEQA (CAPCOA, 2008). The CAPCOA white paper strategies are not guidelines and have not been adopted by any regulatory agency; rather, the paper is offered as a resource to assist lead agencies in considering climate change in environmental documents.”<sup>163</sup>

The California Association of Air Pollution Control Officers (CAPCOA) represents all thirty-five local air quality agencies throughout California. CAPCOA, which has been in existence since 1975, is dedicated to protecting the public health and providing clean air for all our residents and visitors to breathe, and initiated the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Exchange.<sup>164</sup>

“The Greenhouse Gas Reduction Exchange (GHG Rx) is a registry and information exchange for greenhouse gas emissions reduction credits designed specifically to benefit the state of California. The GHG Rx is a trusted source of locally generated credits from projects within California, and facilitates communication between those who create the credits, potential buyers,

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<sup>161</sup> Ibid.

<sup>162</sup> California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Section 15064.4 Determining the Significance of Impacts from Greenhouse Gas Emissions. Accessed August 2022 at: [https://www.califaep.org/statute\\_and\\_guidelines.php](https://www.califaep.org/statute_and_guidelines.php)

<sup>163</sup> Op. Cit. Page 6-28. Background Report citation: CEQA and Climate Change: Evaluating and Addressing Greenhouse Gas Emissions from Projects Subject to the California Environmental Quality Act. January 2008.

<sup>164</sup> California Air Pollution Control Officers Association (CAPCOA). Accessed August 2022 at: <http://www.capcoa.org/>.

and funding organizations.”<sup>165</sup> Four public workshops were held throughout the state including in the SJVAPCD. The mission is to provide a trusted source of high quality California-based greenhouse gas credits to keep investments, jobs, and benefits in-state, through an Exchange with integrity, transparency, low transaction costs and exceptional customer service.<sup>166</sup>

### San Joaquin Valley Unified Air Pollution Control District (Air District)

The Air District is made up of eight counties in California’s Central Valley: San Joaquin, Stanislaus, Merced, Madera, Fresno, Kings, Tulare and the San Joaquin Valley Air Basin portion of Kern. “The San Joaquin Valley Air District is a public health agency whose mission is to improve the health and quality of life for all Valley residents through efficient, effective and entrepreneurial air quality-management strategies.”<sup>167</sup>

The Air District adopted the *Climate Change Action Plan (CCAP)* in August 2008. “The CCAP directed the District Air Pollution Control Officer to develop guidance to assist Lead Agencies, project proponents, permit applicants, and interested parties in assessing and reducing the impacts of project specific greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions on global climate change.

On December 17, 2009, the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District (District) adopted the guidance: Guidance for Valley Land-use Agencies in Addressing GHG Emission Impacts for New Projects under CEQA, and the policy: District Policy – Addressing GHG Emission Impacts for Stationary Source Projects Under CEQA When Serving as the Lead Agency. The guidance and policy rely on the use of performance based standards, otherwise known as Best Performance Standards (BPS), to assess significance of project specific greenhouse gas emissions on global climate change during the environmental review process, as required by CEQA.

Use of BPS is a method of streamlining the CEQA process of determining significance and is not a required emission reduction measure. Projects implementing BPS would be determined to have a less than cumulatively significant impact. Otherwise, demonstration of a 29 percent reduction in GHG emissions, from business-as-usual, is required to determine that a project would have a less than cumulatively significant impact. The guidance does not limit a lead agency’s authority in establishing its own process and guidance for determining significance of project related impacts on global climate change.”<sup>168</sup>

The Air District’s *Guidance for Valley Land-use Agencies in Addressing GHG Emission Impacts for New Project under CEQA* document provides guidance to lead agencies for evaluating the significance of project-specific and cumulative impacts related to GHG emissions.<sup>169</sup> This guidance established the following process for evaluating the significance of project-specific GHG emissions on global climate change:

- “Projects determined to be exempt from the requirements of CEQA would be determined to have a less than significant individual and cumulative impact for GHG emissions and would not require further environmental review, including analysis of project specific GHG emissions. Projects exempt under CEQA would be evaluated consistent with established rules and regulations governing project approval and would not be required to implement [Best Performance Practices] BPS.
- Projects complying with an approved GHG emission reduction plan or GHG mitigation program which avoids or substantially reduces GHG emissions within the geographic area in which the project is located would be determined to have a less than significant individual and cumulative impact for GHG emissions. Such plans or programs must be specified in law or approved by the lead agency with jurisdiction over the affected resource and supported by a CEQA compliant environmental review document adopted by the lead agency. Projects complying with an approved GHG emission reduction plan or GHG mitigation program would not be required to implement BPS.
- Projects implementing Best Performance Standards would not require quantification of project specific GHG emissions. Consistent with CEQA Guideline, such projects would be determined to have a less than significant individual and cumulative impact for GHG emissions.

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<sup>165</sup> Ibid. See “CAPCOA GHG RX” tab

<sup>166</sup> CAPCOA. CAPCOA Greenhouse Gas Reduction Exchange. Accessed August 2022 at: <http://www.ghgrx.org/>.

<sup>167</sup> Air District. About the District. Accessed August 2022 at: Website: [http://www.valleyair.org/General\\_info/aboutdist.htm#Mission](http://www.valleyair.org/General_info/aboutdist.htm#Mission).

<sup>168</sup> Air District. Climate Change Action Plan. Accessed August 2022 at: [http://www.valleyair.org/Programs/CCAP/CCAP\\_menu.htm](http://www.valleyair.org/Programs/CCAP/CCAP_menu.htm)

<sup>169</sup> Air District. Guidance for Valley Land-use Agencies in Addressing GHG Emission Impacts for New Project under CEQA. Accessed August 2022 at: <http://www.valleyair.org/Programs/CCAP/12-17-09/3%20CCAP%20-%20FINAL%20LU%20Guidance%20-%20Dec%2017%202009.pdf>.

- Projects not implementing Best Performance Standards would require quantification of project specific GHG emissions and demonstration that project specific GHG emissions would be reduced or mitigated by at least 29%, compared to Business-As-Usual (BAU), including GHG emission reductions achieved since the 2002-2004 baseline period. Projects achieving at least a 29% GHG emission reduction compared to BAU would be determined to have a less than significant individual and cumulative impact for GHG.
- Notwithstanding any of the above provisions, projects requiring preparation of an Environmental Impact Report for any other reason would require quantification of project specific GHG emissions. Projects implementing BPS or achieving at least a 29% GHG emission reduction compared to BAU would be determined to have a less than significant individual and cumulative impact for GHG.”<sup>170</sup>

## *Local*

### Tulare County General Plan 2030 Update

The Tulare County General Plan 2030 Update: Chapter 9 – Air Quality contains a number of policies that apply to projects within Tulare County that support GHG reduction efforts and which have potential relevance to the Project’s CEQA review: *AQ-1.3 Cumulative Air Quality Impacts* wherein the County shall require development to be located, designed, and constructed in a manner that would minimize cumulative air quality impacts; *AQ-1.5 California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Compliance* wherein the County shall ensure that air quality impacts identified during the CEQA review process are consistently and reasonably mitigated when feasible; *AQ-1.7 Support Statewide Climate Change Solutions* wherein the County shall monitor and support the efforts of Cal/EPA, CARB, and the SJVAPCD, under AB 32 (Health and Safety Code §38501 et seq.), to develop a recommended list of emission reduction strategies, as appropriate, the County will evaluate each new project under the updated General Plan to determine its consistency with the emission reduction strategies; *AQ-1.8 Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reduction Plan/Climate Action Plan* wherein the County will develop a Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reduction Plan (Plan) that identifies greenhouse gas emissions within the County as well as ways to reduce those emissions. The Plan will incorporate the requirements adopted by the California Air Resources Board specific to this issue. In addition, the County will work with the Tulare County Association of Governments and other applicable agencies to include the following key items in the regional planning efforts.

1. Inventory all known, or reasonably discoverable, sources of greenhouse gases in the County,
2. Inventory the greenhouse gas emissions in the most current year available, and those projected for year 2020, and
3. Set a target for the reduction of emissions attributable to the County’s discretionary land use decisions and its own internal government operations.;

*AQ-3.2 Infill near Employment* requiring the County of identify opportunities for infill development near employment areas; *AQ-3.3 Street Design* regarding street designed to encourage transit use, biking, and pedestrian movement; *AQ-3.4 Landscape* regarding the use of ecologically based landscape design principles that can improve local air quality by absorbing CO<sub>2</sub>, producing oxygen, providing shade that reduces energy required for cooling, and filtering particulates; *AQ-3.5 Alternative Energy Design* wherein the County shall encourage all new development to incorporate energy conservation and green building practices to maximum extent feasible; *ERM-4.1 Energy Conservation and Efficiency Measures* wherein the County shall encourage energy conservation and efficiency features in new construction in accordance with State law; and *ERM-4.8 Energy Efficiency Standards* wherein the County shall encourage new developments to incorporate energy efficiency and conservation measures that exceed State Title 24 standards.

### Tulare County Climate Action Plan

The Tulare County Climate Action Plan (CAP) serves as a guiding document for County of Tulare (“County”) actions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to the potential effects of climate change. The CAP is an implementation measure of the 2030 General Plan Update. The General Plan provides the supporting framework for development in the County to produce fewer greenhouse gas emissions during Plan buildout. The CAP builds on the General Plan’s framework with more specific actions that will be applied to achieve emission reduction targets consistent with California legislation.<sup>171</sup>

“The County of Tulare (County) adopted the Tulare County Climate Action Plan (CAP) in August 2012. The CAP includes provisions for an update when the State of California Air Resources Board (CARB) adopts a Scoping Plan Update that provides post-2020 targets for the State and an updated strategy for achieving a 2030 target. Governor Brown signed Senate

<sup>170</sup> Ibid. 4 and 5.

<sup>171</sup> Tulare County Climate Action Plan. Page 1. Accessed August 2022 at: <http://generalplan.co.tulare.ca.us/documents/GeneralPlan2010/ClimateActionPlan.pdf>

Bill (SB) 32 on September 8, 2016, which contains the new 2030 target. The CARB 2017 Scoping Plan Update for the Senate Bill (SB) 32 2030 targets was adopted by the CARB on December 14, 2017 which provided new emission inventories and a comprehensive strategy for achieving the 2030 target (CARB 2017a). With the adoption of the 2017 Scoping Plan, the County proceeded with the 2018 CAP Update that is provided in this document.

The 2018 CAP Update incorporates new baseline and future year inventories to reflect the latest information and updates the County's strategy to address the SB 32 2030 target. The 2030 target requires the State to reduce emissions by 40 percent below 1990 levels from the 2017 Scoping Plan and County data. The CAP identifies the County's fair share of reductions required to maintain consistency with the State target."<sup>172</sup>

GHG emissions from construction and operation of the Project were estimated using CalEEMod from a previously approved Derrel's Mini Storage located on south Mooney Blvd. (Derrel's Mooney Blvd.) in Visalia. As air and GHG emissions are linear in nature, it is reasonable to estimate GHG emissions by analogy; as such, the proposed Project is approximately 88.12% the size of the Derrel's Mooney Blvd. resulting in the GHG emissions shown in **Table 7-1**. Additionally, combined CalEEMod outputs and emissions calculations for the original Sequoia Drive-In Business Park and this proposed Project are also provided in Attachment "A".

### **Project Impact Analysis:**

#### ***GHG's Assessed***

This analysis was restricted to GHGs identified by AB 32, which include carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>), methane (CH<sub>4</sub>), nitrous oxide (N<sub>2</sub>O), hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs), perfluorocarbons (PFCs), sulfur hexafluoride (SF<sub>6</sub>), and nitrogen trifluoride (NF<sub>3</sub>). The proposed project would generate a variety of GHGs, including several defined by AB 32 such as CO<sub>2</sub>, CH<sub>4</sub>, and N<sub>2</sub>O.

Water vapor could be emitted from evaporated water used for landscaping and other uses, but this is not a significant impact because water vapor concentrations in the upper atmosphere are primarily due to climate feedbacks rather than emissions from project-related activities.

Ozone is a GHG; however, unlike the other GHGs, ozone in the troposphere is relatively short-lived and can be reduced in the troposphere on a daily basis. Stratospheric ozone can be reduced through reactions with other pollutants.

Certain GHGs defined by AB 32 would not be emitted by the project. Perfluorocarbons and sulfur hexafluoride are typically used in industrial applications, none of which would be used by the project. Therefore, it is not anticipated that the project would emit perfluorocarbons or sulfur hexafluoride.

Certain GHGs defined by AB 32 would not be emitted by the project. HFCs, PFCs, SF<sub>6</sub>, and NF<sub>3</sub> are typically used in certain industrial applications, none of which would be used for typical commercial or gas station operations. Therefore, it is not anticipated that the proposed project would emit those GHGs.

GHG emissions associated with the proposed project construction as well as future operations were estimated using CO<sub>2</sub> equivalent (CO<sub>2</sub>e) emissions as a proxy for all GHG emissions. In order to obtain the CO<sub>2</sub>e, an individual GHG is multiplied by its Global Warming Potential (GWP). The GWP designates on a pound for pound basis the potency of the GHG compared to CO<sub>2</sub>.

#### ***Thresholds of Significance***

##### SJVAPCD

The SJVAPCD's Guidance for Valley Land-use Agencies in Addressing GHG Emission Impacts for New Projects under CEQA presents a tiered approach to analyzing project significance with respect to GHG emissions. Project GHG emissions are considered less than significant if they can meet any of the following conditions, evaluated in the order presented:

- Project is exempt from CEQA requirements;
- Project complies with an approved GHG emission reduction plan or GHG mitigation program;
- Project implements Best Performance Standards (BPS); or

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<sup>172</sup> Ibid.



- Project demonstrates that specific GHG emissions would be reduced or mitigated by at least 29 percent compared to Business-as-Usual (BAU), including GHG emission reductions achieved since the 2002-2004 baseline period.

The SJVAPCD’s Guidance for Valley Land-use Agencies in Addressing GHG Emission Impacts for New Projects under CEQA includes thresholds based on whether the project will reduce or mitigate GHG levels by 29 percent from BAU levels compared with 2005 levels by 2020.<sup>173</sup> This level of GHG reduction is based on the target established by CARB’s AB 32 Scoping Plan, approved in 2008. First occupancy at the project site is expected to occur in 2023. This date is past the AB 32 2020 milestone year. Given recent legislative and legal scrutiny on post-2020 compliance, additional discussion is provided to show progress towards GHG reduction goals identified in CARB’s 2017 Scoping Plan for the year 2030. Additionally, although not included in a formal GHG reduction plan, Executive Order S-3-05 also includes a goal of reducing GHG emissions 80 percent below 1990 levels by 2050 and Executive Order B-55-18 set the goal to achieve carbon neutrality statewide by 2045.<sup>174</sup>

### Newhall Ranch

The California Supreme Court decision in the *Center for Biological Diversity et al. vs. California Department of Fish and Wildlife, the Newhall Land and Farming Company* (62 Cal.4th 204 [2015]), and known as the Newhall Ranch decision), confirmed that the use of BAU analysis (e.g., 29 percent below BAU), a performance-based approach, would be satisfactory. However, for a project-level analysis that uses CARB’s statewide BAU targets, substantial evidence must be presented to support the use of those targets for a particular project at a specific location. The court noted that this may require examination of the data behind the statewide model and adjustment to the levels of reduction from BAU used for project evaluation. To date, neither CARB nor any lead agencies have provided any guidance on how to adjust AB 32’s statewide BAU target for use at the project level.<sup>175</sup>

The regulations in the State’s 2008 Scoping Plan have been adopted and the State is on track to meet the 2020 target and achieve continued progress towards meeting the 2017 Scoping Plan target for 2030.

In the Newhall case, the Supreme Court was concerned that new development may need to reduce GHG emissions more than existing development to demonstrate it is meeting its fair share of reductions. New development does do more than its fair share through compliance with enhanced regulations, particularly with respect to motor vehicles, energy efficiency, and electricity generation. If no additional reductions are required from an individual project beyond that achieved by regulations, then the amount needed to reach the 2020 target is the amount of GHG emissions a project must reduce to comply with Statewide goals.

### Project-level Thresholds

Section 15064.4(b) of the CEQA Guidelines’ amendments for GHG emissions states that a lead agency may take into account the following three considerations in assessing the significance of impacts from GHG emissions.

- Consideration #1: The extent to which the project may increase or reduce GHG emissions as compared to the existing environmental setting.
- Consideration #2: Whether the project emissions exceed a threshold of significance that the lead agency determines applies to the project.
- Consideration #3: 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 GHG emissions. Such regulations or requirements must be adopted by the relevant public agency through a public review process and must include specific requirements that reduce or mitigate the project’s incremental contribution of GHG emissions. If there is substantial evidence that the possible effects of a particular project are still cumulatively considerable notwithstanding compliance with the adopted regulations or requirements, an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) must be prepared for the project.

In addition, Section 15064.7(c) of the CEQA Guidelines specifies that “[w]hen adopting or using thresholds of significance, a lead agency may consider thresholds of significance previously adopted or recommended by other public agencies, or recommended by experts, provided the decision of the lead agency to adopt such thresholds is supported by substantial

<sup>173</sup> Air Quality, Health Risk Analysis, Greenhouse Gas, and Energy Technical Memorandum for the Setton Project (Memo). January 25, 2022. PDF Page 35. Included in Attachment A of this document.

<sup>174</sup> Ibid.

<sup>175</sup> Op. Cit.

evidence” (14 CCR 15064.7(c)). The CEQA Guidelines also clarify that the effects of GHG emissions are cumulative and should be analyzed in the context of CEQA’s requirements for cumulative impact analysis (see CEQA Guidelines § 15130(f)).

Per CEQA Guidelines § 15064(h)(3), a project’s incremental contribution to a cumulative impact can be found not cumulatively considerable if the project would comply with an approved plan or mitigation program that provides specific requirements that would avoid or substantially lessen the cumulative problem within the geographic area of the project. To qualify, such plans or programs must be specified in law or adopted by the public agency with jurisdiction over the affected resources through a public review process to implement, interpret, or make specific the law enforced or administered by the public agency. Examples of such programs include a “water quality control plan, air quality attainment or maintenance plan, integrated waste management plan, habitat conservation plan, natural community conservation plans [and] plans or regulations for the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions.” Put another way, CEQA Guidelines § 15064(h)(3) allows a lead agency to make a finding of less than significant for GHG emissions if a project complies with adopted programs, plans, policies and/or other regulatory strategies to reduce GHG emissions.

The significance of the project’s GHG emissions is evaluated consistent with CEQA Guidelines §15064.4(b)(2) by considering whether the project complies with applicable plans, policies, regulations and requirements adopted to implement a statewide, regional, or local plan for the reduction or mitigation of GHG emissions.

The Tulare County CAP aims to reduce GHG emissions from development projects in Tulare County. The CAP builds on state and regional policies aimed at reducing GHG emissions consistent with the SB 32 2030 GHG reduction target. The CAP relies on policies of the Tulare County General Plan to guide development projects. In addition, the CAP provides specific guidelines for determining if new development projects are consistent with the CAP. The CAP includes a progress report with metrics and benchmarks for tracking progress toward meeting the GHG reduction targets. The County’s progress is on track for all metrics.

The CAP is utilized to determine the significance from the project’s contribution of GHG emissions. For informational purposes only, the analysis first quantifies project-related GHG emissions under a BAU scenario, and then compares these emissions with emissions that would occur when all project-related design features are accounted for, and when compliance with applicable regulatory measures is assumed.

- a) **Less Than Significant Impact:** The CAP is utilized to determine the significance from the proposed Project’s contribution of GHG emissions. The proposed Project’s long-term GHG emissions are provided for informational purposes only.

**Construction Emissions**

GHG emissions generated during all phases of construction were combined and are shown in Table 17 (in the Memo, Table 8-3 in this document). The SJVAPCD does not have a recommendation for assessing the significance of construction related emissions, however, other jurisdictions such as the Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District (SMAQMD) have concluded that construction emissions should be included since they may remain in the atmosphere for years after construction is complete. The SMAQMD has established quantitative significance thresholds of 1,100 MT CO<sub>2e</sub> per year for the construction phases of land use projects.

<b>Table 8-3 Summary of Construction-Generated Greenhouse Gas Emissions<sup>176</sup></b>	
<b>Emissions Source</b>	<b>MT CO<sub>2e</sub> per Year</b>
Site Preparation	9
Grading	14
Building Construction	322
Paving	17
Architectural Coating	3
<b>Project Construction Total</b>	<b>365</b>
<b>SMAQMD Significance Threshold (Shown for Informational Purposes Only)</b>	<b>1,100</b>
<b>Threshold Exceeded?</b>	<b>No</b>
<i>Notes:            MT CO<sub>2e</sub> = metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent            Totals summed using unrounded numbers; totals may not appear to sum exactly due to rounding.            Source: CalEEMod Output and Additional Supporting Information (Attachment A of the Memo, Attachment “A” of this MND).</i>	

<sup>176</sup> Op. Cit. PDF Page 78.

## ***Operations***

Operational or long-term emissions occur over the life of the proposed Project. Sources of emissions may include motor vehicles and trucks, energy usage, water usage, waste generation, and area sources, such as landscaping activities and residential woodburning. Operational GHG emissions associated with the proposed Project were estimated using CalEEMod 2020.4.0. Please see the “Assumptions” sections of this technical memorandum for details regarding assumptions and methodology used to estimate emissions. Complete CalEEMod output files and additional supporting information are also included in Attachment “A” of this MND.

### Business-as-Usual Operational Emissions

Operational emissions under the business-as-usual scenario were modeled using CalEEMod 2020.4.0. Modeling assumptions for the year 2005 were used to represent 2020 business as usual conditions (without the benefit of regulations adopted to reduce GHG emissions). The CARB and SJVAPCD guidance recommend using regulatory conditions in 2002-2004 in the baseline scenario to represent conditions as if regulations had not been adopted to allow the effect of projected growth on achieving reduction targets to be clearly defined. CalEEMod defaults were used for project energy usage, water usage, waste generation, and area sources (architectural coating, consumer products, and landscaping). The vehicle fleet mixes were revised to reflect the project fleet mix identified for the buildout year.

### Buildout Year Operational Emissions

Operational emissions for the year 2023 were modeled using CalEEMod. CalEEMod assumes compliance with some, but not all, applicable rules and regulations regarding energy efficiency, vehicle fuel efficiency, renewable energy usage, and other GHG reduction policies, as described in the CalEEMod User’s Guide.<sup>177</sup>

The reductions obtained from each regulation and the source of the reduction amount used in the analysis are described below. The following regulations are incorporated into the CalEEMod emission factors:

- Pavley I and Pavley II (LEV III) motor vehicle emission standards
- CARB Medium and Heavy-Duty Vehicle Regulation
- 2005, 2008, 2013, 2016, and 2019 Title 24 Energy Efficiency Standards

The following regulations have not been incorporated into the CalEEMod emission factors and require alternative methods to account for emission reductions provided by the regulations:

- Renewables Portfolio Standard (RPS) requirements for year 2030
- Green Building Code Standards (indoor water use)
- California Model Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance (outdoor water)
- CalRecycle 75 Percent Initiative (solid waste)

Title 24 reductions for 2013 and 2016 updates were added to CalEEMod 2016.3.2 and were carried into CalEEMod 2020.4.0. Title 24 reductions for 2019 were added to CalEEMod 2020.4.0.

RPS is not accounted for in CalEEMod 2020.4.0. Reductions from RPS for operational years 2030 and beyond are addressed by revising the electricity emission intensity factor in CalEEMod to account for the utility RPS rate forecast for 2030. The utilities will be required by SB 100 to increase the use of renewable energy sources to 60 percent by 2030. The latest power content label for SCE was used to estimate a revised CO<sub>2</sub> intensity factor for use in the modeling.

Reductions in emissions from solid waste are based on Tulare County achieving the CalRecycle 75 Percent Initiative by 2020 compared with a 45 percent baseline.<sup>178</sup> Reductions are taken using the CalEEMod mitigation component.

“GHG reductions from some design features and compliance with regulations that are not otherwise accounted for can be quantified in CalEEMod. Note that CalEEMod nominally treats these design elements and conditions as “mitigation measures,” despite their inclusion in the project description. Therefore, reported operational emissions are considered to represent unmitigated project conditions.

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<sup>177</sup> California Air Pollution Control Officers Association (CAPCOA). 2021. California Emission Estimator Model (CalEEMod) Version 2020.4.0 User’s Guide. Accessed August 2022 at: [User’s Guide \(southcoastaqmd.gov\)](https://southcoastaqmd.gov)

<sup>178</sup> California Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery (CalRecycle). 2016. California’s 75 Percent Initiative: Defining the Future. Accessed August 2022 at: [Laws and Regulations - CalRecycle Home Page](https://www.calrecycle.ca.gov/Laws-Regulations)



Operational GHG emissions by source are shown in **Table 2 (in the Memo)**, **Table 8-4** in this document). Full buildout of the project is anticipated to occur in 2023.

<b>Table 2-4 Unmitigated Project Operational GHG Emissions (Buildout Year Scenario)<sup>179</sup></b>		
<b>Emission Source</b>	<b>Emissions (MT CO<sub>2</sub>e per year)</b>	
	<b>Business as Usual Total Emissions (MT CO<sub>2</sub>e per year)</b>	<b>Buildout Year (2023) Total Emissions with Regulations and Design Features (MT CO<sub>2</sub>e per year)</b>
Area	0.003	0.002
Energy	167	135
Mobile (Passenger Vehicles)	427	304
Mobile (Trucks)	4,992	3,925
Yard Tractor	864	864
Waste	31	22
Water	27	22
<b>Total</b>	<b>6,508</b>	<b>5,272</b>
Reduction from BAU		1,236
Percent Reduction		19%
SJVAPCD Significance Threshold (Shown for Informational Proposes Only)		29%
<p><i>MT CO<sub>2</sub>e = metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent. Totals were calculated using unrounded emissions; totals may not appear to sum exactly due to rounding. The project achieves the SJVAPCD 29 percent reduction from BAU threshold, and the 21.7 percent required to show consistency with AB 32 targets. Source of SJVAPCD Significance Threshold: San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District (SJVAPCD). 2015. Final Draft Guidance for Assessing and Mitigating Air Quality Impacts. Accessed August 2022 at: <a href="https://www.valleyair.org/transportation/GAMAQI-2015/FINAL-DRAFT-GAMAQI.PDF">https://www.valleyair.org/transportation/GAMAQI-2015/FINAL-DRAFT-GAMAQI.PDF</a>. Source of Business as Usual Emissions: CalEEMod output for the buildout year BAU scenario (see Attachment "A" of this MND). Source of Buildout Year Emissions: CalEEMod output for the year 2023 (Attachment "A" of this MND).</i></p>		

Emissions were assessed for full buildout operations in years 2023 and 2030. The 2030 scenario summarized in **Table 3 (in the Memo)**, **Table 8-5** in this document).<sup>180</sup>

“As shown in **Table 2 and Table 3 [in the Memo]**, **Tables 8-4 and 8-5** in this document; respectively] the project would achieve a 19 percent reduction from BAU at project buildout (2023) and 28 percent reduction from BAU by the year 2030 with adopted regulations and design features incorporated. However, significance for GHG emissions is analyzed by assessing the project’s compliance with Consideration No. 3 regarding consistency with adopted plans to reduce GHG emissions.

The 2017 Scoping Plan includes new strategies that are not incorporated in the analysis above. Many measures that are likely to proceed include zero net energy buildings in future updates to Title 24 and enhanced motor vehicle fuel efficiency standards beyond 2025. The 2017 Scoping Plan identified an emission limit of 260 million metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalents (MMTCO<sub>2</sub>e). The 2030 BAU Inventory is estimated to be 392 MMTCO<sub>2</sub>e. The 2017 Scoping Plan identified that the bulk of its reductions would come from the Electric Power, Industrial fuel combustion, and Transportation. The continuance of the Cap and Trade would provide additional reductions. Although the 2017 Scoping Plan largely relies on state actions to achieve the GHG emissions limit, the CARB considers local governments partners in achieving the State’s

<sup>179</sup> Air Quality, Health Risk Analysis, Greenhouse Gas, and Energy Technical Memorandum for the Setton Project. January 25, 2022. PDF Page 40. Included in Attachment A of this document.

<sup>180</sup> Ibid. PDF Pages 40-41.

goals for reducing GHG emissions. The 2017 Scoping Plan suggests that all new land use development implement feasible measures to reduce GHG emissions, however, it does not define feasible measures nor assign a required reduction amount to new development.

<b>Table 3</b>		
<b>Unmitigated Project Operational GHG Emissions (Buildout Year [2030] Scenario)<sup>181</sup></b>		
<b>Emission Source</b>	<b>Emissions (MT CO<sub>2</sub>e per year)</b>	
	<b>Business as Usual Total Emissions (MT CO<sub>2</sub>e per year)</b>	<b>2030 Year Total Emissions with Regulations and Design Features (MT CO<sub>2</sub>e per year)</b>
Area	0.003	0.002
Energy	167	118
Mobile (Passenger Vehicles)	419	239
Mobile (Trucks)	4,992	3,417
Yard Tractor	864	864
Waste	31	22
Water	27	20
<b>Total</b>	<b>6,500</b>	<b>4,680</b>
Reduction from BAU		1,820
Percent Reduction		28%
Significance Threshold (Shown for Informational Purposes Only)		29%
<i>MT CO<sub>2</sub>e = metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent.</i> <i>Totals were calculated using unrounded emissions; totals may not appear to sum exactly due to rounding.</i> <i>Source of Business-as-Usual Emissions: CalEEMod output for 2030 BAU scenario (see Attachment "A" in this MND).</i> <i>Source of 2030 Emissions: CalEEMod output for the year 2030 (Attachment "A" in this MND).</i>		

Regarding the years 2045 and 2050, there have been Executive Orders issued to address carbon neutrality and GHG reduction targets, respectively for those years, however, there are no existing GHG reduction measures or plans that specifically address those Orders. Historically, the State would take the lead in developing regulatory and market measures to achieve the required reductions. The proposed project would participate in the reductions through adherence with regulations and continued improvements to the motor vehicle efficiencies accessing the project site. Studies have shown that in order to meet the 2050 targets, aggressive pursuit of technologies in the transportation and energy sectors, including electrification and the decarbonization of fuel, will be required. Because of the technological shifts required and the unknown parameters of the regulatory framework in 2050, quantitatively analyzing the proposed project’s impacts further relative to the 2050 goals is speculative for purposes of CEQA.

Impact Analysis (Project’s Compliance with Consideration No. 3 Regarding Consistency with Adopted Plans to Reduce GHG Emissions)

The Tulare County CAP (2018) is a strategic planning document that identifies sources of GHG emissions within the County, presents current and future emissions estimates, identifies a GHG reduction target for future years, and presents strategic policies and actions to reduce emissions from the development project subject to CEQA. The GHG-reduction strategies in the Plan build key opportunities prioritized by County staff and members of the public.

To be consistent with the CAP, development projects less intense than a 500-unit subdivision or 100,000 square feet of retail or equivalent intensity for other uses can use the CAP consistency checklist. The checklist contains design features and measures that are used to determine consistency. The CAP Consistency Checklist is intended for use by Tulare County staff in performing a qualitative assessment of development projects subject to CEQA review and to identify projects that should

<sup>181</sup> Ibid.

include a quantitative analysis to determine if project emissions would result in a potentially significant impact on climate change.

Table [in the Memo, Table 8-6 in this document] provides a checklist containing measures that will provide reductions necessary to achieve CAP consistency and assess the project’s consistency against those measures.

<b>Table 4 Climate Action Plan Consistency Checklist</b>		
<b>Climate Action Plan Measure</b>	<b>Compliance Requirement</b>	<b>Consistency Assessment</b>
<b>Land Use:</b> Project is consistent with the Tulare County General Plan policies listed in the CAP applicable to GHG emissions and sustainability.	Review for compliance during project review process.	<b>Consistent.</b> The Tulare County General Plan contains policies that aim to reduce GHG emissions. The CAP references the General Plan policies as tools for reducing GHG emissions. These policies are divided into the categories of Transportation Strategies, Building Energy Efficiency, Water Conservation Energy Savings, Solid Waste Reduction and Recycling, and Agricultural Programs and Incentives. The policies are aimed at County action and do not specifically mandate action at the project level. Therefore, compliance with established and applicable regulations would ensure consistency with GHG reduction measures contained in the Tulare County 2030 General Plan. Furthermore, the project would be subject to review by the County. As such, the project would be consistent with this CAP measure prior to the implementation of mitigation.
<b>Land Use—Residential</b>	Not applicable.	<b>Not applicable.</b> The project is not a residential development.
<b>Land Use—Non-Residential:</b> Retail and office projects should be constructed within the boundaries of Rural Communities, HDB, UDB, LDB, and in designated transportation corridors to provide needed local goods services to residents and the traveling public. Agricultural industrial projects may be constructed in rural locations as long as consistent with the General Plan.	Review development plans to ensure locations are appropriate for type of project that is proposed and consistent with County plans.	<b>Consistent.</b> The project would be subject to review by the County prior to the implementation of mitigation ensure compliance with this CAP measure.
<b>Land Use Design—</b> Projects that require construction of new roads or major intersection improvements provide a fair share of improvements such as sidewalks and pedestrian friendly crossings, and bike lanes/paths connecting to schools, shopping, and other uses consistent with County development standards.	Include roadway improvements as conditions of approval of subdivision or commercial site plan.	<b>Consistent.</b> The project would be subject to review by the County prior to the implementation of mitigation ensure applicability and compliance with this CAP measure.
<b>Energy Efficiency:</b> Project complies with current version of Title 24.	Provide copy of the Title 24 Report demonstrating compliance with the applicable standards with Building Permit application.	<b>Consistent.</b> Development included as part of the proposed project would comply with the applicable Title 24 Energy Efficiency Standards in effect at the time building permits are received.
<b>Renewable Energy:</b> Project includes solar panels or other alternative energy source	Include solar on building plans and provide Title 24 compliance reports	<b>Mitigation is required to ensure consistency.</b> Compliance with existing

**Table 4  
Climate Action Plan Consistency Checklist**

<b>Climate Action Plan Measure</b>	<b>Compliance Requirement</b>	<b>Consistency Assessment</b>
meeting County Solar Ordinance or new Title 24 standards whichever is more stringent.	with Building Permit applications.	regulations only require solar ready roofs for industrial buildings and there are no other mechanisms, prior to the incorporation of mitigation, that would ensure the project would include solar panels or other carbon-free sourced energy.
<b>EV Charging:</b> Project meets charging installation/charging ready requirements of the CalGreen Code.	Include charging in building plans	<b>Mitigation is required to ensure consistency.</b> The project would be required to comply with mandatory requirements of the CalGreen Code (California Green Building Standards Code Section 5.106.5.3.2). Additionally, the project operator(s) can participate in incentives programs on electric vehicles and charging equipment for trucks once tenants have been identified. However, the compliance requirement for this CAP measure states that charging must be included in building plans. Therefore, MM 8-2 is required to ensure the project applicant will provide documentation to Tulare County demonstrating that the project design provides electrical vehicle charging infrastructure that would meet charging installation/charging ready requirements of the CalGreen Code.
<b>CalGreen Building Code Water:</b> Project complies with indoor and outdoor water conservation measures.	Provide copy of report showing code compliance.	<b>Consistent.</b> The project would comply with the California Green Building Standards Code, which requires a 20 percent reduction in indoor water use. The project would also include xeriscaping as a conservation measure.
<b>Water Conservation Landscaping</b>	Project complies with County water conservation ordinance requirements for landscaping.	<b>Consistent.</b> Development included as part of the project would comply with County water conservation ordinance requirements for landscaping. Specifically, landscaping is proposed as part of the project in the form of xeriscaping and will meet any requirements set forth by the County of Tulare.
<b>Solid Waste:</b> Project has access to recycling service for homes and businesses meeting CalRecycle requirements.	County verify that providers are in compliance with CalRecycle regulations regarding recycling and diversion of solid waste.	<b>Consistent.</b> This measure would apply to providers and not to individual development projects. The proposed project would be serviced by a provider subject to CalRecycle regulations regarding recycling and diversion of solid waste.
<b>Large Employment Projects:</b> Projects that will have large numbers of employees (over 100) are required to comply with Rule 9410 Employee Trip Reduction Plans (ETRIP). Provide a copy of the ETRIP plan to the County after approval of the plan by the SJVAPCD.	Employer is responsible for compliance with Rule 9410.	<b>Consistent.</b> Compliance with this CAP measure would not require implementation of mitigation to ensure compliance. Compliance with Rule 9410, which is an existing SJVAPCD regulation, would satisfy the requirements of this CAP measure.
<b>Industrial Projects:</b> Industrial projects	Employer is responsible for compliance	<b>Consistent.</b> Compliance with this CAP

Table 4 Climate Action Plan Consistency Checklist		
Climate Action Plan Measure	Compliance Requirement	Consistency Assessment
that are large employers will comply with Rule 9410. Industrial process related GHG emissions are not under the County’s regulatory authority but will require permits from the SJVAPCD and may be subject to Cap-and-Trade.	with Rule 9410.	measure would not require implementation of mitigation to ensure compliance. Compliance with applicable rules and regulations would satisfy the requirements of this CAP measure.
<i>Source of Checklist Questions: Tulare County 2018.</i>		

As noted in **Table (in the Memo, Table 8-6** in this document), compliance with existing regulations does not ensure compliance with CAP measures requiring the inclusion of EV charging and renewable sourced energy. As such, mitigation measures (MMs) **[in the Memo, Mitigation Measures 8-1 through 8-2** in this document] are required for the project to be consistent with the 2018 Tulare County CAP Update.”<sup>182</sup>

“**Table 8-7 (in the Memo, Table 8-7** in this document) provides an analysis of the proposed Project’s consistency with the portion of the CAP Consistency Checklist that outlines the consistency methods and criteria used to determine if a project requires a quantitative analysis to determine significance related to GHG emissions.

Table 8-7 Climate Action Plan Consistency Checklist – Quantitative Analysis Requirements	
	Consistency Assessment
<b>Projects Requiring Quantitative Analysis</b>	
1. Is the project inconsistent with one or more checklist questions?	<b>Quantitative Assessment Not Required with Incorporation of Mitigation.</b> The project’s consistency with the CAP checklist questions is included in Table (in the Memo, Table 8-6 in this MND). As noted in Table , the project would not be inconsistent with one or more checklist questions after incorporation of MM 8-1 and MM 8-2.
2. Does the project contain 500 or more residential units?	<b>Quantitative Assessment Not Required.</b> The project is industrial in nature and does not contain any residential units.
3. Does the project contain 100,000 square feet or more of retail space.	<b>Quantitative Assessment Not Required.</b> The project does not contain 100,000 square feet or more of retail space. The development contemplated as part of the proposed project includes a 50,000-square-foot industrial building with associated loading docks, parking spaces, and xeriscaping.
4. Does the project generate over 4,200 average daily trips?	<b>Quantitative Assessment Not Required.</b> The project is not anticipated to generate over 4,200 average daily trips. As shown in <b>Error! Reference source not found.</b> , it is estimated that the project would generate [redacted] average daily trip ([redacted] daily passenger vehicle trips and [redacted] daily truck trips).
<i>Source of Checklist Questions: Tulare County 2018.</i>	

<sup>182</sup> Op. Cit. 41-44.

As noted in **Table 8-7**, the proposed Project would not require a quantitative assessment after incorporation of MM 8-1 and MM 8-2 [in in this document, MM GHG-1 and MM GHG-2 in the Memo].”<sup>183</sup>

Based on this analysis, implementation of **Mitigation Measures 8-1** through **8-2** (which can be found in their entirety in Attachment F of this IS/MND) would reduce potential Project-specific impacts related to this Checklist Item to less than significant.

**b) No Impact:**

“The analysis contained above under **Impact GHG-1** [in the Memo, Impact 8-a) in this document] assesses the proposed project’s compliance with Consideration No. 3 regarding consistency with adopted plans to reduce GHG emissions by assessing the project’s consistency with the Tulare County CAP. In addition to the assessment provided under **Impact GHG-1** (in the Memo, Impact 8-a) in this document], the proposed project is also assessed for its consistency with CARB’s adopted Scoping Plans.

***Consistency with County of Tulare Climate Action Plan***

As evaluated in **Impact GHG-1** [in the Memo, Impact 8-a) in this document], the proposed project would not conflict with the GHG reduction goals identified in the Tulare County CAP. Specifically, the project would be consistent with the Tulare County CAP with incorporation of **MM GHG-1 and MM GHG-2** [in the Memo, MM 8-1 through MM 8-2 in this MND]. Therefore, implementation of **MM GHG-1 and MM GHG-2** [in the Memo, MM 8-1 through MM 8-2 in this MND] would be required for the project to be considered less than significant regarding the project’s potential to conflict with any applicable plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purposes of reducing the emissions of GHGs.

***Consistency with CARB’s Adopted Scoping Plans***

The State’s regulatory program implementing the 2008 Scoping Plan is now fully mature. All regulations envisioned in the Scoping Plan have been adopted, and the effectiveness of those regulations has been estimated by the agencies during the adoption process and then tracked to verify their effectiveness after implementation. The combined effect of this successful effort is that the State now projects that it will meet the 2020 target and achieve continued progress toward meeting post-2020 targets. Governor Brown, in the introduction to Executive Order B-30-15, stated “California is on track to meet or exceed the current target of reducing greenhouse gas emissions to 1990 levels by 2020, as established in the California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006 (AB 32).

The State’s regulatory program is able to target both new and existing development because the two most important strategies, motor vehicle fuel efficiency and emissions from electricity generation, obtain reductions equally from existing sources and new sources. This is because all vehicle operators use cleaner low carbon fuels and buy vehicles subject to the fuel efficiency regulations and all building owners or operators purchase cleaner energy from the grid that is produced by increasing percentages of renewable fuels. This includes regulations on mobile sources such as the Pavley standards that apply to all vehicles purchased in California, the LCFS (Low Carbon Fuel Standard) that applies to all fuel sold in California, and the Renewable Portfolio Standard and Renewable Energy Standard under SB 100 that apply to utilities providing electricity to all California end users.

Moreover, the Scoping Plan strategy will achieve more than average reductions from energy and mobile source sectors that are the primary sources related to development projects and lower than average reductions from other sources such as agriculture. The proposed project’s operational GHG emissions would principally be generated from electricity consumption and vehicle use (including heavy trucks), which are directly under the purview of the Scoping Plan strategy and have experienced reductions above the State average reduction. Considering this information, the proposed project would be consistent with the State’s AB 32 and SB 32 GHG reduction goals. As such, the proposed project’s GHG impacts would be less than significant.

***Consistency Regarding GHG Reduction Goals for 2050 under Executive Order S-3-05***

Regarding goals for 2050 under Executive Order S-3-05, at this time it is not possible to quantify the emissions savings from future regulatory measures, as they have not yet been developed; nevertheless, it can be anticipated that operation of

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<sup>183</sup> Op. Cit. 45-46.

the proposed project would comply with whatever measures are enacted that State lawmakers decide would lead to an 80 percent reduction below 1990 levels by 2050. In its 2008 Scoping Plan, CARB acknowledged that the “measures needed to meet the 2050 are too far in the future to define in detail.” In the First Scoping Plan Update; however, CARB generally described the type of activities required to achieve the 2050 target: “energy demand reduction through efficiency and activity changes; large scale electrification of on-road vehicles, buildings, and industrial machinery; decarbonizing electricity and fuel supplies; and rapid market penetration of efficiency and clean energy technologies that requires significant efforts to deploy and scale markets for the cleanest technologies immediately.” The 2017 Scoping Plan provides an intermediate target that is intended to achieve reasonable progress toward the 2050 target.

Accordingly, taking into account the proposed project’s design features and the progress being made by the State towards reducing emissions in key sectors such as transportation, industry, and electricity, the proposed project would be consistent with State GHG Plans and would further the State’s goals of reducing GHG emissions 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030, and 80 percent below 1990 levels by 2050, and does not obstruct their attainment.”<sup>184</sup>

Based on this analysis, implementation of **Mitigation Measures 8-1** through **8-2** (which can be found in their entirety in Attachment “F” of this IS/MND) would reduce potential Project-specific impacts related to this Checklist Item to a level considered less than significant.

**Cumulative Impact Analysis: Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation** - The geographic area of this cumulative analysis is the San Joaquin Valley Air Basin. As the proposed Project (Akers Business Park) is consistent with the Tulare County General Plan 2030 Update, Tulare County General Plan Background Report, Tulare County General Plan 2030 Update EIR, Tulare County Climate Action Plan, and previously noted plans, policies, and regulations. the proposed Project area is located approximately 0.50 miles north of the City of Tulare, in a predominantly agricultural, yet transitional, area of the San Joaquin Valley. The site is currently planted to walnuts, except at the southernmost portion of the site which currently has an RV sales development. Surrounding areas include agricultural production, light industrial, and SR 99 is immediately west of the site. The proposed Project’s applicant seeks a zone change to C-3-MU (Service Commercial with a Mixed-Use Overlay Zone) Zone to facilitate a Tentative Subdivision Map (TSM) to subdivide a 65.45-acre parcel and develop the proposed Akers Business Park as a mixed use commercial project that includes the expansion of the existing Magic Touch Recreational Vehicle Sales facility at the south end of the proposed Project (3567 N. Oaks St. Tulare, CA 93274), contractor offices, boat sales, and other related uses allowed in the C-3-MU Zone. With implementation of Mitigation Measures 8-1 and 8-2, the proposed Project will less than significant Project-specific and cumulative impacts.

**Mitigation Measures** See **Mitigation Measures 8-1** through **8-2**

- 8-1** Prior to issuance of building permits, the project applicant or project sponsor shall provide documentation that demonstrates project design provides electrical vehicle charging infrastructure.
- 8-2.** Prior to the issuance of any certificate of occupancy for the proposed project, the project applicant or project sponsor shall provide the Tulare County with documentation, to the County’s satisfaction, demonstrating that the project will include on-site renewable sources of electricity or the project’s electricity demand will be supplied with 100 percent carbon-free electricity sources through the year 2045.

Based on this analysis, implementation of **Mitigation Measures 8-1** through **8-2** (which can be found in their entirety in Attachment “F” of this IS/MND) would reduce potential Project-specific impacts by the Akers Business Park related to this Checklist Item to less than significant.

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<sup>184</sup> Op. Cit. 46-48.

**IX. HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS**

Would the project:	SIGNIFICANT IMPACT	LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT WITH MITIGATION	LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT	NO IMPACT
a) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing or working the project area?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
f) Impair implementation of, or physically interfere with, an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
g) Expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

The discussions regarding Environmental Setting, Regulatory Setting, CEQA requirements, Hazards and Hazardous Materials, etc. contained in the Tulare County General Plan 2030 Update and Tulare County Environmental Impact Report are incorporated herein in their entirety. Where necessary and if available, additional site-specific facts, data, information, etc., are included in this discussion.

**Environmental Setting**

“A hazardous material is defined by the California Code of Regulations (CCR) as a substance that, because of physical or chemical properties, quantity, concentration, or other characteristics, may either (1) cause an increase in mortality or an increase in serious, irreversible, or incapacitating, illness; or (2) pose a substantial present or potential hazard to human health or the environment when improperly treated, stored, transported or disposed of (CCR, Title 22, Division 4.5, Chapter 10, Article 2, Section 66260.10).”<sup>185</sup>

“Hazardous wastes are hazardous materials that no longer have practical use, such as substances that have been discarded, discharged, spilled, contaminated, or are being stored prior to proper disposal. According to Title 22 of the CCR, hazardous materials and hazardous wastes are classified according to four properties: toxic, ignitable, corrosive, and reactive (CCR, Title 22, Chapter 11, Article 3).”<sup>186</sup>

<sup>185</sup> Tulare County General Plan 2030 Update Background Report. Page 8-26.

<sup>186</sup> Ibid. 8-26.



As previously noted, the proposed Project (Akers Business Park) site is located on the San Joaquin Valley floor in an unincorporated area. The proposed Project area is located approximately 0.50 miles north of the City of Tulare, in a predominantly agricultural, yet transitional, area of the San Joaquin Valley. The site is currently planted to walnuts, except at the southernmost portion of the site which currently has an RV sales development. Surrounding areas include agricultural production, light industrial, and SR 99 is immediately west of the site. The proposed Project's applicant seeks a zone change to C-3-MU (Service Commercial with a Mixed-Use Overlay Zone) Zone to facilitate a Tentative Subdivision Map (TSM) to subdivide a 65.45-acre parcel and develop the proposed Akers Business Park as a mixed use commercial project that includes the expansion of the existing Magic Touch Recreational Vehicle Sales facility at the south end of the proposed Project (3567 N. Oaks St. Tulare, CA 93274), contractor offices, boat sales, and other related uses allowed in the C-3-MU Zone.

The nearest airport (Mefford Field Airport, in Tulare) is approximately six (6) miles southeast of the proposed Project site. The nearest operational landfill is Visalia Landfill, approximately ten (10) miles northwest of the proposed Project site. Woodville Landfill is anticipated to become operational

The nearest elementary school (Heritage Elementary School, in Tulare) is located approximately 1.5 miles southeast of the Project site; the next nearest school is Mission Valley Elementary School (in Tulare) approximately 1.75 miles southeast.

## Regulatory Setting

### *Federal*

The NFPA 70®: National Electrical Code® is adopted in all 50 states. It includes requirements for electrical wiring and equipment. Article 705 covers interconnecting generators, windmills, and solar and fuel cells with other power supplies.<sup>187</sup> The federal Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) and California Hazardous Waste Control Law regulate the disposal of solar PV cells. The local hazardous waste regulatory authority is the County of Tulare.

### *State*

The California Department of Industrial Relations, Division of Occupational Safety and Health, is the administering agency designed to protect worker health and general facility safety. The California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CalFire) has designated the area that includes the project site as a Local Responsibility Area which is defined as an area where the local fire jurisdiction is responsible for emergency fire response. The project area is also defined as "Unzoned," which means that the fire hazard severity of the site has not been determined.<sup>188</sup>

### *Local*

#### Tulare County General Plan 2030 Update

The Tulare County General Plan 2030 Update (at Chapter 10 – Health and Safety) contains the following goals and policies that relate to hazards and hazardous materials, and which have potential relevance to the proposed Project's CEQA review: *HS-4.1 Hazardous Materials* wherein the County shall strive to ensure hazardous materials are used, stored, transported, and disposed of in a safe manner, in compliance with local, State, and Federal safety standards, including the Hazardous Waste Management Plan, Emergency Operations Plan, and Area Plan; *HS-4.2 Establishment of Procedures to Transport Hazardous Wastes* wherein the County shall continue to cooperate with the California Highway Patrol (CHP) to establish procedures for the movement of hazardous wastes and explosives within the County; *HS-4.3 Incompatible Land Uses* wherein the County shall prevent incompatible land uses near properties that produce or store hazardous waste; and *HS-4.4 Contamination Prevention* wherein the County shall review new development proposals to protect soils, air quality, surface water, and groundwater from hazardous materials contamination.

## Project Impact Analysis:

**a) and b) Less Than Significant Impact:** The proposed Project (Akers Business Park) may require the transport and use of small quantities of hazardous materials in the form of gasoline, diesel, and oil. Proposed Project construction-related activities will require the transport and use of small quantities of hazardous materials in the form of, for example, gasoline,

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<sup>187</sup> National Fire Protection Association. 2010. NFPA 70: National Fire Code. Accessed August 2022 at: [NFPA 70®: National Electrical Code®](#)

<sup>188</sup> California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection. 2007. Draft Fire Severity Zones in LRA Map. Accessed August 2022 at: [https://osfm.fire.ca.gov/media/6832/fhsz106\\_1\\_map54.pdf](https://osfm.fire.ca.gov/media/6832/fhsz106_1_map54.pdf).

diesel, and oil during construction-related activities. Construction-related activities will be intermittent, temporary, and short-term as they occur. If refueling occurs on site, there is the potential for small leaks due to refueling of the construction-related equipment; however, standard construction Best Management Practices (BMPs) included in the SWPPP will reduce the potential for accidental release of construction-related fuels and other hazardous materials. Therefore, the proposed Project will result in a less than significant impact regarding hazards/hazardous materials.

- c) **No Impact:** As noted earlier, the nearest school, Heritage Elementary School (in Tulare) is located approximately 1.5 miles southeast of the proposed Project site. As such, construction-related activities will be intermittent, temporary, and short-term as they occur. As such, it is not anticipated that the Akers Business Park project would result in the release of hazardous emissions, involve hazardous materials, or create a hazard to the school. There will be no impact.
- d) **No Impact:** According to the State of California Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) – Envirostor Search, there is one hazardous materials site within an approximate two-mile radius of the proposed Project site.<sup>189</sup> “The Moore Aviation [site] was used for 30 years, starting in 1952, to store agricultural products in support of a crop dusting operation which utilized an airstrip to the north of the site across Cartmill Ave. The site has been vacant since 1982. Contaminants stored at the site that have been detected in soil samples include DDT, DDE, chlordane, Dieldrin, and Endrin. Several metals have also been detected in site soil samples. Soil samples to date have been collected near the storage areas. There is currently one building located onsite. It is known to have been used for the storage of pesticides and other agriculture related products. A Phase II Site Assessment was completed in October of 2005. This previous work focused on storage areas at the site. Current plans call for DTSC to complete a Targeted Site Investigation (TSI), under a TSI Grant, that will more accurately define the extent of contamination across the site and identify and screen remedial alternatives. This work will be completed by LFR Inc., under contract with DTSC.”<sup>190</sup> The Envirostor data indicates that no further action was required as of July 19, 2010. The proposed Project site is not listed as hazardous materials sites pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and is not included on a list compiled by the Department of Toxic Substances Control per a review of “Identified Hazardous Waste Sites” (conducted on September 1, 2022 by RMA staff). Therefore, as the proposed Project site is not included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5, it would not create a significant hazard to the public or the environment.
- e) **No Impact:** The nearest airport (Mefford Field Airport in Tulare), is approximately six (6) miles southeast of the proposed Project site; there are no private airports within the proposed Project vicinity. The proposed Project would not result in the placement of any structures sufficiently tall enough to interfere with the flight path of either airport. The proposed Project will not conflict with Tulare County Comprehensive Airport Land Use Plan (CALUP) policy and it is not within any airport’s safety zone. The proposed Project will not result in a safety hazard for people working in the area. As such, the proposed Akers Business Park would result in no impact to this resource.
- f) **No Impact:** The proposed Project will not impair the implementation of, or physically interfere with, an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan. Per standard conditions of approval, the proposed Project contains sufficient access for emergency access. There would be no impact as a result of the proposed Akers Business Park project.
- g) **No Impact:** The surrounding areas include agricultural production, light industrial, and SR 99 is immediately west of the site. As such, it is not subject or vulnerable to wildland fires. As the proposed Project is not within a wildland area, it is not susceptible to wildland fire. As such, the proposed Akers Business Park project would not expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires and would result in no impact to this resource. See also Item 20 Wildfire.

**Cumulative Impact Analysis: Less Than Significant Impact** - The geographic area of this cumulative analysis is Tulare County. This cumulative analysis based on the information provided in the Tulare County 2030 General Plan, General Plan background Report, and/or Tulare County 2030 General Plan EIR. The proposed Project (Akers Business Park) area is located approximately 0.50 miles north of the City of Tulare, in a predominantly agricultural, yet transitional, area of the San Joaquin Valley. The site is currently planted to walnuts, except at the southernmost portion of the site which currently has an RV sales development. Surrounding areas include agricultural production, light industrial, and SR 99 is immediately west of the site. The proposed Project’s applicant seeks a zone change to C-3-MU (Service Commercial with a Mixed-Use Overlay Zone) Zone to facilitate a Tentative Subdivision Map (TSM) to subdivide a 65.45-acre parcel and develop the proposed Akers Business Park as a mixed use commercial project that includes the expansion of the existing Magic Touch Recreational Vehicle Sales

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<sup>189</sup> California Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC). Envirostor. Accessed September 2022 at: <https://www.envirostor.dtsc.ca.gov/public/map/?myaddress=Tulare+County%2C+CA>

<sup>190</sup> Ibid. Moore Aviation (60000853). Accessed September 2022 at: [https://www.envirostor.dtsc.ca.gov/public/profile\\_report?global\\_id=60000853](https://www.envirostor.dtsc.ca.gov/public/profile_report?global_id=60000853)

facility at the south end of the proposed Project (3567 N. Oaks St. Tulare, CA 93274), contractor offices, boat sales, and other related uses allowed in the C-3-MU Zone. Development throughout the Project area and its vicinity will cumulatively, under Year 2030 build out conditions, increase the potential for exposure to existing hazards associated with State Route 99. However, as discussed earlier, the transportation of hazardous materials will continue to be regulated by federal, state, and regional agencies, and all new development will be subject to independent environmental review and all applicable regulations to minimize any potential health risks associated with freeways. Therefore, through appropriate regulations, potential cumulative health impacts associated with the build out of the entire proposed Project area (including the proposed Akers Business Park) would result in less than significant Project-specific and Cumulative Impacts related to this Checklist Item

**X. HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY**

Would the project:	SIGNIFICANT IMPACT	LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT WITH MITIGATION	LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT	NO IMPACT
a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or groundwater quality?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
i) Result in substantial erosion or siltation on-or off-site?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
ii) Substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or offsite?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
iv) Impede or redirect flood flows?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d) In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk release of pollutants due to project inundation?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
e) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

The discussions regarding Environmental Setting, Regulatory Setting, CEQA requirements, Hydrology and Water Quality, etc. contained in the Tulare County General Plan 2030 Update and Tulare County Environmental Impact Report are incorporated herein in their entirety. Where necessary and if available, additional site-specific facts, data, information, etc., are included in this discussion.

**Environmental Setting**

As previously noted, the proposed Project (Akers Business Park) site is located on the San Joaquin Valley floor in an unincorporated area. The purpose of the application is to facilitate the establishment of a convenience store (with gas station), self-storage (mini-warehouses), and future service commercial uses. The proposed Project area is located approximately 0.50 miles north of the City of Tulare, in a predominantly agricultural, yet transitional, area of the San Joaquin Valley. The site is currently planted to walnuts, except at the southernmost portion of the site which currently has an RV sales development. Surrounding areas include agricultural production, light industrial, and SR 99 is immediately west of the site. The proposed Project’s applicant seeks a zone change to C-3-MU (Service Commercial with a Mixed-Use Overlay Zone) Zone to facilitate a Tentative Subdivision Map (TSM) to subdivide a 65.45-acre parcel and develop the proposed Akers Business Park as a mixed use commercial project that includes the expansion of the existing Magic Touch Recreational Vehicle Sales facility at the south end of the proposed Project (3567 N. Oaks St. Tulare, CA 93274), contractor offices, boat sales, and other related uses allowed in the C-3-MU Zone.

Hydrology in the Project vicinity is associated with the Tulare Lake Basin, one of three main water subareas in the county. The Tulare Lake Basin is in the northern alluvial fan and basin subarea which is characterized by southwest-to-south flowing rivers, creeks, and irrigation canal systems that convey water from the Sierra Nevada to the west toward the Tulare Lake Bed. The

southern portion of the basin is internally drained by the Kings, Kaweah, Tule, and Kern Rivers.<sup>191</sup> The Tulare Lake Basin comprises the drainage area of the San Joaquin Valley south of the San Joaquin River and is essentially a closed basin because surface water drains north into the San Joaquin River only in years of extreme rainfall. According to the U.S. Geological Survey, Cameron Creek is the nearest body of water in the vicinity of the proposed Project; it is located north of Oakdale Avenue, north of the proposed Project site.<sup>192</sup>

### ***Flooding***

“Flooding is a natural occurrence in the Central Valley because it is a natural drainage basin for thousands of watershed acres of Sierra Nevada and Coast Range foothills and mountains. Two kinds of flooding can occur in the Central Valley: general rainfall floods occurring in the late fall and winter in the foothills and on the valley floor; and snowmelt floods occurring in the late spring and early summer. Most floods are produced by extended periods of precipitation during the winter months. Floods can also occur when large amounts of water (due to snowmelt) enter storage reservoirs, causing an increase in the amount of water that is released.”<sup>193</sup>

“Official floodplain maps are maintained by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). FEMA determines areas subject to flood hazards and designates these areas by relative risk of flooding on a map for each community, known as the Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM). A 100-year flood is considered for purposes of land use planning and protection of property and human safety. The boundaries of the 100-year floodplain are delineated by FEMA on the basis of hydrology, topography, and modeling of flow during predicted rainstorms.”<sup>194</sup>

“The flood carrying capacity in rivers and streams has decreased as trees, vegetation, and structures (e.g., bridges, trestles, buildings) have increased along the Kaweah, Kings, and Tule Rivers. Unsecured and uprooted material can be carried down a river, clogging channels and piling up against trestles and bridge abutments that can, in turn, give way or collapse, increasing blockage and flooding potential. Flooding can force waters out of the river channel and above its ordinary floodplain. Confined floodplains can result in significantly higher water elevations and higher flow rates during high runoff and flood events.”<sup>195</sup>

### **Regulatory Setting**

#### *Federal*

#### Clean Water Act

The Clean Water Act (CWA) is intended to restore and maintain the chemical, physical, and biological integrity of the nation’s waters (33 CFR 1251). The regulations implementing the CWA protect waters of the U.S. including streams and wetlands (33 CFR 328.3). The CWA requires states to set standards to protect, maintain, and restore water quality by regulating point source and some non-point source discharges. Under Section 402 of the CWA, the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit process was established to regulate these discharges.

#### Safe Drinking Water Act

“The Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA) is the main federal law that ensures the quality of Americans' drinking water. Under SDWA, EPA sets standards for drinking water quality and oversees the states, localities, and water suppliers who implement those standards... SDWA was originally passed by Congress in 1974 to protect public health by regulating the nation's public drinking water supply. The law was amended in 1986 and 1996 and requires many actions to protect drinking water and its sources: rivers, lakes, reservoirs, springs, and ground water wells. (SDWA does not regulate private wells which serve fewer than 25 individuals.)”<sup>196</sup>

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<sup>191</sup> California Department of Water Resources. Draft California’s Groundwater Bulletin 118. 2020. Accessed August 2022 at: <https://water.ca.gov/Programs/Groundwater-Management/Bulletin-118>.

<sup>192</sup> United States Geological Survey (USGS). National Map Viewer. Accessed August 2022 at: [The National Map Viewer | U.S. Geological Survey \(usgs.gov\)](https://www.usgs.gov/national-map-viewer)

<sup>193</sup> Tulare County General Plan 2030 Update. Recirculated Draft Environmental Impact Report. Page 3.6-28. Accessed August 2022 at: <http://generalplan.co.tulare.ca.us/documents/generalplan2010/RecirculatedDraftEIR.pdf>

<sup>194</sup> California Department Of Water Resources. California’s Groundwater Bulletin 118. Tulare Lake Hydrologic Region. San Joaquin Valley Groundwater Basin. Site. Pages 3.9-18. Accessed August 2022 at: [http://www.water.ca.gov/pubs/groundwater/bulletin\\_118/basindescriptions/5-22.11.pdf](http://www.water.ca.gov/pubs/groundwater/bulletin_118/basindescriptions/5-22.11.pdf).

<sup>195</sup> Ibid.

<sup>196</sup> United States Environmental Protection Agency (US EPA or EPA). EPA Drinking Water Requirements for States and Public Water System Drinking Water Regulations. Accessed August 2022 at: <http://water.epa.gov/lawsregs/rulesregs/sdwa/index.cfm>.

The National Flood Insurance Act (1968) makes available federally subsidized flood insurance to owners of flood-prone properties. To facilitate identifying areas with flood potential, Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has developed Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRM) that can be used for planning purposes.

### Environmental Protection Agency

The mission of EPA is to protect human health and the environment.

EPA's purpose is to ensure that:

- all Americans are protected from significant risks to human health and the environment where they live, learn and work;
- national efforts to reduce environmental risk are based on the best available scientific information;
- federal laws protecting human health and the environment are enforced fairly and effectively;
- environmental protection is an integral consideration in U.S. policies concerning natural resources, human health, economic growth, energy, transportation, agriculture, industry, and international trade, and these factors are similarly considered in establishing environmental policy;
- all parts of society -- communities, individuals, businesses, and state, local and tribal governments -- have access to accurate information sufficient to effectively participate in managing human health and environmental risks;
- environmental protection contributes to making our communities and ecosystems diverse, sustainable and economically productive; and
- the United States plays a leadership role in working with other nations to protect the global environment.”<sup>197</sup>

### United States Army Corps of Engineers

“The Department of the Army Regulatory Program is one of the oldest in the Federal Government. Initially it served a fairly simple, straightforward purpose: to protect and maintain the navigable capacity of the nation's waters. Time, changing public needs, evolving policy, case law, and new statutory mandates have changed the complexion of the program, adding to its breadth, complexity, and authority.

The Regulatory Program is committed to protecting the Nation's aquatic resources, while allowing reasonable development through fair, flexible and balanced permit decisions. The Corps evaluates permit applications for essentially all construction activities that occur in the Nation's waters, including wetlands.”<sup>198</sup>

### *State*

#### The Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act

“The Porter-Cologne Act is the principal law governing water quality regulation in California. It establishes a comprehensive program to protect water quality and the beneficial uses of water. The Porter-Cologne Act applies to surface waters, wetlands, and ground water and to both point and nonpoint sources of pollution. Pursuant to the Porter-Cologne Act (California Water Code section 13000 et seq.), the policy of the State is as follows:

- That the quality of all the waters of the State shall be protected,
- That all activities and factors affecting the quality of water shall be regulated to attain the highest water quality within reason, and
- That the State must be prepared to exercise its full power and jurisdiction to protect the quality of water in the State from degradation.

The Porter-Cologne Act established nine Regional Water Boards (based on hydrogeologic barriers) and the State Water Board, which are charged with implementing its provisions and which have primary responsibility for protecting water quality in California. The State Water Board provides program guidance and oversight, allocates funds, and reviews Regional Water Boards decisions. In addition, the State Water Board allocates rights to the use of surface water. The Regional Water Boards have primary responsibility for individual permitting, inspection, and enforcement actions within each of nine hydrologic regions.”<sup>199</sup>

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<sup>197</sup> US EPA Website. Our Mission and What We Do. Accessed August 2022 at: <https://www.epa.gov/aboutepa/our-mission-and-what-we-do>

<sup>198</sup> U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Accessed August 2022 at: <http://www.usace.army.mil/Missions/CivilWorks/RegulatoryProgramandPermits.aspx>.

<sup>199</sup> California Water Boards. State Laws Porter-Cologne Act. Accessed August 2022 at: [https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water\\_issues/programs/nps/encyclopedia/0a\\_laws\\_policy.html](https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/nps/encyclopedia/0a_laws_policy.html).

## State Water Resources Control Board

The State Water Resources Control Board (the State Water Board) was created by the Legislature in 1967. The mission of the Water Board is to ensure the highest reasonable quality for waters of the State, while allocating those waters to achieve the optimum balance of beneficial uses. The joint authority of water allocation and water quality protection enables the Water Board to provide comprehensive protection for California's waters.

The Water Board consists of five full-time salaried Members, each filling a different specialty position. Each board member is appointed to a four-year term by the Governor and confirmed by the Senate.

There are nine Regional Water Quality Control Boards (Regional Boards). The mission of the Regional Boards is to develop and enforce water quality objectives and implementation plans that will best protect the beneficial uses of the State's waters, recognizing local differences in climate, topography, geology and hydrology.

Each Regional Board has seven part-time Members also appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the Senate. Regional Boards develop "basin plans" for their hydrologic areas, govern requirements/issue waste discharge permits, take enforcement action against violators, and monitor water quality. The task of protecting and enforcing the many uses of water, including the needs of industry, agriculture, municipal districts, and the environment is an ongoing challenge for the Water Board and Regional Boards.<sup>200</sup>

## California Department of Water Resources

"This Department's primary mission is to manage the water resources of California in cooperation with other agencies, to benefit the State's people, and to protect, restore, and enhance the natural and human environments." Other goals contained in the Update 2018 California Water Plan include:

- Goal 1 - Improve Integrated Watershed Management: California's vision of sustainable water management relies on the continued support of innovative and inclusive integrated water management strategies. Healthy watersheds, headwaters, aquifers, and working landscapes provide critical water supply and ecosystem services.
- Goal 2 - Strengthen Resiliency and Operational Flexibility of Existing and Future Infrastructure: Water managers must make plans to address aging infrastructure and impacts associated with climate change, population growth, ecosystem stressors, and funding constraints.
- Goal 3 - Restore Critical Ecosystem Functions California is one of the world's great biodiversity hotspots. Anthropogenic influence — water management included — has impacts on natural resources; and environmental protections for many species has impacts on water management.
- Goal 4 - Empower California's Under-Represented or Vulnerable Communities: Equitable water management means reliable, affordable, and safe water supplies and management for all Californians.
- Goal 5 - Improve Inter-Agency Alignment and Address Persistent Regulatory Challenges: Improved alignment and communication will more effectively deliver public benefits. Strengthening links between regulation and strategic planning, as well as utilizing restoration management on an ecosystem scale, will help balance environmental needs and human activities over the long term.
- Goal 6 - Support Real-Time Decision-Making, Adaptive Management, and Long-Term Planning Effective water management requires access to data and information necessary to understand current conditions, historic challenges, and future challenges. It also requires stable funding sufficient to support State and local sustainability goals.<sup>201</sup>

## California Department of Water Resources and State Water Resources Control Board – Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA)

"On September 16, 2014, Governor Jerry Brown signed into law a three-bill legislative package, composed of AB 1739 (Dickinson), SB 1168 (Pavley), and SB 1319 (Pavley), collectively known as the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA). For the first time in its history, California has a framework for sustainable, groundwater management - "management and use of groundwater in a manner that can be maintained during the planning and implementation horizon without causing undesirable results."

