Gonzales 2010 General Plan Environmental Impact Report—Volume 1

SCH# 2009121017

Public Review Draft

City of Gonzales

July 2010

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Gonzales 2010 General Plan
Environmental Impact Report
SCH #2009121017

Public Review Draft

Volume I

Prepared for:

City of Gonzales

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Coastplans

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CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses the preparation of the Draft Environmental Impact Report (Draft EIR) for the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan,* identifying the type of Draft EIR being prepared and the process for preparing it. This chapter also outlines the organization of the document.

1.0 EIR PREPARATION

This environmental impact report (EIR) has been prepared by the City of Gonzales pursuant to the applicable provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and its implementing guidelines (CEQA Guidelines). The most recently revised CEQA Guidelines became effective on March 18, 2010, and these updated guidelines are used in this EIR. The City of Gonzales is the lead agency for this EIR, which examines the environmental effects of adopting the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan*. The planning area of the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* is approximately 19,200 acres in size and contains the existing City of Gonzales, which is approximately 1,211 acres in size, plus approximately 2,150 acres of land for urbanization and 2,130 acres for urban reserve. The balance of the planning area is, and is intended to continue as, unincorporated agricultural and open space land governed by the County of Monterey. This latter agricultural and open space land is included in the planning area because it bears relationship to the City's long-term character and planning, but it is not intended to be included within the City's Sphere of influence (as established by Local Agency Formation Commission, or LAFCO). As for the City's Sphere of Influence, the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* identifies the existing Sphere of Influence boundary but does not propose an expanded boundary, leaving that determination to a later and separate process that would involve close cooperation with LAFCO and the County of Monterey.

CEQA requires that before a decision can be made to approve a project with potentially significant environmental effects, an EIR must be prepared that fully describes the environmental effects of the project. The EIR is a public informational document for use by governmental agencies and the public. It is intended to: identify and evaluate potential environmental consequences of the proposed project; to identify feasible mitigation measures that would lessen or avoid significant adverse impacts; and to identify and examine feasible project alternatives capable of lessening or avoiding the

project's significant impacts. The information contained in the EIR is reviewed and considered by the lead agency prior to its action to approve, disapprove, or modify the proposed project.

1.1 PROGRAM-LEVEL EIR

This EIR is a program-level EIR intended to investigate the environmental impacts of adopting an updated General Plan for the City of Gonzales. This is a first-tier environmental document upon which second-tier environmental documents such as project EIRs, focused EIRs, or mitigated negative declarations may be based.

1.2 ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW PROCESS

On December 7, 2009, the City of Gonzales issued a Notice of Preparation (NOP) to governmental agencies, organizations, and persons interested in the project. The City also prepared an Initial Study Checklist, which was attached to the NOP, identifying the topics the City proposed to discuss in this EIR. The NOP and letters received commenting on the NOP are included in Appendix A in this EIR. The NOP requested those agencies with regulatory authority over the project to identify the environmental issues relevant to their authority that should be addressed in the EIR, and encouraged agencies and the public to provide comments on the proposed content of the EIR. The NOP comment period extended from December 7, 2009 to January 8, 2010. The City held two public scoping meetings on December 16, 2009, at 3:00 pm and 6:00 pm, respectively. The Monterey County LAFCO requested additional time to respond to the NOP, and the City granted this request. The City of Gonzales received LAFCO NOP comments on January 25, 2010.

This Draft EIR will be published and circulated for review and comment by the public and other interested parties, agencies, and organizations for a 45-day period. The Draft EIR will also be available for review and comment on the internet, accessible at: http://ci.gonzales.ca.us. The public review period will be from August 2, 2010 through September 17, 2010. All comments or questions about the Draft EIR should be addressed to:

Community Development Director
City of Gonzales
P.O. Box 647
147 Fourth Street
Gonzales, CA 93926

Following the public review, responses to comments received on the Draft EIR and submitted within the specified review period will be prepared and included in the Final EIR. The City of Gonzales will then review and consider the Final EIR prior to any decision to approve, revise and approve, or reject the proposed project. Prior to approval of the project, the City of Gonzales must certify the Final EIR as complete and adequate.

1.3 ORGANIZATION OF THE DRAFT EIR

The Draft EIR begins with this Introduction (Chapter 1). The chapters following the Introduction are organized as follows:

Chapter 2, Summary, describes the proposed project, the controversial issues associated with the project, the environmental impacts of the project, and recommended mitigation measures. The summary includes a figure that lists each identified environmental impact and corresponding mitigation measure(s). The summary table is divided into three sections—significant unavoidable impacts that cannot be mitigated to a less-than-significant level, significant unavoidable cumulative impacts, and less-than-significant impacts with mitigation measures.

Chapter 3, Project Description, provides a description of the project site and location, the project objectives, the proposed project characteristics, and an outline of the approval process.

Chapter 4, Environmental Setting, Impacts, and Mitigation Measures, contains an analysis of environmental topics in relation to the project. The discussion of each topic is divided into an introductory paragraph that describes the scope of the issue under consideration and sets forth thresholds of significance for potential impacts, an environmental setting section that describes baseline environmental information, and a discussion of impacts and mitigation measures section that describes the project impacts and mitigation measures.

Chapter 5, Alternatives, provides an analysis of a reasonable range of alternatives to the proposed project and indicates whether the alternative reduces any significant and unavoidable impacts to less than significant. As required by the CEQA Guidelines, a discussion of the reasons for selecting the alternatives analyzed in this section is provided, along with a comparative analysis of each alternative and identification of the "environmentally superior" alternative.

Chapter 6, CEQA Considerations, reviews cumulative impacts; significant, irreversible effects; and the project's potential for inducing growth.

Chapter 7, Report Preparation, lists the firms and staff members that prepared the EIR.

Chapter 8, Agencies and Persons Contacted, lists the persons, agencies, and organizations contacted during preparation of the EIR.

Chapter 9, Bibliography, provides a list of documents used in the preparation of the EIR.

Appendices are presented under separate cover in Volume II of this Draft EIR. The appendices present the background documents and technical information used in support of the impact analyses provided in the EIR. There are five appendices as follows:

A. Notice of Preparation and Response Letters

B. AMBAG Consistency Determination

C. Traffic Analysis Report

D. Greenhouse Gas Emissions Technical Information

E. Noise Analysis Report

CHAPTER 2. SUMMARY

This chapter summarizes the project under review, discusses areas of potential controversy, and summarizes project impacts and mitigation measures identified in this DEIR (see Figure 2.2.1).

2.0 PROJECT UNDER REVIEW

The proposed project is the adoption of *Gonzales 2010 General Plan*. The project includes legislative approvals by the City of Gonzales and certification of an EIR with supporting findings. A detailed project description is provided in Chapter 3.

2.1 AREAS OF KNOWN CONTROVERSY AND ISSUES TO BE RESOLVED

The major point of controversy as well as the main challenge for long-term planning in Gonzales is protecting open space and productive agricultural lands while planning for growth. The City is located amidst highly fertile agricultural lands, so some measure of conflict between open space and agricultural preservation, on the one hand, and general plan strategies, on the other, is inevitable. Another challenge to long-term planning is addressing greenhouse gas emissions while planning for growth. This general plan update comes at a time when the State is working to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, so conflicts involving greenhouse gas emissions may be inevitable.

2.2 SUMMARY OF IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

Under CEQA, a significant effect on the environment is defined as a substantial or potentially substantial adverse change in any of the physical conditions within the area affected by a project, including effects on land, air, water, minerals, flora, fauna, ambient noise, and objects of historic or aesthetic significance. The criteria used to determine whether or not effects are significant are included in the introductory part of each topic discussion in Chapter 4 of this EIR. This EIR presents information on all impact categories recommended in the CEQA Guidelines, unless the impact considered was discussed and focused out in the Initial Study (see Appendix A for the NOP, which contains the Initial Study).

Potential environmental impacts of the project are summarized in Figure 2.2.1. This figure lists impacts and mitigation measures in three major categories: 1) significant unavoidable impacts, 2) significant unavoidable cumulative impacts, and 3) less than significant impacts with mitigation measures. For each impact, the figure includes a summary of mitigation measure(s). Please refer to Chapter 4, Impacts and Mitigation Measures, for a complete discussion of each impact and associated mitigation. Cumulative effects are discussed separately in Chapter 6, Broad-Scale CEQA Considerations, and have also been included in the summary table.

Figure 2.2.1: Summary of Impacts and Mitigations

Environmental Impact	Mitigation Measures (See also the GP diagrams, policies, and implementing actions cited in Chapter 4)
----- Significant Unavoidable Impacts ----- (These are impacts that remain significant even after all feasible mitigation has been applied)	
4.2 AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES	
Impact AG-1 [Conversion of Prime Farmland and Farmland of Statewide Importance]	No measures available to supplement the diagrams, policies, and implementing actions contained in *Gonzales 2010 General Plan*.
4.3 AESTHETICS	
Impact AES-1 [Substantial degradation of the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings]	Mitigation Measure AES-1: Visual Screen for Permanent Agricultural Edge The City shall require Specific Plans and development approvals, either of which include land east of Highway 101, to incorporate a naturalistic visual screen along the "Permanent Agricultural Edge" (as depicted in the General Plan Land Use Diagram) separating the Urban Growth Area from adjacent parts of the Planning Area that are not contained in the Urban Growth Area. Such a visual screen shall be designed to screen urban uses contained in the Urban Growth Area from views outside the Urban Growth Area and shall be comprised of dense plantings of tall and large-canopy trees and other vegetation that are native to the Salinas Valley. The trees and other vegetation chosen for the visual screen shall be sufficiently mature when planted to ensure that the visual screen will be effective within five (5) years of approval of the first subdivision in the Specific Plan or other development approval area. The visual screen shall be maintained as a long-term feature of the Urban Growth Area.
Impact AES-2 [Light trespass, light pollution, and glare]	[Re: Light trespass/pollution—see the GP diagrams, policies, and implementing actions cited in Chapter 4] Mitigation Measure AES-2: Reflective Building Exteriors The City shall prohibit building exteriors with large expanses or glass or other reflective material that could become a significant source of glare.

Environmental Impact	Mitigation Measures (See also the GP diagrams, policies, and implementing actions cited in Chapter 4)
----- Significant Unavoidable Impacts ----- **(These are impacts that remain significant even after all feasible mitigation has been applied)**	
4.6 GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS	
Impact GHG-1 [Generation of greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment]	Mitigation Measure GHG-1: Citywide Climate Action Plan The City shall complete work currently underway on, and then adopt, a citywide climate action plan with the objective of meeting a GHG emissions reduction trajectory consistent with State law (currently codified in Health and Safety Code 38500 et seq. (AB 32) and Executive Order S-03-05). The City, in setting the trajectory, shall recognize the likelihood that Gonzales may bear a much larger percentage of growth than other more mature communities in the State and that an appropriate scaling of the State targets set forth in AB 32 and Executive Order S-03-05 would allow a citywide increase in GHG emissions as the City implements the Gonzales 2010 General Plan. This allowable increase in GHG emissions shall be tempered by appropriate measures to limit GHG emissions from new development on a per capita basis, while achieving actual reductions in such emissions from existing uses in the planning area (i.e., uses in place as of the date of certification of the Gonzales 2010 General Plan EIR). The limits to be established for per capita GHG emissions shall be indexed to realistic targets that are readily achievable using GHG Best Management Practices identified as part of the citywide climate action plan. Targets for reducing GHG emissions in existing development shall, at a minimum, be a 15 percent reduction from the baseline identified in the GHG Inventory conducted as part of the citywide climate action plan. GHG Best Management Practices shall include but not be limited to: • Increased energy efficiency beyond Title 24 • Use of electrically powered landscape equipment and outdoor electrical outlets • Installation of green roofs • Installation of solar or tank-less water heaters • Installation of solar panels • Increased diversity and/or density of land use mix • Provision of necessary infrastructure and treatment to allow use of graywater/ recycled water for outdoor irrigation • Installation of rainwater collection systems • Provision of composting facilities at residential sites • Incorporation of all other measures in Figure 4.7.2 above that are identified as being appropriate for implementation in Gonzales. The City shall adopt a citywide climate action plan as outlined above prior to the adoption of any Specific Plan in the Urban Growth Area.

Environmental Impact	Mitigation Measures (See also the GP diagrams, policies, and implementing actions cited in Chapter 4)
----- Significant Unavoidable Impacts ----- (These are impacts that remain significant even after all feasible mitigation has been applied)	
	Mitigation Measure GHG-2: Implementation of GHG Best Management Practices The City shall require Specific Plans and development approvals to contain a plan to implement GHG Best Management Practices, as outlined above, that would result in achieving the limits on GHG emissions adopted as part of the citywide climate action plan. Mitigation Measure GHG-3: Timeframe to Adopt Green Building Code The City shall adopt the "California Green Building Standards (CALGreen) Code," which becomes effective on January 1, 2011, by July 1, 2011.
4.10 UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS	
Impact USS-1 [Upgrade and modernization of the Gonzales Wastewater Treatment Plant could result in the conversion of Prime Farmland]	No measures available to supplement the diagrams, policies, and implementing actions contained in *Gonzales 2010 General Plan*.

Environmental Impact	Mitigation Measure (See also the GP diagrams, policies, and implementing actions cited in Chapter 4)
----- Significant Unavoidable Cumulative Impacts ----- (These are cumulative impacts that remain significant even after all feasible mitigation has been applied)	
Agricultural Resources [Conversion of Prime Farmland and Farmland of Statewide Importance]	No measures available to supplement the diagrams, policies, and implementing actions contained in *Gonzales 2010 General Plan*.
Aesthetics [Substantial degradation of the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings; light trespass, light pollution, and glare]	See descriptions of Mitigation Measures AES-1 and AES-2, above.
Greenhouse Gas Emissions [Generation of greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment]	This is listed above as a significant and unavoidable impact. By definition, the environmental effects associated with greenhouse gas emissions are cumulative impacts. As such, the reader should refer to the analysis contained in Section 4.6 (Greenhouse Gas Emissions) for a discussion of cumulative impacts related to greenhouse gas emissions. See descriptions of Mitigation Measures GHG-1, GHG-2, and GHG-3, above.
Utilities and Service Systems [Upgrade and modernization of the Gonzales Wastewater Treatment Plant could result in the conversion of Prime Farmland]	No measures available to supplement the diagrams, policies, and implementing actions contained in *Gonzales 2010 General Plan*.

Environmental Impact	Mitigation Measure (See also the GP diagrams, policies, and implementing actions cited in Chapter 4)
----- Less than Significant Impacts with Mitigation Measures ----- (These are impacts that become less than significant after all feasible mitigation has been applied)	
4.2 AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES	
Impact AG-2 [Conflicts with existing agricultural zoning]	Mitigation Measure AG-1: Collaboration with County of Monterey Collaborate with the County of Monterey to establish an urban reserve area around Gonzales that corresponds in all or part to the Urban Growth Area and Urban Reserve Area established by the Gonzales 2010 General Plan.
4.4 TRANSPORTATION/TRAFFIC	
Impact TT-1 [Conflicts with established measures of effectiveness for the performance of the circulation system]	Mitigation Measure TT-1: Interchange Improvements The city shall work with TAMC and Caltrans to improve each of the three Gonzales Interchanges on a schedule that would ensure that the improvements are in place to maintain acceptable levels of service at the interchanges as new development occurs in the Urban Growth Area. For the Fifth Street Interchange, the City shall work with Caltrans to explore the feasibility of a non-standard design that would minimize requirements for additional right-of-way and disruption of existing development. Mitigation Measure TT-2: Widen Fifth Street from Rincon to Highway 101 The city shall widen Fifth Street from Rincon Road to the Highway 101 southbound on-ramp from two lanes to four lanes or shall complete other improvements that will effectively maintain acceptable levels of service. Mitigation Measure TT-3: Widen Fifth Street from Highway 101 to Fanoe Road/Herold Parkway The City shall obtain offers of dedication of right of way as opportunities arise and shall subsequently widen Fifth Street from Highway 101 to Fanoe Road/Herold Parkway from four through lanes to six through lanes of traffic. These improvements shall be timed to ensure that the improvements are in place to maintain acceptable levels as new development occurs in the Urban Growth Area. Mitigation Measure TT-4: Widen Fifth Street from Fanoe Road/Herold Parkway to Iverson Road The city shall widen Fifth Street/Johnson Canyon Road from Fanoe Road/Herold Parkway to Iverson Road. The segment between Fanoe Road/Herold Parkway to "Arterial A" shall be widened from two lanes to six lanes, and this improvement shall be timed to ensure that the improvements are in place to maintain acceptable levels as new development occurs in the Urban Growth Area. The segment between "Arterial A" and Iverson Road shall

Environmental Impact	Mitigation Measure (See also the GP diagrams, policies, and implementing actions cited in Chapter 4)
----- Less than Significant Impacts with Mitigation Measures ----- (These are impacts that become less than significant after all feasible mitigation has been applied)	
	be widened to from two lanes to four lanes only after such time that the City amends the Gonzales 2010 General Plan to allow development of the Urban Reserve Area east of Iverson Road. Mitigation Measure TT-5: Synchronization of Signals along the Fifth Street/Johnson Canyon Road corridor The city shall coordinate with Caltrans to integrate interchange improvements at Highway 101 and Fifth Street/Johnson Canyon Road with local improvements along the entire corridor from Rincon Road to Fanoe Road/Herold parkway, including the synchronization of traffic signals. Mitigation Measure TT-6: Widen Associated Lane The City shall widen Associated Lane to a four-lane arterial with limited access between Highway 101 and Fanoe Road. Between Fanoe Road and "Arterial A", this facility shall be widened to a divided four-lane arterial. These improvements shall be timed to ensure that the improvements are in place to maintain acceptable levels as new development occurs in the Urban Growth Area. Mitigation Measure TT-7: Extend Associated Lane to Iverson Road The city shall revise its Circulation Diagram to extend Associated Lane from "Arterial A" to Iverson Road as a four-lane facility. Such an improvement shall only be required at such a time that the City amends the Gonzales 2010 General Plan to allow development of the Urban Reserve Area east of Iverson Road. In the interim, sufficient right-of-way shall be set aside to build the future street extension. Mitigation Measure TT-8: Widen Gloria Road and Design for Truck Use The City shall widen Gloria Road to a four-lane arterial between Highway 101 and "Arterial A". The roadbed for the entire length of Gloria Road from Highway 101 to Iverson Road shall be constructed to handle large volumes of heavy truck traffic. These improvements shall be timed to ensure that the improvements are in place to maintain acceptable levels as new development occurs in the Urban Growth Area. Mitigation Measure TT-9: Design Iverson Lane for Truck Use The City shall reconstruct the roadbed of Iverson Road from Gloria Road to Johnson Canyon Road to handle large volumes of heavy truck traffic. These improvements shall be timed to replace road segments as they deteriorate from truck use and as adjacent properties are developed. Mitigation Measure TT-10: Widen Fanoe Road

Environmental Impact	Mitigation Measure (See also the GP diagrams, policies, and implementing actions cited in Chapter 4)
----- Less than Significant Impacts with Mitigation Measures ----- (These are impacts that become less than significant after all feasible mitigation has been applied)	
	The City shall widen Fanoe Road/Herold Parkway from a two-lane to a four-lane arterial between Gloria Road and Associated Lane. These improvements shall be timed to ensure that the improvements are in place to maintain acceptable levels as new development occurs in the Urban Growth Area. Mitigation Measure TT-11: Traffic Calming on "Arterial A" The city shall work with Specific Plan preparers to refine operations by incorporating traffic calming measures and/or consider alternative alignments on "Arterial A" to discourage large volumes of through traffic on this street. Mitigation Measure TT-12: Update Traffic Impact Fees The City shall update its existing traffic impact fee nexus study to accurately project the costs of circulation system improvements for the 2010 Gonzales General Plan area and shall equitably spread the costs and update its traffic impact fee schedule consistent with the requirements of state law.
Impact TT-2 [Hazards due to a design feature or incompatible uses]	Mitigation Measure TT-13: Project-Level Traffic Analysis Required The City shall require Specific Plans and development approvals to contain a project-level traffic analysis for all areas planned for urbanization. Such an analysis shall evaluate the full range of operational, safety, emergency access, parking, and alternative-mode transportation issues. The analysis shall recommend measures to mitigate any significant impact that a specific project may have on transportation/traffic.
Impact TT-3 [Emergency access in the planning area]	See Mitigation Measure TT-13, above.
Impact TT-4 [Conflicts with adopted policies, plans, or programs regarding public transit, bicycle, or pedestrian facilities, or otherwise decrease the performance or safety of such facilities]	Mitigation Measure TT-14: Revise Circulation Diagram for Consistency with TAMC's "2005 General Bikeways Plan" The City shall amend the Circulation Diagram contained in the Gonzales 2010 General Plan Circulation Element to designate Alta Street and Gonzales River Road as bikeway facilities to achieve consistency with TAMC's "2005 General Bikeway Plan."

Environmental Impact	Mitigation Measure (See also the GP diagrams, policies, and implementing actions cited in Chapter 4)
----- Less than Significant Impacts with Mitigation Measures ----- (These are impacts that become less than significant after all feasible mitigation has been applied)	
4.5 AIR QUALITY	
Impact AQ-3 [Toxic Air Contaminants or odors]	Mitigation Measure AQ-1: Toxic Air Contaminants The City shall minimize local air quality impacts related to exposure of sensitive receptors to TACs by evaluating new development for proximity to TAC sources as recommended in the California Air Resources Board's "Air Quality and Land Use Handbook". Mitigation Measure AQ-2: Deed Restriction Notification of Strong Odor The City of Gonzales shall require that a deed restriction be recorded on all properties located within one (1) mile of either the animal feed lot or the Johnson Canyon Road Landfill (both of which are located east of Iverson Road) notifying the owner or the prospective property buyer of the potential for strong odors emanating from these facilities to adversely affect the property on which the deed restriction is recorded. This measure may be modified and refined as part of the Specific Plan or other development approval process based on a detailed analysis by a qualified air quality expert and based on land use changes over time. Mitigation Measure AQ-3: Working to Reduce Strong Odors The City of Gonzales shall work in partnership with the MBUAPCD and the owners of operations that create significant odors in the planning area to reduce such odors using the most current operational and other techniques available.
4.11 PUBLIC SERVICES	
Impact PS-3 [Provision of new or physically altered public facilities and services]	Mitigation Measure PS-1: Project-Level Public Facilities Impact Analysis Required The City shall require a project-level analysis and report on public facilities impacts as part of Specific Plan and other major development plan review and approval. Such and analysis and report shall identify measures necessary to reduce any environmental effects to a level of less than significant.

Environmental Impact	Mitigation Measure (See also the GP diagrams, policies, and implementing actions cited in Chapter 4)
----- Less than Significant Impacts with Mitigation Measures ----- (These are impacts that become less than significant after all feasible mitigation has been applied)	
4.13 BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES	
Impact BIO-2 [Affects on riparian habitat or other sensitive natural communities]	Mitigation Measure BIO-1: Riparian Protection Ordinance The City shall adopt a Riparian Protection Ordinance to ensure that development does not encroach on Gonzales Slough or any "Waters of the United States" that may be located in the planning area. Such an ordinance shall establish required minimum setbacks from Gonzales Slough, wetlands, and other "Waters of the United States" and require Specific Plans and development applications to contain measures to ensure that all sensitive habitats are protected from the significant negative effects of encroaching development.
Impact BIO-3 [Affects on federally-protected wetlands]	See Mitigation Measure Bio-1, above.
4.14 CULTURAL RESOURCES	
Impact CUL-1 [Significant adverse change in historical resources]	Mitigation Measure CUL-1: Project-Level Cultural Analysis Required The City shall require Specific Plans and development applications to contain a project-level analysis of cultural resources for all areas planned for urbanization. Such an analysis shall evaluate the full range of cultural resources, including historical, archaeological, and paleontological resources, and buried human remains. The analysis shall recommend measures to mitigate any significant impact that a specific project may have on cultural resources.
Impact CUL-2 [Significant change in prehistoric archaeological resources that may exist in the planning area]	Mitigation Measure CUL-2: Accidental Discovery of Cultural Resources The City shall require as a standard condition of project approval the following: "if any archaeological resources are discovered during grading or construction, all work shall be immediately halted and appropriate personnel, including a qualified Native American representative, shall be contacted and consulted. Based on these consultations, appropriate measures shall be taken to protect the discovered resources, and only after such measures have been implemented shall grading or construction continue."
Impact CUL-3 [Potential to lead to the destruction of a unique paleontological resource or site of unique geologic features]	See Mitigation Measure CUL-1: Project-Level Cultural Analysis Required, and CUL-2: Accidental Discovery of Cultural Resources
Impact CUL-4 [Disturbance of human remains]	See Mitigation Measures CUL-1: Project-Level Cultural Analysis Required, and CUL-2: Accidental Discovery of Cultural Resources

Environmental Impact	Mitigation Measure (See also the GP diagrams, policies, and implementing actions cited in Chapter 4)
----- Less than Significant Impacts with Mitigation Measures ----- (These are impacts that become less than significant after all feasible mitigation has been applied)	
4.17 HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS	
Impact HAZ-3 [Hazardous emissions or the handling of hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school]	Mitigation Measure HAZ-1: Site-Specific Review of Potential Land Use Conflicts Involving the Location of New Schools. The City of Gonzales shall identify and evaluate potential land use conflicts between schools and industrial uses as part of Specific Plan or other major development plan review and approval. Such review shall address California Public Resources Code §21151.8(a) regarding requirements for the proposed construction of an elementary or secondary school. Such review should also address the Monterey Bay Unified Air Pollution Control District's Rule 402, Nuisances.
Impact HAZ-4 [Development activity on Fanoe Ranch, a part of which is known to contain hazardous materials]	Mitigation Measure HAZ-2: Remediation Plan for Clean-Up of Fanoe Ranch The City of Gonzales shall require a remediation plan for the clean-up of any contaminated areas of Fanoe Ranch as part any Specific Plan that includes the ranch in its planning area. The remediation plan shall be coordinated with appropriate regional, state, and federal agencies. Mitigation Measure HAZ-3: Site-Specific Investigation of Potential Soil Contamination Required The City of Gonzales shall require site-specific investigations and reports on potential soil contamination as part of Specific Plan or other major development plan review and approval. Such an investigation and report shall include measures necessary to mitigate any environmental hazards to a less than significant level.
Impact HAZ-6 [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]	Mitigation Measure HAZ-4: Development in Areas of Very High Wildfire Potential The City of Gonzales shall require site-specific investigations and reports on wildfire potential for any development east of Iverson Road, which is an area of very high wildfire potential. Such an investigation and report shall include measures necessary to mitigate any wildfire hazards, including the establishment of "fire safe" zones around habitable structures, to a less than significant level.

CHAPTER 3. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

This chapter describes the proposed project, including the project location, the existing adopted general plan that would be replaced by the proposed project, project objectives, and project characteristics.

3.0 PROJECT LOCATION AND FEATURES

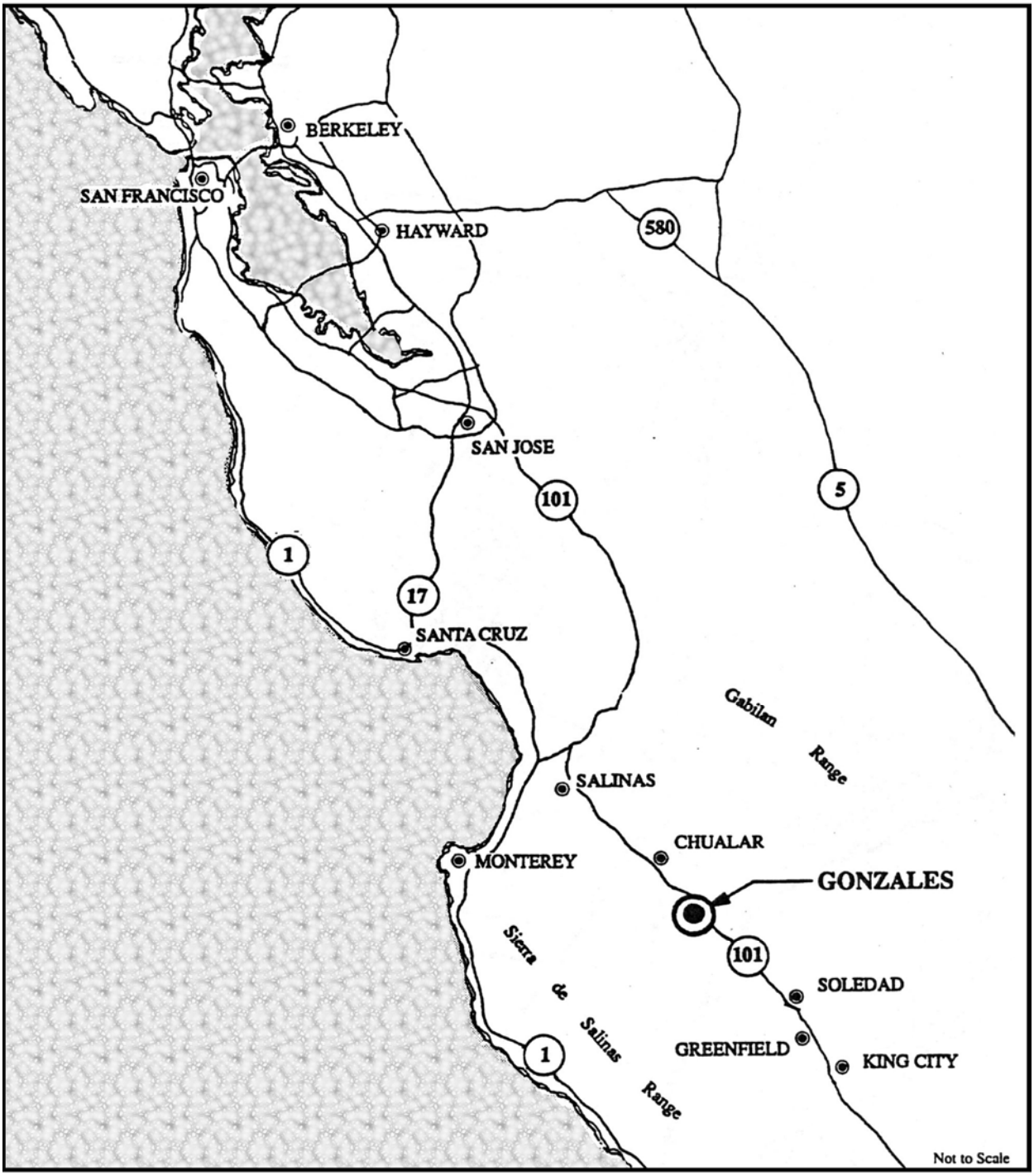
The Gonzales planning area is located in the central part of the Salinas Valley in Monterey County approximately 30 miles south of the City of Salinas on State Route 101 and seven miles north of Soledad. The planning area is primarily agriculture and open space, and trees are absent, save for the occasional clusters around farm houses. To the east of the City, land slopes gently toward the foothills of the Gabilan Mountains and is planted in vegetable and row crops. To the south, large farms and fields of row crops are uninterrupted to the Soledad Correctional Facility. Beyond the city limits on the west, the planning area is essentially flat to the Salinas River, and beyond the land slopes up to Sierra de Salinas mountain range. To the north and south of this area, large-scale field crop and truck farms are predominant. Parcel sizes outside the City limits are mostly larger than 40 acres and several exceed 500 acres. There has been little rural residential development on the city's perimeter, so the transition from urban uses to farmland is abrupt in most places.

The Salinas Valley is crisscrossed by a rectangular grid of roads. Highway 101 and the Union Pacific Railroad angle across this grid and provide the main transportation arteries through the valley. Gonzales River Road runs from Gonzales to the western shoulder of the valley and provides scenic vistas to citrus and avocado orchards, grazing land, and vineyards on the slopes of the Sierra de Salinas, as well as expansive views across the valley. Johnson Canyon Road runs from Gonzales to the valley's eastern shoulder, and the area is fully developed with farms.

There are a limited number of water courses in the area. The most prominent water feature is the Salinas River, which lies on the western boundary of the planning area. Gonzales Slough runs a south/north course through the city, and Johnson Canyon Creek drains a substantial watershed to the east of the planning area. Within the farmed area, a complex network of irrigation ditches cross the area, with water pumped from the ground. The City's wastewater treatment plant is located 1.7 miles west of the Union Pacific

Railroad tracks on the northeast bank of the Salinas River. Figure 3.0.1 shows the regional location of Gonzales, and Figure 3.0.2 shows major drainages in the planning area.

Figure 3.0.1: Regional Location



Source: Coastplans

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Figure 3.0.2: Major Drainages

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3.1 EXISTING CONDITIONS

Existing and planned residential uses in Gonzales represent approximately 60 percent of all land use in the city, and of this amount about 80 percent is single-family residential housing. Industrial use represents almost 13 percent of land use. Streets and highways represent approximately 17 percent, and public/semi public use (including the wastewater treatment plant) represents approximately 8 percent. Commercial use represents about two percent of land use. The City of Gonzales currently has a population of 9,025 persons (source: California Department of Finance, Table 2: E-5 City/County Population and Housing Estimates, 1/1/2009). There are an estimated 1,063 persons currently employed in Gonzales, and of this about a third are employed in agriculture-related industries; a quarter in the public sector; another third in retail, service, and construction jobs; and finally about 10 percent in agriculture (source: AMBAG, 2008).

The *Gonzales 1996 General Plan* (1996, Brady and Associates), which is currently the operable general plan for the City of Gonzales, contained a 6,880-acre planning area, of which approximately 1,211 acres was designated for urban use. Of this, there remains 365 acres of vacant developable land. The current plan accommodated 1,580 new dwelling units over a base of 1,393 units for a total of 2,973 dwelling units. Of this, there remains a potential for approximately 940 dwellings. The current plan projected a total population of 11,578 persons at buildout (including the existing city).[1] The City of Gonzales grew at an average annual rate of 2.84 percent between 1996 and 2009.

Finally, the current plan accommodated 542,640 square feet of new commercial uses and 4,203,540 square feet of new industrial uses. Of this there remains a potential for 183,000 square feet of commercial uses and 1,291,000 square feet of industrial uses. The current plan projected a total of 5,795 jobs at buildout.[2] To accommodate this level of growth, the plan anticipated the need to expand urban services, including:

- ✓ 1.25 million gallons per day (MGD) of wastewater treatment plant capacity,

[1] This 1996 estimate has proven to be low. The current 2010 population of 9,114, plus potential for approximately 3,400 additional persons, would bring the total to 12,514 persons.

- ✓ About 2,200 acre-feet of water supply, and
- ✓ A circulation system consisting of a freeway, three freeway interchanges, and existing and new arterial, collector, and local streets.

The *Gonzales 1996 General Plan* contains diagrams, goals, policies, and implementing actions addressing community visions and issues in each of the plan's seven elements (i.e., Land Use, Circulation, Housing, Community Health and Safety, Environmental Resources and Conservation, Community Facilities and Services, and Community Character).

3.2 PROJECT CHARACTERISTICS

The planning area of the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* is approximately 19,200 acres in size and contains the existing City of Gonzales, which lies at an elevation of 135 feet above mean sea level and is 1,211 acres in size. The planning area also contains approximately 2,150 acres of land for new urbanization and 2,130 acres for urban reserve. The balance of the planning area is, and is intended to continue as, unincorporated agricultural and open space land governed by the County of Monterey.

The *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* estimates a total buildout population of 37,825 persons and a total employment base of 6,463 jobs. Of these, 25,400 persons and 4,190 jobs are attributable to the updated plan. The remainder includes existing and potential population and jobs that existed under the current (1996) general plan. Figure 3.2.1 summarizes the project under review. Figure 3.2.2 shows the geography of project features. Figure 3.2.3 shows buildout projections for the proposed project's Urban Growth Area.

[2] This estimate has proven to be significantly overstated. The actual number of jobs realized as of 2010 (as estimated by AMBAG), with 66% of commercial and 69% of industrial land built out, was 1,063.

Figure 3.2.1: Project Summary

	Development Remaining Potential In 1996 Plan	Proposed Project	Total
Planning Area	--	19,200 ac	19,200 ac
Vacant Land for Urbanization			
Urban Growth Area	365 ac	2,150 ac	2,515 ac
Urban Reserve		2,130 ac	2,130 ac
Potential Dwelling Units			
Urban Growth Area	900 du	6,800 du	7,700 du
Urban Reserve		6,600 du	6,600 du
Potential Commercial Square Feet			
Urban Growth Area	190,000 sf	1,370,000 sf	1,560,000 sf
Urban Reserve		540,000 sf	540,000 sf
Potential Industrial Square Feet			
Urban Growth Area	1,300,000 sf	1,310,000 sf	2,610,000 sf
Urban Reserve		2,382,000 sf	2,382,000 sf
Potential Employment			
Existing (2009)			1,063 jobs
Urban Growth Area	1,210 jobs	4,190 jobs	5,400 jobs
Urban Reserve		3,400 jobs	3,400 jobs
Potential Population			
Existing (2009)			9,025 persons
Urban Growth Area (full buildout around 2050)	3,400 persons	25,400 persons	28,800 persons
Total Population			37,825 persons
Urban Reserve (Beyond 2050)		24,000 persons	24,000 persons

Source: Gonzales 2010 General Plan; Coastplans; City of Gonzales

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Figure 3.2.2: Project Features

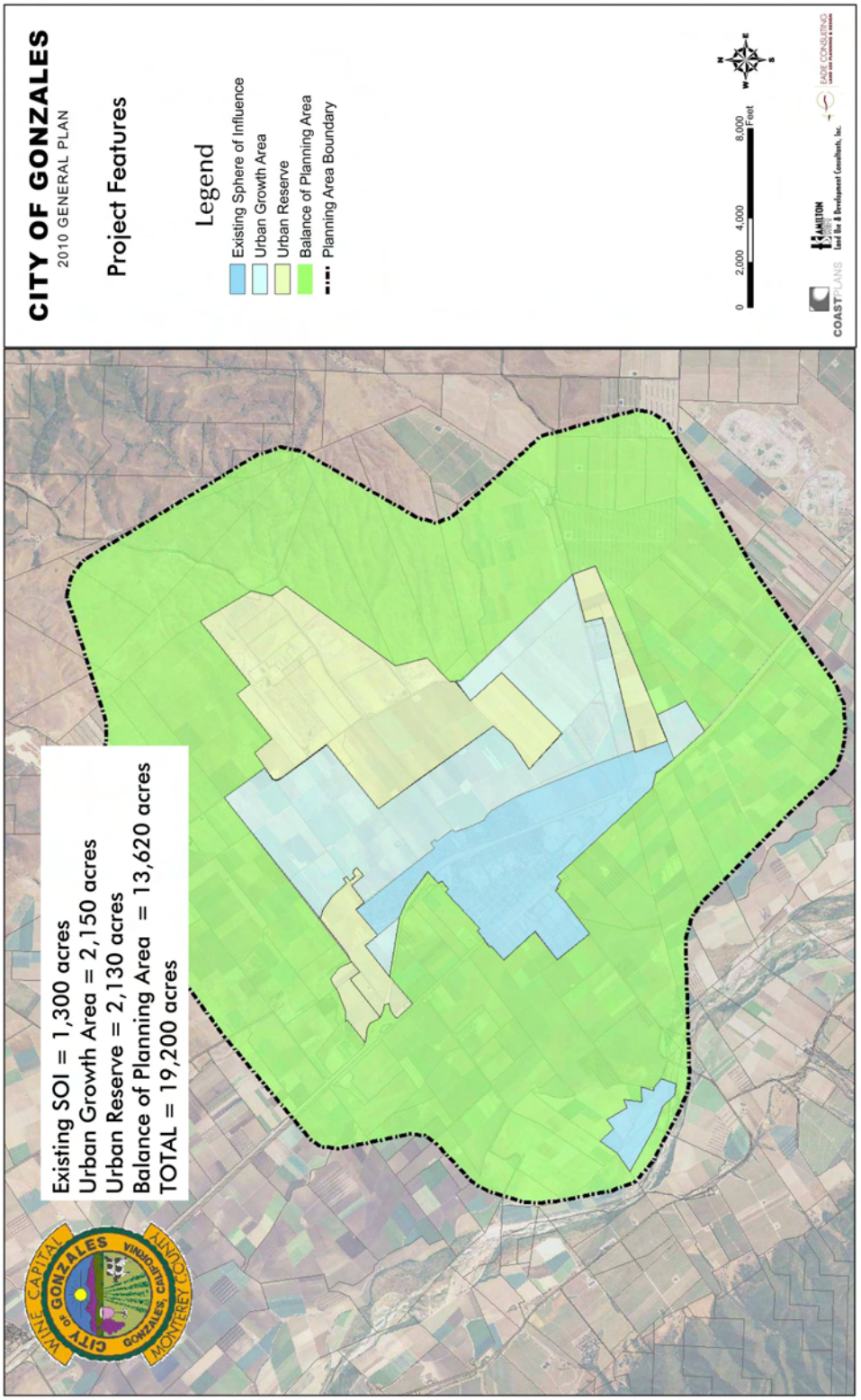

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Figure 3.2.3: Buildout Projections (Urban Growth Area)

EXISTING LAND USE, POPULATION, AND EMPLOYMENT
2009

Designation	Total Acres	Developed Acres	Vacant Acres	Existing Land Use[1]	Population[1]	Employment[2]
Residential Uses						
Neighborhood/Neighborhood Residential	1,490	0	1,490	0 DU	0	0
Low Density Residential	427	297	130	1,474 DU	6,494	--
Medium Density Residential	49	39	10	380 DU	1,674	--
High Density Residential[3]	12	2	10	213 DU	856	0
Subtotal	1,978	338	1,640	2,067 DU	9,025	0
Commercial Uses						
Community and Neighborhood Commercial	90	0	90	0 SF	--	0
Downtown Mixed use	18	18	0	220,000 SF	--	157
Highway Commercial	75	5	70	60,000 SF	--	157
Subtotal	183	23	160	280,000 SF	--	314
Manufacturing Uses						
Heavy Industrial/Manufacturing	469	159	310	1,730,000 SF	--	390
Light Industrial/Business Park	20	0	20	0 SF	--	0
Subtotal	489	159	330	1,730,000 SF	--	390
Other Uses						
Public/Quasi-Public	751	431	320	--	--	252
Agriculture	0	0	0	--	--	107
Parks and Open Space	97	27	70	--	--	--
Urban Reserve	2,130	0	2,130	--	--	--
Subtotal	2,978	458	2,520	--	--	359
TOTAL	5,628	978	4,650	--	9,025	1,063

Footnotes:
[1]Total dwelling units and population are consistent with California Department of Finance, Table E-5 (DOF 2009)
[2]Total employment is consistent with AMBAG 2010 Projection (AMBAG 2008)
[3]Existing land use includes residential component of Downtown Mixed Use (18 acres)

Figure 3.2.3: Buildout Projections (Continued)

FUTURE LAND USE, POPULATION, AND EMPLOYMENT
BUILDOUT

Designation	Added Land Use	Total Land Use	Added Population	Total Population	Added Employment	Total Employment
Residential Uses[1]						
Neighborhood/Neighborhood Residential	6,800 DU	6,800 DU	25,400	25,400	--	--
Low Density Residential	700 DU	2,174 DU	2,600	9,094	--	--
Medium Density Residential	100 DU	480 DU	400	2,074	--	--
High Density Residential	100 DU	313 DU	400	1,256	--	--
Subtotal	7,700 DU	9,767 DU	28,800	37,825	--	--
Commercial Uses[2]						
Community and Neighborhood Commercial	1,010,000 SF	1,010,000 SF	--	--	1,800	1,800
Downtown Mixed use	0 SF	220,000 SF	--	--	0	157
Highway Commercial	550,000 SF	610,000 SF	--	--	1,000	1,157
Subtotal	1,560,000 SF	1,840,000 SF	--	--	2,800	3,114
Manufacturing Uses[3]						
Heavy Industrial/Manufacturing	2,450,000 SF	4,180,000 SF	--	--	1,600	1,990
Light Industrial/Business Park	160,000 SF	160,000 SF	--	--	200	200
Subtotal	2,610,000 SF	4,340,000 SF	--	--	1,800	2,190
Other Uses						
Public/Quasi-Public	--	--	--	--	800	1,052
Agriculture	--	--	--	--	--	107
Parks and Open Space	--	--	--	--	--	--
Urban Reserve	--	--	--	--	--	--
Subtotal	--	--	--	--	800	1,159
TOTAL	--	--	28,800	37,825	5,400	6,463

Footnotes:

[1]Dwelling units for new neighborhood areas calculated as follows: acres x 65% x 7 du/ac ; for other areas: acres x 7 du/ac. Population calculated as follows: dwelling units minus 3% vacancy factor x 3.84 persons per household. All rounded to nearest hundred. Residential potential for community commercial area calculated as follows: 90 acres total, half of which will be one-story commercial development with an F.A.R. of 25%. The other half will be two-story, with a F.A.R. of 45%. With a 10% net-to-gross conversion, that yields: 40 acres @ 25% = 435,600 sf traditional one-story commercial; 40 acres @ 45% = 784,000 sf mixed, two-story commercial. Second-story space (i.e., 392,000 sf) would be office or residential use. If we allocate one quarter to residential use, we get 98,000 sf residential. At an average of 800 sf per residential unit, that gets us about 122 units (rounded to nearest 100).

[2]Commercial square feet calculated as follows: acres x 80% occupancy x 90% gross to net conversion x .25 FAR; rounded to nearest 10,000. Jobs calculated as follows: SF ÷ 550 SF per employee; rounded to nearest 100.

[3]Industrial square feet calculated as follows: acres x 80% occupancy x 90% gross to net conversion x .25 FAR; rounded to nearest 10,000. Jobs calculated as follows: SF ÷ 1,000 SF per light industrial employee (1,500 per heavy industrial employee); rounded to nearest 100.

The *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* addresses the seven mandatory topics of land use, circulation, open space, conservation, noise, and safety, (plus the "Housing Element," which was adopted in a separate process in 2009, and is not part of the project description of this EIR), plus three optional topics: community character, public facilities and services, and sustainability. These topics are organized into eight elements, each of which includes some or all of the following: diagrams, goals, policies and implementing actions. The elements in the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* that are addressed in this EIR are as follows:

- Land Use – This element addresses issues including, but are not limited to: agricultural preservation and land use, the structure and design of new neighborhoods, population and employment, and the use of Specific Plans as implementing tools. Policy LU-2.1 (Specific Plans Required in General Plan Growth Area), in the Land Use Element, requires all new development outside of the existing city to be contained in a specific plan prior to the granting of development entitlements. Implementing Action LU-6.2.2 (Achieve Minimum Density) requires a minimum overall residential density of between seven (7) and nine (9) dwelling units per gross acre. Figures 3.2.4a through 3.2.4d show the Land Use Diagram and its three insets that have been prepared describing and designating potential land uses within the Urban Growth Area.

- Circulation – This element addresses issues including, but are not limited to: existing and future travel demand and traffic patterns, level of service and other performance measures, truck traffic to industrial areas and the Johnson Canyon Road Landfill, transit services, and pedestrian and bicycle use.

- Community Health and Safety – This element addresses issues including, but are not limited to: fire safety, seismic safety and geologic hazards, flooding, hazardous materials, and air and water quality. It includes all required information for the mandatory noise element.

- Conservation and Open Space – This element addresses issues including, but are not limited to: biological resources such as special-status species and habitats, water use and conservation, energy conservation, and managed production of resources. This element also includes a discussion of public parks, recreational open spaces, natural areas, hiking and bicycle trails, and open space and parks as

part of an overall strategy of sustainability and quality of life. The restoration of the Johnson Canyon Creek will be addressed.

- Community Facilities and Services – This element addresses issues including, but are not limited to: sewer, water, and drainage facilities and services, governmental services, schools, and social services.

- Community Character – This element addresses issues including, but are not limited to: the design of new neighborhoods, architecture, street design, and the protection of historical and archaeological resources.

- Sustainability (new element) – This element addresses issues including, but are not limited to: energy conservation, greenhouse gas emissions, and climate change.

The *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* also includes an introduction chapter (Chapter I) that provides a program overview and an implementation chapter (Chapter X) that provides a framework for implementing the General Plan.

Figure 3.2.4a: Land Use Diagram

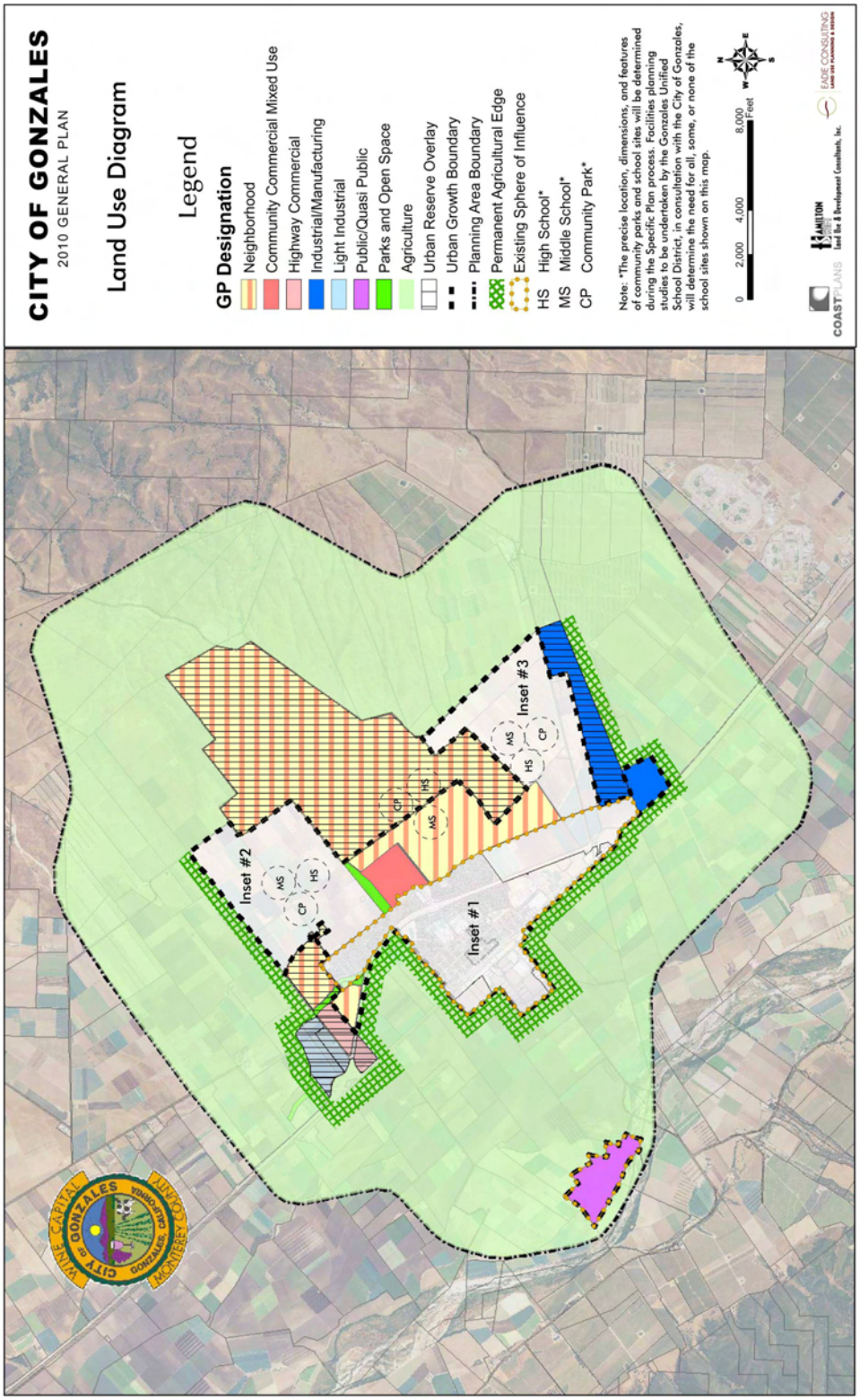

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Figure 3.2.4b: Land Use Diagram Inset #1

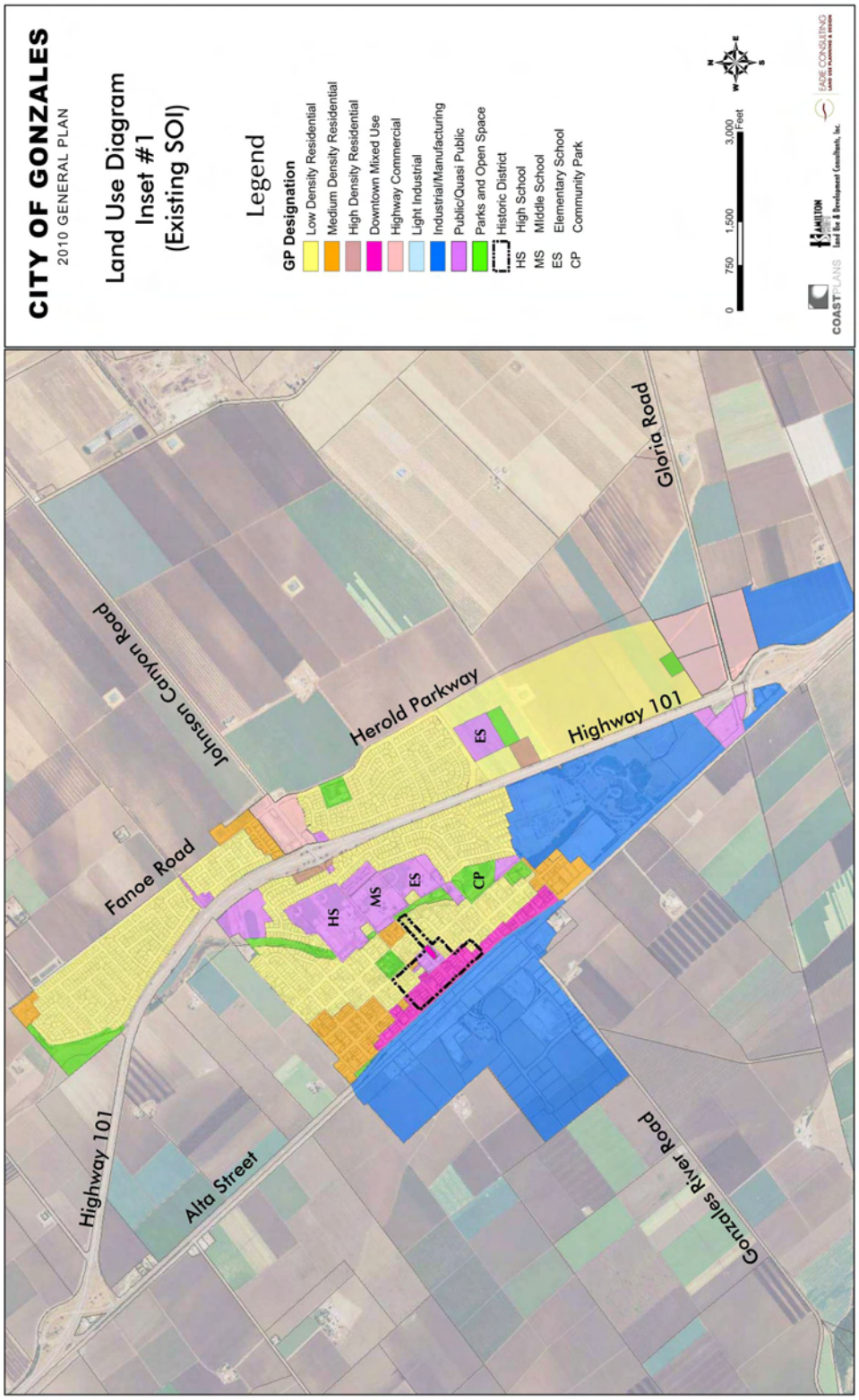

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Figure 3.2.4c: Land Use Diagram Inset #2

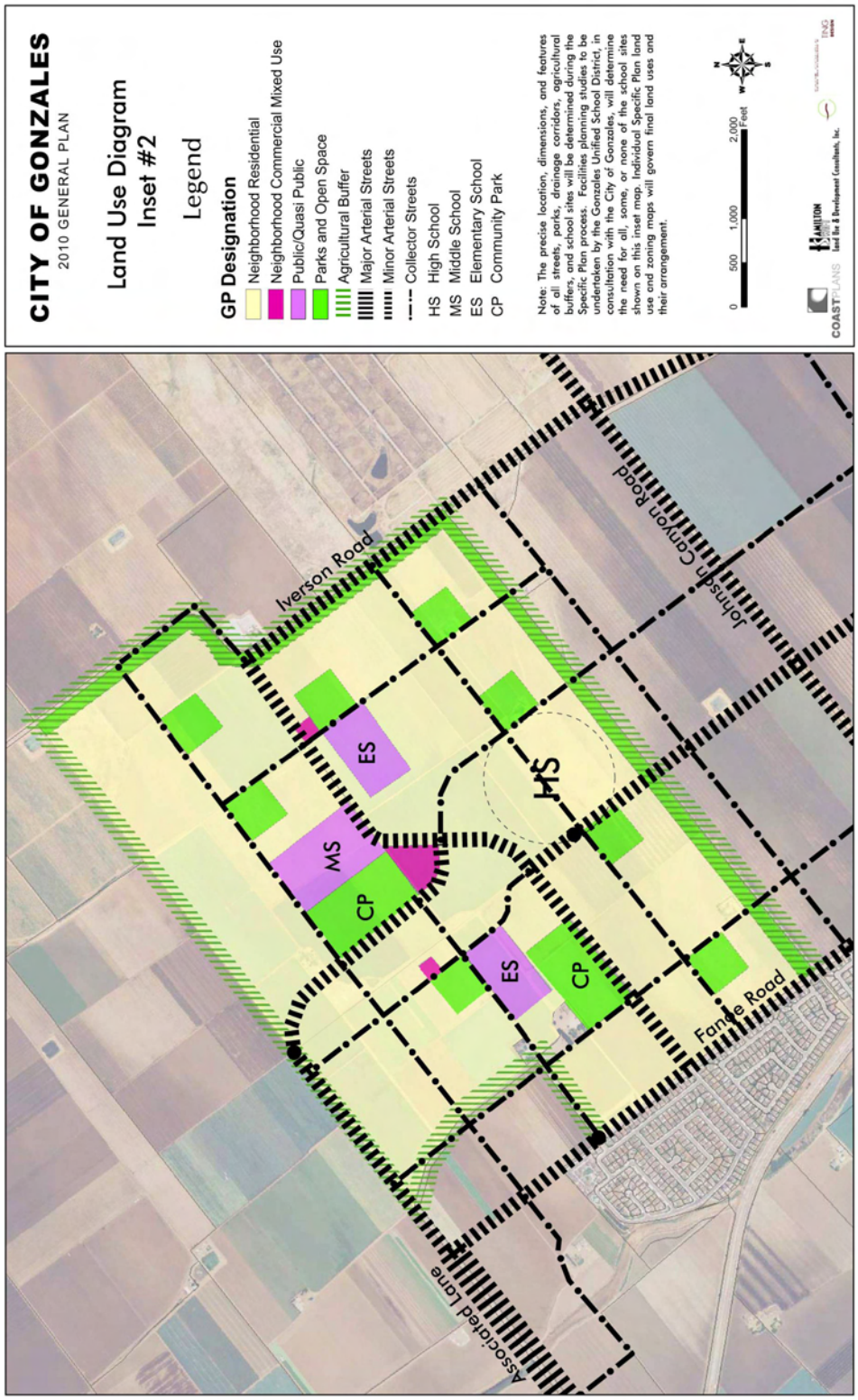

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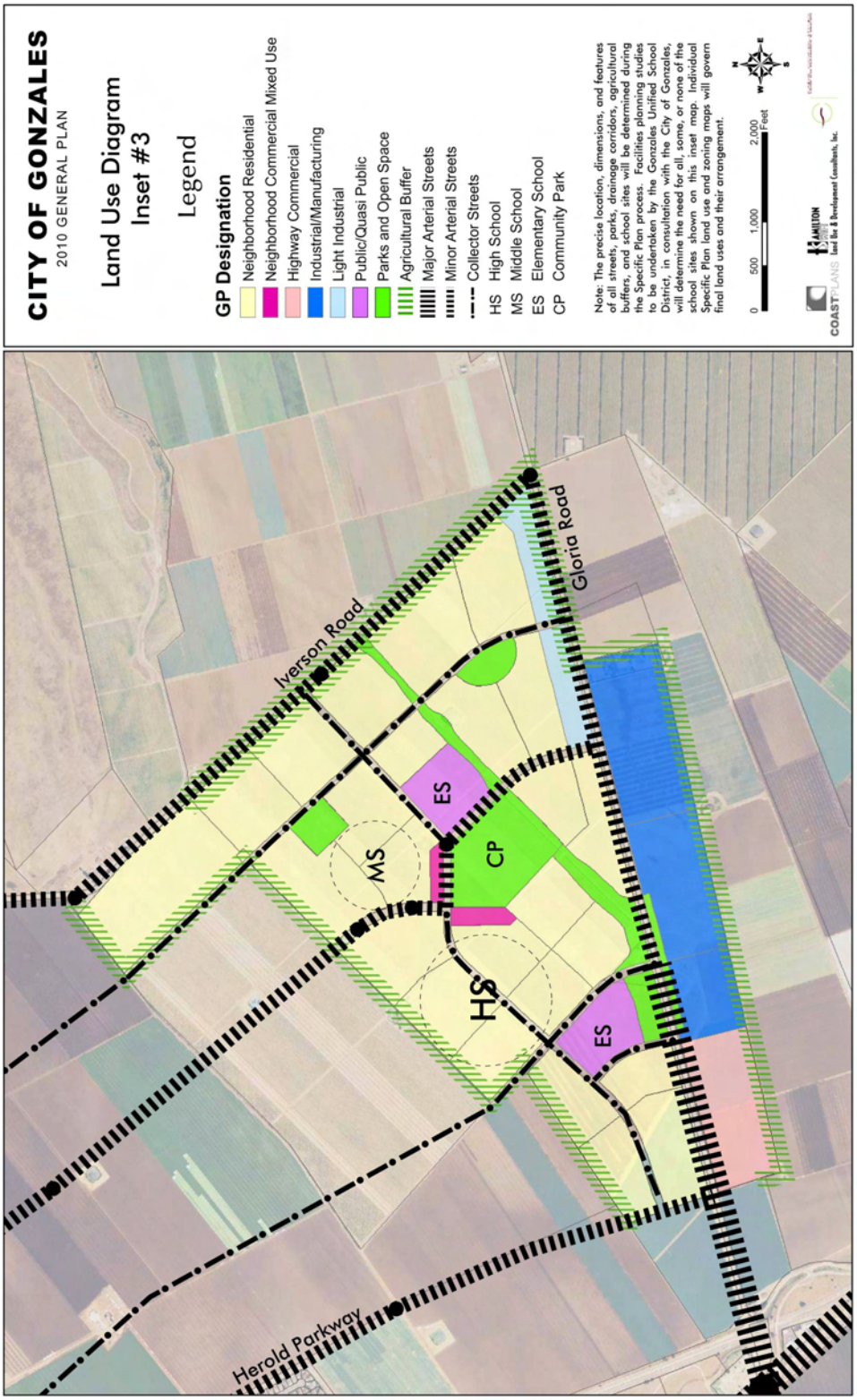
Figure 3.2.4d: Land Use Diagram Inset #3



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3.3 PLAN OBJECTIVES

The *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* seeks, through the adoption of diagrams, goals, policies, and implementing actions in its various elements, to achieve the following objectives:

Obj 1. Diverse, Self Sustaining Local Economy. The development of a city that has the size, excellence in urban design, and public services and facilities necessary to create a vibrant, diverse, and self-sustaining local economy and to provide a home for a diverse population (all elements);

Obj 2. Long-Term Vision. The development of a city that has a coherent long-term vision of development that discourages incremental development decisions that could eventually result in an incoherent and/or sprawling urban form characterized primarily by a collection of residential subdivisions (Land Use, Circulation, and Conservation and Open Space elements);

Obj 3. Small-Town Characteristics. The development of a city that has retained essential small-town characteristics by: 1) providing a variety of housing types to meet the housing needs of existing and new residents, and 2) establishing the highest residential densities at a range consistent with other small cities in the region (Land Use and Community Character elements);

Obj 4. Discouragement of Suburban Sprawl. The development of a city that discourages low-density suburban development characterized by large, single-use housing subdivisions with separate car-dependent commercial services.

Obj 5. Protection of Best Agricultural Lands. The development of a city that has a plan for growth that reduces development pressure on the highest quality agricultural lands in the planning area by promoting growth eastward toward the foothills and away from the Salinas Valley floor, by bounding urbanization with permanently protected agricultural land, and by encouraging compact urban form and the efficient use of land resources (Land Use, Circulation, Conservation and Open Space, Community Facilities and Services, and Community Character elements);

Obj 6. Sustainability. The development of a city that has sustainable, energy efficient development that successfully manages greenhouse gas emissions consistent with state and regional goals by emphasizing compact urban form, high connectivity and mobility within and between neighborhoods, ample opportunity for walking and bicycle use, neighborhood retail and other neighborhood commercial uses within neighborhood centers to reduce vehicle use within the neighborhood, and otherwise designing for the efficient use of energy resources (all elements);

Obj 7. Natural Environment. The development of a city that offers residents abundant opportunities to enjoy open space areas and the natural environment through the protection, re-creation, and enhancement of the area's natural features (Land Use, Conservation and Open Space, and Community Character elements); and

Obj 8. Competitive Development Environment. The development of a city with an Urban Growth Area containing land owned or controlled by a variety of interests, which is necessary to maintain a competitive environment for urban development (Land Use element).

3.4 APPROVALS

The project includes legislative approvals by the City of Gonzales, certification of an EIR, and adoption of findings in support of project approval. In addition, the following agencies play a part in the long-term implementation of the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan*:

- ✓ County of Monterey is the responsible agency for land use planning in unincorporated areas surrounding the City. There are a variety of mutual issues, including: conservation of agricultural lands, redirection of agricultural processing and industrial uses to the City's industrial areas (that may otherwise be proposed within the unincorporated portions of the planning area), provision of affordable housing, and road improvements, to name a few. The City and County will work together to formalize agreements on these and other issues prior to amendment of the City's Sphere of Influence.

- ✓ Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) is responsible for approving the City's Sphere of Influence and subsequent annexations. As such, LAFCO acts as a responsible agency for the purpose of this EIR. The City of Gonzales will propose an expanded Sphere of Influence in coordination with LAFCO and Monterey County in a process separate from adoption of the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan*.

- ✓ Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board is responsible for approving permits for the operation and expansion of the Gonzales Wastewater Treatment Plant and for approving stormwater pollution prevention plans for major development projects.

- ✓ Monterey Bay Unified Air Pollution Control District is responsible for approving permits for stationary equipment and construction permits that have the potential to be a significant source of air pollution.

- ✓ Transportation Agency for Monterey County is responsible for regional transportation improvements, such as lane additions on Highway 101.

- ✓ Caltrans is responsible for the design and approval of improvements to Highway 101, including any interchange improvements in the Gonzales area.

- ✓ California Department of Fish and Game is responsible for protecting special-status species and issuing permits for work in streambeds and other habitat areas.

- ✓ U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is responsible for protecting special-status species that may be present in the planning area.

- ✓ U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is responsible for issuing permits for work that may affect "waters of the United States" in the planning area.

- ✓ National Marine Fisheries Service is responsible for fisheries management, including steelhead trout that reside in the planning area.

- ✓ Gonzales Unified School District (GUSD) is responsible for providing primary and secondary education in the area. The City will cooperate with the GUSD on locating future schools to ensure that adequate sites are reserved at appropriate locations, meeting both the GUSD's needs and reinforcing the neighborhood planning principals of the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan*.

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CHAPTER 4. IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

This chapter of the EIR identifies existing conditions and presents the potential impacts of the proposed project. Mitigation measures are recommended as necessary. The overall scope of the analysis and the key attributes of the analytical approach are presented below to assist the reader in understanding the manner in which the impact analysis has been conducted in this EIR.

Eighteen resource areas identified in the Initial Study Checklist (part of Appendix A) are examined in the sections that follow. For each resource area, the EIR describes the environmental setting, thresholds of significance, and impacts and mitigation measures. An Initial Study prepared at the outset of this EIR process (December 2009) evaluated the proposed project against the list of environmental effects contained in Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines (California Code of Regulations §§ 15000 – 15387 and Appendices A – K). In the case of some listed effects, the Initial Study concluded that the proposed project has no potential to adversely affect the environment, and this EIR has been focused to exclude such listed effects from further consideration. These excluded effects are identified in each resource section analyzed below.

The environmental setting sections describe the baseline environmental conditions. For purposes of the analysis in this EIR, baseline conditions are those that existed as of December 2009, when the Notice of Preparation was published, except where otherwise noted.

4.0 LAND USE AND PLANNING

This section evaluates the potential land use and planning impacts from the implementation of the project.

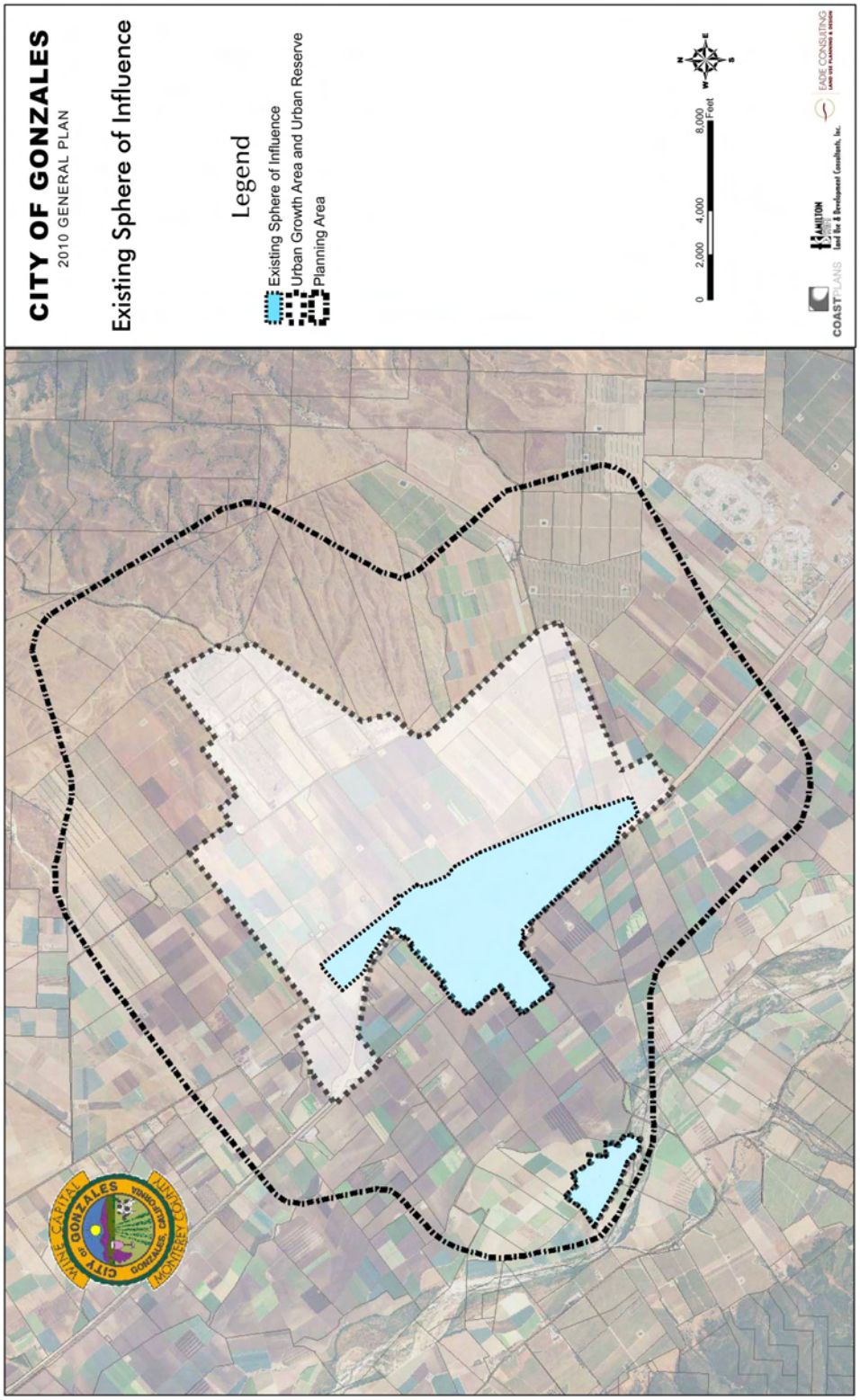
4.0.1 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

The proposed project is an update of Gonzales's general plan and as such, the new *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* will supplant the existing general plan, thereby eliminating any possible conflict between the existing *Gonzales 1996 General Plan* and the new plan. Any inconsistencies that exist between the current general plan and the Gonzales Zoning Ordinance would not be altered by the proposed project. There are two other agencies that have policies and plans with an effect on land use decisions in the City of Gonzales—the Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) and the County of Monterey.

4.0.1.1. LAFCO

LAFCO, which derives its authority from the Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Local Government Reorganization Act of 2000, has direct jurisdiction on the creation and amendment of the City's Sphere of Influence and relies in part on County land use policies to guide its decision making. State law also requires the City and County to negotiate a City's Sphere of Influence (Government Code 56425(b)). The City of Gonzales maintains exclusive right to make land use decisions within its incorporated area and to adopt General Plans for areas, part or all of which may be included in a future LAFCO-approved Sphere of Influence. A discussion of LAFCO policies regarding Sphere of Influence amendments and annexations is presented below in Section 4.0.3.1. Figure 4.0.1 shows the location of the existing Gonzales Sphere of Influence.

Figure 4.0.1: Existing Sphere of Influence



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4.0.1.2. COUNTY OF MONTEREY

The County of Monterey, in its "Draft Central Salinas Valley Land Use Plan," designates almost all of the land contained in the designated Urban Growth Area as "Farmlands 40-Acre Minimum." The exception is the Johnson Canyon Road Landfill, which is designated "Public/Quasi-Public."[3] The "Draft Central Salinas Valley Land Use Plan" has an "Urban Reserve" overlay designation for areas adjacent to cities that are expected to be (or are already) included in a city's Sphere of Influence. Currently, none of the area adjacent to Gonzales is designated as Urban Reserve in this County document. The Monterey County General Plan considers most of the agricultural fields within the proposed planning area to be "prime agriculture" and discourages other uses, including residential development, in these areas. The Draft Monterey County General Plan promotes city-centered growth (see Policies LU-2.15 through LU-2.18).

4.0.1.3. SPECIAL DISTRICTS

There are several special districts governed by LAFCO that are affected by the proposed project. An "affected district," as defined in the Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Act, is a district which is regulated by LAFCO and which contains, or would contain, or whose Sphere of Influence contains, any territory for which a reorganization or a change of organization is proposed or ordered. LAFCO will notify these districts, and solicit their comments, if and when the City of Gonzales applies for a Sphere of Influence amendment or annexation.

The planning area defined by the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* is within the boundaries of the following affected districts:

- ✓ Gonzales Cemetery District,
- ✓ Gonzales Rural Fire Protection District,
- ✓ Resource Conservation District of Monterey County, and
- ✓ Salinas Valley Memorial Health Care System.

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[3] See Figure 4.2.2 below in discussion of agricultural resources.

There are a number of other government entities that exist in the proposed expansion area that are not regulated by LAFCO. These would include school districts and agencies such as the Monterey Bay Unified Air Pollution Control Agency, Monterey-Salinas Transit, and the Salinas Valley Solid Waste Authority. Water and wastewater are both handled buy the City of Gonzales.

4.0.2 THRESHOLDS OF SIGNIFICANCE

The proposed project was considered to have a significant adverse effect on the environment if it met any of the standards of significance listed below. The Initial Study concluded that the proposed project has no potential to result in adverse effects for certain areas of concern, and this EIR has been focused to exclude such listed effects from further consideration. Excluded areas of concern are shown in ~~strikeout~~ format.

- ~~Physically divide an established community?~~
- 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?
- ~~Conflict with any applicable Habitat Conservation Plan or Natural Community Conservation Plan?~~

4.0.3 IMPACTS AND MITIGATIONS

4.0.3.1. CONFLICT WITH ANY APPLICABLE LAND USE PLAN, POLICY, OR REGULATION OF AN AGENCY WITH JURISDICTION OVER THE PROJECT

A. Impact

Impact LAN-1: The adoption of the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* would provide the basis for applications to LAFCO for amendment of Gonzales's Sphere of Influence and eventual annexation of territories for urbanization and as such could engender conflicts with existing land use plans or policy (Less than Significant).

The proposed project would enable development activity that could engender conflicts with regional plans and policy. According to the Gonzales Community Development Director,[4] the proposed project was developed with early consultation that included the Monterey County LAFCO Executive Director, and there was a general consensus that growing eastward away from the best farmlands of the Salinas Valley was an appropriate development strategy. This strategy is consistent with draft County of Monterey land use policy, which states in part that a request for a change in the City's sphere of influence may be supported if it directs growth away from the "highest quality farmlands" and provides adequate buffers along developing agricultural-urban interfaces (*Draft County of Monterey General Plan*, Policy LU-2.18). The proposed project adopts this approach as one of its principal plan objectives (Obj. 5), and contains policies and actions requiring developer contributions to fund permanent agricultural protection and the establishment of agricultural buffers to reduce conflicts between urban and agricultural uses.

While the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* contains a growth area that envisions development well beyond the 20-year time horizon typically used as the basis for establishing Spheres of Influence, it defers the demarcation of a new Sphere of Influence until a time, after adoption, that the City enters into a formal consultation process with the County of Monterey and LAFCO to determine the timing for bringing part or all of the identified growth area into an expanded Sphere of Influence. The proposed project would conflict with draft land use designations set forth in the "Central Salinas Valley Land Use Plan."

[4] Source: Personal communication with William Farrel, May 4, 2010.

Furthermore, the "Central Salinas Valley Land Use Plan" currently does not include an Urban Reserve area adjacent to Gonzales. It is expected, however, that the County of Monterey will finalize this document (or amend it if it is already adopted by this time) to demark urban reserve areas that are consistent with the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan Land* Use Diagram as agreement is reached through the consultation process.

There are three sets of policies that influence Monterey County LAFCO as it considers any forthcoming applications by the City of Gonzales for amendments to its Sphere of Influence and annexation. Each of these is discussed below in Figure 4.8.1, with an accompanying discussion of the proposed project.

Figure 4.8.1: Analysis of LAFCO Policy

LAFCO Policy	Discussion of Proposed Project
LAFCO's policy on the preservation of open space and agricultural lands	
1. *A proposal must discuss how it balances the state interest in the preservation of open space and prime agricultural lands against the need for orderly development.*	The proposed project provides a long-range plan for the orderly development of the City of Gonzales. The plan would meet demand for growth as projected by AMBAG and in addition provide a framework for growth beyond the current horizon of AMBAG growth projections as an expression of the City's long-term vision. In a letter dated February 2, 2010, AMBAG stated that the proposed project is consistent with the 2008 Air Quality Management Plan for the Monterey Bay Region and with the region's population forecast for 2030.
2. *A proposal must discuss its effect on maintaining the physical and economic integrity of agricultural lands.*	The proposed project would lead to the conversion of prime farmland and farmland of statewide importance. Nonetheless, the plan would direct growth away from the best agricultural lands in the area, which lie to the west of the city, and would put in place an agricultural mitigation program that would serve to maintain the physical and economic integrity of adjacent agricultural lands located outside the Urban Growth Area and Urban Reserve Area. The plan also contains measures to minimize conflicts between agricultural and urban uses through the use of buffers and a right-to-farm ordinance.

LAFCO Policy	Discussion of Proposed Project
3. *A proposal must discuss whether it could reasonably be expected to induce, facilitate, or lead to the conversion of existing open-space land to uses other than open-space uses. Proposals should demonstrate that: a) they guide development or use of land for other than open-space uses away from existing prime agricultural lands in open-space use and toward areas containing nonprime agricultural lands; and b) development of existing vacant or nonprime agricultural lands for urban uses will occur prior to the development of existing open-space lands for non-open-space uses that are outside of the existing jurisdiction.*	The proposed project would be expected to facilitate the conversion of existing open space land to urban use. Nonetheless, the proposed plan would direct growth away from the best agricultural lands in the area, which lie to the west of the city. The current City of Gonzales is essentially built out, with the only remaining vacant lands of substantial size in the process of obtaining development approvals. Development of these existing vacant lands is expected to occur prior to development of any new lands identified for develop in the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan*.
4. *A proposal must, if applicable, provide for pre-zoning and must demonstrate that it is consistent with the General Plans and Specific Plans of the existing local agency and any immediately adjacent local agency.*	Any proposal to LAFCO for a Sphere of influence amendment or annexation would comply with these requirements.
Determinations: In determining the sphere of influence of each local agency, the commission shall consider and prepare a written statement of its determinations with respect to each of the following ((Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Determinations for a Sphere of Influence (Government Code § 56425[e])):	
1. *The present and planned land uses in the area, including agricultural and open-space lands.*	See Chapter II, Land Use Element, of the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan*. Additional information regarding present and planned uses is provided in this DEIR in Chapter 3 (Project Description), Section 4.2 (Agricultural Resources), and Section 4.3 (Aesthetics).
2. *The present and probable need for public facilities and services in the area.*	See Chapter VII, Community Facilities and Services, of the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan*. Additional information regarding public facilities and services is provided in this DEIR in Section 4.4 (Transportation/Traffic), Section 4.10 (Utilities and Service Systems), Section 4.11 (Public Services), and Section 4.12 (Parks and Recreation).
3. *The present capacity of public facilities and adequacy of public services that the agency provides or is authorized to provide.*	See response to Item 2 above.
4. *The existence of any social or economic communities of interest in the area if the commission determines that they are relevant to the agency.*	The Salinas Valley agricultural industry would be an economic community of interest.

LAFCO Policy	Discussion of Proposed Project
LAFCO spheres of influence policy guidelines:	
1. *LAFCO intends that its sphere of influence determination will serve as a master plan for the future organization of local government within the County. The spheres shall be used to discourage urban sprawl; limit proliferation of local governmental agencies; encourage efficiency, economy and orderly changes in local government; promote compact, community centered urban development; and minimize adverse impacts on lands classified as prime agriculture.*	See Chapter II, Land Use Element, of the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan*. See also, Chapter IX, Sustainability, of the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan*. Additional information regarding impacts on prime agricultural lands is provided in this DEIR in Section 4.2 (Agricultural Resources).
2. *The sphere of influence lines shall be a declaration of policy which shall be a primary guide to LAFCO in the decision on any proposal under its jurisdiction. Every determination made by the Commission shall be consistent with the spheres of influence of the agencies affected by those determinations.*	Noted.
3. *Any proposal which is inconsistent with an agency's adopted sphere of influence shall not be approved until the Commission, at a noticed public hearing, has considered an amendment or revision to that agency's sphere of influence.*	Noted.
4. *Inclusion within an agency's sphere of influence does not assure annexation to that agency. The Commission shall evaluate boundary change proposals as they relate to all of the relevant factors listed in the Cortese-Knox Local Government Reorganization Act of 1985 (Government Code Section 56841 et seq.).*	Noted.
5. *When possible, a single larger general purpose agency, rather than a number of adjacent smaller ones, established for a given service in the same general area will be preferred. Where an area could be assigned to the sphere of influence of more than one agency providing a particular needed service, the following hierarchy shall apply dependent upon ability to serve.* a) *Inclusion within a City sphere of influence* b) *Inclusion within a multi-purpose district sphere of influence.* c) *Inclusion within a single-purpose district sphere of influence.*	Noted.

LAFCO Policy	Discussion of Proposed Project
In deciding which of two or more equally ranked agencies shall include an area within its sphere of influence, LAFCO shall consider the agencies' service and financial capabilities, social and economic interdependence, topographic factors, and the effect that eventual service extension will have on adjacent agencies.	Noted.
6. *Duplication of authority to perform similar functions in the same territory will be avoided. Sphere of influence boundaries shall not create islands or corridors unless it can be demonstrated that the irregular boundaries represent the most logical and orderly service area of an agency.*	Noted.
7. *The adopted sphere of influence shall reflect City and County General Plans, plans of regional agencies, growth management policies, annexation policies, resource management policies, and any other policies related to ultimate boundary or service area of an affected agency unless those plans or policies conflict with the legislative intent of the Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Act of 2000 (Government Code Section 56000 et seq.). Where inconsistencies between plans exist, LAFCO shall rely upon that plan which most closely follows the Legislature's directive to discourage urban sprawl, direct development away from prime agricultural land and open-space lands, and encourage the orderly formation and development of local governmental agencies based upon local conditions and circumstances.*	The proposed project would conflict with draft land use designations set forth in the "Central Salinas Valley Land Use Plan." Furthermore, the "Central Salinas Valley Land Use Plan" currently does not include an Urban Reserve area adjacent to Gonzales. It is expected, however, that the County of Monterey will finalize this document (or amend it if it is already adopted by this time) with Urban Reserve areas that are consistent with the agreement reached through the consultation process.

LAFCO Policy	Discussion of Proposed Project
8. *Extension of urban type services promotes urban development and such development belongs in cities or areas of development concentration in the unincorporated area of Monterey County. In evaluating proposals involving urban development requiring an urban level of governmental services, the Commission will discourage the formation of new special districts or premature annexation of territory within existing city spheres of influence or logical expansion area. The Commission will discourage boundary change proposals involving urban development outside adopted city spheres of influence that have the potential to negatively impact prime agriculture or open space lands, public service capacity, existing local governmental agencies, or generally represents illogical growth patterns.*	The proposed project would lead to the conversion of prime farmland and farmland of statewide importance. Nonetheless, the plan would direct growth away from the best agricultural lands in the area, which lie to the west of the city, and would put in place an agricultural mitigation program that would serve to maintain the physical and economic integrity of adjacent agricultural lands located outside the Urban Growth Area and Urban Reserve Area. The proposed project provides a long-range plan for the orderly development of the City of Gonzales and represents a logical pattern for growth in the area.
9. *This Commission, in recognition of the mandated requirements for considering impacts on open space lands and agricultural lands, will develop and determine spheres of influence for Cities and urban service districts in such a manner as to promote the long-term preservation and protection of this County's "Resources." The Commission believes the public interest will be best served by considering "Resources" in a broad sense to include open space, recreational opportunities, wildlife, and agricultural land. Sphere of influence determinations must conform with the Commission's Agricultural Preservation Policy adopted in November, 1979.*	See Chapter VI, Conservation and Open Space Element, of the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan*. Additional information regarding the preservation and protection of resources is provided in this DEIR in Section 4.2 (Agricultural Resources), Section 4.3 (Aesthetics), and Section 4.13 (Biological Resources).

LAFCO Policy	Discussion of Proposed Project
10. The Commission recognizes the many inter-relationships and impacts which one agency's land use, planning, and governmental decisions may have on other agencies even though they may be outside of the "sphere of influence" of the secondary agency. Consequently, this Commission, when necessary, will seek to establish and identify Areas of Planning Concern for each city within the County. The "Planning Concern Area" will seek to identify those areas which in a broad sense affect the city in terms of planning and land use decisions. Such "Planning Concern Areas" will be established with the assistance and guidance of the affected cities and the County. The "Planning Concern Area" normally will extend beyond the adopted "sphere of influence" of the city. Once established, the Commission will solicit the cooperation and involvement of the affected cities and the County to jointly involve one another in planning decisions for these areas.	The *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* has established its Planning Area as its "Area of Planning Concern"

Source: Monterey County LAFCO; Coastplans

With regard to special districts affected by the proposed project, amendments to the Gonzales Sphere of Influence and any resulting annexations into the City of Gonzales could affect the operational viability of one or more of these districts by either increasing or reducing the area served by the district. This in turn could affect revenue and/or increased operational expenses for the special district.

B. Applicable Policies and Regulations

The *Gonzales 2010 General Plan's* "Land Use Element" contains the following policies and implementing actions designed to promote orderly development and address other issues of concern to LAFCO and Monterey County:

Policy LU-1.2 Development Pays Fair Share

Require new development to pay its fair share of the cost of capital improvements and facilities needed to serve that development consistent with the policies, standards, and implementing actions of this General Plan and State law requiring a nexus between such requirements and project impacts.

Implementing Action LU-1.2.1 – Capital Improvements. *Coordinate capital improvements through the adoption and implementation of Specific Plans that contain a program of implementation measures including regulations, programs, public works projects, and financing measures necessary to implement the Specific Plan.*

Implementing Action LU-1.2.2 – Availability of Services. *Through Specific Plan development, coordinate new residential development with the provision of essential community services and facilities, such as roads, water, sewer, schools, parks, police and fire services, sanitary facilities, and drainage facilities. Approve development projects only when sufficient municipal services and utilities are available to serve that development or when there are guarantees that such services and utilities will be provided in a timely fashion after entitlements are vested.*

Implementing Action LU-1.2.3 – Impact Fees. *Continue using public facility impact fees to meet the needs for on-site and off-site facility improvements generated by new development. Periodically evaluate these fees to make sure they are sufficient to cover improvement costs.*

Policy LU-1.3 LAFCO Applications

Approve Sphere of Influence and annexation requests to LAFCO only for new residential, commercial, and industrial development that is located within the proposed growth area depicted on the Land Use Diagram. The one exception is that such requests may be approved to facilitate the expansion of the wastewater treatment facility located on Gonzales River Road or other essential public utilities.

Implementing Action LU-1.3.1 – Defer Development Outside of Growth Area. *Defer General Plan Amendments that would facilitate development of land outside the growth area boundary to a date when a subsequent comprehensive update of the General Plan is undertaken and completed.*

Implementing Action LU- 1.3.2 – Coordination with Monterey County. *Encourage Monterey County to consult and coordinate with the City before approving any project that is located within the City's planning area, as depicted on GP Figure I-1. Regularly review private and public development*

proposals in Monterey County that could impact the City and provide comments to the County as appropriate.

Policy LU-1.4 City-Centered Growth

Support the concept of "City-Centered Growth" in the Salinas Valley. This concept concentrates urban uses in and around South County cities and conserves the remainder of the valley for agriculture.

Implementing Action LU-1.4.1 – AMBAG Growth Projections. *Maintain a General Plan growth area and LAFCO Sphere of Influence that contain a supply of land for urbanization that meets or exceeds AMBAG growth projections.*

Implementing Action LU-1.4.2 – Regional Planning. *Continue to provide local representation to other public agencies, including: AMBAG, LAFCO, the County of Monterey and MBUAPCD.*

From the "Conservation and Open Space Element:"

Policy COS-4.1 Maintain Agricultural Economy

Maintain agriculture as the core of the local economy by conserving and protecting agricultural lands and operations within the planning area, and where agricultural land is planned for eventual urbanization, work to keep such land in production up until the time when the land is converted to urban use.

Implementing Action COS-4.1.1 – Grow Eastward. Focus future urban growth to the east of Highway 101 in order to keep the highest quality agricultural lands located west of the highway in production.

Implementing Action COS-4.1.2 – Agriculture as Interim Use. Encourage agriculture as an interim land use on undeveloped properties in the General Plan growth area designated for future urban uses.

Implementing Action COS-4.1.3 – Interim Mitigation. When preparing environmental reports for Specific Plans, require an assessment of potential adverse impacts on adjoining agricultural lands that lie within the growth area

shown on the Land Use Diagram and require interim measures to mitigate the impacts that are identified.

