Draft Initial Study / Negative Declaration City of Merced

Housing Element of the General Plan

Lead Agency:



City of Merced Planning and Permitting Division 678 West 18th Street Merced, California 95340 (209) 385-6858

Prepared by:

Julie Nelson, Planner

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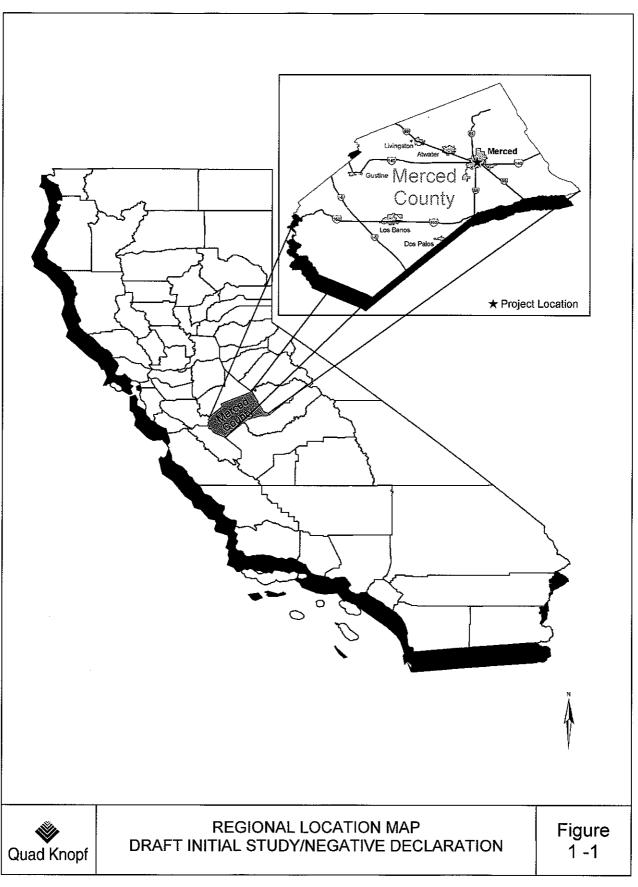
CHAPTER ONE – INTRODUCTION