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<sup>200</sup> State of California Water Boards. Water Boards' Structure. Accessed August 2022 at: [https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/about\\_us/water\\_boards\\_structure/mission.html](https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/about_us/water_boards_structure/mission.html)

<sup>201</sup> California Department of Water Resources: California Water Plan Update 2018. Managing Water Resources for Sustainability. June 2019. Pages 3-2 through 3-6. Accessed August 2022 at: <https://water.ca.gov/-/media/DWR-Website/Web-Pages/Programs/California-Water-Plan/Docs/Update2018/Final/California-Water-Plan-Update-2018.pdf#page=4>.



SGMA requires governments and water agencies of high and medium priority basins to halt overdraft and bring groundwater basins into balanced levels of pumping and recharge. Under SGMA, these basins should reach sustainability within 20 years of implementing their sustainability plans. For critically over-drafted basins, that will be 2040. For the remaining high and medium priority basins, 2042 is the deadline.”<sup>202</sup>

### Regional Water Quality Board

“There are nine Regional Water Quality Control Boards (Regional Boards). The mission of the Regional Boards is to develop and enforce water quality objectives and implementation plans that will best protect the State's waters, recognizing local differences in climate, topography, geology and hydrology. Each Regional Board has seven part-time members appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the Senate. Regional Boards develop “basin plans” for their hydrologic areas, issue waste discharge requirements, take enforcement action against violators, and monitor water quality.”<sup>203</sup>

“The primary duty of the Regional Board is to protect the quality of the waters within the Region for all beneficial uses. This duty is implemented by formulating and adopting water quality plans for specific ground or surface water basins and by prescribing and enforcing requirements on all agricultural, domestic and industrial waste discharges. Specific responsibilities and procedures of the Regional Boards and the State Water Resources Control Board are contained in the Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act.”<sup>204</sup>

### California Water Boards Central Valley - R5

The California Water Boards Central Valley – R5 (Region 5) defines their missions as, “To preserve, enhance, and restore the quality of California's water resources and drinking water for the protection of the environment, public health, and all beneficial uses, and to ensure proper water resource allocation and efficient use, for the benefit of present and future generations.”<sup>205</sup> In addition, the CA Water Boards Central Valley – R5 indicates their Duty as, “The primary duty of the Regional Board is to protect the quality of the waters within the Region for all beneficial uses. This duty is implemented by formulating and adopting water quality plans for specific ground or surface water basins and by prescribing and enforcing requirements on all agricultural, domestic and industrial waste discharges. Specific responsibilities and procedures of the Regional Boards and the State Water Resources Control Board are contained in the [Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act](#).”<sup>206</sup>

The Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) administers the NPDES storm water-permitting program in the Central Valley region. Construction activities on one acre or more are subject to the permitting requirements of the NPDES General Permit for Discharges of Storm Water Runoff Associated with Construction Activity (General Construction Permit). The General Construction Permit requires preparation and implementation of a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP). The plan will include specifications for Best Management Practices (BMPs) that will be implemented during proposed Project construction to control degradation of surface water by preventing the potential erosion of sediments or discharge of pollutants from the construction area. The General Construction Permit program was established by the RWQCB for the specific purpose of reducing impacts to surface waters that may occur due to construction activities. BMPs have been established by the RWQCB in the California Storm Water Best Management Practice Handbook (2003), and are recognized as effectively reducing degradation of surface waters to an acceptable level. Additionally, the SWPPP will describe measures to prevent or control runoff degradation after construction is complete, and identify a plan to inspect and maintain these facilities or project elements.

### SB 610 (Costa) & SB 221 (Kuehl) 2001

“Senate Bills 610 (Chapter 643, Statutes of 2001) and Senate Bill 221 (Chapter 642, Statutes of 2001) amended state law, effective January 1, 2002, to improve the link between information on water supply availability and certain land use decisions made by cities and counties. SB 610 and SB 221 are companion measures which seek to promote more collaborative planning between local water suppliers and cities and counties. Both statutes require detailed information regarding water availability to be provided to the city and county decision-makers prior to approval of specified large development projects. Both statutes also require this

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<sup>202</sup> State of California Department of Water Resources. SGMA Groundwater Management. Accessed August 2022 at: <https://water.ca.gov/Programs/Groundwater-Management/SGMA-Groundwater-Management>

<sup>203</sup> Ibid.

<sup>204</sup> Central Valley Water Quality Control Board. Accessed August 2022 at: [http://www.swrcb.ca.gov/centralvalley/about\\_us/](http://www.swrcb.ca.gov/centralvalley/about_us/).

<sup>205</sup> The California Water Boards. Central Valley – R5. Accessed August 2022 at: [https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralvalley/about\\_us/](https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralvalley/about_us/)

<sup>206</sup> Ibid.



detailed information be included in the administrative record that serves as the evidentiary basis for an approval action by the city or county on such projects. Both measures recognize local control and decision making regarding the availability of water for projects and the approval of projects.

Under SB 610, water assessments must be furnished to local governments for inclusion in any environmental documentation for certain projects (as defined in Water Code 10912 [a]) subject to the California Environmental Quality Act. Under SB 221, approval by a city or county of certain residential subdivisions requires an affirmative written verification of sufficient water supply.”<sup>207</sup>

### *Local*

#### Tulare County Environmental Health Division

“The mission of the Division of Environmental Health is to enhance the quality of life in Tulare County through implementation of environmental health programs that protect public health and safety as well as the environment. We accomplish this goal by overseeing and enforcing numerous different programs, from food facility inspections to hazardous waste. All of our inspectors are licensed and/or certified in the field that they practice in and participate in continuing education to maintain licensure.”<sup>208</sup> “Tulare County Environmental Health permits and regulates State Small Water Systems, which serve drinking water to between 5 and 14 service connections, and no more than an average of 25 persons no more than 60 days out of the year. There are currently 42 of these systems, throughout Tulare County, which serve about 314 connections and approximately 640 people. These systems are inspected by Tulare County Environmental Health, and are required to routinely monitor their water quality.”<sup>209</sup> This division requires water quality testing of public water systems. Any project that involves septic tanks and water wells within Tulare County is subject to approval by this agency. All recommendations provided by this division will be added as mitigation measures to ensure reduction of environmental impacts.

#### Tulare County Land Development Regulations

The Tulare County Resource Management Agency (RMA) is responsible for review, approval, and enforcement of planning and land development throughout the unincorporated portions of Tulare County. County of Tulare regulations that direct planning and land development (and related water and wastewater utilities) include the Tulare County General Plan, Zoning Ordinance, Subdivision Ordinance, and CEQA procedures. These responsibilities are divided between Planning Branch, Public Works Branch, and other divisions or departments of RMA, and in coordination with the Environmental Health Division of the Tulare County Health and Human Services Agency, and the Tulare County Fire Department.

The County’s flood damage prevention code is intended to promote public health, safety, and general welfare in addition to minimizing public and private losses due to flood conditions. The County code provisions to protect against flooding include requiring uses vulnerable to floods be protected against flood damage at the time of initial construction; controlling the alteration of natural flood plains; and preventing or regulating the construction of flood barriers which will unnaturally divert flood waters or which may increase flood hazards in other areas. The County flood damage prevention code, most recently amended by Ord. No. 3212 and effective October 29, 1998, is modeled based upon FEMA guidance.

#### The Tulare County Flood Control District

The Tulare County Flood Control District, a countywide district governed by the County Board of Supervisors, is the local flood management agency. Tulare County participates in the National Flood Insurance Program Community Rating System, uses FEMA insurance rate maps, and enforces Ordinance Code of Tulare County, Part VII, Chapter 27, Flood Damage Prevention. The County Zoning Ordinance also provides regulations to reduce flood hazards through land use regulations.<sup>210</sup>

#### Tulare County General Plan 2030 Update

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<sup>207</sup> California Department of Water Resources. Guidebook for Implementation of Senate Bill 610 and Senate Bill 221 of 2001 to assist water suppliers, cities, and counties in integrating water and land use planning. Page iii. Accessed September 2022 at: <https://cawaterlibrary.net/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/guidebook.pdf>

<sup>208</sup> Tulare County Environmental Health Division. Who Are We. Accessed September 2022 at: <https://tularecountyeh.org/eh/about-us/who-are-we/>

<sup>209</sup> Ibid. Water Systems Program. Accessed September 2022 at: <https://tularecountyeh.org/eh/our-services/water-systems-program/>

<sup>210</sup> Tulare County General Plan 2030 Update. Recirculated Draft Environmental Impact Report. Page 3.6-29. Accessed September 2022 at: <http://generalplan.co.tulare.ca.us/documents/generalplan2010/RecirculatedDraftEIR.pdf>

The Tulare County General Plan 2030 Update has a number of policies that apply to projects within Tulare County. General Plan policies that relate to the proposed Project are listed: *PF-4.14 Compatible Project Design* wherein the County may ensure proposed development within CACUABs is compatible with future sewer and water systems, and circulation networks as shown in city plans; *AG-1.17 Agricultural Water Resources* wherein the County shall seek to protect and enhance surface water and groundwater resources critical to agriculture; *HS-4.4 Contamination Prevention* wherein the County shall review new development proposals to protect soils, air quality, surface water, and groundwater from hazardous materials contamination; *HS-5.1 Development Compliance with Federal, State, and Local Regulations* wherein the County shall ensure that all development within the designated floodway or floodplain zones conforms to FEMA regulations and the Tulare County Flood Damage Prevention Ordinance. New development and divisions of land, especially residential subdivisions, shall be developed to minimize flood risk to structures, infrastructure, and ensure safe access and evacuation during flood conditions; *HS-5.4 Multi-Purpose Flood Control Measures* wherein the County shall encourage multipurpose flood control projects that incorporate recreation, resource conservation, preservation of natural riparian habitat, and scenic values of the County's streams, creeks, and lakes. Where appropriate, the County shall also encourage the use of flood and/or stormwater retention facilities for use as groundwater recharge facilities; *HS-5.6 Impacts to Downstream Properties* wherein the County shall ensure that new County flood control projects will not adversely impact downstream properties or contribute to flooding hazards; *HS-5.10 Flood Control Design* wherein the County shall evaluate flood control project involving further channeling, straightening, or lining of waterways until alternative multipurpose modes of treatment, such as wider berm and landscaped levees, in combination with recreation amenities, are studied; *WR-1.1 Groundwater Withdrawal* wherein the County shall cooperate with water agencies and management agencies during land development processes to help promote an adequate, safe, and economically viable groundwater supply for existing and future development within the County. These actions shall be intended to help the County mitigate the potential impact on ground water resources identified during planning and approval processes; *WR-1.5 Expand Use of Reclaimed Wastewater* to augment groundwater supplies and to conserve potable water for domestic purposes, the County shall seek opportunities to expand groundwater recharge efforts; *WR-1.6 Expand Use of Reclaimed Water* wherein the County shall encourage the use of tertiary treated wastewater and household gray water for irrigation of agricultural lands, recreation and open space areas, and large landscaped areas as a means of reducing demand for groundwater resources; *WR-2.1 Protect Water Quality* wherein the all major land use and development plans shall be evaluated as to their potential to create surface and groundwater contamination hazards from point and non-point sources. The County shall confer with other appropriate agencies, as necessary, to assure adequate water quality review to prevent soil erosion; direct discharge of potentially harmful substances; ground leaching from storage of raw materials, petroleum products, or wastes; floating debris; and runoff from the site; *WR-2.2 National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Enforcement* wherein the County shall continue to support the State in monitoring and enforcing provisions to control non-point source water pollution contained in the U.S. EPA NPDES program as implemented by the Water Quality Control Board; *WR-2.3 Best Management Practices (BMPs)*; wherein the County shall continue to require the use of feasible BMPs and other mitigation measures designed to protect surface water and groundwater from the adverse effects of construction activities, agricultural operations requiring a County Permit and urban runoff in coordination with the Water Quality Control Board; *WR-2.4 Construction Site Sediment Control*; wherein the County shall continue to enforce provisions to control erosion and sediment from construction sites; *WR-2.5 Major Drainage Management* wherein the County shall continue to promote protection of each individual drainage basin within the County based on the basins unique hydrologic and use characteristics; *WR-2.6 Degraded Water Resources* wherein the County shall encourage and support the identification of degraded surface water and groundwater resources and promote restoration where appropriate; *WR-2.8 Point Source Control* wherein the County shall work with the Regional Water Quality Control Board to ensure that all point source pollutants are adequately mitigated (as part of the California Environmental Quality Act review and project approval process) and monitored to ensure long-term compliance; *WR-3.3 Adequate Water Availability* wherein the County shall review new development proposals to ensure the intensity and timing of growth will be consistent with the availability of adequate water supplies. Projects must submit a Will-Serve letter as part of the application process, and provide evidence of adequate and sustainable water availability prior to approval of the tentative map or other urban development entitlement; *WR-3.5 Use of Native and Drought Tolerant Landscaping* wherein the County shall encourage the use of low water consuming, drought-tolerant and native landscaping and emphasize the importance of utilizing water conserving techniques, such as night watering, mulching, and drip irrigation; *WR-3.6 Water Use Efficiency* wherein the County shall support educational programs targeted at reducing water consumption and enhancing groundwater recharge; and *WR-3.10 Diversion of Surface Water* wherein the diversions of surface water or runoff from precipitation should be prevented where such diversions may cause a reduction in water available for groundwater recharge.

#### **Project Impact Analysis:**

- a) **Less Than Significant Impact:** The State Water Resources Control Board requires any new construction project greater than one acre to complete a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP). A SWPPP would be prepared for the proposed Akers Business Park project by a qualified engineer or erosion control specialist as a condition of approval and

would be submitted to the County for review and approval before being implemented during construction. The SWPPP would be designed to reduce potential impacts related to erosion and surface water quality during construction activities and throughout the life of the proposed Project. It would include proposed Project information and best management practices (BMP). The BMPs would include dewatering procedures, stormwater runoff quality control measures, concrete waste management, watering for dust control, and construction of perimeter silt fences, as needed. Implementation of the SWPPP will minimize the potential for the proposed Project to substantially alter the existing drainage pattern in a manner that will result in substantial erosion or siltation onsite or offsite. There will be no discharge to any surface or groundwater sources which may impact water quality standards. As such, the proposed Project would not violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or groundwater quality. Therefore, the proposed Akers Business Park project would result in a less than significant impact to this resource

- b) Less Than Significant Impact:** The proposed Project site is located in the Tulare Lake Basin, an area significantly affected by overdraft. The Department of Water Resources (DWR) has estimated the groundwater by hydrologic region and for the Tulare Lake Basin. DWR estimates a total overdraft of 820,000 acre-feet per year (which is the largest overdraft projected in the state, and approximately 56 percent of the statewide total overdraft). The proposed Project site is located within the Tule Sub-basin portion of the regional area and is within the Eastern Tule GSA Boundary. The site is currently planted to a walnut orchard. Although the proposed Project contains an existing on site domestic well, it will provide a new well(s) to meet its water needs. It is noted that the current use of the walnut orchard requires approximately 62.77 million gallons of water annually. As such, the proposed Project will substantially reduce water consumption from the existing ag-related use by approximately 62.77 million gallons of water per year (based on approximately 959,052 gallons/acre to irrigate walnuts), thus providing a benefit in regard to groundwater usage. As such, there would be less than significant impacts resulting from decreased groundwater supplies as a result of the proposed Akers Business Park project.
- c) Less Than Significant Impact:**
- i) *Erosion and Siltation:* The extent of potential erosion will vary depending on slope steepness/stability, vegetation/cover, concentration of runoff, and weather conditions. The relatively flat nature of the site reduces the need for substantial grading. Any soils removed from these areas would likely be redistributed around and retained elsewhere on the proposed Project site. The site is, and will continue to have, a relatively-flat topography after site construction. Also, as noted earlier, a SWPPP will be in place during construction, as described in Impact 10-a. Therefore, construction-related activities will minimally disturb the ground surface resulting in a less than significant impact from erosion and siltation.
- ii) *Runoff and Flooding:* The site will not result in waters capable of flooding either on- or off-site. The site is not subject to flooding and does not lie within a flood zone per the Federal Emergency Management Agency FIRM map (Panel 06107C0940E).<sup>211</sup> Also, the site will not generate substantial amounts of runoff that would result in on- or off-site flooding as the proposed Project includes an onsite stormwater retention basin. The applicant will be required to comply with RWQCB, City of Tulare, and County of Tulare flood control requirements, as applicable. As such, the proposed Akers Business Park project would result in a less than significant impact to or from this resource Item.
- iii) *Drainage Systems and Polluted Runoff:* No Impact. See Items 10 c) i) and ii). Also, the proposed Project will not connect to any existing or planned stormwater drainage system, as such it will not provide any additional sources of polluted runoff. As noted earlier, the very nature of the proposed Project does not lend itself as a contributor of polluted runoff. Therefore, the proposed Akers Business Park project would result in no impact to this resource. 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, and as such, would result in no impact.
- iv) *Impede or Redirect Flood Flows:* See items 10 c) ii) and iii). In addition, no streams or water features (other than the Cameron Creek, north of and outside of the proposed Project boundary) are within the proposed Project vicinity that would be altered by the improvements associated with the proposed Project. The proposed Akers Business Park project would not substantially alter the surface area of the site as it will be designed to avoid impeding or redirecting of flood flows, as such, the impact would be less than significant.

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<sup>211</sup> Federal Emergency Management Agency FIRM Panel 06107C0940E June 16, 2009. Accessed August 2022 at: <https://hazards-fema.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=8b0adb51996444d4879338b5529aa9cd&extent=-119.43111661234694,36.21814285944352,-119.26494839945653,36.287358109855994>

- d) **No Impact:** As noted earlier, the proposed Project is not subject to flooding and does not lie within a flood zone per the Federal Emergency Management Agency FIRM map (Panel 06107C0940E). The proposed Project is not anticipated to result in the additional exposure of persons or structures to risks associated with inundation. The proposed Project is not located on or near any areas that would result in or be impact by a flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, that would result in a risk release of pollutants due to project inundation. Moreover, the proposed Akers Business Park project site is not exposed to or near any river, reservoirs, pond, or lake subject to seiches from earthquake activity; and it is approximately 100 miles east of the nearest coastline that would be subject to tsunami. Therefore, the impact from potential inundation by the flood hazard, tsunami, or seiches would be less than significant.
- e) **No Impact:** As indicated earlier in Impact 10-a), the proposed Project would not violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements; or otherwise substantially degrade surface or groundwater quality; and would not conflict with or obstruct a water quality control plan. As indicated in 10-b) the proposed Project would not substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin. Therefore, based on the analysis above, the Akers Business Park project would result in a less than significant Project-specific impact related to this Checklist Item.

**Cumulative Impact Analysis: Less Than Significant Impact:** The geographic area of this cumulative analysis is Tulare County. As there are no Project-specific impacts resulting from proposed Project development, no cumulative impacts are anticipated. Additionally, the County has available surface water storage facilities to allow for future recharge areas should they be required. The proposed Project area is located approximately 0.50 miles north of the City of Tulare, in a predominantly agricultural, yet transitional, area of the San Joaquin Valley. The site is currently planted to walnuts, except at the southernmost portion of the site which currently has an RV sales development. Surrounding areas include agricultural production, light industrial, and SR 99 is immediately west of the site. The proposed Project's applicant seeks a zone change to C-3-MU (Service Commercial with a Mixed-Use Overlay Zone) Zone to facilitate a Tentative Subdivision Map (TSM) to subdivide a 65.45-acre parcel and develop the proposed Akers Business Park as a mixed use commercial project that includes the expansion of the existing Magic Touch Recreational Vehicle Sales facility at the south end of the proposed Project (3567 N. Oaks St. Tulare, CA 93274), contractor offices, boat sales, and other related uses allowed in the C-3-MU Zone. The applicant will be required to comply with Regional Water Quality Control Board, City of Tulare, and County of Tulare drainage, storm runoff, flooding, etc. requirements, as applicable. Therefore, development of the proposed Akers Business Park project will result in less than significant impacts to these resources.

**XI. LAND USE AND PLANNING**

Would the project:	SIGNIFICANT IMPACT	LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT WITH MITIGATION	LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT	NO IMPACT
a) Physically divide an established community?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

The discussions regarding Environmental Setting, Regulatory Setting, CEQA requirements, Land Use and Planning, etc. contained in the Tulare County General Plan 2030 Update and Tulare County Environmental Impact Report are incorporated herein in their entirety. Where necessary and if available, additional site-specific facts, data, information, etc., are included in this discussion.

**Environmental Setting**

As noted earlier, the proposed Project (Akers Business Park) site is located in the central-western part of Tulare County. Tulare County is located in the San Joaquin Valley portion of the Great Central Valley of California that lies south of the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta, and is comprised of 4,863 square miles. Tulare County is bordered by Fresno County to the north, Kings County to the west; Kern County to the south; and Inyo County to the east. The proposed Project area is located approximately 0.50 miles north of the City of Tulare, in a predominantly agricultural, yet transitional, area of the San Joaquin Valley. The site is currently planted to walnuts, except at the southernmost portion of the site which currently has an RV sales development. Surrounding areas include agricultural production, light industrial, and SR 99 is immediately west of the site. The proposed Project’s applicant seeks a zone change to C-3-MU (Service Commercial with a Mixed-Use Overlay Zone) Zone to facilitate a Tentative Subdivision Map (TSM) to subdivide a 65.45-acre parcel and develop the proposed Akers Business Park as a mixed use commercial project that includes the expansion of the existing Magic Touch Recreational Vehicle Sales facility at the south end of the proposed Project (3567 N. Oaks St. Tulare, CA 93274), contractor offices, boat sales, and other related uses allowed in the C-3-MU Zone.

Existing land uses in Tulare County have been organized into generalized categories that are summarized on Table 11-1. These lands total 3,930 square miles or approximately 81 percent of Tulare County. Open space, which includes wilderness, national forests, monuments and parks, and county parks, encompass 1,230 square miles, or approximately 25 percent of the County. Agricultural uses total over 2,150 square miles or about 44 percent of the entire county. Incorporated cities in Tulare County capture less than three percent of the entire County.

<b>Generalized Land Use Category</b>	<b>Square Miles<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>Percentage<sup>2</sup></b>
Residential	110	2
Commercial	10	Less than 1%
Industrial	10	Less than 1%
Agriculture	2,150	44
Public (including airports, charitable organizations, churches, fraternal organizations, government owned land, hospitals and rest homes, institutional facilities, rehab facilities and schools)	420	9
Open Space (including national forests and parks, timber preserves)	1,230	25
<b>Classified Subtotal</b>	<b>3,930</b>	<b>81</b>
Unclassified (includes streets and highways, rivers, canals, etc.)	780	16
<b>Unincorporated County Subtotal</b>	<b>4,710</b>	<b>97</b>
Incorporated Cities	130	3

<sup>212</sup> Tulare County General Plan 2030 Update. Background Report. Page 3-53.

Table 11-1 County of Tulare Summary of Assessed Land by Generalized Use Categories <sup>212</sup>		
Generalized Land Use Category	Square Miles <sup>1</sup>	Percentage <sup>2</sup>
<b>Total County</b>	<b>4,840</b>	<b>100</b>
<i>1 One square mile = 640 acres. 2 Percent reflect those estimated for the total land area of the County and may not equal 100 due to rounding.</i>		

## Regulatory Setting

### Federal

Federal regulations for land use are not relevant to the Project because it is not a federal undertaking (the Project site is not located on lands administered by a federal agency, and the project applicant is not requesting federal funding or a federal permit).

### State

The Project is being evaluated pursuant to CEQA; however, there are no state regulations, plans, programs, or guidelines associated with land use and planning that are applicable to the proposed Project.

### Local

#### Tulare County Association of Governments

“[The Tulare County Association of Governments] TCAG is committed to improving the quality of life for residents and visitors throughout Tulare County. We prove our commitment by addressing congestion using a preventative approach. We coordinate regional transit programs to make getting around easy and convenient. We have improved air quality and strive to continue to meet national standards. We responsibly use the extra hard earned tax dollars that the people of Tulare County bring in to us from the passage of Measure R under the supervision of the board and citizen’s review committee. We address current and future rail needs and possibilities with a forward thinking approach. We gather important data which is used by the census and the public to properly forecast housing and transit needs. We also manage the abandoned vehicle program for the county, and do a whole lot more.”<sup>213</sup>.

#### Tulare County General Plan 2030 Update

The General Plan contains the following policies aimed at reducing potential land use conflicts, promoting an efficient urban form, and ensuring consistency with local land use and environmental plans. General Plan policies that relate to the proposed Project are listed as follows: *ED-2.2 Land Requirements* – wherein the County shall ensure there is capacity for new and expanding businesses by: Reserving sufficient locations for industry, recognizing industry’s need for greater land requirements; Recognizing the need for a variety of locations to avoid creation of a monopoly of the industrial land market and to reflect varying requirements for transportation facilities and utility services; and Reserving land for exclusive industrial use to encourage development of like industries that complement each other and to prevent encroachment on industrial areas by incompatible uses; *ED-3.1 Diverse Economic Base* – wherein the County shall actively promote the development of a diversified economic base by continuing to promote agriculture, recreation services, and commerce, and by expanding its efforts to encourage industrial development including the development of energy resources; *ERM-2.9 Compatibility* – wherein the County will encourage the development of mineral deposits in a manner compatible with surrounding land uses; *PF-1.1 Maintain Urban Edges* – wherein the County shall strive to maintain distinct urban edges for all unincorporated communities within the valley region or foothill region, while creating a transition between urban uses and agriculture and open space; *PF-1.2 Location of Urban Development* – wherein the County shall ensure that urban development only takes place in the following areas:

1. Within incorporated cities and CACUDBs;
2. Within the UDBs of adjacent cities in other counties, unincorporated communities, planned community areas, and HDBs of hamlets;
3. Within foothill development corridors as determined by procedures set forth in Foothill Growth Management Plan;
4. Within areas set aside for urban use in the Mountain Framework Plan and the mountain sub-area plans; and

<sup>213</sup> Tulare County Association of Governments. About Us. Accessed September 2022 at: <https://tularecog.org/tcag/about-us/history-of-tcag/>

5. Within other areas suited for non-agricultural development, as determined by the procedures set forth in the Rural Valley Lands Plan;

*PF-1.3 Land Uses in UDBs/HDBs* – wherein the County shall encourage those types of urban land uses that benefit from urban services to develop within UDBs and HDBs. Permanent uses which do not benefit from urban services shall be discouraged within these areas. This shall not apply to agricultural or agricultural support uses, including the cultivation of land or other uses accessory to the cultivation of land provided that such accessory uses are time-limited through Special Use Permit procedures; *PF-1.4 Available Infrastructure* – wherein the County shall encourage urban development to locate in existing UDBs and HDBs where infrastructure is available or may be established in conjunction with development. The County shall ensure that development does not occur unless adequate infrastructure is available, that sufficient water supplies are available or can be made available and that there are adequate provisions for long term management and maintenance of infrastructure and identified water supplies; *PF-4.18 Future Land Use Entitlements in a CACUDB* - wherein the County may work with an individual city to limit any General Plan amendments to change the land use designations of any parcel or any amendments to the County zoning ordinance to add uses to a current zoning classification or change the zoning district designation of any parcel within a CACUDB [with exceptions]; *PF-4.19 Future Land Use Entitlements in a CACUAB* – wherein, As an exception to the County policies that the Rural Valley Lands Plan (RVLP) does not apply within CACUDBs and is only advisory within CACUABs, the County may work with an individual city to provide that no General Plan amendments or rezonings will be considered to change the current land use designation or zoning classification of any parcel within a CACUAB unless appropriate under the requirements of the Rural Valley Lands Plan (RVLP) or similar checklist or unless the County has worked with the city to identify and structure an acceptable alternative General Plan land use designation or zoning classification; *PF-4.21 Application of the RVLP Checklist to Control Development in a CACUAB* – wherein, As an exception to the County policies that the Rural Valley Lands Plan is only advisory within CACUABs, the County may work with an individual city to provide that the requirements of the RVLP will apply to applications for special use permits (including special use permits for the expansion of a non-conforming use), variances considered under Government Code § 65906, or to the extent allowed by law, divisions of land within a CACUAB except in those areas that overlap with a County unincorporated UDB, an HDB, or Corridor Plan area. Such a special use permit, variance, or division of land will be reviewed in light of impacts on such regional concerns as water and sewage disposal availability and preservation of transportation and utility corridors; *PF-2.7 Improvement Standards in Communities* – wherein the County shall require development within the designated UDBs to meet an urban standard for improvements. Typical improvements shall include curbs, gutters, sidewalks, and community sewer and water systems; *LU-1.2 Innovative Development* – wherein the County shall promote flexibility and innovation through the use of planned unit developments, development agreements, specific plans, Mixed Use projects, and other innovative development and planning techniques; *LU-1.8 Encourage Infill Development* - wherein the County shall encourage and provide incentives for infill development to occur in communities and hamlets within or adjacent to existing development in order to maximize the use of land within existing urban areas, minimize the conversion of existing agricultural land, and minimize environmental concerns associated with new development; *LU-1.10 Roadway Access* - wherein County shall require access to public roadways for all new development; *LU-4.6 Commercial Storage Facilities* – wherein the County shall require that commercial storage facilities, including “mini” storage, indoor and outdoor storage facilities, and contractor’s materials storage be screened from view through landscape buffers or other natural landscapes; *LU-5.1 Industrial Developments* – wherein the County shall encourage a wide range of industrial development activities in appropriate locations to promote economic development, employment opportunities, and provide a sound tax base; and *LU-5.4 Compatibility with Surrounding Land Use* – wherein the County shall encourage the infill of existing industrial areas and ensure that proposed industrial uses will not result in significant harmful impacts to adjacent land uses.

#### County of Tulare/City of Tulare Memorandum of Understanding

See previously noted Tulare County General Plan Policies *PF-4.14*, *PF-4.15*, *PF-4.17*, *PF-4.18*, *PF-4.19*, *PF-4.21*, *PF-4.14*, *PF-4.19*, and *PF-4.21*. In keeping with the County of Tulare – City of Tulare Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), Tulare County will work cooperatively with the City of Tulare to make this project mutually beneficial and consistent with the public interest to provide economic opportunity.

#### Rural Valley Lands Plan (RVLP).

Any future development project is subject to the Rural Valley Lands Plan (RVLP). An RVLP analysis prepared for the proposed Project when it was initiated resulted in a score of 9 which indicates that the proposed Project meets the RVLP for non-agricultural uses.

#### City of Tulare



The proposed Project is within the City of Tulare's Sphere of Influence (SOI) and Urban Development Boundary (UDB). The proposed Project site has a land use classification as Regional Commercial as shown in the City's General Plan Land Use Map<sup>214</sup>.

Applicable City of Tulare General Plan policies include, but are not limited to:

LU-P2.5 Urban Development Boundary. The City shall maintain an urban development boundary (UDB) that provides a 20-year land supply.

LU-P2.6 Sphere of Influence. The City shall work with LAFCO to maintain a sphere of influence (SOI) line at Avenue 264 and including the Tagus Ranch area.

LU-P2.7 Cooperative Urban Centers. The City shall continue to work with Tulare County to avoid urban development decisions for lands within the City's UDB without consultation with and affirmation by the City of Tulare.

LU-P2.8 Regional Cooperation. The City shall maintain a cooperative relationship with other local governments (i.e., Tulare County, the City of Visalia) to address regional issues and opportunities related to growth, transportation, infrastructure, greenhouse gas emissions reductions, and other planning issues. Special consideration for cooperation shall be applied when reviewing peripheral development proposals within or adjacent to the City's UDB, especially along the Mooney Boulevard corridor. This includes continued support of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the County of Tulare regarding development impact fees within the City and City UDB.

### **Project Impact Analysis:**

a) **and b) Less Than Significant Impact:** As noted earlier, the proposed Project (Akers Business Park) site is located in the central-western part of Tulare County and is located approximately 0.50 miles north of the City of Tulare, in a predominantly agricultural, yet transitional, area of the San Joaquin Valley. The site is currently planted to walnuts, except at the southernmost portion of the site which currently has an RV sales development. Surrounding areas include agricultural production, light industrial, and SR 99 is immediately west of the site. The proposed Project will include the development of a commercial business park on approximately 65.45 acres located at the southwest corner of Road 100 (Oaks Street) and Oakdale Avenue, east of State Route (SR) 99, APN 149-090-006. The proposed Project will include a General Plan Amendment ("GPA") to change the Land Use Designation from "Valley Agriculture" to "Mixed Use," a Zone Change ("PZC") to change the Zone from AE-20 (Exclusive Agricultural – 20 Acre Minimum) to C-3-MU (Service Commercial with a Mixed-Use Overlay Zone) to facilitate a Tentative Subdivision Map ("TSM") to subdivide a 65.45-acre parcel and develop the proposed Akers Business Park as a mixed use commercial project that includes the expansion of the existing Magic Touch Recreational Vehicle Sales facility at the south end of the proposed Project (3567 N. Oaks St. Tulare, CA 93274), contractor offices, boat sales, and other related uses allowed in the C-3-MU Zone.

As included in General Plan Initiation No. GPI 22-003 (NFDI LLC), RMA staff provided the following analysis to the Tulare County of Board Supervisors for consideration of approval of the applicant's request to initiate the General Plan Amendment process.

"The Tulare County Resource Management Agency ("RMA") has received a request from NFDI LLC (1878 North Mooney Boulevard, St. J, Tulare, CA 93274) for a General Plan Initiation ("GPI"). The project site is located at the southwest corner of East Oakdale Avenue and Akers Street [Oaks Street], (APN: 149-090-006), north of the City of Tulare. The applicant proposes to change the County's land use designation on approximately 65-acres from Agriculture to Service Commercial ("SC") and change the Zoning from AE-20 (Exclusive Agricultural – 20 acre minimum) to C-3-MU (Service Commercial with Mixed-Use Overlay). The project is located within the Tulare Urban Area Boundary ("UAB") and north of the Tulare Urban Development Boundary.

The General Plan Amendment ("GPA") is to allow the development of the proposed Akers Business Park as a mixed-use commercial project that includes the expansion of the existing Magic Touch RVs sales facility at the south end of the project.

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<sup>214</sup> City of Tulare. General Plan Land Use Map. Accessed September 2022 at: <https://www.tulare.ca.gov/home/showpublisheddocument/604/635702261116100000>

The County's General Plan Amendment Policy provides that *the Board shall give consideration as to the public need or necessity of the amendment and whether the proposed amendment would further the goals, objectives, and policies of the general plan and not obstruct their attainment* (Policies and Procedures 391).

The County does have a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the City of Tulare. And per the MOU, the County notifies the City of Tulare of its intentions to amend the General Plan. The City of Tulare did not respond to an initial Planning Review Consultation.

An RVLP Parcel Evaluation was performed for the project site. After all the factors were applied to the parcel, the project received a preliminary RVLP evaluation of 9 points. According to Policy RVLP-1.4 "Determination of Agriculture Land", if the number of points accumulated is 11 or less, the parcel may be considered for nonagricultural zoning. (See Attachment E 2-RVLP Checklist)."

#### Conclusion

Based on factors listed above, it can be concluded that the proposed GPA (1) will be consistent with Tulare County's General Plan; (2) will promote the public interest as a greatly needed economic opportunity project in the Planning Area; and (3) the proposed project will further the goals, objectives, and policies of the Tulare County General Plan; and will not obstruct their attainment."<sup>215</sup>

Based on the analysis above, and as noted earlier, the proposed Project is an appropriate use for the site and will be consistent with applicable objectives, goals and policies outlined in the Tulare County General Plan 2030 Update. As the proposed Project is within the City of Tulare's Sphere of Influence (and within the City's Urban Area and Urban Development Boundaries), the County of Tulare is committed to ensuring that the proposed Project is consistent with Tulare's applicable policies, standards, etc. Therefore, the proposed Akers Business Park project would result in a less than significant Project-specific impact related to this Checklist Item will occur.

**Cumulative Impact Analysis: Less Than Significant Impact:** The geographic area of this cumulative analysis is Tulare County and the City of Tulare. This cumulative analysis is based on the information provided in the Tulare County General Plan 2030 Update, Tulare County General Plan Background Report, the Tulare County General Plan 2030 Update EIR, and the City of Tulare General Plan. As noted earlier, the proposed Akers Business Park project site is located in the central-western part of Tulare County and is located approximately 0.50 miles north of the City of Tulare, in a predominantly agricultural, yet transitional, area of the San Joaquin Valley. The site is currently planted to walnuts, except at the southernmost portion of the site which currently has an RV sales development. Surrounding areas include agricultural production, light industrial, and SR 99 is immediately west of the site. The proposed Project will include the development of a commercial business park on approximately 65.45 acres located at the southwest corner of Road 100 (Oaks Street) and Oakdale Avenue, east of State Route (SR) 99, APN 149-090-006. The proposed Project will include a General Plan Amendment ("GPA") to change the Land Use Designation from "Valley Agriculture" to "Mixed Use," a Zone Change ("PZC") to change the Zone from AE-20 (Exclusive Agricultural – 20 Acre Minimum) to C-3-MU (Service Commercial with a Mixed-Use Overlay Zone) to facilitate a Tentative Subdivision Map ("TSM") to subdivide a 65.45-acre parcel and develop the proposed Akers Business Park as a mixed use commercial project that includes the expansion of the existing Magic Touch Recreational Vehicle Sales facility at the south end of the proposed Project (3567 N. Oaks St. Tulare, CA 93274), contractor offices, boat sales, and other related uses allowed in the C-3-MU Zone. As such, a less than significant cumulative impact related to this Checklist Item will occur.

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<sup>215</sup> See Attachment "F" Application and GPI Information.

## XII. MINERAL RESOURCES

Would the project:	SIGNIFICANT IMPACT	LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT WITH MITIGATION	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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

The discussions regarding Environmental Setting, Regulatory Setting, CEQA requirements, Mineral Resources, etc.; contained in the Tulare County General Plan 2030 Update, Tulare County General Plan Background Report, and Tulare County General Plan 2030 Update Environmental Impact Report are incorporated herein in their entirety. Where necessary and if available, additional site-specific facts, data, information, etc., are included in this discussion.

### Environmental Setting

As noted earlier, the proposed Akers Business Park project site is located in the central-western part of Tulare County and is located approximately 0.50 miles north of the City of Tulare, in a predominantly agricultural, yet transitional, area of the San Joaquin Valley. The site is currently planted to walnuts, except at the southernmost portion of the site which currently has an RV sales development. Surrounding areas include agricultural production, light industrial, and SR 99 is immediately west of the site. The proposed Project will include the development of a commercial business park on approximately 65.45 acres located at the southwest corner of Road 100 (Oaks Street) and Oakdale Avenue, east of State Route (SR) 99, APN 149-090-006. The proposed Project will include a General Plan Amendment (“GPA”) to change the Land Use Designation from “Valley Agriculture” to “Mixed Use,” a Zone Change (“PZC”) to change the Zone from AE-20 (Exclusive Agricultural – 20 Acre Minimum) to C-3-MU (Service Commercial with a Mixed-Use Overlay Zone) to facilitate a Tentative Subdivision Map (“TSM”) to subdivide a 65.45-acre parcel and develop the proposed Akers Business Park as a mixed use commercial project that includes the expansion of the existing Magic Touch Recreational Vehicle Sales facility at the south end of the proposed Project (3567 N. Oaks St. Tulare, CA 93274), contractor offices, boat sales, and other related uses allowed in the C-3-MU Zone.

Per the Tulare County General Plan Background Report, Tulare County is divided into two major physiographic and geologic provinces: the Sierra Nevada Mountains and the Central Valley. The Sierra Nevada Physiographic Province, in the eastern portion of the Tulare County, is underlain by metamorphic and igneous rock. It consists mainly of homogeneous granitic rocks, with several islands of older metamorphic rock. The central and western parts of the County are part of the Central Valley Province, underlain by marine and non-marine sedimentary rocks. It is basically a flat, alluvial plain, with soil consisting of material deposited by the uplifting of the mountains.

Economically, the most important minerals that are extracted in Tulare County are sand, gravel, crushed rock, and natural gas. Other minerals that could be mined commercially include tungsten, which has been mined to some extent, and relatively small amounts of chromite, copper, gold, lead, manganese, silver, zinc, barite, feldspar, limestone, and silica. Minerals that are present but do not exist in the quantities desired for commercial mining include antimony, asbestos, graphite, iron, molybdenum, nickel, radioactive minerals, phosphate, construction rock, and sulfur.

Aggregate resources are the most valuable mineral resource in Tulare County because it is a major component of the Portland cement concrete (PCC) and asphaltic concrete (AC). PCC and AC are essential to constructing roads, buildings, and providing for other infrastructure needs. There are four streams that have provided the main source of high quality sand and gravel in Tulare County: Kaweah River, Lewis Creek, Deer Creek and the Tule River. The highest quality deposits are located at the Kaweah and Tule Rivers. Lewis Creek deposits are considerably inferior to those of the other two rivers.

### Regulatory Setting

#### Federal

There are no federal or local regulations pertaining to mineral resources relevant to the proposed project.

## State

### California Surface Mining and Reclamation Act of 1975

Enacted by the State Legislature in 1975, the Surface Mining and Reclamation Act (SMARA), Public Resources Code Section 2710 et seq., insures a continuing supply of mineral resources for the State. The act also creates surface mining and reclamation policy to assure that:

- Production and conservation of minerals is encouraged;
- Environmental effects are prevented or minimized;
- Consideration is given to recreational activities, watersheds, wildlife, range and forage, and aesthetic enjoyment;
- Mined lands are reclaimed to a useable condition once mining is completed; and
- Hazards to public safety both now and in the future are eliminated.

Areas in the State (city or county) that do not have their own regulations for mining and reclamation activities rely on the Department of Conservation, Division of Mines and Geology, Office of Mine Reclamation to enforce this law. SMARA contains provisions for the inventory of mineral lands in the State of California. The State Geologist, in accordance with the State Board's Guidelines for Classification and Designation of Mineral Lands, must classify Mineral Resource Zones (MRZ) as designated below:

- MRZ-1. Areas where available geologic information indicates that there is minimal likelihood of significant resources.
- MRZ-2. Areas underlain by mineral deposits where geologic data indicate that significant mineral deposits are located or likely to be located.
- MRZ-3. Areas where mineral deposits are found but the significance of the deposits cannot be evaluated without further exploration.
- MRZ-4. Areas where there is not enough information to assess the zone. These are areas that have unknown mineral resource significance.

SMARA only covers mining activities that impact or disturb the surface of the land. Deep mining (tunnel) or petroleum and gas production is not covered by SMARA.

## Local

### Tulare County General Plan 2030 Update

The Tulare County General Plan 2030 Update: Chapter 8 – Environmental Resources Management contains the following goals and policies that relate to mineral resources and which have potential relevance to the Project's California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) review: *ERM-2.1 Conserve Mineral Deposits* wherein the County will encourage the conservation of identified and/or potential mineral deposits, recognizing the need for identifying, permitting, and maintaining a 50 year supply of locally available PCC grade aggregate; and *ERM-4.6 Renewable Energy* wherein the County shall support efforts, when appropriately sited, for the development and use of alternative energy resources, including renewable energy such as wind, solar, bio-fuels and co-generation.

### Project Impact Analysis:

**a)and b) No Impact:** Mineral resources located within Tulare County are predominately sand and gravel resources primarily provided by four streams: Kaweah River, Lewis Creek, Deer Creek, and the Tule River. The Kaweah river is the nearest of these four streams to the proposed Project site and is located approximately greater than 19 miles to the northeast. Due to the distance from these streams, the Project will not result in the loss of an available known mineral resource. The Tulare County General Plan Update (see Figure 8-2 Mineral Resource Zone in the General Plan) indicates the locations of State-designated Mineral Resource Zones. According to the map, the Project site is not located in or within 10 miles of a Mineral Resource Zone. The California Department of Conservation indicates that the nearest, active mining operation (Kaweah South, mining sand and gravel) is located approximately 19 miles northeast of the Project site.<sup>216</sup> As such, the

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<sup>216</sup> State of California Department Of Conservation. Division of Mine Reclamation. Maps: Mines and Mineral Resources Accessed September 2022 at: <https://maps.conservation.ca.gov/mol/index.html>.

Project would not 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 proposed Project site is not delineated on a local land use plan as a locally important mineral resource recovery site. Therefore, the proposed Akers Business Park project would not 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.

**Cumulative Impact Analysis: No Impact** - The geographic area of this cumulative analysis is Tulare County and the City of Tulare. This cumulative analysis is based on the information provided in the Tulare County General Plan 2030 Update, Tulare County General Plan Background Report, the Tulare County General Plan 2030 Update EIR. As noted previously, the proposed Project's 65.45-acre site is approximately 0.50-mile north of the City of Tulare, east of and adjacent to State Route 99 in the central-western part of Tulare County in a predominantly agricultural, yet transitional, area of the San Joaquin Valley. The site is currently planted to walnuts, except at the southernmost portion of the site which currently has an RV sales development. Surrounding areas include agricultural production, light industrial, and SR 99 is immediately west of the site. The proposed Project will include the development of a commercial business park on approximately 65.45 acres located at the southwest corner of Road 100 (Oaks Street) and Oakdale Avenue, east of State Route (SR) 99, APN 149-090-006. The proposed Project will include a General Plan Amendment ("GPA") to change the Land Use Designation from "Valley Agriculture" to "Mixed Use," a Zone Change ("PZC") to change the Zone from AE-20 (Exclusive Agricultural – 20 Acre Minimum) to C-3-MU (Service Commercial with a Mixed-Use Overlay Zone) to facilitate a Tentative Subdivision Map ("TSM") to subdivide a 65.45-acre parcel and develop the proposed Akers Business Park as a mixed use commercial project that includes the expansion of the existing Magic Touch Recreational Vehicle Sales facility at the south end of the proposed Project (3567 N. Oaks St. Tulare, CA 93274), contractor offices, boat sales, and other related uses allowed in the C-3-MU Zone. As such, no cumulative impact related to this Checklist Item will occur.

### XIII. NOISE

Would the project result in:	SIGNIFICANT IMPACT	LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT WITH MITIGATION	LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT	NO IMPACT
a) Generation of a substantial temporary or permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the project in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Generation of excessive ground-borne vibration or ground-borne noise levels?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

The discussions regarding Environmental Setting, Regulatory Setting, CEQA requirements, Noise Resource, etc.; contained in the Tulare County General Plan 2030 Update, Tulare County General Plan Background Report, and Tulare County General Plan 2030 Update Environmental Impact Report are incorporated herein in their entirety. Where necessary and if available, additional site-specific facts, data, information, etc., are included in this discussion.

#### Environmental Setting

As noted previously, the proposed Akers Business Park project’s 65.45-acre site is approximately 0.50-mile north of the City of Tulare, east of and adjacent to State Route 99 in the central-western part of Tulare County in a predominantly agricultural, yet transitional, area of the San Joaquin Valley. The site is currently planted to walnuts, except at the southernmost portion of the site which currently has an RV sales development. Surrounding areas include agricultural production, light industrial, and SR 99 is immediately west of the site. The proposed Project will include the development of a commercial business park on approximately 65.45 acres located at the southwest corner of Road 100 (Oaks Street) and Oakdale Avenue, east of State Route (SR) 99, APN 149-090-006. The proposed Project will include a General Plan Amendment (“GPA”) to change the Land Use Designation from “Valley Agriculture” to “Mixed Use,” a Zone Change (“PZC”) to change the Zone from AE-20 (Exclusive Agricultural – 20 Acre Minimum) to C-3-MU (Service Commercial with a Mixed-Use Overlay Zone) to facilitate a Tentative Subdivision Map (“TSM”) to subdivide a 65.45-acre parcel and develop the proposed Akers Business Park as a mixed use commercial project that includes the expansion of the existing Magic Touch Recreational Vehicle Sales facility at the south end of the proposed Project (3567 N. Oaks St. Tulare, CA 93274), contractor offices, boat sales, and other related uses allowed in the C-3-MU Zone.

“Noise. Noise level (or volume) is generally measured in decibels (dB) using the A-weighted sound pressure level (dBA). The A-weighting scale is an adjustment to the actual sound power levels to be consistent with that of human hearing response, which is most sensitive to frequencies around 4,000 Hertz (about the highest note on a piano) and less sensitive to low frequencies (below 100 Hertz). In addition to the actual instantaneous measurement of sound levels, the duration of sound is important since sounds that occur over a long period of time are more likely to be an annoyance or cause direct physical damage or environmental stress. One of the most frequently used noise metrics that considers both duration and sound power level is the equivalent noise level (Leq). The Leq is defined as the single steady A-weighted level that is equivalent to the same amount of energy as that contained in the actual fluctuating levels over a period of time. Typically, Leq is summed over a one-hour period.

Sound pressure is measured on a logarithmic scale with the 0 dB level based on the lowest detectable sound pressure level that people can perceive (an audible sound that is not zero sound pressure level). Based on the logarithmic scale, a doubling of sound energy is equivalent to an increase of 3 dB and a sound that is 10 dB less than the ambient sound level has no effect on ambient noise. Because of the nature of the human ear, a sound must be about 10 dB greater than the reference sound to be judged as twice as loud. In general, a 3 dBA change in community noise levels is noticeable, while 1-2 dBA changes generally are not perceived. Quiet suburban areas typically have noise levels in the range of 40 to 50 dBA, while noise levels along arterial streets are generally

in the 50 to 60+ dBA range. Normal conversational levels are in the 60-65 dBA range, and ambient noise levels greater than that can interrupt conversations.

Noise levels typically attenuate at a rate of 6 dBA per doubling of distance from point sources such as industrial machinery. Noise from lightly traveled roads typically attenuates at a rate of about 4.11 dBA per doubling of distance. Noise from heavily traveled roads typically attenuates at about 3 dBA per doubling of distance.

The actual time period in which noise occurs is also important since noise that occurs at night tends to be more disturbing than that which occurs during the daytime. To evaluate community noise on a 24-hour basis, the day-night average sound level was developed (Ldn). Ldn is the time average of all A-weighted levels for a 24-hour period with a 10 dB upward adjustment added to those noise levels occurring between 10:00 PM and 7:00 AM to account for the general increased sensitivity of people to nighttime noise levels. The Community Noise Equivalent Level (CNEL) is identical to the Ldn with one exception. The CNEL adds 5 dB to evening noise levels (7:00 PM to 10:00 PM). Thus, both the Ldn and CNEL noise measures represent a 24-hour average of A-weighted noise levels with Ldn providing a nighttime adjustment and CNEL providing both an evening and nighttime adjustment.

Vibration. Vibration is an oscillatory motion through a solid medium in which the motion's amplitude can be described in terms of displacement, velocity, or acceleration. Vibration can be a serious concern, causing buildings to shake and rumbling sounds to be heard. In contrast to noise, vibration is not a common environmental problem. It is unusual for vibration from sources such as buses and trucks to be perceptible, even in locations close to major roads.

There are several different methods that are used to quantify vibration. The peak particle velocity (PPV) is defined as the maximum instantaneous peak of the vibration signal. The PPV is most frequently used to describe vibration impacts to buildings and is usually measured in inches per second. The root mean square (RMS) amplitude is most frequently used to describe the effect of vibration on the human body. The RMS amplitude is defined as the average of the squared amplitude of the signal. Decibel notation (VdB) is commonly used to measure RMS. The decibel notation acts to compress the range of numbers required to describe vibration.

High levels of vibration may cause physical personal injury or damage to buildings. However, groundborne vibration levels rarely affect human health. Instead, most people consider groundborne vibration to be an annoyance that can affect concentration or disturb sleep. In addition, high levels of groundborne vibration can damage fragile buildings or interfere with equipment that is highly sensitive to groundborne vibration (e.g., electron microscopes).

In contrast to noise, groundborne vibration is not a phenomenon that most people experience every day. The background vibration velocity level in residential areas is usually 50 RMS or lower which is well below the threshold of perception for humans (human perception is around 65 RMS). Most perceptible indoor vibration is caused by sources within buildings, such as operation of mechanical equipment, movement of people, or slamming of doors. Typical outdoor sources of perceptible groundborne vibration are construction equipment, steel-wheeled trains, and traffic on rough roads. If the roadway is smooth, the vibration from traffic is rarely perceptible.

As shown in the Tulare County General Plan Background Report, noise levels on SR 99 (between Visalia Municipal Airport and Paige Avenue (Avenues 216) range from 62.2 dBA at 50 feet and 57.7 dBA at 100 feet.<sup>217</sup> As the proposed Project is adjacent to SR 99, it is reasonable to conclude that outdoor noise levels could be 62.2 dBA (at the maximum) due to the noise caused by daily SR 99 traffic.

The Background Report also contains noise levels recorded within unincorporated areas of the County. Noise level data collected during continuous monitoring included the hourly Leq and Lmax and the statistical distribution of noise levels over each hour of the sample period. The community noise survey results indicate that typical noise levels in noise-sensitive areas of the unincorporated areas of Tulare County are in the range of 29-65 dB Ldn. The quietest areas are those that are removed from major transportation-related noise sources and industrial or stationary noise sources.<sup>218</sup>

Noise levels around the Project site are associated with farm equipment and associated agricultural activities, typical noise that emanates from residential uses, and pass-by vehicular noise. Maximum noise levels generated by farm-related tractors typically range from 77 to 85 dB at a distance of 50 feet from the tractor, depending on the horsepower of the tractor and the operating

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<sup>217</sup> Tulare County. Tulare County General Plan Background Report. Page 8-56. Accessed September 2022 at: <http://generalplan.co.tulare.ca.us/documents/GeneralPlan2010/Appendix%20B%20-%20Background%20Report.pdf>

<sup>218</sup> Ibid. Table 8-9. Avenue 256 between SR 99 and Road 216. Page 8-58.



conditions. Due to the seasonal nature of the agricultural industry, there are often extended periods of time when no noise is generated at the proposed Project site, followed by short-term periods of intensive mechanical equipment usage and corresponding noise generation. During periods without noise generated by agricultural production, noise levels would be typical of other noise-sensitive areas in unincorporated Tulare County, as discussed above.

The Tulare County General Plan Background Report Safety section and the Tulare County General Plan 2030 Update serve as the primary policy statement by the County for implementing policies to maintain and improve the noise environment in Tulare County. The General Plan presents Goals and Objectives relative to planning for the noise environment within the County. Future noise/land use incompatibilities can be avoided or reduced with implementation of the Tulare County noise criteria and standards. Tulare County realizes that it may not always be possible to avoid constructing noise sensitive developments in existing noisy areas and therefore provides noise reduction strategies to be implemented in situations with potential noise/land use conflicts.<sup>219</sup>

## Regulatory Setting

### *Federal*

#### Federal Vibration Policies

The Federal Railway Administration (FRA) and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) have published guidance relative to vibration impacts. According to the FRA, fragile buildings can be exposed to ground-borne vibration levels of 0.5 PPV without experiencing structural damage. The FTA has identified the human annoyance response to vibration levels as 80 RMS (Root Mean Square = The square root of the arithmetic average of the squared amplitude of the signal).<sup>220</sup>

### *State*

The California Noise Control Act was enacted in 1973 (Health and Safety Code § 46010 et seq.), and states that the Office of Noise Control (ONC) should provide assistance to local communities in developing local noise control programs. It also indicates that ONC staff will work with the OPR to provide guidance for the preparation of the required noise elements in city and county General Plans, pursuant to Government Code § 65302(f). California Government Code § 65302(f) requires city and county general plans to include a noise element. The purpose of a noise element is to guide future development to enhance future land use compatibility.

### *Local*

Analytical noise modeling techniques, in conjunction with actual field noise level measurements, were used to develop generalized Ldn or Community Noise Equivalent Level (CNEL) contours for traffic noise sources within Tulare County for existing conditions. Traffic data representing annual average daily traffic volumes, truck mix, and the day/night distribution of traffic for existing conditions (1986) and future were obtained from the Tulare County Public Works Department and used in the Tulare County Noise Element. The Tulare County General Plan 2030 Update Health & Safety Element (2012) includes noise and land use compatibility standards for various land uses. These are shown in **Table 13-1** Land Use Compatibility for Community Noise Environments<sup>221</sup>.

#### Tulare County General Plan 2030 Update

The Tulare County General Plan 2030 Update: Chapter 10 – Health and Safety contains the following goals and policies that relate to noise and which have potential relevance to the Project’s California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) review: *HS-8.2 Noise Impacted Areas* – wherein the County shall designate areas as noise-impacted if exposed to existing or projected noise levels that exceed 60 dB Ldn (or Community Noise Equivalent Level (CNEL)) at the exterior of buildings; *HS-8.3 Noise Sensitive Land Uses* – wherein the County shall not approve new noise sensitive uses unless effective mitigation measures are incorporated into the design of such projects to reduce noise levels to 60 dB Ldn (or CNEL) or less within outdoor activity areas and 45 dB Ldn (or CNEL) or less within interior living spaces; *HS-8.6 Noise Level Criteria* wherein the County shall ensure noise level criteria

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<sup>219</sup> Ibid.

<sup>220</sup> U.S. Department of Transportation. “The Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment Manual”. September 2018. FTA Report No. 0123 Federal Transit Administration Page 113. Accessed September 2022 at: [https://www.transit.dot.gov/sites/fta.dot.gov/files/docs/research-innovation/118131/transit-noise-and-vibration-impact-assessment-manual-fta-report-no-0123\\_0.pdf](https://www.transit.dot.gov/sites/fta.dot.gov/files/docs/research-innovation/118131/transit-noise-and-vibration-impact-assessment-manual-fta-report-no-0123_0.pdf).

<sup>221</sup> Tulare County General Plan 2030 Update. Goals and Policies Report. Page 10-25.

applied to land uses other than residential or other noise-sensitive uses are consistent with the recommendations of the California Office of Noise Control (CONC); *HS-8.8 Adjacent Uses* wherein the County shall not permit development of new industrial, commercial, or other noise-generating land uses if resulting noise levels will exceed 60 dB Ldn (or CNEL) at the boundary of areas designated and zoned for residential or other noise-sensitive uses, unless it is determined to be necessary to promote the public health, safety and welfare of the County; *HS-8.11 Peak Noise Generators* wherein the County shall limit noise generating activities, such as construction, to hours of normal business operation (7 a.m. to 7 p.m.). No peak noise generating activities shall be allowed to occur outside of normal business hours without County approval; *HS-8.13 Noise Analysis* – wherein the County shall require a detailed noise impact analysis in areas where current or future exterior noise levels from transportation or stationary sources have the potential to exceed the adopted noise policies of the Health and Safety Element, where there is development of new noise sensitive land uses or the development of potential noise generating land uses near existing sensitive land uses. The noise analysis shall be the responsibility of the project applicant and be prepared by a qualified acoustical engineer (i.e., a Registered Professional Engineer in the State of California, etc.). The analysis shall include recommendations and evidence to establish mitigation that will reduce noise exposure to acceptable levels (such as those referenced in Table 10-1 of the Health and Safety Element); *HS-8.14 Sound Attenuation Features* - The County shall require sound attenuation features such as walls, berming, heavy landscaping, between commercial, industrial, and residential uses to reduce noise and vibration impacts; *HS-8.16 State Noise Insulation* – wherein the County shall enforce the State Noise Insulation Standards (California Administrative Code, Title 24) and Chapter 35 of the Uniform Building Code; *HS-8.18 Construction Noise* wherein the County shall seek to limit the potential noise impacts of construction activities by limiting construction activities to the hours of 7 a.m. to 7 p.m., Monday through Saturday when construction activities are located near sensitive receptors. No construction shall occur on Sundays or national holidays without a permit from the County to minimize noise impacts associated with development near sensitive receptors; *HS-8.19 Construction Noise Control* wherein the County shall ensure that construction contractors implement best practices guidelines (i.e.; berms, screens, etc.) as appropriate and feasible to reduce construction-related noise-impacts on surrounding land uses.

**Table 13-1**

Land Use Category	Community Noise Exposure-L <sub>dn</sub> or CNEL (dB)						
	50	55	60	65	70	75	80
Residential - Low Density Single Family, Duplex, Mobile Homes	[Noise level range: 55-80]						
Residential – Multi-Family	[Noise level range: 55-80]						
Transient Lodging – Motels, Hotels	[Noise level range: 55-80]						
Schools, Libraries, Churches, Hospitals, Nursing Homes	[Noise level range: 55-80]						
Auditoriums, Concerts Halls, Amphitheaters	[Noise level range: 55-80]						
Sports Arenas, Outdoor Spectator Sports	[Noise level range: 55-80]						
Playgrounds, Neighborhood Parks	[Noise level range: 55-80]						
Golf Courses, Riding Stables, Water Recreation, Cemeteries	[Noise level range: 55-80]						
Office Buildings, Business Commercial and Professional	[Noise level range: 55-80]						
Industrial, Manufacturing, Utilities, Agriculture	[Noise level range: 55-80]						
<b>Normally Acceptable</b>	Specified land use is satisfactory, based upon the assumption that any buildings involved are of normal conventional construction, without any special noise insulation requirements.						
<b>Conditionally Acceptable</b>	New construction or development should be undertaken only after a detailed analysis of the noise reduction requirements is made and needed noise insulation features are included in the design. Conventional construction, but with closed windows and fresh air supply systems or air conditioning will normally suffice.						
<b>Normally Unacceptable</b>	New construction or development should generally be discouraged. If new construction or development does proceed, a detailed analysis of the noise reduction requirements must be made and needed noise insulation features included in the design.						
<b>Clearly Unacceptable</b>	New construction or development generally should not be undertaken.						

[Source: Figure Noise-1, State Land Use Compatibility Standards for Community Noise Environment: California Governor's Office of Planning and Research, October 2003]

Land Use	Suggested Maximum Ldn
Residential – low density	60
Residential – high density	65
Transient lodging	65
Schools, libraries, churches, hospitals	65
Playgrounds, parks	65
Commercial	70
Industrial	75

**Project Impact Analysis:**

- a) **Less Than Significant Impact:** As noted previously, the proposed Akers Business Park project’s 65.45-acre site is approximately 0.50-mile north of the City of Tulare, east of and adjacent to State Route 99 in the central-western part of Tulare County in a predominantly agricultural, yet transitional, area of the San Joaquin Valley. The site is currently planted to walnuts, except at the southernmost portion of the site which currently has an RV sales development. Surrounding areas include agricultural production, light industrial, and SR 99 is immediately west of the site. The proposed Project will include the development of a commercial business park on approximately 65.45 acres located at the southwest corner of Road 100 (Oaks Street) and Oakdale Avenue, east of State Route (SR) 99, APN 149-090-006. The proposed Project will include a General Plan Amendment (“GPA”) to change the Land Use Designation from “Valley Agriculture” to “Mixed Use,” a Zone Change (“PZC”) to change the Zone from AE-20 (Exclusive Agricultural – 20 Acre Minimum) to C-3-MU (Service Commercial with a Mixed-Use Overlay Zone) to facilitate a Tentative Subdivision Map (“TSM”) to subdivide a 65.45-acre parcel and develop the proposed Akers Business Park as a mixed use commercial project that includes the expansion of the existing Magic Touch Recreational Vehicle Sales facility at the south end of the proposed Project (3567 N. Oaks St. Tulare, CA 93274), contractor offices, boat sales, and other related uses allowed in the C-3-MU Zone. Project construction will include site preparation, grading, paving, and construction-related activities. The nearest noise sensitive receptors include two scattered rural residential uses approximately 0.50 to the east and southeast of the Project site.

The ambient noise environment in the proposed Project vicinity is dominated by agricultural-related uses, including tractor-intensive work, and SR 99, which is immediately adjacent to the southwestern quadrant of the site boundary. The magnitude and frequency of the existing ambient noise levels may vary considerably over the course of the day and throughout the week. The variation is caused by different reasons, for example, changing weather conditions, the effects of rotation of agricultural crops, and other human-related activities.

Also, by analogy, an environmental impact report prepared for a similar project (that is, Sequoia Drive-In Business Park, SCH No. 2017011027; adopted/certified by the Tulare County Board of Supervisors via Resolution No.2020-0933), is used for a comparative analysis of noise- and vibration-related impacts for this proposed Project. The analogous project is approximately 46 acres in area and is within 0.50 miles east of the City of Visalia. It is also adjacent to a State Route (SR 198), is generally bound by active agriculture with urban encroachment coming from the west and a commercial service use (Caltrans Visalia Maintenance facility) is also located west of the site.

**Construction Noise**

“Proposed Project construction related activities will involve temporary noise sources and will be periodic in nature. Typical construction related equipment include graders, trenchers, small tractors and excavators. During the proposed Project construction, noise from construction related activities will contribute to the noise environment in the immediate vicinity. Activities involved in construction will generate maximum noise levels, as indicated in **Table 13-3** [Table 13.12-

<sup>222</sup> Tulare County 2030 General Plan Update Background Report. Page 8-50.

2 in the reference], ranging from 79 to 91 dBA at a distance of 50 feet, without feasible noise control (e.g., mufflers) and ranging from 75 to 80 dBA at a distance of 50 feet, with feasible noise controls.

The distinction between short-term construction noise impacts and long-term operational noise impacts is a typical one in both CEQA documents and local noise ordinances, which generally recognize the reality that short-term noise from construction is inevitable and cannot be mitigated beyond a certain level. Thus, local agencies frequently tolerate short-term noise at levels that they would not accept for permanent noise sources. A more severe approach would be impractical and might preclude the kind of construction activities that are to be expected from time to time in urban and semi-urban environments. Most residents of these areas recognize this reality and expect to hear construction activities on occasion.”<sup>223</sup>.

Type of Equipment	dBA at 50 feet	
	Without Feasible Noise Control <sup>1</sup>	With Feasible Noise Control
<b>Dozer or Tractor</b>	80	75
<b>Excavator</b>	88	80
<b>Scraper</b>	88	80
<b>Front End Loader</b>	79	75
<b>Backhoe</b>	85	75
<b>Grader</b>	85	75
<b>Truck</b>	91	75

Although impacts are considered less than significant, the Project will be required to adhere to the County’s noise policies, as noted earlier, to ensure that impacts remain less than significant, including *HS-8.11 Peak Noise Generators*; *HS-8.18 Construction Noise*; and *HS-8.19 Construction Noise Control*, as appropriate and feasible to reduce construction-related noise-impacts on surrounding land uses

#### Operational Noise

As noted previously, the proposed Akers Business Park project’s 65.45-acre site is approximately 0.50-mile north of the City of Tulare, east of and adjacent to State Route 99 in the central-western part of Tulare County in a predominantly agricultural, yet transitional, area of the San Joaquin Valley. The site is currently planted to walnuts, except at the southernmost portion of the site which currently has an RV sales development. Surrounding areas include agricultural production, light industrial, and SR 99 is immediately west of the site. The site is located in a predominantly agricultural area within the Urban Development Boundary of the City of Tulare and lies, as indicated in the Tulare County General Plan, within the 75 dBA to 91 dBA contours of SR 99. As noted previously, the nearest rural residences are located approximately 0.50 miles east and southeast of the Project site. It is also noted that the land surrounding the Project site is predominantly zoned AE-20 (to the north, east, and west), which is an exclusive zone for intensive agricultural uses and for those uses which are necessary and an integral part of agricultural operations.

Tulare County’s Land Use Compatibility for Community Noise Environments identified a noise standard of 75 Ldn/CNEL for agricultural land uses, which is the land use that applies to the proposed Akers Business Park project site and the residential home located northeast of the proposed Project site. Operational noise will be similar in character to existing noise in the area resulting from agricultural operations and the adjacent SR 99. At full buildout, the Akers Business Park site will likely be operational during typical business hours, (i.e.; from Monday to Saturday from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.). Noise generating operational activities include employee and delivery vehicle traffic and equipment such as fork-lifts and small loaders. Operating noise is expected to be below Tulare County General Plan noise standard of 75Ldn/CNEL at the exterior of the nearby residence. As such, potential impacts to this Checklist Item is less than significant.

- b) Less Than Significant Impact:** Vibration is an oscillatory motion that can be described in terms of the displacement, velocity, or acceleration. Because the motion is oscillatory, there is no net movement of the vibration element and the

<sup>223</sup> Tulare County. Sequoia Drive-In Business Park. Environmental Impact Report. Chapter 3.12. Noise. Page 3.12-6. December 2018. Available upon request at RMA Administrative Office.

average of any of the motion metrics is zero. Displacement is the most intuitive metric. For a vibrating floor, the displacement is simply the distance that a point on the floor moves away from its static position. The velocity represents the instantaneous speed of the floor movement and acceleration is the rate of change of the speed. Although displacement is easier to understand than velocity or acceleration, it is rarely used for describing ground-borne vibration. Most transducers used for measuring ground-borne vibration use either velocity or acceleration. Furthermore, the response of humans, buildings, and equipment to vibration is more accurately described using velocity or acceleration.”<sup>224</sup>

“The effects of ground-borne vibration can include perceptible movement of floors in buildings, rattling of windows, shaking of items on shelves or hanging on walls, and low-frequency noise (ground-borne noise). Building damage is not a factor for typical transportation projects, but in extreme cases, such as during blasting or pile-driving during construction, vibration could cause damage to buildings. Although the perceptibility threshold is approximately 65 VdB, human response to vibration is not usually substantial unless the vibration exceeds 70 VdB. A vibration level that causes annoyance is well below the damage risk threshold for typical buildings (100 VdB).”<sup>225</sup> “Ground-borne vibration is almost never a problem outdoors. Although the motion of the ground may be perceived, without the effects associated with the shaking of a building, the motion does not provoke the same adverse human reaction.”<sup>226</sup> **Table 13-3** presents the human response to different levels of ground-borne vibration and noise. “The vibration level (VdB) is presented with the corresponding frequency assuming that the vibration spectrum peaks at 30 Hz or 60 Hz.(xi) The groundborne noise levels (dBA) are estimated for the specified vibration velocity with a peak vibration spectrum of 30 Hz (Low Freq) and 60 Hz (Mid Freq). Note that the human response differs for vibration velocity level based on frequency. For example, the noise caused by vibrating structural components may cause annoyance even though the vibration cannot be felt. Alternatively, a low frequency vibration can cause annoyance while the ground-borne noise level it generates does not.”<sup>227</sup>

Vibration Velocity Level	Noise Level		Human Response
	Low Freq*	Mid Freq**	
65 VdB	25 dBA	40dBA	Approximate threshold of perception for many humans. Low frequency sound: usually inaudible. Mid-frequency sound: excessive for quiet sleeping areas.
75 VdB	35 dBA	50dBA	Approximate dividing line between barely perceptible and distinctly perceptible. Many people find transit vibration at this level annoying. Low-frequency noise: tolerable for sleeping areas. Mid-frequency noise: excessive in most quiet occupied
85 VdB	45 dBA	60dBA	Vibration tolerable only if there are an infrequent number of events per day. Low-frequency noise: excessive for sleeping areas. Mid-frequency noise: excessive even for infrequent events for some activities.
*Approximate noise level when vibration spectrum peak is near 30 Hz.			
**Approximate noise level when vibration spectrum peak is near 60 Hz.			