Implementing Action COS-4.1.4 – Protect Agricultural Operations. Protect agricultural operations from interference from urban uses by:

(a) Using buffers or transitional uses (such as parking, roads, etc.) between permanent agricultural areas and residential development areas; and

(b) Requiring that development is phased in a manner which prevents "islands" of urban uses surrounded on all sides by farming. All new development should be either contiguous to the existing city or located within a new neighborhood developed under a Specific Plan, which sets forth orderly development consistent with the approved Neighborhood Design Guidelines and Standards and Community Character policies.

(c) For properties on the perimeter of the City limits, require Specific Plan features that minimize potential conflicts with permanent agricultural operations. Less sensitive uses such as parking, roads, storage, and landscaping should be sited adjacent to the agricultural areas. Residential backyards should not directly abut areas planned for long-term agriculture without proper mitigation measures to limit potential nuisances.

Implementing Action COS-4.1.5 – Infill Development. Provide incentives to encourage infill development on vacant or underutilized sites within the existing City limits west of Highway 101 whenever possible, to avoid urban sprawl and postpone the conversion of agricultural land to urban uses.

Implementing Action COS-4.1.6 – Phased Development. Phase development in an orderly, contiguous manner to maintain a compact development pattern and avoid premature farmland conversion or interference with farm operations. New development should be either contiguous to the existing city or located within a new neighborhood developed under a Specific Plan, which sets forth orderly development consistent with the approved Neighborhood Design Guidelines and Standards and Community Character policies.

Policy COS-4.2 Permanent Urban Edges

Establish permanent urban edges in the vicinity of Associated Lane to the northwest and La Gloria Road to the southeast to preserve adjoining agricultural activities.

> *Implementing Action COS-4.2.1 – Agricultural Easements. Require new development to contribute to the cost of purchase of permanent agricultural easements beyond the permanent urban edges identified in the Land Use Diagram.*

Policy COS-4.3 No Urbanization Outside of Growth Area

Maintain agricultural open space around Gonzales as a means of giving form and definition to the City. To this end, permit urban development only within the areas designated for urban uses on the Land Use Diagram. Land beyond this boundary should remain in agricultural use for the duration of the planning period.

> *Implementing Action COS-4.3.1 – Specific Plan Areas. The City shall not accept Specific Plans or Specific Plan addenda for review and approval that contain area within the urban reserve or outside the boundaries of the growth area shown in the Land Use Diagram.*
>
> *Implementing Action COS-4.3.2 – Regional Coordination. Encourage Monterey County to promote and support agricultural uses in the Central Salinas Valley and to discourage urban development on prime agricultural lands outside the Gonzales 2010 General Plan growth area. Support County, State, and Federal efforts which protect the soil, water, and air resources necessary for the continued viability of agriculture in the Gonzales area.*
>
> *Implementing Action COS-4.3.3 – Agricultural Impact Fund. Establish an agricultural impact mitigation fund structured to purchase agricultural easements on lands shown on the Land Use Diagram as adjacent to but outside the General Plan growth area boundary.*
>
> *Implementing Action COS-4.3.4 – Discourage Industry on Agricultural Lands. Actively oppose free-standing industries in agricultural areas outside of the General Plan Growth Area that do not require on-site locations to process and distribute commodities grown on the property.*

Implementing Action COS-4.3.5 – Right to Farm. Require "Right to Farm" disclosure notices for new residential subdivisions and other residential developments that adjoin active agricultural operations. The notices would inform prospective homebuyers of the possible impacts of agricultural activities on adjoining properties, including noise, odor, and dust. Such disclosure notices should remain in effect as long as there are active agricultural operations on adjoining parcels and should be removed only after adjoining parcels are taken out of agricultural use.

Implementing Action COS-4.3.6 – Williamson Act. Promote the use of Williamson Act contracts in addition to agricultural easements as a means of maintaining land in agricultural use outside the General Plan growth area. Actively discourage the use of Williamson Act contracts or agricultural easements within the General Plan growth area.

Implementing Action COS-4.3.7 – Animal Control. Strictly enforce trespassing and domestic animal control laws to minimize interference with farm operations.

C. Significance Determination

The land use plan, policies, and implementing actions contained in the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* are adequate to ensure that impacts related to conflicting land use plans are less than significant. With regard to impacts on special districts, the LAFCO approval process would ensure that sphere of influence amendments or annexations would be configured to ensure the long-term viability of affected special districts. Therefore, this impact would also be less than significant.

D. Mitigation Measures

None required.

4.1 POPULATION AND HOUSING

This section evaluates the potential impacts of the proposed project on population and housing in the City of Gonzales and the County of Monterey.

4.1.1 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

According to the California Department of Finance (DOF), the population of Gonzales as of January 1, 2009 was 9,025 persons (Table E-5 City/County Population and Housing Estimates, DOF, 1/1/2009). AMBAG projects substantial population growth to 23,418 persons in the year 2035, an increase of about 14,600 over the current 2009 population. According to Chapter I, Introduction, of the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan*, the proposed project assumes that population growth in Gonzales will generally be consistent with AMBAG growth projections. The *Gonzales 2010 General Plan:*

> *. . . is a plan for facilitating urban development that provides jobs and housing for coming generations of residents. While it creates the structure upon which new development can proceed, it does not in itself seek to promote or curtail the rate of population growth. It assumes that the rate of regional population growth is largely dependent on external factors out of the City's control, such as fertility rates, rates of immigration, and the location and availability of jobs. It assumes further that private market forces are the best gauge in determining the rate at which housing and jobs are to be provided. Finally, it assumes that AMBAG growth projections are a mirror of the same larger economic forces that drive private market decisions and that population growth rates in Gonzales will track AMBAG growth forecasts because they have historically been an accurate gauge of regional trends.*

The plan also delineates a permanent agricultural edge and establishes an agricultural mitigation fund to purchase agricultural conservation easements in areas within and beyond this permanent edge.

According to Chapter IV, Housing, of the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan*, Gonzales's Regional Housing Needs Allocation for 2007-2014 (as set by AMBAG) is 689 housing units. The City has sufficient land capacity within its existing Sphere of Influence to

accommodate this demand and sufficient capacity in its proposed Urban Growth Area to meet new housing allocations for decades to come.

4.1.2 Thresholds of Significance

The proposed project was considered to have a significant adverse effect on the environment if it met any of the standards of significance listed below. The Initial Study concluded that the proposed project has no potential to result in adverse effects for certain areas of concern, and this EIR has been focused to exclude such listed effects from further consideration. Excluded areas of concern are shown in ~~strikeout~~ format.

- 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)?
- ~~Displace substantial numbers of existing housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?~~
- ~~Displace substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?~~

4.1.3 Impacts and Mitigations

4.1.3.1. 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)

A. <u>Impact</u>

<u>Impact POP-1: The adoption of the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* would provide the basis for development activity that could induce substantial population growth in an area</u> (Less than Significant).

Growth in and of itself is not assumed to be necessarily beneficial, detrimental, or of little significance to the environment.[5] If not adequately planned and mitigated, population growth could result in a wide range of detrimental environmental effects, including traffic congestion, degraded air quality, loss of farmland and open space, loss of natural habitat, and increased noise (to name a few), and each of these and other impacts are discussed in the various sections of this draft environmental impact report. The general plan is the vehicle by which local jurisdictions plan for growth and development, and it is through the process of developing a general plan (and the accompanying environmental analysis) that a city ensures the negative effects of population growth are anticipated and mitigated as well as possible. General plans also have the potential to induce population growth that is unintended and unanticipated by the plan. Such unintended growth can overwhelm local infrastructure and public facilities and thwart regional planning to address such concerns as air quality and transportation. It is this latter problem that is analyzed below.

According to Chapter II, Land Use, the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* plans for an area of growth that could accommodate an additional approximately 28,800 persons and 5,400 new jobs, exclusive of Urban Reserve areas. In addition, there are approximately 2,130 acres of land in Urban Reserve that is not available for development within the scope of the plan but that nonetheless provides a clear path for the long-term development of the city. The growth potential contained in Urban Reserve lands could accommodate an additional approximately 24,000 persons and 3,400 new jobs.

The aggregate amount of growth described above is well beyond what is expected to occur during the timeframe of the AMBAG population projections, which currently extend through the year 2035. Assuming that AMBAG population growth rates hold, the amount of growth planned in the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* would extend roughly to the year 2050. During the timeframe of the AMBAG population projections, however, the plan assumes that growth in the region will track AMBAG regional population projections. In a letter dated February 2, 2010, AMBAG stated that the proposed project is consistent with the 2008 Air Quality Management Plan for the Monterey Bay Region and with the region's population forecast.

[5] CEQA Statutes and Guidelines, page 142

It is conceivable that the proposed project could induce population growth in Gonzales at rates beyond those anticipated by AMBAG. If this were to happen, it is possible that growth could redistribute among the local jurisdictions of the region, resulting in lower rates of growth in other Salinas Valley communities. The net effect on the regional population (and the regional planning that supports it), if this were to happen, would be negligible.

Alternatively, increased rates of growth in Gonzales could result in a net increase in population growth for the region—in effect drawing more persons to the AMBAG region than anticipated by State and regional agencies. If this were to happen, then this unintended growth could result in the negative environmental impacts cited above. This alternative scenario is considered unlikely, as AMBAG population projections are developed in coordination with the California Department of Finance (DOF) using a methodology unconstrained by local plans and infrastructure capacity—that is to say that the experts at DOF and AMBAG believe that the ability of the AMBAG region to compete for statewide growth is more a factor of state and regional economics than of local general plans.

With regard to the jobs/housing balance, the ratio of jobs to housing units (i.e. jobs/housing balance) has environmental implications related to transportation and air quality. The existing jobs/housing ratio for Gonzales is 0.51. The relatively low ratio means that currently there are more workers living in Gonzales than working in the community—about half of Gonzales residents are commuting outside of the city to work. Figure 4.1.1 depicts the population, employment, and housing units for Monterey County cities and unincorporated areas.

Figure 4.1.1: Jobs/Housing Balance for 2009/2010

Jurisdiction	Employment	Housing Units	Employment/ Housing Ratio
Carmel-By-The-Sea	3,245	3,368	0.96
Del Rey Oaks	360	727	0.50
Gonzales	1,063	2,067	0.51
Greenfield	1,008	3,801	0.27
King City	2,923	3,042	0.96
Marina	3,334	8,720	0.38
Monterey	32,752	13,553	2.42
Pacific Grove	7,058	8,112	0.87
Salinas	49,872	42,595	1.17
Sand City	2,366	138	17.14
Seaside	7,360	11,252	0.65
Soledad	5,868	3,879	1.51
Balance Of County	79,221	39,726	1.99
Incorporated	117,209	101,254	1.16
County Total	196,430	140,980	1.39

Source: AMBAG; California Department of Finance; Coastplans
Notes: [1]Employment numbers are from Monterey Bay Area 2008 Regional Forecast (AMBAG 2008) for the year 2010.
[2]Housing numbers are from the California Department of Finance Table E5-a for the year 2009

The proposed project would increase both the number of jobs and the number of houses in Gonzales. The proposed increases would slightly improve the jobs/housing balance in Gonzales, improving the balance from the existing ratio of 0.51 jobs per house to a ratio of 0.66 jobs per house with buildout of the Urban Growth Area. This ratio would decrease to 0.60 with the added buildout of the Urban Reserve Area. Even with this improved ratio, however, the proposed project would continue a significant imbalance in the number of jobs to available housing. This means that Gonzales would continue to be a bedroom community for the jobs centers in Salinas, the Monterey Peninsula, and points north. Figure 4.1.2 shows the jobs/housing balance in Gonzales with buildout of the Urban Growth Area and the Urban Reserve area.

Figure 4.1.2: Jobs/Housing Balance Buildout of Gonzales General Plan

Gonzales GP Area	Employment	Housing Units	Employment/ Housing Ratio
Existing	1,063	2,067	0.51
Urban Growth Area	6,443	9,767	0.66
Urban Reserve Area	9,810	16,359	0.60

Source: Coastplans; Gonzales 2010 General Plan

As cities in the Salinas Valley mature, it is likely that many will develop stronger employment bases than currently exist. As a result, the jobs/housing balance could improve in the Salinas Valley in the long term. This trend is evident in Figure 4.1.2 above, which shows the jobs/housing balance in Gonzales improving over time.

B. Applicable Policies and Regulations

The *Gonzales 2010 General Plan's* "Land Use Element" contains the following policies and implementing actions addressing population, housing, and job growth:

Policy LU-1.1 Jobs/Housing Balance

Promote a balance between housing growth and job growth. Encourage the provision of housing at a pace that keeps up with job growth in the City. Conversely, encourage the creation of jobs at a pace that keeps up with housing growth in the City

Implementing Action LU-1.1.1 – Land Use Assignments. Designate land that can support a mix of different housing types and a mix of different job types consistent with the land use assignments set forth in the section entitled: "Land Use Concept" above.

Policy LU-1.2 Development Pays Fair Share

Require new development to pay its fair share of the cost of capital improvements and facilities needed to serve that development consistent with the policies, standards, and implementing actions of this General Plan and State law requiring a nexus between such requirements and project impacts.

Implementing Action LU-1.2.1 – Capital Improvements. Coordinate capital improvements through the adoption and implementation of Specific Plans that contain a program of implementation measures including regulations, programs, public works projects and financing measures necessary to implement the Specific Plan.

Implementing Action LU-1.2.2 – Availability of Services. Through Specific Plan development, coordinate new residential development with the provision of essential community services and facilities, such as roads, water, sewer, schools, parks, police and fire services, sanitary facilities, and drainage facilities. Approve development projects only when sufficient municipal services and utilities are available to serve that development or when there are guarantees that such services and utilities will be provided in a timely fashion after entitlements are vested.

Implementing Action LU-1.2.3 – Impact Fees. Continue using public facility impact fees to meet the needs for on-site and off-site facility improvements generated by new development. Periodically evaluate these fees to make sure they are sufficient to cover improvement costs.

Policy LU-1.3 LAFCO Applications

Submit Sphere of Influence and annexation requests to LAFCO only for lands within the Urban Growth Boundary depicted on the Land Use Diagram. In addition, submit applications as may be required to facilitate the expansion of the wastewater treatment facility located on Gonzales River Road or other essential public utilities.

Implementing Action LU- 1.3.1 – Plans for Services. Establish the timing of Sphere of Influence and annexation applications based on completion of plans for services, plans for public facilities, and financing plans that demonstrate compliance with LAFCO standards.

Implementing Action LU- 1.3.2 – Coordination with Monterey County. Encourage Monterey County to consult and coordinate with the City before approving any project that is located within the City's Planning Area, as depicted on Figure I-1. Regularly review private and public development proposals in Monterey County that could impact the City and provide

comments to the County as appropriate. Work with Monterey County to develop agreements per LAFCO policy on Sphere of Influence amendments and annexations.

Policy LU-1.4 City-Centered Growth

Support the concept of "City-Centered Growth" in the Salinas Valley. This concept concentrates urban uses in and around South County cities and conserves the remainder of the valley for agriculture.

Implementing Action LU-1.4.1 – AMBAG Growth Projections. Maintain a General Plan growth area and LAFCO Sphere of Influence that contain a supply of land for urbanization that meets or exceeds AMBAG growth projections.

Implementing Action LU-1.4.2 – Regional Planning. Continue to provide local representation to other public agencies, including: AMBAG, LAFCO, the County of Monterey and MBUAPCD.

Implementing Action LU-1.4.3 – Utility Prohibition Zones. Specific plans shall include utility and road prohibition areas along the interface of the planned development area and permanent agricultural edge, which in subsequent subdivisions will be dedicated as "no-access" strips.

Also, from the "Housing Element:"

Policy HE-1.1 Adequate Sites

Maintain a sufficient amount of vacant, residentially zoned land within the Gonzales Planning Area to support the Regional Housing Needs Allocation and reduce overcrowding in Gonzales. Consistent with Neighborhood Design Guidelines, promote the balanced distribution of housing sites that are affordable to lower and moderate-income households rather than concentrating such sites in a single location.

Implementing Action HE-1.1.1 – Housing for All Income Levels within 2010 General Plan Growth Area. Using the minimum standards for the mix of housing to be achieved in new neighborhoods (set forth in Table II-3 of the Land Use Element), require Specific Plans to design each new neighborhood to contain housing suited for all income levels in roughly the proportion set forth in

the AMBAG Regional Housing Needs Allocation in effect at the time. A full range of financial tools and housing programs will be made available to assist in meeting the housing targets.

Also, from the "Conservation and Open Space Element:"

Policy COS-5.3 No Urbanization Outside of Growth Area

Maintain agricultural open space around Gonzales as a means of giving form and definition to the City. To this end, permit urban development only within the areas designated for urban uses on the Land Use Diagram. Land beyond this boundary should remain in agricultural use for the duration of the planning period.

Implementing Action COS-5.3.1 – Specific Plan Areas. The City shall not accept Specific Plans or Specific Plan addenda for review and approval that contain area within the urban reserve or outside the boundaries of the growth area shown in the Land Use Diagram.

Implementing Action COS-5.3.2 – Regional Coordination. Encourage Monterey County to promote and support agricultural uses in the Central Salinas Valley and to discourage urban development on prime agricultural lands outside the Gonzales 2010 General Plan growth area. Support County, State, and Federal efforts which protect the soil, water, and air resources necessary for the continued viability of agriculture in the Gonzales area.

C. Significance Determination

While the proposed project would induce substantial population growth, the policies and actions contained in the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* lessen the potential impacts related to population and housing to a level of less than significant. The long-term nature of the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* and the policies and implementing actions described would ensure that there is room to grow in Gonzales and that growth would be channeled away from permanent agricultural areas. The designation of a permanent agricultural edge and the implementation of an agricultural mitigation fund to purchase agricultural conservation easements, when combined with the ample room for growth within the Urban Growth Area (and beyond that in the Urban Reserve Area) should be sufficient to avoid growth in areas not planned for urbanization. In addition, the *Gonzales 2010*

General Plan contains measures meant to insure that the City's ability to provide public utilities and services keep pace with growth. Finally, while it is possible that growth within the region could redistribute as a result of the proposed project, providing more growth in Gonzales and less in other Salinas Valley cities, it is unlikely that it would result in unintended population growth on a regional level, drawing growth that otherwise would have gone to some other region. In summary, the proposed project would result in well-planned growth for Gonzales and the region. As such, this impact would be less than significant.

D. Mitigation Measures

None required.

4.2 AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES

This section evaluates the impacts of the proposed project on the agricultural resources of the planning area. Information in this section comes primarily from the U.S. Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service, the County of Monterey, and the City of Gonzales.

4.2.1 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

There are approximately 11,000 acres of agricultural lands within the 19,200-acre planning area that are classified as Prime Farmland and Farmland of Statewide Importance.[6] The California Department of Conservation defines Prime Farmland as land with the best combination of physical and chemical characteristics able to sustain long-term production of agricultural crops. Farmland of Statewide Importance is land with a good combination of physical and chemical characteristics for agricultural production, having only minor shortcomings, such as less ability to store soil moisture, compared to Prime Farmland. Most of the land that would be designated for urbanization in the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* is currently Prime Farmland or Farmland of Statewide Importance.

Much of the planning area is under Williamson Act contract, which is a State program that reduces the tax burden on properties that are held for exclusive agricultural use. The Williamson Act contract lasts for 20 years and is automatically renewed every year so there is always a 20-year hold on using the property for something other than agriculture. The owner whose property is in Williamson Act can file for non-renewal at any time, after which it takes 20 years before the property leaves the system. There are approximately 7,300 acres of Williamson Act property in the planning area. Of this, 160 acres are located within the Urban Growth Area, and the owner of this property filed for non-renewal in 2006. In addition, there are approximately 1,100 acres of agricultural land in private land trust, and none of this land is located in the Urban Growth Area. There are no Williamson Act or private land trust lands in the Urban Reserve Area.

[6] USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, March 16, 1999

All of the agricultural lands in the planning area are irrigated from local wells and crops include row crops (e.g. lettuce) and vineyard. The consensus among farmers is that the highest quality farmlands lie west of Gonzales Slough, where soil deposits from the Salinas River and from the Johnson Canyon watershed are the greatest. These lands are also flatter than the area east of the city. The Monterey County General Plan considers most of the agricultural fields within the proposed planning area to be "prime agriculture" and discourages other uses, including residential development, in these areas. The Monterey County General Plan designates the entirety of the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* Growth Area as "Farmlands 40-Acre Minimum." Figure 4.2.1 shows a map of agricultural resources in the Gonzales Area, and Figure 4.2.2 shows Monterey County land use designations in the planning area.

The proposed project includes approximately 7,000 acres of Prime Farmland and Farmland of Statewide Importance that is outside of the Urban Growth Area and outside of the Urban Reserve Area but that is within the planning area. This area has been included in the proposed project because it bears relationship to planning for the City of Gonzales. All of this land has been designated as "Agriculture" in the "Land Use Element" and is intended to remain as greenbelt surrounding the city. This land is not available for development.

Figure 4.2.1 Agricultural Resources

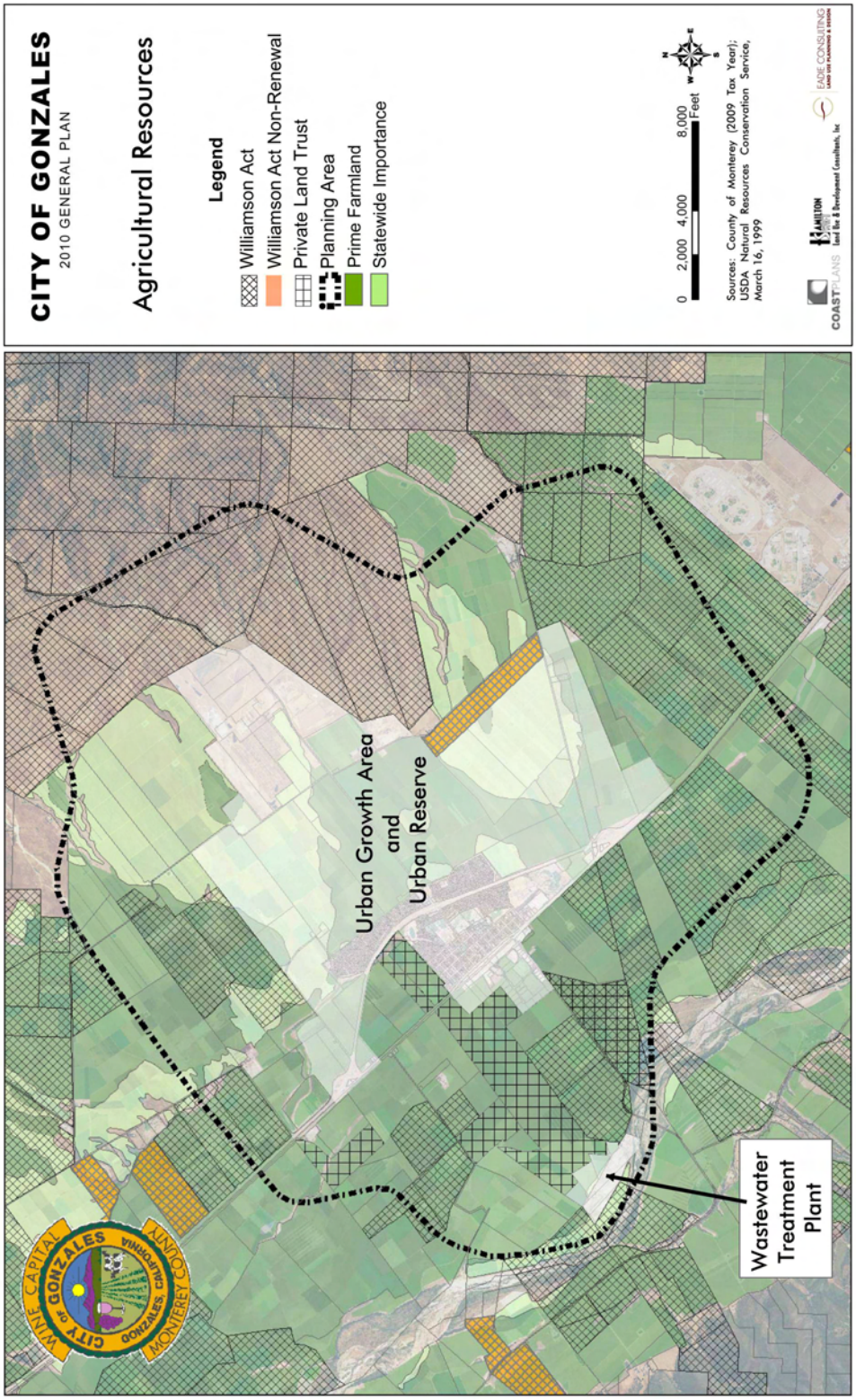

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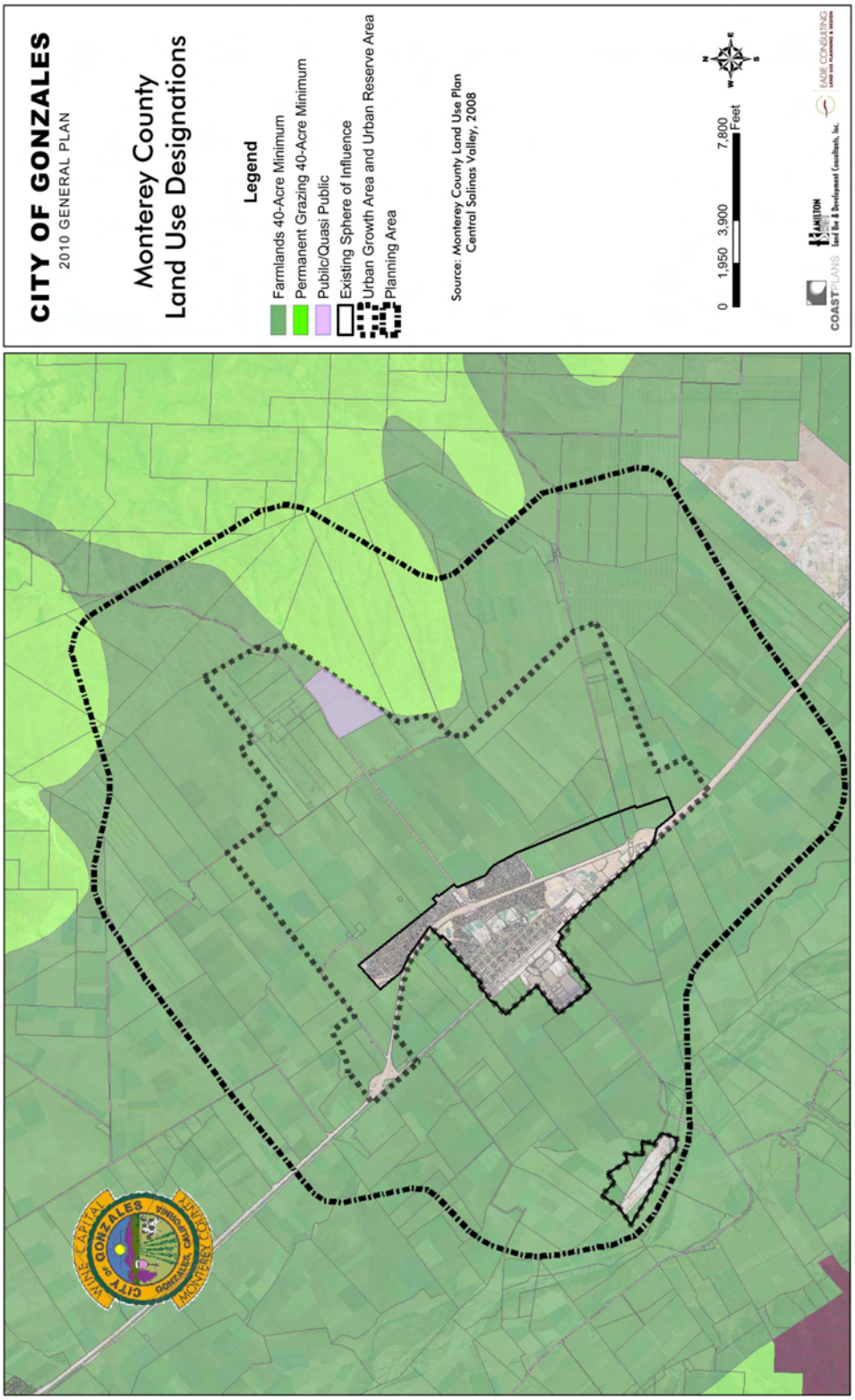
Figure 4.2.2: Monterey County General Plan Land Use Designations



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4.2.2 THRESHOLDS OF SIGNIFICANCE

The proposed project was considered to have a significant adverse effect on the environment if it met any of the standards of significance listed below. The Initial Study concluded that the proposed project has no potential to result in adverse effects for certain areas of concern, and this EIR has been focused to exclude such listed effects from further consideration. Excluded areas of concern are shown in ~~strikeout~~ format.

- 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

- Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract

- ~~Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code section 12220(g)) or timberland (as defined by Public Resources Code section 4526)?~~ [excluded from further study—see Initial Study in Appendix A]

- ~~Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?~~ [excluded from further study—see Initial Study in Appendix A]

- Involve other changes in the existing environment that, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of farmland to non-agricultural use ~~or conversion of forest land to non-forest use~~? [partially excluded from further study—see Initial Study in Appendix A]

4.2.3 IMPACTS AND MITIGATIONS

4.2.3.1. CONVERSION OF PRIME FARMLAND

A. Impact

Impact AG-1: The adoption of the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* would provide the basis for development activity that could result in the conversion of Prime Farmland and Farmland of Statewide Importance (Significant and Unavoidable).

The proposed project would enable urbanization of approximately 890 acres of Prime Farmland and 1,220 acres of Farmland of Statewide Importance contained in the Urban Growth Area. In addition, the proposed project designates land for Urban Reserve, which would not be available for urbanization within the timeframe of the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan*, but that in the very long term could affect an approximately 1,000 additional acres of Prime Farmland, 380 acres of Farmland of Statewide Importance, and 460 acres of land currently used for raising beef. All of this land—referred to as the Urban Growth Area and Urban Reserve Area in the Land Use Diagram—would be considered "prime agricultural land" under the *Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Local Government Reorganization Act of 2000*[7]. Figure 4.1.2 summarizes the project's potential impact on farmland.

[7] According to Cortese-Knox (Government Code §56064), "Prime agricultural land" means an area of land, whether a single parcel or contiguous parcels, that has not been developed for a use other than an agricultural use and that meets any of the following qualifications:

(a) Land that qualifies, if irrigated, for rating as class I or class II in the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service land use capability classification, whether or not land is actually irrigated, provided that irrigation is feasible.

(b) Land that qualifies for rating 80 through 100 Storie Index Rating.

(c) Land that supports livestock used for the production of food and fiber and that has an annual carrying capacity equivalent to at least one animal unit per acre as defined by the United States Department of Agriculture in the National Range and Pasture Handbook, Revision 1, December 2003.

(d) Land planted with fruit or nut-bearing trees, vines, bushes, or crops that have a nonbearing period of less than five years and that will return during the commercial bearing period on an annual basis from the production of unprocessed agricultural plant production not less than four hundred dollars ($400) per acre.

(e) Land that has returned from the production of unprocessed agricultural plant products an annual gross value of not less than four hundred dollars ($400) per acre for three of the previous five calendar years.

Figure 4.1.2: Impacts on Agricultural Resources

Farmland Type	*Gonzales 2010 General Plan*	
	Growth Area	Urban Reserve
Prime Farmland west of Gonzales Slough*	50 acres	170 acres
Prime Farmland east of Gonzales Slough	840 acres	830 acres
Farmland of Statewide Importance	1,220 acres	380 acres
Animal Feedlot	0 acres	460 acre
Other (non farmland)	40 acres	290 acres
Total	2,150 acres	2,130 acres

Source: USDA NRCS, 1999; Coastplans
*Note: *As explained in the environmental setting section above, the farmlands west of Gonzales Slough are regarded as the highest value farmlands in the area.*

Of the 2,110 acres of farmland in the Urban Growth Area, 640 acres are in vineyard use and 1,470 acres are used to grow a variety of row crops including lettuce. In the Urban Reserve Area, 175 acres are in vineyard use and 1,205 acres are used to grow a variety of row crops including lettuce.

B. Applicable Policies and Regulations

The *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* contains the following policies and implementing measures designed to protect and enhance the agricultural resources of the planning area.

From the "Land Use Element:"

Policy LU-1.3 LAFCO Applications

Submit Sphere of Influence and annexation requests to LAFCO only for lands within the Urban Growth Boundary depicted on the Land Use Diagram. In addition, submit applications as may be required to facilitate the expansion of the wastewater treatment facility located on Gonzales River Road or other essential public utilities.

Implementing Action LU- 1.3.1 – Plans for Services. Establish the timing of Sphere of Influence and annexation applications based on completion of plans for services, plans for public facilities, and financing plans that demonstrate compliance with LAFCO standards.

Policy LU-1.4 City-Centered Growth

Support the concept of "City-Centered Growth" in the Salinas Valley. This concept concentrates urban uses in and around South County cities and conserves the remainder of the valley for agriculture.

> *Implementing Action LU-1.4.3 – Utility Prohibition Zones. Specific plans shall include utility and road prohibition areas along the interface of the planned development area and permanent agricultural edge, which in subsequent subdivisions will be dedicated as "no-access" strips.*

Policy LU-6.2 Utilize Land Efficiently

Utilize land efficiently to maintain a compact development pattern, enhance walkability, and limit farmland conversion in areas outside the identified General Plan growth area.

> *Implementing Action LU-6.2.1 – Establish Minimum Densities. Adopt development codes as part of Specific Plans or separately, that establish minimum development densities and discourage construction of housing at substantially lower gross densities than the maximum permitted by the General Plan, particularly on sites designated for medium- and high-density housing. Single-family-detached housing construction in these locations is generally inconsistent with the City's goal of providing a wide range of housing choices. Exceptions should be made for sites where environmental constraints (flood plains, etc.) preclude development at the maximum allowable density. In such instances, only the unconstrained portions of the site should be considered "developable" for purposes of density calculation.*

> *Implementing Action LU-6.2.2 – Achieve Minimum Density. Within new Specific Plan areas designated for residential use, ensure that new Neighborhood Residential development achieves an overall residential density between seven (7) and nine (9) dwelling units per gross residential acre. Densities within each Specific Plan neighborhood area may (and should) vary as long as the overall density target is met.*

From the "Conservation and Open Space Element:"

Policy COS-4.1 Maintain Agricultural Economy

Maintain agriculture as the core of the local economy by conserving and protecting agricultural lands and operations within the planning area, and where agricultural land is planned for eventual urbanization, work to keep such land in production up until the time when the land is converted to urban use.

Implementing Action COS-4.1.1 – Grow Eastward. Focus future urban growth to the east of Highway 101 in order to keep the highest quality agricultural lands located west of the highway in production.

Implementing Action COS-4.1.2 – Agriculture as Interim Use. Encourage agriculture as an interim land use on undeveloped properties in the General Plan growth area designated for future urban uses.

Implementing Action COS-4.1.3 – Interim Mitigation. When preparing environmental reports for Specific Plans, require an assessment of potential adverse impacts on adjoining agricultural lands that lie within the growth area shown on the Land Use Diagram and require interim measures to mitigate the impacts that are identified.

Implementing Action COS-4.1.4 – Protect Agricultural Operations. Protect agricultural operations from interference from urban uses by:

(a) Using buffers or transitional uses (such as parking, roads, etc.) between permanent agricultural areas and residential development areas; and

(b) Requiring that development is phased in a manner which prevents "islands" of urban uses surrounded on all sides by farming. All new development should be either contiguous to the existing city or located within a new neighborhood developed under a Specific Plan, which sets forth orderly development consistent with the approved Neighborhood Design Guidelines and Standards and Community Character policies.

(c) For properties on the perimeter of the City limits, require Specific Plan features that minimize potential conflicts with permanent agricultural operations. Less sensitive uses such as parking, roads, storage, and landscaping should be sited adjacent to the agricultural areas. Residential backyards should not directly abut areas planned for long-term agriculture without proper mitigation measures to limit potential nuisances.

Implementing Action COS-4.1.5 – Infill Development. Provide incentives to encourage infill development on vacant or underutilized sites within the existing City limits west of Highway 101 whenever possible, to avoid urban sprawl and postpone the conversion of agricultural land to urban uses.

Implementing Action COS-4.1.6 – Phased Development. Phase development in an orderly, contiguous manner to maintain a compact development pattern and avoid premature farmland conversion or interference with farm operations. New development should be either contiguous to the existing city or located within a new neighborhood developed under a Specific Plan, which sets forth orderly development consistent with the approved Neighborhood Design Guidelines and Standards and Community Character policies.

Policy COS-4.2 Permanent Urban Edges

Establish permanent urban edges in the vicinity of Associated Lane to the northwest and La Gloria Road to the southeast to preserve adjoining agricultural activities.

Implementing Action COS-4.2.1 – Agricultural Easements. Require new development to contribute to the cost of purchase of permanent agricultural easements beyond the permanent urban edges identified in the Land Use Diagram.

Policy COS-4.3 No Urbanization Outside of Growth Area

Maintain agricultural open space around Gonzales as a means of giving form and definition to the City. To this end, permit urban development only within the areas designated for urban uses on the Land Use Diagram. Land beyond this boundary should remain in agricultural use for the duration of the planning period.

Implementing Action COS-4.3.1 – Specific Plan Areas. The City shall not accept Specific Plans or Specific Plan addenda for review and approval that contain area within the urban reserve or outside the boundaries of the growth area shown in the Land Use Diagram.

Implementing Action COS-4.3.2 – Regional Coordination. Encourage Monterey County to promote and support agricultural uses in the Central Salinas Valley and to discourage urban development on prime agricultural lands outside the Gonzales 2010 General Plan growth area. Support County, State, and Federal efforts which protect the soil, water, and air resources necessary for the continued viability of agriculture in the Gonzales area.

Implementing Action COS-4.3.3 – Agricultural Impact Fund. Establish an agricultural impact mitigation fund structured to purchase agricultural easements on lands shown on the Land Use Diagram as adjacent to but outside the General Plan growth area boundary.

Implementing Action COS-4.3.4 – Discourage Industry on Agricultural Lands. Actively oppose free-standing industries in agricultural areas outside of the General Plan Growth Area that do not require on-site locations to process and distribute commodities grown on the property.

Implementing Action COS-4.3.5 – Right to Farm. Require "Right to Farm" disclosure notices for new residential subdivisions and other residential developments that adjoin active agricultural operations. The notices would inform prospective homebuyers of the possible impacts of agricultural activities on adjoining properties, including noise, odor, and dust. Such disclosure notices should remain in effect as long as there are active agricultural operations on adjoining parcels and should be removed only after adjoining parcels are taken out of agricultural use.

Implementing Action COS-4.3.6 – Williamson Act. Promote the use of Williamson Act contracts in addition to agricultural easements as a means of maintaining land in agricultural use outside the General Plan growth area. Actively discourage the use of Williamson Act contracts or agricultural easements within the General Plan growth area.

Implementing Action COS-4.3.7 – Animal Control. Strictly enforce trespassing and domestic animal control laws to minimize interference with farm operations.

C. <u>Significance Determination</u>

While the policies and actions listed above would lessen the impacts of urbanization on agricultural lands, the net result of the proposed project would be to convert Prime Farmland and Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland) to non-agricultural use. This impact would have been substantially greater had the project targeted lands west and north of the City for urbanization because it is generally acknowledged that agricultural lands west of Gonzales Slough are of significantly higher value than those than lie to the east. By encouraging growth to the east, the proposed project is consistent with a general consensus among agricultural preservationists and county and regional officials that growing away from the lowest reaches of the Salinas Valley where soils are the most productive, is a preferable development pattern. Given that the proposed project would avoid the best farmlands in the area and establish the basis for creating an agricultural mitigation fund to permanently protect farmlands outside the path of urbanization, there are no remaining feasible mitigation measures available to lessen this impact further or to reduce it to a level of less than significant. This impact is significant and unavoidable.

D. <u>Mitigation Measures</u>

No feasible measures available.

4.2.3.2. CONFLICTS WITH AGRICULTURAL ZONING

A. <u>Impact</u>

<u>Impact AG-2: The adoption of the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* would provide the basis for development activity that would conflict with existing agricultural zoning or a Williamson Act contract</u> (Less than Significant with Mitigation Measures).

To allow future projects, the proposed project would require annexation and prezoning that would conflict with existing agricultural zoning. The Monterey County General Plan designates the entirety of the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* Growth Area as "Farmlands 40-Acre Minimum." Adoption of the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* would, therefore, conflict

with existing zoning for agricultural use. In addition, a small portion of the planning area was under Williamson Act contract in the years leading up to the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* but was placed in "non-renewal" status in 2006. The process of adopting the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* has, therefore, conflicted with Williamson Act contracts as it has encouraged landowners to remove Williamson Act contracts in anticipation of future development options.

B. Applicable Policies and Regulations and Actions

The "Conservation and Open Space Element" contains the following policies and implementing measures designed to protect and enhance the agricultural resources of the planning area.

> Policy COS-4.3 No Urbanization Outside of Growth Area
>
> Maintain agricultural open space around Gonzales as a means of giving form and definition to the City. To this end, permit urban development only within the areas designated for urban uses on the Land Use Diagram. Land beyond this boundary should remain in agricultural use for the duration of the planning period.
>
> > Implementing Action COS-4.3.6 – Williamson Act. *Promote the use of Williamson Act contracts in addition to agricultural easements as a means of maintaining land in agricultural use outside the General Plan growth area. Actively discourage the use of Williamson Act contracts or agricultural easements within the General Plan growth area.*

C. Significance Determination

Successful amendment of the Gonzales Sphere of influence and subsequent annexation would require an agreement between the County of Monterey and the City of Gonzales to bring their respective general plans into consistency. If left unresolved, the zoning conflict would be of no practical consequence since implementation of the proposed project would be unlikely—LAFCO requires agreement between the County of Monterey and the City of Gonzales to gain its approval. With regard to Williamson Act conflicts, the property owner entered into non-renewal status on his own accord in the hopes of adding it to neighboring land he owned/controlled, which was a likely candidate for including in the Urban Growth Area. By entering into non-renewal status, the owner, in effect, mitigated the potential impact of adding this adjacent land. Conflicts with existing zoning

established by the County of Monterey are a significant impact that would be reduced to a level of less than significant with the following mitigation measure:

D. Mitigation Measures

The City of Gonzales shall incorporate the following measure into the *Draft Gonzales 2010 General Plan* prior to final adoption and eliminate or amend any existing provisions of the draft plan that may be in conflict with this measure so as to eliminate the inconsistency in favor of the measure:

> Mitigation Measure AG-1: Collaboration with County of Monterey
>
> *Collaborate with the County of Monterey to establish an urban reserve area around Gonzales that corresponds entirely or partially to the Urban Growth Area and Urban Reserve Area established by the* Gonzales 2010 General Plan.

4.2.3.3. Other Changes Resulting in Conversion of Farmland

A. Impact

Impact AG-3: The adoption of the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* would provide the basis for development activity that could result in other changes affecting the conversion of farmland outside the area planned for growth (Less than Significant).

The proposed project would enable development activity that would result in the conversion of agricultural land to urban uses over a period of years and decades. The lands designated for conversion to urban uses are located in proximity to other agricultural lands that could be affected by urbanization and have the potential to result indirectly in the conversion of agricultural land. Such conversion could result from increasing nuisance complaints from residents against farmers who operate adjacent to new urban uses (e.g., noise, dust, and odors). In addition, proximity of lands to new urban infrastructure and an expanding LAFCO Sphere of Influence would increase the value of the land for urbanization. Urbanization in the Urban Growth Area and the Urban Reserve Area could also impact neighboring agricultural operations by increasing land values and taxes on land without Williamson Act protection. Each of these could compel land owners to consider urbanization over continued farming.

B. Applicable Policies and Regulations and Actions

The *Gonzales 2010 General Plan's* "Land Use Element" contains the following implementing action designed to protect and enhance the agricultural resources of the planning area:

> *Implementing Action LU-1.4.3 – Utility Prohibition Zones. Specific plans shall include utility and road prohibition areas along the interface of the planned development area and permanent agricultural edge, which in subsequent subdivisions will be dedicated as "no-access" strips.*

The "Conservation and Open Space Element" contains the following policies and implementing measures designed to protect and enhance the agricultural resources of the planning area:

Policy COS-4.1 Maintain Agricultural Economy

Maintain agriculture as the core of the local economy by conserving and protecting agricultural lands and operations within the planning area, and where agricultural land is planned for eventual urbanization, work to keep such land in production up until the time when the land is converted to urban use.

> *Implementing Action COS-4.1.1 – Grow Eastward. Focus future urban growth to the east of Highway 101 in order to keep the highest quality agricultural lands located west of the highway in production.*
>
> *Implementing Action COS-4.1.2 – Agriculture as Interim Use. Encourage agriculture as an interim land use on undeveloped properties in the General Plan growth area designated for future urban uses.*
>
> *Implementing Action COS-4.1.3 – Interim Mitigation. When preparing environmental reports for Specific Plans, require an assessment of potential adverse impacts on adjoining agricultural lands that lie within the growth area shown on the Land Use Diagram (GP Figure II-4) and require interim measures to mitigate the impacts that are identified.*
>
> *Implementing Action COS-4.1.4 – Protect Agricultural Operations. Protect agricultural operations from interference from urban uses by:*

(a) Using buffers or transitional uses (such as parking, roads, etc.) between permanent agricultural areas and residential development areas; and

(b) Requiring that development is phased in a manner which prevents "islands" of urban uses surrounded on all sides by farming. All new development should be either contiguous to the existing city or located within a new neighborhood developed under a Specific Plan, which sets forth orderly development consistent with the approved Neighborhood Design Guidelines and Standards and Community Character policies.

(c) For properties on the perimeter of the City limits, require Specific Plan features that minimize potential conflicts with permanent agricultural operations. Less sensitive uses such as parking, roads, storage, and landscaping should be sited adjacent to the agricultural areas. Residential backyards should not directly abut areas planned for long-term agriculture without proper mitigation measures to limit potential nuisances.

Implementing Action COS-4.1.5 – Infill Development. Provide incentives to encourage infill development on vacant or underutilized sites within the existing City limits west of Highway 101 whenever possible, to avoid urban sprawl and postpone the conversion of agricultural land to urban uses.

Implementing Action COS-4.1.6 – Phased Development. Phase development in an orderly, contiguous manner to maintain a compact development pattern and avoid premature farmland conversion or interference with farm operations. New development should be either contiguous to the existing city or located within a new neighborhood developed under a Specific Plan, which sets forth orderly development consistent with the approved Neighborhood Design Guidelines and Standards and Community Character policies.

Policy COS-4.2 Permanent Urban Edges

Establish permanent urban edges in the vicinity of Associated Lane to the northwest and La Gloria Road to the southeast to preserve adjoining agricultural activities.

Implementing Action COS-4.2.1 – Agricultural Easements. Require new development to contribute to the cost of purchase of permanent agricultural easements beyond the permanent urban edges identified in the Land Use Diagram.

Policy COS-4.3 No Urbanization Outside of Growth Area

Maintain agricultural open space around Gonzales as a means of giving form and definition to the City. To this end, permit urban development only within the areas designated for urban uses on the Land Use Diagram. Land beyond this boundary should remain in agricultural use for the duration of the planning period.

Implementing Action COS-4.3.1 – Specific Plan Areas. The City shall not accept Specific Plans or Specific Plan addenda for review and approval that contain area within the urban reserve or outside the boundaries of the growth area shown in the Land Use Diagram.

Implementing Action COS-4.3.2 – Regional Coordination. Encourage Monterey County to promote and support agricultural uses in the Central Salinas Valley and to discourage urban development on prime agricultural lands outside the Gonzales 2010 General Plan growth area. Support County, State, and Federal efforts which protect the soil, water, and air resources necessary for the continued viability of agriculture in the Gonzales area.

Implementing Action COS-4.3.3 – Agricultural Impact Fund. Establish an agricultural impact mitigation fund structured to purchase agricultural easements on lands shown on the Land Use Diagram as adjacent to but outside the General Plan growth area boundary.

Implementing Action COS-4.3.4 – Discourage Industry on Agricultural Lands. Actively oppose free-standing industries in agricultural areas outside of the General Plan Growth Area that do not require on-site locations to process and distribute commodities grown on the property.

Implementing Action COS-4.3.5 – Right to Farm. Require "Right to Farm" disclosure notices for new residential subdivisions and other residential developments that adjoin active agricultural operations. The notices would

inform prospective homebuyers of the possible impacts of agricultural activities on adjoining properties, including noise, odor, and dust. Such disclosure notices should remain in effect as long as there are active agricultural operations on adjoining parcels and should be removed only after adjoining parcels are taken out of agricultural use.

Implementing Action COS-4.3.6 – Williamson Act. Promote the use of Williamson Act contracts in addition to agricultural easements as a means of maintaining land in agricultural use outside the General Plan growth area. Actively discourage the use of Williamson Act contracts or agricultural easements within the General Plan growth area.

Implementing Action COS-4.3.7 – Animal Control. Strictly enforce trespassing and domestic animal control laws to minimize interference with farm operations.

C. Significance Determination

The proposed project includes policies and action that lessen the impact of the project, including an agricultural mitigation fund, requirements to provide agricultural buffers to separate urbanization from ongoing farming activities, and requirements to provide utility prohibition zones. These policies and actions lessen the impacts of urbanization to a level of less than significant.

D. Mitigation Measures

None required.

4.3 AESTHETICS

This section evaluates the impacts of the proposed project on the aesthetic resources of the planning area.

4.3.1 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

The existing visual character of the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* planning area is influenced primarily by agricultural lands that slope gently eastward toward the foothills of the Gabilan Mountains. Figure 4.3.1 shows a map of seven representative vantage points in the planning area, and Figures 4.3.2a through 4.3.2j show photographs depicting baseline conditions in the planning area. As can be seen in these photographs, agricultural fields and low-density residential uses are the primary visual features. No major landscape feature or natural communities (e.g., natural rock outcroppings or forest) are visible except for long-distance views of the Gabilan Mountains to the east and the Sierra de Salinas to the west of town. There are no scenic highways in the vicinity.

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Figure 4.3.1 View Analysis

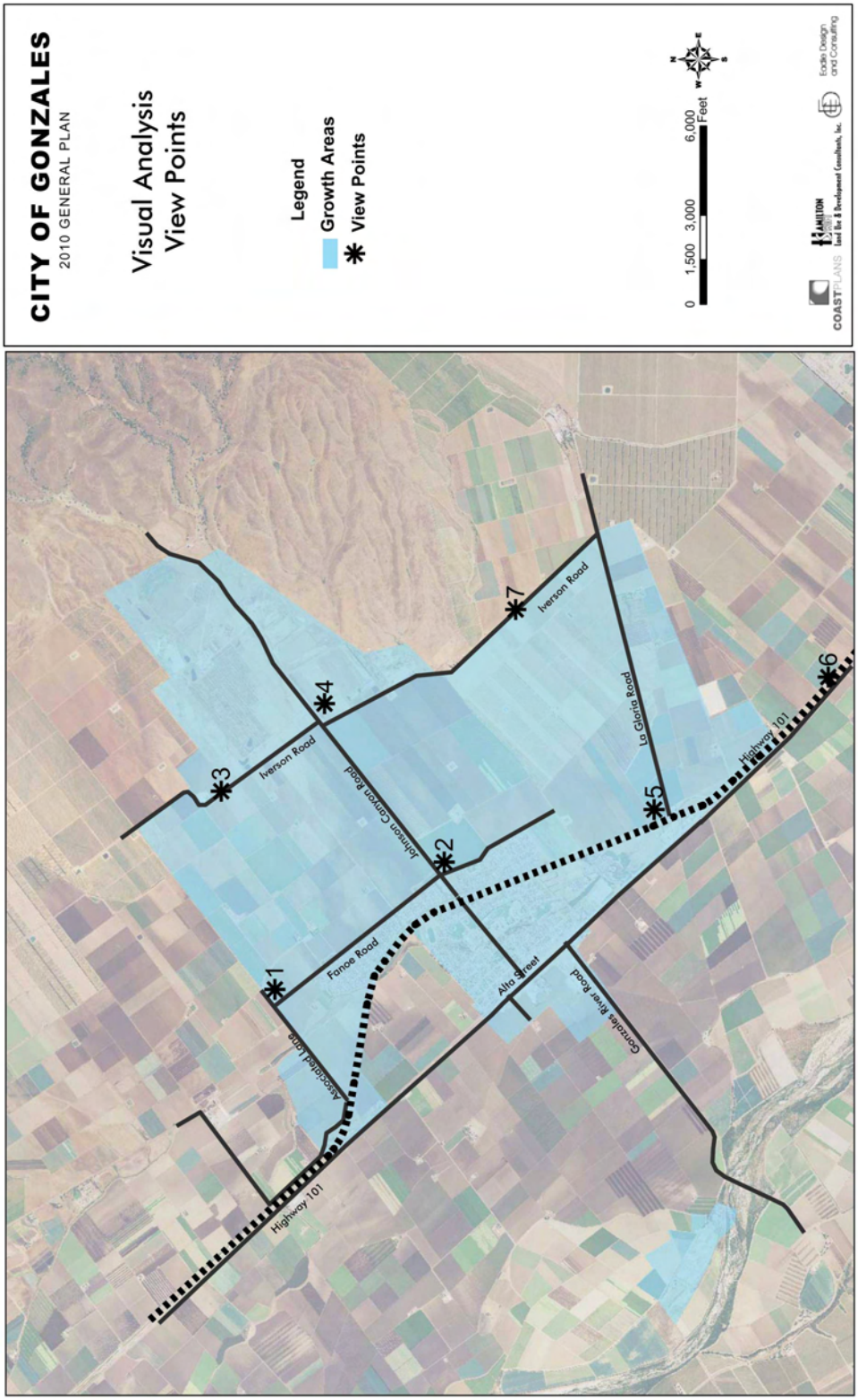

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Figure 4.3.2a: View #1, looking E

Figure 4.3.2b: View #2, looking NE

Figure 4.3.2c: View #2, looking NW

Figure 4.3.2d: View #3, looking SW

Figure 4.3.2e: View #4, looking W

Figure 4.3.2f: View #4, looking SW

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Figure 4.3.2g: View #5, looking S

Figure 4.3.2h: View #5, looking E

Figure 4.3.2i: View #6, looking N

Figure 4.3.2j: View #7, looking W

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4.3.2 THRESHOLDS OF SIGNIFICANCE

The proposed project was considered to have a significant adverse effect on the environment if it met any of the standards of significance listed below. The Initial Study concluded that the proposed project has no potential to result in adverse effects for certain areas of concern, and this EIR has been focused to exclude such listed effects from further consideration. Excluded areas of concern are shown in ~~strikeout~~ format.

- ~~Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista,~~ [excluded from further study—see Initial Study in Appendix A],
- ~~Substantially damage scenic resources, including but not limited to trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway~~ [excluded from further study—see Initial Study in Appendix A],
- Substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings, or
- Create a new source of substantial light or glare that would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area.

4.3.3 IMPACTS AND MITIGATIONS

4.3.3.1. VISUAL CHARACTER OR QUALITY OF THE SITE AND ITS SURROUNDINGS

A. Impact

Impact AES-1: The adoption of the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* would provide the basis for development activity that could irreversibly degrade the visual character of this part of the Central Salinas Valley (Significant and Unavoidable).

The proposed project would result in the conversion of the rural/open space landscape that currently characterizes the planning area, to a built landscape associated with urban uses. This would substantially degrade the visual character and quality of the existing landscape. The development criteria contained in the "Land Use Element" does not

expressly limit the height of new development in the Urban Growth Area. It does, however, limit residential development densities to 24 units per gross acre and non-residential development intensities to a floor area ratio of 1.5. It is unlikely under these development criteria that building heights would exceed 45 feet. The "Community Character Element" also contains criteria that would tend to lessen the impacts of development on visual character. For example, Implementing Action CC-1.1.2 (Enhance Natural Features), in the "Community Character Element" states that "new development should be sensitive to site opportunities and constraints, such as drainage courses, views, and mature trees." Implementing Action CC-8.1.2 (Hillside and Farmland Views) encourages "the preservation of hillside and farmland views in developed areas and in areas planned for future development." Finally, Implementing Action CC-1.1.10 (Neighborhood Design Guidelines) requires the adoption of design guidelines to guide new development in the Urban Growth Area.

B. Applicable Policies and Regulations

The *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* contains the following policies and implementing measures designed to protect and enhance the visual character of the planning area.

From the "Land Use Element:"

See Section D of the "Land Use Element" for the descriptions of "High Density Residential," "Neighborhood Residential," "Neighborhood Commercial," and "Community Commercial Mixed Use."

From the "Conservation and Open Space Element:"

Policy COS-3.1 Create Interconnected Natural Corridors

Create a network of natural corridors throughout the planning area that serves to enhance and connect natural habitats, provides naturalistic drainage control, and provides opportunities for active and passive recreation.

Implementing Action COS-3.1.1 – Corridors Established through Specific Plans. Require Specific Plans and development plans to contain provisions that when implemented result in the establishment of natural corridors throughout the Specific Plan Area that serve to enhance and connect natural habitats, provide

naturalistic drainage control, and provide opportunities for active and passive recreation.

Implementing Action COS-3.1.2 – Corridors Established through Public Works Projects. Include provisions in all proposed public works projects that when implemented will prevent the project from causing any discontinuation of a natural corridor that is envisioned by the Gonzales 2010 General Plan or any subsequent approved or anticipated Specific Plan or development plan.

Implementing Action COS-3.1.3 – Use of Native Species for Street and Park Trees. Require Specific Plans, other development plans, and public works projects to select street trees and park trees that provide high value for birdlife, that have root systems (that with properly installed root guards) do not damage sidewalks and curbs, that provide a good canopy for shade, that can be cost effectively maintained, that are drought and disease resistant, and that are relatively long lived.

Policy COS-4.2 Permanent Urban Edges

Establish permanent urban edges in the vicinity of Associated Lane to the northwest and La Gloria Road to the southeast to preserve adjoining agricultural activities.

Implementing Action COS-4.2.1 – Agricultural Easements. Require new development to contribute to the cost of purchase of permanent agricultural easements beyond the permanent urban edges identified in the Land Use Diagram.

Policy COS-4.3 No Urbanization Outside of Growth Area

Maintain agricultural open space around Gonzales as a means of giving form and definition to the City. To this end, permit urban development only within the areas designated for urban uses on the Land Use Diagram. Land beyond this boundary should remain in agricultural use for the duration of the planning period.

Implementing Action COS-4.3.1 – Specific Plan Areas. The City shall not accept Specific Plans or Specific Plan addenda for review and approval that contain area within the urban reserve or outside the boundaries of the growth area shown in the Land Use Diagram.

Implementing Action COS-4.3.2 – Regional Coordination. Encourage Monterey County to promote and support agricultural uses in the Central Salinas Valley and to discourage urban development on prime agricultural lands outside the Gonzales 2010 General Plan growth area. Support County, State, and Federal efforts which protect the soil, water, and air resources necessary for the continued viability of agriculture in the Gonzales area.

Implementing Action COS-4.3.3 – Agricultural Impact Fund. Establish an agricultural impact mitigation fund structured to purchase agricultural easements on lands shown on the Land Use Diagram as adjacent to but outside the General Plan growth area boundary.

Implementing Action COS-4.3.4 – Discourage Industry on Agricultural Lands. Actively oppose free-standing industries in agricultural areas outside of the General Plan Growth Area that do not require on-site locations to process and distribute commodities grown on the property.

Policy COS-7.1 Create Open Space and Natural Habitat in Drainage Areas

Protect the community from flooding hazards in a manner that creates open space and natural habitat and does not diminish groundwater recharge in the Planning Area.

Implementing Action COS-7.1.1 – Restore and Maintain Riparian Habitat. Create new naturalistic drainages in the growth area to serve as natural habitat and open space.

Implementing Action COS-7.1.2 – Dual Use of Flood Plains. Encourage the use of flood plain areas within new development as natural habitat, open space, and recreation areas.

Implementing Action COS-7.1.3 – Development within 100-Year Flood Hazard Zone. Prohibit development within the 100-year flood hazard zone unless the project incorporates measures that mitigate 100-year flood hazards to habitable structures while maintaining similar levels of groundwater recharge from the flood flows.

From the "Community Character Element:"

Policy CC-1.1 Community Building

Promote future urban growth that is "community building," and serves to strengthen the physical, social and economic infrastructure throughout Gonzales.

Implementing Action CC-1.1.1 – Utilize land efficiently. Future development shall make efficient use of the land to provide quality living environments, and minimize the conversion of agricultural lands.

Implementing Action CC-1.1.2 – Enhance Natural Features. Preserve and enhance desirable features of the natural and built environments in Gonzales. New development should be sensitive to site opportunities and constraints, such as drainage courses, views, and mature trees.

Implementing Action CC-1.1.3 – High Standards for Design. Require a high standard of design and site planning, both in new development areas and on redevelopment or infill sites.

Implementing Action CC-1.1.4 – Infill Development. Encourage infill development that is compatible in scale, mass, texture, and density with its surroundings. Development should be appropriate to the context of the project site as well as the physical attributes of the site itself.

Implementing Action CC-1.1.5 – Complement Existing Character. Encourage new development that complements the pattern and character of older areas of town, with an emphasis on more traditional design elements rather than suburban design elements.

Implementing Action CC-1.1.6 – Well Defined Edges. Maintain well-defined edges between the town and the surrounding agricultural lands. Work with the County of Monterey to discourage "rural residential," ranchette, commercial, or industrial development on county lands around the City.

Implementing Action CC-1.1.7 – Open Space Around the City. Maintain the identity of Gonzales as a town surrounded by farmland by retaining the existing

open space between Gonzales, Chualar, Salinas, and Soledad and by keeping open the land between the city and the hills west of town.

Implementing Action CC-1.1.8 – Community Gateways. Enhance the City's identity through gateways, signs, markers, and other symbols of local heritage.

Implementing Action CC-1.1.10 – Neighborhood Design Guidelines. Adopt Neighborhood Design Guidelines to implement Community Character policies and guide development in new Specific Plan areas.

Implementing Action CC-1.1.11 – Commercial and Industrial Design Guidelines. Adopt design guidelines for major commercial and industrial development, including both new construction and alterations.

Policy CC-5.1 Enhance Role of Natural Environment

Enhance the role of the natural environment, especially natural topography and historic drainages, as a defining element of Gonzales' character and identity. Such natural features should be enhanced and restored where feasible, and utilized for multiple purposes including drainage, wildlife habitat and recreation.

Implementing Action CC-5.1.1 – Open Space as Primary Element of Urban Form. Expand the use of open space as a primary element of urban form through the creation of new natural features, such as greenways, greenbelts, drainage courses, lakes and other water features.

Implementing Action CC-5.1.2 – Gonzales Slough. Promote the conservation and restoration use of the Gonzales Slough as an enhanced natural feature for passive recreation and as a pedestrian spine connecting Gonzales' schools, parks, and neighborhoods.

Implementing Action CC-5.1.3 – Funding for Slough. Explore funding sources to enhance the Slough's role as a linear park, providing new amenities for pedestrians and recreational use where feasible.

Policy CC-8.1 Visual Resources and Gateways

Protect and enhance the visual qualities of Gonzales.

Implementing Action CC-8.1.2 – Hillside and Farmland Views. Encourage the preservation of hillside and farmland views in developed areas and in areas planned for future development.

Implementing Action CC-8.1.3 – Distinct Edge. Maintain a distinct edge between the urban area and agricultural lands on the perimeter of the City.

C. Significance Determination

While the plans, policies, and actions contained in the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* lessen the impacts of urbanization, the net result of the proposed project remains a substantial degradation of the intrinsic open space character of the project area. The following mitigation measure is available to lessen this impact further, but this impact remains significant and unavoidable.

D. Mitigation Measures

The City of Gonzales shall incorporate the following measure into the *Draft Gonzales 2010 General Plan* prior to final adoption and eliminate or amend any existing provisions of the draft plan that may be in conflict with this measure so as to eliminate the inconsistency in favor of the measure:

Mitigation Measure AES-1: Visual Screen for Permanent Agricultural Edge

The City shall require Specific Plans and development approvals, either of which include land east of Highway 101, to incorporate a naturalistic visual screen along the "Permanent Agricultural Edge" (as depicted in the General Plan Land Use Diagram) separating the Urban Growth Area from adjacent parts of the Planning Area that are not contained in the Urban Growth Area. Such a visual screen shall be designed to screen urban uses contained in the Urban Growth Area from views outside the Urban Growth Area and shall be comprised of dense plantings of tall and large-canopy trees and other vegetation that are native to the Salinas Valley. The trees and other vegetation chosen for the visual screen shall be sufficiently mature when planted to ensure that the visual screen will be effective within five

(5) years of approval of the first subdivision in the Specific Plan or other development approval area. The visual screen shall be maintained as a long-term feature of the Urban Growth Area.

4.3.3.2. LIGHT AND GLARE

A. Impact

Impact AES-2: The adoption of the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* would provide the basis for development activity that would have new sources of night time lighting that could result in light trespass,[8] light pollution, and glare (Significant and Unavoidable).

The proposed project would enable urbanization that would have the potential to increase light trespass, light pollution, and glare in the planning area. For example, street and other exterior lighting would increase ambient lighting levels in the planning area leading to night glow above the city. Also, new office or commercial buildings with reflective glass exteriors could result in new sources of glare. In addition to aesthetic impacts, such effects could cause disruption of sensitive habitat areas, such as the Gonzales Slough and could impact wildlife species using these habitat areas.

B. Applicable Policies and Regulations

The *Gonzales 2010 General Plan's* "Community Character Element" contains the following measures designed to reduce nighttime lighting and glare the project area.

Policy CC-8.1 Visual Resources and Gateways

Protect and enhance the visual qualities of Gonzales.

Implementing Action CC-8.1.8 – Reduce Light Pollution. *Require new development, with special attention to commercial and industrial development, to reduce light pollution by designing exterior lighting to be downward cast and hooded.*

[8] This refers to lighting that goes outside of area intended to be lit.

C. Significance Determination

While the plans, policies, and actions contained in the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* lessen the impacts of urbanization related light pollution and glare, these impacts remain significant and unavoidable. Nonetheless, the following measure would address potential glare caused by new buildings with reflective glass exteriors:

D. Mitigation Measures

The City of Gonzales shall incorporate the following measure into the *Draft Gonzales 2010 General Plan* prior to final adoption and eliminate or amend any existing provisions of the draft plan that may be in conflict with this measure so as to eliminate the inconsistency in favor of the measure:

Mitigation Measure AES-2: Reflective Building Exteriors

The City shall prohibit building exteriors with large expanses or glass or other reflective material that could become a significant source of glare.

4.4 TRANSPORTATION/TRAFFIC

This section evaluates the potential impacts of the project on traffic and circulation. Information in this section is derived primarily from project plans and a traffic report prepared by Hatch Mott MacDonald (March 22, 2010). The Hatch Mott MacDonald report is presented in its entirety in Appendix C.

4.4.1 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

The following subsection describes existing conditions in the planning area.

4.4.1.1. STREETS AND HIGHWAYS

The Gonzales street and highway system consists of a regional roadway system that connects the city with other cities and regions and a local roadway system that interconnects the various parts of the city and provides access to the regional roadway system.

A. Regional Roadway System

Gonzales is linked to other cities in the Salinas Valley by U.S. Highway 101, which runs in a north-south direction through the City. The highway is two lanes in each direction with a center median. The City is served by interchanges located at North Alta Street and Old Stage Road a mile north of downtown, Fifth Street about a quarter-mile east of downtown, and South Alta Street and Gloria Road about a mile south of downtown. The freeway was constructed as a bypass around the City, removing most regional traffic from City streets. A full complement of north- and southbound ramps are provided at each interchange, although development adjacent to the Fifth Street Interchange has constrained the City's ability to improve this facility.

Gonzales is also linked to the County roadways system via the following two-lane local roads:

- ✓ Gonzales River Road, which provides a connection from Alta Street west to River Road (County Route G17), which in turn parallels Highway 101 along the base of the Sierra de Salinas.
- ✓ Johnson Canyon Road, which provides an extension of Fifth Street east to Iverson Road and beyond into the Gabilan Mountains.
- ✓ Old Stage Road, which runs north from the Highway 101/Alta Street (north) Interchange paralleling Highway 101.
- ✓ Gloria Road, which runs east from Highway 101 to Highway 25 in Central San Benito County, through the hills east of Gonzales.
- ✓ Iverson Road, which serves the eastern side of the General Plan area and provides a connection from Gloria Road to Johnson Canyon Road and beyond, skirting the base of the Gabilan Mountains.
- ✓ Foletta Road, which serves the northern extent of the General Plan area paralleling Highway 101 and connects Gonzales with Chualar to the north.

B. Local Roadway System

The local roadway system includes a grid of north-south and east-west streets, with some of the east-west streets extending across Gonzales Slough into subdivisions characterized by curvilinear streets and cul-de-sacs. Fifth Street continues east from the grid and crosses Highway 101, providing access to the newer subdivisions east of the freeway, as well as farms on the east side of the Salinas Valley. A network of farm roads forms a large grid that includes Associated Lane on the north, and Fanoe Road/Herold Parkway closest to and paralleling Highway 101. Gloria and Iverson Roads form the south and eastern limits, respectively of this local roadway system. Lanini Road provides access to the area west of the Union Pacific Railroad tracks south of Gloria Road. Finally, access into the existing industrial park west of Alta Street is provided by Gonzales River Road (mentioned above) and a recently improved grade crossing at Fermin Lane. Figure 4.4.1 shows the existing network of streets and roads in the Gonzales planning area.

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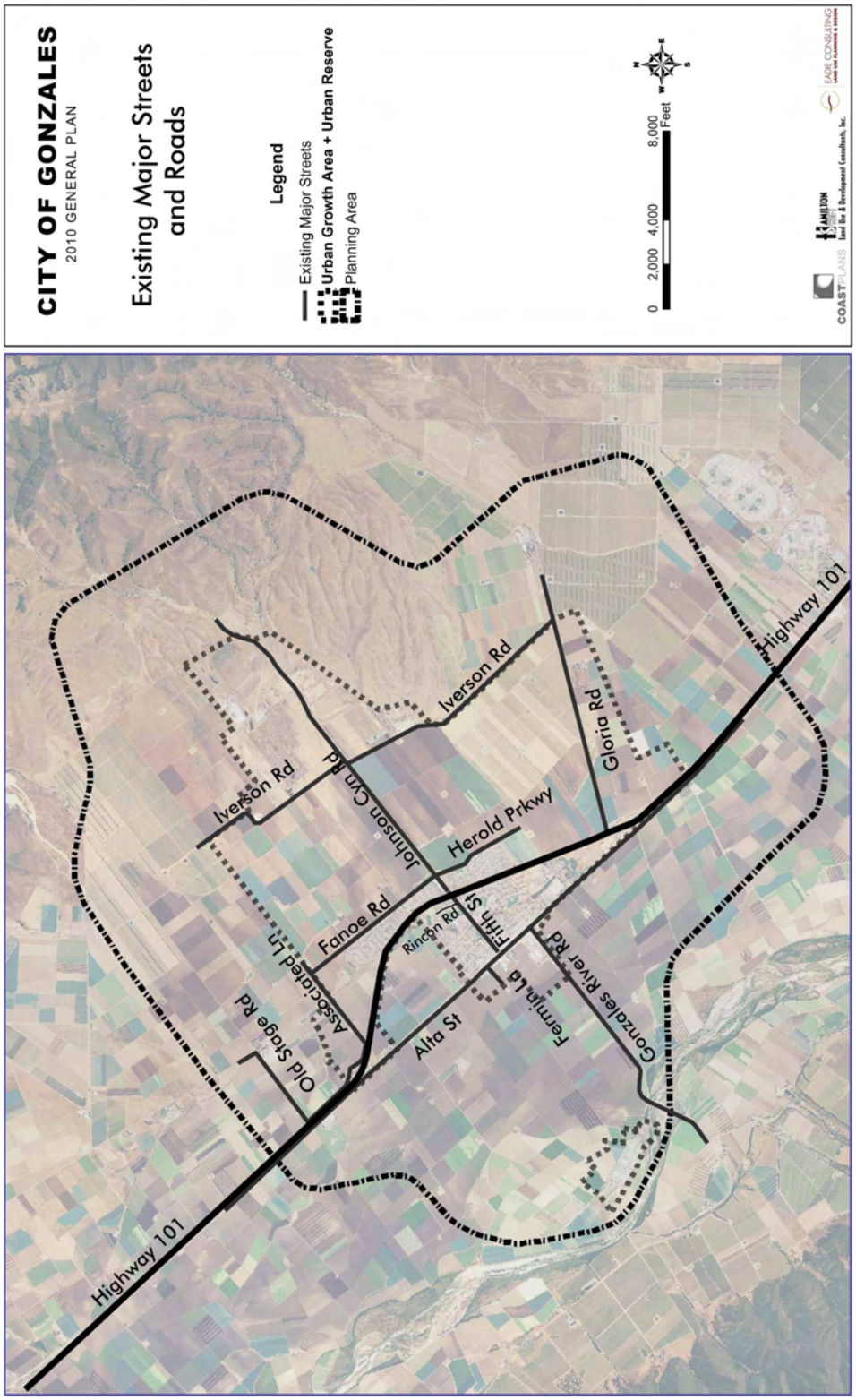
Figure 4.4.1: Existing Street and Roadway Network



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4.4.1.2. BICYCLES AND PEDESTRIANS

The flat terrain, the grid street system, short block lengths, and wide streets of Gonzales are conducive to bicycle use. There is a moderate amount of pedestrian and bicycle traffic along most City streets between Alta Street and Highway 101. A large part of this traffic is composed of children and teens going to and from the parks and schools located near the geographic center of the City. There are no Class "I" bike paths[9] in the City; a Class "II" bike lane exists from the Fifth Street overpass to Herold Parkway and south along Herold Parkway through the California Breeze subdivision. Streets are generally wide enough to accommodate bike traffic without interfering with vehicle traffic.

Most Gonzales streets have sidewalks, and striped crosswalks are present at the most heavily crossed corners. A pedestrian crossing on Fifth Street, controlled by a flashing red light, connects the Gonzales High School and the Fairview Middle School. In addition, there is a considerable amount of pedestrian and bicycle traffic using the Fifth Street overpass of Highway 101, primarily consisting of persons traveling to the shopping center or students going to school.

4.4.1.3. RAILROAD

According to the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan*, the Union Pacific Railroad owns the freight and passenger rail line running north-south through the Salinas Valley and flanking the west side of Gonzales. Regular freight service is provided on the tracks. The tracks are also used for daily AMTRAK service between Los Angeles and Seattle, although the nearest station is in Salinas. The AMTRAK trains run once a day in each direction.

4.4.1.4. OTHER TRANSPORTATION MODES

Gonzales does not have a local transit system. Monterey-Salinas Transit (MST) line 23 currently provides daily service at regular intervals between Salinas and King City with

[9]A Class I bike path is a paved facility reserved for bicycles (and sometimes pedestrians) that is separated from a motorized vehicle roadway. A Class II bike path is a striped corridor along a roadway which is reserved for bicycles. A Class III bike path is shared with motorists and is identified only with signs.

stops in Gonzales. MST Express Line 53 provides service once a day in each direction between Pebble Beach and King City with a stop in Gonzales. Monterey-Salinas Transit also operates "RIDES", a demand-responsive service for seniors and the disabled that offers transportation throughout the Monterey Peninsula to Gonzales. Greyhound offers bus service four times a day between the San Francisco area and the Los Angles area, with stops in Salinas and occasionally King City. By request, the bus may allow passengers to disembark at the Gonzales interchanges.

There is no airport in Gonzales. Passenger air service is available at Monterey Peninsula Airport, 25 miles northwest, and at San Jose International Airport, 75 miles north. Private and corporate air service is available at Salinas Municipal Airport, 13 miles north of the city limits.

4.4.1.5. EXISTING OPERATIONS

Figure 4.4.2 shows daily traffic volumes and level of service (LOS) on major streets in Gonzales. The volumes were derived in part from PM peak hour traffic counts conducted in 2006 and validated in March 2010. The counts indicate that peak hour traffic along Alta Street, the City's busiest street, ranges from about 4,000 to 5,500 vehicles per day. This is less than half of the design capacity of the roadway. Along Fifth Street, peak volumes range from 3,400 to 7,100 daily vehicles west of Highway 101 to over 10,000 daily vehicles east of the Highway 101 interchange. About 80 percent of the practical capacity is being used west of the freeway while less than half the practical capacity is being used east of the freeway.

In 2008, the City, working with Caltrans, installed a new stop sign at the Fifth Street overpass. This new traffic control has improved operations on the south-bound exit off from Highway 101 and largely eliminated backups onto Highway 101 caused by exiting traffic during peak hour travel times. Unfortunately, while this new traffic control has improved safety on Highway 101, it has caused long delays on Fifth Street during peak hours. Highway 101 within and in the immediate vicinity of Gonzales operates at an acceptable LOS A. Most of the on- and off-ramps at the three Highway 101 interchanges in the city also operate at acceptable LOS A. The one exception is the southbound off ramp at the Fifth Street Interchange, which operates at LOS C.

Figure 4.4.2: Existing Average Daily Traffic Volumes and Levels of Service

	Street Segment	Description	Existing	
			ADT VOL	LOS[10]
1. ALTA STREET				
	a. Gloria Rd - Gonzales River Rd	2 Lane Arterial	4,060	A
	b. Gonzales River Rd - 5th St	2 Lane Arterial	5,200	A
	c. 5th St - Associated Lane	2 Lane Arterial	5,480	A
2. ASSOCIATED LANE				
	a. Old Stage - Fanoe	2 Lane Rural	NA	A
	b. Fanoe Rd - "Arterial B"	2 Lane Rural	NA	A
3. FIFTH STREET/JOHNSON CANYON ROAD				
	a. Alta St - Rincon Rd	2 Lane Arterial	3,390	A
	b. Rincon Rd - 101 SB Ramps	2 Lane Arterial	7,070	A
	c. 101 NB Ramps - Fanoe Rd	4 Lane Divided Arterial	10,160	A
	d. Fanoe Rd - "Arterial A"	2 Lane Rural	1,600	A
	e. "Arterial A" - Iverson Rd	2 Lane Rural	1,600	A
	f. East of Iverson Rd	2 Lane Rural	1,600	A
4. GLORIA ROAD				
	a. Hwy 101 NB-Ramp - Herold Pkwy Ext	2 Lane Rural	1,100	A
	b. Herold Pkwy Ext - "Arterial A"	2 Lane Rural	1,100	A
	e. "Arterial A" - Iverson Road	2 Lane Rural	1,100	A
	f. East of Iverson	2 Lane Rural	860	A
5. GONZALES RIVER ROAD				
	a. West of S. Alta Street	2 Lane Rural	2,500	A
6. HIGHWAY 101				
	a. South of Gloria Rd	4 Lane Freeway	43,600	A
	b. Gloria Rd - Fifth St	4 Lane Freeway	42,300	A
	c. Fifth St - Alta St	4 Lane Freeway	40,500	A
	d. North of Alta St	4 Lane Freeway	43,000	A
7. HEROLD PARKWAY / FANOE ROAD				
	a. South of Johnson Canyon Rd	2 Lane Collector	3,530	A
	b. Johnson Canyon Rd - "Arterial B"	2 Lane Collector	5,350	A
	c. "Arterial B" - Associated Ln	2 Lane Collector	5,350	A
8. IVERSON ROAD				
	a. North of Gloria Rd	2 Lane Rural	460	A

[10] The City's level of service standard for local streets and Caltrans level of service standard for Highway 101 is LOS C.

	Street Segment	Description	Existing	
			ADT VOL	LOS[10]
	b. South of Johnson Canyon Rd	2 Lane Rural	460	A
	c. North of Johnson Canyon Rd	2 Lane Rural	600	A
	d. South of Associated Ln	2 Lane Rural	600	A
9. HIGHWAY 101/LA GLORIA ROAD INTERCHANGE				
	a. Northbound off ramp	1 Lane Ramp	1,670	A
	b. Northbound on ramp	1 Lane Ramp	510	A
	c. Southbound off ramp	1 Lane Ramp	280	A
	d. Southbound on ramp	1 Lane Ramp	1,670	A
10. HIGHWAY 101/FIFTH STREET INTERCHANGE				
	a. Northbound off ramp	1 Lane Ramp	1,820	A
	b. Northbound on ramp	1 Lane Ramp	2,060	A
	c. Southbound off ramp	1 Lane Ramp	2,430	C
	d. Southbound on ramp	1 Lane Ramp	1,960	A
11. HIGHWAY 101/ALTA STREET INTERCHANGE				
	a. Northbound off ramp	1 Lane Ramp	400	A
	b. Northbound on ramp	1 Lane Ramp	1,920	A
	c. Southbound off ramp	1 Lane Ramp	2,460	A
	d. Southbound on ramp	1 Lane Ramp	810	A

Source: Hatch Mott MacDonald, 2006 w/ Validation in March 2010

4.4.1.6. PROJECTED FUTURE OPERATIONS WITHOUT PROJECT

The Hatch Mott MacDonald analysis estimated future traffic volumes along Highway 101 in the greater Gonzales area under existing conditions, Year 2030 without Project (i.e. under the current Gonzales General Plan), and Year 2050 without Project. At Year 2030 without the project, the entire Highway 101 corridor through Gonzales would need to be widened from four to six lanes. By Year 2050, the segment north of N. Alta Street/Old Stage Road would need to be eight lanes wide to achieve acceptable levels of service. Without these widenings, the LOS would be reduced to D and F levels. With the widenings, the LOS would be C, which would be acceptable according to Caltrans. Figure 4.4.3 summarizes projected traffic operations on Highway 101 through the year 2050 without the proposed project (i.e., assuming only growth under the existing *Gonzales 1996 General Plan*).

Figure 4.4.3: Projected Future Traffic on Highway 101 w/out Project

Highway 101 Segment	South of Gloria Road	Gloria Rd to Fifth St	Fifth St to N. Alta St	North of N. Alta St
Description	4-Lane Freeway	4-Lane Freeway	4-Lane Freeway	4-Lane Freeway
Existing				
ADT Volume	43,600	42,300	40,500	43,000
LOS	A	A	A	A
Year 2030				
ADT Volume	70,098	65,588	69,108	78,408
LOS	D	D	D	E
Improvement	Widen to 6 Lanes	Widen to 6 Lanes	Widen to 6 Lanes	Widen to 6 Lanes
LOS w/ Improvement	C	C	C	C
Year 2050*				
ADT Volume	86,805	82,295	85,815	95,115
LOS	F	F	F	F
Improvement	Widen to 6 Lanes	Widen to 6 Lanes	Widen to 6 Lanes	Widen to 8 Lanes
LOS w/ Improvement	C	C	C	C

Source: Hatch Mott MacDonald, 2010
*Note: *Year 2050 volumes were projected by extending growth rate of through freeway traffic volumes by an additional 20 years. This growth rate was derived from the AMBAG traffic demand model forecast utilized in forecasting Year 2030 volumes.*

4.4.2 THRESHOLDS OF SIGNIFICANCE

The proposed project was considered to have a significant adverse effect on the environment if it met any of the standards of significance listed below. The Initial Study concluded that the proposed project has no potential to result in adverse effects for certain areas of concern, and this EIR has been focused to exclude such listed effects from further consideration. Excluded areas of concern are shown in ~~strikeout~~ format.

- Conflict with an applicable plan, ordinance or policy establishing measures of effectiveness for the performance of the circulation system, taking into account all modes of transportation including mass transit and non-motorized travel and relevant components of the circulation system, including but not limited to intersections, streets, highways and freeways, pedestrian and bicycle paths, and mass transit?

- Conflict with an applicable congestion management program, including, but not limited to level of service standards and travel demand measures, or other standards established by the county congestion management agency for designated roads or highways?

- ~~Result in a change in air traffic patterns, including either an increase in traffic levels or a change in location that result in substantial safety risks?~~

- Substantially increase hazards due to a design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?

- Result in inadequate emergency access?

- Conflict with adopted policies, plans, or programs regarding public transit, bicycle, or pedestrian facilities, or otherwise decrease the performance or safety of such facilities?

4.4.3 Impacts and Mitigations

4.4.3.1. Conflict with an applicable plan, ordinance or policy establishing measures of effectiveness for the performance of the circulation system; Conflict with an applicable congestion management program?

A. Impact

Impact TT-1: The adoption of the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* would provide the basis for development activity that could conflict with established measures of effectiveness for the performance of the circulation system or conflict with an applicable congestion management plan (Less than Significant with Mitigation Measures).

The proposed project would enable new development that would result in increased traffic that could conflict with established level of service standards and/or conflict with the Monterey County Congestion Management Plan. The following analysis is divided into two parts—1) Urban Growth Area (~2050) and 2) Urban Growth Area + Urban

Reserve Area (beyond 2050). Figure 4.4.4 shows the Circulation Diagram from the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan*.

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Figure 4.4.4: Circulation Diagram from *Gonzales 2010 General Plan*

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Analysis of Urban Growth Area (~Year 2050; Not Including Urban Reserve)

According to a traffic analysis performed by Hatch Mott MacDonald (March 27, 2010), projected population and employment data for the Urban Growth Area was integrated into the regional traffic demand model developed by the Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments (AMBAG). The model was modified to include the proposed new street system east of Highway 101, as identified in the Circulation Diagram (Figure 4.14.3 above). The traffic model was then used to develop the traffic forecasts upon which the Hatch Mott MacDonald analysis was based.[11] The AMBAG model forecasts that buildout of the Urban Growth Area would generate approximately a net new 55,925 daily trips. Appendix C contains the complete Hatch Mott MacDonald analysis.

According to the Hatch Mott MacDonald analysis, most of the city streets within Gonzales would operate at acceptable levels of service within their current configurations at buildout of the Urban Growth Area. However, one corridor—Fifth Street-Johnson Canyon Road—would require additional improvements to offset deficient operations. Operations and improvements related to buildout of the Urban Growth Area (at approximately the year 2050) are discussed below. A discussion of operations and improvements related to buildout of the Urban Reserve Area (i.e., Urban Growth Area + Urban Reserve Area) follows that.

Fifth Street/Johnson Canyon Road:

> The Fifth Street-Johnson Canyon Road corridor would be most affected by the city's buildout, both because it is the most direct route to access Highway 101 for half of the new growth east of Highway 101, and it is centrally located for crossing the freeway. Each deficiently operating segment of this corridor is described below.

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[11] The AMBAG traffic demand model utilizes population and employment forecasts for the entire Monterey Bay Area (Monterey, San Benito, and Santa Cruz Counties) that were developed by AMBAG in 2004. Updated population and employment forecasts were developed by AMBAG in 2008. These updated forecasts anticipate a slower level of population and employment growth than the 2004 projections. For example, while the 2004 forecasts projected an annual population growth rate of 1.2% between 2000 and 2030, the 2008 forecasts project a lower annual growth rate of 0.8%. Similarly, the 2004 forecasts projected an annual employment growth rate of 1.6%, while the 2008 forecasts project an annual growth rate of 0.8%. Use of the 2004 population and employment forecasts within this analysis therefore represents a conservative approach to this analysis. See Appendix D for a more detailed discussion of this topic, as included within the AMBAG document *Monterey Bay Area 2008 Regional Forecast*.

Fifth Street between Rincon Road and Highway 101 would operate at an unacceptable LOS D, and would need to be widened from two to four through lanes to achieve acceptable levels of service. The feasibility of adding a second through lane in each direction is constrained by the configuration of the street, particularly the all-way stop intersection at Rincon Road and the "jog" in Rincon Road at its intersection with Fifth Street. The feasibility of widening the road or adding turning bays is limited by the built-up character of the adjacent lots and the need to maintain slow traffic flow in the vicinity of the schools. On-street parking would have to be prohibited on Fifth Street east of the high school, and the existing planter strip adjacent to the sidewalk in the eastbound direction of Fifth Street would need to be removed. This would reduce traffic delays caused by vehicles entering or leaving on-street parking stalls, as well as provide additional pavement for use by traveling vehicles; however, it could also increase vehicle speeds. Trap lanes (i.e., where traffic in a through lane is directed into a turn lane) and signalization of the Rincon Road/Fifth Street intersection may also become necessary, in order to manage the vehicle queues on Fifth Street between Rincon Road and Fanoe Road/Herold Parkway. It is recommended that any future design study for the Highway 101/Fifth Street interchange should also include both the design of the Fifth Street corridor (between Rincon Road and Fanoe Road/Herold Parkway), and an evaluation of synchronization of future traffic signals along the corridor.

Between Highway 101 and Fanoe Road, Fifth Street would operate at an unacceptable LOS E. To achieve acceptable levels of service, this segment would need to be widened from four lanes to six lanes (three through lanes in each direction, plus turn lanes).

Between Fanoe Road/Herold Parkway and Iverson Road, Fifth Street (also known in this area as Johnson Canyon Road) would be the primary east-west arterial through the new growth areas in the eastern portion of the city. This facility is projected to operate at an unacceptable LOS F immediately east of Fanoe Road/Herold Parkway. To operate acceptably, it would need to be widened from two lanes to four lanes (two through lanes in each direction) between Fanoe Road/Herold Parkway and “Arterial A”. The street is bounded by agricultural fields, so widening would convert Prime Farmland to urban use (discussed in full in Section

4.2 above). It would also have an impact on visual character (discussed in full in Section 4.3 above). The improvements and operations described above have been incorporated into the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* Circulation Diagram.

Fanoe Road/Herold Parkway:

To encourage use of Fanoe Road/Herold Parkway, as well as to accommodate other traffic demand on the corridor, it is recommended that Fanoe Road/Herold Parkway be widened and constructed as four-lane divided arterials between Gloria Road and Associated Lane. The improvements and operations described above have been incorporated into the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* Circulation Diagram.

Gloria Road:

Gloria Road can operate acceptably as a two-lane arterial between Highway 101 and Iverson Road. However, a high percentage of the new industrial and manufacturing areas in Gonzales would be located along this corridor, adding a considerable number of semi-trailers and other large trucks. In addition, the Gloria Road and Iverson Road corridors would be the official truck route for hauling waste to the new Johnson Canyon Landfill east of the city. Finally, some of the traffic shifted away from the Fifth Street corridor would end up on Gloria Road, primarily the traffic bound to and from the south along Highway 101. It is therefore recommended that Gloria Road be developed as a four-lane divided arterial between Highway 101 and "Arterial A" and as a two-lane arterial between Street "A and Iverson Road. The improvements and operations described above have been incorporated into the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* Circulation Diagram.

Associated Lane:

Associated Lane would need to be realigned at buildout of the land use plan, extending farther east into the city. Although it can operate acceptably as a two-lane arterial in the short-term, traffic diversions from the Fifth Street/Johnson Canyon Road corridor would add additional traffic to the corridor. Associated Lane should therefore be upgraded as a four-lane divided arterial (two lanes in each direction) between Highway 101 and "Arterial A", and a two-lane divided arterial between "Arterial A" and "Arterial B". In the long term, this corridor would best function as a four-lane arterial with limited access (see discussion in next section regarding Urban Growth Area plus Urban reserve area). As it would be

best to limit access early to avoid costly retrofits, this street segment should be designed for limited access early in the development of the Urban Growth Area. The improvements and operations described above have been incorporated into the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* Circulation Diagram.

