

# CHAPTER 14.0

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## Additional Statutory Considerations

### 14.1 Growth Inducing Effects of the Proposed Project

#### Introduction

The CEQA *Guidelines* require that an EIR evaluate the growth-inducing impacts of a proposed action (Section 15126.2[d]). A growth-inducing impact is defined by the CEQA Guidelines as:

*[T]he ways in which the proposed project could foster economic or population growth, or the construction of additional housing, either directly or indirectly, in the surrounding environment. Included in this are projects which would remove obstacles to population growth .... It must not be assumed that growth in any area is necessarily beneficial, detrimental, or of little significance to the environment.*

A project can have direct and/or indirect growth-inducement potential. Direct growth inducement would result if a project involved construction of new housing. A project can have indirect growth-inducement potential if it would establish substantial new permanent employment opportunities (e.g., commercial, industrial or governmental enterprises) or if it would involve a substantial construction effort with substantial short-term employment opportunities and indirectly stimulate the need for additional housing and services to support the new employment demand. Similarly, under CEQA, a project would indirectly induce growth if it would remove an obstacle to additional growth and development, such as removing a constraint on a required public service. An example of this indirect effect would be the expansion of a wastewater treatment plant, which might allow for more development in service areas.

#### Potential for Growth-Inducement

The purpose of a general plan is to guide the growth and development of a community. Accordingly, the City's proposed General Plan is premised on a certain amount of growth taking place. Once situated within the largely rural San Joaquin Valley, the City of Tulare finds itself surrounded by growth and population expansion. The City grew quickly between 1990 and 2000 (10,745 new residents. As of January 1, 2007 the City's population was 55,935 individuals. The City is expected to continue to grow at the same rate (annual average rate of 2.8 percent) through 2030. This would result in an additional 78,978 residents over the next 25 years, bringing the population past 130,000 people.

## Direct Impacts

As discussed in this Draft EIR, during the next 25 years the City population is estimated exceed 130,000 residents. Implementation of the Proposed Project would induce some of the population growth in the City. As identified in the Land Use section of Chapter 3.0 the Draft General Plan Update has been developed with the primary goal of ensuring that future growth will occur in an orderly manner consistent with the economic, social, and environmental needs of the City. This will help prevent urban sprawl and land use conflicts, and it will ensure compatibility and community continuity throughout the City.

As a result, while the Proposed Project would result in an increase of growth locally, the policies included in the Proposed Project reduce the potential for negative impacts associated with directly induced growth. However, because this growth resulting from the Proposed Project would still significantly affect existing visual resources and result in an overall reduction of existing open space and agricultural lands, the growth inducing impacts of the Proposed Project are also considered significant and unavoidable.

## Indirect Impacts

While the Proposed Project does allow additional growth, it also includes specific policies that limit and direct that growth within the Planning Area. The Draft Land Use Diagram also provides a mixture of housing, shopping and employment opportunities so that as the number of residents increase they do not pressure adjacent communities to provide new commercial and employment opportunities.

Also, as previously stated in Chapter 4.0 “Public Services and Utilities”, commitments to provide water and sewer infrastructure would be limited to areas within the City’s proposed Planning Area. As result, the Draft General Plan policies would strive to contain growth within the proposed Planning Area. However, the City’s proposed policies would not preclude other surrounding jurisdictions from developing areas adjacent to the City’s proposed Planning Area.

Proposed policies LU-2.9 “Regional Cooperation”, LU-2.11 “Regional Planning” encourage a uniform land use policy and regional cooperation to address land use planning issues; however, the City has limited ability to constrain future development (driven by market forces) adjacent to its proposed Planning Area by neighboring jurisdictions. Consequently, indirect growth inducing impacts of the Proposed Project are also considered significant and unavoidable.

