

NOTICE OF PREPARATION (NOP)
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT (EIR)
CITY OF VISALIA GENERAL PLAN UPDATE

FILED
TULARE COUNTY
APR 22 2010
GREGORY B. HARRIS
ASSESSOR/CLERK RECORDER
BY:

Date: April 19, 2010
To: Responsible Agencies, Interested Parties and Organizations
Subject: **Notice of Preparation of an Environmental Impact Report for the City of Visalia General Plan Update and Scheduling of a Scoping Meeting on Friday, May 7, 2010**

Project Title: City of Visalia General Plan Update

Location: City of Visalia, California

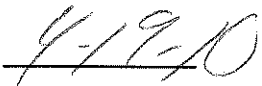
The City of Visalia is preparing a General Plan Update and has determined that a comprehensive Environmental Impact Report (EIR) will be necessary. The City of Visalia requests your input regarding the scope and content of environmental analysis that is relevant to your respective agency's statutory/regulatory responsibilities in order to ascertain potential impacts of the proposed project. The City of Visalia, in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), will direct the preparation of an EIR for the project. The project description is provided in the attached Notice of Preparation (NOP).

Although specific proposals and revisions for the Visalia General Plan have not yet been determined, we are soliciting your comments. This will allow your input to be taken into consideration during formulation of the environmental effects to be addressed in the EIR. A description of the proposed action, location map, and preliminary identification of the potential environmental effects are contained in the attached materials.

CEQA Guidelines Section 15082(b) mandates each Responsible Agency to respond to an NOP within thirty days (30) after receipt. The review period will extend from April 26, 2010, to May 25, 2010. Your views and comments on how the project may affect the environment are welcomed. Please send your written response, with the name of your agency contact person, to the following address: Paul Scheibel, City of Visalia Community Development Department; 315 E. Acequia Avenue, Visalia, CA 93291.

A Scoping Meeting will be conducted at 9:00 a.m. on Friday, May 7, 2010, at the Visalia City Hall Council Chambers located at 707 W. Acequia Avenue in Visalia. If you have questions regarding this NOP or the Scoping Meeting, you can contact Paul Scheibel at (559) 713-4369.


Paul Scheibel, Planning Services Manager
City of Visalia


Date

**Document Details Report
State Clearinghouse Data Base**

SCH# 2010041078
Project Title City of Visalia General Plan Update
Lead Agency Visalia, City of

Type **NOP** Notice of Preparation

Description The General Plan Update provides the community with an opportunity to clarify its vision for future development patterns, transportation systems, economic development opportunities, and sustainable growth. The General Plan will have a horizon year of 2030.

The General Plan Update will likely address the following topics, which will be combined into an integrated Plan:

- * Land Use;
 - * Circulation;
 - * City Design;
 - * Open Space, Parks and Recreation;
 - * Noise;
 - * Safety;
 - * Community Facilities and Public Services; and
 - * Conservation, Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Emissions.
-

Lead Agency Contact

Name Paul Scheibel
Agency City of Visalia
Phone 559-713-4369 **Fax**
email
Address 707 West Acequia Avenue
City Visalia **State** CA **Zip** 93291

Project Location

County Tulare
City Visalia
Region
Cross Streets Citywide
Lat / Long
Parcel No.
Township **Range** **Section** **Base**

Proximity to:

Highways
Airports
Railways
Waterways
Schools
Land Use

Project Issues Landuse; Traffic/Circulation; Other Issues; Recreation/Parks; Noise; Public Services; Air Quality

Reviewing Agencies Resources Agency; Office of Historic Preservation; Department of Parks and Recreation; Department of Water Resources; Department of Fish and Game, Region 4; Office of Emergency Management Agency, California; Native American Heritage Commission; California Highway Patrol; Department of Housing and Community Development; Caltrans, District 6; Department of Toxic Substances Control; Regional Water Quality Control Bd., Region 5 (Fresno)

**Document Details Report
State Clearinghouse Data Base**

Date Received 04/22/2010 *Start of Review* 04/22/2010 *End of Review* 05/24/2010

Resources Agency

Resources Agency
Nadell Gayou

Dept. of Boating & Waterways
Mike Sotelo

California Coastal Commission
Elizabeth A. Fuchs

Colorado River Board
Gerald R. Zimmerman

Dept. of Conservation
Rebecca Salazar

California Energy Commission
Enc Knight

Cal Fire
Allen Robertson

Central Valley Flood Protection Board
James Herota

Office of Historic Preservation
Wayne Donaldson

Dept of Parks & Recreation
Environmental Stewardship Section

California Department of Resources, Recycling & Recovery
Sue O'Leary

S.F. Bay Conservation & Dev't. Comm.
Steve McAdam

Dept. of Water Resources
Resources Agency
Nadell Gayou

Conservancy

Fish and Game

Dept. of Fish & Game
Scott Flint
Environmental Services Division

Fish & Game Region 1
Donald Koch

Fish & Game Region 1E
Laurie Harnsberger

Fish & Game Region 2
Jeff Drongesen

Fish & Game Region 3
Charles Arnor

Fish & Game Region 4
Julie Vance

Fish & Game Region 5
Don Chadwick
Habitat Conservation Program

Fish & Game Region 6
Gabrina Gatchel
Habitat Conservation Program

Fish & Game Region 6 I/M
Brad Henderson
Inyo/Mono, Habitat Conservation Program

Dept. of Fish & Game M
George Isaac
Marine Region

Other Departments

Food & Agriculture
Steve Shafer
Dept. of Food and Agriculture

Dept. of General Services
Public School Construction

Dept. of General Services
Anna Garbeff
Environmental Services Section

Dept. of Public Health
Bridgette Binning
Dept. of Health/Drinking Water

Independent Commissions, Boards
Delta Protection Commission
Linda Flack

Cal EMA (Emergency Management Agency)
Dennis Castirilo

Governor's Office of Planning & Research
State Clearinghouse

Native American Heritage Comm.
Debbie Treadway

Public Utilities Commission
Leo Wong

Santa Monica Bay Restoration
Guangyu Wang

State Lands Commission
Marina Brand

Tahoe Regional Planning Agency (TRPA)
Cherry Jacques

Business, Trans. & Housing

Caltrans - Division of Aeronautics
Sandy Hesnard

Caltrans - Planning
Terri Pencovic

California Highway Patrol
Scott Loetscher
Office of Special Projects

Housing & Community Development
CEQA Coordinator
Housing Policy Division

Dept. of Transportation

Caltrans, District 1
Rex Jackman

Caltrans, District 2
Marcelino Gonzalez

Caltrans, District 3
Bruce de Terra

Caltrans, District 4
Lisa Carboni

Caltrans, District 5
David Murray

Caltrans, District 6
Michael Navarro

Caltrans, District 7
Elmer Alvarez

Caltrans, District 8
Dan Kopulsky

Caltrans, District 9
Gayle Rosander

Caltrans, District 10
Tom Dumas

Caltrans, District 11
Jacob Armstrong

Caltrans, District 12
Chris Herre

Cal EPA

Air Resources Board

Airport Projects
Jim Lerner

Transportation Projects
Douglas Ito

Industrial Projects
Mike Tolstrup

State Water Resources Control Board
Regional Programs Unit
Division of Financial Assistance

State Water Resources Control Board
Student Intern, 401 Water Quality Certification Unit
Division of Water Quality

State Water Resources Control Board
Steven Herrera
Division of Water Rights

Dept. of Toxic Substances Control
CEQA Tracking Center

Department of Pesticide Regulation
CEQA Coordinator

RWQCB 1
Cathleen Hudson
North Coast Region (1)

RWQCB 2
Environmental Document Coordinator
San Francisco Bay Region (2)

RWQCB 3
Central Coast Region (3)

RWQCB 4
Teresa Rodgers
Los Angeles Region (4)

RWQCB 5S
Central Valley Region (5)

RWQCB 5F
Central Valley Region (5)
Fresno Branch Office

RWQCB 5R
Central Valley Region (5)
Redding Branch Office

RWQCB 6
Lahontan Region (6)

RWQCB 6V
Lahontan Region (6)
Victorville Branch Office

RWQCB 7
Colorado River Basin Region (7)

RWQCB 8
Santa Ana Region (8)

RWQCB 9
San Diego Region (9)

Other

**NOTICE OF PREPARATION (NOP)
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT (EIR)
CITY OF VISALIA GENERAL PLAN UPDATE**

Date: April 16, 2010
To: Responsible Agencies, Interested Parties and Organizations
Subject: **Notice of Preparation of an Environmental Impact Report for the City of Visalia General Plan Update and Scheduling of a Scoping Meeting on Friday, May 7, 2010**

Project Title: City of Visalia General Plan Update

Location: City of Visalia, California

The City of Visalia is preparing a General Plan Update and has determined that a comprehensive Environmental Impact Report (EIR) will be necessary. The City of Visalia requests your input regarding the scope and content of environmental analysis that is relevant to your respective agency's statutory/regulatory responsibilities in order to ascertain potential impacts of the proposed project. The City of Visalia, in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), will direct the preparation of an EIR for the project. The project description is provided in the attached Notice of Preparation (NOP).

Although specific proposals and revisions for the Visalia General Plan have not yet been determined, we are soliciting your comments. This will allow your input to be taken into consideration during formulation of the environmental effects to be addressed in the EIR. A description of the proposed action, location map, and preliminary identification of the potential environmental effects are contained in the attached materials.