**Table 13-4** presents average source levels in terms of velocity for various types of construction equipment measured under a wide variety of construction activities.

Typical outdoor sources of perceptible ground borne vibration are construction equipment, steel-wheeled trains, and traffic on rough roads. Construction vibrations can be transient, random, or continuous. The approximate threshold of vibration perception is 65 VdB, while 85 VdB is the vibration acceptable only if there are an infrequent number of events per day.

<sup>224</sup> U.S. DOT. FTA. Transit Noise & Vibration Impact Assessment Manual. September 2022. Page 110. Accessed September 2022 at: [https://www.transit.dot.gov/sites/fta.dot.gov/files/docs/research-innovation/118131/transit-noise-and-vibration-impact-assessment-manual-fta-report-no-0123\\_0.pdf](https://www.transit.dot.gov/sites/fta.dot.gov/files/docs/research-innovation/118131/transit-noise-and-vibration-impact-assessment-manual-fta-report-no-0123_0.pdf)

<sup>225</sup> Ibid. 117-118.

<sup>226</sup> Op. Cit. 118.

<sup>227</sup> Op. Cit. 119.

<sup>228</sup> Op. Cit. 120.

**Construction Related Vibration Impacts:** While construction-related activities will result in minor amounts of groundbourne vibration, such groundbourne noise or vibration will attenuate rapidly from the source and will not be generally perceptible outside of the construction areas. As such, impacts to the neighboring sensitive receptor will be less than significant.

**Project Operational Vibration Impacts:** As described in Impact 13 a), The Project will largely result in typical agricultural/industrial use-related noise. Typical noise will likely result from vehicles accessing and egressing the site, on-site fork lifts and small loaders, etc. Other than these sources there will be no vibrational impacts from Project operation. As such, there will be no exposure of persons to or generation of excessive groundborne vibration.

<b>Equipment</b>		<b>PPV at 25 ft. in/sec</b>	<b>Approximate Lv * at 25 ft</b>
Pile Driver (impact)	upper range	1.518	112
	Typical	0.544	104
Pile Driver (sonic)	upper range	0.734	105
	typical	0.17	93
Clam shovel drop (slurry wall)		0.202	94
Hydromill (slurry wall)	in soil	0.008	66
	in rock	0.017	75
Vibratory Roller		0.21	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
<i>*RMS velocity in decibels, VDB re 1 micro-in/sec</i>			

- c) **No Impact:** The proposed Project is not within an airport land use plan or within two miles of a private airfield. The proposed Akers Business Park project will not conflict with Tulare County Airport Land Use Plan policy and as such, there will be no impact to this Checklist Item.

**Cumulative Impact Analysis: Less Than Significant Impact** - The geographic area of this cumulative analysis is Tulare County. This cumulative analysis is based on the information provided in the Tulare County 2030 General Plan, General Plan background Report, and/or Tulare County 2030 General Plan EIR. The normal operations of the proposed Project will have a minimal impact on the overall ambient noise levels of the area. The Project will contribute to the cumulative impacts on the noise resource; however, the proposed Project in and of itself will result in a minimal impact. Vibration impacts, both construction- and project operational-related would not generate excessive groundbourne vibration or noise resulting in a less than significant impact. Lastly, as the proposed Project is located outside of the Tulare Municipal Airport (Mefford Field) noise contours, it would not expose people residing or working in the proposed Akers Business Park project area to excessive noise levels. Therefore, Project-specific and Cumulative Impacts will be less than significant.

<sup>229</sup> Op. Cit. 184.

**XIV. POPULATION AND HOUSING**

Would the project:	SIGNIFICANT IMPACT	LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT WITH MITIGATION	LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT	NO IMPACT
a) Induce substantial unplanned population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

The discussions regarding Environmental Setting, Regulatory Setting, CEQA requirements, Population and Housing, etc. contained in the Tulare County General Plan 2030 Update and Tulare County Environmental Impact Report are incorporated herein in their entirety. Where necessary and if available, additional site-specific facts, data, information, etc., are included in this discussion.

**Environmental Setting**

Tulare County is located in a geographically diverse region with the majestic peaks of the Sierra Nevada framing its eastern region, while its western portion includes the San Joaquin Valley floor, which is very fertile and extensively cultivated. In addition to its agricultural production, the County’s economic base also includes agricultural packing and shipping operations. Small and medium size manufacturing plants are located in the western part of the county and are increasing in number. Tulare County contains portions of Sequoia National Forest, Sequoia National Monument, Inyo National Forest, and Kings Canyon National Park. Sequoia National Park is entirely contained within the county.

The County encompasses approximately 4,840 square miles of classified lands (lands with identified uses) and can be divided into three general topographical zones: a valley region; a foothill region east of the valley area; and a mountain region just east of the foothills. The eastern half of the county is generally comprised of public lands, including the Mountain Home State Forest, Golden Trout Wilderness area, and portions of the Dome Land and south Sierra Wilderness areas. Federal lands, which include wilderness, national forests, monuments and parks, along with County parks, make up 52 percent of the County, the largest percentage found in the County. Agricultural uses, which include row crops, orchards, dairies, and grazing lands on the Valley floor and in the foothills total over 2,020 square miles or about 43 percent of the entire County. Urban uses such as incorporated cities, communities, hamlets, other unincorporated urban uses, and infrastructure rights-of-way make up the remaining land in the County

As noted previously, the proposed Akers Business Park project’s 65.45-acre site is approximately 0.50-mile north of the City of Tulare, east of and adjacent to State Route 99 in the central-western part of Tulare County in a predominantly agricultural, yet transitional, area of the San Joaquin Valley. The site is currently planted to walnuts, except at the southernmost portion of the site which currently has an RV sales development. Surrounding areas include agricultural production, light industrial, and SR 99 is immediately west of the site. The proposed Project will include the development of a commercial business park on approximately 65.45 acres located at the southwest corner of Road 100 (Oaks Street) and Oakdale Avenue, east of State Route (SR) 99, APN 149-090-006. The proposed Project will include a General Plan Amendment (“GPA”) to change the Land Use Designation from “Valley Agriculture” to “Mixed Use,” a Zone Change (“PZC”) to change the Zone from AE-20 (Exclusive Agricultural – 20 Acre Minimum) to C-3-MU (Service Commercial with a Mixed-Use Overlay Zone) to facilitate a Tentative Subdivision Map (“TSM”) to subdivide a 65.45-acre parcel and develop the proposed Akers Business Park as a mixed use commercial project that includes the expansion of the existing Magic Touch Recreational Vehicle Sales facility at the south end of the proposed Project (3567 N. Oaks St. Tulare, CA 93274), contractor offices, boat sales, and other related uses allowed in the C-3-MU Zone.

**Regulatory Setting**

*Federal*



“HUD’s mission is to create strong, sustainable, inclusive communities and quality affordable homes for all. HUD is working to strengthen the housing market to bolster the economy and protect consumers; meet the need for quality affordable rental homes; utilize housing as a platform for improving quality of life; build inclusive and sustainable communities free from discrimination; and transform the way HUD does business.” However, as the proposed Project does not propose any housing, HUD or other, federal regulations do not apply.

### *State*

#### California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD)

HCD’s mission is to “Promote safe, affordable homes and strong vibrant communities throughout California.” “In 1977, the State Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) adopted regulations under the California Administrative Code, known as the Housing Element Guidelines, which are to be followed by local governments in the preparation of local housing elements. AB 2853, enacted in 1980, further codified housing element requirements. Since that time, new amendments to State Housing Law have been enacted. Each of these amendments has been considered during development of this Housing Element.”<sup>230</sup>

#### California Relocation Assistance Act

The State of California adopted the California Relocation Assistance Act (California Government Code §7260 et seq.) in 1970. This State law, which follows the federal Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Act, requires public agencies to provide procedural protections and benefits when they displace businesses, homeowners, and tenants in the process of implementing public programs and projects. This State law calls for fair, uniform, and equitable treatment of all affected persons through the provision of relocation benefits and assistance to minimize the hardship of displacement on the affected persons. There are no state regulations that are relevant to this proposed Project.

### *Local*

#### Tulare County Regional Housing Needs Assessment Plan 2014-2023

The Tulare County Association of Governments (TCAG) was responsible for allocating the State’s projections to each local jurisdiction within Tulare County including the County unincorporated area, which is reflected in this Housing Element. Tulare County has no control over the countywide population and housing projections provided to TCAG when it prepared the Regional Housing Needs Assessment Plan (RHNA). As the proposed Project does not include (or remove/displace) any housing, the RHNA does not apply.

#### Tulare County Housing Authority

“The Housing Authority of the County of Tulare (HATC) has been officially designated as the local public housing agency for the County of Tulare by the Board of Supervisors and was created pursuant to federal and state laws. ...HATC is a unique hybrid: a public sector agency with private sector business practices. Their major source of income is the rents from residents. The HATC mission is "to provide affordable, well-maintained rental housing to qualified low- and very low-income families. Priority shall be given to working families, seniors and the disabled. Tenant self sufficiency and responsibility shall be encouraged. Programs shall be self-supporting to the maximum extent feasible.”

HATC provides rental assistance to very low and moderate-income families, seniors and the handicapped throughout the county. HATC offers many different programs, including the conventional public housing program, the housing choice voucher program (Section 8), the farm labor program for families with farm labor income, senior housing programs, and other programs. They also own or manage some individual subsidized rental complexes that do not fall under the previous categories, and can provide information about other affordable housing that is available in Tulare County. All programs are handicap accessible. Almost all of the complexes have 55-year recorded affordability covenants.” As noted earlier, the proposed Project does not include (or remove/displace) any public housing, no impact would occur to HATC’s objectives/programs.

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<sup>230</sup> Tulare County Housing Element 2015 Update. Page 1-3. Accessed September 2022 at: <http://generalplan.co.tulare.ca.us/documents/GP/001Adopted%20Tulare%20County%20General%20Plan%20Materials/110Part%20I%20Voluntary%20Elements%20Chapters%206.%2012%20and%2015/001CHP%206%20Tulare%20County%20Housing%20Element%20Update%202015/CHP%206%20Tulare%20County%20Housing%20Element%20Update%202015.pdf>

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HATC provides rental assistance to very low and moderate-income families, seniors and the handicapped throughout the county. HATC offers many different programs, including the conventional public housing program, the housing choice voucher program (Section 8), the farm labor program for families with farm labor income, senior housing programs, and other programs. They also own or manage some individual subsidized rental complexes that do not fall under the previous categories, and can provide information about other affordable housing that is available in Tulare County. All programs are handicap accessible. Almost all of the complexes have 55-year recorded affordability covenants."<sup>231</sup>

### **Project Impact Analysis:**

**a)and b) No Impact:** As noted previously, the proposed Akers Business Park project's 65.45-acre site is approximately 0.50-mile north of the City of Tulare, east of and adjacent to State Route 99 in the central-western part of Tulare County in a predominantly agricultural, yet transitional, area of the San Joaquin Valley. The site is currently planted to walnuts, except at the southernmost portion of the site which currently has an RV sales development. Surrounding areas include agricultural production, light industrial, and SR 99 is immediately west of the site. The proposed Project will include the development of a commercial business park on approximately 65.45 acres located at the southwest corner of Road 100 (Oaks Street) and Oakdale Avenue, east of State Route (SR) 99, APN 149-090-006. The proposed Project will include a General Plan Amendment ("GPA") to change the Land Use Designation from "Valley Agriculture" to "Mixed Use," a Zone Change ("PZC") to change the Zone from AE-20 (Exclusive Agricultural – 20 Acre Minimum) to C-3-MU (Service Commercial with a Mixed-Use Overlay Zone) to facilitate a Tentative Subdivision Map ("TSM") to subdivide a 65.45-acre parcel and develop the proposed Akers Business Park as a mixed use commercial project that includes the expansion of the existing Magic Touch Recreational Vehicle Sales facility at the south end of the proposed Project (3567 N. Oaks St. Tulare, CA 93274), contractor offices, boat sales, and other related uses allowed in the C-3-MU Zone.

It is likely that temporary, local construction workers (and an unknown number of permanent employees when the Business Park component is realized) are anticipated to be utilized for the proposed Project which will not require additional permanent housing. The employees are anticipated to be part of the existing workforce in Tulare County. The proposed Project likely will not result in additional construction-related workers. Thus, depending upon timing (i.e., the year the Phases will actually occur), construction-related workers would be on site during a later stage of overall project development. There will not be a demand for additional housing as a direct result of the proposed Project and it will not induce population growth in the area. There are no existing homes on the proposed Project site and no homes in the immediate vicinity would be displaced because of proposed Project implementation. Also, as there are no existing houses on the proposed Project site, no people will be displaced as a result of Project implementation. Therefore, the Akers Business Park project would result in no Project-specific Impact related to this Checklist Item.

**Cumulative Impact Analysis: No Impact:** The geographic area of this cumulative analysis is Tulare County. This cumulative analysis is based on the information provided in the Tulare County General Plan 2030 Update, Tulare County General Plan Background Report, and Tulare County General Plan 2030 Update EIR.

The proposed Project will not require additional permanent housing, it does not impact existing homes on the proposed Project site; and it will not displace any additional housing units will not result in the conversion of any inhabited housing on-site or off-site. Therefore, the proposed Akers Business Park project will not result in the conversion of any inhabited housing on-site or off-site. As such, No Project-specific or Cumulative Impact related to this Checklist Item will occur.

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<sup>231</sup> Tulare County Housing Element 2015 Update. Page 5-12.

**XV. PUBLIC SERVICES**

Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for any of the public services:

	SIGNIFICANT IMPACT	LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT WITH MITIGATION	LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT	NO IMPACT
a) Fire protection?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Police protection?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Schools?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d) Parks?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
e) Other public facilities?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

The discussions regarding Environmental Setting, Regulatory Setting, CEQA requirements, Public Services, etc. contained in the Tulare County General Plan 2030 Update and Tulare County Environmental Impact Report are incorporated herein in their entirety. Where necessary and if available, additional site-specific facts, data, information, etc., are included in this discussion.

**Environmental Setting**

As noted previously, the proposed Akers Business Park project’s 65.45-acre site is approximately 0.50-mile north of the City of Tulare, east of and adjacent to State Route 99 in the central-western part of Tulare County in a predominantly agricultural, yet transitional, area of the San Joaquin Valley. The site is currently planted to walnuts, except at the southernmost portion of the site which currently has an RV sales development. Surrounding areas include agricultural production, light industrial, and SR 99 is immediately west of the site. The proposed Project will include the development of a commercial business park on approximately 65.45 acres located at the southwest corner of Road 100 (Oaks Street) and Oakdale Avenue, east of State Route (SR) 99, APN 149-090-006. The proposed Project will include a General Plan Amendment (“GPA”) to change the Land Use Designation from “Valley Agriculture” to “Mixed Use,” a Zone Change (“PZC”) to change the Zone from AE-20 (Exclusive Agricultural – 20 Acre Minimum) to C-3-MU (Service Commercial with a Mixed-Use Overlay Zone) to facilitate a Tentative Subdivision Map (“TSM”) to subdivide a 65.45-acre parcel and develop the proposed Akers Business Park as a mixed use commercial project that includes the expansion of the existing Magic Touch Recreational Vehicle Sales facility at the south end of the proposed Project (3567 N. Oaks St. Tulare, CA 93274), contractor offices, boat sales, and other related uses allowed in the C-3-MU Zone.

The Tulare County Sheriff’s Department provides law enforcement protection services to the unincorporated County. The nearest Sheriff’s Office station is the main office located approximately 5.5 surface miles north of the proposed Project site. In the event of a mutual aid request for police services from the County of Tulare, the City of Tulare Police Department Headquarters is approximately 3.5 surface miles from Magic Touch RV Sales and 4.0 surface miles from the intersection of Oakdale Avenue and N. Oaks Street. It is noted that both Sheriff and Tulare Police patrols are constantly circulating/patrolling and it would be speculative to estimate actual police response times.

Tulare County Fire Department provides fire protection services with the nearest substation, Fire Station No. 1, is approximately six (6) miles east of the proposed Project site; while the next nearest (Fire Station No. 25) is also approximately six (6) miles, south of the proposed Project site. In the event of a mutual aid request for fire services from the County of Tulare, the City of Tulare Fire Department Station No. 63 (located at 2900 “M” Street, in Tulare) is approximately 1.3 surface miles from Magic Touch RV Sales and 1.8 surface miles to the intersection of Oakdale Avenue and N. Oaks Street.

The nearest elementary school (Heritage Elementary School, in Tulare) is located approximately 1.5 miles southeast of the Project site; the next nearest school is Mission Valley Elementary School (in Tulare) approximately 1.75 miles southeast. Also, see parks discussion at Item 15 Recreation.

**Regulatory Setting**

*Federal*

None that are applicable to this Project.

*State*

California Fire Code and Building Code

The purpose of the California Fire Code (Title 24, Part 9 of the California Code of Regulations) is to establish the minimum requirements consistent with nationally recognized good practices to safeguard the public health, safety and general welfare from the hazards of fire, explosion or dangerous conditions in new and existing buildings, structures and premises, and to provide safety and assistance to fire fighters and emergency responders during emergency operations.<sup>232</sup>

*Local*

Tulare County General Plan 2030 Update

The following Tulare County General Plan 2030 Update, Chapter 14 – Public Facilities and Services, contains the following policies that relate to public services and may apply to this Project: *PFS-7.2 Fire Protection Standards* wherein the County shall require all new development to be adequately served by water supplies, storage, and conveyance facilities supplying adequate volume, pressure, and capacity for fire protection; *PFS-7.3 Visible Signage for Roads and Buildings* – wherein the County shall strive to ensure all roads are properly identified by name or number with clearly visible signs. The County shall strive to ensure all roads are properly identified by name or number with clearly visible signs; *PFS-7.5 Fire Staffing and Response Time Standards* wherein the County shall strive to maintain fire department staffing and response time goals consistent with National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) standards; *PFS-7.6 Provision of Station Facilities and Equipment* wherein the County shall strive to provide sheriff and fire station facilities, equipment (engines and other apparatus), and staffing necessary to maintain the County’s service goals. The County shall continue to cooperate with mutual aid providers to provide coverage throughout the County;

<b>Fire Staffing and Responses Time Standards</b>			
	<b>Demographics</b>	<b>Staffing/Response Time</b>	<b>% of Calls</b>
<b>Urban</b>	> 1,000 people/sq. mi.	15 fire fighters (FF)/9 min.	90
<b>Suburban</b>	500-100 people/sq. mi.	10 FF/10 min.	80
<b>Rural</b>	< 500 people/sq. mi.	6 FF/14 min.	80
<b>Remote*</b>	Travel Dist.>8 min.	4 FF/no specific response time	90
*Upon assembling the necessary resources at the emergency scene, the fire department should have the capacity to safely commence an initial attack within 2 minutes, 90% of the time.			

*PFS-7.9 Sheriff Response Time* wherein the County shall work with the Sheriff’s Department to achieve and maintain a response time of:

1. Less than 10 minutes for 90 percent of the calls in the valley region; and
2. 15 minutes for 75 percent of the calls in the foothill and mountain regions;

and *PFS-7.12 Design Features for Crime Prevention and Reduction* wherein the County shall promote the use of building and site design features as means for crime prevention and reduction.

**Project Impact Analysis:**

- a) **Less Than Significant Impact:** The County of Tulare will continue to provide fire protection services to the proposed Akers Business Park project site upon development. In accordance with General Plan *Policy PFS-7.5*, the County shall strive to maintain fire department staffing and response time goals consistent with National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) standards. the proposed Project site is located within six (6) miles of two (2) Tulare Fire Department stations; the nearest stations are Fire Station No. 1 at 25456 Road 140 (approximately six (6) miles east of the site); and Fire Station No. 25 at 2082 E. Foster Drive (approximately six (6) miles south) in Tulare. Based on the proposed Project’s proximity to

<sup>232</sup> 2019 California Fire Code (Title 24, Part 9 of the California Code of Regulations). 1.1.2 Purpose. Page 3. Accessed September 2022 at: [Building Department - RMA \(ca.gov\)](https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/Immunization/ICCSafe/Building-Department-RMA-ca.gov) then click [CHAPTER 24 - FLAMMABLE FINISHES, 2019 California Fire Code, Title 24, Part 9 | ICC Digital Codes \(iccsafe.org\)](#)

fire protection services, no additional staffing or expansion of existing fire suppression services will be required as a result of Project implementation. Therefore, impacts to fire protection services will be less than significant.

- b) Less Than Significant Impact:** The County of Tulare will continue to provide police protection services to the proposed Project site upon development; the nearest Sheriff's Office is located at 833 S. Akers Street in Visalia (approximately 5.5 miles north). The proposed Project would not generate new permanent residents, and therefore the number of emergency law enforcement calls originating from the Project site would remain low. Operation of the proposed Akers Business Park project would not result in the need for additional police facilities or result in the hiring of additional law enforcement personnel. Impacts associated with police protection services would be less than significant during operation of the proposed Project.
- c)-e) No Impact:** As noted earlier, the nearest school is Heritage Elementary School, in Tulare (located approximately 1.5 miles south of the Project site); the next nearest school is Mission Valley Elementary School (in Tulare) approximately 1.75 miles southeast. As previously discussed, although the proposed Project would increase the number of temporary employees at the Project site during construction-related activities, it is expected that local and regional construction workers would be available to serve the proposed Project's construction-related needs. Similarly, it is expected that the future year-round employees will come from the existing Tulare County, or surrounding area workforce as the unemployment rate in Tulare County was 7.9% as of August 2022.<sup>233</sup> Therefore, the Project will not result in significant population growth in the area. Impacts to schools, parks and libraries are generally the result of new residential developments. Since there are no proposed new residential facilities associated with the Project and the Project anticipates utilizing the existing workforce in the area, there are no significant impacts to these facilities.

**Cumulative Impact Analysis: Less Than Significant Impact:** The geographic area of this cumulative analysis is Tulare County. This cumulative analysis is based on the information provided in the Tulare County General Plan 2030 Update, Tulare County General Plan Background Report, and Tulare County General Plan 2030 Update EIR. As noted previously, the proposed Akers Business Park project's 65.45-acre site is approximately 0.50-mile north of the City of Tulare, east of and adjacent to State Route 99 in the central-western part of Tulare County in a predominantly agricultural, yet transitional, area of the San Joaquin Valley. The site is currently planted to walnuts, except at the southernmost portion of the site which currently has an RV sales development. Surrounding areas include agricultural production, light industrial, and SR 99 is immediately west of the site. The proposed Project will include the development of a commercial business park on approximately 65.45 acres located at the southwest corner of Road 100 (Oaks Street) and Oakdale Avenue, east of State Route (SR) 99, APN 149-090-006. The proposed Project will include a General Plan Amendment ("GPA") to change the Land Use Designation from "Valley Agriculture" to "Mixed Use," a Zone Change ("PZC") to change the Zone from AE-20 (Exclusive Agricultural – 20 Acre Minimum) to C-3-MU (Service Commercial with a Mixed-Use Overlay Zone) to facilitate a Tentative Subdivision Map ("TSM") to subdivide a 65.45-acre parcel and develop the proposed Akers Business Park as a mixed use commercial project that includes the expansion of the existing Magic Touch Recreational Vehicle Sales facility at the south end of the proposed Project (3567 N. Oaks St. Tulare, CA 93274), contractor offices, boat sales, and other related uses allowed in the C-3-MU Zone. As noted earlier, the proposed Project will not result in significant population growth in the area. Impacts to fire and polices services, schools, parks and libraries are generally the result of new residential developments. Since there are no proposed new residential facilities associated with the proposed Project and the Project anticipates utilizing the existing workforce in the area, there are no significant impacts to these facilities.

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<sup>233</sup> State of California. Employment Development Department. Labor Market Information Division. Visalia-Porterville Metropolitan Statistical Area (Tulare County). September 16, 2022. Accessed September 2022 at: [https://www.labormarketinfo.edd.ca.gov/file/lfmonth/visa\\$pd.pdf](https://www.labormarketinfo.edd.ca.gov/file/lfmonth/visa$pd.pdf).

**XVI. RECREATION**

Would the project:	SIGNIFICANT IMPACT	LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT WITH MITIGATION	LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT	NO IMPACT
a) Would the project increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

The discussions regarding Environmental Setting, Regulatory Setting, CEQA requirements, Recreation, etc. contained in the Tulare County General Plan 2030 Update and Tulare County Environmental Impact Report are incorporated herein in their entirety. Where necessary and if available, additional site-specific facts, data, information, etc., are included in this discussion.

**Environmental Setting**

As noted previously, the proposed Akers Business Park project’s 65.45-acre site is approximately 0.50-mile north of the City of Tulare, east of and adjacent to State Route 99 in the central-western part of Tulare County in a predominantly agricultural, yet transitional, area of the San Joaquin Valley. The site is currently planted to walnuts, except at the southernmost portion of the site which currently has an RV sales development. Surrounding areas include agricultural production, light industrial, and SR 99 is immediately west of the site. The proposed Project will include the development of a commercial business park on approximately 65.45 acres located at the southwest corner of Road 100 (Oaks Street) and Oakdale Avenue, east of State Route (SR) 99, APN 149-090-006. The proposed Project will include a General Plan Amendment (“GPA”) to change the Land Use Designation from “Valley Agriculture” to “Mixed Use,” a Zone Change (“PZC”) to change the Zone from AE-20 (Exclusive Agricultural – 20 Acre Minimum) to C-3-MU (Service Commercial with a Mixed-Use Overlay Zone) to facilitate a Tentative Subdivision Map (“TSM”) to subdivide a 65.45-acre parcel and develop the proposed Akers Business Park as a mixed use commercial project that includes the expansion of the existing Magic Touch Recreational Vehicle Sales facility at the south end of the proposed Project (3567 N. Oaks St. Tulare, CA 93274), contractor offices, boat sales, and other related uses allowed in the C-3-MU Zone.

“Tulare County contains several county, state, and federal parks. Aside from parks in the county, there are many open space areas as well. This section will highlight these various parks and open space areas and identify recreational opportunities within them.”<sup>234</sup> Two new parks were completed and became operational in the unincorporated communities of Plainview (Plainview Community Park) in 2016 and Earlimart (Earlimart Community Park) in 2017. In addition to the 15 parks and recreation facilities that are owned and operated by Tulare County, there are State Parks and Forests, National Parks and National Forests, trails, and recreational areas.

**Federal**

Lakes Kaweah and Success

“Lake Kaweah was formed after the construction of the Terminus Dam on the Kaweah River in 1962. The lake offers many recreational opportunities including fishing, camping, and boating. Lake Kaweah is located 20 miles east of Visalia on Highway 198 and was constructed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers for flood control and water conservation purposes. The lake has a maximum capacity to store 143,000 acre-feet of water. There are a total of 80 campsites at the lake’s Horse Creek Campground, which contains toilets, showers and a playground. Campfire programs are also available. Aside from camping, boat ramps are provided at the Lemon Hill and Kaweah Recreation Areas. Both Kaweah and Horse Creek provide picnic areas, barbecue grills and piped water. Swimming is allowed in designated areas. In addition, there is a one-mile hiking trail between Slick Rock and Cobble Knoll, which is ideal for bird watching.

<sup>234</sup> Tulare County General Plan 2030 Update Background Report. February 2010. Page 4-1. Accessed May 2022 at: <http://generalplan.co.tulare.ca.us/documents.html> then scroll to and click on “Appendix B-Background Report”

Lake Success was formed by construction of the Success Dam on the Tule River in 1961. The lake offers many recreational activities including fishing, boating, waterskiing, and picnicking. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACOE) constructed this reservoir for both flood control and irrigation purposes. The lake has a capacity of 85,000 acre-feet of water. The lake is located eight miles east of Porterville in the Sierra Nevada foothills area. Recreational opportunities include ranger programs, camping at the Tule campground, which provides 104 sites, boating, fishing, picnic sites, playgrounds and a softball field. Seasonal hunting is also permitted in the 1,400-acre Wildlife Management Area.”<sup>235</sup>

### National Parks and National Forests

“Most of the recreational opportunities in the county are located in Sequoia National Forest, Giant Sequoia National Monument, and in Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks (SEKI). Although these parks span adjacent counties, they make a significant contribution to the recreational opportunities that Tulare County has to offer.”<sup>236</sup>

### Sequoia National Forest

“Sequoia National Forest takes its name from the Giant Sequoia, which is the world’s largest tree. There are more than 30 groves of sequoias in the lower slopes of the park. The park includes over 1,500 miles of maintained roads, 1,000 miles of abandoned roads and 850 miles of trails for hikers, off-highway vehicle users and horseback riders. The Pacific Crest Trail connecting Canada and Mexico, crosses a portion of the forest, 78 miles of the total 2,600 miles of the entire trail. It is estimated that 10 to 13 million people visit the forest each year.”<sup>237</sup>

### Giant Sequoia National Monument

“The Giant Sequoia National Monument was created in 2000 by President Clinton in an effort to preserve 34 groves of ancient sequoias located in the Sequoia National Forest. The Monument includes a total of 327,769 acres of federal land, and provides various recreational opportunities, including camping, picnicking, fishing, and whitewater rafting. According to the Giant Sequoia National Monument Management Plan EIS, the Monument includes a total of 21 family campgrounds with 502 campsites and seven group campgrounds. In addition, there are approximately 160 miles of system trails, including 12 miles of the Summit National Recreation Trail.”<sup>238</sup>

### Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks (SEKI)

“The U.S. Congress created the Kings Canyon National Park in 1940 and Sequoia National Park in 1890. Because they share many miles of common boundaries, they are managed as one park. The extreme large elevation ranges in the parks (from 1,500 to 14,491 feet above sea level), provide for a wide range of vegetative and wildlife habitats. This is witnessed from exploring Mt. Whitney, which rises to an elevation of 14,491 feet, and is the tallest mountain in the contiguous United States. During the summer months, park rangers lead walks through the parks, and tours of Crystal and Boyden Caves. During the winter, visitors explore the higher elevations of the parks via cross country skis or snowshoes, or hike the trails in the foothills. The SEKI also contains visitor lodges, the majority of which are open year round. According to the National Parks Conservation Association, a combined total of approximately 1.5 million people visit the two parks on an annual basis.”<sup>239</sup>

### ***State***

“The Mountain Home State Forest is a State Forest managed by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CDF). The Forest consists of 4,807 acres of parkland containing a number of Giant Sequoias, and is located just east of Porterville. The Forest is a Demonstration Forest, which is considered timberland that is managed for forestry education, research, and recreation. Fishing ponds, hiking trails, and campsites are some of the amenities that can be found in the Forest.”<sup>240</sup> Colonel Allensworth State Historic Park (approximately 3,715 acres in area) is located in the unincorporated community of Allensworth in southwestern Tulare County.

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<sup>235</sup> Ibid. 4-7.

<sup>236</sup> Op. Cit. 4-8.

<sup>237</sup> Op. Cit. 4-9.

<sup>238</sup> Op. Cit.

<sup>239</sup> Op. Cit.

<sup>240</sup> Op. Cit. 4-7.



### ***Other Recreational Facilities***

Other recreational resources available in Tulare County include portions of the Pacific Crest Trail, South Sierra Wilderness Area, Dome Land Wilderness Area, Golden Trout Wilderness Area, International Agri-Center, and the Tulare County Fairgrounds.<sup>241</sup>

In addition, there are several nature preserves open to the public which are owned and operated by non-profit organizations, including the Kaweah Oaks Preserve and Dry Creek- Homer Ranch preserves, both owned and operated by Sequoia Riverlands Trust.

### ***Local***

#### Parks

Mooney Grove Park (a 143-acre site) is the nearest County owned/operated park, located less than four (4) miles northeast of the proposed Project site; the next nearest County owned/operated park is Elk Bayou Park (a 60-acre site) located approximately seven (7) miles south. Lastly, each incorporated city in the County maintains and operates municipal park and recreation facilities which can also be accessed by the County's total population; the nearest City park is the City of Tulare's Blain Park located approximately one (1) mile south the proposed Project site.

#### Schools

"A total of 48 school districts provide education throughout Tulare County... Of the 48 school districts, seven are unified districts providing educational services for kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup> grade. The remaining 41 districts consist of 36 elementary school districts and four high school districts. Many districts only have one school."<sup>242</sup> As noted earlier, the nearest school is Heritage Elementary School, in Tulare (located approximately 1.5 miles south of the Project site); the next nearest school is Mission Valley Elementary School (in Tulare) approximately 1.75 miles southeast.

### **Regulatory Setting**

#### *Federal*

None that apply to this proposed Project.

#### *State*

None that apply to this proposed Project.

#### *Local*

### **Project Impact Analysis:**

**a)and b) No Impact:** As discussed in Item 15 e), the proposed Project will not increase the demand for recreational facilities, nor will it put a strain on the existing recreational facilities. The nearest park is Mooney Grove Cutler Park (approximately four miles northeast). The proposed Project does not include recreational facilities. Since there is no population growth associated with the proposed Project, the proposed Akers Business Park project would not 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; further, there will be no need to construct or expand any recreational facilities as there would be no adverse physical effect on the environment. Therefore, there will be no impact to this resource.

**Cumulative Impact Analysis: No Impact:** The geographic area of this cumulative analysis is Tulare County. This cumulative analysis is based on the information provided in the Tulare County General Plan 2030 Update, Tulare County General Plan Background Report, and Tulare County General Plan 2030 Update EIR. As noted previously, the proposed Project's 65.45-acre site is approximately 0.50-mile north of the City of Tulare, east of and adjacent to State Route 99 in the

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<sup>241</sup> Op. Cit. 4-10 to 4-11.

<sup>242</sup> Tulare County General Plan 2030 Update Background Report. Pages 7-75 and 7-76. Accessed September 2022 at: <http://generalplan.co.tulare.ca.us/documents.html> then scroll to Recirculated Draft EIR, the click on "Appendix B-Background Report"

central-western part of Tulare County in a predominantly agricultural, yet transitional, area of the San Joaquin Valley. The site is currently planted to walnuts, except at the southernmost portion of the site which currently has an RV sales development. Surrounding areas include agricultural production, light industrial, and SR 99 is immediately west of the site. The proposed Project will include the development of a commercial business park on approximately 65.45 acres located at the southwest corner of Road 100 (Oaks Street) and Oakdale Avenue, east of State Route (SR) 99, APN 149-090-006. The proposed Project will include a General Plan Amendment (“GPA”) to change the Land Use Designation from “Valley Agriculture” to “Mixed Use,” a Zone Change (“PZC”) to change the Zone from AE-20 (Exclusive Agricultural – 20 Acre Minimum) to C-3-MU (Service Commercial with a Mixed-Use Overlay Zone) to facilitate a Tentative Subdivision Map (“TSM”) to subdivide a 65.45-acre parcel and develop the proposed Akers Business Park as a mixed use commercial project that includes the expansion of the existing Magic Touch Recreational Vehicle Sales facility at the south end of the proposed Project (3567 N. Oaks St. Tulare, CA 93274), contractor offices, boat sales, and other related uses allowed in the C-3-MU Zone. As noted earlier, since there is no population growth associated with the proposed Project, there would be no impacts to the Recreation resource.

**XVII. TRANSPORTATION**

Would the project:	SIGNIFICANT IMPACT	LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT WITH MITIGATION	LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT	NO IMPACT
a) Conflict with a program plan, ordinance or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle and pedestrian facilities?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Would the project conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3, subdivision (b)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses, (e.g., farm equipment)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Result in inadequate emergency access?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

The discussions regarding Environmental Setting, Regulatory Setting, CEQA requirements, Transportation Resource, etc.; contained in the Tulare County General Plan 2030 Update, Tulare County General Plan Background Report, and Tulare County General Plan 2030 Update Environmental Impact Report are incorporated herein in their entirety. Where necessary and if available, additional site-specific facts, data, information, etc., are included in this discussion.

**Environmental Setting**

As noted previously, the proposed Akers Business Park project’s 65.45-acre site is approximately 0.50-mile north of the City of Tulare, east of and adjacent to State Route 99 in the central-western part of Tulare County in a predominantly agricultural, yet transitional, area of the San Joaquin Valley. The site is currently planted to walnuts, except at the southernmost portion of the site which currently has an RV sales development. Surrounding areas include agricultural production, light industrial, and SR 99 is immediately west of the site. The proposed Project will include the development of a commercial business park on approximately 65.45 acres located at the southwest corner of Road 100 (Oaks Street) and Oakdale Avenue, east of State Route (SR) 99, APN 149-090-006. The proposed Project will include a General Plan Amendment (“GPA”) to change the Land Use Designation from “Valley Agriculture” to “Mixed Use,” a Zone Change (“PZC”) to change the Zone from AE-20 (Exclusive Agricultural – 20 Acre Minimum) to C-3-MU (Service Commercial with a Mixed-Use Overlay Zone) to facilitate a Tentative Subdivision Map (“TSM”) to subdivide a 65.45-acre parcel and develop the proposed Akers Business Park as a mixed use commercial project that includes the expansion of the existing Magic Touch Recreational Vehicle Sales facility at the south end of the proposed Project (3567 N. Oaks St. Tulare, CA 93274), contractor offices, boat sales, and other related uses allowed in the C-3-MU Zone.

“Tulare County has two major regional highways, State Highway [Route] 99 and 198. State Highway [Route] 99 connects Tulare County to Fresno and Sacramento to the north and Bakersfield to the south. State Highway 198 connects from U.S. Highway 101 on the west and continues eastward to Tulare County, passing through the City of Visalia and into Sequoia National Park. The highway system in the County also includes State highways, County-maintained roads, and local streets within each of the eight cities.”<sup>243</sup>

“Tulare County’s transportation system is composed of several State Routes, including three freeways, multiple highways, as well as numerous county and city routes. The county’s public transit system also includes two common carriers (Greyhound and Orange Belt Stages), the AMTRAK Service Link, other local agency transit and paratransit services, general aviation, limited passenger air service and freight rail service.

Travel within Tulare County is a function of the size and spatial distribution of its population, economic activity, and the relationship to other major activity centers within the Central Valley (such as Fresno and Bakersfield) as well as more distant urban centers such as Los Angeles, Sacramento, and the Bay Area. In addition, there is considerable travel between the northwest portions of Tulare County and southern Fresno County and travel to/from Kings County to the west. Due to the

<sup>243</sup> Tulare County General Plan 2030 Update, Page 13-2. Accessed September 2022 at: <http://generalplan.co.tulare.ca.us/index.asp>.

interrelationship between urban and rural activities (employment, housing, services, etc.) and the low average density/ intensity of land uses, the private automobile is the dominant mode of travel for residents in Tulare County.”<sup>244</sup>

#### Area Roadways

SR 99 west of the proposed Project site; SR 99 provides a connection to Visalia to the north and Tulare to the south, and for general north and south travel. Oakdale Avenue (on the north side of the proposed Project) and Oaks Street (on the east side of the proposed Project) both directly abut the proposed Project site. The existing Magic Touch Recreational Vehicle Sales facility at the south end of the project currently has access/egress via Oaks Street. Although likely, it has not been determined if the undeveloped portion of the proposed Project site will have access/egress from both Oakdale Avenue and Oaks Street.

#### Airport

There are seven public use airports in Tulare County. These include six publicly owned and operated facilities (Porterville Municipal, Sequoia Field, Tulare Municipal [Mefford Field], Visalia Municipal, Woodlake, Exeter Airport, and Eckert Field.”<sup>245</sup> Mefford Field is the nearest public airport and is located approximately six (6) miles southeast of the proposed Project site.

#### Design for Emergency Access

According to § 21060.3 and § 15359 of the CEQA Guidelines, an “Emergency” means a sudden, unexpected occurrence, involving a clear and imminent danger, demanding immediate action to prevent or mitigate loss of, or damage to, life, health, property, or essential public services. “Emergency” includes such occurrences as fire, flood, earthquake, or other soil or geologic movements, as well as such occurrences as riot, accident, or sabotage.

#### Alternative Transportation

“Transit planning in Tulare County is done at the county and local level. The Tulare County Association of Governments (TCAG) is the County’s designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) and also serves as the Tulare County Council of Governments, Transportation Authority, and Regional Transportation Planning Agency. TCAG’s nine member agencies include eight incorporated cities (Dinuba, Exeter, Farmersville, Lindsay, Porterville, Tulare, Visalia, and Woodlake) and Tulare County.”<sup>246</sup> Fixed routes transit services operating in Tulare County are provided by Dinuba Area Regional Transit (DART), Porterville Transit (COLT), Tulare Intermodal Express (TIME), Tulare County Area Transit (TCaT), Visalia Transit, and Visalia-Fresno intercity service (V-Line).<sup>247</sup>

### Regulatory Setting

#### *Federal*

Several federal regulations govern transportation issues. They include: Title 49, CFR, Sections 171-177 (49 CFR 171-177) which governs the transportation of hazardous materials, the types of materials defined as hazardous, and the marking of the transportation vehicles; 49 CFR 350-399, and Appendices A-G, Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations which address safety considerations for the transport of goods, materials, and substances over public highways; and 49 CFR 397.9, the Hazardous Materials Transportation Act of 1974, which directs the U.S. Department of Transportation to establish criteria and regulations for the safe transportation of hazardous materials.

#### *State*

#### CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3, Subdivision (b): Criteria for Analyzing Transportation Impacts

- (2) Land Use Projects. Vehicle miles traveled exceeding an applicable threshold of significance may indicate a significant impact. Generally, projects within one-half mile of either an existing major transit stop or a stop along an existing high-quality transit corridor should be presumed to cause a less than significant transportation impact. Projects that decrease

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<sup>244</sup> Tulare County General Plan 2030 Update Background Report. Page 5-4.

<sup>245</sup> Tulare County Comprehensive Airport Land Use Plan. Pages 1-1 and 1-3 Accessed August 2022 at: <https://tularecounty.ca.gov/rma/rma-documents/planning-documents/tulare-county-comprehensive-airport-land-use-plan/>

<sup>246</sup> Tulare County Association of Governments (TCAG). Tulare County Long Range Transit Plan. Page 2-2. Accessed September 2022 at: <https://tularecog.org/tcag/planning/transit-planning/transit-plans/transit-development-plans-short-and-long-range-transit-plans/tulare-county-regional-long-range-transit-plan/>

<sup>247</sup> Ibid. 30-32.

vehicle miles traveled in the project area compared to existing conditions should be considered to have a less than significant transportation impact.

- (3) **Transportation Projects.** Transportation projects that reduce, or have no impact on, vehicle miles traveled should be presumed to cause a less than significant transportation impact. For roadway capacity projects, agencies have discretion to determine the appropriate measure of transportation impact consistent with CEQA and other applicable requirements. To the extent that such impacts have already been adequately addressed at a programmatic level, a lead agency may tier from that analysis as provided in Section 15152.
- (4) **Qualitative Analysis.** If existing models or methods are not available to estimate the vehicle miles traveled for the particular project being considered, a lead agency may analyze the project's vehicle miles traveled qualitatively. Such a qualitative analysis would evaluate factors such as the availability of transit, proximity to other destinations, etc. For many projects, a qualitative analysis of construction traffic may be appropriate.
- (5) **Methodology.** A lead agency has discretion to choose the most appropriate methodology to evaluate a project's vehicle miles traveled, 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 vehicle miles traveled and may revise those estimates to reflect professional judgment based on substantial evidence. Any assumptions used to estimate vehicle miles traveled and any revisions 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.

#### Caltrans: Transportation Concept Reports

Each District of the State of California Transportation Department (Caltrans) prepares a Transportation Concept Report (TCP) for every state highway or portion thereof in its jurisdiction. The TCR usually represents the first step in Caltrans' long-range corridor planning process. The purpose of the TCR is to determine how a highway will be developed and managed so that it delivers the targeted LOS and quality of operations that are feasible to attain over a 20-year period, otherwise known as the "route concept" or beyond 20 years, for what is known as the "ultimate concept".

Caltrans has prepared a number concept reports for State Routes, Interstate Routes, and U.S. Routes. Tulare County is located in Caltrans District 6. Caltrans has completed a Transportation Concept Report (November 2003 2016) for State Route 99, which is adjacent to and west of the proposed Project site.

#### Caltrans Guide for the Preparation of Traffic Impact Studies

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) has developed this "Guide for the Preparation of Traffic Impact Studies" to provide a starting point and a consistent basis in which Caltrans evaluates traffic impacts to State highway facilities. The applicability of this guide for local streets and roads (non-State highways) is at the discretion of the effected jurisdiction. Caltrans Guide for the Preparation of Traffic Impact Studies establishes the following criterion as a starting point in determining when a TIS is needed:

1. Generates over 100 peak hour trips assigned to a State highway facility
2. Generates 50 to 100 peak hour trips assigned to a State highway facility – and, affected State highway facilities are experiencing noticeable delay; approaching unstable traffic flow conditions (LOS "C" or "D").
3. Generates 1 to 49 peak hour trips assigned to a State highway facility – the following are examples that may require a full TIS or some lesser analysis
  - a. Affected State highway facilities experiencing significant delay; unstable or forced traffic flow conditions (LOS "E" or "F").
  - b. The potential risk for a traffic incident is significantly increased (i.e., congestion related collisions, non-standard sight distance considerations, increase in traffic conflict points, etc.).
  - c. Change in local circulation networks that impact a State highway facility (i.e., direct access to State highway facility, a non-standard highway geometric design, etc.).<sup>248</sup>

#### ***Local Policy and Regulations***

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<sup>248</sup> Caltrans. Guide for the Preparation of Traffic Impact Studies. A. Trip Generation Thresholds. December 2002. Page 2. Accessed August 2022 at: <https://www.contracosta.ca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/34121/Caltrans2002-TIS-Guidelines-PDF>

“Transportation Control Measures (TCM) are designed to reduce vehicle miles traveled, vehicle idling, and/or traffic congestion in order to reduce vehicle emissions. Currently, Tulare County is a nonattainment region under the Federal Clean Air Act (CAA) and the California Clean Air Act (CCAA). Both of these acts require implementation of TCMs. These TCMs for Tulare County are as follows:

- Rideshare Programs;
- Park and Ride Lots;
- Alternate Work Schedules;
- Bicycle Facilities;
- Public Transit;
- Traffic Flow Improvement; and
- Passenger Rail and Support Facilities.”<sup>249</sup>

#### Tulare County Association of Governments (TCAG)

“... [W]ith the passage of Assembly Bill (AB) 69 State law has required the preparation of Regional Transportation Plans (RTPs) to address transportation issues and assist local and state decision makers in shaping California’s transportation infrastructure.”<sup>250</sup> The Tulare County Association of Government has prepared the 2014 Regional Transportation Plan. Specific policies that apply to the Proposed Project are listed as follows:

**System Performance** - Objective: Develop an efficient regional road and circulation system that provides maximum achievable mobility and accessibility for vehicles, bicycles, pedestrians, and public transportation.

Policy 1 – Maintain a Level of Service C or better on rural roads and Level of Service D or better on urban roads.

**Air Quality and Greenhouse Gases** - Objective: Encourage coordinated development to achieve an improved jobs-housing balance in the region.

Policy 1 – Encourage mixed-use developments in urbanized areas and existing small communities, both incorporated and unincorporated.

#### Caltrans: Transportation Concept Reports

Each District of the State of California Transportation Department (Caltrans) prepares a Transportation Concept Report (TCP) for every state highway or portion thereof in its jurisdiction. The TCR usually represents the first step in Caltrans’ long-range corridor planning process. The purpose of the TCR is to determine how a highway will be developed and managed so that it delivers the targeted LOS and quality of operations that are feasible to attain over a 20-year period, otherwise known as the “route concept” or beyond 20 years, for what is known as the “ultimate concept”. The proposed Project site is located in Tulare County which and Caltrans District 6. As there is an on-ramp from Oakdale Avenue allowing direct access to northbound SR 99, it is included in the SR 99 Transportation Concept Report (prepared in November 2003) which applies to this proposed Project.

#### Caltrans Guide for the Preparation of Traffic Impact Studies

“The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) has developed this "Guide for the Preparation of Traffic Impact Studies" in response to a survey of cities and counties in California. The purpose of that survey was to improve the Caltrans local development review process (also known as the Intergovernmental Review/California Environmental Quality Act or IGR/CEQA process). The survey indicated that approximately 30 percent of the respondents were not aware of what Caltrans required in a traffic impact study (TIS). In the early 1990s, the Caltrans District 6 office located in Fresno identified a need to provide better quality and consistency in the analysis of traffic impacts generated by local development and land use change proposals that effect State highway facilities. At that time, District 6 brought together both public and private sector expertise to develop a traffic impact study guide. The District 6 guide has proven to be successful at promoting consistency and uniformity in the identification and analysis of traffic impacts generated by local development and land use changes. The guide developed in Fresno was adapted for statewide use by a team of Headquarters and district staff. The guide will provide consistent guidance for Caltrans staff who review local development and land use change proposals as well as inform local agencies of the information needed for Caltrans to

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<sup>249</sup> Tulare County General Plan 2030 Update Recirculated Draft Environmental Impact Report. Page 3.2-2.

<sup>250</sup> TCAG Transportation Plan. Page 1-11.

analyze the traffic impacts to State highway facilities. The guide will also benefit local agencies and the development community by providing more expeditious review of local development proposals.”<sup>251</sup>

### Local

#### Tulare County General Plan 2030 Update

The following Tulare County General Plan 2030 Update policies for this resource apply to this Project: *LU-7.4 Streetscape Continuity* – wherein the County shall ensure that streetscape elements (e.g., street signs, trees, and furniture) maintain visual continuity and follow a common image for each community; *TC-1.13 Land Dedication for Roadways and Other Travel Modes* - As required by the adopted County Improvement Standards, the County shall require, where warranted, an irrevocable offer of dedication to the right-of-way for roadways and other travel modes, as part of the development review process; *TC-1.14 Roadway Facilities* - As part of the development review process, new development shall be conditioned to fund, through impact fees, tonnage fees, and/or other mechanism, the construction and maintenance of roadway facilities impacted by the project. As projects or locations warrant, construction or payment of pro-rata fees for planned road facilities may also be required as a condition of approval; *TC-1.15 Traffic Impact Study* - The County shall require an analysis of traffic impacts for land development projects that may generate increased traffic on County roads. Typically, applicants of projects generating over 100 peak hour trips per day or where LOS “D” or worse occurs, will be required to prepare and submit this study. The traffic impact study will include impacts from all vehicles, including truck traffic; *TC-1.16 County Level Of Service (LOS) Standards* wherein the County shall strive to develop and manage its roadway system (both segments and intersections) to meet a LOS of “D” or better in accordance with the LOS definitions established by the Highway Capacity Manual; and *HS-1.9 Emergency Access* wherein the County shall require, where feasible, road networks (public and private) to provide for safe and ready access for emergency equipment and provide alternate routes for evacuation.

#### Tulare County Transportation Control Measures (TCM)

“Transportation Control Measures (TCM) are designed to reduce vehicle miles traveled, vehicle idling, and/or traffic congestion in order to reduce vehicle emissions. Currently, Tulare County is a nonattainment region under the Federal Clean Air Act (CAA) and the California Clean Air Act (CCAA). Both of these acts require implementation of TCMs. These TCMs for Tulare County are as follows:

- Rideshare Programs;
- Park and Ride Lots;
- Alternate Work Schedules;
- Bicycle Facilities;
- Public Transit;
- Traffic Flow Improvement; and
- Passenger Rail and Support Facilities.

#### Tulare County Association of Governments (TCAG)

The passage of Assembly Bill (AB) 69 State law has required the preparation of Regional Transportation Plans (RTPs) to address transportation issues and assist local and state decision makers in shaping California’s transportation infrastructure. The Tulare County Association of Government has prepared its Regional Transportation Plans (RPTs) and subsequent RTP/SCS (Sustainable ) including the 2022 RTP/SCS.

#### **Project Impact Analysis:**

- a) **Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation:** The following determination is based on the “Traffic Evaluation and Vehicle Miles Traveled Assessment for the Akers Business Park Project” (TIS/VMT study) prepared by C2 Consult Group (and included as Attachment “D” of this document). As indicated in the TIS/VMT study, “The conditions with trips generated from the Akers Business Park Project were assessed by adding the Project’s trips to the existing traffic volumes shown in **Figure 3** [of the TIS/VMT study]. The Project’s trip assignment is shown in **Figure 7** [of the TIS/VMT study], which were added to the existing volumes to estimate the existing plus Project volumes. The combined peak hour traffic volumes used for this assessment are shown in **Figure 8** [of the TIS/VMT study]. The lane configurations at the

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<sup>251</sup> Caltrans Guide for the preparation of traffic studies, page ii. Accessed September 2022 at: <https://www.contracosta.ca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/34121/Caltrans2002-TIS-Guidelines-PDF>.



intersection with the completion of the Akers Business Park Project were assumed to include the addition of an eastbound right turn lane on Oakdale Avenue at the Akers at Oakdale intersection. The balance of the lane configurations at both intersections are assumed to remain the same as the existing configurations. The Level of Service Calculations for the Existing plus the Akers Business Park Project can be seen in **Appendix B** [of the TIS/VMT study]. Based on the existing plus Akers Business Park conditions assessment as shown in **Table 4** [of the TIS/VMT study] the intersections are projected to continue operating above the County and City's level of service target standards of D.<sup>252</sup> It is also noted that specific improvements, as applicable, can not be determined until specific uses and square footage of future developments occur. As such, rather than speculate on potential impacts, and therefore, potential mitigation, the applicant/developer will be required to evaluate development proposals and mitigate accordingly as determined by the County of Tulare and/or the City of Tulare (see Mitigation Measure 17-1).

- b) Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation:** The following determination is based on the "Traffic Evaluation and Vehicle Miles Traveled Assessment for the Akers Business Park Project" (TIS/VMT study) prepared by C2 Consult Group (and included as Attachment "D" of this document). A preliminary determination indicated in the TIS/VMT study indicates VMT would not be exceeded as a result of the project.<sup>253</sup> However, it is noted that specific improvements, as applicable, can not be determined until specific uses and square footage of future developments occur. As such, rather than speculate on potential impacts, and therefore, potential mitigation, the applicant/developer will be required to evaluate development proposals and mitigate accordingly as determined by the County of Tulare and/or the City of Tulare (see Mitigation Measure 17-1).
- c) Less Than Significant Impact:** As previously discussed, Oakdale Avenue (on the north side of the proposed Project) and Oaks Street (on the east side of the proposed Project) both directly abut the proposed Project site. The existing Magic Touch Recreational Vehicle Sales facility at the south end of the project currently has access/egress via Oaks Street. Also, although likely, it has not been determined if the undeveloped portion of the proposed Project site will have access/egress from both Oakdale Avenue and Oaks Street. Construction of the proposed Project would require the delivery of construction-related equipment and facility materials, some of which may require transport by oversize vehicles. The use of oversize vehicles during construction can create a hazard to the public by limiting motorist views on roadways and by the obstruction of space. Construction-related oversize vehicle loads must comply with permit-related and other requirements of the California Vehicle Code and the California Streets and Highway Code. California Highway Patrol escorts may be required at the discretion of Caltrans and the County and would be detailed in respective oversize load permits. Due to the rural nature of the area roads and flat terrain, construction-related vehicles are not anticipated to incur hazards traveling to and from the Project site. Furthermore, the proposed Project would not include a design feature or use vehicles with incompatible uses that would create a hazard on the roadways surrounding the Project site. Any impacts to this Checklist Item would be less than significant.
- d) Less Than Significant Impact:** As previously discussed, Oakdale Avenue (on the north side of the proposed Project) and Oaks Street (on the east side of the proposed Project) both directly abut the proposed Project site. The existing Magic Touch Recreational Vehicle Sales facility at the south end of the proposed Akers Business Park project currently has access/egress via Oaks Street. Also, although likely, it has not been determined if the undeveloped portion of the proposed Project site will have access/egress from both Oakdale Avenue and Oaks Street. As such, emergency access to the site will likely be provided be via Oakdale Avenue and Oaks Street and adequate space will be maintained, and prioritized, for emergency vehicle use as required. Therefore, there will be a less than significant impact to this resource.

**Cumulative Impact Analysis: Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation:** The geographic area of this cumulative analysis is Tulare County. This cumulative analysis is based on the information provided in the Tulare County 2030 General Plan, Tulare County General Plan Background Report, Tulare County 2030 General Plan EIR, and TIS/VMT analysis provided by C2 Consult Corp (provided in Attachment "D").

The Project is consistent the Tulare County 2030 General Plan and as such, the proposed Akers Business Park project will not conflict with an applicable plan, ordinance or policy establishing measures of effectiveness for the performance of the circulation system, taking into account all modes of transportation including mass transit and non-motorized travel and relevant components of the circulation system, including but not limited to intersections, streets, highways and freeways, pedestrian and bicycle paths, and mass transit. Further, it will not conflict with an applicable congestion management program, including, but not limited to level of service standards and travel demand measures, or other standards established by the county congestion

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<sup>252</sup> "Traffic Evaluation and Vehicle Miles Traveled Assessment for the Akers Business Park Project" (TIS/VMT study) Page 18. Prepared by C2 Consult Group and included as Attachment "D" of this document.

<sup>253</sup> Ibid. 29.

management agency for designated roads or highways. As indicated earlier, the proposed Project's specific daily trips/VMT, cannot be determined due to the absence of specific land use types and square footage of area to be developed; therefore, as an abundance of caution, it would result in less than significant impacts with mitigation. The proposed Project will not result in a change in air traffic patterns, including either increase in traffic levels or a change in location that results in substantial safety risks. Although undetermined at this time, the tentative design of the industrial park would likely include one access/egress point along Oakdale Avenue and one access/egress point along Oaks Street. As such, it will not substantially increase hazards due to a design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses, (e.g., farm equipment) and it will include adequate emergency access. Lastly, the proposed Project will not conflict with adopted policies, plans, or programs regarding public transit, bicycle, or pedestrian facilities, or otherwise decrease the performance or safety of such facilities. As such, the proposed Akers Business Park project will result in less than significant cumulative impacts to Traffic and Transportation.

**Mitigation Measure(s):** See **Mitigation Measure 7-1** (To be implemented as a Condition of Approval)

- 17-1** To be determined as it would be speculative to identify specific uses and square footage of future which have not been determined. As development proposals occur, each will be evaluated to determine potential impact and appropriate/applicable mitigation as needed. Mitigation could include roadway improvements, signalization, VMT fees, etc.

Therefore, implementation of Mitigation Measure 17-1 would result in a less than significant impact to this item.

**XVIII. TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES**

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

- a) 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)?
- b) 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, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe?

	<b>SIGNIFICANT IMPACT</b>	<b>LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT WITH MITIGATION</b>	<b>LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT</b>	<b>NO IMPACT</b>
a)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

The discussions regarding Environmental Setting, Regulatory Setting, CEQA requirements, Transportation Resource, etc.; contained in the Tulare County General Plan 2030 Update, Tulare County General Plan Background Report, and Tulare County General Plan 2030 Update Environmental Impact Report are incorporated herein in their entirety. Where necessary and if available, additional site-specific facts, data, information, etc., are included in this discussion.

**Environmental Setting**

“Tulare County lies within a culturally rich province of the San Joaquin Valley. Studies of the prehistory of the area show inhabitants of the San Joaquin Valley maintained fairly dense populations situated along the banks of major waterways, wetlands, and streams. Tulare County was inhabited by aboriginal California Native American groups consisting of the Southern Valley Yokuts, Foothill Yokuts, Monache, and Tubatulabal. Of the main groups inhabiting the Tulare County area, the Southern Valley Yokuts occupied the largest territory.”<sup>254</sup>

Information provided by the Southern San Valley Historical Resources Information Center, at California State University, Bakersfield (Center) and the California Native American Heritage Commission Sacred Lands File search (included in Attachment “C” of this document) were used as the basis for determining that this Project would result in a less than significant impact with mitigation.

As noted previously, the proposed Akers Business Park project’s 65.45-acre site is approximately 0.50-mile north of the City of Tulare, east of and adjacent to State Route 99 in the central-western part of Tulare County in a predominantly agricultural, yet transitional, area of the San Joaquin Valley. The site is currently planted to walnuts, except at the southernmost portion of the site which currently has an RV sales development. Surrounding areas include agricultural production, light industrial, and SR 99 is immediately west of the site. The proposed Project will include the development of a commercial business park on approximately 65.45 acres located at the southwest corner of Road 100 (Oaks Street) and Oakdale Avenue, east of State Route (SR) 99, APN 149-090-006. The proposed Project will include a General Plan Amendment (“GPA”) to change the Land Use Designation from “Valley Agriculture” to “Mixed Use,” a Zone Change (“PZC”) to change the Zone from AE-20 (Exclusive Agricultural – 20 Acre Minimum) to C-3-MU (Service Commercial with a Mixed-Use Overlay Zone) to facilitate a Tentative Subdivision Map (“TSM”) to subdivide a 65.45-acre parcel and develop the proposed Akers Business Park as a mixed use commercial project that includes the expansion of the existing Magic Touch Recreational Vehicle Sales facility at the south end of the proposed Project (3567 N. Oaks St. Tulare, CA 93274), contractor offices, boat sales, and other related uses allowed in the C-3-MU Zone.

**Cultural Background**

<sup>254</sup> Tulare County General Plan 2030 Update. August 2012. Page 8-5.

“Tulare County lies within a culturally rich province of the San Joaquin Valley. Studies of the prehistory of the area show inhabitants of the San Joaquin Valley maintained fairly dense populations situated along the banks of major waterways, wetlands, and streams. Tulare County was inhabited by aboriginal California Native American groups consisting of the Southern Valley Yokuts, Foothill Yokuts, Monache, and Tubatulabal. Of the main groups inhabiting the Tulare County area, the Southern Valley Yokuts occupied the largest territory.”<sup>255</sup>

“California’s coast was initially explored by Spanish (and a few Russian) military expeditions during the late 1500s. However, European settlement did not occur until the arrival into southern California of land-based expeditions originating from Spanish Mexico starting in the 1760s. Early settlement in the Tulare County area focused on ranching. In 1872, the Southern Pacific Railroad entered Tulare County, connecting the San Joaquin Valley with markets in the north and east. About the same time, valley settlers constructed a series of water conveyance systems (canals, dams, and ditches) across the valley. With ample water supplies and the assurance of rail transport for commodities such as grain, row crops, and fruit, a number of farming colonies soon appeared throughout the region.”<sup>256</sup>

“The colonies grew to become cities such as Tulare, Visalia, Porterville, and Hanford. Visalia, the County seat, became the service, processing, and distribution center for the growing number of farms, dairies, and cattle ranches. By 1900, Tulare County boasted a population of about 18,000. New transportation links such as SR 99 (completed during the 1950s), affordable housing, light industry, and agricultural commerce brought steady growth to the valley. The California Department of Finance estimated the 2007 Tulare County population to be 430,167.”<sup>257</sup>

### ***Tulare County’s Documented Cultural Resources***

Tulare County’s known and recorded cultural resources were identified through historical records, such as those found in the National Register of Historic Places, the Historic American Building Survey/Historic American Engineering Record (HABS/HAER), the California Register of Historic Resources, California Historical Landmarks, and the Tulare County Historical Society list of historic resources. These resources are available to the general public. They have been summarized in the Tulare County General Plan Update 2030 Background Report (2010).<sup>258</sup>

The California Historical Resources Information Center (CHRIS), Southern San Joaquin Valley Historical Resources Information Center (SSJVIC) located at California State University, Bakersfield (Center) conducted a search for the proposed Project location as requested by Tulare County RMA. In summary, the Center’s search response letter indicated, “According to the information in our files, there has been two previous cultural resource studies conducted within the project area: TU-00130, & 01677. There have been five cultural resource studies conducted within the one-half mile radius: TU-00102, 01008, 01310, 01311, 01324. It should be noted that the two studies conducted with the project area only intersect the APE on a small sliver of the southern portion, leaving %98 of the project area unstudied.”<sup>259</sup> The CHRIS results letter further noted, “According to the information in our files, there are no recorded resources within the project area, and it is unknown if any exist there. There are three known resources within the one-half mile radius: P-54-002181, 004626, 004894. These resources consist of historic era irrigation ditches, and the Southern Pacific Railroad. There are no recorded cultural resources within the project area or radius that are listed in the National Register of Historic Places, the California Register of Historical Resources, the California Points of Historical Interest, California Inventory of Historic Resources, for the California State Historic Landmarks.”<sup>260</sup> The Center also recommended that the NAHC be contacted regarding cultural resources that may not be included in the CHRIS inventory (see Attachment “C”). Tulare County RMA also requested a Sacred Lands File (SLF) search from the California Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC). The NAHC provided a letter dated February 13, 2023, showing “negative” results which indicates there are no documented Sacred Lands within the Project area (see NAHC response letter dated February 13, 2023; also in Attachment “C”). Prior to release of this MND, CHRIS, NAHC, and SLF searches for the proposed Project have not been received from the respective agencies who generate the search results.

## **Regulatory Setting**

### ***Federal***

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<sup>255</sup> Tulare County 2030 General Plan. Page 8-5.

<sup>256</sup> Ibid.

<sup>257</sup> Op. Cit. 8-6.

<sup>258</sup> Tulare County General Plan Background Report. Pages 9-57 to 9-59.

<sup>259</sup> California Historical Resources Information System (CHRIS). Southern San Joaquin Valley Information Center. California State University, Bakersfield. Record Search 22-319. Akers Business Park (GPA 22-003). See Attachment “C” of this MND.

<sup>260</sup> Ibid.

## The National Historic Preservation Act

The National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) of 1966, which has been amended several times, was passed to acknowledge the importance of protecting our nation's heritage from federal development. The NHPA sets federal historic preservation policy, establishes partnerships between the Federal government and states and the Federal government and tribes, creates the [National Register of Historic Places](#) and [National Historic Landmarks](#) programs, mandates the selection of qualified [State Historic Preservation Officers](#), establishes the [Advisory Council on Historic Preservation](#), charges Federal agencies with stewardship, and establishes the role of [Certified Local Governments](#) within the states.

Title I of the statute established the National Register of Historic Places to create a national listing of historic properties (districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects) significant in American history, architecture, archeology, engineering, and culture. Title I also expanded the level of Federal concern to include the preservation of historic properties of local or State significance. It established State Historic Preservation Officers as partners in the national historic preservation program and also describes how local governments or Indian tribes may, in certain circumstances, carry out SHPO functions.

Implementation of Section 106 of Title I has been critical to archeology and archeological preservation in the United States. Section 106 requires federal agencies to take into account the effects of their actions on historic properties by identifying historic properties, assessing adverse effects, and resolving those adverse effects. The process is initiated by the federal agency, and includes comment and input from stakeholders at the local and State levels, as well as the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation. After the procedures for implementing Section 106 were established (6 CFR 800), the field of professional archeology expanded throughout governments and the private sector to meet the need for compliance.

Section 110 requires all federal agencies to establish -- in conjunction with the Secretary of the Interior -- their own historic preservation programs for the identification, evaluation, and protection of historic properties, including archeological properties. Determinations of Eligibility for the National Register are established during Phase II archeological surveys.

### *Title II*

Title II of NHPA establishes the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, an independent Federal agency. The Council and its staff advise Federal agencies on their roles in the national historic preservation program, especially Section 106. The ACHP also develops advice and training to support Federal agencies.

### *Title IV*

Title IV of the statute established the National Center for Preservation Technology and Training, part of the National Park Service. NCPTT contributes research and training to archeological preservation practice.

Statute and regulation texts:

- [National Historic Preservation Act](#) (16 U.S. Code 470 et seq.), statute text.
- [National Register of Historic Places](#) (36 CFR 60), regulation text.
- [Procedures for State, Tribal, and Local Government Historic Preservation Programs](#) (36 CFR 61), regulation text.
- [Determinations of Eligibility for Inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places](#) (36 CFR 63), regulation text.
- [Protection of Historic Properties](#) (36 CFR 800), regulation text.<sup>261</sup>

### *State*

#### California State Office of Historic Preservation (OHP)

“The California State Office of Historic Preservation (OHP) is responsible for administering federally and state mandated historic preservation programs to further the identification, evaluation, registration and protection of California's irreplaceable

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<sup>261</sup> U.S. Department of the Interior. National Park Service. Accessed September 2022 at: [National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 - Archeology \(U.S. National Park Service\) \(nps.gov\)](#)

archaeological and historical resources under the direction of the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO), a gubernatorial appointee, and the State Historical Resources Commission.”<sup>262</sup>

“OHP’s responsibilities include identifying, evaluating, and registering historic properties; ensuring compliance with federal and state regulatory obligations; encouraging the adoption of economic incentives programs designed to benefit property owners; encouraging economic revitalization by promoting a historic preservation ethic through preservation education and public awareness and, most significantly, by demonstrating leadership and stewardship for historic preservation in California.”<sup>263</sup>

A historical resource may be eligible for inclusion in the California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR) if it:

- Is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of California’s history and cultural heritage;
- Is associated with the lives of persons important to our past;
- Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region, or method of construction, or represents the work of an important creative individual, or possesses high artistic values; or
- Has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.<sup>264</sup>

### Native American Heritage Commission

“The Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC), created in statute in 1976, is a nine-member body, appointed by the Governor, to identify and catalog cultural resources -- ancient places of special religious or social significance to Native Americans and known ancient graves and cemeteries of Native Americans on private and public lands in California. The NAHC is also charged with ensuring California Native American tribes’ accessibility to ancient Native American cultural resources on public lands, overseeing the treatment and disposition of inadvertently discovered Native American human remains and burial items, and administering the California Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (CalNAGPRA), among many other powers and duties.”<sup>265</sup>

### Tribal Consultation Requirements: AB 52 (Gatto, 2014)

The Public Resources Code has established that “[a] project with an effect that may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource is a project that may have a significant effect on the environment.” (Pub. Resources Code, § 21084.2.) To help determine whether a project may have such an effect, the Public Resources Code requires a lead agency to consult with any California Native American tribe that requests consultation and is traditionally and culturally affiliated with the geographic area of a proposed project. That consultation must take place prior to the release of a negative declaration, mitigated negative declaration, or environmental impact report for a project. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21080.3.1.) If a lead agency determines that a project may cause a substantial adverse change to tribal cultural resources, the lead agency must consider measures to mitigate that impact.<sup>266</sup>

### CEQA Guidelines: Archaeological Resources

Section 15064.5(c) of CEQA Guidelines provides specific guidance on the treatment of archaeological resources as noted below.<sup>267,268</sup>

- (1) When a Project will impact an archaeological site, a lead agency shall first determine whether the site is an historical resource, as defined in subdivision (a).
- (2) If a lead agency determines that the archaeological site is an historical resource, it shall refer to the provisions of Section 21084.1 of the Public Resources Code, and this section, Section 15126.4 of the Guidelines, and the limits contained in Section 21083.2 of the Public Resources Code do not apply.