## 14.2 Summary of Cumulative Impacts

### Introduction

CEQA Guidelines Section 15130(a) requires that an EIR discuss the cumulative impacts of a project when the project’s incremental effect is “cumulatively considerable,” meaning that the project’s incremental effects are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past,

current, and probable future projects. A consideration of actions included as part of a cumulative impact scenario can vary by geographic extent, time frame, and scale. They are defined according to environmental resource issue and the specific significance level associated with potential impacts. CEQA Guidelines 15130(b) requires that discussions of cumulative impacts reflect the severity of the impacts and their likelihood of occurrence. The CEQA Guidelines note that the cumulative impacts discussion does not need to provide as much detail as is provided in the analysis of project-only impacts and should be guided by the standards of practicality and reasonableness and focus on the cumulative impact to which the identified other projects contribute rather than the attributes of other projects which do not contribute to the cumulative impacts.

In addition, CEQA Guidelines Section 15130(b) identifies that the following three elements are necessary for an adequate cumulative analysis:

1. A list of past, present, and reasonably anticipated future projects producing related or cumulative impacts, including those projects outside the control of the Lead Agency (i.e., the list approach); or a summary of projections contained in an adopted general plan or related planning document designed to evaluate regional or area-wide conditions (i.e., the plan approach). Any such planning document shall be referenced and made available to the public at a location specified by the Lead Agency.
2. A summary of expected environmental effects to be produced by those projects with specific reference to additional information stating where that information is available.
3. A reasonable analysis of the cumulative impacts of the relevant projects. An EIR shall examine reasonable, feasible options for mitigating or avoiding the project's contribution to any significant cumulative effects.

## Cumulative Setting

For the purposes of this EIR, the cumulative setting is based on a two-fold approach. For some impact issue areas (i.e., air quality, traffic, and water supply), the cumulative setting is defined by specific regional boundaries (air basin, regional roadway network, etc.) or projected regional or area-wide conditions, contributing to cumulative impacts. For the remaining impact issue areas, the cumulative setting is based on development anticipated within the vicinity of the City, including surrounding cities within Tulare County and the County as a whole. This analysis is based primarily on impacts contained in the existing general plan documents for these jurisdictions, including the adjacent cities and the City of Porterville and County of Tulare, both of which are currently undergoing general plan updates.

Additionally, several projects are currently planned and undergoing environmental review. These projects are described in the table below and have been included in the cumulative analysis.

**TABLE 14-1  
CURRENT PROJECTS**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Size</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Description</b>
Cartmill Crossing North	132 acres	Environmental Review Phase	The 132-acre site is proposed for development as a shopping center containing approximately 1.1 million square feet of regional retail and commercial service uses, plus a 16-screen cinema complex.
Tulare Protein Harvesting and Processing Plant	90 acres	Environmental Review Phase	The project is the construction and operation of a protein harvesting plant composed of three separate facilities, a harvesting and processing plant, a cold storage and freezer plant, and a co-gen plant that will convert animal waste to energy.
City of Tulare South I Street Industrial Park	458 acres	Environmental Review Phase	The project includes the annexation of approximately 458 acres from the County into the Tulare City limits. The proposed area will be divided into 123 acres of Light Industrial (M-1), 259 acres of Heavy Industrial (M-2) and 76 acres of Urban and Suburban Residential.
Tulare Motor Sports Complex	751 acres	Environmental Review Phase	Proposed to develop a super speedway 1-mile D-shaped oval racetrack and drag strip, grandstands, surrounding commercial uses, and race support facilities including fuel storage, 50 space garage, multi-story mini storage, medical center, helipad, police substation and fire station.

## Cumulative Impacts

### Cumulative Impacts Related to Aesthetics

Implementation of the Proposed Project would result in changes to the visual character of the City’s proposed Planning Area from a more agricultural/rural setting to one that is more characterized by suburban or urban uses (i.e., streets, homes, and neighborhood shopping centers), with increased light and glare sources. Despite the proposed General Plan’s policies and actions, in conjunction with adopted State, County and City regulations to enhance the City’s current community character and preserve open space, development permitted under the Proposed Project would result in a significant impact to the existing visual identity and character of the City due to the amount of growth allowed.