CEQA Guidelines Section 15082(b) mandates each Responsible Agency to respond to an NOP within thirty days (30) after receipt. The review period will extend from April 19, 2010, to May 18, 2010. Your views and comments on how the project may affect the environment are welcomed. Please send your written response, with the name of your agency contact person, to the following address: Paul Scheibel, City of Visalia Community Development Department; 315 E. Acequia Avenue, Visalia, CA 93291.

A Scoping Meeting will be conducted at 9:00 a.m. on Friday, May 7, 2010, at the Visalia City Hall Council Chambers located at 707 W. Acequia Avenue in Visalia. If you have questions regarding this NOP or the Scoping Meeting, you can contact Paul Scheibel at (559) 713-4369.

Paul Scheibel, Planning Services Manager
City of Visalia

Date

**NOTICE OF PREPARATION (NOP)
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT (EIR)
CITY OF VISALIA GENERAL PLAN UPDATE**

1. PROJECT TITLE:

City of Visalia General Plan Update

2. LEAD AGENCY NAME AND ADDRESS:

City of Visalia
Community Development Department
315 E. Acequia Avenue
Visalia, CA 93291

3. CONTACT PERSON AND PHONE NUMBER:

Paul Scheibel
Planning Services Manager
(559) 713-4369
pscheibel@ci.visalia.ca.us

4. PROJECT LOCATION:

The City of Visalia, located in the central San Joaquin Valley, covers an area of approximately 36 square miles. The City is situated in northwestern Tulare County, north of the City of Tulare and west of the City of Farmersville (Figure 1). The City of Hanford, in Kings County, lies 12 miles to the west. With a 2009 population of 123,670, Visalia is the largest city in Tulare County.

Highway 198 passes east-west through the center of the City, while Highway 99 runs north-south two miles from the western edge of the City. Highway 63 passes north-south through the center of the City. The City is also served by transit, including the Visalia City Coach (VCC) and Tulare County Area Transit (TCAT). Amtrak connects to Visalia via a bus service from the train station in Hanford. Additionally, the City is served by the Visalia Municipal Airport, which is located at the City's western edge, along Highway 99.

The Proposed Planning Area comprises all land within the City limits as well as neighboring unincorporated land, excluding the community of Goshen (Figure 2). The existing City limits include residential, commercial, and industrial developments; as well as public facilities including parks, schools, public utilities, the College of the Sequoias campus; and private institutions like Fresno Pacific University.

5. PROJECT SPONSOR'S NAME AND ADDRESS:

City of Visalia
Community Development Department
315 E. Acequia Avenue
Visalia, CA 93291

6. DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT:

The current City of Visalia General Plan was last comprehensively updated in 1991. Although some of the policies in this document are still relevant, much has changed since its adoption. Since 2000, the City's population increased by 35 percent, while employment increased by 12 percent. While unemployment has risen since the economic downturn of 2008 and 2009, the Tulare County Association of Governments (TCAG) projections that the City will add some 25,000 new jobs by 2030. TCAG also expects population to increase to a projected 207,600 by 2030—an increase of 46 percent over the next 20 years. The General Plan Update provides the community with an opportunity to clarify its vision for future development patterns, transportation systems, economic development opportunities, and sustainable growth. The General Plan will have a horizon year of 2030.

The General Plan Update will likely address the following topics, which will be combined into an integrated Plan:

- Land Use;
- Circulation;
- City Design;
- Open Space, Parks, and Recreation;
- Noise;
- Safety;
- Community Facilities and Public Services; and
- Conservation, Air Quality, and Greenhouse Gas Emissions.

In order to meet the deadlines of California's Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD), the update of the City's Housing Element, another required component of the General Plan, was completed in 2009. Upon completion of the General Plan Update, the two documents will be reviewed for internal consistency.

Work on the General Plan Update is in progress. The scope includes a review of background material and preparation of an initial working paper: *Existing Conditions and Key Issues Report*. This report will contain a description and series of maps documenting existing land uses, public facilities, and environmental conditions within the City of Visalia. Coinciding with the

preparation of the existing conditions paper, initial outreach in the form of stakeholder interviews and community workshops will be held in later spring and summer of 2010. This outreach will continue and also contribute to the environmental analysis for the project.

The next step of the General Plan Update will include development of potential land use and transportation alternatives through direct participation with the community and General Plan Update Review Committee (GPURC). The alternatives will focus on changes at identified locations within the City. An additional community workshop will be held to further identify and refine concepts for the alternatives. The resulting alternative concepts will be presented to the GPURC for further refinement, followed by a discussion of the relative advantages and disadvantages of each with City decision-makers. Following this process, a Preferred Plan will be prepared and reviewed by the community and GPURC prior to presentation to City decision-makers. Based on the Preferred Plan, the General Plan Update will be drafted.

A final community workshop will ensure that the community's needs have been addressed in the proposed Preferred Plan. A series of public hearings will then allow City decision-makers to consider the proposed Plan.

The entire scope of work for the General Plan Update and EIR is attached as Appendix A.

7. EIR

This NOP is a required publication at the outset of the EIR process.

The EIR will provide a programmatic environmental assessment of the potential consequences of the proposed General Plan Update. It will discuss how General Plan policies could potentially affect the environment, identify any significant impacts, and recommend measures to mitigate those impacts. The EIR will also consider the potential environmental impacts of alternatives, and identify an environmentally superior alternative. Subsequent environmental review will be conducted for major development projects, public works and infrastructure improvements to evaluate site-specific issues.

8. SURROUNDING LAND USES AND SETTING:

Visalia's Planning Area boundaries include the entire city limits, Sphere of Influence, and some additional unincorporated land that borders the City (Figure 2). The unincorporated community of Goshen lies to the northwest, and the City of Farmersville lies to the east. Most of the remaining land uses surrounding the City are agricultural in nature. Several creeks, rivers, and canals run through and adjacent to the City, including the St. John's River, which forms the northeast border of the City. Mill, Packwood, and Persian creeks run east-west through the City.

9. OTHER PUBLIC AGENCIES WHOSE APPROVAL IS REQUIRED:

No other public agency is required to approve the Visalia General Plan Update. However, development under the General Plan may require approval of State, federal and responsible trustee agencies that may rely on this EIR for information relative to their area of expertise and jurisdiction.

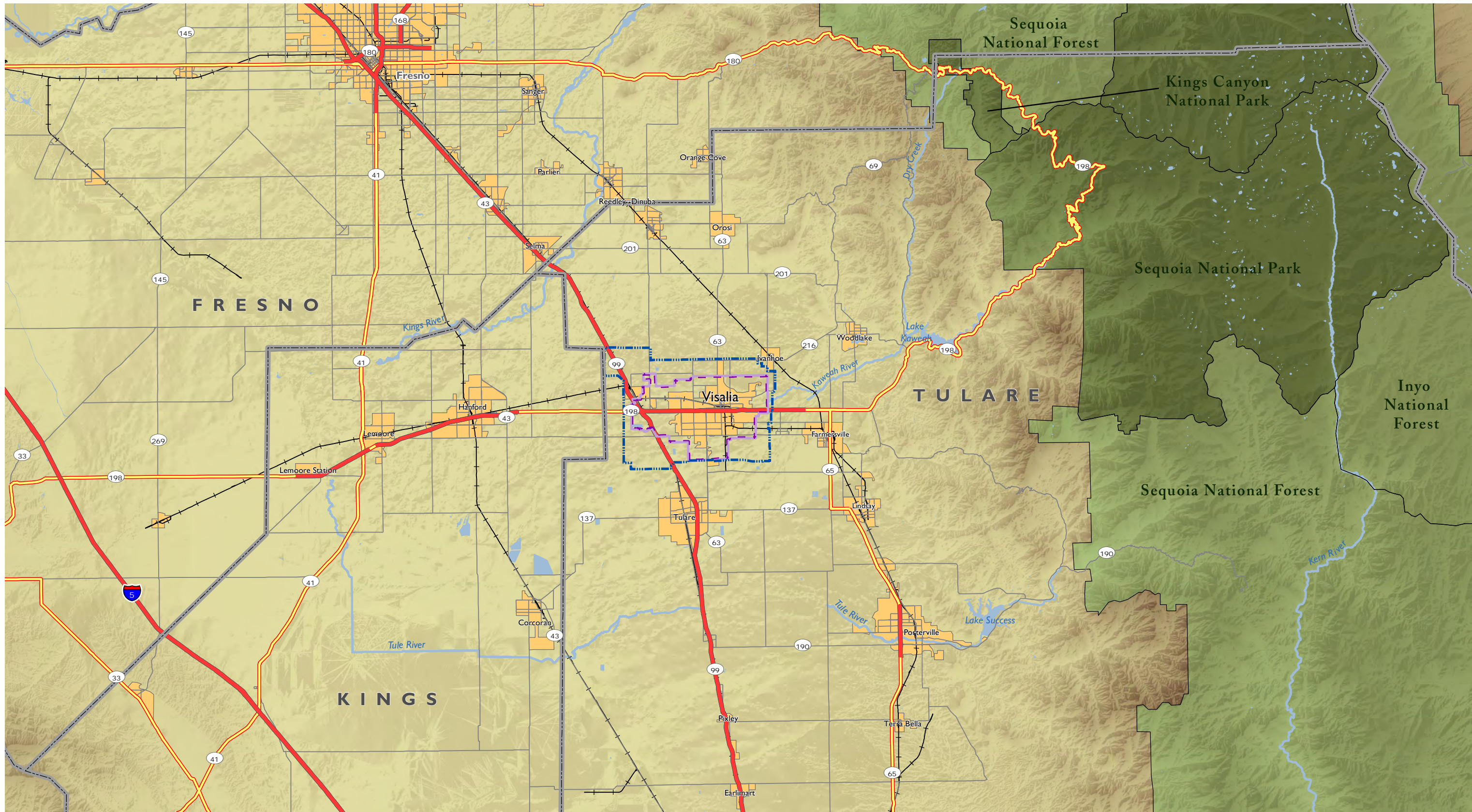
10 POTENTIAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS TO BE CONSIDERED:

Preliminary topics for the EIR include:

- Land Use (including jobs and housing);
- Aesthetics and Visual Resources;
- Open Space and Recreation;
- Biological Resources;
- Cultural Resources;
- Transportation and Traffic;
- Air Quality;
- Noise and Vibration;
- Geology, Soils, and Seismicity;
- Hydrology and Flooding;
- Public Services and Utilities;
- Energy;
- Climate Change; and
- Hazardous Materials and Toxics.

In addition to the potential environmental effects listed above, the EIR will evaluate potential cumulative effects and potential growth-inducing impacts of the proposed Visalia General Plan Update as well as alternatives to the

proposed General Plan Update. The No Project alternative will evaluate the impacts resulting from continued implementation of existing plans, policies, and regulations which govern the City. As appropriate, other alternatives that would avoid or lessen environmental effects related to the proposed Visalia General Plan Update will be discussed. The draft EIR will also recommend measures to mitigate any significant environmental impacts.



- Study Boundary
- Sphere of Influence
- Urbanized Area
- County Line
- Freeway
- Highway
- Major Road

**Figure 1:
Regional Setting**

Source: Sphere of Influence, City of Visalia, 2010; Digital Elevation Model, United States Geological Survey, 2009; National Forest and Park, United States Geological Survey, 2006; Hydrology, Metropolitan Transportation Commission, 2008; Map base, TeleAtlas North America, Inc., 2008.

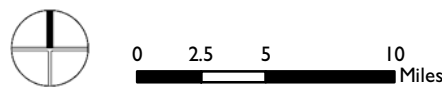
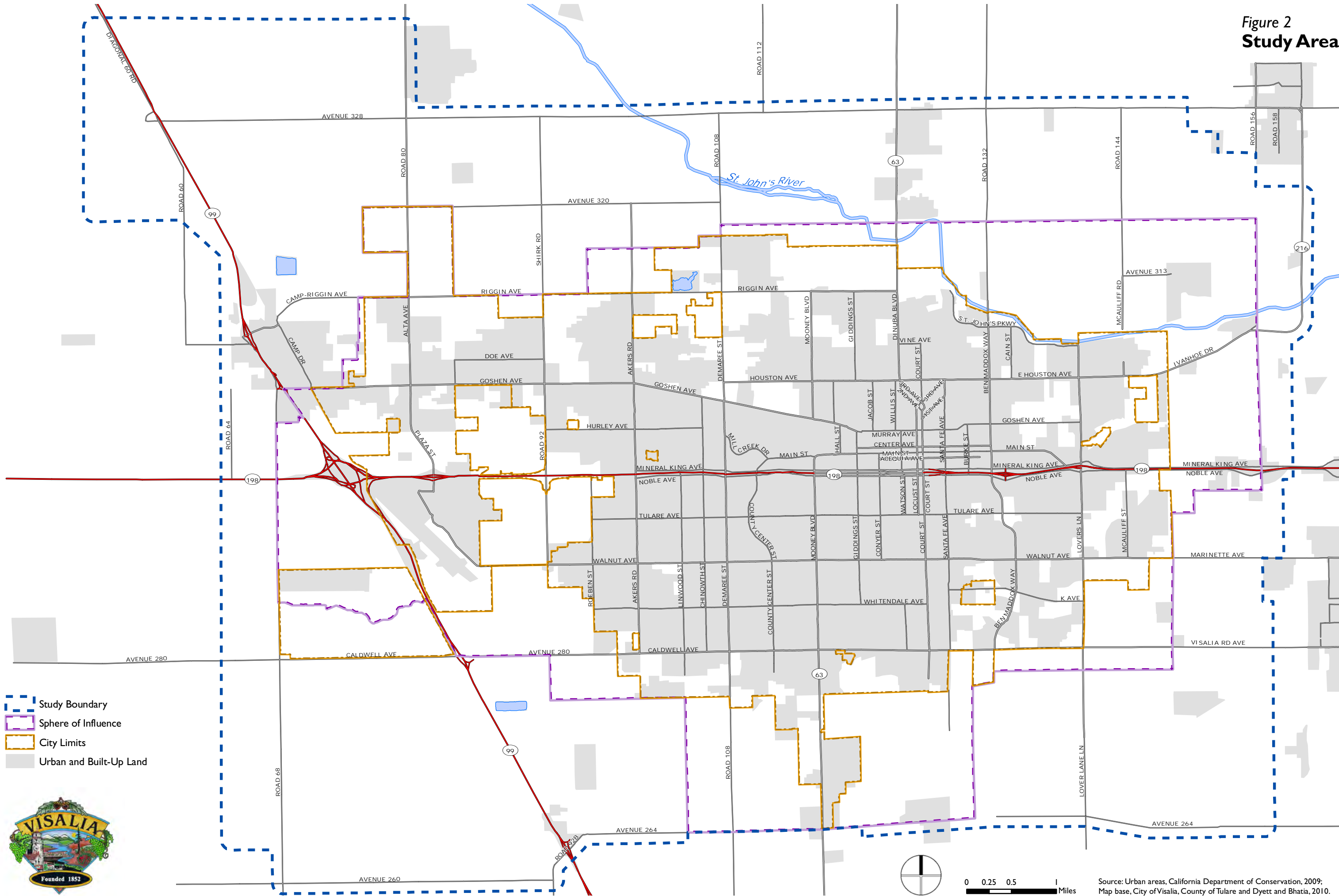


Figure 2
Study Area



0 0.25 0.5 1 Miles

Source: Urban areas, California Department of Conservation, 2009; Map base, City of Visalia, County of Tulare and Dyett and Bhatia, 2010.

Appendix A

**CITY OF VISALIA
GENERAL PLAN UPDATE AND EIR SCOPE OF WORK**

2 Scope of Work

2.1 Phases of Work and Schedule

PHASES

Our approach to the Visalia General Plan Update and the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) work program envisions the project to be broken down into three phases, each of which involves several major tasks. This section provides an overview and a detailed scope of work. The total timeframes for each phase are presented, along with the amount of time that will be spent on each task. The timeframes for the tasks overlap, as shown on the graphic schedule that follows. The total estimated time frame for the General Plan and EIR is three years.

Phase I: Visioning, Outreach, and Background Studies – 10 Months Total

Task: Reconnaissance, Organization, and Technical Work. (3 Months) A kick-off meeting will be held with City staff and the team, which includes a field tour. The public participation program will be finalized. Background information needs will be determined, plan product formats, including computer-mapping formats, will be established, and the available land use information will be analyzed. During this Phase, we will also establish a General Plan update website.

Task 2: Visioning and Issue Identification. (5 Months) Key issues would be identified through field reconnaissance and review of planning documents, stakeholder interviews, Review Committee meetings, decision-maker meetings, a community survey, as well as a community workshop.

Task 3: Existing Conditions and Key Issues Report. (7 Months) An assessment of the existing conditions, trends, and key issues—physical, economic, and environmental—will be undertaken. This assessment will provide the springboard for the plan alternatives, as well as the basis for policies in the General Plan, and the setting for the General Plan EIR. A baseline transportation analysis will be included. A report will be prepared in the form of a “map atlas,” emphasizing graphics and maps. This document will serve as a repository of all data collected and analyzed, so that the planning process can be delayed if necessary until additional funding is available.

Phase II: Choices – 13 Months

Task 4: Alternatives and Evaluation. (7 Months) Dyett & Bhatia will develop three alternative scenarios for future development, arranged in a workbook. These alternatives will focus on key decisions related to the areas of future growth and areas with infill devel-

opment opportunities. The alternatives will be evaluated with the community, Review Committee, Planning Commission, and City Council. The evaluation will consider sustainability and greenhouse gas emissions; environmental and agricultural land impacts; transportation access and impacts; infrastructure costs; and other critical factors.

Task 5: Preferred Plan, Policy Framework, and Phasing Plan. (6 Months) Based on feedback from the community and decision-makers, a preferred plan will be prepared, along with key policies that form the core of the General Plan. Potential policies related to green building, recycled water, and other sustainable development issues will be introduced. A table of existing General Plan policies will identify policies to be retained, revised, or deleted. A preliminary phasing plan will also be drafted and discussed. This document will summarize the preferred plan and key policy choices, so that the community consensus is memorialized if the planning process needs to be delayed due to funding.