<sup>262</sup> Office of Historic Preservation. Mission and Responsibilities. Accessed September 2022 at: [http://ohp.parks.ca.gov/?page\\_id=1066](http://ohp.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=1066).

<sup>263</sup> Ibid.

<sup>264</sup> Office of Historic Preservation. California Register of Historic Places. Accessed September 2022 at: [http://www.ohp.parks.ca.gov/?page\\_id=21238](http://www.ohp.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=21238).

<sup>265</sup> Native American Heritage Commission. Welcome. Accessed September 2022 at: <http://nahc.ca.gov/>.

<sup>266</sup> Office of Planning and Research. Technical Advisory: AB 52 and Tribal Cultural Resources in CEQA (June 2017). Page 3. Accessed September 2022 at: [https://www.opr.ca.gov/docs/20200224-AB\\_52\\_Technical\\_Advisory\\_Feb\\_2020.pdf](https://www.opr.ca.gov/docs/20200224-AB_52_Technical_Advisory_Feb_2020.pdf)

<sup>267</sup> Office of Historic Preservation. CEQA Basics. Accessed September 2022 at: [https://ohp.parks.ca.gov/?page\\_id=21721](https://ohp.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=21721).

<sup>268</sup> CEQA Guidelines, Section 15064.5 - Determining the Significance of Impacts to Archaeological and Historical Resources. Accessed September 2022 at: <https://casetext.com/regulation/california-code-of-regulations/title-14-natural-resources/division-6-resources-agency/chapter-3-guidelines-for-implementation-of-the-california-environmental-quality-act/article-5-preliminary-review-of-projects-and-conduct-of-initial-study/section-150645-determining-the-significance-of-impacts-to-archaeological-and-historical-resources>

- (3) If an archaeological site does not meet the criteria defined in subdivision (a), but does meet the definition of a unique archeological resource in Section 21083.2 of the Public Resources Code, the site shall be treated in accordance with the provisions of section 21083.2. The time and cost limitations described in Public Resources Code Section 21083.2 (c–f) do not apply to surveys and site evaluation activities intended to determine whether the Project location contains unique archaeological resources.
- (4) If an archaeological resource is neither a unique archaeological nor an historical resource, the effects of the Project on those resources shall not be considered a significant effect on the environment. It shall be sufficient that both the resource and the effect on it are noted in the Initial Study or EIR, if one is prepared to address impacts on other resources, but they need not be considered further in the CEQA process.

CEQA Guidelines: Human Remains

Public Resources Code Sections 5097.94 and 5097.98 provide guidance on the disposition of Native American burials (human remains), and fall within the jurisdiction of the Native American Heritage Commission:<sup>269</sup>

- (d) When an initial study identifies the existence of, or the probable likelihood, of Native American human remains within the Project, a lead agency shall work with the appropriate Native Americans as identified by the Native American Heritage Commission as provided in Public Resources Code Section 5097.98. The applicant may develop an agreement for treating or disposing of, with appropriate dignity, the human remains and any Items associated with Native American burials with the appropriate Native Americans as identified by the Native American Heritage Commission. Action implementing such an agreement is exempt from:
  - (1) The general prohibition on disinterring, disturbing, or removing human remains from any location other than a dedicated cemetery (Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5).
  - (2) The requirements of CEQA and the Coastal Act.
- (e) In the event of the accidental discovery or recognition of any human remains in any location other than a dedicated cemetery, the following steps should be taken:
  - (1) There shall be no further excavation or disturbance of the site or any nearby area reasonably suspected to overlie adjacent human remains until:
    - (A) The coroner of the county in which the remains are discovered must be contacted to determine that no investigation of the cause of death is required, and
    - (B) If the coroner determines the remains to be Native American:
      4. The coroner shall contact the Native American Heritage Commission within 24 hours.
      5. The Native American Heritage Commission shall identify the person or persons it believes to be the most likely descended from the deceased Native American.
      6. The most likely descendent may make recommendations to the landowner or the person responsible for the excavation work, for means of treating or disposing of, with appropriate dignity, the human remains and any associated grave goods as provided in Public Resources Code Section 5097.98, or
  - (2) Where the following conditions occur, the landowner or his authorized representative shall rebury the Native American human remains and associated grave goods with appropriate dignity on the property in a location not subject to further subsurface disturbance.
    - (C) The Native American Heritage Commission is unable to identify a most likely descendent or the most likely descendent failed to make a recommendation within 24 hours after being notified by the commission.
    - (D) The descendant identified fails to make a recommendation; or
    - (C) The landowner or his authorized representative rejects the recommendation of the descendant, and the mediation by the Native American Heritage Commission fails to provide measures acceptable to the landowner.
- (f) As part of the objectives, criteria, and procedures required by Section 21082 of the Public Resources Code, a lead agency should make provisions for historical or unique archaeological resources accidentally discovered during construction. These provisions should include an immediate evaluation of the find by a qualified archaeologist. If the find is determined to be an historical or unique archaeological resource, contingency funding and a time allotment sufficient to allow for implementation of avoidance measures or appropriate mitigation should be available. Work could continue on other parts of the building site while historical or unique archaeological resource mitigation takes place.

*Local*

Tulare County General Plan 2030 Update

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<sup>269</sup> Op. Cit.



The General Plan has a number of policies that apply to Projects within Tulare County. General Plan policies that relate to the proposed Project are listed as follows: *ERM-6.1 Evaluation of Cultural and Archaeological Resources* wherein the County shall participate in and support efforts to identify its significant cultural and archaeological resources using appropriate State and Federal standards; *ERM-6.2 Protection of Resources with Potential State or Federal Designations* wherein the County shall protect cultural and archaeological sites with demonstrated potential for placement on the National Register of Historic Places and/or inclusion in the California State Office of Historic Preservation's California Points of Interest and California Inventory of Historic Resources; *ERM-6.3 Alteration of Sites with Identified Cultural Resources* which states that when planning any development or alteration of a site with identified cultural or archaeological resources, consideration should be given to ways of protecting the resources. Development can be permitted in these areas only after a site specific investigation has been conducted pursuant to CEQA to define the extent and value of resource, and Mitigation Measures proposed for any impacts the development may have on the resource; *ERM-6.4 Mitigation* which states that if preservation of cultural resources is not feasible, every effort shall be made to mitigate impacts, including relocation of structures, adaptive reuse, preservation of facades, and thorough documentation and archival of records; *ERM-6.9 Confidentiality of Archaeological Sites* wherein the County shall, within its power, maintain confidentiality regarding the locations of archaeological sites in order to preserve and protect these resources from vandalism and the unauthorized removal of artifacts; and *ERM-6.10 Grading Cultural Resources Sites* wherein the County shall ensure all grading activities conform to the County's Grading Ordinance and California Code of Regulations, Title 20, § 2501 et. seq.

The intensive agricultural use of the Project site have continually been disturbed to the point that there are no evident surface Tribal cultural resources. However, as discussed below, mitigation measures are included in the unlikely event that Tribal cultural resources are encountered.

#### **Project Impact Analysis:**

**a) and b) Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation:** As noted previously, information provided by the Southern San Valley Historical Resources Information Center, at California State University, Bakersfield (Center) and the California Native American Heritage Commission Sacred Lands File search (included in Attachment "C" of this document) were used as the basis for determining that this proposed Project would result in a less than significant impact with mitigation. Although no cultural resources were identified within the proposed Akers Business Park project area in the records search, there is a possibility that subsurface resources could be uncovered during proposed Project construction-related activities. In such an unlikely event, potentially significant impacts to previously unknown subsurface resources may occur. Also, to date, RMA one response(s) has/have been received from the tribes that were notified in compliance with AB 52 requirements through a list of potentially affected tribes provided by the NAHC. As such, it is not anticipated that Native American tribal cultural resources or remains will be found within the proposed Project area. However, **Mitigation Measures 5-1 through 5-3** are included in the unlikely event that Native American remains or tribal cultural resources are unearthed during any ground disturbance activities. **Mitigation Measures 5-1 through 5-3** would be implemented to reduce the potential level of impact to this resource as less than significant for resources 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 to a resource consider significant to a California Native American tribe. Therefore, the proposed Akers Business Park project would result in a less than significant impact to this resource.

#### **Cumulative Impact Analysis: Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation:**

The geographic area of this cumulative analysis is Tulare County. This cumulative analysis is based on the information provided in the Tulare County General Plan 2030 Update, Tulare County General Plan Background Report, and Tulare County General Plan 2030 Update EIR. The Akers Business Park project would only contribute to cumulative impacts related to this Checklist Item if Project-specific impacts were to occur. With implementation of Mitigation Measure 5-1 through 5-3, potential Project-specific impacts would be reduced to less than significant levels. Therefore, the proposed Project's cumulative impacts would be less than significant with mitigation. Also see the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP) in Attachment "F".

As previously discussed, based on the analysis noted earlier, impacts to Tribal Cultural Resources will be reduced to a level of **Less Than Significant Project-specific and Cumulative Impacts With Mitigation** with the implementation of Mitigation Measures 5-1 through 5-3.

**Mitigation Measures:** See **Mitigation Measures 5-1 through 5-3** (which can be found in their entirety in Attachment "F" of this IS/MND)

**Summary of Mitigation Measures:**

- 5-1.** Discovery of resources during excavation, suspension of work, retention of qualified archaeologist/paleontologist, implementation of measures to protect resources.
- 5-2.** Cessation of work activities, County notification, determination of significance, actions to be taken as determined by a qualified archaeologist/paleontologist, treatment plan, collaboration with affected Native American Tribe.
- 5-3.** Inadvertent discovery of human remains during excavation, cessation of excavation or disturbance, contact of Coroner/Sheriff, contact NAHC, and dignified reburial.

Therefore, implementation of Mitigation Measure 5-1 through 5-3 would result in a less than significant impact to this item.

**XIX. UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS**

Would the project:	SIGNIFICANT IMPACT	LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT WITH MITIGATION	LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT	NO IMPACT
a) Require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment or storm water drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry and multiple dry years?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
e) Comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

The discussions regarding Environmental Setting, Regulatory Setting, CEQA requirements, Utility/Service Systems Resources, etc.; contained in the Tulare County General Plan 2030 Update, Tulare County General Plan Background Report, and Tulare County General Plan 2030 Update Environmental Impact Report are incorporated herein in their entirety. Where necessary and if available, additional site-specific facts, data, information, etc., are included in this discussion.

**Environmental Setting**

“Tulare County and special districts provide many important services to County residents and businesses in unincorporated communities and hamlets such as water, wastewater, storm drainage, solid waste removal, utilities, communications, fire protection, law enforcement, and a number of other community facilities and services (schools, community centers, etc.).”<sup>270</sup>

“Water districts supply water to communities and hamlets throughout the County. Most communities and some hamlets have wastewater treatment systems; however, several communities including Three Rivers, Plainview, Alpaugh, and Ducor rely on individual septic systems. Storm drainage facilities are generally constructed and maintained in conjunction with transportation improvements or new subdivisions in communities. Solid waste collection in the County is divided into service areas, as determined by the Board of Supervisors, with one license for each area. Southern California Edison provides electric service to the south and central areas of Tulare County while PG&E provides electric service in the north. The [Southern California] Gas Company is the primary provider of natural gas throughout the County.”<sup>271</sup>

As previously noted, the proposed Akers Business Park project’s 65.45-acre site is approximately 0.50-mile north of the City of Tulare, east of and adjacent to State Route 99 in the central-western part of Tulare County in a predominantly agricultural, yet transitional, area of the San Joaquin Valley. The site is currently planted to walnuts, except at the southernmost portion of the site which currently has an RV sales development. Surrounding areas include agricultural production, light industrial, and SR 99 is immediately west of the site. The proposed Project will include the development of a commercial business park on approximately 65.45 acres located at the southwest corner of Road 100 (Oaks Street) and Oakdale Avenue, east of State Route (SR) 99, APN 149-090-006. The proposed Project will include a General Plan Amendment (“GPA”) to change the Land Use

<sup>270</sup> Tulare County General Plan Update 2030. Page 14-3.

<sup>271</sup> Ibid. 14-3.

Designation from “Valley Agriculture” to “Mixed Use,” a Zone Change (“PZC”) to change the Zone from AE-20 (Exclusive Agricultural – 20 Acre Minimum) to C-3-MU (Service Commercial with a Mixed-Use Overlay Zone) to facilitate a Tentative Subdivision Map (“TSM”) to subdivide a 65.45-acre parcel and develop the proposed Akers Business Park as a mixed use commercial project that includes the expansion of the existing Magic Touch Recreational Vehicle Sales facility at the south end of the proposed Project (3567 N. Oaks St. Tulare, CA 93274), contractor offices, boat sales, and other related uses allowed in the C-3-MU Zone.

## **Regulatory Setting**

### *Federal*

#### U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) - Federal Regulation Title 40, Part 503

In 1993, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) promulgated Standards for the Use or Disposal of Sewage Sludge (Code of Federal Regulations Title 40, Part 503), which establish pollutant limitations, operational standards for pathogen and vector attraction reduction, management practices, and other provisions intended to protect public health and the environment from any reasonably anticipated adverse conditions from potential waste constituents and pathogenic organisms.

This part establishes standards, which consist of general requirements, pollutant limits, management practices, and operational standards, for the final use or disposal of sewage sludge generated during the treatment of domestic sewage in a treatment works. Standards are included in this part for sewage sludge applied to the land, placed on a surface disposal site, or fired in a sewage sludge incinerator. Also included in this part are pathogen and alternative vector attraction reduction requirements for sewage sludge applied to the land or placed on a surface disposal site.

In addition, the standards in this part include the frequency of monitoring and recordkeeping requirements when sewage sludge is applied to the land, placed on a surface disposal site, or fired in a sewage sludge incinerator. Also included in this part are reporting requirements for Class I sludge management facilities, publicly owned treatment works (POTWs) with a design flow rate equal to or greater than one million gallons per day, and POTWs that serve 10,000 people or more.<sup>272</sup>

#### Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA)<sup>273</sup>

Congress passed RCRA on October 21, 1976 to address the increasing problems the nation faced from our growing volume of municipal and industrial waste. RCRA, which amended the Solid Waste Disposal Act of 1965, set national goals for:

- a) Protecting human health and the environment from the potential hazards of waste disposal.
- b) Conserving energy and natural resources.
- c) Reducing the amount of waste generated.
- d) Ensuring that wastes are managed in an environmentally-sound manner
- e) To achieve these goals, RCRA established three distinct, yet interrelated, programs:
- f) The solid waste program, under RCRA Subtitle D, encourages states to develop comprehensive plans to manage nonhazardous industrial solid waste and municipal solid waste, sets criteria for municipal solid waste landfills and other solid waste disposal facilities, and prohibits the open dumping of solid waste.
- g) The hazardous waste program, under RCRA Subtitle C, establishes a system for controlling hazardous waste from the time it is generated until its ultimate disposal — in effect, from “cradle to grave.”
- h) The underground storage tank (UST) program, under RCRA Subtitle I, regulates underground storage tanks containing hazardous substances and petroleum products. RCRA banned all open dumping of waste, encouraged source reduction and recycling, and promoted the safe disposal of municipal waste. RCRA also mandated strict controls over the treatment, storage, and disposal of hazardous waste.

### *State*

#### The Integrated Waste Management Act (Assembly Bill 939)

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<sup>272</sup> National Archives and Records Administration. Code of Federal Regulations. Title 40: Protection of Environment Part 503: Standards for the Use of Disposal of Sewage Sludge. Accessed September 2022 at: <https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-40/chapter-I/subchapter-O/part-503?toc=1>.

<sup>273</sup> United States Environmental Protection Agency. Summary of the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act. Accessed September 2022 at: <https://www.epa.gov/laws-regulations/summary-resource-conservation-and-recovery-act> ; then click on “EPA History: RCRA”.

In 1989 the California legislature passed the Integrated Waste Management Act of 1989, known as AB 939. The bill mandates a reduction of waste being disposed: jurisdictions were required to meet diversion goals of 25% by 1995 and 50% by the year 2000. AB 939 also established an integrated framework for program implementation, solid waste planning, and solid waste facility and landfill compliance.

#### State Water Quality Control Board

“The State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board) was created by the Legislature in 1967. The joint authority of water allocation and water quality protection enables the State Water Board to provide comprehensive protection for California’s waters. The State Water Board consists of five full-time salaried members, each filling a different specialty position. Board members are appointed to four-year terms by the Governor and confirmed by the Senate. There are nine Regional Water Quality Control Boards (Regional Boards). The mission of the Regional Boards is to develop and enforce water quality objectives and implementation plans that will best protect the State’s waters, recognizing local differences in climate, topography, geology and hydrology. Each Regional Board has seven part-time members appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the Senate. Regional Boards develop “basin plans” for their hydrologic areas, issue waste discharge requirements, take enforcement action against violators, and monitor water quality. The task of protecting and enforcing the many uses of water, including the needs of industry, agriculture, municipal districts, and the environment is an ongoing challenge for the State and Regional Water Quality Control Boards.”<sup>274</sup>

#### Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB)

“There are nine Regional Water Quality Control Boards (Regional Boards). The mission of the Regional Boards is to develop and enforce water quality objectives and implementation plans that will best protect the State’s waters, recognizing local differences in climate, topography, geology and hydrology. Each Regional Board has seven part-time members appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the Senate. Regional Boards develop “basin plans” for their hydrologic areas, issue waste discharge requirements, take enforcement action against violators, and monitor water quality.”<sup>275</sup>

#### The Regional Water Quality Control Board – Biosolids

In California, the beneficial reuse of treated municipal sewage sludge (*a.k.a.*, biosolids) generally must comply with the California Water Code in addition to meeting the requirements specified in Part 503 in Title 40 of the Code of Federal Regulations.

In July 2004, the State Water Resources Control Board adopted Water Quality Order No. 2004-12-DWQ (General Order), and certified a supporting statewide Programmatic Environmental Impact Report (PEIR)

The General Order incorporates the minimum standards established by the Part 503 Rule and expands upon them to fulfill obligations to the California Water Code. However, since California does not have delegated authority to implement the Part 503 Rule, the General Order does not replace the Part 503 Rule. The General Order also does not preempt or supersede the authority of local agencies to prohibit, restrict, or control the use of biosolids subject to their jurisdiction, as allowed by law.

Persons interested in seeking coverage under the General Order should contact the appropriate Regional Water Quality Control Board. Only applicants who submit a complete *Notice of Intent* (NOI), appropriate application fee, and are issued a Notice of Applicability by the executive officer of the appropriate Regional Water Quality Control Board are authorized to land apply biosolids at an agricultural, horticultural, silvicultural, or land reclamation site as a soil amendment under the General Order.

#### State Water Resources Control Board, Divisions of Drinking Water and Clean Water

Recycled water regulations are administered by both Central RWQCB and the California State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB). The regulations governing recycled water are found in a combination of sources, including the Health and Safety Code, Water Code, and Titles 22 and 17 of the California Code of Regulations (CCR). Issues related to the treatment and distribution of recycled water are generally under the permitting authority of RWQCB and the Clean Water Division of the SWRCB.

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<sup>274</sup> California State Water Boards Mission Statement. Accessed September 2022 at: [http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/about\\_us/water\\_boards\\_structure/mission.html](http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/about_us/water_boards_structure/mission.html).

<sup>275</sup> Ibid.

## State Water Resources Control Board Water Onsite Wastewater Treatment Systems (OWTS) Policy

“The purpose of this Policy is to allow the continued use of OWTS, while protecting water quality and public health. This Policy recognizes that responsible local agencies can provide the most effective means to manage OWTS on a routine basis. Therefore, as an important element, it is the intent of this policy to efficiently utilize and improve upon where necessary existing local programs through coordination between the State and local agencies. To accomplish this purpose, this Policy establishes a statewide, risk-based, tiered approach for the regulation and management of OWTS installations and replacements and sets the level of performance and protection expected from OWTS. In particular, the Policy requires actions for water bodies specifically identified as part this Policy where OWTS contribute to water quality degradation that adversely affect beneficial uses.”<sup>276</sup>

### State NPDES General Construction Permit

The State NPDES General Construction Permit requires development and implementation of a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) that uses storm water “Best Management Practices” to control runoff, erosion and sedimentation from the site both during and after construction. The SWPPP has two major objectives: (1) to help identify the sources of sediments and other pollutants that affect the quality of storm water discharges; and (2) to describe and ensure the implementation of practices to reduce sediment and other pollutants in storm water discharges.

### CalRecycle

CalRecycle (formerly the California Integrated Waste Management Board) governs solid waste regulations on the state level, delegating local permitting, enforcement, and inspection responsibilities to Local Enforcement Agencies (LEA). Regulations authored by CalRecycle (Title 14) were integrated with related regulations adopted by the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) pertaining to landfills (Title 23, Chapter 15) to form CCR Title 27.

### California Public Utilities Commission

The California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) regulates privately owned electric, natural gas, telecommunications, water, railroad, rail transit, and passenger transportation companies, in addition to authorizing video franchises. In 1911, the CPUC was established by Constitutional Amendment as the Railroad Commission. In 1912, the Legislature passed the Public Utilities Act, expanding the Commission's regulatory authority to include natural gas, electric, telephone, and water companies as well as railroads and marine transportation companies. In 1946, the Commission was renamed the California Public Utilities Commission. It is tasked with ensuring safe, reliable utility service is available to consumers, setting retail energy rates, and protecting against fraud.

### *Local*

As the Project will not utilize any new or expanded water, wastewater treatment or storm water drainage, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities, the applicable Tulare County General Plan 2030 Update policies for this resource are limited to the following for this resource item: *PFS-2.3 Well Testing* wherein the County shall require new development that includes the use of water wells to be accompanied by evidence that the site can produce the required volume of water without impacting the ability of existing wells to meet their needs; *PFS-3.2 Adequate Capacity* wherein the County shall require development proposals to ensure the intensity and timing of growth is consistent with the availability of adequate wastewater treatment and disposal capacity; *PFS-4.3 Development Requirements* wherein the County shall encourage project designs that minimize drainage concentrations and impervious coverage, avoid floodplain areas, and where feasible, provide a natural watercourse appearance; *PFS-4.4 Stormwater Retention Facilities* wherein the County shall require on-site detention/retention facilities and velocity reducers when necessary to maintain existing (pre-development) storm flows and velocities in natural drainage systems. The County shall encourage the multi-purpose design of these facilities to aid in active groundwater recharge; *PFS-4.5 Detention/Retention Basins Design* wherein the County shall require that stormwater detention/retention basins be visually unobtrusive and provide a secondary use, such as recreation, when feasible; *PFS-4.7 NPDES Enforcement* wherein the County shall continue to monitor and enforce provisions to control non-point source water pollution contained in the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) program; *PFS-5.3 Solid Waste Reduction* wherein the County shall promote the maximum feasible use of solid waste reduction, recycling, and composting of waste, strive to

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<sup>276</sup> California State Water Resources Control Board. OWTS Policy. Water Quality Control Policy for Siting, Design, Operation, and Maintenance of Onsite Wastewater Treatment Systems. June 19, 2012. Accessed September 2022 at: [https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water\\_issues/programs/owts/docs/owts\\_policy.pdf](https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/owts/docs/owts_policy.pdf).

reduce commercial and industrial waste on an annual basis, and pursue financing mechanisms for solid waste reduction programs; *PFS-5.4 County Usage of Recycled Materials and Products* wherein the County shall encourage all industries and government agencies in the County to use recycled materials and products where economically feasible; and *PFS-5.8 Hazardous Waste Disposal Capabilities* wherein the County shall require the proper disposal and recycling of hazardous materials in accordance with the County's Hazardous Waste Management Plan.

#### Tulare County General Plan 2030 Update

As the Project will not utilize any new or expanded water, wastewater treatment or storm water drainage, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities, the applicable Tulare County General Plan 2030 Update policies for this resource are limited to the following for this resource item: *PFS-2.1 Water Supply* where in the County shall work with agencies providing water service to ensure that there is an adequate quantity and quality of water for all uses, including water for fire protection, by, at a minimum, requiring a demonstration by the agency providing water service of sufficient and reliable water supplies and water management measures for proposed urban development; *PFS-2.3 Well Testing* wherein the County shall require new development that includes the use of water wells to be accompanied by evidence that the site can produce the required volume of water without impacting the ability of existing wells to meet their needs; *PFS-2.5 New Systems or Individual Wells* where connection to a community water system is not feasible per PFS-2.4: Water Connections, service by individual wells or new community systems may be allowed if the water source meets standards for quality and quantity; *PFS-3.1 Private Sewage Disposal Standards* where in the County shall maintain adequate standards for private sewage disposal systems (e.g., septic tanks) to protect water quality and public health; *PFS-3.2 Adequate Capacity* wherein the County shall require development proposals to ensure the intensity and timing of growth is consistent with the availability of adequate wastewater treatment and disposal capacity; *PFS-4.3 Development Requirements* wherein the County shall encourage project designs that minimize drainage concentrations and impervious coverage, avoid floodplain areas, and where feasible, provide a natural watercourse appearance; *PFS-4.4 Stormwater Retention Facilities* wherein the County shall require on-site detention/retention facilities and velocity reducers when necessary to maintain existing (pre-development) storm flows and velocities in natural drainage systems. The County shall encourage the multi-purpose design of these facilities to aid in active groundwater recharge; *PFS-4.5 Detention/Retention Basins Design* wherein the County shall require that stormwater detention/retention basins be visually unobtrusive and provide a secondary use, such as recreation, when feasible; *PFS-4.7 NPDES Enforcement* wherein the County shall continue to monitor and enforce provisions to control non-point source water pollution contained in the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) program; *PFS-5.3 Solid Waste Reduction* wherein the County shall promote the maximum feasible use of solid waste reduction, recycling, and composting of waste, strive to reduce commercial and industrial waste on an annual basis, and pursue financing mechanisms for solid waste reduction programs; *PFS-5.4 County Usage of Recycled Materials and Products* wherein the County shall encourage all industries and government agencies in the County to use recycled materials and products where economically feasible; and *PFS-5.8 Hazardous Waste Disposal Capabilities* wherein the County shall require the proper disposal and recycling of hazardous materials in accordance with the County's Hazardous Waste Management Plan.

#### **Project Impact Analysis:**

**a), c – e) No Impact:** As previously noted, the proposed Akers Business Park project site is located on the San Joaquin Valley floor in an unincorporated on a 65.45-acre site approximately 0.50-mile north of the City of Tulare, east of and adjacent to State Route 99 in the central-western part of Tulare County. It is in a predominantly agricultural, yet transitional, area of the San Joaquin Valley. The site is currently planted to walnuts, except at the southernmost portion of the site which currently has an RV sales development. Surrounding areas include agricultural production, light industrial, and SR 99 is immediately west of the site. The proposed Project will include the development of a commercial business park on approximately 65.45 acres located at the southwest corner of Road 100 (Oaks Street) and Oakdale Avenue, east of State Route (SR) 99, APN 149-090-006. The proposed Project will include a General Plan Amendment (“GPA”) to change the Land Use Designation from “Valley Agriculture” to “Mixed Use,” a Zone Change (“PZC”) to change the Zone from AE-20 (Exclusive Agricultural – 20 Acre Minimum) to C-3-MU (Service Commercial with a Mixed-Use Overlay Zone) to facilitate a Tentative Subdivision Map (“TSM”) to subdivide a 65.45-acre parcel and develop the proposed Akers Business Park as a mixed use commercial project that includes the expansion of the existing Magic Touch Recreational Vehicle Sales facility at the south end of the proposed Project (3567 N. Oaks St. Tulare, CA 93274), contractor offices, boat sales, and other related uses allowed in the C-3-MU Zone. The proposed Akers Business Park project will utilize an on-site septic system for wastewater disposal; on-site storm water retention/detention basin; would not 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; and it will comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste as applicable. As such, there will be no impact to these resources.



**b) Less Than Significant Impact:** As noted earlier, the proposed Akers Business Park project's 65.45-acre site is approximately 0.50-mile north of the City of Tulare, east of and adjacent to State Route 99 in the central-western part of Tulare County in a predominantly agricultural, yet transitional, area of the San Joaquin Valley. The site is currently planted to walnuts, except at the southernmost portion of the site which currently has an RV sales development. Surrounding areas include agricultural production, light industrial, and SR 99 is immediately west of the site. The proposed Project will include the development of a commercial business park at the southwest corner of Road 100 (Oaks Street) and Oakdale Avenue. The proposed Project will include a General Plan Amendment ("GPA") to change the Land Use Designation from "Valley Agriculture" to "Mixed Use," a Zone Change ("PZC") to change the Zone from AE-20 (Exclusive Agricultural – 20 Acre Minimum) to C-3-MU (Service Commercial with a Mixed-Use Overlay Zone) to facilitate a Tentative Subdivision Map ("TSM") to subdivide a 65.45-acre parcel and develop the proposed Akers Business Park as a mixed use commercial project that includes the expansion of the existing Magic Touch Recreational Vehicle Sales facility at the south end of the project, contractor offices, boat sales, and other related uses allowed in the C-3-MU Zone. As noted earlier at Item 10 a) Hydrology and Water Quality, the current use of a walnut orchard requires approximately 62.77 million gallons of water annually. As such, the proposed Akers Business Park project will substantially reduce water consumption from the existing ag-related use by approximately 959,052 gallons/acre to irrigate walnuts, thus providing a benefit in regard to groundwater usage. Therefore, a less than significant impact would occur to this resource.

**Cumulative Impact Analysis: Less Than Significant Impact:** The geographic area of this cumulative analysis is Tulare County. This cumulative analysis is based on the information provided in the Tulare County General Plan 2030 Update, Tulare County General Plan Background Report, and Tulare County General Plan 2030 Update EIR. As previously noted, and as summarized here, the proposed Akers Business Park project will include the development of a commercial business park at the southwest corner of Road 100 (Oaks Street) and Oakdale Avenue. The proposed Project will include a General Plan Amendment ("GPA") to change the Land Use Designation from "Valley Agriculture" to "Mixed Use," a Zone Change ("PZC") to change the Zone from AE-20 (Exclusive Agricultural – 20 Acre Minimum) to C-3-MU (Service Commercial with a Mixed-Use Overlay Zone) to facilitate a Tentative Subdivision Map ("TSM") to subdivide a 65.45-acre parcel and develop the proposed Akers Business Park as a mixed use commercial project that includes the expansion of the existing Magic Touch Recreational Vehicle Sales facility at the south end of the project. The site is currently planted to walnuts; however, when this use is discontinued it will likely result in a reduction of water consumption below the approximately 62.77 million gallons of water that is currently used to irrigate the walnut orchard. As such, the proposed Akers Business Park project will have sufficient water supplies available. Therefore, as there will be less than significant Project-specific impacts, there will be less than significant cumulative impacts.

**XX. WILDFIRES**

If located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, would the project:	SIGNIFICANT IMPACT	LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT WITH MITIGATION	LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT	NO IMPACT
a) Substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

The discussions regarding Environmental Setting, Regulatory Setting, CEQA requirements, Utility/Service Systems Resources, etc.; contained in the Tulare County General Plan 2030 Update, Tulare County General Plan Background Report, and Tulare County General Plan 2030 Update Environmental Impact Report are incorporated herein in their entirety. Where necessary and if available, additional site-specific facts, data, information, etc., are included in this discussion.

**Environmental Setting**

As noted earlier, the Akers Business Park project’s 65.45-acre site is approximately 0.50-mile north of the City of Tulare, east of and adjacent to State Route 99 in the central-western part of Tulare County in a predominantly agricultural, yet transitional, area of the San Joaquin Valley. The site is currently planted to walnuts, except at the southernmost portion of the site which currently has an RV sales development. Surrounding areas include agricultural production, light industrial, and SR 99 is immediately west of the site. The proposed Project will include the development of a commercial business park at the southwest corner of Road 100 (Oaks Street) and Oakdale Avenue. The proposed Project will include a General Plan Amendment (“GPA”) to change the Land Use Designation from “Valley Agriculture” to “Mixed Use,” a Zone Change (“PZC”) to change the Zone from AE-20 (Exclusive Agricultural – 20 Acre Minimum) to C-3-MU (Service Commercial with a Mixed-Use Overlay Zone) to facilitate a Tentative Subdivision Map (“TSM”) to subdivide a 65.45-acre parcel and develop the proposed Akers Business Park as a mixed use commercial project that includes the expansion of the existing Magic Touch Recreational Vehicle Sales facility at the south end of the proposed Project area, contractor offices, boat sales, and other related uses allowed in the C-3-MU Zone.

“A wildfire is an uncontrolled fire spreading through vegetative fuels. Wildfires can be caused by human activities (such as arson or campfires) or by natural events (such as lightning). Wildfires often occur in forests or other areas with ample vegetation. Wildfires differ from other fires due to their large size, the speed at which the fires can spread, and the ability of the fire to change direction unexpectedly and to jump gaps, such as roads, rivers, and fire breaks. In areas where structures and other human development meet or intermingle with wildland or vegetative fuels (referred to as the wildland urban interface or WUI), wildfires can cause significant property damage and present extreme threats to public health and safety. The following three factors contribute significantly to wildfire behavior and can be used to identify wildfire hazard areas.

**Topography:** As slope increases, the rate of wildfire spread increases. South-facing slopes are also subject to more solar radiation, making them drier and thereby intensifying wildfire behavior. However, ridgetops may mark the end of wildfire spread because fire spreads more slowly or may even be unable to spread downhill.

**Fuel:** The type and condition of vegetation plays a significant role in the occurrence and spread of wildfires. Certain types of plants are more susceptible to burning or will burn with greater intensity, and non-native plants may be more susceptible to

burning than native species. Dense or overgrown vegetation increases the amount of fuel load. The ratio of living to dead plant matter is also important. The risk of fire increases significantly during periods of prolonged drought, as the moisture content of both living and dead plant matter decreases; or when a disease or infestation has caused widespread damage. The fuel's continuity, both horizontally and vertically, is also an important factor.

Weather: The most variable factor affecting the behavior of wildfires is weather. Temperature, humidity, wind, and lightning can affect chances for ignition and spread of fire. Extreme weather, such as high temperatures and low humidity, can lead to extreme wildfire activity. By contrast, cooling and higher humidity often signal reduced wildfire occurrence and easier containment. Years of precipitation followed by warmer years tend to encourage more widespread fires and longer burn periods. Also, since the mid-1980s, earlier snowmelt and associated warming due to global climate change has been associated with longer and more severe wildfire seasons in the western U.S.

Wildfires can have serious effects on the local environment, beyond the removal of vegetation. Soil exposed to intense heat may lose its capability to absorb moisture and support life. Exposed soils erode quickly and enhance siltation of rivers and streams, thereby enhancing flood potential, harming aquatic life, and degrading water quality. Lands stripped of vegetation are also subject to increased debris flow hazards, as described above. Wildfires can also greatly affect the air quality of the surrounding area.

Local responsibility areas generally include incorporated cities, cultivated agriculture lands and portions of the desert. Local responsibility area fire protection is typically provided by city fire departments, fire protection districts, counties, and by CAL FIRE under contract to the local government. The fire hazard severity zones for the area of local responsibility in the County are shown on Figure B-4 (Appendix B, Hazard Figures [in the MJLHMP]). Fire severity zones are depicted for the Cities of Porterville and Woodlake in Figures B-13 and B-20 (Appendix B, Hazard Figures MJLHMP).

State responsibility area is a legal term defining the area where the State has financial responsibility for wildfire protection. Incorporated cities and Federal ownership are not included. The prevention and suppression of fires in all areas that are not State responsibility areas are primarily the responsibility of local or Federal agencies.

The portion of the County that transitions from the valley floor into the foothills and mountains is characterized by high to very high threat of wildfire; this includes the cities of Porterville and Woodlake, the jurisdiction of Tulare County Office of Education (TCOE), the Tule River Tribe Reservation and areas of the County unincorporated. Steeper terrain in these areas increases the threat of wildfire. The western portion of the County has little or no threat of wildfire. The risk of wildfire increases where human access exists in high fire hazard severity zones, such as the Sierra Nevada Mountains and foothills, because of a greater chance for human carelessness and because of historic and current fire management practices.

### ***Impact of Climate Change***

Climate and weather have long been acknowledged as playing key roles in wildfire activity, and global warming is expected to exacerbate fire impacts on natural and urban ecosystems. Predicting future fire regimes requires an understanding of how temperature and precipitation interact to control fire activity.<sup>7</sup> Since 2012, record drought and record temperatures, have weakened trees throughout California, resulting in millions of acres of failing forestland that then become vulnerable to disease and infestation. Infestations, such as those caused by native bark beetles, have caused tree mortality of epidemic proportions. The scale of tree mortality in California contributes to significantly increased wildfire risks, and presents life safety risks due to falling trees that can injure or kill people. The immediate consequence of tree mortality on California forestlands increases the potential for wildfires, further spread of forest insect tree damage, threats to critical public safety infrastructure from falling trees, reduced forest carbon stocks, loss of commercial timber values to landowners, and diminished wildlife habitat. Due to these increased risks, the County proclaimed states of emergency for tree mortality.

In addition, and in response to the millions of dead trees, a State of Emergency Proclamation was issued by the Governor. A Tree Mortality Task Force, comprised of State and Federal agencies led by CAL FIRE, Cal OES and the Governor's office has identified six counties as high hazard zones due to dead and dying trees and the hazards, this tree mortality presents. The 10 counties include: Amadore, Calaveras, El Dorado, Fresno, Kern, Madera, Mariposa, Placer, Tulare, and Tuolumne. Both the State's and the County's Tree Mortality Task Forces are structured as a Multi-Agency Coordination Group and meet monthly to exchange information and updates among stakeholders. Participants are encouraged to discuss needs and concerns, and leverage each other's subject matter expertise and resources to further response efforts."<sup>277</sup>

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<sup>277</sup> Tulare County 2018 Multi-Jurisdictional Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (MJLHMP). March 2018. Pages 70-72. Accessed September 2022 at: <https://oes.tularecounty.ca.gov/oes/mitigation/tulare-county-mjlhmp/>

The proposed Akers Business Park project's location does not lend itself to wildfire risk as it is not within a fire hazard severity zone (as identified by CalFire<sup>278</sup>), lacks slope/terrain conducive to wildfire spread, lacks vegetation which would fuel wildfire (i.e., dense vegetation consisting of shrubs and bushes, dead or dying trees caused by drought or pest infestation (i.e., bark beetle), is surrounded by predominantly agriculturally productive lands, and, as noted earlier, is in the valley portion of the County which has no threat of wildfire.

## Regulatory Setting

### *Federal*

None that apply to the proposed Project.

### *State*

#### Senate Bill 1241 (Kehoe, 2012)

“Wildfire: Senate Bill 1241 (Kehoe, 2012) required the Office of Planning and Research, the Natural Resources Agency, and CalFire to develop “amendments to the initial study checklist of the [CEQA Guidelines] for the inclusion of questions related to fire hazard impacts for projects located on lands classified as state responsibility areas, as defined in section 4102, and on lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, as defined in subdivision (i) of section 51177 of the Government Code.” (Pub. Resources Code, § 21083.01 (emphasis added).) The Agency added several questions addressing this issue. Notably, while SB 1241 required the questions to address specific locations, it did not necessarily limit the analysis to those locations, and so the Agency posed the questions for projects located within “or near” those zones. Lead agencies will be best placed to determine precisely where such analysis is needed outside of the specified zones.”<sup>279</sup>

“The safety elements of local general plans will also describe potential hazards, including: “any unreasonable risks associated with the effects of seismically induced surface rupture, ground shaking, ground failure, tsunami, seiche, and dam failure; slope instability leading to mudslides and landslides; subsidence; liquefaction; and other seismic hazards ..., and other geologic hazards known to the legislative body; flooding; and wildland and urban fires.” (Gov. Code § 65302(g)(1).) Hazards associated with flooding, wildfire and climate change require special consideration. (Id. at subd. (g)(2)-(g)(4).) Lead agencies must “discuss any inconsistencies between the proposed project and applicable general plans” related to a project’s potential environmental impacts in a project’s environmental review. (State CEQA Guidelines § 15125(d).) Local governments may regulate land use to protect public health and welfare pursuant to their police power. (Cal. Const., art. XI, § 7; California Building Industry Assn. v. City of San Jose (2015) 61 Cal. 4th 435, 455 (“so long as a land use restriction or regulation bears a reasonable relationship to the public welfare, the restriction or regulation is constitutionally permissible.”)<sup>280</sup>

#### CAL FIRE - Tulare Unit Strategic Fire Plan

As summarized in the 2017 Tulare Multi-Jurisdictional Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (MJLHMP), “The Plan is a local road map to create and maintain defensible landscapes in order to protect vital assets. It seeks to reduce firefighting cost and property loss, increase public and firefighter safety, minimize wildfire risk to communities and contribute to ecosystem health. The Plan identifies pre-suppression projects including opportunities for reducing structural ignitability, and the identification of potential fuel reduction projects and techniques for minimizing those risks. The central goals that are critical to reducing and preventing the impacts of fire revolve around both suppression efforts and fire prevention efforts. The MJLHMP fire hazard analysis and fire related mitigation measures will be provided to Cal Fire to support the Tulare Unit Strategic Fire Plan.”<sup>281</sup>

Cal Fire publishes Fire Hazard Severity Zone Maps for all regions in California, which can be viewed here. The fire hazard measurement used as the basis for these maps includes the speed at which a wildfire moves, the amount of heat the fire produces, and most importantly, the burning fire brands that the fire sends ahead of the flaming front. Lead agencies and project proponents can review the Cal Fire maps to determine whether a given project site will be subject to the new CEQA wildfire impacts analysis.

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<sup>278</sup> California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection. 2007. Draft Fire Severity Zones in LRA Map. Accessed August 2022 at: [https://osfm.fire.ca.gov/media/6832/fhszl06\\_1\\_map54.pdf](https://osfm.fire.ca.gov/media/6832/fhszl06_1_map54.pdf)

<sup>279</sup> MJLHMP. Page 70.

<sup>280</sup> Ibid. Pages 38 and 39.

<sup>281</sup> Ibid Table 3-1: Legal & Regulatory Capabilities. 14.

Tulare County General Plan 2030 Update

The proposed Project is not located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones. The following Tulare County General Plan 2030 Update policies could apply to this Project if it were located on sloped areas, fire hazards areas, lands susceptible to landslides, subsidence/settlement, contamination, and/or flooding; potential for wildland fires; etc.: *HS-6.1 New Building Fire Hazards* - The County shall ensure that all building permits in urban areas, as well as areas with potential for wildland fires, are reviewed by the County Fire Chief; *HS-6.5 Fire Risk Recommendations* - The County shall encourage the County Fire Chief to make recommendations to property owners regarding hazards associated with the use of materials, types of structures, location of structures and subdivisions, road widths, location of fire hydrants, water supply, and other important considerations regarding fire hazard that may be technically feasible but not included in present ordinances or policies; *HS-6.7 Water Supply System* – The County shall require that water supply systems be adequate to serve the size and configuration of land developments, including satisfying fire flow requirements. Standards as set forth in the subdivision ordinance shall be maintained and improved as necessary; *HS-7.1 Coordinate Emergency Response – Service with Government Agencies* wherein the County shall coordinate emergency response with local, State, and Federal governmental agencies, community organizations, volunteer agencies, and other response partners during emergencies or disasters utilizing SEMS and NIMS; and *HS-7.2 Mutual Aid Agreement* - The County shall participate in established local, State, and Federal mutual aid systems. Where necessary and appropriate, the County shall enter into agreements to ensure the effective provision of emergency services, such as mass care, heavy rescue, hazardous materials, or other specialized function.

**Project Impact Analysis:**

a) - d) **No Impact:** As noted earlier, the proposed Akers Business Park project’s 65.45-acre site is approximately 0.50-mile north of the City of Tulare, east of and adjacent to State Route 99 in the central-western part of Tulare County in a predominantly agricultural, yet transitional, area of the San Joaquin Valley. The site is currently planted to walnuts, except at the southernmost portion of the site which currently has an RV sales development. The proposed Project will include the development of a commercial business park at the southwest corner of Road 100 (Oaks Street) and Oakdale Avenue. The proposed Project will include a General Plan Amendment (“GPA”) to change the Land Use Designation from “Valley Agriculture” to “Mixed Use,” a Zone Change (“PZC”) to change the Zone from AE-20 (Exclusive Agricultural – 20 Acre Minimum) to C-3-MU (Service Commercial with a Mixed-Use Overlay Zone) to facilitate a Tentative Subdivision Map (“TSM”) to subdivide a 65.45-acre parcel and develop the proposed Akers Business Park as a mixed use commercial project that includes the expansion of the existing Magic Touch Recreational Vehicle Sales facility at the south end of the project.

**Cumulative Impact Analysis: No Impact** – The geographic area of this cumulative analysis is Tulare County. This cumulative analysis is based on the information provided in the Tulare County 2030 General Plan, Tulare County General Plan Background Report, and the Tulare County 2030 General Plan EIR. As previously noted, and as summarized here, the proposed Akers Business Park project’s 65.45-acre site is approximately 0.50-mile north of the City of Tulare, east of and adjacent to State Route 99. As noted above, the proposed Project would result in a General Plan Amendment and Zone changes to facilitate a Tentative Subdivision Map to subdivide the existing 65.45-acre parcel and develop the proposed Akers Business Park as a mixed-use commercial project that includes the expansion of the existing Magic Touch Recreational Vehicle Sales facility at the south end of the project. For the reasons stated above, Items 20 a) through d) do not apply to the Akers Business Park project as it is not located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones. As such, no Project-specific Impact or Cumulative Impacts will occur.

**XXI. MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE**

- a) Does the project have the potential to substantially degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, substantially reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal species, or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?
- b) Does the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? (“Cumulatively considerable” means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects)?
- c) Does the project have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?

**Project Impact Analysis:**

The analysis conducted in this Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration results in a determination that the proposed Project will have a less than significant effect on the local environment. As previously noted, the Akers Business Park project’s 65.45-acre site is approximately 0.50-mile north of the City of Tulare, east of and adjacent to State Route 99 in the central-western part of Tulare County in a predominantly agricultural, yet transitional, area of the San Joaquin Valley. The site is currently planted to walnuts, except at the southernmost portion of the site which currently has an RV sales development. The proposed Project will include the development of a commercial business park at the southwest corner of Road 100 (Oaks Street) and Oakdale Avenue. The proposed Project will include a General Plan Amendment (“GPA”) to change the Land Use Designation from “Valley Agriculture” to “Mixed Use,” a Zone Change (“PZC”) to change the Zone from AE-20 (Exclusive Agricultural – 20 Acre Minimum) to C-3-MU (Service Commercial with a Mixed-Use Overlay Zone) to facilitate a Tentative Subdivision Map (“TSM”) to subdivide a 65.45-acre parcel and develop the proposed Akers Business Park as a mixed use commercial project that includes the expansion of the existing Magic Touch Recreational Vehicle Sales facility at the south end of the project.

- a) **Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation:** The potential for impacts to cultural resources (including tribal cultural resources) from the construction-related activities of the proposed Akers Business Park project will be less than significant with the incorporation of the Mitigation Measures 5-1 through 5-3 as contained in Item 5 Cultural Resources and Item 18 Tribal Cultural Resources. The analysis contained in Item 4 Biological Resources concludes that this resource has the potential to be impacted and has included Mitigation Measures 4-1 through 4-9. Mitigation Measures 5-1 through 5-3 (as contained in Item 5 Cultural Resources), would also apply to Item 7 Geology and Soils, specifically; regarding paleontological resources. Accordingly, the proposed Project will involve no potential for significant impacts due to degradation of the quality of the environment, substantial reductions in the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, causing a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threatening to eliminate a plant or animal community, reduction in the number or restriction of the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal or elimination of important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory. As such, the impact from the proposed Akers Business Park project will be less than significant with mitigation for biological resources and less than significant with mitigation for cultural, paleontological, and tribal cultural resources
- b) **Less Than Significant Impact:** Projects considered in a cumulative analysis include those that would be constructed concurrently with the Project and those that would be in operation at the same time as the Project. The cumulative projects considered in this analysis are limited to projects that would result in similar impacts to the proposed Project due to their potential to collectively contribute to significant cumulative impacts, as well as other development projects that would be

located in the vicinity of the proposed Akers Business Park project.

Tulare County staff have determined that there are no projects that could have the potential to contribute to cumulative impacts. The proposed Project was determined to have less than- to no impacts to all resources with the exception of the agricultural resources, biological resources, cultural resources (including Tribal Cultural Resources), geological resources (in the form of paleontological resources), and traffic, with incorporation/implementation of mitigation measures, conditions of approval, and project design features identified earlier.

The majority of the potential impacts resulting from the proposed Project will be short term, temporary, and intermittent occurring during Project construction-related activities; and with negligible impacts resulting from proposed Project operations as discussed earlier in this environmental analysis. Because construction-related impacts are typically short duration, temporary, intermittent, and localized, they would have to occur concurrently and in proximity of other projects in order to have a cumulative impact. Construction-related impacts (which are primarily associated with air quality, biological resources, greenhouse gases, noise, and traffic) are not likely to act cumulatively with any other projects in a manner that would result in significant impacts.

The proposed Project (as described in Items 3 and 8) will have short-term impacts with regard to air quality and greenhouse gases during construction-related activities. However, the emissions associated with this proposed Akers Business Park project are less significant when compared to baseline emissions levels as quantified in Items 3 Air Quality and 8 Greenhouse Gases, and are not considered cumulatively considerable pursuant to guidelines from the Air District. (See Impact 3(c) for a complete discussion of the Project's cumulative air quality impacts.) The proposed Project would implement the applicable SJVAPCD rules, regulations, permit requirements, etc., (e.g., Best Available Control Measures); therefore, reducing the Project specific and cumulative impacts to a less than significant level.

As discussed in Item 4 Agricultural and Forestry Resources, the proposed Project site consists of agriculturally productive land in the form of an existing walnut orchard. As noted earlier at Item 4, locating the proposed Project at this site would result in a loss of 0.000050% of 1,298,053 total acres of agricultural lands and 0.00017% of 366,136 acres of all Prime Farmlands within Tulare County. Also, as the Project must comply with Tulare County General Plan policy AG-1.6 Conservation Easements for conservation of important agricultural land to non-agricultural use through an in-lieu fee or other conservation mechanism, implementation of Mitigation Measure 2-1 will reduce the Project's impact to less than significant. As indicated in Item 5 Biological Resources, the proposed Project site is not suitable habitat or known to host any special status species, when combined cumulatively with other projects, the proposed Akers Business Park project would not result in impacts to biological resources that are cumulatively considerable. As indicated at Item 5, the proposed Akers Business Park project site does not contain any known cultural or tribal cultural resources. However, as an abundance of caution, Mitigation Measures 4-1 through 4-9, and 5-1 through 5-3 have been incorporated into this MND.

Impacts to aesthetics from the proposed Project would be minimal as these types of business parks are commonly found within or adjacent to nearby urban type development, and when adjacent to or near a major transportation corridor such as SR 99. The contribution of the proposed Project would not be cumulatively considerable. Thus, the proposed Akers Business Park project would result in less than significant cumulative impact to Aesthetics.

No archaeological or historic resources were located on the proposed Project site. With implementation of the cultural resource mitigation measures specified in Impact 5 Cultural Resources, the proposed Akers Business Park project would not cause cumulatively considerable cultural resource impacts because impacts to unknown cultural resources would be minimized.

The proposed Akers Business Park project also will not cause cumulatively considerable geology and soils impacts (with the exception of paleontological resources, as noted earlier), as Project-specific impacts will be less than significant and will not be anticipated to combine with impacts caused by the cumulative projects identified by the County.

The proposed Project will not cause cumulatively considerable impacts related to hazards and hazardous materials. While small amounts of hazardous materials may be used or transported as a result of construction-related activities as the proposed Akers Business Park project develops, these activities will occur in compliance with applicable laws and regulations, and any impacts resulting from use, transport, disposal, or accident or upset conditions will be localized in nature. As a result, any Project-level impacts will not have the potential to contribute to hazards associated with other projects because these impacts would only occur intermittently, if at all. When fully built-out, it is likely that the tenants will store small amounts of typical hazardous materials, such as fuel (e.g., gasoline for small tractor equipment) and lubricants. The storage, transport, and use of these materials will comply with Local, State, and Federal regulatory



requirements.

The proposed Akers Business Park project will not cause cumulatively considerable hydrology and water quality-related impacts. The proposed Project applicant will be required to implement a SWPPP to reduce impacts and will not cause discharge to any surface or groundwater sources or alter the course of any stream or river. Nor will the proposed Project change runoff patterns in the area. Also, as noted in Item 10 a) Hydrology & Water Quality, the current use of a walnut orchard requires approximately 62.77 million gallons of water annually. As such, the proposed Akers Business Park project will substantially reduce water consumption from the existing ag-related use by approximately 959,052 gallons/acre to irrigate walnuts, thus providing a benefit in regard to groundwater usage.

The proposed Akers Business Park project will not cause cumulatively considerable land use and planning impacts. The proposed Project is consistent with all applicable land use planning policies (that is Tulare County 2030 General Plan). As a result, the proposed Akers Business Park project's impacts will not be cumulatively significant.

The proposed Akers Business Park project also will not combine noise-related impacts with that of other projects to cause cumulatively considerable impacts. Construction-related activities will cause short-term, temporary, and intermittent increases in noise in the area, and could occur at the same time as other noise-causing events in the area. However, no other concurrent construction projects are anticipated to occur adjacent to or near the proposed Project site, and operational noise will be minimal. As a result, the proposed Akers Business Park project is not anticipated to considerably contribute to cumulative noise impacts during construction or operation. Therefore, a less than significant Project-specific impact related to this Checklist Item will occur.

As indicated in the discussion of Item 15 a) through f) Public Services, earlier, the proposed Akers Business Park project will not significantly impact the fire or police response times, schools, parks, or other facilities. Therefore, less than significant Project-specific or Cumulative Impacts related to this Checklist Item will occur.

As discussed in Item 16 a) and b) Recreation, there will be no need to construct or expand any recreational facilities, as such, there would be no adverse physical effect on the environment from the proposed Akers Business Park project. Therefore, there would be a less than significant impact to this resource.

As indicated at the discussion of Item 17 Transportation, the proposed Akers Business Park project is consistent the Tulare County 2030 General Plan. As such, the proposed Project will not conflict with an applicable plan, ordinance or policy establishing measures of effectiveness for the performance of the circulation system, taking into account all modes of transportation including mass transit and non-motorized travel and relevant components of the circulation system, including but not limited to intersections, streets, highways and freeways, pedestrian and bicycle paths, and mass transit. Further, it will not conflict with an applicable congestion management program, including, but not limited to level of service standards and travel demand measures, or other standards established by the county congestion management agency for designated roads or highways. As indicated in Item 17 b), the proposed Project is not relieved of the requirements to conduct a VMT analysis using the screening criteria as defined in Tulare County's SB 743 Guidelines. As indicated earlier, the proposed Project's specific daily trips/VMT, cannot be determined due to the absence of specific land use types and square footage of area to be development; therefore, as an abundance of caution, it would result in less than significant impacts with mitigation (in the form of a Condition of Approval). Also, the proposed Akers Business Park project will not result in a change in air traffic patterns, including either increase in traffic levels or a change in location that results in substantial safety risks; it will not substantially increase hazards due to a design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses, (e.g., farm equipment) and it will include adequate emergency access; and it will not conflict with adopted policies, plans, or programs regarding public transit, bicycle, or pedestrian facilities, or otherwise decrease the performance or safety of such facilities.

The proposed Akers Business Park project would not require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water facilities there are sufficient water supplies available to serve the proposed Project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry and multiple dry years. Stormwater detention will be provided on site, as such, there is no need to construct or expand storm water drainage facilities. Lastly, the proposed Project would not 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 and it will comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste. As such, the proposed Akers Business Park project would result in a less than significant impact

Finally, as noted earlier, Items 20 a) through d) Wildfire, does not apply to the proposed Akers Business Park project as it

is not located in state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones. As such, no Project-specific Impact or Cumulative Impacts will occur.

Each of the cumulative projects considered in this section would be required to comply with project-specific mitigation measures, project design features, and/or conditions of approval, as well as applicable General Plans, zoning ordinances, laws and policies. Implementation of the identified Project-specific mitigation measures and compliance with applicable codes, Tulare County General Plan policies, ordinances, laws and other requirements will reduce the impact of cumulative impacts to less than significant. Lastly, projects are also required to comply with other entities'/agencies' (e.g., San Valley Unified Air Pollution Control District, Regional Water Quality Control Board, etc.) applicable rules, regulations, standards, orders, permits, thresholds, etc., which would then also contribute to minimizing or avoiding adverse impacts.

- c) **Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation:** The proposed Akers Business Park project will not result in substantial adverse effect on human beings, either directly or indirectly. Mitigation Measures (see **Mitigation Measures 2-1, 4-1 through 4-9, 5-1 through 5-3, and 17-1**) are provided to reduce the Project's potential effects on Agricultural Resources, Biological Resources, Cultural/Tribal Cultural Resources, Paleontological Resources, and Transportation to less than significant. No additional mitigation measures will be required. Therefore, implementation of the proposed Akers Business Park project would result in a less than significant impact.

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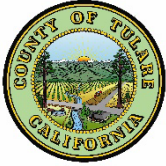
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# **ATTACHMENT “A”**

## **Air Quality, Greenhouse Gas, and Energy Technical Memorandum**

# **ATTACHMENT “B”**

## **Biological Evaluation Technical Memorandum**



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## TECHNICAL MEMORANDUM BIOLOGICAL SPECIES EVALUATION

DATE: February 13, 2023  
TO: Hector Guerra, Chief Environmental Planner  
FROM: Jessica Willis, Planner IV  
SUBJECT: Akers Business Park (GPA 22-003, PZC 22-010, PPM 23-007)

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### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposed Project consists of the development of a commercial business park located at the southwest corner of Road 100 (Akers/Oaks Street) and Avenue 256 (Oakdale Avenue), east of State Route (SR) 99. The proposed Project includes a General Plan Amendment ("GPA") to change the Land Use Designation from "Valley Agriculture" to "Mixed Use," a Zone Change ("PZC") to change the Zone from AE-20 (Exclusive Agricultural – 20 Acre Minimum) to C-3-MU (Service Commercial with a Mixed-Use Overlay Zone), and a Tentative Parcel Map ("PPM") to subdivide a 65.45-acre parcel to facilitate the development of the proposed Akers Business Park. The proposed Project is a mixed-use commercial development that includes the expansion of the existing Magic Touch Recreational Vehicle Sales facility at the south end of the proposed Project (3567 N. Oaks St. Tulare, CA 93274), contractor offices, boat sales, and other related uses allowed in the C-3-MU Zone.

### PROJECT LOCATION

The Project site is located Southwest corner of Road 100 (Akers/Oaks Street) and Avenue 256 (Oakdale Avenue), east of State Route 99, Tulare, CA 93274.

Assessor Parcel Number(s): 149-090-006

USGS 7.5-minute Quadrangle: Visalia

Surrounding Quadrangles: Visalia, Traver, Monson, Ivanhoe, Goshen, Exeter, Paige, Tulare and Cairns Corner quadrangles (see Attachment 1)

Public Land Survey System: Section 27, Township 19 South, Range 24 East, Mount Diablo Base and Meridian

Latitude/Longitude: 36° 15' 56.16" N / 119° 20' 27.07" W (southwest corner of Rd 100 & Ave256)

## BIOLOGICAL SPECIES EVALUATION

The most recent California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDDB), RareFind 5 and Biogeographic Information and Observation System (BIOS) was accessed between October 03, 2022, and October 4, 2022.<sup>1</sup> These databases were utilized in the identification of the historic range of special status plant and animal species within the Project vicinity, evaluation of potential impacts on biological species, and determination of applicability of mitigation measures, if needed.

- *9-Quad Area:* The 9-quadrangle Project vicinity includes the Visalia, Traver, Monson, Ivanhoe, Goshen, Exeter, Paige, Tulare and Cairns Corner quadrangles (see Attachment 1). Review of BIOS indicates that there are 4 natural communities, 25 special status animal species, and 19 special status plant species recorded within the 9-quadrangle Project vicinity (see Attachment 2 for the full listing of species).
- *Project Quad:* The Project is located within the Visalia quadrangle (see Attachment 1). Review of BIOS indicates that there are no natural communities, 9 special status animal species, and 5 special status plant species recorded within the Visalia quadrangle Project vicinity (see Attachment 3 for the full listing of species).<sup>2</sup>
- *Project Site and Vicinity:* There are no special status plant or animal species, or natural community recorded within the Project site (see Attachment 1). However, the San Joaquin kit fox and the Swainson's hawk have been recorded within the 5-mile radius. As such mitigation measures are warranted.

Cameron Creek (developed as part of the Tulare Irrigation District canal system) is located directly north of the Project site across Avenue 256 (Oakdale Avenue). The Project will comply with all applicable stormwater regulations and will not result in runoff that could affect Cameron creek.

The following Mitigation Measures will be required prior to any construction-related activities to ensure the Project will have a less than significant impact on special status plant and animal species within the Project vicinity.

### ***Pre-construction Surveys and Education***

**BIO-1: (*Pre-construction Survey – Special Status Plant Species*)** A qualified biologist/botanist will conduct pre-construction surveys for special status plant species in accordance with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) Protocols for Surveying and Evaluating Impacts to Special Status Native Plant Populations and Natural Communities (2009). This protocol includes identification of reference populations to facilitate the likelihood of field investigation occurring during the appropriate floristic period. Surveys should be timed to coincide with flowering periods for species that could occur (March-May). In the absence of protocol-level surveys being performed, additional surveys may be necessary.

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<sup>1</sup> CDFW. CNDDDB Maps and Data. <https://wildlife.ca.gov/Data/CNDDDB/Maps-and-Data>

<sup>2</sup> The Tulare Quadrangle is included in the list as the existing RV sales facility that is proposed for expansion is located in the Tulare quad south of the Project site.

- If special status plant species are not identified during pre-construction surveys, no further action is required.
- If special status plant species are detected during preconstruction surveys, plant population shall be avoided with the establishment of a minimum 50-foot no disturbance buffer from the outer edge of the plant population. If buffers cannot be maintained, the Sacramento Field Office of the USFWS and the Fresno Field Office of CDFW shall be contacted immediately to identify the appropriate minimization actions to be taken as appropriate for the species identified and to determine permitting needs.

**BIO-2: (*Pre-construction Survey – San Joaquin Kit Fox and Nesting Raptors/Migratory Birds*)**

If Project activities must occur during the nesting season (February 1-August 31), a qualified biologist will conduct preconstruction surveys for active raptor and migratory bird nests within 30 days of the onset of these activities. The survey will include the proposed work area(s) and surrounding lands within 500 feet for all nesting raptors and migratory birds save Swainson’s hawk; the Swainson’s hawk survey will extend to ½-mile outside of work area boundaries. If no nesting pairs are found within the survey area, no further mitigation is required.

**BIO-3: (*Employee Education Program*)**

Prior to the start of construction, the applicant shall retain a qualified biologist/botanist to conduct a tailgate meeting to train all construction staff that will be involved with the project on the special status species that occur, or may occur, on the project site. This training will include a description of the species and its habitat needs; a report of the occurrence of the species in the project area; an explanation of the status of the species and its protection under the Endangered Species Act; and a list of the measures being taken to reduce impacts to the species during project construction and implementation.

***San Joaquin kit fox***

**BIO-4: (*Avoidance*)**

A standardized pre-construction/pre-activity survey shall be conducted no less than 14 days and no more than 30 days prior to the beginning of ground disturbance and/or construction activities or any Project activity likely to impact the San Joaquin kit fox. Surveys shall identify kit fox habitat features on the Project site and evaluate use by kit fox and, if possible, assess the potential impacts to the kit fox by the proposed activity. The status of all dens shall be determined and mapped. Written results of pre-construction/pre-activity surveys must be received by the USFWS within five days after survey completion and prior to the start of ground disturbance and/or construction activities.

**BIO-5: (*Minimization*)**

Construction activities shall be carried out in a manner that minimizes disturbance to kit fox. Minimization measures include, but are not limited to: restriction of project-related vehicle traffic to established roads, construction areas, and other designated areas; inspection and covering of structures (e.g., pipes), as well as installation of escape structures, to prevent the inadvertent entrapment of kit foxes; restriction of rodenticide and herbicide use; and proper disposal of food items and trash

**BIO-6:** *(Mortality Reporting)* The Sacramento Field Office of the USFWS and the Fresno Field Office of CDFW will be notified in writing within three working days in case of the accidental death or injury of a San Joaquin kit fox during Project-related activities. Notification must include the date, time, location of the incident or of the finding of a dead or injured animal, and any other pertinent information. core avoidance areas. Any unauthorized take of Special Status species will be immediately reported to DFW by the monitor. The monitor will also notify the Project Coordinator who will stop work until corrective measures are implemented.

*Nesting Raptors and Migratory Birds, including loggerhead shrike and tricolor blackbird*

**BIO-7:** *(Avoidance)* In order to avoid impacts to nesting birds, construction will occur, where possible, outside the nesting season, or between September 16 and January 31

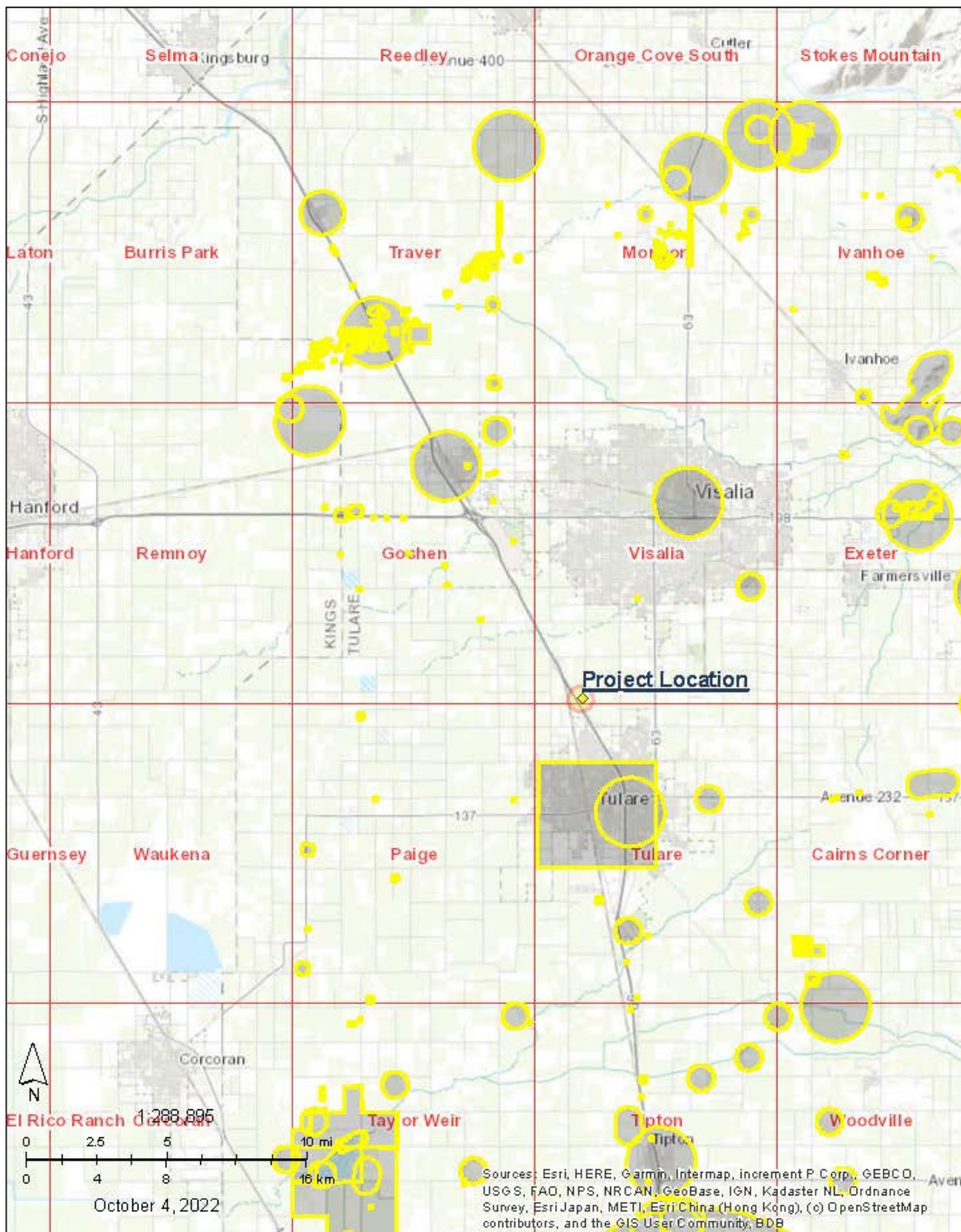
**BIO-8:** *(Buffers)* If active nests are found within the survey areas a qualified biologist will establish appropriate no-disturbance buffers based on species tolerance of human disturbance, baseline levels of disturbance, and barriers that may separate the nest from construction disturbance. These buffers will remain in place until the breeding season has ended or until the qualified biologist has determined that the birds have fledged and are no longer reliant upon the nest or parental care for survival.

