

NEGATIVE DECLARATION

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

Pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act of 1970 (CEQA), the State CEQA Guidelines, and the Kern County Guidelines for Implementation of CEQA and State CEQA Guidelines, the Kern County Planning and Natural Resources Department has made an Initial Study of possible environmental impacts of the following-described project:

APPLICANT: Kern County Planning and Natural Resources Department (PP17009)

APPLICATION: **General Plan Amendment Case No. 160, Map No. 500**
Housing Element - 6th Cycle 2024 - 2031

LOCATION: Countywide

DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED PROJECT: The Draft Kern County 2024 - 2031 Housing Element (the Project) is designed to address the projected housing needs of current and future unincorporated area County residents. The Project is mandated by the State of California, which has required the preparation and adoption of a Housing Element within every General Plan for every jurisdiction since 1969. On mandated intervals all jurisdictions in California are required to update their Housing Element pursuant to Section 65580 – 65589.8 of the Government Code. The development and preservation of adequate and affordable housing is important to the well-being of the residents and economic prosperity of Kern County. Kern County has adopted two (2) General Plans for the unincorporated areas; the Kern County General Plan and the Metropolitan Bakersfield General Plan, which was prepared and updated jointly, but adopted separately, with the City of Bakersfield and covers unincorporated areas within the Bakersfield City limits and Sphere of influence. This Housing Element is part of both General Plans and the use of the term “General Plan” in this document refers to both unincorporated areas only. The City of Bakersfield separately prepares and adopts its own Housing Element to cover areas within the city limits and under their jurisdiction.

This Housing Element represents Kern County’s long-term commitment to the development and improvement of housing with specific goals for the mandated review period 2024 - 2031. This Element identifies strategies and programs that focus on:

1. Preserving and improving housing and neighborhoods;
2. Providing adequately zoned housing sites that meets the requirements from the Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA);
3. Assisting in the provision of affordable housing;
4. Removing governmental and other constraints to housing investment; and
5. Affirmatively furthering fair housing in the unincorporated areas.

The Draft Kern County Housing Element 2024 - 2031 is available online here:

<https://kernplanning.com/housing-element/>

Specific recommendations for revisions to the County’s Housing Element programs are described in the proposed Housing Element Update and include new staffing and programs for implementation. No changes are proposed to the County’s land use regulations nor are any specific projects proposed in the Housing Element Update. Zoning Ordinance changes would be minor and

mainly proposed to update the Zoning Ordinance to existing State requirements, which the County currently complies with. No changes in existing land use zones or densities would be proposed.

While many of the County of Kern's housing programs benefit residents in the incorporated jurisdictions, the purview of the Housing Element is on the unincorporated County. Each City and County jurisdiction in the State is required to prepare and adopt its own Housing Element as part of the local General Plan.

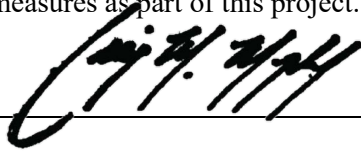
MITIGATION MEASURES Included in the Proposed Project to Avoid Potentially Significant Effects (if required):

None required

INCLUSION OF MITIGATION MEASURES AS PART OF PROJECT:

I, as applicant/authorized agent, have reviewed the mitigation measures noted above and agree to include said measures as part of this project.

Signed: _____

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "C. J. ...", written over a horizontal line.

Dated: 2/2/2024

FINDINGS: It has been found that this project, as described and proposed to be mitigated herein, will not have a significant effect on the environment and that an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) is, therefore, not required. A brief statement of reasons supporting such findings is as follows:

- (1) There does not appear to be a substantial body of opinion that considers or will consider the various anticipated environmental effects resulting from the proposed action to be adverse.
- (2) Proposed action would not appear to conflict with environmental plans and goals of the community where it is located. Proposal would not appear to conflict with any adopted element of the Kern County General Plan.
- (3) Proposed action would not appear to induce substantial growth or concentration of population. Project would not displace a large number of people.
- (4) Proposed project design would not appear to disrupt or divide the existing geographic arrangement of an established community.
- (5) Proposal would not appear to conflict with established recreational, educational, religious, or scientific uses of the area.

PUBLIC INQUIRY: Any person may object to dispensing with such EIR or respond to the findings herein. Information relating to the proposed project is on file in the office of the Planning and Natural Resources Department at the address shown below. Any person wishing to examine or obtain a copy of that information or this document, or seeking information as to the time and manner to so object or respond, may do so by inquiring at said office during regular business hours.

A copy of the Initial Study is attached hereto.

PROPOSED NEGATIVE DECLARATION DATE: February 2, 2024
NEGATIVE DECLARATION REVIEW PERIOD ENDS: March 4, 2024

LORELEI H. OVIATT, AICP, Director
Planning and Natural Resources Department

Kern County Planning and
Natural Resources Department
2700 "M" Street, Suite 100
Bakersfield, CA 93301
(661) 862-8600



By Craig M. Murphy
Assistant Director

AGENCY CONSULTATION REQUIRED: Yes No

AGENCIES CONSULTED: Kern County Planning and Natural Resources Department/Planning Operations; Cities of: Arvin, Bakersfield (Planning Dept. & Public Works), California City, Delano, Maricopa, McFarland, Ridgecrest, Shafter, Taft, Tehachapi, Wasco; Bureau of Land Management: Bakersfield & Ridgecrest; China Lake Naval Air Force Weapons Station; Edwards AFB; FAA; FCC; Fish & Wildlife: Sacramento, Palm Springs, Hopper Mtn Natl; Forest Service: Los Padres, Sequoia; US Dept of Ag NRCS Bakersfield; Resource Conserv. Districts: Antelope Valley, Buena Vista, Eastern Kern, Kern Valley, North West Kern, Tehachapi; So San Joaquin Arch Info Center; Caltrans: District 6, District 9, Div of Aeronautics, Div of Structures; State Clearinghouse; CalGEM; California Fish & Wildlife; Reg Water Quality: Central, Lahontan; Toxic Substance Control; Water Resources Div of Land & Right of Way; Kern