Phase III: Draft General Plan and EIR – 13 Months

Task 6: Draft General Plan. (6.5 Months) We propose to include the following elements. This would be refined based on input from City staff, the community, and decision-makers:

- State-mandated elements: Land Use; Circulation; Open Space, Parks, and Recreation, Noise; Safety; and Conservation/Air Quality.
- Community Facilities and Public Services: An additional element is proposed to cover community facilities and public services. Public services include: schools, infrastructure (stormwater management, wastewater systems, and water supply and distribution); solid waste management; and police and fire services. Community facilities include libraries, civic and cultural facilities, and historic preservation resources.
- City Design Element: This element covers street design, scenic highways, urban design, gateways, neighborhood design character, and other urban design issues.
- Implementation Program: This outlines the major General Plan initiatives to be accomplished over the next 20 years and how they can be carried out over time.
- Sustainability. We propose that sustainability policies will be integrated throughout the plan, since best practices for sustainability apply to all the different General Plan elements. However a separate Sustainability Element could be prepared.

The plan will include both guiding policies and implementation policies in each chapter. This will be laid out in an easy-to-read format, with rich use of photographs, drawings, and three-dimensional visualization. It will be provided to the City in a format so as to be easily accessible on the web.

Task 7: Draft and Final EIR. (10 Months) Impact assessment will be conducted parallel to General Plan preparation, so that mitigation can be built into the General Plan, resulting in a self-mitigating Plan.

Task 8: Community Review and Adoption. (7 Months) The Draft General Plan and Draft EIR will be circulated for review and comment, and discussed at public hearings. Final versions will be prepared based on final direction from the City Council.

MEETINGS

The following meetings are anticipated in our scope of work and presented in the work program after their corresponding task. They also are shown graphically on the Project Schedule in Section 2.3.

Public Meetings in the Scope of Work

		<i>City Council/ Planning Commission</i>	<i>Community/ Neighborhood Workshops</i>	<i>General Plan Review Committee</i>	<i>Stakeholder Interview Sessions</i>
Task 1:	Reconnaissance, Organization, and Technical Work				
Task 2:	Issue Identification and Visioning	1	1 (with General Plan Review Committee)		15
Task 3:	Existing Conditions and Key Issues Assessment	1		1	
Task 4:	Planning Alternatives	1	3 (includes 2 special community meetings)	2	2-3
Task 5:	Preferred Plan and Key Policies Formulation	1		1	4
Task 6:	Draft General Plan		1	2	
Task 7:	Draft Environmental Impact Report		1		
Task 8:	Community Review and Adoption	4			
Total General Plan / EIR		8	6	6	22

PRODUCTS

The following products are anticipated in our scope of work, presented in the work program after their corresponding task, and shown graphically on the Project Schedule in Section 2.3.

Coordination/Outreach Materials

Detailed Work Program & Project Schedule
Project Website
Community Outreach Summary Report
Newsletter #1: Project Introduction
Newsletter #2: Opportunities & Challenges
Newsletter #3: Alternative Plans
Newsletter #4: Draft Preferred Plan
Newsletter #5: General Plan Summary
Community Survey

Workbooks/Reports

Draft Vision/Guiding Principles Memorandum
Existing General Plan Policy Matrix; Summary Report
Existing Conditions, Opportunities and Challenges Workbook with Map Atlas (Draft and Final)
Smart Growth Development Examples Booklet
Best Practices Memorandum
Sustainability Indicators Memorandum
Alternative Plans Workbook
Travel Demand Forecast/Alternatives Analysis Working Paper
Fiscal Analysis Technical Memorandum (Optional)
Draft Preferred Plan, Policy Framework, and Phasing Alternatives Report
Infrastructure Analysis Memorandum

Sustainable Development Policies Memorandum

General Plan Documents

General Plan Outline
Administrative Draft General Plan
Public Hearing Draft General Plan
General Plan Executive Summary
Adopted General Plan (with “screen-check” review copy)
GIS Layers for Land Use, Existing Land Use, and other key topics

CEQA Documents

Notice of Preparation
Notice of Completion
Notice of Determination
Administrative Draft EIR
Draft EIR
Administrative Final EIR: Addendum – Response to Comments
Final EIR: Addendum – Response to Comments
Statement of Overriding Considerations (if necessary)
Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (if necessary)

Implementation Documents

Implementation Program

2.2 Detailed Scope of Work

This section outlines our proposed work program for all phases of the Visalia General Plan Update. The program is organized into eight tasks, from project initiation to publishing the final General Plan and EIR documents. The sequence of work products, community meetings and City Council/Planning Commission workshops are graphically illustrated in Section 2.3: Phases and Schedule.

The task-by-task descriptions that follow present our approach to data collection, alternatives analysis, policy formulation and preparation of the documents. Each task description includes a purpose statement at the beginning.

Initials in parentheses following the sub-section heading identify the lead firm for each sub-task:

- D&B: Dyett & Bhatia, Urban and Regional Planners
- EPS: Economic & Planning Systems, Economics and Public Finance Consultants
- UG: Urban Green, Sustainability Consultants
- J&S: Jones & Stokes, Environmental Consultants
- OM: Omni-Means, Transportation Engineers & Planners
- PP: Provost & Pritchard, Civil Engineers - Infrastructure Consultants
- MWR: Mountain West Research, Survey Specialists

TASK I: RECONNAISSANCE, ORGANIZATION, AND TECHNICAL WORK

The objective of this first task will be to develop a detailed Public Participation Program, as well to conduct a series of introductory and organizational tasks. Background information needs will be determined, plan product formats, including computer-mapping formats, will be established, and the available land use information will be analyzed. During this Phase, we will also establish a General Plan update website.

- A. **Kick-off Meeting and Field Tour with City Staff (D&B, OM, J&S, EPS, PP).** The consultants will meet with members of the City Planning Department staff for a half-day to discuss their ideas and aspirations for the project. At these meetings data sources will be identified, roles and responsibilities will be clarified, communication protocols will be established, and work program modifications will be discussed. A field tour of the City to examine key issues will be part of the kick-off meeting.
- B. **Background Information (D&B).** Existing information needed for the General Plan will be gathered, including: water, sewer, transportation and other facility plans, existing land use, and details on the status of proposed and approved development projects. During the kick-

off meeting, we will coordinate with Planning Department and other City staff to provide the consultant team with an overview of existing plans and program, pipeline development, major opportunities, and key issues.

- C. **Gather Information from Other Public Agencies (D&B).** Representatives from neighboring jurisdictions and Tulare County will be contacted in order to coordinate with local and regional planning efforts. Other relevant regional agencies that regulate issues or produce plans will be contacted.
- D. **Obtain City/County Base Maps, Current Digital Orthophotography, and Compile GIS Database (D&B).** Using data available from the City, Tulare County, and our fieldwork, we will prepare a computerized base map for the display and analysis of Planning Area land data. All GIS information and database development will be coordinated to be compatible with ArcGIS and the City's current mapping efforts. The database will include georeferenced aerials for a composite database for the Planning Area. All streets will be included, and parcel lines will be shown on some of the published maps.
- E. **Land Use and Vacant Parcel Survey (D&B).** The City currently does not have a complete GIS database of existing land use. Obtaining existing land use and zoning data layers will be essential for looking at infill and reuse opportunities. A land use data layer would be created from existing data sources, such GIS data for Tulare County and third party sources. Focused windshield surveys would be used to complement the land use and assessor's parcel data to identify opportunity sites. Significant vacant parcels and parcels with redevelopment potential would be surveyed in more detail and identified in the Map Atlas, described below; they also will be the foundation for the General Plan Housing Element Update. Information from the East Downtown Expansion Area plan will be incorporated.
- F. **Existing Transportation Conditions (OM).**
 - **Traffic Counts:** Existing daily and peak hour traffic counts will be obtained from the City, Caltrans and recent traffic studies and EIRs. Under this task it is anticipated that up to 25 AM and PM peak hour and 25 daily counts be newly conducted. Should additional daily or peak hour counts be required as determined by City/Caltrans staff and/or the TAC, OMNI-MEANS will provide a budget and obtain additional authorization.
 - **Transportation Corridor Data:** Available transportation corridor data will be obtained from all available sources, including the City, TCAG and Caltrans files. This information would include:
 - Right-of-way widths
 - Pavement width
 - Travel lanes
 - Travel speed (85% or posted speed)
 - Grades
 - Planned improvement projects

- G. **Demographic Analysis and Trends. (D&B)** An analysis of census data and other more recent data sources will be conducted to study population growth and demographic trends in Visalia.
- H. **Establish Project Website (D&B).** D&B will provide to City staff a complete design of the project website. Interim designs will be reviewed with staff before the site is finalized. This site will be hosted on the City’s website or as a stand-alone site. The Scope of Work, Schedule Existing Conditions and Key Issues Report (see Task 3), upcoming participation opportunities, and other material will be placed on the project website.

Meetings: Kick-off & Issues Meeting with City Staff

*Products: Final Project Work Program & Schedule
Project Website
Electronic Base Map for the General Plan
Traffic Counts*

TASK 2: COMMUNITY VISIONING AND ISSUE IDENTIFICATION

The objective of this task is to identify and understand community concerns and to establish a coordinated and realistic direction for the future founded on a community-based strategic vision. This task is intended not only to provide a more complete picture of the issues and opportunities facing the City of Visalia, but also to build public support and ‘buy-in’ into the General Plan Update process.