Similarly, development associated with the anticipated regional growth would result in a substantial change to the visual character of the surrounding area. Continual urbanization of existing agriculture and open space land has the potential to permanently alter the character of the area. Although the Proposed Project does include a variety of greenbelt and park areas, the overall conversion of existing open space areas to suburban land uses would permanently alter the City’s existing character. State and local regulations, such as the State Scenic Highway guidelines may mitigate some potential impacts by preserving views and open space land. However, the Proposed Project combined with the overall growth trends in Tulare County would contribute considerably to cumulative aesthetic impacts (including additional sources of light and glare) which would transform the region from an

agricultural/rural character to a more suburban setting and thus, would result in a cumulative significant and unavoidable aesthetic impact.

### **Cumulative Impacts Related to Agricultural Resources**

With the implementation of the Proposed Project there would be a loss of existing agricultural lands within the City's proposed Planning Area. While the Proposed Project includes policies to minimize this impact, there would still be a project level significant and unavoidable impact. The loss of agricultural land within the City's proposed Planning Area as a result of urban development is part of an overall trend within Tulare County and the County will continue to face development pressure in the foreseeable future. The Proposed Project does include several policies directing the City to work at a regional level to control the conversion of agricultural uses. However, since the County is projected to continue to urbanize at a significant rate, the loss of agricultural lands as a result of the Proposed Project would contribute considerably to a significant and unavoidable cumulative impact to agricultural resources.

### **Cumulative Impacts Related to Air Quality**

Cumulative air quality impacts were considered in terms of the various land uses proposed under the Proposed Project and the traffic projections generated by the traffic model. Due to the existing and projected air quality issues in the San Joaquin Valley Air Basin, the Proposed Project would contribute considerably to a significant and unavoidable cumulative air quality impact.

### **Cumulative Impacts Related to Biological Resources**

Development associated with implementation of the Proposed Project would contribute to the ongoing loss of natural and agricultural lands Tulare County, which currently provide habitat for a variety of federal and State listed special status species, as well as other wildlife and plant resources. Development under the Proposed Project would result in the conversion of existing habitats to urban uses. Policies in the proposed General Plan and regional, State and federal regulations are available to mitigate impacts to biological resources at a project specific level. Development outside of the City in Tulare County would also be subject to the same regional, State and federal regulations addressing sensitive species. However, since the County is projected to continue to urbanize at a steady rate, the loss of open space areas and habitats as a result of the Proposed Project would contribute considerably to a significant and unavoidable cumulative impact to biological resources.

### **Cumulative Impacts Related to Cultural Resources**

Grading and other construction activities have the potential to impact cultural resources in the City's proposed Planning Area. Draft General Plan policies identified in the EIR and compliance with federal and State regulations help to reduce these impacts. However, cultural resources such as historical, archaeological and paleontological resources, in Tulare County could be cumulatively impacted by future development and related construction activities in the region.

The City will continue to ensure that a variety of preservation efforts are implemented under all future development projects to minimize impacts to archaeological resources (as defined in Section 15064.5), paleontological resources, or human remains. Under CEQA, however, any "substantial adverse change in the significance of an historical resource" (e.g., the destruction of such a resource) is considered a significant environmental effect as a matter of law. Because it is possible that, after City decision-makers have approved a development project, grading activities in an area identified for development reveal an archaeological resource meeting the definition of an historical resource, and that such a previously unknown historical resource cannot be preserved or avoided without substantial redesign at significant cost, the City cannot be sure that impacts on all such historical resources can be mitigated to less than significant levels.

Consequently, the Proposed Project has the potential to contribute considerably to a significant and unavoidable cumulative impact to these historic resources. However, similar considerations do not apply to unique archaeological resources or paleontological resources, which therefore can be fully mitigated through data recovery where avoidance or preservation is infeasible or unnecessary. Therefore, implementation of the Proposed would reduce the potential cumulative impact to a less-than-significant level with respect to human remains and archaeological resources that do not qualify as historical resources.