County: Ag, Airports, County Clerk, PW Floodplain, PW Survey, Environmental Health, Fire, Library, Parks & Rec, Sheriff, PW Dev Review, PW O&M; Municipal Advisory Council: Inyokern, Mountain Communities, Rosamond, Tehachapi, Mojave; Parks & Recreation: Bakersfield City, Bear Mountain, Buttonwillow, North of the River, Shafter, Tehachapi, West Side; State Dept of Parks: Hungry Valley, Tehachapi District, Angeles District, Mojave Desert Sector; School Districts: Arvin High, Bakersfield City, Beardsley, Blake, Panama-Buena Vista, Buttonwillow Union, Caliente Union, West Kern Community College, Delano Joint Union High, Delano Union, DiGiorgio, Edison, El Tejon Unified, Elk Hills, Fairfax Union, Fruitvale, General Shafter, Greenfield Union, Kern Community College, Kern High, Kern Valley, Kernville Union, Lakeside Union, Lamont, Lerdo, Lost Hills Union, Maple, Maricopa Unified, McFarland Unified, McKittrick, Mojave Unified, Mountain View, Midway, Norris, Pond Union, Muroc Unified, Rio Bravo-Greeley, Rosedale Union, Richland-Lerdo Union, Shafter High, Sierra Sands Union, Semi Tropic, Southern Ker Unified, Standard, South Fork Union, Taft Union High, Tehachapi Unified, Taft City, Vineland, Wasco Union Elementary, Wasco Union High; Kern County Superintendent of Schools; KernCOG; LAFCO; Kern County Water Agency; East Kern Air Pollution Control District; San Joaquin APCD; Golden Empire Transit; Delano Mosquito Abatement District; Kern Mosquito & Vector Control District; South Fork Mosquito Abatement District; Westside Mosquito & Vector Control District; Community/Utility Service Districts: Desert Lake, Arvin Community, Bakersfield City PW, Bear Valley, Bear Valley Springs Assoc, Boron, California City PW, East Niles, Enos Lane, Frazier Park, Golden Hills, Inyokern, Lake Isabella, Lamont, Lost Hills, Mojave, Mountain Communities, Public Utilities Com Energy Div, Rosamond, So San Joaquin, Stallion Springs, Wasco, State Dept of Public Utilities Commission; Water Districts: Antelope Valley-East Kern, Aerial Acres, Alta Sierra, Bakersfield City, Arvin-Edison, Ashe, Berrenda Mesa, Bella Vista, Beldridge, Buena Vista, Bodfish, Brock Mutual, Buttonwillow County, Casa Loma, Cawelo, Edmonston Acres, Edgemont Acres, California Water Service, Gosford Road, Friant Water Users Authority, Erskine Creek, Indian Wells, Greenfield County, Goose Lake, Kern River Watermaster, Kern County Water Agency, Indian Wells Valley, Kern Water Bank Authority, Kern River Valley, Kern Delta, La Hacienda, Lake of the Woods, Kern-Tulare, Los Angeles Dept of Water & Power, Lebec County, Lamont Storm, Mettler County, Lost Hills, North Kern Water Storage, Mountain Mesa, North Edwards, Olcese, North of the River, Oildale Mutual, Metro Water Dist of So California, Pinion Pines, Riverkern, Rosedale-Rio Bravo, Rand Communities, Shafter-Wasco, Quail Valley, Smi Tropic, Stockdale, Superior Mountain, Tejon-Castaic, Tehachapi-Cummings, West Kern, Wheeler Ridge-Maricopa, Vaughn; Airports: Bakersfield Municipal, California City Municipal, Delano Municipal, Inyokern, Minter Field, Mojave East Kern Airport District, Mountain Valley, Rosamond Skypark, Tehachapi Municipal; Adams, Broadwell, Joseph & Cardozo; Center on Race, Poverty & Environment; Defenders of Wildlife; Desert Tortoise Preserve Committee; Friant Water Users Authority; Mojave Chamber of Commerce; Native American Heritage Council of Kern County; Pacific Crest Trail Association; PG&E: Bakersfield, Fresno; Sierra Club; So Cal Edison: Wofford Heights/Kernville, Long Beach/Bakersfield/San Joaquin Valley, Tehachapi/Antelope Valley, Ridgecrest, Valencia/San Fernando; So Cal Gas; Eric Anderson; Hungry Valley SVRA; Janice Armstrong; Leadership Council; LiUNA; Mary Ann Lockhart; Pleistocene Foundation; Tulare Basin Wetlands Association; William Nelson; Lozeau Drury, LLP; Cuyama Basin Groundwater Sustainability Agency; Kern River Groundwater Sustainability Agency; State Dept of Housing & Community Development; Military Contacts: US Air Force Western Reg, US Army G3 Force Integration, US Army Office of Strategic Integration, US Navy Plans & Liaison Office, US Marine Corp MCIWEST-MCB CamPen; Tribal Contacts: Big Pine Paiute Tribe of the Owens Valley, Chumash Council of Bakersfield, Coastal Band of the Chumash Nation, Fernandeno Tataviam Band of Mission Indians, Kern Valley Indian Community, Kitanemuk & Yowiumne Tejon Indians, Quechan Tribe of the Fort Yuma Reservation, Salinan Tribe of Monterey, San Luis Obispo Counties, San Fernando Band of Mission Indians, Yuhaaviatam of San Manuel Nation, Santa Rosa Rancheria Tachi Yokut Tribe, Sana Ynez Band of Chumash Indians, Tejon Indian Tribe, Tubatulabals of Kern Valley, Tule River Indian Tribe, Xolon-Salinan Tribe, yak tityu tityu yak tilhini Northern Chumash Tribe, Kern Valley Indian Community, Quechan Tribe of the Fort Yuma Reservation, Wuksache Indian Tribe/Eshom Valley Band, Kern Valley Indian Council

STATE CLEARINGHOUSE NUMBER (if required):

INITIAL STUDY PREPARED BY: Craig Murphy, Assistant Director Planning and Natural Resources Department

DATE POSTED: February 2, 2024 **DATE OF NOTICE TO PUBLIC:** February 2, 2024

* Public Resources Code, Section 21000, et seq.