- A. **Kickoff Workshop with General Plan Review Committee and Public. (D&B)** Conduct a workshop with members of the Review Committee and the public to discuss their ideas and aspirations for the General Plan. The meeting will have three principal objectives:
- Discuss what people like about Visalia and want to preserve.
 - Discuss key concerns and issues that should be covered in the General Plan process.
 - Discuss the future vision of Visalia in 2030 and key priorities to accomplish.

The consultant team will prepare materials and conduct the workshop (we expect that city staff will be available for tabletop facilitation at a few tables). The meeting will be designed as a community event, to facilitate the participation of a wide diversity of residents, business people, and other key stakeholders. D&B will prepare all materials for the workshop, and summarize findings. We would work with City staff, stakeholders, Review Committee members, and possibly the City Council to extend personal invitations to community members, in order to encourage attendance.

We would meet with the General Plan Review Committee immediately before the community workshop to do introductions, discuss their important role in the project, and discuss logistics and scheduling.

- B. **Existing General Plan Review. (D&B)** During this task, D&B will also carefully evaluate the current General Plan using a matrix of policies and discussions with City staff to determine the overall effectiveness and areas that need improvement. The existing plan will be

evaluated based on recent state and federal legislation, to determine policies that need to be added or revised to comply with state and federal requirements.

- C. **Newsletter #1 (D&B).** The first General Plan Update newsletter will be prepared to explain the objectives of the General Plan program, key issues to be addressed, and opportunities for public participation. The newsletter will help ensure that citizens are informed about how and when to be involved in the General Plan Update Process. We assume that the City will be responsible for the printing and mailing of the newsletter. It could be included in a City newsletter or as an insert in the local newspaper.
- D. **Interview Individual Stakeholders (D&B; EPS may attend some interviews).** Over a two-day period, representatives of public agencies, community members, educators, business leaders, environmental advocates, members of City Committees, etc. will be interviewed to identify their issues of concern and get feedback about the specific issues identified. Utility companies and school districts will be interviewed. City department heads and other key staff will also be interviewed. This step is critical, because often people will be much more candid in a one-on-one or small group interview. We will ask a series of questions to uncover the major issues of concern, deal breakers, desirables, and the political factors that may come into play during the process. Our budget provides for 15 such interviews (with two or three participants at each meeting for a total of about 30-40 individuals). These interviews could be scheduled either concurrently on the same day in two rooms, or over two days, with D&B staff and EPS staff. A report summarizing stakeholder findings will be provided and published.
- E. **Meet and Confer with other City, Regional, and State agencies. (D&B).** Hold up to four meetings over the course of one day with representatives from other nearby cities, regional agencies, or state agencies. Gather information and discuss key issues related to the growth and development of Visalia. These meetings could be held later at the alternatives stage of the planning process (Task 4), in order to gather feedback about General Plan proposals.
- F. **Define Preliminary Planning Area (D&B).** Existing data will be analyzed to propose the boundary of the preliminary planning area. The Planning Area and growth boundaries of surrounding communities will be mapped as part of this effort. This will be presented to decision-makers and then finalized.
- G. **City Staff Meeting (D&B).** Meet with City staff to review all the input from the community and to review the proposed planning area.
- H. **Prepare and Compile Mail-in Survey (D&B, MWR).** A postage prepaid mail-in survey can be prepared to understand viewpoints related to the city's vision, growth and development, salient planning issues, and potentially transportation use and habits, to help with later transportation analysis. D&B would work with the City to develop and refine the survey instrument and determine an appropriate sample population. The survey could be mailed as part of the City's community newsletter or as a stand-alone mailing. We would look to the City to print, mail and provide postage costs for the survey. This could also be conducted as part of a later task.

- I. **General Plan Guiding Principles and Big Ideas (D&B).** A General Plan Guiding Principles memo (two or three pages long) will be developed based on the community input. While these can be refined prior to General Plan adoption, they will provide guidance for subsequent efforts. These will provide the criteria for evaluating alternatives in later phases. Also included in the memo will be a preliminary list of the “big ideas” that came out of the community outreach. Examples could include proposals for bike path systems, economic development, City gateways, or other projects that citizens want to accomplish over the next 20 years.
- J. **Study Session with City Council and the Planning Commission (Meeting #1) (D&B; Team).** Staff and consultants will meet with members of the City Council and the Planning Commission (preferably in a joint workshop) to discuss their ideas and aspirations for the General Plan. The meeting will have three principal objectives:
- Summarize community input received, and review approach to public participation. This will be refined based on any City Council/Planning Commission comments following the meeting.
 - Give decision-makers the opportunity to describe their own priorities for the planning process as well as areas or issues they believe are the most critical.
 - Receive City Council and Planning Commission input about the Draft Guiding Principles and “Big Ideas”.

Meetings: *Stakeholder Interview Meetings (15)*

Kickoff Community Workshop #1, with General Plan Review Committee

City Staff Meeting

Study Session with City Council/Planning Commission

Products: *Newsletter #1: Project Introduction*

Existing General Plan Policy Matrix

Report on Community Outreach, including: Stakeholder Meetings and Community Workshop #1

Draft Guiding Principles and “Big Ideas” Memo

TASK 3: EXISTING CONDITIONS AND KEY ISSUES ANALYSIS (BACKGROUND STUDIES)

The objective of this task will be to obtain and compile background information; analyze long-term trends; identify key factors that will affect planning decisions; identify key issues, and summarize the opportunities and constraints in Visalia. The Existing Conditions and Key Issues Report will be in the form of a “map atlas,” relying on maps and graphics to depict a range of subject matter affecting physical development. Text will be written in a way that can be easily understood by the public and decision-makers.

- A. **Existing Land Use Layer (D&B).** A complete existing land use data layer will be prepared, which will serve as the basis for calibration of the transportation model, land use analysis, and alternatives. Significant vacant, underutilized parcels, and unincorporated County land with a potential for annexation, will also be identified, based on a variety of considerations.
- B. **Population and Employment Projections (D&B, review by EPS).** D&B will derive citywide population and employment projections which are likely to rely on existing State, regional, and city data sources (i.e. the San Joaquin Valley Regional Blueprint). The employment projections will include a breakdown by NAICS sector, to be used in the economic and market analyses described further below. EPS will review and comment on these projections. This information will also be correlated with information in the draft updated Housing Element.
- C. **Market Demand Analysis (EPS).** EPS will evaluate the real estate market conditions and trends likely to affect the type, amount, and location of development in Visalia over the General Plan term. The analysis will be based on market indicators such as vacancy and absorption, relative prices, commute patterns, select demographic characteristics of anticipated growth, existing nodes of business activity by sector, other readily available data. This information, in conjunction with the citywide employment projections by sector, will be utilized to estimate a range of residential, retail, industrial, and office space and land that could be supported in Visalia over the General Plan term assuming rapid, stable, or slow rates.
- D. **Economic Analysis, including Major Corridors (EPS).** This effort entails an evaluation of the regional employment base, significant and emerging/expanding industries, and the City’s competitive position within the region. The consideration of economic vitality issues, (e.g. the existing labor pool, trends in major economic sectors, the existing business climate and efforts to cultivate business opportunities), and the role of Visalia in the larger Tulare/Fresno region economy will help the City to identify opportunities to foster desired employment and economic growth over the period of the General Plan. In conjunction with the market indicators analyzed in Task 3B and 3C, this evaluation will ultimately provide an economic development perspective of how to best position the City’s five major commercial corridors with respect to regional and city-level trends and opportunities. The goal will be to identify and inform strategies to foster desired development patterns within these corridors.

- E. **Transportation Assessment (OM).** The existing traffic conditions will be analyzed based on the data collected in Tasks 1. Critical roadways will be described in terms of functional classification, travel speed, lanes, traffic volumes, and intersection spacing. Intersections will be described in terms of configuration, control, and traffic volumes. Daily capacity analysis will be completed for existing roadway conditions. Weekday AM and PM peak hour capacity analysis will be completed for existing intersection conditions. Existing regional travel patterns, including travel to, from, and through the City will be summarized. Stakeholder interviews related to transportation are also included in this task.

An inventory of non-automobile transportation modes within the City will also be updated to reflect existing conditions. Existing airport, railroad, public transit, truck, bicycle, and pedestrian travel conditions will be identified. Existing Transportation System Management (TSM), Transportation Demand Management (TDM), Transportation Control Measures (TCM) and other transportation programs within the City will be identified. Existing conditions of other travel modes, including airport, railroad, transit, trucks, bicycles and pedestrians and TSM programs will be studied and summarized into the Circulation section of the Existing Conditions Report.

The results of this technical analysis (in text, tabular, and graphical format) will document the existing transportation conditions and setting for the Existing Conditions and Key Issues Report. It will also form the initial chapters of the Technical Appendix that will support the EIR.