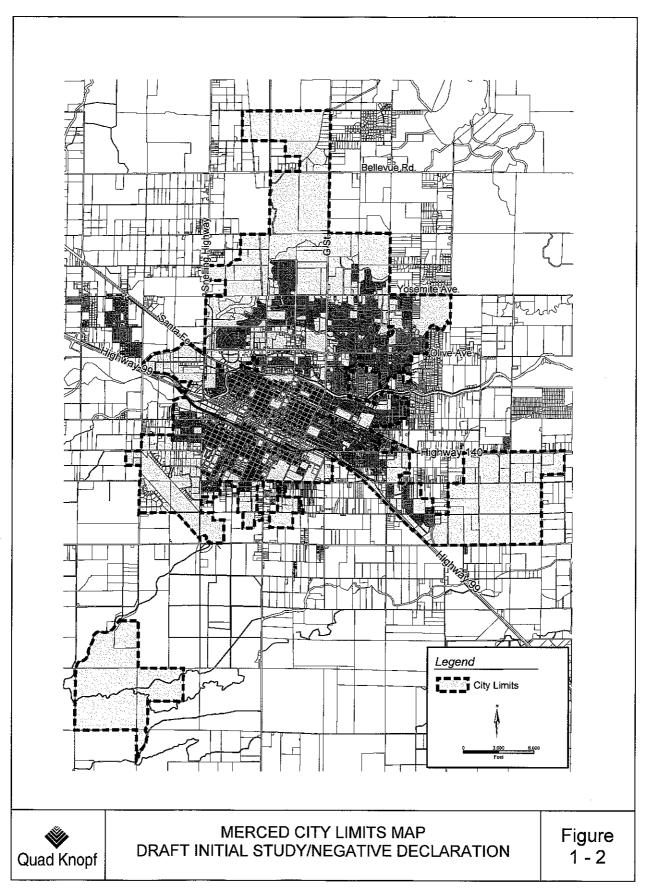
1.1 Purpose and Authority

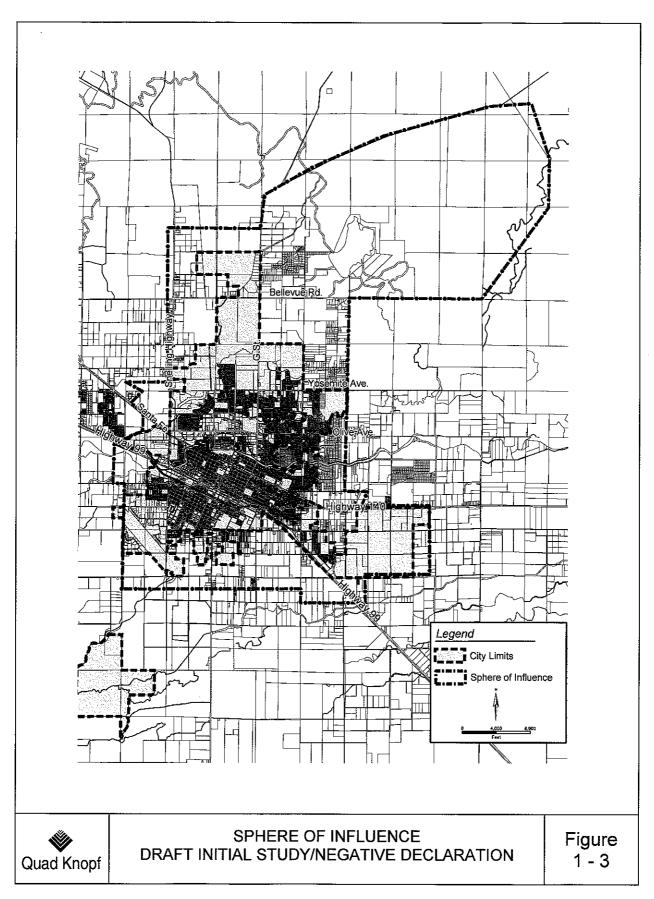
The proposed project for which this Initial Study/Negative Declaration has been prepared is the approval of a Housing Element of the General Plan for the City of Merced. This document has been prepared in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), Public Resources Code 21000 et. Seq. The City of Merced will act as the lead agency for this project pursuant to CEQA.

1.2 Determination

On the basis of the Initial Study it has been determined that the project will have no significant effect on the environment. Therefore, a Negative Declaration is proposed for adoption.







CHAPTER TWO - PROJECT SUMMARY

2.1 Project Location

The City of Merced is located approximately 104 miles southeast of Sacramento, 53 miles northwest of Fresno, and 112 miles south of San Francisco, in the Central Valley of California.

2.2 Project Description

The proposed project includes the certification and adoption of the City of Merced's Housing Element of the General Plan, 2009. Policies to be adopted under the Housing Element will include those to facilitate the procurement of housing and financing, to improve older areas of the town, to provide assistance for maintenance and construction of housing units, to diversify available housing, to encourage reductions in energy usage, and to protect the existing quality of life. (All development will be in accordance with General Plan policies and EIR mitigation in the General Plan EIR and applicable Project EIR's.) Adoption of the Housing Element will not include the approval of any specific projects. A determination has also been made that there is adequate residential land to accommodate the Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) and no land use changes will result from implementation of the element. Further, when specific actions are undertaken they will receive environmental review. Projects proposed as a result of the Element's adoption will be evaluated for specific impacts before their approval and development.

CHAPTER THREE - ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST FORM

- 1. Project title: City of Merced, Housing Element of the General Plan
- Lead agency name and address: City of Merced 678 West 18th Street Merced, CA 95340
- 3. Contact person and phone number: Julie Nelson, Planner (209) 385-6858
- 4. Project location:

The proposed project is located in Merced County, California. The geographic area covered by the project includes the City of Merced's Specific Urban Development Plan (SUDP)(Figure 1-3).

- Project sponsor's name and address:
 City of Merced
 Julie Nelson, Planner
 678 West 18th Street
 Merced, CA 95340
- 6. General plan designation: Housing Element of the General Plan
- 7. Zoning: N/A
- 8. Description of project:

The proposed project includes the certification and adoption of the City of Merced's Housing Element of the General Plan. Policies to be adopted under the Housing Element will include those to facilitate the procurement of housing and financing, to improve older areas of the town, to provide assistance for maintenance and construction of housing units, to diversify available housing, to encourage reductions in energy usage, and to protect the existing quality of life as part of the Merced Vision 2015 General Plan. Adoption of the Housing Element will not include the approval of any specific projects. Projects proposed as a result of the Element's adoption will be evaluated for specific impacts before their approval and development.

