

Population and Housing

Chapter 3.13

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The proposed Project will result in less than significant impacts to Population and Housing. No mitigation measures will be required. A detailed review of potential impacts is provided in the analysis below.

INTRODUCTION

California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Requirements

This section of the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) addresses potential impacts to Population and Housing. As required in Section 15126, all phases of the proposed Project will be considered as part of the potential environmental impact.

As noted in 15126.2 (a), “[a]n EIR shall identify and focus on the significant environmental effects of the proposed Project. In assessing the impact of a proposed Project on the environment, the lead agency should normally limit its examination to changes in the existing physical conditions in the affected area as they exist at the time the notice of preparation is published, or where no notice of preparation is published, at the time environmental analysis is commenced. Direct and indirect significant effects of the Project on the environment shall be clearly identified and described, giving due consideration to both the short-term and long-term effects. The discussion should include relevant specifics of the area, the resources involved, physical changes, alterations to ecological systems, and changes induced in population distribution, population concentration, the human use of the land (including commercial and residential development), health and safety problems caused by the physical changes, and other aspects of the resource base such as water, historical resources, scenic quality, and public services. The EIR shall also analyze any significant environmental effects the Project might cause by bringing development and people into the area affected. For example, an EIR on a subdivision astride an active fault line should identify as a significant effect the seismic hazard to future occupants of the subdivision. The subdivision will have the effect of attracting people to the location and exposing them to the hazards found there. Similarly, the EIR should evaluate any potentially significant impacts of locating development in other areas susceptible to hazardous conditions (e.g., floodplains, coastlines, wildfire risk areas) as identified in authoritative hazard maps, risk assessments or in land use plans addressing such hazards areas.”¹

The environmental setting provides a description of the Population and Housing in the County. The regulatory setting provides a description of applicable Federal, State and Local regulatory policies that were developed in part from information contained in the Tulare County 2030

¹ 2012 CEQA Guidelines, Section 15126.2 (a)

General Plan, the Tulare County General Plan Background Report and/or the Tulare County General Plan Revised DEIR incorporated by reference and summarized below. Additional documents utilized are noted as appropriate. A description of the potential impacts of the proposed Project is provided and includes the identification of feasible mitigation measures (if necessary and feasible) to avoid or lessen the impacts.

Thresholds of Significance

- Induce Substantial Population Growth
- Displace Housing
- Displace People

ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

“Tulare County, California is one of the largest counties in the San Joaquin Valley. Geographically it is situated about midway between San Francisco and Los Angeles, the two principal cities of the Pacific Slope... Within the confines of Tulare County are now 4,863 square miles, or 3,158,400 acres.”²

The Tulare County Region has three (3) sub-regional Housing Market Areas. These three areas are described below:

Visalia/Farmersville/Exeter/Sequoia Park/Dinuba/Cutler/Orosi Market Area:

“Located in northern Tulare County and encompassing Census Tracts 1 through 20. Several cities are located within this market area including Dinuba, Exeter, Farmersville, Visalia (the County’s largest City), and Woodlake. Visalia is the only city within the entire County with two regional shopping centers. A number of unincorporated communities are located within this market area including: Cutler, East Orosi, Orosi, Sultana, Traver, Goshen, West Goshen, Ivanhoe, Lemon Cove, Three Rivers, and other Valley and Sierra Communities. It should be noted that Woodlake and Farmersville are highly defined sub-market areas within this Market Area. These communities have high farmworker households, low median income, and high unemployment rates within Tulare County. The geographic boundary of this market area extends to the Tulare County line in the north, west and east, and generally extends to Avenue 256 in the south.”³

Tulare/Southwest Tulare County Market Area:

“Located in central Tulare County, this Market Area encompasses Census Tracts 21 through 24, 29 through 32, and 42 through 44. The only incorporated city in this Market Area is Tulare, the second largest city in the County. A number of unincorporated cities are also located in this Market Area and include: Tipton, Pixley, Earlimart, and other Valley Communities. Most economic interaction with communities in this market area

² Tulare County Regional Blueprint, page 4 to 5

³ Final Tulare County 2008 Regional Housing Needs Assessment Plan, page II-2

Draft Environmental Impact Report for the
Harvest Power Project

primarily occurs between the City of Delano located just south of the Tulare/Kern County Line and the City of Visalia to the north. The geographic boundary of this market area extends generally along Avenue 256, the County line to the west and to the south, and along Rd. 192/Rd. 176/Rd. 208/SR 65 to the east.”⁴

Lindsay/Strathmore/Porterville/Foothills/Southeast Tulare County Market Area:

“Located in southeast Tulare County, this Market Area encompasses Census Tracts 25 through 28, 33 through 41, and 45. Most economic interaction in this Market Area occurs between the unincorporated communities and the Cities of Lindsay and Porterville. The unincorporated communities in this Market Area include: Strathmore, Cairns Corner, Ducor, Terra Bella, the Tule Indian Reservation, and other Valley and Sierra Communities. The geographic boundary of this market area extends along Avenue 256 to the north, Rd. 192/Rd. 176/Rd. 208/SR 65 to the west, and the County line to the south and east.”⁵

According to the Tulare County Regional Housing Needs Plan, the number of household in Tulare County’s was estimated as 110,356 in 2000. In 2007 the number of households was estimated as 125,836. The 2014 household Projection is estimated as 159,514.