"Arterial A":

"Arterial A" would be a new north-south arterial east of Highway 101, to be located approximately equidistant between Fanoe Road/Herold Parkway and Iverson Road. It would function acceptably as a two-lane arterial between "Arterial B" and Gloria Road. Between "Arterial B" and Associated Lane, "Arterial A" would be designated as a collector street. Due to its connection to Associated Lane, this northern end of "Arterial A" could be used as a through route to Associated Lane by drivers looking for a short-cut through the local neighborhoods. It is recommended that the City work with the future project applicant pertaining to this future growth area, in order to determine methods to discourage use of the upper end of "Arterial A" as a through route. This may involve either traffic calming or a different alignment for the street than currently proposed. These recommendations are the subject of a mitigation measure below. "Arterial A" has been incorporated into the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* Circulation Diagram.

"Arterial B":

"Arterial B" would be a new east-west arterial in the future northeastern quadrant of the city, connecting Fanoe Road and Iverson Road. This street would operate acceptably as a two-lane arterial in its entirety. It would also have sufficient reserve capacity to accommodate traffic diversions from Fifth Street/Johnson Canyon en route to Highway 101 via the North Alta Street/Old Stage Road/Associated Lane interchange. "Arterial B" has been incorporated into the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* Circulation Diagram.

Highway 101 – Local Operations:

Highway 101 would operate deficiently throughout much of the city, as well as immediately north and south of Gonzales. Widening of the freeway would be required either with or without buildout of the Urban Growth Area. Highway 101 from south of the Gloria Road interchange to North Alta/Old Stage Road would

need to be widened to six lanes, and Highway 101 north of North Alta Street/Old Stage Road Interchange would need widening to eight lanes.

As discussed above, Highway 101 widening improvements would be required with or without the proposed project. Nonetheless, the proposed project would make substantial contributions to traffic on Highway 101. When the Urban Growth Area traffic is added to Year 2050 regional conditions, the necessary level of improvement to Highway 101 remains the same. No additional widening would be required beyond that required for Year 2050 without buildout of the Urban Growth Area. Cumulative traffic impacts associated with the proposed project are discussed in Chapter 6. Figure 4.4.5 shows projected average daily traffic (ADT) volumes and resulting levels of service (LOS) at buildout of the Urban Growth Area.

Table 4.4.5: Future Average Daily Traffic Volumes and Levels of Service (Buildout of Urban Growth Area – Year 2050)

Street Segment	ADT VOL	LOS w/out Upgrade	Future Classification (* denotes street upgrade)	LOS w/ Upgrade
ALTA STREET				
a. Gloria Rd - Gonzales River Rd	5,329	A	Major Arterial 2-Lane	A
b. Gonzales River Rd - 5th St	4,064	A	Major Arterial 2-Lane	A
c. 5th St - Associated Lane	5,649	A	Major Arterial 2-Lane	A
ASSOCIATED LANE				
a. Old Stage - Fanoe	10,688	A	Major Arterial 4-Lane*	A
b. Fanoe Rd - "Arterial B"	5,581	A	Minor Arterial 4-Lane (new)	A
c. "Arterial A" – "Arterial B"	3,494	A	Minor Arterial 2-Lane (new)	A
FIFTH STREET/JOHNSON CANYON RD				
a. Alta St - Rincon Rd	5,754	A	Minor Arterial 2-Lane	A
b. Rincon Rd - 101 SB Ramps	15,473	D	Minor Arterial 4-Lane*	A
c. 101 NB Ramps - Fanoe Rd	33,924	E	Major Arterial 6-Lane*	C
d. Fanoe Rd - "Arterial A"	21,304	F	Minor Arterial 4-Lane*	A
e. "Arterial A" - Iverson Rd	476	A	Minor Arterial 4-Lane*	A
f. East of Iverson Rd	363	A	Minor Arterial 2-Lane	A
GLORIA ROAD				
a. Hwy 101 NB-Ramp - Herold Pkwy Ext	11,589	B	Major Arterial 4-Lane*	A
b. Herold Pkwy Ext - "Arterial A"	8,224	A	Major Arterial 4-Lane*	A
e. "Arterial A" - Iverson Road	2,846	A	Minor Arterial 2-Lane	A
f. East of Iverson	900	A	Minor Arterial 2-Lane	A

Street Segment	ADT VOL	LOS w/out Upgrade	Future Classification (* denotes street upgrade)	LOS w/ Upgrade
GONZALES RIVER ROAD				
a. West of S. Alta Street	2,480	A	Major Arterial 2-Lane	A
HIGHWAY 101				
a. South of Gloria Rd	77,345	E	Major Arterial 6-Lane*	C
b. Gloria Rd - Fifth St	74,579	D	Major Arterial 6-Lane*	C-
c. Fifth St - Alta St	88,120	F	Major Arterial 6-Lane*	C
d. North of Alta St	94,840	F	Major Arterial 8-Lane*	C
HEROLD PARKWAY / FANOE ROAD				
a. North of Gloria Rd	7,758	A	Minor Arterial 4-Lane (new)	A
b. South of Johnson Canyon Rd	10,806	A	Minor Arterial 4-Lane*	A
c. Johnson Canyon Rd - "Arterial B"	13,827	C	Minor Arterial 4-Lane*	A
e. "Arterial B" - Associated Ln	9,568	A	Minor Arterial 4-Lane*	A
IVERSON ROAD				
a. North of Gloria Rd	322	A	Minor Arterial 2-Lane	A
b. South of Johnson Canyon Rd	928	A	Minor Arterial 2-Lane	A
c. North of Johnson Canyon Rd	686	A	Minor Arterial 2-Lane	A
d. South of Associated Ln	1,511	A	Minor Arterial 2-Lane	A
"ARTERIAL A" (new facility)				
a. North of Gloria Rd	2,549	A	Minor Arterial 2-Lane (new)	A
b. South of Johnson Canyon Rd	8,053	A	Minor Arterial 2-Lane (new)	A
c. Johnson Canyon Rd - "Arterial B"	9,306	A	Minor Arterial 2-Lane (new)	A
"ARTERIAL B" (new facility)				
a. Fanoe to "Arterial A"	1,943	A	Minor Arterial 2-Lane (new)	A
b. "Arterial A" to Associated Ln	3,669	A	Minor Arterial 2-Lane (new)	A
c. Associated Ln to Iverson Rd	3,582	A	Minor Arterial 2-Lane (new)	A
HIGHWAY 101/LA GLORIA ROAD INTERCHANGE				
a. Northbound off ramp	4,711	A	[One-Lane Ramp]*	A
b. Northbound on ramp	3,776	A	[One-Lane Ramp]*	A
c. Southbound off ramp	1,568	A	[One-Lane Ramp]*	A
d. Southbound on ramp	3,399	A	[One-Lane Ramp]*	A
HIGHWAY 101/FIFTH STREET INTERCHANGE				
a. Northbound off ramp	4,663	A	[One-Lane Ramp]	A
b. Northbound on ramp	10,652	A	[One-Lane Ramp]	A
c. Southbound off ramp	12,973	C	[One-Lane Ramp]	C
d. Southbound on ramp	5,424	A	[One-Lane Ramp]	A
HIGHWAY 101/ALTA STREET				

Street Segment	ADT VOL	LOS w/out Upgrade	Future Classification (* denotes street upgrade)	LOS w/ Upgrade
INTERCHANGE				
a. Northbound off ramp	2,467	A	[One-Lane Ramp]*	A
b. Northbound on ramp	5,994	A	[One-Lane Ramp]*	A
c. Southbound off ramp	4,550	A	[One-Lane Ramp]*	A
d. Southbound on ramp	1,358	A	[One-Lane Ramp]*	A

Source: Hatch Mott MacDonald, 2010

Highway 101 – Regional Operations:

According to the Hatch Mott MacDonald analysis, other sections of Highway 101 in Monterey County would also operate deficiently in the future. Figure 4.4.6 depicts the projected volumes along the entirety of Highway 101 in Monterey County at the Year 2030.[12] The addition of traffic from the buildout of the General Plan Urban Growth Area would result in impacts to many road segments between Greenfield and Prunedale. However, as with the freeway segments within Gonzales, the impacts to these regional freeway segments would not rise to the level of requiring additional roadway upgrades beyond that which would be required without buildout of the Urban Growth Area. This is because the total amount of traffic growth on these non-local freeway segments would diminish in proportion to the distance from Gonzales. The further away the segment is from Gonzales, the lower the number of vehicle trips added from the Urban Growth Area.

[12] These volumes are taken from the *Regional Impact Fee Next Study Update*, Kimley-Horn and Associates, March 26, 2008, and therefore only assume the growth projected under the current Gonzales General Plan, not the proposed update.

Figure 4.4.6: Year 2030 Volumes along Highway 101 in Monterey County (without the proposed project)

Roadway Segment	Roadway Classification	LOS E Capacity	2030 Base Line		
			ADT[13]	V/C RATIO[14]	LOS
US Highway 101					
County Border to Crazy Horse Canyon Rd.	4-Lane Uninterrupted Flow Highway	64,200	67,009	1.044	F
Crazy Horse Canyon Rd. to San Miquel Canyon	4-Lane Uninterrupted Flow Highway	64,200	58,672	0.914	E
San Miguel Canyon Rd. to SR-156	4-Lane Uninterrupted Flow Highway	64,200	75,258	1.172	F
SR-156 to Pesante Rd.	4-Lane Uninterrupted Flow Highway	64,200	67,533	1.052	F
Pesante Rd. to Espinosa Rd.	4-Lane Uninterrupted Flow Highway	64,200	70,734	1.102	F
Espinosa Rd. to E Boronda Rd.	4-Lane Uninterrupted Flow Highway	64,200	74,981	1.168	F
E Boronda Rd. to W Laurel Dr.	4-Lane Freeway	69,100	74,999	1.085	F
W Laurel Dr. to N Main SI.	4-Lane Freeway	69,100	74,106	1.072	F
N Main SI. to E Market SI.	4-Lane Freeway	69,100	85,228	1.233	F
E Market SI. to John SI.	4-Lane Freeway	69,100	81,038	1.173	F
John SI. to S Sanborn Rd.	4-Lane Freeway	69,100	86,922	1.258	F
S Sanborn Rd. to Airport Blvd.	4-Lane Freeway	69,100	88,239	1.277	F
Airport Blvd. to Abbott SI.	4-Lane Freeway	69,100	64,262	0.93	E
Abbott SI. to Spence Rd.	4-Lane Uninterrupted Flow Highway	64,200	89,284	1.391	F
Spence Rd. to Chualar Rd.	4-Lane Uninterrupted Flow Highway	64,200	88,205	1.374	F
[Gonzales Segments Here—not shown]					
Carnphora Rd. to Moranda Rd.	4-Lane Uninterrupted Flow Highway	64,200	72,495	1.129	F
Moranda Rd. to Front SI.	4-Lane Uninterrupted Flow Highway	64,200	72,495	1.129	F
Front SI. to Arroyo Seco Rd.	4-Lane Uninterrupted Flow Highway	64,200	49,849	0.776	D
Arroyo Seco Rd. to El Carnino Real	4-Lane Uninterrupted Flow Highway	64,200	49,983	0.779	D
El Carnino Real to Oak Ave.	4-Lane Uninterrupted Flow Highway	64,200	46,918	0.731	D
Oak Ave. to Patricia Ln.	4-Lane Uninterrupted Flow Highway	64,200	32,572	0.507	C

[13] ADT means average daily traffic
[14] V?C Ration means ratio of volume to traffic and is used to determine LOS

Roadway Segment	Roadway Classification	LOS E Capacity	2030 Base Line		
			ADT[13]	V/C RATIO[14]	LOS
Patricia Ln. to Central Ave.	4-Lane Uninterrupted Flow Highway	64,200	31,294	0.487	C
Central Ave. to Jolon Rd.	4-Lane Uninterrupted Flow Highway	64,200	35,118	0.547	C
Jolon Rd. to Broadway SI.	4-Lane Freeway	69,100	36,826	0.533	B
Broadway SI. to S 1 st SI.	4-Lane Freeway	69,100	30,404	0.44	B
S 1st SI. to Wildhorse Rd.	4-Lane Freeway	69,100	27,675	0.401	B
Wildhorse Rd. to SR-198	4-Lane Freeway	69,100	27,635	0.4	B
SR-198 to Lockwood San Lucas Rd.	4-Lane Freeway	69,100	25,226	0.365	B
Lockwood San Lucas Rd. to Cattlernen Rd.	4-Lane Freeway	69,100	25,934	0.375	B
Cattlernen Rd. to Los Lobos Rd.	4-Lane Freeway	69,100	27,031	0.391	B
Los Lobos Rd. to Alvarado Rd.	4-Lane Freeway	69,100	27,031	0.391	B
Alvarado Rd. to Jolon Rd.	4-Lane Freeway	69,100	27,031	0.391	B
Jolon Rd. to Bradley Rd. (exit 251)	4-Lane Freeway	69,100	36,518	0.528	B
Bradley Rd. to Bradley Rd. (exit 245)	4-Lane Freeway	69,100	38,175	0.552	B
Bradley Rd. to County Border	4-Lane Freeway	69,100	40,606	0.588	C

Source: Kimley-Horn and Associates, 2008

Highway 101 – Interchange Operations:

The freeway on- and off-ramps at all three interchanges with Highway 101 in Gonzales would operate acceptably as one-lane ramps (plus any necessary additional lanes required at their intersections with city streets). However, each of these three interchanges—1) North Alta Street/Old Stage Road/Associated Lane, 2) Fifth Street, and 3) South Alta Street/Gloria Road—would need to be reconfigured in order to accommodate the additional traffic from buildout of the Urban Growth Area. A Project Study Report (PSR) is currently in progress for the South Alta Street/Gloria Road interchange, and PSRs should also be performed for the other two interchanges.

The most challenging interchange to reconstruct would be the Fifth Street interchange, due to the limited ability to increase the overall footprint of the interchange. Existing multi-family housing has been constructed close to the interchange right of way and would need to be demolished to make room for

interchange improvements. There are non-standard approaches to improving the interchange that would not require demolition of the multi-family housing (e.g., single-point diamond interchange), but such approaches are not looked upon favorably by Caltrans because the safety of non-standard designs have not been tested. By using a non-standard design, interchange improvement could result in a public hazard. In addition, such an approach would constrict pedestrian access across the interchange, which is heavily traveled by students and others walking from the older section of Gonzales to the commercial area east of Highway 101.

It is conceivable that Caltrans could be persuaded to accept a non-standard approach to interchange improvement at Fifth Street, and pedestrian access problems could be dealt with by incorporating a separate pedestrian overcrossing. Failing that, the multi-family housing would probably have to be removed to make room for a standard interchange improvement. Without replacement of the housing at some other location, such an action would impact the city's supply of affordable housing. Given the land resources being provided for urbanization in the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan*, it is likely that an alternative site for the housing could be incorporated into one or more of the Specific Plans that would be forthcoming after adoption of the plan. It is also likely that any impacts associated with developing the replacement housing would be adequately dealt with as part of the Specific Plan and subsequent environmental review process. Improvement of the three Gonzales interchanges is the subject of a mitigation measure below.

Analysis of Urban Growth Area + Urban Reserve

The Urban Reserve Area has concentrations of development in three areas: 1) Johnson Canyon Road corridor, 2) Associated Lane corridor (near Highway 101), and 3) Gloria Road corridor. According to a traffic analysis performed by Hatch Mott MacDonald (March 27, 2010), projected population and employment data for the Urban Reserve Area was integrated into the regional traffic demand model developed by the Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments (AMBAG). The AMBAG model forecasts that buildout of both the Urban Growth Area and the Urban Reserve would generate approximately 86,737 daily trips. The following sections summarize the ability of the various roadway corridors to accommodate the added traffic from the Urban Reserve, as well as those corridors that would require further improvement.

Fifth Street/Johnson Canyon Road:

Operations with buildout of the Urban Growth Area plus the Urban Reserve area are expected to further degrade the deficient operations of the Fifth Street and Johnson Canyon Road corridors. It is recommended that the corridor be designed as a four-lane arterial between Rincon Road and Highway 101. From Highway 101 to "Arterial A", the corridor should be designed as a six-lane facility. The excess capacity along the remaining street system with implementation of the previously recommended roadway improvements—especially Fanoe Road, Herold Parkway, Associated Lane, and Gloria Road—would generally be able to accommodate both the diverted traffic from Fifth Street and the traffic growth emanating from growth areas along those other corridors.

Two roadways with segments that would need further design refinement beyond those previously recommended are Johnson Canyon Road and Associated Lane. Johnson Canyon Road should be upgraded to a four-lane arterial between "Arterial A" and Iverson Road at buildout of both the Urban Growth Area and the Urban Reserve. The design of this section of roadway should be similar to that of Johnson Canyon Road east of this segment. Johnson Canyon Road would continue to operate acceptably as a two-lane arterial east of Iverson Road. No further improvements would be required for this section of the roadway.

Associated Lane:

The segment of Associated Lane between Highway 101 and Fanoe Road would best function as a four-lane arterial with limited access. This minimization of access would include both project driveways and public streets. The limiting of access to Associated Lane would increase the vehicle capacity of this segment by reducing the "friction" on through traffic flow caused by intersection operations. The lack of proposed residential neighborhoods to the north of Associated Lane would minimize any impacts these changes would have to either residential quality of life or pedestrian/bicycle circulation in the area.

Associated Lane is also recommended to be extended eastward from its currently proposed alignment, in order to directly connect with Iverson Road. This improvement would further encourage traffic to use Associated Lane instead of Fifth Street/Johnson Canyon Road en route to Highway 101, especially from the

Urban Reserve Area northeast of the corner of Iverson Road and Johnson Canyon Road.

Access into the Easternmost Urban Reserve Subarea:

Two roadway corridors would become the primary access into the easternmost Urban Reserve subareas – Johnson Canyon Road and "Arterial B". The Urban Reserve area at the northeast corner of the Iverson Road/Johnson Canyon Road intersection would be best served through the westward extension of "Arterial B" and the two parallel collector streets to the south. Connections to Johnson Canyon Road should be minimized.

Highway 101 – Local Operations:

Highway 101 would operate deficiently throughout much of the city, as well as immediately north and south of Gonzales, with buildout of both the Urban Growth Area and the Urban Reserve. Widening of the freeway to six lanes south of North Alta Street/Old Stage Road and eight lanes north of the same interchange would be required to achieve acceptable freeway operations at buildout of both the Urban Growth Area and the Urban Reserve. Note that this level of improvement would also be required without the project.

Highway 101 – Regional Operations:

Traffic from the buildout of the Urban Growth Area and the Urban Reserve Area would continue to impact the deficiently operating segments between Greenfield and Prunedale. This growth would not, however, create a need for more travel lanes beyond what would be required without the project. Widening and improving Highway 101 would be a regional improvement, and the Transportation Agency for Monterey County (TAMC) would be the agency responsible for its implementation. Payment of the TAMC regional traffic impact fee by each future development within Gonzales would mitigate the regional impact of the General Plan as a whole.

Highway 101 – Interchange Operations:

Most of the freeway on- and off-ramps at all three interchanges with Highway 101 in Gonzales would all operate acceptably as one-lane ramps (plus any necessary additional lanes required at their intersections with city streets). The potential

exceptions would be the northbound on-ramp and southbound off-ramp at the Fifth Street interchange. The recommended restriction of Fifth Street to four lanes east of Highway 101 would moderate the volumes on these two ramps by causing traffic to divert to other interchanges within the city, thereby eliminating the need for widening of these ramps.

As under buildout of just the Urban Growth Area, the three interchanges within Gonzales—1) North Alta Street/Old Stage Road, 2) Fifth Street, and 3) South Alta Street/Gloria Road—would need to be reconfigured in order to accommodate the additional traffic from buildout of the Urban Growth Area and Urban Reserve. A Project Study Report (PSR) is currently in progress for the South Alta Street-Gloria Road interchange, and PSRs should also be performed for the other two interchanges. The most challenging interchange to reconstruct would be the Fifth Street interchange, due to the limited ability to increase the overall footprint of the interchange (see earlier discussion in previous section). Figure 4.4.7 shows the projected average daily traffic (ADT) volumes and resulting levels of service upon buildout of both the Urban Growth Area and the Urban Reserve Area.

Table 4.4.7: Future Average Daily Traffic Volumes and Levels of Service (Buildout of Urban Growth Area + Urban Reserve Area)

Street Segment	ADT VOL	LOS w/out Upgrade	Future Classification (* denotes street upgrade)	LOS w/ Upgrade
ALTA STREET				
a. Gloria Rd - Gonzales River Rd	4,318	A	Major Arterial 2-Lane	A
b. Gonzales River Rd - 5th St	2,998	A	Major Arterial 2-Lane	A
c. 5th St - Associated Lane	3,717	A	Major Arterial 2-Lane	A
ASSOCIATED LANE				
a. Old Stage - Fanoe	31,838	F	Major Arterial 4-Lane*	C
b. Fanoe Rd - "Arterial B"	18,271	F	Minor Arterial 4-Lane (new)	A
c. "Arterial A" – "Arterial B"	16,127	E	Minor Arterial 2-Lane (new)	A
FIFTH STREET/JOHNSON CANYON RD				
a. Alta St - Rincon Rd	6,019	A	Minor Arterial 2-Lane	A
b. Rincon Rd - 101 SB Ramps	16,584	E	Minor Arterial 4-Lane*	A
c. 101 NB Ramps - Fanoe Rd	42,339	F	Major Arterial 6-Lane*	C
d. Fanoe Rd - "Arterial A"	33,784	F	Minor Arterial 6-Lane*	C
e. "Arterial A" - Iverson Rd	17,965	E	Minor Arterial 4-Lane*	A
f. East of Iverson Rd	4,482	A	Minor Arterial 2-Lane	A
GLORIA ROAD				

Street Segment	ADT VOL	LOS w/out Upgrade	Future Classification (* denotes street upgrade)	LOS w/ Upgrade
a. Hwy 101 NB-Ramp - Herold Pkwy Ext	12,836	C	Major Arterial 4-Lane*	A
b. Herold Pkwy Ext - "Arterial A"	7,652	A	Major Arterial 4-Lane*	A
e. "Arterial A" - Iverson Road	2,838	A	Minor Arterial 2-Lane	A
f. East of Iverson	950	A	Minor Arterial 2-Lane	A
GONZALES RIVER ROAD				
a. West of S. Alta Street	3,599	A	Major Arterial 2-Lane	A
HIGHWAY 101				
a. South of Gloria Rd	68,631	D	Major Arterial 6-Lane*	C
b. Gloria Rd - Fifth St	66,827	D	Major Arterial 6-Lane*	C
c. Fifth St - Alta St	86,277	F	Major Arterial 6-Lane*	C
d. North of Alta St	100,443	F	Major Arterial 8-Lane*	C
HEROLD PARKWAY / FANOE ROAD				
a. North of Gloria Rd	10,627	A	Minor Arterial 4-Lane (new)	A
b. South of Johnson Canyon Rd	16,186	E	Minor Arterial 4-Lane*	A
c. Johnson Canyon Rd - "Arterial B"	20,621	F	Minor Arterial 4-Lane*	A
e. "Arterial B" - Associated Ln	20,421	F	Minor Arterial 4-Lane*	A
IVERSON ROAD				
a. North of Gloria Rd	4,056	A	Minor Arterial 2-Lane	A
b. South of Johnson Canyon Rd	4,448	A	Minor Arterial 2-Lane	A
c. North of Johnson Canyon Rd	12,806	C	Minor Arterial 2-Lane	C
d. South of Associated Ln	9,938	A	Minor Arterial 2-Lane	A
STREET A (new facility)				
a. North of Gloria Rd	3,111	A	Minor Arterial 2-Lane (new)	A
b. South of Johnson Canyon Rd	13,159	C	Minor Arterial 2-Lane (new)	C
c. Johnson Canyon Rd - "Arterial B"	5,592	A	Minor Arterial 2-Lane (new)	A
STREET B (new facility)				
a. Fanoe to "Arterial A"	2,348	A	Minor Arterial 2-Lane (new)	A
b. "Arterial A" to Associated Ln	2,379	A	Minor Arterial 2-Lane (new)	A
c. Associated Ln to Iverson Rd	2,540	A	Minor Arterial 2-Lane (new)	A
HIGHWAY 101/LA GLORIA ROAD INTERCHANGE				
a. Northbound off ramp	4,171	A	[One-Lane Ramp]*	A
b. Northbound on ramp	4,550	A	[One-Lane Ramp]*	E
c. Southbound off ramp	1,568	A	[One-Lane Ramp]*	F
d. Southbound on ramp	3,751	A	[One-Lane Ramp]*	A
HIGHWAY 101/FIFTH STREET INTERCHANGE				
a. Northbound off ramp	6,072	A	[One-Lane Ramp]	A
b. Northbound on ramp	14,830	D	[One-Lane Ramp]	A
c. Southbound off ramp	15,957	D	[One-Lane Ramp]	C
d. Southbound on ramp	5,535	A	[One-Lane Ramp]	A

Street Segment	ADT VOL	LOS w/out Upgrade	Future Classification (* denotes street upgrade)	LOS w/ Upgrade
HIGHWAY 101/ALTA STREET INTERCHANGE				
a. Northbound off ramp	4,385	A	[One-Lane Ramp]*	A
b. Northbound on ramp	11,096	B	[One-Lane Ramp]*	A
c. Southbound off ramp	10,996	A	[One-Lane Ramp]*	A
d. Southbound on ramp	3,271	A	[One-Lane Ramp]*	A

Source: Hatch Mott MacDonald, 2010

Truck Traffic

The *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* Circulation Diagram shows truck routes that both incorporates existing city truck routes and designates future truck routes within the growth areas east of Highway 101. These future truck routes include the Gloria Road and Iverson Road corridors, which are currently the established truck routes for waste trucks traveling to and from the Johnson Canyon Landfill east of Gonzales. The designated truck routes are intended to reinforce this routing of truck traffic to and from the landfill and is consistent with agreements in place between the City of Gonzales and the Salinas Valley Solid Waste Authority regarding the movement of trucks between Highway 101 and the Johnson Canyon Road landfill. The proposed project would have no effect on the number of trucks permitted to service the landfill.

In addition to landfill truck traffic, the proposed project would generate additional truck traffic in areas designated for new commercial and industrial development. All new near-term industrial development proposed by the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* would be located along Gloria Road. New proposed commercial development areas would also be located along Gloria Road and along Fifth Street/Johnson Canyon Road. The existing city contains an industrial park in the area west of Alta Street along Gonzales River Road, and there is a substantial amount of vacant industrial land available for development. Such development would increase truck traffic along Gonzales River Road, but such traffic would not be the result of the proposed project, as the area was designated for development in the *Gonzales 1996 General Plan*. Finally, the proposed project would increase truck traffic on Highway 101 due to new industrial and commercial development in the planning area. Such additional truck traffic would not be expected to represent a

significant change in the type or proportion of truck traffic on Highway 101, and future LOS calculated for this highway accounts for such additional truck traffic.

B. Applicable Policies and Regulations

The *Gonzales 2010 General Plan's* "Circulation Element" contains the following policies and implementing actions designed to address traffic congestion, level of service, and street capacity:

Policy CIR-1.1 Interconnected and Efficient Streets

Develop and maintain an interconnected and efficient system of arterial, collector, and local streets consistent with the policies and diagrams of the Circulation Element to accommodate the movement of people and vehicles and provide access within Gonzales. Circulation patterns in the new growth area should be inter-connected and provide multiple route choices for residents.

Implementing Action CIR-1.1.1 – Level of Service Standards. Maintain the following standards for acceptable traffic levels of service (LOS) during peak periods:

- ✓ *For signalized intersections, roundabouts, and four-way stops, LOS C,*
- ✓ *For unsignalized, local street stop sign controlled intersections, LOS C overall, and*
- ✓ *For mid block road segments, LOS C overall (the need for mid-block analysis will be determined on a case-by-case basis in Specific Plan development)*

Exceptions to these standards may be granted where road widening or other improvements needed to achieve the designated level of service would be detrimental to the character of the area or would be inconsistent with other goals and policies in this General Plan.

Implementing Action CIR-1.1.7 – Plan Lines. Preserve right of way for proposed collector and arterial streets by adopting plans lines as part of Specific Plan approval.

Implementing Action CIR-1.1.8 – Highway 101 Interchanges. Continue to work with Caltrans to improve Gonzales's Highway 101 interchanges. Require final redesign plans to be adopted by the City and Caltrans before development takes place.

Implementing Action CIR-1.1.9 – Traffic Monitoring. Develop a periodic system of traffic monitoring to determine whether or not service levels are being maintained and to ensure that the impacts of new development are evaluated based on current conditions.

Implementing Action CIR-1.1.10 – 5th Street LOS. Consider a variety of measures to prevent Fifth Street west of Highway 101 from deteriorating below LOS "C." These could include peak hour parking restrictions, modifying the Rincon Road intersection, or making improvements to the Highway 101/Fifth Street Interchange.

Implementing Action CIR-1.1.12 – Traffic Control. Provide operational controls, including: roundabouts, traffic signals or stop signs where warranted to facilitate the safe flow of vehicles through intersections. As a first option, consider the use of roundabouts for traffic control at all non-local intersections.

Policy CIR-10.1 Regional Planning

Approve only new circulation improvements that are consistent with regional transportation planning efforts.

Implementing Action CIR-10.1.1 – Regional Planning. Work with the Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments, Monterey County, Monterey Salinas Transit, and the regional Congestion Management Agency to develop and implement plans which reduce congestion, improve air quality, and reduce single occupant home-to-work driving trips. Coordinate with AMBAG on the Sustainable Communities Strategy.

Implementing Action CIR-10.1.2 – State and Federal Coordination. Coordinate local transportation improvements with State and Federal agencies to ensure consistency between local and regional/statewide actions, especially as pertains to Highway 101.

C. Significance Determination

While the plans, policies, and actions of the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* lessen the potential impact of urbanization on transportation and traffic, there remains the potential for substantial adverse effect on transportation and traffic. According to the Hatch Mott MacDonald analysis, the following impacts would need to be addressed:

- Improvement of all three Gonzales Interchanges.
- Widening of Fifth Street/Johnson Canyon Road from Rincon Street to Iverson Road.
- Widening of Associate Lane from Highway 101 to "Arterial A"; extension of Associated Lane to Iverson Road in the long term.
- Widening of Gloria Road from Highway 101 to "Arterial A"; reconstruction of entire length of Gloria Road from Highway 101 to Iverson Road to handle heavy truck traffic.
- Reconstruction of Iverson Road from Gloria Road to Johnson Canyon Road to handle heavy truck traffic.
- Widening of Fanoe Road/Herold Parkway from Gloria Road to Associated Lane.

These impacts would be made less than significant with the following mitigation measures:

D. Mitigation Measures

The City of Gonzales shall incorporate the following measures into the *Draft Gonzales 2010 General Plan* prior to final adoption and eliminate or amend any existing provisions of the draft plan that may be in conflict with these measures so as to eliminate the inconsistency in favor of the measures:

Mitigation Measure TT-1: Interchange Improvements

The city shall work with TAMC and Caltrans to improve each of the three Gonzales Interchanges on a schedule that would ensure that the improvements are in place to maintain acceptable levels of service at the interchanges as new development occurs in the Urban Growth Area. For the Fifth Street Interchange, the City shall

work with Caltrans to explore the feasibility of a non-standard design that would minimize requirements for additional right-of-way and disruption of existing development.

Mitigation Measure TT-2: Widen Fifth Street from Rincon to Highway 101

The city shall widen Fifth Street from Rincon Road to the Highway 101 southbound on-ramp from two lanes to four lanes or shall complete other improvements that will effectively maintain acceptable levels of service.

Mitigation Measure TT-3: Widen Fifth Street from Highway 101 to Fanoe Road/Herold Parkway

The City shall obtain offers of dedication of right of way as opportunities arise and shall subsequently widen Fifth Street from Highway 101 to Fanoe Road/Herold Parkway from four through lanes to six through lanes of traffic. These improvements shall be timed to ensure that the improvements are in place to maintain acceptable levels as new development occurs in the Urban Growth Area.

Mitigation Measure TT-4: Widen Fifth Street from Fanoe Road/Herold Parkway to Iverson Road

The city shall widen Fifth Street/Johnson Canyon Road from Fanoe Road/Herold Parkway to Iverson Road. The segment between Fanoe Road/Herold Parkway to "Arterial A" shall be widened from two lanes to six lanes, and this improvement shall be timed to ensure that the improvements are in place to maintain acceptable levels as new development occurs in the Urban Growth Area. The segment between "Arterial A" and Iverson Road shall be widened to from two lanes to four lanes only after such time that the City amends the Gonzales 2010 General Plan to allow development of the Urban Reserve Area east of Iverson Road.

Mitigation Measure TT-5: Synchronization of Signals along the Fifth Street/Johnson Canyon Road corridor

The city shall coordinate with Caltrans to integrate interchange improvements at Highway 101 and Fifth Street/Johnson Canyon Road with local improvements along the entire corridor from Rincon Road to Fanoe Road/Herold parkway, including the synchronization of traffic signals.

Mitigation Measure TT-6: Widen Associated Lane

The City shall widen Associated Lane to a four-lane arterial with limited access between Highway 101 and Fanoe Road. Between Fanoe Road and "Arterial A", this facility shall be widened to a divided four-lane arterial. These improvements shall be timed to ensure that the improvements are in place to maintain acceptable levels as new development occurs in the Urban Growth Area.

Mitigation Measure TT-7: Extend Associated Lane to Iverson Road

The city shall revise its Circulation Diagram to extend Associated Lane from "Arterial A" to Iverson Road as a four-lane facility. Such an improvement shall only be required at such a time that the City amends the Gonzales 2010 General Plan to allow development of the Urban Reserve Area east of Iverson Road. In the interim, sufficient right-of-way shall be set aside to build the future street extension.

Mitigation Measure TT-8: Widen Gloria Road and Design for Truck Use

The City shall widen Gloria Road to a four-lane arterial between Highway 101 and "Arterial A". The roadbed for the entire length of Gloria Road from Highway 101 to Iverson Road shall be constructed to handle large volumes of heavy truck traffic. These improvements shall be timed to ensure that the improvements are in place to maintain acceptable levels as new development occurs in the Urban Growth Area.

Mitigation Measure TT-9: Design Iverson Lane for Truck Use

The City shall reconstruct the roadbed of Iverson Road from Gloria Road to Johnson Canyon Road to handle large volumes of heavy truck traffic. These improvements shall be timed to replace road segments as they deteriorate from truck use and as adjacent properties are developed.

Mitigation Measure TT-10: Widen Fanoe Road

The City shall widen Fanoe Road/Herold Parkway from a two-lane to a four-lane arterial between Gloria Road and Associated Lane. These improvements shall be timed to ensure that the improvements are in place to maintain acceptable levels as new development occurs in the Urban Growth Area.

Mitigation Measure TT-11: Traffic Calming on "Arterial A"

The city shall work with Specific Plan preparers to refine operations by incorporating traffic calming measures and/or consider alternative alignments on "Arterial A" to discourage large volumes of through traffic on this street.

Mitigation Measure TT-12: Update Traffic Impact Fees

The City shall update its existing traffic impact fee nexus study to accurately project the costs of circulation system improvements for the 2010 Gonzales General Plan *area and shall equitably spread the costs and update its traffic impact fee schedule consistent with the requirements of state law.*

4.4.3.2. SUBSTANTIALLY INCREASE HAZARDS DUE TO A DESIGN FEATURE OR INCOMPATIBLE USES

A. Impact

Impact TT-2: The adoption of the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* would provide the basis for development activity that could cause a substantial increase in hazards due to a design feature or incompatible uses (Less than Significant with Mitigation Measures).

The proposed project would enable new development that could result in hazards due to a design feature or incompatible use. The *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* contains a Circulation Diagram, and review of this diagram reveals no obvious design feature or incompatible use that would create a hazard to the traveling public. Nonetheless, the detailed design of neighborhoods, commercial centers, and industrial parks, each of which would include a full range of streets—from major arterials to local streets and cul-de-sacs—is not part of the proposed project but is rather left to the subsequent development of Specific Plans.

The *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* also contains typical cross sections for each type of street facility. A review of these cross sections, plus the policies and implementing actions contained in the Circulation Element, indicates that required lane widths are standard and should pose no problem for emergency vehicles. Also, all streets are required to accommodate pedestrians with sidewalks that conform to standards set by the American Disability Act. The *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* also indicates that all non-local streets

must provide a standard width bicycle lane, unless there is an adjacent off-street Class I bicycle facility planned. Finally, the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* indicates that the City is encouraged to avoid overbuilding streets with more lanes than are needed in the relatively short term (i.e., 10 years). This should help minimize the number of multi-lane intersections, which could pose a hazard to pedestrians. All the features described above would have a positive effect on pedestrian and bicyclist safety.

The *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* also contains implementing actions calling for improved design of the Fifth Street corridor including the overpass at Highway 101, the avoidance of traffic conflicts in major commercial areas, and coordination with the school district to ensure that schools are sited appropriately. The Fifth Street corridor is heavily traveled by pedestrians, and the improvements called for in the plan should result in improved pedestrian and bicycle safety along this corridor. The other actions should also result in a safer travel environment.

With regard to at-grade railroad crossings, the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* does not change any land uses or add new land for urbanization west of the Union Pacific Railroad tracks, except for the expansion of the Gonzales Wastewater Treatment Plant west of the city. Expansion and upgrade of that facility, plus additional traffic on Gonzales River Road that would accompany urbanization in the Urban Growth Area, would lead to additional traffic using existing at-grade crossings. The proposed project contains an implementing action discouraging new at-grade railroad crossings and requiring the City to maintain the safety of vehicles, trains, bicyclists, and pedestrians at all existing railroad crossings.

Finally, the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* contains implementing actions that encourage the use of roundabouts as a first option in all major intersections and that call for flexibility in design to discourage speeding. Roundabouts significantly reduce the number of potential conflicting turning movements and thereby result in overall safer operations through an intersection. With proper design, bicycle and pedestrian movement is also made safer. Well designed streets that serve to reduce speeding also contribute to a safer travel environment. These features of the proposed project should have a positive effect on overall traffic safety.

B. Applicable Policies and Regulations

The *Gonzales 2010 General Plan's* "Circulation Element" contains the following policies and implementing actions designed to address transportation safety:

> *Implementing Action CIR-1.1.6 – Flexible Design. Allow flexibility in street design where appropriate to enhance neighborhood character, reduce traffic speeds, and discourage but typically not preclude through-traffic.*
>
> *Implementing Action CIR-1.1.11 – Street Widths. New arterial and collector streets shall be constructed with the minimum number of lanes needed for the relatively short term (i.e., approximately 10 years) and with sufficient reserve capacity within the right-of-way to accommodate any additional lanes necessary to meet the City's level-of-service standards under long-term conditions. Land reserved within the right-of-way for future lanes should be used in the interim as landscaped medians or roadside green strips.*
>
> *Implementing Action CIR-1.1.12 – Traffic Control. Provide operational controls, including: roundabouts, traffic signals or stop signs where warranted to facilitate the safe flow of vehicles through intersections. As a first option, consider the use of roundabouts for traffic control at all non-local intersections.*
>
> *Implementing Action CIR-2.1.1 – 5th Street Corridor. Redesign the 5th Street corridor into an attractive transit boulevard that serves as a major "spine" that ties the historic city center to the new community commercial center proposed in the vicinity of Johnson Canyon Road and Herold Parkway and beyond, and that substantially improves transit, pedestrian and bicyclist mobility.*
>
> *Implementing Action CIR-4.1.1 – Streets as Joint Use Facilities. Adopt Specific Plans that emphasize the use of all streets and corridors as joint use facilities designed not only for vehicular movement but also for pedestrians, cyclists, and public transit vehicles.*
>
> *Implementing Action CIR-4.1.7 – Walking Environment. Create aesthetically pleasing neighborhood walking environments through the installation of parkways separating sidewalks from streets, street trees, and adequate sidewalk*

width. Also consider reducing the width and number of driveway curb cuts and the use of intelligent crosswalks.[15]

Policy CIR-5.1 Balance Need for Emergency Access with Safe Design

Design new streets to balance the need for emergency access with the need to design safe streets that discourage speeding traffic.

Implementing Action CIR-5.1.1 – No Increase in the Number of Railroad Crossings. Maintain the safety of vehicles, trains, bicyclists, and pedestrians at all railroad crossings. Strongly discourage new private railroad crossings to serve parcels on the west side of Alta Street. Access to these parcels west of Alta Street and south of Gonzales River Road should use existing grade crossings wherever possible.

Implementing Action CIR-5.1.2 – Discourage Through Trips on Local Streets. Provide adequate capacity on new arterials and collectors and design local streets to discourage diversion of through-trips to local streets.

Implementing Action CIR-5.1.3 – Speed Control. Enforce posted speed limits within the City. On road segments where speed limits are consistently violated, explore the use of other traffic control measures to slow down traffic, including additional signs and road design changes and the installation of traffic-calming features.

Implementing Action CIR-5.1.5 – Traffic Calming. If warranted in the future, initiate measures to reduce through-traffic on local streets. These measures could include: intersection and mid-block bulb-outs, large canopy street trees, pedestrian refuge islands, street widths that are designed to be effective in reducing traffic speeds, diverters, speed humps, reduced speed limits, additional stop signs, and similar traffic management devices.

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[15] An intelligent crosswalk is typically designed so that when a pedestrian steps off the curb between the triggering posts at a crosswalk, flashing lights turn on automatically, lighting the roadway like an airport runway, alerting motorists that someone is crossing the street.

Implementing Action CIR-5.1.6 – Avoid Traffic Conflicts at Interchanges. Prohibit new street intersections within 600 feet of the Alta Street and Gloria Road interchange ramps unless the City Engineer finds that closer access will meet acceptable safety standards or that mitigation measures will be followed to ensure safe access and to minimize interference with traffic flow.

Implementing Action CIR-5.1.7 – Avoid Traffic Conflicts at Intersections. In the development areas east of Highway 101, regulate the location of commercial and multi-family residential driveways in a manner which minimizes conflicts at intersections and interference with moving traffic.

Implementing Action CIR-5.1.8 – School Siting. Coordinate with public and private school providers on the location and design of school ingress/egress and drop-off/pick-up points to ensure efficient and safe traffic operations on public streets. Require Specific Plans to contain school siting criteria designed to facilitate coordination between the City and school providers.

Implementing Action CIR-5.1.10 – Design Streets for Pedestrians and Bicyclists. Ensure that street designs provide adequate safety provisions for bicycles and pedestrians.

Policy CIR-8.1 Increase Opportunities for Biking and Walking

Require new development to address global warming through the design of transportation/circulation systems that facilitate and encourage bicycle and pedestrian travel; promote personal health, recreation, and enjoyment; and reduce the rate of energy consumption and air pollution.

Implementing Action CIR-8.1.1 – Linear Park along Johnson Canyon Creek. Establish a linear park along the Johnson Canyon Creek between Fanoe Road and eastern reach of the General Plan Growth Area.

Implementing Action CIR-8.1.2 – Designing for Pedestrians and Bicyclists. Promote an integrated pedestrian and bicycle system that makes walking and biking an efficient, comfortable and safe way of traveling around Gonzales. Require bike lanes on all non-local streets, unless the Circulation Diagram shows a Class I bicycle facility adjacent to the street.

Implementing Action CIR-8.1.3 – Bicycle Parking. Require major commercial development, employment centers, and public facilities to include provisions for safe and secure bicycle parking.

Implementing Action CIR-8.1.4 – Safe Routes to School. Provide safe access for children and teens walking or bicycling to Gonzales schools and City parks. The City shall ensure that any re-design and subsequent improvement of the Highway 101/Fifth Street Interchange places a high priority on providing full capacity for the safe movement of pedestrians and bicyclists through the facility.

Implementing Action CIR-8.1.5 – Provide Sidewalks. Provide sidewalks within all residential and commercial development areas.

Implementing Action CIR-8.1.6 – American with Disabilities Act. New development shall meet or exceed ADA requirements to facilitate the mobility of disabled persons and to improve the overall function of the circulation system to serve the non-motorized public.

Implementing Action CIR-8.1.7 – Pedestrian Amenities. Use street trees, lighting, landscaping, and other amenities as appropriate to create an attractive environment for pedestrians.

Implementing Action CIR-8.1.8 – Grant Funds for Bicycle Facilities. The City shall, as appropriate, apply for grant funds for bikeway improvements (e.g., Transportation Development Act funds) when planning or implementing major circulation improvements.

Implementing Action CIR-8.1.9 – Highway 101 Pedestrian Overpass. Establish a linear path connection along the slough between future development areas and the Gonzales High School Stadium, with an underpass or overpass provided at Highway 101.

C. Significance Determination

While the policies and actions of the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* lessen the potential impact of urbanization on traffic safety, there remains the potential for substantial adverse effects related to traffic safety. The proposed project does not include detailed, project-level development plans; therefore, no project-specific analysis was undertaken as part of

this program-level EIR. It is unknown what, if any, safety problems may arise from future development plans approved through the Specific Plan process. Such project-specific analysis would need to be undertaken at the next stage of discretionary approval as part of the Specific Plan process, which is an integral part of the General Plan implementation strategy. This is an impact that would be made less than significant with Mitigation Measure TT-13.

D. Mitigation Measures

The City of Gonzales shall incorporate the following measure into the *Draft Gonzales 2010 General Plan* prior to final adoption and eliminate or amend any existing provisions of the draft plan that may be in conflict with this measure so as to eliminate the inconsistency in favor of the measure:

> Mitigation Measure TT-13: Project-Level Traffic Analysis Required
>
> *The City shall require Specific Plans and development approvals to contain a project-level traffic analysis for all areas planned for urbanization. Such an analysis shall evaluate the full range of operational, safety, emergency access, parking, and alternative-mode transportation issues. The analysis shall recommend measures to mitigate any significant impact that a specific project may have on transportation/traffic.*

4.4.3.3. Result in inadequate emergency access

A. Impact

Impact TT-3: The adoption of the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* would enable new development that could affect emergency access in the planning area (Less than Significant with Mitigation Measures).

The *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* contains a revised Circulation Diagram, which depicts major elements of the new circulation system. Review of this new circulation system reveals a well connected grid of major arterials, minor arterials, and collector streets covering the Urban Growth Area. In addition, the policies and implementing actions of the plan place a strong emphasis on connectivity between and within neighborhoods. These plan features would have a positive impact on project design and increase the

likelihood that travelers would have multiple points of ingress and egress to their neighborhood or place of employment.

As mentioned above, a review of the typical street cross sections contained in the Circulation Element indicates that travel lanes are of standard width and should pose no access constraints for emergency vehicles traveling in the area. Emergency response and evacuation is addressed in Subsection 4.4.2.4 above.

B. Applicable Policies and Regulations

The *Gonzales 2010 General Plan's* "Circulation Element" contains the following policies and implementing actions designed to address emergency access:

Policy CIR-2.2 Connectivity between Neighborhoods

Require a high level of connectivity between neighborhoods to provide numerous route choices that help distribute traffic onto more numerous smaller street facilities and lessen the need for large street facilities.

> *Implementing Action CIR-2.2.1 – Connection Between Specific Plan Areas. Adopt Specific Plans that anticipate connection to future adjacent Specific Plan areas and provide a range of street and other connections consistent with City design guidelines and standards.*
>
> *Implementing Action CIR-2.2.2 – Connections to the Community Commercial Core Area. Adopt Specific Plans that anticipate connection to the community commercial core area to be located in the vicinity of Johnson Canyon Road and Fanoe Road/Herold Parkway.*

Policy CIR-2.3 Connectivity within Neighborhoods

Require a high level of connectivity within neighborhoods to reduce the need for vehicular trips and encourage walking and biking.

> *Implementing Action CIR-2.3.1 – Connectivity Analysis. Require a connectivity analysis as one component of Specific Plan review.*
>
> *Implementing Action CIR-2.3.2 – Block Length. To provide pedestrians with frequent opportunities to cross the street and help to calm traffic, blocks shall*

generally be between 300 and 500 feet in length, unless longer block lengths are justified due to public safety, topography, drainages, or other environmental or physical constraints.

C. Significance Determination

While the policies and actions of the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* lessen the potential impact of urbanization on emergency access, there remains the potential for substantial adverse effect related to emergency access. The proposed project does not include detailed, project-level development plans, and therefore no project-specific analysis was undertaken as part of this program-level EIR. It is unknown what, if any, emergency access problems may arise from future development plans approved through the specific plan process. Such project-specific analysis would need to be undertaken at the next stage of discretionary approval as part of the Specific Plan process, which is an integral part of the General Plan implementation strategy. This is an impact that would be made less than significant with Mitigation Measure TT-13 set forth above.

D. Mitigation Measures

No additional measures required.

4.4.3.4. CONFLICT WITH ADOPTED POLICIES, PLANS, OR PROGRAMS REGARDING PUBLIC TRANSIT, BICYCLE, OR PEDESTRIAN FACILITIES, OR OTHERWISE DECREASE THE PERFORMANCE OR SAFETY OF SUCH FACILITIES

A. Impact

Impact TT-4: The adoption of the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* would provide the basis for development activity that could conflict with adopted policies, plans, or programs regarding public transit, bicycle, or pedestrian facilities, or otherwise decrease the performance or safety of such facilities (Less than Significant with Mitigation Measures).

The proposed project would enable development activity that could conflict with plans for alternative transportation or otherwise impede the performance and safety of alterative transportation facilities. The proposed project would result in the urbanization of approximately 2,150 acres of land contained in the Urban Growth Boundary. In addition, the proposed project identifies 2,130 acres of land in Urban Reserve that is not intended

for development under the proposed project. As discussed above, urbanization would result in an increase in traffic that is substantial in relation to existing traffic and street capacity, and the form that the built environment ultimately takes would affect the long-term viability of efforts to reduce dependence on the single occupant vehicle and support alternative modes of travel.

The *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* emphasizes urban development patterns that promote compact, neighborhood-based development; street connectivity; and mixed-use development. As such, the proposed project would make a positive contribution to supporting alternative transportation.

While the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* does not anticipate changing the basic calculus that forms the basis of AMBAG regional growth projections, the proposed plan could support regional efforts to encourage people to live closer to where they work. If Salinas continues to be the primary job center in the Salinas Valley, Gonzales, as the closest city to the south, may in the future be favored for urbanization over more distant cities to the south. The proximity to Salinas and the potential size of the transit market created by growth in Gonzales could lend itself to a more cost-effective public transit investment. In this way, the proposed project could encourage the use of alternative transportation on a regional scale.

With regard to consistency with the Transportation Agency for Monterey County's (TAMC) 2005 General Bikeways Plan, the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* identifies some but not all of the bike routes shown in the General Bikeways Plan. For example, the proposed project identifies the Fifth Street/Johnson Canyon Road corridor as future Class I bikeways, which is generally consistent with TAMC's plan. Instead of identifying Iverson Road as a bike route, however, the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* identifies a parallel route west of Iverson Road, which would be a new street to be developed when the surrounding area urbanizes. This alternative route—along "Arterial A"—was chosen because Iverson Road is the route for trucks accessing the Johnson Canyon Road Landfill. By moving the bike route off Iverson Road, planners sought to separate bike traffic from truck traffic and thereby improve bike safety. The new route along "Arterial A" still connects to Gloria Road in the same way as the Iverson Road Route did.

The proposed project does fail to identify other routes identified by TAMC in the General Bikeways Plan. The TAMC plan shows Alta Street as a Caltrans bike route and Gonzales

River Road as a proposed Class II bike route. Neither of these routes is identified in the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan*.

B. Applicable Policies and Regulations

The *Gonzales 2010 General Plan's* "Introduction" contains the following objective designed to promote sustainability:

> *Obj 6. Sustainability. The development of a city that has sustainable, energy efficient development that successfully manages greenhouse gas emissions consistent with state and regional goals by emphasizing compact urban form, high connectivity and mobility within and between neighborhoods, ample opportunity for walking and bicycle use, neighborhood retail and other neighborhood commercial uses within neighborhood centers to reduce vehicle use within the neighborhood, and otherwise designing for the efficient use of energy resources (all elements).*

The "Land Use Element" contains the following policy designed to promote neighborhood development:

> *Policy LU-6.1 Neighborhoods as "Building Blocks"*
>
> *Employ a neighborhood-based growth strategy whereby new pedestrian-oriented neighborhoods, complete with schools, park and recreation facilities, a wide range of housing types, and neighborhood-serving commercial services, form the basic planning unit or "building block" for new residential growth.*

The "Circulation Element" contains the following policies and implementing actions designed to reduce dependence on the single occupant vehicle and promote alternative bicycle use and walking:

> *Policy CIR-7.1 Reduce Dependence on the Single Passenger Vehicle*
>
> *Require new development to address global warming through the design of transportation/circulation systems that promote sustainable alternatives to single passenger vehicles and reduces the rate of energy consumption and air pollution.*

Implementing Action CIR-7.1.1 – Regional coordination. Initiate coordination with the Transportation Agency for Monterey County and Monterey-Salinas Transit to begin development of a long-range transit plan for Gonzales that includes local bus service to neighborhood centers in Gonzales.

Implementing Action CIR-7.1.2 – Mobility for the Disabled. Strive to improve the mobility of seniors, persons with disabilities, and persons without access to a car. Support improved delivery of County services that provide transportation to these groups.

Implementing Action CIR-7.1.3 – Public Transit. Support the gradual improvement of public transit services to Gonzales.

Implementing Action CIR-7.1.4 – Ridesharing. Actively promote ridesharing and carpooling for persons working in Gonzales and for persons commuting from Gonzales to jobs in other cities.

Implementing Action CIR-7.1.5 – Compact Development Patterns. Encourage a land use pattern which makes it easier to shop, play, work, and conduct personal business with minimal driving. This includes increasing the mix of housing, retail, service, and public uses in downtown Gonzales.

Implementing Action CIR-7.1.6 – Caltrans Coordination. Work with Caltrans to seek development of a park and ride lot at the North Alta interchange.

Implementing Action CIR-7.1.7 – Rideshare Bulletins. Work with local grocery stores, the post office, or other frequently visited places in Gonzales to develop a rideshare bulletin board for residents commuting to jobs in other cities.

Implementing Action CIR-7.1.8 – Greyhound Stop. Maintain a permanent bus stop site in Gonzales for private intercity buses (Greyhound) and encourage continuation of regularly scheduled stops.

Implementing Action CIR-7.1.9 – Street Connectivity. Promote street connectivity between neighborhoods and other activity centers.

Implementing Action CIR-7.1.10 – Anticipate Future Public Transit. Require the design of new neighborhood developments to anticipate/accommodate future public transit service.

Policy CIR-8.1 Increase Opportunities for Biking and Walking

Require new development to address global warming through the design of transportation/circulation systems that facilitate and encourage bicycle and pedestrian travel; promote personal health, recreation, and enjoyment; and reduce the rate of energy consumption and air pollution.

Implementing Action CIR-8.1.1 – Linear Park along Johnson Canyon Creek. Establish a linear park along the Johnson Canyon Creek between Fanoe Road and eastern reach of the General Plan Growth Area.

Implementing Action CIR-8.1.2 – Designing for Pedestrians and Bicyclists. Promote an integrated pedestrian and bicycle system that makes walking and biking an efficient, comfortable and safe way of traveling around Gonzales. Require bike lanes on all non-local streets, unless the Circulation Diagram shows a Class I bicycle facility adjacent to the street.

Implementing Action CIR-8.1.3 – Bicycle Parking. Require major commercial development, employment centers, and public facilities to include provisions for safe and secure bicycle parking.

Implementing Action CIR-8.1.4 – Safe Routes to School. Provide safe access for children and teens walking or bicycling to Gonzales schools and City parks. The City shall ensure that any re-design and subsequent improvement of the Highway 101/Fifth Street Interchange places a high priority on providing full capacity for the safe movement of pedestrians and bicyclists through the facility.

Implementing Action CIR-8.1.5 – Provide Sidewalks. Provide sidewalks within all residential and commercial development areas.

Implementing Action CIR-8.1.6 – American with Disabilities Act. New development shall meet or exceed ADA requirements to facilitate the mobility of disabled persons and to improve the overall function of the circulation system to serve the non-motorized public.

Implementing Action CIR-8.1.7 – Pedestrian Amenities. Use street trees, lighting, landscaping, and other amenities as appropriate to create an attractive environment for pedestrians.

Implementing Action CIR-8.1.8 – Grant Funds for Bicycle Facilities. The City shall, as appropriate, apply for grant funds for bikeway improvements (e.g., Transportation Development Act funds) when planning or implementing major circulation improvements.

Implementing Action CIR-8.1.9 – Highway 101 Pedestrian Overpass. Establish a linear path connection along the slough between future development areas and the Gonzales High School Stadium, with an underpass or overpass provided at Highway 101.

C. Significance Determination

Policies and implementing actions contained in the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* are adequate to ensure that impacts related to conflicts with adopted policies, plans, or programs supporting alternative transportation are less than significant. The proposed plan would probably have a positive effect on efforts to promote alternative transportation both locally and regionally. The one exception to this finding is inconsistency between the proposed project and the TAMC "2005 General Bikeways Plan." This inconsistency is a significant impact that would be reduced to a level of less than significant with the mitigation measure below.

D. Mitigation Measures

The City of Gonzales shall incorporate the following measure into the *Draft Gonzales 2010 General Plan* prior to final adoption and eliminate or amend any existing provisions of the draft plan that may be in conflict with this measure so as to eliminate the inconsistency in favor of the measure:

Mitigation Measure TT-14: Revise Circulation Diagram for Consistency with TAMC's "2005 General Bikeways Plan"

The City shall amend the Circulation Diagram contained in the Gonzales 2010 General Plan *Circulation Element to designate Alta Street and Gonzales River Road as bikeway facilities to achieve consistency with TAMC's "2005 General Bikeway Plan."*

4.5 AIR QUALITY[16]

This section evaluates the impacts of the proposed project on local and regional air quality, examines the climatic influences that affect air quality of the City of Gonzales, and describes available data on measured contaminant levels near the study area. The information contained in this section was developed by Don Ballanti, Certified Consulting Meteorologist, and the impacts discussed herein are evaluated using methods and criteria recommended by the Monterey Bay Unified Air Pollution Control District (MBUAPCD).

4.5.1 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

The following subsection describes existing conditions in the planning area.

4.5.1.1. CLIMATE AND METEOROLOGY

The project study area is located within the County of Monterey, which is in the North Central Coast Air Basin (NCCAB), where the Monterey Bay Unified Air Pollution Control District (MBUAPCD) is charged with maintaining air quality. The NCCAB includes Monterey, Santa Cruz, and San Benito counties. The northwest sector of the basin is dominated by the Santa Cruz Mountains. The Diablo Range marks the northeastern boundary and, together with the southern extent of the Santa Cruz Mountains, forms the Santa Clara Valley, which extends into the northeastern tip of the basin. Farther south, the Santa Clara Valley evolves into the San Benito Valley, which extends northwest–southeast and has the Gabilan Range as its western boundary. To the west of the Gabilan Range is the Salinas Valley, which extends from Salinas at the northwest end to King City at the southeast end. The western side of the Salinas Valley is bordered by the Sierra de Salinas, which also forms the eastern side of the smaller Carmel Valley.

[16] Greenhouse gas emissions are addressed in Section 4.6 below.

The semi-permanent high-pressure cell in the eastern Pacific is the basic controlling factor in the climate of the air basin. In the summer, the high pressure cell is dominant and causes persistent west and northwest winds over the entire California coast. Air descends in the Pacific High forming a stable temperature inversion of hot air over a cool coastal layer of air. The onshore air currents pass over cool ocean waters to bring fog and relatively cool air into the coastal valleys. The warmer air aloft acts as a lid to inhibit vertical air movement. The generally northwest–southeast orientation of mountain ridges tends to restrict and channel the summer onshore air currents. Surface heating in the interior portion of the Salinas and San Benito Valleys creates a weak low pressure, which intensifies the onshore airflow during the afternoon and evening.

In the fall, the surface winds become weak, and the marine layer grows shallow, dissipating altogether on some days. The airflow is occasionally reversed in a weak offshore movement, and the relatively stationary air mass is held in place by the Pacific high-pressure cell, which allows pollutants to build up over a period of a few days. It is most often during this season that the north or east winds develop to transport pollutants from either the San Francisco Bay area or the Central Valley into the NCCAB.

During the winter, the Pacific High migrates southward and has less influence on the air basin. Air frequently flows in a southeasterly direction out of the Salinas and San Benito Valleys, especially during night and morning hours. Northwest winds are nevertheless still dominant in winter, but easterly flow is more frequent. The general absence of deep, persistent inversions and the occasional storm systems usually result in good air quality for the basin as a whole in winter and early spring.

4.5.1.2. AIR POLLUTANTS

The federal and state governments have established AAQS for ozone, carbon monoxide (CO), nitrogen dioxide (NO_2), sulfur dioxide (SO_2), particulate matter (PM_{10} and $PM_{2.5}$), and lead. A complete summary of state and national AAQS is provided in Figure 4.5.1. The following provides a description of important pollutants in Gonzales.

A. <u>Ozone</u>

Ozone occurs in two layers of the atmosphere. The layer nearest the Earth's surface is the troposphere and extends approximately 10 miles above ground level, where it meets the

stratosphere. The stratosphere extends upward to approximately 30 miles above ground level and protects life on earth from the sun's harmful ultraviolet rays (UV-B).

Figure 4.5.1: State and National Ambient Air Quality Standards

Pollutant	Averaging Time	California Standards	Federal Standards	
			Primary	Secondary
Ozone	1 Hour	0.09 ppm	-	Same as primary
	8 Hour	0.07 ppm	0.075 ppm	
Carbon Monoxide	8 Hour	9.00 ppm	9.00 ppm	None
	1 Hour	20.00 ppm	35.00 ppm	
Nitrogen Dioxide	Annual Mean	0.03 ppm	0.053 ppm	Same as primary
	1 Hour	0.18 ppm	--	
Sulfur Dioxide	Annual Mean	--	0.03 ppm	--
	24 Hour	0.04 ppm	0.14 ppm	--
	3 Hour	--	--	0.50 ppm
	1 Hour	0.25 ppm	--	--
Respirable Particulate Matter (PM_{10})	Annual Mean	20.00 ug/m^3	--	Same as primary
	24 Hour	50.00 ug/m^3	150.00 ug/m^3	
Fine Particulate Matter ($PM_{2.5}$)	Annual Mean	12.00 ug/m^3	15.00 ug/m^3	Same as primary
	24 Hour	--	35.00 ug/m^3	
Sulfates	24 Hour	25.00 ug/m^3	--	--
Lead	30 Day Average	1.50 ug/m^3	--	--
	Calendar Quarter	--	1.50 ug/m^3	Same as primary
Hydrogen Sulfide	1 Hour	0.03 ppm	N/A	N/A
Vinyl Chloride	24 Hour	0.01 ppm	N/A	N/A

Source: California Air Resources Board, http://www.arb.ca.gov/research/aaqs/aaqs2.pdf, accessed February 2, 2010.
Notes: ppm = parts per million
ug/m^3 = micrograms per cubic meter

Ozone is a photochemical pollutant and needs volatile organic compounds (VOCs), NO_X, and sunlight to form. Therefore, VOCs and NO_X are ozone precursors. The primary sources of VOC within the planning area are on- and off-road motor vehicles, cleaning and surface coatings, solvent evaporation, landfills, petroleum production and marketing,

and prescribed burning. The primary sources of NO_x are on- and off-road motor vehicles, stationary source fuel combustion, and industrial processes.[17]

Many respiratory ailments, as well as cardiovascular disease, are aggravated by exposure to high ozone levels. Ozone also damages natural ecosystems such as forests and foothill plant communities, as well as agricultural crops and human-made materials such as rubber, paint, and plastics. Societal costs from ozone damage include increased healthcare costs, the loss of human and animal life, accelerated replacement of industrial equipment, and reduced crop yields.

B. Carbon Monoxide

Carbon monoxide (CO) is an odorless, colorless, toxic gas that is emitted by mobile and stationary sources as a result of incomplete combustion of hydrocarbons and other carbon-based fuels. In urban areas, automobile exhaust can cause as much as 95 percent of all CO emissions. At high concentrations, CO can reduce the oxygen carrying capacity of blood and cause headaches, dizziness, unconsciousness, and death. State and federal standards for CO were not exceeded in the North Central Coast Air Basin between 2000 and 2005.

C. Nitrogen Oxide

Nitrogen oxides (NO_X) are a family of highly reactive gasses that are a primary precursor to the formation of ground-level ozone, and react in the atmosphere to form acid rain. Nitrogen dioxide (NO_2), often referenced interchangeably with NO_X, is a reddish-brown gas that occurs in areas that have a high concentration of combustion sources (e.g., motor vehicles, power plants, refineries, and other industrial operations). The health effects of short-term exposure are still uncertain. However, frequent or prolonged exposure to NO_2 concentrations that are typically much higher than concentrations normally found in the ambient air may increase acute respiratory illness in children and the incidence of chronic bronchitis and lung irritation. Chronic exposure to NO_2 may aggravate eyes and mucus membranes and cause pulmonary dysfunction.

[17] Monterey Bay Unified Air Pollution Control District, *CEQA Air Quality Guidelines*, 2008

D. Particulate Matter

Particulate matter pollution consists of very small liquid and solid particles floating in the air. Particulate matter is a mixture of materials that can include smoke, soot, dust, salt, acids, and metals. Particulate matter also forms when gases emitted from motor vehicles and industrial sources undergo chemical reactions in the atmosphere. Natural sources of particulates include sea spray, forest fires, volcanic debris, etc. Human-made sources include fuel combustion and industrial processes, industrial and nonindustrial fugitive sources and transportation. PM_{10} particles are less than or equal to 10 microns in aerodynamic diameter. $PM_{2.5}$ particles are less than or equal to 2.5 microns in aerodynamic diameter and are a subset, or portion of PM_{10}.

PM_{10} and $PM_{2.5}$ are classified as primary or secondary depending on their origin. Primary particles are unchanged after being directly emitted (e.g., road dust). Secondary particulates are formed in the atmosphere largely by chemical reactions involving gases, (e.g., sulfate from directly emitted sulfur oxides). PM_{10} and $PM_{2.5}$ particles are small enough to be inhaled into, and lodge in, the deepest parts of the human lung. Health problems begin as the body reacts to these foreign particles. Acute and chronic health effects associated with high particulate levels include the aggravation of chronic respiratory diseases, heart and lung disease, coughing, bronchitis, and respiratory illnesses in children.

Recent mortality studies have shown a statistically significant direct association between mortality and daily concentrations of particulate matter in the air. Non-health-related effects include reduced visibility and the soiling of buildings.

E. Reactive Organic Gases (ROG) and Volatile Organic Compounds (VOG)

Hydrocarbons are organic gases that are made up of hydrogen and carbon atoms. There are several subsets of organic gases including ROGs and VOCs. ROGs are defined by state rules and regulations; VOCs are defined by federal rules and regulations. Both ROGs and VOCs are emitted from the incomplete combustion of hydrocarbons or other carbon-based fuels, or as a product of chemical processes. The major sources of hydrocarbons are combustion engine exhaust, oil refineries, and oil-fueled power plants; other common sources are petroleum fuels, solvents, dry cleaning solutions, and paint (via evaporation). Wineries also contribute hydrocarbons through their fermentation activities.

F. Toxic Air Contaminants

In addition to the criteria pollutants discussed above, toxic air contaminants (TACs) are another group of pollutants of concern. Unlike criteria pollutants, no safe levels of exposure to TACs can be established. There are many different types of TACs, with varying degrees of toxicity. Sources of TAC's include industrial processes such as petroleum refining and chrome plating operations, commercial operations such as gasoline stations and dry cleaners, and motor vehicle exhaust.

In 1998, after a ten year scientific assessment process, the Air Resources Board identified particulate matter from diesel-fueled engines as a toxic air contaminant (TAC). The state of California is implementing a program of identifying and reducing risks associated with particulate matter emissions from diesel-fueled vehicles

The California Air Resources Board in 2005 published an air quality/land use handbook.[18] The handbook, which is advisory and not regulatory, was developed in response to recent studies that have demonstrated a link between exposure to poor air quality and respiratory illnesses, both cancer and non-cancer related. The CARB handbook recommends that planning agencies strongly consider proximity to these sources when finding new locations for "sensitive" land uses such as homes, medical facilities, daycare centers, schools and playgrounds. Air pollution sources of concern include freeways, rail yards, ports, refineries, distribution centers, chrome plating facilities, dry cleaners and large gasoline service stations.

Key recommendations in the handbook, applicable to Gonzales, include taking steps to avoid siting new, sensitive land uses:

- ✓ Within 500 feet of a freeway, urban roads with 100,000 vehicles/day, or rural roads with 50,000 vehicles/day;
- ✓ Within 1,000 feet of a distribution center that accommodates more than 100 trucks per day, more than 40 trucks per day with operating transport refrigerator units (TRUs) per day, or where TRU unit operations exceed 300 hours per week;

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[18] California Air Resources Board, Air Quality and Land Use Handbook: A Community Health Perspective, April 2005.

- ✓ Within 300 feet of any dry cleaning operation (for operations with two or more machines, provide 500 feet); or
- ✓ Within 300 feet of a large gasoline dispensing facility.

While local agencies cannot regulate diesel exhaust from trucks and buses, appropriate policies regarding the siting of residences, schools, day care centers and other sensitive receptors away from major sources of diesel exhaust such as truck haul routes, warehouses, and distribution centers can greatly reduce exposures and risk.

4.5.1.3. LOCAL AIR QUALITY

A. Attainment Status

The Monterey Bay Air Basin is considered an attainment or maintenance area for the Federal standards. The air basin is a non-attainment area for State ozone standards and particulate matter standards.

B. Air Quality Monitoring Data

The existing air quality conditions in the project study area can be characterized by monitoring data collected in the region. The closest monitoring station to Gonzales is located at located at 855 E. Laurel Drive in Salinas. The Salinas monitoring station experienced no violations of the state/federal 1- and 8-hour ozone standards or the federal particulate matter standards during the three most recent years for which data are available (2006-2008). During the same period, the state PM_{10} standard was exceeded two days in 2006 and one day in 2008. Nitrogen dioxide and carbon monoxide concentrations were well below state/federal standards during this period.[19]

C. Sensitive Land Uses

Sensitive receptors include land uses such as residences, schools, and hospitals where building occupants are considered to be sensitive to air pollution, such as residents,

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[19] California Air Resources Board, *Aerometric Data Analysis and Management (ADAM),* 2010. (http: //www.arb.ca.gov./adam/cgi-bin/adamtop/d2wstart)

recreationists, school children, hospital patients, and the elderly. Sensitive receptors in Gonzales are primarily residences and the three schools located within the city.

4.5.2 THRESHOLDS OF SIGNIFICANCE

The proposed project was considered to have a significant adverse air quality effect on the environment if it met any of the standards of significance listed below. The Initial Study excluded no areas of concern in this topic area.

- Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan,
- Violate any air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation,
- Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is in nonattainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standards (AAQS), or
- Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations, or
- Create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people.

The Guidelines further state that the significance criteria established by the applicable air quality management or air pollution control district may be relied upon to make the determinations above.

The MBUAPCD has specified significance thresholds within its CEQA Air Quality Guidelines to determine whether mitigation is needed for project-related air quality impacts.[20] For construction, the threshold is PM_{10} - 82 pounds per day. The MBUAPCD does not have significance thresholds for construction-related ozone precursors (ROG and NO_x) because they are accommodated in the emission inventories of state- and federally required air plans.

[20] Monterey Bay Unified Air Pollution Control District, *CEQA Air Quality Guidelines*, 2008.

The MBUAPCD CEQA Guidelines identify thresholds of significance specific to program EIRs, such as for a general plan. According the MBUAPCD CEQA Guidelines, the air quality analysis for a general plan should:

- Focus on the project's cumulative air quality impact on regional ozone which should be analyzed by determining its consistency with the Air Quality Management Plan (AQMP), and
- Its localized impact should be assessed by identifying whether build-out would create or substantially contribute to carbon monoxide "hotspots" where federal or state AAQS are exceeded.

4.5.3 IMPACTS AND MITIGATIONS

4.5.3.1. CONSISTENCY WITH REGIONAL AIR QUALITY PLAN

A. Impact

Impact AQ-1: The *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* would enable urbanization that would result in new sources of emissions such as vehicles, natural gas combustion for heating and other area sources. The timing and amount of urbanization would affect regional air quality planning and possibly conflict with the adopted AQMP of the MBUAPCD (Less than Significant).

The proposed project would enable development activity, the timing and amount of which would affect regional air quality planning. The incremental daily emission increase associated with project buildout is identified in Figure 4.5.2 for ROG and NO_X (two precursors of ozone), CO, PM_{10} and $PM_{2.5}$. Because ozone is a summertime problem, the emissions of ROG and NO_X are for summertime conditions. Emissions for CO, PM_{10} and $PM_{2.5}$ are for wintertime conditions.[21]

[21] Regional emissions associated with buildout of the Urban Growth Area and the Urban Growth Area plus Urban Reserve were estimated using the URBEMIS-2007 emission model. The program was used to estimate vehicular and area source emissions associated with buildout by the year 2035. The methodology used is described in Appendix B, along with the URBEMIS-2007 output.

The MBUAPCD bases its AQMP on projections made by the Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments (AMBAG). The proposed project provides a substantial area for future urbanization in the Urban Growth Area (UGA) that at current growth rates projected by AMBAG would build out sometime around 2050. Buildout of the Urban Reserve Area (URA) would occur sometime around 2090. Current AMBAG projections only extend to 2035, but it is expected that growth in Gonzales through 2035 will roughly track annual average growth rates consistent with AMBAG projections. Accordingly, the proposed project would not conflict with or obstruct the implementation of the AQMP currently adopted by the MBUAPCD.

Figure 4.5.2: Daily Regional Emissions, Pounds per Day

Pollutant	*Gonzales 2010 General Plan*	
	UGA*	UGA + Urban Reserve**
ROG	622.9	905.9
NOx	240.3	376.5
CO	7,715.1	11,075.3
PM_{10}	1,667.2	2,475.8
$PM_{2.5}$	1,051.2	1,482.0

Source: Don Ballanti, 2010

*Notes: *Assumes added population of 14,300 persons by 2035 and 28,800 persons by 2050*
***Assumes added population of 52,800 persons by around 2090*

B. Applicable Policies and Regulations

The "Community Health and Safety Element" contains the following policies and implementing actions designed to protect and enhance air quality:

Policy HS-6.1 Air Quality in New Construction and Redevelopment

Require all new construction and renovation to be designed in accordance with adopted Neighborhood Design Guidelines and constructed to reduce the City's overall greenhouse gas emissions and other deleterious air quality impacts.

Implementing Action HS-6.1.1 – Support Regional Air Quality Efforts. *Support regional efforts to achieve and maintain ambient air quality standards. The*

City should cooperate with regional, State, and Federal agencies in conducting studies and implementing regulations to improve air quality.

Implementing Action HS-6.1.2 – Land Use and Transportation Patterns. *Encourage a land use and transportation pattern which reduces dependence on the single passenger vehicle. Some of the elements of this pattern include a balanced mix of jobs and housing which minimize the necessity of commuting, a compact City form which minimizes vehicle miles traveled; mixing of commercial and residential uses to reduce the need for driving; and convenient provisions for bicycles, pedestrians, and carpools.*

Implementing Action HS-6.1.4 – Street Trees. *Promote the use of street trees as a means of reducing roadside temperatures that in turn reduce summertime emissions of ozone-forming hydrocarbon pollutants, especially along collector and arterial streets and along industrial streets, where street trees are not presently required.*

Implementing Action HS-6.1.5 – State Funds for Congestion Management. *On an on-going basis, pursue State funds for transportation improvements which resolve congestion problems or promote alternatives to automobile use (including bikeways).*

Implementing Action HS-6.1.6 – County CMP. *Participate in the Monterey County Congestion Management Program and the on-going efforts of the Transportation Agency of Monterey County. The program allows jurisdictions to use their gas tax funds to implement transportation improvements and resolve congestion problems.*

C. Significance Determination

For a general plan, the MBUAPCD threshold of significance is consistency with the Air Quality Management Plan (AQMP), which is determined by whether the general plan population projections are consistent with those of the AQMP. Consistency determinations in Monterey County are made by the Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments (AMBAG). AMBAG has determined that the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* is

consistent with the AQMP (See Appendix B). The impacts related to conflicts with the regional air quality plan are less than significant.

D. Mitigation Measures

None required.

4.5.3.2. Increased Carbon Monoxide Concentrations

A. Impact

Impact AQ-2: Future development under the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* would increase traffic volumes on surface roads, resulting in the potential for increased carbon monoxide concentrations at neighboring properties that could violate air quality standards (Less than Significant).

The proposed project would enable development activity that would produce carbon monoxide. Carbon monoxide is a local pollutant, in that it is relatively inert and therefore high concentrations are only found near the source. Carbon monoxide is an odorless, colorless poisonous gas whose primary source in the Monterey Bay Area is automobiles. Because of its localized nature, concentrations of this gas are highest near intersections of major roads where low speeds and idling occur.

The Monterey Bay Unified APCD CEQA Guidelines provide that projects may cause or substantially contribute to a violation of the State or national AAQS for carbon monoxide when levels of service (LOS) are significantly affected. The guidelines identify intersections or road segments that would operate at LOS E or F as having a potential to exceed the State/national AAQS.

Currently all surface streets within Gonzales operate as LOS C or better. Traffic modeling conducted for the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* shows that with projected traffic growth surface streets with planned improvements would operate at LOS C or better through 2035 with the exception one road segment: Fifth Street between Fanoe Road and U.S. 101. CALINE-4 modeling was undertaken at the intersection of Fifth Street and the U.S. 101 northbound ramps. Modeling was conducted using EMFAC-2007 emission factors

and the statewide carbon monoxide protocol.[22] Worst case concentrations at receptors located 10 feet from the intersection are shown in Figure 4.5.3. Projected carbon monoxide concentrations are well below the state/national ambient standards.

Figure 4.5.3: Worst-Case Carbon Monoxide Levels in 2035, in Parts per Million

Pollutant	*Gonzales 2010 General Plan*		State Standard
	UGA	UGA + Urban Reserve	
1-Hour Average	2.9	3.1	20.0
8-Hour Average	1.7	1.9	9.0

Source: Don Ballanti, 2010; California Air Resources Board

B. Applicable Policies and Regulations and Actions

Several elements of the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* contain the policies and implementing actions designed to reduce vehicle miles traveled and promote walking and biking thereby protecting and enhancing air quality:

From the "Land Use Element:"

Policy LU-3.2 Street Connectivity

Maintain continuity in the street pattern between the east and west sides of the freeway, continuing elements of the "grid" of the original townsite as much as possible as the area east of Highway 101 develops. New street and block patterns within neighborhoods should form a well connected pattern that provides direct travel routes, facilitates walking and biking, and provides more than one way of reaching a destination allowing vehicle traffic to gently filter through a neighborhood rather than forcing all trips onto heavily traveled collectors and arterials.

Implementing Action LU-3.2.1 – Address Street Connectivity in Design Guidelines. Ensure that adopted neighborhood design guidelines contain guidance addressing street connectivity within and between neighborhoods.

[22] Garaz, Vincent J. et al, Transportation Project-Level Carbon Monoxide Protocol, UCD-ITS-RR-97-21, December 1997.

From the "Circulation Element":

Policy CIR-2.3 Connectivity within Neighborhoods

Require a high level of connectivity within neighborhoods to reduce the need for vehicular trips and encourage walking and biking.

Implementing Action CIR-2.3.1 – Connectivity Analysis. Require a connectivity analysis as one component of Specific Plan review.

Implementing Action CIR-2.3.2 – Block Length. To provide pedestrians with frequent opportunities to cross the street and help to calm traffic, blocks shall generally be between 300 and 500 feet in length, unless longer block lengths are justified due to public safety, topography, drainages, or other environmental or physical constraints.

From the "Community Health and Safety Element":

Policy HS-6.1 Air Quality in New Construction and Redevelopment

Require all new construction and renovation to be designed in accordance with adopted Neighborhood Design Guidelines and constructed to reduce the City's overall greenhouse gas emissions and other deleterious air quality impacts.

Implementing Action HS-6.1.2 – Land Use and Transportation Patterns. Encourage a land use and transportation pattern which reduces dependence on the single passenger vehicle. Some of the elements of this pattern include a balanced mix of jobs and housing which minimize the necessity of commuting, a compact City form which minimizes vehicle miles traveled; mixing of commercial and residential uses to reduce the need for driving; and convenient provisions for bicycles, pedestrians, and carpools.

Implementing Action HS-6.1.5 – State Funds for Congestion Management. On an on-going basis, pursue State funds for transportation improvements which resolve congestion problems or promote alternatives to automobile use (including bikeways).

Implementing Action HS-6.1.6 – County CMP. Participate in the Monterey County Congestion Management Program and the on-going efforts of the Transportation Agency of Monterey County. The program allows jurisdictions to use their gas tax funds to implement transportation improvements and resolve congestion problems.

From the "Community Character Element:"

Policy CC-2.1 Neighborhood as Building Block.

Use the neighborhood as the basic "building block" for community growth, whereby neighborhoods form the basic planning unit and include schools, park and recreation facilities, a wide range of housing types, and neighborhood-serving commercial services.

Implementing Action CC-2.1.1 – Connections Between Neighborhoods. Strengthen the physical linkages between existing residential neighborhoods and create linkages from these areas to new neighborhoods as they are developed. This involves a greater emphasis on pedestrian and bicycle paths within and between neighborhoods, and encouraging alternatives to soundwalls and other unfriendly barriers adjacent to pedestrian spaces within and surrounding neighborhoods.

Implementing Action CC-2.1.2 – Compact Scale. New residential neighborhoods should maintain a friendly, compact walkable scale, similar to the existing older Gonzales neighborhoods.

C. Significance Determination

The proposed project includes policies and actions that lessen the impact of the project, including requirements for compact urban development based on small to medium-sized neighborhoods with high street connectivity that promotes walking and bicycle use. These policies and actions lessen the impacts of urbanization to a level of less than significant.

D. Mitigation Measures

None required.

4.5.3.3. EXPOSURE TO TOXIC AIR CONTAMINANTS AND ODORS

A. Impacts

Impact AQ-3: Buildout of the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* would expose sensitive receptors to increased diesel exhaust and other Toxic Air Contaminants or odors (Less than Significant with Mitigation Measures).

The proposed project would enable development activity with the potential to expose sensitive receptors to toxic air contaminants. The California Air Resources Board (CARB) in 2005 published an air quality/land use handbook[23] that recommends that planning agencies strongly consider proximity to these sources when finding new locations for "sensitive" land uses such as homes, medical facilities, daycare centers, schools and playgrounds. Toxic air contaminant-related land uses of concern include freeways, rail yards, ports, refineries, distribution centers, chrome plating facilities, dry cleaners and large gasoline service stations. The CARB recommendations are not reflected in the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* policies or implementing actions. The Land Use Diagram and its insets, however, were designed to locate most industrial development along the south edge of the Urban Growth Area, where prevailing northerly winds would carry any toxic air contaminants away from residential development to the north. The one area of possible concern would be in the vicinity of the northern interchange at Highway 101 and North Alta Street, where approximately 30 acres of neighborhood development are proposed adjacent to Highway 101 and south of an Urban Reserve Area containing light industrial uses.

With regard to impacts related to strong odors, an existing animal feed lot located east of Iverson Road (i.e., Fat City), the Johnson Canyon Road Landfill, and an organic fertilizer company all have the potential to generate significant odors that could affect nearby development in the Urban Growth Area. Under certain conditions, the odor from these uses is noticeable even in Downtown Gonzales, which is two miles west.

B. Applicable Policies and Regulations and Actions

None.

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[23] California Air Resources Board, Air Quality and Land Use Handbook: A Community Health Perspective, April 2005.

C. Significance Determination

The lack of criteria for siting of sensitive receptors in the vicinity of existing or proposed sources of mobile or stationary sources of Toxic Air Contaminants could unnecessarily expose sensitive populations to adverse levels of pollutants. In addition, the location of residential uses in the vicinity of Fat City and the landfill could subject residents to strong odors. These are potentially significant impacts, which would be reduced to a level of less than significant with the following mitigation measures:

D. Mitigation Measures

The City of Gonzales shall incorporate the following measures into the *Draft Gonzales 2010 General Plan* prior to final adoption and eliminate or amend any existing provisions of the draft plan that may be in conflict with these measures so as to eliminate the inconsistency in favor of the measures:

Mitigation Measure AQ-1: Toxic Air Contaminants

The City shall minimize local air quality impacts related to exposure of sensitive receptors to TACs by evaluating new development for proximity to TAC sources as recommended in the California Air Resources Board's "Air Quality and Land Use Handbook".

Mitigation Measure AQ-2: Deed Restriction Notification of Strong Odor

The City of Gonzales shall require that a deed restriction be recorded on all properties located within one (1) mile of either the animal feed lot or the Johnson Canyon Road Landfill (both of which are located east of Iverson Road) notifying the owner or the prospective property buyer of the potential for strong odors emanating from these facilities to adversely affect the property on which the deed restriction is recorded. This measure may be modified and refined as part of the Specific Plan or other development approval process based on a detailed analysis by a qualified air quality expert and based on land use changes over time.

Mitigation Measure AQ-3: Working to Reduce Strong Odors

The City of Gonzales shall work in partnership with the MBUAPCD and the owners of operations that create significant odors in the planning area to reduce such odors using the most current operational and other techniques available.

4.6 GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

This section evaluates the potential impacts associated with Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions from development under the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan*. The impact analysis is quantitative (where data are reasonably available) and qualitative otherwise. This analysis was prepared by Don Ballanti, Certified Consulting Meteorologist.

4.6.1 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

The following subsection describes existing conditions in the planning area.

4.6.1.1. BACKGROUND

Climate change refers to any significant change in measures of climate, such as average temperature, precipitation, or wind patterns, over a period of time. Climate change may result from natural factors, natural processes, and human activities that change the composition of the atmosphere and alter the surface and features of the land. Significant changes in global climate patterns have recently been associated with global warming, an average increase in the temperature of the atmosphere near the Earth's surface, that may be attributed to accumulation of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in the atmosphere. Greenhouse gases trap heat in the atmosphere, which in turn heats the surface of the Earth. Some GHGs occur naturally and are emitted to the atmosphere through natural processes, while others are created and emitted solely through human activities. The emission of GHGs through the combustion of fossil fuels (i.e. fuels containing carbon), in conjunction with other human activities, is linked to global warming.[24]

State law defines greenhouse gasses to include the following: carbon dioxide (CO_2), methane (CH_4), nitrous oxide (N_2O), hydrofluorocarbons, perfluorocarbons, and sulfur hexafluoride. The most common GHG that results from human activity is carbon dioxide, followed by methane and nitrous oxide. Greenhouse gas emissions mix in the

[24] OPR Technical Advisory Letter on CEQA and Climate Change, June 19, 2008

atmosphere; therefore, emissions from anywhere in the world can affect the climate everywhere. Consequently, greenhouse gas emissions from local communities may contribute to global warming impacts across California, the U.S. and the world.

Carbon dioxide is the "reference gas" for climate change, meaning that emissions of GHGs are typically reported in "carbon dioxide-equivalent" (CO_2-eq) measures. Emissions of carbon dioxide are largely by-products of fossil fuel combustion, whereas methane results from off-gassing associated with agricultural practices and landfills. Other GHGs, with much greater heat absorption potential than carbon dioxide, include hydrofluorocarbons, perfluorocarbons, and sulfur hexafluoride, and are generated in certain industrial processes.

There is international scientific consensus that human-caused increases in GHGs have and will continue to contribute to global warming, although there is uncertainty concerning the magnitude and rate of the warming. Potential global warming impacts in California may include, but are not limited to, loss in snow pack, sea level rise, more extreme heat days per year, more high ozone days, more large forest fires, and more drought years.[25] Secondary effects are likely to include global rise in sea level, impacts to agriculture, changes in disease vectors, and changes in habitat and biodiversity.

The California Air Resources Board (ARB) estimated that in 2006 California produced about 485 million gross metric tons (about 535 million U.S. tons) of CO_2-eq GHG emissions.[26] The ARB found that transportation is the source of 38 percent of the State's GHG emissions, followed by electricity generation (both in-state and out-of-state) at 22 percent and industrial sources at 20 percent. Commercial and residential fuel use (primarily for heating) accounted for 9 percent of GHG emissions.[27]

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[25] California Air Resources Board, Climate Change website (http://www.arb.ca.gov/cc/ccei/meetings/120106workshop/intropres12106.pdf).

[26] Because of the differential heat absorption potential of various GHGs, GHG emissions are frequently measured in "carbon dioxide-equivalents," which present a weighted average based on each gas's heat absorption (or "global warming") potential.

[27] California Air Resources Board, *California Greenhouse Gas Inventory for 2000-2006— by Category as Defined in the Scoping Plan* .http://www.arb.ca. gov/cc/inventory/data/tables/ghg_inventory_scopingplan_2009-03-13.pdf.

California has taken a leadership role in addressing the trend of increasing GHG emissions, with the passage in 2006 of California Assembly Bill 32 (AB 32), the Global Warming Solutions Act. This legislation is discussed below, under Regulatory Setting.

4.6.1.2. REGULATORY SETTING

A. <u>Federal</u>

In December 2009, in response to a U.S. Supreme Court ruling, the federal Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) made a finding under the Clean Air Act that current and projected atmospheric concentrations of the six generally recognized GHGs—CO_2, methane, nitrous oxide, hydrofluorocarbons, perfluorocarbons, and sulfur hexafluoride—"threaten the public health and welfare of current and future generations," and that emissions of these gases from new cars and trucks "contribute to the greenhouse gas pollution which threatens public health and welfare."[28]

While not in itself imposing any regulatory requirements, this "endangerment finding" under the Clean Air Act is required before EPA can issue regulations, and will allow the agency to adopt GHG emissions standards that it proposed in September 2009, in conjunction with new fuel economy standards simultaneously proposed by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration of the U.S. Department of Transportation. The standards proposed would apply to passenger cars, light-duty trucks, and medium-duty passenger vehicles, covering model years 2012 through 2016. They require these vehicles to meet an estimated combined average emissions level of 250 grams of carbon dioxide (CO_2) per mile in model year 2016, equivalent to 35.5 miles per gallon (mpg) if the automotive industry were to meet this CO_2 level all through fuel economy improvements.[29]

The Department of Transportation published a Draft Environmental Impact Statement for proposed Corporate Average Fuel Economy (CAFE) Standards; the comment period closed November 9, 2009.[30] In a related action, in June 2009, EPA granted California a waiver

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[28] EPA website: http://www.epa.gov/climatechange/endangerment.html. Reviewed March 24, 2010.

[29] EPA, *EPA and NHTSA Propose Historic National Program to Reduce Greenhouse Gases and Improve Fuel Economy for Cars and Trucks*, September 2009.

[30] National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, *Draft Environmental Impact Statement: Corporate Average Fuel Economy Standards, Passenger Cars and Light Trucks, Model Years 2012-2016*. September 2009.

under the federal Clean Air Act, allowing the state to impose its own, stricter GHG regulations for vehicles beginning in 2009 (see below).