### **Cumulative Impacts Related to Mineral Resources and Geology**

Regional development would increase the number of people and structures subject to geologic- and soils-related risks. The policies contained in the Draft General Plan, along with compliance with federal, State and local regulations addressing building construction, run-off and erosion, reduce the potential project-level impact associated with geology and soils to a less-than-significant level. Development in other communities in Tulare County would also be required to comply with federal, State and local regulations that are designed to protect increases in people and structures from hazards related to such issues as earthquakes, landslides and soil erosion. As a result, conformance with adopted California building codes, and other measures to protect people and structures from geologic hazards, would reduce this impact to a less-than-significant level. The project's incremental contribution to these impacts will be less than cumulatively considerable.

The Draft General Plan includes specific policies to avoid significant impacts to important mineral resources in the City. These policies are in compliance with State laws that require local jurisdictions to take into consideration the continued availability of important mineral resources in land use decisions. As a result, the Proposed Project would not add considerably to any significant cumulative impact on mineral resources in Tulare County.

### **Cumulative Impacts to Health and Safety**

The increase in local population and employment under the Proposed Project would result in the increased use of hazardous household, commercial and industrial materials. In addition, there would be an increase in population that would be exposed to potential wildland fires and hazards associated with aircraft operation. Potential project-level impacts associated with hazards and hazardous materials would be reduced to a less-than-significant level due to local, regional, State

and federal regulations, such as those that control the production, use and transportation of hazardous materials and waste and control the location of incompatible land uses in airport hazard area. Similarly, as growth occurs in Tulare County, additional people would be exposed risks associated with hazardous materials, wastes, wildland fires and airport operations. However, regional, State and federal regulations would apply to development countywide, thereby reducing the potential for cumulative impacts associated with hazards and hazardous materials to a less-than-significant level. The project's incremental contribution to these impacts will be less than cumulatively considerable.

### **Cumulative Impacts to Flooding and Water Quality**

As development proceeds within the City's proposed Sphere of Influence, additional population would also be exposed to the risk of flooding and increase the amount of impervious surfaces which could affect local hydrologic resources. Existing regulations and Draft General Plan policies would reduce the risk to a less-than-significant level. However, new development within Tulare County may locate additional population and structures within areas subject to flooding. Regional development would also increase the amount of impervious surfaces and result in increased impacts to water quality. Although, development would also be required to comply with regional, State and federal regulations designed to address flooding issues, the Proposed Project has the potential to contribute considerably to a significant and unavoidable cumulative flooding impact.

### **Cumulative Impacts to Land Use**

As the primary planning document for the City, the Proposed Project would have a less-than-significant impact in relation to most potential conflicts with other applicable plans, policies and regulations, including the County's General Plan. Potential land use incompatibility issues resulting from implementation of the Draft General Plan would be mitigated by policies contained in the "Land Use" and "Conservation and Open Space" Elements. Specific policies in these Draft Elements are designed to prevent conflicts between various land uses, such as residential land uses and those associated with airport operations, industrial uses, or agricultural operations, and avoid significant environmental impacts at the project level. The Draft General Plan also provides additional guidelines from the County and State in regards to the preservation of open space, which requires the preservation of open space areas and the buffering of some agricultural land. Therefore, implementation of the Proposed Project will not add considerably to a significant cumulative impact associated with land use.

### **Cumulative Impacts to Noise**

Traffic-related cumulative noise impacts are considered as part of the noise analysis provided, since the future traffic projections used for the noise analysis were generated by a traffic model that considered growth under the Draft General Plan in conjunction with the projected regional growth for Tulare County. Future noise level increases related to increases in traffic associated with new roadways facilitated by the Proposed Project would result in an overall significant and unavoidable noise impact at the project-level and cumulative level.

## **Cumulative Impacts to Public Facilities and Services**

The following provides a cumulative analysis broken down by each category of service or utility.

### ***Solid Waste***

Growth within the City and Tulare County would contribute to the need for adequate solid waste disposal facilities. As discussed in Chapter 4.0, various landfills have capacity to accept waste produced by the General Plan Update. Additionally, the cost of solid waste disposal would be incorporated into development fees. As a result, it can be concluded that there would be adequate capacity and funding to support regional increases in population, and a significant cumulative impact would not occur.