**BIO-9:** *(Mortality reporting)* The Sacramento Field Office of the USFWS and the Fresno Field Office of CDFW will be notified in writing within three working days in case of the accidental death or injury of a special status nesting raptor or migratory bird during Project-related activities. Notification must include the date, time, location of the incident or of the finding of a dead or injured animal, and any other pertinent information. core avoidance areas. Any unauthorized take of Special Status species will be immediately reported to DFW by the monitor. The monitor will also notify the Project Coordinator who will stop work until corrective measures are implemented.



# Attachment 1. 9-Quad Project Vicinity

## Map of Akers 9 Quad Vicinity



Author: dbk@tulareconservation.org  
Printed from: http://tulareconservation.org

## Attachment 2 – 9-Quad Project Vicinity Species List



### Selected Elements by Scientific Name

California Department of Fish and Wildlife

California Natural Diversity Database



**Query Criteria:** Quad IS (Visalia (3611933)) OR (Tulare (3611923)) OR (Traver (3611944)) OR (Monson (3611943)) OR (Ivanhoe (3611942)) OR (Exeter (3611932)) OR (Cairns Corner (3611922)) OR (Woodville (3611912)) OR (Tipton (3611913)) OR (Taylor Weir (3611914)) OR (Paige (3611924)) OR (Goshen (3611934))

Species	Element Code	Federal Status	State Status	Global Rank	State Rank	Rare Plant Rank/CDFW SSC or FP
<i>Agelaius tricolor</i> tricolored blackbird	ABPBXB0020	None	Threatened	G1G2	S1S2	SSC
<i>Ambystoma californiense pop. 1</i> California tiger salamander - central California DPS	AAAAA01181	Threatened	Threatened	G2G3T3	S3	WL
<i>Andrena macswaini</i> An andrenid bee	IIHYM35130	None	None	G2	S2	
<i>Anniella pulchra</i> Northern California legless lizard	ARACC01020	None	None	G3	S3	SSC
<i>Antrozous pallidus</i> pallid bat	AMACC10010	None	None	G4	S3	SSC
<i>Athene cunicularia</i> burrowing owl	ABNSB10010	None	None	G4	S3	SSC
<i>Atriplex cordulata var. cordulata</i> heartscale	PDCHE040B0	None	None	G3T2	S2	1B.2
<i>Atriplex cordulata var. erecticaulis</i> Earlimart orache	PDCHE042V0	None	None	G3T1	S1	1B.2
<i>Atriplex depressa</i> brittlescale	PDCHE042L0	None	None	G2	S2	1B.2
<i>Atriplex minuscule</i> lesser saltscale	PDCHE042M0	None	None	G2	S2	1B.1
<i>Atriplex persistens</i> vernal pool smallscale	PDCHE042P0	None	None	G2	S2	1B.2
<i>Atriplex subtilis</i> subtle orache	PDCHE042T0	None	None	G1	S1	1B.2
<i>Bombus crotchii</i> Crotch bumble bee	IIHYM24480	None	None	G2	S1S2	
<i>Branchinecta lynchi</i> vernal pool fairy shrimp	ICBRA03030	Threatened	None	G3	S3	
<i>Buteo swainsoni</i> Swainson's hawk	ABNKC19070	None	Threatened	G5	S3	
<i>Caulanthus californicus</i> California jewelflower	PDBRA31010	Endangered	Endangered	G1	S1	1B.1
<i>Charadrius montanus</i> mountain plover	ABNNB03100	None	None	G3	S2S3	SSC
<i>Coccyzus americanus occidentalis</i> western yellow-billed cuckoo	ABNRB02022	Threatened	Endangered	G5T2T3	S1	



**Selected Elements by Scientific Name**  
 California Department of Fish and Wildlife  
 California Natural Diversity Database



Species	Element Code	Federal Status	State Status	Global Rank	State Rank	Rare Plant Rank/CDFW SSC or FP
<i>Delphinium recurvatum</i> recurved larkspur	PDRAN0B1J0	None	None	G2?	S2?	1B.2
<i>Desmocerus californicus dimorphus</i> valley elderberry longhorn beetle	IICOL48011	Threatened	None	G3T2T3	S3	
<i>Dipodomys nitratoides nitratoides</i> Tipton kangaroo rat	AMAFD03152	Endangered	Endangered	G3T1T2	S1S2	
<i>Emys marmorata</i> western pond turtle	ARAAD02030	None	None	G3G4	S3	SSC
<i>Eryngium spinosepalum</i> spiny-sepaled button-celery	PDAP10Z0Y0	None	None	G2	S2	1B.2
<i>Eumops perotis californicus</i> western mastiff bat	AMACD02011	None	None	G4G5T4	S3S4	SSC
<i>Euphorbia hooveri</i> Hoover's spurge	PDEUP0D150	Threatened	None	G1	S1	1B.2
<i>Gambelia sila</i> blunt-nosed leopard lizard	ARACF07010	Endangered	Endangered	G1	S1	FP
<i>Great Valley Valley Oak Riparian Forest</i> Great Valley Valley Oak Riparian Forest	CTT61430CA	None	None	G1	S1.1	
<i>Helianthus winteri</i> Winter's sunflower	PDAST4N260	None	None	G2?	S2?	1B.2
<i>Imperata brevifolia</i> California satintail	PMPOA3D020	None	None	G3	S3	2B.1
<i>Lanius ludovicianus</i> loggerhead shrike	ABPBR01030	None	None	G4	S4	SSC
<i>Lasthenia chrysantha</i> alkali-sink goldfields	PDAST5L030	None	None	G2	S2	1B.1
<i>Lasthenia glabrata ssp. coulteri</i> Coulter's goldfields	PDAST5L0A1	None	None	G4T2	S2	1B.1
<i>Lepidurus packardii</i> vernal pool tadpole shrimp	ICBRA10010	Endangered	None	G4	S3S4	
<i>Linderiella occidentalis</i> California linderiella	ICBRA06010	None	None	G2G3	S2S3	
<i>Lithobates pipiens</i> northern leopard frog	AAABH01170	None	None	G5	S2	SSC
<i>Lytta hoppingi</i> Hopping's blister beetle	IICOL4C010	None	None	G1G2	S1S2	
<i>Lytta morrisoni</i> Morrison's blister beetle	IICOL4C040	None	None	G1G2	S1S2	
<i>Northern Claypan Vernal Pool</i> Northern Claypan Vernal Pool	CTT44120CA	None	None	G1	S1.1	
<i>Northern Hardpan Vernal Pool</i> Northern Hardpan Vernal Pool	CTT44110CA	None	None	G3	S3.1	



**Selected Elements by Scientific Name**  
**California Department of Fish and Wildlife**  
**California Natural Diversity Database**



Species	Element Code	Federal Status	State Status	Global Rank	State Rank	Rare Plant Rank/CDFW SSC or FP
<i>Orcuttia inaequalis</i> San Joaquin Valley Orcutt grass	PMPOA4G060	Threatened	Endangered	G1	S1	1B.1
<i>Pseudobahia peirsonii</i> San Joaquin adobe sunburst	PDAST7P030	Threatened	Endangered	G1	S1	1B.1
<i>Puccinellia simplex</i> California alkali grass	PMPOA53110	None	None	G2	S2	1B.2
<i>Sagittaria sanfordii</i> Sanford's arrowhead	PMALI040Q0	None	None	G3	S3	1B.2
<i>Spea hammondi</i> western spadefoot	AAABF02020	None	None	G2G3	S3	SSC
<i>Talanites moodyae</i> Moody's gnaphosid spider	ILARA98020	None	None	G1G2	S1S2	
<i>Taxidea taxus</i> American badger	AMAJF04010	None	None	G5	S3	SSC
<i>Valley Sacaton Grassland</i> Valley Sacaton Grassland	CTT42120CA	None	None	G1	S1.1	
<i>Vulpes macrotis mutica</i> San Joaquin kit fox	AMAJA03041	Endangered	Threatened	G4T2	S2	

Record Count: 48

## Attachment 3 - Visalia & Tulare Quads Species List



### Selected Elements by Scientific Name California Department of Fish and Wildlife California Natural Diversity Database



**Query Criteria:** Quad</span> IS </span>(Visalia (3611933)</span> OR </span>(Tulare (3611923))

Species	Element Code	Federal Status	State Status	Global Rank	State Rank	Rare Plant Rank/CDFW SSC or FP
<i>Andrena macswaini</i> An andrenid bee	IIHYM35130	None	None	G2	S2	
<i>Anniella pulchra</i> Northern California legless lizard	ARACC01020	None	None	G3	S3	SSC
<i>Atriplex depressa</i> brittlescale	PDCHE042L0	None	None	G2	S2	1B.2
<i>Bombus crotchii</i> Crotch bumble bee	IIHYM24480	None	None	G2	S1S2	
<i>Buteo swainsoni</i> Swainson's hawk	ABNKC19070	None	Threatened	G5	S3	
<i>Caulanthus californicus</i> California jewelflower	PDBRA31010	Endangered	Endangered	G1	S1	1B.1
<i>Coccyzus americanus occidentalis</i> western yellow-billed cuckoo	ABNRB02022	Threatened	Endangered	G5T2T3	S1	
<i>Emys marmorata</i> western pond turtle	ARAAD02030	None	None	G3G4	S3	SSC
<i>Eumops perotis californicus</i> western mastiff bat	AMACD02011	None	None	G4G5T4	S3S4	SSC
<i>Imperata brevifolia</i> California satintail	PMPOA3D020	None	None	G3	S3	2B.1
<i>Lasthenia chrysantha</i> alkali-sink goldfields	PDAST5L030	None	None	G2	S2	1B.1
<i>Lytta hoppingi</i> Hopping's blister beetle	IICOL4C010	None	None	G1G2	S1S2	
<i>Pseudobahia peirsonii</i> San Joaquin adobe sunburst	PDAST7P030	Threatened	Endangered	G1	S1	1B.1
<i>Vulpes macrotis mutica</i> San Joaquin kit fox	AMAJA03041	Endangered	Threatened	G4T2	S2	

Record Count: 14

# **ATTACHMENT “C”**

## **Cultural and Tribal Cultural Resources**





**To:** Hector Guerra  
Tulare County Resource Management Agency  
5961 S. Mooney Blvd.  
Visalia, CA 93277

**Record Search 22-319**

**Date:** August 29, 2022

**Re:** Akers Business Park (GPA 22-003)

**County:** Tulare

**Map(s):** Visalia 7.5'

### **CULTURAL RESOURCES RECORDS SEARCH**

The California Office of Historic Preservation (OHP) contracts with the California Historical Resources Information System's (CHRIS) regional Information Centers (ICs) to maintain information in the CHRIS inventory and make it available to local, state, and federal agencies, cultural resource professionals, Native American tribes, researchers, and the public. Recommendations made by IC coordinators or their staff regarding the interpretation and application of this information are advisory only. Such recommendations do not necessarily represent the evaluation or opinion of the State Historic Preservation Officer in carrying out the OHP's regulatory authority under federal and state law.

The following are the results of a search of the cultural resource files at the Southern San Joaquin Valley Information Center. These files include known and recorded cultural resources sites, inventory and excavation reports filed with this office, and resources listed on the National Register of Historic Places, the OHP Built Environment Resources Directory, California State Historical Landmarks, California Register of Historical Resources, California Inventory of Historic Resources, and California Points of Historical Interest. Due to processing delays and other factors, not all of the historical resource reports and resource records that have been submitted to the OHP are available via this records search. Additional information may be available through the federal, state, and local agencies that produced or paid for historical resource management work in the search area.

### **PRIOR CULTURAL RESOURCE STUDIES CONDUCTED WITHIN THE PROJECT AREA AND THE ONE-HALF MILE RADIUS**

According to the information in our files, there has been two previous cultural resource studies conducted within the project area: TU-00130, & 01677. There have been five cultural resource studies conducted within the one-half mile radius: TU-00102, 01008, 01310, 01311, 01324. It should be noted that the two studies conducted with the project area only intersect the APE on a small sliver of the southern portion, leaving %98 of the project area unstudied.

**KNOWN/RECORDED CULTURAL RESOURCES WITHIN THE PROJECT AREA AND THE ONE-HALF MILE RADIUS**

According to the information in our files, there are no recorded resources within the project area, and it is unknown if any exist there. There are three known resources within the one-half mile radius: P-54-002181, 004626, 004894. These resources consist of historic era irrigation ditches, and the Southern Pacific Railroad.

There are no recorded cultural resources within the project area or radius that are listed in the National Register of Historic Places, the California Register of Historical Resources, the California Points of Historical Interest, California Inventory of Historic Resources, for the California State Historic Landmarks.

**COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

We understand the project will include the development of a commercial business park on approximately 65.45 acres. We also understand the proposed project will include a General Plan Amendment ("GPA") to change the Land Use Designation from "Valley Agriculture" to "Mixed Use,". According to aerial maps, the current land use is agriculture. Please note that agriculture does not constitute previous development, as it does not destroy cultural resources, but merely moves them around within the plow zone. Because only a small portion of this project area has been previously studied for cultural resources, it is unknown if any are present. As such, prior to ground disturbance activities, we recommend a qualified, professional consultant conduct a field survey to determine if cultural resources are present. A list of qualified consultants can be found at [www.chrisinfo.org](http://www.chrisinfo.org).

We also recommend that you contact the Native American Heritage Commission in Sacramento. They will provide you with a current list of Native American individuals/organizations that can assist you with information regarding cultural resources that may not be included in the CHRIS Inventory and that may be of concern to the Native groups in the area. The Commission can consult their "Sacred Lands Inventory" file to determine what sacred resources, if any, exist within this project area and the way in which these resources might be managed. Finally, please consult with the lead agency on this project to determine if any other cultural resource investigation is required. If you need any additional information or have any questions or concerns, please contact our office at (661) 654-2289.

By:



Jeremy E David, Assistant Coordinator

**Date:** August 29, 2022

Please note that invoices for Information Center services will be sent under separate cover from the California State University, Bakersfield Accounting Office.



**TRIBAL CONSULTATION NOTICE AND TRACKING TABLE  
AKERS BUSINESS PARK (GPA 22-003)**

TRIBE CONTACTED	REQUEST TYPE			ITEMS & DOCUMENTS SUBMITTED					DELIVERY METHOD			CONSULTATION PERIOD		CONSULTATION / ACTIONS
	AB 52	SB 18	Sec 106	Project Notification	Maps	SLF Search Results	CHRIS Results	Other	E-mail	FedEx	Certified US Mail	Return Receipt	Period Ends	Summary
<b>SACRED LAND FILE (SLF) REQUEST</b>														
Native American Heritage Commission NAHC@nahc.ca.gov					X				8/9/22					
<b>CONSULTATION REQUEST LETTERS</b>														
Big Sandy Rancheria of Western Mono Indians Elizabeth D. Kipp, Chairperson PO. Box 337 Auberry, CA 93602 <a href="mailto:lkipp@bsrnation.com">lkipp@bsrnation.com</a>	X	X		X	X		X		8/9/22		9/26/22 7020 2450 0000 3027 7685	9/29/22	12/28/22	8/9/22, consultant emailed the tribe with return receipt; receipt returned.
Dunlap Band of Mono Indians Benjamin Charley Jr., Tribal Chair P.O. Box 14 Dunlap, CA 93621 <a href="mailto:ben.charley@yahoo.com">ben.charley@yahoo.com</a>	X	X		X	X		X		8/9/22		9/26/22 7020 2450 0000 3027 7760	10/11/22	1/9/23	8/9/22, consultant emailed the tribe with return receipt; receipt returned.
Dunlap Band of Mono Indians Dirk Charley, Tribal Secretary 5509 E. McKenzie Avenue Fresno, CA 93727 <a href="mailto:dcharley2016@gmail.com">dcharley2016@gmail.com</a>	X	X		X	X		X		8/9/22					8/9/22, consultant emailed the tribe with return receipt; receipt returned.
Kern Valley Indian Tribe Robert Robinson, Co-Chairperson P.O. Box 1010 Lake Isabella, CA 93240 <a href="mailto:bbutterbredt@gmail.com">bbutterbredt@gmail.com</a>	X	X		X	X		X		8/9/22		9/26/22 7020 2450 0000 3027 7609	10/5/22	1/3/23	8/9/22, consultant emailed the tribe with return receipt; receipt returned.
Kern Valley Indian Community Julie Turner, Secretary P. Box 1010 Lake Isabella, CA 93240 <a href="mailto:meindiagirl@sbcglobal.net">meindiagirl@sbcglobal.net</a>	X	X		X	X		X		8/9/22		9/26/22 7020 2450 0000 3027 7616	10/5/22	1/3/23	8/9/22, consultant emailed the tribe with return receipt; receipt returned.
Kern Valley Indian Community Brandi Kendricks 30741 Foxridge Court Tehachapi, CA 93561 <a href="mailto:krazykendricks@hotmail.com">krazykendricks@hotmail.com</a>	X	X		X	X		X		8/9/22					8/9/22, consultant emailed the tribe with return receipt; receipt returned.

**TRIBAL CONSULTATION NOTICE AND TRACKING TABLE  
AKERS BUSINESS PARK (GPA 22-003)**

TRIBE CONTACTED	REQUEST TYPE			ITEMS & DOCUMENTS SUBMITTED					DELIVERY METHOD			CONSULTATION PERIOD		CONSULTATION / ACTIONS
	AB 52	SB 18	Sec 106	Project Notification	Maps	SLF Search Results	CHRIS Results	Other	E-mail	FedEx	Certified US Mail	Return Receipt	Period Ends	Summary
North Fork Mono Tribe Ron Goode, Chairperson 13396 Tollhouse Road Clovis, CA 93619 <a href="mailto:rwgoode911@hotmail.com">rwgoode911@hotmail.com</a>	X	X		X	X		X		8/9/22		9/26/22 7020 2450 0000 3027 7777	10/5/22	1/3/23	8/9/22, consultant emailed the tribe with return receipt; receipt returned.
Santa Rosa Rancheria Tachi Yokut Tribe Leo Sisco, Chairperson 16835 Alkali Drive Lemoore, CA 93245 <a href="mailto:LSisco@tachi-yokut-nsn.gov">LSisco@tachi-yokut-nsn.gov</a>	X	X		X	X		X		8/9/22		9/26/22 7020 2450 0000 3027 7623	9/28/22	12/27/22	8/9/22, consultant emailed the tribe with return receipt; receipt returned.
Santa Rosa Rancheria Cultural Department Shana Powers, Director 16835 Alkali Drive Lemoore, CA 93245 <a href="mailto:SPowers@tachi-yokut-nsn.gov">SPowers@tachi-yokut-nsn.gov</a>	X	X		X	X		X		8/9/22		9/26/22 7020 2450 0000 3027 7630	9/28/22	12/27/22	8/9/22, consultant emailed the tribe with return receipt; receipt returned.
Santa Rosa Rancheria Cultural Department Staff  Samantha McCarty <a href="mailto:SMcCarty@tachi-yokut-nsn.gov">SMcCarty@tachi-yokut-nsn.gov</a>  Paige Berggren <a href="mailto:PBerggren@tachi-yokut-nsn.gov">PBerggren@tachi-yokut-nsn.gov</a>	X	X		X	X		X		8/9/22					8/9/22, consultant emailed the tribe with return receipt; receipt returned.
Tubatulabals of Kern Valley Robert L. Gomez, Jr., Chairperson P.O. Box 833 Weldon, CA 93283-0833 <a href="mailto:rgomez@tubatulabal.org">rgomez@tubatulabal.org</a>	X	X		X	X		X		8/9/22		9/26/22 7020 2450 0000 3027 7647	10/6/22	1/4/23	8/9/22, consultant emailed the tribe with return receipt; receipt returned.
Tule River Indian Tribe Neil Peyron, Chairperson P. O. Box 589 Porterville, CA 93258 <a href="mailto:neil.peyron@tulerivertribe-nsn.gov">neil.peyron@tulerivertribe-nsn.gov</a>	X	X		X	X		X		8/9/22		9/26/22 7020 2450 0000 3027 7654	9/28/22	12/27/22	8/9/22, consultant emailed the tribe with return receipt; receipt returned.
Tule River Indian Tribe Dept. of Environmental Protection Kerri Vera, Director P. O. Box 589 Porterville, CA 93258 <a href="mailto:tuleriverenv@yahoo.com">tuleriverenv@yahoo.com</a>	X	X		X	X		X		8/9/22		9/26/22 7020 2450 0000 3027 7661	9/28/22	12/27/22	8/9/22, consultant emailed the tribe with return receipt; receipt returned.

**TRIBAL CONSULTATION NOTICE AND TRACKING TABLE  
AKERS BUSINESS PARK (GPA 22-003)**

TRIBE CONTACTED	REQUEST TYPE			ITEMS & DOCUMENTS SUBMITTED					DELIVERY METHOD			CONSULTATION PERIOD		CONSULTATION / ACTIONS
	AB 52	SB 18	Sec 106	Project Notification	Maps	SLF Search Results	CHRIS Results	Other	E-mail	FedEx	Certified US Mail	Return Receipt	Period Ends	Summary
Tule River Indian Tribe Felix Christman, Council Member P. O. Box 589 Porterville, CA 93258 <a href="mailto:tuleriverarchmon1@gmail.com">tuleriverarchmon1@gmail.com</a> <a href="mailto:felix.christman@tulerivertribe-nsn.gov">felix.christman@tulerivertribe-nsn.gov</a>	X	X		X	X		X		8/9/22					8/9/22, consultant emailed the tribe with return receipt; receipt returned.
Wuksache Indian Tribe/ Eshom Valley Band Kenneth Woodrow, Chairperson 1179 Rock Haven Ct. Salinas, CA 93906 <a href="mailto:kwood8934@aol.com">kwood8934@aol.com</a>	X	X		X	X		X		8/9/22		9/26/22 7020 2450 0000 3027 7678	9/28/22	12/27/22	8/9/22, consultant emailed the tribe with return receipt; receipt returned.

## NATIVE AMERICAN HERITAGE COMMISSION

February 13, 2023

Jessica Willis  
Tulare County Resource Management Agency

**Via Email to:** [jwillis@tularecounty.ca.gov](mailto:jwillis@tularecounty.ca.gov)

**Re: Native American Tribal Consultation, Pursuant to the Assembly Bill 52 (AB 52), Amendments to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) (Chapter 532, Statutes of 2014), Public Resources Code Sections 5097.94 (m), 21073, 21074, 21080.3.1, 21080.3.2, 21082.3, 21083.09, 21084.2 and 21084.3, Akers Business Park (GPA 22-003, PZC 22-010, PPM 23-007) Project, Tulare County**

Dear Ms. Willis:

Pursuant to Public Resources Code section 21080.3.1 (c), attached is a consultation list of tribes that are traditionally and culturally affiliated with the geographic area of the above-listed project. Please note that the intent of the AB 52 amendments to CEQA is to avoid and/or mitigate impacts to tribal cultural resources, (Pub. Resources Code §21084.3 (a)) ("Public agencies shall, when feasible, avoid damaging effects to any tribal cultural resource.")

Public Resources Code sections 21080.3.1 and 21084.3(c) require CEQA lead agencies to consult with California Native American tribes that have requested notice from such agencies of proposed projects in the geographic area that are traditionally and culturally affiliated with the tribes on projects for which a Notice of Preparation or Notice of Negative Declaration or Mitigated Negative Declaration has been filed on or after July 1, 2015. Specifically, Public Resources Code section 21080.3.1 (d) provides:

*Within 14 days of determining that an application for a project is complete or a decision by a public agency to undertake a project, the lead agency shall provide formal notification to the designated contact of, or a tribal representative of, traditionally and culturally affiliated California Native American tribes that have requested notice, which shall be accomplished by means of at least one written notification that includes a brief description of the proposed project and its location, the lead agency contact information, and a notification that the California Native American tribe has 30 days to request consultation pursuant to this section.*

The AB 52 amendments to CEQA law does not preclude initiating consultation with the tribes that are culturally and traditionally affiliated within your jurisdiction prior to receiving requests for notification of projects in the tribe's areas of traditional and cultural affiliation. The Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) recommends, but does not require, early consultation as a best practice to ensure that lead agencies receive sufficient information about cultural resources in a project area to avoid damaging effects to tribal cultural resources.

The NAHC also recommends, but does not require that agencies should also include with their notification letters, information regarding any cultural resources assessment that has been completed on the area of potential effect (APE), such as:

1. The results of any record search that may have been conducted at an Information Center of the California Historical Resources Information System (CHRIS), including, but not limited to:



CHAIRPERSON  
**Laura Miranda**  
Luiseño

VICE CHAIRPERSON  
**Reginald Pagaling**  
Chumash

SECRETARY  
**Sara Dutschke**  
Miwok

COMMISSIONER  
**Isaac Bojorquez**  
Ohlone-Costanoan

COMMISSIONER  
**Buffy McQuillen**  
Yokayo Pomo, Yuki,  
Nomlaki

COMMISSIONER  
**Wayne Nelson**  
Luiseño

COMMISSIONER  
**Stanley Rodriguez**  
Kumeyaay

COMMISSIONER  
**[Vacant]**

COMMISSIONER  
**[Vacant]**

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY  
**Raymond C. Hitchcock**  
Miwok/Nisenan

**NAHC HEADQUARTERS**  
1550 Harbor Boulevard  
Suite 100  
West Sacramento,  
California 95691  
(916) 373-3710  
[nahc@nahc.ca.gov](mailto:nahc@nahc.ca.gov)  
[NAHC.ca.gov](http://NAHC.ca.gov)

- A listing of any and all known cultural resources that have already been recorded on or adjacent to the APE, such as known archaeological sites;
- Copies of any and all cultural resource records and study reports that may have been provided by the Information Center as part of the records search response;
- Whether the records search indicates a low, moderate, or high probability that unrecorded cultural resources are located in the APE; and
- If a survey is recommended by the Information Center to determine whether previously unrecorded cultural resources are present.

2. The results of any archaeological inventory survey that was conducted, including:

- Any report that may contain site forms, site significance, and suggested mitigation measures.

All information regarding site locations, Native American human remains, and associated funerary objects should be in a separate confidential addendum, and not be made available for public disclosure in accordance with Government Code section 6254.10.

3. The result of any Sacred Lands File (SLF) check conducted through the Native American Heritage Commission was negative.

4. Any ethnographic studies conducted for any area including all or part of the APE; and

5. Any geotechnical reports regarding all or part of the APE.

Lead agencies should be aware that records maintained by the NAHC and CHRIS are not exhaustive and a negative response to these searches does not preclude the existence of a tribal cultural resource. A tribe may be the only source of information regarding the existence of a tribal cultural resource.

This information will aid tribes in determining whether to request formal consultation. In the event that they do, having the information beforehand will help to facilitate the consultation process.

If you receive notification of change of addresses and phone numbers from tribes, please notify the NAHC. With your assistance, we can assure that our consultation list remains current.

If you have any questions, please contact me at my email address: [Cameron.vela@nahc.ca.gov](mailto:Cameron.vela@nahc.ca.gov).

Sincerely,

*Cameron Vela*

Cameron Vela  
Cultural Resources Analyst

Attachment

**Native American Heritage Commission  
Tribal Consultation List  
Tulare County  
2/13/2023**

***Big Sandy Rancheria of  
Western Mono Indians***

Elizabeth Kipp, Chairperson  
P.O. Box 337  
Auberry, CA, 93602  
Phone: (559) 374 - 0066  
Fax: (559) 374-0055  
lkipp@bsrnation.com

Western Mono

***Santa Rosa Rancheria Tachi  
Yokut Tribe***

Leo Sisco, Chairperson  
P.O. Box 8  
Lemoore, CA, 93245  
Phone: (559) 924 - 1278  
Fax: (559) 924-3583

Southern Valley  
Yokut

***Tule River Indian Tribe***

Neil Peyron, Chairperson  
P.O. Box 589  
Porterville, CA, 93258  
Phone: (559) 781 - 4271  
Fax: (559) 781-4610  
neil.peyron@tulerivertribe-nsn.gov

Yokut

***Wuksache Indian Tribe/Eshom  
Valley Band***

Kenneth Woodrow, Chairperson  
1179 Rock Haven Ct.  
Salinas, CA, 93906  
Phone: (831) 443 - 9702  
kwood8934@aol.com

Foothill Yokut  
Mono

This list is current only as of the date of this document and is based on the information available to the Commission on the date it was produced. Distribution of this list does not relieve any person of statutory responsibility as defined in Section 7050.5 of the Health and Safety Code, Section 5097.94 of the Public Resources Code and Section 5097.98 of the Public Resources Code.

This list is applicable only for consultation with Native American tribes under Government Code Sections 65352.3, 65352.4 et seq. and Public Resources Code Sections 21080.3.1 for the proposed Akers Business Park (GPA 22-003, PZC 22-010, PPM 23-007) Project, Tulare County.



# RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AGENCY

5961 SOUTH MOONEY BLVD  
VISALIA, CA 93277  
PHONE (559) 624-7000  
FAX (559) 615-3002

Aaron R. Bock Economic Development and Planning  
Reed Schenke Public Works  
Sherman Dix Fiscal Services

REED SCHENKE, DIRECTOR

MICHAEL WASHAM, ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR

## PROJECT NOTIFICATION AND TRIBAL CONSULTATION REQUEST

**Project Title:** Akers Business Park (GPA 22-003)

**Project Location:** Located at the Southwest Corner of Road 100/Oaks Street and Oakdale Avenue, east of State Route 99 in Tulare, CA

USGS 7.5 Minute Quadrangle(s): Visalia and Tulare

APN(s): 149-090-006

PLSS: Section 27, Township 19 South, Range 24 East, MDB&M.

**Land Use Designation / Zoning:** AE-20 (Exclusive Agricultural, 20 acre Minimum)

### Project Description:

The proposed Project (Akers Business Park) will include the development of a commercial business park on approximately 65.45 acres located at the southwest corner of Road 100 and Oakdale Avenue, east of State Highway 99, APN 149-090-006. The proposed project will include a General Plan Amendment ("GPA") to change the Land Use Designation from "Valley Agriculture" to "Mixed Use," a Zone Change ("PZC") to change the Zone from AE-20 (Exclusive Agricultural – 20 Acre Minimum) to C-3-MU (Service Commercial with a Mixed-Use Overlay Zone) to facilitate a Tentative Subdivision Map ("TSM") to subdivide a 65.45-acre parcel and develop the proposed Akers Business Park as a mixed use commercial project that includes the expansion of the existing Magic Touch Recreational Vehicle Sales facility at the south end of the proposed Project (3567 N. Oaks St. Tulare, CA 93274), contractor offices, boat sales, and other related uses allowed in the C-3-MU Zone.

The proposed Project site is within the Visalia and Tulare USGS Quadrangles. It is located in Section 27, Township 19 and Range 24, Mount Diablo Base and Meridian. An aerial map and USGS map are attached.

**Request for Consultation:** Pursuant to the provisions of AB 52 and SB 18, as the lead agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the County of Tulare hereby extends an invitation to consult on the CEQA review of the Chase Morgan Project in order to assist with identifying and/or preserving and/or mitigating project impacts to Native American cultural places and tribal cultural resources.

If your Tribe desires to consult with the County on the review of this proposed Project, please respond in writing within ninety (90) days regarding SB 18 requirements, and thirty (30) days

regarding AB 52 requirements, of receipt of this notification. Written correspondence can be mailed to the following addresses:

U.S. Post: Tulare County Resource Management Agency  
Environmental Planning Division  
Attn: Jessica Willis / Hector Guerra  
5961 S. Mooney Blvd.  
Visalia, CA 93277-9394

E-mail: [JWillis@co.tulare.ca.us](mailto:JWillis@co.tulare.ca.us) and [HGuerra@co.tulare.ca.us](mailto:HGuerra@co.tulare.ca.us)

If you need further assistance or have any questions, please feel free to contact Jessica Willis by phone at (559) 624-7122, or Hector Guerra at (559) 624-7121.

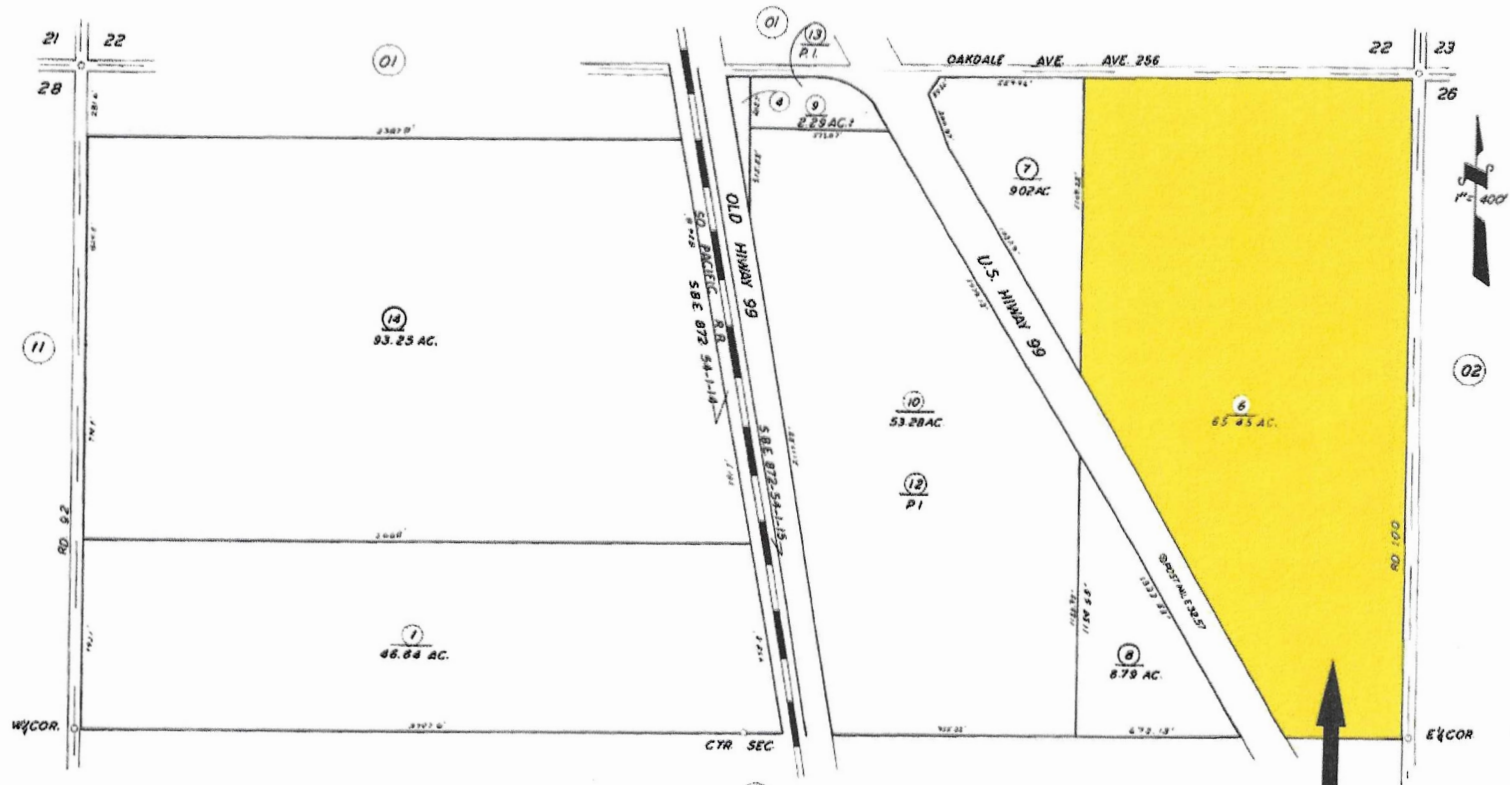
**If the County does not receive a response to this notification, it will be presumed that your Tribe has declined the opportunity to consult on this proposed Project pursuant to AB 52 and SB-18.**





POR. N½ SEC. 27, T.19S., R.24E., M.D.B.&M.

TAX CODE AREA **149-09**  
115-001



**PRC 22-014**

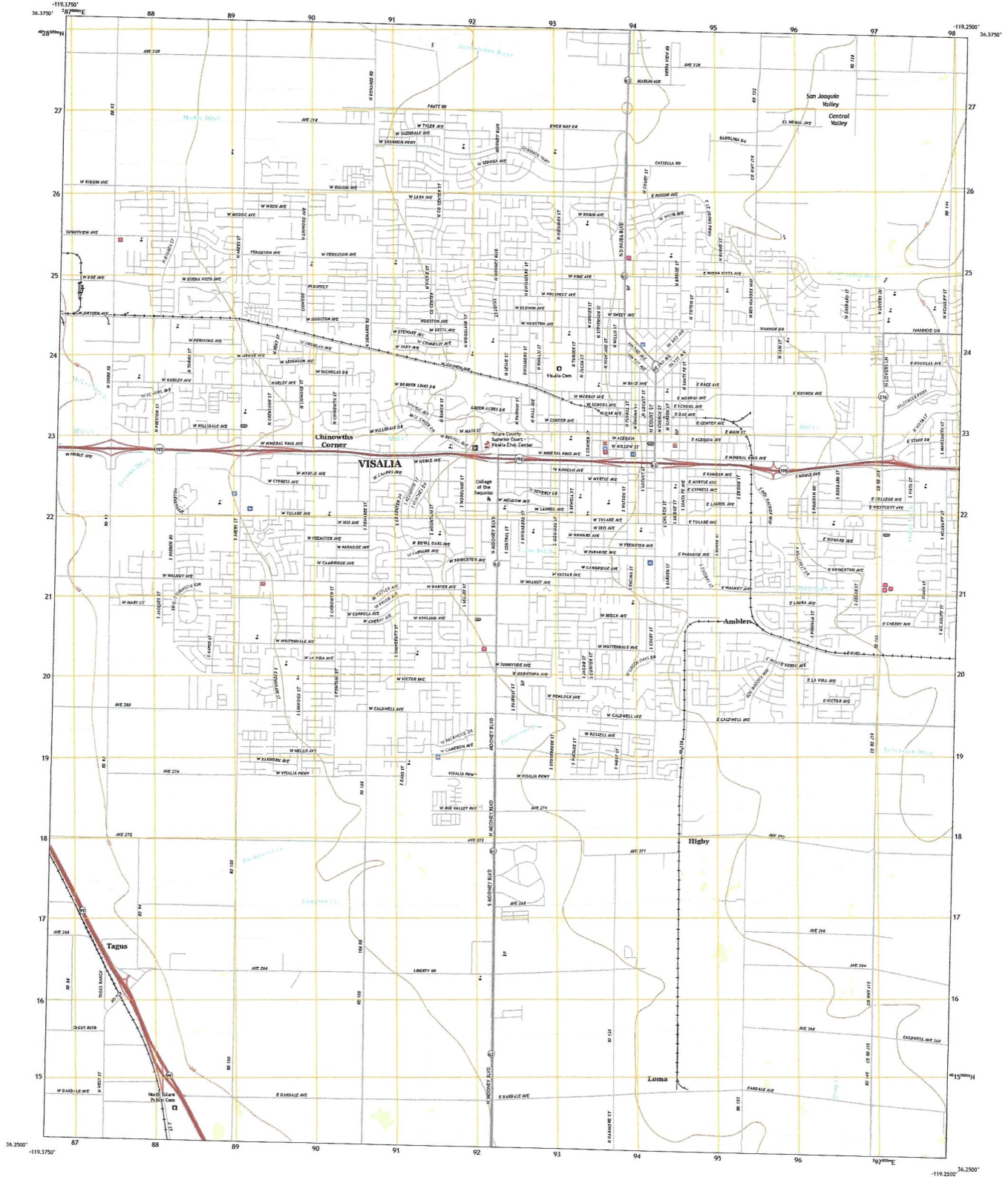
ASSESSOR'S MAPS BK. 149, PG. 09.

COUNTY OF TULARE, CALIF.

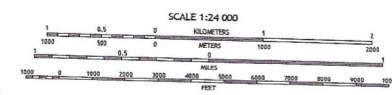
NOTE — ASSESSOR'S BLOCK NUMBERS SHOWN IN ELLIPSES  
ASSESSOR'S PARCEL NUMBERS SHOWN IN CIRCLES

4-8-63 CS





Produced by the United States Geological Survey  
North American Datum of 1983 (NAD83)  
World Geodetic System of 1984 (WGS84), projection used  
1 000-meter grid/Universal Transverse Mercator, Zone 11S  
This map is not a legal document. Boundaries may be  
generalized for this map scale. Private lands within government  
reservations may not be shown. Obtain permission before  
entering private lands.



AR RAINING QUADRANGLES

1	2	3
4	5	6
7	8	9

1 Tower  
2 Beacon  
3 Benchmark  
4 Contour  
5 Elevation  
6 Ridge  
7 Tidal  
8 Contour Corner

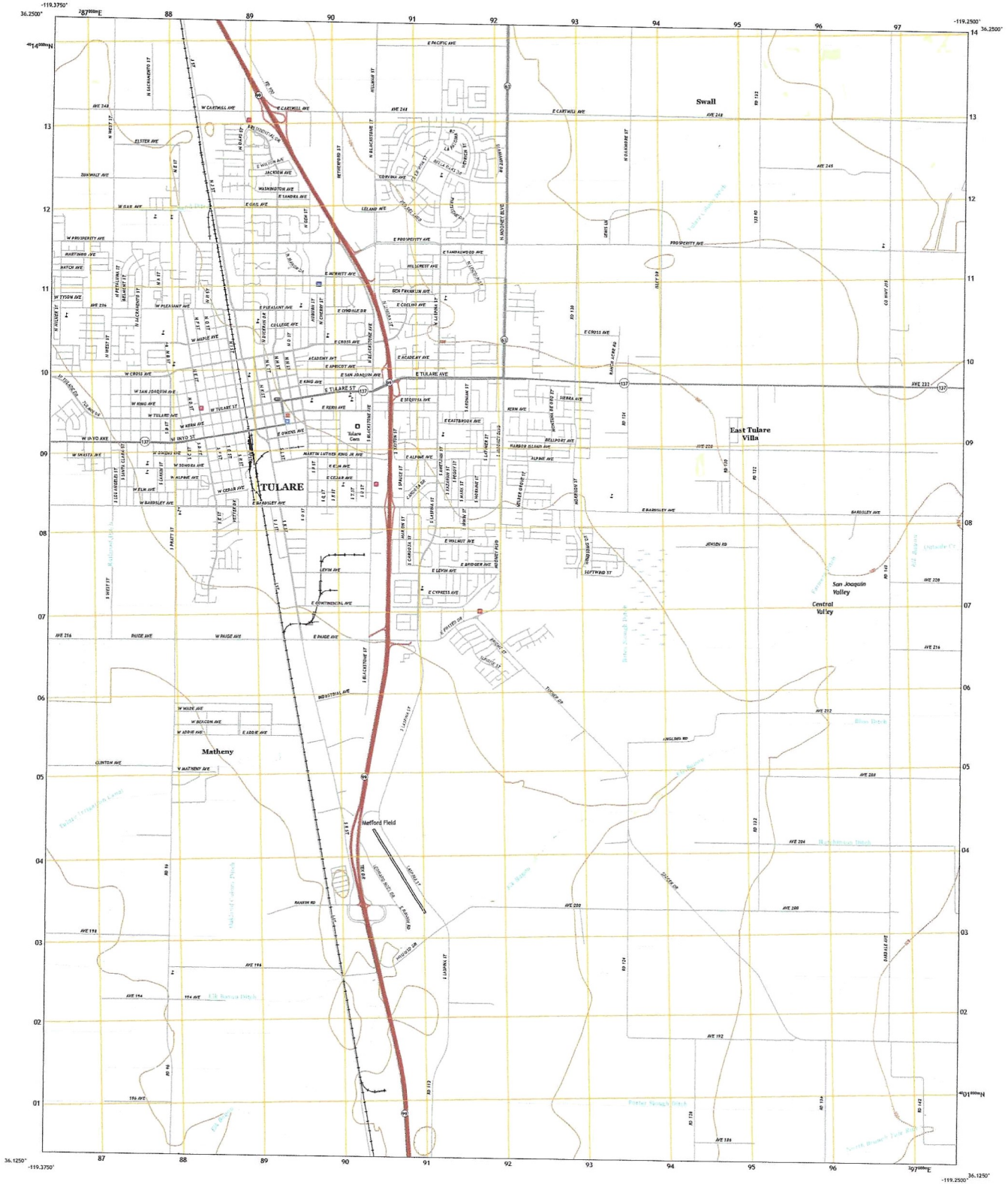




U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

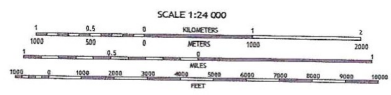
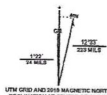


TULARE QUADRANGLE  
CALIFORNIA - TULARE COUNTY  
7.5-MINUTE SERIES



Produced by the United States Geological Survey  
North American Datum of 1983 (NAD83)  
World Geodetic System of 1984 (WGS84) Projection and  
1:100,000 scale grid/contour/feature data from 1983  
This map is not a legal document. Boundaries may be  
generalized for this map scale. Private lands within government  
reservations may not be shown. Obtain permission before  
entering private lands.

Inventory: NAD83 July 2022 - July 2020  
Base: 1:50,000  
Horizontal: National Hydrographic Catalog, 1981-2011  
Vertical: National Hydrographic Catalog, 2006-2020  
Contour: National Elevation Dataset, 2008  
Boundaries: Multiple sources; see metadata file 2010-2020  
Public Land Survey System: BLM, 2020  
Wetlands: National Wetlands Inventory, 1984



1	2	3	1 Contour
4	5	6	2 Visible
7	8	9	3 Contour
10	11	12	4 Ridge
13	14	15	5 Contour Center
16	17	18	6 Trough
19	20	21	7 Trough
22	23	24	8 Wetlands

TULARE, CA  
2021

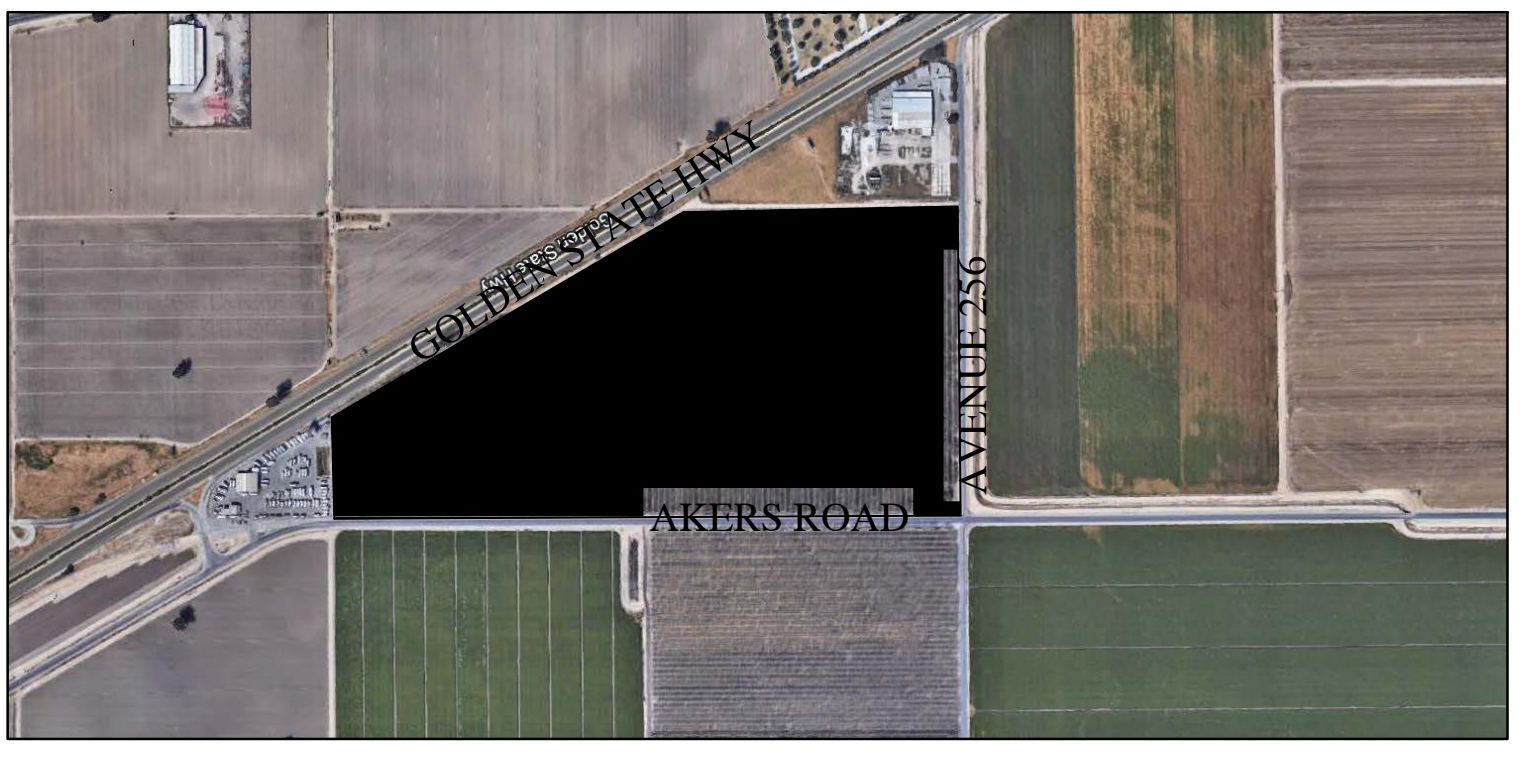




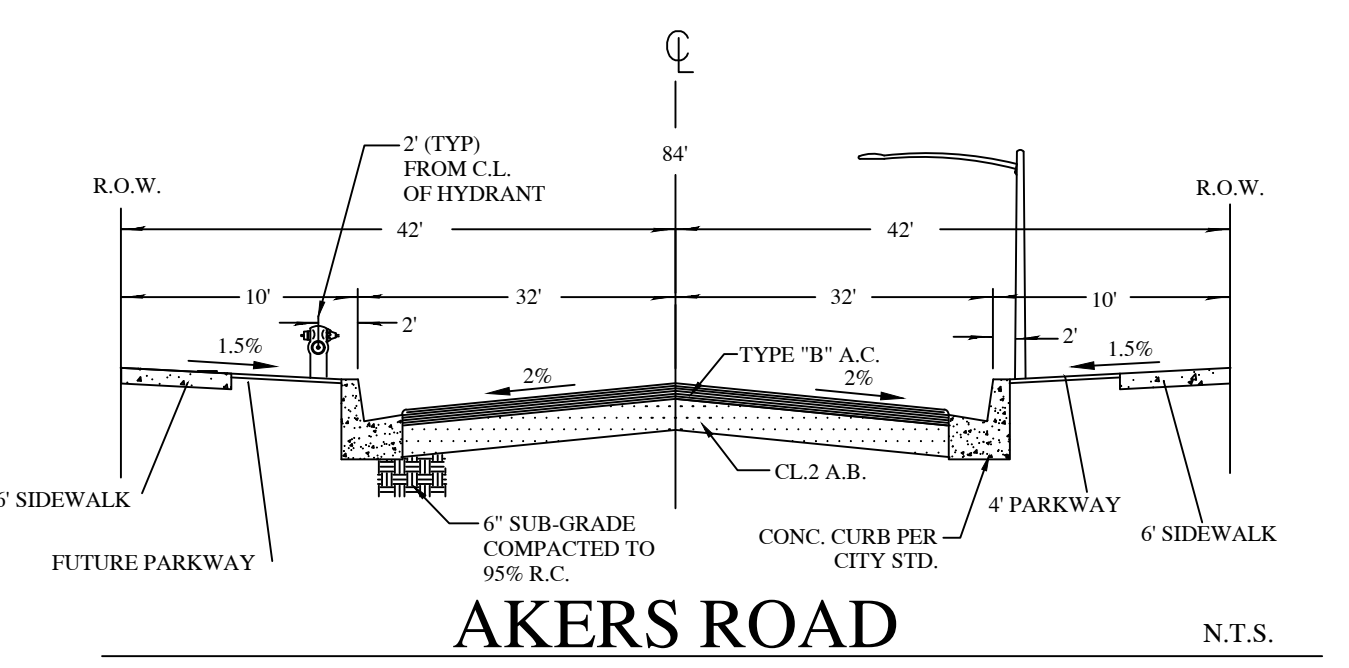
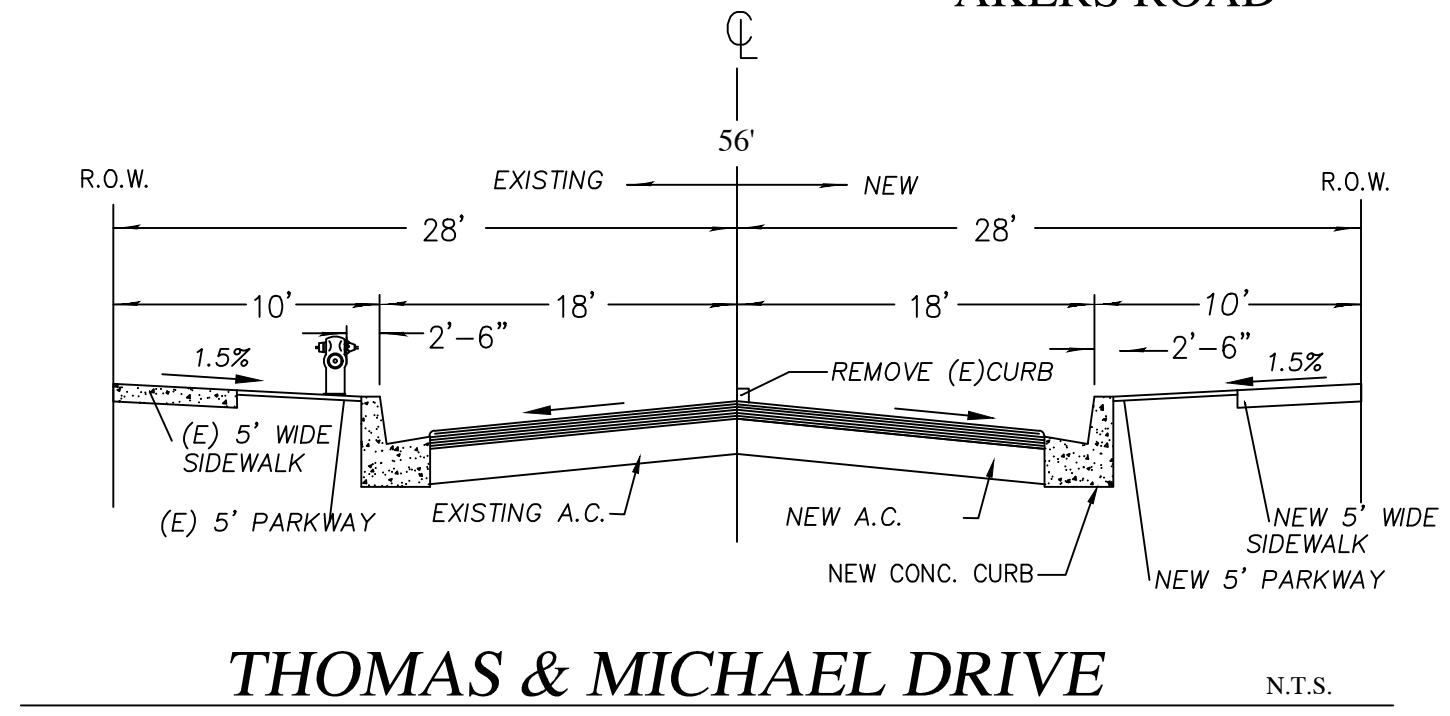
**PROJECT INFO**  
 APN: 149-090-006  
 SOUTH WEST CORNER OF AKERS ROAD AND AVENUE 256

**LEGAL DESCRIPTION**  
 DEVELOPER NFDI, LLC  
 BARRETT NUNLEY 559-799-6990  
 BLAZE NUNLEY 559-799-6955  
 1878 N MOONEY BLVD SUITE J  
 TULARE CA 93274

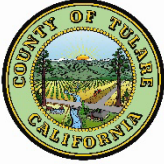
**SITE DATA OVERALL**  
 LOT AREA +65.5 ACRES (+2,874,713 SQ FT)



**PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT FOR  
 AKERS BUSINESS PARK**







# RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AGENCY

5961 SOUTH MOONEY BLVD  
VISALIA, CA 93277  
PHONE (559) 624-7000  
FAX (559) 615-3002

Aaron R. Bock Economic Development and Planning  
Reed Schenke Public Works  
Sherman Dix Fiscal Services

REED SCHENKE, DIRECTOR

MICHAEL WASHAM, ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR

September 26, 2022

Dunlap Band of Mono Indians  
Benjamin Charley Jr., Chairperson  
PO. Box 14  
Dunlap, CA 93621

RE: Project Notification and Consultation Request Pursuant to Assembly Bill (AB) 52 and Senate Bill (SB) 18 for the Akers Business Park (GPA 22-003)

Dear Chairperson Charley,

Pursuant to the provisions of AB 52 and SB 18, as the lead agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the County of Tulare hereby extends an invitation to consult on the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) review of the Akers Business Park (GPA 22-003) in order to assist with identifying and/or preserving and/or mitigating project impacts to Native American cultural places including:

- Native American sanctified cemetery, place of worship, religious or ceremonial site, or sacred shrine; and
- Native American historic, cultural, or sacred site that is listed or may be eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources including historic or prehistoric ruins and any burial ground, archaeological, or historic site.

In accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) (Pub. Resources Code, § 21000 et seq.), the County of Tulare Resource Management Agency (RMA) will be preparing a Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) to evaluate the environmental effects associated with the Project.

## **Sacred Lands File Search**

The County requested a Sacred Lands File (SLF) search through the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) on August 9, 2022, for the proposed Project. The SLF search results will be made available upon the release of the MND for public review. However, the results may be made available to your Tribal Representatives if a written request for consultation is submitted to the County within thirty (30) days of receipt of this letter.

## **California Historical Resources Information System**

A California Historical Resources Information System (CHRIS) search for the project area was requested through the Southern San Joaquin Valley Information Center (SSJVIC) on August 12, 2022.

The CHRIS search dated August 29, 2022, indicated that there are three (3) recorded resources within the project area (site) or ½ mile radius. These resources consist of historic era irrigation ditches and the Southern Pacific Railroad. The CHRIS search also indicated that there are no recorded cultural resources within the project area; however, the SSJVIC recommended that a field survey be conducted to determine if cultural resources are present on the project site. As such, the County is providing an opportunity for consultation with your Tribe to determine whether a Tribal Cultural Resources study will be required. The results of the CHRIS search would be made available to your Tribal Representatives if a written request for consultation is received. If the County does not receive a response to this request within thirty (30) days of receipt of this letter for CEQA purposes pursuant to AB 52, it will be presumed that there are no Tribal Cultural resources of concern and a Cultural Resources study will not be required.

If your Tribe desires to consult with the County on the review of this project, please respond in writing within ninety (90) days of receipt of this letter regarding SB 18 requirements, and thirty (30) days regarding AB 52 requirements. Written correspondence can be mailed to the address provided above or e-mailed to the addresses provided below.

**If the County does not receive a response to this notification, it will be presumed that your Tribe has declined the opportunity to consult on this project pursuant to AB 52 and SB 18.**

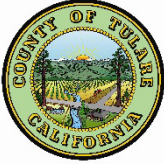
Thank you for your consideration on this matter and please do not hesitate to contact me by phone or e-mail should you have any questions or need additional information. If you need immediate assistance and I am unavailable, please contact, Jessica Willis, Planner IV, by phone at (559) 624-7122, or by email at [jwillis@tularecounty.ca.gov](mailto:jwillis@tularecounty.ca.gov).

Sincerely,



Hector Guerra  
Chief Environmental Planner  
(559) 624-7121  
[hguerra@tularecounty.ca.gov](mailto:hguerra@tularecounty.ca.gov)

*Attachment(s): AB 52 Project Notification and Tribal Consultation Request  
Project Site Map and Vicinity Map  
Visalia and Tulare Topography Map*



# RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AGENCY

5961 SOUTH MOONEY BLVD  
VISALIA, CA 93277  
PHONE (559) 624-7000  
FAX (559) 615-3002

Aaron R. Bock Economic Development and Planning  
Reed Schenke Public Works  
Sherman Dix Fiscal Services

REED SCHENKE, DIRECTOR

MICHAEL WASHAM, ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR

September 26, 2022

Big Sandy Rancheria of Western Mono Indians  
Elizabeth D. Kipp, Chairperson  
PO. Box 337  
Auberry, CA 93602

RE: Project Notification and Consultation Request Pursuant to Assembly Bill (AB) 52 and Senate Bill (SB) 18 for the Akers Business Park (GPA 22-003)

Dear Chairperson Kipp,

Pursuant to the provisions of AB 52 and SB 18, as the lead agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the County of Tulare hereby extends an invitation to consult on the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) review of the Akers Business Park (GPA 22-003) in order to assist with identifying and/or preserving and/or mitigating project impacts to Native American cultural places including:

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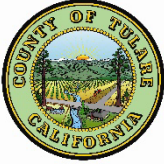
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Sincerely,



Hector Guerra  
Chief Environmental Planner  
(559) 624-7121  
[hguerra@tularecounty.ca.gov](mailto:hguerra@tularecounty.ca.gov)

*Attachment(s): AB 52 Project Notification and Tribal Consultation Request  
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Visalia and Tulare Topography Map*



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Aaron R. Bock Economic Development and Planning  
Reed Schenke Public Works  
Sherman Dix Fiscal Services

REED SCHENKE, DIRECTOR

MICHAEL WASHAM, ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR

September 26, 2022

Kern Valley Indian Community  
Julie Turner, Secretary  
P.O. Box 1010  
Lake Isabella, CA 93240

RE: Project Notification and Consultation Request Pursuant to Assembly Bill (AB) 52 and Senate Bill (SB) 18 for the Akers Business Park (GPA 22-003)

Dear Ms. Turner,

Pursuant to the provisions of AB 52 and SB 18, as the lead agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the County of Tulare hereby extends an invitation to consult on the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) review of the Akers Business Park (GPA 22-003) in order to assist with identifying and/or preserving and/or mitigating project impacts to Native American cultural places including:

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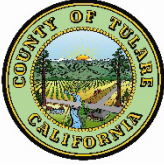
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Sincerely,



Hector Guerra  
Chief Environmental Planner  
(559) 624-7121  
[hguerra@tularecounty.ca.gov](mailto:hguerra@tularecounty.ca.gov)

*Attachment(s): AB 52 Project Notification and Tribal Consultation Request  
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Visalia and Tulare Topography Map*



# RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AGENCY

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VISALIA, CA 93277  
PHONE (559) 624-7000  
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Aaron R. Bock Economic Development and Planning  
Reed Schenke Public Works  
Sherman Dix Fiscal Services

REED SCHENKE, DIRECTOR

MICHAEL WASHAM, ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR

September 26, 2022

Kern Valley Indian Community  
Robert Robinson, Chairperson  
P.O. Box 1010  
Lake Isabella, CA 93240

RE: Project Notification and Consultation Request Pursuant to Assembly Bill (AB) 52 and Senate Bill (SB) 18 for the Akers Business Park (GPA 22-003)

Dear Chairperson Robinson,

Pursuant to the provisions of AB 52 and SB 18, as the lead agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the County of Tulare hereby extends an invitation to consult on the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) review of the Akers Business Park (GPA 22-003) in order to assist with identifying and/or preserving and/or mitigating project impacts to Native American cultural places including:

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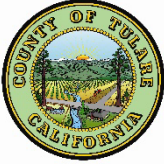
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Sincerely,



Hector Guerra  
Chief Environmental Planner  
(559) 624-7121  
[hguerra@tularecounty.ca.gov](mailto:hguerra@tularecounty.ca.gov)

*Attachment(s): AB 52 Project Notification and Tribal Consultation Request  
Project Site Map and Vicinity Map  
Visalia and Tulare Topography Map*



# RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AGENCY

5961 SOUTH MOONEY BLVD  
VISALIA, CA 93277  
PHONE (559) 624-7000  
FAX (559) 615-3002

Aaron R. Bock Economic Development and Planning  
Reed Schenke Public Works  
Sherman Dix Fiscal Services

REED SCHENKE, DIRECTOR

MICHAEL WASHAM, ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR

September 26, 2022

Wuksache Indian Tribe/Eshom Valley Band  
Kenneth Woodrow, Chairperson  
1179 Rock Haven Ct.  
Salinas, CA 93906

RE: Project Notification and Consultation Request Pursuant to Assembly Bill (AB) 52 and Senate Bill (SB) 18 for the Akers Business Park (GPA 22-003)

Dear Chairperson Woodrow,

Pursuant to the provisions of AB 52 and SB 18, as the lead agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the County of Tulare hereby extends an invitation to consult on the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) review of the Akers Business Park (GPA 22-003) in order to assist with identifying and/or preserving and/or mitigating project impacts to Native American cultural places including:

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If your Tribe desires to consult with the County on the review of this project, please respond in writing within ninety (90) days of receipt of this letter regarding SB 18 requirements, and thirty (30) days regarding AB 52 requirements. Written correspondence can be mailed to the address provided above or e-mailed to the addresses provided below.

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Thank you for your consideration on this matter and please do not hesitate to contact me by phone or e-mail should you have any questions or need additional information. If you need immediate assistance and I am unavailable, please contact, Jessica Willis, Planner IV, by phone at (559) 624-7122, or by email at [jwillis@tularecounty.ca.gov](mailto:jwillis@tularecounty.ca.gov).

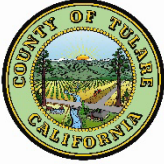
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Aaron R. Bock Economic Development and Planning  
Reed Schenke Public Works  
Sherman Dix Fiscal Services

REED SCHENKE, DIRECTOR

MICHAEL WASHAM, ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR

September 26, 2022

Santa Rosa Rancheria Tachi Yokut Tribe  
Leo Sisco, Chairperson  
16835 Alkali Drive  
Lemoore, CA 93245

RE: Project Notification and Consultation Request Pursuant to Assembly Bill (AB) 52 and Senate Bill (SB) 18 for the Akers Business Park (GPA 22-003)

Dear Chairperson Sisco,

Pursuant to the provisions of AB 52 and SB 18, as the lead agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the County of Tulare hereby extends an invitation to consult on the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) review of the Akers Business Park (GPA 22-003) in order to assist with identifying and/or preserving and/or mitigating project impacts to Native American cultural places including:

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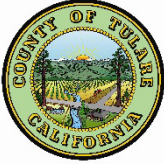
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Aaron R. Bock Economic Development and Planning  
Reed Schenke Public Works  
Sherman Dix Fiscal Services

REED SCHENKE, DIRECTOR

MICHAEL WASHAM, ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR

September 26, 2022

Santa Rosa Rancheria Tachi Yokut Tribe  
Shana Powers, Director  
16835 Alkali Drive  
Lemoore, CA 93245

RE: Project Notification and Consultation Request Pursuant to Assembly Bill (AB) 52 and Senate Bill (SB) 18 for the Akers Business Park (GPA 22-003)

Dear Ms. Powers,

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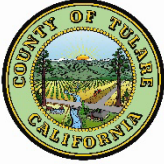
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Aaron R. Bock Economic Development and Planning  
Reed Schenke Public Works  
Sherman Dix Fiscal Services

REED SCHENKE, DIRECTOR

MICHAEL WASHAM, ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR

September 26, 2022

Tule River Indian Tribe  
Environmental Protection Department  
Kerri Vera, Director  
P.O. Box 589  
Porterville, CA 93258

RE: Project Notification and Consultation Request Pursuant to Assembly Bill (AB) 52 and Senate Bill (SB) 18 for the Akers Business Park (GPA 22-003)

Dear Ms. Vera,

Pursuant to the provisions of AB 52 and SB 18, as the lead agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the County of Tulare hereby extends an invitation to consult on the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) review of the Akers Business Park (GPA 22-003) in order to assist with identifying and/or preserving and/or mitigating project impacts to Native American cultural places including:

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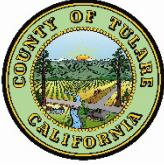
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PHONE (559) 624-7000  
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Aaron R. Bock Economic Development and Planning  
Reed Schenke Public Works  
Sherman Dix Fiscal Services

REED SCHENKE, DIRECTOR

MICHAEL WASHAM, ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR

September 26, 2022

Tule River Indian Tribe  
Neil Peyron, Chairperson  
P.O. Box 589  
Porterville, CA 93258

RE: Project Notification and Consultation Request Pursuant to Assembly Bill (AB) 52 and Senate Bill (SB) 18 for the Akers Business Park (GPA 22-003)

Dear Chairperson Peyron,

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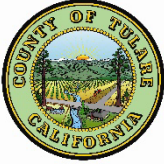
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Sherman Dix Fiscal Services

REED SCHENKE, DIRECTOR

MICHAEL WASHAM, ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR

September 26, 2022

Tubatulabals of Kern Valley  
Robert L. Gomez, Jr., Chairperson  
P.O. Box 833  
Weldon, CA 93283-0833

RE: Project Notification and Consultation Request Pursuant to Assembly Bill (AB) 52 and Senate Bill (SB) 18 for the Akers Business Park (GPA 22-003)

Dear Chairperson Gomez,

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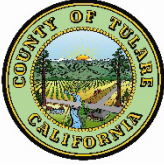
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Aaron R. Bock Economic Development and Planning  
Reed Schenke Public Works  
Sherman Dix Fiscal Services

REED SCHENKE, DIRECTOR

MICHAEL WASHAM, ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR

September 26, 2022

North Fork Mono Tribe  
Ron Goode, Chairperson  
13396 Tollhouse Road  
Clovis, CA 93619

RE: Project Notification and Consultation Request Pursuant to Assembly Bill (AB) 52 and Senate Bill (SB) 18 for the Akers Business Park (GPA 22-003)

Dear Chairperson Goode,

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## **California Historical Resources Information System**

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The CHRIS search dated August 29, 2022, indicated that there are three (3) recorded resources within the project area (site) or ½ mile radius. These resources consist of historic era irrigation ditches and the Southern Pacific Railroad. The CHRIS search also indicated that there are no recorded cultural resources within the project area; however, the SSJVIC recommended that a field survey be conducted to determine if cultural resources are present on the project site. As such, the County is providing an opportunity for consultation with your Tribe to determine whether a Tribal Cultural Resources study will be required. The results of the CHRIS search would be made available to your Tribal Representatives if a written request for consultation is received. If the County does not receive a response to this request within thirty (30) days of receipt of this letter for CEQA purposes pursuant to AB 52, it will be presumed that there are no Tribal Cultural resources of concern and a Cultural Resources study will not be required.