9. Surrounding land uses and setting: Briefly describe the project's surroundings:

The City of Merced is located in Merced County and is the largest city within the county. The topography of the community is characterized by flat land approximately 155-180 feet in elevation.

10. Other public agencies whose approval is required (e.g., permits, financing approval, or participation agreement.)

California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD).

ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS POTENTIALLY AFFECTED:

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

	Aesthetics		Agriculture Resources		Air Quality
	Biological Resources		Cultural Resources		Geology/Soils
	Hazards & Hazardous Materials		Hydrology / Water Quality		Land Use / Planning
	Mineral Resources		Noise		Population / Housing
	Public Services		Recreation		Transportation/Traffic
	Utilities / Service Systems		Mandatory Findings of S	ignific	ance
On the	DETERMINATION: (To be completed by the Lead Agency) On the basis of this initial evaluation:				
			t COULD NOT have a sign E DECLARATION will b		
	environment, there will	not be by or	sed project could have a sign a significant effect in this agreed to by the project product will be prepared.	case b	ecause revisions in the
			t MAY have a significant e ACT REPORT is required.	effect c	on the environment, and
	"potentially significant ueffect 1) has been adequ	unless ately a	t MAY have a "potentially mitigated" impact on the e analyzed in an earlier documen addressed by mitigation	nviron nent p	ment, but at least one ursuant to applicable

	analysis as described on attached sheets. An ENVIR is required, but it must analyze only the effects that	
	I find that although the proposed project could have environment, because all potentially significant effect adequately in an earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLAR standards, and (b) have been avoided or mitigated proposed upon the proposed project, nothing further	cts (a) have been analyzed ARATION pursuant to applicable ursuant to that earlier EIR or or mitigation measures that are
Signa	ature	Date
Signa	ature	Date

EVALUATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS:

- 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.
- Once the lead agency has determined that a particular physical impact may occur, then the checklist answers must indicate whether the impact is potentially significant, less than significant with mitigation, or less than significant. "Potentially Significant Impact" is appropriate if there is substantial evidence that an effect may be significant. If there are one or more "Potentially Significant Impact" entries when the determination is made, an EIR is required.
- 4) "Negative Declaration: Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated" applies where the incorporation of mitigation measures has reduced an effect from "Potentially

Significant Impact" to a "Less Than Significant Impact." The lead agency must describe the mitigation measures, and briefly explain how they reduce the effect to a less than significant level (mitigation measures from Section 17, "Earlier Analyses," may be cross-referenced).

- 5) Earlier analyses may be used where, pursuant to the tiering, program EIR, or other CEQA process, an effect has been adequately analyzed in an earlier EIR or negative declaration. Section 15063(c)(3)(D). In this case, a brief discussion should identify the following:
 - a) Earlier Analysis Used. Identify and state where they are available for review.
 - b) Impacts Adequately Addressed. Identify which effects from the above checklist were within the scope of and adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and state whether such effects were addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis.
 - c) Mitigation Measures. For effects that are "Less than Significant with Mitigation Measures Incorporated," describe the mitigation measures which were incorporated or refined from the earlier document and the extent to which they address site-specific conditions for the project.
- 6) Lead agencies are encouraged to incorporate into the checklist references to information sources for potential impacts (e.g., general plans, zoning ordinances). Reference to a previously prepared or outside document should, where appropriate, include a reference to the page or pages where the statement is substantiated.
- 7) Supporting Information Sources: A source list should be attached, and other sources used or individuals contacted should be cited in the discussion.
- 8) This is only a suggested form, and lead agencies are free to use different formats; however, lead agencies should normally address the questions from this checklist that are relevant to a project's environmental effects in whatever format is selected.
- 9) The explanation of each issue should identify:
 - a) the significance criteria or threshold, if any, used to evaluate each question; and
 - b) the mitigation measure identified, if any, to reduce the impact to less than significance

SAMPLE QUESTION

Issues:

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact		
1. AESTHETICS Would the project:				\boxtimes		
a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?				\boxtimes		
Response: The adoption of the Merced Housing Element will implement plans and policies regarding data acquisition, improvements to existing housing conditions, and reduction of energy use. There will be no adverse aesthetic impacts associated with the project. (Project Description.).						
b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?						
Response: See Response 1a).						
c) Substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings?						
Response: See Response 1a).						
d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?						
Response: See Response 1a).						
2. AGRICULTURE RESOURCES In determining whether impacts to agricultural resources are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to the California Agricultural Land						
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	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Evaluation and Site Assessment Model (1997) prepared by the California Dept. of Conservation as an optional model to use in assessing impacts on agriculture and farmland. 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 non- agricultural use?				
Response: The adoption of the City's Hous supporting improvements to housing condi- farmland, a conflict with zoning, or a conv beyond that analyzed in the adopted Gener	itions in the car	ity. It will not re	esult in a cor	version of
b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?				\boxtimes
Response: See Response 2a).				
c) Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland, to non-agricultural use?				
Response: See Response 2a).				
3. AIR QUALITY Where available, the significance criteria established by the applicable air quality management or air pollution control district may be relied upon to make the following determinations. Would the project:				

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?		Incorporation		
Response: The City's Housing Element is is adoption will not conflict with the impleme proposed as a result of the adoption of the compliance with applicable air quality plan	ntation of an Housing Elei	y air quality pla	ın. Individua	l projects
b) Violate any air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation?				\boxtimes
Response: Adoption of the Housing Elemer improvements, data acquisition, and energy standards. Specific projects proposed as a for their impacts on air quality.	y use reductio	on, will not viole	ate any air qı	ıality
c) Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard (including releasing emissions which exceed quantitative thresholds for ozone precursors)?				
Response: See Response 3b).				
d) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?				
Response: See Response 3b).				
e) Create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people?				\boxtimes
Response: There will be no objectionable o Housing Element. (Project Description.)	dors created	as a result of th	e adoption o	f the
City of Morced				hma 2000

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
4. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES Would the project:				\boxtimes
a) Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?				
Response: Adoption of the City of Merced resources. Specific projects proposed as a for their potential impacts to biological res	result of the			~
b) Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Game or US Fish and Wildlife Service?				
Response: See Response 4a).				
c) Have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?				
Response: See Response 4a).				
d) Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory				
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	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?				
Response: See Response 4a).				
e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?				
Response: See Response 4a).				
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?				
Response: See Response 4a).				
5. CULTURAL RESOURCES Would the project:				
a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in '15064.5?				
Response: Adoption of the City's Housing I Projects proposed after the Element's adop cultural resources. (Project Description.)				
b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to '15064.5?				
Response: See Response 5a).				
c) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique				

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
geologic feature?				
Response: See Response 5a).				
d) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?				
Response: See Response 5a).				
6. GEOLOGY AND SOILS Would the project:				
a) Expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:				
i) Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42.				
ii) Strong seismic ground shaking?				\boxtimes
iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?				
iv) Landslides?				\boxtimes

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Less Than Significant Impact No Impact

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Response: Adoption of the City's Housing Element will have no impact related to geology and soils. As projects are proposed after the Element's adoption, their specific sites will be assessed for potential safety and environmental hazards associated with geology and soils. (Project Description.) b) Result in substantial soil erosion or \boxtimes the loss of topsoil? Response: See Response 6a). c) Be located on a geologic unit or soil \boxtimes 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? Response: See Response 6a). \boxtimes d) Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial risks to life or property? Response: See Response 6a). \boxtimes 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? Response: See Response 6a). 7. HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS X MATERIALS Would the project: a) Create a significant hazard to the X City of Merced June 2009

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Less Than Significant Impact

No Impact

public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?

Response: Adoption of they City's Housing Element will not result in any safety or nvironmental issues related to hazardous materials. Specific projects proposed after the Remark's adoption will be evaluated for their potential impacts.				
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?				
Response: See Response 7a).				
c) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?				
Response: See Response 7a).				
d) Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?				
Response: See Response 7a).				
e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety				

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Less Than Significant Impact No Impact

hazard for people residing or working in the project area?