B. State

AB 32

The regulatory setting addressing climate change and greenhouse gas emissions is fluid and changing rapidly. The passage of the California Global Warming Solutions Act (Assembly Bill 32) in 2006, which declares that "global warming poses a serious threat to the economic well-being, public health, natural resources, and the environment of California," launched statewide efforts to address climate change. AB 32 requires that the state's global warming emissions be reduced to 1990 levels by the year 2020 and directs the California Air Resources Board to develop regulations and establish a reporting and monitoring system to track global warming emissions levels. Senate Bill 97 followed in 2007, which directs the California Office of Planning and Research (OPR) to develop draft CEQA Guidelines "for mitigation of greenhouse gas emissions or the effects of greenhouse gas emissions" by July 1, 2009, and directed the Resources Agency to certify and adopt the CEQA Guidelines by January 1, 2010.

On December 11, 2008, ARB approved a Scoping Plan to meet the 2020 GHG reduction limits outlined in AB 32. The Scoping Plan estimates a reduction of 174 million metric tons (about 191 million U.S. tons) of CO_2-eq. Approximately one-third of the emissions reductions strategies fall within the transportation sector and include the following: California Light-Duty Vehicle GHG standards, Low Carbon Fuel Standard, Heavy-Duty Vehicle GHG emission reductions and energy efficiency, and medium and heavy-duty vehicle hybridization, high speed rail, and efficiency improvements in goods movement. These measures are expected to reduce GHG emissions by 57.3 million metric tons (63 million U.S. tons) of CO_2-eq. Emissions from the electricity sector are expected to be reduced another 49.7 million metric tons (55 million U.S. tons) of CO_2-eq. Reductions from the electricity sector include building and appliance energy efficiency and conservation, increased combined heat and power, solar water heating (AB 1470), the renewable energy portfolio standard (33 percent renewable energy by 2020), and the existing "million solar roofs" program. Other reductions are expected from industrial

sources, agriculture, forestry, recycling and waste, water, and emissions reductions from cap-and-trade programs. Regional GHG targets are also expected to yield a reduction of 5 million metric tons (5.5 million U.S. tons) of CO_2-eq.[31]

While ARB has identified a GHG reduction target of 15 percent from current levels for actions by local governments themselves, it has not yet determined what amount of GHG emissions reductions it recommends from local government land use decisions. However, the Scoping Plan does state that successful implementation of the plan relies on local governments' land use planning and urban growth decisions because local governments have primary authority to plan, zone, approve, and permit land development to accommodate population growth and the changing needs of their jurisdictions. ARB further acknowledges that decisions on how land is used will have large effects on the GHG emissions that will result from the transportation, housing, industry, forestry, water, agriculture, electricity, and natural gas emission sectors.

SB 375

SB 375, enacted in October, 2008, is designed to connect the reduction of GHG emissions from cars and light trucks to land use and transportation policy. SB 375 asserts that "without improved land use and transportation policy, California will not be able to achieve the goals of AB 32." Accordingly, SB 375 has three goals: 1) to use the regional transportation planning process to help achieve AB 32 goals; 2) to use CEQA streamlining as an incentive to encourage residential projects which help achieve AB 32 goals to reduce GHG emissions; and 3) to coordinate the regional housing needs allocation process with the regional transportation planning process.

SB 375 requires the California Air Resources Board (CARB) to establish GHG emission reduction targets for each region (as opposed to individual cities or households). Then each region's metropolitan planning organization—such as the Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments (AMBAG)—must create a "sustainable communities strategy" as part of the Regional Transportation Plan that will meet the target for the region. No "on-the-ground" change is likely to be seen for several years, after AMBAG actually adopts the "sustainable communities" plan called for in the law.

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[31] California Air Resources Board, *California Greenhouse Gas Inventory for 2000-2006— by Category as Defined in the Scoping Plan* .http://www.arb.ca. gov/cc/inventory/data/tables/ghg_inventory_scopingplan_2009-03-13.pdf.

C. Local and Regional Efforts

At the time this Draft EIR was prepared, the City had initiated work on a climate action plan. As part of this effort, the City had implemented the "Gonzales Grows Green" leadership initiative to educate and train businesses, industry, and residents on waste reduction and recycling. The City had also cooperated with AMBAG on the preparation of a 2005 Baseline Report that assessed City GHG emissions[32] and initiated communication and coordination with the California Attorney General's Office on greenhouse gas planning efforts as a means of framing a work program. The City was also in the process of evaluating a proposal to complete preparation of a climate action plan and considering alternatives for financing the effort.

4.6.2 Thresholds of Significance

The Natural Resources Agency adopted Amendments to the CEQA Guidelines for greenhouse gas emissions on December 30, 2009. On February 16, 2010, the Office of Administrative Law approved the Amendments, and filed them with the Secretary of State for inclusion in the California Code of Regulations. The Amendments became effective on March 18, 2010.

CEQA Guidelines provide that a project would have a significant adverse effect on the environment if it met any of the standards of significance listed below.

- Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment.
- Conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases.

Neither the Monterey Bay Unified Air Pollution Control District nor the State of California have established numerical thresholds of significance for greenhouse gas emissions for either individual projects or general plans.

[32] AMBAG. 2009. City of Gonzales Local Government Operations Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory: 2005 Baseline Report.

4.6.3 IMPACTS AND MITIGATIONS

4.6.3.1. GENERATION OF GREENHOUSE GASES

A. Impact

Impact GHG-1: In the absence of any adopted numerical thresholds of significance and uncertainty about the timing and effectiveness of State programs to reduce greenhouse gas emissions statewide, it cannot be determined that buildout under the General Plan will not result in greenhouse gas emissions that may have a significant impact on the environment (Significant and Unavoidable).

The proposed project would enable development activity that would generate greenhouse gas emissions. Potential greenhouse gas emissions related to buildout under the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* were calculated using estimated incremental increases in trip generation, population, employment, water consumption and solid waste production. The calculation of greenhouse gas emissions associated with general plan buildout is detailed in Appendix D. The analysis provides a general inventory of new future sources but does not attempt to characterize all emissions such as those related to industry or refrigerants, or the benefits from carbon sequestration from trees.

Greenhouse gas emissions from projected growth in Gonzales under buildout of the proposed Urban Growth Area alone and together with buildout of the Urban Reserve are shown by source type in Figure 4.6.1. Emissions are expressed as CO_2 equivalent metric tons per year. The emissions in Figure 4.6.1 are based on current emission factors that do not include the effects of either the State programs to reduce greenhouse emissions nor the effect adopted General Plan policies and implementation actions would have in reducing emissions from future growth.

Figure 4.6.1: Greenhouse Gas Emissions Associated with General Plan Buildout, in Metric Tons per Year (CO_2-eq)

Source	*Gonzales 2010 General Plan*	
	Growth Area	Growth Area +Urban Reserve
Vehicles	65,680	106,799
Natural Gas Combustions	23,841	34,599
Electricity	27,287	38,124
Water Conveyance	144	246
Wastewater Treatment	249	424
Solid Waste Decomposition	11,026	15,198
Total	125,579	195,351

Source: Don Ballanti, 2010

Buildout of the Urban Growth Area would increase greenhouse gas emissions by 125,579 metric tons per year CO_2-eq. This represents about 0.029 percent of the year 2020 emissions limit established for the State of California as required by AB 32. Buildout of the Urban Growth Area and Urban Reserve by 2035 would increase greenhouse gas emissions by 195,351 metric tons per year. This represents about 0.045 percent for the year 2020 emissions limit established by the State of California as required by AB 32.

The California Attorney General's (AG) Office submitted issues to the City of Petaluma in a letter dated January 3, 2008, and the Monterey Bay Area Unified Air Pollution Control District requested in its response to the Notice of Preparation that these issues be addressed in the this DEIR. The AG letter addressed issues related to greenhouse gas emissions, and a discussion of each issue is presented in Figure 4.6.2 below:

Figure 4.6.2: Issues Raised by AG Letter to City of Petaluma

AG Issue Area	Discussion
CEQA Requirements	The Natural Resources Agency adopted Amendments to the CEQA Guidelines for greenhouse gas emissions on December 30, 2009. On February 16, 2010, the Office of Administrative Law approved the Amendments, and filed them with the Secretary of State for inclusion in the California Code of Regulations. The Amendments became effective on March 18, 2010
Potential Mitigation Measures:	
✓ Mandatory mixed uses in all commercial development	Not appropriate for Gonzales; this is optional and encouraged in the Downtown Mixed Use Designation and the Community Commercial Core Area designation.
✓ Additional mixed-use sites	To be incorporated into Climate Action Plan required by Mitigation Measure GHG-1
✓ Incentives for mixed-use development	To be incorporated into Climate Action Plan required by Mitigation Measure GHG-1
✓ Increased density for SFDs	The *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* requires new residential development to achieve a minimum of 7 to 9 dwelling units per gross acre. This is substantially higher than existing development in Gonzales.
✓ Require high end of density range	See response above.
✓ Heat Island Mitigation Plan	To be incorporated into Climate Action Plan required by Mitigation Measure GHG-1
✓ Strengthen policies to support walking, biking, and carpooling and to reduce congestion around schools	The *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* requires new development to be neighborhood based and consistent with adopted Neighborhood Design Guidelines. These guidelines require schools to be centrally located in small- to medium-sized neighborhoods and for neighborhoods to achieve a high level of connectivity to promote walking and bicycling. See Circulation Element Policy CIR-2.3 and Implementing Actions CIR-2.3.1 and CIR-2.3.2.
✓ Add policy to require locating schools such that opportunities for walking and bicycling are maximized	See "Land Use Element" Implementing Action LU-9.1.1 – Location of New Schools
✓ Develop comprehensive parking management strategy to encourage walking, bicycling, carpooling, and transit use	Not appropriate for Gonzales
✓ Evaluate actions to increase ridesharing and transit use	To be incorporated into Climate Action Plan required by Mitigation Measure GHG-1

AG Issue Area	Discussion
✓ Give priority to infrastructure and amenities in mixed-use and high-density areas	To be incorporated into Climate Action Plan required by Mitigation Measure GHG-1
✓ Accelerate schedule for climate action plan	This is addressed in Mitigation Measure GHG-1. See also "Sustainability Element" Implementing Action SUS-1.1.2 – Establish Regional Targets and Implementing Action SUS-1.1.3 – Support Gonzales Grows Green Initiatives
✓ Require sustainable site planning and green building practices	To be incorporated into Climate Action Plan required by Mitigation Measure GHG-1
✓ Specify a timeframe for adopting green building ordinance	This is addressed in Mitigation Measure GHG-2. See also "Sustainability Element" Implementing Action SUS-1.6.2 – Standards for Green Building.
✓ Require recycling in all buildings	To be incorporated into Climate Action Plan required by Mitigation Measure GHG-1
✓ Specify sources of renewable power that the City will investigate and implement including: installing solar photovoltaic systems to generate electricity for city buildings and operations; using methane to generate electricity at the City wastewater treatment plant; and installing combined heat and power systems	See "Sustainability Element" Implementing Action SUS-1.6.1 – Energy Efficient Buildings and Implementing Action SUS-1.5.1 – Renewal Energy Systems.
✓ Require energy efficiency and water conservation upgrades to existing non-residential buildings at the time of sale, remodel, or additions	To be incorporated into Climate Action Plan required by Mitigation Measure GHG-1
✓ Require new residential development to participate in the California Energy Commission New Solar Homes Partnership and include onsite solar photovoltaic systems in at least 50 percent of all residential buildings	To be incorporated into Climate Action Plan required by Mitigation Measure GHG-1
✓ Require onsite solar generation of electricity in new retail/commercial buildings and parking lots/garages (solar carports)	To be incorporated into Climate Action Plan required by Mitigation Measure GHG-1
✓ Develop a program to provide innovative, low-interest financing for energy efficiency and renewable energy projects	Not appropriate for Gonzales
✓ Adopt stronger requirements for use of recycled and reclaimed water, including: requiring installation of graywater systems in new buildings, if feasible, to allow use of recycled water for irrigation; requiring new buildings to include plumbing for graywater systems; requiring new development to provide the infrastructure needed for the City to deliver reclaimed water to the property for use in irrigation, if feasible	See "Sustainability Element" Implementing Action SUS-1.11.3 – Wastewater Recovery. See also "Community Facilities and Services Element" Implementing Action FS-3.1.4 – Upgrade Quality of Effluent. To be incorporated into Climate Action Plan required by Mitigation Measure GHG-1

B. Applicable Policies and Regulations

The *Gonzales 2010 General Plan's* "Sustainability Element" contains the following policies and implementing measures designed to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from future development.

Policy SUS-1.1 Climate Protection Strategies

The City shall continue to pursue strategies designed to reduce greenhouse gas production and increase the production and use of renewable energy.

Implementing Action SUS-1.1.1 – Conduct a GHG Inventory. The City will complete work in progress to establish a baseline inventory of GHG emissions including municipal emissions, and emissions from all business sectors and the community using methods approved by, or consistent with guidance from, the California Air Resources Board.

Implementing Action SUS-1.1.2 – Establish Regional Targets. Work with AMBAG in the process of identifying regional targets and implementing various programs for reducing GHG emissions and promoting sustainability.

Implementing Action SUS-1.1.3 –Support Gonzales Grows Green Initiatives. The City shall continue to address climate change through the Gonzales Grows Green Initiatives which provide a local mechanism for carrying out strategies to reduce GHG gas emissions. Key program objectives include:

- ✓ *Improve environmental consciousness of government, businesses and its citizenry.*
- ✓ *Promote Gonzales as an incubator for environmental business development*
- ✓ *Fund some services through cooperative ventures involving sustainability.*
- ✓ *Become known both regionally and beyond for its "GONZALES GROWS GREEN" Sustainable Community Initiative (G_3)*

- ✓ *Assist Gonzales in "doing the right things" for its entire community with a focus on ecology, economy and equity.*

Implementing Action SUS-1.1.4 – Monitor Performance. Regularly assess progress and program needs, identifying opportunities and obstacles for meeting GHG emission reduction goals.

Policy SUS-1.2 Sustainable Land Use Patterns

Encourage sustainable and efficient land use patterns that promote walkability, reduce vehicular trips, and preserve open space and long-term agricultural lands.

Implementing Action SUS-1.2.1 – Implement Neighborhood Design Guidelines. Utilize the Neighborhood Design Guidelines, Specific Plans, and other General Plan implementation programs as appropriate to establish and maintain sustainable land use patterns.

Policy SUS-1.3 Promote Green Industries

Promote the development of "clean" or "green" sector industries that benefit Gonzales' environment and economy.

Implementing Action SUS-1.3.1 – New Industries. Promote industries that are using or developing technologies or processes to make better use of resources, reduce pollution, to allow for greater use of renewable resources, or to achieve other environmental benefits.

Implementing Action SUS-1.3.2 – Existing Industries. Encourage energy efficiency and innovation in existing industries and as an integral part of economic development.

Implementing Action SUS-1.3.3 – Agricultural Industries. Recognizing the importance of the agricultural industry to the local and regional economy, support efforts by the agricultural processors to achieve cost-effective reductions in energy consumed by agricultural operations (for example, cooling facilities) where economically and technically feasible.

Policy SUS-1.4 Reduce Transportation Generated GHG Emissions

Implement General Plan policies and Neighborhood Design Guidelines through specific plans, and develop and adopt new or amended regulations, programs, and incentives as appropriate to reduce transportation related GHG emissions by encouraging alternative modes of transportation and increased fuel efficiency.

> *Implementing Action SUS-1.4.1 – Transportation Options: Promote transportation options such as bicycle trails, commute trip reduction programs, incentives for car pooling and public transit.*
>
> *Implementing Action SUS-1.4.2 – Public Transit Planning and Financing. Consider long term options for making transit available in Gonzales, and for financing public transit, such as through impact fees (Transit Impact Development Fee). To compete effectively in the transportation marketplace, alternative transit modes need comprehensive route coverage, frequent service, and attractive and comfortable equipment. Local governments can help level the playing field by establishing new policies and priority for transportation expenditures and projects in communities.*
>
> *Implementing Action SUS-1.4.3 – Small-Scale Employment. Promote small-scale employment such as live/work spaces and satellite work centers to reduce the total travel necessary for a worker.*
>
> *Implementing Action SUS-1.4.4 – Telecommunications. Encourage the expansion of telecommunications Infrastructure.*

Policy SUS-1.5 Increase Use of Renewable Energy Increase the local use and production of renewable energy.

Implementing Action SUS-1.5.1 – Renewable Energy Systems. Encourage the local construction and use of renewable energy systems such as solar electric, wind power, methane power and biodiesel.

Policy SUS-1.6 Encourage Green Building Practices

Employ sustainable or "green" building techniques for the construction and operation of buildings where feasible.

Implementing Action SUS-1.6.1 – Energy Efficient Buildings. Encourage the design and construction of energy efficient buildings where feasible using "green" technology and principles such as:

- ✓ *Designing mechanical and electrical systems that achieve maximum energy efficiency with currently available technology*
- ✓ *Minimizing energy use through innovative site design and building orientation that address factors such as sun-shade patterns, prevailing winds, and sun screens*
- ✓ *Employing self-generation of energy using renewable technologies*
- ✓ *Combining energy efficiency measures that have longer payback periods with measures that have shorter payback periods*
- ✓ *Reducing levels of non-essential lighting, heating and cooling.*

Implementing Action SUS-1.6.2 – Standards for Green Building. Consider developing and adopting interim and long-term standards for green building in addition to those identified in the California Green Building Code.

Implementing Action SUS 1.6.3 – Municipal Buildings as Green Building Models. Utilize green building practices in the design of new and major remodels to City buildings. Greening of public buildings should provide a model for private construction/retrofit.

Implementing Action SUS 1.6.4 – Recycled Building Materials. Promote the reuse of building material, use materials that have recycled content, or use materials that are derived from sustainable or rapidly renewable sources to the extent feasible.

Implementing Action SUS-1.6.5 – Construction/Demolition Recycling. Develop standard conditions of approval for all new developments to prepare and implement a construction/demolition waste recycling plan as a condition of project approval and entitlement. Enforce through the building inspection process.

Implementing Action SUS-1.6.6 – Deconstruction. Deconstruction is the process of dismantling a building in order to salvage select materials for reuse. Encourage the scheduling of time for deconstruction activities to take place during project demolition as appropriate.

Implementing Action SUS-1.6.7 – Life-Cycle Costing. Encourage use of life cycle costing in determining materials and construction techniques. Life cycle costing analyses the costs and benefits over the life of a particular product, technology or system.

Implementing Action SUS-1.6.8 – Reduce Cooling Load. Encourage use of cool roofing materials and parking lot design, and strategic tree planting in parking lots to reduce the need for mechanical cooling of buildings.

- ✓ *Encourage the use of cool roofing materials, such as reflective, low heat retention tiles, membranes and coatings, to reduce heat build up.*
- ✓ *Plant trees and other vegetation to provide shade and cool air temperatures. In particular, properly position trees to shade buildings, air conditioning units, and parking lots.*
- ✓ *Reduce heat build-up in parking lots through increased shading or use of cool paving materials as feasible.*

Implementing Action SUS 1.6.9 – Sustainable Landscape. Implement sustainable landscape design and maintenance, where feasible.

- ✓ *Encourage the use of integrated pest management to delay, reduce, or eliminate dependence on the use of pesticides, herbicides, and synthetic fertilizers*
- ✓ *Encourage composting efforts through education, incentives, and other activities*
- ✓ *Decrease the amount of impervious surfaces in developments, especially where public places, plazas and amenities are proposed to serve as recreations opportunities.*

- ✓ *Strategically plant deciduous shade trees, evergreen trees, and drought tolerant native vegetation, as appropriate.*
- ✓ *Reduce use of lawn types that require high levels of irrigation.*
- ✓ *Implement water conservation measures in site/building design and landscaping.*
- ✓ *Encourage the use of high efficiency irrigation technology, and recycled site water to reduce the use of potable water for irrigation.*

Policy SUS-1.7 Green Municipal Operations

Utilize green practices in conducting municipal operations.

Implementing Action SUS-1.7.1 – Buy Energy Efficient Products. Purchase municipal office equipment and appliances that are Energy Star products as feasible.

Implementing Action SUS-1.7.2 – Green the City Fleet. Purchase the most cost-effective and lowest emission vehicle possible. Reduce vehicle size while eliminating old and underused vehicles. Promote fleet use of biodiesel as appropriate.

Implementing Action SUS 1.7.3 – Reduce Municipal Office Waste. Reduce municipal waste going into landfills as a means of reducing methane emissions.

Implementing Action SUS 1.7.4 – Recyclable Supplies. Promote use of recycled paper products.

Implementing Action SUS 1.7.5 – Building "Tune-ups". Encourage energy-efficiency retrofits or "tune-ups" of public buildings to reduce energy use and operational costs. Such projects can also serve as models for similar work in the private sector.

Policy SUS 1.8 Public Awareness/Education

Support efforts to enhance public awareness and understanding of climate protection issues.

Implementing Action SUS-1.8.1 – Sustainability Education. Help educate the public, schools, other jurisdictions, professional associations, business and industry about reducing global warming pollution and implementing sustainable practices.

Policy SUS-1.9 Improve Waste Management

Develop and adopt new or amended regulations, programs, and incentives as appropriate to reduce waste by improving management and recycling programs.

Implementing Action SUS-1.9.1 – Renovate Instead of Demolish. Reduce construction and demolition waste by encouraging renovating and adding on to existing buildings, rather than constructing new buildings where feasible.

Implementing Action SUS 1.9.2 – Recycling Facilities. Include features in buildings to facilitate recycling of waste generated by building occupants and associated refuse storage areas. Provide permanent, adequate, and convenient space for individual building occupants to collect refuse and recyclable material.

Implementing Action SUS 1.9.3 – Innovative Use of Waste Products. Through the Gonzales Grows Green Initiatives, support the innovative use and re-use of waste products generated by businesses, government and citizens.

Policy SUS-1.10 Energy from Landfill

Work with the Salinas Valley Waste Authority to investigate opportunities to utilize energy produced or recovered from the Johnson Canyon Road landfill.

Implementing Action SUS-1.10.1 – Methane Gas Recovery. Support efforts to recover and convert methane gas to an energy source for use in fueling vehicles, operating equipment, and heating buildings.

Implementing Action SUS-1.10.2 – Waste to Energy. Support use of waste to energy technology.

Policy SUS-1.11 Improve Water Supply Efficiency

Evaluate opportunities to increase the energy efficiency of water and wastewater systems.

Implementing Action SUS-1.11.1 – Efficiency of New and Existing Systems. Retrofit municipal water and wastewater systems with energy efficient motors, pumps and other equipment where feasible. Where systems are expanded, or new systems are constructed, to accommodate new growth, ensure that energy efficiency is built into the new systems.

Implementing Action SUS-1.11.2 – Methane from Wastewater Treatment. Evaluate the feasibility of recovering wastewater treatment methane for energy production.

Implementing Action SUS-1.11.3 – Wastewater Recovery. Evaluate the feasibility of wastewater recovery for irrigation.

Policy SUS-1.12 Biological Diversity and Sustainability

Promote biological diversity and sustainability through habitat restoration and healthy watershed management.

Implementing Action SUS-1.12.1 – Landscape Conditions Prior to Human Modification. Carefully consider a project site's natural hydrology, topography, soils and indigenous vegetation in the preparation of specific plans and the design of new development.

Implementing Action SUS-1.12.2 – Preservation of Open Space. Promote the preservation of open spaces and natural watercourses. These open spaces function as rainwater infiltration zones and natural habitat as well as creating a more natural appearance for the new community.

Implementing Action SUS-1.12.3 – Natural Hydrology. Recreate and/or restore the historic natural hydrology of the landscape where feasible by incorporating natural drainage features such as creeks and sloughs into site design.

Implementing Action SUS-1.12.4 – Impacts on Hydrology and Water Quality. Design new development and redevelopment to minimize impacts on watershed hydrology and water quality.

The Sustainability Element is interconnected with all other elements of the General Plan, and all other elements embody sustainability principles. The goals, policies and actions in the element are directly tied to the implementation of other elements. A brief summary of how sustainability is reflected in each of other elements is provided below.

The **Land Use Element** incorporates sustainable development policies and actions emphasizing future neighborhoods that efficiently use available land while reducing the demand on natural resources. Land use policies promote compact, walkable, mixed use development, and the long-term conservation of the most productive agricultural lands. In addition, the Land Use Element promotes a balance of jobs and housing by ensuring that anticipated future residential development is underpinned by lands reserved for local job growth.

The **Circulation Element** promotes the use of alternative transportation such as pedestrian and bicycle modes of transportation, and supports future transit-oriented development designed to take advantage of mass transit systems.

The **Housing Element** must include an analysis of energy conservation opportunities. In addition, energy conservation and green building measures found in this Sustainability Element may be incorporated into those of the Housing Element.

The **Community Health and Safety Element** includes sustainable development policies and actions addressing air quality and reduction in greenhouse gas emissions, water quality, and hazardous materials safety.

The **Conservation and Open Space Element** promotes the long-term viability of agricultural lands and operations, plant and animal resources, water, and soils. In addition, it includes policies and actions that encourage infill development and orderly growth and require the provision of parks and recreation facilities.

The **Community Facilities and Services Element** promotes healthy watershed management, restoration of historic natural drainages, and best management practices to

mitigate pollutant loadings associated with urban runoff. It also encourages waste recycling, purchase of recycled materials, and hazardous waste management.

The **Community Character Element** incorporates sustainable development policies and actions that promote walkable neighborhoods with well-connected street, pedestrian and bike paths linkages, compact infill development, higher densities in the Downtown Mixed Use District, energy and resource efficient buildings, and enhancement of natural features such as drainages. It also contains policies to promote urban open space, tree planting and preservation. These policies are further implemented through the City's Neighborhood Design Guidelines.

C. Significance Determination

As noted in the Regulatory Setting section, the State has approved the Scoping Plan that outlines programs and measures to reach the 2020 greenhouse gas emissions limit mandated by AB 32. The Scoping Plan is expected to reduce greenhouse emissions in 2020 to 30 percent below what is termed "business as usual." It is reasonable to assume that the statewide programs, together with General Plan policies and implementation programs would reduce project emissions, shown in Figure 4.7.1, by a similar amount.

The transportation sector represents a significant proportion of all GHG emissions, and alternative transportation strategies represent an important tool in reducing transportation-related GHG emissions. The *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* contains policies, plans, and implementing actions that support alternative transportation (see Section 4.4.3.4 [B] above).

Neither the Monterey Bay Unified Air Pollution Control District nor the State of California have established numerical thresholds of significance for greenhouse gas emissions for either individual projects or general plans. In the absence of any adopted numerical thresholds of significance and with the inherent uncertainty about the timing and effectiveness of State programs to reduce greenhouse gas emissions statewide, it cannot be determined that buildout under the General Plan will not result in greenhouse gas emissions that may have a significant impact on the environment. This impact remains cumulatively significant and unavoidable.

D. Mitigation Measures

The City of Gonzales shall incorporate the following measures into the *Draft Gonzales 2010 General Plan* prior to final adoption and eliminate or amend any existing provisions of the draft plan that may be in conflict with these measures so as to eliminate the inconsistency in favor of the measures:

Mitigation Measure GHG-1: Citywide Climate Action Plan

The City shall complete work currently underway on, and then adopt, a citywide climate action plan with the objective of meeting a GHG emissions reduction trajectory consistent with State law (currently codified in Health and Safety Code 38500 et seq. (AB 32) and Executive Order S-03-05).[33] *The City, in setting the trajectory, shall recognize the likelihood that Gonzales may bear a much larger percentage of growth than other more mature communities in the State and that an appropriate scaling of the State targets set forth in AB 32 and Executive Order S-03-05 would allow a citywide increase in GHG emissions as the City implements the* Gonzales 2010 General Plan. *This allowable increase in GHG emissions shall be tempered by appropriate measures to limit GHG emissions from new development on a per capita basis, while achieving actual reductions in such emissions from existing uses in the planning area. The limits to be established for per capita GHG emissions shall be indexed to realistic targets that are readily achievable using GHG Best Management Practices identified as part of the citywide climate action plan. Targets for reducing GHG emissions in existing development shall, at a minimum, be a 15 percent reduction from the baseline identified in the GHG inventory prepared by AMBAG (2009). GHG Best Management Practices shall include but not be limited to:*

- ✓ *Increased energy efficiency beyond Title 24*
- ✓ *Use of electrically powered landscape equipment and outdoor electrical outlets*

[33] Pursuant to these mandates, California is committed to reducing GHG emissions to 1990 levels by 2020, and to 80 percent below 1990 levels by 2050. These objectives are consistent with the underlying environmental objective of stabilizing atmospheric concentrations of greenhouse gases at a level that will substantially reduce the risk of dangerous climate change.

- ✓ *Installation of green roofs*
- ✓ *Installation of solar or tank-less water heaters*
- ✓ *Installation of solar panels*
- ✓ *Increased diversity and/or density of land use mix*
- ✓ *Provision of necessary infrastructure and treatment to allow use of graywater/ recycled water for outdoor irrigation*
- ✓ *Installation of rainwater collection systems*
- ✓ *Provision of composting facilities at residential sites*
- ✓ *Incorporation of all other measures in Figure 4.7.2 above that are identified as being appropriate for implementation in Gonzales.*

The City shall adopt a citywide climate action plan as outlined above prior to the adoption of any Specific Plan in the Urban Growth Area.

Mitigation Measure GHG-2: Implementation of GHG Best Management Practices

The City shall require Specific Plans and development approvals to contain a plan to implement GHG Best Management Practices, as outlined above, that would result in achieving the limits on GHG emissions adopted as part of the citywide climate action plan.

Mitigation Measure GHG-3: Timeframe to Adopt Green Building Code

The City shall adopt the "California Green Building Standards (CALGreen) Code," which becomes effective on January 1, 2011, by July 1, 2011.

4.6.3.2. CONSISTENCY WITH APPLICABLE PLAN, POLICY OR REGULATION

A. Impact

Impact GHG-2: The *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* would not conflict with any applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases (Less than Significant).

The proposed project would enable development activity that could conflict with efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. As noted in the Regulatory Setting section, the State has approved the Scoping Plan that outlines programs and measures to reach the 2020 greenhouse gas emissions limit mandated by AB 32. The Scoping Plan is currently the only applicable plan to reduce greenhouse emissions. The plan consists of 18 programs or measures. Some programs have been formally adopted, other have not.

Figure 4.6.3 summarizes the measures presented in the Scoping Plan and identifies the statewide emission reduction associated with each measure. It also shows, where applicable, policies in the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* that support the statewide program or measure.

Figure 4.6.3: State Scoping Plan Measures

State Scoping Program/Measure	Statewide Reduction by 2020 (MMCO2-eq)	Related General Plan Policies and Implementation Measures
California Light-Duty Vehicle GHG Standards ✓ Pavley Vehicle Standards ✓ Zero Emission Vehicle Program ✓ Alternative/Renewable Fuel and Vehicle Technology Program	31.7	The City does not have the authority to regulate vehicle or fuel standards, but supports the Scoping Plan through SUS-11. and SUS-1.4
Energy Efficiency ✓ Utility Efficiencies ✓ Building Standards ✓ Appliance Standards	26.3	Supported by SUS-1.6
Renewable Portfolio Standard (33% by 2020)	21.3	Supported by SUS-1.5
Low Carbon Fuel Standard	15	The City Does not have the authority to regulate fuel standards by supports the Scoping Plan through SUS-1.1 and SUS-1.4

State Scoping Program/Measure	Statewide Reduction by 2020 (MMCO2-eq)	Related General Plan Policies and Implementation Measures
Regional Transportation-Related GHG Targets	5	Supported by SUS-1.2 and SUS-1.4.
Vehicle Efficiency Measures (consumer education, engine load, tire inflation, etc.)	4.5	The City does not have the authority to regulate vehicle efficiency standards but supports the Scoping Plan through SUS-1.2 and SUS-1.4.
Goods Movement ✓ Port Electrification ✓ Heavy-Duty Engine Efficiency	3.7	Not Applicable. Gonzales does not have a port, nor has the authority to regulate heavy duty engine efficiency.
Million Solar Roofs	2.1	Supported by SUS-1.3, SUS-1.5 and SUS-1.6.
Medium/Heavy Duty Vehicles	1.4	The City does not have the authority to regulate vehicle or fuel standards, but supports the Scoping Plan through SUS-11. and SUS-1.4
High Speed Rail (between northern and southern California)	1.0	Not Applicable.
Industrial Measures	1.4	Supported by SUS-1.3.
High Global Warming Potential Gas Measures	20.2	The City does not have the authority to regulate refrigerants, blowing agents, etc, but supports the Scoping Plan through SUS-1.3.
Sustainable Forests (sequestration)	5.0	Not applicable.
Recycling and Waste ✓ Landfill Methane Control ✓ High Recycling/Zero Waste	1.0	Supported by SUS-1.7, SUS-1.9 and SUS-1.10.
Total	174	

Source: Don Ballanti

B. Applicable Policies and Regulations and Actions

See Subsection 4.6.3.1 [B] above.

C. Significance Determination

Figure 4.6.3 demonstrates that the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* supports each applicable statewide program or measure with one or more policies and associated implementing

actions. The *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* would not conflict with any applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases. This impact is less than significant.

D. Mitigation Measures

None required.

4.7 ENERGY CONSERVATION

The goal of conserving energy implies the wise and efficient use of energy. The means of achieving this goal include:

- ✓ Decreasing overall per capita energy consumption,
- ✓ Decreasing reliance on natural gas and oil, and
- ✓ Increasing reliance on renewal energy sources.

In order to assure that energy implications are considered in project decisions, the California Environmental Quality Act requires that EIRs include a discussion of the potential energy impacts of proposed projects, with particular emphasis on avoiding or reducing inefficient, wasteful and unnecessary consumption of energy.

The consideration of energy conservation in project decisions is closely related to the analysis of transportation and greenhouse gas emissions. Automobiles and trucks are a significant source of greenhouse gases, directly related to the amount of fuel consumed by the automobile. In short, the greater the traffic-related greenhouse gas emissions impacts are for a project, the greater the consumption of non-renewable energy, including oil. This correlation will weaken over time as the automobile fleet gradually transforms from gasoline and diesel-powered engines to hybrid and electric-powered engines, but in the short term air quality and greenhouse gas emission impacts are a useful gauge of energy consumption. In addition to traffic-related greenhouse gas emissions, residential, commercial, and industrial power usage is also a significant source of greenhouse gas emissions. For all the above reasons, one should review the analysis of transportation/traffic (see Section 4.4) and greenhouse gas emissions (see Section 4.6) contained in this DEIR for added insight on issues related to energy conservation.

4.7.1 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

According to the U.S. Department of Energy, energy usage in transportation and residential sectors represents about half of U.S. energy consumption, and is largely

controlled by individual domestic consumers.[34] Accordingly, General Plans, which set forth the constitution for the development of cities in California, are an important tool for shaping our energy future. Our ability to plan energy efficient neighborhoods, and the transportation systems that serve them, plays a predominant role in our efforts to conserve energy and reduce air pollution and the human factors associated with climate change.

Much of California's electrical power grid is operated by the California Independent System Operator (CAISO). CAISO is a non-profit public benefit corporation charged with operating the majority of California's high-voltage wholesale power grid. Balancing the demand for electricity with an equal supply of megawatts, the CAISO is the impartial link between power plants and the utilities that serve more than 30 million consumers. In the Central Coast Region, gas and electricity is provided by the Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E), which is a CAISO member.

In early 2010, CAISO adopted the "2010-2014 Five-Year Strategic Plan Update." The plan, which updated CAISO's 2009-2013 plan, summarized California's coming energy needs as follows:

> *The state needs 55,657 gigawatt-hours (GWh) of new renewable generation to meet the 20 percent standard and 102,000 GWh to meet the 33 percent standard. To access these clean resources and deliver the output to customers, the ISO estimates the state needs six or more major transmission lines in the next decade. According to our preliminary studies, meeting the 33 percent portfolio goal requires more than 800 circuit-miles of 500 kilovolt transmission lines planned, approved, sited and constructed by 2020 (CAISO, 2010).*

[34] http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Energy_conservation

4.7.2 Thresholds of Significance

The proposed project was considered to have a significant adverse effect on the environment if it met one or more of the standards of significance listed below.

- Would the project result in the wasteful, inefficient and unnecessary consumption of energy?
- Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered energy transmission facilities, need for new physically altered energy transmission facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable levels of service.

4.7.3 Impacts and Mitigations

4.7.3.1. Result in the wasteful, inefficient, and unnecessary consumption of energy; Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered energy transmission facilities, need for new physically altered energy transmission facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable levels of service.

A. <u>Impact</u>

<u>Impact ENR-1: The adoption of the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* would provide the basis for development activity that could result in wasteful, inefficient, and unnecessary consumption of energy. It could also result in the need for new and improved energy transmission facilities, the construction of which could cause a significant environmental effect</u> (Less than Significant).

The proposed project would enable development activity that would result in new demand for electricity and natural gas, and this demand is summarized in Figure 4.7.1 and Figure 4.7.2. These projections assume that Title 24 will remain in place but do not

factor in any improvements in energy efficiency that would most likely be achieved over time.

Figure 4.7.1: Existing and Projected Electricity Demand (Urban Growth Area)

Designation	Existing Land Use	Added Land Use	Usage Factor (KWH/year)[1]	Estimated Existing Annual Usage per DU (GWH/year)	Estimated Additional Usage at Buildout (GWH/year)	Total Usage at Buildout (GWH/year)
Residential Uses						
Neighborhood/Neighborhood Residential	0 DU	6,800 DU	7,100	0.000	48.280	48.280
Low Density Residential	1,474 DU	700 DU	7,100	10.465	4.970	15.435
Medium Density Residential	380 DU	100 DU	7,100	2.698	0.710	3.408
High Density Residential	213 DU	100 DU	7,100	1.512	0.710	2.222
Subtotal	2,067 DU	7,700 DU	--	14.676	54.670	69.346
Commercial Uses						
Community and Neighborhood Commercial	0 SF	1,010,000 SF	16.75	0.000	16.918	16.918
Downtown Mixed use	220,000 SF	0 SF	16.75	3.685	0.000	3.685
Highway Commercial	60,000 SF	550,000 SF	16.75	1.005	9.213	10.218
Subtotal	280,000 SF	1,560,000 SF	--	4.690	26.130	30.820
Manufacturing Uses						
Heavy Industrial/Manufacturing	1,730,000 SF	2,450,000 SF	16.75	28.978	41.038	70.015
Light Industrial/Business Park	0 SF	160,000 SF	16.75	0.000	2.680	2.680
Subtotal	1,730,000 SF	2,610,000 SF	--	28.978	43.718	72.695
Other Uses						
Public/Quasi-Public	--	--				
Agriculture	--	--				
Parks and Open Space	--	--				
Urban Reserve	--	--				
Subtotal	--	--				
TOTAL	--	--		48.343	124.518	172.861

Sources: California Energy Commission ("California Energy Demand 2000-2010"); Salinas General Plan Final EIR; Coastplans; Gonzales 2010 General Plan

Notes: [1]Neighborhood Residential usage factor represents a weighted average of 70% SFD and 30% MFD; commercial and industrial usage factors are per 1,000 SF

Figure 4.7.2: Existing and Projected Natural Gas Demand (Urban Growth Area)

Designation	Existing Land Use	Added Land Use	Usage Factor (therms/year)[1]	Estimated Existing Annual Usage (therms/year)	Additional Usage at Buildout (therms/year)	Total Usage at Buildout (therms/year)
Residential Uses						
Neighborhood/Neighborhood Residential	0 DU	6,800 DU	420	0	2,856,000	2,856,000
Low Density Residential	1,474 DU	700 DU	420	619,080	294,000	913,080
Medium Density Residential	380 DU	100 DU	420	159,600	42,000	201,600
High Density Residential	213 DU	100 DU	420	89,460	42,000	131,460
Subtotal	2,067 DU	7,700 DU	--	868,140	3,234,000	4,102,140
Commercial Uses						
Community and Neighborhood Commercial	0 SF	1,010,000 SF	0.38	0	383,800	383,800
Downtown Mixed use	220,000 SF	0 SF	0.38	83,600	0	83,600
Highway Commercial	60,000 SF	550,000 SF	0.38	22,800	209,000	231,800
Subtotal	280,000 SF	1,560,000 SF	--	106,400	592,800	699,200
Manufacturing Uses						
Heavy Industrial/Manufacturing	1,730,000 SF	2,450,000 SF	0.38	657,400	931,000	1,588,400
Light Industrial/Business Park	0 SF	160,000 SF	0.38	0	60,800	60,800
Subtotal	1,730,000 SF	2,610,000 SF	--	657,400	991,800	1,649,200
Other Uses						
Public/Quasi-Public	--	--				
Agriculture	--	--				
Parks and Open Space	--	--				
Urban Reserve	--	--				
Subtotal	--	--				
TOTAL	--	--	--	1,631,940	4,818,600	6,450,540

Sources: California Energy Commission ("California Energy Demand 2000-2010"); Salinas General Plan Final EIR; Coastplans; Gonzales 2010 General Plan

Notes: [1]Neighborhood Residential usage factor represents a weighted average of 70% SFD and 30% MFD; commercial and industrial usage factors are per 1,000 SF

According to the figures above, the proposed project would increase demand for electricity at buildout of the Urban Growth Area from 48 GWH per year to 173 GWH per year. The proposed project would also increase demand for natural gas from 1.6 million therms per year to 6.4 million therms per year. Buildout of the Urban Reserve Area would slightly less than double the increase in demand for electricity and natural gas, assuming

current rates of use. Such assumptions made about energy usage beyond 50 years into the future, however, offer little insight into what our future energy profile will actually be. This is because it is likely that the amounts and forms of energy that are used to power residential and transportation uses will change significantly over the course of 50 plus years.

The supply of new electricity and natural gas capacity would require upgrades to PG&E's gas and electric systems. New and expanded distribution and transmission lines and related facilities would need to be constructed to provide adequate capacity to the Urban Growth Area. This would probably include upgrading existing substation and transmission line equipment, expanding existing substations to their ultimate buildout capacity, and building new substations and interconnecting transmission lines. Comparable upgrades or additions needed to accommodate additional loads on the gas system could include facilities such as regulator stations, odorizer stations, valve lots, and distribution and transmission lines.

B. Applicable Policies and Regulations

The *Gonzales 2010 General Plan's* "Housing Element" contains the following policies and implementing actions designed to address energy conservation:

Policy HE-9.1 Energy Conservation Programs

Support state, federal, and utility industry programs which promote energy conservation and which assist homeowners and renters in reducing energy costs.

> *Implementing Action HE-9.1.1 – Support of PG&E Programs. The City will continue to support Pacific Gas and Electric programs that reduce residential energy costs. These programs include energy audits and weatherization of existing homes, rebates for energy efficiency upgrades, and reduced rates for seniors and lower income households.*

Implementing Action HE-9.1.2 – Property Transfer Inspections. If staff resources become available, the City will consider adopting a property inspection ordinance that would require that all dwelling units be inspected for compliance with current energy conservation regulations at the time they are sold. Sellers of units that lack the recommended energy-efficient features would be required to cover the cost of upgrading the units prior to

Policy HE-9.2 Promote Energy Efficiency in Housing

Zoning, subdivision, and building code regulations should encourage energy efficient architectural design and site planning.

Implementing Action HE-9.2.1 – California Green Building Standards. The City shall adopt the California Green Building Standards Code, whose provisions will be mandatory in January, 2010. The standards include a 50 percent increase in landscape water conservation and a 15 percent reduction in energy use compared to current standards.

Policy HE-9.3 Encourage Public Awareness and Education about Energy Conservation

Promote public awareness of the benefits of, and methods for, energy conservation in housing.

Implementing Action HE-9.3.1 – Public Information. Make bilingual information promoting techniques and resources for reducing energy and water use readily available at City Hall.

Policy HE-9.5 Promote Energy Conservation through Land Use and Transportation Planning.

Encourage energy conservation through land use and transportation policies such as those encouraging housing construction close to planned employment and shopping (to reduce auto use and gasoline consumption), and requiring sidewalks and bike lanes in new developments.

Implementing Action HE-9.5.1 – Design Guidelines. Adopt Neighborhood Design Guidelines supporting development of compact, pedestrian-and bicycle-

friendly neighborhoods where residences are within walking distance to commercial services, schools and recreation facilities.

From the "Sustainability Element:"

Policy SUS-1.1 Climate Protection Strategies

The City shall continue to pursue strategies designed to reduce greenhouse gas production and increase the production and use of renewable energy.

Implementing Action SUS-1.1.1 – Conduct a GHG Inventory. Establish an inventory of city-wide GHG emissions.

Implementing Action SUS-1.1.2 – Establish Regional Targets. Work with AMBAG in the process of identifying regional targets and implementing various programs for reducing GHG emissions and promoting sustainability.

Implementing Action SUS-1.1.3 –Support Gonzales Grows Green Initiatives. The City shall continue to address climate change through the Gonzales Grows Green Initiatives which provide a local mechanism for carrying out strategies to reduce GHG gas emissions. Key program objectives include:

- ✓ *Improve environmental consciousness of government, businesses and its citizenry.*
- ✓ *Promote Gonzales as an incubator for environmental business development*
- ✓ *Fund some services through cooperative ventures involving sustainability.*
- ✓ *Become known both regionally and beyond for its "GONZALES GROWS GREEN" Sustainable Community Initiative (G_3)*
- ✓ *Assist Gonzales in "doing the right things" for its entire community with a focus on ecology, economy and equity.*

Implementing Action SUS-1.1.4 – Monitor Performance. Regularly assess progress and program needs, identifying opportunities and obstacles for meeting GHG emission reduction goals.

Policy SUS-1.2 Sustainable Land Use Patterns

Encourage sustainable and efficient land use patterns that promote walkability, reduce vehicular trips, and preserve open space and long-term agricultural lands.

> *Implementing Action SUS-1.2.1 – Implement Neighborhood Design Guidelines. Utilize the Neighborhood Design Guidelines, Specific Plans, and other General Plan implementation programs as appropriate to establish and maintain sustainable land use patterns.*

Policy SUS-1.3 Promote Green Industries

Promote the development of "clean" or "green" sector industries that benefit Gonzales' environment and economy.

> *Implementing Action SUS-1.3.1 – New Industries. Promote industries that are using or developing technologies or processes to make better use of resources, reduce pollution, to allow for greater use of renewable resources, or to achieve other environmental benefits.*
>
> *Implementing Action SUS-1.3.2 – Existing Industries. Encourage energy efficiency and innovation in existing industries and as an integral part of economic development.*
>
> *Implementing Action SUS-1.3.3 – Agricultural Industries. Recognizing the importance of the agricultural industry to the local and regional economy, support efforts by the agricultural processors to achieve cost-effective reductions in energy consumed by agricultural operations (for example, cooling facilities) where economically and technically feasible.*

Policy SUS-1.4 Reduce Transportation Generated GHG Emissions

Implement General Plan policies and Neighborhood Design Guidelines through specific plans, and develop and adopt new or amended regulations, programs, and incentives as appropriate to reduce transportation related GHG emissions by encouraging alternative modes of transportation and increased fuel efficiency.

Implementing Action SUS-1.4.1 – Transportation Options: Promote transportation options such as bicycle trails, commute trip reduction programs, incentives for car pooling and public transit.

Implementing Action SUS-1.4.2 – Public Transit Planning and Financing. Consider long term options for making transit available in Gonzales, and for financing public transit, such as through impact fees (Transit Impact Development Fee). To compete effectively in the transportation marketplace, alternative transit modes need comprehensive route coverage, frequent service, and attractive and comfortable equipment. Local governments can help level the playing field by establishing new policies and priority for transportation expenditures and projects in communities.

Implementing Action SUS-1.4.3 – Small-Scale Employment. Promote small-scale employment such as live/work spaces and satellite work centers to reduce the total travel necessary for a worker.

Implementing Action SUS-1.4.4 – Telecommunications. Encourage the expansion of telecommunications Infrastructure.

Policy SUS-1.5 Increase Use of Renewable Energy Increase the local use and production of renewable energy.

Implementing Action SUS-1.5.1 – Renewal Energy Systems. Encourage the local construction and use of renewable energy systems such as solar electric, wind power, methane power and biodiesel.

Policy SUS-1.6 Encourage Green Building Practices

Employ sustainable or "green" building techniques for the construction and operation of buildings where feasible.

Implementing Action SUS-1.6.1 – Energy Efficient Buildings. Encourage the design and construction of energy efficient buildings where feasible using "green" technology and principles such as:

- ✓ *Designing mechanical and electrical systems that achieve maximum energy efficiency with currently available technology*

- ✓ *Minimizing energy use through innovative site design and building orientation that address factors such as sun-shade patterns, prevailing winds, and sun screens*
- ✓ *Employing self-generation of energy using renewable technologies*
- ✓ *Combining energy efficiency measures that have longer payback periods with measures that have shorter payback periods*
- ✓ *Reducing levels of non-essential lighting, heating and cooling.*

Implementing Action SUS-1.6.2 – Standards for Green Building. Consider developing and adopting interim and long-term standards for green building in addition to those identified in the California Green Building Code.

Implementing Action SUS 1.6.3 – Municipal Buildings as Green Building Models. Utilize green building practices in the design of new and major remodels to City buildings. Greening of public buildings should provide a model for private construction/retrofit.

Implementing Action SUS 1.6.4 – Recycled Building Materials. Promote the reuse of building material, use materials that have recycled content, or use materials that are derived from sustainable or rapidly renewable sources to the extent feasible.

Implementing Action SUS-1.6.5 – Construction/Demolition Recycling. Develop standard conditions of approval for all new developments to prepare and implement a construction/demolition waste recycling plan as a condition of project approval and entitlement. Enforce through the building inspection process.

Implementing Action SUS-1.6.6 – Deconstruction. Deconstruction is the process of dismantling a building in order to salvage select materials for reuse. Encourage the scheduling of time for deconstruction activities to take place during project demolition as appropriate.

Implementing Action SUS-1.6.7 – Life-Cycle Costing. Encourage use of life cycle costing in determining materials and construction techniques. Life cycle costing

analyses the costs and benefits over the life of a particular product, technology or system.

Implementing Action SUS-1.6.8 – Reduce Cooling Load. Encourage use of cool roofing materials and parking lot design, and strategic tree planting in parking lots to reduce the need for mechanical cooling of buildings.

- ✓ *Encourage the use of cool roofing materials, such as reflective, low heat retention tiles, membranes and coatings, to reduce heat build up.*
- ✓ *Plant trees and other vegetation to provide shade and cool air temperatures. In particular, properly position trees to shade buildings, air conditioning units, and parking lots.*
- ✓ *Reduce heat build-up in parking lots through increased shading or use of cool paving materials as feasible.*

Implementing Action SUS 1.6.9 – Sustainable Landscape. Implement sustainable landscape design and maintenance, where feasible.

- ✓ *Encourage the use of integrated pest management to delay, reduce, or eliminate dependence on the use of pesticides, herbicides, and synthetic fertilizers*
- ✓ *Encourage composting efforts through education, incentives, and other activities*
- ✓ *Decrease the amount of impervious surfaces in developments, especially where public places, plazas and amenities are proposed to serve as recreations opportunities.*
- ✓ *Strategically plant deciduous shade trees, evergreen trees, and drought tolerant native vegetation, as appropriate.*
- ✓ *Reduce use of lawn types that require high levels of irrigation.*
- ✓ *Implement water conservation measures in site/building design and landscaping.*

- ✓ *Encourage the use of high efficiency irrigation technology, and recycled site water to reduce the use of potable water for irrigation.*

Policy SUS-1.7 Green Municipal Operations

Utilize green practices in conducting municipal operations.

Implementing Action SUS-1.7.1 – Buy Energy Efficient Products. Purchase municipal office equipment and appliances that are Energy Star products as feasible.

Implementing Action SUS-1.7.2 – Green the City Fleet. Purchase the most cost-effective and lowest emission vehicle possible. Reduce vehicle size while eliminating old and underused vehicles. Promote fleet use of biodiesel as appropriate.

Implementing Action SUS 1.7.3 – Reduce Municipal Office Waste. Reduce municipal waste going into landfills as a means of reducing methane emissions.

Implementing Action SUS 1.7.4 – Recyclable Supplies. Promote use of recycled paper products.

Implementing Action SUS 1.7.5 – Building "Tune-ups". Encourage energy-efficiency retrofits or "tune-ups" of public buildings to reduce energy use and operational costs. Such projects can also serve as models for similar work in the private sector.

Policy SUS 1.8 Public Awareness/Education

Support efforts to enhance public awareness and understanding of climate protection issues.

Implementing Action SUS-1.8.1 – Sustainability Education. Help educate the public, schools, other jurisdictions, professional associations, business and industry about reducing global warming pollution and implementing sustainable practices.

Policy SUS-1.9 Improve Waste Management

Develop and adopt new or amended regulations, programs, and incentives as appropriate to reduce waste by improving management and recycling programs.

Implementing Action SUS-1.9.1 – Renovate Instead of Demolish. Reduce construction and demolition waste by encouraging renovating and adding on to existing buildings, rather than constructing new buildings where feasible.

Implementing Action SUS 1.9.2 – Recycling Facilities. Include features in buildings to facilitate recycling of waste generated by building occupants and associated refuse storage areas. Provide permanent, adequate, and convenient space for individual building occupants to collect refuse and recyclable material.

Implementing Action SUS 1.9.3 – Innovative Use of Waste Products. Through the Gonzales Grows Green Initiatives, support the innovative use and re-use of waste products generated by businesses, government and citizens.

Policy SUS-1.10 Energy from Landfill

Work with the Salinas Valley Waste Authority to investigate opportunities to utilize energy produced or recovered from the Johnson Canyon Road landfill.

Implementing Action SUS-1.10.1 – Methane Gas Recovery. Support efforts to recover and convert methane gas to an energy source for use in fueling vehicles, operating equipment, and heating buildings.

Implementing Action SUS-1.10.2 – Waste to Energy. Support use of waste to energy technology.

Policy SUS-1.11 Improve Water Supply Efficiency

Evaluate opportunities to increase the energy efficiency of water and wastewater systems.

Implementing Action SUS-1.11.1 – Efficiency of New and Existing Systems. Retrofit municipal water and wastewater systems with energy efficient motors, pumps and other equipment where feasible. Where systems are expanded, or

new systems are constructed, to accommodate new growth, ensure that energy efficiency is built into the new systems.

Implementing Action SUS-1.11.2 – Methane from Wastewater Treatment. Evaluate the feasibility of recovering wastewater treatment methane for energy production.

Implementing Action SUS-1.11.3 – Wastewater Recovery. Evaluate the feasibility of wastewater recovery for irrigation.

State Title 24 Energy Standards

The State Title 24 energy standards have been adopted by the State to reduce the overall energy usage of new development. Title 24 requirements address a wide range of design and performance features of development, including heating and cooling, shading and lighting, to list a few.

Standard Conditions of Approval

As a standard Condition of Approval for new development projects, the City requires, consistent with the Subdivision Map Act, that developments are designed to include passive solar energy conservation improvements.

C. Significance Determination

The policies and actions of the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* lessen the potential impact of urbanization on wasteful energy consumption. In addition, Mitigation Measures GHG-1 (Citywide Climate Action Plan), GHG-2 (Implementation of GHG Best Management Practices), and GHG-3 (Timeframe to Adopt Green Building Code) in Subsection 4.6.3.1 D above, would have the effect of insuring that the proposed project would not result in wasteful or inefficient energy usage, because reduced GHG emissions are directly related to reduced energy consumption.

D. Mitigation Measures

None required.

4.8 NOISE

This section evaluates the potential noise impacts associated with implementation of the project. Information in this section is based primarily on a report prepared by Brown-Buntin Associates, entitled: "Noise Element Update Gonzales 2010 General Plan City of Gonzales, California," which was also the basis for updating the Noise Element contained in the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan*. The Brown-Buntin report is presented in its entirety in Appendix E.

4.8.1 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

Based on the requirements of the Government Code and field studies conducted during preparation of the Noise Element update, it was determined that there are three major sources of community noise within the City of Gonzales. Those sources include traffic on U.S. Highway 101 (US 101) and major local roadways, commercial/industrial facilities (stationary noise sources), and rail operations on the Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR). There are no known existing airports within the General Plan study area.

4.8.1.1. EXISTING NOISE CONDITIONS

For the purposes of the DEIR, information is provided on traffic-related noise, as no new development is proposed in the Gonzales 2010 General Plan in proximity to existing commercial/industrial facilities or the Union Pacific Railroad tracks. Figure 4.8.1 summarizes existing noise conditions.[35]

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[35] A-Weighted Sound Level: All sound levels referred to in this analysis are in A-weighted decibels. A-weighting de-emphasizes the very low and very high frequencies of sound in a manner similar to the human ear. Most community noise standards utilize A-weighting, as it provides a high degree of correlation with human annoyance and potential adverse health effects.

Day/Night Average Sound Level (DNL): The time-weighted average sound level during a 24-hour day, obtained after addition of 10 dB to sound levels during the nighttime hours (10:00 p.m.-7:00 a.m.). The DNL and CNEL are similar descriptors of the community noise environment and are generally considered to be *equivalent within ±1.0 dB*.

Table 4.8.1: Generalized Traffic Noise Exposure, Existing Conditions

Roadway	Segment	DNL @ Typical Setback, dB[36]	Distance, Feet[37]	
			60 dB DNL	65 dB DNL
US 101	South of Gloria Rd	77.7	1,507	700
	Gloria-Fifth	77.5	1,477	686
	Fifth-Alta	77.4	1,435	666
	North of Alta St	77.6	1,493	693
Alta Street	Gloria-Gonzales River Rd	61.4	93	43
	Gonzales River Rd-Fifth	59.1	65	30
	Fifth-Tenth	59.3	67	31
	Tenth-Associated Lane	64.6	152	71
Associated Lane	Old Stage-Fanoe	53.4	27	13
	Fanoe-"Arterial A"	---	---	---
	"Arterial A"-"Arterial B"	---	---	---
Fifth Street	Alta-Rincon Rd	53.8	29	13
	Rincon Rd-US 101	57.0	47	22
	US 101-Fanoe	60.7	83	39
	Fanoe-"Arterial A"	60.4	80	37
	"Arterial A"-Iverson	60.4	80	37
	East of Iverson	60.4	80	37
Gloria Road	US 101-Herold Pkwy	58.8	62	29
	Herold Pkwy-"Arterial A"	58.8	62	29
	"Arterial A"-Iverson	58.8	62	29
	East of Iverson	56.6	44	21
Gonzales River Road	West of Alta St	57.1	48	22
Herold Pkwy/Fanoe	North of Gloria Rd	---	---	---

Equivalent Sound Level (Leq): The sound level containing the same total energy as a time varying signal over a given period. The Leq is typically calculated for either one-hour or 24-hour periods, but may be calculated for any stated period of time.

[36] The typical setback is assumed to be 75 feet from the center of all roadways except US 101 where a setback of 100 feet was assumed. Calculations are generalized and do not take into consideration sound walls or other site-specific conditions.
[37] From the center of the roadway

Roadway	Segment	DNL @ Typical Setback, dB[36]	Distance, Feet[37]	
			60 dB DNL	65 dB DNL
	South of Fifth/Johnson Cyn	54.0	30	14
	Fifth/Johnson Cyn-"Arterial B"	55.8	39	18
	"Arterial B"-Associated Ln	55.8	39	18
Iverson Road	North of Gloria Rd	55.0	35	16
	South of Fifth/Johnson Cyn	55.0	35	16
	North of Fifth/Johnson Cyn	56.1	41	19
	South of Associated Ln	56.1	41	19

Source: Brown-Buntin Associates, Inc., 2010

The City of Gonzales' noise standard is 60 to 65 dB DNL for exterior noise and 45 dB DNL for interior noise for noise-sensitive uses. As shown in Table 4.8.1, existing noise conditions for uses within the typical 75-foot setback are within these standards; noise sensitive uses located within 100 feet of Highway 101 would be exposed to higher levels without sound mitigation.

Figure 4.8.2 shows the roadways where distances to DNL contours were calculated for existing traffic conditions. The streets are color coded to indicate the approximate distances to the 60 dB DNL noise contours.

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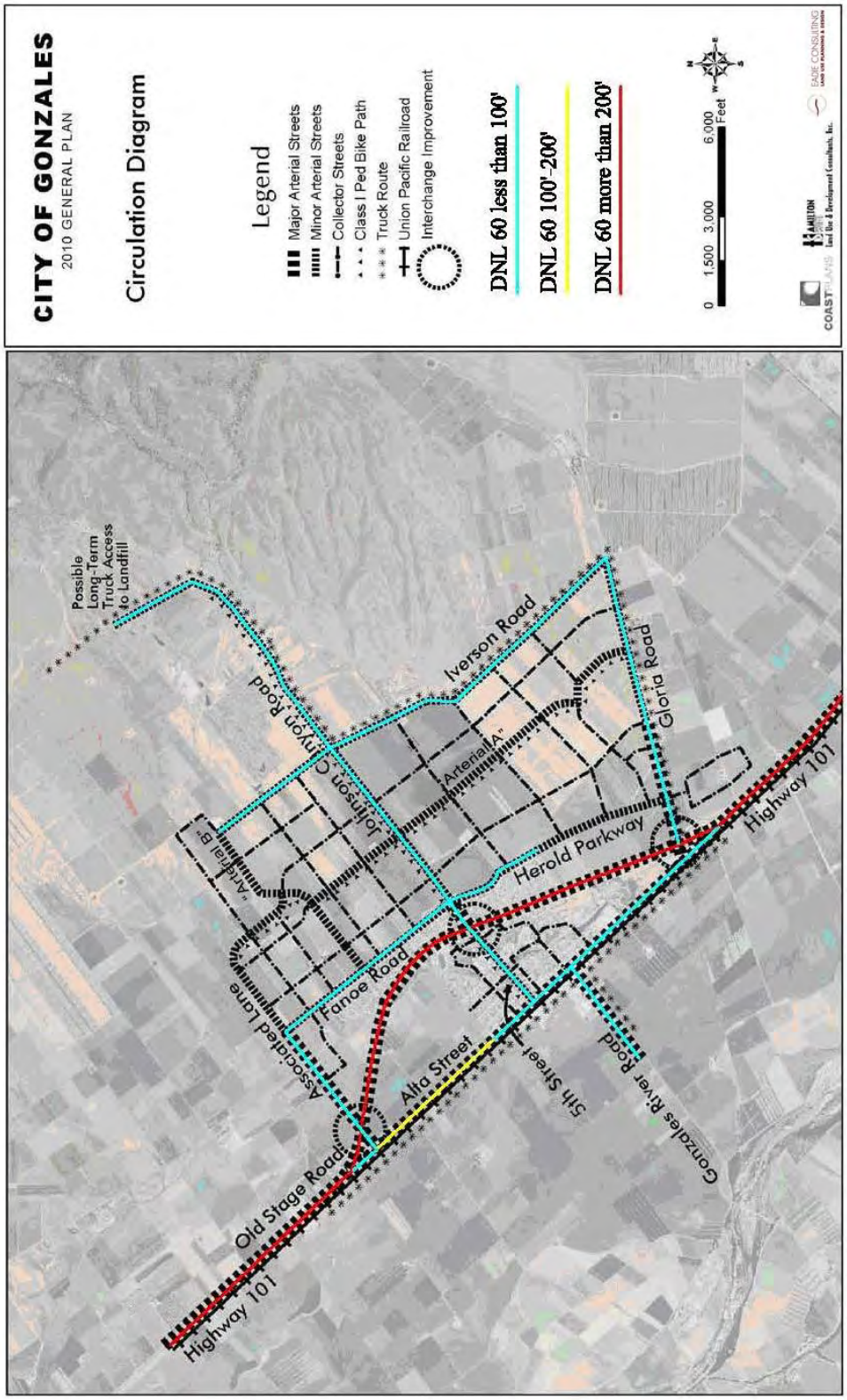
Figure 4.8.2: Existing Noise Contours



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4.8.1.2. FUTURE NOISE CONDITIONS WITHOUT PROJECT

Figure 4.8.3 summarizes calculated noise exposure at typical building setbacks and distances to DNL contours for future traffic conditions without the project.

Figure 4.8.3: Generalized Traffic Noise Exposure, Build-Out of 1996 General Plan (No Project)

Roadway	Segment	DNL @ Typical Setback, dB[38]	Distance, Feet[39]	
			60 dB DNL	65 dB DNL
US 101	South of Gloria Rd	78.2	1646	764
	Gloria-Fifth	78.0	1589	738
	Fifth-Alta	78.4	1673	777
	North of Alta St	78.9	1816	843
Alta Street	Gloria-Gonzales River Rd	62.9	118	55
	Gonzales River Rd-Fifth	61.0	88	41
	Fifth-Tenth	60.7	84	39
	Tenth-Associated Lane	66.0	189	88
Associated Lane	Old Stage-Fanoe	53.4	27	13
	Fanoe-"Arterial A"	---	---	---
	"Arterial A"-"Arterial B"	---	---	---
Fifth Street	Alta-Rincon Rd	54.8	34	16
	Rincon Rd-US 101	57.7	52	24
	US 101-Fanoe	62.3	107	50
	Fanoe-"Arterial A"	60.8	84	39
	"Arterial A"-Iverson	60.8	84	39
	East of Iverson	60.8	84	39
Gloria Road	US 101-Herold Pkwy	65.7	181	84
	Herold Pkwy-"Arterial A"	57.9	54	25
	"Arterial A"-Iverson	57.9	54	25
	East of Iverson	56.8	46	21

[38]Assumed to be 75 feet from the center of all roadways except US 101 where a setback of 100 feet was assumed. Calculations are generalized and do not take into consideration sound walls or other site-specific conditions.

[39]From the center of the roadway

Roadway	Segment	DNL @ Typical Setback, dB[38]	Distance, Feet[39]	
			60 dB DNL	65 dB DNL
Gonzales River Road	West of Alta St	---	---	---
Herold Pkwy/Fanoe	North of Gloria Rd	54.0	30	14
	South of Fifth/Johnson Cyn	56.5	44	20
	Fifth/Johnson Cyn-"Arterial B"	56.6	44	21
	"Arterial B"-Associated Ln	56.6	44	21

Source: Brown-Buntin Associates, Inc, 2010

4.8.2 THRESHOLDS OF SIGNIFICANCE

The proposed project was considered to have a significant adverse effect on the environment if it met any of the standards of significance listed below. The Initial Study concluded that the proposed project has no potential to result in adverse effects for certain areas of concern, and this EIR has been focused to exclude such listed effects from further consideration. Excluded areas of concern are shown in ~~strikeout~~ format.

- 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?
- Exposure of persons to or generation of excessive ground borne vibration or ground borne noise levels?
- A substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?
- A substantial temporary or periodic increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?
- ~~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?~~

- ~~For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?~~

4.8.3 IMPACTS AND MITIGATIONS

4.8.3.1. EXPOSURE OF PERSONS TO OR GENERATION OF NOISE LEVELS IN EXCESS OF STANDARDS; EXPOSURE OF PERSONS TO OR GENERATION OF EXCESSIVE GROUND BORNE VIBRATION OR GROUND BORNE NOISE LEVELS; A SUBSTANTIAL TEMPORARY OR PERMANENT INCREASE IN AMBIENT NOISE LEVELS IN THE PROJECT VICINITY ABOVE LEVELS EXISTING WITHOUT THE PROJECT

A. Impact

Impact N-1: The adoption of the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* would provide the basis for development activity that could expose persons to or generate noise or vibration in excess of standards and result in a temporary or permanent increase in ambient noise levels (Less than Significant).

The proposed project would enable development activity that could result in exposing persons to noise and vibration. Such development would involve a full range of urban uses in proximity to each other and could result in the exposure of persons to, or the generation of, noise or vibration in excess of standards. Also, temporary and permanent increases in ambient noise levels would be expected to accompany construction activities and urbanization in general.

The *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* designates significant acreage for the development of commercial and industrial uses, which would be expected to generate increased truck traffic within the City, and stationary equipment associated with such uses could produce significant noise or vibration. It is unknown if, or by how much, rail operations could increase within the City of Gonzales in the future. However, rail activity is likely to increase, and switching operations within the City could occur once again if existing or future industries reinstitute rail shipments. If rail activity were to double in the future, the generalized 60 dB DNL contour would be located at approximately 720 feet from the center of the tracks. This does not take into consideration site-specific conditions such as

acoustic shielding or reflections caused by nearby buildings. Nonetheless, the proposed project does not propose any new noise-sensitive development within 720 feet of the Union pacific Railroad tracks. New industrial/manufacturing use is proposed south of Gloria Road adjacent to Highway 101, and the closest part of this development area would be within approximately 375 feet of the railroad tracks.

Future traffic noise exposure was calculated based upon the above-described FHWA Model and traffic data obtained from Hatch Mott MacDonald and Caltrans.[40] Figure 4.8.4 summarizes calculated noise exposure at typical building setbacks and distances to DNL contours for future traffic conditions for the proposed project. Figure 4.8.5 shows the roadways where distances to DNL contours were calculated for future traffic conditions with build-out of the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan*. The streets are color coded to indicate the approximate distances to the 60 dB DNL noise contours. Traffic noise exposure information is generalized for flat terrain and the absence of acoustical shielding or reflections that may be caused by site-specific conditions.

Figure 4.8.4: Generalized Traffic Noise Exposure, *Gonzales 2010 General Plan*

Roadway	Segment	DNL @ Typical Setback, dB[41]	Distance, Feet[42]	
			60 dB DNL	65 dB DNL
US 101	s/o Gloria Rd	80.2	2,209	1,025
	Gloria-Fifth	80.0	2,156	1,001
	Fifth-Alta	80.7	2,409	1,118
	n/o Alta St	81.0	2,530	1,174
Alta Street	Gloria-Gonzales River Rd	62.6	111	52
	Gonzales River Rd-Fifth	58.0	55	26
	Fifth-Tenth	59.4	69	32
	Tenth-Associated Lane	64.7	155	72
Associated Lane	Old Stage-Fanoe	64.5	151	70
	Fanoe-"Arterial A"	59.1	66	30

[40] Traffic noise modeling assumptions for the 2010 General Plan, 2010 General Plan plus Urban Reserve and No Project (1996 General Plan build-out) conditions are summarized in Appendix D.
[41] Assumed to be 75 feet from the center of all roadways except US 101 where a setback of 100 feet was assumed. Calculations are generalized and do not take into consideration sound walls or other site-specific conditions.
[42] From the center of the roadway

Roadway	Segment	DNL @ Typical Setback, dB[41]	Distance, Feet[42]	
			60 dB DNL	65 dB DNL
	"Arterial A"-"Arterial B"	57.1	48	22
Fifth Street	Alta-Rincon Rd	56.1	41	19
	Rincon Rd-US 101	60.4	79	37
	US 101-Fanoe	67.2	227	106
	Fanoe-"Arterial A"	66.4	201	93
	"Arterial A"-Iverson	55.1	36	17
	e/o Iverson	54.0	30	14
Gloria Road	US 101-Herold Pkwy	63.8	134	62
	Herold Pkwy-"Arterial A"	62.3	107	49
	"Arterial A"-Iverson	57.7	53	24
	e/o Iverson	56.8	46	21
Gonzales River Road	w/o Alta St	57.1	48	22
Herold Pkwy/Fanoe	n/o Gloria Rd	60.6	82	38
	s/o Fifth/Johnson Cyn	62.0	102	47
	Fifth/Johnson Cyn-"Arterial B"	64.4	147	68
	"Arterial B"-Associated Ln	61.5	94	44
Iverson Road	n/o Gloria Rd	53.4	27	13
	s/o Fifth/Johnson Cyn	58.0	55	26
	n/o Fifth/Johnson Cyn	56.7	45	21
	s/o Associated Ln	60.2	77	36
"Arterial A"	n/o Gloria Rd	54.2	31	14
	s/o Fifth/Johnson Cyn	59.2	66	31
	Fifth/Johnson Cyn-"Arterial B"	59.8	73	34
"Arterial B"	Fanoe-"Arterial A"	53.0	26	12
	"Arterial A"-Associated Ln	55.8	39	18
	Associated Ln-Iverson	55.7	39	18

Source: Brown-Buntin Associates, Inc.

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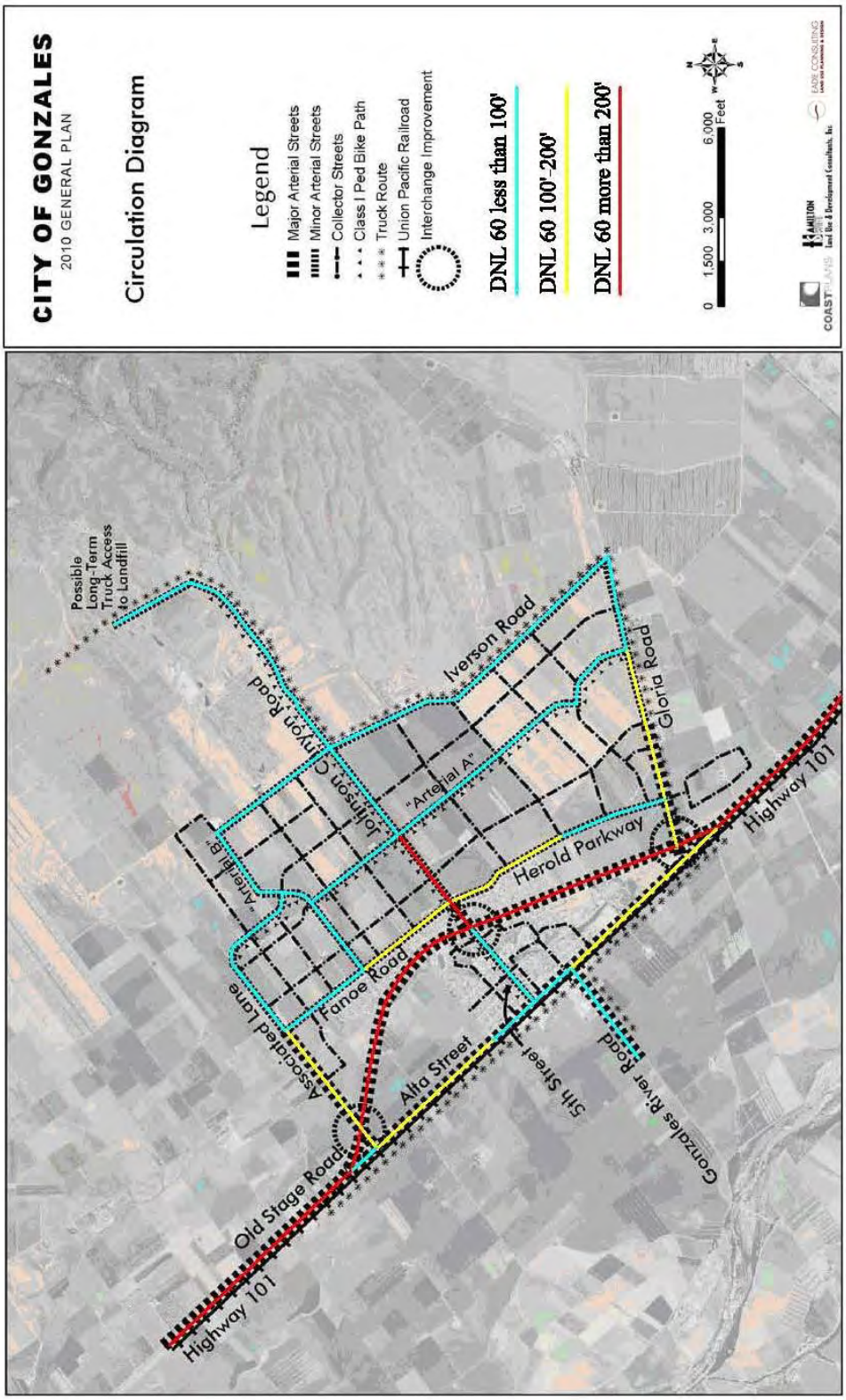
Figure 4.8.5: Future Noise Contours, Gonzales 2010 General Plan



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The proposed project proposes to locate new neighborhood development that in limited instances is within less than 1,000 feet from Highway 101, which would place it within the facility's 65 dB DNL noise contour. The proposed project also designates a truck route along Gloria Road and the southern part of Iverson Road to facilitate access to the Johnson Canyon Road Landfill. Noise sensitive land uses, such as residential uses, could be located in proximity to this corridor, which could expose such uses to noise or ground borne vibration.

The proposed project also contains land in the Urban Reserve Area that is not intended for development under the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan*. Nonetheless, in the interest of providing as much information as possible about all aspects of the proposed project, Brown-Buntin provided noise exposure information for the buildout of the Urban Growth Area plus the Urban Reserve Area. Figure 4.8.6 summarizes calculated noise exposure at typical building setbacks and distances to DNL contours for future traffic conditions for the Urban Growth Area plus the Urban Reserve Area. Noise information is not provided for Highway 101, because the timeline of this development scenario extends well beyond 2050.[43]

[43] While Hatch Mott MacDonald extended the AMBAG traffic model (which is the basis for the noise analysis) to analyze full buildout of the Urban Growth Area, it concluded that it was too speculative to extend the regional model further to some point well beyond 2050 to simulate conditions on Highway 101 under buildout of the Urban Reserve Area. Local traffic, on the other hand, was judged to be largely a factor of local growth and therefore lent itself to analysis beyond 2050.

Figure 4.8.6: Generalized Traffic Noise Exposure, 2010 General Plan plus the Urban Reserve Growth for Local Roads

Roadway	Segment	DNL @ Typical Setback, dB[44]	Distance, Feet[45]	
			60 dB DNL	65 dB DNL
US 101[46]	s/o Gloria Rd	---	---	---
	Gloria-Fifth	---	---	---
	Fifth-Alta	---	---	---
	n/o Alta St	---	---	---
Alta Street	Gloria-Gonzales River Rd	61.7	97	45
	Gonzales River Rd-Fifth	56.7	45	21
	Fifth-Tenth	57.6	52	24
	Tenth-Associated Lane	62.9	117	54
Associated Lane	Old Stage-Fanoe	69.3	312	145
	Fanoe-"Arterial A"	64.3	144	67
	"Arterial A"-"Arterial B"	63.7	133	62
Fifth Street	Alta-Rincon Rd	56.3	42	20
	Rincon Rd-US 101	60.7	83	39
	US 101-Fanoe	68.2	264	122
	Fanoe-"Arterial A"	68.4	273	127
	"Arterial A"-Iverson	65.7	179	83
	e/o Iverson	63.7	133	62
Gloria Road	US 101-Herold Pkwy	64.2	143	67
	Herold Pkwy-"Arterial A"	62.0	102	47
	"Arterial A"-Iverson	57.7	52	24
	e/o Iverson	57.0	47	22
Gonzales River Road	w/o Alta St	58.7	61	29
Herold Pkwy/Fanoe	n/o Gloria Rd	61.9	101	47
	s/o Fifth/Johnson Cyn	63.7	133	62
	Fifth/Johnson Cyn-"Arterial B"	64.8	157	73

[44] Assumed to be 75 feet from the center of all roadways except US 101 where a setback of 100 feet was assumed. Calculations are generalized and do not take into consideration sound walls or other site-specific conditions.
[45] From the center of the roadway
[46] Traffic data were not available for US 101 for this planning period

Roadway	Segment	DNL @ Typical Setback, dB[44]	Distance, Feet[45]	
			60 dB DNL	65 dB DNL
	"Arterial B"-Associated Ln	64.8	156	72
Iverson Road	n/o Gloria Rd	59.2	67	31
	s/o Fifth/Johnson Cyn	59.6	71	33
	n/o Fifth/Johnson Cyn	64.2	143	66
	s/o Associated Ln	63.1	121	56
"Arterial A"	n/o Gloria Rd	55.1	35	16
	s/o Fifth/Johnson Cyn	61.3	92	43
	Fifth/Johnson Cyn-"Arterial B"	57.6	52	24
"Arterial B"	Fanoe-"Arterial A"	53.9	29	14
	"Arterial A"-Associated Ln	53.9	29	14
	Associated Ln-Iverson	54.2	31	14

Source: Brown-Buntin Associates, Inc.

B. Applicable Policies and Regulations

The *Gonzales 2010 General Plan's* "Community Health and Safety Element" contains the following policies and implementing actions designed to address the exposure of persons to or generate noise in excess of standards:

Policy 8.1 Transportation Noise

Maintain a citywide noise environment that achieves noise goals by minimizing to the degree practicable the impact of transportation-related noise.

Implementing Action HS-8.1.1 – Noise-Sensitive Land Uses. New development of noise-sensitive land uses shall not be permitted in areas exposed to existing or projected future noise levels from transportation noise sources exceeding 60 dB DNL within outdoor activity areas (65 dB DNL is allowable for residential uses in the Downtown Mixed-Use District) unless appropriate noise mitigation measures have been incorporated into the final project design. An exterior exposure of up to 65 dB DNL within outdoor activity areas may be allowed if a good-faith effort has been made to mitigate exterior noise exposure using a practical application of available noise mitigation measures and interior noise exposure due to exterior sources will not exceed 45 dB DNL.

Implementing Action HS-8.1.2 – New Transportation Noise. Noise created by new transportation noise sources, including roadway improvement projects, shall be mitigated so as not to exceed 60 dB DNL within outdoor activity areas (65 dB DNL is allowable for residential uses in the Downtown Mixed-Use District) and 45 dB DNL within interior living spaces of existing noise-sensitive land uses.

Policy 8.2 Stationary Noise Sources

Maintain a citywide noise environment that achieves noise goals by minimizing to the degree practicable the impact of stationary noise sources.

Implementing Action HS-8.2.1 – Noise-Sensitive Land Uses. The new development of noise-sensitive land uses shall not be permitted in areas where noise levels from existing stationary noises sources may exceed the noise level standards summarized in [GP] Table V-3.

[GP] Table V-3

ALLOWABLE NOISE EXPOSURE-STATIONARY NOISE SOURCES[47]

	Daytime (7 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.)	**Nighttime (10 p.m.-7 a.m.)**
Hourly L_{eq}, dBA	*55*	*50*
Maximum level, dBA	*70*	*65*

Implementing Action HS-8.2.2 – New Stationary Noise Sources. Noise created by proposed stationary noise sources, or existing stationary noise sources which undergo modifications that may increase noise levels, shall be mitigated so as not to exceed the noise level standards of Table V-3 within outdoor activity areas of existing or planned noise-sensitive land uses.

[47] As determined within outdoor activity areas of existing or planned noise-sensitive uses. If outdoor activity area locations are unknown, the allowable noise exposure shall be determined at the property line of the noise-sensitive use.

Policy 8.3 Development Review and Monitoring

Maintain a citywide noise environment that achieves noise goals through development review and post-development monitoring.

> *Implementing Action HS-8.3.1 – Development Review. The City shall review new public and private development proposals to determine conformance with the policies and implementing actions of the Community Health and Safety Element. Where the development of a project may result in land uses being exposed to existing or projected future noise levels exceeding the levels specified, the City shall require an acoustical analysis early in the review process so that noise mitigation may be included in the project design. For development not subject to environmental review, the requirements for an acoustical analysis shall be implemented prior to the issuance of a building permit.*
>
> *Implementing Action HS-8.3.2 – Compliance Monitoring. The City shall develop and employ procedures to monitor compliance with the policies of the Community Health and Safety Element after completion of projects where noise mitigation measures have been required.*

The "Community Character Element" also contains the following policies and implementing actions that have a bearing on the exposure of persons to noise in excess of standards:

> *Implementing Action CC-8.1.6 – Views from Highway 101. Maintain and enhance quality views of the city from Highway 101, especially at city entries, by avoiding land uses that require soundwalls adjacent to the highway where feasible.*
>
> *Implementing Action CC-8.1.7 – Landscape Existing Soundwalls. Encourage more effective landscaping of existing soundwalls, especially in high visibility areas such as adjacent to Highway 101.*
>
> *Implementing Action CC-8.1.9 – New Development Should Convey Positive Image. Ensure that new development built adjacent to Highway 101, including north and south interchanges, conveys a positive image of Gonzales. Enhanced*

vegetation, wide landscaped setbacks, aesthetically designed and landscaped soundwalls, and landscape berms should be used to the extent feasible to enhance the City's appearance from the freeway.

C. Significance Determination

The plans, policies, and actions of the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* lessen the potential impact of urbanization related to exposure of persons to or generation of noise in excess of standards to a level of less than significant. While there is the potential for noise sensitive uses to be located in proximity to regional transportation corridors and to local routes used by trucks accessing the Johnson Canyon Road Landfill, the proposed project requires new development to adhere to clear standards for noise exposure. While the project would result in substantial increases in temporary and permanent noise levels, such increases would be normal for urbanizing areas. This impact is also less than significant.

D. Mitigation Measures

None required.

4.9 HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

This section evaluates the potential impacts of the proposed project related to hydrology and water quality. Analysis of groundwater supplies relies in part on information from the *Draft Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement for the Salinas Valley Water Project (SVWP EIR/EIS)* (2001) and the *2007 Monterey County General Plan Draft Environmental Impact Report* (DEIR) (2008).

4.9.1 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

The following subsection describes existing conditions in the planning area.

4.9.1.1. WATER QUALITY AND STORMWATER DISCHARGE

According to the *2007 Monterey County General Plan DEIR* (2008), groundwater quality in Monterey County is good to excellent. Nitrate contamination levels, however, have increased over time in areas with active agricultural uses. Gonzales currently draws its water from wells in a 400-foot deep aquifer located in the Pressure Subarea of the Salinas Valley Groundwater Basin. According to the "Gonzales Water Master Plan" (City of Gonzales, 2001), the groundwater drawn from these wells currently exhibit no signs of nitrate contamination. However, nitrate contamination has been observed in wells tapped into the shallower 180-foot aquifer. There are no other known water quality problems, and the water purveyed by the City of Gonzales is regarded as excellent quality. The State of California Department of Food and Agriculture periodically conducts a sampling of agricultural wells throughout the County and has not reported any problems with synthetic organic pesticide contamination of wells.

With regard to quality of stormwater runoff, the proposed Urban Growth Area is largely used for agricultural production, and the stormwater runoff from actively cultivated fields probably contains concentrations of silt, fertilizer, pesticides, and other chemicals used in the agricultural process. Stormwater from agricultural areas is retained in drainage catch basins, where water is allowed to percolate back into the ground after a storm. The City wastewater treatment plant is not a surface water discharger but instead uses percolation ponds to reintroduce plant effluent into the groundwater.

The City of Gonzales is subject to regular reporting to the California Regional Water Quality Control Board that addresses water quality in and around the Gonzales Wastewater Treatment Plan. There are several monitoring wells around the plant. Monitoring is done on a quarterly basis (i.e., January, April, July, and October). Generally, the quality of effluent has met State standards. Potable water is monitored by the California Department of Health Services, Office of Public Drinking Water. The City of Gonzales contracts with the Monterey County Department of Public Heath for water sampling and laboratory analysis. Water produced by city wells is in compliance with all State standards.[48]

4.9.1.2. GROUNDWATER SUPPLIES[49]

The ground water basin in the Salinas Valley consists of four subareas. While these subareas have different hydrologic characteristics, water can move between them because they are not separated by barriers to horizontal flow. The Urban Growth Area is located primarily in the East Side Subarea. The City of Gonzales currently pumps from wells located in the Pressure Subarea. Figure 4.9.1 shows the groundwater subareas in the Salinas Valley.

- The *Pressure Subarea* is located between Gonzales and Monterey Bay and is composed mostly of confined and semi-confined aquifers separated by clay layers (aquitards) that limit the amount of vertical recharge. Three primary aquifers have been identified in the Pressure Zone – the 180-Foot Aquifer, the 400-Foot Aquifer, and the so called Deep Zone.

- The *East Side Subarea* includes unconfined and semi-confined aquifers in the northern portion of the basin that historically received most of its recharge from percolation from stream channels on the west slope of the Gabilan Range. As a result of extractions in excess of recharge, the declines in ground water level in the East Side subarea have induced subsurface recharge (i.e., recharge from one aquifer to another) from the Pressure subarea and the Forebay subarea. This inflow

[48] Personal communication with Carlos Lopez, City of Gonzales Director of Public Works, June 21, 2010.
[49] The following discussion is adapted from the 2007 Monterey County General Plan DEIR (Michael Brandman Associates, September 2008).

is now a larger source of recharge than the stream channels coming from the Gabilan Range.

According to the *2007 Monterey County General Plan DEIR* (2008), seawater intrusion has impacted the coastal portion of the Pressure Area of the Salinas Basin since at least the 1930s due to decreased ground water recharge and increased ground water extraction. According to the *SVWP EIR/EIS* (2001), seawater has contaminated two of the three primary producing aquifers in the coastal part of the Salinas Basin, the 180-foot and the 400-foot aquifers, and is estimated to be advancing inland at an average rate of 425 feet per year. Gonzales is approximately 20 miles inland from the most inland extent of seawater intrusion mapped in the *SVWP EIR/EIS* (2001).

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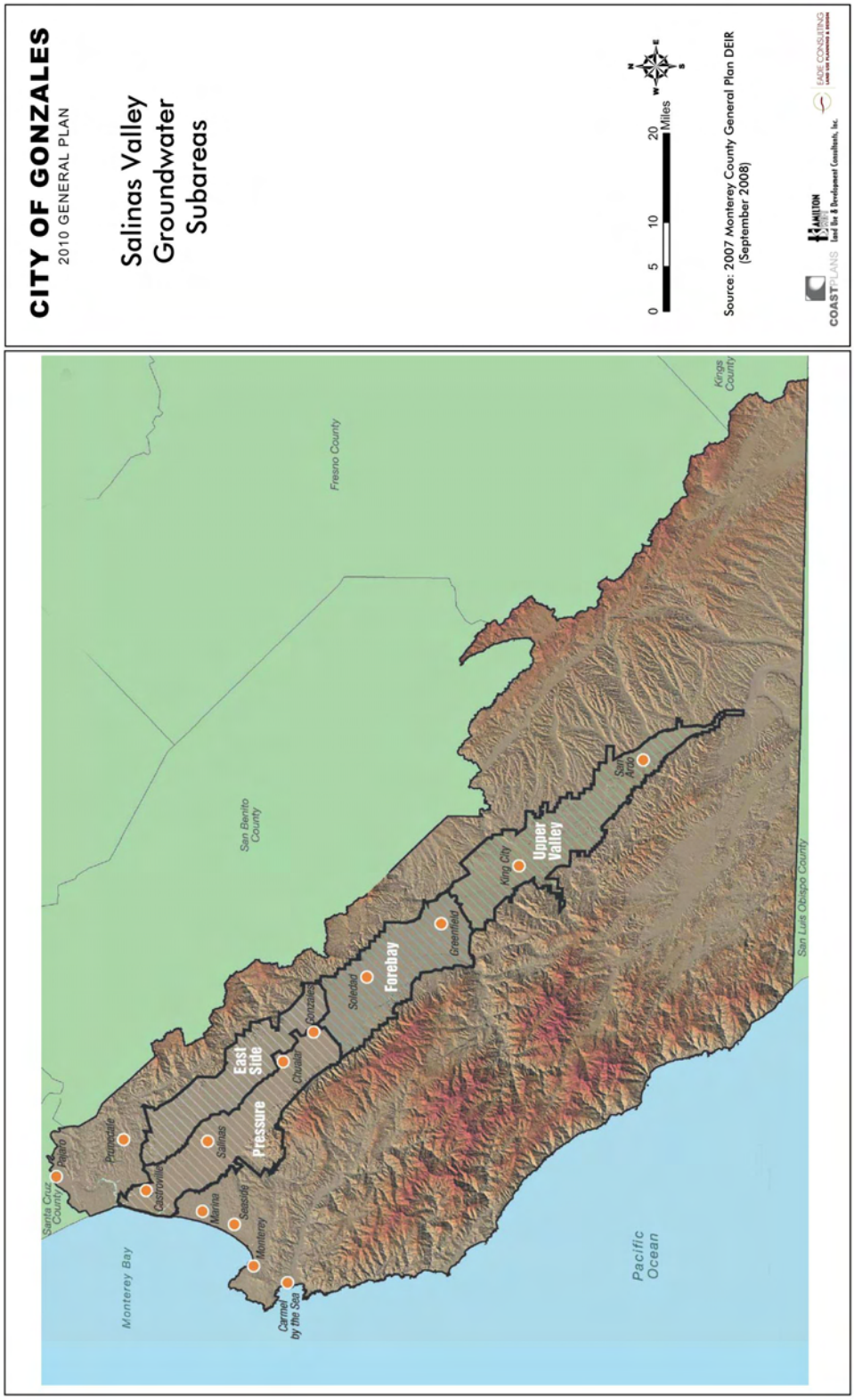
Figure 4.9.1: Salinas Valley Groundwater Subareas



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In general, the increase in the pumping and use of groundwater for urban and agricultural uses in the Salinas Valley and the increase in impervious surface area (which reduces the areas of soil that can absorb stormwater for groundwater recharge) have resulted in the groundwater basin being in a state of overdraft, and this overdraft has in turn resulted in seawater intrusion in coastal areas. Nonetheless, groundwater is ample in the areas around Gonzales, as existing wells continue to perform well without signs of depletion. The Salinas Valley Groundwater Basin is not currently adjudicated, which means that disputes over the use of groundwater supplies, to the degree that they exist at all, have not grown serious enough to compel landowners and water purveyors in the area to request court action to settle disputes. Adjudication would be a sure sign that groundwater supplies were failing to meet increasing demands.