** Title 14, Division 6, California Administrative Code, as amended

*** Resolution No. 88-068, adopted January 19, 1988

LHO:CMM:cc (01/25/2024 - 5585.ND)

Attachment

KERN COUNTY PLANNING AND NATURAL RESOURCES DEPARTMENT

INITIAL STUDY REVIEW

PROJECT DESCRIPTION AND SETTING

PROPOSED PROJECT: General Plan Amendment Case No. 160 , Map No. 500
Housing Element - 6th Cycle 2024 - 2031 by Kern County Planning and
Natural Resources Department (PP17009)

LOCATION : Countywide

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: The Draft Kern County 2024 - 2031 Housing Element (henceforth referred to as the Project) is designed to address the projected housing needs of current and future unincorporated area County residents. The Project is mandated by the State of California, which has required the preparation and adoption of a Housing Element within every General Plan for every jurisdiction since 1969. On mandated intervals all jurisdictions in California are required to update their Housing Element pursuant to Section 65580 – 65589.8 of the Government Code. The development and preservation of adequate and affordable housing is important to the well-being of the residents and economic prosperity of Kern County. Kern County has adopted two (2) General Plans for the unincorporated areas; the Kern County General Plan and the Metropolitan Bakersfield General Plan, which was prepared and updated jointly, but adopted separately with the City of Bakersfield and covers unincorporated areas within the Bakersfield City limits and Sphere of Influence. This Housing Element is part of both General Plans and the use of the term “General Plan” in this document refers to both unincorporated areas only. The City of Bakersfield separately prepares and adopts its own Housing Element to cover areas within the city limits and under their jurisdiction.

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Specific recommendations for revisions to the County’s Housing Element programs are described in the proposed Housing Element Update and include new staffing and programs for implementation. No changes are proposed to the County’s land use regulations nor are any specific projects proposed in the Housing Element Update. Zoning Ordinance changes would be minor and mainly proposed to update the Zoning Ordinance to existing State requirements, which the County currently complies with. No changes in existing land use zones or densities would be proposed.

While many of the County of Kern's housing programs benefit residents in the incorporated jurisdictions, the purview of the Housing Element is on the unincorporated County. Each City and County jurisdiction in the State is required to prepare and adopt its own Housing Element as part of the local General Plan.

ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING:

Kern County is California's third largest county in land area, encompassing 8,161 square miles. Located in the southern end of the Central Valley, Kern County serves as the gateway to Southern California, the San Joaquin Valley and California's High Desert. The County is bounded by Kings, Tulare, and Inyo Counties on the north, San Bernardino County on the east, Los Angeles and Ventura counties on the south and Santa Barbara and San Luis Obispo Counties on the west. The county contains three (3) distinct areas ; valley, mountain and desert encompassing over five (5) million acres that includes significant state owned and federal lands managed by the US Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, and the Department of Defense. It has two (2) different air basins managed by the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District and the East Kern Air Pollution Control District with distinct geographic characteristics, attainment status, and plans. It is covered for transportation and legislated regional issues such as the Regional Housing Needs Allocation by the Kern County Council of Governments (KernCOG). The Housing Element divides the county into 12 subareas as defined by KernCOG.

- Greater Arvin
- Greater California City
- Greater Delano
- Greater Frazier Park
- Greater Lake Isabella
- Greater Mc Farland
- Greater Ridgecrest
- Greater Shafter
- Greater Taft
- Greater Tehachaphi
- Greater Wasco
- Metro Bakersfield
-

A complete description of these areas can be found in the Draft Housing Element Pages 1-2 through 1-4. <https://kernplanning.com/housing-element/>.

The county General Plan distinctions between there distinct variations in terrain, climate, geographic, and environmental factors by defining three regions of the county. These regions are as follows:

- Valley Region: The southern San Joaquin Valley below an elevation of 1,000 feet mean sea level (MSL);
- Mountain Region: The westernmost and central portion of the County above the 1,000 foot MSL contour in the valley and western region of the County and west of the primary alignment of the Los Angeles Aqueduct in the eastern County, including the southernmost portion of the County; and
- Desert Region: The eastern section of the County east of the primary alignment of the Los Angeles Aqueduct.

The distinct different environmental settings for each of these regions are described in detail in the Kern County General Plan documents found online here:

<https://kernplanning.com/planning/planning-documents/general-plans-elements/>

According to the US Census Bureau, Kern County experienced a population growth of approximately eight (8) percent between 2002 and 2010, increasing from 839,631 to 909,235. Between 2020 and 2030, it is estimated the population will grow by nearly 13 percent. In unincorporated areas, single family detached units comprise 73.2 percent of all housing and mobile homes make up 13.1 percent. The median home sales price in May 2023 in various Kern County metro areas was between \$225, 000 and \$382,500. The U.S Census 2017-2021 five (5) year estimates found that the vacancy rate for the incorporated county was 1.9 percent while it was 4.2 percent in unincorporated areas.

**KERN COUNTY
ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST FORM**

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

DETERMINATION. (To be completed by the Lead Agency)

On the basis of this initial evaluation:

- I find that the proposed project COULD NOT have a significant effect on the environment, and a NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.
- I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, there will not be a significant effect in this case because revisions in the project have been made by or agreed to by the project proponent. A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.
- I find that the proposed project MAY have a significant effect on the environment, and an ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required.
- I find that the proposed project MAY have a "potentially significant impact" or "potentially significant unless mitigated" impact on the environment, but at least one effect (a) has been adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and (b) has been addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis as described on attached sheets. An ENVIRONMENT IMPACT REPORT (EIR) 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

Craig Murphy
Printed Name

2/2/2024

Date

Assistant Director
Title

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 Environmental Impact Report (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 measure and briefly explain how they reduce the effect to a less than significant level.
- (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) The adopted guidelines state “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. “Kern County has adopted this format and included all questions from Appendix G.
- (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.

Issues (and Supporting Information Sources):	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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I. AESTHETICS. Would the project:

- | | | | | |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c) In nonurbanized 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 points) 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 daytime or nighttime views in the area? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

RESPONSES:

Response to (a) through (d) The project does not propose any new zoning designations and only acknowledges already zoned properties which have completed review under California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Such properties, when developed are required to fully comply with all requirements of the Kern County Zoning ordinance and General Plan policies regarding aesthetics. Chapter 19.81 – Outdoor Lighting – Dark Skies applies to all projects and requires specific requirements for light fixtures, siting, and protection of areas. Development projects that propose the construction of new housing units or the conversion of existing buildings will be subject to project specific review and imposition of requirements for aesthetic impacts, degradation of scenic resources or visual character, effects on scenic vistas and new sources of light and glare. Projects that propose to change agricultural zoned property to residential will be subject to site specific review under CEQA. Therefore, impacts are considered less than significant and no further mitigation is required.

Issues (and Supporting Information Sources):	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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II. AGRICULTURE AND FOREST RESOURCES.