Response: The projects proposed as a result of the adoption of the Housing Element will be evaluated for potential impacts and hazards associated with their location with respect to the airport. (City Limits Map, Figure 1-2.)						
f) For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?						
Response: The project is not in the vicinity of a private airstrip. (City Limits Map, Figure 1-2.)						
g) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?						
Response: The proposed Housing Element is in compliance with the City's General Plan and will have no effect on an adopted emergency response or evacuation plan. (General Plan.)						
h) Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires, including where wildlands are adjacent to urbanized areas or where residences are intermixed with wildlands?						
Response: See Response 7a).						
8. HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY Would the project:						
a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements?				\boxtimes		

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Less Than Significant Impact No Impact

Response: The adoption of the Housing Eleme City of Merced will not affect water quality or assessed for potential impacts to water quality	waste discharg	ge. Individual	•	
b) Substantially deplete groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that there would be a net deficit in aquifer volume or a lowering of the local groundwater table level (e.g., the production rate of pre-existing nearby wells would drop to a level which would not support existing land uses or planned uses for which permits have been granted)?				
Response: As indicated in the Housing Element on groundwater as its only water supply for the 46,500 gallons per minute (gpm) provide the consist of four elevated storage tanks a active production wells. The groundwater basilarger San Joaquin Valley groundwater basin, the growing demands over the next twenty year Plan, 2005.)	e city. Twenty ity's total wate and the piping in underlying t The District h	wells with a c or supply. The system. Curre the City of Men nas adequate v	ombined capo city's distrib ently, all well. rced is part o vater supply t	acity of ution s are f the
c) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, in a manner which would result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site?				
Response: Adoption of the Housing Element w patterns. Individual project sites will be assessive prior to their approval. (Project Description.)	sed according			rainage
d) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the				

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
course of a stream or river, or substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or off-site?				
Response: See Response 8c).				
e) Create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned storm water drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff?				
Response: The City of Merced Housing E. improvements of infrastructure in order to capacity. The adoption of the Housing Ele Individual projects will be assessed for the	insure the co ement will not	ntinued availab result in an ind	rility of storm crease of rund	off water.
f) Otherwise substantially degrade water quality?				
Response: There are no aspects of the propuality. Specific projects proposed after the impacts to water quality. (Project Descrip	he Element's o			
g) Place housing within a 100-year flood hazard area as mapped on a federal Flood Hazard Boundary or Flood Insurance Rate Map or other flood hazard delineation map?				

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Less Than Significant Impact No Impact

The City's storm water disposal system is mainly composed of Merced Irrigation District (MID) facilities, including water distribution canals and laterals, drains, and natural channels that traverse the area. The City of Merced Storm Drain Master Plan, April 2002, provides additional information including phasing and priorities and mitigation of storm water quality along with proposed locations for detention basins required of new developments.

Projects proposed as a result of this adoption location in these areas and the construction l	~	ı their
h) Place within a 100-year flood hazard area structures which would impede or redirect flood flows?		\boxtimes
Response: See Response 8g).		
i) 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?		
Response: See Response 8g).		
j) Inundation by seiche, tsunami, or mudflow?		\boxtimes

Less Than
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Less Than Significant Impact No Impact

Response: Two major categories of flooding hazard effect Merced County. The greatest risk is from storm runoff, particularly in the urban areas located within the Merced floodplain. The second hazard is the remote risk of failure of one of the local or adjacent counties dam. Impacts from dam failure could effect virtually every urban area within the county. (Merced County Year 2000 General Plan Chapter (1) Section B.5.e, land use).

Each project or building permit are now reviewed under the County "Flood Damage Prevention Ordinance" (Section 18.128 of the Zoning Code) to ensure that new construction in these areas is properly designed to minimize hazard to life and property. (Merced County Year 2000 General Plan Chapter (I) Section E.36).

9. LAND USE AND PLANNING - Would the project:				
a) Physically divide an established community?				\boxtimes
Response: The Housing Element proposes housing quality, to construct new housing and to reduce energy consumption. Adopt in the division of an existing subdivision.	, to increase h tion and imple	nousing afforde mentation of th	ability and av	ailability,
b) Conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project (including, but not limited to the general plan, specific plan, local coastal program, or zoning ordinance) adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?				
Response: The proposed Housing Element and therefore will not interfere with other	-	-		ral Plan
c) Conflict with any applicable habitat				

Significant Significant Significant **Impact** Impact with Mitigation Incorporation conservation plan or natural community conservation plan? Response: The City's Housing Element is in compliance with the General Plan and will not conflict with a habitat or natural community conservation plan.) X 10. MINERAL RESOURCES -- Would the project: \boxtimes 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? Response: Adoption of the Element's plans and policies for improving existing housing conditions, reducing energy consumption, and making information and housing assistance readily available will not affect any mineral resources. Projects proposed as a result of the Element's adoption will be evaluated for the presence of mineral resources and recovery sites on the project site. (Project Description.) \boxtimes 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? Response: See Response 10a). \boxtimes 11. NOISE Would the project result in: \boxtimes a) 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

Potentially

Less Than

Less Than

No Impact

of other agencies?