### ***Fire Protection***

Future regional growth would result in increased demand for fire services throughout the City and County. As discussed in Chapter 4.0 “Public Services and Utilities”, the City will implement a variety of policies designed to address the adequate provision of a variety of public services as part of the Proposed Project. Therefore, the project would not contribute considerably to a significant cumulative impact associated with fire protection services.

### ***Law Enforcement Service***

Future regional growth would result in a need for expanded law enforcement service throughout the City and County. As discussed in Chapter 4.0 “Public Services and Utilities”, the City will implement a variety of policies designed to address the adequate provision of a variety of public services as part of the Proposed Project. Therefore, the project would not contribute considerably to a significant cumulative impact associated with law enforcement services.

### ***Schools***

Future regional growth would result in increased demand for schools throughout the City and County. As with the analysis for the Proposed Project, it is unknown exactly where these school facilities would occur to support the cumulative increase in population resulting from growth within and outside of the City. As specific school facility expansion or improvement projects are identified, additional project-specific, second-tier environmental analysis would be completed. Additionally, the payment of school impacts fees (pursuant to SB 50), is deemed as a matter of law to help mitigate these potential impacts to school facilities. Therefore, the Proposed Project would not contribute considerably to a significant cumulative impact associated with schools.

### ***Water Supply and Delivery***

Future growth in the City and County would generate an additional demand for water. As previously described in Chapter 4.0 “Public Services and Utilities” a variety of water supply sources throughout the City of Tulare Water District would provide sufficient supplemental water to accommodate the population projections associated with the Proposed Project. In addition to these existing sources of water supply available to the City, several policies and implementation

measures are included as part of the Proposed Project that would minimize this impact through the early identification of required infrastructure and the orderly construction and rehabilitation of the facilities needed to serve existing and planned urban areas. Therefore, the Proposed Project would not contribute considerably to a significant cumulative impact associated with water supply and delivery.

### ***Wastewater***

Future regional growth would result in increased demand for wastewater services throughout the City and County. As previously described in Chapter 4.0 “Public Services and Utilities”, the City is served by a comprehensive sanitary sewer system and no untreated wastewater would be discharged to surface water or groundwater resources. Therefore, exceeding set CVRWQCB wastewater treatment requirements are not anticipated. Additionally, several improvements are planned for the existing WWTRF. These upgrades or improvements include providing additional oxidation ditches, secondary clarifiers, filtration facilities, disinfection capacity, and storage facilities. However, newer technologies, including micro-filtration, may be considered for future WWTRF upgrades. Both of the facilities are planned for expansion to 12 MGD for the industrial train and 8 MGD for the residential train. Therefore, the Proposed Project would not contribute considerably to a significant cumulative impact associated with wastewater.

### ***Stormwater***

As noted in Chapter 4.0 “Public Services and Utilities”, development can cause significant increases in peak flow and runoff volume. Increases in peak flow and volume can be 50 percent and higher when compared to undeveloped conditions. The Proposed Project includes policies and implementation measures to address the need for additional storm drainage infrastructure and ensure that appropriate runoff control and pollution measures are included for future development proposals. Therefore, the project’s incremental contribution to these impacts will be less than cumulatively considerable.

## **Cumulative Impacts to Traffic and Transportation**

Cumulative traffic impacts of the Proposed Project are more fully described in Chapter 5.0 “Transportation and Circulation” of this Draft EIR. The following section provides a summary of the information provided in this chapter of the EIR.

The traffic model used considered growth under the Draft General Plan in conjunction with the projected regional growth for Tulare County. Therefore, the transportation analysis of the General Plan Update is inherently cumulative in nature, because the implementation of the Proposed Project would take place over many years and would occur in conjunction with other growth and development throughout the region.

As identified in Chapter 5.0 the Proposed Project would result in substantial increase in vehicular traffic on roadways in the Planning Area resulting in a significant and unavoidable impact. Because this analysis was based on a cumulative model, the project’s incremental contribution to traffic impacts would be cumulatively considerable.