If your Tribe desires to consult with the County on the review of this project, please respond in writing within ninety (90) days of receipt of this letter regarding SB 18 requirements, and thirty (30) days regarding AB 52 requirements. Written correspondence can be mailed to the address provided above or e-mailed to the addresses provided below.

**If the County does not receive a response to this notification, it will be presumed that your Tribe has declined the opportunity to consult on this project pursuant to AB 52 and SB 18.**

Thank you for your consideration on this matter and please do not hesitate to contact me by phone or e-mail should you have any questions or need additional information. If you need immediate assistance and I am unavailable, please contact, Jessica Willis, Planner IV, by phone at (559) 624-7122, or by email at [jwillis@tularecounty.ca.gov](mailto:jwillis@tularecounty.ca.gov).

Sincerely,



Hector Guerra  
Chief Environmental Planner  
(559) 624-7121  
[hguerra@tularecounty.ca.gov](mailto:hguerra@tularecounty.ca.gov)

*Attachment(s): AB 52 Project Notification and Tribal Consultation Request  
Project Site Map and Vicinity Map  
Visalia and Tulare Topography Map*

## NATIVE AMERICAN HERITAGE COMMISSION

October 12, 2022

Aaron Bock  
County of Tulare

Via Email to: [ABock@Tularecounty.ca.gov](mailto:ABock@Tularecounty.ca.gov)

**Re: Native American Consultation, Pursuant to Senate Bill 18 (SB18), Government Codes §65352.3 and §65352.4, as well as Assembly Bill 52 (AB52), Public Resources Codes §21080.1, §21080.3.1 and §21080.3.2, Akers Business Park; GPI 22-003 Project, Tulare County**

Dear Mr. Bock:

Attached is a consultation list of tribes with traditional lands or cultural places located within the boundaries of the above referenced counties or projects.

Government Codes §65352.3 and §65352.4 require local governments to consult with California Native American tribes identified by the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) for the purpose of avoiding, protecting, and/or mitigating impacts to cultural places when creating or amending General Plans, Specific Plans and Community Plans.

Public Resources Codes §21080.3.1 and §21080.3.2 requires public agencies to consult with California Native American tribes identified by the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) for the purpose of avoiding, protecting, and/or mitigating impacts to tribal cultural resources as defined, for California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) projects.

The law does not preclude local governments and agencies from initiating consultation with the tribes that are culturally and traditionally affiliated within your jurisdiction. The NAHC believes that this is the best practice to ensure that tribes are consulted commensurate with the intent of the law.

Best practice for the AB52 process and in accordance with Public Resources Code §21080.3.1(d), is to do the following:

*Within 14 days of determining that an application for a project is complete or a decision by a public agency to undertake a project, the lead agency shall provide formal notification to the designated contact of, or a tribal representative of, traditionally and culturally affiliated California Native American tribes that have requested notice, which shall be accomplished by means of at least one written notification that includes a brief description of the proposed project and its location, the lead agency contact information, and a notification that the California Native American tribe has 30 days to request consultation pursuant to this section.*

The NAHC also recommends, but does not require that lead agencies include in their notification letters, information regarding any cultural resources assessment that has been completed on the area of potential affect (APE), such as:



CHAIRPERSON  
**Laura Miranda**  
Luiseño

VICE CHAIRPERSON  
**Reginald Pagaling**  
Chumash

SECRETARY  
**Sara Dutschke**  
Miwok

COMMISSIONER  
**Isaac Bojorquez**  
Ohlone-Costanoan

COMMISSIONER  
**Buffy McQuillen**  
Yokayo Pomo, Yuki,  
Nomlaki

COMMISSIONER  
**Wayne Nelson**  
Luiseño

COMMISSIONER  
**Stanley Rodriguez**  
Kumeyaay

COMMISSIONER  
**[Vacant]**

COMMISSIONER  
**[Vacant]**

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY  
**Raymond C. Hitchcock**  
Miwok/Nisenan

**NAHC HEADQUARTERS**  
1550 Harbor Boulevard  
Suite 100  
West Sacramento,  
California 95691  
(916) 373-3710  
[nahc@nahc.ca.gov](mailto:nahc@nahc.ca.gov)  
NAHC.ca.gov

1. The results of any record search that may have been conducted at an Information Center of the California Historical Resources Information System (CHRIS), including, but not limited to:
  - A listing of any and all known cultural resources have already been recorded on or adjacent to the APE, such as known archaeological sites;
  - Copies of any and all cultural resource records and study reports that may have been provided by the Information Center as part of the records search response;
  - Whether the records search indicates a low, moderate or high probability that unrecorded cultural resources are located in the APE; and
  - If a survey is recommended by the Information Center to determine whether previously unrecorded cultural resources are present.
2. The results of any archaeological inventory survey that was conducted, including:
  - Any report that may contain site forms, site significance, and suggested mitigation measures.  
  
All information regarding site locations, Native American human remains, and associated funerary objects should be in a separate confidential addendum, and not be made available for public disclosure in accordance with Government Code Section 6254.10.
3. The result of the Sacred Lands File (SFL) check conducted through the Native American Heritage Commission was negative.
4. Any ethnographic studies conducted for any area including all or part of the potential APE; and
5. Any geotechnical reports regarding all or part of the potential APE.

Lead agencies should be aware that records maintained by the NAHC and CHRIS is not exhaustive, and a negative response to these searches does not preclude the existence of a tribal cultural resource. A tribe may be the only source of information regarding the existence of a tribal cultural resource.

This information will aid tribes in determining whether to request formal consultation. In the event, that they do, having the information beforehand will help to facilitate the consultation process.

If you receive notification of change of addresses and phone numbers from tribes, please notify the NAHC. With your assistance we can assure that our consultation list remains current.

If you have any questions, please contact me at my email address: [Cameron.vela@nahc.ca.gov](mailto:Cameron.vela@nahc.ca.gov).

Sincerely,

*Cameron Vela*

Cameron Vela  
Cultural Resources Analyst

Attachment



**Native American Heritage Commission  
Tribal Consultation List  
Tulare County  
10/13/2022**

***Big Sandy Rancheria of  
Western Mono Indians***

Elizabeth Kipp, Chairperson  
P.O. Box 337  
Auberry, CA, 93602  
Phone: (559) 374 - 0066  
Fax: (559) 374-0055  
lkipp@bsrnation.com

Western Mono

***Santa Rosa Rancheria Tachi  
Yokut Tribe***

Leo Sisco, Chairperson  
P.O. Box 8  
Lemoore, CA, 93245  
Phone: (559) 924 - 1278  
Fax: (559) 924-3583

Southern Valley  
Yokut

***Tule River Indian Tribe***

Neil Peyron, Chairperson  
P.O. Box 589  
Porterville, CA, 93258  
Phone: (559) 781 - 4271  
Fax: (559) 781-4610  
neil.peyron@tulerivertribe-nsn.gov

Yokut

***Wuksache Indian Tribe/Eshom  
Valley Band***

Kenneth Woodrow, Chairperson  
1179 Rock Haven Ct.  
Salinas, CA, 93906  
Phone: (831) 443 - 9702  
kwood8934@aol.com

Foothill Yokut  
Mono

This list is current only as of the date of this document and is based on the information available to the Commission on the date it was produced. Distribution of this list does not relieve any person of statutory responsibility as defined in Section 7050.5 of the Health and Safety Code, Section 5097.94 of the Public Resources Code and Section 5097.98 of the Public Resources Code.

This list is applicable only for consultation with Native American tribes under Government Code Sections 65352.3, 65352.4 et seq. and Public Resources Code Sections 21080.3.1 for the proposed Akers Business Park; GPI 22-003 Project, Tulare County.

**DR Mata Consulting**  
6145 W Cherry Ct  
Visalia, CA 93277  
Phone: (559) 799-2942  
Email: [Darlene@DRMataConsulting.com](mailto:Darlene@DRMataConsulting.com)

August 9, 2022

Big Sandy Rancheria of Western Mono Indians  
Elizabeth D, Kipp, Chairperson  
PO Box 337  
Auberry, CA 93621  
VIA Email: lkipp@bsrnation.com

RE: Tribal Cultural Resources under the California Environmental Quality Act, SB 18 Tribal Consultation Government Code 65352.3 and AB 52 21080.3.1

Dear Tribal Chairperson;

This letter is submitted on behalf of the County of Tulare Resource Management Agency. The County of Tulare has begun to process an application for a general plan amendment, rezone, and tentative subdivision map. **General Plan Initiation No. GPI 22-003 was submitted by NFDI, LLC.**

The project will include the development of a commercial business park on approximately 65.45 acres located at the southwest corner of Road 100 and Oakdale Avenue, east of State Highway 99, APN 149-090-006. The proposed project will include a General Plan Amendment (“GPA”) to change the Land Use Designation from “Valley Agriculture” to “Mixed Use,” a Zone Change (“PZC”) to change the Zone from AE-20 (Exclusive Agricultural – 20 Acre Minimum) to C-3-MU (Service Commercial with a Mixed-Use Overlay Zone) to facilitate a Tentative Subdivision Map (“TSM”) to subdivide a 65.45-acre parcel and develop the proposed Akers Business Park as a mixed use commercial project that includes the expansion of the existing Magic Touch Recreational Vehicle Sales facility at the south end of the project, contractor offices, boat sales, and other related uses allowed in the C-3-MU Zone.

The project site is within the Visalia and Tulare USGS Quadrangles. It is located in Section 27, Township 19 and Range 24, Mount Diablo Base and Meridian. An aerial map and USGS maps are attached.

In compliance with SB 18 and AB 52, and pursuant to Government code 65352.3 and 21080.3.1, on behalf of the County of Tulare, we are requesting your review and comments on the potential impacts on cultural places associated with your tribe by this proposal. Your participation is important at this early stage of processing to ensure that cultural places important to your tribe are identified and the potential impact associated with the implementation of the project are mitigated. If you have not responded by November 8, 2022, the County of Tulare will assume your tribe has declined consultation as per Government Code 65352.

Should you have any comments or questions please contact me at (559) 799-2942 or darlene@DRMataConsulting.com or directly to the County of Tulare to Aaron Bock at ABock@tularecounty.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

*Darlene R. Mata*

Darlene R. Mata  
Planning Consultant

Enclosures:   Aerial Map  
                  USGS Maps  
                  Site Plan

**DR Mata Consulting**  
6145 W Cherry Ct  
Visalia, CA 93277  
Phone: (559) 799-2942  
Email: [Darlene@DRMataConsulting.com](mailto:Darlene@DRMataConsulting.com)

August 9, 2022

Dunlap Band of Mono Indians  
Benjamin Charley Jr., Tribal Chair  
P.O. Box 14  
Dunlap, CA 93621  
VIA Email: Ben.Charley@yahoo.com

RE: Tribal Cultural Resources under the California Environmental Quality Act, SB 18 Tribal Consultation Government Code 65352.3 and AB 52 21080.3.1

Dear Tribal Chairperson;

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Sincerely,

*Darlene R. Mata*

Darlene R. Mata  
Planning Consultant

Enclosures: Aerial Map  
USGS Maps  
Site Plan

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6145 W Cherry Ct  
Visalia, CA 93277  
Phone: (559) 799-2942  
Email: [Darlene@DRMataConsulting.com](mailto:Darlene@DRMataConsulting.com)

August 9, 2022

Kern Valley Indian Tribe  
Robert Robinson, Co-Chairperson  
P.O. Box 1010  
Lake Isabella, CA 93240  
[bbutterbredt@gmail.com](mailto:bbutterbredt@gmail.com)

RE: Tribal Cultural Resources under the California Environmental Quality Act, SB 18 Tribal Consultation Government Code 65352.3 and AB 52 21080.3.1

Dear Tribal Chairperson;

This letter is submitted on behalf of the County of Tulare Resource Management Agency. The County of Tulare has begun to process an application for a general plan amendment, rezone, and tentative subdivision map. **General Plan Initiation No. GPI 22-003 was submitted by NFDI, LLC.**

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*Darlene R. Mata*

Darlene R. Mata  
Planning Consultant

Enclosures: Aerial Map  
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Site Plan



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6145 W Cherry Ct  
Visalia, CA 93277  
Phone: (559) 799-2942  
Email: [Darlene@DRMataConsulting.com](mailto:Darlene@DRMataConsulting.com)

August 9, 2022

North Fork Mono Tribe  
Ron Goode, Chairperson  
13396 Tollhouse Road  
Clovis, CA 93619  
[rwgoode911@hotmail.com](mailto:rwgoode911@hotmail.com)

RE: Tribal Cultural Resources under the California Environmental Quality Act, SB 18 Tribal Consultation Government Code 65352.3 and AB 52 21080.3.1

Dear Tribal Chairperson;

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*Darlene R. Mata*

Darlene R. Mata  
Planning Consultant

Enclosures: Aerial Map  
USGS Maps  
Site Plan

**DR Mata Consulting**  
6145 W Cherry Ct  
Visalia, CA 93277  
Phone: (559) 799-2942  
Email: [Darlene@DRMataConsulting.com](mailto:Darlene@DRMataConsulting.com)

August 9, 2022

Santa Rosa Rancheria Tachi Yokut Tribe  
Leo Sisco, Chairperson  
16835 Alkali Drive  
Lemoore, CA 93245  
VIA Email: [spowers@tachi-yokut-nsn.gov](mailto:spowers@tachi-yokut-nsn.gov)

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Sincerely,



Darlene R. Mata Planning Consultant

Enclosures: Aerial Map  
USGS Maps  
Site Plan

Cc: Via Email Santa Rosa Rancheria  
Cultural Department Staff

Samantha McCarty

[SMcCarty@tachi-yokut-nsn.gov](mailto:SMcCarty@tachi-yokut-nsn.gov)

Paige Berggren

[PBerggren@tachi-yokut-nsn.gov](mailto:PBerggren@tachi-yokut-nsn.gov)

Damion Cuara

[DCuara@tachi-yokut-nsn.gov](mailto:DCuara@tachi-yokut-nsn.gov)

Maria Gonzales

[MGonzales@tachi-yokut-nsn.gov](mailto:MGonzales@tachi-yokut-nsn.gov)

William Barrios

[WBarrios@tachi-yokut-nsn.gov](mailto:WBarrios@tachi-yokut-nsn.gov)

**DR Mata Consulting**  
6145 W Cherry Ct  
Visalia, CA 93277  
Phone: (559) 799-2942  
Email: [Darlene@DRMataConsulting.com](mailto:Darlene@DRMataConsulting.com)

August 9, 2022

Tule River Indian Tribe  
Neil Peyron, Chairperson  
P. O. Box 589  
Porterville, CA 93258  
[neil.peyron@tulerivertribe-nsn.gov](mailto:neil.peyron@tulerivertribe-nsn.gov)

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Sincerely,

*Darlene R. Mata*

Darlene R. Mata  
Planning Consultant

Enclosures: Aerial Map  
USGS Maps  
Site Plan

Cc: Kerri Vera, Director via email  
Joey Garfield, Tribal Archaeologist via email

**DR Mata Consulting**  
6145 W Cherry Ct  
Visalia, CA 93277  
Phone: (559) 799-2942  
Email: [Darlene@DRMataConsulting.com](mailto:Darlene@DRMataConsulting.com)

August 9, 2022

Wuksache Indian Tribe/Eshom Valley Band  
Kenneth Woodrow, Chairperson  
1179 Rock Haven Ct.  
Salinas, CA 93906  
[kwood8934@aol.com](mailto:kwood8934@aol.com)

RE: Tribal Cultural Resources under the California Environmental Quality Act, SB 18 Tribal Consultation Government Code 65352.3 and AB 52 21080.3.1

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Sincerely,

*Darlene R. Mata*

Darlene R. Mata  
Planning Consultant

Enclosures:   Aerial Map  
                  USGS Maps  
                  Site Plan

# **ATTACHMENT “D”**

## **Traffic Impact Study/VMT Assessment**

# Traffic Evaluation And Vehicle Miles Traveled Assessment for the Akers Business Park Project

Tulare County, California

## **DRAFT REPORT**

*November 2022*

Submitted to the  
County of Tulare  
5961 S. Mooney Blvd.  
Visalia, Ca. 93277

Prepared for:  
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Quest Equity, LLC  
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# Traffic Evaluation And Vehicle Miles Traveled Assessment for the Akers Business Park Project

Tulare, California

**DRAFT REPORT**

*November 2022*

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*[https://d.docs.live.net/1908e84e76e68192/Desktop/C2 Consult/Projects/1341.10 Nunley Development - Akers Bus TA/Work Product/Akers Business Park TIS.doc](https://d.docs.live.net/1908e84e76e68192/Desktop/C2%20Consult/Projects/1341.10%20Nunley%20Development%20-%20Akers%20Bus%20TA/Work%20Product/Akers%20Business%20Park%20TIS.doc)*

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# Traffic Evaluation And Vehicle Miles Travelled Assessment for the Akers Business Park Project

## CHAPTER 1 – INTRODUCTION

### **Study Purpose**

The Akers Business Park Project is located in Tulare County, California. The project is composed of retail and industrial uses and occupies approximately 65 acres and lies at the southwest corner of the intersection of Akers Road and Oakdale Avenue. **Figure 1** shows a vicinity map of the area around the development site, while **Figure 5** shows the Akers Business Park site plan.

### **Study Area**

This study assessed the following items.

- 1) *Intersection analysis of Akers Street at Cartmill Avenue and Akers Street at Oakdale Avenue*
- 2) *The Vehicle Miles Traveled assessment of the Project*

### **Traffic Model**

For the purposes of evaluating the Akers Business Park Project's Vehicle Miles Traveled impacts, the Tulare County Association of Governments (TCAG) Regional Traffic Model was used. The Regional Traffic Model was selected as the best available tool for accurately assessing Project specific VMT within Tulare County. This tool provides the best and most reasonable evaluations in Tulare County as it can provide baseline regional vehicle miles traveled data and predict changes in regional vehicle miles traveled as a result of a proposed land use. This model is also used for long range multi-modal transportation planning, community circulation element preparation and air quality analysis. This allows the Akers Business Park to be evaluated in the context of regional long-range plans and programs.

Traffic Evaluation and Vehicle Miles Traveled Assessment  
for the Akers Business Park Project  
Tulare County, California

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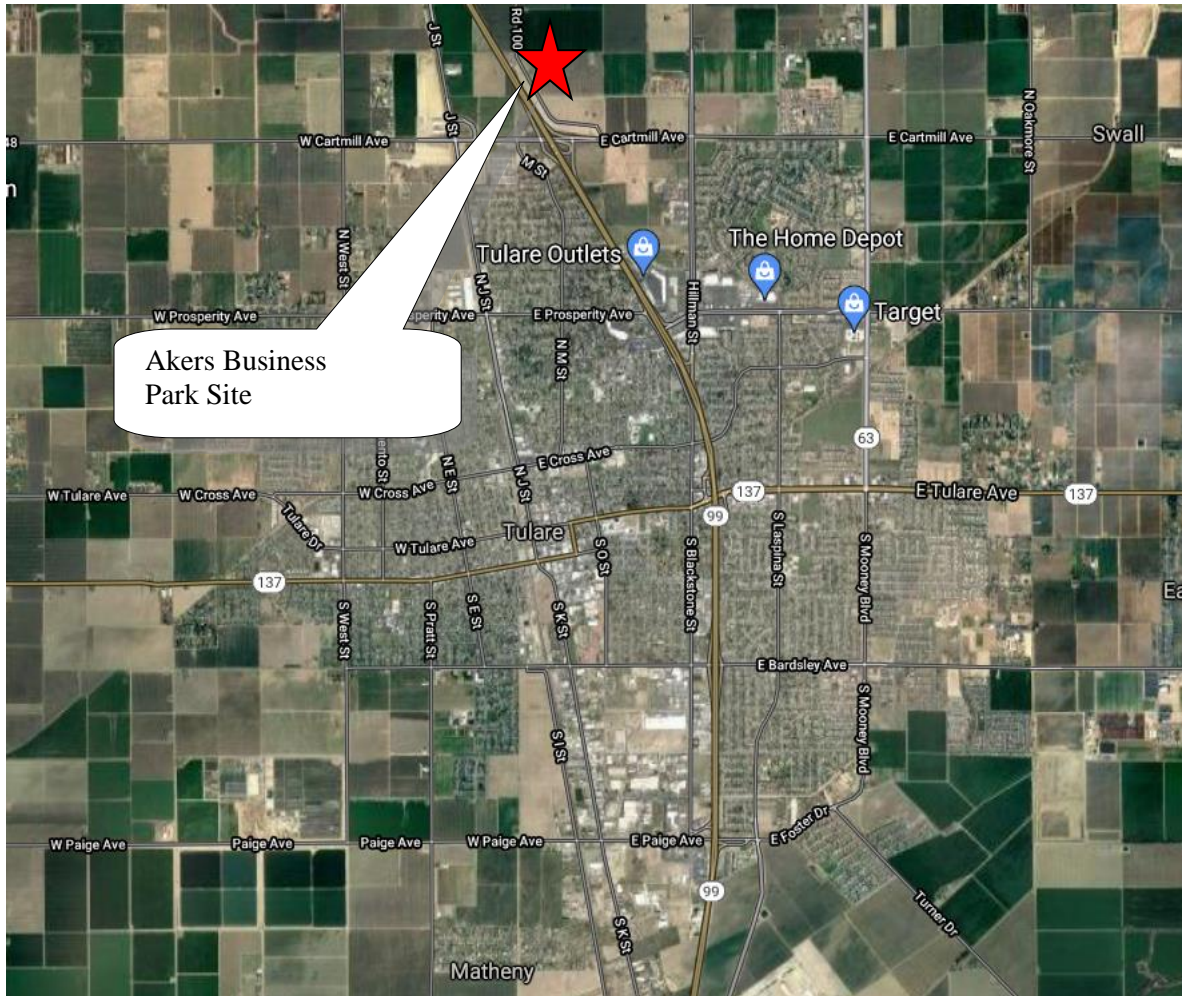


FIGURE 1: Vicinity Map





FIGURE 2: Project Location

## CHAPTER 2 – EXISTING CONDITONS

### Roadways

#### Akers Street

Is a County road located within the City of Tulare Urban Development Boundary. It is designated as an Arterial in the City of Tulare General Plan. It provides inter-city connection between Tulare and Visalia as well as direct access to developing properties adjacent to the street. Arterials provide high volume connections between freeways and collectors and are typically designed to accommodate up to eight through traffic lanes, a parking/transit/right turn lane, and a center median with dual left turn lanes at intersections. The right-of-way for these streets should range from 84 to 146 feet. A driveway spacing of at least 300 feet should be maintained wherever possible. Arterials are designated throughout the Planning Area, generally creating a one-mile grid pattern.

#### Cartmill Avenue

Is a City of Tulare street designated by the City of Tulare as a Major Arterial street in the City's Circulation Element. Major arterials provide high volume connections between freeways and collectors and are typically designed to accommodate up to eight through traffic lanes, a parking/transit/right turn lane, and a center median with dual left turn lanes at intersections. The right-of-way for these streets should range from 84 to 146 feet. A driveway spacing of at least 300 feet should be maintained wherever possible. Arterials are designated throughout the Planning Area, generally creating a one-mile grid pattern. Substantial improvements have been made by the City to Cartmill Avenue between "J" Street and Hillman Street.

#### Oakdale Avenue

Is currently a County roadway designated by the City of Tulare as an Arterial street in the City's Circulation Element east of Akers. West of Akers it is designated as a local street. Arterials provide high volume connections between freeways and collectors and are typically designed to accommodate up to eight through traffic lanes, a parking/transit/right turn lane, and a center median with dual left turn lanes at intersections. The right-of-way for these streets should range from 84 to 146 feet. A driveway spacing of at least 300 feet should be maintained wherever possible. Arterials are designated throughout the Planning Area, generally creating a one-mile grid pattern.

### Analysis Scenarios

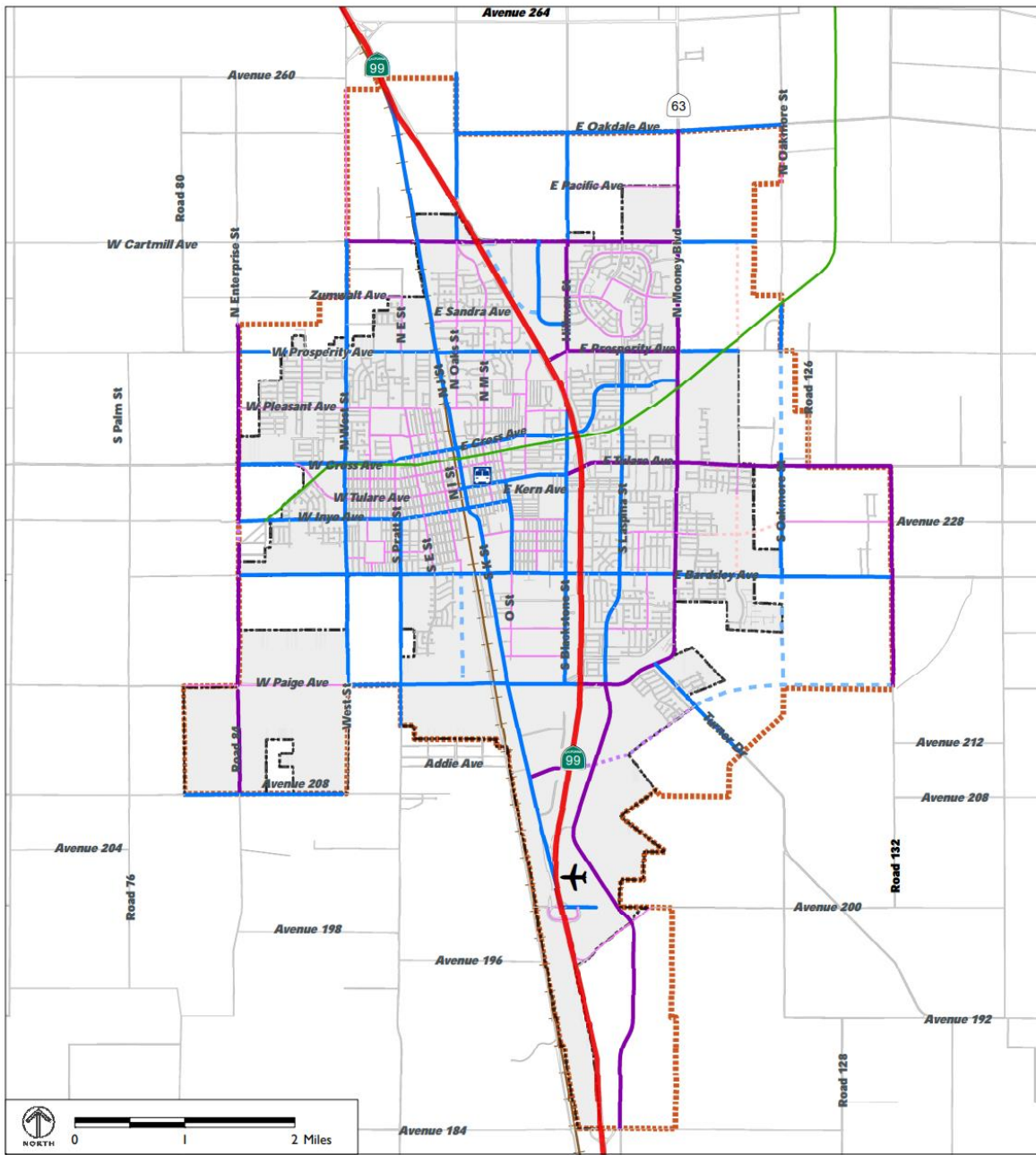
This study evaluated the following scenarios at the study intersection:

- Existing Conditions
- Existing Conditions plus the Akers Business Park Project

### Study Intersections

The study area for analyzing traffic impacts includes two intersections, Akers Street at Oakdale Avenue and Akers Street at Cartmill Avenue. The intersection locations and the site location are shown in **Figure 2**.

Traffic Evaluation and Vehicle Miles Traveled Assessment  
 for the Akers Business Park Project  
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Source: City of Tulare, Tulare County, and The Planning Center | DC&E, 2012.

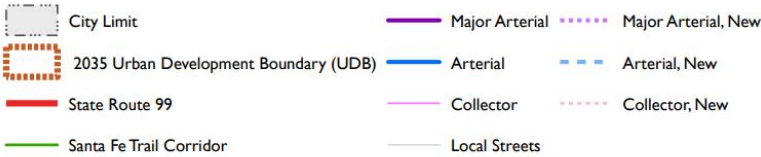


FIGURE 3 - I  
**CIRCULATION DIAGRAM**

FIGURE 3: City of Tulare Circulation Element



### **Traffic Counts**

According to the Institute of Transportation Engineers' *Traffic Impact Analyses for Site Development*, the overall purpose of a traffic impact study is to determine the project impacts that are likely to occur to the surrounding street system. In order to accomplish this, analysts need to determine what occurs when the peak of the project generated traffic is combined with the peak of the surrounding street traffic. The publication states that "peak periods [of adjacent streets and highways] are generally the weekday morning (7-9 a.m.) and evening (4-6 p.m.) peak hours, although local area characteristics occasionally result in other peaks (e.g., at major shopping or recreational centers). In order to accommodate these analyses, traffic counts were collected during weekdays during the morning hours of 7:00 to 9:00 AM and the afternoon hours of 4:00 to 6:00 PM.

On October 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup>, 2022, C2 completed traffic counts between 7am and 9am and 4pm and 6pm at the designated intersections. That traffic data suggested that the peak hours were generally from 7:15 to 8:15am and from 4:30 to 5:30pm. These hours coincide with the travel patterns in the study area and the inter-city traffic between Tulare and Visalia. The existing AM and PM traffic counts at the study intersection are shown in **Figure 4**.

### **Analysis Methodology**

All level of service analyses performed for this study conform to the practices of the *Highway Capacity Manual*, and were done using the traffic analysis software HCS (unsignalized) or Synchro 7 (signalized). For signalized intersections, this software allows for optimization of signal timings to minimize traffic delay at each intersection. This process can result in different signal cycle lengths for both the AM and PM peak hours of a given analysis scenario and may also vary between different scenarios. This optimization somewhat reflects traffic agency procedure whereby intersection signal cycle lengths are adjusted for differing traffic conditions and times, based on counts of existing traffic volume.

For analysis purposes, HCM 2010 defines six levels of service for various facility types. The six levels are given letter designations ranging from "A" to "F", with "A" representing the best operating conditions and "F" the worst. Quantifiable measures of effectiveness that best describe the quality of operation on the subject facility type are used to determine the facilities level of service. For the case of both signalized and unsignalized intersections, the quantifiable measure of effectiveness is average control delay.<sup>1</sup>

Control delay for two-way stop-controlled (TWSC) intersections, which have stop signs on only the minor street approaches, is on a per-vehicle basis and is computed for the stop-controlled, minor-street movements and major street left turn movements only, because major-street through movements are theoretically in continual free-flow conditions and therefore experience no delay. Since there is no aggregation of delay for a TWSC intersection, there is no level of service for an intersection as a whole, but only levels of service for individual minor-street and major-street left turn movements.

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<sup>1</sup> Control delay, according to the *2010 Highway Capacity Manual*, page 16-1, includes initial acceleration delay, queue move-up time, stopped delay, and final acceleration delay.

The following table shows level of service ratings and their corresponding ranges of average control delay for both signalized and unsignalized intersections. For signalized intersections, it also contains a general description of traffic flow associated with each level of service.

INTERSECTION LEVEL OF SERVICE DESCRIPTIONS			Allowable Delay	
			Signalized	Unsignalized <sup>1</sup>
Level of Service	Conditions	Signalized Intersection Description	Delay (sec/veh)	Delay (sec/veh)
“A”	Free Flow	<i>Users experience very low delay. Progression is favorable and most vehicles do not stop at all.</i>	<10.0	≤10.0
“B”	Stable Operations	<i>Vehicles travel with good progression. Some vehicles stop, causing slight delay.</i>	>10.0 – 20.0	>10.0 – 15.0
“C”	Stable Operations	<i>Higher delays result from fair progression. A significant number of vehicles stop, although many continue to pass through the intersection without stopping.</i>	>20.0 - 35.0	>15.0 – 25.0
“D”	Approaching Unstable	<i>Congestion is noticeable. Progression is unfavorable, with more vehicles stopping rather than passing through the intersection.</i>	>35.0 – 55.0	>25.0 – 35.0
“E”	Unstable Operations	<i>Traffic volumes are at capacity. Users experience poor progression and long delays.</i>	>55.0 – 80.0	>35.0 – 50.0
“F”	Forced Flow	<i>Intersection’s capacity is oversaturated, causing poor progression and unusually long delays.</i>	>80.0	>50.0

Source: Chapters 16 and 18, Highway Capacity Manual, Transportation Research Board.

<sup>1</sup>Unsignalized intersections include TWSC and AWSC

Level of service for each study intersection in the various analysis scenarios are summarized in tables throughout the report. For signalized intersections, the level of service rating shown represents the overall level of service for the intersection as a whole. For stop-controlled intersections, the level of service rating shown is for each individual traffic movement (excluding major-street through movements) instead of the entire intersection.

### **Level of Service Standard**

The County of Tulare’s Level Of Service (LOS) Standards shall strive to develop and manage its roadway system (both segments and intersections) to meet a LOS of “D” or better in accordance with the LOS definitions established by the Highway Capacity Manual. This standard shall apply to the intersection of Akers at Oakdale. The intersection of Cartmill Avenue at Akers Street is located within the City of Tulare, which also has a stated level of service standard of LOS “D”.

**Existing Conditions (2022)**

Existing levels of service at the study intersections were assessed using the current lane configurations, and using the existing weekday peak hour traffic volumes (shown in **Figure 4**). Level of service for existing conditions is summarized in **Table 1**. The intersection of Akers Street at Cartmill Avenue is currently controlled by a traffic signal, while the intersection of Akers Street at Oakdale Avenue is controlled by east/west stop signs. Calculations for the existing conditions are included in **Appendix A**.

Table 1: Existing Conditions Level of Service				
	AM Peak Hour		PM Peak Hour	
Intersection	Vehicle Delay	LOS	Vehicle Delay	LOS
Akers St at Cartmill Ave	8.8	A	9.1	A
Akers St at Oakdale Ave				
Northbound approach	7.4	A	7.8	A
Southbound approach	7.5	A	7.6	A
Westbound approach	9.8	A	10.0	A
Eastbound approach	0.0	A	0.0	A

Based on the existing conditions assessment, the intersections are currently operating above the County and City’s level of service target standards of D.

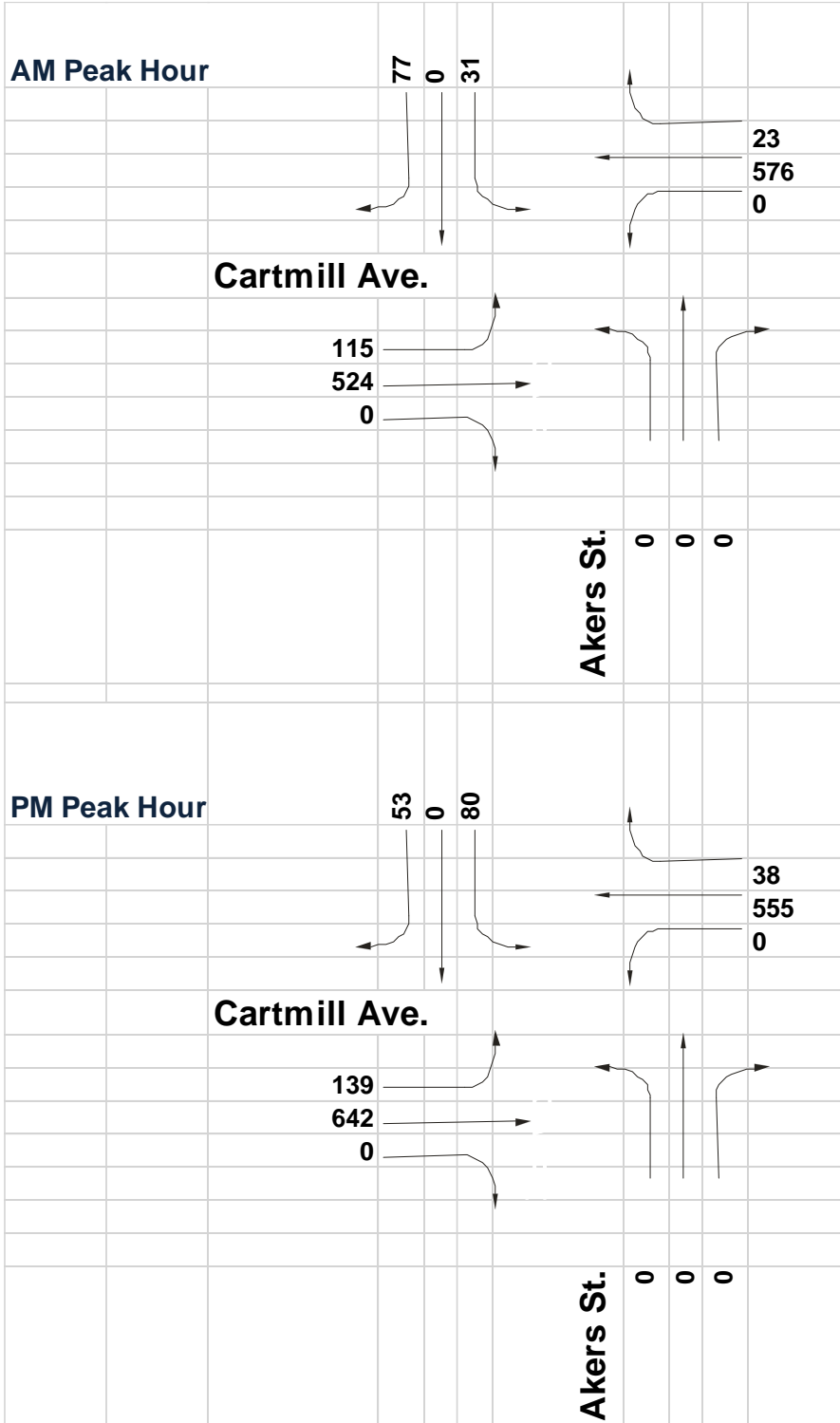


FIGURE 4: Existing Traffic Counts



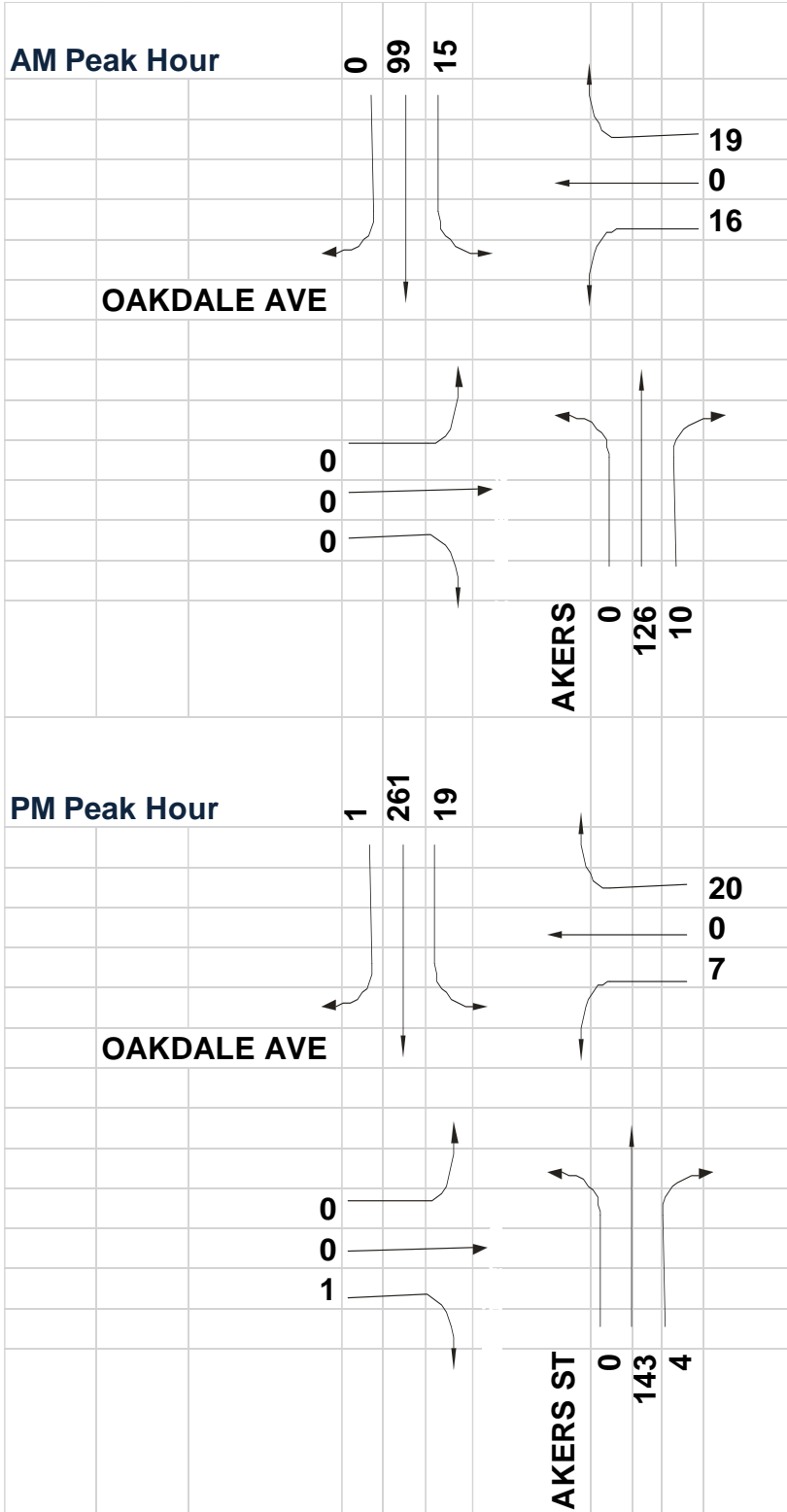


FIGURE 4: Existing Traffic Counts

**Transit**

Tulare is currently served by Tulare Regional Transit services, which operates 6 fixed routes, 1 express bus (to/from Visalia) and dial-a-ride service within the community. The hours of operation are Monday through Friday from 6:15am to 9:15pm, Saturday from 8:15am to 6:15pm and on Sunday from 8:15am to 6:15pm. The routes serve Tulare and Visalia as well as connections with Tulare County Area Transit (TCaT), and Visalia Transit (VT). The service does not operate on New Year’s Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, or Christmas Day.

Mode	Fare Category	2014	2019 (Current)	
Fixed-Route	General Public	\$1.25	\$1.50	
	Children (five and younger w/ fare-paying adult)	Free	Free	
	Senior/ADA/Medicare Cardholder	\$1.25	\$0.75	
	Personal Care Attendant (with ADA passenger)	Free	Free	
	Monthly General Pass	\$40.00	\$40.00	
	Monthly Senior/ADA/Medicare Pass (60 and over)	\$33.00	\$20.00	
	Monthly Student Pass	\$33.00	\$33.00	
	Trip Tickets (book of 20)	\$25.00	\$30.00	
Dial-A-Ride	General Public	\$2.50	\$3.25	
	ADA-Certified	\$2.00	\$2.00	
	ADA Attendant	Free	Free	
	Children (seven and younger w/ fare-paying adult)	\$1.25	\$1.25	
	Children without fare-paying adult	\$2.25	\$2.50	
		Trip Tickets (book of 10)	\$25.00	\$32.50
		ADA Trip Tickets (book of 10)	\$20.00	\$20.00

Two types of fares can be chosen, regular- and discount- fare. For a local weekday trip the regular fare is \$1.50 and the discount fare is \$0.75. Discounts are given to people 18 years and under, people 65 years and older, Individuals with disabilities, Medicare Card holders, and Veterans. Tickets can be obtained using Cash, GoPasses, GoCards, and Courtesy Cards. The Monterey Transit operates from 6:30 a.m. to 9:30 p.m. Monday through Friday, and 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Saturdays.

No routes currently provide direct service to or near the Project’s site. The closest service is provided via Route 5 which is located approximately 1.5 miles south of the Project. **Figure 5** shows the relationship of the Akers Business Park Project to Route 5.



FIGURE 5: Tulare Transit Route Map

### CHAPTER 3 – PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Akers Business Park is a mixed-use project proposed to be located on the west side of Akers Street between Cartmill Avenue and Oakdale Avenue. This site is located on the northern edge of the City of Tulare. The Project is located on approximately 65 acres and will include just over 14 acres of retail and slightly over 43 acres of industrial land uses. The balance of the acreage will be used for both internal and external road right-of-way. Access to the development will be from Akers, Oakdale and an as yet unnamed internal street **Figure 6** shows the proposed Akers Business Park site plan and **Table 2** provides the details for each use. The proposed land uses include and estimated total of 82,000 square feet of retail uses and a total of 503,000 square feet of industrial uses.

Parcel	Land Use Type	Size (Acres)	Floor Area Ratio	Building (sf)	Employ Rate	Employees
Tenant A Boat Dealership	Retail	4.00	0.17	30,000	0.002	60
Tenant B - Industrial	Industrial	12.00	0.25	130,000	0.002	260
Tenant C - Magic Touch Expansion	Retail	3.30	-	0	0.002	1
Tenant D	Industrial	4.00	0.29	50,000	0.002	100
Tenant E	Retail	1.50	0.09	6,000	0.002	12
Tenant F	Retail	1.50	0.09	6,000	0.002	12
Tenant G	Retail	4.00	0.23	40,000	0.002	80
Tenant H	Industrial	8.70	0.26	100,000	0.002	200
Tenant I	Industrial	9.00	0.26	100,000	0.002	200
Tenant J	Industrial	2.80	0.19	23,000	0.002	46
Tenant K	Industrial	1.04	0.44	20,000	0.002	40
Tenant L	Industrial	1.08	0.43	20,000	0.002	40
Tenant M	Industrial	1.08	0.43	20,000	0.002	40
Tenant N	Industrial	1.20	0.38	20,000	0.002	40
Tenant O	Industrial	2.30	0.20	20,000	0.002	40
				<b>Total Employees =</b>	<b>1,171</b>	
				FAR calc'd		

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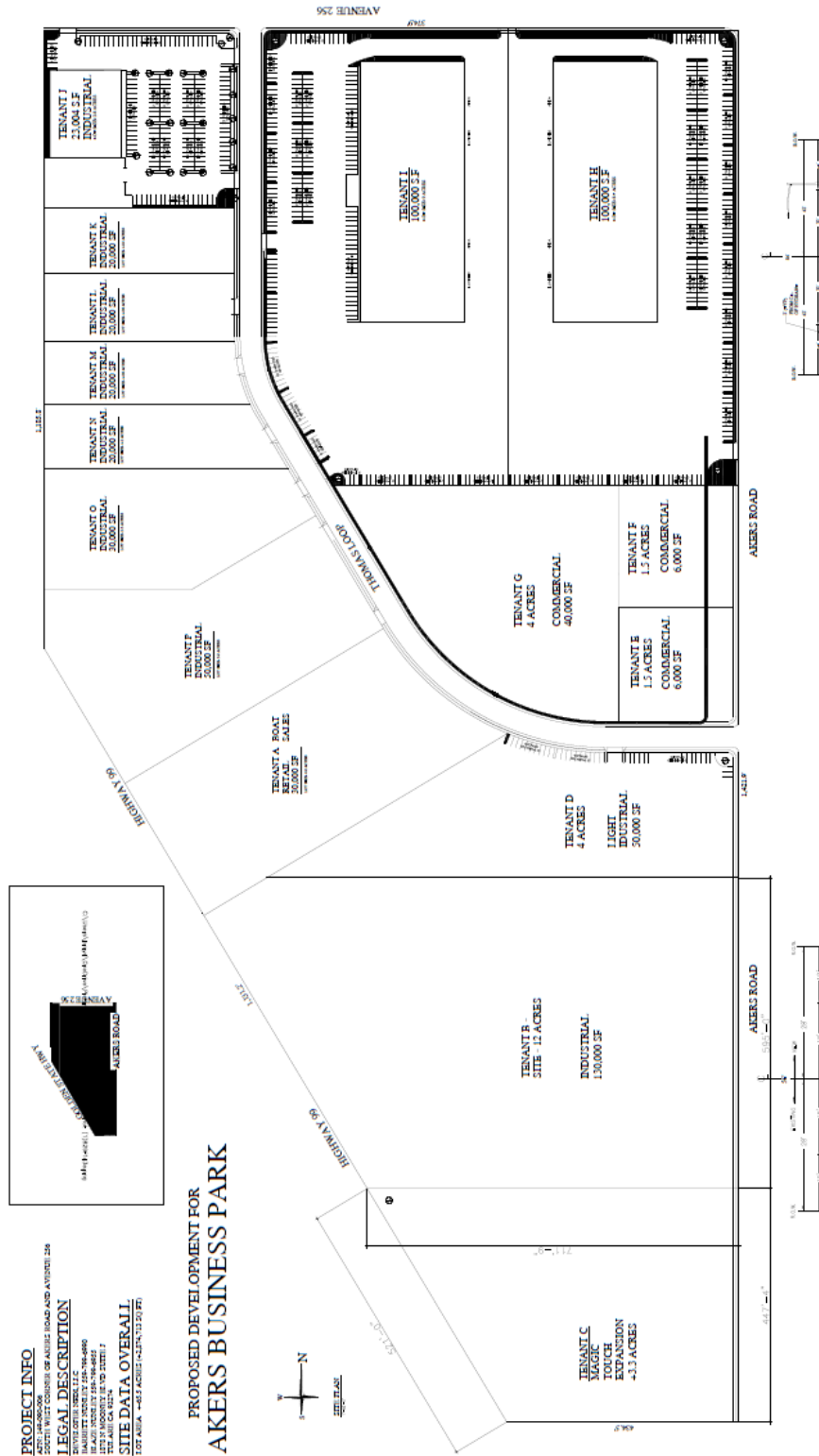


FIGURE 6: Akers Business Park Project

**Project Trip Generation**

New trips generated by the Akers Business Park Project were estimated using the Institute of Transportation Engineer’s *Trip Generation Manual*. This publication provides average rates of trip generation for different building uses, and relates these rates to building size (retail and industrial whether measured in square feet or other metrics such as number of employees. Trip generation rates are provided for weekdays along with the proportion of trips that are inbound or outbound from the development. The resulting Project trip generation is shown in **Table 3**.

Table 3 Akers Business Park Project Mixed Use Trip Generation					
Land Use	Daily Trips	AM Peak Hour Trips		PM Peak Hour Trips	
		Enter	Exit	Enter	Exit
Retail (82,000sf)	3,634	0	0	98	125
Industrial (503,000sf)	3,501	347	75	91	342
<b>Total Volume</b>	<b>7,135</b>	<b>347</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>189</b>	<b>467</b>

The estimated Project’s vehicle trips yields 422 trips in the AM peak hour and 656 trips in the PM peak hour. It should be noted that these estimated Project trips do not include retail pass-by trips which may or may not be present. Until more detail is known on actual retail uses, potential, if any, for pass-by trips cannot be estimated.

**The Akers Business Park Project’s Vehicle Trip Distribution**

The Akers Business Park Project is expected to generally distribute project related trips matching the current travel pattern at the study intersection. Because of its retail and industrial components, the trips will be distributed in relation to the Tulare and Visalia populations. Those ratios along with the existing traffic counts were used as guidelines for the distribution of vehicular trips to the surrounding streets. The net increase in Project traffic has been added to the existing traffic volumes at the two intersections. Based on this methodology, the Akers Business Park Project’s trips were distributed as shown in **Figure 7**.

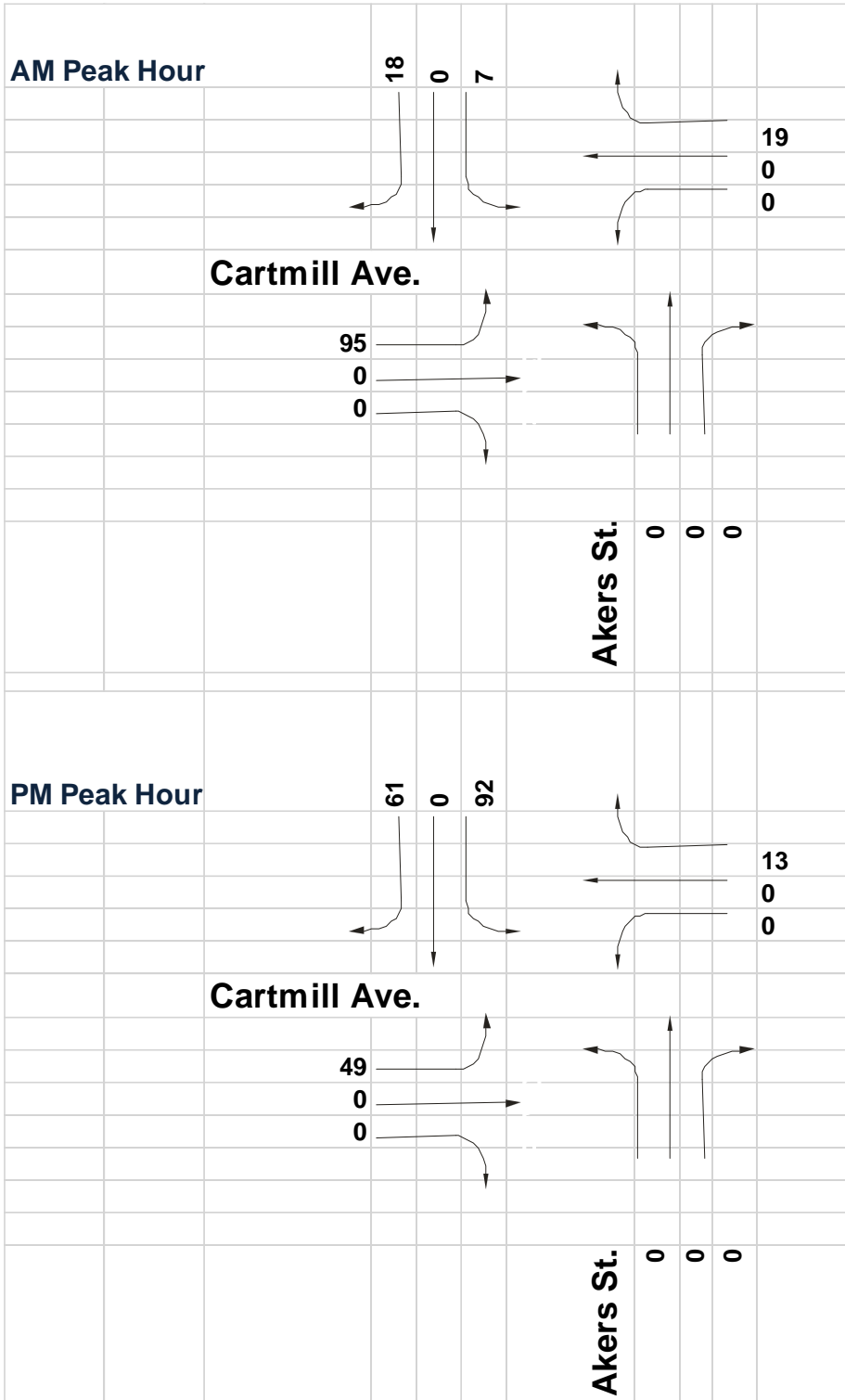


FIGURE 7: Akers Business Park Trip Assignment



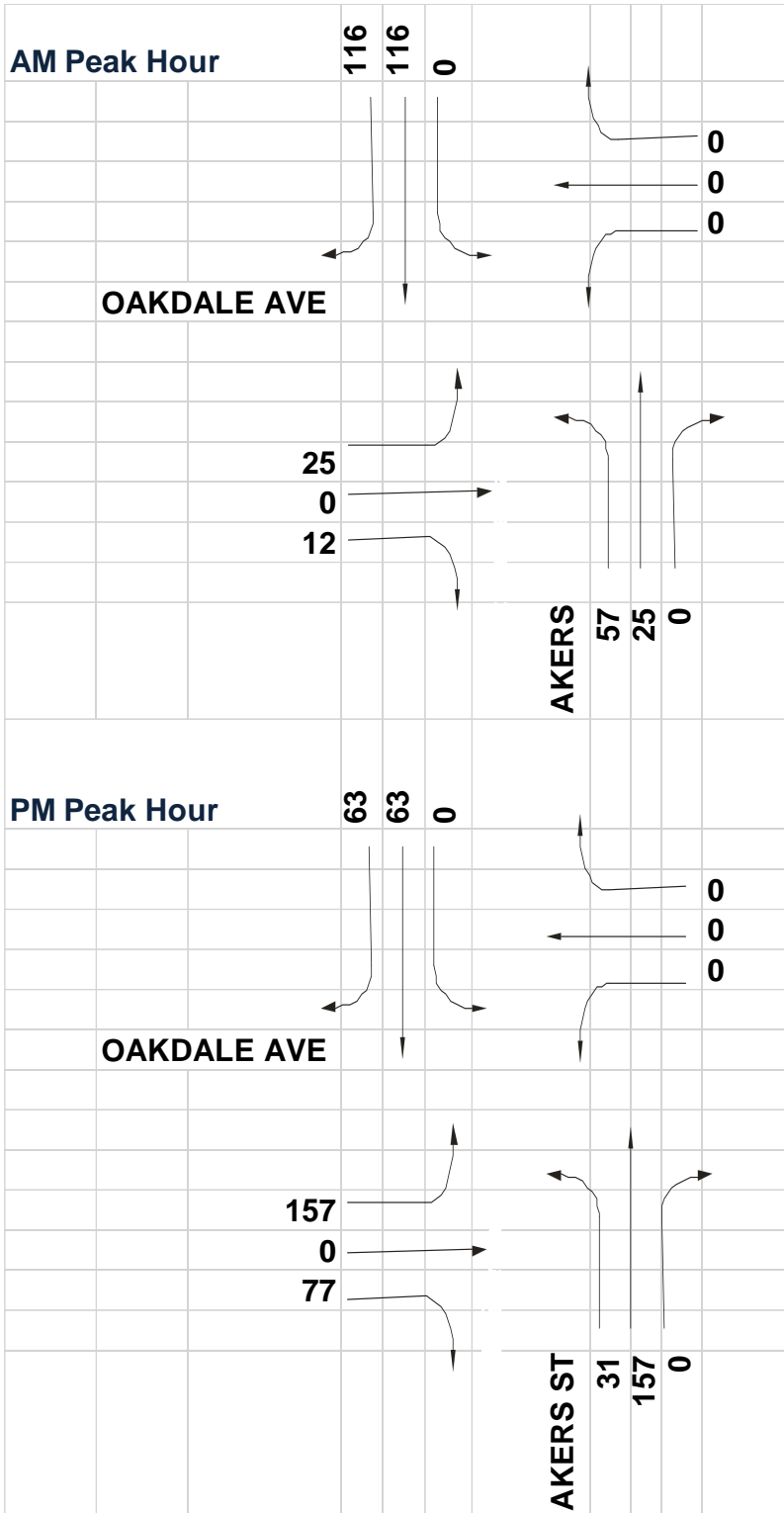


FIGURE 7: Akers Business Park Trip Assignment

## CHAPTER 4 – CONDITIONS WITH PROJECT

### Akers Business Park Project Assessment

The conditions with trips generated from the Akers Business Park Project were assessed by adding the Project’s trips to the existing traffic volumes shown in **Figure 3**. The Project’s trip assignment is shown in **Figure 7**, which were added to the existing volumes to estimate the existing plus Project volumes. The combined peak hour traffic volumes used for this assessment are shown in **Figure 8**. The lane configurations at the intersection with the completion of the Akers Business Park Project were assumed to include the addition of an eastbound right turn lane on Oakdale Avenue at the Akers at Oakdale intersection. The balance of the lane configurations at both intersections are assumed to remain the same as the existing configurations. The Level of Service Calculations for the Existing plus the Akers Business Park Project can be seen in **Appendix B**.

Based on the existing plus Akers Business Park conditions assessment as shown in **Table 4**, the intersections are projected to continue operating above the County and City’s level of service target standards of D.

Table 4: Existing Plus Akers Business Park Level of Service				
Intersection	AM Peak Hour		PM Peak Hour	
	Vehicle Delay	LOS	Vehicle Delay	LOS
Akers St at Cartmill Ave	8.3	A	9.3	A
Akers St at Oakdale Ave				
Northbound approach	8.1	A	8.0	A
Southbound approach	7.6	A	7.9	A
Westbound approach	11.8	B	12.5	B
Eastbound approach	13.2	B	22.2	B

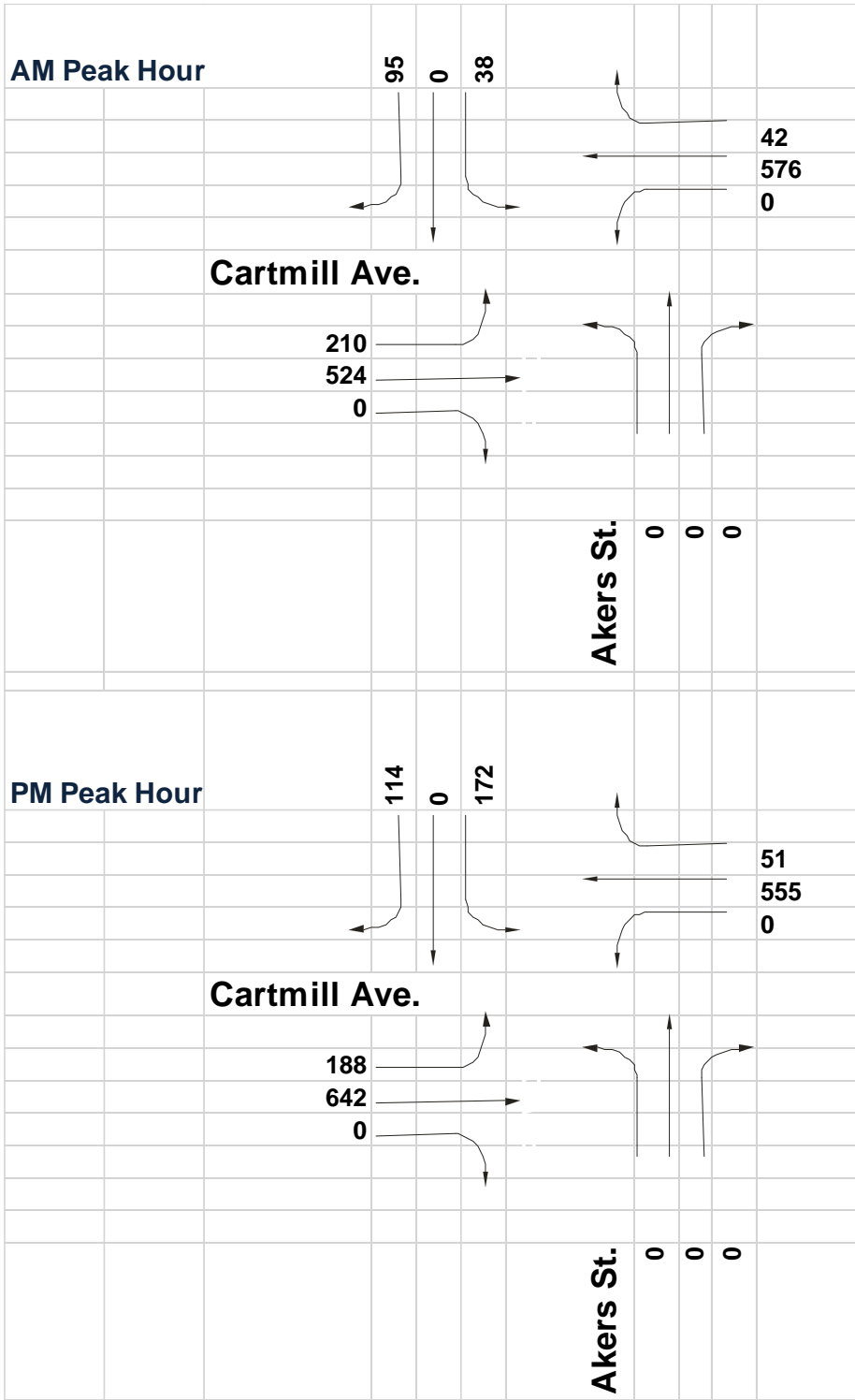


FIGURE 8: Existing Plus Akers Business Park Traffic Counts

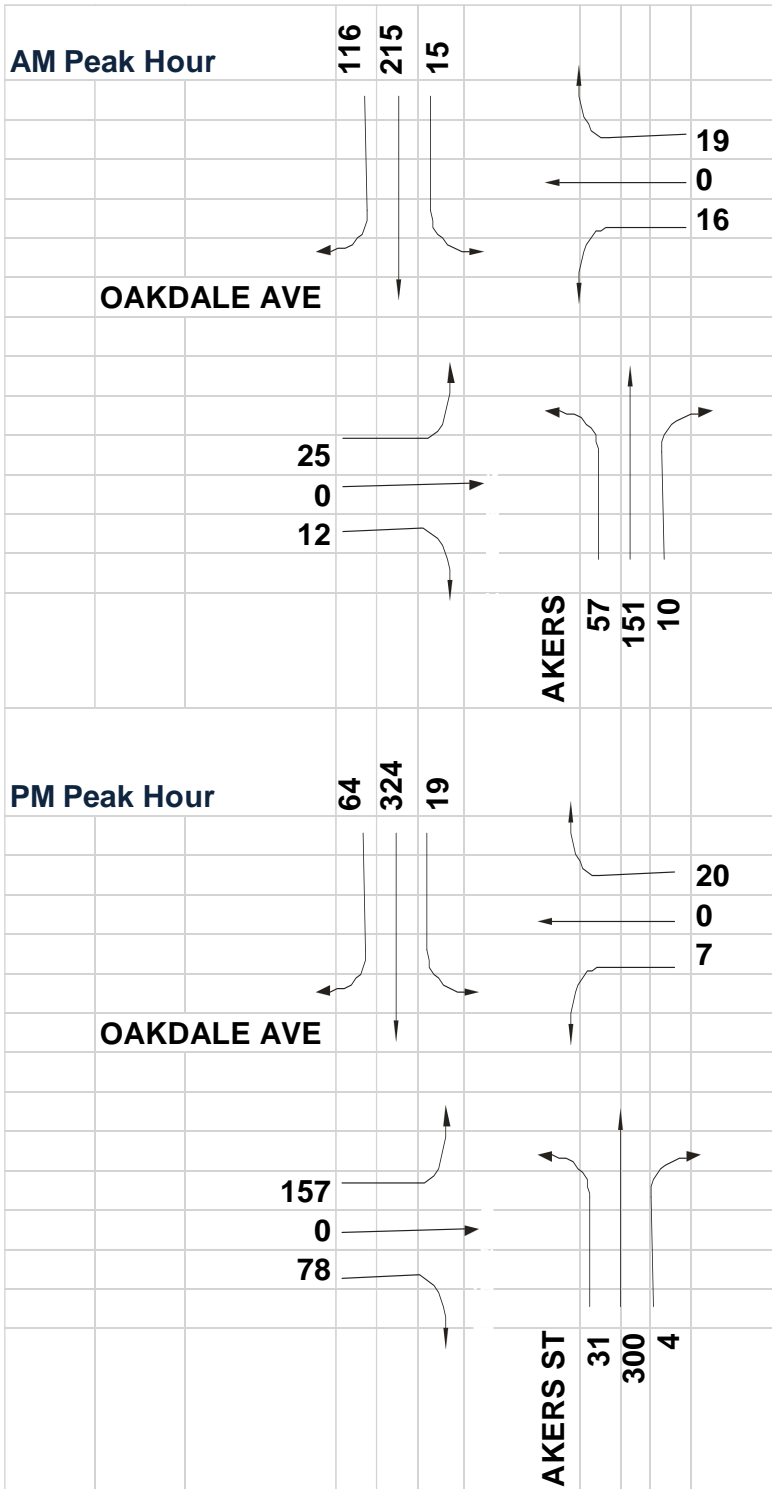


FIGURE 8: Existing Plus Akers Business Park Traffic Counts

## CHAPTER 5 – VEHICLE MILES TRAVELLED ASSESSMENT

In 2020 the County of Tulare prepared the County of Tulare Draft SB 743 Guidelines for the implementation of Senate Bill 743 in the unincorporated area of Tulare County. SB 743 was passed by the legislature and signed into law in the fall of 2013. This legislation led to a change in the way that transportation impacts will be measured under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Starting on July 1, 2020, automobile delay and level of service (LOS) may no longer be used as the performance measure to determine the transportation impacts of land development projects under CEQA and the new performance measure will be vehicle miles traveled (VMT). Although statewide guidance for the implementation of SB 743 has been written by the Governor's Office of Planning and Research (OPR), CEQA allows lead agencies (including Tulare County) the latitude to determine their own methodologies and significance thresholds for CEQA technical studies. The SB 743 Guidelines provided in this report are based on the statewide guidance provided by OPR, but they include clarifications and details tailored for and specific to local conditions in Tulare County SB 743 applies to both land development and transportation projects. The VMT analysis methodology for land development projects was developed in order to accomplish the following:

- ◆ *Meet the requirements of CEQA, including the new SB 743 regulations that were adopted into*
- ◆ *CEQA in December 2018 and go into effect on July 1, 2020.*
- ◆ *Provide for transportation improvements to be built that benefit Tulare County residents and*
- ◆ *facilitate travel by walking, bicycling, and transit.*
- ◆ *Provide for analysis and mitigation of VMT impacts in a way that is feasible and within the*
- ◆ *scale*
- ◆ *of land development projects in Tulare County.*

VMT analysis for land development projects is to be conducted by comparing a project's VMT/capita or VMT/employee to the average VMT/capita or VMT/employee for the traffic analysis zone (TAZ) in which the project is located. Projects that have a VMT/capita or VMT/employee equal to or above the average for the TAZ are required to provide mitigation in the form of relatively low-cost improvement projects that would support travel by bicycling or walking or provide justification that improvements at the regional level are sufficient to mitigate their VMT impacts. Certain projects such as small projects and local serving retail projects would be presumed to have a less than significant impact and would not be required to do a VMT analysis. It is important to note that goods movement (e.g., the transport of raw or finished products from one location to another, for example, transfer of milk to an ice cream producing plant and then the transfer of ice cream to a distributor or directly to a retailer) is not subject to SB 743 and only passenger trips need to be considered in a VMT analysis. 1 Transportation projects that are focused on improvements to travel by bicycling, walking, and transit would be presumed to have a less than significant impact (as these modes of travel eliminate or reduce miles travelled by a vehicle) and would not be required to do a VMT analysis. Certain small roadway projects and all roadway projects that are consistent with the General Plan would be presumed to have a less than significant impact (as these projects have been anticipated to accommodate projected growth and/or are planned improvements to the roadway system for safety, to meet current roadway standards, or to improve roads that are functionally obsolete). Larger roadway projects that are inconsistent with the General Plan would need to conduct a VMT analysis and would need to consider providing mitigation if the project is forecasted to cause an increase in VMT.