Would the project:

- | | | | | |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| a) Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to nonagricultural use? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or 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 section 12220(g)) or timberland (as defined in Public Resources Code section 4526) or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code Section 51104 (g), | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| e) Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland to nonagricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| f) Result in the cancellation of an open space contract made pursuant to the California Land Conservation Act of 1965 or Farmland Security Zone Contract for any parcel of 100 or more acres (Section 15206(b)(3) Public Resources Code? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

RESPONSES:

Response to (a) through (f) The project does not propose any new zoning designations and only acknowledges already zoned properties which have completed review under California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Kern County covers an area of 8,161 square miles or over five (5) million acres including 4500 square miles (2.8 million acres) of land zoned for exclusive agriculture. 1.5 million acres of prime and nonprime agricultural land is enrolled in a binding Williamson Act Land Use contract for 10-year intervals with another 179,450 acres enrolled in a

Farmland Security Zone Contract for 20-year intervals. The major irrigated and grazing areas are in the Southern San Joaquin Valley, mountains of Tehachapi and the eastern kern areas near Willow Springs.

The proposed Housing Element does not include or require the actual physical development of housing units or rejoining of agriculturally zoned land. However, the Housing Element generally encourages the appropriate actions necessary to provide adequate housing for the County's housing needs while ensuring a jobs/housing balance to reduce Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) and services. If development proposed conversion of agricultural lands designated Prime, Unique or Farmland of Statewide Importance to residential use, existing zoning restrictions would require a General Plan amendment, zone change and review under CEQA which are discretionary actions requiring a public hearing and may not be approved. Further Williamson Act and Farmland Security Act contracts are binding legal agreements that restrict use of the land for residential and non-agricultural commercial uses. Both General Plans contain policies to discourage the premature conversion of agricultural land in the Land Use, Open Space and Conservation Element. Impacts are less than significant, and no further mitigation is required.

Issues (and Supporting Information Sources):	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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III. AIR QUALITY. The significance criteria established by the applicable Air pollution control district shall be relied upon to make the following determinations. Would the project:

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

b) Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is nonattainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard? Specifically, would implementation of the project (in a specific location) exceed any of the following adopted thresholds:

i. San Joaquin Valley Unified Air Pollution Control District:

Operational and Area Sources

Reactive Organic Gases (ROG)
10 tons per year.

Oxides of Nitrogen (NO_x)
10 tons per year.

Particulate Matter (PM₁₀)
15 tons per year.

Stationary Sources as determined by District Rules

Severe Nonattainment
25 tons per year.

Extreme Nonattainment
10 tons per year.

Issues (and Supporting Information Sources):	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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III. AIR QUALITY. (Continued)

ii. Eastern Kern Air Pollution Control District.

Operational and Area Sources

Reactive Organic Gases (ROG) 25 tons per year.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Oxides of nitrogen (NO _x) 25 tons per year.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Particulate Matter (PM ₁₀) 15 tons per year.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Stationary Sources - determined by District

<u>Rules</u> 25 tons per year.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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- | | | | | |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 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"/> |

RESPONSES:

Response to (a) through (e) The county is covered by two (2) different air basins. A portion of Kern County (valley portion and portions of the mountain) is within the San Joaquin Valley Air Basin (SJVAB) which is include among the eight (8) counties that comprise the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District (SJVAPCD). The Kern River Valley, Cummings Valley, Stallion Springs, and Bear Valley Springs (the western part of the Tehachapi Region) are still included in the federally designated San Joaquin Valley PM10 Serious Nonattainment Area. Federal designations for eight-(8-) hour ozone and PM10 have split the Indian Wells Valley out as a separate planning area from the rest of the Air District. The SJVAPCD acts as the regulatory agency for air pollution control in the SJVAB and is the local agency empowered to regulate air pollution emissions for the plan area. The entire SJVAB is designated non-attainment for ozone and particulate matter (PM 10/ PM 2.5).

The remainder of the County (mountain and desert) is within the Mojave Air Basin under the authority of the Eastern Kern Air Pollution Control District as the regulatory agency. The Mojave Desert Air Basin is in non-attainment for Ozone - 8 Hour per federal standards and nonattainment for PM 10 and PM 2.5 for State standards. However, the State standards designate it as Moderate Nonattainment for Ozone - 1 Hour and Nonattainment for PM10 / PM 2.5.

The Housing Element is a policy document and does not involve the construction of housing that would cause a violation of air quality standards, result in a net increase in pollutants, expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations, or create objectionable odors. The

Housing Element does not conflict with applicable air quality plans as all development, when constructed, must comply with all standards and regulations of each air district for grading and construction. The Housing Element is a policy document that provides a survey and analysis of current vacant and zoned properties with characteristics for residential development to meet the RHNA. Impacts are less than significant, and no further mitigation is required.

Issues (and Supporting Information Sources):	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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IV. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES.

Would the project:

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|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| a) Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special-status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" 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, regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c) Have a substantial adverse effect on 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

RESPONSES:

Response to (a) through (f) The adoption of the Housing Element 2024 - 2031, which is a policy document focused on residentially zoned land and policies to affirmatively further fair housing, will not adversely impact biological resources, special status habitats, wetlands, wildlife movement, local policies protecting biological resources or conflict with an adopted habitat conservation plan or state habitat conservation plan. The Housing Element is a policy-level document that does not include any site-specific designs or proposals. The policies of the Housing Element require public services, such as sewer and water, and these constraints, therefore focus zoned properties and housing policies into urbanized areas or in established unincorporated communities away from established migratory routes or concentrations of biological resources. No such zoning is proposed in the over 100,000 acres conservation easements recorded and managed in the Tehachapi mountains or within the protected State and Federal lands. Further, over 157,000 acres of land is already committed to wind and commercial scale solar which has altered the biological resource areas and those areas are prohibited for residential use. Both the Kern County General Plan and the Metropolitan Bakersfield General Plan have land use policies specific to preservation of endangered species, resolution of conflicts with adopted habitat conservation plans and protection of conservation areas. Any future housing development general plan amendments or zoning will be subject to site specific CEQA review. Impacts are less than significant, and no further mitigation is required.