On November 10, 2009, Governor Schwarzenegger signed SB X7 7, requiring a 20 percent reduction in urban water use by 2020. Additionally, the bill requires agricultural water suppliers to develop water management plans and to adopt specified efficient water management practices. More efficient water use in urban areas will help communities increase local water self-reliance, since many communities currently depend on water from other parts of the state. By meeting the 20 percent reduction targets, such localities can decrease their dependence on water imports. Such a reduction also provides significant environmental and energy benefits. The California Energy Commission estimates that water use contributes to 19 percent of the state's electricity use and over 30 percent of non-power plant natural gas use. Therefore, by limiting water consumption, the state can also reduce greenhouse gas emissions caused by energy consumption.

4.9.1.3. Drainage Patterns and Stormwater Systems

The City of Gonzales's existing drainage system utilizes natural and engineered channels, street inlets, storm drains, and retention basins. The system collects flow from the areas west of Highway 101 and discharges it at multiple locations within the Gonzales Slough. Several water courses that receive flows from large drainage areas outside the planning area also feed water to the Gonzales Slough, including McCoy Creek and Johnson Canyon Creek. The Gonzales Slough bisects the City of Gonzales running roughly parallel to Highway 101. The slough has been channelized in places, and remaining natural areas are connected by a series of culverts. Historically, the slough has been a source of

flooding within the city. Stormwater from subdivisions east of Gonzales Slough is collected and retained in stormwater retention basins. The City's current policy requires 100 percent retention of storm water flows for new development projects.

The federal government's National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) is used to regulate the quality of non-point sources storm water runoff to minimize impacts on surface water quality. The NPDES program is also administered on a regional basis in California by the Regional Water Quality Control Boards. The NPDES program establishes permit conditions for certain types of projects. Projects that are enabled due to the adoption of the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* require a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) to demonstrate how best management practices for the prevention/reduction of urban pollutants in storm water runoff, both during the construction and operational phases of projects, will be reduced. The SWPPP has two major objectives: 1) to help identify the sources of sediments and other pollutants that affect the quality of storm water discharges, and 2) to describe and ensure the implementation of practices to reduce sediment and other pollutants in storm water discharges.

The Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board (CCRWQCB) acting on behalf of the State Water Resources Control Board, implements state and federal laws related to water quality. The CCRWQCB establishes water quality standards and prepares basin plans that provide guidance for water quality measures to be implemented by local jurisdictions. The measures focus on reduction of urban pollutants contained in non-point sources of storm water runoff. Such pollutants include, but are not limited to, sediment, pesticides, chemicals, oil and grease.

4.9.1.4. FLOODING HAZARDS

The City of Gonzales is a participant in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP), which provides flood insurance and oversees floodplain management regulations to reduce the potential for flood damages and loss of life. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) manages the NFIP. The FEMA Special Flood Hazard Area (SFHA) for the City of Gonzales is identified on Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) Panel's 06053C0414G, 06053C0418G, and 06053C0518G. The FIRM identifies Gonzales Slough and a small area adjacent to South Alta Street as high-risk flood areas subject to

inundation during the 100-year flood. The FEMA Special Flood Hazard Area (SFHA) for adjacent unincorporated areas of County of Monterey is identified on Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) Panels 06053C0425G and 060530425G. The FIRM identifies multiple drainages within the Urban Growth Area as Zone A floodplains, indicating these areas may be subject to inundation during the 100-year flood. In addition to flooding caused by stormwater, small parts of the existing city west of Alta Street could be subject to inundation from the failure of Nacimiento Dam. Figure 4.9.2 shows flood and dam inundation hazards in the planning area.[50]

[50] Zone A: Areas with a 1% annual chance of flooding and a 26% chance of flooding over the life of a 30-year mortgage. Because detailed analyses are not performed for such areas; no depths or base flood elevations are shown within these zones.

Zone AE: The base floodplain where base flood elevations are provided. AE Zones are now used on new format FIRMs instead of A1-A30 Zones.

Zone AH: Areas with a 1% annual chance of shallow flooding, usually in the form of a pond, with an average depth ranging from 1 to 3 feet. These areas have a 26% chance of flooding over the life of a 30-year mortgage. Base flood elevations derived from detailed analyses are shown at selected intervals within these zones.

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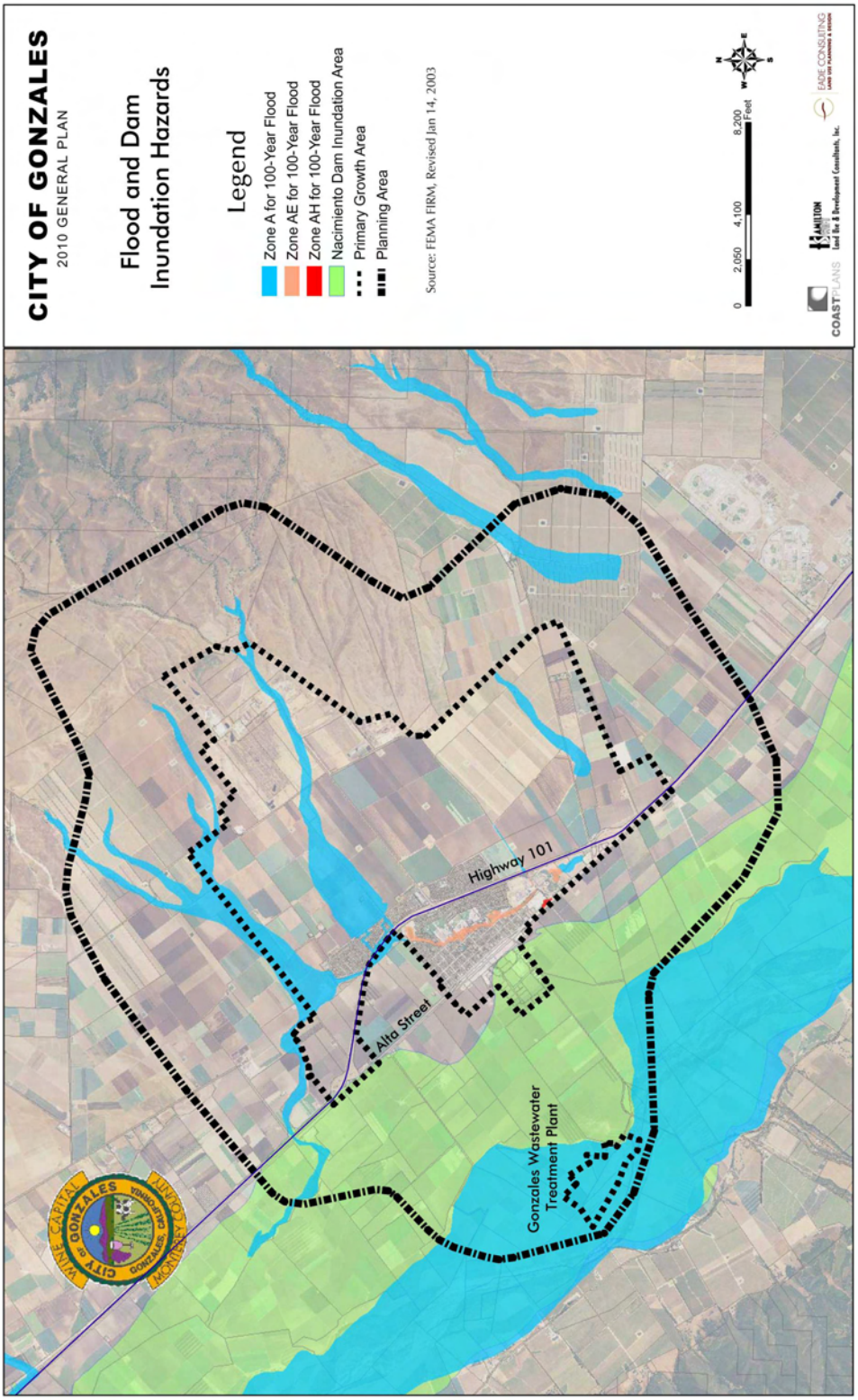
Figure 4.9.2: Flood Hazard Zones



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4.9.2 THRESHOLDS OF SIGNIFICANCE

The proposed project was considered to have a significant adverse effect on the environment if it met any of the standards of significance listed below. The Initial Study concluded that the proposed project has no potential to result in adverse effects for certain areas of concern, and this EIR has been focused to exclude such listed effects from further consideration. Excluded areas of concern are shown in ~~strikeout~~ format.

- Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements?
- 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)?
- 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?
- Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the 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?
- Create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff?
- Otherwise substantially degrade water quality?
- 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?
- Place within a 100-year flood hazard area structures which would impede or redirect flood flows?

- Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving flooding, including flooding of as a result of the failure of a levee or dam?

- ~~Inundation by seiche, tsunami, or mudflow?~~

4.9.3 Impacts and Mitigations

4.9.3.1. Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade water quality?

A. Impact

Impact HWQ-1: The adoption of the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* would provide the basis for development activity that could violate water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade water quality (Less than Significant).

The *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* would have the potential to result in urbanization that could result in the deterioration of surface water quality. Stormwater runoff from new urbanized areas could contain a host of urban water contaminants that are contained in the oil, grease, and other debris that accumulates on streets and parking lots. Stormwater contaminants include sediment from construction activities, nutrients, bacteria and viruses, oil and grease, metals, organics, pesticides, and gross pollutants (e.g., trash and debris).

The Gonzales 2010 General Plan proposes to change City stormwater policy, which previously required retention of all storm waters on site, to now allow retention of the 10-year, 24-hour storm event and detention of the 100-year, 24-hour storm event.[51] In large storm events, this new approach would allow stormwater from new urbanized areas to mix with stormwater from high in the watersheds above the planning area that flow through the area to Johnson Canyon Creek, McCoy Creek, and Gonzales Slough. To the

degree that stormwater from urbanized areas mixes with this pass-through stormwater, a potential is created for urban contaminants to degrade water quality in these bodies of water. Stormwater that is retained on site is also a concern, because contaminated stormwater could leach into groundwater basins and degrade groundwater quality, and nutrient-rich storm water runoff is an attractive medium for mosquitoes, flies, and rodents when it accumulates and stands for more than 72 hours (California Stormwater Quality Association, 2003).

Urbanization would also increase the amount of wastewater requiring treatment at the Gonzales Wastewater Treatment Facility. Currently, all water from the facility is directed to infiltration ponds where treated effluent is percolated back into the groundwater. No effluent is currently released to the adjacent Salinas River. The proposed project would not change the City's approach to the disposal of treated wastewater effluent but could require additional area for expanded infiltration pond capacity. With additional infiltration comes a higher potential for the contamination of groundwater with any contaminants that remain in the wastewater treatment plant effluent.

B. Applicable Policies and Regulations

The *Gonzales 2010 General Plan's* "Public Facilities and Services Element" contains the following policies and implementing actions designed to address water quality in the planning area:

Policy FS-4.1 Meet Demand for New Drainage Facilities

Meet the demand for new drainage facilities in a timely, cost effective manner by requiring at a minimum the retention of the 10-year 24-hour storm event and the detention of the 100-year 24-hour storm event.

> *Implementing Action FS-4.1.1 – On-Site Retention and Detention. Allow for the use of on-site detention and retention basins. Such basins should be designed to be jointly used for parks or passive open space where feasible.*

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[51] Retention of stormwater means directing storm waters to a basin where they are absorbed into the soil; detention of stormwater means directing storm waters to a basin where they are held temporarily and released in stages to prevent downstream flooding.

Implementing Action FS-4.1.4 – Best Management Practices. Require new development to incorporate Best Management Practices (BMPs) for drainage by utilizing source control and treatment control BMPs to mitigate for pollutant loadings associated with urban runoff.

Implementing Action FS-4.1.5 – Filtration Systems to Cleanse Urban Runoff. Require new development to install filtration systems in parking lots and other large impervious surfaces and retention basins to ensure that urban pollutants do not reach the groundwater and implement regimens to inspect and maintain the filtration systems on a periodic basis. The city shall monitor stormwater runoff from uses with potentially hazardous materials or high concentrations of surface water pollutants (pavement oil, grease, etc.) and as necessary require land owners to take remedial actions to ensure water quality.

Implementing Action FS-4.1.8 – Educate City Employees. Educate city employees about storm water pollution and their role in pollution prevention.

Implementing Action FS-4.1.9 – Public Education and Technical Assistance. Publish information periodically to inform citizens and businesses about urban runoff issues and their role in pollution prevention.

Implementing Action FS-4.1.10 – Periodic Inspections. Conduct periodic inspections of businesses, residential areas, and major land uses to ensure compliance with water quality regulations and best management practices.

Implementing Action FS-4.1.11 – SWPPP. Ensure all developers and contractors comply with stormwater pollution prevention practices.

The *Gonzales 2010 General Plan's* "Community Health and Safety Element" contains the following policies and implementing actions designed to address water quality in the planning area:

Policy HS-7.1 Water Quality in New Construction and Redevelopment

Require all new construction and renovation to be designed and constructed to protect water quality.

Implementing Action HS-7.1.1 – Protect City Wells. Protect the quality of water obtained from City wells.

Implementing Action HS-7.1.2 – Protect Natural Drainages from Hazardous Materials. Minimize the extent of development using hazardous chemicals or involving polluting materials (such as motor oil and paint) in areas adjacent to the Gonzales Slough, Johnson Canyon Creek, and other drainages east of Fanoe Road.

Implementing Action HS-7.1.3 – Best Management Practices. Promote stormwater Best Management Practices to trap or remove potential pollutants from urban runoff before they reach the Gonzales Slough and other sensitive habitat or natural areas.

Implementing Action HS-7.1.4 – Monitor Potable Water Quality. Continue to monitor Gonzales' potable water supply for trace chemicals and other potential contaminants. Regular sanitary surveys should be performed by the City Engineer. The State Department of Health Services should be alerted if hazards are identified.

Implementing Action HS-7.1.5 – Agricultural Impacts on Water Quality. Work with the County Department of Environmental Health and Agricultural Commissioner to identify potential impacts of farming operations and the use of herbicides, pesticides, and fertilizers on the City's domestic water supply.

Implementing Action HS-7.1.6 – Maintain Water Quality During Construction. Maintain adequate regulatory controls to minimize sediment flow from construction sites and other sources to the Gonzales Slough and other drainage courses.

Implementing Action HS-7.1.7 – Public Awareness. Support efforts to increase public awareness of water quality issues and prevent surface water pollution from household activities.

Implementing Action HS-7.1.8 – Dumping and Litter Laws. Enforce dumping and anti-litter laws to minimize pollution of ditches and the Gonzales Slough.

Implementing Action HS-7.1.9 – Recycling. Implement a citywide recycling program to recycle items such as oil, paint, and other substances which could contaminate ground and surface water if improperly disposed.

C. Significance Determination

The policies and actions contained in the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* and the requirements of the National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) together work to lessen the potential impacts related to the violation of water quality standards and waste discharge requirements and on the degradation of water quality otherwise, to a level of less than significant.

With regard to urban contaminants degrading stormwater runoff, new policy and actions contained in the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* would require the use of best management drainage practices (see Implementing Action FS-4.1.4). These new practices are consistent with the Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board's (CCRWQCB) approach to controlling non-point source pollution, and when combined with the NPDES would render this impact less than significant.

With regard to groundwater contamination from the infiltration of wastewater treatment plant effluent, the design of the facility's infiltration ponds has to be approved by the CCRWQCB, which insures that proper steps are taken to insure this does not become a problem. As a result, this impact would be less than significant.

D. Mitigation Measures

None required.

4.9.3.2. 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 GROUND WATER TABLE LEVEL

A. Impact

Impact HWQ-2: The adoption of the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* would provide the basis for development activity that could substantially deplete groundwater supplies or

<u>interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that there would be a net deficit in aquifer volume or a lowering of the local ground water table level</u> (Less than Significant).

The proposed project would enable development activity that could contribute to the further decline of the groundwater basin in coastal areas as a result of seawater intrusion. While there is no direct evidence that increased groundwater usage in Gonzales would actually have a direct impact on seawater intrusion 20 miles downstream, the most conservative assumption is that it would contribute to the problem.

According to the "City of Gonzales Draft Water System Plan" (Rick Engineering, 2010), an additional 6.10 million gallons per day (MGD) of production capacity would be needed to supply groundwater for development of the Urban Growth Area. Assuming groundwater wells would be constructed to supply new demands, it is estimated that five to seven additional wells would be required at buildout. Agricultural uses located in the Urban Growth Area, which would gradually be supplanted by urban uses, currently (2009) occupy 98 percent of the Urban Growth Area and consume approximately 5.78 MGD. Buildout of the Urban Reserve Area would generate demand for an additional 5.32 MGD of groundwater. Agricultural uses currently (2009) occupy 65 percent of the Urban Reserve Area and consume approximately 4.27 MGD of groundwater. Figure 4.9.3 summarizes the analysis.

Figure 4.9.3: Current Agricultural Water Usage

Crop Type	Acres in Production	Usage Rate (AF/AC/YR)	Annual Water Usage (AF/YR)	Annual Water Usage (MGD)
Urban Growth Area				
Vineyards[1]	640	1.50	960	0.86
All Other[2]	1,470	3.75	5,513	4.92
Subtotal	2,110		6,473	5.78
Urban Reserve Area				
Vineyards[1]	175	1.50	263	0.23
All Other[2]	1,205	3.75	4,519	4.03
Subtotal	1,380		4,781	4.27
TOTAL	3,490		11,254	10.05

Sources: [1]Coastplans; Larry Bettiga, UC Cooperative Extension, Farm Advisor, Salinas, California
[2]Coastplans; "Sun Valley Land and Foletta Subdivisions SB610 Water Supply Assessment," Boyle Engineering, January 2007

Agricultural uses in the planning area operate private groundwater wells that would be phased out along with the agricultural uses as urbanization proceeds. While the aquifers currently tapped by agricultural wells may in some cases be different than the aquifers preferred by the City Water Department for urban use, ultimately water from all area aquifers constitute a functional part of the larger Salinas Valley groundwater basin. So while different demands may be placed on the various aquifers in the immediate area, the overall balance of groundwater in the Central Salinas Valley should not be affected as agricultural wells are replaced by wells operated by the City Water Department.

Assuming that all agricultural wells are ultimately retired, the net new demand for groundwater in the Urban Growth Area would be 0.32 MGD (i.e., 6.10 MGD – 5.78 MGD = 0.32 MGD). The net new demand for groundwater in the Urban Reserve Area would be 1.05 MDG (5.32 MGD – 4.27 MGD = 1.05 MGD). The *Gonzales 2010 General Plan*, however, contains new policy (Policy FS 2.1) that would require the City to meet this demand without increasing the net capacity of existing groundwater wells (both public and agricultural wells) that exist in the planning area.

With regard to the issue of groundwater depletion through the interference of groundwater recharge, the urban landscape would contain substantial areas of impervious surface, which could inhibit groundwater recharge. If groundwater recharge is substantially

altered due to urbanization, this could also lead to a substantial depletion of groundwater supplies in the area.

B. Applicable Policies and Regulations

In addition to the policies and action listed above in Subsection 4.9.3.1 [B], the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* contains policies and actions that also have a bearing on groundwater supplies. The "Community Health and Safety Element" contains the following policies and implementing actions that have a bearing on groundwater supply in the planning area:

Policy COS-5.1 Water Conservation and Groundwater Recharge

Safeguard the quality and availability of groundwater supplies in Gonzales and the Salinas Valley.

> *Implementing Action COS-5.1.1 – Supplement Groundwater Supplies. Support regional efforts to supplement groundwater supplies with additional sources, such as new reservoirs, provided that such sources are economically feasible.*
>
> *Implementing Action COS-5.1.2 – Water Conservation. Encourage water conservation by Gonzales residents by continuing to follow the State's model ordinance promoting the use of drought-tolerant landscaping and the City's water ordinance promoting water conservation practices.*

Policy COS-7.1 Create Open Space and Natural Habitat in Drainage Areas

Protect the community from flooding hazards in a manner that creates open space and natural habitat and does not diminish groundwater recharge in the Planning Area.

> *Implementing Action COS-7.1.1 – Restore and Maintain Riparian Habitat. Create new naturalistic drainages in the growth area to serve as natural habitat and open space.*
>
> *Implementing Action COS-7.1.2 – Dual Use of Flood Plains. Encourage the use of flood plain areas within new development as natural habitat, open space, and recreation areas.*

Implementing Action COS-7.1.3 – Development within 100-Year Flood Hazard Zone. Prohibit development within the 100-year flood hazard zone unless the project incorporates measures that mitigate 100-year flood hazards to habitable structures while maintaining similar levels of groundwater recharge from the flood flows.

The "Public Facilities and Services Element" contains the following implementing policies and actions that have a bearing on groundwater supply in the planning area:

Policy FS-2.1 Meet New Demand for Water

Meet the demand for increased water service by new development in a timely, cost effective manner by construction of new wells, water distribution lines and reservoirs to keep pace with new development. Maintain average groundwater extractions necessary to serve full buildout of the Urban Growth Area to approximately 5.8 MGD in order to avoid significantly increasing groundwater withdrawals over current (2010) levels. To the degree necessary, the city shall rely upon best management practices, water conservation and recycled wastewater in order to make up any deficit in accommodating the demand for water supply that accompanies buildout of this General Plan.

Implementing Action FS-2.1.1 – Protect Existing Water Service. Permit new development only when public water can be supplied and delivered without threatening water supply or water quality in the rest of Gonzales.

Implementing Action FS-4.1.2 – Use of Porous Materials. Encourage the use of porous materials for outdoor spaces to reduce the volume of runoff that must be conveyed by the storm drainage system, provided that such spaces are not surfaces where oil, grease and other surface pollutants may accumulate. Alternatives to impervious pavement include porous asphalt and bricks, modular paving, gravel, and lattice blocks with soil or grass in the interstices.

C. Significance Determination

The policies and actions contained in the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* lessen the potential impacts related to the depletion of groundwater supplies to a level of less than significant.

With regard to new demands by development on groundwater supplies, the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* calls for no net increase in groundwater well capacity in the planning area (Policy FS-2.1).[52] Implementing Action FS-2.1.1 calls for the protection of existing water service, requiring that the City allow new development only "when public water can be supplied and delivered without threatening water supply or water quality in the rest of Gonzales." Other actions call for water conservation and/or water recycling (Implementing Actions FS-2.1.5 and FS-2.1.6). Finally, Senate Bills 610 and 221[53] require collaborative planning and documentation of water sources, including preparation of Water Assessments for new development. Together these policies, actions, and state requirements serve to protect groundwater supplies.

With regard to the project's impact on the regional problem of seawater intrusion in the Salinas Valley groundwater basin, new policies and implementing actions contained in the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* would result in no net increase in groundwater usage at buildout of the planning area (see Policy FS-2.1). Therefore, this impact would be less than significant.

With regard to the issue of groundwater depletion through the interference of groundwater recharge, the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* encourages the use of porous paving materials to allow for greater groundwater recharge within development areas (FS-4.1.2). It also requires the use of Best Management Practices that rely primarily on naturalistic drainage features that allow for groundwater recharge (FS-4.1.4). Finally, the plan also requires that any development that would modify existing drainage courses be designed to ensure that levels of groundwater recharge are similar to those levels that existed prior to the proposed modification (COS-8.1.3). Together these policies and actions serve to ensure that groundwater recharge is not significantly affected by new development in the planning area.

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[52] "No net increase" means that the combined total use of groundwater for both agriculture and urban use would not increase with the project.

[53] Senate Bills 610 (Chapter 643, Statutes of 2001) and Senate Bill 221 (Chapter 642, Statutes of 2001) amended state law, effective January 1, 2002. Under SB 610, water assessments must be furnished to local governments for inclusion in any environmental documentation for certain projects (as defined in Water Code 10912 [a]) subject to the California Environmental Quality Act. Under SB 221, approval by a city or county of certain residential subdivisions requires an affirmative written verification of sufficient water supply.

D. Mitigation Measures

None required.

4.9.3.3. 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 that would result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site. Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, or substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner that would result in flooding on- or off-site. 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?

A. Impact

Impact HWQ-3: The adoption of the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* would provide the basis for development activity that could substantially alter existing drainage patterns, increase the rate and/or amount of surface runoff that would result in flooding and/or exceed the capacity of existing drainage facilities, and provide additional sources of polluted runoff (Less than Significant).

The proposed project would enable development activity that could alter drainage patterns. Significant portions of the planning area are subject to flooding, and urbanization would most likely result in grade modifications that would substantially alter existing drainage patterns. In addition, urbanization would increase the amount of impervious surface area within the planning area, which could increase the rate and amount of surface runoff. Much of this additional impervious surface area, such as parking lots and streets, would introduce new sources of oil, grease, and other urban pollutants into the stormwater flow.

B. Applicable Policies and Regulations

In addition to the policies and action listed above in Subsections 4.9.3.1[B] and 4.9.3.2[B], the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* contains policies and actions that also have a bearing on flood safety and stormwater pollution. The "Community Health and Safety Element" contains the following implementing policies and actions that have a bearing on groundwater supply in the planning area:

Policy HS-2.1 Flood Safety

Require all new construction and renovation to be designed and constructed to mitigate the effects of flood hazards.

Implementing Action HS-2.1.1 – Flood Damage Prevention. Require new development to take all necessary steps to mitigate its on- and off-site stormwater drainage effects, consistent with city regulations, state law, and best management practices.

Implementing Action HS-2.1.2 – Flood Hazard Analysis. Require proponents of new development to prepare comprehensive drainage studies to fully document on- and off-site drainage conditions and downstream impacts and provide appropriate mitigation.

Implementing Action HS-2.1.3 – Redefinition of Flood Hazard Zone. Where Specific Plans propose modified flood hazard zones, such modifications shall:

- *Provide for natural habitat, open space, and recreational uses;*
- *Be consistent with state law governing the management of flood waters;*
- *Be consistent the Gonzales Flood Damage Prevention ordinance; and*
- *Be designed in to incorporate best management practices.*

Implementing Action HS-2.1.4 – 100-Year Flood Hazard Zone. Prohibit development within the 100-year flood zone of Gonzales Slough (shown in GP Figure V-2) unless the project incorporates measures that mitigate flood hazards to habitable structures and transportation facilities without increasing

downstream flood hazard, consistent with state law and the Gonzales Flood Damage Prevention Ordinance.

Implementing Action HS-2.1.5 – Public Awareness of Flood Hazards. Promote greater public awareness of flood hazards throughout the Planning Area by making available up-to-date maps of flood plain boundaries and enforcing flood plain development restrictions.

The "Conservation and Open Space Element" contains the following policies and implementing actions that have a bearing on groundwater supply in the planning area:

Policy COS-7.1 Create Open Space and Natural Habitat in Drainage Areas

Protect the community from flooding hazards in a manner that creates open space and natural habitat and does not diminish groundwater recharge in the planning area.

Implementing Action COS-7.1.1 – Restore and Maintain Riparian Habitat. Create new naturalistic drainages in the growth area to serve as natural habitat and open space.

Implementing Action COS-7.1.2 – Dual Use of Flood Plains. Encourage the use of flood plain areas within new development as natural habitat, open space, and recreation areas.

Implementing Action COS-7.1.3 – Development within 100-Year Flood Hazard Zone. Prohibit development within the 100-year flood hazard zone unless the project incorporates measures that mitigate 100-year flood hazards to habitable structures while maintaining similar levels of groundwater recharge from the flood flows.

C. Significance Determination

The policies and actions contained in the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* lessen the potential impacts related to flood hazards and polluted runoff to a level of less than significant. With regard to modified drainage patterns that could result in flooding, the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* requires any grading changes that would modify flood zones be designed to be consistent with state and local laws regulating drainage (see Implementing Action HS-2.1.3).

With regard to increased runoff due to new development, the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* requires the preparation of comprehensive drainage studies and site-specific mitigation to insure that new development does not result in new or worsened flooding offsite (see Implementing Actions HE-2.1.1 and HS-2.1.2).

With regard to additional sources of urban pollutants, see the analysis on stormwater quality above in Subsection 4.9.3.2. In addition, the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* prohibits the siting of uses within the 100-year flood hazard zone that could result in health hazards due to the release of chemicals (see Implementing Action HS-2.1.6).

D. Mitigation Measures

None required.

4.9.3.4. 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? Place within a 100-year flood-hazard area structures that would impede or redirect flood flows? 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?

A. Impact

Impact HWQ-4: The adoption of the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* would provide the basis for development activity that could place housing or other structures within a 100-year flood hazard area. The proposed project would not result in development within an area that may be subject to flooding as a result of dam failure (Less than Significant).

The proposed project would enable development activity that could be affected by flood hazards. According to the Federal Emergency Management Agency Flood Insurance Rate Maps, the Urban Growth Area designated by the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* contains areas that are subject to high risk of flooding (see Figure 4.9.2), especially in the northern part of the Urban Growth Area. These high-risk areas occupy large swaths of land due to the flat topography and narrow channelization that is the result of decades of farming. Urbanization would most likely result in grade modifications that would substantially alter

existing drainage patterns to reduce the footprint of flood zones and increase developable area.

The area west of Alta Street could be subject to flooding caused by dam failure (Nacimiento Dam is located approximately 30 miles upstream of the planning area), and the city's wastewater treatment plant is located in the dam inundation area. Urbanization enabled by the proposed project would result in the expansion of the wastewater treatment facility and increase the amount of untreated or partially treated sewage effluent that could be released in the event of dam failure and inundation of the treatment plant. The proposed project does not expand or change the intensity of use in the industrial area west of Alta Street.

B. Applicable Policies and Regulations

See Subsection 4.9.3.3 [B], above.

C. Significance Determination

The policies and actions contained in the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* lessen the potential impacts related to 100-year flood hazards to a level of less than significant. The *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* requires any grading changes that would modify flood zones be designed to be consistent with state and local laws regulating drainage (see Implementing Action HS-2.1.3). These laws insure that changes to flood zones mapped by FEMA do not result in new or worsened flooding offsite.

With regard to flooding hazards related to dam failure, any expansion of the Gonzales Wastewater Treatment Facility would be subject to the same emergency preparedness procedures that are currently in place for the existing facility. The Nacimiento Dam is periodically inspected by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (due to the existing hydroelectric plant located at the base of the dam) and the State Department of Water Resources, Division of Safety of Dams. Dam safety is the responsibility of both federal agencies and the Monterey County Water Resources Agency. This oversight, plus regular dam inspection and maintenance reduces the likelihood of dam failure. This impact would be less than significant.

D. Mitigation Measures

None required.

4.10 UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

This section evaluates the potential for the project to cause impacts to water supply systems, wastewater disposal systems, solid waste disposal systems, and energy systems. Information in this section is derived primarily from the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan*; the City of Gonzales *Draft Wastewater System Concept Plan* (AECOM, 2010); City of Gonzales *Draft Water System Concept Plan* (AECOM, 2010); and the City of Gonzales *Drainage Concept Plan* (Rick Engineering, 2010).

4.10.1 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

The following subsection describes existing conditions in the planning area.

4.10.1.1. WASTEWATER TREATMENT AMD COLLECTION FACILITIES

The Gonzales Wastewater Treatment Plant, located approximately two miles west of the intersection of South Alta Road and Gonzales River Road, has been operating since 1931 and has been expanded several times in response to population growth and improved technology. The plant currently operates under Waste Discharge Requirements (WDR) Order R3-2006-0005 with a limit of 1.30 million gallons per day (MGD) maximum average monthly flow. The plant provides biological treatment within six facultative aerated ponds and two polishing/oxidation pond operated in two parallel trains. Polishing pond effluent is disposed via evaporation and percolation in three seven-acre disposal fields (approximately 21 acres total), with one pond being used at a time. Designs for the most recent plant upgrade were completed in 2006 and the city has made improvements to the headworks and aerated facultative ponds. The plant currently serves all residential, commercial and industrial customers in the city. The plant provides primary treatment only.

According to the *Draft Wastewater System Concept Plan* (AECOM, 2010), average daily flow of wastewater received at the Gonzales Wastewater Treatment Plant was 0.584 MGD.[54] Average Wet Weather and Dry Weather Flow for the record period were 0.529

[54] Based on wastewater treatment plant records from January 2006 through December 2008

MGD and 0.627 MGD respectively. Seasonal wastewater patterns indicated increased loading during the summer months, consistent with the city's dynamic industrial activity and economy, with greater agricultural processing and production during summer months. Maximum Average Month Flow, which is regulated by the wastewater treatment plant's discharge permit, was 0.722 MGD over the past three years. With a permitted capacity of 1.30 MGD, the plant has an available unused capacity of 0.578 MGD maximum average monthly flow.

The wastewater collection system consists of a network of sewer mains ranging from six *to* 12 inches in diameter. A 21-inch trunk line carries wastewater from the city limits to the treatment plant. While the collection lines are adequately sized, some of the laterals in the older sections of the city are too small for the volume of wastewater they carry. Sludge from facility is disposed in the Johnson Canyon Road Landfill.

4.10.1.2. Water Supply and Distribution Systems

The City's water system consists of four groundwater wells, a network of primary distribution mains ranging in size from 10 to 12 inches, one existing storage reservoir and two new 3-MG reservoirs. The average daily demand for water in the city was 1.37 million gallons per day (MGD) in 2008. Approximately 66 percent of the total water produced was used for residential purposes, approximately nine percent for commercial and institutional uses (commercial, school and city facilities and hydrants) and approximately 25 percent for industrial uses, (AECOM USA, Inc. 2010). There are no existing water supply deficiencies. The city's water system has operated on a reliable basis for many years, even during periods of prolonged drought.

The Gonzales Water Department is the purveyor of potable water in Gonzales, and water delivered by the system is monitored by the California Department of Health Services, Office of Public Drinking Water. The City of Gonzales contracts with the Monterey County Department of Public Heath for water sampling and laboratory analysis. Water produced by city wells is in compliance with all State standards.[55]

[55] Personal communication with Carlos Lopez, City of Gonzales Director of Public Works, June 21, 2010.

4.10.1.3. STORMWATER DRAINAGE FACILITIES

The City of Gonzales's existing drainage system utilizes natural and engineered channels, street inlets, storm drains, and retention basins. The system collects flow from the developed and undeveloped areas within the city watershed and discharges it at multiple locations within the Gonzales Slough. The Gonzales Slough intersects the city of Gonzales and runs parallel to Highway 101. The slough is connected by a series of culvert crossings that operate mostly under outlet control due to a flat longitudinal slope and tailwater effects caused by undersized culverts. Historically, the slough has been a source of flooding within the city. The older areas of Gonzales drain to Gonzales Slough, while all of the newer projects east of Highway 101 utilize retention basins. Flooding has been a problem along sections of Gonzales Slough and a small area adjacent to South Alta Street.

4.10.1.4. SOLID WASTE DISPOSAL

Solid waste in Gonzales is collected by Tri-Cities Disposal, a franchise refuse hauler providing regularly scheduled trash pick-up and recycling services to Gonzales and other cities in the Salinas Valley and the region. The Johnson Canyon Road Landfill, located approximately two miles east of the City of Gonzales within the planning area, is a regional facility owned and operated by the Salinas Valley Solid Waste Authority. Operations at the facility are permitted under Solid Waste Facilities Permit (SWFP) No. 27-AA-0005 issued by the Monterey County Health Department in 2000. The facility is classified by the Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) as a Class III refuse disposal facility.[56]

The Johnson Canyon Road Landfill has been operating as a municipal solid waste disposal facility since 1976. The site is 163 acres in size, of which 80 acres are currently approved for waste disposal. Of the 80 acres, 33 acres are currently overlain by waste. According to the *Draft Regional Solid Waste Facilities Project EIR*, (Salinas Valley Solid Waste Authority, 2002), the total capacity of the facility was approximately 6.6 million cubic

[56] A Class III facility is permitted to receive the following non-hazardous waste types: residential, commercial and industrial solid waste, construction and demolition debris, wood waste, metal salvage, double bagged

yards in 1999, of which 2.9 million tons of capacity remained. The Draft EIR estimated that this capacity would provide approximately 43 years of disposal capacity to the current jurisdictions served by the landfill. This equates to approximately 67,500 tons per year. Assuming this rate of fill per year, it is estimated that the Johnson Canyon Road Landfill has approximately 2.2 million tons of capacity remaining in 2010, enough to provide service through the year 2042 at AMBAG growth rates as they were projected at the time.[57] The Salinas Valley Solid Waste Authority updated its "Source Reduction and Recycling Element" (SRRE) in 2008 and received a letter from CalRecycle accepting the five-year update. The implementation of the programs in the SRRE has resulted in a cumulative recycling rate for Authority member agencies (Salinas, Gonzales, Soledad, Greenfield, King City) and the eastern portion Monterey County of 65 percent. The Salinas Valley Solid Waste Authority is currently examining options for ensuring that adequate waste disposal capacity exists for the next 70 for its member jurisdictions and is currently negotiating with two firms that claim a 99 percent diversion rate after recovery of all recyclable materials and processing by gasification.[58]

4.10.2 Thresholds of Significance

The proposed project was considered to have a significant adverse effect on the environment if it met any of the standards of significance listed below. The Initial Study excluded no areas of concern in this topic area.

- Exceed wastewater treatment requirements of the applicable Regional Water Quality Control Board?
- 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?

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non-friable asbestos [under one cubic yard (cy)], agricultural wastes, and tires. A waste acceptance and control program is in effect to prohibit the disposal of unacceptable waste types.

[57] Projected AMBAG population growth rates have been significantly reduced since the 1990s; thus, actual landfill capacity may extend out further than 2042.

[58] Email from Susan Warner to Coastplans, dated March 23, 2010.

- Require or result in the construction of new stormwater drainage facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?
- Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project from existing entitlements and resources, or are new or expanded entitlements needed?
- 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?
- Be served by a landfill with sufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the project's solid waste disposal needs?
- Comply with federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste?

4.10.3 Impacts and Mitigations

4.10.3.1. Exceed wastewater treatment requirements of the applicable Regional Water Quality Control Board; 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; 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

A. <u>Impact</u>

<u>Impact USS-1: The adoption of the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* would provide the basis for development activity that could exceed wastewater treatment requirements and require expanded water and wastewater treatment facilities without which the</u>

<u>wastewater treatment provider would be unable to affirm that it has sufficient capacity to serve planned development</u> (Significant and Unavoidable).

The proposed project would enable development activity that could impact the existing wastewater treatment system. According to the City of Gonzales *Draft Wastewater System Concept Plan* (AECOM, 2010), the buildout of the Urban Growth Area could generate up to 4.053 million gallons per day (MGD) in additional average daily wastewater flow (ADF). Buildout of the Urban Reserve Area could generate up to an additional 4.256 MGD ADF. To accommodate this additional demand, the Gonzales Wastewater Treatment Plant would have to be expanded. The existing plant capacity 1.30 MGD and current usage is 0.0722 MGD, leaving 0.578 MGD of unused capacity. Thus, buildout of the Urban Growth Area would exceed existing available capacity by 3.47 MGD. Buildout of the Urban Reserve Area would increase this deficiency to 7.73 MGD.

The Land Use Diagram includes land designated for new light and heavy industrial use. While precise uses are unknown at this time, such uses could include food-processing industries with the potential to produce high biological oxygen demand (BOD) levels that can overload wastewater treatment processes by introducing raw biological wastes into the sanitary sewer system. Other uses could include industries with the potential to use hazardous materials in the manufacturing process that could find their way into the sanitary sewer system.

The *Draft Wastewater System Concept Plan* identifies three options for expanding wastewater treatment plant capacity. These include: 1) an expanded facultative pond treatment system, 2) a Biolac wave oxidation extended aeration activated sludge (EAAS) system retrofit, or 3) an oxidation ditch EAAS system. In general, the facultative pond system has the advantage of not requiring high levels of management expertise but results in a low-quality effluent that cannot be recycled and could require up to an additional 85 acres of land for new ponds. The two EAAS systems, on the other hand, require advanced management skills but result in a high-quality effluent that can be recycled, provided there are some additional treatment upgrades. The two EAAS systems would require one to three acres of additional land, which is already available within the wastewater treatment plant property. Infiltration pond capacity would need to be expanded by up to 100 acres, but this acreage could be significantly reduced depending on the amount of wastewater that is recycled. The city currently owns, or has agreements in place to purchase about half of this total land requirement, and this land is located immediately east of the existing

plant. The city has not determined which of these options will be selected. However, due to the need to conserve groundwater resources the city will likely move in a direction that will lead eventually to the capacity to recycle treated wastewater.

Expansion of the Gonzales Wastewater Treatment Plan capacity could lead to the conversion of approximately 185 acres of prime agricultural land located next to the existing facility. This amount of land could be reduced by approximately 85 acres if the city converted from a facultative pond system to an EAAS system. Further savings could be achieved if the city developed the capacity to recycle some or all of its waste effluent, thereby reducing the need for new infiltration ponds. It is speculative, however, to assume what choices the city will make with regard to treatment plant process upgrades.

B. Applicable Policies and Regulations

The *Gonzales 2010 General Plan's* "Public Facilities and Services Element" contains the following policies and implementing actions designed to address wastewater treatment capacity:

Policy FS-3.1 Meet New Demand for Sewer Capacity

Increase capacity of the Gonzales wastewater treatment plant commensurate with projected population and employment growth. Increases in capacity should occur in a timely, cost-effective manner. Improvements should include expansion of existing capacity, expansion of effluent disposal facilities, and construction of new collection mains and a gradual transition to higher levels of treatment.

Implementing Action FS-3.1.1 – Protect Existing Sewer Services. Permit new development only when it can be demonstrated that sufficient wastewater collection and treatment capacity is, or will be in place to serve the development without diminishing existing service levels.

Implementing Action FS-3.1.2 – No Service Outside City Limits. Do not extend city sewer service to development outside the city limits. Requests to extend sewer to unincorporated properties should only be considered if annexation is also being concurrently requested and should not be approved until the annexation also has been approved.

Implementing Action FS-3.1.3 – Upgrade Sewer Lines. Continue to work towards reducing sewer infiltration problems, thereby increasing the available capacity of the wastewater treatment plant.

Implementing Action FS-3.1.4 – Upgrade Quality of Effluent. Undertake capital improvements and programs that upgrade the quality of effluent at the treatment plant and allow for the recycling of wastewater to meet the demand for water supply in the city.

Implementing Action FS-3.1.5 – Pursue Grant Funding. On an on-going basis, pursue grants from the state and federal governments which enable the city to undertake wastewater improvements serving the planned industrial areas.

Implementing Action FS-3.1.6 – Coordinate Plan for Services. Work with the Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board to increase the permitted discharge volume at the wastewater treatment plant and to expand and upgrade wastewater treatment facilities.

Implementing Action FS-3.1.7 – Treatment Plant Expansion. Acquire sufficient land adjacent to the wastewater treatment plant to accommodate future plant expansion. Until such time as the land is needed for this purpose, it should be used for agriculture.

Implementing Action FS-3.1.8 – Sewer Treatment Plant Impact Fees. Following completion of the Sewer Master Plan, revise the sewer treatment plant impact fee schedule to reflect the projected costs of sewage treatment plant improvements recommended in the plan.

Implementing Action FS-3.1.9 – Satellite Treatment Plants. The city should consider the use of satellite treatment plants where feasible to take advantage of recycling opportunities and to reduce collection system upgrade costs.

Also, from the "Sustainability Element:"

Policy SUS-1.11 Improve Water Supply Efficiency

Evaluate opportunities to increase the energy efficiency of water and wastewater systems.

Implementing Action SUS-1.11.1 – Efficiency of New and Existing Systems. Retrofit municipal water and wastewater systems with energy efficient motors, pumps and other equipment where feasible. Where systems are expanded, or new systems are constructed, to accommodate new growth, ensure that energy efficiency is built into the new systems.

Implementing Action SUS-1.11.2 – Methane from Wastewater Treatment. Evaluate the feasibility of recovering wastewater treatment methane for energy production.

Implementing Action SUS-1.11.3 – Wastewater Recovery. Evaluate the feasibility of wastewater recovery for irrigation.

In addition to the policies and implementing actions contained in the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan*, the City of Gonzales, under the authority of Municipal Code Chapter 10.16, Sewage Disposal, requires industrial users to obtain an Industrial Discharge Permit, which evaluates wastewater constituents expected to emanate from proposed industrial uses. If a proposed use is expected to discharge wastewater that could lead to the violation of water quality standards, the user is expected to take measures to properly dispose of problem constituents without dumping them into the wastewater system. The user is also typically required to install a wastewater inspection station on-site so that the city can monitor water quality and detect problems early.

C. Significance Determination

With regard to the violation of water quality standards, the city's standard practice of evaluating wastewater from proposed new industrial uses as part of the use permit process (discussed above) reduces this impact to less than significant.

With regard to issues related to wastewater treatment plant expansion, the policies and actions contained in the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* are sufficient to ensure that adequate treatment plant capacity is developed to accommodate growth in the planning area. The expansion of treatment plant capacities, however, in itself engenders a potential significant impact to agricultural resources, because some of the available options for expanding treatment plant capacity would involve the conversion of Prime Farmland. This impact is lessened by Implementing Action COS-4.3.3, Agricultural Impact Fund (discussed above in Subsection 4.2.3.1[B]), in that fees collected from developers would be

used to permanently protect agricultural land outside the path of growth. In this case, the City would treat itself as a developer and pay into the fund when converting agricultural land for treatment plant expansion. Nonetheless, the conversion of prime agricultural land for treatment plant expansion would remain a significant impact. This is a significant and unavoidable impact.

D. Mitigation Measures

No feasible measures available. See Section 4.2, Agricultural Resources.

4.10.3.2. REQUIRE OR RESULT IN THE CONSTRUCTION OF NEW STORMWATER DRAINAGE FACILITIES OR EXPANSION OF EXISTING FACILITIES, THE CONSTRUCTION OF WHICH COULD CAUSE SIGNIFICANT ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS

A. Impact

Impact USS-2: The adoption of the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* would provide the basis development activity that could result in the construction of new stormwater drainage facilities and expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects (Less than Significant with Mitigation Measures).

The proposed project would enable new development that would require new drainage systems. The *Gonzales 20101 General Plan* identifies drainage improvements to accommodate development in the planning area and correct existing deficiencies. The drainage approach relies on best management practices that combine naturalistic drainage features with trunk line pipes. The installation of these drainage features would require trenching and grading that would have the potential to disrupt and degrade cultural resources, such as Native American artifacts that could be buried in the planning area, biological resources, and agricultural lands. The trenching and grading would also have the potential to unearth contaminated soils that are known to exist in the northern part of the Urban Growth Area. Finally, as with any earthwork, such construction activities could result in soil erosion that could degrade water quality and clog drainage facilities downstream.

The Urban Growth Area has low habitat value because the area has been intensively farmed for decades, so it is unlikely that the installation of drainage facilities would have a significant effect on biological resources. Parts of the Urban Growth Area lie in proximity to known habitat for California tiger salamander, a federally-listed endangered species. In the northern part of the area, these salamanders are sufficiently hybridized so as to not qualify a listed species under the Endangered Species Act (Source: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, letter addressed to Robert J. Uram dated June 15, 2007). It is unknown if there are California tiger salamander that would qualify as a listed species in other parts of the Urban Growth Area. If there are, the trenching and grading activity associated with drainage improvements could have a significant effect on this important biological resource.

B. Applicable Policies and Regulations

The *Gonzales 2010 General Plan's* "Community Character Element" contains the following policies and implementing actions designed to address the protection of cultural resources:

Policy CC-9.1 Archaeological Protection

Support continued research on Native American settlement around Gonzales and protect any unique artifacts or sites discovered.

> *Implementing Action CC-9.1.1 – Archaeological Investigation. Conduct an investigation of potential unique archaeological resources on any development site where there is reason to believe that such resources are likely to be present. The decision to preserve or extract any resources uncovered would be made on a case by case basis according to the recommendation of a qualified archaeologist.*

In addition, the "Community Health and Safety Element" contains the following policies and implementing actions designed to address hazardous materials safety:

Policy HS-5.1 Hazardous Material Safety in New Construction and Redevelopment

Require all new construction and renovation to be designed and constructed to mitigate the effects of hazardous materials.

Implementing Action HS-5.1.1 – Review Development Proposals. *Review all development proposals for their potential to introduce hazardous materials to Gonzales, and require a sanitary survey of the potential impact on City utilities and stormwater where necessary to protect public health and safety.*

Policy HS-7.1 Water Quality in New Construction and Redevelopment

Require all new construction and renovation to be designed and constructed to protect water quality.

Implementing Action HS-7.1.6 – Maintain Water Quality During Construction. Maintain adequate regulatory controls to minimize sediment flow from construction sites and other sources to the Gonzales Slough and other drainage courses.

In addition, the "Conservation and Open Space Element" contains the following policies and implementing actions designed to address the protection of important biological resources:

Policy COS-2.1 Protect Special-Status Species

Protect special-status species that are located within the planning area and create the conditions necessary for such species to become self sustaining.

Implementing Action COS-2.1.1 – Identify Special-Status Species. Require Specific Plans and development applications to identify and map special-status species and hybridized versions of the California tiger salamander that may be located in the proposed development area.

Implementing Action COS-2.1.2 – Avoid and Buffer Special-Status Species. Require Specific Plans and development applications to contain provisions to avoid the take of listed species, where possible, and to buffer areas containing listed species from urban encroachment. In the case where a hybridized version of California tiger salamander is present, if the USFWS concurs that the species present is sufficiently hybidized to fall outside the regulation of the Endangered Species Act, then no mitigation shall be required.

Implementing Action COS-2.1.3 – Avoid Fragmentation of Special-Status Species. Require Specific Plans and development applications, for lands containing or adjoining Special Status Species habitiat areas to include provisions that ensure that a population of a listed species will not be isolated and/or fragmented as a result of the project. Exceptions may be granted by the City in cases where the developer can demonstrate that isolation and/or fragmentation of listed species cannot feasibly be avoided in site design.

Implementing Action COS-2.1.4 – Apply for Take of Special-Status Species in Specified Circumstances. As applicable, during specific plan development or other development application processes, require consultation with the appropriate regulatory agencies to identify any potential impacts to sensitive plant and/or animal species. Where feasible, Specific Plans and development applications should avoid impacts and/or incorporate mitigation measures to address any impacts. Any required regulatory permits shall be obtained prior to land alteration permit issuance.

Implementing Action COS-2.1.5 – Protocol Salamander Surveys. For Specific Plan or other development applications, for lands within known or potential habitat areas (GP Figure VI-1) undertake salamander surveys as part of the review process by a qualified biologist (i.e., one that has obtained permission from the USFWS to undertake such surveys) to determine the presence of the California tiger salamander. The results of such surveys and genetic tests shall be reviewed by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS).

Implementing Action COS-2.1.6 – Agency Consultation Regarding Salinas River. Undertake appropriate agency consultations to protect listed species in and adjacent to the Salinas River as the City of Gonzales plans and executes the expansion of its wastewater treatment facility located on Gonzales River Road.

Implementing Action COS-2.1.7 – Agency Consultation Regarding Other Special-Status Species. Undertake appropriate agency consultations to protect listed species in and adjacent to city-owned rights-of-way as the City of Gonzales plans and executes any capacity improvement to existing facilities or the creation of new facilities within these rights-of-way.

In addition, the "Community Facilities and Services Element" contains the following policies and implementing actions designed to address drainage:

Policy FS-4.1 Meet Demand for New Drainage Facilities

Meet the demand for new drainage facilities in a timely, cost effective manner by requiring at a minimum the retention of the 10-year 24-hour storm event and the detention of the 100-year 24-hour storm event.

Implementing Action FS-4.1.1 – On-Site Retention and Detention. Allow for the use of on-site detention and retention basins. Such basins should be designed to be jointly used for parks or passive open space where feasible, consistent with Implementing Action COS-7.1.4.

Implementing Action FS-4.1.2 – Use of Porous Materials. Encourage the use of porous materials for outdoor spaces to reduce the volume of runoff that must be conveyed by the storm drainage system, consistent with the maintenance of water quality standards. Alternatives to impervious pavement include porous asphalt and bricks, modular paving, gravel, and lattice blocks with soil or grass in the interstices.

Implementing Action FS-4.1.3 – Recreate Natural Landscape. Require new development to re-create the historic natural hydrology of the landscape to the degree practicable by incorporating natural drainage features such as creeks and sloughs into site design. Man-made hydrologic features shall be designed to be naturalistic in character to the maximum extent feasible through variation in drainage channel alignment, gentle slopes, wide channel sections and vegetative plantings and riparian trees. Retention and detention basins should be similar in appearance to naturally occurring ponds or sloughs.

Implementing Action FS-4.1.4 – Best Management Practices. Require the use source and treatment control Best Management Practices to trap or remove potential pollutants from urban runoff before they reach the Gonzales Slough and other sensitive habitat or natural areas.

C. Significance Determination

The policies and actions contained in the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* lessen the potential impacts related to the installation of drainage improvements in the planning area. Furthermore, the environmental effects related to drainage improvements discussed above—cultural resources, hazardous materials, water quality, and biological resources—have been analyzed separately in other sections of this EIR. With the exception of the analysis on hazardous materials, each of these analyses resulted in no mitigation measures being required. The mitigation measure related to hazardous materials, which is set forth in Section 4.17, is listed below:

> Mitigation Measure HAZ-1: Site-Specific Investigation of Potential Soil Contamination Required

This mitigation measure, in combination with the policies and implementing action of the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* would reduce impacts associated with drainage improvements to a level of less than significant.

D. Mitigation Measures

No additional measures required.

4.10.3.3. HAVE SUFFICIENT WATER SUPPLIES AVAILABLE TO SERVE THE PROJECT FROM EXISTING ENTITLEMENTS AND RESOURCES, OR ARE NEW OR EXPANDED ENTITLEMENTS NEEDED

A. Impact

Impact USS-3: The adoption of the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* would provide the basis for development activity that could require new and/or expanded water supply entitlements (Less than Significant).

The proposed project would enable development activity that would require expanded water supplies. As discussed in Subsection 4.8.3.2, buildout of the Urban Growth Area would result in a net additional demand (factoring out reduced demand for agricultural uses in the area) for 0.32 MGD of groundwater production capacity, and buildout of the Urban Service Area would result in a net additional demand for 1.05 MGD of

groundwater capacity. The withdrawal of additional groundwater from the aquifers of the Pressure Subarea and the Eastside Subarea of the Salinas Valley groundwater basin could lead to the substantial depletion of groundwater supplies in the area.

B. Applicable Policies and Regulations

The *Gonzales 2010 General Plan's* "Public Facilities and Services Element" contains the following policies and implementing actions designed to address water supply capacity:

Policy FS-2.1 Meet New Demand for Water

Meet the demand for increased water service by new development in a timely, cost effective manner by construction of new wells, water distribution lines and reservoirs to keep pace with new development. Maintain average groundwater extractions necessary to serve full buildout of the Urban Growth Area to approximately 4.8 MGD in order to avoid significantly increasing groundwater withdrawals over current (2010) levels. To the degree necessary, the city shall rely upon best management practices, water conservation and recycled wastewater in order to make up any deficit in accommodating the demand for water supply that accompanies buildout of this General Plan.

Implementing Action FS-2.1.1 – Protect Existing Water Service. Permit new development only when public water can be supplied and delivered without threatening water supply or water quality in the rest of Gonzales.

C. Significance Determination

The analysis in Subsection 4.8.3.2 notes that the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* calls for no net increase in groundwater well capacity in the planning area (Policy FS-2.1). Implementing Action FS-2.1.1 calls for the protection of existing water service, requiring that the City allow new development only "when public water can be supplied and delivered without threatening water supply or water quality in the rest of Gonzales." Other actions call for water conservation and/or water recycling (Implementing Actions FS-2.1.5 and FS-2.1.6).

The analysis contained in Subsection 4.8.3.2 concluded that the policies and implementing actions of the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan,* plus the requirement for collaborative planning and documentation of water sources, required by Senate Bills 610

and 221, including preparation of Water Assessments, serve to protect groundwater supplies and to reduce the environmental effects associated with supplying water to the planning area to a level of less than significant.

D. Mitigation Measures

None required.

4.10.3.4. BE SERVED BY A LANDFILL WITH SUFFICIENT PERMITTED CAPACITY TO ACCOMMODATE THE PROJECT'S SOLID WASTE DISPOSAL NEEDS; COMPLY WITH FEDERAL, STATE, AND LOCAL STATUTES AND REGULATIONS RELATED TO SOLID WASTE

A. Impact

Impact USS-4: The adoption of the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* would provide the basis for development activity that would generate demand for additional solid waste disposal capacity (Less than Significant).

The proposed project would enable development activity that would require expanded solid waste disposal capacity. According to the California Integrated Waste Management Board (September 21-22, 1999 Board Meeting Minutes), the City of Gonzales produced approximately 1.8 pounds per day of solid waste per person in 1999. According to the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan*, buildout of the Urban Growth Area would result in 28,800 new residents in the city. At 1.8 pounds per person per day, this growth would result in the generation of about 51,840 pounds of solid waste per day, or about 26 tons per day. The Johnson Canyon Road Landfill is expected to provide landfill services through the year 2042 and has 2.2 million tons of capacity remaining in 2010. Buildout of the Urban Growth Area is expected to occur around 2050, and buildout of the Urban Reserve Area well after that. Thus, the proposed project would generate solid waste in excess of currently projected landfill capacity.

B. Applicable Policies and Regulations

The *Gonzales 2010 General Plan's* "Public Facilities and Services Element" contains the following policies and implementing actions designed to address solid waste capacity:

Policy FS-5.1 Meet Demand for New Solid Waste Capacity

The city shall support the continued operation of the Johnson Canyon Valley Landfill east of Iverson Road as the primary means of meeting the city's need for additional solid waste capacity.

Implementing Action FS-5.1.1 – Recycling and Composting._Support programs to compost yard waste and to recycle or reuse paper, cardboard, glass, metal, plastics, motor oil as a means of reducing the amount of waste going to landfills.

Implementing Action FS-5.1.2 – Hazardous Waste. Promote and encourage practices and technologies which reduce the use of hazardous substances and the generation and improper disposal of hazardous wastes.

Implementing Action FS-5.1.3 – Long-Term Planning. Support state programs to reduce waste generation and to provide safe disposal sites to meet long-term local needs.

Implementing Action FS-5.1.4 – Purchase Recycled Materials. Where costs are equivalent, follow a preferential purchasing policy for goods containing recycled materials.

Also, from the "Sustainability Element:"

Policy SUS-1.9 Improve Waste Management

Develop and adopt new or amended regulations, programs, and incentives as appropriate to reduce waste by improving management and recycling programs.

Implementing Action SUS-1.9.1 – Renovate Instead of Demolish. Reduce construction and demolition waste by encouraging renovating and adding on to existing buildings, rather than constructing new buildings where feasible.

Implementing Action SUS 1.9.2 – Recycling Facilities. Include features in buildings to facilitate recycling of waste generated by building occupants and associated refuse storage areas. Provide permanent, adequate, and convenient space for individual building occupants to collect refuse and recyclable material.

Implementing Action SUS 1.9.3 – Innovative Use of Waste Products. Through the Gonzales Grows Green Initiatives, support the innovative use and re-use of waste products generated by businesses, government and citizens.

C. Significance Determination

The policies and actions contained in the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* lessen the potential impacts related to solid waste disposal capacity in the planning area to a level of less than significant.

The Johnson Canyon Road Landfill has approximately 2.2 million tons of capacity remaining in 2010 (see the analysis above in Subsection 4.15.2.4), enough to provide services for approximately 32 years through the year 2042. The landfill operator, the Salinas Valley Solid Waste Authority, is working to expand operations at the Johnson Canyon Road facility to provide 70 years of capacity to its member cities (source: per. comm. with Carlos Lopez, Gonzales Director of Public Works). At the annual average growth rate derived from AMBAG's 2008 projections, the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* contains enough land in its Urban Growth Area for growth through the year 2050. This planning horizon is longer than what is currently planned for the Johnson Canyon Road facility but probably within the 70-year capacity that is currently being evaluated by the Salinas Valley Solid Waste Authority. To the degree that local recycling, conservation, and waste recovery efforts are successful in reducing the rate of landfill, the length of time that the Johnson Canyon Road Landfill could remain in operation would be extended.

D. Mitigation Measures

None required.

4.11 PUBLIC SERVICES

This section evaluates the potential impacts of the proposed project on public services. For information regarding public parks, please see Chapter 4.12, Parks and Recreation.

4.11.1 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

The City of Gonzales is a general law city that provides police and fire protection services in the area. School facilities and operated by the Gonzales Unified School District (GUSD). Each of these and other public facility and services are discussed below.

4.11.1.1. FIRE DEPARTMENT

The City of Gonzales Fire Department provides fire protection services to the planning area, including structural fire fighting, medical emergencies, hazardous material, grass firefighting, vehicle fires and accident response. The Gonzales Fire Department has one station, which is centrally located on Center Street between Third and Fourth Streets. The average emergency response time is currently approximately five minutes, although it can vary depending on the location of the nearest volunteer firefighter at the time of the emergency. The department has one paid professional fire engineer. All other staffing is by a volunteer force. The City anticipates that it cannot depend on adding additional volunteers as residential growth proceeds and that a gradual transition to paid staff will be required to maintain service levels. The City of Gonzales has an ISO rating of five.[59]

4.11.1.2. POLICE DEPARTMENT

The City of Gonzales Police Department provides police protection services to the planning area. Services include, but are not limited to, maintaining the public peace and safety, enforcement of the laws and ordinances of the state and City, safeguarding life and

[59] ISO or Insurance Services Office, Inc. reviews the fire-fighting capabilities of individual communities. ISO measures the major elements of a community's fire-suppression system and develops a numerical grading called a Public Protection Classification. The Public Protection Classification ranges from 1 to 10. Class 1

property, the prevention and detection of crime, and the protection of the rights of all persons. The department is also responsible for the smooth and orderly flow of traffic, first response to medical emergencies, the animal control function, and emergency operations. In addition, the department operates a community policing program with 13 part-time civilian volunteers and a police explorer program with 12 youth volunteers.

Current staffing of the Police Department consists of 13 uniformed personnel, including: nine officers, three sergeants, and the Chief of Police. The department also has five civilian employees, including: one full time records supervisor, a half-time Receptionist, two paid on-call half time receptionists, and a half-time animal control officer. The Gonzales Police Department is located in new facilities at Fourth Street and Belden Street. The response time objective of the Police Department is four minutes.

4.11.1.3. SCHOOLS

The GUSD adopted a Facility Master Plan in 2008. According to the Plan, Gonzales is served by the Gonzales Unified School District (GUSD), which operates four schools—La Gloria School, serving Grades K-4; Fairview Middle School, serving Grades 5-8; Gonzales High School, serving Grades 9-12 (serving students from Gonzales, Chualar, Mission District, and outlying areas in the County); and Somavia Continuation High School, serving Grades 10-12.

The GUSD consolidated with the Gonzales Union High School District in 1997, and two years later Soledad opened its own high school. As a result of this reorganization, high school enrollment at GUSD decreased from approximately 1,400 students in 1997 to 775 in 1999. Since that time, enrollment has further decreased to approximately 700 students. Elementary and middle school enrollment, on the other hand, has increased from 1,200 to 1,550 students. As of 2005, there were approximately 900 students at La Gloria Elementary School and 650 at Fairview Middle School. As of 2010, Gonzales High School has capacity for about 1,200 total students or 500 additional students above current enrollment. Fairview Middle School is at capacity, and La Gloria Elementary School is 300 students over its intended capacity.

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generally represents superior property fire protection, and Class 10 indicates that the area's fire-suppression program doesn't meet ISO's minimum criteria.

4.11.1.4. Other Public Facilities and Services

The City of Gonzales provides general government services, including all aspects of city management, personnel administration, finance and billing services, computer system and web support, maintenance and administration of the Gonzales City Code, city planning and code enforcement services, disaster planning and coordination, and operation of City boards and commissions, support to the elected City Council, and myriad other activities. Current staffing consists of a City Manager and a staff of twelve persons. In addition, the City contracts for legal services, engineering services, and accounting services. All general government services are conducted from the City offices at 147 Fourth Street. The current office is at capacity with no space available for additional staff. The City is currently studying alternatives for expansion of City Hall to accommodate additional staff for the intermediate future.

4.11.2 Thresholds of Significance

The proposed project was considered to have a significant adverse effect on the environment if it met any of the standards of significance listed below. The Initial Study excluded no areas of concern in this topic area.

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

4.11.3 Impacts and Mitigations

4.11.3.1. Result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered fire and police facilities, need for new or physically altered fire and police facilities, the construction of which could cause significant

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS, IN ORDER TO MAINTAIN ACCEPTABLE SERVICE RATIOS, RESPONSE TIMES OR OTHER PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVES

A. Impact

Impact PS-1: The adoption of the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* could result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered fire and police facilities, need for new or physically altered fire and police facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives (Less than Significant).

Fire Protection

The proposed project would enable development activity that would require the expansion of the City's capacity to provide fire protection services to a larger service area, including the construction of new fire stations and perhaps the physical alteration of existing fire stations. In addition to serving a larger area, the Fire Department would likely need to expand its capability to protect a larger and more diverse array of industrial uses. The failure to provide adequate fire protection services could result in hazards to public health and safety, the destruction of physical structures, and/or the degradation of natural habitats. In addition, the construction of new and perhaps altered physical facilities could cause a number of typical construction-related impacts, including but not limited to stormwater runoff, noise, and loss of natural habitat. Also, the operation of such new or altered facilities could cause operation-related impacts, including but not limited to traffic congestion, bicycle and pedestrian hazards, and a deterioration of air quality.

According to Harold Wolgamott, Gonzales Fire Department, the City does not have capacity to provide fire protection services to development anticipated with the proposed project without substantial improvements to facilities and equipment and without an increase in the professional fire department staffing.[60] In January 2006, the City prepared its "Master Facilities Plan and Development Impact Fee Calculation and Nexus Report." The plan, which serves as the basis for the Fire Capital Facilities Mitigation Fee, establishes the need for City acquisition of a two-acre parcel east of Highway 101 and

[60] Personal communication with Harold Wolgamott, December 15, 2009

design and construction of a new fire station in two phases. The plan also documents the need for various fire apparatus including a Type 1 fire engine, water tender, aerial truck, communications, and specialty equipment. However, this master plan does not address the fire service needs associated with the proposed project. Such needs would need to be determined at the time of Specific Plan or other development approval.

Police Protection

The proposed project would enable development activity that would require the expansion of the City's capacity to provide police protection services to a larger service area, including the construction of new police stations and perhaps the physical alteration of existing police stations. The failure to provide adequate police protection services could result in hazards to public health and safety. In addition, the construction of new and perhaps altered physical facilities could cause a number of typical construction-related impacts, including but not limited to stormwater runoff, noise, and loss of natural habitat. Also, the operation of such new or altered facilities could cause operation-related impacts, including but not limited to traffic congestion, bicycle and pedestrian hazards, and a deterioration of air quality.

According to Paulette Cudio, Chief of Police, the City does not have capacity to provide police protection services to development anticipated with the proposed project without substantial improvements to facilities and equipment and without an increase in the professional police department staffing.[61] The "Master Facilities Plan and Development Impact Fee Calculation and Nexus Report" prepared by the City in January 2006, documented the need for various capital improvements and equipment including a new 10,000 square-foot police station, eight additional vehicles, and a range of personnel equipment necessary to outfit additional officers. However, this master plan does not address the police service needs associated with the proposed project. Such needs would need to be determined at the time of Specific Plan or other development approval.

B. <u>Applicable Policies and Regulations</u>

The *Gonzales 2010 General Plan's* "Community Health and Safety Element" contains the following policies and implementing actions designed to address police and fire protection services:

Policy HS-4.1 Maintain Levels of Service for Police and Fire Protection

Establish and maintain levels of service for police and fire services that meet national and/or regional standards. Proposals for new development shall be evaluated against these service levels to determine the extent of improvements needed.

Implementing Action HS-4.1.1 – Address Police and Fire Protection Service Needs in Specific Plan Development. Require Specific Plans to address police and fire service needs, and require new development resulting from the Specific Plan to fund needed police and fire protection services.

Implementing Action HS-4.1.2 – Crime Prevention through Quality Design. Design new development to foster a sense of community and to incorporate architectural or landscape features which minimize the potential for crime.[62]

Implementing Action HS-4.1.3 – Convert to Sworn Staff and Volunteer Department. Support the gradual conversion of Gonzales' all-volunteer Fire Department to a combined sworn staff and volunteer Department. The conversion would enable the Department to provide efficient, reliable service to the larger population and employment base envisioned by this General Plan.

Implementing Action HS-4.1.4 – Water for Fire Protection. Ensure that the Gonzales water system can provide adequate flow for peak fire suppression needs before new development is approved. Where water supply in existing developed areas does not meet current standards for fire flow, corrective measures should be pursued.

Implementing Action HS-4.1.5 – Crime Prevention through Public Education. Promote continued public education and awareness for youth to discourage drug use and gang activity.

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[61] Personal communication with Paulette Cudio, December 15, 2009

[62] The policy promotes the concept of 'defensible space." Design elements could include well lit parking areas and walkways, front doors facing the street, minimal use of alcoves or other hiding places, low vegetation screens, etc.

Implementing Action HS-4.1.6 – Levels of Service for Police and Fire Protection. Within one year of General Plan adoption, adopt level of service standards for police and fire protection. These standards should be based on (a) maximum acceptable response time; (b) minimum staffing levels per 1,000 residents; (c) fire-flow rates for hydrants; or (d) any other measurement deemed acceptable for ensuring the adequacy of police and fire services.

Implementing Action HS-4.1.7 – Review of Development Proposals. On an on-going basis, refer proposed development applications to the Police and Fire Departments for review and comment. Projects should not be approved until these Departments have determined that facilities and equipment are adequate or will be made adequate to serve the proposed development.

Implementing Action HS-4.1.8 – Design Safe Streets. Design new streets to balance the need for emergency access with the need for discouraging speeding traffic. In new subdivisions and other residential development, require roadway widths and turning radii that are sufficient for emergency vehicle access.[63] *Road widths that substantially exceed the requirements for emergency vehicle access are discouraged. Where appropriate, hydrants, street lighting, and lighted house numbers should be provided to facilitate emergency service delivery.*

Implementing Action HS-4.1.9 – Building Code Updates. Periodically update the Gonzales Building Code to incorporate amendments to the International Building Code pertaining to fire and life safety.

Implementing Action HS-4.1.10 – New Fire Station. Fund and construct a second fire station on the east side of the freeway and establish a full-time fire fighting force as funding allows.

Implementing Action HS-4.1.11 – Periodical Evaluation of Impact Fees. Evaluate police and fire impact fees on a regular basis to ensure that they are adequate to meet public safety needs.

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[63] For consistency with the Community Character Element, roads should achieve this objective without being excessively wide. Road widths that substantially exceed the requirements for emergency vehicle access are discouraged.

Implementing Action HS-4.1.12 – Up-to-Date Equipment. Maintain up-to-date fire fighting and police vehicles.

C. Significance Determination

The policies and implementing actions contained in the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* ensure that adequate fire and police services would be available for the new urbanization enabled by the proposed project. The construction of such facilities would be subject to the full range of policies and implementing actions contained in the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* intended to avoid significant environmental impacts of new construction. In addition, the siting and construction of any such new facility would be subject to CEQA. This impact is less than significant.

D. Mitigation Measures

None required.

4.11.3.2. Result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered schools, need for new or physically altered schools, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable performance objectives

A. Impact

Impact PS-2: The adoption of the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* would result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered school facilities, need for new or physically altered school facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable performance objectives (Less than Significant).

The proposed project would enable development activity that would result in the need for new schools. The failure to provide adequate school facilities could result in the overcrowding and degradation of existing school facilities and the inability to adequately educate the City's children. In addition, the construction of new schools and the physical alteration of existing school facilities could cause a number of typical construction-related impacts, including but not limited to stormwater runoff, noise, and loss of natural habitat.

Also, the operation of such new or altered facilities could cause operation-related impacts, including but not limited to traffic congestion, bicycle and pedestrian hazards, and a deterioration of air quality.

A 2005 estimate by Lapkoff & Gobalet Demographic Research, Inc. indicated that a typical new single-family housing unit in Gonzales generated 0.40 elementary school students, 0.30 middle school students, and 0.30 high school students. Thus the urbanization enabled by the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* would generate approximately 3,100 additional elementary school students, 2,300 additional middle school students, and 2,300 additional high school students.[64] This represents more than a 550 percent increase over existing enrollment levels. Approximately 11 new facilities will be needed to serve the larger student population on roughly 212 total acres of land. Figure 4.11.1 shows a summary of school facilities needed to accommodate General Plan buildout.

Figure 4.11.1: Land Requirements for Future Schools

School Type	No. of Students in PGA	No. of School Sites	No. of Students per School	School Size in Acres	Total Acres
High School	2,300	2	1,200	40	80
Middle School	2,300	3	800	18	54
Elementary School	3,100	6	600	13	78
Total	7,700	11	--	--	212

Source: Coastplans; Lapkoff & Gobalet Demographic Research, Inc.

B. Applicable Policies and Regulations

The "Community Facilities and Services Element" contains the following policies and implementing actions designed to address school needs:

[64] 7,700 new dwelling units x 0.40 students per unit ≈ 3,100 elementary students; 7,700 new dwelling units x 0.30 students per unit ≈ 2,300 middle and high school students

Policy FS-6.1 Meet Demand for New Schools

Ensure that residential growth does not further exceed the capabilities or capacities of the Gonzales Unified Elementary School District or the Gonzales Union High School District to provide adequate educational facilities for Gonzales youth. *(See also Land Use Element on continued investment in Gonzales' school facilities.)*

Implementing Action FS-6.1.1 – New Development Provides Schools Sites. *To the extent permitted by law, require proponents of new residential development to contribute to the acquisition of land or the construction of facilities which would be necessary to accommodate students from such projects.*

Implementing Action FS-6.1.2 – Dual Use of Facilities. *Promote cooperation between the City and the school districts to facilitate joint use of facilities, including both recreational facilities and school buildings. (See also Environmental Resources and Conservation Policy 8.4 on joint use.)*

Implementing Action FS-6.1.3 – Safe Routes to School. *Encourage the school districts to design their facilities to facilitate safe, convenient travel by pedestrians and bicyclists.*

Implementing Action FS-6.1.4 – New School Sites. *Work with the Gonzales Unified School District to acquire new school sites for east of Highway 101, as demand presents itself.*

Implementing Action FS-6.1.5 – Coordination with School District. *Encourage developers to meet with the school districts early in the Specific Plan process to arrive at agreements for the provision of school facilities and services.*

Implementing Action FS-6.1.6 – Specific Plan Process. *Use the Specific Plan process to determine the measures needed to mitigate the impact of development on local schools.*

Implementing Action FS-6.1.7 – Collect School Impact Fees. *Continue to use the building permit process as a means of collecting impact fees which defray the cost of providing school facilities to new development. To the extent*

permitted by law, estimates of local costs for school facilities should be based on actual costs incurred by the school districts rather than statewide averages.

Implementing Action FS-6.1.9 – Schools Master Plan. *Encourage the Gonzales Unified School District to maintain a school master plan as a means of providing greater detail on enrollment projections, facility needs, and funding mechanisms.*

C. Significance Determination

The policies and implementing actions contained in the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* ensure that adequate schools facilities would be available for the new urbanization enabled by the proposed project. This impact is less than significant.

D. Mitigation Measures

None required.

4.11.3.3. Result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of other new or physically altered public facilities and services, need for other new or physically altered public facilities and services, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios

A. Impact

Impact PS-3: The adoption of the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* would result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of other new or physically altered public facilities and services, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios (Less than Significant with Mitigation Measures).

The proposed project would enable development activity that would require the expansion of the City's capacity to provide other public facilities and services to a larger service area, including the construction of new and/or expanded libraries, community centers, and city hall offices. The failure to provide adequate other public facilities and

services could result in hazards to public health and safety and the deterioration of existing facilities. In addition, the construction of new and perhaps altered physical facilities could cause a number of typical construction-related impacts, including but not limited to drainage, noise, and loss of natural habitat. Also, the operation of such new or altered facilities could cause operation impacts, including but not limited to traffic congestion, bicycle and pedestrian hazards, and a deterioration of air quality.

According to Rene Mendez, City Manager, the City does not have capacity to provide general government services to development anticipated with the proposed project without substantial capital improvements and additional staffing. The "Master Facilities Plan and Development Impact Fee Calculation and Nexus Report" prepared by the City in January 2006, documented the need for various capital improvements and equipment. These include expansion of, or construction of a new city hall, with offices, storage space and meeting rooms. The master plan also identifies acquisition of additional City vehicles for general government use. The master plan does not address the need for other public facilities and services associated with the proposed project.

B. Applicable Policies and Regulations

The "Community Services and Facilities Element" contains the following policies and implementing actions designed to address other public facility and service needs:

Policy FS-7.1 Meet Demand for New Library Services

The City shall support the continued operation of the County Library as the primary means of meeting the City's need for additional library services through 2030.

Implementing Action FS-7.1.1 – Relocate Library. *Support the relocation of the library to a permanent location west of Highway 101 to support the objective of keeping historic Gonzales the center of community life and culture.*

Implementing Action FS-7.1.2 – Bilingual Materials. *Support the acquisition of bilingual reading and audio-visual materials for the Gonzales Library.*

Implementing Action FS-7.1.3 – Funding. *Support efforts which will increase private donations and State funding for library operation, renovation, maintenance, and equipment acquisition.*

Implementing Action FS-7.1.4 – Library as Central Gathering Place. *Promote programs and events which affirm the library's role as a community gathering place and learning center.*

Policy FS-8.1 Meet Demand for New Social Services

Maintain attractive, safe, adequately sized facilities for the delivery of recreational and social services to the residents of Gonzales. Such facilities should convey a positive image of the community and promote a sense of civic pride.

Implementing Action FS-8.1.1 – Child Care Facilities. *Promote the development of licensed, private child care facilities to meet growing community needs.*

Implementing Action FS-8.1.2 – Cultural Diversity. *Design City services, including recreational programs and senior programs, to recognize the cultural and ethnic diversity of Gonzales residents.*

Implementing Action FS-8.1.3 – Senior Programs. *Support the provision of programs and facilities serving the senior citizen population.*

Implementing Action FS-8.1.4 – Encourage Senior Participation. *Encourage the active participation of senior citizens in community affairs. Wherever feasible, their expertise, talents, and available time should be used for the benefit of the community.*

Implementing Action FS-8.1.5 – Establish Liaison. *Establish a liaison between senior citizens and the two school districts to provide access to buildings for programs and continuing education opportunities.*

Implementing Action FS-8.1.6 – New Community Center. *Pursue funding for the development of a new community center.*

Policy FS-9.1 Meet Demand for New Civic Center

Maintain existing civic facilities and develop a new ones to serve the increasing needs of the Gonzales Citizenry.

Implementing Action FS-9.1.1 – Locate Key Civic Building Downtown. *Maintain the City Hall, Post Office, and Police Station in downtown locations. The buildings should be renovated or expanded as needed to meet seismic safety requirements and space needs, and to enable the application of new technologies. The buildings appearance and character should promote civic pride. (See also Land Use Element on retaining public buildings downtown.)*

Implementing Action FS-9.1.2 – Locate New Public Buildings Downtown. *Concentrate new public buildings, including a new library, in that part of Gonzales that extends from Downtown to the new Community Commercial Core area east of Highway 101 to enhance the image of the area as the City Center and encourage spin-off benefits for Downtown shops and businesses.*

Implementing Action FS-9.1.3 – Locate Government Agencies Downtown. *Encourage other government agencies needing to expand or establish a presence in Gonzales to locate in the downtown area rather than in peripheral locations.*

Implementing Action FS-9.1.4 – Reserve Sites for New facilities. *Investigate the acquisition of properties in the area that extends from Downtown to the new Community Commercial Core area east of Highway 101 as "reserve" sites for future civic facilities.*

C. Significance Determination

The policies and implementing actions contained in the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* ensure that other public facilities and services would be available for the new urbanization enabled by the proposed project. The actual project-level impacts associated with the construction, for example, of a new community center are unknown, however, because no site-specific analysis was undertaken as part of this program-level EIR. Such site-specific investigations would need to be undertaken as part of the Specific Plan process, which is an integral part of the General Plan implementation strategy. This impact would be made less than significant with the following mitigation measure:

D. Mitigation Measures

The City of Gonzales shall incorporate the following measure into the *Draft Gonzales 2010 General Plan* prior to final adoption and eliminate or amend any existing provisions

of the draft plan that may be in conflict with this measure so as to eliminate the inconsistency in favor of the measure:

> Mitigation Measure PS-1: Project-Level Public Facilities Impact Analysis Required
>
> *The City shall require a project-level analysis and report on public facilities impacts as part of Specific Plan and other major development plan review and approval. Such an analysis and report shall identify measures necessary to reduce any environmental effects of new construction of public facilities to a level of less than significant.*

4.12 PARKS AND RECREATION

This section analyzes the environmental effects of the proposed project on park and recreational resources in the City of Gonzales.

4.12.1 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

The City of Gonzales is underserved by park and recreation facilities. The City of Gonzales has approximately seven parks totaling approximately 22 acres serving a 2009 population of 9,025 persons, which is a ratio of 2.4 acres per thousand persons. The *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* calls for a ratio of five acres per thousand, or more than twice the park average than what currently exists. There are seven parks totaling about 22 acres. Figure 4.12.1 summarizes existing parks in Gonzales.

Figure 4.12.1: Existing Park Inventory

Name	Size
Central Park	2.06 acres
Centennial Park	7.00 acres
First Street/Skate Park	2.98 acres
Meyer Park	3.00 acres
Canyon Creek Tot Lot	0.43 acres
Canyon Creek Park Phase I	2.46 acres
Canyon Creek Park Phase II	3.89 acres
Total	21.82 acres

Source: City of Gonzales 2005-06 Development Impact Fee Calculation Report

The National Recreation and Park Association recommends that a local park system contain five to eight acres of community-serving parkland per 1,000 residents. As of 2009, Gonzales had just two acres of parkland per 1,000 residents. Despite a population increase of approximately 40 percent since 1996, park acreage increased only slightly. This deficiency is offset to some extent by the availability of the school athletic fields for public recreation and the linear open space along the Gonzales Slough. Figure 4.12.2 shows the location of existing Gonzales parks in Gonzales.

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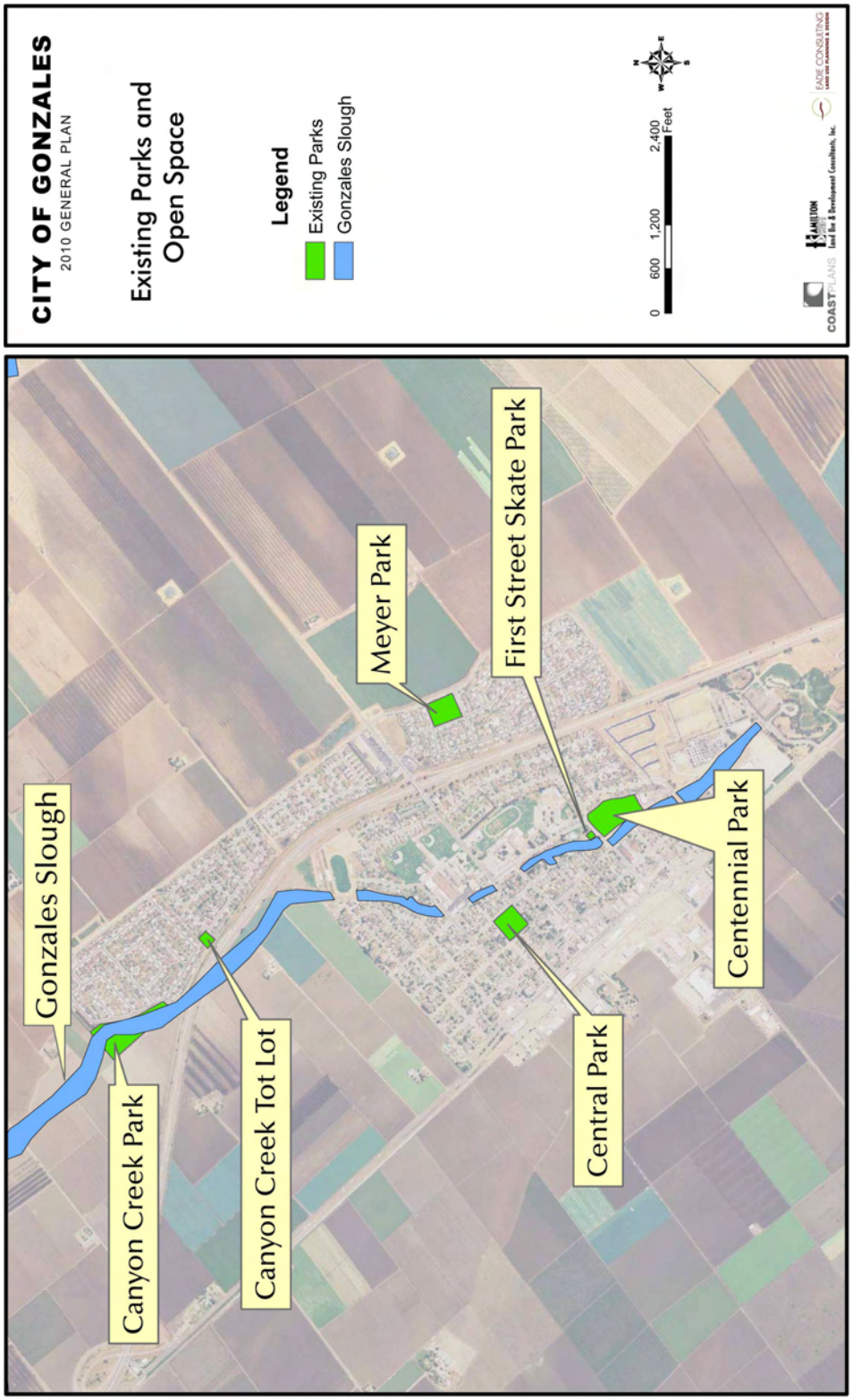
Figure 4.12.2: Existing Parks



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4.12.2 THRESHOLDS OF SIGNIFICANCE

The proposed project was considered to have a significant adverse effect on the environment if it met any of the standards of significance listed below. The Initial Study excluded no areas of concern in this topic area.

- Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered park or recreational facilities or need for new or physical altered park or recreational facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios?
- 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?
- 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?

4.12.3 IMPACTS AND MITIGATIONS

4.12.3.1. RESULT IN SUBSTANTIAL ADVERSE PHYSICAL IMPACTS ASSOCIATED WITH THE PROVISION OF NEW OR PHYSICALLY ALTERED PARK OR RECREATIONAL FACILITY, NEED FOR NEW OR PHYSICALLY ALTERED PARK OR RECREATIONAL FACILITY, THE CONSTRUCTION OF WHICH COULD CAUSE SIGNIFICANT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS, IN ORDER TO MAINTAIN ACCEPTABLE SERVICE RATIOS

A. Impact

Impact REC-1: The adoption of the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* would result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered parks, need for new or physically altered parks, the construction of which could

cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios (Less than Significant).

The proposed project would result in development activity that would require new park and recreation facilities. The construction of new park and recreation facilities and the physical alteration of existing park and recreation facilities could cause a number of typical construction-related impacts, including but not limited to drainage, noise, and loss of natural habitat.

The *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* estimates buildout of the Urban Growth Area will add 25,400 to the City. At a rate of five (5) acres per 1,000 persons, this equates to approximately 130 acres of land designated for park and recreation and open space needs. Of this, approximately 63 acres would be devoted to neighborhood and mini parks, which are not shown on the Land Use Diagram (contained in the Land Use Element) but which are part of the Neighborhood Residential land use designation. The remaining 67 acres would be devoted to community parks. Additional acreage would be required for the Urban Reserve Area. Land requirements for parks and open space are estimated below in Figure 4.12.3.

Figure 4.12.3: Land Requirements for Parks and Open Space

Park Type	Recommended Park Size[1]	Acres per 1,000 Persons	Estimated No. of Parks[2]	Estimated Total Park Acres
Community Park	15.0 to 30.0	2	3	67
Neighborhood Park	5.0 to 12.0	2.8	7	60
Mini Park	0.2 to 0.5	0.2	10	3
Total[3]		5	20	130

Source: Coastplans; City of Gonzales
Note: [1]Actual size of parks will determined in the Specific Plan process
[2]These were calculated using the midpoint of the recommended park size
[3]130 acres ≈ 25,400 new persons / 1,000 = 25.40 thousand persons x 5 acres per thousand persons

This plan also recognizes the value of the Gonzales Slough and the historic Johnson Canyon Creek corridor as recreational open space, and such space would provide additional resources beyond the five (5) acres per thousand persons called for in this plan.

According to Sara Papineau, Director of Parks and Recreation, the City does not have capacity to provide park facilities and services to development anticipated with the proposed project without substantial capital improvements and additional staffing. The "Master Facilities Plan and Development Impact Fee Calculation and Nexus Report" prepared by the City in January 2006, documented the need for various capital improvements and equipment. These include expansion of the community swimming pool, or construction of a new or additional pool, and additional improved parks, and expansion of or construction of new community recreation and meeting facilities. This master plan does not address the park and recreation needs associated with the proposed project.

B. Applicable Policies and Regulations

The *Gonzales 2010 General Plan's* "Conservation and Open Space Element" contains the following policies and implementing actions designed to address park and recreation needs:

Policy COS-7.1 New Park and Recreation Facilities

Provide parks and recreational facilities of varying sizes and functions to meet the needs of Gonzales residents. Park acreage should increase commensurate with the growth of the City.