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Less Than Significant Impact No Impact

Response: The Housing Element is in compliance with the General Plan and proposes to improve existing housing and living conditions in the City. Individual projects will be assessed according to the policies set forth in the General Plan concerning their compatibility and environmental effects on surrounding land uses. Thus, conflicts of land uses resulting in increased ambient noise levels will be minimal. (Project Description.)

	•	- ,	
b) Exposure of persons to or generation of excessive ground borne vibration or ground borne noise levels?			\boxtimes
Response: See Response 11a).			
c) A substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?			
Response: See Response 11a).			
d) A substantial temporary or periodic increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?			
Response: See Response 11a).			
e) For a project located within an airport- land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?			

Response: The Merced Municipal Airport is located in the southwest area of the City. Projects proposed as a result of the adoption of the Housing Element will be evaluated for potential impacts and hazards associated with their location with respect to the airport. (City Limits Map, Figure 1-2.)

f) For a project within the vicinity of a

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	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
private airstrip, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?				
Response: The project is not located in the vicinity of a private airstrip. (City Limits Map, Figure 1-2.)				
12. POPULATION AND HOUSING Would the project:				\boxtimes
a) Induce substantial 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)?				
Response: Adoption of the policies will supprovision of housing to accommodate the esubstantial unpredicted population growth.	xpected popu	ılation growth,		
b) Displace substantial numbers of existing housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?				
Response: The proposed project includes p result in the displacement of housing or pe			conditions an	ed will not
c) Displace substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?				
Response: See Response 12b).				
13. PUBLIC SERVICES				\boxtimes
a) Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with				
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	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for any of the public services:		•		
Fire protection?				\boxtimes
Police protection?				\boxtimes
Schools?				
Parks?				
Other public facilities?				\boxtimes
Response: The City's law enforcement is pand its fire protection is provided through Central Station concept. The City's publication autonomous governmental agencies separations and source of funding. Merced Corovides educational development to the Minclude those to improve housing conditionavailable for the construction of new schools afficient in the City and supporting areas the facilities as needed. (City of Merced	the City of Mession can be caused from the College, one of Merced Country and economicals, and law economicals, and law economicals, and law economicals.	ferced Fire Depo operated by sch City. They have I the California by residents. The mics of the town enforcement and projected grow	artment, using ool districts, their own eld community control plans to be a Land is culfire protecti	g the which are ected olleges adopted rrently on are
14. RECREATION				\boxtimes
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?				

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with
Mitigation
Incorporation

Less Than Significant Impact No Impact

Response: Local recreational facilities in the community parks, nine neighborhood parks, the City's Housing Element will not affect the facilities. Specific projects proposed after the respect to their effect on recreational facilities.	ree greenways use of or dema Element's adop	s, and ten mini and for existing otion will be e	parks. Adoj grecreationa valuated with	otion of l
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?				
Response: There are no recreational facilities Description.)	included in the	e proposed pro	oject. (Projec	ct
15. TRANSPORTATION/TRAFFIC Would the project:				\boxtimes
a) Cause an increase in traffic which is substantial in relation to the existing traffic load and capacity of the street system (i.e., result in a substantial increase in either the number of vehicle trips, the volume to capacity ratio on roads, or congestion at intersections)?				
Response: The City's street system is develope north-south roadways which include Highway This north-south network distributes traffic the carry traffic to convenient north-south major of community destinations, or to Highway 99 and	59, "R" Stree roughout the co arterial on exp	t, "G" Street o ommunity. Ea ressway conne	and Parsons . st-west arter	Avenue. ials
Plans and studies are underway that would pr growth. (City of Merced Vision 2015 General	-	e roadways to	accommodat	e the
b) Exceed, either individually or cumulatively, a level of service standard established by the county congestion				