Issues (and Supporting Information Sources):	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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V. CULTURAL RESOURCES. Would the project:

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|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to CEQA Guidelines § 15064.5? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of dedicated cemeteries? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

RESPONSES:

Response to (a) through (f) Cultural and archaeological resources are physical objects, buildings, structures, living biological resources, or landscapes with unique cultural or historical significance. These resources may include Native American tools, artworks, other possessions or artifacts, structures, and sacred locations. The Housing Element is a policy-level document that does not include any site-specific designs or proposals. The policies of the Housing Element require public services, such as sewer and water, and these constraints, therefore focus zoned properties and housing policies into urbanized areas or in established unincorporated communities away from areas with known cultural significance and unexplored archaeological resources. No such zoning is proposed in the over 100,000 acres conservation easements recorded and managed in the Tehachapi mountains or within the protected State and Federal lands. Further, over 157,000 acres of land is already committed to wind and commercial scale solar which has been reviewed under CEQA for cultural and archaeological resource areas and those areas are not compatible for residential use. Both the Kern County General Plan and the Metropolitan Bakersfield General Plan have land use policies specific to the protection of historical and archeological artifacts and areas. Any future housing development General Plan Amendments or zoning involve environmental review and specific projects that include the development of housing have mitigation to ensure the any archaeological artifacts discovered or human remains are handled respectfully and within the law of both the State and identified Tribal Elders. Impacts are less than significant, and no further mitigation is required.

Issues (and Supporting Information Sources):	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
VI. ENERGY . Would the project:				
a) Result in potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during project construction or operation?	<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"/>

RESPONSES:

Response to (a) through (b) The project does not propose any new zoning designations and only acknowledges already zoned properties which have completed review under California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The Housing Element does not implement construction without further review of permits and plans. The Kern County Code of Building Regulations (2022) includes all the following codes: California Code of Regulations, Title 24 – California Administrative Code, California Building Code, California Residential Code, California Electrical Code, California Mechanical Code, California Plumbing Code, California Energy Code, California Elevator Safety Construction Code, California Historical Building Code, California Fire Code, California Existing Building Code, California Green Building Standards Code, and California Referenced Standards Code. The adopted 2022 Kern County Code of Building Regulations requires the design of the residential development incorporate energy conservation measures and limits through the building permit process wasteful or excessive use of energy. Impacts on energy are less than significant, and no further mitigation is required.

Issues (and Supporting Information Sources):	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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VII . GEOLOGY AND SOILS. Would the project:

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|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| a) Directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving: | | | | |
| i. Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| ii. Strong seismic groundshaking? | <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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| d) Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (19914), creating substantial 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 wastewater disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of wastewater? | <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 type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

RESPONSES:

Response to (a) through (e) Kern County is seismically active, as is all of California, subject to moderate to severe ground shaking depending on the area. The General Plans contain goals and policies that are designed to address and mitigate seismic risks and soil issues. The Kern County Code of Building Regulations (2022) includes all the following codes: California Code of Regulations, Title 24 – California Administrative Code, California Building Code, California Residential Code, California Electrical Code, California Mechanical Code, California Plumbing Code, California Energy Code, California Elevator Safety Construction Code, California Historical Building Code, California Fire Code, California Existing Building Code, California Green Building Standards Code, and California Referenced Standards Code. The adopted 2022 Kern County Code of Building Regulations reflects the strict regulations and highest current standards imposed by the State to ensure that structures are built or retrofitted to withstand severe ground movement and shaking and that locations on or near faults are avoided. The Housing Element does not implement the development housing but provides the structure of zoning for it to occur and provides policies to support implementation. Actual development is conditioned by various codes and regulations to evaluate property for seismic and soil risks and impose mandatory mitigation. Landslide, erosion, subsidence, liquefaction, expansive soil will be evaluated through existing Kern County ordinances in the grading and building permit process as well. Similarly, any proposed use of septic systems is strictly limited by General Plan policies and land development policies adopted under direction of State law. Impacts are less than significant, and no further mitigation is required.

Issues (and Supporting Information Sources):	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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VIII GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS. Would the project:

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|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 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 of an agency adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

RESPONSES:

Response to (a) and (b) The adoption of the 2024 - 2031 Housing Element as a policy plan will not conflict with regulations for the reduction of emissions of greenhouse gases or generate any greenhouse gas emissions. Actual construction of any of residential housing units to implement the Housing Element, have either already complied with CEQA when zoned or if newly proposed, will require a discretionary action and grading and building permits for actual construction activities. The Kern County Code of Building Regulations (2022) includes all the following codes: California Code of Regulations, Title 24 – California Administrative Code, California Building Code, California Residential Code, California Electrical Code, California Mechanical Code, California Plumbing Code, California Energy Code, California Elevator Safety Construction Code, California Historical Building Code, California Fire Code, California Existing Building Code, California Green Building Standards Code, and California Referenced Standards Code. These codes reflect the most current standards of the state for building residential structures and implement the States goals for reduction of Greenhouse Gases under SB 100. The impacts on the generation of greenhouse gas emissions are less than significant, and no further mitigation is required.

Issues (and Supporting Information Sources):	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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IX. HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS. Would the project:

- | | | | | |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| a) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials? | <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 1/4 mile of an existing or proposed school? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| d) Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code § 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| e) For a project located within the adopted Kern County Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan, would the project result in a safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing or working in the project area? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Issues (and Supporting Information Sources):	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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IX HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS. (Continued)

h) Would implementation of the project generate vectors (flies, mosquitoes, rodents, etc.) or have a component that includes agricultural waste?

Specifically, would the project exceed the following qualitative threshold:

The presence of domestic flies, mosquitoes, cockroaches, rodents, and/or any other vectors associated with the project is significant when the applicable enforcement agency determines that any of the vectors:

- | | | | | |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| i. Occur as immature stages and adults in numbers considerably in excess of those found in the surrounding environment; and | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| ii. Are associated with design, layout, and management of project operations; and | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| iii. Disseminate widely from the property; and | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| iv. Cause detrimental effects on the public health or well being of the majority of the surrounding population. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

RESPONSES:

Response to (a) through (h) The project does not propose any new zoning designations and only acknowledges already zoned properties which have completed review under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The Housing Element does not implement construction without further review of permits and plans. Actual development is conditioned by various codes and regulations including the Kern County Land Development Ordinance and Kern County Code of Building Regulations (2022). The Kern County Code of Building Regulations (2022) includes all the following codes: California Code of Regulations, Title 24 – California Administrative Code, California Building Code, California Residential Code, California Electrical Code, California Mechanical Code, California Plumbing Code, California Energy Code, California Elevator Safety Construction Code, California Historical Building Code, California Fire Code, California Existing Building Code, California Green Building Standards Code, and California Referenced Standards Code. These codes reflect the most current standards of the state for building residential structures to address potential hazardous materials. The zoned areas for future residential development occurs in urbanized areas or established unincorporated communities that are not in areas with high risk of wildlife. The Kern County Airport Land Use

Compatibility Plan prohibits residential uses in the A (Runway Protection Zone), B-1 (Approach/Departure Zone – adjacent to runway and B-2) (extended approach/departure zones) so impacts and conflict with airports is less than significant. The impacts on hazards and hazardous materials are less than significant and no further mitigation is required.