**Table 3.13-1
Tulare County Population**

	1980	1990	2000	2008
Tulare County’s Population	245,738	311,921	368,021	435,254

Source: 1980, 1990, 2000 U.S. Census, State of California, Department of Finance, E-1 Population Estimates.

“Affordability problems occur when housing costs become so high in relation to income that households have to pay an excessive proportion of their income for housing, or are unable to afford any housing and are homeless. A household is considered to be overpaying (or cost burdened) if it spends more than 30 percent of its gross income on housing. Severe overpayment occurs when a household spends more than 50 percent of income on housing. Housing costs depend upon many variables, including the type, size, value and/or location of the housing units, the intended tenure of the unit (whether it is to be occupied by owners or renters), and the inclusion or exclusion of one or more utilities, services, property taxes, insurance, and maintenance.”⁶

“Housing costs continue to rise significantly. Since 2000, the median rent has increased 40.9 percent from \$516 to \$727. The monthly owner costs for housing units with a mortgage have seen an even larger escalation going from \$943 to \$1,518 which is a 61 percent increase. The monthly owner costs for those housing units without a mortgage increased by 31 percent, going from \$251 to \$330.”⁷

⁴ Final Tulare County 2008 Regional Housing Needs Assessment Plan, page II-2

⁵ Ibid., page II-4

⁶ 2009 Housing Element, page 36

⁷ Ibid., page 41

Draft Environmental Impact Report for the
Harvest Power Project

As noted in the Tulare County 2008 Regional Housing Needs Assessment Plan, “[t]he RHNA Plan recommends that the County provide land use and zoning for approximately 938 units per year in the unincorporated portions of the County. This augmented number was due to the high allocation of housing given to the incorporated cities mainly as a result of the amount of annexations carried out by incorporated cities. The County administratively agreed to increase its housing share to 7,035 units (938 units per year over the 7 1/2 year RHNA planning period) to alleviate member jurisdictions concerns over high housing numbers within the incorporated cities.”⁸

“The County has made significant progress in meeting the quantifiable goals and Projected needs from the 2003 Housing Element... The 7.5-year time frame included a construction boom. The 2002 Regional Housing Needs Plan indicated a housing need of 2,250 units within the unincorporated area; overall growth was much greater than the Projected need.”⁹

REGULATORY SETTING

Federal Agencies & Regulations

US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)

“HUD’s mission is to create strong, sustainable, inclusive communities and quality affordable homes for all. HUD is working to strengthen the housing market to bolster the economy and protect consumers; meet the need for quality affordable rental homes; utilize housing as a platform for improving quality of life; build inclusive and sustainable communities free from discrimination; and transform the way HUD does business.”¹⁰

State Agencies & Regulations

California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD)

HCD’s mission is to “[p]rovide leadership, policies and programs to preserve and expand safe and affordable housing opportunities and promote strong communities for all Californians.”¹¹ “In 1977, the State Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) adopted regulations under the California Administrative Code, known as the Housing Element Guidelines, which are to be followed by local governments in the preparation of local housing elements. AB 2853, enacted in 1980, further codified housing element requirements. Since that time, new amendments to State Housing Law have been enacted. Each of these amendments has been considered during development of this Housing Element.”¹²

⁸ 2009 Housing Element, page 10

⁹ Ibid., page 101

¹⁰ HUD Website, <http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/about/mission>

¹¹ HCD website, <http://www.hcd.ca.gov/mission.html>

¹² 2009 Housing Element, page 3 to 4

California Relocation Assistance Act

The State of California adopted the California Relocation Assistance Act (*California Government Code* §7260 et seq.) in 1970. This State law, which follows the federal Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Act, requires public agencies to provide procedural protections and benefits when they displace businesses, homeowners, and tenants in the process of implementing public programs and Projects. This State law calls for fair, uniform, and equitable treatment of all affected persons through the provision of relocation benefits and assistance to minimize the hardship of displacement on the affected persons.

Local Policy & Regulations

Tulare County 2008 Regional Housing Needs Assessment Plan

“The Tulare County Association of Governments (TCAG) was responsible for allocating the State’s Projections to each local jurisdiction within Tulare County including the County unincorporated area, which is reflected in this Housing Element. Tulare County has no control over the countywide population and housing Projections provided to TCAG when it prepared the Regional Housing Needs Assessment Plan.”¹³

Tulare County Regional Blueprint 2009

This Blueprint includes the following preferred growth scenario principals:

- Increase densities county-wide by 25% over the status quo densities;
- Establish light rail between cities;
- Extend Highway 65 north to Fresno County;
- Expand transit throughout the county;
- Maintain urban separators around cities; and
- Growth will be directed toward incorporated cities and communities where urban development exists and where comprehensive services and infrastructure are or will be provided.