## 14.3 Significant Unavoidable Adverse Impacts which could not be avoided if the Project was Implemented

Public Resources Code section 21100(b) (2) and CEQA Guidelines section 15126.2(b) require that any significant and unavoidable effect on the environment must be identified. In addition, CEQA Guidelines 15093(a) allows the decision-making agency to determine if the benefits of a proposed project outweigh the unavoidable adverse environmental impacts of implementing the project. The City can approve a project with unavoidable adverse impacts if it prepares and adopts a “Statement of Overriding Considerations” setting forth the specific reasons for making such a judgment. A list of unavoidable adverse impacts identified in this EIR is provided below. For each of the unavoidable adverse impacts, the City must prepare and adopt a Statement of Overriding Considerations if the City approves the project.

### Unavoidable Adverse Impacts

The Executive Summary (Table ES-1) and Chapter 13 “Alternatives to the Proposed Project” provide detailed summary tables that identify the Proposed Project’s environmental impacts, proposed mitigation measures, and the level of impact significance after mitigation. This section lists the impacts (by environmental resource topic) which are considered significant after all mitigation is applied. These impacts include the following:

#### Aesthetics

Implementation of the Proposed Project would result in changes to the visual character of the City’s proposed Planning Area from a more agricultural/rural setting to one that is more characterized by suburban or urban uses (i.e., streets, homes, and neighborhood shopping centers), with increased light and glare sources. As a result, the following aesthetic impacts are considered significant and unavoidable:

- **Impact AES-1.** The Proposed Project could substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings.
- **Impact AES-2.** The Proposed Project could have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista or substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway.
- **Impact AES-3.** The Proposed Project would create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area.

## Agricultural Resources

With the implementation of the Proposed Project there would be a loss of existing agricultural lands within the City's proposed Planning Area. While the Proposed Project includes policies to minimize this impact, the following agricultural resource impacts are considered significant and unavoidable:

- **Impact AG-1.** The Proposed Project would result in the substantial conversion of important farmland to non-agricultural uses.
- **Impact AG-3.** The Proposed Project could involve other changes in the existing environment that, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Important Farmland, to non-agricultural uses.

## Air Quality

Construction activities associated with individual development projects and traffic associated with future growth in accordance with the Proposed Project would exceed local air quality district significance thresholds. While the Proposed Project includes policies to minimize this impact, the following air quality impacts are considered significant and unavoidable:

- **Impact AQ-1.** The Proposed Project would result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of criteria pollutants. Future growth in accordance with the Proposed Project would exceed the SJVAPCD thresholds for PM-10.
- **Impact AQ-3.** The Proposed Project would expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations.
- **Impact AQ-5.** The project could conflict with implementation of state goals for reducing greenhouse gas emissions and thereby have a negative effect on Global Climate Change.

## Biological Resources

Development associated with implementation of the Proposed Project would contribute to the ongoing loss of natural and agricultural lands in Tulare County, which currently provide habitat for a variety of federally and State list special status species. While the Proposed Project includes several policies to minimize this impact, the following biological resource impacts are considered significant and unavoidable:

- **Impact BIO-1.** The Proposed Project could have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any fish or wildlife species including those officially designated species identified as an endangered, threatened, 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.

- **Impact BIO-2.** The Proposed Project could have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.
- **Impact BIO-3.** The Proposed Project could have a substantial adverse effect on “federally protected” wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means.
- **Impact BIO-4.** The Proposed Project could 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.

## Cultural Resources

Development associated with implementation of the Proposed Project could cause a substantial adverse change (i.e., result in the demolition) to a historic resource for which no mitigation may be available to replace the affected resource. While the Proposed Project includes several policies to minimize this impact, the following cultural resource impacts are considered significant and unavoidable:

- **Impact CR-1.** The Proposed Project could cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in Section 15064.5.
- **Impact CR-2.** The Proposed Project could cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a unique archaeological resource as defined in Section 15064.5 and/or disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries.  
*(Significant and Unavoidable for archaeological resources only)*

## Flooding and Water Quality

Overall, most impacts associated with flooding and water quality would be reduced to a less-than-significant level. However, while the Proposed Project includes policies to minimize a majority of these impacts, the following impact is considered significant and unavoidable:

- **Impact HWQ-2.** The Proposed Project could expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving flooding, including flooding as a result of the failure of a levee or dam.