- F. **Agricultural Resources and Farmland. (D&B)** D&B will gather data and prepare maps related to all types of farmland within the planning area and at the outside edges. This information will also be depicted graphically in GIS layers. Data sources include:
- Recent aerial photographs showing the distribution of grazing land and other open land within the Planning Area;
 - Data concerning any local properties under active Williamson Act contract;
 - Existing land use zoning regulations;
 - U.S. Department of Agriculture soil survey reports; and
 - Recent farmland classifications based on the Important Farmland Maps of the Department of Conservation's Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program (FMMP).
- G. **Public Services Assessment (D&B).** Significant issues related to the provision of public services will be provided, including: fire protection, police protection, schools, and basic utilities.
- H. **Community Facilities and Historic Resources. (D&B)** Major community facilities will be identified. Historic resources identified in the California Historic Resources Information System (CHRIS) will also be mapped and listed. Existing historic protection policies will be described.
- I. **Existing Water, Wastewater, and Stormwater Infrastructure (PP).** Provost & Pritchard will document and map the existing water, wastewater, and stormwater systems. The evalu-

ations will be based on discussions with City staff and by reviewing the adopted Water System Master Plan, Sanitary Sewer System Master Plan, and Stormwater Master Plan. The data gathered will be used to address storm water management, wastewater systems and water supply and distribution from a community facilities and public service perspective. Provost & Pritchard will prepare base maps of the existing systems and prepare a short report of the findings, existing constraints, and issues.

- J. **Hydrology and Water Quality. (J&S)** The hydrology and water quality existing conditions section will be updated using existing information. The hydrology and water quality section will include a description of the surface hydrology and hydrogeology of the City, including characteristics of existing drainages, downstream water bodies, drainage infrastructure, and underlying aquifers and associated groundwater levels. FEMA floodplains will be identified, and a discussion of regional flood control infrastructure will be included. Surface and groundwater quality will be discussed qualitatively using available data. Relevant federal, state, and local regulations and agencies will be described, including provisions of the federal CWA, the state Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act, the permitting and regulatory authority of the RWQCB. This section will also discuss relevant local regulations associated with the City and County, including the municipal National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) stormwater permit program.
- K. **Air Quality (J&S)**
- The air quality and climate existing conditions will be characterized based on meteorological and ambient pollutant data monitored at the stations in and around Visalia. We will also describe the health effects of the various pollutants of concern, discuss the most recent local, state, and federal ambient air quality standards, the project area's attainment status with respect to the air quality standards, , and how the air quality standards pertain to the proposed general plan.
 - We will also discuss air quality planning in the project region, including a discussion of applicable air quality goals, policies, and attainment plans of state and local agencies. We will also discuss those aspects of the region's most recent Air Quality Attainment Plan and State Implementation Plan that are applicable to the project. In addition, we will identify the general locations of sensitive receptors in Visalia. Finally, we will identify the emissions budget for the City of Visalia based on data provided by the California Air Resources Board.
- L. **Natural Hazards (D&B)** The primary natural hazards within the area covered by the General Plan include wildfires, floods, earthquakes, landslides, and dam safety. Natural hazards information will be described in text and depicted graphically in GIS.
- M. **Hazardous Materials (D&B).** D&B will gather information on the locations of known soil and/or groundwater contamination. This will include information on possible development sites identified in the East Downtown Plan.
- N. **Noise (J&S)**

- ICF Jones & Stokes will update the existing conditions noise report for the updated noise element of the general plan as recommended in the State of California General Plan Guidelines and the SJVAPCD Air Quality Guidelines for General Plans.. As part of this effort ICF Jones & Stokes will conduct the following tasks:
 - **Identify existing noise sensitive land uses.** Using aerial photography, land use mapping and other data to be provided by the City, ICF Jones & Stokes will identify existing noise sensitive land uses in the City (e.g. residential areas, schools, healthcare facilities, churches).
 - **Identify major mobile and stationary noise sources.** Using transportation plan mapping and other data to be provided by the City and the project transportation consultant, ICF Jones & Stokes will identify existing major mobile and stationary sources of noise in the City (e.g. highways, railroads, airports, commercial and industrial facilities).
 - **Characterize existing noise levels from major noise sources.** ICF Jones & Stokes will characterize existing noise conditions in the City with a community noise survey and noise modeling. The community noise survey will involve short-term (10 to 15 minute) sound levels measurements at up to eight selected locations throughout the City. Long-term measurements (continuous 24-hour measurements over several days) will be conducted at up to three locations within the City. Existing traffic noise conditions along existing major arterials and freeways within the city will be characterized at a program level along up to 30 roadway segments using the FHWA Traffic Noise Model (TNM) version 2.5 and average daily traffic volume and speed data to be provided by the project transportation consultant. Existing noise along rail lines will be characterized using Federal Transit Administration and the Federal Railroad Administration noise models and rail operational data to be provided by the City. Existing traffic and rail noise modeling results will be summarized in a tabular format. Existing and projected aircraft noise conditions will be characterized using aircraft noise contours prepared as part of previous airport noise studies if available. Future noise contours will be prepared for up to 15 road segments. A map showing noise contours will be prepared; new aircraft noise modeling is not included in this scope of work.
 - **Determine the extent of noise problems in the community.** Based on noise complaint information to be provided by the City, ICF Jones & Stokes will characterize the location and extent of noise problems in the community.
- O. **Biological Resources (J&S).** ICF Jones & Stokes' biology team will review existing information and coordinate with resource agencies and review aerial photographs of the study area. We will obtain and review existing and available information that pertains to the project area. This will include a review of records from the most recent update to the California Natural Diversity Database, recent environmental documents, and ICF Jones & Stokes' file information. An ICF Jones & Stokes botanist will also review additional information on species habitat requirements, blooming periods, and field identification characteristics from state floras (Munz and Keck 1973, Hickman 1993) and the California Native Plant Society's (CNPS) inventory on-line edition. This information will be used to develop a list of special-status species that have the potential to occur in the project region. No field studies, including blooming period special-status plant surveys, protocol-level surveys for wildlife species,

or wetland delineation according to U.S. Army Corps of Engineers requirements are proposed under this scope of work.

- P. **Sustainability (D&B, with Urban Green).** D&B and Urban Green will establish a list of key sustainability indicators related to land use and future development. D&B will gather data about the proposed indicators from available existing data and from other data being created for the General Plan. We will look at current trends in Visalia, benchmarks based on State standards and/or other comparable cities, and compare where Visalia stands relative to these benchmarks.
- Q. **Community Design (D&B).** D&B will analyze Visalia’s urban form at three levels: the citywide scale, neighborhood, and individual block. The citywide analysis will emphasize entrances, edges, views, and streetscapes. Analysis at the neighborhood scale will identify key areas that give the City its unique character, including Downtown, and residential neighborhoods developed during different decades of the City’s growth. These elements will be depicted on the base map, described according to their contributing characteristics, and illustrated by photographs. The block-level analysis will examine block sizes and the prototypical relationship between buildings and streets, in residential and non-residential areas—both traditional and emerging.

Using GIS, D&B will analyze city and neighborhood walkability—accessibility to shops, services, downtown, and open spaces. We will also review recently-built projects, design and development regulations in the Zoning Ordinance, and see how these match with community values and livability desires, and what changes in City policies and standards will foster better community design. Scenic highways will also be identified and evaluated.

- R. **Parks and Open Space (D&B).** Using information from City (and County) staff, the Planning Area’s parks and recreational open space will be fully mapped and quantified, including planned open space acquisitions. Existing park standards will be described. Using service radii and walking distances from existing parks, current deficiencies in recreational open space will also be visually represented, and neighborhoods or other areas lacking in such facilities will be identified.
- S. **City Staff Meeting. (D&B)** Review the maps, major findings, and conclusions of the Existing Conditions and Key Issues Report at a meeting with City staff from all departments. City staff will review and comment on the draft, and then D&B will revise the document to respond to staff comments.
- T. **Existing Conditions and Key Issues Report (D&B).** Using information provided by City staff and available through compiled resources, D&B will prepare a graphically-oriented Existing Conditions and Key Issues Report. It will include a series of maps, tables and summary text documenting existing land uses, analysis of existing neighborhood form (block and lot patterns, connections, open space and density), major development projects (City staff to provide), public facilities, environmental conditions, existing noise, regional policy considerations, and potential growth areas. The demographic analysis and the economic analysis will be included.

The mapping analysis will lead into an assessment of recent and long-term trends in land use within Visalia. This assessment will focus on the important patterns and trends that will affect the choices that the City must make later in the planning process. This assessment will include development of focus study areas—sites where change/intensification could be expected or should be explored as part of the General Plan update process. These areas will be identified through discussions with City staff, community input (Task 2), field surveys, and a GIS-based intensity/valuation analysis. We will also work with staff to identify any other existing uses that may be replaced or intensified due to their economic obsolescence, physical deterioration, or incompatibility with adjacent uses. While much of the City will not undergo change, this analysis will provide the opportunity to address key sites and corridors in an integrated interdisciplinary manner, and help support neighborhood-based discussion of their challenges and prospects.

- U. **General Plan Review Committee Meeting #1 (D&B).** Present and discuss key findings of the Existing Conditions and Key Issues Report. The General Plan Review Committee members will have the opportunity to identify any additional key issues that they think should be added to the report.
- V. **Present Existing Conditions and Key Issues Report to Decision-Makers: CC/PC Meeting #2 (D&B).** The report will be presented in a joint workshop with the Planning Commission/City Council (or alternatively at a single meeting of one of the two bodies.) To enable the consultant team to present findings on key topics, substantial time will be reserved at the meeting for decision-maker feedback on key issues. Decision-maker feedback will be used to draw up alternatives, as well as incorporation in General Plan policy.
- W. **Prepare Newsletter #2 (D&B).** The second General Plan Update will describe key findings from public participation efforts at this stage and results from the Existing Conditions and Key Issues Report. The articles will help inform citizens about the progress of the General Plan Update and describe ways to get involved in subsequent phases. This can be posted on the City website, and distributed via other regular City mailings or the local newspaper.