Tulare County Housing Authority

“The Housing Authority of the County of Tulare (HATC) has been officially designated as the local public housing agency for the County of Tulare by the Board of Supervisors and was created pursuant to federal and state laws. ...HATC is a unique hybrid: a public sector agency with private sector business practices. Their major source of income is the rents from residents. The HATC mission is “to provide affordable, well-maintained rental housing to qualified low- and very low-income families. Priority shall be given to working families, seniors and the disabled. Tenant self sufficiency and responsibility shall be encouraged. Programs shall be self-supporting to the maximum extent feasible.” HATC provides rental assistance to very low and moderate-income families, seniors and the handicapped throughout the county. HATC offers

¹³ Tulare County 2009 Housing Element, page 10

many different programs, including the conventional public housing program, the housing choice voucher program (Section 8), the farm labor program for families with farm labor income, senior housing programs, and other programs. They also own or manage some individual subsidized rental complexes that do not fall under the previous categories, and can provide information about other affordable housing that is available in Tulare County. All programs are handicap accessible. Almost all of the complexes have 55-year recorded affordability covenants.”¹⁴

2009-2014 Housing Element Policies

Policy 1.11

Encourage the development of a broad range of housing types to provide an opportunity of choice in the local housing market.

Policy 1.14

Pursue an equitable distribution of future regional housing needs allocations, thereby providing a greater likelihood of assuring a balance between housing development and the location of employment opportunities.

Policy 1.33

Encourage and support a balance between housing and agricultural needs.

Policy 3.11

Support and coordinate with local economic development programs to encourage a “jobs to housing balance” throughout the unincorporated area.

IMPACT EVALUATION

Will the Project:

- 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)?**

Project Impact Analysis: *No Impact*

The proposed Project does not include new homes. As part of the proposed expansion, the number of employees will increase the staff from 7 to 12. This increase in the size of this existing business will not induce population growth because of the relative size of the growth. In addition, the Project site is located in a rural area and this increase in the size of this business will not induce nearby parcels to either increase new homes or create new businesses. No Project specific impacts related to this checklist item will occur.

¹⁴ 2009 Housing Element, page 112

Cumulative Impact Analysis: ***No Impact***

The geographic area of this cumulative analysis is Tulare County. This cumulative analysis is based on the information provided in the Tulare County 2030 General Plan, General Plan background Report, and/or Tulare County 2030 General Plan EIR.

As the proposed Project will not result in any project specific impacts, no cumulative impacts will occur as well. As such, no cumulative impacts related to this checklist item will occur.

Mitigation Measures:

None Required.

Conclusion: ***No Impact***

As noted above, no Project specific or cumulative impacts related to this checklist item will occur.

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

Project Impact Analysis: ***No Impact***

There is no housing located on the Project site and no housing will be displaced as a result of the proposed Project. No Project specific impacts related to this checklist item will occur.

Cumulative Impact Analysis: ***No Impact***

The geographic area of this cumulative analysis is Tulare County. This cumulative analysis is based on the information provided in the Tulare County 2030 General Plan, General Plan background Report, and/or Tulare County 2030 General Plan EIR.

As noted above, there is no existing housing on the Project site and the proposed Project will not displace any housing units. No cumulative impacts related to this checklist item will occur.

Mitigation Measures:

None Required.

Conclusion: ***No Impact***

As noted above, no Project specific or cumulative impacts related to this checklist item will occur.

c) Displace substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?

Project Impact Analysis: *No Impact*

The proposed Project does not include the conversion of housing. As such, no Project specific impacts related to this checklist item will occur.

Cumulative Impact Analysis: *No Impact*

The geographic area of this cumulative analysis is Tulare County. This cumulative analysis is based on the information provided in the Tulare County 2030 General Plan, General Plan background Report, and/or Tulare County 2030 General Plan EIR.

The proposed Project will not convert housing on-site or off-site. As such, no cumulative impacts related to this checklist item will occur.

Mitigation Measures:

None Required.

Conclusion: *No Impact*

As noted above, no Project specific or cumulative impacts related to this checklist item will occur.

REFERENCES

Tulare County 2030 General Plan, August 2012

Tulare County 2009 Housing Element Update, May 2012

HUD Website: <http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/about/mission>

HCD Website, <http://www.hcd.ca.gov/mission.html>

Final Tulare County 2008 Regional Housing Needs Assessment Plan, Tulare County Association of Governments, July 2008

2012 CEQA Guidelines

Tulare County Regional Blueprint, TCAG, May 2009