Issues (and Supporting Information Sources):	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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X HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY.

Would the project:

- | | | | | |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or ground water quality? | <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 a substantial erosion or siltation on – or off-site | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| ii) substantially increase the rate of amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on-or off-site; | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input 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; or | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| iv) impeded or redirect flood flows? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| d) In flood hazard, tsunami, seiche zones, risk release of pollutants due to project inundation? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| e) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

RESPONSES:

Response to (a) through (f) The Housing Element 2024 - 2031 does not involve the construction of housing units or the use of the water resources in the County. Any specific projects resulting from the implementation of policies and actions in the Housing Element would be subject to building permit requirements that a confirmed and stable water supply be confirmed with a will-serve letter before the residential construction begins. Further, any development must comply with the Groundwater Sustainability Plans or restrictions in adjudicated water basins. Any new general plan amendments or re-zoning would be subject to environmental review to address the individual and cumulative impact upon water resources, from water usage and quality to the alteration of drainage patterns that might result in flooding, siltation, or erosion. Impact is less than significant, and no further mitigation is required.

Response to (g) through (j) The Housing Element does not place any structures in the 100-year floodplain or put persons or structures at risk due to dam or levee failure or inundation since the document is a policy document and does not include actual construction of housing. Flooding is considered a constraint to residential building and must be evaluated on a case-by-case basis for avoidance and mandatory regulations. The impacts on hydrology and water resources are less than significant, and no further mitigation is required.

Issues (and Supporting Information Sources):	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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XI. LAND USE AND PLANNING.

Would the project:

- | | | | | |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| a) Physically divide an established community? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input 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"/> |

RESPONSES:

Response to (a) and (b) The Housing Element is a planning document to address the County’s housing needs over the 2024 - 2031 planning period. It does not propose any actions that would divide established communities in the County. Goals and policies in both General Plans are designed to implement projects to conserve and improve the quality of existing housing and residential neighborhoods in the County. New housing would be developed on the sites listed in the housing inventory in the plan. All projects listed in the inventory of zoned property are consistent with the applicable General Plan and all other ordinances and regulations. The impacts on land use planning are less than significant and no further mitigation is required.

Issues (and Supporting Information Sources):	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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XII. MINERAL RESOURCES. Would the project:

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|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

RESPONSES:

Response to (a) and (b) The County’s Housing Element does not require the construction of housing but serves as a policy plan and inventory of zoned locations for the County with respect to housing. The General Plan and zoning ordinance contains requirements for mineral and mining activities which are intended to conserve areas for mineral extraction and exploration while protecting residential projects. Development would occur on existing residentially zoned property with appropriate access for mineral rights and environmental review of those mineral recovery projects. General Plan amendments and rezoning requests are required to be evaluated to the location in relation to mineral rights on the property and consistency with policies regarding the availability of important minerals. The impacts on mineral resources are less than significant and no further mitigation is required.

Issues (and Supporting Information Sources):	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
XIII. NOISE. Would the project result in:				
a) Generation of a substantial temporary or permanent increase in the 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) A substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) For a project located within the Kern County Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

RESPONSES:

Response to (a) through (d) The County’s Housing Element does not require the construction of housing but serves as a policy plan and inventory of zoned locations for the County with respect to housing. The General Plan and zoning ordinance and Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan have requirements to evaluate and mitigate noise from projects. Residentially projects generate low levels of noise compared to industrial and commercial projects and are not expected to generate significant noise impacts. The impacts from residential projects generating noise are less than significant and no further mitigation is required.

Issues (and Supporting Information Sources):	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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XIV. POPULATION AND HOUSING.

Would the project:

- | | | | | |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| a) Induce substantial unplanned population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

RESPONSES:

Response to (a) through (c) While the Housing Element is designed to facilitate the development of housing in order to meet anticipated population growth, it will not induce unplanned growth. The Housing Element is based on the Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) which is provided by Kern COG based on direction provided by the State Housing and Community Development agency. That agency uses Department of Finance projections of population along with past evidence of growth to create a projection. Since 1986, when the Kern County zoning ordinance was first comprehensively adopted, the projections for the unincorporated areas have never exceeded the State guidance even during periods of high economic activity and low interest rates. The limitations of publicly available sewer and water, as well as the cost of road and other infrastructure requirements in this largely rural county ensure growth inducement will not occur in an unchecked manner. The impacts on population and housing are less than significant and no further mitigation is required

Issues (and Supporting Information Sources):	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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XV. PUBLIC SERVICES.

Would the project:

- a) Result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times, or to other performance objectives for any of the public services:

Fire Protection?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Police Protection?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Schools?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Parks?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other Public Facilities?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

RESPONSES:

Response to (a) through (c) The Housing Element is a planning document to address the County's housing needs over the 2024 - 2031 planning period. New housing would be developed on the sites listed in the housing inventory in the plan. All projects listed in the inventory of zoned property are consistent with the applicable General Plan and all other ordinances and regulations. As consideration and adoption of the Housing Element would not result in any construction activities, no impacts to public services will occur. The impacts on public services are less than significant and no further mitigation is required.

Issues (and Supporting Information Sources):	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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XVI. RECREATION.

- | | | | | |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| a) Would the project increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

RESPONSES:

Response to (a) through (b) The Housing Element is a planning and policy document to address the County’s housing needs over the 2024 - 2031 planning period. New housing would be developed on the sites listed in the housing inventory in the plan. All projects listed in the inventory of zoned property are consistent with the applicable General Plan and all other ordinances and regulations. As consideration and adoption of the Housing Element would not result in any construction activities, no impacts to recreation will occur. The impacts on recreation are less than significant and no further mitigation is required.