## Noise

Future noise level increases related to the additional traffic resulting from the Proposed Project would result in significant noise impacts. While the Proposed Project includes several policies developed to minimize this impact, the following noise impacts are considered significant and unavoidable:

- **Impact N-1.** The Proposed Project would result in the exposure of persons to or generation of noise levels in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies; or would result in a substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project; or would result in a substantial temporary or periodic increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project.
- **Impact N-2.** The Proposed Project will result in the exposure of persons to or generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels.
- **Impact N-3.** The Proposed Project will be located within an airport land use plan area or within the vicinity of a private airstrip and could expose people residing or working within the project area to excessive noise levels.

## Public Services and Utilities

Similar to any other development in areas of new growth, the construction of new facilities or the expansion of existing facilities may result in the permanent conversion of existing agricultural lands or other open space areas. While the Proposed Project includes several policies developed to minimize these environmental impacts, the following impacts are considered significant and unavoidable:

- **Impact PSU-1.** The Proposed Project would require or result in the construction of new water treatment facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects.
- **Impact PSU-5.** The Proposed Project would require or result in the construction of new wastewater treatment facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which would cause significant environmental effects.
- **Impact PSU-12.** The Proposed Project would include fire protection/law enforcement facilities or require the construction/expansion of facilities which would have an adverse physical effect on the environment.
- **Impact PSU-15.** The Proposed Project would include community facilities or require the construction/expansion of facilities which would have an adverse physical effect on the environment.
- **Impact PSU-17.** The Proposed Project may require the construction or expansion of additional energy infrastructure facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects.

## Traffic and Transportation

The Proposed Project would result in significant and unavoidable impacts to roadways. While the Proposed Project includes several policies developed to minimize these traffic and transportation impacts, the following impact is considered significant and unavoidable:

- **Impact TC-1.** The Proposed Project would result in a substantial increase in vehicular traffic on roadways in the Project Area.

## 14.4 Significant Irreversible Environmental Changes which would Result from the Proposed Action should it be Implemented

### Introduction

Public Resources Code section 21100(b) (2) and CEQA Guidelines section 15126.2(b), which apply to projects as specified in CEQA Guidelines section 15127 (e.g., the adoption of a plan), require that any significant effect on the environment that would be irreversible if the project is implemented must be identified. A project would generally result in a significant irreversible impact if:

- Primary and secondary impacts would commit future generations to similar uses;
- The project would involve a large commitment of nonrenewable resources; and/or
- The project would involve uses in which irreversible damage could result from any potential environmental accidents associated with the project.

### Significant Irreversible Environmental Changes

Significant and irreversible environmental changes associated with the Proposed Project include the following:

#### Changes in Land Use that Commit Future Generations

Development under the Proposed Project would result in the conversion of vacant and agricultural/open space lands to industrial, commercial and residential uses, and the intensification of underutilized areas. This development would constitute a long-term commitment to residential, commercial, industrial, and other urban uses. The Proposed Project would result in the commitment of land that is not currently designated for development under the City's existing General Plan. This commitment of land would be generally tied to population growth projections that are anticipated to occur both locally and regionally throughout the San Joaquin Valley.

## **Commitment of Resources**

Development allowed under the Proposed Project would irreversibly commit nonrenewable resources to the construction and maintenance of buildings, infrastructure and roadways. These non-renewable resources include mining resources such as sand, gravel, steel, lead, copper and other metals. Build-out of the Proposed Project also represents a long-term commitment to the consumption of fossil fuels, natural gas and gasoline. Increased energy demands would be used for construction, lighting, heating and cooling of residences, and transportation of people within, to and from the City. Development would also result in an irreversible commitment of limited, renewable resources such as lumber and water.