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
management agency for designated roads or highways?				
Response: See Response 15a).				
c) Result in a change in air traffic patterns, including either an increase in traffic levels or a change in location that results in substantial safety risks?				
Response: There are no structures or design would impact air traffic patterns. (Project		-	oposed proje	ct that
d) Substantially increase hazards due to a design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?				
Response: The proposed project is for the conditions. There will be no redesign of rodescription.)		-	-	_
e) Result in inadequate emergency access?				\boxtimes
Response: Accessibility will not be affected improvements as there are no changes in re(Project Description.)	-		~	-
f) Result in inadequate parking capacity?				
Response: Adoption of the plans supporting inadequate parking capacity. (Project Des		rovements will	not result in	
g) Conflict with adopted policies, plans, or programs supporting alternative transportation (e.g., bus turnouts, bicycle racks)?				

Impact with Impact Mitigation Incorporation Response: The Element's plans for improvements to housing, financing, and energy consumption will not interfere with any alternative transportation plans. (Project Description.) 16. UTILITIES AND SERVICE \bowtie SYSTEMS B Would the project: Xa) Exceed wastewater treatment requirements of the applicable Regional Water Quality Control Board? Response: The design capacity of the wastewater treatment plant is 10 million gallons per day (M&D). This facility, located in the southwest part of the City about two miles south of the airport, can be expanded and upgraded to meet the City's needs. The City has plans to expand its wastewater treatment plant as growth occurs. This expansion is expected to serve the projected 2020 SUDP population of 150,000 as well as new businesses and industries. Therefore, implementation of the Element's plans and policies will not exceed the capacity of wastewater treatment facilities or requirements. (Final EIR, Merced Vision 2015 General Plan.) X b) Require or result in the construction of new water or wastewater treatment facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects? Response: See Responses 16a) and 16d). \boxtimes c) Require or result in the construction of new storm water drainage facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?

Potentially

Significant

Less Than

Significant

Less Than

Significant

No Impact

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Less Than
Significant
with
Mitigation
Incorporation

Less Than Significant Impact No Impact

Response: Merced's Vision 2015 General Plan EIR indicates several measures, including diversion structures, retention basins, and other crossings and culverts that provide a reduction of the impacts of storm water flow. Merced's Vision 2015 General Plan EIR holds as one of its policies the improvement of infrastructure within the city for the better handling of storm water flows. Thus, there is adequate capacity of the City's storm water drainage system to handle additional flows resulting from the Housing Element's adoption and implementation. (City of Merced Vision 2015 Plan.)

d) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project from existing entitlements and resources, or are new or expanded entitlements needed?		
Response: See Response 7a) and b).		
e) 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?		
Response: See Response 16a).		
f) Be served by a landfill with sufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the project's solid waste disposal needs?		\boxtimes

Response: The City of Merced is served by the Highway 59 landfill, which is operated by the County. The County of Merced has expanded its operation with an additional 91 acres, and 124 acres set aside for future growth. This has produced a thirty year landfill capacity. The proposed project will not result in the creation of solid waste. Individual projects proposed after the Element's adoption will be evaluated based on their potential for creation of solid waste. (City of Merced Vision 2015 General Plan.)

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	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
g) Comply with federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste?				
Response: See Response 16f).				
17. MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE				
a) Does the project have the potential to degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory? Response: The adoption of the City's Hous through the reduction of habitat or impacts proposed as a result of the Element's adop	to biologica tion will be a	l resources. Inc ssessed for thei	dividual proj	ects
biological resources prior to approval. (Pab) Does the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? ("Cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects)?				

projects for improvements to existing housing, construction of new housing, improvements to

Response: The adoption of the City's Housing Element will result in the eventual approval of

Potentially Less Than Less Than No Impact Significant Significant Significant Impact Impact with Mitigation Incorporation accessibility of housing and financing, reduction of energy usage, and creation of a population and housing database. According to the City's General Plan and Conservation Element, existing infrastructure is sufficient to accommodate the predicted growth. Specific projects proposed as a result of the Element's adoption will be assessed based on their potential impacts to services and conditions of the City. c) Does the project have environmental \boxtimes effects that will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly? Response: The project will result in the adoption of plans to improve the living conditions of the citizens of Merced and will not result in any adverse impacts to human beings. (Project

Description.)