Issues (and Supporting Information Sources):	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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XVII. TRANSPORTATION

Would the project:

- | | | | | |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| a) Conflict with a program, plan, ordinance, or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b) Conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines § 15064.3 (b) | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c) Substantially increase hazards due to a 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"/> |

RESPONSES:

Response to (a) through (d) The Kern Council of Governments (KernCOG) as the regional transportation agency, prepares the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) to examine long-range transportation issues, opportunities and needs for Kern County. KernCOG also prepares the Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP) and the Federal Transportation Improvement Program, which are funding documents, which implement projects referenced and identified in the RTP. The RTP program supports the implementation of the Circulation Element of the Kern County General Plans. The adoption of the 2024 - 2031 Housing Element is a planning and policy document to address the County's housing needs over the 2024 - 2031 planning period. New housing would be developed on the sites listed in the housing inventory in the plan. All projects listed in the inventory of zoned property are consistent with the applicable General Plan and all other ordinances and regulations. As consideration and adoption of the Housing Element would not result in any construction activities, no impacts to transportation, emergency access and conflicts with airports will occur. The impacts are less than significant and no further mitigation is required.

Issues (and Supporting Information Sources):	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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XVIII. TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES.

Would the project:

a) Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in Public Resources Code § 21074 as either a site, feature, place, cultural landscape that is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American tribe, and that is:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
i) Listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, or in a local register of historical resources defined in Public Resources Code section 5020.1 (k) or	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
ii) A recourse determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code section 5024.1. In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resource Code section 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native America tribe.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

RESPONSES:

Response to (a) The Housing Element is a planning and policy document to address the County’s housing needs over the 2024 - 2031 planning period. New housing would be developed on the sites listed in the housing inventory in the plan. All projects listed in the inventory of zoned property are consistent with the applicable General Plan and all other ordinances and regulations. As consideration and adoption of the Housing Element would not result in any construction activities, no impacts to tribal cultural resources will occur. The impacts on tribal cultural resources are less than significant and no further mitigation is required.

Issues (and Supporting Information Sources):	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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XIX. UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS.

Would the project:

- | | | | | |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| a) Require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment or storm water drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

RESPONSES:

Response to (a) through (e) The Housing Element is a planning and policy document to address the County's housing needs over the 2024 - 2031 planning period. New housing would be developed on the sites listed in the housing inventory in the plan. All projects listed in the inventory of zoned property are consistent with the applicable General Plan and all other ordinances and regulations. The Kern County and Incorporated Cities Integrated Waste Management Plan utilized existing general plan map codes to determine solid waste disposal needs for the next 15 years as required by State law. As consideration and adoption of the Housing Element would not result in any construction activities, no impacts to utilities or service systems will occur. The impacts on utilities and service systems are less than significant and no further mitigation is required.

Issues (and Supporting Information Sources):	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
XX. WILDFIRE. If located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, would the project:				
a) Substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Due to slope, prevailing winds, or 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

RESPONSES:

Response to (a) through (d) The Housing Element is a planning and policy document to address the County’s housing needs over the 2024 - 2031 planning period. New housing would be developed on the sites listed in the housing inventory in the plan. All projects listed in the inventory of zoned property are consistent with the applicable General Plan and all other ordinances and regulations and are not located in high fire hazard severity zones. As consideration and adoption of the Housing Element would not result in any construction activities, no impacts wildfire issues will occur. The impacts on wildfire are less than significant and no further mitigation is required.

Issues (and Supporting Information Sources):	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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XXI. MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE.

- | | | | | |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| a) Does the project have the potential to degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, substantially reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal, or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| b) Does the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? ("Cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of a project are significant when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects.) | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| c) Does the project have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

RESPONSES:

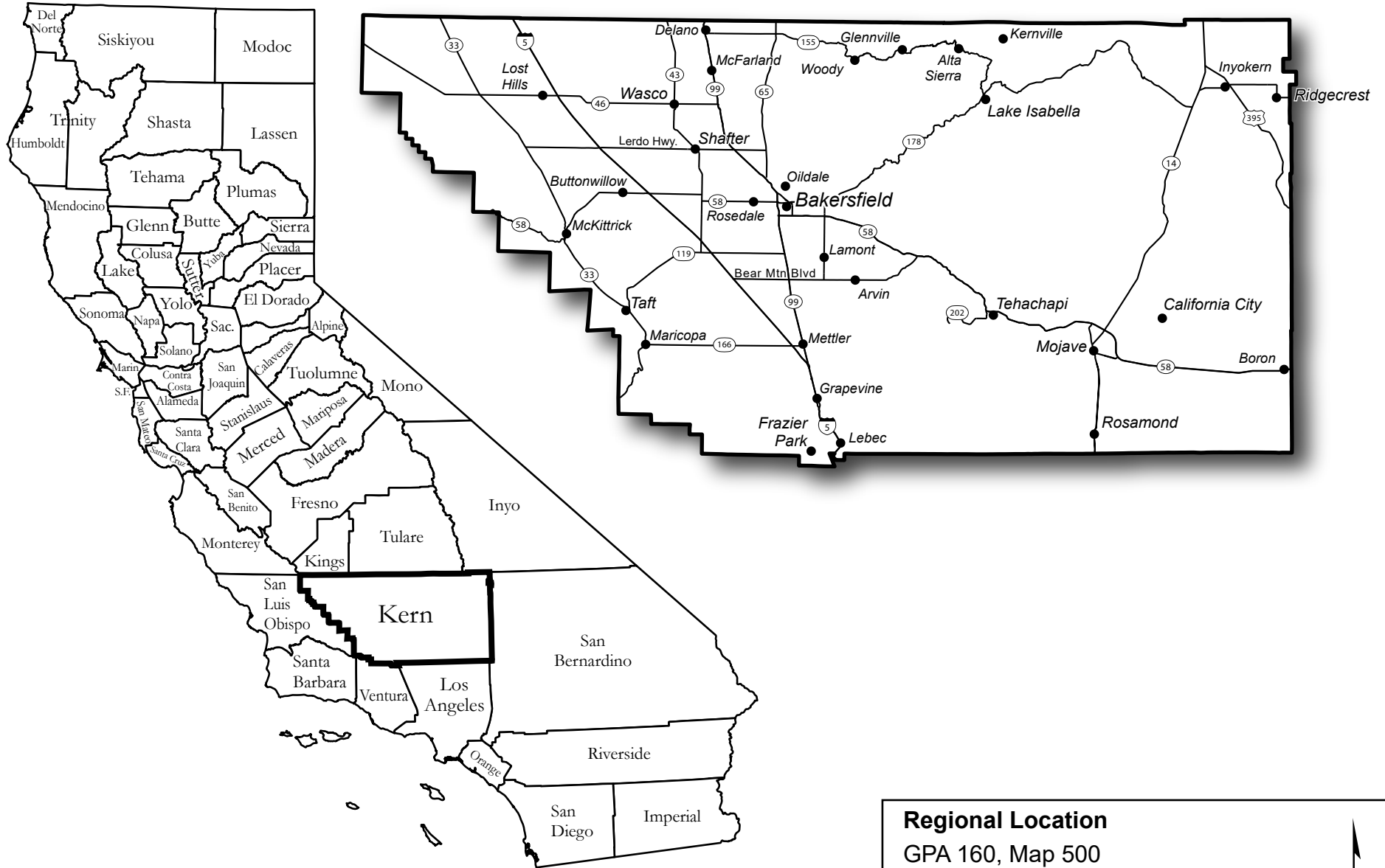
Response to (a) through (c) The Housing Element is a planning and policy document to address the County’s housing needs over the 2024 - 2031 planning period. Adoption of the Housing Element does not involve any construction or physical implementation activities and therefore there would be no impacts on the potential to degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, substantially reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal, or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory or contribute to cumulative impacts. As there are no construction or physical implementation activities there is a “no impact” mandatory finding of significance.