Although VMT will be the performance measure for CEQA transportation studies, California jurisdictions may still require consideration of roadway operational analysis in the project approval process and may condition projects to provide roadway improvements. Guidelines are provided for the evaluation of the effect of projects on roadways, including the determination of required roadway improvements.

### 3.1 Overview of Analysis

The VMT analysis methodology for land development projects was developed in order to accomplish the following:

- ◆ *Meet the requirements of CEQA, including the new SB 743 regulations that were adopted into CEQA in December 2018 and go into effect on July 1, 2020.*
- ◆ *Provide for transportation improvements to be built that benefit Tulare County residents and facilitate travel by walking, bicycling, and transit.*
- ◆ *Provide for analysis and mitigation of VMT impacts in a way that is feasible and within the scale of land development projects in Tulare County.*

The starting point for the VMT analysis provided in these Guidelines was OPR's December 2018 technical advisory. OPR recommends determining the project VMT/capita or VMT/employee and comparing it to regional and/or city-wide averages. For urban, suburban, and rural areas within counties that are part of Metropolitan Planning Areas (MPO's), OPR recommends use of VMT/capita and VMT/employee significance thresholds that are 15% below the relevant averages. OPR also states that for rural areas outside MPO's, significance thresholds may be best determined on a case-by-case basis.

It is important to note that VMT analysis, as described in these Guidelines only applies to passenger travel, not goods movement (as defined earlier). The following (referring to CEQA) is contained in OPR's technical advisory: "Section 15064.3, subdivision (a), states, 'For the purposes of this section, vehicle miles traveled refers to the amount and distance of automobile travel attributable to a project. Here, the term 'automobile' refers to on-road passenger vehicles, specifically cars and light trucks.'" Therefore, trips related to the movement of goods for agricultural or industrial purposes would not be subject to a VMT analysis and would be considered to have a less than significant impact on the transportation system. For projects that include both auto and truck (i.e. goods movement) trips only the auto trips would be analyzed. When determining mitigation measures, only a project's auto trips would be considered.

Building on the OPR guidance, these Guidelines provide a refined VMT analysis specifically tailored to the unincorporated areas within the County of Tulare's jurisdiction. These Guidelines extend OPR's concept of determining significance thresholds for rural areas on a case-by-case basis to Tulare County based on the concept that travel behavior in the small town and rural areas of Tulare County is similar to travel behavior in the rural portions of non-MPO counties.

Project VMT/capita and VMT/employee can be most easily determined using a travel demand model, either by running the model for each specific project VMT analysis or by creating maps and tables showing average VMT/capita and VMT/employee values for the area of interest. Many types of transportation analyses in Tulare County should be conducted using the TCAG regional travel demand model and this model can potentially be used for VMT analysis if a model run is conducted for each project. However, TCAG does not provide map or table based VMT/capita and

VMT/employee values. Instead VMT analysis can be conducted using the California Statewide Travel Demand Model (CSTDm), developed and maintained by Caltrans. Caltrans has provided base-year (2010) and horizon year (2040) VMT/capita and VMT/employee values for the entire state broken down by county and by geographical units known as traffic analysis zones (TAZ's) within each county.

In its Technical Advisory, OPR refers to the process described earlier for small projects as “map based screening”. OPR recommends this methodology for determining which projects are located in VMT-efficient areas and can therefore be “screened out” from requiring a VMT analysis. For Tulare County, this process is extended to allow for the map-based analysis of VMT/capita and VMT/employee values.

Thresholds of significance for VMT analysis are also based on OPR's recommendations, but some refinements have been made to reflect the predominantly rural character of Tulare County; following are refinements applicable to Tulare County:

- ◆ *OPR recommends that residential and office projects compare project VMT/capita or VMT/employee to regional or city-wide average. For Tulare County, due to its predominantly rural character, these comparisons are made between project VMT and the average VMT/capita or between project VMT/employee for the average VMT/employee in the TAZ in which the project is located.*
- ◆ *OPR recommends a significance threshold of 15% below average. For Tulare County, the significance threshold is below the TAZ average. Therefore, projects that have a VMT/capita or VMT/employee equal to or above the average VMT/capita or VMT/employee in the TAZ in which the project is located would be presumed to have a significant transportation impact.*
- ◆ *OPR recommends that local-serving retail projects can be presumed to have a less than significant transportation impact. This is because local-serving retail typically reduces trip lengths by providing additional destinations that tend to replace trips to more distant retail locations. For Tulare County, this concept is also used and it is extended to other types of local-serving projects such as schools, public facilities, parks, and local-serving medical offices.*
- ◆ *OPR recommends that a regional retail project may have a significant impact if results in a net increase in total VMT. This threshold is also used by Tulare County.*
- ◆ *OPR does not recommend a specific threshold for industrial projects. For Tulare County, an industrial project has a significant impact if its VMT/employee equals or exceeds average VMT/employee for the TAZ in which the project is located. It should be noted that goods movement is not subject to VMT analysis. Therefore, goods movement trips associated with an industrial project would not be included when determining VMT/employee.*

While many projects will go through the process described above to analyze VMT, some projects will be determined to be “screened out” due to project size or project type. These projects are described in Section 3.2. Figure 3-1 shows a flow chart that summarizes the VMT analysis process. Tulare County Traffic Zone Analysis Maps are shown in Figure 3-2. These maps provide a general indication of the location of TAZ's within Tulare County. At the time of preparation of this report, more detailed TAZ maps were available on the website of the Northern California Section of the Institute of Transportation Engineers ([www.norcalite.org](http://www.norcalite.org)). In the future these maps may be available from Tulare County staff or the Caltrans SB 743 website (<https://dot.ca.gov/programs/transportationplanning/>)



office-of-smart-mobility-climate-change/sb-743). VMT/capita and VMT/employee values for base year conditions based on the CSTDM are shown in Table 3-1.

It should be noted that some projects include a mix of land uses. For these projects, one way to conduct the VMT analysis would be to use the methodology described above and analyze VMT impacts and mitigation for each land use type separately. An alternative approach would be to conduct an analysis determine the VMT reduction that would occur due to internal capture (i.e. trips between different land uses that occur within the project site). The information in Appendix A may be helpful in determining VMT reductions for mixed use projects.

### 3.2 Screening Criteria

Following is a description of projects that would have a less than significant transportation impact due to project size or project type. If a project meets at least one of the following screening criteria, it would not require a detailed VMT analysis.

#### *Small Projects*

*Some projects are small enough that they can be presumed to have a less than significant transportation impact without doing a detailed VMT analysis. For Tulare County, projects that generate less than 500 trips per day can be presumed to have a less than significant impact. Trip generation would normally be determined using the current edition of the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) Trip Generation Manual. Other potential sources include the San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG) trip generation guide (Not So Brief Guide of Vehicular Traffic Generation Rates in the San Diego Region, April 2002), articles in the ITE Journal, as well as trip generation rates obtained from other accepted sources. In some cases, project applicants may choose to conduct counts of existing similar facilities in order to determine trip generation rates.*

#### *Local-Serving Retail and Similar Land Uses*

*Consistent with OPR's Technical Advisory, local-serving retail uses are presumed to have a less than significant impact on VMT since they tend to attract vehicle trips from adjacent areas that would have otherwise been made to more distant retail locations. This presumption also applies in Tulare County.*

*Most retail developments in the unincorporated area of Tulare County are anticipated to be local serving. In cases where there is reasonable doubt on whether a project is local serving or regional, County staff can exercise an option of requesting, or requiring, a market study to assist in the evaluation/determination of localness or regionality. Other developments that are not technically retail may fall under this category such as medical offices, insurance agents, and other offices that are intended to serve the general public. See Appendix E for a list of projects that would fall into this category based on the County's zoning code. Project applicants are encouraged to submit a written analysis to Tulare County for a determination on whether the local serving status applies.*

#### *Local-Serving Public Facilities*

*Similar to retail land uses, local-serving public facilities are presumed to have a less than significant impact on VMT. This would include government facilities intended to typically serve the local public, parks, and public elementary schools, public middle schools, and high schools.*

#### *Affordable and Farmworker Housing Projects*

*OPR's Technical Advisory allows for a less than significant finding for transportation impacts of residential projects that are 100% affordable housing located in infill areas. For Tulare County, affordable housing is defined as affordable to all persons with a household income equal to or less than 50% of the area median income (as defined by California Health and Safety Code Section 50093), housing for senior citizens, housing for transitional foster youth, disabled veterans, and homeless persons. In addition, this screening category applies to all 100% affordable housing projects that meet the detailed criteria above, regardless of whether they are located in infill areas. It also applies to all developments intended primarily for farm worker housing regardless of their status with respect to affordability.*

#### *Redevelopment Projects That Result in a Net Reduction of VMT*

*According to CEQA, projects are considered to have a less than significant impact if they result in a net reduction in the relevant performance measure (in this case VMT). Therefore, redevelopment projects in Tulare County that generate less VMT than the existing project they are replacing would be considered to have a less than significant impact on VMT. For the purposes of VMT analysis, a redevelopment project is any project that replaces an existing development rather than being built on vacant/undeveloped land. Since VMT/capita and VMT/employee are efficiency metrics, a redevelopment project that would produce more VMT than the existing project it is replacing would need to conduct a VMT analysis assuming the proposed land use (with no credit taken for the existing land use) to determine whether the proposed project meets the applicable significance thresholds (i.e. a value below the average VMT/capita or VMT/employee of the TAZ in which the project is located).*

#### *Mixed-Use Projects That Result in a Net Reduction of VMT*

*Mixed-use projects typically generate less VMT than the individual component land uses would generate if they were built on separate project sites because mixed-use projects allow some trips to be made by walking or by short vehicle trips which would occur within or very near the project site. Mixed-use projects that wish to demonstrate a net reduction in VMT would need to conduct an internal capture analysis using the methodology described in the current edition Institute of Transportation Engineers Trip Generation Handbook. Once a reduction in VMT is demonstrated through internal capture, the VMT reduction would be used to indicate a reduced level of VMT/capita or VMT/employee for one or more of the individual land uses. After applying this reduction, the individual land use components of the project would be analyzed separately with respect to applicable significance thresholds.*

### 3.3 Significance Thresholds

Significance thresholds for land development projects are summarized below. Additional discussion and substantial evidence can be found in Appendix C.

- ◆ *Residential Projects: A significant transportation impact occurs if the project VMT per capita equals or exceeds the average VMT per capita for the TAZ where the project is located.*
  - ◆ *Office Projects: A significant transportation impact occurs if the project VMT per employee equals or exceeds the average VMT per employee for the TAZ where the project is located.*
  - ◆ *Regional Retail Projects: A significant transportation impact occurs if the project results in a net increase in VMT.*
  - ◆ *Industrial Projects: A significant transportation impact occurs if the project VMT per employee exceeds the average VMT per employee for the TAZ where the project is located.*
- Appendix B includes information on project types not described above.*

### 3.4 Mitigation

The preferred method of VMT mitigation in Tulare County is for project applicants to provide transportation improvements that facilitate travel by walking, bicycling, or transit. This can be accomplished as follows:

- ◆ *A survey should be conducted within one half mile of the project site to determine any gaps in facilities for walking, bicycling, or transit. For example, this could include repair of damaged or construction of new sidewalks, installation of curb ramps, provision of bicycle facilities, or improvement to transit stops or access to transit routes. For bicycle facilities, the improvement could be a Class I, II, or III bicycle facility consistent with TCAG's Regional Active Transportation Plan or Tulare County Complete Streets plans and programs.*
- ◆ *If suitable improvements are not found within one half mile of the project site, improvements could be suggested in more remote locations as long as they support walking, bicycling, and transit in the unincorporated area of Tulare County.*
- ◆ *The project list in Appendix F, based on the TCAG Regional Active Transportation Plan, can be consulted for potential projects that could be used for VMT mitigation.*
- ◆ *In order to provide VMT mitigation for CEQA purposes, the cost of the mitigation provided should exceed either \$20 per average daily trip generated by the project or 0.5% of the total construction cost of the project (not including land acquisition). The \$20 value per average daily trip is based on a generally typical statewide minimum roadway mitigation value of \$2,000 per single family dwelling unit and an assumption that transit, bicycling, and walking make up approximately 1% of all trips in Tulare County. The value of 0.5% of construction cost is meant to be roughly equivalent to this value but expressed in a different way.*
- ◆ *If a project provides mitigation that meets either or both of the VMT mitigation costs described above, it can presume a 1% reduction in VMT for reporting purposes. The goal of this mitigation is that it will be sufficient to reduce a project's VMT impacts to a level of insignificance.*
- ◆ *In some cases, it may be infeasible for projects to meet the requirements described earlier. In these cases, a project may submit reasonable rationale to the County and request mitigation of VMT impacts on a regional basis. The project applicant would then provide reasonable documentation (i.e., evidence) of how its implementation would provide funding toward unfunded projects. Suitable projects may be found in the TCAG Regional Active Transportation Plan, transit development plans, bicycle and pedestrians plans adopted at the local level, or as part of complete streets projects. Payment could be made through direct or indirect payment of fees or other monetary contributions that would be used to fund relevant improvements. In order for a project to demonstrate a 1% reduction in VMT for reporting purposes, a reasonable argument must be made and submitted by the project applicant to the County for review and subsequent approval.*

### 3.5 Step by Step Summary of VMT Analysis for Land Development Projects

Following is a step by step summary of the process for VMT analysis of land development projects.

- ◆ *Determine whether the project is relieved of the requirements to conduct a VMT analysis using the screening criteria described in Section 3.2.*
- ◆ *If the project is not relieved, determine the TAZ where the project is located based on the maps shown in Figure 3-2 or the more detailed maps available from the ITE or Caltrans sources noted at the end of Section 3.1.*
- ◆ *Determine the average VMT/capita or VMT/employee for the TAZ in which the project is located based on Table 3-1.*

- ◆ Unless the project has unique characteristics that would result in less VMT generation than a typical project, assume the project VMT/capita or VMT/employee is the same as the average for the TAZ in which the project is located. This would typically result in a significant VMT impact.
- ◆ Provide VMT mitigation as described in Section 3.4.

### 3.6 Additional VMT Methodologies for Unique Situations

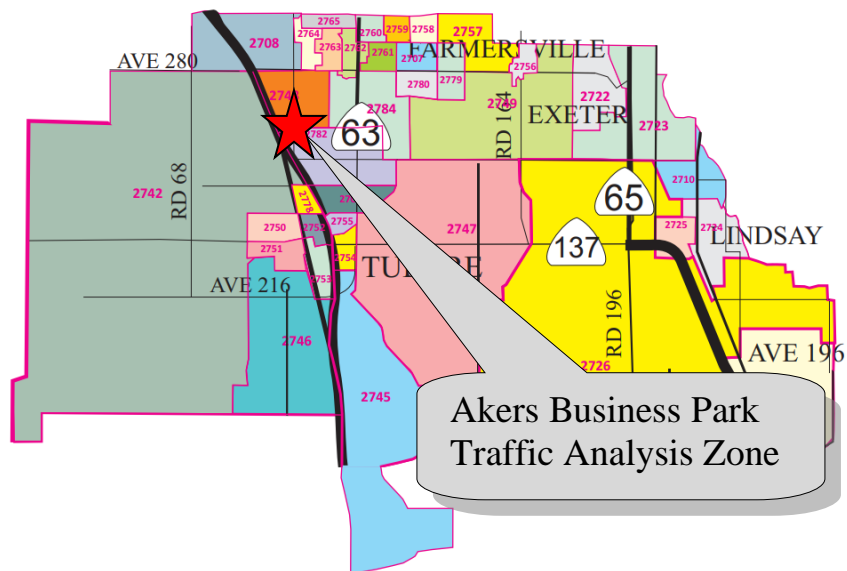
For some projects, it may be acceptable to conduct VMT analysis in an alternative manner than what is described above. This could apply to proposed very large projects that would require a model run rather than the methodology described above. It could also apply to projects that have unique VMT characteristics for which the average VMT/capita or VMT/employee in the TAZ where the project is located would not be applicable.

### Akers Business Project Screening Process

Following is a step by step summary of the process for VMT analysis of land development projects.

- ◆ Determine whether the project is relieved of the requirements to conduct a VMT analysis using the screening criteria described in Section 3.2.
- ◆ Small Projects – “NO”
- ◆ Local-Serving Retail and Similar Land Uses – “NO”
- ◆ Local-Serving Public Facilities – “NO”
- ◆ Affordable and Farmworker Housing Projects – “NO”
- ◆ Redevelopment Projects That Result in a Net Reduction of VMT – “NO”
- ◆ Mixed-Use Projects That Result in a Net Reduction of VMT – “NO”
- ◆ If the project is not relieved, determine the TAZ where the project is located based on the maps shown in Figure 3-2 or the more detailed maps available from the ITE or Caltrans sources noted at the end of Section 3.1. –

**Traffic Analysis Zone =**  
 TAZ 2782



**FIGURE 9: TCAG's  
 Traffic Analysis Zones**

- ◆ Determine the average VMT/capita or VMT/employee for the TAZ in which the project is located based on Table 3-1.

**Traffic Analysis Zone #2782, Tulare,  
 Daily VMT Per Capita = 15.04  
 Daily VMT Per Employee= 25.60**

Metric (vehicle miles travelled)	Existing	Threshold (15% reduction)
Tulare County Regional Average VMT Travelled per Capita	11.7	9.94
Traffic Analysis Zone 2782 Average Vehicle Miles Travelled per Capita	15.4	Exceeding

- ◆ Unless the project has unique characteristics that would result in less VMT generation than a typical project, assume the project VMT/capita or VMT/employee is the same as the average for the TAZ in which the project is located. This would typically result in a significant VMT impact.

**See analysis below for unique characteristics of Project**

### **Akers Business Park Project Vehicle Miles Travelled Analysis and Mitigation**

For the overall Akers Business Park Project, a more focused assessment was completed (see Table 8). This evaluation used the Regional Traffic Model in the horizon year of 2046 to project the total number of regional vehicle miles travelled without the Business Park. Then a second model run was completed to reflect the total number of regional vehicle miles travelled with the Business Park added. These two numbers were compared and the net differential was used to determine the potential “impact”.

This methodology was used because the Akers Business Park is a mix of retail and industrial uses. This methodology gets to the focus of SB 743 in the goal of reducing vehicle miles travelled by development of “infill” projects and shortening the distance between jobs and housing. The Akers Business Park is located centrally within the Visalia-Tulare urban area and thus addresses the SB 743 goals of balancing land uses to shorten and reduce vehicle miles travelled.

As shown in the table, without the Akers Business Park Project, the daily regional vehicles miles travelled is estimated by TCAG to total 12,280,659. With the addition of the Akers Business Park, the daily regional vehicles miles travelled are estimated by TCAG to decrease slightly to a total 12,191,360. This represents a regional decrease of 89,299 vehicle miles traveled per day, which is a 0.007% decrease over the baseline estimate. See **Appendix F** for data from the TCAG 2046 Regional Traffic Model.

Table 8 <b>Akers Business Park Project Assessment</b> <i>by Land Use Component</i>				
<b>Land Uses</b>	<b>Regional Baseline VMT</b>	<b>Akers Business Park Project VMT</b>	<b>Over Threshold or Net Increase (yes/no)</b>	<b>Significant (yes/no)</b>
Retail and Industrial	12,280,659	12,191,360	<b>-89,299</b> <b>(-0.007%)</b>	<b>NO</b>

Based on the evaluation shown above the completion of the Akers Business Park Project results in a positive impact in that it reduces future vehicle miles travelled. Therefore, the Business Park is determined to have a less than significant impact under the CEQA Thresholds of Significant (3.2-Mixed-Use Projects That Result in a Net Reduction of VMT).

- ◆ *Provide VMT mitigation as described in Section 3.4.*

***Not required as Akers Business Park Project impacts are less than significant.***

Appendix A  
*Existing Conditions*  
*Level of Service Calculations*



Traffic Evaluation and Vehicle Miles Traveled Assessment  
for the Akers Business Park Project  
Tulare County, California

Akers Business Park  
Existing AM

11/14/2022

Movement	EBL	EBT	EBR	WBL	WBT	WBR	NBL	NBT	NBR	SBL	SBT	SBR
Lane Configurations												
Volume (vph)	115	524	0	0	576	23	0	0	0	31	0	77
Ideal Flow (vphpl)	1900	1900	1900	1900	1900	1900	1900	1900	1900	1900	1900	1900
Total Lost time (s)	4.0	4.0			4.0	4.0					4.0	
Lane Util. Factor	1.00	0.91			0.91	1.00					1.00	
Fr't	1.00	1.00			1.00	0.85					0.90	
Flt Protected	0.95	1.00			1.00	1.00					0.99	
Satd. Flow (prot)	1770	5085			5085	1583					1660	
Flt Permitted	0.40	1.00			1.00	1.00					0.99	
Satd. Flow (perm)	752	5085			5085	1583					1660	
Peak-hour factor, PHF	0.92	0.92	0.92	0.92	0.92	0.92	0.92	0.92	0.92	0.92	0.92	0.92
Adj. Flow (vph)	125	570	0	0	626	25	0	0	0	34	0	84
RTOR Reduction (vph)	0	0	0	0	0	15	0	0	0	0	50	0
Lane Group Flow (vph)	125	570	0	0	626	10	0	0	0	0	68	0
Turn Type	Perm			Perm		Perm					Perm	
Protected Phases		4			8							6
Permitted Phases	4			8		8				6		
Actuated Green, G (s)	16.0	16.0			16.0	16.0						16.0
Effective Green, g (s)	16.0	16.0			16.0	16.0						16.0
Actuated g/C Ratio	0.40	0.40			0.40	0.40						0.40
Clearance Time (s)	4.0	4.0			4.0	4.0						4.0
Lane Grp Cap (vph)	301	2034			2034	633						664
v/s Ratio Prot		0.11			0.12							
v/s Ratio Perm	c0.17					0.01						0.04
v/c Ratio	0.42	0.28			0.31	0.02						0.10
Uniform Delay, d1	8.6	8.1			8.2	7.2						7.5
Progression Factor	1.00	1.00			1.00	1.00						1.00
Incremental Delay, d2	4.2	0.3			0.4	0.0						0.3
Delay (s)	12.8	8.5			8.6	7.3						7.8
Level of Service	B	A			A	A						A
Approach Delay (s)		9.2			8.6			0.0				7.8
Approach LOS		A			A			A				A
<b>Intersection Summary</b>												
HCM Average Control Delay		8.8			HCM Level of Service			A				
HCM Volume to Capacity ratio		0.26										
Actuated Cycle Length (s)		40.0			Sum of lost time (s)			8.0				
Intersection Capacity Utilization		34.0%			ICU Level of Service			A				
Analysis Period (min)		15										

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Traffic Evaluation and Vehicle Miles Traveled Assessment  
for the Akers Business Park Project  
Tulare County, California

TWO-WAY STOP CONTROL SUMMARY								
General Information				Site Information				
Analyst	CC			Intersection	Akers at Oakdale			
Agency/Co.	County of Tulare			Jurisdiction	County of Tulare			
Date Performed	11/14/2022			Analysis Year	Existing Conditions			
Analysis Time Period	AM Peak							
Project Description Akers Business Park								
East/West Street: Oakdale				North/South Street: Akers				
Intersection Orientation: North-South				Study Period (hrs): 0.25				
Vehicle Volumes and Adjustments								
Major Street	Northbound			Southbound				
Movement	1	2	3	4	5	6		
	L	T	R	L	T	R		
Volume (veh/h)	0	126	10	15	99	0		
Peak-Hour Factor, PHF	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00		
Hourly Flow Rate, HFR (veh/h)	0	126	10	15	99	0		
Percent Heavy Vehicles	5	--	--		--	--		
Median Type	Undivided							
RT Channelized			0			0		
Lanes	0	1	0	0	1	0		
Configuration	LTR			LTR				
Upstream Signal	0			0				
Minor Street	Eastbound			Westbound				
Movement	7	8	9	10	11	12		
	L	T	R	L	T	R		
Volume (veh/h)	0	0	0	16	0	19		
Peak-Hour Factor, PHF	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00		
Hourly Flow Rate, HFR (veh/h)	0	0	0	16	0	19		
Percent Heavy Vehicles	5	5	5	5	5	5		
Percent Grade (%)	0			0				
Flared Approach	N			N				
Storage	0			0				
RT Channelized	0			0				
Lanes	0	1	0	0	1	0		
Configuration	LTR			LTR				
Delay, Queue Length, and Level of Service								
Approach	Northbound	Southbound	Westbound			Eastbound		
Movement	1	4	7	8	9	10	11	12
Lane Configuration	LTR	LTR	LTR			LTR		
v (veh/h)	0	15	35			0		
C (m) (veh/h)	1475	1461	789					
v/c	0.00	0.01	0.04					
95% queue length	0.00	0.03	0.14					
Control Delay (s/veh)	7.4	7.5	9.8					
LOS	A	A	A					
Approach Delay (s/veh)	--	--	9.8					
Approach LOS	--	--	A					



Traffic Evaluation and Vehicle Miles Traveled Assessment  
for the Akers Business Park Project  
Tulare County, California

Akers Business Park  
Existing PM

11/14/2022

Movement	EBL	EBT	EBR	WBL	WBT	WBR	NBL	NBT	NBR	SBL	SBT	SBR
Lane Configurations												
Volume (vph)	139	642	0	0	555	38	0	0	0	80	0	53
Ideal Flow (vphpl)	1900	1900	1900	1900	1900	1900	1900	1900	1900	1900	1900	1900
Total Lost time (s)	4.0	4.0			4.0	4.0					4.0	
Lane Util. Factor	1.00	0.91			0.91	1.00					1.00	
Flt Protected	0.95	1.00			1.00	0.85					0.97	
Satd. Flow (prot)	1770	5085			5085	1583					1711	
Flt Permitted	0.41	1.00			1.00	1.00					0.97	
Satd. Flow (perm)	769	5085			5085	1583					1711	
Peak-hour factor, PHF	0.92	0.92	0.92	0.92	0.92	0.92	0.92	0.92	0.92	0.92	0.92	0.92
Adj. Flow (vph)	151	698	0	0	603	41	0	0	0	87	0	58
RTOR Reduction (vph)	0	0	0	0	0	25	0	0	0	0	35	0
Lane Group Flow (vph)	151	698	0	0	603	16	0	0	0	0	110	0
Turn Type	Perm			Perm		Perm				Perm		
Protected Phases		4			8							6
Permitted Phases	4			8		8				6		
Actuated Green, G (s)	16.0	16.0			16.0	16.0					16.0	
Effective Green, g (s)	16.0	16.0			16.0	16.0					16.0	
Actuated g/C Ratio	0.40	0.40			0.40	0.40					0.40	
Clearance Time (s)	4.0	4.0			4.0	4.0					4.0	
Lane Grp Cap (vph)	308	2034			2034	633					684	
v/s Ratio Prot		0.14			0.12							
v/s Ratio Perm	c0.20					0.01					0.06	
v/c Ratio	0.49	0.34			0.30	0.03					0.16	
Uniform Delay, d1	9.0	8.3			8.2	7.3					7.7	
Progression Factor	1.00	1.00			1.00	1.00					1.00	
Incremental Delay, d2	5.5	0.5			0.4	0.1					0.5	
Delay (s)	14.4	8.8			8.5	7.4					8.2	
Level of Service	B	A			A	A					A	
Approach Delay (s)		9.8			8.5			0.0			8.2	
Approach LOS		A			A			A			A	
<b>Intersection Summary</b>												
HCM Average Control Delay			9.1								A	
HCM Volume to Capacity ratio			0.33									
Actuated Cycle Length (s)			40.0							8.0		
Intersection Capacity Utilization			36.1%								A	
Analysis Period (min)			15									

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Traffic Evaluation and Vehicle Miles Traveled Assessment  
for the Akers Business Park Project  
Tulare County, California

TWO-WAY STOP CONTROL SUMMARY								
General Information				Site Information				
Analyst	CC			Intersection	Akers at Oakdale			
Agency/Co.	County of Tulare			Jurisdiction	County of Tulare			
Date Performed	11/14/2022			Analysis Year	Existing Conditions			
Analysis Time Period	PM Peak							
Project Description Akers Business Park								
East/West Street: Oakdale				North/South Street: Akers				
Intersection Orientation: North-South				Study Period (hrs): 0.25				
Vehicle Volumes and Adjustments								
Major Street	Northbound			Southbound				
Movement	1	2	3	4	5	6		
	L	T	R	L	T	R		
Volume (veh/h)	0	143	4	19	261			
Peak-Hour Factor, PHF	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00			
Hourly Flow Rate, HFR (veh/h)	0	143	4	19	261			
Percent Heavy Vehicles	5	--	--	5	--	--		
Median Type	Undivided							
RT Channelized			0			0		
Lanes	0	1	0	0	1	0		
Configuration	LTR			LTR				
Upstream Signal		0			0			
Minor Street	Eastbound			Westbound				
Movement	7	8	9	10	11	12		
	L	T	R	L	T	R		
Volume (veh/h)	0	0	0	7	0	20		
Peak-Hour Factor, PHF	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00		
Hourly Flow Rate, HFR (veh/h)	0	0	0	7	0	20		
Percent Heavy Vehicles	5	5	5	5	5	5		
Percent Grade (%)	0			0				
Flared Approach		N			N			
Storage		0			0			
RT Channelized			0			0		
Lanes	0	1	0	0	1	0		
Configuration	LTR			LTR				
Delay, Queue Length, and Level of Service								
Approach	Northbound	Southbound	Westbound			Eastbound		
Movement	1	4	7	8	9	10	11	12
Lane Configuration	LTR	LTR	LTR			LTR		
v (veh/h)	0	19	27			0		
C (m) (veh/h)	1285	1417	749					
v/c	0.00	0.01	0.04					
95% queue length	0.00	0.04	0.11					
Control Delay (s/veh)	7.8	7.6	10.0					
LOS	A	A	A					
Approach Delay (s/veh)	--	--	10.0					
Approach LOS	--	--	A					

Appendix B

*Existing Plus Akers Business Park Project Conditions  
Level of Service Calculations*



Traffic Evaluation and Vehicle Miles Traveled Assessment  
for the Akers Business Park Project  
Tulare County, California

Akers Business Park  
Existing+PROJECT AM

11/14/2022

Movement	EBL	EBT	EBR	WBL	WBT	WBR	NBL	NBT	NBR	SBL	SBT	SBR
Lane Configurations												
Volume (vph)	210	524	0	0	576	42	0	0	0	38	0	95
Ideal Flow (vphpl)	1900	1900	1900	1900	1900	1900	1900	1900	1900	1900	1900	1900
Total Lost time (s)	4.0	4.0			4.0	4.0					4.0	
Lane Util. Factor	1.00	0.91			0.91	1.00					1.00	
Flt Protected	0.95	1.00			1.00	0.85					0.90	
Satd. Flow (prot)	1770	5085			5085	1583					1659	
Flt Permitted	0.40	1.00			1.00	1.00					0.99	
Satd. Flow (perm)	752	5085			5085	1583					1659	
Peak-hour factor, PHF	0.92	0.92	0.92	0.92	0.92	0.92	0.92	0.92	0.92	0.92	0.92	0.92
Adj. Flow (vph)	228	570	0	0	626	46	0	0	0	41	0	103
RTOR Reduction (vph)	0	0	0	0	0	22	0	0	0	0	70	0
Lane Group Flow (vph)	228	570	0	0	626	24	0	0	0	0	74	0
Turn Type	Perm			Perm		Perm					Perm	
Protected Phases		4			8							6
Permitted Phases	4			8		8				6		
Actuated Green, G (s)	26.0	26.0			26.0	26.0						16.0
Effective Green, g (s)	26.0	26.0			26.0	26.0						16.0
Actuated g/C Ratio	0.52	0.52			0.52	0.52						0.32
Clearance Time (s)	4.0	4.0			4.0	4.0						4.0
Lane Grp Cap (vph)	391	2644			2644	823						531
v/s Ratio Prot		0.11			0.12							
v/s Ratio Perm	c0.30					0.02						0.04
v/c Ratio	0.58	0.22			0.24	0.03						0.14
Uniform Delay, d1	8.3	6.5			6.6	5.8						12.1
Progression Factor	1.00	1.00			1.00	1.00						1.00
Incremental Delay, d2	6.2	0.2			0.2	0.1						0.5
Delay (s)	14.5	6.7			6.8	5.9						12.6
Level of Service	B	A			A	A						B
Approach Delay (s)		8.9			6.7			0.0				12.6
Approach LOS		A			A			A				B
<b>Intersection Summary</b>												
HCM Average Control Delay		8.3										
HCM Volume to Capacity ratio		0.41										
Actuated Cycle Length (s)		50.0										
Intersection Capacity Utilization		40.7%										
Analysis Period (min)		15										
Critical Lane Group												

1/14/2022

Synchro 7 - Report  
Page 1



Traffic Evaluation and Vehicle Miles Traveled Assessment  
for the Akers Business Park Project  
Tulare County, California

TWO-WAY STOP CONTROL SUMMARY								
General Information				Site Information				
Analyst	CC			Intersection	Akers at Oakdale			
Agency/Co.	County of Tulare			Jurisdiction	County of Tulare			
Date Performed	11/14/2022			Analysis Year	Existing Conditions + PROJECT			
Analysis Time Period	AM Peak							
Project Description Akers Business Park								
East/West Street: Oakdale				North/South Street: Akers				
Intersection Orientation: North-South				Study Period (hrs): 0.25				
Vehicle Volumes and Adjustments								
Major Street	Northbound				Southbound			
Movement	1	2	3	4	5	6		
	L	T	R	L	T	R		
Volume (veh/h)	57	151	10	15	215	116		
Peak-Hour Factor, PHF	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00		
Hourly Flow Rate, HFR (veh/h)	57	151	10	15	215	116		
Percent Heavy Vehicles	5	--	--	5	--	--		
Median Type	Undivided							
RT Channelized			0					0
Lanes	0	1	0	0	1	0		
Configuration	LTR			LTR				
Upstream Signal		0			0			
Minor Street	Eastbound				Westbound			
Movement	7	8	9	10	11	12		
	L	T	R	L	T	R		
Volume (veh/h)	25	0	12	16	0	19		
Peak-Hour Factor, PHF	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00		
Hourly Flow Rate, HFR (veh/h)	25	0	12	16	0	19		
Percent Heavy Vehicles	5	5	5	5	5	5		
Percent Grade (%)	0				0			
Flared Approach		N			N			
Storage		0			0			
RT Channelized			0					0
Lanes	0	1	1	0	1	0		
Configuration	LT		R		LTR			
Delay, Queue Length, and Level of Service								
Approach	Northbound	Southbound	Westbound			Eastbound		
Movement	1	4	7	8	9	10	11	12
Lane Configuration	LTR	LTR	LTR			LT		R
v (veh/h)	57	15	35			25		12
C (m) (veh/h)	1212	1400	564			390		759
v/c	0.05	0.01	0.06			0.06		0.02
95% queue length	0.15	0.03	0.20			0.20		0.05
Control Delay (s/veh)	8.1	7.6	11.8			14.9		9.8
LOS	A	A	B			B		A
Approach Delay (s/veh)	--	--	11.8			13.2		
Approach LOS	--	--	B			B		



Traffic Evaluation and Vehicle Miles Traveled Assessment  
for the Akers Business Park Project  
Tulare County, California

Akers Business Park Existing+PROJECT PM													11/14/2022
	↖	→	↘	↙	←	↖	↙	↑	↘	↙	↓	↘	
Movement	EBL	EBT	EBR	WBL	WBT	WBR	NBL	NBT	NBR	SBL	SBT	SBR	
Lane Configurations	↖	↖↖↖		↖	↖↖↖	↖					↖	↖	
Volume (vph)	188	642	0	0	555	51	0	0	0	172	0	114	
Ideal Flow (vphpl)	1900	1900	1900	1900	1900	1900	1900	1900	1900	1900	1900	1900	
Total Lost time (s)	4.0	4.0			4.0	4.0					4.0		
Lane Util. Factor	1.00	0.91			0.91	1.00					1.00		
Frt	1.00	1.00			1.00	0.85					0.95		
Flt Protected	0.95	1.00			1.00	1.00					0.97		
Satd. Flow (prot)	1770	5085			5085	1583					1711		
Flt Permitted	0.41	1.00			1.00	1.00					0.97		
Satd. Flow (perm)	769	5085			5085	1583					1711		
Peak-hour factor, PHF	0.92	0.92	0.92	0.92	0.92	0.92	0.92	0.92	0.92	0.92	0.92	0.92	
Adj. Flow (vph)	204	698	0	0	603	55	0	0	0	187	0	124	
RTOR Reduction (vph)	0	0	0	0	0	29	0	0	0	0	53	0	
Lane Group Flow (vph)	204	698	0	0	603	26	0	0	0	0	258	0	
Turn Type	Perm			Perm		Perm					Perm		
Protected Phases		4			8							6	
Permitted Phases	4			8		8				6			
Actuated Green, G (s)	21.0	21.0			21.0	21.0						16.0	
Effective Green, g (s)	21.0	21.0			21.0	21.0						16.0	
Actuated g/C Ratio	0.47	0.47			0.47	0.47						0.36	
Clearance Time (s)	4.0	4.0			4.0	4.0						4.0	
Lane Grp Cap (vph)	359	2373			2373	739						608	
v/s Ratio Prot		0.14			0.12								
v/s Ratio Perm	c0.27					0.02						0.15	
v/c Ratio	0.57	0.29			0.25	0.03						0.42	
Uniform Delay, d1	8.7	7.4			7.3	6.5						11.0	
Progression Factor	1.00	1.00			1.00	1.00						1.00	
Incremental Delay, d2	6.4	0.3			0.3	0.1						2.2	
Delay (s)	15.1	7.7			7.5	6.6						13.2	
Level of Service	B	A			A	A						B	
Approach Delay (s)		9.4			7.4			0.0				13.2	
Approach LOS		A			A			A				B	
<b>Intersection Summary</b>													
HCM Average Control Delay			9.3						A				
HCM Volume to Capacity ratio			0.51										
Actuated Cycle Length (s)			45.0							8.0			
Intersection Capacity Utilization			47.6%									A	
Analysis Period (min)			15										
c Critical Lane Group													

Traffic Evaluation and Vehicle Miles Traveled Assessment  
for the Akers Business Park Project  
Tulare County, California

TWO-WAY STOP CONTROL SUMMARY								
General Information				Site Information				
Analyst	CC			Intersection	Akers at Oakdale			
Agency/Co.	County of Tulare			Jurisdiction	County of Tulare			
Date Performed	11/14/2022			Analysis Year	Existing Conditions+PROJECT			
Analysis Time Period	PM Peak							
Project Description Akers Business Park								
East/West Street: Oakdale				North/South Street: Akers				
Intersection Orientation: North-South				Study Period (hrs): 0.25				
Vehicle Volumes and Adjustments								
Major Street	Northbound				Southbound			
Movement	1	2	3	4	5	6		
	L	T	R	L	T	R		
Volume (veh/h)	31	300	4	19	324			
Peak-Hour Factor, PHF	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00		
Hourly Flow Rate, HFR (veh/h)	31	300	4	19	324	1		
Percent Heavy Vehicles	5	--	--	5	--	--		
Median Type	Undivided							
RT Channelized			0					0
Lanes	0	1	0	0	1	0		
Configuration	LTR			LTR				
Upstream Signal		0			0			
Minor Street	Eastbound				Westbound			
Movement	7	8	9	10	11	12		
	L	T	R	L	T	R		
Volume (veh/h)	157	0	78	7	0	20		
Peak-Hour Factor, PHF	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00		
Hourly Flow Rate, HFR (veh/h)	157	0	78	7	0	20		
Percent Heavy Vehicles	5	5	5	5	5	5		
Percent Grade (%)		0			0			
Flared Approach		N			N			
Storage		0			0			
RT Channelized			0			0		
Lanes	0	1	1	0	1	0		
Configuration	LT		R		LTR			
Delay, Queue Length, and Level of Service								
Approach	Northbound	Southbound	Westbound			Eastbound		
Movement	1	4	7	8	9	10	11	12
Lane Configuration	LTR	LTR	LTR			LT	R	
v (veh/h)	31	19	27			157	78	
C (m) (veh/h)	1218	1240	508			310	710	
v/c	0.03	0.02	0.05			0.51	0.11	
95% queue length	0.08	0.05	0.17			2.70	0.37	
Control Delay (s/veh)	8.0	7.9	12.5			28.0	10.7	
LOS	A	A	B			D	B	
Approach Delay (s/veh)	--	--	12.5			22.2		
Approach LOS	--	--	B			C		

Appendix C  
*TCAG Regional Traffic Model –  
Vehicle Miles Traveled Data*





**Kasia A Poleszczuk**

to me, Roberto

Hi Charlie,

I apologize again for making you wait for these run results:

VMT 2022 (baseline data) **10,741,931.15**;  
VMT 2022 with Project **10,679,807.26**

VMT 2046 (baseline data) **12,280,658.96**  
VMT 2046 (with the project) **12,191,359.95**

TCAG Disclaimer:

*“This data is provided for your information and is not intended for SB743 analysis or any other specific type of study”*

As to your mapping request, I have a few other pressing priorities to complete in the next few weeks, so I wouldn't be able to get to it right away. If you need these maps done by a certain date, please call Roberto to discuss options.

**ATTACHMENT “E”**  
**Agenda Item for GPI 22-003**



**Resource Management  
Agency  
COUNTY OF TULARE  
AGENDA ITEM**

**BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**

LARRY MICARI  
District One

PETE VANDER POEL  
District Two

AMY SHUKLIAN  
District Three

EDDIE VALERO  
District Four

DENNIS TOWNSEND  
District Five

**AGENDA DATE:** August 30, 2022

Public Hearing Required	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Scheduled Public Hearing w/Clerk	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Published Notice Required	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Advertised Published Notice	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Meet & Confer Required	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Electronic file(s) has been sent	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	N/A	<input type="checkbox"/>
Budget Transfer (Aud 308) attached	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Personnel Resolution attached	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Agreements are attached and signature line for Chairman is marked with tab(s)/flag(s)	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
CONTACT PERSON: Celeste Perez    PHONE: (559) 624-7010				

**SUBJECT:** General Plan Initiation No. GPI 22-003 – NFDI LLC

**REQUEST(S):**  
That the Board of Supervisors:

Approve General Plan Initiation No. GPI 22-003 to authorize the applicant, NFDI LLC, to file an application for a General Plan Amendment to change the land use designation on approximately 65-acres from Agriculture to Service Commercial and zoning from AE-20 (Exclusive Agricultural – 20 acre minimum) to C-3-MU (Service Commercial with Mixed-Use Overlay), located at the southwest corner of East Oakdale Avenue and Akers Street, north of the City of Tulare.

**SUMMARY:**  
The Tulare County Resource Management Agency (“RMA”) has received a request from NFDI LLC (1878 North Mooney Boulevard, St. J, Tulare, CA 93274) for a General Plan Initiation (“GPI”). The project site is located at the southwest corner of East Oakdale Avenue and Akers Street, (APN: 149-090-006), north of the City of Tulare. The applicant proposes to change the County’s land use designation on approximately 65-acres from Agriculture to Service Commercial (“SC”) and change the Zoning from AE-20 (Exclusive Agricultural – 20 acre minimum) to C-3-MU (Service Commercial with Mixed-Use Overlay). The project is located within the Tulare Urban Area Boundary (“UAB”) and north of the Tulare Urban Development Boundary.

The General Plan Amendment (“GPA”) is to allow the development of the proposed Akers Business Park as a mixed-use commercial project that includes the expansion of the existing Magic Touch RVs sales facility at the south end of the project.

**SUBJECT:** General Plan Initiation No. GPI 22-003 – NFDI LLC

**DATE:** August 30, 2022

This stage of the proposal is a request to authorize the applicant to apply for a General Plan Amendment. Approval of a GPI application in no way guarantees that the ultimate project will be approved. Instead, approval of a GPI gives the applicants a fair and reasonable opportunity to “make their case” regarding the merits of the resulting planning and development project.

**Tulare County General Plan Consistency**

The County’s General Plan Amendment Policy provides that *the Board shall give consideration as to the public need or necessity of the amendment and whether the proposed amendment would further the goals, objectives, and policies of the general plan and not obstruct their attainment* (Policies and Procedures 391).

The County does have a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the City of Tulare. And per the MOU, the County notifies the City of Tulare of its intentions to amend the General Plan. The City of Tulare did not respond to an initial Planning Review Consultation.

An RVLP Parcel Evaluation was performed for the project site. After all the factors were applied to the parcel, the project received a preliminary RVLP evaluation of 9 points. According to Policy RVLP-1.4 “Determination of Agriculture Land”, if the number of points accumulated is 11 or less, the parcel may be considered for non-agricultural zoning. (See Attachment 2 - RVLP Checklist).

**Conclusion**

Based on factors listed above, it can be concluded that the proposed GPI (1) will be consistent with Tulare County’s General Plan; and (2) will promote the public interest as a greatly needed economic opportunity project in the Planning Area; and (3) The proposed GPA and project are consistent with the Tulare County General Plan; would further the goals, objectives, and policies of that Plan, and would not obstruct their attainment

Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that the proposed GPI should be approved.

**FISCAL IMPACT/FINANCING:**

No Net County Cost to the General Fund.

The applicants cost for a General Plan Amendment and Zone Change is an initial deposit of \$5,321 to the Tulare County RMA. Additional fees of \$100 per hour may be charged, if actual cost of processing the application exceeds the deposits. CEQA documentation and compliance for the project is also charged at a full cost recovery basis.

**LINKAGE TO THE COUNTY OF TULARE STRATEGIC BUSINESS PLAN:**

The County’s five-year strategic plan includes the “Economic Well Being Initiative - to promote economic development opportunities, effective growth management and a quality standard of living”. The authorization to initiate the requested general plan amendment application helps fulfill this initiative by the following:



**SUBJECT:** General Plan Initiation No. GPI 22-003 – NFDI LLC

**DATE:** August 30, 2022

- Providing economic development creation in the commercial areas for sales tax revenue.
- Providing effective growth management by allowing urban uses that are consistent and harmonious.
- Providing a higher quality of life by providing jobs and services to the establishments of the County

**ADMINISTRATIVE SIGN-OFF:**



Aaron R. Bock, MCRP, JD, LEED AP  
Assistant Director  
Economic Development & Planning



Michael Washam, ACE  
Associate Director



Reed Schenke, P.E.  
Director

cc: County Administrative Office

Attachment(s) Attachment 1 – Maps and Graphics  
Attachment 2 – RVLP Checklist

**BEFORE THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
COUNTY OF TULARE, STATE OF CALIFORNIA**

IN THE MATTER OF GENERAL PLAN ) Resolution No. \_\_\_\_\_  
INITIATION NO. GPI 22-003 – NFDI LLC )

UPON MOTION OF SUPERVISOR \_\_\_\_\_, SECONDED BY  
SUPERVISOR \_\_\_\_\_, THE FOLLOWING WAS ADOPTED BY THE  
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS, AT AN OFFICIAL MEETING HELD AUGUST 30, 2022, BY  
THE FOLLOWING VOTE:

AYES:  
NOES:  
ABSTAIN:  
ABSENT:

ATTEST: JASON T. BRITT  
COUNTY ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER/  
CLERK, BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

BY: \_\_\_\_\_  
Deputy Clerk

\* \* \* \* \*

Approved General Plan Initiation No. GPI 22-003 to authorize the applicant, NFDI LLC, to file an application for a General Plan Amendment to change the land use designation on approximately 65-acres from Agriculture to Service Commercial and zoning from AE-20 (Exclusive Agricultural – 20 acre minimum) to C-3-MU (Service Commercial with Mixed-Use Overlay), located at the southwest corner of East Oakdale Avenue and Akers Street, north of the City of Tulare.

# Attachment 1

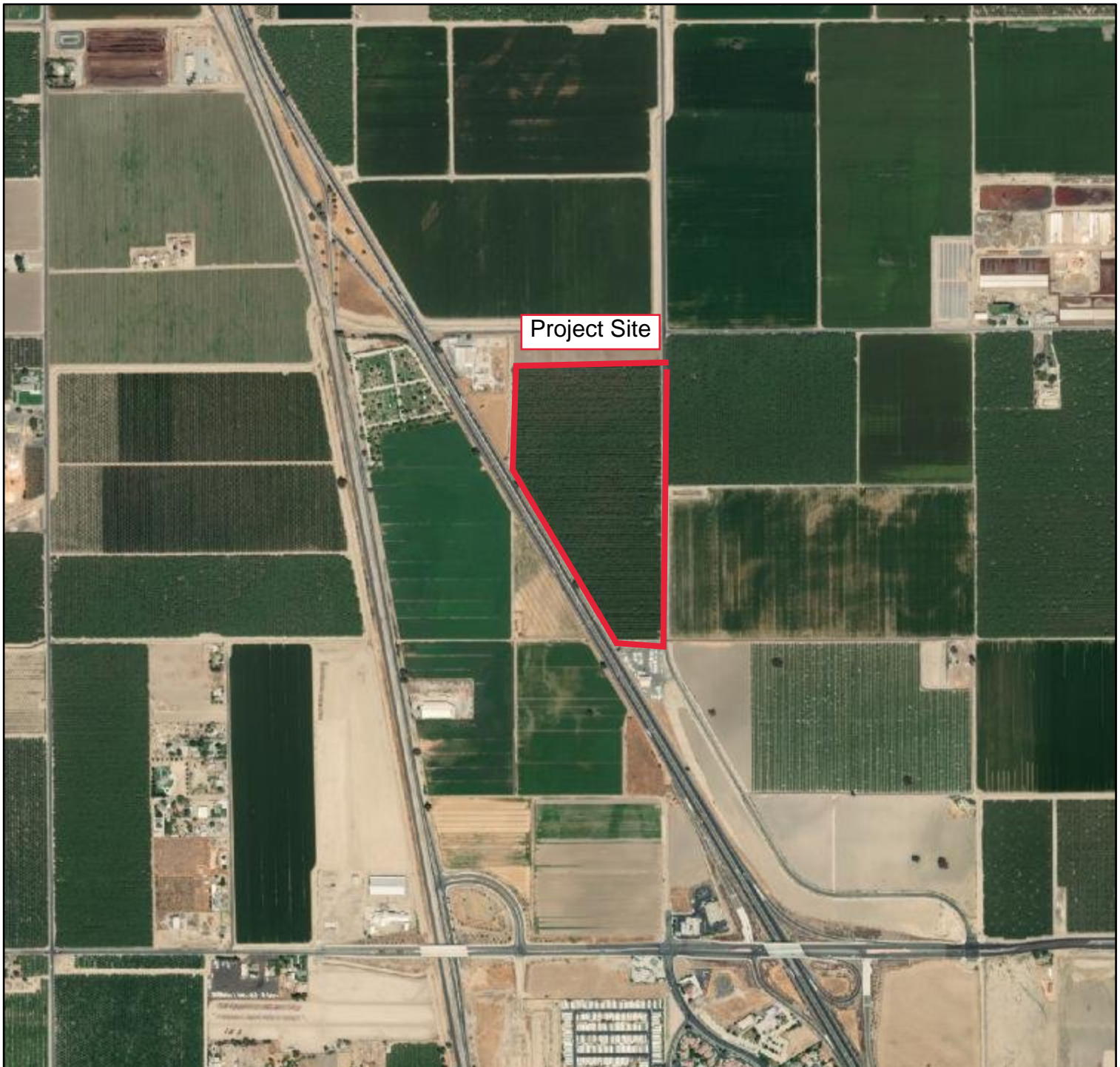
## Maps and Graphics







# Aerial Photograph For Case Number: GPI 22-003



Project Site

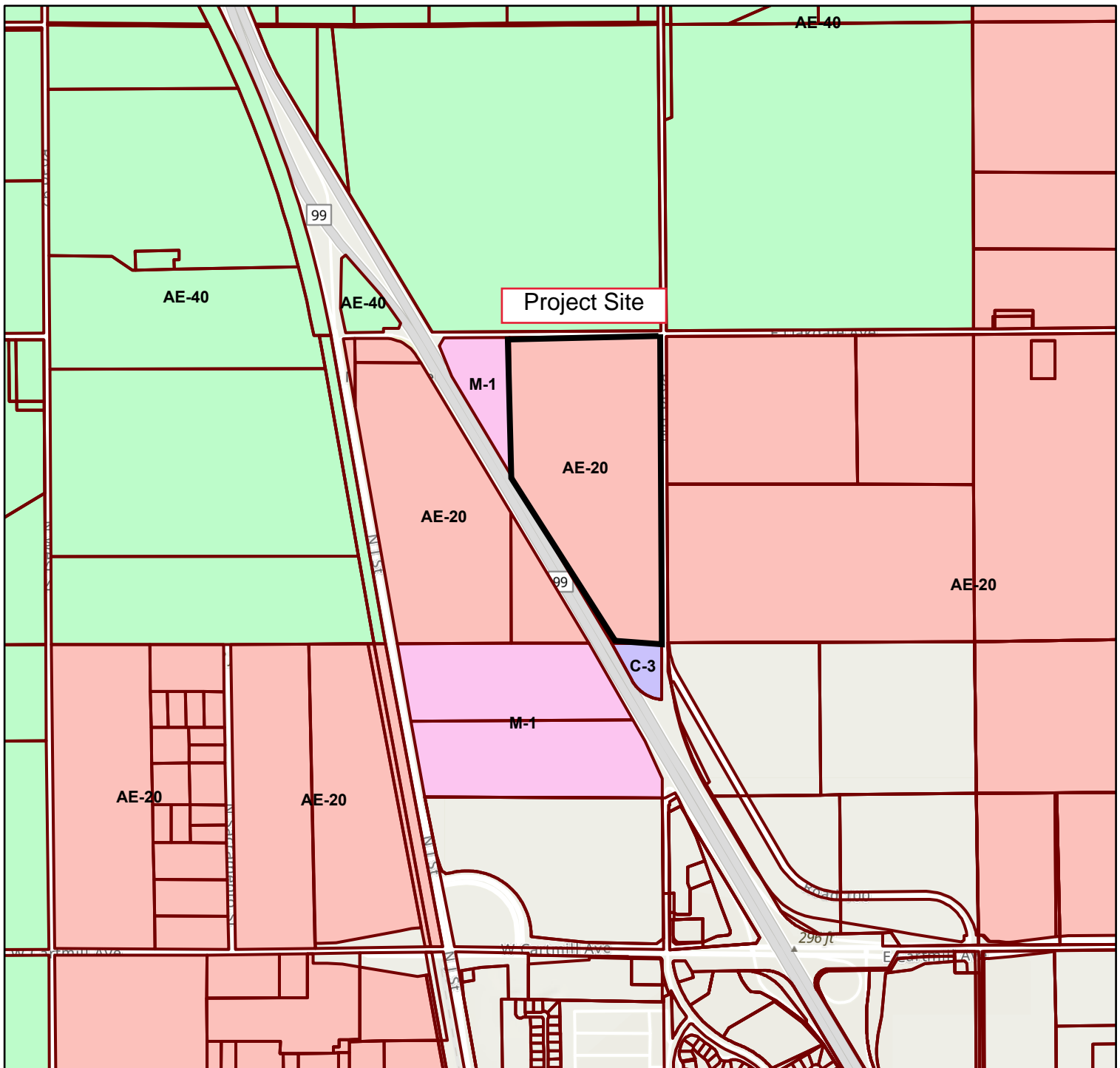
 Project Site

Owner: Michael Thomas  
Address: 715 E. Oakdale Ave  
City, State, ZIP: Tulare, CA 93274  
Applicant: NFDI LLC  
Agent:  
Supervisory District: 2  
Assessors Parcel: 149-090-006





# Existing Zoning For Case Number: GPI 22-003



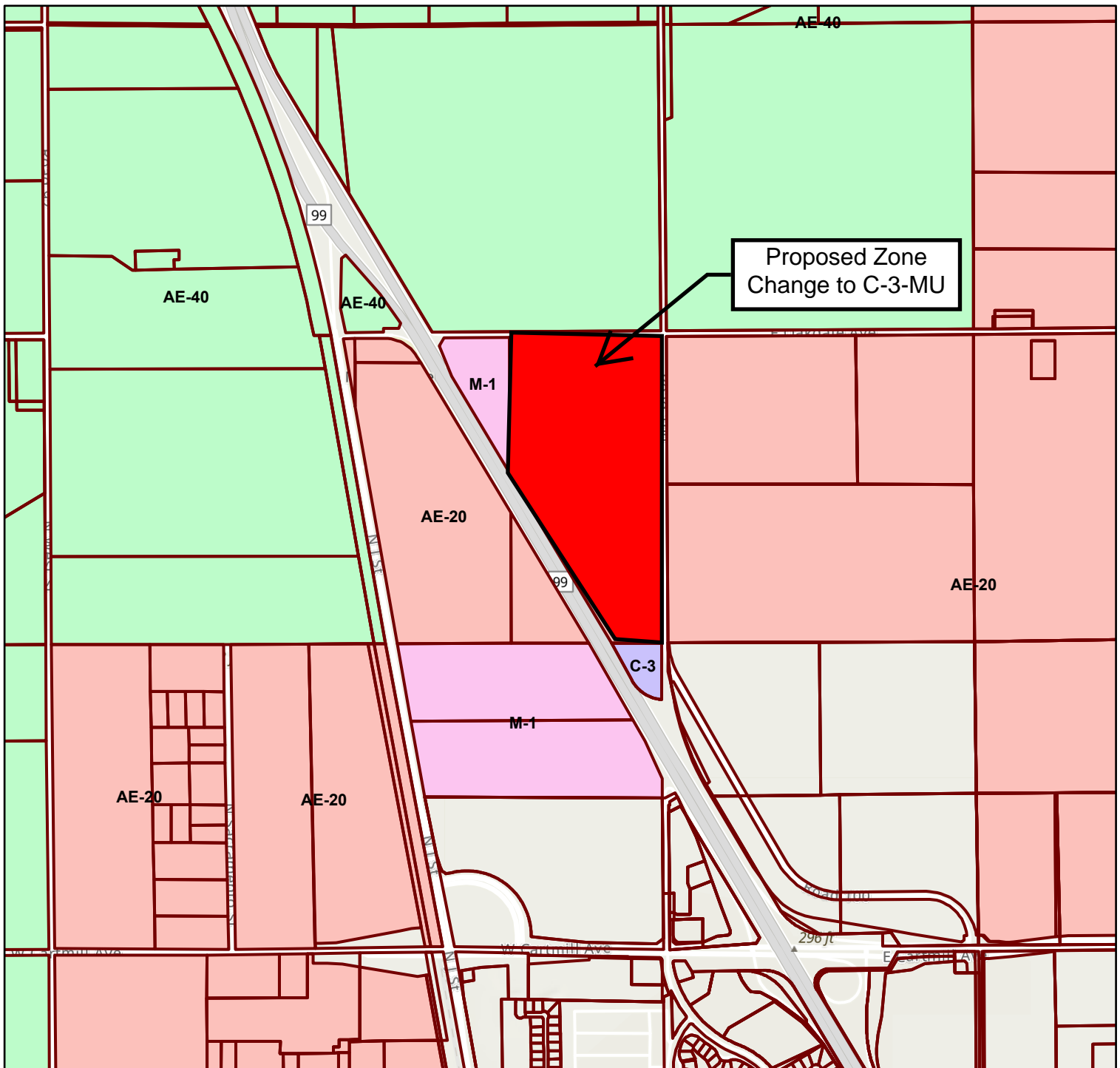
Owner: Michael Thomas  
 Address: 715 E. Oakdale Ave  
 City, State, ZIP: Tulare, CA 93274  
 Applicant: NFDI LLC  
 Agent:  
 Supervisorial District: 2  
 Assessors Parcel: 149-090-006

- AE-40
- AE-20
- M-1
- C-3
- Tulare City Limits





# Proposed Zoning For Case Number: GPI 22-003



Owner: Michael Thomas  
 Address: 715 E. Oakdale Ave  
 City, State, ZIP: Tulare, CA 93274  
 Applicant: NFDI LLC  
 Agent:  
 Supervisorial District: 2  
 Assessors Parcel: 149-090-006

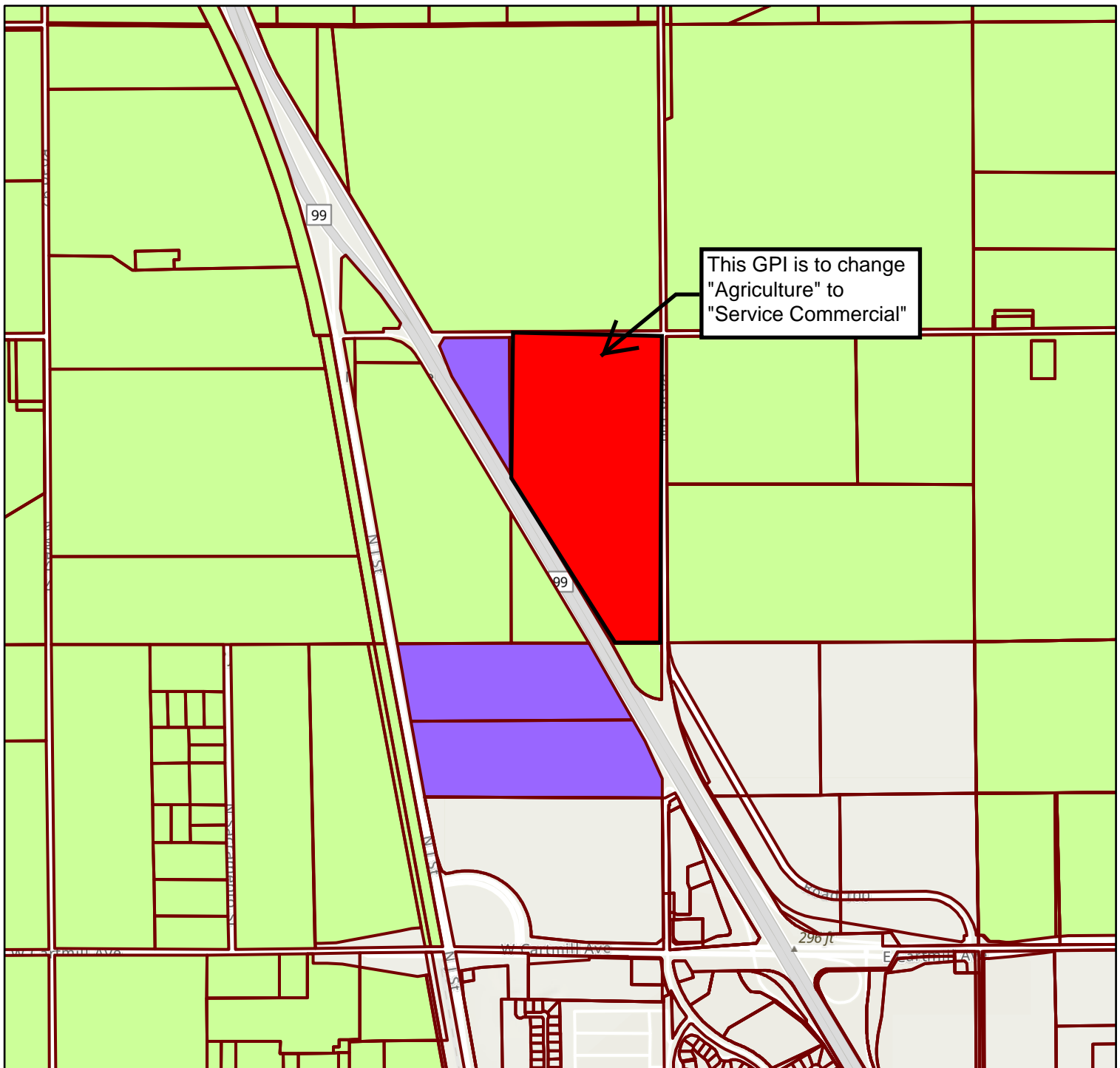
- AE-40
- AE-20
- M-1
- C-3
- Tulare City Limits







# General Plan Designation For Case Number: GPI 22-003



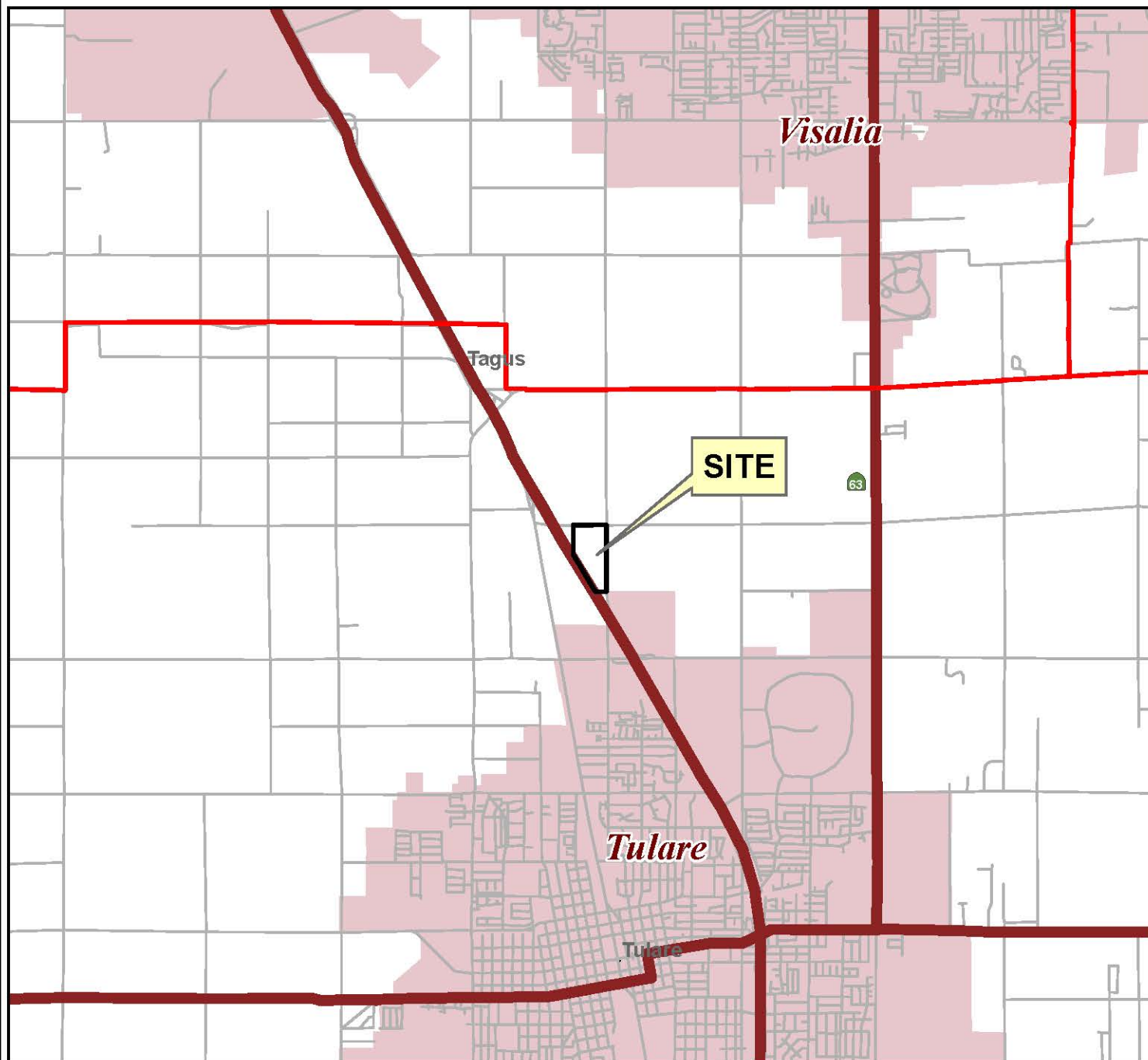
Owner: Michael Thomas  
 Address: 715 E. Oakdale Ave  
 City, State, ZIP: Tulare, CA 93274  
 Applicant: NFDI LLC  
 Agent:  
 Supervisorial District: 2  
 Assessor's Parcel: 149-090-006

- Agriculture
- Light Industrial
- Tulare City Limits





# Vicinity Map for GPI 22-003



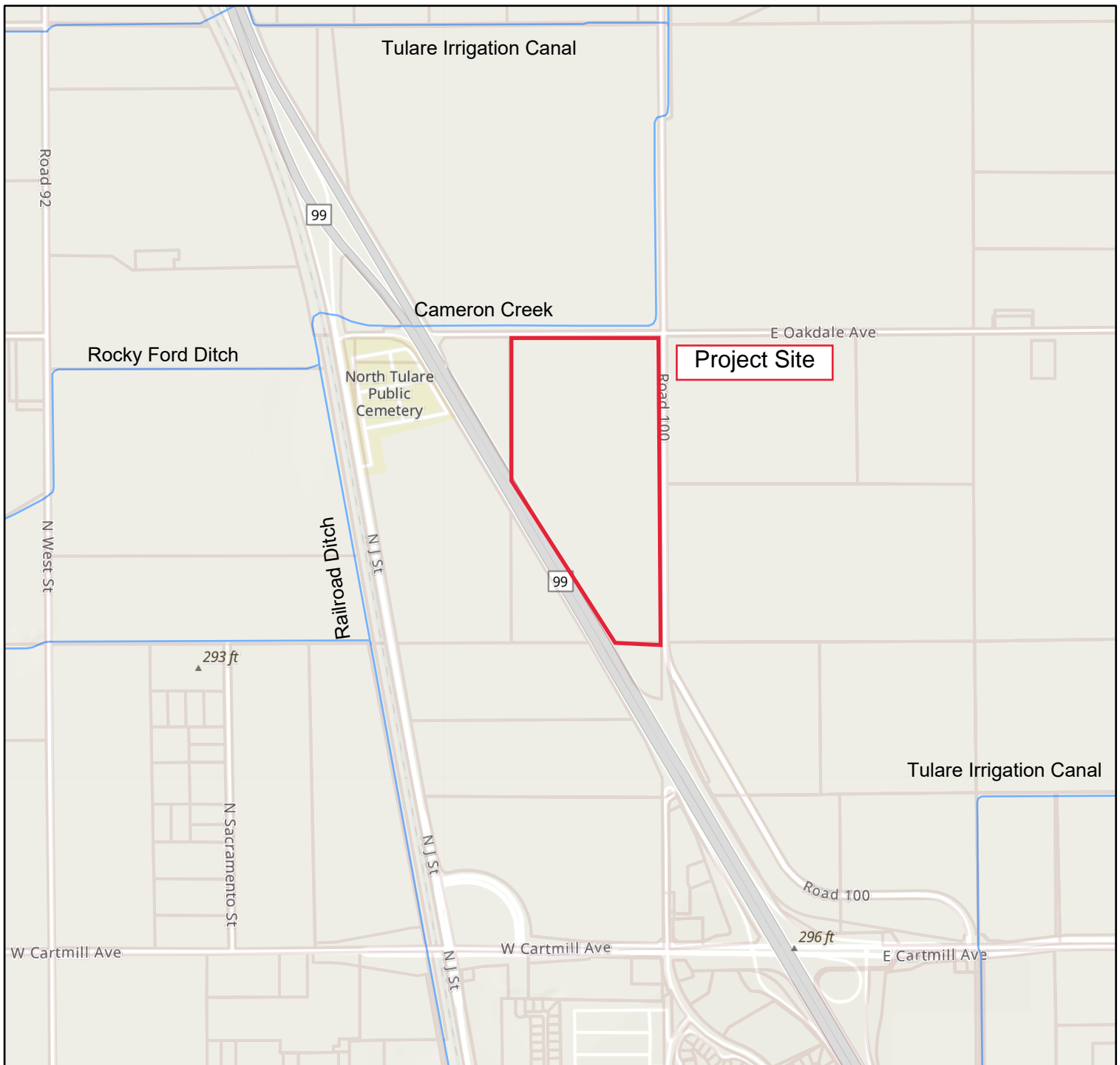
Supervisorial District: 2





-  SITE
-  Supervisorial Districts
-  County Boundary



# Waterways For Case Number: GPI 22-003



Owner: Michael Thomas  
 Address: 715 E. Oakdale Ave  
 City, State, ZIP: Tulare, CA 93274  
 Applicant: NFDI LLC  
 Agent:  
 Supervisorial District: 2  
 Assessors Parcel: 149-090-006

 Waterways  
 Project Site



# Attachment 2

## RVLP Checklist

*RURAL VALLEY LANDS PLAN - PARCEL EVALUATION CHECKLIST***A. RESTRICTED TO AGRICULTURAL VALUES**

If a following factor meets the "Restricted to Agriculture" criteria, place an "R" in the value column and stop the evaluation; if the factor meets the "Non-agricultural" criteria, place a "0" in the value column and continue.