Implementing Action COS-7.1.1 – Park Standards. Public Parks shall be provided at a ratio of five (5) acres per thousand residents, and such park space should be developed at a rate that coincides with the growth of the City.

Implementing Action COS-7.1.2 – Developer Contributions. Require proponents of new residential development to contribute to the acquisition and/or development of adequate parks and recreational facilities, through dedication of parkland, park improvements, and/or payment of fees to acquire and improve new parks sites.

Implementing Action COS-7.1.3 – Location of New Parks. Locate new parks so that facilities and open spaces are equitably distributed throughout the City and so that safe, convenient access by pedestrians and bicycles can be ensured.

Implementing Action COS-7.1.4 – Joint-Use of School Facilities. Work with the school districts in Gonzales to allow joint use of school athletic fields and playgrounds for public recreation. Wherever feasible, school fields and recreational facilities should supplement City parks and be used to offset the deficiency of park acreage that currently exists in the City. Work with the school district to ensure that school playfields and recreational facilities are retained as public open space, even if the schools are leased or sold for non-educational purposes.

Implementing Action COS-7.1.5 – Dual Use for Flood Control and Recreation. Where feasible, safe, and consistent with flood control and habitat protection goals, provide trails and other recreational amenities along the Gonzales Slough (extending along the Slough from Alta Street to the area north of Sunrise Ranch) and along other open space and drainage corridors.

Implementing Action COS-7.1.6 – Regional Cooperation. Cooperate with neighboring communities, public agencies, and school districts to provide recreational facilities and programs to Gonzales residents.

Implementing Action COS-7.1.7 – Park Master Plan. *Adopt a park master plan for the City that provides a detailed list of park and recreation capital improvements funded under the authority of this General Plan, the Subdivision Map Act, and any other applicable authority.*

Implementing Action COS-7.1.8 – Additional Park Funding. *In addition to developer contributions, pursue a variety of funding mechanisms for park improvements, including but not limited to assessment districts, user fees, donations and fund raising, and State and Federal grants.*

Implementing Action COS-7.1.9 – Trail Dedications. *To the extent permitted by law, require the dedication of a trail easement along the Gonzales Slough and other open space and drainage corridors when parcels fronting the Slough and these other corridors are developed or redeveloped. Grants and other funding sources should be explored to join disconnected segments of the trail and to create a link across Highway 101.*

Policy COS-7.2 Range of Parks Types.

Provide a sufficient mix of park environments to meet both passive and active recreational needs, including: community parks, neighborhood parks, mini parks, and bicycle and pedestrian facilities.

Implementing Action COS-7.2.1 – Community Parks. New development shall provide community parks at the rate of 2.0 acres of park per 1,000 persons or greater. A Community Park should range in size from approximately 15 to 30 acres, and actual park sizes and locations will be determined on a case-by-case basis in the Specific Plan process.

Implementing Action COS-7.2.2 – Neighborhood Parks. New development shall provide neighborhood parks at the rate of 2.8 acres of park per 1,000 persons or greater. A Neighborhood Park should range in size from five (5) to 12 acres, and actual park sizes will be determined on a case-by-case basis in the Specific Plan process.

Implementing Action COS-7.2.3 – Mini Parks. New development shall provide mini parks at the rate of 0.2 acres of park per 1,000 persons or greater. A Mini Park should range in size from 0.2 to 0.5 acres, and actual park sizes will be determined on a case-by-case basis in the Specific Plan process.

C. Significance Determination

The policies and implementing actions contained in the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* ensure that adequate park and recreation facilities and services would be available for the new urbanization enabled by the proposed project. Also, a larger tax base would result from new urbanization, and this could provide greater resources for the city to maintain and modernize existing park and recreational facilities. This impact is less than significant.

D. Mitigation Measures

None required.

4.12.3.2. 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?

A. Impact

Impact REC-2: The adoption of the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* could 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 (Less than Significant).

The proposed project would enable development activity that could lead to an increase in the number of persons using existing park and recreation facilities in the City, and such increased use could accelerate the deterioration of these facilities.

B. Applicable Policies and Regulations

See Subsection 4.12.3.1 [B] for applicable policies and implementing actions.

C. Significance Determination

The policies and implementing actions contained in the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* ensure that new development enabled by the proposed project would provide park and recreation facilities at a ratio of five acres per 1,000 persons. This would increase the citywide average number of park acres per resident, which in turn would have the beneficial effect of easing demand on existing park and recreational facilities. This impact is less than significant.

D. Mitigation Measures

None required.

4.13 BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

This section evaluates the impacts of the proposed project on the biological resources of the project site and its environs. This section is adapted from a biotic report prepared by EcoSystems West for the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan*.

Since the development of the prior general plan (Gonzales General Plan, 1996), knowledge and conservation of local biological resources have progressed. During the course of environmental studies undertaken as part of the landfill expansion in the mid 2000s, special-status plant and wildlife species were identified. In addition, critical fish habitat was designated by National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA, 2005) in the area. EcoSystems West reviewed all available documents on biological resources in the vicinity, consulted with local experts, and conducted reconnaissance site visits of accessible portions of the proposed planning area.

4.13.1 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

The *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* proposes expansion of the planning area. Most of the developable land within the proposed planning area has been altered by human activities, from agriculture operations, grazing, and re-routing seasonal drainages into ditches, agricultural ponds, or retention basins for irrigation and flood control. The proposed northeastward expansion of the City would extend urbanization to the foothills of the Gabilan Range and to the lower extent of Johnson Canyon and encompassing the Johnson Canyon Road Landfill. The lower extent of Johnson Canyon is characterized by annual non-native grasslands and oak savanna.

The primary natural landscape features within and around Gonzales include the Gonzales Slough within the City limits, the Salinas River to the southwest, and the foothills of the Gabilan Range to the northeast. Gonzales is set in the Salinas Valley floor, which has been extensively cultivated for agricultural use. Northeast of the valley floor, agricultural fields give way to the rangelands that stretch to the foothills of the Gabilan Range. A series of seasonal drainages, including Johnson Canyon Creek, McCoy Creek and several unnamed drainages convey seasonal runoff from the Gabilan Range southwestward. Many segments of these drainages have been altered and converted into channelized agricultural ditches to divert seasonal runoff into agricultural ponds and retention basins,

and to assist in regulating seasonal flooding. Strips of ruderal and grassland plant communities occur along some of these drainages and ditches, offering some degree of habitat diversity and cover for wildlife. Figure 4.13.1 shows major drainages in the planning area.

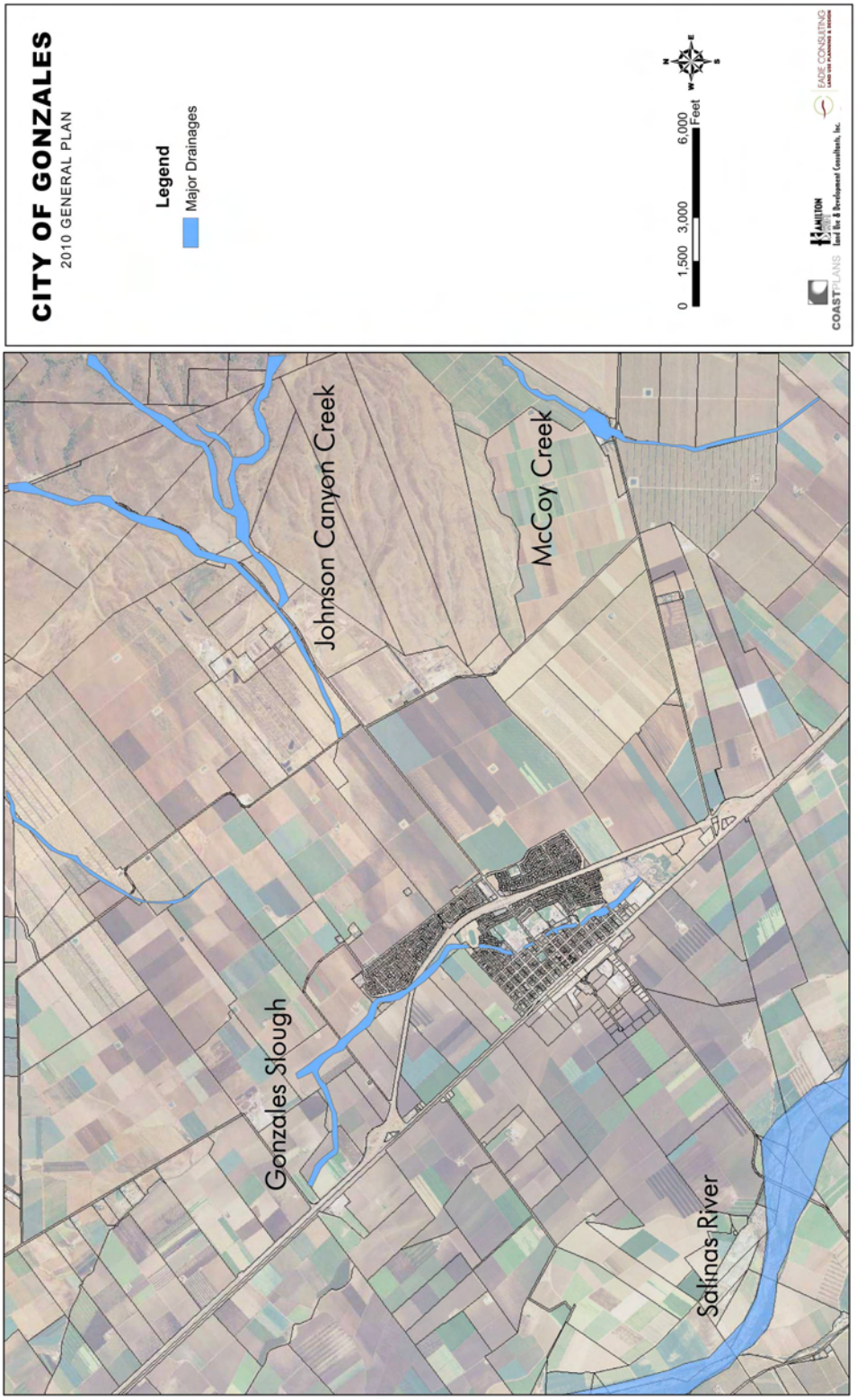
4.13.1.1. GONZALES SLOUGH

The Gonzales Slough is the most notable natural feature within the planning area. The slough is a freshwater marsh and riparian environment, providing habitat for a variety of plant and wildlife species (Brady and Associates 1996b). Freshwater marsh and riparian habitat (described in the sections below) are recognized as sensitive habitats and are protected under CEQA. Riparian vegetation helps to maintain streambank stability, stream configuration and water quality.

The Gonzales Slough provides a variety of resident and migratory wildlife the opportunity to forage, breed, seek refuge, and disperse within the City and Salinas Valley. The aquatic habitat supports amphibians including the western toad (*Bufo boreas*), and Pacific treefrogs (*Hyla regilla*), and provides potential habitat for special-status amphibians and reptiles listed in Figure 4.13.2. Terrestrial wildlife found along the slough include the western fence lizard (*Sceloporus occidentalis*), red-wing black birds (*Agelaius phoeniceus*), black phoebe ((*Sayornia nigricans*), Allen's hummingbird (*Selasphorus sasin*), Anna's hummingbird (*Calypte anna*), house finch (*Carpodacus mexicanus*), barn swallow (*Hirundo rustica*), green heron (*Butorides virescens*), great blue heron (*Ardea herodias*), California ground squirrel (*Spermophilus beecheyi*), and raccoon (*Procyon lotor*). The presence of feral domestic cats along the Gonzales Slough corridor is likely to be detrimental to native wildlife.

The slough flows northwest as it meanders through the Blackstone Winery, residential neighborhoods, parks and school fields. Just north of the winery in the south-central section of the city, between C Street and Fairview Drive, the vegetation on the banks of the slough is periodically scraped in an effort to reduce roughage and to increase flood storage capacity. According to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) 100-year flood insurance maps of the area, no surface flows from Gonzales Slough appear to reach the Salinas River (FEMA 1981; MCWRA 2001), except during extreme storm events.

Figure 4.13.1: Major Drainages in the Planning Area



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4.13.1.2. JOHNSON CANYON CREEK, OTHER SEASONAL DRAINAGES, AND AGRICULTURAL PONDS

The slough is fed by seasonal drainages, including McCoy Creek, Johnson Creek, and other unnamed drainages that originate in the Gabilan Range east of the City. Many segments of these natural drainages have been altered to divert flows into irrigation ditches, ponds, and retention basins for agricultural use and flood management. The drainage pattern of McCoy Creek has been altered to divert a portion of the flow volume west along ditches adjacent to Gloria Road at the south end of the City. Portions of Johnson Creek and the northeast branch of Gonzales Slough have also been diverted to flow west along a series of ditches along Johnson Canyon Road as well as other roads. These and other unnamed drainages flow into temporary retention basins and eventually flow under Highway 101 through culverts into the Gonzales Slough.

Agricultural ponds are scattered throughout much of the planning area. These ponds are typically located at well heads and are used to store irrigation water pumped from the wells during low energy usage periods. The water is then used to irrigate crops. These agricultural ponds are typically surrounded by small berms and beyond that, active field cultivation. Salamanders apparently breed in the water that is present and estivate in the berms surrounding the ponds.[65]

Five such agricultural ponds are located on Fanoe Ranch and are known to contain hybridized populations of California tiger salamander (*Ambystoma californiese*). According to the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the salamanders in the Fanoe Ranch ponds were studied by a qualified biologist and determined to be hybridized beyond the point that they would be regulated by Endangered Species Act.[66] Other ponds in the General Plan growth area will need to be evaluated on a case-by-case basis to determine if salamanders are present that would be regulated by the Endangered Species Act.

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[65] Fitzpatrick B.M. and H.B Shaffer, 2007.
[66] U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 2007. Letter from Diane Noda, USFWS Field Supervisor, dated June 15, 2007 to Robert Uram, attorney at law.

4.13.1.3. JOHNSON CANYON ROAD LANDFILL

The Salinas Valley Solid Waste Authority (SVSWA) manages the operations of the Johnson Canyon Road Landfill facility, east of the City. The Landfill property contains known populations of special-status plants including the Indian bush mallow (*Malocothamus aboriginum*). Special-status wildlife primarily occurs in pond sites and their surrounding upland areas of the Landfill. These species include the vernal pool fairy shrimp (*Branchinecta lynchi*), California tiger salamander (*Ambystoma californiese*), western spadefoot toad (*Scaphiopus hammondii*), and western burrowing owl (*Athene cunicularia*) (B. Helm and D. Bland, personal communication 2007).

As part of their resource management agreement with CDFG, the SVSWA created a deed restriction/conservation easement on an approximately 12-acre area within the landfill's eastern boundary. This area includes a pond site, part of the upstream drainage that flows into the pond, and an approximately 220-foot buffer below the pond. The easement prohibits non-CDFG approved developments or improvements with this area, with the exception of permitted controlled grazing and periodic monitoring and maintenance of landfill gas monitoring probes (Salinas Valley Solid Waste Authority 1999).

4.13.2 HABITAT TYPES AND VEGETATION COMMUNITIES

Eight habitat types were identified within the proposed planning area. These include California annual grassland, coast live oak savanna, freshwater marsh, Pacific willow riparian, aquatic, agriculture, ruderal, and urban/developed. Of these community types, only freshwater marsh and riparian are not typically associated with ongoing human disturbance and tend to be dominated by native plant species, although non-natives may occur. The remaining community types, including the oak savanna understory, are non-native in that they are typically a result of various types of conversion due to human influence. The majority of plant species in these communities were introduced from other geographic regions and has become naturalized over time.

4.13.2.1. CALIFORNIA ANNUAL GRASSLAND

The California annual grassland alliance (series) is a plant community type recognized by Sawyer and Keeler-Wolf (1995) and the CDFG (2003) and is also described by the non-

native grassland type of Holland (1986). This community type is located primarily in the eastern portion of the proposed General Plan Growth Area in areas associated with current and historic livestock grazing. Small patches of annual grassland can also be found along berms surrounding agricultural ponds and detention basins as well as along roadways bordering residential and agricultural properties. The majority of species associated with this community type consists of introduced Mediterranean annual grasses and forbs including brome grasses (*Bromus hordeaceus*, *B. madritensis*, *B. diandrus*), wild oats (*Avena barbata*, *A. fatua*), barley (*Hordeum murinum*, *H. marinum*), Italian ryegrass (*Lolium multiflorum*), English plantain (*Plantago lanceolata*), cheeseweed mallow (*Malva parviflora*), cutleaf geranium (*Geranium dissectum*), red-stemmed filaree (*Erodium cicutarium*), black mustard (*Brassica nigra*), wild raddish (*Raphanus sativus*), Italian thistle (*Carduus pycnocephalus*), and fiddle dock (*Rumex pulcher*).

Remnant native grassland species are relatively uncommon yet can be locally abundant in areas with mesic or rocky soils and along the lower reach of Johnson Creek. Common native species include California poppy (*Eschscholzia californica*), golden aster (*Heterotheca sessifolia*), naked buckwheat (*Eriogonum nudum*), silverleaf lupine (*Lupinus albifrons*), creeping wild rye (*Leymus triticoides*), and purple needlegrass (*Nassella pulchra*). Interspersed amongst the grassland, native shrubs such as coyote brush (*Baccharis pilularis*) and California sagebrush (*Artemsia californica*) are abundant in areas where grazing has been withheld for several years or more. A known occurrence record of Indian bush mallow, a CNPS List 1B species (see Figure 4.13.2 below for a complete list of species) , is also located within the annual grassland community near Johnson Canyon Road within the proposed General Plan Growth Area at the northeast boundary (CNDDB 2007; CDFG 2007a,b). This population is currently believed to be extant[67].

4.13.2.2. Coast Live Oak Savanna

This community type corresponds most closely to Holland's (1986) coast live oak woodland habitat type, and to a phase of the coast live oak series of Sawyer and Keeler-Wolf (1995) and the coast live oak forest and woodland alliance of the CDFG (2003). Oak savannas are differentiated from oak woodland primarily due to the widely spaced

[67] Extant= Still in existence; not destroyed, lost, or extinct (CNPS).

distribution of trees (typically less than 10 percent canopy cover). The understory is comprised of non-native annual grassland species and in most cases, the shrub layer is lacking or poorly developed. Coast live oak savanna is located on a small hillside in the eastern portion of the proposed General Plan Growth Area south of Johnson Creek and immediately east of the landfill.

Coast live oak (*Quercus agrifolia*) is the only tree species present in the overstory. The understory vegetation consists of non-native annual grasses and a mixture of annual and perennial forbs and wildflowers. Within the proposed planning area, the presence of mature coast live oaks is the principal distinction between the oak savanna and annual grassland plant communities. Coast live oak savanna is not listed as a "high priority" sensitive plant community by the CNDDB (CDFG 2003). However, coast live oaks are considered "protected trees" and thereby a protected resource under local policies and regulations throughout Monterey County (Monterey County Resources Management Agency 2007). No special-status plant species are located in this habitat type within the planning area.

4.13.2.3. FRESHWATER MARSH

The freshwater marsh plant community of the Gonzales Slough is most closely related to Holland's (1986) coastal and valley freshwater marsh description and also corresponds to a phase of the bulrush-cattail series of Sawyer Keeler-Wolf (1995) and the CDFG (2003). The Gonzales Slough is located in central Gonzales and is fed by a series of natural and man-made waterbodies. Surface flows from the slough are presently isolated from the Salinas River to the west, except following periodic storm events. As a result, much of the slough is dominated by emergent freshwater marsh vegetation including California bulrush (*Scirpus californicus*), cattail (*Typha* sp.), nutsedge (Cyperus eragrostis), rabbitfoot grass (*Polypogon monspeliensis*), curly dock (*Rumex crispus*), pennyroyal (*Mentha pulegium*), Bermuda grass (*Cynodon dactylon*), Italian ryegrass, and creeping wild rye. No special-status plant species are located in this habitat type within the planning area.

Marsh vegetation is not contiguous along the entire reach of the Gonzales Slough within the proposed planning area. Emergent vegetation is most prevalent along reaches that flow for short durations and where the channel consists of natural substrates as opposed to concrete. Freshwater marsh provides beneficial habitat for a variety of birds and wildlife

species and also serves as a natural filtration mechanism for stormwater and other contaminants.

The freshwater marsh within the Gonzales slough may be recognized as a "high priority" sensitive plant community by the CNDDB; in addition, marshes and wetlands are highly valued as habitat for wildlife and assist with flood control and contaminant filtration and sequestration following storm events. Marshes are particularly valuable habitat for a variety of bird and amphibian species including state and federally protected species such as nesting water fowl and wading birds, western spade foot toads, and western pond turtles. Marshes within or adjacent to jurisdictional "waters of the U.S." are protected under the Federal Clean Water Act (EPA 1977) and impacts to these features are prohibited prior to obtaining a permit from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Regional Water Quality Control Board.

4.13.2.4. Pacific Willow Riparian Woodland

Several stretches of the Gonzales Slough corridor support dense willow riparian habitat dominated almost entirely by Pacific willow (*Salix lasiandra* ssp. *lasiandra*). Contiguous riparian vegetation occurs near the Blackstone winery and in several additional patches a few hundred meters further downstream. This community type is best classified as a phase of the Pacific willow series and woodlands alliance of Sawyer Keeler-Wolf (1995) and the CDFG (2003).

Several other tree species also commonly occur along the Gonzales Slough riparian corridor including blue gum willow (*Eucalyptus globulus*), silver wattle acacia (*Acacia dealbata*), weeping willow (*Salix babylonica*), and arroyo willow (*Salix lasiolepis*). Herbaceous shrubs including Himalayan blackberry (*Rubus discolor*), bull thistle (*Cirsium vulgare*), fennel (*Foeniculum vulgare*), and tree mallow (*Lavatera arborea*) are also common in riparian corridors along the banks of the Gonzales Slough. No special-status plant species are located in this habitat type within the planning area.

The Pacific willow riparian woodland and the woodlands alliance, to which this habitat type corresponds, are recognized as a "high priority" sensitive plant community by the CNDDB (CDFG 2003). Moreover, riparian corridors are valued for wildlife habitat, stream stabilization, and flood control and are typically considered a sensitive resource by most

city and county general plans. The *Monterey County General Plan* does not have specific riparian setback requirements in non-coastal areas. However, new development is prohibited within perennial and intermittent streams as well as along natural banks and in riparian vegetation on County lands (Monterey County 2006). The *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* does not have specific riparian setback requirements.

4.13.2.5. AQUATIC

Within the proposed planning area, aquatic habitat includes areas with standing or flowing water for the majority of the year. These areas typically lack vegetation but often integrate with freshwater marsh and riparian woodland along the Salinas River and the Gonzales Slough. Of the numerous drainages flowing through or across the proposed planning area, the Gonzales Slough provides perennial flows while Johnson and McCoy creeks flow seasonally. Numerous unnamed seasonal drainages have been converted into agricultural and/or roadside ditches. During the summer and fall seasons of 2007, shallow water was flowing along Gonzales Slough and evidence of higher flows was observed both in the slough and other seasonal drainages. Segments of aquatic habitat within Gonzales Slough and other seasonal drainages contain emergent vegetation and filamentous algae mats that offer potential breeding and/or foraging habitat for a variety of common amphibians and aquatic reptiles including the Pacific tree frog (*Hyla regilla*) and western toad (*Bufo boreas*) and garter snakes (*Thamnophis* sp.). Moorhens, water fowl and wading birds such as American coots (*Fulica americana*), mallard duck (*Anas platyrhynchos*), egrets (*Ardea* sp.), great blue heron (*Ardea herodias*), green heron (*Butorides virescens*) may feed on aquatic invertebrates, tadpoles, small fish, crayfish and frogs along segments of these drainages.

No sensitive fish species are known to occur within Gonzales Slough, Johnson and McCoy creeks or the numerous unnamed drainages within the proposed planning area. The segment of the Salinas River that flows near the wastewater treatment facility west of Gonzales is federally designated as critical habitat for the South-Central California Coast steelhead Evolutionary Significant Unit (NOAA 2005 and 2006). The river is outside the planning area but could be influenced by operations at the Gonzales Wastewater Treatment Plant.

The Salinas River, Gonzales Slough, McCoy Creek, Johnson Creek and unnamed natural drainages designated as blue-line waterbody features on USGS quadrangle maps are considered 'Waters of the U.S.' or jurisdictional waters of the U.S Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE) (2001). In addition, diverted segments of these drainages may be considered jurisdictional. Those drainages connecting to the Gonzales Slough through surface flows or enclosed storm systems would be considered jurisdictional, whereas ditch segments that do not discharge into the Gonzales Slough or Salinas River would not be considered jurisdictional (ACOE 2001; EMC Planning Group 2007).

As previously mentioned, the segment of the Salinas River that flows near the wastewater treatment facility west of Gonzales is federally designated as critical habitat for the South-Central California Coast Steelhead Evolutionary Significant Unit (NOAA 2005 and 2006). In addition, aquatic habitats formed in seasonal swales, drainages, ponds, or natural and manmade depressions (e.g., retention basins and road ruts) that retain water for up to 20 weeks may provide potential habitat for federal and/or state protected species including the vernal pool fairy shrimp, California tiger salamander, western spadefoot toad, and California red-legged frog.

4.13.2.6. AGRICULTURE

Much of the outlying land beyond existing development in Gonzales—along the Salinas Valley floor—is presently used to grow food crops such as broccoli, spinach, and lettuce. The majority of these agricultural fields have been actively farmed for many decades. The Monterey County General Plan considers most of the agricultural fields within the proposed General Plan Growth Area to be "prime agriculture" and discourages other uses, including residential development, in these areas. The agricultural land east of U.S. Highway 101 include soils with high clay content that may have supported seasonal wetlands or vernal pools at some time in the past. Presently, these areas have marginal habitat value and do not support naturalized vegetation or sensitive plant communities.

4.13.2.7. RUDERAL

Throughout the proposed planning area, ruderal vegetation is common in fallow agricultural fields, vacant lots, and along ditches and roadways in central Gonzales. The

ruderal vegetation community shares many similarities with California annual grassland. Ruderal vegetation is best described as an early seral stage of the annual grassland plant community and will often develop grassland characteristics given time and lack of ongoing disturbance. Ruderal areas are typically dominated by bare ground and an assortment of weedy opportunistic plants. Plant species commonly associated with this community include Bermuda buttercup (*Oxalis pes-caprae*), common groundsel (*Senecio vulgaris*), white clover (*Trifolium repens*), white sweetclover (*Melilotus albus*), poison hemlock (*Conium maculatum*), wild raddish, black mustard, Italian ryegrass, wild oats and brome grasses. No special-status plant species are located in this habitat type within the planning area.

4.13.2.8. Developed/Urban Landscape

The current footprint of urban Gonzales in currently located along both sides of the Highway 101 corridor, approximately one mile north of the Salinas River. The city consists of residential and commercial properties, many of which are landscaped by ornamental vegetation. Planted trees and shrubs may provide refuge and foraging opportunities for birds and other wildlife, but otherwise these areas provide marginal habitat value for sensitive species. No special-status plant species are located in this habitat type within the planning area.

4.13.3 Special-Status Species

For the purposes of this update, special-status species are those plants and/or animals that are:

- ✓ 'Proposed' or 'Candidates' for listing, or listed as 'Threatened' or 'Endangered' by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) under the federal Endangered Species Act (ESA) (USFWS 2007a, b, c, d);
- ✓ 'Proposed' for listing, or listed as 'Rare', 'Threatened', or 'Endangered' by the California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG) under the California Endangered Species Act (CESA) (CDFG 2007b,c);

- ✓ Plants occurring on Lists 1A (Presumed Extinct in California), List 1B (Rare, Threatened, or Endangered in California and elsewhere), or List 2 (Rare, Threatened, or Endangered in California, but are more common elsewhere) of the California Native Plant Society (CNPS) *Inventory of Rare and Endangered Plants of California* (Tibor 2001; CNPS 2007);

- ✓ Plant species included on List 3 (Plants About Which We Need More Information -- A Review List) or List 4 (Plants of Limited Distribution -- A Watch List) of the CNPS *Inventory* (Tibor 2001; CNPS 2007). These species are considered to be of lower sensitivity, and generally do not fall under specific state or federal regulatory authority.[68]

- ✓ Animals considered 'Species of Special Concern' or 'Fully Protected' by the CDFG (CDFG 2007c); and

- ✓ Bat species considered 'High Priority' for conservation by the Western Bat Working Group (WBWG) (1998) (CDFG 2007c) and those species protected under California Fish and Game Code (2007).

- ✓ Species satisfying the minimum biological criteria for listing under CEQA, although not included on any State-recognized list[69].

An inventory of special-status plant and animal species was generated by reviewing the California Natural Diversity Data Base (CNDDB) (2007) occurrence records for the Gonzales USGS 7.5' quadrangle. For plants, an additional eight surrounding USGS quadrangles were reviewed for occurrence records in the CNPS Inventory (Tibor 2001, CNPS 2007) along with additional floras (Thomas 1960; Munz and Keck 1973; Hickman 1993; Holland 1986; Sawyer and Keeler-Wolf 1995). Previous local studies within the General Plan study area,

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[68] With the exception of List 4 plants, these species fall under state regulatory authority under the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines (2007).

[69] Under Section 15380(d) of the CEQA Guidelines, a species not included on any list recognized by the State "shall nevertheless be considered rare or endangered if the species can be shown to meet the criteria" for listing. The CDFG, USFWS and U.S. Forest Service all maintain independent lists of species with designated conservation status that meet the CEQA Guidelines criterion for consideration. Under provisions of Section 15380(d) of the CEQA Guidelines, the project lead agency and CDFG, in making a determination of significance, must treat non-listed plant and animal species as equivalent to listed species if such species satisfy the minimum biological criteria for listing.

information provided by professional biologists knowledgeable of the area, and a field reconnaissance by EcoSystems West Consulting Group supplemented the inventory.

Figure 4.13.2 provides a list of special-status species that are known to occur or potentially occur within the proposed General Plan Growth Area and surroundings. The likelihood of occurrence is indicated by 'Present', 'Possible', or 'Unlikely'. The table includes general habitat requirements and seasonal flowering periods for plants and general habitat requirements, and seasonal presence as year-long residents, breeding, wintering, or migrants in Monterey County for wildlife. The presence of potential wildlife habitat is also addressed in Figure 4.13.2.

One special status plant and six special status wildlife species occur within the proposed General Plan Growth Area for the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan*. One plant and four wildlife species were identified during biotic studies conducted on landfill property prior to the 1998 landfill expansion (Brown, Venice and Associates 1997; CDFG 2007a; CNDDB 2007; D. Bland and Associates, personal communication 2007). Two additional protected wildlife species have been documented along the segment of the Salinas River that flows past the City of Gonzales (CNDDB 2007; NOAA 2005 and 2006) but outside of the planning area.

Indian Valley bush mallow, a CNPS List 1B species, is the only special status plant known to occur within the proposed General Plan Growth Area (CDFG 2007a; CNDDB 2007) (Figure 4.13.2). Special-status wildlife known to occur within the proposed General Plan Growth Area include native and hybrid[70] species of California tiger salamander, the western spadefoot toad, vernal pool fairy shrimp, and western burrowing owl. These records are primarily from Johnson Creek Canyon and the vicinity of the Landfill, northeast of the City (Brown Venice and Associates 1997; CDFG 2007a; CNDDB 2007; D. Bland and Associates, personal communication 2007). The proposed planning area provides habitat for two additional special-status wildlife species: the western pond turtle and South-Central-Coast steelhead. A number of other special-status plant and animal species may occur based on habitat requirements and proximity of known populations. These species are also listed in Figure 4.13.2.

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[70] Hybrid species are those offspring of the native California tiger salamander (*Ambystoma californiense*) and introduced barred salamander (*Ambystoma tigrinum mavoritium*) (Fitzpatrick and Shaffer 2007).

Figure 4.13.2. Conservation status and habitat requirements of special-status species that may occur in the vicinity of the proposed General Plan Growth Area (SOI) for the 2008 City of Gonzales General Plan Update, Monterey County, California.

Common Name ***Scientific Name***	**Status** **Federal/State/Other**	**Habitat Requirements**	**Potential Habitat Occurrence/Seasonal Use for Wildlife**
		PLANTS	
Bristlecone pine *Abies bracteata*	--/--/List 1B.3	Lower montane coniferous forest, broadleaved upland forest, chaparral; rocky sites. Evergreen tree.	**Unlikely.** Suitable habitat requirements not present within the Gonzales SOI. No native coniferous trees are present.
Napa false indigo *Amorpha californica var. napensis*	--/--/List 1B.2	Broadleaved upland forest, chaparral, cismontane woodland; canopy openings. May-July.	**Unlikely.** Oak savanna and annual grassland located within the Gonzales SOI does not provide suitable habitat for this species.
Douglas' fiddleneck *Amsinckia douglasiana*	--/--/List 4.2	Cismontane woodland, valley and foothill grassland; Monterey shale, dry sites. March-May.	**Possible.** Annual grassland located in eastern portion of SOI has dry rocky/sandy soils that may be suitable for supporting this species.
Gabilan Mountains manzanita *Arctostaphylos gabilanensis*	--/--/List 1B.2	Chaparral, cismontane woodland; granitic. January.	**Unlikely.** Suitable habitat requirements not present within the proposed Gonzales SOI.
Monterey manzanita *Arctostaphylos montereyensis*	--/--/List 1B.2	Chaparral, cismontane woodland, coastal scrub; sandy. February-March.	**Unlikely.** Suitable habitat requirements not present within the proposed Gonzales SOI.
Pajaro manzanita *Arctostaphylos pajaroensis*	--/--/List 1B.1	Chaparral; sandy areas. December-March.	**Unlikely.** Suitable chaparral habitat not present within the proposed Gonzales SOI.
Crownscale *Atriplex coronata* var. *coronata*	--/--/List 4.2	Chenopod scrub, valley and foothill grassland, vernal pools; mesic areas, alkaline soils. March-October.	**Possible.** Annual grassland within proposed Gonzales SOI does not have alkaline soil concentrations.
Congdon's tarplant *Centromadia parryi* ssp. *congdonii*	--/--/List 1B.2	Valley and foothill grassland; alkaline soils. May-October (November)	**Possible.** Annual grassland within proposed Gonzales SOI does not have alkaline soil concentrations. However, this species will tolerate light to moderate disturbance. Nearest extant population located in lightly disked grassland approximately 3 miles north of the proposed SOI (CNDDB 2007).
Palmer's spineflower *Chorizanthe palmeri*	--/--/List 4.2	Chaparral, cismontane woodland, valley and foothill grassland; rocky usually serpentinite soils. April-August.	**Possible.** Suitable annual grassland habitat; however, serpentinite soils favored by this species are not present within the proposed Gonzales SOI.
Monterey spineflower *Chorizanthe pungens* var. *pungens*	FT/--/List 1B.2	Chaparral, cismontane woodland, coastal dunes, coastal scrub, valley and foothill grassland; sandy areas. April-June (July).	**Possible.** Suitable annual grassland with sandy loam soils located in eastern portion of the proposed Gonzales SOI. Nearest known occurrence approximately 9 miles south of the proposed SOI west of Soledad along the Salinas River (CNDDB 2007).
robust spineflower *Chorizanthe robusta* var. robusta	FE/--/List 1B.1	Chaparral, cismontane woodland (openings), coastal dunes, coastal scrub; sandy or gravelly areas. April-September	**Unlikely.** Suitable habitat requirements not present within the proposed Gonzales SOI.

Common Name ***Scientific Name***	**Status Federal/State/Other**	**Habitat Requirements**	**Potential Habitat Occurrence/Seasonal Use for Wildlife**
potbellied spineflower *Chorizanthe ventricosa*	--/--/List 4.3	Chaparral, cismontane woodland, coastal scrub. April-June.	**Unlikely.** Suitable habitat requirements not present within the proposed Gonzales SOI.
gypsum loving larkspur *Delphinium gypsophilum* ssp. *gypsophilum*	--/--/List 4.2	Chenopod scrub, cismontane woodland, valley and foothill grassland. February-May.	**Possible.** Suitable annual grassland and oak savanna in eastern portion of the proposed Gonzales SOI.
Pinnacles buckwheat *Eriogonum nortonii*	--/--/List 1B.3	Chaparral, valley and foothill grassland; sandy often on recently burned areas. May-August (September).	**Possible.** Suitable annual grassland with sandy, disturbed soils in eastern portion of the proposed Gonzales SOI. Nearest extant population located 10 miles northeast of proposed SOI north of Toro Peak (CNDDB 2007).
stinkbells *Fritillaria agrestis*	--/--/List 4.2	Chaparral, cismontane woodland, pinyon and juniper woodland, valley and foothill grassland; clay, sometimes serpentinite. March-June.	**Possible.** Suitable annual grassland habitat; however, serpentinite and clay soils favored by this species are not present within the proposed Gonzales SOI.
Fragrant fritillary *Fritillaria liliaceae*	--/--/List 1B.2	Cismontane woodland, coastal prairie, coastal scrub, valley and foothill grassland; often serpentinite. February-April.	**Possible.** Suitable annual grassland habitat; however, serpentinite soils favored by this species are not present within the proposed Gonzales SOI. Nearest known extant population mapped approximately 20 miles north of proposed SOI (CNDDB 2007). Many additional populations likely in the surrounding areas but observations are limited due to very short blooming period and livestock grazing.
hogwallow starfish *Hesperevax caulescens*	--/--/List 4.2	Valley and foothill grassland, vernal pools (shallow); mesic, clay. March-June.	**Possible.** Annual grassland supports only small areas of mesic habitat. Clay soils not present in annual grassland areas of the proposed Gonzales SOI.
Salinas Valley goldfields *Lasthenia leptalea*	--/--/List 4.3	Cismontane woodland, valley and foothill grassland. February-April.	**Possible.** Suitable annual grassland and oak savanna habitat in eastern portion of the proposed Gonzales SOI.
large-flowered leptosiphon *Leptosiphon grandiflorus*	--/--/List 4.2	Coastal bluff scrub, closed-cone coniferous forest, cismontane woodland, coastal dunes, coastal prairie, coastal scrub, valley and foothill grassland; usually sandy. April-August.	**Possible.** Suitable grassland and oak savanna with sandy loam soils in eastern portion of the proposed Gonzales SOI.
wooly-headed lessingia *Lessingia hololeuca*	--/--/List 3	Broadleaved upland forest, coastal scrub, lower montane coniferous forest, valley and foothill grassland; clay or serpentinite. June-October.	**Unlikely.** Annual grassland and oak savanna within proposed Gonzales SOI do not include clay or serpentinite soils.
small-leaved lomatium *Lomatium parvifolium*	--/--/List 4.2	Closed-cone coniferous forest, chaparral, coastal scrub, riparian woodland; serpentinite. January-June.	**Unlikely.** Annual grassland and riparian areas along the Gonzales Slough do not include serpentinite soils.

Common Name *Scientific Name*	Status Federal/State/Other	Habitat Requirements	Potential Habitat Occurrence/Seasonal Use for Wildlife
harlequin lotus *Lotus formosissimus*	--/--/List 4.2	Broadleaved upland forest, coastal bluff scrub, closed-cone coniferous forest, cismontane woodland, coastal prairie, coastal scrub, meadows and seeps, marshes and swamps, North Coast coniferous forest, valley and foothill grassland; wetlands and roadsides. March-July.	**Possible.** Species has a broad range of suitable habitat requirements, many of which are present within the proposed Gonzales SOI.
Indian Valley bush mallow *Malocothamus aboriginum*	--/--/List 1B.2	Chaparral, cismontane woodland; rocky, often in recently burned areas. April-October.	**Present.** Indian Valley bush mallow is recorded as present in rocky soils along Johnson Canyon Road in the eastern portion of the proposed Gonzales SOI.
Carmel Valley bush mallow *Malacothamnus palmeri* var. *involucratus*	--/--/List 1B.2	Chaparral, cismontane woodland, coastal scrub. May-August (October).	**Possible.** Occupies similar habitat as Indian Valley bush mallow; however, this species has not been recorded from the Gonzales Plan Area. Nearest known occurrence approximately 10 miles northeast of the proposed SOI (Calflora Database 2008).
Carmel Valley malacothrix *Malacothrix saxatillis* var. *arachnoidea*	--/--/List 1B.2	Chaparral; rocky. (March) June-December.	**Unlikely.** Suitable chaparral habitat not present within the proposed Gonzales SOI.
California spineflower *Mucronea californica*	--/--/List 4.2	Chaparral, cismontane woodland, coastal dunes, coastal scrub, valley and foothill grassland; sandy. March-July (August)	**Possible.** Suitable annual grassland and oak savanna with sandy loam soils in eastern portion of the proposed SOI.
adobe naverretia *Navarretia nigelliformis* ssp. *nigelliformis*	--/--/List 4.2	Valley and foothill grassland (vernally mesic), vernal pools, clay or serpentinite. April-June.	**Unlikely.** Vernally mesic areas with clay or serpentinite soils not present within the proposed Gonzales SOI.
shining naverretia *Navarretia nigelliformis* ssp. *radians*	--/--/List 1B.2	Cismontane woodland, valley and foothill grassland, vernal pools. May-July.	**Unlikely.** Vernal pools and seasonal wetlands underlain by claypan not present within the proposed Gonzales SOI.
California adder's-tongue *Ophioglossum californicum*	--/--/List 4.2	Chaparral, valley and foothill grassland, vernal pools; mesic areas. (December) January-June.	**Unlikely.** Vernal pools and seasonal wetlands underlain by claypan not present within the proposed Gonzales SOI.
Gairdner's yampah *Perideridia gairdneri* ssp. *gairdneri*	--/--/List 4.2	Broadleaved upland forest, chaparral, coastal prairie, valley and foothill grassland, vernal pools; vernally mesic areas. June-October.	**Unlikely.** Vernally mesic areas not present within the proposed Gonzales SOI.
South Coast branching phacelia *Phacelia ramosissima* var. *austrolitoralis*	--/--/List 4.2	Chaparral, coastal dunes, coastal scrub, marshes and swamps (coastal salt); sandy sometimes rocky soils. March-August.	**Unlikely.** Suitable habitat requirements not present within the proposed Gonzales SOI.
Hickman's popcorn flower *Plagiobothrys chorisianus* var. *hickmanii*	--/--/List 4.2	Closed-cone coniferous forest, chaparral, coastal scrub, marshes and swamps, vernal pools. April-June	**Unlikely.** Suitable habitat requirements not present within the proposed Gonzales SOI.
hooked popcorn flower *Plagiobothrys uncinatus*	--/--/List 1B.2	Chaparral, cismontane woodland, valley and foothill grassland; sandy. April-May.	**Possible.** Suitable annual grassland and oak savanna habitat; however, more commonly found at higher elevations west of the Salinas River.

Common Name ***Scientific Name***	**Status Federal/State/Other**	**Habitat Requirements**	**Potential Habitat Occurrence/Seasonal Use for Wildlife**
maple-leaved checkerbloom *Sidalcea malachroides*	--/--/List 4.2	Broadleaved upland forest, coastal prairie, coastal scrub, North Coast coniferous forest, riparian woodland; often in disturbed areas. April-August.	**Possible.** More commonly found in forested areas near the coast; though suitable disturbed riparian habitat is located along the Gonzales Slough.
marsh zigadenus *Zigadenus micranthus* var. *fontanus*	--/--/List 4.2	Chaparral, cismontane woodland, lower montane coniferous forest, meadows and seeps, marshes and swamps; vernally mesic often serpentinite.	**Possible.** Not typically found in stagnant marsh habitat typical of the Gonzales Slough. Vernally wet areas with serpentinite soils not present within the proposed Gonzales SOI.
WILDLIFE			
Crustacean			
Vernal pool fairy shrimp (*Branchinecta lynchi*)	FT/--/--	Endemic to vernal pools and swales in the grasslands of the central coast mountains, central valley, and south coast mountains. Inhabits small, clear-water depression pools and grassy swales, earth slump, or basalt-flow depression pools.	**Present.** Known record from Johnson Canyon Road Landfill. Resident of Monterey County. Nearest federally designated critical habitat unit is southeast of Gonzales between Pinnacles National Monument and King City; Potential habitat occurs in open grassland areas and seasonal swales/drainages near the Landfill and along the foothills east of Gonzales. Present within the planning area.
Fish			
Steelhead- *South/Central Coast ESU (*Oncorhynchus mykiss*)	FT/ SC/--	Requires silt-free gravel for spawning; spends the first few years of its life in fresh water before migrating to the ocean. Adults later return to breed in the same freshwater locations where they were spawned.	**Present.** Resident of Monterey County. Nearest federal designated critical habitat is along the Salinas River, 1.5 miles west of Gonzales (NOAA 2005 and 2006). Not present in the planning area.
Amphibians and Reptiles			
**California tiger salamander (*Ambystoma californiese*)	FT/SC/--	Seasonal pools, stock ponds and detention basins, and ditches with nearby grasslands and/or open woodlands within Central California.	**Present.** Known records from the Johnson Canyon Road Landfill (CNDDB 2007). Resident of Monterey County; Nearest federally designated critical habitat is approximately 5 miles east of Gonzales. Potential aquatic and upland habitat in and around existing agricultural pond/detention basins near Gonzales. Present in the planning area.
Coast Range newt (*Taricha torosa torosa*)	--/SC/--	Coastal drainages and ponds along Southern and Central California and along the Salinas Valley.	**Possible**. Resident of Monterey County. Potential habitat occurs along Gonzales Slough and in existing agricultural pond/detention basins near Gonzales.
Western spadefoot toad (*Scaphiopus hammondii*)	--/SC/--	Vernal pools or other seasonal water sources with small mammal burrows available as refuge sites in upland grassland areas	**Present.** Known records from the Johnson Canyon Road Landfill (CNDDB 2007). Resident of Monterey County; Potential habitat in existing agricultural pond/detention basins near Gonzales.

Common Name ***Scientific Name***	**Status Federal/State/Other**	**Habitat Requirements**	**Potential Habitat Occurrence/Seasonal Use for Wildlife**
California red-legged frog (*Rana aurora draytonii*)	FT/SC/--	Requires the presence of surface water until mid to late summer for reproduction; occupies ephemeral and/or perennial water with standing or slow moving flows; upland habitat includes leaf litter and small mammal burrows; adults are known to travel up to 2 miles overland between aquatic sites.	**Possible.** Resident of Monterey County. Nearest known records are in two federally designated critical habitat units approximately 15 miles west in the Santa Lucia Range and 10 miles east of Gonzales along San Benito County line. Potential habitat occurs in Gonzales Slough and existing agricultural ponds/detention basins and drainages in Salinas Valley.
Western pond turtle (*Emys marmorata*)	--/SC/--	Found in ponds, marshes, rivers, streams, and ditches containing aquatic vegetation; usually seen sunning on logs, banks, or rocks. Moves up to 3-4 miles within a creek/drainage system, especially during "walk-abouts" before a female lays eggs; nests in burrows in upland areas up to several hundred feet away from aquatic habitat, in woodlands, grasslands, or open areas.	**Present.** Nearest known records occur along Salinas River (CNDDB 2007). Resident of Monterey County; Potential habitat occurs along Gonzales Slough, and perennial agricultural ponds and ditches.
Coast horned lizard (*Phrynosoma coronatum frontale*)	--/SC/--	Open grasslands, dry washes and drainages with patches of loose soils to bury in and with an abundance of ants to forage on.	**Possible.** Resident of Monterey County. Nearest known record occurs on Handley Ranch Quarry, northeast of Gonzales; Potential habitat occurs along the Salinas River and along the foothills of Gabilan Range.
Silvery legless lizard (*Anniella pulchra nigra*)	--/SC/--	Burrowing species found along drainages with loose, friable soils or sand with scattered vegetation for cover; Sometimes found in suburban gardens near drainages	**Possible**. Resident of Monterey County. Known from Salinas Valley; Potential habitat occurs along Gonzales Slough and along Salinas River.
Black legless lizard (*Anniella pulchra nigra*)	--/SC/--	Burrowing species found along drainages with loose, friable soils or sand with scattered vegetation for cover; Sometimes found in suburban gardens near drainages	**Possible**. Resident of Monterey County. Known from Salinas Valley; Potential habitat occurs along Gonzales Slough and along Salinas River.
Raptors/Birds (Nesting and/or Wintering)			
California condor (*Gymnogyps californianus*)	FE/SE; FP/--	Wide ranging species that roosts on cliffs, rock outcrops, and may perch on power poles. Feeds in open areas up to 100 miles from roost.	**Possible migrant**. Resident of Monterey County. Known roosting areas that are less than 100 miles are from Pinnacles National Monument to the southeast and Ventana Wilderness to the southwest of Gonzales; May forage over open fields and along roadways in vicinity of Gonzales.
Cooper's hawk *(Accipiter cooperi)*	--/SC/--	Nests in deciduous riparian forest, live oak, or second growth conifers usually near stream courses with dense canopy cover and open understory. Known to nest along riparian habitats in residential areas.	**Possible nesting.** Resident of Monterey County. Nearest known record is from Handley Ranch Quarry, northeast of Gonzales. Potential nesting habitat occurs in vacant stick nest structures in tree canopy along Gonzales Slough
Sharp-shinned hawk *(Accipiter striatus)*	--/SC/--	Nests in deciduous riparian forest associated with dense stands of smaller conifers.	**Unlikely nesting.** Resident of Monterey County. May occur as a winter migrant or foraging over open areas of Salinas Valley.
Northern harrier (*Circus cyaneus*)	--/SC/--	Nests and forages in open grasslands and marshes	**Unlikely nesting.** Resident of Monterey County; May occur as a winter migrant or foraging over open areas of Salinas Valley

Common Name ***Scientific Name***	**Status Federal/State/Other**	**Habitat Requirements**	**Potential Habitat Occurrence/Seasonal Use for Wildlife**
Ferruginous hawk (wintering) (*Buteo regalis*)	--/SC/BCC	Winter visitor to open field and grasslands	**Possible wintering.** Winter Migrant of Monterey County**.** Nearest record is from north Monterey Co. (CNDDB 2007). May forage or visit vicinity of Gonzales during winter season.
Golden eagle (nesting & wintering) (*Aquila chrysaetos*)	--/SC; FP/ BCC	Resides in open mountains, foothills, canyons, or plains. Nests in a mass of sticks on cliffs or in trees.	**Possible wintering.** Resident of Monterey County**.** Nearest known nesting sites are from Pinnacles National Monument; Potential wintering and foraging habitat occur along Salinas Valley.
White-tailed kite (*Elanus leucurus*)	--/FP/--	Nests in tree stands bordering open grasslands, marshes and fields. Forages small prey including rodents, lizards, and snakes.	**Possible wintering**. Resident of Monterey County. Potential foraging and wintering habitat occur along Gonzales Slough and surrounding fields of Salinas Valley.
Merlin (wintering) (*Falco columbarius)*	-/SC/-	Wintering habitats include riparian, dense woodlands, grasslands, open fields, marshes and developed areas; primarily feeds on small birds.	**Possible wintering.** Winter Migrant of Monterey County. Potential wintering and foraging habitat occurs in open fields, grassland and along Salinas River and Gonzales Slough. .
Short-eared owl (*Asio flammeus*)	--/SC/--	Rare fall and winter visitor to the open fields and grasslands, of the Salinas Valley	**Possible wintering.** Winter Migrant of Monterey County. Nearest known occurrence is from the Gonzales Landfill in 1995. Potential habitat occurs along the grasslands east of Gonzales.
Western burrowing owl (*Athene cunicularia*)	--/SC/BCC	Open areas with burrow features available to nest or winter in; Burrow features include small mammal burrows, rock piles/outcrops, and sparsely vegetated berms/slopes along roadways, agriculture ponds, retention basins and culverts.	**Present wintering**. Nearest known records from the Johnson Canyon Road Landfill and near Soledad (CNDDB 2007). Winter Migrant of Monterey County; Potential habitat occurs in grasslands, and on berms/slopes of agricultural pond and detention basins, ditches, open fields and foothills east of Gonzales.
Yellow warbler (*Dendroica petechia brewsteri*)	--/SC/--	Found in dense willow riparian and/or cottonwood riparian; locally along the Salinas River.	**Possible nesting.** Resident of Monterey County**.** Potential habitat occurs along dense willow stands along Gonzales Slough adjacent to Blackstone Winery in Gonzales.
Willow flycatcher (*Empidonax tralli* ssp.)	--/ SE/-	Nests in dense riparian habitat near surface of water or saturated soil.	**Possible migrant.** Spring/fall migrant. Potential habitat occurs along dense willow stands along Gonzales Slough adjacent to Blackstone Winery in Gonzales.
Loggerhead shrike (*Lanius ludovicianus*)	--/SC/BCC	Grasslands, coastal sage scrub. Nests in low trees and shrubs; feeds on insects, lizards and small snakes.	**Possible migrant.** Resident of Monterey County. Nearest nesting record is from Handley Ranch Quarry, northeast of Gonzales.
Least Bell's Vireo (*Vireo belli pusillus*)	FE/SE/BCC	Dense riparian thickets	**Possible migrant.** Resident of Monterey County. Nearest known record is from the upper Salinas River, near Bradley.
California horned lark (*Eremophila alpestris actia*)	--/SC/--	Nests and forages in open grasslands, and in sparse coastal sage scrub	**Possible nesting.** Resident of Monterey County. Nearest nesting occurrence is from Handley Ranch Quarry, northeast of Gonzales; Potential habitat occurs in open grassland areas east of Gonzales.

Common Name ***Scientific Name***	**Status Federal/State/Other**	**Habitat Requirements**	**Potential Habitat Occurrence/Seasonal Use for Wildlife**
Tricolored blackbird (nesting colony) (*Agelaius tricolor*)	--/SC/BCC	Highly colonial; nest sites are adjacent to open water, ponds, drainages and marshes with emergent vegetation.	**Possible nesting.** Resident of Monterey County. Nearest nesting record in Soledad (CNDDB 2007). Potential habitat occurs in agricultural ponds/detention basis or ditches with emergent vegetation.
Yellow-breasted chat (*Icteria virens*)	--/SC/--	Requires dense riparian thickets; found in foothill and desert riparian areas	**Possible nesting.** Resident of Monterey County. Nearest known record from Salinas River near Soledad; Potential habitat occurs along Gonzales Slough and Salinas River.
Mammals			
Pallid bat *(Antrozous pallidus)*	--/SC/HP	Roost sites are primarily associated with oak woodland, redwood, ponderosa pine, and giant sequoia forests. Will also roost under bridges and in buildings and rock outcrops.	**Possible.** Resident of Monterey County. Potential roosting habitat occurs in old or abandoned structures (e.g. barns) and under bridges. May forage over open fields and drainages near Gonzales...
Western red bat *(Lasiurus blossevillii)*	--/***/HP	Roosts in foliage primarily in riparian and wooded habitats.	**Possible**. Resident of Monterey County. Potential roosting habitat occurs in riparian canopy along Gonzales Slough and Salinas River.
Long-legged myotis *(Myotis volans)*	--/***/HP	Roosts primarily in large hollow tree snags, or live trees with exfoliating bark; also uses rock crevices, mines, and buildings.	**Possible.** Resident of Monterey County**.** Potential roosting habitat occurs in tree stands with exfoliating bark along Gonzales Slough and Salinas River.
Salinas pocket mouse (*Perognathus inornatus psammophilus*)	--/SC/--	Occurs on fine-textured sandy soils of grassland and desert shrub communities, especially where plant cover is not dense and soils are friable.	**Possible.** Resident of Monterey County. Nearest known record is from 2.5 miles north of Soledad; Potential habitat occurs along open grassland east of Gonzales
Monterey dusky-footed woodrat *(Neotoma fuscipes luciana)*	--/SC/--	Associated with chaparral and forest habitats. Builds stick nests on ground, in shrubs, and trees with grass, sticks, leaves, string, etc. Population may be limited by availability of nest materials.	**Possible.** Resident in Monterey County. Potential habitat occurs along Gonzales Slough and upper banks of Salinas River.
San Joaquin kit fox (*Vulpes macrotis mutica*)	FE/ ST/--	Grassland, open scrub, or woodland areas; some agricultural and urbanized areas.	**Possible**. Resident of Monterey County; dispersal migrant. Nearest known records are from Soledad along Metz Road (CNDDB 2007); Potential habitat occurs along foothills and open fields east of Gonzales and west along the Salinas River.
American badger (*Taxidea taxus*)	--/SC/--	Friable soils and open, uncultivated grasslands and meadows. Forages on burrowing rodents, insects, and ground nesting birds.	**Possible**. Resident of Monterey County. Nearest known record is from 2 miles northeast of Soledad (CNDDB 2007); Potential habitat occurs along open grassland east of Gonzales.

Notes:

Plants

CNPS Status (Tibor 2001; CNPS 2007; CNDDB 2007)

CNPS Lists: List 1A: Presumed extinct in California. List 1B: Rare, Threatened, or Endangered in California and elsewhere. List 2: Rare, Threatened, or Endangered in California, more common elsewhere. List 3: Plants about which more information is needed. List 4: Plants of limited distribution: a watch list.

Threat Code extensions: .1: Seriously endangered in California. .2: Fairly endangered in California. .3 Not very endangered in California.

Wildlife

Federal Status (USFWS 2007d; CDFG 2007c)

FE = Endangered: Any species, which is in danger of extinction throughout all, or a significant portion of its range
FT = Threatened: Any species, which is likely to become an endangered species within the foreseeable future throughout all, or a significant portion of its range.
** Steelhead South/ Central Coast Evolutionary Significant Unit (ESU) for all runs in basins from the Pajaro River south to, but not including the Santa Maria River.*

*** Includes both native and hybrid individuals of California tiger salamanders.*

State Status (CDFG 1996; CDFG 2007c)

SE = Endangered: A native species or subspecies of animal which is in serious danger of becoming extinct throughout all, or a significant portion of its range, due to loss of habitat, change in habitat, over exploitation, predation, competition and/or disease.
ST = Threatened: A native species or subspecies that, although no presently threatened with extinction, is likely to become an endangered species in the foreseeable future in the absence of special protection and management efforts.
SC = CDFG Species of Special Concern are taxa given special consideration because they are biologically rare, very restricted in distribution, declining throughout their range, or at a critical stage in their life cycle when residing in California or taxa that are closely associated with a habitat that is declining in California (e.g., wetlands)
FP = Fully Protected: This classification was the State's initial effort in the 1960's to identify and provide additional protection to those animals that were rare or faced possible extinction. Fully Protected species may not be taken or possessed at any time and no licenses or permits may be issued for their take except for collecting these species for necessary scientific research and relocation of the bird species for the protection of livestock.

**** = Included on preliminary list of revised CDFG Mammal Species of Special Concern (CDFG 1996)*

Other (CDFG 2007c; WBWG 1998)

HP = Considered "High Priority" on the Western Bat Working Group's (WBWG) Western Bat Species Regional Priority Matrix (1998)
BCC= Considered by Fish and Wildlife Service: Birds of Conservation Concern. Species of migratory nongame birds that are considered to be of concern in the United States because of (1) documented or apparent population declines, (2) small or restricted populations, (3) dependence on restricted or vulnerable habitats.

The segment of the Salinas River that flows near the wastewater treatment facility west of Gonzales has been federally designated as critical habitat for the Evolutionary Significant Unit (ESU) of the South-Central Coast steelhead (NOAA 2005 and 2006). Section 3 of the ESA (NOAA 2005) defines critical habitat as:

- ✓ Specific areas within the geographical area occupied by the species at the time of listing, on which are found those physical or biological features that are essential to the conservation of the listed species and that may require special management considerations or protection,
- ✓ Specific areas outside the geographical area occupied by the species at the time of listing that are essential for the conservation of a listed species.

This segment of the river also provides habitat for the western pond turtle (CNDDB 2007). Figure 4.13.3 presents the general locations of biotic resources and critical habitat within the vicinity of the City.

The proposed planning area and surroundings provide potential habitat for the wildlife species listed in Figure 4.13.2. Many of these species are commonly found in cultivated fields, rangeland, and in other areas of the Salinas Valley and bordering foothills (MCWRA 2001). Others disperse, forage, or migrate through the valley. The presence of suitable habitat cannot be ruled out without additional assessments and/or focused surveys, which are most appropriately done at the time that Specific Plans and development entitlements are prepared.

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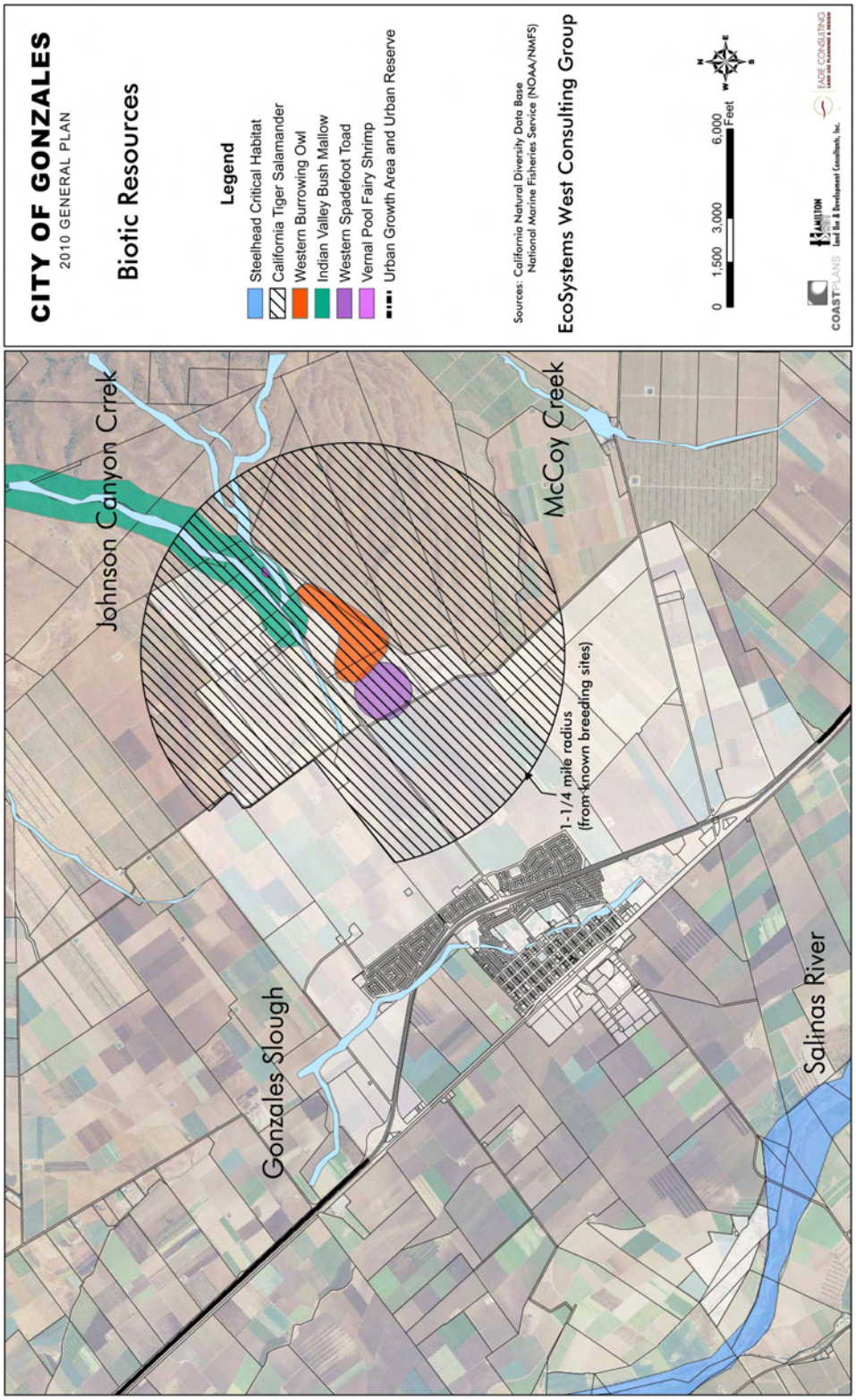
Figure 4.13.3: Biotic Resources



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4.13.4 WILDLIFE MOVEMENT

The City of Gonzales and its surroundings are comprised of a diverse assemblage of natural and human-influenced environments. Protecting and enhancing habitat continuity between the remaining natural and open space areas promotes the integrity of local ecosystems and is essential to sustaining populations and allowing for the continued dispersal of native plant and animal species. In addition, patterns of wildlife movement are protected under CEQA.

On a large scale, the Salinas River to the west and Gabilan Range to the east of the City provide important wildlife corridors for some species dispersing along the Salinas Valley. In the northeast part of the planning area, Johnson Canyon Creek, McCoy Creek, and other seasonal drainages and ditches offer dispersal and foraging habitat. Corridors should be protected and enhanced with adequate buffers, protection from disturbances such as noise and light pollution, management of native plant communities for long term sustainability, and protection of agricultural lands, ponds and ditches.

The few natural corridors that remain within the Gonzales planning area have been significantly degraded by encroaching urban uses and modification for drainage control. Johnson Canyon Creek and McCoy Creek have been reduced to drainage ditches in much of the planning area, but in the eastern and northern reaches of the planning area these historic stream channels are less disturbed. Nonetheless, there is the possibility of some limited wildlife movement in the planning area, including California tiger salamander, which is known to move from breeding areas by as much as one-quarter mile. California red legged frog may also be present in the planning and like the salamander moves from breeding ponds to surrounding upland areas for estivation. The San Joaquin kit fox and other smaller mammals may be present in the planning area moving across agricultural fields as it forages for food. Finally, there are several species of birds that may be present in the planning area.

Continuity between important plant and wildlife habitats can be sustained by protecting and enhancing natural linkages, such as riparian corridors and drainages, canyons, ridgelines, and corridors across the valley floor where barriers such as dense urban development, exclusionary fencing, and heavily traveled roadways have not yet eliminated options for plant and wildlife dispersal. While narrow corridors may be the

only option for movement in some locations due to existing development, habitat linkages are most effective through maintenance of a permeable landscape (one that allows for uninhibited movement of species) (Michael Brandman and Associates 2006). The drainages that flow into the Gonzalez Slough, the slough itself, and open spaces such as the protected portions of the landfill property, neighborhood parks adjoining larger open spaces, and uncultivated areas adjacent to the Salinas River, provide habitat continuity within the Urban Growth Area and immediate surroundings.

4.13.5 REGULATORY SETTING

Local, state, and federal regulations have been enacted to provide for the protection and management of sensitive biological and wetland resources. At the federal level, the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) is responsible for the protection of terrestrial and freshwater organisms through the federal Endangered Species Act and the Migratory Bird Treaty Act, while the National Marine Fisheries Service (National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, or NOAA Fisheries) is responsible for protection of anadromous fish (fish that live most of their adult life in saltwater but spawn in freshwater). The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) has primary responsibility for protecting wetlands and jurisdictional "other waters of the U.S." under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act. At the state level, the California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG) administers the California Endangered Species Act (CESA), and protects streams and water bodies under Section 1600 of the California Fish and Game Code (CFGC 2006). Certification by the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) is also required when a proposed activity may result in discharge into navigable waters, pursuant to Section 401 of the Clean Water Act and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Section 404(b) (1) Guidelines.

4.13.5.1. FEDERAL SPECIAL-STATUS SPECIES

Federal Endangered Species Act. The federal Endangered Species Act (ESA) of 1973 (Title 16 United States Code, Section 1531 *et seq*., as amended) prohibits federal agencies from authorizing, permitting or funding any action that would result in biological jeopardy to a species listed as Threatened or Endangered under the ESA. Listed species are taxa for

which proposed and final rules have been published in the Federal Register (USFWS 2007a, b, c, d, e).

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's (USFWS) responsibilities include administering the ESA including Sections 7, 9, and 10. Section 9 of the ESA prohibits the take of animal species that are federally listed as endangered or threatened. Section 3(18) of the ESA defines "take" to mean to harass, harm, pursue, hunt, shoot, wound, kill, trap, capture, or collect, or to attempt to engage in any such conduct. Service regulations (50 CFR 17.3) define "harm" to include significant habitat modification or degradation which actually kills or injures wildlife by significantly impairing essential behavioral patterns, including breeding, spawning, rearing, migrating, feeding, or sheltering. "Harassment" is defined by the Service as an intentional or negligent action that creates the likelihood of injury to listed species by annoying it to such an extent as to significantly disrupt normal behavioral patterns which include, but are not limited to, breeding, feeding, or sheltering.

Exemptions to the prohibitions against "take" may be obtained through coordination with the Service in two ways: 1) through interagency consultation for projects with federal involvement (i.e., funded, authorized, or carried out by a Federal agency) pursuant to Section 7; or 2) through the issuance of an incidental take permit under Section 10(a)(1)(B) of the ESA. The ESA and its implementing regulations do not prohibit take of listed plant species. Federal agencies cannot undertake activities that would jeopardize the continued existence of a threatened or endangered plant or animal species. In addition, the removal of threatened or endangered plants may be a violation of the ESA under certain circumstances, if the action is not in compliance with state law.

Federal agencies such as USFWS and NOAA designate specific areas as "Critical Habitat" for the recovery of threatened and endangered species (USFWS 2005). Federal regulations protecting critical habitat areas and maps showing their boundaries are published in the USFWS *Federal Register*. Under Section 7 of the ESA, federal agencies may not carry out, fund, or approve any actions that result in destroying or adversely modifying critical habitat. Since the restrictions associated with critical habitat designation are directed solely at federal agency actions (e.g., Federal Highway Administration, Environmental Protection Agency, Army Corps of Engineers etc.), designation generally has little direct effect on private landowners (USFWS 2005). Consultation under Section 7

does not apply to activities on private or other non-federal lands that do not involve a federal nexus.

Migratory Bird Treaty Act. All migratory birds and their nests are federally protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918 (MBTA) (Title 16 United States Code, Section 703-712 as amended; 50 Code of Federal Regulations Section 21; and 50 Code of Federal Regulations Section 13) and by CDFG codes that support the act. The MBTA makes it unlawful to "take" any migratory bird or raptor listed in the 50 Code of Federal Regulations Section 10, including their nests, eggs or products (MBTA 1918).

4.13.5.2. State of California Special-Status Species

California Endangered Species Act. The 1984 CESA [CFGC 2006 (Section 2050-2098)] prohibits the "take" of State-listed threatened and endangered species. The Habitat Conservation Planning Branch of the CDFG administers the State's rare species program. The CDFG maintains lists of designated Endangered, Threatened and Rare plant and animal species (CDFG 2007a, b), as designated by the California Fish and Game Commission or under the California Native Plant Protection Act (NPPA). In addition to recognizing three levels of endangerment, the CDFG provides interim protection of candidate species while the Fish and Game Commission is reviewing them. Habitat degradation or modification is not expressly included in the definition of "take" under the California Fish and Game Code (CFGC); however, the CDFG has interpreted "take" to include the "killing of a member of a species which is the proximate result of habitat modification…" (CFGC 2006).

California Native Plant Protection Act. Project permitting and approval requires compliance with the 1977 NPPA [CFGC 2006 (Section 2050-2098)]. Along with the CESA, the act authorizes the California Fish and Game Commission to designate Endangered, Threatened, and Rare plant species and to regulate the taking of these species. In addition to the Endangered and Threatened categories established by CESA, the NPPA establishes a "Rare" category for plant species only.

CDFG Species of Special Concern and Fully Protected Species. In addition to lists of designated Endangered, Threatened, and Rare plant and animal species, the CDFG maintains a list of animal "Species of Special Concern," (CDFG 2007c) most of which are

species whose breeding populations in California may face extirpation.[71] Although these species have no legal status under the CESA, the CDFG recommends considering these species during analysis of proposed project impacts to protect declining populations, and to avoid the need to list them as threatened or endangered in the future. These species may "be considered rare or endangered [under CEQA] if the species can be shown to meet the criteria." Additionally, the California Fish and Game Code contains lists of vertebrate species designated as "Fully Protected" [CFGC 2006 (Section 3511)] [birds], 4700[mammals], 5050 [reptiles and amphibians], and 5515 [fish]. Such species may not be taken or possessed without a permit and are also considered under CEQA.

CEQA Guidelines Section 15380. Under provisions of Section 15380 of the *CEQA Guidelines*, plants and animals with the following protected status must be addressed for proposed development projects: federally-listed Endangered or Threatened species under the ESA, species listed by the State as Endangered, Threatened, or Rare under CESA or NPPA, and other non-listed species that meet the CEQA Guidelines definition of endangered or rare.

Under Section 15380(d) of the *CEQA Guidelines*, a species not included on any list recognized by the State "shall nevertheless be considered rare or endangered if the species can be shown to meet the criteria" for listing. The CDFG, USFWS and U.S. Forest Service all maintain independent lists of species with designated conservation status that meet the *CEQA Guidelines* criterion for consideration. Under provisions of Section 15380(d) of the *CEQA Guidelines*, the project lead agency and CDFG, in making a determination of significance, must treat non-listed plant and animal species as equivalent to listed species if such species satisfy the minimum biological criteria for listing.

The *CEQA Guidelines* Environmental Checklist identifies potential impacts to a sensitive natural community as one of six biological topics to be reviewed. Where determined to be significant under CEQA, the potential impact would require mitigation through avoidance, minimization of disturbance or loss, or some type of compensatory mitigation when unavoidable.

[71] "Extirpate" = to destroy completely; to pull up by the root; exterminate (Merriam-Webster).

CNDDB maintains a working list of "high priority" habitats for inventory (i.e., those habitats that are rare or endangered within the borders of California) (Holland 1986; CDFG 2003a). CNDDB "high priority" habitats are generally considered sensitive habitats under CEQA. Sensitive habitats include: riparian corridors, wetlands, habitats for legally protected species and CDFG Species of Special Concern, areas of high biological diversity, areas providing important wildlife habitat, and unusual or regionally restricted habitat types. Habitat types considered sensitive include those listed on the CNDDB working list of "high priority" habitats for inventory (i.e., those habitats that are rare or endangered within the borders of California) (Holland 1986 and CDFG 2003a). CNDDB also ranks special status wildlife based on their global and state status, and on the status of any subspecies its range. Species ranked by the CNDDB may be protected under CEQA if they are shown to meet the criteria for listing.

California Native Plant Society Inventory of Rare and Endangered Vascular Plants of California. In general, the CDFG qualifies plant species on List 1B (Plants Rare, Threatened, or Endangered in California and Elsewhere) or List 2 (Plants Rare, Threatened, or Endangered in California, But More Common Elsewhere) of the California Native Plant Society's (CNPS) *Inventory of Rare and Endangered Vascular Plants of California* (Tibor 2001; CNPS 2007) for legal protection under CEQA. Species on CNPS List 3 (Plants About Which We Need More Information--A Review List) or List 4 (Plants of Limited Distribution--A Watch List) may, but generally do not, qualify for protection under CEQA.

Western Bat Working Group Listings. The CDFG maintains a list of bat species designated as "High Priority" by the Western Bat Working Group (WBWG). Species designated as "High Priority" are defined as "imperiled or are at high risk of imperilment based on available information on distribution, status, ecology and known threats (WBWG 1998; CDFG 2007c). These species qualify for legal protection under Section 15380(d) of the *CEQA Guidelines*.

4.13.5.3. Wetlands and Waters of the U.S

Wetlands are areas that are periodically or permanently inundated by surface or ground water, and support vegetation adapted to life in saturated soil. Wetlands are recognized as important features on a regional and national level because of their high inherent value

to fish and wildlife, use as storage areas for storm and floodwaters, and water recharge, filtration, and purification functions. The Corps and the USFWS have developed technical standards for delineating wetlands through consideration of three criteria: hydrology, soils, and vegetation.

Under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act, the Corps is responsible for regulating the discharge of fill material into waters of the United States. The term "waters" includes wetlands and non-wetland bodies of water that meet specific criteria as defined in the Code of Federal Regulations. In general, a permit must be obtained before fill can be placed in wetlands or other waters of the U.S. The type of permit depends on the amount of acreage and the purpose of the proposed fill, subject to discretion of the Corps.

Jurisdictional authority of the CDFG over wetland areas is established under Section 1600 of the Fish and Game Code (2006), which pertains to activities that would disrupt the natural flow or alter the channel, bed, or bank of any lake, river, or stream. The Fish and Game Code stipulates that it is unlawful to substantially divert or obstruct the natural flow or substantially change the bed, channel or bank of any river, stream or lake without notifying the CDFG, incorporating necessary mitigation, and obtaining a Streambed Alteration Agreement. The California Wetlands Conservation Policy of the CDFG states that the Fish and Game Commission will strongly discourage development in or conversion of wetlands, unless, at a minimum, project mitigation assures that there will be no net loss of either wetland habitat values or acreage. The CDFG is also responsible for commenting on projects requiring Corps permits under the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act of 1958.

4.13.5.4. Monterey County Policies

Riparian Protection. Neither the County of Monterey nor the City of Gonzales has a specific riparian ordinance or riparian buffer requirements consistently applied to non-coastal areas. However, the Central Salinas Valley Area Plan (CSVAP), which includes Gonzales, maintains that development shall be designed to protect and preserve riparian habitats along the main channels of the Salinas River (Monterey County 2006).

Protected Trees. According to the Monterey County Zoning Ordinance-Title 21 "Preservation of Oak and Other Protected Trees" (2007), oak trees six inches or more in

diameter two feet above ground level may not be removed in any area included in the Central Salinas Valley Area Plan as Resource Conservation, Residential, Commercial or Industrial (except Industrial, Mineral Extraction) without approval of a permit granted by the county planning department. No other tree species is specifically listed as protected by the Central Salinas Valley Area Plan. These County requirements are addressed for information purposes only and do not apply to development within Gonzales.

4.13.6 Thresholds of Significance

The proposed project was considered to have a significant adverse effect on the environment if it met any of the standards of significance listed below. The Initial Study concluded that the proposed project has no potential to result in adverse effects for certain areas of concern, and this EIR has been focused to exclude such listed effects from further consideration. Excluded areas of concern are shown in ~~strikeout~~ format.

- 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 (CDFG) or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS).

- Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations or by the CDFG or USFWS.

- Have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (including but not limited to marshes, vernal pools, coastal areas, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruptions, or other means.

- Interfere substantially with 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.

- ~~Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?~~

- ~~Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?~~

4.13.7 IMPACTS AND MITIGATIONS

4.13.7.1. EFFECT ON CANDIDATE, SENSITIVE, OR SPECIAL-STATUS SPECIES

A. Impact

Impact BIO-1: The adoption of the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* would provide the basis for development activity that could have a substantial effect on candidate, sensitive, or special-status species (Less than Significant).

The proposed project would enable development activity that could affect special-status species. As discussed above, a number of special-status plant and animal species may occur in the planning area. Aquatic habitats formed in seasonal swales, drainages, ponds, or natural and manmade depressions (e.g., retention basins and road ruts) that retain water for up to 20 weeks may provide potential habitat for federal and/or state protected species including the vernal pool fairy shrimp, California tiger salamander, western spadefoot toad, and California red-legged frog. There are one special-status plant and six special-status wildlife species known to occur within the proposed planning area.

New development, particularly industrial development, could have the potential to accidentally release hazardous materials into protected habitats and drainages that may contain special status species. Even in relatively clean residential development there is the potential for streets and parking lots to collect pollutants such as oil and grease, which could then be released into nearby drainages during heavy rain storms. The proposed project includes a provision to allow drainage detention in new development areas, which is a change over current policy, which requires full retention of all stormwater generated by new development. The proposed modified implementing action would allow improved flexibility for development and provide continued/improved hydration for aquatic habitats such as Gonzales Slough. The proposed project also requires the use of drainage Best Management Practices (BMPs), which have a proven ability to clean surface water runoff and reduce non-point source pollution if applied correctly and appropriately.

Such a system would, however, create a potential for polluted stormwater to enter in off-site drainage such as Gonzales Slough if stormwater facilities constructed using BMPs were not correctly designed and maintained.

Also, expansion and improvement of the Gonzales Wastewater Treatment Plant, which is located adjacent to the Salinas River, could have an impact on steelhead critical habitat. While the treatment plant does not currently release any effluent into the river, expansion and improvement of the treatment process could entail options to release treated effluent into the river. This could have a positive effect on steelhead habitat by increasing water flows in the river but could also entail possible negative impacts during system upset or failure.

B. Applicable Policies and Regulations and Actions

The *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* contains the following policies and implementing measures designed to protect and enhance the special-status plant and animal species in the planning area.

From the "Community Health and Safety Element:"

Policy HS-7.1 Water Quality in New Construction and Redevelopment

Require all new construction and renovation to be designed and constructed to protect water quality.

Implementing Action HS-7.1.2 – Protect Natural Drainages from Hazardous Materials. Minimize the extent of development using hazardous chemicals or involving polluting materials (such as motor oil and paint) in areas adjacent to the Gonzales Slough, Johnson Canyon Creek, and other drainages east of Fanoe Road.

Implementing Action HS-7.1.3 – Best Management Practices. Promote stormwater Best Management Practices to trap or remove potential pollutants from urban runoff before they reach the Gonzales Slough and other sensitive habitat or natural areas.

From the "Conservation and Open Space Element"

Policy COS-2.1 Protect Special-Status Species

Protect special-status species that are located within the planning area and create the conditions necessary for such species to become self sustaining.

Implementing Action COS-2.1.1 – Identify Special-Status Species. Require Specific Plans and development applications to identify and map special-status species and hybridized versions of the California tiger salamander that may be located in the proposed development area.

Implementing Action COS-2.1.2 – Avoid and Buffer Special-Status Species. Require Specific Plans and development applications to contain provisions to avoid the take of listed species, where possible, and to buffer areas containing listed species from urban encroachment. In the case where a hybridized version of California tiger salamander is present, if the USFWS concurs that the species present is sufficiently hybridized to fall outside the regulation of the Endangered Species Act, then no mitigation shall be required.

Implementing Action COS-2.1.3 – Avoid Fragmentation of Special-Status Species. Require Specific Plans and development applications, for lands containing or adjoining Special Status Species habitat areas to include provisions that ensure that a population of a listed species will not be isolated and/or fragmented as a result of the project. Exceptions may be granted by the City in cases where the developer can demonstrate that isolation and/or fragmentation of listed species cannot feasibly be avoided in site design.

Implementing Action COS-2.1.4 – Apply for Take of Special-Status Species in Specified Circumstances. As applicable, during specific plan development or other development application processes, require consultation with the appropriate regulatory agencies to identify any potential impacts to sensitive plant and/or animal species. Where feasible, Specific Plans and development applications should avoid impacts and/or incorporate mitigation measures to address any impacts. Any required regulatory permits shall be obtained prior to land alteration permit issuance.

Implementing Action COS-2.1.5 – Protocol Salamander Surveys. For Specific Plan or other development applications, for lands within known or potential habitat areas (GP Figure VI-1) undertake salamander surveys as part of the review process by a qualified biologist (i.e., one that has obtained permission from the USFWS to undertake such surveys) to determine the presence of the California tiger salamander. The results of such surveys and genetic tests shall be reviewed by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS).

Implementing Action COS-2.1.6 – Agency Consultation Regarding Salinas River. Undertake appropriate agency consultations to protect listed species in and adjacent to the Salinas River as the City of Gonzales plans and executes the expansion of its wastewater treatment facility located on Gonzales River Road.

Implementing Action COS-2.1.7 – Agency Consultation Regarding Other Special-Status Species. Undertake appropriate agency consultations to protect listed species in and adjacent to city-owned rights-of-way as the City of Gonzales plans and executes any capacity improvement to existing facilities or the creation of new facilities within these rights-of-way.

From the "Community Facilities and Services Element:"

Policy FS-4.1 Meet Demand for New Drainage Facilities

Meet the demand for new drainage facilities in a timely, cost effective manner by requiring at a minimum the retention of the 10-year 24-hour storm event and the detention of the 100-year 24-hour storm event.

Implementing Action FS-4.1.1 – On-Site Retention and Detention. Allow for the use of on-site detention and retention basins. Such basins should be designed to be jointly used for parks or passive open space where feasible, consistent with Implementing Action COS-7.1.4.

C. Significance Determination

The plans, policies, and actions of the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* lessen the potential impact of urbanization on special status plant and animal species to a level of less than significant.

D. Mitigation Measures

None required.

4.13.7.2. Effect on Riparian Habitat or Other Sensitive Natural Communities

A. Impact

Impact BIO-2: The adoption of the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* would provide the basis for development activity that could affect riparian habitat or other sensitive natural communities (Less than Significant with Mitigation Measures).

The proposed project would enable development activity that could affect sensitive habitats. As discussed above, there are three habitat types identified within the proposed planning area that are recognized as sensitive habitats and protected under CEQA. These include freshwater marsh, aquatic, and Pacific willow riparian woodland. All three habitat types are located along the Gonzales Slough; in addition, aquatic habitat is also found in Johnson Canyon Creek, McCoy Creek and other unnamed drainage in the planning area. As discussed above in the section related to impacts on candidate, sensitive, or specials-status species, new development could result in the accidental release of hazardous materials and/or stormwater pollutants entering into Gonzales Slough, which contains sensitive habitat. Also as discussed in the previous section, the expansion of the wastewater treatment plant could have impacts on the Salinas River, which also contains sensitive habitat. In addition, new development located adjacent to Gonzales Slough has the potential to encroach on or modify the banks of Gonzales Slough. Such development could preclude successful habitat restoration or further degrade the poor condition of the slough.

B. Applicable Policies and Regulations and Actions

The *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* contains the following policies and implementing measures designed to protect and enhance the protected habitats in the planning area.

From the "Community Health and Safety Element:"

Policy HS-7.1 Water Quality in New Construction and Redevelopment

Require all new construction and renovation to be designed and constructed to protect water quality.

Implementing Action HS-7.1.2 – Protect Natural Drainages from Hazardous Materials. Minimize the extent of development using hazardous chemicals or involving polluting materials (such as motor oil and paint) in areas adjacent to the Gonzales Slough, Johnson Canyon Creek, and other drainages east of Fanoe Road.

Implementing Action HS-7.1.3 – Best Management Practices. Promote stormwater Best Management Practices to trap or remove potential pollutants from urban runoff before they reach the Gonzales Slough and other sensitive habitat or natural areas.

From the "Conservation and Open Space Element:"

Policy COS-1.1 Protect Regulated Habitats

Protect regulated habitats (e.g., freshwater marsh, riparian woodland, and aquatic habitat) that are located within the planning area and prevent the isolation of individual habitat areas by interconnecting them to the degree practicable with open space corridors.

Implementing Action COS-1.1.1 – Identify Regulated Habitat. Require Specific Plans or other development applications to identify and map regulated habitats (e.g., freshwater marsh, riparian woodland, and aquatic habitat) in Specific Plans (or in the case where no specific plan is required, as part of the development application).

Implementing Action COS-1.1.2 – Avoid and Buffer Regulated Habitat. Require Specific Plans and development applications to contain provisions to avoid regulated habitat, where possible, and to buffer such habitat from urban encroachment.

Implementing Action COS-1.1.3 – Connections Between Habitat Areas. Require Specific Plans and development applications to contain provisions to establish open space and wildlife connections between regulated habitats within the proposed development area and to create opportunities for connection to regulated habitat outside the development area. Exceptions may be granted by the City in cases where the developer can demonstrate that such connections are infeasible to incorporate into site design.

Implementing Action COS-1.1.4 – Take Regulated Habitat in Specified Circumstances. Where the applicant can demonstrate the possibility for superior site design, allow Specific Plans and development applications to contain provisions removing regulated habitat. Any required regulatory permits shall be obtained prior to land alteration permit issuance.

Implementing Action COS-1.1.5 – Agency Consultation Regarding Salinas River. Undertake appropriate agency consultations to conserve protected habitat in and adjacent to the Salinas River as the City of Gonzales plans and executes the expansion of its wastewater treatment facility located on Gonzales River Road.

Implementing Action COS-1.1.6 – Agency Consultation Regarding Other Protected Habitat. Undertake appropriate agency consultations to conserve protected habitat in and adjacent to city-owned rights-of-way as the City of Gonzales plans and executes any capacity improvement to existing facilities or the creation of new facilities within these rights-of-way.

From the "Community Facilities and Services Element:"

Policy FS-4.1 Meet Demand for New Drainage Facilities

Meet the demand for new drainage facilities in a timely, cost effective manner by requiring at a minimum the retention of the 10-year 24-hour storm event and the detention of the 100-year 24-hour storm event.

Implementing Action FS-4.1.1 – On-Site Retention and Detention. Allow for the use of on-site detention and retention basins. Such basins should be designed to be jointly used for parks or passive open space where feasible, consistent with Implementing Action COS-7.1.4.

From the "Community Character Element:"

Policy CC-5.1 Enhance Role of Natural Environment

Enhance the role of the natural environment, especially natural topography and historic drainages, as a defining element of Gonzales' character and identity. Such natural features should be enhanced and restored where feasible, and utilized for multiple purposes including drainage, wildlife habitat and recreation.

> *Implementing Action CC-5.1.1 – Open Space as Primary Element of Urban Form. Expand the use of open space as a primary element of urban form through the creation of new natural features, such as greenways, greenbelts, drainage courses, lakes and other water features.*
>
> *Implementing Action CC-5.1.2 – Gonzales Slough. Promote the conservation and restoration use of the Gonzales Slough as an enhanced natural feature for passive recreation and as a pedestrian spine connecting Gonzales' schools, parks, and neighborhoods.*

Policy CC-8.1 Visual Resources and Gateways

Protect and enhance the visual qualities of Gonzales.

> *Implementing Action CC-8.1.8 – Reduce Light Pollution. Require Specific Plans to contain development codes that require exterior lighting be downward cast and hooded to minimize glare and light pollution into the night sky.*

C. Significance Determination

While the policies and actions contained in the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* lessen the potential impact of urbanization on protected habitats, there remains the potential for substantial adverse effect related to the protected habitats. This is a significant impact that would be made less than significant with the following mitigation measure:

D. Mitigation Measures

The City of Gonzales shall incorporate the following measure into the *Draft Gonzales 2010 General Plan* prior to final adoption and eliminate or amend any existing provisions

of the draft plan that may be in conflict with this measure so as to eliminate the inconsistency in favor of the measure:

> Mitigation Measure BIO-1: Riparian Protection Ordinance
>
> *The City shall adopt a Riparian Protection Ordinance to ensure that development does not encroach on Gonzales Slough or any "Waters of the United States" that may be located in the planning area. Such an ordinance shall establish required minimum setbacks from Gonzales Slough, wetlands, and other "Waters of the United States" and require Specific Plans and development applications to contain measures to ensure that all sensitive habitats are protected from the significant negative effects of encroaching development.*

4.13.7.3. Effect on Federally Protected Wetlands

A. Impact

Impact BIO-3: The adoption of the Gonzales 2010 General Plan would provide the basis for development activity that could affect federally-protected wetlands (Less than Significant with Mitigation Measures).

As discussed above, the Salinas River, Gonzales Slough, McCoy Creek, Johnson Creek and unnamed natural drainages are designated as blue-line waterbody features on USGS quadrangle maps and are or may be considered "Waters of the United States" or jurisdictional waters of the U.S Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE, 2001). In addition, diverted segments of these drainages may be considered jurisdictional (e.g., those drainages connecting to the Gonzales Slough through surface flows or enclosed storm systems would be considered jurisdictional), whereas ditch segments that do not discharge into the Gonzales Slough or Salinas River would not be considered jurisdictional (ACOE 2001; EMC Planning Group 2007). Also, as previously mentioned, the segment of the Salinas River that flows near the wastewater treatment facility west of Gonzales is federally designated as critical habitat for the South-Central California Coast Steelhead Evolutionary Significant Unit (NOAA 2005 and 2006).