MITIGATION MEASURES

None required

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- (1) Kern County 2024-2031 Draft Housing Element <https://kernplanning.com/housing-element/>
- (2) Kern County General Plan and Final Program
Environmental Impact Report for the Kern County General Plan (2004)
- (3) Kern County Zoning Ordinance (April 2021)
- (4) Kern County Code of Building Regulations (2022)
- (5) Kern County Development Standards
- (6) Kern County Land Division Ordinance (2009)
- (7) Kern County Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan (2012)



Regional Location

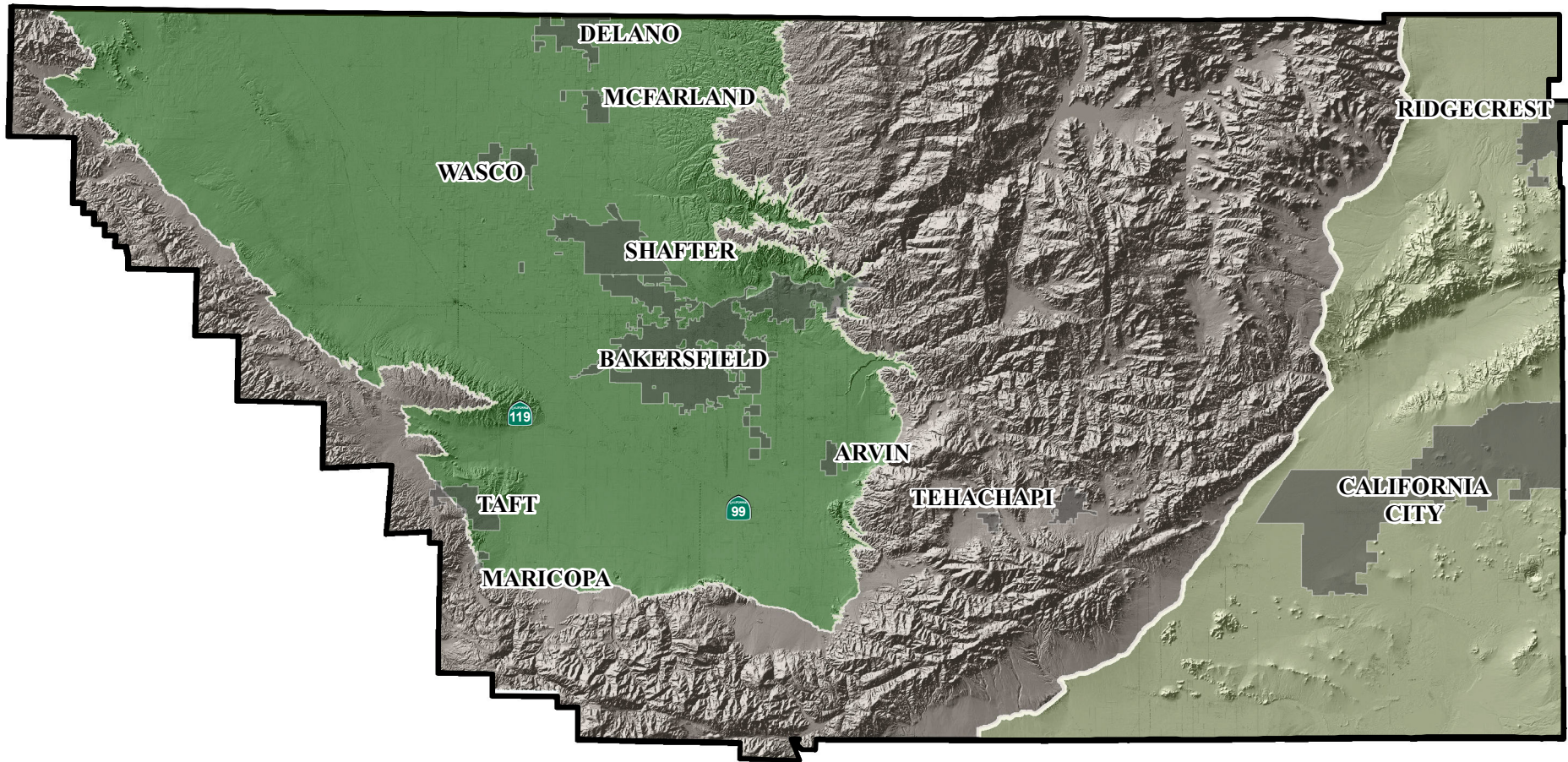
GPA 160, Map 500








**Kern County
Planning & Natural
Resources Department**




01/29/2024



-  Kern County
-  Desert Region - 1,142,814 ac.
-  Mountain Region - 2,351,321 ac.
-  Valley Region - 1,729,464 ac.
-  City Limits

Kern County Regions
 GPA 160, Map 500



Kern County
 Planning & Natural
 Resources Department

0 5 10 Miles 