	<b>VALUE</b>
1. Agricultural Preserve Status	0
2. Limitations for Individual Waste Disposal Facilities	0

**B. VARIABLE POINT VALUE**

Each of the following land capability ratings (as per USDA Soil Conservation Service data have been awarded a number value, as follows:

<b>LAND CAPABILITY</b>	<b>POINT VALUE</b>
Class I, II, or III	4 points
Class IV	2 points
Class V, VI or VII	0 points

For the following factor, determine the land capability rating(s) of the parcel under review and award its corresponding point value.

Class I, II, or III	4 points	2
Class IV	2 points	
Class V, VI or VII	0 points	

**C. POINT VALUES**

If a following factor meets the highest relative suitability criteria, award the factor the number of points listed for the category; if the factor meets the lowest relative suitability criteria, award it a "0".

**FOUR POINT CATEGORY**

1. Existing Parcel Size (use gross acreage figure)	4
2. Existing Land Use/Suitability for Cultivation	0

**THREE POINT VALUE CATEGORY**

1. Surrounding Parcel Size (do not evaluate this factor if the site received "0" points for "Existing Land Use/Suitability for Cultivation"; enter a "0" in such cases)	3
2. Surrounding Land Use	0
3. Proximity of Inharmonious Uses (NOTE: Flexible Point Value applicable in some cases)	0
4. Proximity to Lands in Agricultural Preserve	0

**TWO POINT VALUE CATEGORY**

1. Level of Groundwater and Soil Permeability	0
---	---

**ONE POINT VALUE CATEGORY**

1. Proximity to Fire Protection Facilities (NOTE: Three Point Value applicable in some cases)	0
2. Access to Paved Roads	0
3. Historical Sites, Archaeological Sites, Wildlife Habitats, and/or Unique Natural Features	0
4. Flood Prone Areas	0
5. Availability of Community Domestic Water/Fire Flow Requirements	0
6. Surface Irrigation Water	0
7. Groundwater Recharge Potential (do not evaluate this factor if the site received "0" points for "Surface Irrigation Water"; enter "0" in such cases)	0

**TOTAL POINTS** 9

BACK UP STATEMENT FOR  
RURAL VALLEY LANDS PLAN (RVLP)  
EVALUATION CHECKLIST

For Proposed GPI 22-003 – NFDI LLC (Owner Michael Thomas) for mixed use development of commercial uses. This would include the expansion of the existing RV sales on an adjacent site.

SITE EVALUATED: A 65.0-acre parcels was evaluated under the RVLP point exception system. The site is on a legal parcel, assigned Assessor Parcel Number (APN) 149-090-006.

A. RESTRICTED TO AGRICULTURAL VALUES

1. Agricultural Preserve Status:

The subject 65-acre parcel is not under contract as an Agricultural Preserve. Zero (0) points are allocated.

2. Limitation for Individual Waste Disposal Facilities:

New septic system installations will require submission of a site evaluation report. The report shall be submitted to the Tulare County Environmental health Services Division (TCEHSD) and will be required at the development stage. Zero (0) points are allocated.

B. VARIABLE POINT VALUE

1. Land Capability:

The Soil Conservation Service has rated the agricultural capability of the soil type (Nord Fine Sandy Loam) as Prime Class I soil if irrigated or Class IVc if not irrigated. The owner no longer wishes to farm, and the soil will no longer be irrigated. APN 149-090-006 contains a walnut orchard, so two (2) points are allocated.

C. FOUR POINT VALUE CATEGORY

1. Existing Parcel Size:

The subjects 65-acres site under evaluation is over the acreage 5-acre minimum set by the evaluation criteria and is considered economically viable for productive agriculture. This factor receives zero (4) points.

2. Existing Land Use/Suitability for Cultivation:

The subject 65-acre site is in agricultural use however, the subject site will no longer be irrigated and would not be suitable to agricultural use. The subject site is located within the Tulare Urban Area Boundary and is abutted on two sides by commercial use and is directly northwest of the city limits of Tulare. Therefore zero (0) points are allocated.

D. THREE POINT VALUE CATEGORY:

1. Surrounding Parcel Size:

Approximately 5% of the area within a ¼ mile radius of the site is devoted to parcels that are smaller than 5 acres. The highest suitability is applied when less than 35% is determined. Nonagricultural land uses are possible in areas where most of the land is in agriculture. This factor is allocated three (3) points.

2. Surrounding Land Uses:

The purpose of this evaluation is to prevent the close association of agricultural uses and non-agricultural uses which may have the potential to adversely affect one another. As stated before subject site is located within the Tulare Urban Area Boundary and is abutted on two sides by commercial uses and directly northwest of the city limits of Tulare. This factor receives zero (0) points.

3. Proximity to Inharmonious Uses (dairies, feed lots, concentrated animal raising operations, sand and gravel operations, waste disposal sites, airports and/or agricultural chemical research stations, etc.): The proposed site will have a required commercial zone change. There are no above types of uses within 1/4 mile (1,342 feet) of the site. Therefore, this factor receives zero (0) points.

4. Proximity to Lands within Agricultural Preserves:

The site is abutted on two sides with agricultural preserves, and within one-quarter mile (1,320 feet) of the perimeter of the site only about 30% of the area is land that is in agricultural preserves. Zero (0) points are allocated.

E. TWO POINT VALUE CATEGORY:

1. Level of Groundwater and Soil Permeability:

The soil type on the site is Nord Fine Sandy Loam, which has a moderate permeability rating. The groundwater level is unknown however the subject site lies next to the 170 foot contour interval lines, according to the SGMA Data Viewer, Spring 2021. Zero (0) points are allocated.

F. ONE POINT VALUE CATEGORY:

1. Proximity to Fire Protection Facilities:

The subject site is within the 5 mile response distance area of the County Fire Station located in Tulare, which makes it more suitable for nonagricultural uses. This factor receives zero (0) points.

2. Access to Paved Roads:

The site has direct access to North Oak Street, a paved public road, and is better suited for non-agricultural uses than areas without such access; therefore, zero (0) points are allocated.

3. Historical, Archaeological, Wildlife Habitat, and Unique Natural Features:



The subject site contains orchards, so is less likely to contain features that may be destroyed by commercial activity. Therefore, zero (0) points are allocated.

4. Flood Prone Areas:

A portion of the subject site is located within FEMA Zone X and is not subject to a 100-year flood zone, therefore, zero (0) points are allocated.

5. Availability of Community Domestic Water:

The subject site is under the valley Kaweah Delta Water Control District and can meet the requirements of the Tulare County Fire Flow Ordinance. Therefore, the site receives an allocation of zero (0) point.

6. Surface Irrigation Water:

It is unknown if there are surface irrigation water. Therefore, the site received an allocation of zero (0) point.

7. Groundwater Recharge Potential:

If the site is does not have surface water sources, Nord Fine Sandy Loam soil permeability is moderate. The highest recorded groundwater level according to the Groundwater Level Data from the California Department of Water Resources website shows 127.5 in Spring of 2011. Zero (0) point is awarded.

**Total Points = 9**

If the number of points accumulated is eleven (11) or less, the parcel may be considered for non-agricultural zoning. A parcel receiving 12, 13, 14, 15, or 16 points shall be determined to have fallen within a “gray” area where no clear cut decision is readily apparent. In such cases, the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors shall make a decision based on the unique circumstances pertaining to the particular parcel of land, including factors not covered by this system. If the number of points accumulated is more than the 17 point RVLP threshold, then the parcel shall remain agriculturally zoned.



# TULARE COUNTY RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AGENCY PLANNING APPLICATION



GENERAL INFORMATION / COVER SHEET

## LAND USE ENTITLEMENT (DISCRETIONARY)

TYPE OF APPLICATION:

- |   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Development Agreement              | <input type="checkbox"/> Review/Interpretation Request | <input type="checkbox"/> Variance- Flood                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Final Site Plan                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Revisions to a Parcel/Sub Map | <input type="checkbox"/> Variance-Building/Road Setback    |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> General Plan Initiation | <input type="checkbox"/> Special Use Permit (PC)       | <input type="checkbox"/> Variance- Zoning                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> General Plan Amendment             | <input type="checkbox"/> Specific Plan                 | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Zone Change Initiation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Planned Development                | <input type="checkbox"/> Tentative Parcel Map          | <input type="checkbox"/> Zone Change                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Planned Unit Development           | <input type="checkbox"/> Tentative Subdivision Map     | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____                       |

**Applicant:** NFDI LLC

Mailing Address 1878 N Mooney Blvd, St J  
 City/Town Tulare State CA Zip 93274  
 Phone 559-799-6990 Cell \_\_\_\_\_  
 E-Mail barrett@swifthomesinc.com  
 Signature Bear Ninley

**Property Owner:** Michael Thomas

Mailing Address 715 E. Oakdale Ave  
 City/Town Tulare State CA Zip 93274  
 Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Cell \_\_\_\_\_  
 E-Mail \_\_\_\_\_  
 Signature \_\_\_\_\_

**Other Persons to be Notified:** (Specify: Other Owner(s), Agent, Lender, Architect, Engineer, Surveyor)

Name/Title Quest Equity (Buyer)  
 Mailing Address 1878 N Mooney Blvd, St J  
 City/Town Tulare State CA Zip 93274  
 Phone 559-799-6993 Fax \_\_\_\_\_  
 E-Mail Greg@swifthomesinc.com

Name/Title Darlene Mata, Planning Consultant  
 Mailing Address 6145 W Cherry Ct  
 City/Town Visalia State CA Zip 93277  
 Phone 559-799-2942 Fax \_\_\_\_\_  
 E-Mail Darlene@drmataconsulting.com

**Project Information:**

Site Address(es): N/A - SW CORNER OF ACRES RD + AVE 256 City/Town: TULARE  
 Assessor's Parcel No(s): 149-090-006

GPI 22-003		THIS SPACE FOR PERMIT CENTER STAFF USE ONLY	
Project Number: <u>GPA 22-003</u>	Supervisor District: <u>2</u>	Economic Development: <u>YES</u>	
Current Zoning: <u>AE-20</u>	General Plan Land Use: <u>TULARE UDB</u>	UAB/UDB/HDB/MS: Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	
Project Description <u>PROPOSED BUSINESS PARK</u>			
Agricultural Preserve (if applicable) - Preserve No. <u>—</u>	Contract No. <u>—</u>		
Filing Fee(s): <u>\$5,321.00</u>	Total Amount Paid: _____	Payment Type: <u>CHECK</u>	
Date Received: <u>7/13/22</u>	Existing Entitlements/References: <u>PRC 22-014</u>		
Application Received/Reviewed by: <u>JAS</u>			

PERMIT CENTER HOURS: MONDAY - THURSDAY 9:00 A.M. TO 4:30 P.M. FRIDAY 9 A.M. - 11 A.M.

TULARE COUNTY RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AGENCY  
 \*\*5961 S. Mooney Blvd. Visalia, CA 93277 \*\* PHONE: 559-624-7000 \*\*



## DISCRETIONARY LAND USE ENTITLEMENT APPLICATION

### REQUIREMENTS, FEES AND INSTRUCTIONS *(Please use dark blue or black ink)*

The application form must be filled out completely and in every respect with all questions answered and all required attachments before the County can officially accept the application for processing. In the course of accepting and processing the application, Permit Center staff or the project planner may ask the applicant to clarify, correct or otherwise supplement the required information. The application may be filed with the Resource Management Agency Permit Center, at 5961 S. Mooney Blvd. Visalia, CA 93277. Phone No. (559) 624-7000. **IMPORTANT NOTICE: Fees are required at time of application submittal and are subject to change. Please verify the most up to date fees with Permit Center staff. The applicant is responsible for the payment of all fees associated with this application, including the initial fee/deposit and additional fees charged for processing. In addition, the applicant may be required to submit to the County additional deposits.**

**Please see application fee information on Page 3 for specific and detailed fee information.**

**In addition to this application, please provide the following:**

1. One (1) copy of the Development / Site Plan (showing entire parcel and location of the project)
2. Operational Statement: Please attach a detailed operational statement.
3. A signed Indemnification Agreement
4. "Will Serve" Letter from the appropriate off-site Community Water or Sewage Disposal provider.
5. Supplemental Information: Parcel Map Applications may require applications for exceptions and/or a waiver of the final map (if applicable). Certain applications pertaining to projects involving the raising of animals (dairies or other animals), Surface Mining or other more intense uses may require additional information and forms which can be obtained by contacting the Permit Center staff.

### **SUMMARY OF REQUIREMENTS FOR A LAND USE ENTITLEMENT APPLICATION**

	Applicant	Staff
1. Completed Application	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Owner's Affidavit <i>(signed by property owner)</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Filing Fee	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Development/Site Plan (1 copy) (additional copies may be required)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Indemnification and Cost Recovery Agreement <i>(separate attachment)</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Supplemental Information (Review of "Identified Hazardous Waste Sites")	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Applicant's Request for Notification of Proposed Land Use Action	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Operational Statement <i>(if required by County)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. "Will Serve" letter from the appropriate off-site Community water and/or sewage disposal provider.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. Water availability information for all existing and/or proposed on-site domestic wells. (Note: If a domestic well on one parcel is going to supply water to another parcel, a ten foot wide well and pipeline repair and maintenance easement in favor of that parcel shall be shown on the parcel (tentative/final) map and incorporated into the legal description prepared for the division of land.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. Request for Unused Fees Form <i>(Signed by the Applicant)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## **LAND USE ENTITLEMENT APPLICATION FEES**

<b><u>Project Type</u></b> Development	<b><u>Fee Due at Application Submittal</u></b>
Agreement	\$1,303 deposit (then \$100/hourly charged)
Final Site Plan	\$3,415 deposit (then \$100/hourly charged)
General Plan Initiation	\$5,321 deposit (then \$100/hourly charged)
General Plan Amendment	\$10,321 deposit (then \$100/hourly charged)
Planned Development	\$8,304 deposit (then \$100/hourly charged)
Planned Unit Development	\$8,203 deposit (then \$100/hourly charged)
Review/Interpretation Request	\$300 deposit (then \$100/hourly charged)
Revisions to a Parcel/Sub Map	\$1,312 (for a Minor Revision) 1/2 of fee for Tent Map not less than \$1,354 (Major Revision)
Special Use Permit (PC)	\$3,005 deposit (then \$100/hourly charged) for CEQA Exempt projects, temporary uses, mobile home/additional housing \$5,750 deposit (then \$100/hourly charged) for New Special Use Permits and Amendments \$5,528 deposit (then \$100/hourly charged) for Expansions of Non-Conforming Uses *Note that Large Day Cares, Kennels, and Hazardous Waste Facilities have special fee amounts. Please contact Permit Center staff for any fee questions. Additional \$150 fee in SRA Areas
Specific Plan	\$5,321 deposit (then \$100/hourly charged)
Tentative Parcel Map	\$2,507 flat fee (for 1-4 lots) - Additional: \$168 for Waiver request, \$249 for exceptions to maps/lot lines, \$113 in SRA Areas; \$3,568 plus \$65 per lot (for more than 4 lots) (then \$100/hourly charged)
Tentative Subdivision Map	Deposit Varies based on number of lots (then \$100/hourly charged)
Variance - Flood	\$3,313 deposit (then \$100/hourly charged)
Variance - Building/Road Setback	\$1,801 flat fee
Variance - Zoning	\$3,490 deposit (then \$100/hourly charged)
Zone Change Initiation	\$3,333 deposit (then \$100/hourly charged) Note: Zone Initiation fee is deducted from Zone Change Fee
Zone Change	\$6,451 deposit (then \$100/hourly charged)
<b><u>Additional Fees Due Prior to Hearing or Project Completion</u></b>	
CEQA (Environmental) Fees for 2021	Varies: Exempt: \$58, ND or MND: \$2,480.25, EIR: \$3,445.25
Recording Fee Deposit	\$150 (Including SB2 - Building Homes and Jobs Act Fee)
Compliance Monitoring Fee	\$130
<b><u>Tax Clearance Fees for Parcel Maps/Lot Line Adjustments</u></b>	
Assessor Fee Per Map for Tax Estimates	\$63
Assessor Fee Per Map for Waived Maps	\$336
Tax Collector Fee	\$131 per Original APN



**PLEASE FILL OUT THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION COMPLETELY.**

1. Type of Project:

- Residential       Commercial       Industrial       Agricultural

2. Present use of the project site (existing conditions, improvements, and/or development)?  
Agriculture - Walnuts

3. What is the project/proposed use of site? And when will the use begin? (*Please state exactly and in detail what the intended reason to be done on, or with, the property.*)

The property is proposed to be developed as a mixed use development with commercial and industrial uses.

The project also includes the expansion of the existing RV sales adjacent to the site.

4. Is the project proposing to create new lots? Yes

If yes, how many? unknown at this time

5. Is this project to resolve a violation? No

6. Liquid waste disposal (*please check appropriate box*):  Existing       Proposed

Septic Tank-Leach Lines: Size of tank \_\_\_\_\_ gallons & length of lines \_\_\_\_\_ ft.

Seepage Pit - Size \_\_\_\_\_

Community System – Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Aerobic tank - Size of tank \_\_\_\_\_

7. Water supply (*please check appropriate box*):  Existing       Proposed

Domestic Well – Size of pump \_\_\_\_\_ Gallons per minute \_\_\_\_\_

Irrigation Well: \_\_\_\_\_

Irrigation District – Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Private Water Company – Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Community System – Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**Note:** A "Will Serve" letter must be provided from any off-site community water and/or sewage disposal provider and must be submitted as part of this application. In addition, water availability information for all existing and/or proposed on-site domestic wells must also be submitted with this application.

8. Source of energy (*please check appropriate box*):

Electricity – Company name: Edison       Natural Gas – Company name: \_\_\_\_\_

Propane: Size of tank \_\_\_\_\_ Provider \_\_\_\_\_

9. Date property was acquired: \_\_\_\_\_

10. Date use began on site: \_\_\_\_\_

11. Parcel or Lot Size(s) (in acres or sq. ft. as appropriate): 65 acres
12. How much area of the total parcel or lot is being developed or utilized for the proposed use (acreage, square footage and percentage)?  
100%
13. Will the development of the project be in phases? If yes, please describe each phase and estimated time frames. Yes  No   
Unknown at this time
14. List and describe any other related permits and/or other public approvals required for this project, including those required by city, regional, state and federal agencies.  
General Plan Amendment, Rezone, Tentative Parcel Map
15. Parking: Specify the number of on-site parking spaces, including the location, size, and type of surfacing.  
Will depend on future use
- Specify number of loading space(s) and loading dock(s) \_\_\_\_\_
16. Number of trips generated per day by each type listed below (2 trips = 1 arrival and 1 departure):
- |                            |       |           |       |
|----------------------------|-------|-----------|-------|
| Residents                  | _____ | Customers | _____ |
| Employees (including self) | _____ | Shipping  | _____ |
| Deliveries                 | _____ | Other     | _____ |

**Residential Projects Only:**

17. Please indicate the type of residential development (conventional, mobile home, duplex, tri-plex).  
\_\_\_\_\_
18. How many structures/buildings are being proposed? \_\_\_\_\_
19. How many units will there be? \_\_\_\_\_
20. Please provide the relationship of persons to the applicant in each dwelling unit.  
\_\_\_\_\_

**\*\*For Residential Projects and Tentative Parcel Map/Subdivision Map Projects please skip the next section and proceed to Page 9 to complete the Environmental Setting Questions and additional required forms.**

**Commercial, Industrial and Agricultural Projects Only:**

21. Employees: Indicate the total number of employees and include the number of shifts and number of employees per shift.  
Estimated to be 400 +
22. Days and Hours of Operation (if seasonal, include months of operation):  
24/7



23. Please fill out the table below regarding your proposed project. Note: For proposed expansions please provide a copy of the existing use permit or approved site plan. Please describe additional information about the expansion on a separate sheet.

DESCRIPTION OF EXISTING USE AND NEW OR PROPOSED EXPANSION		
	EXISTING	NEW OR PROPOSED EXPANSION
Type of Use		
Number of Employees		
Type of Development		
Size of Development (sq. ft.)		
Area of Development (sq. ft./acres)		
Operating Hours & Days		
Annual Production (tons, gallons, etc.)		
Daily Trips (arrivals & departures) of :		
Employees		
Customers		
Deliveries		
Shipments		
Equipment		
Vehicles, by type		
Water usage (# of gallons per year)		
Wastewater (# of gallons per year)		

24. Are alcoholic beverages proposed to be served on site?  Yes  No  
 If Yes, please explain and state who will hold the license from the State Department of Alcohol Beverage Control. \_\_\_\_\_
25. Waste materials: Indicate types of all waste materials and the existing or proposed method for disposal.  
 \_\_\_\_\_
26. Waste/Storm water: Indicate plans for reclamation for waste/stormwater (if applicable):  
 On-site storage \_\_\_\_\_  
 Required permit or waiver from Regional Water Quality Control Board? Y / N (If yes, attach report.)  
 If processing water is used for irrigating, specify # of acres, location (APNs) and property owner(s)  
 \_\_\_\_\_
27. Access to major roads, railroads or waterways. Access to Akers or Road 100 and Avenue 256
28. Drive approach(es) – Describe existing or proposed. To meet City of Tulare standards



29. Signage – Describe existing and proposed signage for the proposed use. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
30. Landscaping – Describe existing and proposed landscaping on the site. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
31. If the proposed use is for commercial development, indicate the type (*neighborhood, general, service, urban, rural, agricultural*), proposed use, and square footage of retail and/or wholesale sales area and/or storage area.  
Uses would be a mix of commercial/industrial uses. No Manufacturing or processing
32. If the proposed use is for institutional, indicate the type (*hospital, daycare, clinics, or similar use*), the major function, estimated occupancy and the community benefits to be derived from the project.  
\_\_\_\_\_
33. If the proposed use includes manufacturing or processing, indicate the type of product, method of storage, process for distribution or selling, and whether the operation is for retail or wholesale.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Equipment used \_\_\_\_\_ Where operated \_\_\_\_\_  
Distance from nearest off-site residence \_\_\_\_\_  
Current production (# gallons or tons/yr) \_\_\_\_\_ Proposed production(# gallons or tons/yr) \_\_\_\_\_
34. If the proposed use includes storage or warehousing, indicate the type of materials to be stored on site and the size and description of the storage area, including existing and proposed fencing and screening.  
Unknown at this time  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Are any portable toilets stored on site? Yes / No If so, how many? \_\_\_\_\_  
Where are portable toilets emptied and cleaned out? \_\_\_\_\_ By whom? \_\_\_\_\_  
Are any of the stored materials hazardous? Yes / No  
Any explosive materials? Yes / No Volatile materials? Yes / No Poisons? Yes / No  
If so, please describe storage arrangements (containment, inside structure, signage, etc.)  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Does applicant have a Hazardous Materials Business Plan on file with the County Environmental Health Services Division? \_\_\_\_\_  
Does applicant have current State and local permits for transporting hazardous materials? Yes / No  
Describe \_\_\_\_\_
35. Type of equipment and/or machines to be utilized, including horsepower. Specify - powered by propane, gasoline, diesel or electricity (*if applicable*): \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Fork Lifts \_\_\_\_\_
36. Type and number of vehicles to be utilized (*if applicable*):  
Pickups \_\_\_\_\_ Tractors \_\_\_\_\_  
2-ton trucks \_\_\_\_\_ ARB compliant? Yes / No  
18-wheelers \_\_\_\_\_ ARB compliant? Yes / No  
Trailers \_\_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_

**Specific Types of Projects (Applicable only to Cell Tower, Solar Projects, Confined Animal Operations and Assemblage of People applications):**

37. If the proposed use is for a telecommunications/cell tower, indicate the type, height, size of lease area and the number of receivers proposed.

Distance from nearest residence \_\_\_\_\_ Distance from public road \_\_\_\_\_

NOTE: Please provide map of cell tower locations within 10 mile radius.

38. If the proposed use is for a solar facility, describe whether power will be generated -

For use on the site  or back to the grid

Panel type \_\_\_\_\_ Square footage or acreage \_\_\_\_\_

Ground mounted  Roof-mounted  Amount of power to be generated \_\_\_\_\_

39. If the proposed use is for an animal operation, specify the types of animals and their maximum number.

\_\_\_\_\_

**Note:** Dairies and Other Concentrated Animal Raising Operations require special application forms.

40. If the proposed use will include facilities for an assemblage of people (in a church, auditorium, or other structure, or in an open area), inside/outside (tent, canopy or building), indicate the seating capacity, including whether it is fixed or loose seating, and the number of tables with seating.

Proposed days (weekends or weekdays?) \_\_\_\_\_ Proposed # of events/year \_\_\_\_\_

Proposed Number of Commercial Events: \_\_\_\_\_

Expected # of attendees \_\_\_\_\_ Employees (including self): \_\_\_\_\_

Distance to lot lines \_\_\_\_\_ Distance to nearest off-site residence \_\_\_\_\_

Proposed entertainment \_\_\_\_\_ Amplification type \_\_\_\_\_

Hours of events - Setup \_\_\_\_\_ Event(s) \_\_\_\_\_ Cleanup \_\_\_\_\_

# of parking spaces \_\_\_\_\_ On-site parking area size \_\_\_\_\_ Surface \_\_\_\_\_

Off-site parking arrangements, if any: \_\_\_\_\_

Fencing - Type \_\_\_\_\_ Location \_\_\_\_\_

Proposed # of security guards (Need 1 for each 100 attendees if no alcohol served or 2 for each 100 if alcohol is served): \_\_\_\_\_

Will alcohol be served? Yes  No

If yes, who holds the ABC license? \_\_\_\_\_

Restroom arrangements:  Portable Toilets (Need 1:50 people)  Restrooms (1:100 people)

Number Provided \_\_\_\_\_  
 Number of hand wash sinks \_\_\_\_\_ (If portable toilets, need 1 hot water dispenser for every 15 food handlers).

Food Provider or Caterer: \_\_\_\_\_



**ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING**

41. Describe the project site, prior to the proposed use, including all above and below ground developed improvements (*residences, outbuildings, barns, sheds, covers, shop buildings, septic tank-leach line systems, domestic/agricultural wells, fuel storage tanks, etc.*), including the size of each.

The project site is currently planted in Walnuts that are older and at the end of their life spac.

42. Please describe and indicate the slopes and general terrain of the subject site (fairly level, on bluff, hillside with outcroppings, etc.): Relatively flat

43. Trees: Please identify the type and size of any large trees on site.  
Walnut Trees

44. Water bodies/courses: Identify the type and location of any on-site or nearby water bodies/courses (*rivers, canals, ditches, streams, creeks, ponds etc.*).  
None

45. Describe the character and land use of the surrounding properties (orchards, vineyards, row crops, pasture, open space, water courses, railroads, roads, rural residential, subdivisions, commercial, schools, churches, vacant, city or county boundary):

<u>DIRECTION</u>	<u>CHARACTER/LAND USE</u>
North	Agriculture row crops
South	Commercial RV Sales
East	Agriculture Trees
West	Commercial/ Agriculture/ HWY 99

46. Fire Suppression:

Number of Hydrants on site 0 Hydrant(s) off site     Distance    

Storage tank on site for fire suppression (requires Fire Department connection) Size    

47. Will the project require the development of public service *facilities* (*roads, sewer lines, water lines, etc.*)? If so, describe the required development:

Yes, will require development of local roads and stub of sewer and water for future connection to the City of Tulare

48. Provide any additional information that may be helpful in evaluating this request. (*Use the back of this form or attach separate sheet, if needed.*)

**SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION FOR  
APPLICATION OF ANY DEVELOPMENT PROJECT**

**HAZARDOUS WASTE AND SUBSTANCES STATEMENT:**

Per California Government Code Section 65962.5(f), before the County accepts as complete an application for any development project, the applicant or owner shall consult the State's lists of hazardous waste facilities, shall submit a signed statement to the County indicating whether the project is located on a site that is included on any of the lists. The "Identified Hazardous Waste Sites" list may be viewed on the web at <http://www.envirostor.dtsc.ca.gov/public> or reviewed at the Resource Management Agency Permit Center, 5961 South Mooney Blvd., Visalia, California.

Before any application can be accepted as complete by the Tulare County Resource Management Agency, the owner of the subject property, or the owner's authorized agent, must complete this form.

**STATEMENT:**

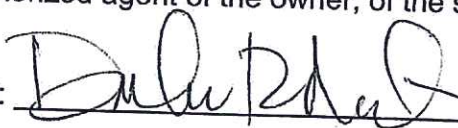
I have reviewed the "Identified Hazardous Waste Sites" list (which may be viewed on the web at <http://www.envirostor.dtsc.ca.gov/public>) dated June 15, 2022, and state that:

"The site(s) of the project subject to this application \_\_\_ is /  is not on the "Identified Hazardous Waste Sites" list."

(If the site is on any of hazardous waste facilities lists, the applicant shall inform the County of which list, the date of the list, the regulatory identification number of the site on the list and corrective measures that will be taken to remove the site from the State list.)

**CERTIFICATION:**

I hereby certify that the information furnished herein presents to the best of my knowledge and belief, true and correct facts, statements, and information, and that I am the owner, or the authorized agent of the owner, of the subject property.

Signed: 

Dated: June 15, 2022



**APPLICANT(S) REQUEST FOR NOTIFICATION  
OF PROPOSED LAND USE ACTION**

NOTICE:

Under Section 65945(a) of the California Government Code, at the time of filing an application for a development permit, the applicant may make a written request to receive notice from the County of a proposal to adopt or amend any of the following plans or ordinances which may affect the proposed development permit:

1. A General Plan
2. A Specific Plan
3. A Zoning Ordinance
4. An Ordinance affecting building permits or grading permits

The applicant shall specify, in written request, the types of proposed actions for which notice is requested. Prior to taking any of those actions, the County is required to give notice to any applicant who has requested notice of the type of action proposed and whose development project is pending before the County if the County determines that the proposal is reasonably related to the applicant's request for the development permit. Notice shall be given only for those types of actions which the applicant specifies in the request for notification.


REQUEST:

I hereby request under Section 65945(a) for the following types of actions (see above). Circle those that apply:

①    ②    ③    ④

I hereby waive notice under Section 65945(a).

I understand that any rights to notice under Section 65945(a) will lapse at the time that final action is taken on my development project.

Signed:   
(applicant or authorized agent)

Dated: 6/15/2022

Permit No.: \_\_\_\_\_

**The County of Tulare**  
**“INDEMNIFICATION AND COST RECOVERY AGREEMENT”**  
**must accompany this application**

**Please download or print out the form from the  
County Web Site  
(located with the list of land use applications).**

**The Indemnification and Cost Recovery Agreement  
must be filled in and signed by the applicant and must be  
submitted as part of any land use application requiring  
discretionary review by the County.**

**This Agreement must be signed by the Applicant**

**Please sign the Agreement in blue ink (preferred)  
and submit the original, signed document with the appropriate  
land use application.**

---

**WITHDRAWAL OF APPLICATION**

**Should you, at any time during the processing of your application, wish to withdraw your application and request a refund of fees paid, you may do so by forwarding a letter to the Resource Management Agency making that request. Please state clearly that you no longer wish to proceed with your land use project (*state the project number*), and that you are requesting a withdrawal of your project and a refund of any fees that have not been expended for the processing of your application.**

**Please date and sign the letter and include a mailing address where you would like any refund of fees (if applicable) to be mailed. Forward the request to the attention of the project planner.**



## REQUEST FOR REFUND OF FEES

Resource Management Agency  
5961 S. Mooney Blvd.  
Visalia, CA 93277

Project Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Please refund any unused fees associated with this application to the designated name and address below.

\_\_\_\_\_  
*(please print name)*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*(Street Address, Suite/Apt. No.)*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*(City, State, Zip)*

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**INDEMNIFICATION AND COST RECOVERY AGREEMENT DEVELOPMENT  
ENTITLEMENTS AND ENVIRONMENTAL ENTITLEMENTS HEREIN  
REFERRED TO AS THE PROJECT**

**THIS AGREEMENT** is made and entered into on \_\_\_\_\_ (Month) \_\_\_\_\_ (Date), \_\_\_\_\_ (Year), by \_\_\_\_\_ (Applicant(s)/Authorized Representative), referred to herein as "APPLICANT(S)" and the County of Tulare, CA referred to herein as "Tulare County" or the "County."

**RECITALS**

**WHEREAS, APPLICANT(S)** has requested that Tulare County process the project identified as \_\_\_\_\_ (Application Type), \_\_\_\_\_ (Project Case Number), submitted by \_\_\_\_\_ (Name of APPLICANT(S), Address, City, State, Zip Code), which will result in an entitlement consisting of \_\_\_\_\_ (describe project/Entitlement), on a \_\_\_\_\_-acre parcel, (collectively "PROJECT") and its ENTITLEMENT BY and TO the COUNTY as described below:

\_\_\_\_\_ (Project Case Number), submitted by \_\_\_\_\_ (Name of APPLICANT(S), Address, City, State, Zip Code), which will result in an entitlement consisting of \_\_\_\_\_ (describe project/Entitlement), on a \_\_\_\_\_-acre parcel, (collectively "PROJECT") and its ENTITLEMENT BY and TO the COUNTY as described below:

Assessor's Parcel Number(s): \_\_\_\_\_ 149-090-006  
Legal Description: (insert or attach as separate document(s)) \_\_\_\_\_

**WHEREAS, APPLICANT(S)** desires to indemnify COUNTY from liability or loss connected with the approval or conditional approval of the PROJECT and environmental clearances as provided in this Agreement.

**WHEREAS, APPLICANT(S)** desires to reimburse COUNTY for all costs incurred by COUNTY for any reason relating to its processing and action relating to the PROJECT and for developing a mitigation and monitoring plan and addressing any lawsuit or appeal by third parties challenging COUNTY'S decision to approve the PROJECT.

**NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS MUTUALLY AGREED** between COUNTY and APPLICANT(S) as follows:

1. For the purposes of this Agreement, the term COUNTY shall include the County of Tulare, the Tulare County Planning Commission, the Tulare County Zoning Administrator, the Tulare County Board of Supervisors and/or any Tulare County agencies, departments, commissions, agents, officers, or employees. For the purposes of this Agreement, the term APPLICANT(S) shall include all parties applying for discretionary land use approval on the PROJECT, including but not limited to the owner or owners of the property or properties upon which the PROJECT will be sited and the APPLICANT(S) successor(s)-in-interest.

2. Reimbursements to the COUNTY

The APPLICANT(S) shall pay, by an advance deposit, and reimburse the COUNTY for the monies expended by the COUNTY for the preparation of any necessary documents relating to the processing of and action on the PROJECT including but not limited to Persons or Consultants



retained by the COUNTY, Infrastructure, Planning, Attorney's Fees, and other related expenditures. Reimbursable costs include development of a mitigation and monitoring plan for the COUNTY, including but not limited to staff time, consultant fees and attorneys' fees.

The COUNTY may, at any time, require the APPLICANT(S) to advance funds and/or reimburse COUNTY for costs that will or have been, or for which the COUNTY reasonably anticipates will be, incurred by the COUNTY during the course of any action. Where funds have not been received as requested by the COUNTY, the APPLICANT(S) shall reimburse COUNTY within thirty (30) days of receipt of an itemized written invoice from COUNTY. Failure of the APPLICANT(S) to timely reimburse the COUNTY shall be considered a material violation of the conditions of the approval of the PROJECT. Where said funds have not been deposited or reimbursed by the APPLICANT(S), all work shall be suspended on the APPLICANT'(S) request. Failure to receive funds from the APPLICANT(S) within 45 calendar days of the written notice shall cause the APPLICANT'(S) request to be deemed withdrawn and the APPLICANT'(S) request shall be closed and a new request shall be required.

Ordinance No. 352, as amended, requires a filing fee to be paid at the time of filing an application for a Special Use Permit, Final Site Plan or other land use application. This fee is to cover the cost to the County for advertising, investigations and processing the application through its various stages. If the costs of preparing the written staff report and environmental review exceed the deposit paid, the applicant will be billed an additional fee for staff time as adopted by the Board of Supervisors from time to time. A public hearing before the decision making body will not be scheduled until payment is received. Where applications are flat fees, there shall be no additional requirements to the COUNTY in regard to payment of fees except as mentioned in this paragraph unless the PROJECT is appealed, whereupon the APPLICANT(S) shall be responsible for reimbursement to the COUNTY for all costs, including court costs, associated with the appeal process.

### 3. Effects of Litigation

In the event that litigation is instituted, and a final judgment is obtained, which invalidates any action of the COUNTY in connection with this PROJECT, then APPLICANT(S) shall have no further obligations whatsoever under this Agreement. COUNTY may tender the defense of any such litigation to APPLICANT(S) and APPLICANT(S) counsel, in which case APPLICANT(S) shall bear all costs of such litigation, including COUNTY'S attorneys' fees, expert witness fees, and court costs in connection therewith.

In the event any legal action or special proceeding is commenced by any person or entity other than a party challenging this Agreement or any provision herein, the parties agree to cooperate with each other in good faith to defend said lawsuit. To the extent the litigation seeks to over-turn or invalidate any approval held by or granted by COUNTY to APPLICANT(S) or affected Subsequent Property Owner, and, in such event, APPLICANT(S) and/or such Subsequent Property Owner shall hold the COUNTY harmless from and defend the COUNTY from all costs and expenses incurred in the defense of such lawsuit, including but not limited to, attorneys' fees and expenses of litigation awarded to the prevailing party or parties in such litigation. The APPLICANT(S) and/or affected Subsequent Property Owner shall not settle any lawsuit on grounds which include, but are not limited to, non-monetary relief, without the consent of the COUNTY. The COUNTY shall act in good faith, and shall not unreasonably withhold, condition or delay consent to settle.



4. Cooperation in the Event of Initiative or Legal Challenge

a. Initiative

Should a non-County initiative measure or measures be enacted which could affect the PROJECT:

(1) APPLICANT(S) and COUNTY shall meet and confer in good faith to mutually determine the proper course of action; and

(2) In the event COUNTY and APPLICANT(S) jointly determine to challenge such initiative measure, APPLICANT(S) shall provide for any challenge to such initiative measure at its sole cost and expense.

(3) In the event that a court determination has the effect of preventing, delaying or modifying the development of the PROJECT as set forth above, COUNTY and APPLICANT(S) shall meet and confer in good faith to determine if there are alternative means of achieving the mutual goals and objectives of this Agreement, in light of such court action.

(4) If any COUNTY approval of the PROJECT is appealed to the Board of Supervisors or if any COUNTY approval of the PROJECT is challenged in Court, the APPLICANT(S) agree(s) to cover all costs associated with said appeal and shall deposit sufficient funding to process an appeal and shall provide security for payment for any liabilities incurred as a result of litigation which is subject to this Agreement. APPLICANT(S) agree to enter into any further agreements as may be required by the Board of Supervisors in its sole discretion from time to time by resolution to clarify the duties, rights and responsibilities under this Agreement.

(5) Failure or refusal by the APPLICANT(S) to provide obligations as required in Section 4 a. (4) of this Agreement, shall result in and be deemed an abandonment of the PROJECT described herein, and all rights accrued to the APPLICANT(S) to proceed under the COUNTY'S discretionary actions in such regard shall be deemed immediately revoked, and the COUNTY will be entitled to seek all remedies available to it under law, including but not limited to breach of contract and/or enforcement of any code violations.

b. Other Legal Challenge

In the event of any legal action instituted by a third party or other governmental entity or official challenging the validity of any provision of this Agreement, the parties hereby agree to cooperate in defending said action. APPLICANT(S) shall bear all costs of such defense including COUNTY'S attorneys' fees, expert witness fees, and court costs.

5. No Duty of COUNTY

It is specifically understood and agreed by the parties that the development contemplated by this Agreement is a private development, that COUNTY has no interest in or responsibility for or duty to third persons concerning any of said improvement, and that APPLICANT(S) shall have full power over the exclusive control of the Property herein described subject only to the limitations and obligations of APPLICANT(S) under this Agreement.



APPLICANT(S) hereby agrees to and shall hold COUNTY and its elected and appointed representatives, officers, agents and employees harmless from any liability for damage or claims for damage for personal injury, including death, as well as from claims for property damage which may arise from APPLICANT(S) operations under this Agreement, excepting suits and actions brought by APPLICANT(S) and arising from the gross negligence or willful misconduct of the COUNTY to the extent, if any, that such gross negligence or willful misconduct has contributed to such damage.

6. Indemnification by APPLICANT(S)

This Indemnification and Hold Harmless Agreement applies to all damages and claims for damages suffered or alleged to have been suffered by reason of the operations referred to in this Section, regardless of whether or not COUNTY prepared, supplied or approved plans or specifications for the PROJECT, but does not apply to damages and claims for damages caused by the COUNTY with respect to public improvements and facilities after the COUNTY has accepted responsibility for such public improvements and facilities.

The APPLICANT(S) shall defend, indemnify, and hold harmless the County of Tulare (COUNTY), its officials, officers, employees, representatives, agents and attorneys, from and against all claims, proceedings, damages, losses, judgments, liabilities, expenses and other costs, including litigation costs and attorney's fees, arising out of, resulting from, or in connection with, the COUNTY'S act or acts leading up to and including approval of any environmental document or mitigation plan granting approvals relating to the PROJECT. APPLICANT(S) obligation to defend, indemnify and hold the COUNTY harmless specifically includes, but is not limited to, any suit or challenge by any third party against the COUNTY which challenges or seeks to set aside, void or annul the legality or adequacy of any environmental document or mitigation plan approved by the COUNTY or any approval related to the PROJECT.

The APPLICANT(S) obligations to defend, indemnify and hold the COUNTY, its officials, officers and employees, representatives, agents and attorneys harmless under the provisions of this paragraph shall include, but not be limited to, the cost of preparation of any administrative record by COUNTY, staff time, copying costs, attorneys' fees, expert witness fees, court costs, the costs of any judgments or awards against the COUNTY for damages, losses, litigation costs, or attorney's fees arising out of a suit or challenge contesting the adequacy of any approval of the environmental document or mitigation plan, or any approval related to the PROJECT, and the costs of any settlement representing damages, litigation costs and attorney's fees to be paid to other parties arising out of a suit or challenge contesting the adequacy of the approval of the environmental document or mitigation plan or any document or any other approval related to the PROJECT, if the settlement so provides.

7. Further Indemnification

APPLICANT(S) shall defend COUNTY against all claims to attach, set aside, void, or annul COUNTY'S approval (or any condition of said approval) of the PROJECT, and all claims seeking to impose personal liability on COUNTY as a result of COUNTY'S involvement in such PROJECT, and all claims relating to APPLICANT(S) payment and reimbursement to COUNTY for any costs incurred in connection with COUNTY'S processing of and action on and acceptance of APPLICANT(S) PROJECT and all claims relating to COUNTY'S mitigation and/or monitoring plan that are related to the APPLICANT(S) PROJECT.



APPLICANT(S) shall indemnify COUNTY and hold harmless from any and all costs, attorney's fees (including a third party award of attorney's fees), expenses, liabilities, losses, and damages ("damages") of whatever nature rendered against COUNTY as a result of any such claim, except where such damages result solely, exclusively, and 100% from the negligence of COUNTY, and APPLICANT(S) shall specifically indemnify COUNTY and hold COUNTY harmless, from any such damages arising out of the issuance of a writ of mandamus or prohibition or the entry of a judgment against COUNTY based in whole or in part on lack of substantial evidence to support COUNTY'S approval.

8. Third Party Action

The defense and indemnification obligations created by this Agreement shall apply to claims by third parties arising out of the following: COUNTY'S processing of and action on and acceptance of APPLICANT'(S) PROJECT.

APPLICANT(S) acknowledges and waives its rights under California Civil Code Section 1542 which provides as follows:

"A general release does not extend to claims which the creditor does not know or suspect to exist in his favor at the time of executing the release, which if known by him must have materially affected his settlement with the debtor."

9. Termination

The COUNTY may without cause terminate this Agreement by giving written notice as provided below. APPLICANT(S) may not terminate this Agreement for any reason.

10. Notices

Except as may be otherwise required by law, any notice to be given shall be written and shall be either personally delivered, sent by facsimile transmission or sent by first class mail, postage prepaid and addressed as follows:

COUNTY: TULARE COUNTY RMA  
Attention: Director RMA  
5961 South Mooney Blvd.  
Visalia, CA 93277-9394  
559-624-7000 - Office  
559-730-2653 – Fax

APPLICANT(S): NFDI LLC  
1878 N Mooney Blvd, St J  
Tulare Ca 93274  
(559) 799-6990  
Email: barrett@swifthomesinc.com



Notice personally delivered is effective when delivered. Notice sent by facsimile transmission is deemed to be received upon successful transmission. Notice sent by first class mail shall be deemed received on the fifth day after the date of mailing. Either party may change the above address by giving written notice pursuant to this paragraph.

11. Entire Agreement

This Agreement represents the complete understanding between the parties with respect to matters set forth herein.

12. Enforcement Action

In the event it becomes necessary for COUNTY to take any action against the APPLICANT(S) to enforce or interpret the terms of this Agreement, COUNTY shall be entitled to its reasonable attorneys' fees and costs, including all costs of investigation, and all pre-litigation costs.

13. Severability

If any provision of this Agreement is held by an arbitrator or court of competent jurisdiction to be invalid or unenforceable, the remainder of the Agreement shall continue in full force and effect and shall in no way be impaired or invalidated.

14. Governing Law

The rights and obligations of the parties and the interpretation and performance of this Agreement shall be governed by the laws of California, excluding any statute which directs application of the laws of another jurisdiction. The parties agree that this contract is made in and shall be performed in Tulare County, California.

15. **NO THIRD PARTY BENEFICIARIES INTENDED:** Unless specifically set forth, the parties to this Agreement do not intend to provide any other party with any benefit or enforceable legal or equitable right or remedy.

16. **WAIVERS:** The failure of either party to insist on strict compliance with any provision of this Agreement shall not be considered a waiver of any right to do so, whether for that breach or any subsequent breach. The acceptance by either party of either performance or payment shall not be considered to be a waiver of any preceding breach of the Agreement by the other party.

The undersigned APPLICANT(S) expressly warrant his/her authority to enter into this Agreement of any property or properties upon which the PROJECT is sited and the APPLICANT(S) successors-in-interest. The APPLICANT(S) having read and considered the above provisions, indicate his/her/its/their agreement by their authorized signatures below.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties hereto have caused this Agreement to be executed, the day and year first-above written.

APPROVED AS TO FORM:  
By: Tulare County – County Counsel

**COUNTY AUTHORIZATION**

By \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Associate Director  
Tulare County Resource Management Agency

Michael Washam  
Printed Name

**APPLICANT(S)**

*[If the APPLICANT(S) is(are) an Individual(s), use the following signature lines:]*

By \_\_\_\_\_ By \_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
APPLICANT APPLICANT  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

*[If the APPLICANT(S) is a general or limited partnership, use the following signature lines:]*

By \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
General Partner  
APPLICANT

*[If the APPLICANT(S) is a corporation, use the following signature lines:]*

Note: Pursuant to Corporations Code Section 313 a contract with a corporation must be signed by one person from the following corporate officers; chairperson of the board, the president or any vice-president and must also be signed by a second person from the following corporate officers: the secretary, any assistant secretary, the chief financial officer, or any assistant treasurer unless the contract is accompanied by a certified copy of the Board of Directors resolution authorizing the execution of the contract by a single designated officer or person.

APPLICANT(S):

By Bear Nunley Date: 6/15/22  
Printed Name: Bear Nunley, NFDI LLC  
President or Vice President

By \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Secretary or Treasurer

***[If the APPLICANT(S) is an LLC, use the following signature lines:]***

---

Note: "Corporations Code Section 17157 requires that contracts with an LLC be signed by at least two managers, unless the contract is accompanied by a certified copy of the articles of organization stating that the LLC is managed by only one manager."

By \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Manager

By \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Manager





# RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AGENCY

5961 South Mooney Blvd.  
Visalia, CA. 93277  
Phone (559) 624-7000  
Fax (559) 615-3002

## RECEIPT

RECEIPT NUMBER: TRC-053038-13-07-2022

PAYMENT DATE: 7/13/2022 10:11:53AM

PLAN NUMBER: GPI22003

APPLICATION TYPE: General Plan Initiation

OWNER:

PAYEE: Great Valley Builders

APPLICANT: Nfdi, Llc

TYPE OF PAYMENT: Fee Payment

PAYMENT METHOD: Check

PARCEL NUMBER: 149-090-006

CHECK/MONEY ORDER NO: 15688

SITE ADDRESS: South West Corner of Acres Road and Avenue 256, Tulare

### ACCOUNT ITEM LIST

Fee Name	Account Number	Fee No	Paid Amount
Computer Maintenance Fee	00123051204218	00310945	\$10.00
DEPOSIT General Plan - Initiation	00123061105421	00310948	\$5,000.00
Request to Initiate GPA [ENG]	01422523905421	00310946	\$250.00
Request to Initiate GPA [EVH]	00114260115421	00310947	\$61.00

TOTAL PAYMENT: \$5,321.00

TOTAL PAID FROM CURRENCY: \$5,321.00

Elementary School District:

High School District:

RECEIPT ISSUED BY: ppadilla1@tularecc LOCATION: Visalia 1

DATE PRINTED: 07/13/2022 TIME: 10:12 am

# **ATTACHMENT “F”**

## **Mitigation Monitoring and Report Program**

# MITIGATION MONITORING AND REPORTING PROGRAM

This Draft Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP) has been prepared in compliance with State law and based upon the findings of the Draft Mitigated Negative Declaration for Akers Business Park Project.

The CEQA Public Resources Code Section 21081.6 requires the Lead Agency decision making body is going to approve a project and certify the EIR that it also adopt a reporting or monitoring program for those measures recommended to mitigate or avoid significant/adverse effects of the environment identified in the EIR. The law states that the reporting or monitoring program shall be designed to ensure compliance during project implementation. The MMRP is to contain the following elements:

- **Action and Procedure.** The mitigation measures are recorded with the action and procedure necessary to ensure compliance. In some instances, one action may be used to verify implementation of several mitigation measures.
- **Compliance and Verification.** A procedure for compliance and verification has been outlined for each action necessary. This procedure designates who will take action, what action will be taken and when and by whom and compliance will be monitored and reported and to whom it will be report. As necessary the reporting should indicate any follow-up actions that might be necessary if the reporting notes the impact has not been mitigated.
- **Flexibility.** The program has been designed to be flexible. As monitoring progresses, changes to compliance procedures may be necessary based upon the recommendations by those responsible for the MMRP. As changes are made, new monitoring compliance procedures and records will be developed and incorporated into the program

The following presents the Mitigation Measures identified for the proposed Project in this MND. Each Mitigation Measure is identified by the impact number. For example,4-1 would be the first Mitigation Measure identified in the Biological analysis of the MND.

The first column of Table identifies the Mitigation Measure. The second column, entitled “When Monitoring is to Occur,” identifies the time the Mitigation Measure should be initiated. The third column, “Frequency of Monitoring,” identifies the frequency of the monitoring that should take place to assure the mitigation is being or has been implemented to achieve the desired outcome or performance standard... The fourth column, “Agency Responsible for Monitoring,” names the party ultimately responsible for ensuring that the Mitigation Measure is implemented. The last columns will be used by the County of Tulare (or Wastewater System Governing Entity once formed) to ensure that individual Mitigation Measures have been complied with and monitored.



Draft Mitigated Negative Declaration  
Akers Business Park Project  
GPA 22-003, PZC 22-010, PPM 23-007

<b>Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program</b>							
<b>Mitigation Measure</b>	<b>Monitoring Timing / Frequency</b>	<b>Action Indicating Compliance</b>	<b>Monitoring Agency</b>	<b>Person Responsible for Monitoring / Reporting</b>	<b>Verification of Compliance</b>		
					<b>Initials</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Remarks</b>
<b>AGRICULTURAL AND FOREST RESOURCES</b>							
<p><b>2-1.</b> The applicant will be required to create an agricultural land conservation easement at a ratio of 1 acre of developed property for 1 acre of conserved agricultural land (a 1:1 ratio). This amount of 1:1 will be represented by 12 acres within the County. Any replacement acreage will be to the satisfaction of the Planning Director of Tulare County. The applicant will purchase an agricultural land conservation easement, of like agricultural land within the County, on the entire 12 acres to be maintained and kept in agriculture in perpetuity. The “ultimate” agricultural easement shall be placed on other suitable and agriculturally compatible property, of the same soil types and arability, within Tulare County; at a replacement ratio of 1:1, and to be established as an agricultural land conservation easement in perpetuity.</p>	<p>Prior to Issuance of Building Permit.</p>	<p>Approval of Agricultural Land Conservation Easement.</p>	<p>County of Tulare Planning Department</p>	<p>County of Tulare Planning Department</p>			
<p><b>BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES:</b> <i>Based on the disturbed condition of the majority of the proposed Project area, reasonable inferences were made that it was unlikely that any of the sensitive species listed would actually occur onsite. However, this Project does not preclude the opportunity for special status species from accessing or traveling through the site prior or post construction phases. Historically, there have been records of special status species in the vicinity of the proposed Alternatives. Within the context of CEQA, potential impacts could result in significant impacts; however, implementation of Mitigation Measures 4-1 through 4-16 would reduce potential impacts to <b>Less Than Significant</b>.</i></p>							
<b>Survey(s)/Education</b>							
<p><b>4-1. Pre-construction survey(s) plants:</b> A qualified biologist/botanist will conduct pre-construction surveys for special status plant species in accordance with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) Protocols for Surveying and Evaluating Impacts to Special Status Native Plant Populations and</p>	<p>Prior to start of construction.</p>	<p>Once within 30 days of construction, unless pre-construction survey results in new recommendation for further study and mitigation. Then</p>	<p>County of Tulare</p>	<p>Field survey by a qualified biologist.</p>			

Draft Mitigated Negative Declaration  
Akers Business Park Project  
GPA 22-003, PZC 22-010, PPM 23-007

<b>Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program</b>							
<b>Mitigation Measure</b>	<b>Monitoring Timing / Frequency</b>	<b>Action Indicating Compliance</b>	<b>Monitoring Agency</b>	<b>Person Responsible for Monitoring / Reporting</b>	<b>Verification of Compliance</b>		
					<b>Initials</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Remarks</b>
<p>Natural Communities (2009). This protocol includes identification of reference populations to facilitate the likelihood of field investigation occurring during the appropriate floristic period. Surveys should be timed to coincide with flowering periods for species that could occur (March-May). In the absence of protocol-level surveys being performed, additional surveys may be necessary.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If special status plant species are not identified during preconstruction surveys, no further action is required.</li> <li>• If special status plant species are detected during preconstruction surveys, plant population shall be avoided with the establishment of a minimum 50-foot no disturbance buffer from the outer edge of the plant population. If buffers cannot be maintained, the Sacramento Field Office of the USFWS and the Fresno Field Office of CDFW shall be contacted immediately to identify the appropriate minimization actions to be taken as appropriate for the species identified and to determine permitting needs.</li> </ul>		<p>mitigation should occur as recommended following coordination with Tulare County RMA</p> <p>For special status plant species, survey(s) shall occur if detected.</p>					
<p><b>4-2. Pre-construction animal surveys (San Joaquin kit fox, nesting raptors/birds, burrowing owl):</b> If Project activities must occur during the nesting season (February 1-August 31), a qualified biologist will conduct preconstruction surveys for active raptor and migratory bird nests within 30 days of the onset</p>	<p>Prior to construction-related activities.</p>	<p>As needed if special status species are detected.</p>	<p>County of Tulare.</p>	<p>Qualified biologist.</p>			

Draft Mitigated Negative Declaration  
Akers Business Park Project  
GPA 22-003, PZC 22-010, PPM 23-007

<b>Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program</b>							
<b>Mitigation Measure</b>	<b>Monitoring Timing / Frequency</b>	<b>Action Indicating Compliance</b>	<b>Monitoring Agency</b>	<b>Person Responsible for Monitoring / Reporting</b>	<b>Verification of Compliance</b>		
					<b>Initials</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Remarks</b>
of these activities. The survey will include the proposed work area(s) and surrounding lands within 500 feet for all nesting raptors and migratory birds save Swainson's hawk; the Swainson's hawk survey will extend to ½-mile outside of work area boundaries. If no nesting pairs are found within the survey area, no further mitigation is required.							
<b>4-3. Employee education program:</b> Prior to the start of construction, the applicant shall retain a qualified biologist/botanist to conduct a tailgate meeting to train all construction staff that will be involved with the project on the special status species that occur, or may occur, on the project site. This training will include a description of the species and its habitat needs; a report of the occurrence of the species in the project area; an explanation of the status of the species and its protection under the Endangered Species Act; and a list of the measures being taken to reduce impacts to the species during project construction and implementation.	Prior to construction-related activities.	As needed if special status species are detected.	County of Tulare.	County of Tulare, Qualified biologist, and/or Cal Fish and Wildlife Service.			
<b><i>San Joaquin kit fox</i></b>							
<b>4-4. Avoidance</b> A standardized pre-construction/pre-activity survey shall be conducted no less than 14 days and no more than 30 days prior to the beginning of ground disturbance and/or construction activities or any Project activity likely to impact the San Joaquin kit fox. Surveys shall identify kit fox habitat features on the Project site and evaluate use by kit fox and, if possible, assess the potential	Prior to start of construction-related activities.	Retention of professional biologist/ongoing monitoring/ submittal of Report of Findings, if applicable.	County of Tulare Planning Department and/or CDFW	Qualified Biologist.			

Draft Mitigated Negative Declaration  
Akers Business Park Project  
GPA 22-003, PZC 22-010, PPM 23-007

<b>Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program</b>							
<b>Mitigation Measure</b>	<b>Monitoring Timing / Frequency</b>	<b>Action Indicating Compliance</b>	<b>Monitoring Agency</b>	<b>Person Responsible for Monitoring / Reporting</b>	<b>Verification of Compliance</b>		
					<b>Initials</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Remarks</b>
impacts to the kit fox by the proposed activity. The status of all dens shall be determined and mapped. Written results of pre-construction/pre-activity surveys must be received by the USFWS within five days after survey completion and prior to the start of ground disturbance and/or construction activities.							
<b>4-5. Minimization.</b> Construction activities shall be carried out in a manner that minimizes disturbance to kit fox. Minimization measures include, but are not limited to: restriction of project-related vehicle traffic to established roads, construction areas, and other designated areas; inspection and covering of structures (e.g., pipes), as well as installation of escape structures, to prevent the inadvertent entrapment of kit foxes; restriction of rodenticide and herbicide use; and proper disposal of food items and trash	During construction-related activities.	Retention of professional biologist/ongoing monitoring/ submittal of Report of Findings, if applicable	County of Tulare Planning Department and/or CDFW	Qualified biologist.			
<b>4-6. Mortality Reporting:</b> The Sacramento Field Office of the USFWS and the Fresno Field Office of CDFW will be notified in writing within three working days in case of the accidental death or injury of a San Joaquin kit fox during Project-related activities. Notification must include the date, time, location of the incident or of the finding of a dead or injured animal, and any other pertinent information. core avoidance areas. Any unauthorized take of Special Status species will be immediately reported to DFW by the monitor. The monitor will also notify the Project	During construction.	As needed during construction.	County of Tulare	Determination by qualified biologist.			

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Coordinator who will stop work until corrective measures are implemented.							
<b><i>Nesting Raptors and Migratory Birds, including loggerhead shrike and tricolor blackbird</i></b>							
<b>4.7 Avoidance.</b> In order to avoid impacts to nesting birds, construction will occur, where possible, outside the nesting season, or between September 16 and January 31	Prior to start of construction.	Retention of professional biologist/ongoing monitoring/ submittal of Report of Findings, if applicable.	County of Tulare Planning Department	Field survey by a qualified Biologist.			
<b>4.8 Buffers.</b> If active nests are found within the survey areas a qualified biologist will establish appropriate no-disturbance buffers based on species tolerance of human disturbance, baseline levels of disturbance, and barriers that may separate the nest from construction disturbance. These buffers will remain in place until the breeding season has ended or until the qualified biologist has determined that the birds have fledged and are no longer reliant upon the nest or parental care for survival.	Prior to and during construction-related activities. On-going.	Retention of professional biologist/ongoing monitoring/ submittal of Report of Findings, if applicable.	County of Tulare Planning Department	Qualified biologist.			
<b>4.9. Mortality reporting.</b> The Sacramento Field Office of the USFWS and the Fresno Field Office of CDFW will be notified in writing within three working days in case of the accidental death or injury of a special status nesting raptor or migratory bird during Project-related activities. Notification must include the date, time, location of the incident or of the finding of a dead or injured animal, and any other pertinent information. core avoidance areas. Any unauthorized take of Special Status species will be immediately reported to DFW by							

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the monitor. The monitor will also notify the Project Coordinator who will stop work until corrective measures are implemented.							
<b>CULTURAL RESOURCES AND GEOLOGY/SOILS (PALEONTOLOGICAL RESOURCES):</b>							
<b>5-1</b> - In the event that historical, archaeological or paleontological resources are discovered during site excavation, the County shall require that grading and construction work on the Preferred/ Proposed Project site be immediately suspended until the significance of the features can be determined by a qualified archaeologist or paleontologist. In this event, the specialists shall provide recommendations for measures necessary to protect any site determined to contain or constitute an historical resource, a unique archaeological resource, or a unique paleontological resource or to undertake data recover, excavation analysis, and curation of archaeological or paleontological materials. County staff shall consider such recommendations and implement them where they are feasible in light of Project design as previously approved by the County.	During Construction	Daily or as needed throughout the construction period if suspicious resources are discovered	Governing Entity established for operating the Wastewater System Services via field evaluation of the resource finds by a qualified archaeologist	A qualified archaeologist shall document the results of field evaluation and shall recommend further actions that shall be taken to mitigate for unique resource or human remains found, consistent with all applicable laws including CEQA.			
<b>5-2</b> - The property owner shall avoid and minimize impacts to paleontological resources. If a potentially significant paleontological resource is encountered during ground disturbing activities, all construction within a 100-foot radius of the find shall immediately cease until a qualified paleontologist determines whether the resources requires further study. The project proponent shall include a standard	During Construction	Daily or as needed throughout the construction period if suspicious resources are discovered	Governing Entity established for operating the Wastewater System Services via field evaluation of the resource finds by a qualified	A qualified archaeologist shall document the results of field evaluation and shall recommend further actions that shall be			



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<p>inadvertent discovery clause in every construction contract to inform contractors of this requirement. The paleontologist shall notify the Tulare County Resource Management Agency and the project proponent of the procedures that must be followed before construction is allowed to resume at the location of the find. If the find is determined to be significant and the Tulare County Resource Management Agency determines avoidance is not feasible, the paleontologist shall design and implement a data recovery plan consistent with applicable standards. The plan shall be submitted to the Tulare County Resource Management Agency for review and approval. Upon approval, the plan shall be incorporated into the project.</p>			archaeologist	taken to mitigate for unique resource or human remains found, consistent with all applicable laws including CEQA.			
<p><b>5-3.</b> Consistent with Section 7050.5 of the California Health and Safety Code and (CEQA Guidelines) Section 15064.5, if human remains of Native American origin are discovered during project construction, it is necessary to comply with State laws relating to the disposition of Native American burials, which fall within the jurisdiction of the Native American Heritage Commission (Public Resources Code Sec. 5097). In the event of the accidental [that is, unanticipated] discovery or recognition of any human remains in any location other than a dedicated cemetery, the following steps should be taken:</p> <p>1. There shall be no further excavation or</p>	During Construction	Daily or as needed throughout the construction period if suspicious resources are discovered	County of Tulare Planning Department via field evaluation of the resource finds by a qualified archaeologist	A qualified archaeologist shall document the results of field evaluation and shall recommend further actions that shall be taken to mitigate for unique resource or human remains found, consistent with			

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<p>disturbance of the site or any nearby area reasonably suspected to overlie adjacent human remains until:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. The Tulare County Coroner/Sheriff must be contacted to determine that no investigation of the cause of death is required; and</li> <li>b. If the coroner determines the remains to be Native American:               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. The coroner shall contact the Native American Heritage Commission within 24 hours.</li> <li>ii. The Native American Heritage Commission shall identify the person or persons it believes to be the most likely descended from the deceased Native American.</li> <li>iii. The most likely descendent may make recommendations to the landowner or the person responsible for the excavation work, for means of treating or disposing of, with appropriate dignity, the human remains and any associated grave goods as provided in Public Resources Code section 5097.98, or</li> </ol> </li> <li>2. Where the following conditions occur, the landowner or his/her authorized representative shall rebury the Native American human remains and associated</li> </ol>				<p>all applicable laws including CEQA.</p>			

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grave goods with appropriate dignity on the property in a location not subject to further subsurface disturbance. a. The Native American Heritage Commission is unable to identify a most likely descendent or the most likely descendent failed to make a recommendation within 24 hours after being notified by the commission. b. The descendant fails to make a recommendation; or c. The landowner or his authorized representative rejects the recommendation of the descendent.							
<b>TRANSPORTATION/TRAFFIC (TO BE IMPLEMENTED AS A CONDITION OF APPROVAL)</b>							
<b>17-1</b> – To be determined as it would be speculative to identify specific uses and square footage of future which have not been determined. As development proposals occur, each will be evaluated to determine potential impact and appropriate/applicable mitigation as needed. Mitigation could include roadway improvements, signalization, VMT fees, etc.	TBD	TBD	County of Tulare / TBD	County of Tulare / TBD			
<b>TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES</b>							
<b>See Mitigation Measures 5-3 through 5-3.</b>							