B. Applicable Policies and Regulations and Actions

See 4.13.6.1b and 4.13.6.2b above.

C. Significance Determination

While the policies and actions contained in the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* lessen the potential impact of urbanization on protected habitats, there remains the potential for substantial adverse effect related to federally protected wetlands. This is a significant impact that would be made less than significant with Mitigation Measure BIO-1 (Riparian Protection Ordinance) above.

D. Mitigation Measures

No additional measures required.

4.13.7.4. Interfere With Movement of Wildlife Species or with Established Wildlife Corridors

A. Impact

Impact BIO-4: The adoption of the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* would provide the basis for development activity that could interfere with the movement of wildlife species or affect established wildlife corridors (Less than Significant).

The proposed project would enable development activity that could affect the movement of wildlife. While the planning area is largely devoid of natural habitat, which has been displaced by agricultural activities, there is the possibility of some limited wildlife movement, including California tiger salamander, which is known to move from breeding areas. California red legged frog may also be present and like the salamander would move from breeding ponds to surrounding upland areas. The San Joaquin kit fox and other smaller mammals may be present, moving across agricultural fields as it forages for food. Finally, there are several species of bird that may also be present.

B. Applicable Policies and Regulations and Actions

The *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* contains the following policies and implementing measures designed to protect and enhance wildlife movement and established wildlife corridors in the planning area:

From the "Conservation and Open Space Element:"

> *Implementing Action COS-1.1.3 – Connections Between Habitat Areas. Require Specific Plans and development applications to contain provisions to establish open space and wildlife connections between regulated habitats within the proposed development area and to create opportunities for connection to regulated habitat outside the development area. Exceptions may be granted by the City in cases where the developer can demonstrate that such connections are infeasible to incorporate into site design.*

C. Significance Determination

Due to the highly disturbed nature of the landscape present in the Gonzales planning area, it is likely that there is only limited wildlife movement in the planning area. Implementing actions to avoid the fragmentation of what limited habitats remain, to encourage the use of newly designed drainage corridors to serve as habitat for the species that do exist, and to avoid and buffer special-status species and habitat as part of subsequent Specific Plan preparation, lessen the potential impact of urbanization on the movement of wildlife to a level of less than significant.

D. Mitigation Measures

None required.

4.14 CULTURAL RESOURCES

This section evaluates the potential impacts of the proposed project on prehistoric and historic cultural resources. This section includes information from historical and archaeological record searches conducted by the Northwest Information Center, a search by the Native American Heritage Commission of the Sacred Lands File, and from contact with persons on the Native American Contacts List.

4.14.1 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

Cultural resources encompass paleontological, archaeological, and historic resources. Below is a brief summary of each component.

- ✓ Historic Resources: Historic resources are associated with the more recent past. In California, historic resources are typically associated with the Spanish, Mexican, 0and American periods in the state's history and are usually less than 200 years old.
- ✓ Archaeological Resources: Archaeology is the study of prehistoric human activities and cultures. Archaeological resources are generally associated with indigenous cultures and are less than 10,000 years old.
- ✓ Paleontological Resources: Paleontology is the study of plant and animal fossils. Generally, paleontological resources are more than 10,000 years old.

4.14.1.1. HISTORIC RESOURCES

The *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* encompasses approximately 19,200 acres in the central part of the Salinas Valley in Monterey County. The first residents of the Gonzales area were Native Americans known as the Ohlone. However, there are no known remnants of their presence in Gonzales and there is no written record of their presence in the vicinity of the city. The Gonzales townsite was part of an 1836 Mexican land grant given to Teodoro Gonzalez, who, was then the acting alcalde (mayor) of Monterey. The grant, known as the "Rincon de la Punta del Monte" (ranch at the foot of the mountains), encompassed 15,128 acres of the Salinas Valley. Cattle raising was the predominant

activity for about 40 years, with the ranch leased to Hildreth and Dunphy for much of that period.

Settlers of varied cultural and ethnic backgrounds came to Gonzales during the early years. Grain became the primary crop produced on nearby farms during the 1880s, joined by dairies producing cheese in the 1890s. Swiss dairy farmers migrated to the area during the late 1800s and early 1900s, bringing their families to the growing town. In the 1920s, the dairies were gradually converted to row crop cultivation. As these activities were labor-intensive and often seasonal, migrant laborers became an important part of the workforce. Several waves of migrant field workers came to the Valley, including Filipinos, families seeking refuge from "dust bowl" conditions in the American Midwest, and finally, immigrants from Mexico. Many seasonal workers eventually settled in the area, finding year-round jobs in agricultural industries.

There are known historic resources within the existing City of Gonzales and known and potential historic sites within the surrounding planning area. According to the Northwest Information Center in a letter dated July 17, 2009, local, state and federal inventories include eleven recorded buildings or structures within the proposed planning area. These include:

1. Gabilan Lodge No. 372 (IOOF Hall), listed on the National Register (NR) and the California Register (CR);

2. Gonzales Community Church listed on the National Register (NR) and the California Register (CR);

3. Gonzales Water Tower, with a status code of 6Y, which means it has been determined ineligible for listing for NR by consensus through the Section 106 process, but not evaluated for CR;

4. 28275 Alta Road, the Bernardino Breschini Dairy, with a status code of 7R, which means it has been identified in a reconnaissance level survey, but not yet evaluated;

5. 28493 Alta Road, the Violini Farmstead, with a status code of 7R;

6. Carr Road property, no name given, with a status code of 7R;

7. 28230 Corda Rd, the Vosti Farmstead, with a status code of 7R;

8. 26771 El Camino Real N, Rianada Jacks House, with a status code of 7R;

9. 27300 Fanoe Road, no name given, with a status code of 7R;

10. 27221 Old Stage Rd, Dadro Farmstead, with a status code of 7R; and

11. 29875 Tavernetti Rd, the Lanini/Fransconi Farmstead, with a status code of 7R.

An additional 10 sites that are not part of the inventory cited above, are identified in the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan*. These sites were identified in the *1996 Gonzales General Plan* as sites of local interest, and the *1996 Gonzales General Plan* established a Historic District that encompassed many of these properties. Figure 4.14.1 shows all 21 sites of historical significance and the boundaries of the Historic District.

4.14.1.2. Archaeological and Paleontological Resources

Paleontological resources include fossil remains of aquatic and terrestrial vertebrates, remains of plants and animals. Most of the fossils found in Monterey County are of aquatic vertebrates and are evidence of the region's geologic history, which has been heavily affected by the Pacific Ocean. Due to the proximity to the ocean, the area lacks large, terrestrial fossils, such as the dinosaur, found in other regions of the United States. Most of Monterey County's fossils are micro-organisms such as foraminifera or diatoms, or assemblages of mollusks and barnacles most commonly found in sedimentary rocks ranging from Cretaceous age (138 to 96 million years old) to Pleistocene age (1.6 million to 11 thousand years old).[72]

According to the Northwest Information Center (NWIC), there are no known recorded archaeological sites in Gonzales. Based on information from the NWIC and the Native American Heritage Commission, which conducted a Scared Lands File check, Native American resources in this part of Monterey County have been found near sources of water (including perennial and intermittent streams and springs), near the valley/upland transition zones, and on alluvial fans and terraces. This information was disseminated to persons on the Native American Contacts List through direct mail contact.

[72] Source: *Monterey County 2007 General Plan* Draft Environmental Impact Report

The planning area includes areas adjacent to the Salinas River on the valley floor, areas near Downtown Gonzales that are adjacent to former stream channels, and areas in the foothills with varied ecologies. Much of the planning area is located on depositional land surfaces that increase the potential for buried archaeological resources that may have no surface indications. Given the similarity of these environmental factors, coupled with the sensitivity for buried archaeological resources, there is a high potential for the presence of unrecorded Native American resources in the planning area.[73] The *Monterey County 2007 General Plan* Draft Environmental Impact Report shows the Gonzales area as having low to medium archaeological sensitivity, and these areas are also shown in Figure 4.14.1.

4.14.1.3. Buried Remains

According to Louise Ramirez, Chairperson of the Ohlone/Costanoan Esselen Nation, the entire Salinas Valley was occupied for thousands of years by ancestors of such groups as the Costanoan, Ohlone, Salinan, and others, and those interred outside of modern cemeteries are buried with the formal cemeteries of Native American peoples. According to letter dated January 20, 2010 from the Native American Heritage Commission, a record search of the sacred lands file failed to indicate the presence of Native American cultural resources in the immediate planning area. In addition, persons on the Native American Contact List for Monterey County were contacted, and none of the persons contacted had knowledge of ancestral burial grounds in the planning area.

[73] Source: Northwest Information Center, File Number 09-0034, Letter dated July 17, 2009

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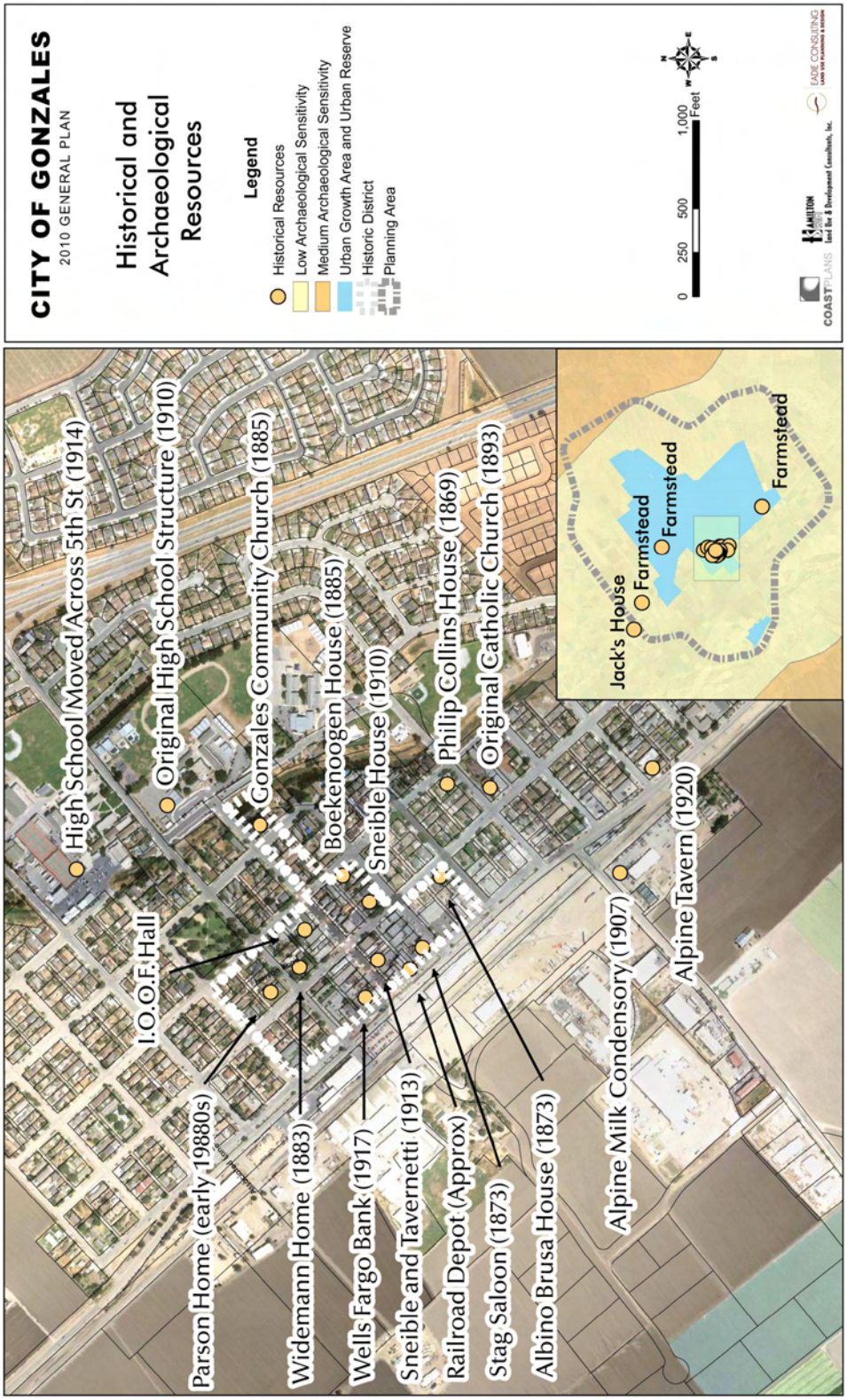
Figure 4.14.1: Cultural Resources



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4.14.2 REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

4.14.2.1. STATE AND FEDERAL HISTORIC PRESERVATION PROGRAMS

According to the California Office of Historic Preservation, a historic property (for purposed of State actions), is:

> *". . . Any building, site, structure, object, district or collection of structures, and their associated sites, deemed of importance to the history, architecture or culture of an area by an appropriate local, state or federal government jurisdiction. This shall include structures on existing or future national, state, or local historical registers or official inventories, such as the National Register of Historic Places, State Historical Landmarks, State Points of Historical Interest, and city or county registers or inventories of historical or architecturally significant sites, places, historic districts or landmarks."*[74]

For the purpose of federal action, a qualified historic resource is:

> *". . . Any district, building, structure, site, or object that is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places because the property is significant at the national, state, or local level in American history, architecture, archeology, engineering, or culture. Typically, a historic property must be at least 50 years old and retain integrity."*[75]

The State Office of Historic Preservation oversees four historic preservation programs:

- ✓ National Register of Historic Places
- ✓ California Register of Historic Places
- ✓ California Historical Landmarks
- ✓ California Points of Historic Interest

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[74] Source: California Health and Safety Code §18955
[75] Source: http://www.parks.ca.gov

Each program has its own specific eligibility criteria, although historic resources often overlap on multiple lists. Resources listed in the National Register as California Historical Landmarks meeting a certain standard for historical significance (i.e., #770 and above), are automatically listed in the California Register. Points of Historical Interest designated after December 1997 and recommended by the State Historical Resources Commission are also listed in the California Register.

4.14.2.2. Senate Bill 18—Tribal Consultation Guidelines

Senate Bill 18 (SB18) requires that local governments consult with tribal representatives about the implications of proposed general plans or amendments on protected cultural places and sacred sites. SB18 introduces a separate process that expands the focus to include traditional tribal cultural places on both public and private lands for federally and non-federally recognized tribes. A cultural place is a landscape feature, site, or cultural resource that has some relationship to particular tribal religious heritage or is an historical or archaeological site of significance or potential significance. The cultural place may be outside the reservation boundary. Many tribes have "Traditional Use Areas" that extend miles beyond reservation boundaries, reflecting their historical mobile patterns. SB18 consultation is designed to be concurrent with the general plan process.

4.14.2.3. Monterey County Local Official Register of Historic Resources

The local Official Register of Historic Resources is the County of Monterey's listing of locally designated historic resources.

4.14.3 Thresholds of Significance

The proposed project was considered to have a significant adverse effect on the environment if it met any of the standards of significance listed below. The Initial Study excluded no areas of concern in this topic area.

- Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in CEQA Section 15064.5.

- Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to CEQA Section 15064.5.
- Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature.
- Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries.

4.14.4 IMPACTS AND MITIGATIONS

4.14.4.1. CAUSE A SUBSTANTIAL ADVERSE CHANGE IN THE SIGNIFICANCE OF A HISTORICAL RESOURCE AS DEFINED IN CEQA SECTION 15064.5.

A. Impact

Impact CUL-1: The adoption of the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* would provide the basis for development with the potential to cause a significant adverse change in historical resources (Less than Significant with Mitigation Measures).

The proposed project would enable development activity that could affect historical resources in the planning area. The proposed project could result in the development of Specific Plans and other discretionary approvals that could result in either the demolition of historically significant structures and properties or in a substantial change in the surrounding area of potential effect (APE).[76]

B. Applicable Policies and Regulations

The *Gonzales 2010 General Plan's* "Community Character Element" contains policies and implementing actions designed to protect historic resources in the planning area:

[76] According to Federal Emergency Management Agency, the APE is the geographic area within which the character or use of historic properties may be changed as a result of the project (see http://training.fema.gov/EMIWeb/IS/IS253LS/EHP0304Summary.pdf).

Policy CC-7.1 Historic Preservation

Encourage the preservation of historic buildings in Gonzales, both within the Historic District and elsewhere in the City. While retrofitting of such buildings for contemporary uses is strongly encouraged, alterations should respect and complement the historic character and design elements of the buildings.

Implementing Action CC-7.1.1 – Historic District. Create and maintain an Historic District corresponding to the boundaries identified on the Land Use Diagram. Creation of the District will allow property owners to take advantage of tax benefits offered to historic properties and will assist the City in its efforts to conserve historic resources in Gonzales.

Implementing Action CC-7.1.2 – Promote Historic Preservation. Promote broad-based interest in and support for historic preservation activities in the City.

Implementing Action CC-7.1.3 – Priority Listing of Historic Sites. Establish and maintain a priority listing of buildings and sites in the Downtown Historic District in cooperation with the Historic Preservation Commission of Gonzales.

Implementing Action CC-7.1.4 – Historic Design Guidelines. Develop design guidelines for new buildings and alterations to existing buildings within the Historic District.

Implementing Action CC-7.1.5 – Funding for Rehabilitation. Explore possible funding sources for rehabilitation and restoration of historic buildings and sites within the Historic District.

Implementing Action CC-7.1.6 – Historic Plaques and Markers. Promote the use of plaques, markers, brochures, and other informational tools to increase awareness and appreciation of local historic resources.

Implementing Action CC-7.1.7 – Technical Assistance. Encourage and aid private efforts to rehabilitate and restore historic properties by providing information and expertise, and by allowing flexibility in the application of zoning and code compliance standards.

Implementing Action CC-7.1.8 – Interagency Coordination. Coordinate City programs with those of other agencies that are either involved in historic preservation or that set requirements affecting historic buildings. For instance, the City should ensure that the State's alternative building code requirements for historic structures are followed.

Implementing Action CC-7.1.9 – Quick-Response Ordinance. Adopt an ordinance or resolution that provides a quick-response mechanism for saving historic resources threatened by demolition. The ordinance or resolution should emphasize the restoration (rather than demolition) of historic resources that are damaged by earthquakes, fires, or other natural disasters and should include provisions addressing the availability of funding for restoration.

C. Significance Determination

While these policies and actions lessen the potential impact of urbanization on historic resources, there remains the potential for substantial adverse effect on historic resources. No site-specific historical surveys were undertaken as part of this program-level EIR, so it is unknown what if any historical resources may be present on any particular development site. Such site-specific investigations would need to be undertaken at the next stage of discretionary approval as part of the Specific Plan process, which is an integral part of the General Plan implementation strategy. This is an impact that would be made less than significant with Mitigation Measure CUL-1.

D. Mitigation Measures

The City of Gonzales shall incorporate the following measure into the *Draft Gonzales 2010 General Plan* prior to final adoption and eliminate or amend any existing provisions of the draft plan that may be in conflict with this measure so as to eliminate the inconsistency in favor of the measure:

Mitigation Measure CUL-1: Project-Level Cultural Analysis Required

The City shall require Specific Plans and development applications to contain a project-level analysis of cultural resources for all areas planned for urbanization. Such an analysis shall evaluate the full range of cultural resources, including historical, archaeological, and paleontological resources, and buried human

remains. The analysis shall recommend measures to mitigate any significant impact that a specific project may have on cultural resources.

4.14.4.2. Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a prehistoric archaeological resource

A. Impact

Impact CUL-2: The adoption of the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* provides the basis development activity with the potential to cause a significant change in prehistoric archaeological resources that may exist in the planning area (Less than Significant with Mitigation Measures).

The proposed project would enable development activity that could affect archaeological resources in the planning area. The Northwest Information Center has indicated that there is a high potential of identifying unrecorded Native American resources in the planning area. There is a potential, therefore, for unrecorded archaeological resources to be located in the western part of the planning area close to the Salinas River.

B. Applicable Policies and Regulations

The *Gonzales 2010 General Plan's* "Community Character Element" contains the following policies and implementing measures designed to protect unique prehistoric archaeological resources in the planning area:

Policy CC-9.1 Archaeological Protection

Support continued research on Native American settlement around Gonzales and protect any artifacts or sites discovered.

Implementing Action CC-9.1.1 – Archaeological Investigation. *Conduct an investigation of potential archaeological resources on any development site where there is reason to believe that such resources are likely to be present. The decision to preserve or extract any resources uncovered would be made on a case by case basis according to the recommendation of a qualified archaeologist.*

C. Significance Determination

While this policy and action lessens the potential impact of urbanization on prehistoric archaeological resources, there remains the potential for substantial adverse effect on prehistoric archaeological resources. No site-specific historical surveys were undertaken as part of this program-level EIR, so it is unknown what if any resources may be present on any particular development site. Such site-specific investigations would need to be undertaken at the next stage of discretionary approval as part of the Specific Plan process, which is an integral part of the General Plan implementation strategy. This is an impact that would be made less than significant with Mitigation Measure CUL-1 (presented in a previous subsection). In addition, while the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* contains an action requiring archaeological investigation, it contains no provisions specifying procedures to follow when such resources are discovered accidentally during construction. This is an impact that would be made less than significant impact with the following mitigation measure:

D. Mitigation Measures

The City of Gonzales shall incorporate the following measure into the *Draft Gonzales 2010 General Plan* prior to final adoption and eliminate or amend any existing provisions of the draft plan that may be in conflict with this measure so as to eliminate the inconsistency in favor of the measure:

Mitigation Measure CUL-2: Accidental Discovery of Cultural Resources

The City shall require as a standard condition of project approval the following: "if any archaeological resources are discovered during grading or construction, all work shall be immediately halted and appropriate personnel, including a qualified Native American representative, shall be contacted and consulted. Based on these consultations, appropriate measures shall be taken to protect the discovered resources, and only after such measures have been implemented shall grading or construction continue."

4.14.4.3. Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature.

A. Impact

Impact CUL-3: The adoption of the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* would provide the basis for development activity with the potential to lead to the destruction of a unique paleontological resource or site of unique geologic features (Less than Significant with Mitigation Measures).

The proposed project would enable development activity that could affect paleontological resources in the planning area. According to the *Draft Monterey County General Plan,* there are no known significant paleontological localities within the planning area. In addition, a cursory field examination of the planning area conducted by Coastplans and City officials in 2007 indicates no evidence of any unique geologic feature, such as a rock outcropping or cave complex. However, the deep alluvial deposits within much of the planning area increase the potential for buried paleontological resources and/or unique geologic features that may have no surface indication.

B. Applicable Policies and Regulations

No application policies or regulations.

C. Significance Determination

No site-specific surveys were undertaken as part of this program-level EIR, so it is unknown what if any resources may be present on any particular development site. Such site-specific investigations would need to be undertaken at the next stage of discretionary approval as part of the Specific Plan process, which is an integral part of the General Plan implementation strategy. This is an impact that would be made less than significant with Mitigation Measure CUL-1 and Mitigation Measure CUL-2 (presented in a previous subsection).

D. Mitigation Measures

No additional measures required.

4.14.4.4. Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries

A. Impact

Impact CUL-4: The adoption of the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* would provide the basis for development activity that could result in the disturbance of human remains (Less than Significant with Mitigation Measures).

The proposed project would enable development activity that could result in the disturbance of human remains. The urbanization of the planning area would involve extensive grading and trenching activity to prepare streets and building pads, install drainage features, lay pipe for public utilities, and prepare building foundations. Such grading and trenching activity has the potential to disturb human remains that may be interred in the planning area outside of modern cemeteries. As discussed above, a record search of the sacred lands file failed to indicate the presence of Native American cultural resources in the immediate planning area and persons on the Native American Contact List for Monterey County had no knowledge of ancestral burial grounds in the planning area.

Nonetheless, as noted above, the Northwest Information Center (NWIC) identified a high potential for discovering unrecorded Native American archaeological resources and a moderate possibility for discovering historic-period archaeological resources in the planning area. In his letter dated July 17, 2009, Bryan Much, Assistant Coordinator at the Northwest Information Center recommended that future projects with the Gonzales planning area be considered on an individual basis under the NWIC's Project Review Program. He noted that special attention should be given to the potential for buried archaeological resources with no surface indications.

B. Applicable Policies and Regulations

See Subsection 4.5.4.2[B] above.

C. Significance Determination

While the policies and action of *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* lessen the potential for disturbing human remains interred outside of formal cemeteries in the planning area, there remains the potential for substantial adverse effect on such resources. No site-specific

surveys were undertaken as part of this program-level EIR, so it is unknown what if any resources may be present on any particular development site. Such site-specific investigations would need to be undertaken at the next stage of discretionary approval as part of the Specific Plan process, which is an integral part of the General Plan implementation strategy. In addition, there is potential for accidentally uncovering human remains during grading or construction. These are impacts that would be made less than significant with Mitigation Measure CUL-1 and Mitigation Measure CUL-2 (presented in previous subsections).

D. Mitigation Measures

No additional measures required.

4.15 MINERAL RESOURCES

The Initial Study concluded that the proposed project has no potential to result in adverse effects in this topic of concern, and this EIR has been focused to exclude this topic from further consideration. Excluded areas of concern are shown below in ~~strikeout~~ format.

- ~~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?~~
- ~~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?~~

4.16 GEOLOGY AND SOILS

This section evaluates whether the proposed project would expose people or structures to major geologic hazards or would damage geological resources.

4.16.1 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

The following subsection describes existing conditions in the planning area.

4.16.1.1. REGIONAL GEOLOGY

The following text includes edited excerpts of a geological analysis contained in a recently completed environmental study for a project in the Gonzales area that was prepared for the City of Gonzales.[77] Information is also derived from the "*Monterey County 2007 General Plan* Draft Environmental Impact Report."

Gonzales is located in the northwest-southeast trending alluvial filled Salinas Valley carved by the Salinas River. The depth of the alluvium is estimated to vary between 880 and 1,000 feet. The low rolling foothills of the Gabilan Mountains lie to the east of Gonzales. These upland areas are non-marine terrace deposits of the Pleistocene Epoch, Quaternary Period. Both marine and non-marine deposits originated from the surrounding mountains. The valley fill was deposited as a result of physical and chemical weathering. The parent rocks of the higher areas eroded and the alluvium was transported by water, wind and gravity to form the valley fill. Alluvial fan deposit material is highly variable with mixtures of gravel, sand, clay and silt. The topography of the Gonzales planning area is primarily flat but slopes gently as it approaches the Gabilan Range to the east.

[77] Sun Valley and Foletta Subdivisions EIR (SCH #2006091132)

A. Faults

Gonzales is located in a region that is seismically active; however, no known active faults fall within the area mapped as a result of the Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zone Act of 1972. Nearby active or potentially active faults include the Reliz fault, located approximately three miles southwest of the city; the Monterey Bay-Tularcitos fault, located approximately 11 miles southwest of the site; and the San Andreas fault (creeping segment, located 15 miles northeast of the City. The King City Fault lies about four miles west of the City. Other smaller faults, including Bear Valley, Rinconada, Tularcitos, Pinnacles, and Chalone Creek, are located within a 15-mile radius of the City. There are no known faults within the City or the planning area.

B. Ground Shaking

The City lies within Geotechnical Evaluation Zones II and IV of the Monterey County Seismic Safety Map (Breckoland and Associates 1975). Seismic risk to property is characterized on this map as being moderate to high due to the proximity of the City to the active San Andreas and King City fault zones and the characteristics of the underlying material. Because the planning area is located in an alluvium-filled valley, the ground responds strongly to seismic waves generated by an earthquake. The City could expect to experience moderate to severe groundshaking in the event of a major earthquake on the San Andreas Fault. The fault has the capacity to produce another earthquake similar in magnitude to the great quake of 1906, which measured 8.3 on the Richter scale. One recent estimate was that the maximum likely earthquake in the next 50 years on the San Benito/Santa Cruz section of the fault would be of Richter Magnitude 7.0 to 8.0. The most recent earthquake to affect the City was the 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake, which had a magnitude of 7.1 and an epicenter on the San Andreas Fault in Santa Cruz County about 50 miles from Gonzales. An earthquake of moderate to high magnitude generated on a nearby fault could cause considerable ground shaking at the site.

Ground lurching is a result of the rolling motion imparted to the ground surface during energy released by an earthquake. Such rolling motion can cause ground cracks to form. The potential for the formation of these cracks is considered greater at contacts between deep alluvium and bedrock. Such an occurrence is possible in the planning area.

C. Liquefaction

Other geologic hazards affecting Gonzales include liquefaction. Liquefaction is a type of ground failure that involves a sudden loss in strength of a saturated, cohesionless soil caused by shock or strain, such as an earthquake, and resulting in the temporary transformation of the soil into a fluid mass. If the liquefying layer is near the surface, the effects are much like that of quicksand. If the liquefying layer is in the subsurface, it may provide a sliding surface for the material above it. Liquefaction typically occurs in areas where groundwater is less than 30 feet below the surface, and where the soils are composed predominantly of poorly consolidated fine sand. The hazard is the greatest in filled areas along the Gonzales Slough and in areas where soils are sandy or water-saturated, such as the Gonzales wastewater treatment plant site west of the City limits. Figure 4.16.1 shows seismic hazards zones in the planning area. Figure 4.16.2 show liquefaction hazards in the planning area.

Figure 4.16.1: Seismic Hazards

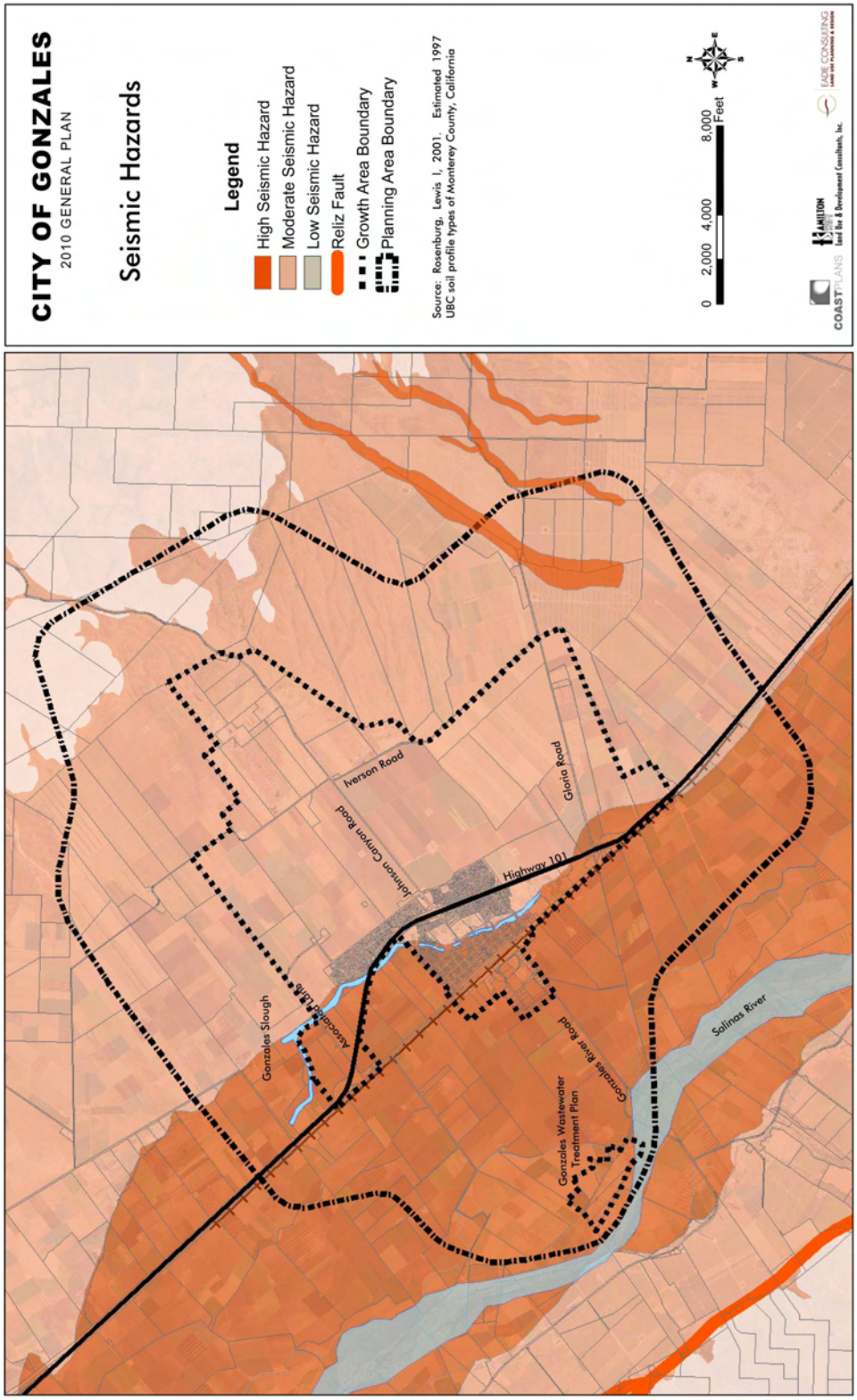

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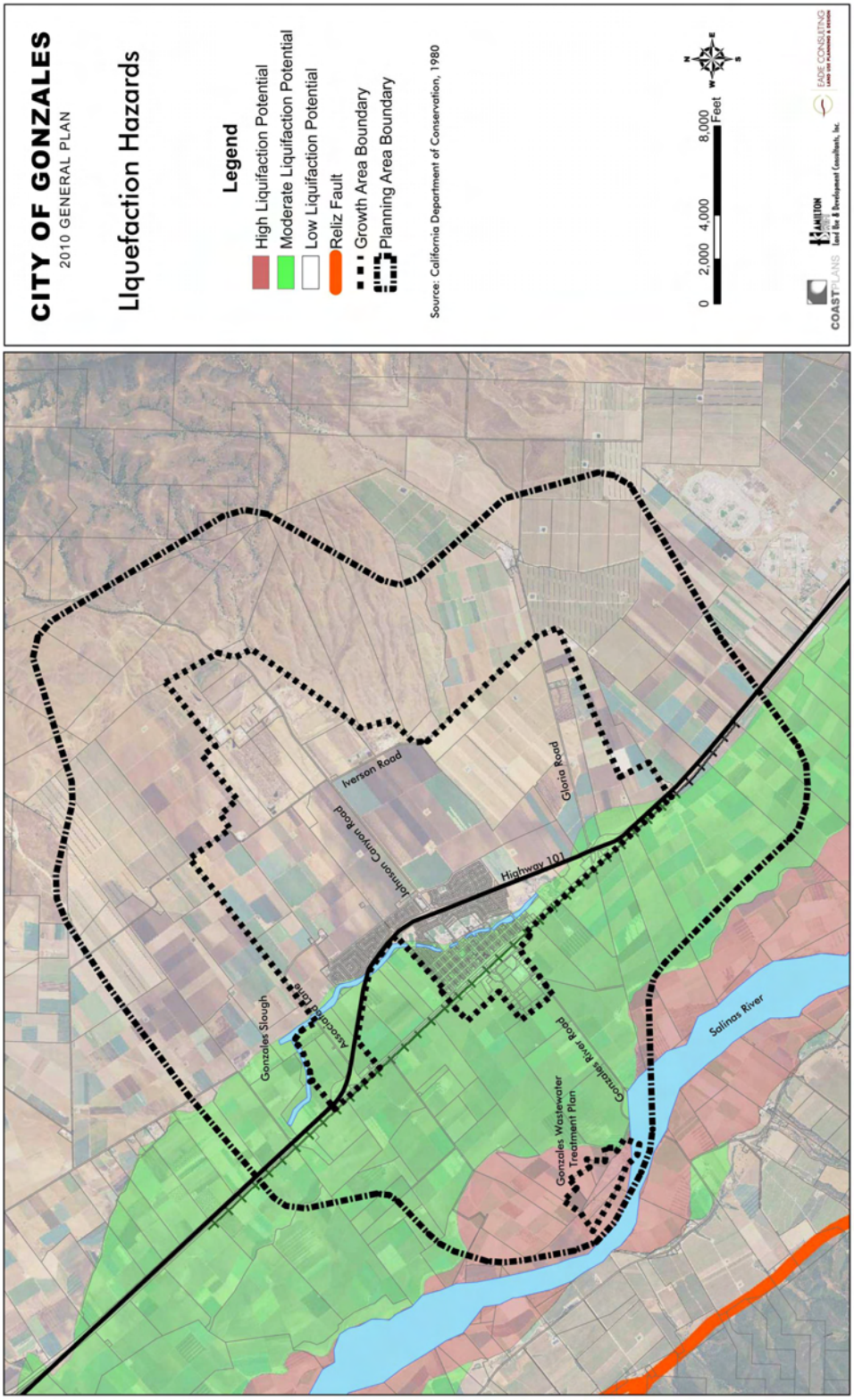
Figure 4.16.2: Liquefaction Hazards



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D. Settlement

Densification/settlement of the sandy soils above and below groundwater levels can result in settlement during an earthquake. Earthquake-induced densification, as well as densification due to wetting from irrigation and stormwater, could occur in the planning area. [78]

E. Lateral Spreading

Lateral spreading can occur in weaker soils on slopes and adjacent to open channels that are subject to strong ground shaking during earthquakes.[79] While most of the planning area is topographically flat, there are some limited opportunities for lateral spreading in areas adjacent to Gonzales Slough and the upper reaches of Johnson Canyon Creek.[80]

F. Expansive and Erodable Soils and Other Issues

Expansive soils shrink and swell as a result of moisture changes. This can cause heaving and cracking of slabs-on-grade, pavements and structures on shallow foundations. In the Salinas Valley, erosion and deposition are directly related through flooding, where sediment is picked up in one area, transported, and deposited in another. This includes sediment eroded from stream banks due to scouring flow. There is also general erosion on terrace surfaces, and wind erosion of bare soils, especially those with low cohesion that have formed from sandy deposits. The planning area has low to moderate expansion potential.[81] Figure 4.16.3 shows areas of potential erosion hazards in the planning area, and Figure 4.16.4 shows areas of soil shrink/swell potential. As can be seen, the areas of highest erosion potential occur outside the Urban Growth Area and the Urban Reserve Area in the eastern reaches of the planning area. The areas of greatest shrink/swell potential are also the areas of highest soil quality for agriculture, which lie west of Gonzales Slough. Due to relative flat topography, risk from earthquake-induced landsliding, and lurch cracking is considered low. Due to the absence of large bodies of water close to the planning area, the potential for tsunamis or seiches is considered non-existent.

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[78] Source: Sun Valley and Foletta Subdivisions DEIR, 2007
[79] I.B.I.D
[80] Source: Coastplans, based on extrapolation of analysis contained in Sun Valley and Foletta Subdivisions DEIR, 2007
[81] Source: California Department of Conservation, 1980

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Figure 4.16.3: Erosion Potential

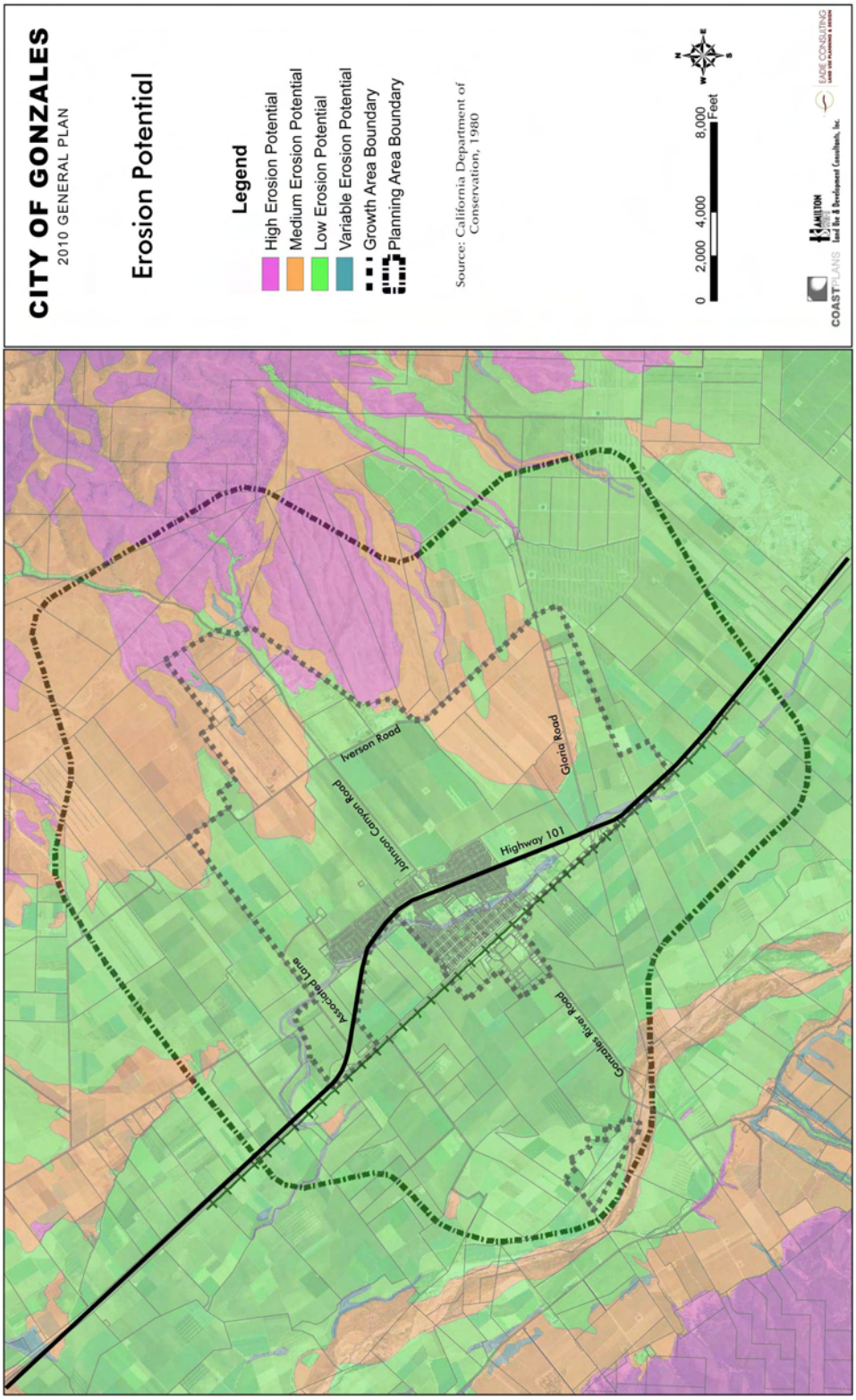

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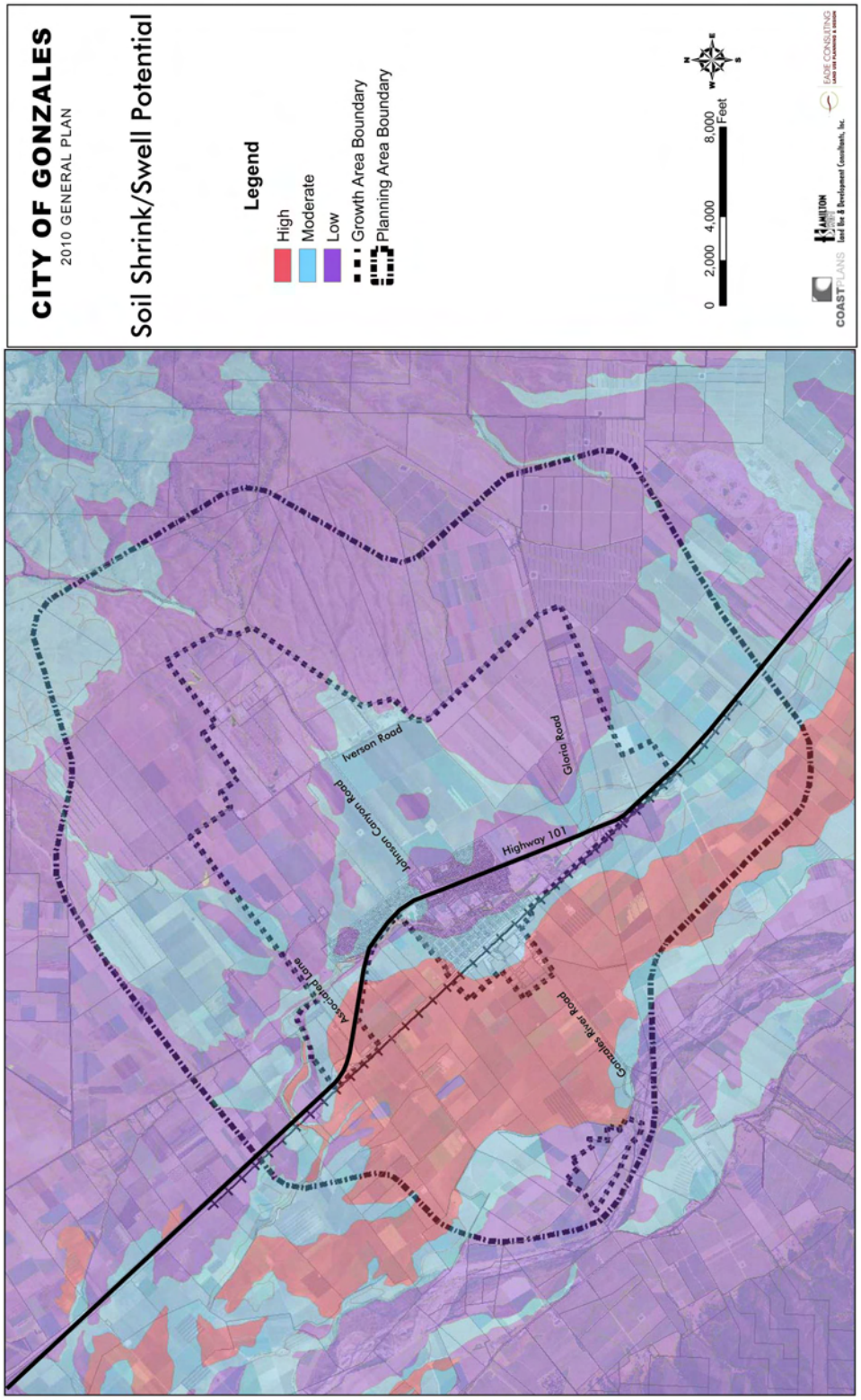
Figure 4.16.4: Soil Shrink/Swell Potential



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4.16.2 THRESHOLDS OF SIGNIFICANCE

The proposed project was considered to have a significant adverse effect on the environment if it met any of the standards of significance listed below. The Initial Study concluded that the proposed project has no potential to result in adverse effects for certain areas of concern, and this EIR has been focused to exclude such listed effects from further consideration. Excluded areas of concern are shown in ~~strikeout~~ format.

- 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, iii) seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction; or iv) ~~Landslides;~~

- Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?

- Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site liquefaction?

- 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?

- ~~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?~~

4.16.3 IMPACTS AND MITIGATIONS

4.16.3.1. EXPOSE PEOPLE OR STRUCTURES TO POTENTIAL SUBSTANTIAL ADVERSE EFFECTS, INCLUDING THE RISK OF LOSS, INJURY, OR DEATH INVOLVING: I)

STRONG SEISMIC GROUND SHAKING, OR II) SEISMIC-RELATED GROUND FAILURE, INCLUDING LIQUEFACTION

A. Impact

Impact GEO-1: The adoption of the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* would provide the basis for development activity with the potential to expose persons to substantial adverse effects related to seismic-related events (Less than Significant).

The proposed project would enable development activity that could expose persons to the effects of seismic events. While the likelihood of ground rupture is low due to absence of any known fault within the planning area, groundshaking is considered a major hazard throughout the Salinas Valley and therefore in the planning area. Groundshaking could lead to structural failure in buildings, roads, and bridges and to ground failure, including liquefaction.

B. Applicable Policies and Regulations

The "Community Health and Safety Element" contains the following policies and implementing actions designed to protect against impacts related to seismic events in the planning area:

Policy HS-1.1 Seismic Safety in New Construction and Redevelopment

Require all new construction and renovation to be designed and constructed to retain structural integrity when subject to seismic activity, in accordance with the City's building codes.

Implementing Action HS-1.1.1 – Design for Seismic Safety. *Require new development in areas of moderately or very high seismic hazard shown in GP Figure V-1 to assess the extent of seismic hazards in accordance with State guidelines and incorporate mitigation measures that reduce them.*

Implementing Action HS-1.1.2 – Seismic Retrofit. *Encourage the upgrading of existing buildings to protect against damage, injury, and loss of life.*

Implementing Action HS-1.1.3 – Setbacks from New Faults. *In the event potentially active faults are discovered in the future, establish setbacks between such faults and any structures intended for human occupancy.*

Implementing Action HS-1.1.4 – Soils Analysis. *Conduct soils analyses for all applications where development is proposed in areas with moderate or high seismic risks or where soil stability may be an issue.*

Implementing Action HS-1.1.5 – Geotechnical Investigations. *Conduct geotechnical investigations using a State-registered geologist, for major development proposals on those sites within 500 feet of the Gonzales Slough and those sites identified in GP Figure V-1 as having high seismic hazards. These reports should evaluate measures to mitigate the effects of ground shaking, liquefaction, subsidence, settlement, and fault displacement.*

Implementing Action HS-1.1.6 – Un-Reinforced Masonry. *Provide applicants proposing work on un-reinforced masonry (URM) buildings with all necessary information to comply with State laws and requirements for URMs.*

Implementing Action HS-1.1.7 – Public Awareness. *Continue to promote public awareness of earthquake hazards and ways to reinforce buildings and prevent damage, including bolting of homes to their foundations.*

Implementing Action HS-1.1.8 – Periodic Building Code Update. *Evaluate any building code changes pertaining to seismic safety for their potential impact on historic structures. Code revisions which promote the preservation of such structures should be encouraged.*

Implementing Action HS-1.1.9 – Subsidence and Differential Settlement. *Maintain building codes, engineering standards, and groundwater withdrawal practices which minimize the risk of subsidence and differential settlement.*

C. Significance Determination

The policies and actions contained in the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* lessen the potential impacts related to seismic events, and the Uniform Building Code is designed to mitigate major seismic hazards. The impacts related to seismic hazards are less than significant.

D. Mitigation Measures

None required.

4.16.3.2. Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil

A. Impact

Impact GEO-2: The adoption of the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* would provide the basis development activity with the potential to result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil (Less than Significant).

The proposed project would enable development activity that could expose soils in the planning area to erosion. In general, the potential for erosion and attendant loss of topsoil is greatest on the eastern side of the planning area where lands slope up to form the foothills of the Gabilan Mountains. The predominantly low sloping lands in the Urban Growth Area have low or moderate potential for erosion. Construction and grading activities and associated changes in stormwater flows could lead to erosion and loss of top soil in the planning area.

B. Applicable Policies and Regulations

The "Conservation and Open Space Element" contains the following policies and implementing actions designed to protect soils in the planning area:

Policy COS-4.1 Minimize Erosion and Loss of Top Soil

Minimize erosion and loss of topsoil as new development occurs. Soil should be protected to avoid siltation of the Slough and to maintain its capability to support landscaping, gardens, and other productive uses.

Implementing Action COS-4.1.1 – Require Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plans. *For projects that may disturb one acre or more of soil, refer the development applicant to the Regional Water Quality Control Board for preparation of a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan. Where appropriate, require measures to mitigate potential adverse impacts on soil, including erosion and siltation of drainage courses.*

C. Significance Determination

The policies and actions contained in the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* lessen the potential impacts related to erosion and soil loss to a level of less than significant.

D. Mitigation Measures

None required.

4.16.3.3. Located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable and potentially result in on- or off-site liquefaction

A. Impact

Impact GEO-3: The adoption of the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* would provide the basis for development activity on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable and potentially subject to liquefaction (Less than Significant).

The proposed project would enable development activity on lands that could be subject to liquefaction during seismic events. The part of the planning area that lies west of Gonzales Slough has moderate liquefaction potential, and the areas closest to the Salinas River have high liquefaction potential. Areas east of Gonzales Slough, where most urbanization is directed, generally have low liquefaction potential. The *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* expands the potential for development in areas of moderate liquefaction potential by designating land for neighborhood residential development in the vicinity of the Northern Interchange at Highway 101. Also, urban expansion would probably require expansion of the City's wastewater treatment plant located adjacent to the Salinas River in an area of high liquefaction potential.

B. Applicable Policies and Regulations

See policies and action under Subsection 4.16.3.1 above.

C. Significance Determination

The policies and actions contained in the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* lessen the potential impacts related to liquefaction to a level of less than significant.

D. Mitigation Measures

None required.

4.16.3.4. LOCATED ON EXPANSIVE SOIL, CREATING SUBSTANTIAL RISKS TO LIFE OR PROPERTY

A. Impact

Impact GEO-4: The adoption of the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* would provide the basis for development activity on expansive soil, creating substantial risks to life or property (Less than Significant).

The proposed project would enable development activity on lands that could have expansive soil properties. Soil characteristics directly impact land use. Soil ideal for agriculture may not be suitable for building foundations or roadways, while certain erosive or expansive soils are entirely unsuitable to use as engineered fill. Improper design for specific soil conditions can cause significant financial losses and can influence the performance and safety of civil works. The State of California has estimated statewide losses due to damage from expansive soils for the period 1970 though 2000 exceeding $150 million. The *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* would have the potential to result in urbanization on soils that are subject to expansion and contraction. Construction on such soils could lead to foundation problems in buildings and instability in roadbeds that could create a substantial risk to life or property.

B. Applicable Policies and Regulations

See policies and action under Subsection 4.16.3.1 above.

C. Significance Determination

The policies and actions contained in the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* lessen the potential impacts related expansive soils to a level of less than significant.

D. Mitigation Measures

None required.

4.17 HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

This section evaluates the potential impacts of the proposed project related to hazards and the use and disposal of hazardous substances. This section contains information from the California Department of Toxic Substances Control and from the County of Monterey. As part of the development of the "Community Health and Safety Element" and "Conservation and Open Space Element" the City of Gonzales reviewed state planning law related to hazards planning and disseminated draft materials to state, regional, and local agencies that handle emergency planning and response.

4.17.1 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

The planning area includes existing urbanized areas, a proposed growth area dominated by agricultural land, which has been actively farmed for decades and subject to pesticide and chemical fertilizer use, and an urban reserve area with includes agricultural land and foothill areas with moderate to steep slopes. These areas are described in more detail below.

4.17.1.1. HAZARDOUS MATERIALS SITES

According to the California Department of Toxic Substances Control EnviroStor Database,[82] there is one contaminated site listed on Federal or State databases—Fanoe Ranch, which is listed as a State Voluntary Clean-Up Site. Potential contaminants of concern include:

- ✓ Dioxin (as 2,3,7,8-TCDD TEQ);
- ✓ Lead;
- ✓ Organochlorine Pesticides (8081 OCPS); And

[82] Source: California Department of Toxic Substances Control. EnviroStor Database (August 6, 2009).

✓ Petroleum.

The following is the site history excerpted from the EnviroStor Database:

> *The Site is located in a rural agricultural area cultivated with row crops including sugar beets, beans, alfalfa, lettuce, broccoli, cauliflower, celery and seed crops. Agricultural chemicals historically used onsite include herbicides, fungicides, insecticides and pesticides. Three agricultural wells are used onsite with depths ranging from 900 to 960 feet. A dairy farm business leased and used a portion of the Site from 1938 until 1970. When the dairy ceased operation, the barn and associated structures were demolished. Two petroleum tanks were reportedly buried in the vicinity of the former dairy area. Sturdy Oil Company has leased a portion of the former dairy area for bulk storage of gasoline and diesel since 1972. The company also uses an approximately 15-acre area at the northeastern corner of the Site for treatment/disposal of hydrocarbon impacted soil excavated from Sturdy Oil service stations in the south Monterey County area with approval from the Monterey County Health Department.*

4.17.1.2. Transport and Handling of Hazardous Materials

Products as diverse as gasoline, paint solvents, film solvents, household cleaning products, refrigerants and radioactive substances are categorized as hazardous materials. What remains of a hazardous material after use or processing is considered to be a hazardous waste. The handling, transportation and disposal of such materials and wastes are of concern in all communities. Improper handling of hazardous materials or wastes may result in significant effects to human health and the environment.

Accidental Release Prevention laws were passed by both the Federal and State governments to help prevent accidental releases of extremely hazardous chemicals from impacting surrounding communities. Extremely hazardous chemicals (termed "regulated substances") include anhydrous ammonia, chlorine gas, sulfur dioxide, methyl bromide and a number of pesticides. In addition, many of the commercial and industrial operations in Gonzales unrelated to the agricultural industry use hazardous materials and generate hazardous materials as part of their daily operations. Some examples of

hazardous material users include gasoline stations, dry cleaners and automotive repair shops. Hazardous materials are also used by residential households, including cleaning supplies and paints.

The Monterey County Environmental Health Division, which is the local CUPA (Certified Unified Program Agency), administers state and federal accidental release prevention laws and regulations through its Hazardous Materials Business Response Plan and Inventory Program.

Two major transportation facilities are located in the planning area—Highway 101 and Union Pacific Railroad—and hazardous materials are transported through the planning area on these facilities. The U.S. Department of Transportation Pipeline and Hazardous materials Safety Administration's (PHMSA) Office of Hazardous Materials Safety is the Federal safety authority for ensuring the safe transport of hazardous materials by air, rail, highway, and water. According to PHMSA there were five reported hazardous materials incidents on Highway 101 since 2000.[83] Of these five, one was considered serious. None of these incidents occurred in Monterey County. PHMSA also report three incidents involving the Union Pacific Railroad in California since 2000. Of these three, one of these was considered serious. None of these incidents occurred in Monterey County.

Finally with regard to potential land use conflicts involving the location of new schools, the California Public Resources Code §21151.8(a) contains requirements for the construction of an elementary or secondary school. Such conflicts are also addressed in the Monterey Bay Unified Air Pollution Control District's Rule 402, Nuisances.

4.17.1.3. FIRE HAZARDS

According to the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CDFFP), the easternmost part of the planning area has a "Very High" potential for fire hazards. The remainder of the planning area is undesignated, which means that there is neither "Very High" nor "Moderate" potential for fire hazards in this area. These classifications are based on slope, climate, fuel loading (vegetation) and water availability. The principal

[83] https://hazmatonline.phmsa.dot.gov/IncidentReportsSearch

ingredients of wildland fires—fuel, topography and weather—combine to make highly hazardous fire conditions in the eastern reaches of the planning area. To compound the problem, the local winds can make fire fighting very difficult. As a result, these areas can be unsafe for development and occupancy unless strong fire safety measures are taken.

4.17.1.4. SCHOOLS

There are four existing schools located in the planning area. These include:

1. Gonzales High School,
2. Somavia Continuation High School,
3. Fairview Middle School, and
4. La Gloria Elementary School

In addition to these existing schools, the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* identifies the need for as many as 12 new schools (two high schools, four middle schools, and six elementary schools). According to the Draft Land Use Diagram, no new industrial uses are planned within one-quarter mile of the existing schools in Gonzales. The location of new schools, however, is undetermined—these locations will be agreed upon in subsequent Specific Plan processes.

4.17.1.5. EMERGENCY RESPONSE AND EVACUATION

Monterey County has designated various routes in the planning area as "Pre-Designated Emergency Evacuation Routes" that may be deployed when necessary. These routes are maintained to ensure the safe and efficient movement of people, belongings, and emergency personnel during times of declared emergencies. These routes, which are shown in the figure above, include:

- ✓ Highway 101
- ✓ Gonzales River Road
- ✓ Gloria Road

- ✓ Johnson Canyon Road
- ✓ Old Stage Road

The City of Gonzales adopted an Emergency Operations Plan in March 2005. The plan is based on the functions and principles of the Standardized Emergency Management System (SEMS), which is based on the FIRESCOPE Incident Command System (ICS), and identifies how the city fits in the overall SEMS structure.

Figure 4.17.1 below shows the location of Fanoe Ranch, areas with fire hazard potential, the location of existing schools, and emergency evacuation routes.

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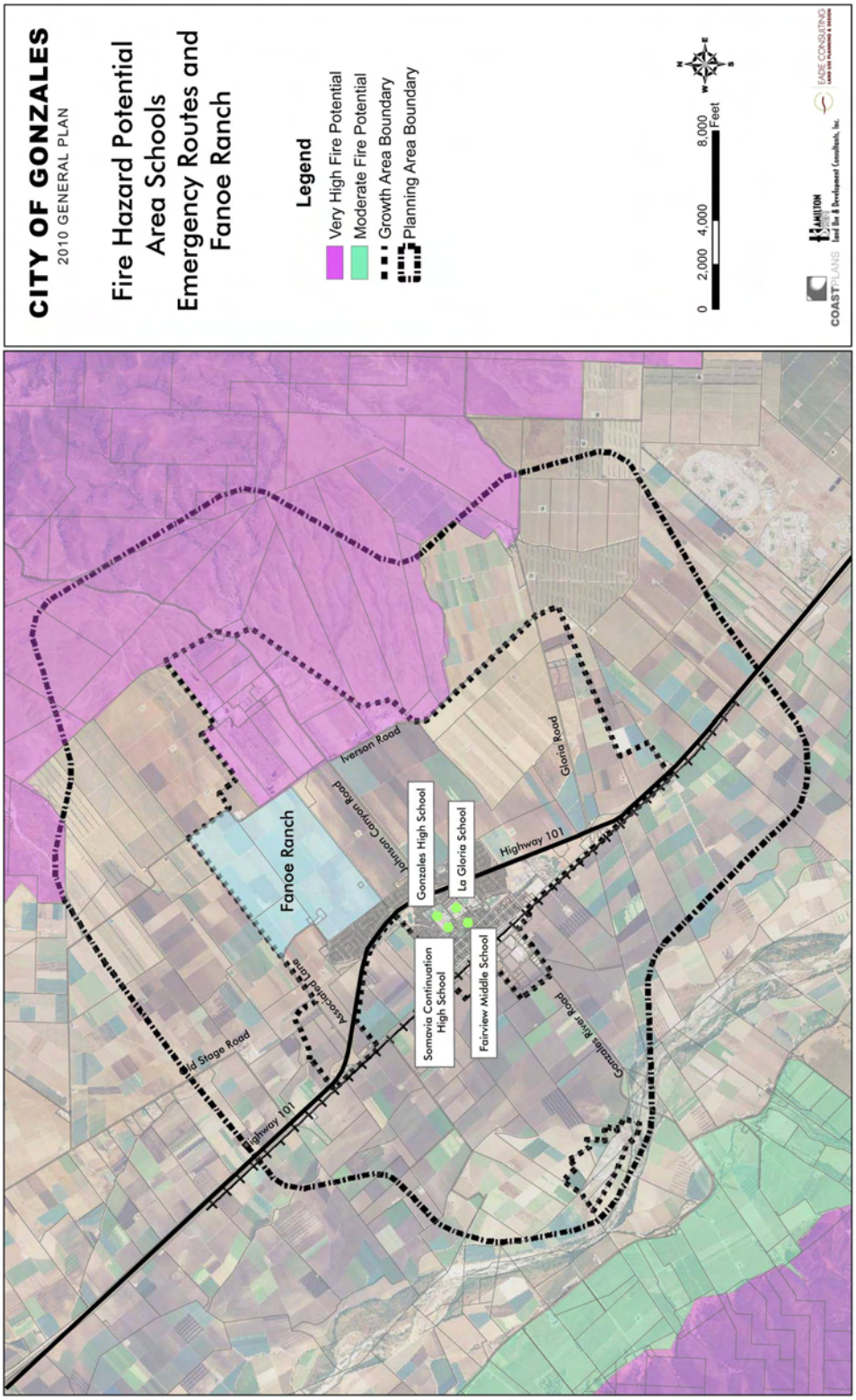
Figure 4.17.1: Hazards and Hazardous Materials



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4.17.2 THRESHOLDS OF SIGNIFICANCE

The proposed project was considered to have a significant adverse effect on the environment if it met any of the standards of significance listed below. The Initial Study concluded that the proposed project has no potential to result in adverse effects for certain areas of concern, and this EIR has been focused to exclude such listed effects from further consideration. Excluded areas of concern are shown in ~~strikeout~~ format.

- Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?
- 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?
- Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?
- 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?
- ~~For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?~~
- ~~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?~~
- Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?

4.17.3 Impacts and Mitigations

4.17.3.1. Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials

E. Impact

Impact HAZ-1: The adoption of the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* would provide the basis for development activity that could involve the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials (Less than Significant).

Much of the industry in Gonzales involves agricultural packaging and storage. These industries can include cold storage technologies that use ammonia or other materials that could pose a hazard to public health. Other industrial uses that may be encouraged to locate in Gonzales as a result of the proposed project, many of which are unforeseeable at this time, could have the potential use hazardous materials that require transport, use, and handling and, like cold storage, could pose a health hazard.

F. Applicable Policies and Regulations

The *Gonzales 2010 General Plan's* "Community Health and Safety Element" contains the following policies and implementing actions designed to address hazardous material safety in the planning area:

Policy HS-5.1 Hazardous Material Safety in New Construction and Redevelopment

Require all new construction and renovation to be designed and constructed to mitigate the effects of hazardous materials.

Implementing Action HS-5.1.1 – Review Development Proposals. Review all development proposals for their potential to introduce hazardous materials to Gonzales, and require a sanitary survey of the potential impact on City utilities and stormwater where necessary to protect public health and safety.

Implementing Action HS-5.1.2 – County Hazardous Materials Management Plan. Support the County Hazardous Waste Management Plan and participate in its periodic update.

Implementing Action HS-5.1.3 – State and County Requirements. Implement State and County requirements for the storage, use, transport, disposal, and handling of hazardous materials, including requirements for management plans, security precautions, and contingency plans.

Implementing Action HS-5.1.4 – Transport of Hazardous Materials. To the extent permitted by law, regulate the transport of hazardous materials in residential areas to minimize potential health and safety hazards.

Implementing Action HS-5.1.5 – Separation between Non-Compatible Uses. Provide adequate and safe separation between areas where hazardous materials are present and non-compatible uses such as schools, residences, and public facilities.

Implementing Action HS-5.1.6 – Inventory of Hazardous Materials Sites. Use State and County permitting data to maintain an inventory of sites that store, use, or are contaminated with significant quantities of hazardous materials. The inventory should be consulted when considering new residential development or school sites.

Implementing Action HS-5.1.7 – Site Sensitive Uses away from Hazardous Materials. Site future schools, residences, and public gathering places at least 1,000 feet downwind of areas that have significant quantities of hazardous materials. Conversely, site new uses that will have significant quantities of hazardous materials no less than 1,000 feet upwind of any existing or planned schools, residences, or public gathering places.

Implementing Action HS-5.1.8 – Storage of Hazardous Materials. Support enforcement of California Code of Regulations Title 19 requirements for the storage of hazardous materials.

Implementing Action HS-5.1.9 – Spill Containment. Enforce the spill containment requirement to Section 11.08.090 of the Gonzales City Code.

Where warranted by the type and extent of materials present, secondary spill containment facilities adequate to protect public health and safety should be required on properties with hazardous materials storage and/or processing activities.

G. Significance Determination

The policies and actions contained in the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* lessen the potential impacts involving the routine transport or handling of hazardous materials to a level of less than significant.

H. Mitigation Measures

None required.

4.17.3.2. 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

A. Impact

Impact HAZ-2: The adoption of the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* would provide the basis for development activity that could 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 (Less than Significant).

The proposed project would result in further urbanization in proximity to Highway 101 and Union Pacific Railroad. Both of these transportation facilities are used to transport hazardous materials throughout the state, and any upset or accident on these facilities in proximity to the planning area could create a significant hazard to the public. In addition, industrial uses such as cold storage operations could involve the use of chlorine gas, which if accidentally released could seriously affect the health of persons living down wind. The proposed project would allow more industrial development and place more persons in proximity to such development. As a result, a greater number of persons would be at risk if an industrial accident occurred.

B. Applicable Policies and Regulations

See Subsection 4.17.3.1 above.

C. Significance Determination

The policies and actions contained in the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan*, plus federal, state, and county regulations lessen the potential impact involving reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment. The proposed project locates heavy industrial uses primarily along the southern perimeter of the Urban Growth Area, where prevailing winds would typically carry any airborne hazardous materials away from populated areas. These impacts are less than significant.

D. Mitigation Measures

None required.

4.17.3.3. Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school

A. Impact

Impact HAZ-3: The adoption of the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* would provide the basis for development activity that could result in uses that might have hazardous emissions or entail the handling of hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school (Less than Significant with Mitigation Measures).

The proposed project would enable development activity including, among other things, industrial uses and new schools. A review of the Draft Land Use Diagram indicates that industrial uses have generally been located away from residential areas that would contain new schools. Nonetheless, the location of new schools is not definitively specified in the Draft Land Use Diagram, so there remains a potential for news schools to be located within one-quarter mile of an industrial use (or vise versa) that might have hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste.

B. Applicable Policies and Regulations

See Subsection 4.17.3.1, above.

C. Significance Determination

While the policies and actions contained in the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* lessen the potential impact involving uses that might have hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school, there nonetheless remains a potential for industrial uses and school to be located in proximity to one another. No site-specific investigations were undertaken as part of this program-level EIR, so it is unknown what if site planning issues may arise that call this issue into question. Such site-specific investigations would need to be undertaken at the next stage of discretionary approval as part of the Specific Plan process, which is an integral part of the General Plan implementation strategy. This is an impact that would be made less than significant with Mitigation Measure HAZ-1, below:

D. Mitigation Measures

The City of Gonzales shall incorporate the following measure into the *Draft Gonzales 2010 General Plan* prior to final adoption and eliminate or amend any existing provisions of the draft plan that may be in conflict with this measure so as to eliminate the inconsistency in favor of the measure:

> Mitigation Measure HAZ-1: Site-Specific Review of Potential Land Use Conflicts Involving the Location of New Schools.
>
> *The City of Gonzales shall identify and evaluate potential land use conflicts between schools and industrial uses as part of Specific Plan or other major development plan review and approval. Such review shall address California Public Resources Code §21151.8(a) regarding requirements for the proposed construction of an elementary or secondary school. Such review should also address the Monterey Bay Unified Air Pollution Control District's Rule 402, Nuisances.*

4.17.3.4. 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 CREATE A SIGNIFICANT HAZARD TO THE PUBLIC OR THE ENVIRONMENT

A. Impact

Impact HAZ-4: The adoption of the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* would provide the basis for development activity on Fanoe Ranch, a part of which is known to contain hazardous materials. Such development could create a significant hazard to the public or the environment (Less than Significant with Mitigation Measures).

The proposed project would enable development activity on a known hazardous materials site. Approximately one-third of the Urban Growth Area is occupied by the 770-acre Fanoe Ranch, which is a known hazardous materials site listed with the State of California. Development on this site could expose the public to hazardous contaminants. Also, there may be other unknown sites in the designated growth area that contain some kind of hazardous contaminant. In addition, the proposed project would also enable development activity on land that previously was used for agricultural production. These former agricultural soils could contain high residual levels of pesticides or herbicides that would pose a hazard to health.

B. Applicable Policies and Regulations

See Subsection 4.17.3.1 above.

C. Significance Determination

While the policies and actions contained in the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* lessen the potential impact involving known hazardous materials sites, there nonetheless remains a significant hazard to the public or the environment. Notwithstanding the summary information that is available from the Envirostor database regarding Fanoe Ranch, no site-specific investigations were undertaken as part of this program-level EIR, so the precise extent of contamination on Fanoe Ranch is unknown and it is unknown if other sites in the Planning area have potential contamination. Such site-specific investigations would need to be undertaken at the next stage of discretionary approval as part of the Specific Plan process, which is an integral part of the General Plan implementation strategy. This is an impact that would be made less than significant with Mitigation Measure HAZ-2, below.

There also remains the potential for a substantial adverse effect related to agricultural soils. No site-specific investigations were undertaken as part of this program-level EIR, so the actual extent of soil contamination on any particular development site is unknown. Such site-specific investigations would need to be undertaken at the next stage of discretionary approval as part of the Specific Plan process, which is an integral part of the General Plan implementation strategy. This is an impact that would be made less than significant with Mitigation Measure HAZ-3, below:

D. Mitigation Measures

The City of Gonzales shall incorporate the following measures into the *Draft Gonzales 2010 General Plan* prior to final adoption and eliminate or amend any existing provisions of the draft plan that may be in conflict with these measures so as to eliminate the inconsistency in favor of the measures:

Mitigation Measure HAZ-2: Remediation Plan for Clean-Up of Fanoe Ranch

The City of Gonzales shall require a remediation plan for the clean-up of any contaminated areas of Fanoe Ranch as part any Specific Plan that includes the ranch in its planning area. The remediation plan shall be coordinated with appropriate regional, state, and federal agencies.

Mitigation Measure HAZ-3: Site-Specific Investigation of Potential Soil Contamination Required

The City of Gonzales shall require site-specific investigations and reports on potential soil contamination as part of Specific Plan or other major development plan review and approval. Such an investigation and report shall include measures necessary to mitigate any environmental hazards to a less than significant level.

4.17.3.5. Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan

A. Impact

Impact HAZ-5: The adoption of the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* would provide the basis for development activity that could impair implementation of or physically interfere

<u>with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan</u> (Less than Significant).

The proposed project would enable development activity that could result in traffic congestion on one or more of the five "Pre-Designated Emergency Evacuation Routes" in the planning area. These routes are maintained to ensure the safe and efficient movement of people, belongings, and emergency personnel during times of declared emergencies, and congestion on these routes could interfere with existing emergency response and evacuations plans.

B. <u>Applicable Policies and Regulations</u>

The *Gonzales 2010 General Plan's* "Community Health and Safety Element" contains the following policies and implementing actions designed to address emergency preparedness in the planning area:

Policy HS-3.1 Hazard Mitigation Planning

The City shall take all reasonable actions to prepare for emergencies, using the "Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan, Monterey County" (URS, September 2007) as the basis for planning and preparation.

Implementing Action HS-3.1.1 – Critical Facilities. Identify hazard-prone critical facilities and infrastructure and carry out acquisition, relocation, and structural and non-structural retrofitting measures as necessary.

Implementing Action HS-3.1.5 – Critical Transportation Facilities. Examine and mitigate critical infrastructure that has been identified as currently being too narrow to ensure the safe transportation of truckloads within Monterey County.

Implementing Action HS-3.1.6 – Conduct Emergency Drills. Conduct periodic drills to test the effectiveness of the City's emergency response procedures.

Implementing Action HS-3.1.7 – Public Awareness. Increase public awareness of flood, seismic, fire, and other hazards and methods to avoid or mitigate the effects of these hazards. Provide public information notices in English and Spanish on what to do in the event of an emergency.

In addition, the "Circulation Element" contains the following policies and implementing actions designed to address traffic congestion in the planning area:

Policy CIR-1.1 Interconnected and Efficient Streets

Develop and maintain an interconnected and efficient system of arterial, collector, and local streets consistent with the policies and diagrams of the Circulation Element to accommodate the movement of people and vehicles and provide access within Gonzales. Circulation patterns in the new growth area should be inter-connected and provide multiple route choices for residents.

Implementing Action CIR-1.1.1 – Level of Service Standards. Maintain the following standards for acceptable traffic levels of service (LOS) during peak periods:

- *For signalized intersections, roundabouts, and four-way stops, LOS C*
- *For unsignalized, local street stop sign controlled intersections, LOS D*
- *For mid block road segments, LOS C (the need for mid-block analysis will be determined on a case-by-case basis in Specific Plan development)*

Exceptions to these standards may be granted where road widening or other improvements needed to achieve the designated level of service would be detrimental to the character of the area or would be inconsistent with other goals and policies in this General Plan.

Implementing Action CIR-1.1.2 – Major Arterial Streets. Design major arterial streets to limit driveways, street intersections, curb cuts, and cross-traffic so that congestion is minimized and vehicle safety is improved. Where necessary, arterials should be designed to anticipate possible widening to four or six lanes in the long-term future, depending on what is needed to maintain level-of-services standards under projected future traffic conditions. Encourage the use of alley access or frontage roads for residential uses located on arterials streets.

Implementing Action CIR-1.1.8 – Highway 101 Interchanges. Continue to work with Caltrans to improve Gonzales's Highway 101 interchanges. Require final

redesign plans to be adopted by the City and Caltrans before development takes place.

Implementing Action CIR-1.1.9 – Traffic Monitoring. Develop a periodic system of traffic monitoring to determine whether or not service levels are being maintained and to ensure that the impacts of new development are evaluated based on current conditions.

Implementing Action CIR-1.1.10 – 5th Street LOS. Consider a variety of measures to prevent Fifth Street west of Highway 101 from deteriorating below LOS "C." These could include peak hour parking restrictions, modifying the Rincon Road intersection, or making improvements to the Highway 101/Fifth Street Interchange.

Implementing Action CIR-1.1.11 – Street Widths. New arterial and collector streets shall be constructed with the minimum number of lanes needed for the relatively short term (i.e., approximately 10 years) and with sufficient reserve capacity within the right-of-way to accommodate any additional lanes necessary to meet the City's level-of-service standards under long-term conditions. Land reserved within the right-of-way for future lanes should be used in the interim as landscaped medians or roadside green strips.

Implementing Action CIR-1.1.12 – Traffic Control. Provide operational controls, including: roundabouts, traffic signals or stop signs where warranted to facilitate the safe flow of vehicles through intersections. As a first option, consider the use of roundabouts for traffic control at all non-local intersections.

C. Significance Determination

Policies and implementing actions contained in the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* are adequate to ensure that impacts related to emergency response and evacuation planning are less than significant.

D. Mitigation Measures

None required.

4.17.3.6. 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

A. Impact

Impact HAZ-6: The adoption of the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* would provide the basis for development activity that could 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 (Less than Significant with Mitigation Measures).

The proposed project would enable development activity in areas of very high fire potential that could result in habitable structures being located in proximity to wildlands that could catch fire and expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death.

B. Applicable Policies and Regulations

The *Gonzales 2010 General Plan's* "Community Health and Safety Element" contains the following policies and implementing actions designed to address fire protection in the planning area:

Policy HS-4.1 Maintain Levels of Service for Police and Fire Protection

Establish and maintain levels of service for police and fire services that meet national and/or regional standards. Proposals for new development shall be evaluated against these service levels to determine the extent of improvements needed.

Implementing Action HS-4.1.1 – Address Police and Fire Protection Service Needs in Specific Plan Development. Require Specific Plans to address police and fire service needs, and require new development resulting from the Specific Plan to fund needed police and fire protection services.

Implementing Action HS-4.1.3 – Convert to Sworn Staff and Volunteer Department. Support the gradual conversion of Gonzales' all-volunteer Fire Department to a combined sworn staff and volunteer Department. The

conversion would enable the Department to provide efficient, reliable service to the larger population and employment base envisioned by this General Plan.

Implementing Action HS-4.1.4 – Water for Fire Protection. Ensure that the Gonzales water system can provide adequate flow for peak fire suppression needs before new development is approved. Where water supply in existing developed areas does not meet current standards for fire flow, corrective measures should be pursued.

Implementing Action HS-4.1.6 – Levels of Service for Police and Fire Protection. Within one year of General Plan adoption, adopt level of service standards for police and fire protection. These standards should be based on (a) maximum acceptable response time; (b) minimum staffing levels per 1,000 residents; (c) fire-flow rates for hydrants; or (d) any other measurement deemed acceptable for ensuring the adequacy of police and fire services.

Implementing Action HS-4.1.7 – Review of Development Proposals. On an on-going basis, refer proposed development applications to the Police and Fire Departments for review and comment. Projects should not be approved until these Departments have determined that facilities and equipment are adequate or will be made adequate to serve the proposed development.

Implementing Action HS-4.1.8 – Design Safe Streets. Design new streets to balance the need for emergency access with the need for discouraging speeding traffic. In new subdivisions and other residential development, require roadway widths and turning radii that are sufficient for emergency vehicle access. Road widths that substantially exceed the requirements for emergency vehicle access are discouraged. Where appropriate, hydrants, street lighting, and lighted house numbers should be provided to facilitate emergency service delivery.

Implementing Action HS-4.1.9 – Building Code Updates. Periodically update the Gonzales Building Code to incorporate amendments to the International Building Code pertaining to fire and life safety.

Implementing Action HS-4.1.10 – New Fire Station. Fund and construct a second fire station on the east side of the freeway and establish a full-time fire fighting force as funding allows.

Implementing Action HS-4.1.11 – Periodical Evaluation of Impact Fees. Evaluate police and fire impact fees on a regular basis to ensure that they are adequate to meet public safety needs.

Implementing Action HS-4.1.12 – Up-to-Date Equipment. Maintain up-to-date fire fighting and police vehicles.

C. Significance Determination

While the policies and implementing actions contained in the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* lessen the potential impact involving wildland fires, the proposed project does not address long-term development in areas of very high wildfire potential. While the Urban Growth Area has low fire potential, the Urban Reserve Area east of Iverson Road contains areas of very high fire potential. This is an impact that would be made less than significant with Mitigation Measure HAZ-4, below:

D. Mitigation Measures

The City of Gonzales shall incorporate the following measure into the *Draft Gonzales 2010 General Plan* prior to final adoption and eliminate or amend any existing provisions of the draft plan that may be in conflict with this measure so as to eliminate the inconsistency in favor of the measure:

Mitigation Measure HAZ-4: Development in Areas of Very High Wildfire Potential

The City of Gonzales shall require site-specific investigations and reports on wildfire potential for any development east of Iverson Road, which is an area of very high wildfire potential. Such an investigation and report shall include measures necessary to mitigate any wildfire hazards, including the establishment of "fire safe" zones around habitable structures, to a less than significant level.

CHAPTER 5. BROAD-SCALE CEQA CONSIDERATIONS

This chapter discusses cumulative impacts, significant irreversible effects, and growth inducement.

5.0 CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

Cumulative impacts are defined as two or more individual effects that, when considered together, are considerable or that compound, or increase other environmental impacts. The cumulative impact from several projects is the change in the environment that results from the incremental impact of the development when added to other closely related past, present, and reasonably foreseeable or probable future developments.

As defined in Resources Code §15355,

> *"…a cumulative impact consists of an impact which is created as a result of the combination of the project evaluated in the EIR together with other projects causing related impacts. An EIR may determine that a project's contribution to a significant cumulative impact will be rendered less than cumulatively considerable and thus is not significant. A project's contribution is less than cumulatively considerable if the project is required to implement or fund its fair share of a mitigation measure or measures designed to alleviate the cumulative impact."*

This analysis uses projections and analyses contained in the "Monterey Bay Area 2008 Regional Forecast" (AMBAG, 2008), the "2008 Air Quality Management Plan" (MBUAPCD, 2008), and the "Monterey County 2007 General Plan Draft Environmental Impact Report" (Michael Brandman Associates, 2007). According to AMBAG, Monterey County is expected to grow significantly through the year 2035, adding 85,000 persons and 34,800 new houses, and the Central Salinas Valley (consisting of Gonzales, Soledad, Greenfield, and King City) is expected to bear a significant part of this growth. Figure 5.0.1 summarizes expected growth in the Central Salinas Valley and Gonzales between 2009 and 2035.

Figure 5.0.1: Expected Growth in the Vicinity of Gonzales, 2009 through 2035

	Central Salinas Valley[1]	Gonzales	Percent of Central Salinas Valley
Population Growth	53,500	14,393	27%
Added Housing Units	18,500	3,400	18%

Source: Coastplans; AMBAG 2008
Note: Consisting of Gonzales, Soledad, Greenfield, and King City

For cumulative impact areas related to open space, the area evaluated is the Central Salinas Valley (from approximately Chular through King City). For agricultural resources, the area evaluated is Monterey County. For air quality and greenhouse gas emissions, the area evaluated is the Monterey Bay Air Basin. For transportation, the area evaluated is the same as evaluated by the AMBAG Regional Traffic Model. This cumulative impact analysis considers development potential of the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan*, including growth in the Urban Growth Area as well as the Urban Reserve Area, even though the latter is not available for development within the scope of the plan.

5.0.1 LAND USE AND PLANNING (LESS THAN CUMULATIVELY SIGNIFICANT)

The *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* is consistent with LAFCO and Monterey County policies, which direct development away from the best agricultural lands of the Salinas Valley. The LAFCO process for amending the City's Sphere of Influence involves close consultation between the City of Gonzales and the County of Monterey, so any existing policy conflicts will be worked out in that process.

On a cumulative basis, the proposed project would result in a development pattern that is in keeping with a general consensus that in Gonzales growing eastward away from the best farmlands of the Salinas Valley would be the best way to protect the highest quality farmlands in the area. This strategy is consistent with draft County of Monterey land use policy, which states in part that a request for a change in the city's sphere of influence may be supported if it directs City growth away from the "highest quality farmlands" and provides adequate buffers along developing agricultural-urban interfaces (*Draft County of Monterey General Plan*, Policy LU-2.18). The proposed project would adopt this basic

approach as one of its planning objectives (Obj. 5) and would contain policies and actions requiring developer contributions to fund permanent agricultural protection and establish agricultural buffers to reduce conflicts between urban and agricultural uses.

With regard to the jobs housing balance, as cities in the Salinas Valley mature it is likely that many will develop stronger employment bases than currently exist. As a result, the jobs/housing balance could improve in the Salinas Valley in the long term. This trend is evident in Gonzales.

In conclusion, the incremental effect of the proposed project with regard to land use conflicts, when considered in the context of the urbanization throughout Monterey County, would be less than cumulatively considerable. In addition, the incremental effect of the proposed project with regard to the jobs/housing balance, when considered in the context of the urbanization throughout Monterey County, would be less than cumulatively considerable.[84] The proposed project's effect on land use and planning is a less than significant cumulative impact.

5.0.2 Population and Housing (Less than Cumulatively Significant)

The *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* contains policies and implementing actions that effectively limit the potential for unintended population growth in the region. AMBAG has found the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* consistent with regional air quality plans and growth projections. Growth in Gonzales would make a significant contribution to the cumulative population growth within the region, but the overall level of growth in the region is not expected to exceed AMBAG projections. This is because the population projections prepared by AMBAG for jurisdictions in the region are based on a distribution of statewide growth projections prepared by the California Department of Finance (DOF). DOF's projections for the region are developed largely independent of considerations of local capacity as expressed by general plans.

In conclusion, the incremental effect of the proposed project with regard to population and housing, when considered in the context of the urbanization throughout Monterey

[84] See Section 4.1.1 for a complete analysis of jobs/housing balance.

County, would be less than cumulatively considerable. The proposed project's effect on population and housing is a less than significant cumulative impact.

5.0.3 Agricultural Resources (Cumulatively Significant and Unavoidable)

The proposed project would result in the conversion of Prime Farmland and Farmland of Statewide Importance to urbanization, with new sources of conflict between agricultural and urban uses. As outlined above in Chapter 4, the proposed General Plan policies and implementing actions would reduce impacts related to "other changes related to the conversion of farmland" to a level of less than significant. Impacts related to farmland conversion and conflicts with agricultural zoning, however, would remain significant and unavoidable because urbanization would unavoidably result in the loss of farmland and encourage the discontinuation of Williamson Act contracts.

The proposed project would designate an Urban Growth Area consisting of approximately 3.4 square miles (2,150 acres), most of which is currently agricultural land. If fully developed, this area would increase the size of Gonzales from 2.0 to almost 5.5 square miles. In addition, the proposed project would designate an urban reserve area of another 3.3 square miles (2,130 acres), however, not all of this is agricultural land. While this urban reserve area is not available for development within the scope of the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan*, when it is eventually developed, it would increase the size of Gonzales to almost 9.0 square miles.

According to the American Farmland Trust, there were approximately 84 square miles of (54,000 acres) of urbanized land in Monterey County in 2004, and this was expected to increase by approximately 50 square miles (32,000 acres) between 2004 and 2050—a 60 percent increase (source: "Paving Paradise: A New Perspective on California Farmland Conversion," American Farmland Trust, 2007). These 50 square miles of lost agricultural land represent approximately 2.4 percent of the 2,075 square miles of (1.328 million acres) of agricultural lands that existed in the Monterey County in 2004 (source: "Census of Agriculture," United States Department of Agriculture, 2007). To put this long-term loss of agricultural land in perspective, approximately 8.5 square miles (5,440 acres) of high-quality farmland was urbanized in all of Monterey County between 1990 and 2004. Growth in Gonzales (8.0 square miles, including urban reserve) would represent

approximately 16 percent of projected countywide urbanization through 2050 (i.e., 8.0 ÷ 50.0 = 16%).

In conclusion, the incremental effect of the proposed project, when considered in the context of ongoing urbanization throughout the Monterey County, would be considered cumulatively considerable. The effects of the proposed project on agricultural resources are a significant and unavoidable cumulative impact.

5.0.4 AESTHETICS[85] (CUMULATIVELY SIGNIFICANT AND UNAVOIDABLE)

The proposed General Plan would result in changes to the visual character of the area surrounding Gonzales from that of rural agricultural open space to that of urbanized landscape, with new sources of light and glare.

According to the American Farmland Trust, urbanized acres in Monterey County as a whole are projected to increase by approximately 50 square miles (32,327 acres) between 2004 and 2050—a 60 percent increase (source: "Paving Paradise: A New Perspective on California Farmland Conversion," American Farmland Trust, 2007). To put this long-term loss of open space in perspective, if AMBAG growth projections are extended through 2050 (using the same growth rates assumed for the 2035 projection), the City of Gonzales would add approximately 8 square miles through 2050, increasing its size from two square miles to 10 square miles.[86] Within the Central Salinas Valley (stretching from

[85] The following analysis regarding the loss of open space land is based in part on research by the American Farmland Trust, and the period of analysis for this research is through 2050. Supporting analysis by Coastplans based on AMBAG projections has been structured to use the same time period for the sake of consistency. In addition, unlike the cumulative analysis of agricultural impacts, this analysis on aesthetics focuses on only a portion of Monterey County—the Central Salinas Valley. This is because the aesthetic resource in question—the open space character of the Central Salinas Valley—would be inadequately evaluated in the context of all open space in Monterey County, which includes mountain ranges and coastal areas that have value as separate aesthetic resources.

[86] This is a rough approximation and slightly overstates the case. The proposed project would designate a Urban Growth Area consisting of approximately 3.4 square miles (2,150 acres), most of which is currently open space. If fully developed, this area would increase the size of Gonzales from 2.0 to almost 5.5 square miles. In addition, the proposed project would designate an urban reserve area of another 3.3 square miles (2,130 acres). While this urban reserve area is not available for development within the planning horizon of the *Gonzales 2030 General Plan*, when it is eventually developed, it would increase the size of Gonzales to almost 9.0 square miles.

approximately Chular through King City), urbanization through 2050 would increase by 26 square miles from roughly nine square miles to 35 square miles. This would occupy approximately 15 percent of the 240 square miles of the Central Salinas Valley, up from approximately four percent. Figure 5.0.2 tabulates projected open space consumption in Salinas Valley, and Figure 5.0.3 shows a map of projected open space consumption.

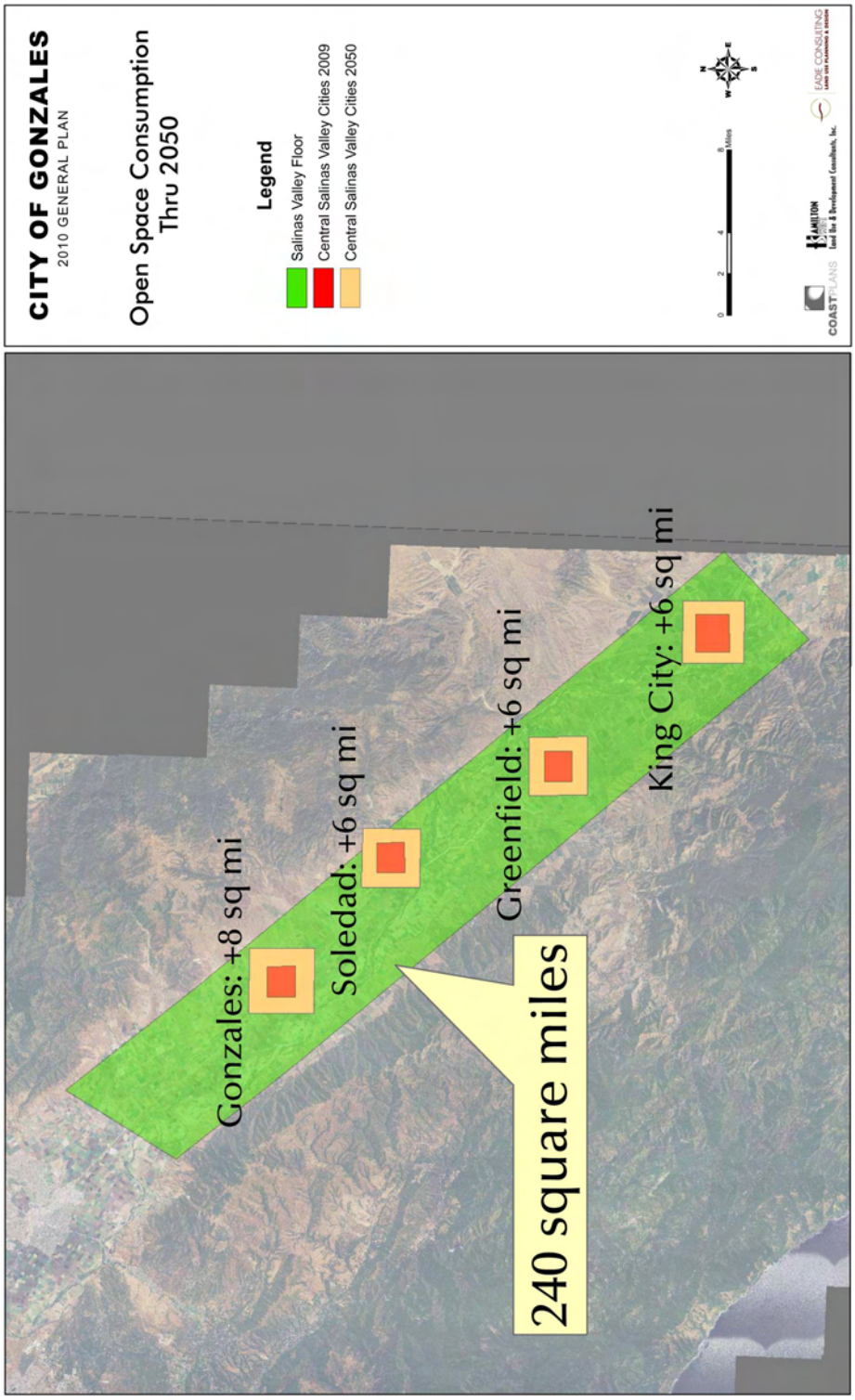
Figure 5.0.2: Projected Open Space Consumption in the Salinas Valley

	Size[1] (Sq. Mi.)	2009 Population	2050[2] Population	Growth 2009 to 2050	Pop[3] Density (pop/acre)	Added Area (Sq. Mi.)	Total Area 2050
Gonzales	2	9,025	40,593	31,568	6.3	8	10
Greenfield	2	17,547	41,605	24,058	6.3	6	8
Soledad	2	28,050	51,835	23,785	6.3	6	8
King City	3	12,024	37,479	25,455	6.3	6	9
	9	66,646	171,513	104,867	6.3	26	35

Note: [1]Governor's Office of Planning and Research, Book of Lists 2009
[2]This assumes a straight-line projection of population based on the annual average growth rate calculated from the AMBAG 2008 growth projections for 2035.
[3]This is the person-per-acre factor calculated for Monterey County by the American Farmland Trust for the period 2004 through 2050
Sources: Coastplans; AMBAG; American Farmland Trust

As shown in the figure above, the cumulative amount of urbanization would approximately triple in the Central Salinas Valley, and the total amount of urbanization would comprise approximately 15 percent of all open space in the study area. This change in the visual character of Central Salinas Valley is a significant cumulative impact, and the proposed project's contribution to this impact would be cumulative considerable. Mitigation Measure AES-1 (Visual Screen for Permanent Agricultural Edge) would lessen the proposed project's impact on visual character, as would the policies and implementing actions of the Gonzales 2010 General Plan, which require (among other things) relatively high development densities, designate areas for permanent agriculture/open space, and emphasize the importance of enhancing the role of the natural environment, especially natural topography and historic drainages, as a defining element of Gonzales' character and identity (see Section 4.3, above). No other feasible mitigation measures are available.

Figure 5.0.3: Open Space Consumption through 2050



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With regard to light pollution, urbanization in Gonzales would make a cumulatively significant contribution to light pollution in the Central Salinas Valley. As outlined above in Chapter 4, the proposed General Plan policies and implementing actions would reduce impacts related to light and glare. In addition, Mitigation Measure AES-2 (Reflective Building Exteriors) would lessen the proposed project's impact related to glare. Nonetheless, the impact of the proposed project related to light pollution would remain significant and unavoidable.

In conclusion, the incremental effect of the proposed project with regard to aesthetic resources, when considered in the context of the urbanization throughout Monterey County, would be cumulatively considerable. The proposed project's effect on aesthetic resources is a significant and unavoidable cumulative impact.

5.0.5 TRANSPORTATION/TRAFFIC (LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT)

The traffic analysis performed for the proposed General Plan indicates that the circulation system will experience significant impacts as a result of future traffic volumes. Since the analysis includes growth within the County, the project-level analysis contained in Section 4.4 is also in effect a cumulative analysis of traffic impacts within the County. As development occurs, both within the City and throughout the County, traffic volumes on the regional circulation system would increase and may exceed the capacity of various roadways. Implementation of the General Plan and the mitigation measures proposed in this EIR would reduce traffic impacts. In addition, TAMC's Regional Traffic Impact Fee is designed to fund regional transportation improvements. Together, these measures would ensure that regional (i.e., cumulative) traffic impacts are less than significant.

In conclusion, the incremental effect of the proposed project with regard to traffic, when considered in the context of the urbanization throughout Monterey County, would be less than cumulatively considerable. The proposed project would have a less-than-significant cumulative traffic impact.

5.0.6 AIR QUALITY (LESS THAN CUMULATIVELY SIGNIFICANT)

Although air quality in the region is generally very good, the North Central Coast Air Basin is considered a nonattainment area due to exceedances of the California Ambient Air Quality Standards (CAAQS) for ozone and inhalable particulate matter (PM10). The Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments (AMBAG) adopted an Air Quality Management Plan (AQMP) to address air quality within the region. Implementation of the AQMP will partially reduce the air quality impacts resulting from development within the region. Based on an analysis of AMBAG's projections as compared to the proposed project, AMBAG determined that emissions attributable to General Plan implementation were consistent with the AQMP.[87]

In conclusion, the incremental effect of the proposed project with regard to air quality, when considered in the context of the urbanization throughout Monterey County, would be less than cumulatively considerable. The proposed project's effect on air quality is a less than significant cumulative impact.

5.0.7 GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS (CUMULATIVELY SIGNIFICANT AND UNAVOIDABLE)

By definition, the environmental effects associated with greenhouse gas emissions are cumulative impacts. The reader should refer to the analysis contained in Section 4.6 (Greenhouse Gas Emissions) for a discussion of cumulative impacts related to greenhouse gas emissions.

5.0.8 ENERGY CONSERVATION (LESS THAN CUMULATIVELY SIGNIFICANT)

The policies and actions of the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* lessen the potential impact of urbanization on wasteful energy consumption. In addition, Mitigation Measures GHG-1 (Citywide Climate Action Plan), GHG-2 (Implementation of GHG Best Management Practices), and GHG-3 (Timeframe to Adopt Green Building Code) in Subsection 4.6.3.1 D above, would have the effect of insuring that the proposed project would not result in

[87] In a letter dated February 2, 2010, AMBAG stated that the proposed project is consistent with the 2008 Air Quality Management Plan for the Monterey Bay Region and with the region's population forecast.

wasteful or inefficient energy usage, because reduced GHG emissions are directly related to reduced energy consumption.

In conclusion, the incremental effect of the proposed project with regard to energy conservation, when considered in the context of the urbanization throughout Monterey County, would be less than cumulatively considerable. The proposed project's effect on energy conservation is a less than significant cumulative impact.

5.0.9 NOISE (LESS THAN CUMULATIVELY SIGNIFICANT)

Anticipated regional development would generate short-term noise during the construction process of individual projects. Increased development would also increase traffic volumes and associated noise levels. Significant noise levels already occur along many of the region's transportation corridors. Some existing development is already impacted by vehicular noise, and may continue to experience high noise levels whether or not the project is implemented. Implementing policies and implementing actions contained in the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* would reduce cumulative impacts to new noise sensitive land uses to a less than significant level. In addition, the proposed General Plan does not propose any land use that would result in a significant increase to the ambient noise level in the region. Existing development may continue to be impacted by the cumulative vehicular traffic along the region's roadways.

In conclusion, the incremental effect of the proposed project with regard to noise, when considered in the context of the urbanization throughout Monterey County, would be less than cumulatively considerable. The proposed project's effect on noise is a less than significant cumulative impact.

5.0.10 HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY (LESS THAN CUMULATIVELY SIGNIFICANT)

The *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* includes measures to ensure than groundwater quality and quantity issues in the Salinas Valley are not worsened. It also contains measures to control non-point source pollution from stormwater sources and to ensure that persons and property are not threatened by flooding. The impacts related to hydrology and water quality identified in Chapter 4 are less than significant.

On a cumulative basis, urbanization and increased agricultural production in Monterey County will tend to worsen groundwater problems in the Salinas Valley and this is a significant cumulative impact. Nonetheless, the incremental effect of the proposed project with regard to groundwater impacts, when considered in the context of ongoing urbanization and agricultural production throughout the Monterey County, would be less than cumulatively considerable because the City of Gonzales, through its *Gonzales 2010 General Plan*, proposes to commit to a policy of no net increase in groundwater well capacity in its planning area. Also, policies and implementing actions contained in the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* would seek to maintain groundwater recharge opportunities so that groundwater supplies would not be significantly affected by increased areas of impervious surface.

With regard to the cumulative effects of urbanization on non-point source pollution, the National Pollution Discharge Elimination System and regional BMP-type drainage controls required by the Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board would make these cumulative impacts less than significant. Urbanization could have a cumulative positive impact on surface water quality as it supplants agricultural uses in the Salinas Valley, thereby reducing the load of silt and agricultural chemicals in stormwater runoff.

With regard to flood hazards, FEMA flood hazard management measures would make cumulative flood hazard impacts less than significant. The incremental effect of the proposed project with regard to hydrology and water quality, when considered in the context of the urbanization throughout Monterey County, would be less than cumulatively considerable. The proposed project's effect on hydrology and water quality is a less than significant cumulative impact.

5.0.11 Utilities and Service Systems (Cumulatively Significant and Unavoidable)

The *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* will require significant upgrades to wastewater collection and treatment systems, water supplies, and stormwater facilities. The construction of an expanded wastewater treatment facility would result in an environmental effect—the loss of prime agricultural land that surrounds the existing treatment facility.

On a cumulative basis, urbanization in Monterey County could result in the conversion of greater amounts of prime agricultural land as the need for expanded wastewater treatment facilities increases. Loss of prime agricultural land for the expansion of wastewater treatment facilities in Monterey County would be a significant cumulative effect. As the loss of agricultural resources is a significant and unavoidable effect (see the discussion in Subsection 4.2.3.2 above) and also a significant cumulative effect (see Subsection 5.0.2 above), the incremental effect of the proposed project, when considered in the context of ongoing urbanization throughout Monterey County, would be considered cumulatively considerable. The effects of the proposed project on wastewater treatment facilities are a significant and unavoidable cumulative impact.

On the plus side, urbanization in Monterey County would probably result in a net cumulative benefit with regard to water quality as communities switch to improved technologies for wastewater treatment as they expand to accommodate new development.

With regard to expanding sewer, water, and drainage collection and delivery systems, urbanization in Monterey County would not result in a significant cumulative impact provided jurisdictions use standard practices and take standard environmental precautions as new facilities are constructed.

In conclusion, the incremental effect of the proposed project with regard to new collection and delivery systems, when considered in the context of the urbanization throughout Monterey County, would be less than cumulatively considerable. The proposed project's effect on new collection and delivery systems is a less than significant cumulative impact.

5.0.12 Public Services (Less than Cumulatively Significant)

The *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* would lead to the need for expanded fire and police services and the physical facilities from which to operate. It would also require numerous new schools, new parks and recreational facilities, and other public facilities such as new and/or expanded libraries, community centers, and city hall offices. The construction and operation of these facilities could lead to a significant environmental effect, which would be reduced to a level of less than significant with Mitigation Measure PS-1. Mitigation Measure PS-1 requires project-level environmental analysis when Specific Plans and development approvals move forward.

On a cumulative basis, urbanization in Monterey County would generate the need for new public facilities to serve increasing populations, and the construction of such facilities could engender a cumulative environmental effect that would be less than significant, provided proper planning is done to finance and construct needed facilities.

In conclusion, the incremental effect of the proposed project with regard to public facilities, when considered in the context of the urbanization throughout Monterey County, would be less than cumulatively considerable. The proposed project's effect on public facilities is a less than significant cumulative impact.

5.0.13 PARKS AND RECREATION (LESS THAN CUMULATIVELY SIGNIFICANT)

The *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* would bring with it numerous new park and recreational facilities at the rate of five acres per 1,000 residents. The construction of these facilities could lead to an environmental effect that would be less than significant with Mitigation Measure PS-1 (discussed above). The current ratio of park space to resident is approximately two acres per 1,000 residents, so new development would probably serve to raise the citywide ratio to something greater. This would in turn lessen the strain on existing park and recreation facilities. A larger tax base would result from new urbanization, and this could provide greater resources for the city to maintain and modernize existing park and recreational facilities.

On a cumulative basis, urbanization in Monterey County would generate the need for new parks and recreational facilities to serve increasing populations, and the construction of such facilities would engender an environmental effect that would be less than significant, provided proper planning is done to finance and construct needed facilities.

In conclusion, the incremental effect of the proposed project with regard to park and recreational facilities, when considered in the context of the urbanization throughout Monterey County, would be less than cumulatively considerable. The proposed project's effect on park and recreational facilities is a less than significant cumulative impact.

5.0.14 Biological Resources (Less than Cumulatively Significant)

The *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* would result in a net benefit to biological resources in the area. Almost all of the land proposed for urbanization has been actively farmed for decades. These farming activities have stripped most of the native vegetation from the landscape, rerouted streams into agricultural drainage ditches, and dumped tons of chemical fertilizer, pesticides, and other toxic substances into the soil and groundwater. As a result, the natural plant and animal communities of the Gonzales area have been seriously compromised for years. The proposed project would promote the use of naturalistic drainage facilities capable of producing relatively clean stormwater discharge, re-create natural plant and animal communities along these drainage corridors, reduce or eliminate the use of agricultural chemicals, and actively protect endangered habitats and species.

In conclusion, the incremental effect of the proposed project on biological resources would be less than cumulative considerable when considered in the context of ongoing urbanization throughout the Monterey County. The proposed project's effect on biological resources is a less than significant cumulative impact.

5.0.15 Cultural Resources (Less than Cumulatively Significant)

The cultural impacts identified in Chapter 4 are less than significant and avoidable with the included mitigations. On a cumulative basis, urbanization in Monterey County should not pose a significant threat to cultural resources, provided basic precautions are taken and consultations with appropriate experts are held (both required by State Law).

In conclusion, the incremental effect of the proposed project with regard to cultural resources, when considered in the context of the urbanization throughout Monterey County, would be less than cumulatively considerable. The proposed project's effect on cultural resources is a less than significant cumulative impact.

5.0.16 Geology and Soils (Less than Cumulatively Significant)

The *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* directs urbanization away from the areas of highest ground shaking and liquefaction, which are west of the city, and urbanization will

probably result in less soil erosion than would otherwise result with continued agricultural production. The geology and soil impacts identified in Chapter 4 are less than significant and avoidable with the included mitigations.

On a cumulative basis, urbanization in Monterey County should not significantly increase the threat to persons and property posed by geology and soil conditions, provided standard measures are taken to mitigate threats (required by State law). Perhaps the greatest threat is posed by seismic events in the area. An increasing number of persons and structures will be exposed to the moderate to high levels of seismic-related hazards, such as earthshaking and liquefaction, that are present in Monterey County as the Salinas Valley continues to urbanize. Unlike when the East San Francisco Bay developed decades ago, however, updated building codes and regulations governing construction in areas subject to the strongest ground shaking (e.g., Alquist-Priolo Fault Zone Act) are in place to mitigate the worst effects of seismic hazards.

In conclusion, the incremental effect of the proposed project with regard to geology and soil, when considered in the context of the urbanization throughout Monterey County, would be less than cumulatively considerable. The proposed project's effect on geology and soil is a less than significant cumulative impact.

5.0.17 Hazards and Hazardous Materials (Less than Cumulatively Significant)

The *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* directs urbanization to areas that have been in agricultural production for decades and are therefore likely to be contaminated to some degree with hazardous agricultural chemicals. Also, with urbanization comes industrial development that might use one or more hazardous materials for manufacturing. With regard to wildfires, agricultural protection policies will tend to direct urbanization in Gonzales to areas with greater slope and therefore greater potential for wildfires. The impacts related to hazards and hazardous materials identified in Chapter 4 are less than significant and avoidable with the included mitigations.

On a cumulative basis, urbanization in Monterey County will tend to expose more persons to agricultural chemicals and result in more industrial development with its attendant potential for using hazardous materials in manufacturing. These threats, however, should not significantly increase, provided standard measures are taken to

remediate soil contamination during construction and separate industrial uses from residences and schools. With regard to wildfires, agricultural protection policies will tend to direct urbanization in Monterey County to areas with greater slope and therefore greater potential for wildfires. This cumulative effect is nonetheless manageable provided standard measures are taken to reduce wildfire hazards.

In conclusion, the incremental effect of the proposed project with regard to hazards and hazardous materials, when considered in the context of the urbanization throughout Monterey County, would be less than cumulatively considerable. The proposed project's effect on hazards and hazardous materials is a less than significant cumulative impact.

5.1 SIGNIFICANT IRREVERSIBLE EFFECTS

CEQA Guidelines section 15126.2 (c) requires a discussion of significant and irreversible changes that would be caused by the proposed project if implemented. For example, the use of non-renewable resources that facilitates urban expansion may be irreversible. Such commitments of resources should be evaluated to assure that current use is justified. Secondary as well as direct effects should also be considered. Another example is the possibility of accidental environmental damage that could result from the proposed project.

The *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* has the following significant irreversible effects:

1. Conversion of Prime Farmland (see Subsection 4.2.3.1, above);
2. Loss of prime farmland for public facilities (see Subsection 4.10.3.1, above);
3. Cumulative impact related to conversion of Prime Farmland (See Subsection 5.0.3, above);
4. Substantial degradation of visual character (loss of open space) (see Subsection 4.3.3.1, above);
5. Substantial degradation of visual character (light pollution and glare) (see Subsection 4.3.3.2, above);
6. Cumulative impacts related to aesthetic resources (loss of open space; light pollution) (See Subsection 5.0.4, above),

7. Cumulative impact related to regional traffic impacts (see Subsection 5.0.5, above), and

8. Cumulative impact related to emission of significant amounts of greenhouse gasses (see Subsection 4.6.3.1 above).

5.2 GROWTH INDUCEMENT

A project is typically considered to be growth-inducing if it fosters economic or population growth. Typical growth inducements might be the extension of urban services or transportation infrastructure to a previously un-served or under-served area or the removal of major barriers to development. Not all growth inducement is necessarily negative. If, for example, a city is planning for the provision of new housing and services to meet expected population growth, then the extension of services and the removal of old barriers would be a positive effect. The California Department of Housing and Community Development expects this kind of planning as it reviews and certifies the housing elements of local jurisdictions throughout the state.

Growth inducement, however, can result in negative effects when new services or facilities are designed and constructed in ways that encourage growth into areas meant for permanent open space or agriculture. Negative effects also result when the sizing and location of such services and facilities mask a larger growth trend that is unacknowledged in comprehensive plans. This, in turn, precludes comprehensive environmental analysis, which is then too often replaced by piecemeal environmental documents that fail to adequately assess significant cumulative effects.

Growth-inducing impacts fall into two general categories: direct and indirect. Direct growth-inducing impacts are generally associated with the provision of urban services to an undeveloped area. The provision of these services to an area and the resulting development can serve to induce other landowners in neighboring areas to pressure their local jurisdiction to convert their property to urban uses. Indirect, or secondary growth-inducing impacts, consist of the additional demands for housing, goods, and services associated that are generated by new growth.

5.2.1 DIRECT IMPACTS

The *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* would directly induce population, employment, and economic growth by providing the basis for urbanization in areas that are not currently designated for urban growth. Implementation of the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* would facilitate the following level of growth:

- 28,800 new residents in the Urban Growth Area and 24,000 new residents in the Urban Reserve Area.
- 7,700 new residential units in the Urban Growth Area and 6,600 new residential units in the Urban Reserve Area.
- 1.56 million square feet of new commercial use in the Urban Growth Area and 542,000 square feet in the Urban Reserve Area.
- 2.61 million square feet of new industrial use in the Urban Growth Area and 2.38 million square feet in the Urban Reserve Area.

The *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* includes a land use diagram, policies, and implementing action designed to permanently protect the highest quality agricultural lands that border the Urban Growth Area and the Urban Reserve Area. The *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* also calls for development to proceed in increments of identifiable neighborhoods that provide school, services and commercial uses to support the new population in a timely fashion. It also provides employment and commercial centers to support the community as a whole. Finally, the scope of the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* is large enough to encompass a long-term vision for future growth that provides the basis for a comprehensive environmental analysis capable of understanding the long-term trends of urbanization in the Salinas Valley.

There are no active Williamson Act properties in areas designated for growth in the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan*. The proposed project would, however, result in the conversion of lands that were in the past under Williamson Act Contract are now either out of the system or are in a state of contract non-renewal. The Fanoe Ranch, a 780-acre property located in the northeastern part of the Urban Growth Area, is fully out of the Williamson Act system but was no doubt placed in a non-renewal status years ago in anticipation of urban expansion from the City of Gonzales. A smaller property, a 150-

acre property west of Iverson Road that is controlled by the Jackson Family, was placed in Williamson Act Contract Non-Renewal status during early development of *Gonzales 2010 General Plan*. The proposed project has not targeted any properties for urbanization that were not already out or on their way out of the Williamson Act system.

As a result, while the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* would result in urbanization, its policies and implementing actions would reduce the potential for directly inducing growth into areas that are intended to be permanently protected for agriculture and open space. This impact would be less than significant.

5.2.2 INDIRECT IMPACTS

As mentioned above, the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* contains policies and implementing actions designed to create complete new neighborhoods that are somewhat self sufficient. In addition, it plans for employment and commercial centers to serve the community as a whole. This approach to comprehensive planning should reduce the indirect impact of generating unanticipated growth outside the community.

There are, of course, some services that are typically provided on a regional basis, and the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* would contribute to demand for such regional services. One example would be higher education facilities. City officials do not envision a new university or even a community college in the city's near-term future. As a result, such facilities that are currently located in Salinas or Fort Ord could be indirectly induced to grow and accommodate larger regional populations. Another example would be airport facilities. City officials do not envision a new airport in the city's near-term future. Such facilities that are currently located in Salinas or Monterey could be indirectly induced to grow and accommodate larger regional populations. Nonetheless, while growth in Gonzales would contribute to the demand for higher education or airport facilities in the region, this is not expected to be a significant contribution when considered on a regional level.

As a result, while the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* would result in urbanization, its policies and implementing actions would reduce the potential for indirectly inducing growth in neighboring regional centers. This impact would be less than significant.

CHAPTER 6. ALTERNATIVES

6.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter evaluates alternatives to the proposed *Gonzales 2010 General Plan*. The discussion includes a description of the rationale used to select alternatives, alternatives that were considered but not evaluated, the alternatives selected for evaluation, and an evaluation of the effects of the alternatives, including any significant effects that the alternative may engender.

6.1 SELECTION OF ALTERNATIVES

The alternatives selected for evaluation represent a range of reasonable alternatives to the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan*, including alternate patterns and location of urbanization, that would feasibly attain most of the basic objectives of the project but avoid or substantially lessen the major significant effects of the project.

While the project alternatives are measured against each of the 17 environmental categories in Section 5.3 below, there were five major significant effects that influenced the selection of project alternatives more than the others. These were:

- ✓ Substantial degradation of existing visual character,
- ✓ Agricultural land conversion,
- ✓ Traffic congestion, and
- ✓ Greenhouse Gas Emissions.

The three project alternatives and the reason for their selection are as follows:

6.1.1 NO PROJECT ALTERNATIVE

This is a required alternative per CEQA Guidelines.

6.1.2 REDUCED GROWTH ALTERNATIVE

This alternative has the potential to substantially lessen each of the five major significant effects referenced above by reducing the land available for urbanization. This alternative may reduce the ability of the City to achieve a diverse, self-sustaining economy (Obj. 1) and constrict the long-term vision necessary to avoid incremental and incoherent development patterns over the long term (Obj 2). Other objectives, however, could be furthered by this alternative.

6.1.3 HIGHER DENSITY ALTERNATIVE

This alternative has the potential to substantially lessen each of the five major significant effects referenced above by reducing the rate at which land would be consumed by urbanization. This alternative would reduce the ability of the City to maintain small-town characteristics (such as a variety of housing types and residential densities consistent with other small cities in the region) (Obj. 3). Other project objectives, however, could be furthered by the alternative.

Each of these alternatives is evaluated in detail in Section 5.3 below.

6.2 ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED BUT NOT FURTHER EVALUATED

An EIR need not consider every conceivable alternative to a project, nor must an EIR consider alternatives that fail to meet the basic objectives of the project, are infeasible, or are unable to avoid significant environmental impacts. This section evaluates alternatives that were considered in the course of preparing this EIR but that were not carried forward for more detailed evaluation for one or more of the reasons above.

6.2.1 CONVENTIONAL SUBURBANIZATION ALTERNATIVE

In the course of developing the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan*, the Citizens Advisory Committee, Planning Commission, and City Council considered policies and implementing actions that would have resulted in an urban form characterized by conventional residential subdivisions, curvilinear streets with cul-de-sacs and limited

connectivity, and strip commercial development at the intersection of major streets. This pattern would be a continuation of the development pattern that currently exists east of Highway 101 and would have provided for manageable, incremental urbanization to the east that was easily scalable to regional growth forecasts. For the purposes of this EIR, these elements have been collected into an alternative development scenario, which has been named the "Conventional Suburbanization" alternative. This alternative was rejected for further evaluation because it would have seriously hampered the City's ability to achieve most of its plan objectives.

- Obj. 1 (Diverse, Self Sustaining Local Economy). This alternative would have tended to perpetuate the City's role as a bedroom community by failing to create neighborhood centers with a sense of place and attractiveness beyond the mere utility of providing retail acres for buying necessities.

- Obj. 2 (Long-Term Vision). This alternative would have limited the ability of the City to envision a coherent long-term vision of neighborhood-based development and instead encouraged incremental growth leading to residential sprawl.

- Obj. 3 (Small-Town Characteristics). This alternative would have predominately produced single-family housing organized in expansive subdivisions rather than whole neighborhoods with a definable center of activity.

- Obj. 5 (Sustainability). This alternative would have resulted in a circulation pattern characterized by large arterial streets, poor walkability, and heavy dependence on the automobile.

By choosing to protect the integrity of its plan objectives over the development status quo and pressure to scale its long-term vision to approximate AMBAG growth projections, the City chose to reject some of the worst practices of post-World War II planning.

6.2.2 Concentric Development Alternative

The Citizens Advisory Committee, Planning Commission, and City Council also considered but rejected plan elements to include land west of Highway 101 and west of Alta Street for urbanization. For the purpose of this EIR, these elements were collected into an alternative development scenario, which has been named the "Concentric

Development" alternative. This alternative is similar to the proposed project in that the planning area and the growth area would be the same size in each case. The same number of acres would be available for urbanization, the same number of houses could be built, and the city would experience the same rate of growth in population and jobs. In the "Concentric Development" alternative, however, growth generally extends in all directions from around the existing core area, instead of extending primarily east, as is the case in the proposed project. This alternative was rejected for further evaluation because it would have seriously hampered the City's ability to protect the most valuable farmlands in the area (Obj. 5) and conflicted with the agricultural protection policies of Monterey County and the Local Agency Formation Commission. In addition, the City would have been increasingly split by Highway 101 and the Union Pacific Railroad tracks.

6.3 DETAILED EVALUATION OF ALTERNATIVES

The following is a detailed evaluation of the three selected project alternatives.

6.3.1 NO PROJECT ALTERNATIVE

The "No Project" alternative is the continuation of the existing general plan into the future. In this case, the projected impacts of the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* were compared to the impacts that would occur if the *Gonzales 1996 General Plan* remained in effect. Please also refer to the "Environmental Setting" provided for each impact section discussed in Chapter 4 above, for a description of existing conditions.

6.3.1.1. PRINCIPAL CHARACTERISTICS

The 1996 General Plan contained a 6,880-acre planning area, of which approximately 1,000 acres were designated for urban use (not including streets and highways). The plan accommodated 1,580 new dwelling units and a total population of 11,578 persons at buildout. The plan also accommodated 542,640 square feet of new commercial uses and 4,203,540 square feet of new industrial uses—enough for a total of 5,795 jobs at buildout. In 2003, the City amended the 1996 General Plan to add approximately 30 acres of industrial land west of Alta Street. This additional area accommodated approximately 335,000 additional square feet of industrial uses and 235 new jobs (assuming the same

no. of employees per sf as assumed in 1996 GP). To accommodate this level of growth, the plan anticipated the need to expand urban services, including:

- 1.25 million gallons per day (MGD) of wastewater treatment plant capacity,
- About 2,200 acres feet of water supply, and
- A circulation system consisting of a freeway, three freeway interchanges, and existing and new arterial, collector, and local streets.

Figure 6.3.1 summarizes the remaining development potential of the 1996 General Plan.

Figure 6.3.1: Remaining Capacity of 1996 General Plan

	Remaining Capacity of 1996 GP in 2009
Vacant Acres Designated for Urbanization	365 ac
Potential New Dwelling Units[1]	900 du
Potential New Commercial Square Feet	190,000 sf
Potential New Industrial Square Feet	1,300,000 sf
Added Population	3,400 persons

Note: [1]This includes D'Arrigo property (138 acres/690 du), which was approved in June 2009
Sources: Coastplans; City of Gonzales

6.3.1.2. Impact Analysis of "No Project" Alternative

The "No Project" alternative would have the following impacts relative to adoption of the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan*.

A. <u>Land Use and Planning</u>

There are two non-city agencies that have policies and plans with an effect on land use decisions in the City of Gonzales—the Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) and the County of Monterey. The "No Project" alternative is fully consistent with LAFCO policies, and the *Gonzales 1996 General Plan*, which is the basis for the 'No Project" alternative, has enabled a successful annexation program since its adoption in 1996. The

"No Project" alternative is also consistent with County policies—most succinctly expressed in the "Central Salinas Valley Planning Area Land Use Map" adopted in 1987—which designated the entire 1996 General Plan growth area as "Urban Reserve."

The proposed project was developed with early consultation that included the LAFCO Executive Director, and there was a general consensus that growing eastward away from the best farmlands of the Salinas Valley was an appropriate development strategy. This strategy is consistent with a draft County of Monterey land use policy, which states that a request for a change in the city's planning area may be supported if it directs city growth away from the "highest quality farmlands" and provides adequate buffers along developing agricultural-urban interfaces (*Draft County of Monterey General Plan*, Policy LU-2.18). The proposed project would adopt this basic approach as one of its principal plan objectives (Obj. 5), and would contain policies and actions requiring developer contributions to fund permanent agricultural protection and the establishment of agricultural buffers to reduce conflicts between urban and agricultural uses. While the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* contains a growth area that envisions development well beyond the 20-year time horizon typically used as the basis for establishing Spheres of Influence, it defers the demarcation of a new Sphere of Influence until a time, after adoption, that the City enters into a consultation process with the County of Monterey and submits a formal application to LAFCO. It is expected that the County of Monterey will finalize its Central Salinas Valley Land Use Plan with areas designated for Urban Reserve that are consistent with the agreement reached through the consultation process. **Impact: no substantial improvement over the proposed project.**

B. <u>Population and Housing</u>

The "No Project" alternative would have the potential to result in population and housing impacts by inducing substantial population growth inside the area planned for growth. The "No Project" alternative would not address future development needs, including the City's ongoing obligation to produce housing, and contains no policies that would prevent unintended urbanization or encourage permanent protection of designated agricultural areas. The proposed project, on the other hand, provides a clear path for the long-term development of the city and addresses the planning and environmental issues associated with that growth. It also clearly delineates areas for permanent agricultural protection and establishes an agricultural mitigation fund to purchase conservation easements in those areas. With the "No Project" alternative, development pressure could remain for land that

lies east of the proposed growth area. This is because land to the east has lower agricultural values than other land in the area that would be contiguous to existing urban services, and such development would be consistent with the general consensus among planning agencies in the region that developing toward the foothills away from the Salinas Valley floor is a preferable development pattern. Nonetheless, the "No Project" alternative, on its face, would result in reduced population and housing growth. **Impact: substantially less impact than the proposed project.**

C. Agricultural Resources

The "No Project" alternative would result in the degradation of agricultural resources by: 1) converting prime farmland for urban use, 2) conflict with Williamson Act contracts, and 3) increasing urban/agricultural conflicts and increasing pressure on neighboring farmlands to convert by extending urban services closer to active agricultural operations. With regard to converting prime farmland, this effect would be substantially less than the proposed project because considerably less prime Farmland would be urbanized under the 'No Project" alternative. With regard to conflicts with existing Williamson Act contracts, the "No Project" alternative would not affect any existing Williamson Act contracts or affect property that was placed in non-renewal status in 2006. With regard to increasing conflicts and other pressures to convert prime farmland, the "No Project" alternative would have a substantially greater impact than the proposed project because the latter provides for the establishment of an agricultural mitigation fund to permanently protect prime farmlands—something the "No Project" alternative does not do. **Impact: item #1—substantially less impact than the proposed project; item #2—no substantial improvement over the proposed project; item #3—substantially greater impact than the proposed project.**

D. Aesthetics

The "No Project" alternative could result in the degradation of aesthetic values by: 1) substantially degrading the existing visual character of the planning area by converting the open space provided by agricultural fields to urban development, and by 2) creating new sources of light and glare. With respect to visual character, this effect would be substantially less than the effect of the proposed project because considerably less urbanization would be enabled under the "No Project" alternative resulting in the retention of more open space. With regard to new sources of light or glare, the "No Project" alternative would enable urban development that includes street lights. The

amount of land covered by streetlights would be substantially less than the proposed project. The overall impact to aesthetics would be substantially less under the "No Project" alternative. **Impact: items #1 and #2—substantially less impact than the proposed project.**

E. Transportation/Traffic

The "No Project" alternative would have the potential to result in transportation impacts by: 1) producing a substantial cumulative deterioration of the level of service on Highway 101, 2) substantially increasing traffic congestion along the Fifth Street corridor and at the Fifth Street interchange, and 3) conflicting with regional policy to "provide public transportation that increases mobility and improves quality of life in Monterey County."[88] With regard to item #1, the "No Project" alternative could result in the development of housing that increases traffic on Highway 101. This effect would be substantially less than that of the proposed project because substantially less land would be urbanized under the "No Project" alternative. With regard to item #2, the "No Project" alternative could result in local traffic impacts, especially along the Fifth Street corridor and at the Fifth Street interchange to Highway 101. This effect would be substantially less than that of the proposed project, because there would be less traffic along the Fifth Street corridor and at the Fifth Street interchange under the "No Project" alternative. Finally, with regard to item #3, the development pattern under the "No Project" alternative would not be conducive to increasing transit ridership. This effect would not be a substantial improvement over the proposed project because the proposed project organizes new development into neighborhoods with clearly defined centers that are conducive to transit ridership. **Impacts: items #1 and #2— substantially less impact than the proposed project; item #3—no substantial improvement over the proposed project.**

F. Air Quality

The "No Project" alternative would result in the degradation of air quality by: 1) enabling residential development approvals that would increase population and the number of vehicle miles traveled in the air basin, 2) enabling industrial development approvals that

[88] Transportation Agency for Monterey County, *2005 Regional Transportation Plan*. Goal 1.3, Policy 4: Administer Transportation for Livable Communities (TLC) Transit-Oriented Development Incentive Program to encourage land use jurisdictions that support Transit Oriented Development, and reward jurisdictions that approve new housing and other development near transit hubs.

could add new stationary sources of pollution and increase the potential for the release of hazardous materials into the atmosphere through upset or accident, 3) exposing new residents to highway-generated diesel emissions, and 4) subjecting new residents to odor from an animal feedlot. The first two of these effects would be substantially less than the effect of the proposed project because considerably less residential and industrial development would be enabled under the "No Project" alternative. The third item (i.e., highway-generated diesel emissions) would not be a substantial improvement over the proposed project. The proposed project would designate one small additional area (approximately 25 acres) for residential development adjacent to Highway 101 (in the vicinity of the Northern Interchange), but this addition would not represent a significant difference. The fourth item (i.e., feedlot odor) would be substantially greater than the proposed project because this feedlot would eventually be converted to urban use under the proposed project. **Impact: item #1 and #2—substantially less impact than the proposed project; item 3—no substantial improvement over the proposed project; item #4—substantially greater impact than the proposed project.**

G. Greenhouse Gas Emissions

The "No Project" alternative would have a significant impact on the environment by enabling urbanization without feasible and effective measures in place to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions to a level that is deemed necessary in new urban development to slow and ultimately reverse a long-term trend of rising global temperatures and increasing adverse environmental impacts associated with climate change. The proposed project, on the other hand, contains a number of policies and actions meant to reduce per capita GHG emission and reduce GHG emissions in existing development. Nonetheless, the sheer amount of growth allowed under the proposed project could result in substantially greater GHG emissions than the "No project" alternative.[89] **Impact: substantially less impact than the proposed project.**

[89] Urbanization in Gonzales does not necessarily contribute to an increase in GHG emissions at the regional level. Any business or residence not constructed in Gonzales could instead be built in Salinas or any one of a number of other Monterey County communities. Nonetheless, urbanization in Gonzales, instead of Fort Ord or Salinas, could result in more vehicle miles traveled and greater GHG emissions due to the possibly greater driving distances between home and work. On the other hand, urbanization in Gonzales could also reduce the amount of growth in Salinas Valley cities to the south and result in a net reduction in vehicle miles traveled and reduced GHG emissions. AMBAG growth projections assume continued growth outside

H. Energy Conservation

The "No Project" alternative would have the potential to substantially increase the demand for residential energy supplies. Unlike, the "No Project" alternative, the proposed project would result in a higher average residential density and a smaller percentage of single family homes, which would reduce per capita energy consumption. Nonetheless, the overall effect of the "No Project" alternative would be substantially less energy usage than that of the proposed project because less development would occur and energy demand would be reduced. **Impact: substantially less impact than the proposed project.**

I. Noise

The "No Project" alternative would have the potential to degrade the noise environment by: 1) locating noise-sensitive development in proximity to Highway 101, 2) creating a substantial and permanent increase in ambient noise levels due to increased traffic generated by new development and the general increase in activity associated with urbanization, and 3) placing noise sensitive uses along the route used by trucks to access the Salinas valley Landfill. With regard to item #1, the "No Project" alternative would result in the development of residential uses along Highway 101. This would be slightly less development along Highway 101 than would be allowed by the proposed project. With regard to item #2, the "No Project" alternative would result in substantially less ambient noise than the proposed project, which has a substantially larger growth area and corresponding potential for noise creation. Both the "No Project" alternative and the proposed project would contain policies and actions designed to mitigate acute noise impacts resulting from plan implementation to a less-than-significant level. With regard to item #3 (i.e., landfill trucks), the "No Project" alternative would result in substantially less residential development along the route used by trucks accessing the Salinas Valley Landfill. **Impact item #1—no substantial improvement over the proposed project; item #2 and #3— substantially less impact than the proposed project.**

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of Salinas, thus absent some major shift in land use policy in the region, it is likely that growth could be shifted to cities that lie to the south.

J. Hydrology and Water Quality

As for the proposed project, the "No Project" alternative would have the potential to adversely impact hydrology and water quality by 1) enabling development that could substantially change drainage patterns, increase stormwater runoff, and expose people and structures to flooding, 2) reduce groundwater recharge, and 3) degrade water quality. With regard to item #1, the "No Project" alternative would produce less stormwater runoff, but it would limit the City's ability to correct the existing flooding problems associated with Johnson Canyon Creek, because new construction that could partially fund upgrades to the existing drainage system would be precluded. The proposed project, on the other hand, would enable the City to more effectively plan for drainage improvements that would correct existing flooding problems, because new construction could partially fund system-wide upgrades. With regard to item #2, the "No Project" alternative would result in the construction of less impervious surface (associated with urbanization) and thus would be less disruptive to groundwater recharge. With regard to item #3, the "No Project" alternative could result in lower water quality because existing agricultural uses, with their substantial impacts on water quality, would remain in place. The proposed project, on the other hand, would contain new policies and actions providing state-of-the-art drainage design that could significantly lessen water quality impacts from non-point sources. **Impact items #1 and #3—substantially greater impact than project; item #2— substantially less impact than the proposed project.**

K. Utility and Service Systems;

The "No Project" alternative would have the potential to result in utility and service system impacts by: 1) increasing the demand for sewer and water transport systems, 2) increasing the demand for sewer treatment capacity, and 3) increasing the demand for drinking water. With regard to item #1, the "No Project" alternative would result in the need to extend sewer and water pipes to supply new development. This effect is substantially less than that of proposed project because substantially less area would be development under the "No Project" alternative. With regard to items #2 and #3, the "No Project" alternative would increase demand for sewer and water services. This effect would be substantially less than that of the proposed project, because substantially less development would occur under the "No Project" alternative. **Impact: items #1, #2, and #3— substantially less impact than the proposed project.**

L. Public Services

The "No Project" alternative would have the potential to result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new and/or improved governmental facilities, such as new schools, parks, and expanded police and fire facilities. Such facilities would be needed to accommodate the development potential that remains in the existing planning area. These effects would be substantially less than the effects of the proposed project because considerably less development would be enabled under the "No Project" alternative, requiring fewer new and/or improved governmental facilities. **Impact: substantially less impact than the proposed project.**

M. Recreation

The "No Project" alternative would have the potential to result in an increase in the use of community recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facilities could be accelerated. It would also require new and/or expanded recreational facilities the construction of which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment. Such new facilities and acreage would slightly increase the average number of acres of parkland per person citywide and slightly lessen the deterioration of existing recreational facilities. It is unlikely, however, that the small increment of growth that remains in the Gonzales 1996 General Plan would provide the City with sufficient resources to expand its community swimming pool or to construct a second one. The "No Project" alternative would, therefore, place additional demand on this facility, potentially leading its more rapid deterioration.

The proposed project, on the other hand, would substantially increase the average number of acres of parkland per person citywide by providing new recreational facilities. It would also have the potential to lessen the deterioration of the existing swimming pool, because the proposed project, unlike the "No Project" alternative, would require development to provide new community parks (which are sized to contain facilities such as swimming pools) as well as neighborhood parks. The scale of new development under the proposed project would make it more likely that a large recreation facility with citywide benefit could be constructed. **Impact: substantially greater impact than the proposed project.**

N. Biological Resources

The "No Project" alternative could result in degradation of biological resources by: 1) affecting special status species, 2) disturbing potential jurisdictional waters, and 3) contributing to a potentially significant cumulative impact on downstream water quality that is detrimental to the health of wildlife in Gonzales Slough. With regard to item #1 and #2, these effects are substantially less than the effect of the proposed project because considerably less development would be enabled under the "No Project" alternative and because the area that lies closer to the foothills, which is included in the project but not in the 1996 General Plan, has greater habitat value. Like the area designated for growth in the existing 1996 General Plan, much of the area contained in the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* Growth Area is characterized by actively cultivated agricultural fields with little or no remaining habitat value. A recently completed EIR for the Salinas Valley Solid Waste Authority (for landfill expansion), however, revealed rare and endangered species that could affect lands that are located in the eastern reaches of the planning area, including for example, California tiger salamander.

With regard to item #3, the "No Project" alternative would leave in place agricultural operations that could have a greater impact on wildlife in Gonzales than if the upstream watershed were converted to urban use. While contaminants from urban uses would have their own impacts on Gonzales Sough, the proposed project would provide for state-of-the-art drainage designs that are capable of resulting in relatively high water quality. In a study commissioned by AMBAG in 1999, which analyzed impacts from agricultural operations and urbanization on the health of the sloughs around Watsonville, researchers found that the contaminants from agricultural operations were a substantial hazard to wildlife.[90] **Impact: items #1 and #2— substantially less impact than the proposed project; item #3—substantially greater impact than the proposed project.**

O. Cultural Resources

The "No Project" alternative would have the potential to disturb known historical resources and unknown archaeological and/or paleontological resources, as for the proposed project. The "No Project" alternative would reduce the amount of land converted from agricultural use to urban development. As a result, there would be a

decrease in the amount of land that would be graded as part of construction activities, thereby reducing the risk of encountering subsurface cultural resources. Both the *Gonzales 1996 General Plan* and the proposed project include policies to mitigate impacts to cultural resources to a less-than-significant level. As a result, the "No Project" alternative would not be a substantial improvement over the proposed project. **Impact: no substantial improvement over the proposed project.**

P. Geology and Soils

The "No Project" alternative would expose people and structures to the risk of loss, injury, or death involving geological forces. The "No Project" alternative would result in a smaller number of new residents and new development subject to risk from geological and soils-based hazards than the proposed project. **Impact: substantially less impact than the proposed project.**

Q. Hazardous Materials

As for the proposed project, the "No Project" alternative would have the potential to expose people to hazardous materials by: 1) enabling industrial development approvals in the planning area, and 2) enabling residential development on former agricultural lands that would expose persons to soils that could be tainted with hazardous agricultural chemicals. With regard to item #1, the "No Project" alternative would result in less new industrial development, and such development would be limited to areas west of Alta Street, away from new and existing residential areas. Accordingly, fewer persons would put at risk if an industrial accident occurred. Cold storage operations, for example, could involve the use of chlorine gas, which if released through accident could seriously affect the health of persons living down wind.

The "No Project" alternative would also result in less new residential development on former agricultural lands and would, therefore, expose fewer people to hazardous materials. New development under either the "No Project" alternative or the proposed project would be subject to local, state and federal regulations that would reduce the potential for hazards and hazardous materials to a less-than-significant level. The proposed project contains additional policies that would reduce potential impacts from

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[90] Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments. 1999. "Water Quality Management Plan for the Pajaro River Watershed. March 1999." Draft Plan.

hazards and hazardous materials. Nonetheless, the impacts associated with the "No Project" alternative would be substantially less than the proposed project. **Impacts: items #1 and #2— substantially less impact than the proposed project.**

6.3.2 REDUCED GROWTH ALTERNATIVE

The "Reduced Growth" alternative reduces the amount of growth potentially accommodated by the proposed project by limiting the land area to be included within the Urban Growth Area.

6.3.2.1. PRINCIPAL CHARACTERISTICS

The planning area in the "Reduced Growth" alternative is the same as in the proposed project, but the amount of land included in the Urban Growth Area has been reduced by approximately two-thirds, and all the area designated "Urban Reserve" in the proposed project has been redesignated as "Agriculture" outside the Urban Growth Area. The "Reduced Growth" alternative would accommodate approximately 14,400 persons, which is consistent with AMBAG growth projections for 2035 population (i.e., 23,418 persons, an increase of 14,393 persons over the existing 2009 population). Of the 14,400 persons accommodated by the "Reduced Growth" alternative, 3,400 persons would be accommodated by undeveloped land within the growth area established in the *Gonzales 1996 General Plan*.

The "Reduced Growth" alternative would not necessarily change the pace of growth in the short term. While the "Reduced Growth" alternative contains a smaller growth area than the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan*, the plan does not impact the rate of population growth. In this alternative, as with the proposed project, the rate of regional population growth is largely dependent on external factors out of the City's control, such as fertility rates, rates of immigration, and the location and availability of jobs. This alternative, like the proposed project, accepts the premise that AMBAG growth projections are a mirror of the same larger economic forces that drive private market decisions and that population growth rates in Gonzales generally would track AMBAG growth forecasts. In both the "Reduced Growth" alternative and the proposed project, the pace of growth would

probably track AMBAG projections through 2035. In the "Reduced Growth" alternative, however, much of the growth in the region could be re-directed away from Gonzales to some other city or place in the region after 2035 if adequate acreage were not available to serve the demand for development. In the proposed project, additional acres are provided to serve needs beyond 2035, because the City wants to provide a long-term vision for growth. It is assumed that the "Reduced Growth" alternative would include resource protection policies similar to those contained in the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan*. Figure 6.3.2 compares the land use plans for the "Reduced Growth" alternative and the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan*. Figure 6.3.3 shows the land use diagram for the "Reduced Growth" alternative.

Figure 6.3.2: "Reduced Growth" Alternative v. Proposed Project

	Proposed Project	"Reduced Growth"
Planning Area	19,200 ac	19,200 ac
Land for Urbanization		
Remaining Potential in 1996 Plan	365 ac	365 ac
Urban Growth Area	2,150 ac	735 ac
Urban Reserve	2,130 ac	0 ac
Additional Dwelling Units		
Remaining Potential in 1996 Plan	940 du	940 du
Urban Growth Area	6,735 du	2,795 du
Urban Reserve	6,590 du	0 du
Additional Commercial Square Feet		
Remaining Potential in 1996 Plan	183,000 sf	183,000 sf
Urban Growth Area	1,228,500 sf	238,000 sf
Urban Reserve	542,000 sf	0 sf
Additional Industrial Square Feet		
Remaining Potential in 1996 Plan	1,291,000 sf	1,291,000 sf
Urban Growth Area	1,347,000 sf	255,000 sf
Urban Reserve	2,382,000 sf	0 sf
Additional Employment		
Remaining Potential in 1996 Plan	1,195 jobs	1,195 jobs
Urban Growth Area	3,990 jobs	1,445 jobs
Urban Reserve	3,365 jobs	0 jobs
Additional Population at 2035		
AMBAG Forecast	14,393 persons	14,393 persons
Remaining Potential in 1996 Plan	3,400 persons	3,400 persons
Urban Growth Area to 2035	10,993 persons	10,993 persons
Additional Population beyond 2035 (Urban Growth Area only)	14,407 persons	0 persons

Sources: Coastplans; City of Gonzales

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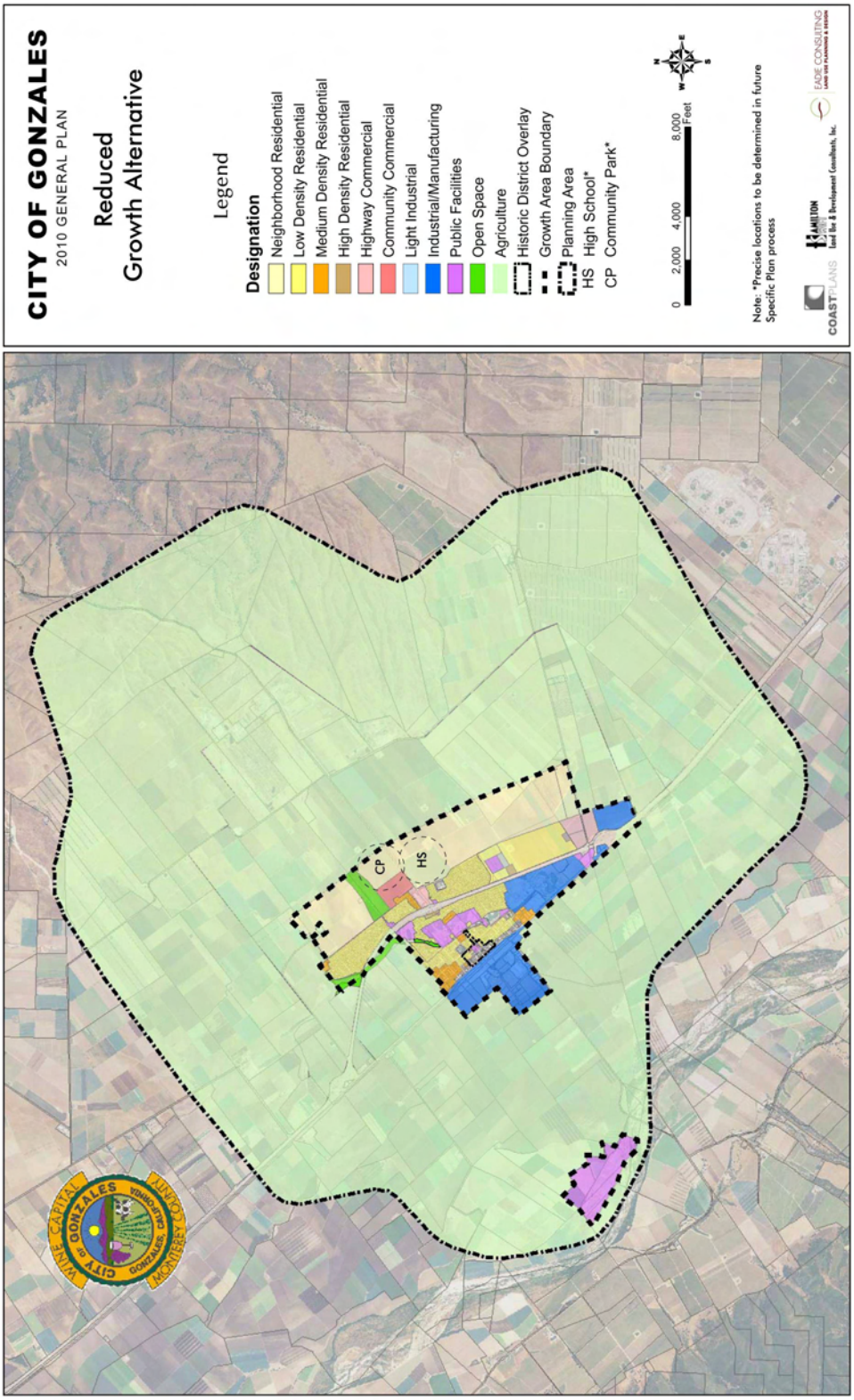
Figure 6.3.3: Land Use Diagram for "Reduced Growth" Alternative



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6.3.2.2. IMPACT ANALYSIS OF "REDUCED GROWTH" ALTERNATIVE

The "Reduced Growth" alternative would have the following impacts relative to adoption of the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan*.

A. <u>Land Use and Planning</u>

There are two non-city agencies that have policies and plans with an effect on land use decisions in the City of Gonzales—the Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) and the County of Monterey. With regard to LAFCO, both the "Reduced Growth" alternative and the proposed project would defer the demarcation of a new Sphere of Influence until after adoption of the plan.

With regard to Monterey County, both the "Reduced Growth" alternative and the proposed project would result in a development pattern that is in keeping with a general consensus that growing eastward away from the best farmlands of the Salinas Valley would be the best way to protect the highest quality farmlands in the area. This strategy is consistent with draft County of Monterey land use policy, which states in part that a request for a change in the city's sphere of influence may be supported if it directs City growth away from the "highest quality farmlands" and provides adequate buffers along developing agricultural-urban interfaces (*Draft County of Monterey General Plan*, Policy LU-2.18). Both the "Reduced Growth" alternative and the proposed project would adopt this basic approach as one of its planning objectives (Obj. 5), and each would contain policies and actions requiring developer contributions to fund permanent agricultural protection and establish agricultural buffers to reduce conflicts between urban and agricultural uses. The City is on record with Monterey County requesting that the County provide an Urban Reserve Area consistent with the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan*. **Impact: no substantial improvement over the proposed project.**

B. <u>Population and Housing</u>

The "Reduced Growth" alternative would have the potential to result in population and housing impacts by inducing substantial unintended population growth outside the area planned for growth. While both the "Reduced Growth" alternative and the proposed project would clearly delineate areas for permanent agricultural protection and establish an agricultural mitigation fund to purchase conservation easements in those areas,

development pressure would remain for land that lie east of the proposed growth area. This is because land to the east has lower agricultural values than other land in the area that would be contiguous to existing urban services, and such development would be consistent with the general consensus among planning agencies in the region that developing toward the foothills away from the Salinas Valley floor is a preferable development pattern. Nonetheless, the "Reduce Growth" alternative, on its face, would result in reduced population and housing growth. **Impact: substantially less impact than the project.**

C. Agricultural Resources

The "Reduced Growth" alternative would result in the degradation of agricultural resources by: 1) converting prime farmland for urban use, 2) conflict with Williamson Act contracts, and 3) increasing urban/agricultural conflicts and increasing pressure on neighboring farmlands to convert by extending urban services closer to active agricultural operations. With regard to item #1, the "Reduced Growth" alternative would convert 530 acres of Prime farmland and 205 acres of Farmland of Statewide Importance. This is significantly less than the proposed project. Figure 6.3.4 compares the impacts on farmland of the "Reduced Growth" alternative to the proposed project.

Figure 6.3.4: Comparative Impacts on Farmland

Farmland Type	*Gonzales 2010 General Plan*		"Reduced Growth" Alternative	
	Growth Area	Urban Reserve	Growth Area	Urban Reserve
Prime Farmland	890 acres	1,000 acres	530 acres	n/a
Farmland of Statewide Importance	1,220 acres	380 acres	205 acres	n/a
Animal Feedlot	0 acres	460 acre	0 acres	n/a
Other (Grazing)	40 acres	290 acres	0 acres	n/a
Total	2,150 acres	2,130 acres	735 acres	n/a

Source: Coastplans; *Gonzales 2010 General Plan*

With regard to Williamson Act contracts, the "Reduced Project" alternative would not affect any existing Williamson Act contracts or affect property that was placed in non-renewal status in 2006. With regard to item #2, the "Reduced Growth" alternative would

not result in a substantial improvement over the proposed project because both would provide for the establishment of an agricultural mitigation fund to permanently protect selected prime farmlands. **Impact: item #1— substantially less impact than the proposed project; item #2—no substantial improvement over the proposed project.**

D. Aesthetics

The "Reduced Growth" alternative could result in the degradation of aesthetic values by: 1) substantially degrading the existing visual character of the planning area by converting the open space provided by agricultural fields to urban development, and by 2) creating new sources of light and glare. With regard to both of these impacts, the "Reduced Growth" alternative would result in significantly less acreage designated for urban uses. Therefore, there would be reduced impacts associated with the degradation of visual character and new sources of light and glare. **Impact: items #1 and #2— substantially less impact than the proposed project.**

E. Transportation/Traffic

The "Reduced Growth" alternative would have the potential to result in transportation impacts by: 1) producing a substantial cumulative deterioration of the level of service on Highway 101, 2) substantially increasing local traffic congestion, for example at the 5th Street interchange, and 3) conflicting with regional policy to "provide public transportation that increases mobility and improves quality of life in Monterey County." With regard to item #1, the "Reduced Growth" alternative would allow less growth and therefore generate less traffic on Highway 101 by persons traveling back and forth from work from new housing built in Gonzales. With regard to item #2, the "Reduced Growth" alternative would result in reduced traffic impacts on local streets and reduced impacts on the 5th Street interchange at Highway 101, a known area of congestion. With regard to item #3, the "Reduced Growth" alternative would promote public transit as effectively as the proposed project, because in either case development would be organized into walkable neighborhoods with higher density housing in proximity to neighborhood centers that would be easily served by public transit. The reduced growth alternative would provide less critical mass for transit development in the long term, but it is too speculative to assess what impact this would have on public transit development. **Impact item #1 and #2—substantially less impact than the proposed project; item #3—no substantial improvement over the proposed project.**

F. Air Quality

The "Reduced Growth" alternative would result in the degradation of air quality by: 1) enabling residential development approvals that would increase population and the number of vehicle miles traveled (VMT) in the air basin, 2) enabling industrial development approvals with that could add new stationary sources of pollution and increase the potential for the release of hazardous materials into the atmosphere through upset or accident, 3) exposing new residents to highway-generated diesel emissions, and 4) subject new residents to odor from an animal feedlot. The "Reduced Growth" alternative would decrease VMT within the air basin and have substantially less impact on air pollution, because less land would be urbanized, which in turn would generate less traffic and fewer vehicle miles traveled. With regard to item #2 (i.e., industrial development), the "Reduced Growth" alternative would decrease the number of potential new stationary sources of air pollution and decrease the potential for the release of hazardous materials into the atmosphere, because less industrial development would be allowed. With regard to item #3 (i.e., highway-generated diesel emissions), the "Reduced Growth" alternative would result in no substantial improvement over the project because it would not result in fewer persons living in proximity to Highway 101. With regard to item #4 (odor from the animal feedlot), the "Reduced Growth" alternative would result in a substantially greater impact than the project because the feedlot use would probably continue for a longer period of time. **Impact: items #1 and #2—substantially less impact than the proposed project; items #3—no substantial improvement over the project; item #4—substantially greater impact than the proposed project.**

G. Greenhouse Gas Emissions

The "Reduced Growth" alternative would result in less development, which in turn would generate less traffic and use less energy than the proposed project. Therefore, the number of vehicle miles traveled would be less and the amount of GHG emissions would be reduced. Both the "Reduced Growth" alternative and the proposed project would contain a number of policies and actions meant to reduce per capita GHG emission and reduce GHG emissions in existing development. Nonetheless, the sheer amount of growth allowed under the proposed project could result in substantially greater GHG emissions than the "Reduced Growth" alternative. **Impact: substantially less impact than the proposed project.**

H. Energy Conservation

The "Reduced Growth" alternative would have the potential to substantially increase the demand for residential energy supplies. This impact would be substantially less than for the proposed project because less growth would be allowed under the "Reduced Growth' alternative. Less growth would result in a smaller population, fewer houses, and less traffic, each of which would contribute to reduced energy usage. **Impact: substantially less impact than the proposed project.**

I. Noise

The "Reduced Growth" alternative would have the potential to degrade the noise environment by: 1) locating noise-sensitive development in proximity to Highway 101, 2) creating a substantial and permanent increase in ambient noise levels due to increased traffic generated by new development and the general increase in activity associated with urbanization, and 3) placing noise sensitive uses along the route used by trucks to access the Salinas Valley Landfill. With regard to item #1, the "Reduced Growth" alternative would result in no change to the noise sensitive development planned along Highway 101, so there would be no substantial improvement over the proposed project.

With regard to item #2, the "Reduced Growth" alternative would result in substantially less noise impact than the proposed project, because there would be less urbanization overall. With regard to item #3, the "Reduced Growth" alternative would exclude from development much of the land along the route chosen by trucks accessing the Salinas Valley Landfill. As a result, there would be a substantial improvement over the proposed project. **Impact: item #1—no substantial improvement over the project; item #2 and #3—substantially less impact than the proposed project.**

J. Hydrology and Water Quality

The "Reduced Growth" alternative would have the potential to adversely impact hydrology and water quality by: 1) enabling development that could substantially change drainage patterns, increase stormwater runoff, and expose people and structures to flooding; 2) reduce groundwater recharge; and 3) degrade water quality. With regard to item #1, the "Reduced Growth" alternative would subject less land to urbanization and result in less stormwater runoff. With regard to item #2, the "Reduced Growth" alternative would result in less impervious surface, but in either the "Reduced Growth"

alternative or proposed project, policies and actions require drainage designs to approximate the amount of groundwater recharge that existed prior to development, so there would be no substantial improvement with the alternative. With regard to item #3, the "Reduced Growth" alternative could result in lower water quality because a greater number of agricultural acres, with their substantial impacts on water quality, would remain in place under the "Reduced Growth" alternative than under the proposed project. Both the "Reduced Growth" alternative and the proposed project would include policies and actions requiring naturalistic drainage designs capable of producing a relatively high quality of drainage effluent, but these policies and actions would not apply to agricultural operations outside the incorporated area. The net effect would be a potential for substantially lower water quality with the alternative. **Impact: item #1—substantially less impact than the proposed project; item #2—no substantial improvement over the project; item #3—substantially greater impact than project.**

K. Utility and Service Systems

The "Reduced Growth" alternative would have the potential to result in utility and service system impacts by: 1) increasing the demand for sewer and water transport systems, 2) increasing the demand for sewer treatment capacity, and 3) increasing the demand for water. With regard to item #1, the "Reduced Growth" alternative would result in a reduction in the lineal feet of sewer and water pipelines because less land would be subject to urbanization. With regard to item #2, the "Reduced Growth" alternative would result in a reduction in the demand for sewer treatment capacity. With regard to items #3, the "Reduced Growth" alternative would generate substantially less demand for water because less land would be urbanized. **Impact: item #1, #2, and #3—substantially less impact than the proposed project.**

L. Public Services

The "Reduced Growth" alternative would have the potential to result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new and/or improved governmental facilities, such as new schools, parks, and expanded police and fire facilities. The "Reduced Growth" alternative would accommodate less development, which in turn would lessen the demand for public services in the long term and the impacts associated with providing them. **Impact: substantially less impact than the proposed project.**

M. Recreation

The "Reduced Growth" alternative would have the potential to result in an increase in the use of community recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facilities could be accelerated. It would also require new and/or expanded recreational facilities the construction of which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment. Such new facilities and acreage would increase the average number of acres of parkland per person citywide and lessen the deterioration of existing recreational facilities. Both the "Reduced Growth" alternative and the proposed project would have the potential to lessen the deterioration of the existing swimming pool, because both would require development to provide new community parks (which are sized to contain facilities such as swimming pools) as well as neighborhood parks. Nonetheless, the "Reduced Growth" alternative would probably have an overall reduced impact on existing recreational facilities, because it allows less growth. **Impact: substantially less impact than the proposed project.**

N. Biological Resources

The "Reduced Growth" alternative could result in degradation of biological resources by: 1) affecting special status species, 2) disturbing potential jurisdictional waters, and 3) contributing to a potentially significant cumulative impact on downstream water quality by enabling urbanization, the runoff from which would contain contaminants detrimental to the health of wildlife in Gonzales Slough. With regard to item #1, the "Reduced Growth" alternative would result in a substantial improvement over the proposed project because considerably less development would be enabled east of the existing city in proximity to the foothills. The area that lies closer to the foothills has greater habitat value than areas that have been heavily farmed for generations. A recent EIR completed for the Salinas Valley Solid Waste Authority (for landfill expansion) revealed rare and endangered species that could affect lands planned for growth in the "Reduced Growth" alternative, including for example, California tiger salamander.

With regard to item #2, the "Reduced Growth" alternative would result in substantially less impact than the proposed project because less land would be designated for urbanization. With regard to item #3, the "Reduced Growth" alternative would result in no substantially improvement over the proposed project because a larger area of agricultural soils, with their attendant chemical contamination, would be left in place in the watershed above Gonzales Slough. The impacts of continued agricultural on

biological resources could be the same or even greater than the impacts of urbanization.[91] **Impact items #1 and #2— substantially less impact than the proposed project; item #3— no substantial improvement over the project.**

O. Cultural Resources

The "Reduced Growth" alternative would have the potential to disturb known historical resources and unknown archaeological and/or paleontological resources. The "Reduced Growth" alternative would decrease the amount of land area subject to urbanization, and as a result, would decrease the amount of land that would be graded for construction. This, in turn, would reduce the risk of encountering subsurface cultural resources. Both the "Reduced Growth" alternative and the proposed project would include policies and actions designed to mitigate impacts to cultural resources. **Impact: substantially less impact than the proposed project.**

P. Geology and Soils

The "Reduced Growth" alternative would expose people and structures to the risk of loss, injury, or death involving geological forces. The "Reduced Growth" alternative would result in fewer structures being built, so there would be a reduced likelihood that new residents and new development would be subject to risk from geological and soils-based hazards. Both the "Reduced Growth" alternative and the proposed project would include policies and actions designed to mitigate such impacts and both would be subject to local, state and federal regulations also designed to reduce the potential for geology or soils related impacts. **Impact: substantially less impact than the proposed project.**

Q. Hazardous Materials

The "Reduced Growth" alternative would have the potential to expose people to hazardous materials by: 1) enabling industrial development approvals in the planning area, 2) enabling residential development on former agricultural lands that would expose persons to soils that could be tainted with hazardous agricultural chemicals, and 3) allowing development on a site that is included on a list of hazardous materials sites and as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment. With regard to item #1, the "Reduced Growth" alternative would result less new industrial

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[91] Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments. 1999. "Water Quality Management Plan for the Pajaro

development than the proposed project, so there would be less opportunity for persons to be exposed to hazardous materials in the case of an industrial accident. Cold storage operations, for example, could involve the use of chlorine gas, which if released through accident could seriously affect the health of persons living down wind.

With regard to item #2, the "Reduced Growth" alternative would result in less agricultural land conversion. Therefore, the number of acres containing hazardous agricultural chemicals to which people are exposed would be less. With regard to item #3, the "Reduced Growth" alternative would develop only a portion of Fanoe Ranch, which is a listed hazardous materials site. An approximately 15-acre area at the northeastern corner of the site, which would be excluded from urbanization under the "Reduced Growth" alternative, is known to have been used for the treatment and disposal of hydrocarbon impacted soil excavated from Sturdy Oil service stations in the south Monterey County area. Exclusion of this area for development would lessen the exposure of persons to hazardous materials. Other parts of the site that would remain in the growth area, however, may have soil contamination issues to address. New development under either the "Reduced Growth" alternative or the proposed project would be subject to local, state and federal regulations that would reduce the potential for hazards and hazardous materials to a less-than-significant level. **Impacts: items #1, #2, and #3— substantially less impact than the proposed project.**

River Watershed. March 1999." Draft Plan.

6.3.3 HIGHER DENSITY ALTERNATIVE

The "Higher Density" alternative reduces the rate at which land would be urbanized by requiring higher average residential densities. It also reduces the planned development footprint, so the number of persons and houses would be the same as the proposed project at buildout. The "Higher Density" alternative is the environmentally superior alternative.

6.3.3.1. PRINCIPAL CHARACTERISTICS

In the "High Density" alternative, the average density at which housing is developed has been increased. While the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* requires an overall residential density between seven (7) and nine (9) dwelling units per gross residential acre, the "Higher Density" alternative would require an overall residential density between nine (9) and eleven (11) dwelling units per gross residential acre. This higher density would be achieved by changing the required mix of housing so that a greater proportion would be attached single family and multi-family and a smaller proportion would be detached single family housing. Under the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan*, 1,200 units of housing (the approximate size of the prototypical neighborhood, according to the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* "Land Use Element") would consume approximately 170 acres of open space land; under the "Higher Density" alternative, the same 1,200 units of housing would only consume approximately 135 acres—about 20 percent less land. This equates to approximately 300 acres in the Urban Growth Area and 290 acres in the Urban Reserve Area.[92] The Land Use Diagram for the "Higher Density" alternative has been adjusted accordingly. Figure 6.3.5 below compares the required mix of housing for the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan* and the "Higher Density" alternative. Figure 6.3.6 shows the Land Use Diagram for the "Higher Density" alternative.

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[92] This calculation was made by taking the amount of land in the "Neighborhood"/"Neighborhood Residential" designations (see Figure 3.2.3), of which 65% is for residential use (the remaining 35% is for non-residential neighborhood uses), and reducing it by 20%. The actual calculations are as follows: 1,490 acres x 65% = 968 acres; 968 acres – (20% x 968 acres) = 774 acres; 774 acres ÷ 65% = 1,191 acres; 1,490 acres – 1,191 acres ≈ 300 acres. A similar methodology was used to reduce the size of the Urban Reserve Area. Of the 2,130 Urban Reserve acres, approximately 1,450 acres would be devoted to "Neighborhood" use. The actual calculations are as follows: 1,450 acres x 65% = 942 acres; 942 acres – (20% x 942 acres) = 753 acres; 753 acres ÷ 65% = 1,159 acres; 1,450 acres – 1,159 acres ≈ 290 acres.

Figure 6.3.5: Comparing the Required Mix of Housing

Density Category	Min. Required Mix (Percent of total units)	
	Gonzales 2010 General Plan	**"Higher Density" Alternative**
NR Very Low (single family lots 10,001 to 20,000 sq. ft.; 2 to 3 du/gac)	No minimum required	No minimum required
NR Low (single family lots 6,000 -10,000 sq .ft.; 3 to 6 du/gac)	15 %	5%
NR Medium (single family lots 3,500 - 5,999 sq. ft.; 6 to 9 du/gac)	15 %	5%
NR Medium High (attached or detached units w/lots > 2,300 sq. ft.; 9 to 15 du/gac)	15 %	30%
NR High (attached units such as apartments, townhomes, mixed-use residential, or other similar types; 15 to 24 du/gac)	15 %	30%

Sources: *Gonzales 2010 General Plan*; Coastplans

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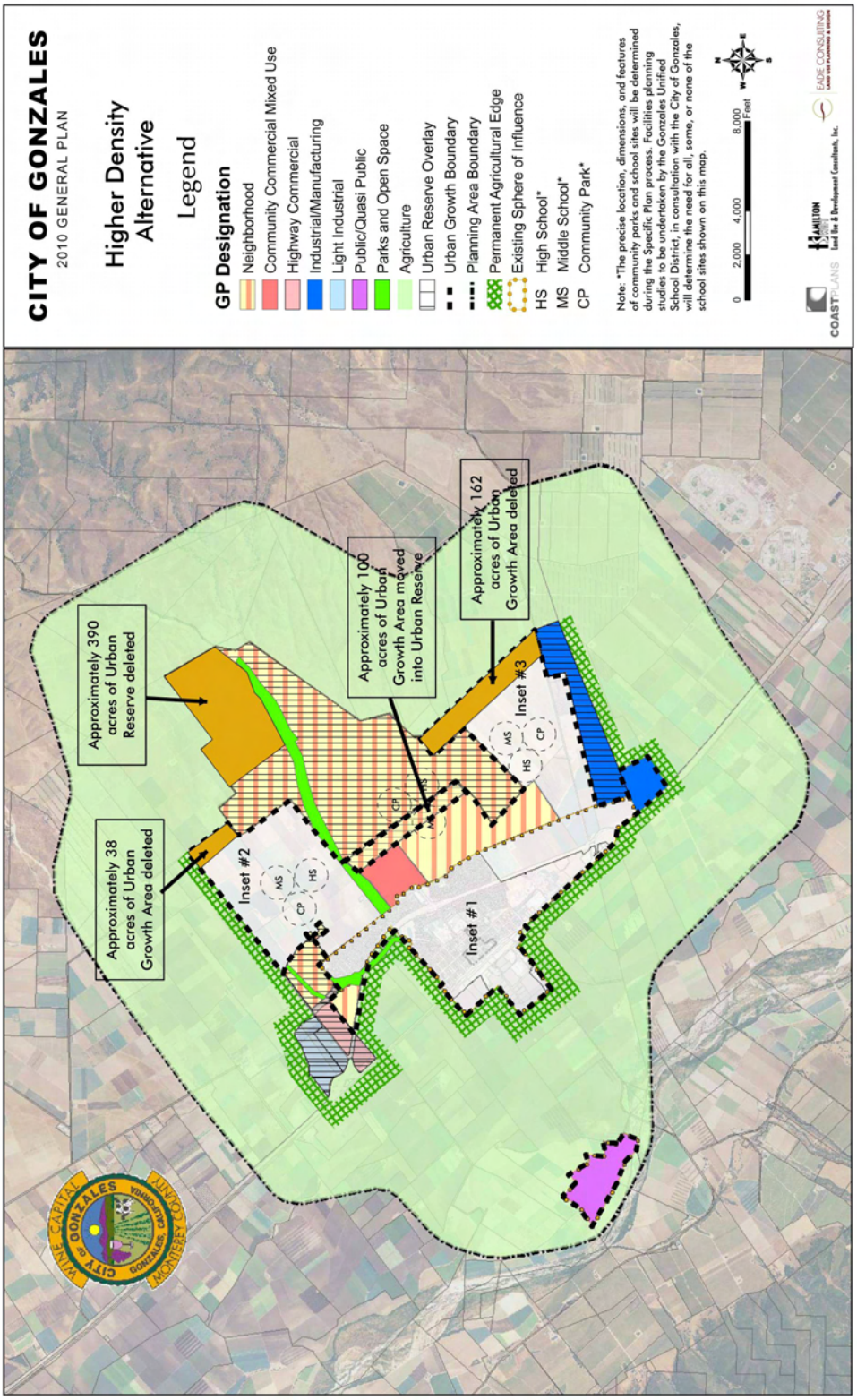
Figure 6.3.6: Land Use Plan for "Higher Density" Alternative



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6.3.3.2. IMPACT ANALYSIS OF "HIGHER DENSITY" ALTERNATIVE

The "Higher Density" alternative would have the following impacts relative to adoption of the *Gonzales 2010 General Plan*.

A. <u>Land Use and Planning</u>

There are two non-city agencies that have policies and plans with an effect on land use decisions in the City of Gonzales—the Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) and the County of Monterey. With regard to LAFCO, both the "Higher Density" alternative and the proposed project would defer the demarcation of a new Sphere of Influence until after adoption of the plan.

With regard to Monterey County, both the "Higher Density" alternative and the proposed project would result in a development pattern that is in keeping with a general consensus that growing eastward away from the best farmlands of the Salinas Valley would be the best way to protect the highest quality farmlands in the area. This strategy is consistent with draft County of Monterey land use policy, which states in part that a request for a change in the city's sphere of influence may be supported if it directs City growth away from the "highest quality farmlands" and provides adequate buffers along developing agricultural-urban interfaces (*Draft County of Monterey General Plan*, Policy LU-2.18). Both the "Higher Density" alternative and the proposed project would adopt this basic approach as one of its planning objectives (Obj. 5), and each would contain policies and actions requiring developer contributions to fund permanent agricultural protection and establish agricultural buffers to reduce conflicts between urban and agricultural uses. **Impact: no substantial improvement over the proposed project.**

B. <u>Population and Housing</u>

The "Higher Density" alternative would have the potential to result in population and housing impacts by inducing substantial unintended population growth outside the area planned for growth. Both the "Higher Density" alternative and the proposed project would provide a clear path for the long-term development of the city and address the planning and environmental issues associated with population and housing. Both would clearly delineate areas for permanent agricultural protection and establish an agricultural mitigation fund to purchase conservation easements in those areas. The likelihood of the

either the Higher Density" alternative or the proposed project to result in unintended urbanization is low. **Impact: no substantial improvement over the project.**

C. Agricultural Resources

The "Higher Density" alternative would result in the degradation of agricultural resources by: 1) converting prime farmland for urban use, 2) conflict with Williamson Act contracts, and 3) increasing urban/agricultural conflicts and increasing pressure on neighboring farmlands to convert by extending urban services closer to active agricultural operations. With regard to item #1, this impact would be substantially less than the proposed project because less Prime Farmland and Farmland of Statewide Importance would be designated for conversion. With regard to item #2, the reduction in the size of the Urban Growth Area would remove the only land that is currently in the Williamson Act system. This land was put into non-renewal status in 2006, however, so this impact would result in no substantial improvement. With regard to item #3, the "Higher Density" alternative would not result in a substantial improvement over the proposed project because the both would provide for the establishment of an agricultural mitigation fund to permanently protect prime farmlands. **Impact: items #1— substantially less impact than the proposed project; items #2 and #3—no substantial improvement over the proposed project.**

D. Aesthetics

The "Higher Density" alternative could result in the degradation of aesthetic values by: 1) substantially degrading the existing visual character of the planning area by converting the open space provided by agricultural fields to urban development, and by 2) creating new sources of light and glare. With regard to item #1, the "Higher Density" alternative would substantially degrade the existing visual character of the planning area by converting the open space provided by agricultural fields to urban development. This impact would be substantially less than that of the proposed project because less land would be subject to urbanization under the "Higher Density" alternative. With regard to item #2, the "Higher Density" alternative would subject less land to urbanization, which in turn would reduce the number of streetlights put into service. **Impact: items #1 and #2—substantially less impact than the proposed project.**

E. Transportation/Traffic

The "Higher Density" alternative would have the potential to result in transportation impacts by: 1) producing a substantial cumulative deterioration of the level of service on Highway 101, 2) substantially increasing traffic congestion at the 5th Street interchange, and 3) conflicting with regional policy to "provide public transportation that increases mobility and improves quality of life in Monterey County." With regard to item #1, the "Higher Density" alternative could have the potential to result in less traffic on Highway 101 because higher density development typically generates fewer trips per household and therefore fewer miles traveled per capita. In the case of Gonzales, however, this typical decrease in generated trips would likely by offset by larger family sizes, so the net result would be approximately the same amount of traffic. With regard to item #2, the "Higher Density" alternative would result in higher concentrations of traffic on fewer streets, but such impacts would be correctable by appropriate street design. The overall impact on the 5th Street interchange would be less because of overall fewer trips generated, but the interchange would still experience substantial congestion. As a result the "Higher Density" alternative would result in no substantial change over the proposed project. With regard to item #3, higher densities can provide a significant enhancement to public transit by locating more persons in proximity to transit routes. **Impact: items #1 and #2—no substantial improvement over the project; item #3—substantially less impact than the proposed project.**

F. Air Quality

The "Higher Density" alternative would result in the degradation of air quality by: 1) enabling residential development approvals that would increase population and the number of vehicle miles traveled in the air basin, 2) enabling industrial development approvals with that could add new stationary sources of pollution and increase the potential for the release of hazardous materials into the atmosphere through upset or accident, 3) exposing new residents to highway-generated diesel emissions, and 4) subject new residents to odor from an animal feedlot. With regard to item #1, the "Higher Density" alternative would result in substantially less impact than the proposed project because less land would be subject to urbanization and higher density residential development better supports public transit. With regard to item #2, the impact of industrial development on air quality would be the same under either the project or the "High Density" alternative because the amount of industrial development would not

change between the two alternatives. With regard to item #3, the "Higher Density" alternative would result in no substantial improvement over the proposed project because it would not result in substantially fewer persons living closer to Highway 101. With regard to item #4, the "Higher Density" alternative could result in a substantially greater impact over the project because much of the feedlot use could remain in operation in the long term. **Impact item #1—substantially less impact than the proposed project; items #2 and #3—no substantial improvement over the proposed project; item #4—substantially greater impact than the proposed project.**

G. Greenhouse Gas Emissions

The "Higher Density" alternative would result in the same level of housing and population growth in Gonzales but would occupy a smaller land footprint. Higher densities could also result in a smaller proportion of single family houses and a larger proportion of townhouse or multi-family houses. Townhouses and multi-family housing use less water and energy. They also tend to generate fewer numbers of vehicle trips and increase the market for transit services. For all these reasons, the "Higher Density" alternative could result in reduced GHG emissions. **Impact: substantially less impact than the proposed project.**

H. Energy Conservation

The "Higher Density" alternative would have the potential to substantially increase the demand for residential energy supplies. This impact would be substantially less than for the proposed project because the "Higher Density" alternative would result in a higher average residential density and a smaller percentage of single family homes, which would reduce per capita energy consumption. This is because higher residential densities typically consume less energy. Figure 6.3.7 compares energy and water usage for different types of housing.

Figure 6.3.7: Comparison of Annual Water and Energy Usage

	Single Family (1,600 sf)	Townhouse (950 sq ft)	Multi-Family Apartment (850 sq ft)
Water	180,000 gallons	98,000 gallons	82,000 gallons
Electricity	8,600 kWh	4,500 kWh	5,100 kWh
Natural Gas	510 therms	340 therms	300 therms

Source: Calthorpe Associates

The overall effect of the "Higher Density" alternative would be substantially less energy usage than that of the proposed project. **Impact: substantially less impact than the proposed project.**

I. <u>Noise</u>

The "Higher Density" alternative would have the potential to degrade the noise environment by: 1) locating noise-sensitive development in proximity to Highway 101, 2) creating a substantial and permanent increase in ambient noise levels due to increased traffic generated by new development and the general increase in activity associated with urbanization, and 3) placing noise sensitive uses along the route used by trucks to access the Johnson Canyon Road Landfill. With regard to item #1, the "Higher Density" alternative would result in only a minor increase in noise sensitive development along Highway 101, so there would be no substantial improvement over the proposed project. With regard to item #2, the "Higher Density" alternative would result in substantially greater noise impacts than the proposed project, because higher ambient noise levels are typically associated with higher density development due to increased concentrations of traffic. This would be offset somewhat by the reduced vehicle miles traveled in the "Higher Density" alternative, which would create less ambient noise on the area's streets and highways. Nonetheless, the net result would be a substantially greater impact than the proposed project. With regard to item #3, the "Higher Density" alternative would remove property from the Urban Growth Area that is in proximity to Iverson Road, which is the route chosen by trucks accessing the Johnson Canyon Road Landfill. As a result, there would be a substantial improvement over the proposed project. **Impact: item #1—**

no substantial improvement over the project; item #2—substantially greater impact than the project; item #3—substantially less impact than the proposed project.

J. Hydrology and Water Quality

The "Higher Density" alternative would have the potential to adversely impact hydrology and water quality by: 1) enabling development that could substantially change drainage patterns, increase stormwater runoff, and expose people and structures to flooding; 2) reduce groundwater recharge; and 3) degrade water quality. With regard to item #1, the "Higher Density" alternative would subject less land to urbanization, but the urbanization that did occur would probably have a higher percentage of impervious surfaces. The net result could be an increase stormwater runoff. With regard to item #2, the "Higher Density" alternative would result in more impervious surface, but in either the "Higher Density" alternative or proposed project, policies and actions require drainage designs to approximate the amount of groundwater recharge that existed prior to development, so there would be no substantial change with the alternative. With regard to item #3, the "Higher Density" alternative would result in no substantially improvement over the proposed project because a larger area of agricultural soils, with their attendant chemical contamination, would be left in place in the watershed above Gonzales Slough. The impacts of continued agricultural on water quality could be the same or even greater than the impacts of urbanization.[93] **Impact: item #1—substantially greater impact than the proposed project; items #2 and #3—no substantial improvement over the project.**

K. Utility and Service Systems

The "Higher Density" alternative would have the potential to result in utility and service system impacts by: 1) increasing the demand for sewer and water transport systems, 2) increasing the demand for sewer treatment capacity, and 3) increasing the demand for water. With regard to item #1, the "Higher Density" alternative would result in a reduction in the lineal feet of sewer and water pipelines because of the more compact form of development associated with higher densities. With regard to item #2, the "Higher Density" alternative would result in approximately the same demand for sewer treatment facilities. With regard to items #3, the "Higher Density" alternative would generate substantially less demand for water because higher residential densities typically

consume less water. Overall, the "Higher Density" alternative would have a greater proportion of townhouse and multi-family development than the proposed project, so this alternative would result in less demand per capita for water. **Impact: item #1 and #3—substantially less impact than the proposed project; item #2—no substantial improvement over the project.**

L. Public Services

The "Higher Density" alternative would have the potential to result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new and/or improved governmental facilities, such as new schools, parks, and expanded police and fire facilities. These effects would be essentially the same for both the "Higher Density" alternative and the proposed project because both assume the same level of population growth (although the "Higher Density" alternative assumes that such population growth would occupy less land). Under the "Higher Density" alternative, fire departments might need to invest in more expensive equipment to deal with a greater number of multi-story structures. This expense would be offset largely by the reduction in area that would need to be covered by fire responders. **Impact: no substantial improvement over the project.**

M. Recreation

The "Higher Density" alternative would have the potential to result in an increase in the use of community recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facilities could be accelerated. It would also require new and/or expanded recreational facilities the construction of which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment. Both the "Higher Density" alternative and the proposed project would result in new and improved recreational facilities. These facilities would lessen the deterioration of existing community recreational facilities and substantially increase the average number of acres of parkland per person citywide by providing both new neighborhood and community recreational facilities. **Impact: no substantial improvement over the project.**

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[93] Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments. 1999. "Water Quality Management Plan for the Pajaro River Watershed. March 1999." Draft Plan.

N. Biological Resources

The "Higher Density" alternative could result in degradation of biological resources by: 1) affecting special status species, 2) disturbing potential jurisdictional waters, and 3) contributing to a potentially significant cumulative impact on downstream water quality by enabling urbanization, the runoff from which would contain contaminants detrimental to the health of wildlife in Gonzales Slough. With regard to item #1, the "Higher Density" alternative could result in a substantial improvement over the proposed project because less land would be subject to urbanization. The land removed from the Urban Growth area is closer to the foothills, which has greater habitat value than the agricultural fields. With regard to item #2, the "Higher Density" alternative would result in substantially less impact than the proposed project because less area would be subject to urbanization. With regard to item #3, the "Higher Density" alternative would result in no substantially improvement over the proposed project because a larger area of agricultural soils, with their attendant chemical contamination, would be left in place in the watershed above Gonzales Slough. The impacts of continued agricultural on biological resources could be the same or even greater than the impacts of urbanization.[94] **Impact: items #1 and #2—substantially less impact than the proposed project; item #3—no substantial improvement over the project.**

O. Cultural Resources

The "Higher Density" alternative would have the potential to disturb known historical resources and unknown archaeological and/or paleontological resources. The "Higher Density" alternative would decrease the amount of land area subject to urbanization, and as a result, would decrease the amount of land that would be graded for construction. This, in turn, would reduce the risk of encountering subsurface cultural resources. Both the "Higher Density" alternative and the proposed project would include policies and actions designed to mitigate impacts to cultural resources. **Impact: substantially less impact than the proposed project.**

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[94] Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments. 1999. "Water Quality Management Plan for the Pajaro River Watershed. March 1999." Draft Plan.

P. Geology and Soils

The "Higher Density" alternative would expose people and structures to the risk of loss, injury, or death involving geological forces. The "Higher Density" alternative would result in a greater number of two and three story buildings, which are at greater risk of failure caused by geological and soils-based hazards. This alternative would also result in high population densities. While taller structures can be constructed to adequately mitigate for such hazards, higher concentrations of persons, in general, are at greater risk during geologic events. As a result, the "Higher Density" alternative would result in greater impact than the proposed project. **Impact: substantially greater impact than the proposed project.**

Q. Hazardous Materials

The "Higher Density" alternative would have the potential to expose people to hazardous materials by: 1) enabling industrial development approvals in the planning area, and 2) enabling residential development on former agricultural lands that would expose persons to soils that could be tainted with hazardous agricultural chemicals. The "Higher Density" alternative would result in the same amount of new industrial development located in the same areas. Higher concentrations of persons, however, would put a greater number at risk if an industrial accident occurred. Cold storage operations, for example, could involve the use of chlorine gas, which if released through accident could seriously affect the health of persons living down wind. With regard to chemicals contained in agricultural soils, the "Higher Density" alternative would convert less agricultural land and therefore lessen the number of acres containing hazardous agricultural chemicals to which people would be exposed. New development under either the "Higher Density" alternative or the proposed project would be subject to local, state and federal regulations that would reduce the potential for hazards and hazardous materials to a less-than-significant level. **Impacts: item #1—substantially greater impact than the proposed project; item #2— substantially less impact than the proposed project.**

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