Meetings: City Staff Meeting

General Plan Review Committee Meeting #1

Joint City Council & Planning Commission Meeting #2

Products: Existing Conditions and Key Issues Report, Draft and Final (30 bound copies, 1 unbound copy, one CD-ROM of each)

Newsletter #2: Existing Conditions and Key Issues

TASK 4: ALTERNATIVES AND EVALUATION

Dyett & Bhatia will research models of smart growth development and best practices for sustainability, agricultural land preservation, and air quality. Then we will develop three alternative scenarios for future development, arranged in a workbook. These alternatives will focus on key decisions related to the areas of future growth – both expansion areas and infill development. The alternatives will be evaluated with the community, Planning Commission, and City Council. The

evaluation will consider sustainability and greenhouse gas emissions; environmental impacts; transportation access and impacts; and other critical factors.

- A. **Smart Growth Development Examples. (D&B)** Dyett & Bhatia will research and prepare a booklet of photos and data showing smart growth development models from around California that are relevant to Visalia. A booklet will be prepared showing photos of the examples and presenting basic data about density.
- B. **Best Practices – Sustainability, Agricultural Land Preservation, and Air Quality. (D&B, UG)** Research best practices related to several key General Plan topics, and prepare a summary memorandum and powerpoint presentation. Cover the following topics:
- Sustainability – especially energy efficiency, and transportation
 - Agricultural Land Preservation and mitigations
 - Air Quality Improvement Strategies and Mitigations
- C. **Opportunity Sites for Infill Development and Greenfield Development. (D&B)** D&B will identify infill development opportunity sites through the use of GIS and an analysis of underutilized land (based on County assessor data.) D&B will also analyze development capacity of land within the planning area, based on the carrying capacity of the land, in consultation with City staff regarding densities, open space requirements, and other key assumptions.
- D. **Targeted Analysis on Key Economic Development Issues (EPS).** The City has identified a number of critical economic development issues. Under this subtask, EPS would coordinate with the City to identify one pressing economic development issue for which further analysis could help refine land use alternatives and/or the preferred land use alternative. Potential issues could include, but are not limited to these:
- The relative economic position of individual commercial districts in the City (e.g. Downtown, commercial corridors, and BRP). An evaluation of this issue could focus on each area’s competitive advantages to support commercial growth and identification of major challenges and trade-offs.
 - Policies and strategies to position commercial areas for business attraction. Factors for consideration could include the amount of land needed to develop or foster a commercial node and other key characteristics (e.g. targeted employment sectors, building types and sizes, parking/access requirements, proximity to suppliers or customers, etc).
 - Potential for development along Highway 198 between Highway 99 and Acres Road. This area has historically served as a greenbelt for the City, but the City and property owners may wish to explore the economic and/or fiscal implications of alternative land uses for this area.
- E. **Review Current Traffic Model (OM).** The Alternatives Evaluation and the General Plan Circulation Element will use the Tulare County Regional Travel Demand Model as a base for further traffic modeling refinements to more accurately reflect the current and planned circulation system serving the City of Visalia and its sphere of influence.. Essentially, more local serving collector roads will be added to the TCAG regional network to obtain a more

realistic local travel interaction between land uses within the City. This task will also further disaggregate the existing traffic analysis zones (TAZs) representing the City to more discreetly assign existing and future traffic generation to the City's circulation system. With these traffic modeling refinements, sensitivity to alternative land use and circulation concepts will be greater, including more sensitive comparison of VMT and other parameters in response to SB 375. Lastly, trip generation will be based on population and employment, and not land use, to facilitate incorporation of alternative mobility solutions to synchronize with the compact growth sustainable design direction expressed by the City for this General Plan Update.

This model uses TP+/Viper/CUBE modeling software to provide the basis for both existing and future traffic volume forecasts. Close coordination will be maintained with local and regional transportation agencies including: Caltrans, TCAG and City Planning and Public Works Departments to ensure that the model is acceptable to all appropriate agencies. The following work tasks are required to review, comment, and work with TCAG on their regional traffic model that will be used for this General Plan Update.

- *Refine Existing and Proposed Future Roadway Data.* Existing and future roadway system information as obtained in Task 2 will be refined and documented to form the basis for a more refined traffic model roadway network to more accurately reflect more localized travel within and through the City from the regional model, both existing and in the future.
- *Obtain Existing and Future Land Use Data.* Existing and future land use data and projections will be provided from TCAG to OMNI-MEANS. This data and projections will be divided into separate categories for use in determining land use person and employee trip generation characteristics. OMNI-MEANS will work with City staff and the Consultant Team in further disaggregating the traffic analysis zones (TAZs) to enhance sensitivity to local interactive travel between alternate land uses. *The development, accuracy, and approvals of the land use data and projections will not be the sole responsibility of OMNI-MEANS as future planned growth is difficult to project based upon many development factors.* A new key element of the traffic model to facilitate evaluation and comparative measurement of alternative mobility solutions is that trip generation will originate first from person and employee trips before vehicle trip generation is calculated. Fulfilling the requirements of SB 375, mode choice reflecting differences in proposed land development mix and patterns will first be calculated. Availability of modal options and application of smart growth principles to land use planning will specifically be reflected in the calculation of net vehicle trip generation.
- *Review and Calibrate Existing Conditions Traffic Model.* Based upon the information obtained in Tasks 2 and 3, the TP+/Viper/CUBE traffic model will be update to simulate non-directional peak hour and daily conditions through TCAG staff. The traffic model roadway network will include all significant existing roadway facilities. The existing land use data will be divided into a greater appropriate number of Traffic Analysis Zones (TAZ's) as discussed previously. These zones will be connected to the network to realistically simulate vehicular traffic loading. Based upon the existing traffic volume counts obtained in Task 2, the current traffic model will be calibrated to match these peak hour and daily volumes. Adjustment to the TCAG traffic model will be

done as needed; the accuracy of these calibrations will match the standards set forth by Caltrans.

- F. **Alternative Plans (D&B).** Dyett & Bhatia will develop three potential land use/transportation alternatives. The alternatives will focus on changes at identified opportunity sites and the different opportunity areas for future growth. They will be sensitive to the issues and constraints identified in Task 3, and designed to highlight key policy issues and decisions, such as the geographic areas for future growth and potential transportation improvements. The alternatives will highlight key policy trade-offs infill development and development in expansion areas, and compare implementation challenges.
- G. **Growth Projections for Alternatives (D&B, Review by EPS.)** D&B will prepare growth projections for the three alternatives, based on the preliminary growth projections and the land use supply in each of the alternatives. EPS will review these growth projections and provide feedback based on the Market and Economic Analyses conducted during Task 2.
- H. **Alternatives Evaluation (D&B).** Each of the alternatives will be evaluated based on the guiding principles and other key criteria identified by the City Council. The alternatives will be evaluated in terms of: sustainability and environmental impacts; transportation trips; and infrastructure needs (as described in more detail in the tasks below). A fiscal impacts analysis is optional.

Scenario 360 or a comparable graphic program such as Index or Places 3 will be used to evaluate the implications of the three alternatives. Graphic analysis will focus on sustainability indicators.

- I. **Sustainability and Environmental Impacts Evaluation. (D&B, with Urban Green)** The alternatives will be qualitatively compared in terms of the sustainability indicators developed in Task 3, with emphasis on land-use related energy use and transportation. Major irreversible potential environmental impacts will also be discussed, such as those related to biological resources and loss of prime agricultural land.
- J. **Transportation Trips and Alternatives Comparison (OM).** Omni-Means will assist the project team in shaping conceptual plans based on anticipated transportation and circulation needs and improvements, including a compact land use plan concept. Based upon the calibrated traffic model identified in Subtask 4D, OMNI-MEANS will project 2030 daily and peak hour (non-directional) traffic projections over the General Plan transportation network in conjunction with TCAG. The existing General Plan will be used initially as the basis for determining future 2030 development conditions. From the daily and peak hour traffic projections, overall circulation capacity needs can be projected such that needed changes to the City's circulation system can be identified for multiple scenarios. Also, mode choice options (alternative mobility solutions) will be evaluated for measurable effectiveness in achieving more sustainable design solutions. With a comparative understanding of the alternative land use and circulation plans, OMNI-MEANS will assist the Consultant Team in shaping the General Plan alternatives and achievement of other General Plan goals, including those involving sustainability design. Simply put, the purpose of this effort is to test and help refine the City's efforts to plan for the future. At minimum, this task would consider the following:

- Test up to four (4) preliminary alternative land use/circulation concepts. These four alternatives will be analyzed within the traffic model for future traffic volume projections. These preliminary model forecasts will be reviewed and submitted for consideration. They will not be analyzed in detail and there will not be a quantitative written evaluation prepared. The preliminary analyses will primarily allow for the analysis of creative and innovative concepts for potential transportation implications. Secondly, the preliminary analyses will allow the project team to respond to public comments without incurring great cost or effort.
 - Test up to three (3) alternative land use/circulation concepts that will be reviewed in detail for incorporation into the supporting environmental document General Plan Update. A “No Project” (i.e., Current General Plan) alternative will be among these alternatives. The detail of this review will include projected trip generation, daily and peak hour modeled traffic forecasts, and preliminary comparative assessment of potential transportation impacts;
 - Determine what changes to the circulation system or programs and capital improvements would be needed in order to accommodate the proposed General Plan; and
 - Identify the changes to thresholds/capital project timing as a result of the proposed land use changes.
 - Omni-Means will prepare a working paper summarizing the alternatives analysis process and findings. The results of all technical analyses will be presented in appropriate text, tabular and graphical format.
- K. **City Staff Alternatives Workshop. (D&B)** A hands-on workshop with City staff will be held to review preliminary concepts for planning alternatives.
- L. **General Plan Review Committee Meetings #2 and #3. (D&B)** Two meetings with the General Plan Review Committee will be conducted to discuss the alternatives and preliminary evaluation results. At the first meeting the alternatives will be presented and discussed. The committee will have the opportunity to raise issues and concerns. Alternatives will be revised if needed, and will be discussed in greater detail at the second meeting, along with the evaluation analysis.
- M. **Alternatives Plan Workbook (D&B).** Dyett & Bhatia will prepare an Alternative Plans Workbook that presents the three alternatives and evaluates land use distribution, housing and population projections, resources conservation, and initial assessments of transportation impacts, fiscal impacts, and infrastructure implications. A comparison of sustainability indicators will also be included.
- N. **Newsletter #3 (D&B).** Widespread outreach on the planning alternatives will be initiated with the third newsletter, which will contain the alternative plan and comparison of salient features and buildout data, as space allows. Again, the newsletter will invite community members to participate in the discussion on alternatives’ relative merits at the next workshop, with place and time information included.
- O. **Alternative Plans Community Workshop #2 (D&B).** At the second community workshop we will present the model developments and best practices examples. Then we will present

the Alternative Plans, and conduct small-group discussions about the pros and cons of each. Photographs of typical types of development as well as plan drawings of the alternatives will be used.

- P. **Special Community Meetings (D&B).** Two meetings in low-income, minority or other neighborhoods will be held, with translation, to obtain input from these groups that often do not participate in community planning. This would be structured with food and family activities, to encourage participation.
- Q. **Presentation to Key Citizen Groups (D&B).** Prepare a presentation about the alternatives and major policy choices to key citizen groups such as the Chamber of Commerce, the Downtown Merchants, or the Rotary Club. Make the presentation to two or three groups on a single day, accompanied by City staff. Give the presentation to City staff so they can give the presentation to other groups if appropriate.
- R. **Planning Commission/City Council Workshop #3. (D&B)** A workshop would be held to review the community feedback and discuss the alternatives with the Planning Commission and City Council. Commission and Council feedback will help inform work on the Preferred Plan in Task 6.

*Meetings: City Staff Workshop on Preliminary Alternatives
General Plan Review Committee Meetings #2 and #3
Community Workshop #2
Special Community Meetings (2)
Presentation to Key Citizen Groups (two to three groups in one day)
Planning Commission/City Council Workshop #3*

*Products: Smart Growth Development Examples Booklet
Best Practices Memorandum
Travel Demand Forecast/Alternatives Analysis Working Paper
Fiscal Analysis Technical Memorandum (OPTIONAL)
Infrastructure Analysis Memorandum
Sustainability Indicators Memorandum
Alternative Plans Workbook
Alternatives Presentation (can also be used by City staff at other meetings)
Newsletter #3: Alternative Plans*

TASK 5: PREFERRED PLAN AND POLICY FRAMEWORK

The objective of Task 5 is to create a land use and circulation plan based on the decision-maker feedback public feedback on the alternative, and to begin identifying new policy initiatives to implement the Preferred Plan concept. Depending on the input, this Preferred Plan may represent a hybrid of the alternatives, closely reflect a single alternative, or integrate new ideas generated by the public process.

A preferred plan will be prepared, along with key policies that form the core of the General Plan. Potential policies related to green building, recycled water, and other sustainable development

issues will be introduced. A table of existing General Plan policies will identify policies to be retained, revised, or deleted. A preliminary phasing plan will also be drafted and discussed.

- A. **Preferred Plan and Policy Framework (D&B, Omni Means, with review by EPS).** Following the Planning Commission/City Council Alternatives Workshop (Task 4), a preliminary Draft Preferred Plan map and corresponding data on land use, population, and employment changes will be prepared for City staff review. After confirming the preferred plan scenario with staff (or modifying it based on staff comments), we will prepare a Draft Preferred Plan, which will include the Draft Preferred Plan map, a development vision statement, table(s) quantifying land use and buildout, and a series of key policies and objectives that will guide detailed policy development. The entire consultant team will hold a half-day working session to craft the preferred plan, so that expertise and conclusions for all key topics are integrated into the preferred plan.

For the Preferred Alternative, Omni-Means will prepare forecasts for AM and PM peak hours at up to 25 intersections and daily traffic forecasts at up to 25 roadway segments. These traffic forecasts will be used for Levels of Service analysis, and evaluation of other environmental impact performance measures, including for air quality and noise analyses. The specific transportation impact analysis will be performed under Task 6 and be incorporated into the Transportation Section of the Draft EIR.

Omni-Means will also work with D&B and City staff to develop a draft Circulation Diagram for the Preferred Plan. Omni-Means will review the existing circulation diagram and propose circulation improvements (consistent with the City's Capital Improvements Program (CIP) to fit the City's future needs), based on the forecasts prepared for the alternatives.

Based on the Economic Analysis (Task 3), findings of the public outreach phase, the goals of the City's Strategic Plan, and data provided in the background report,

D&B will create a list of key recommended economic development policies for the policy framework. EPS will review these policies, and assist in refining them as needed based on its understanding of market and economic dynamics as well as experience with economic development policy work on other recent general plan efforts.

- B. **Infrastructure Analysis (PP).** Provost & Pritchard will use the existing conditions data on water, sewer, and stormwater infrastructure to qualitatively assess impacts on each system posed by the Preferred Plan. The analysis will include such items as extent or complexity of required utilities, ability to phase implementation of the utilities, ability of the City to provide the required future water demands, ability of the City to treat the future wastewater flows, or other issues. This will be a short qualitative-level evaluation of the utilities.
- C. **General Plan Policies Evaluation (D&B).** Using the policy matrix developed in Task 2, D&B will outline recommendations for all existing General Plan policies. Policies may be retained, revised, or deleted. A comments column would explain the recommendations in more detail where needed.

- D. **Sustainability Policies (D&B, Urban Green).** Develop potential policies related to sustainable development that could be integrated into the General Plan for consideration by City staff and decision makers. Sustainable development policies would cover items such as: resource conservation (energy and water), green building, water treatment and reuse, low impact development and related stormwater provisions, solid waste, increased mobility and reduced VMT, A range of options would be presented, and the cost and administrative implications would be discussed in a memo format.
- E. **City Staff Meeting. (D&B, Omni Means)** The consultants will meet with senior City staff to review the Preferred Plan, policy framework, General Plan policies evaluation, and phasing alternatives. The documents will be revised to reflect City staff comments.
- F. **General Plan Review Committee Meeting #4 (D&B).** Present the preferred plan to the committee and obtain input. Revise the plan if necessary prior to presentation to the City Council.
- G. **Newsletter #4 (D&B).** Communication with the community will continue with the fourth newsletter. This insert will highlight the Draft Preferred Plan, explain how it reflects the community's input, and invite people to the Planning Commission/City Council workshop to share their opinions.
- H. **Phasing Alternatives (D&B, OM).** Phasing recommendations and alternatives will be prepared for the Preferred Plan. Phasing alternatives will address which geographic areas should be developed first, and the logical sequencing of master plans in each of the City's future growth areas. The phasing alternatives will take into account factors such as: logical and cost-effective phasing of utilities infrastructure; development phasing and thresholds related to major transportation improvements; and potential environmental impacts and mitigations. A Draft Phasing Plan will be prepared based on an evaluation of the alternatives, following consultation with decision-makers and City staff.
- I. **City Staff Meeting. (D&B)** The consultants will meet with senior City staff (on the same day as the General Plan Review Committee meeting) to review the phasing alternatives. The documents will be revised to reflect City staff comments.
- J. **Planning Commission/City Council Workshop on Draft Preferred Plan #4. (D&B)** At a workshop we will present the Draft Preferred Plan and policy implications, and provide feedback on comments received at prior meetings. The decision-makers will discuss the Preferred Plan concept and give additional input to the project team on the Draft Preferred Plan, the Phasing Alternatives, and new core policies.
- K. **Stakeholder Follow-Up Meetings (D&B).** Follow-up meetings with key stakeholders will be held to discuss the preferred plan, phasing plan, and any other unresolved issues related to the preferred plan. This could involve a few City Council and Planning Commission members, and key affected stakeholders such as landowners, and/or other key community members. A maximum of four meetings on one day is assumed. City staff would also attend.

Meetings: City Staff Meeting

General Plan Review Committee #4

Planning Commission/City Council Workshop #4

Stakeholder Follow-Up Meeting Related to Phasing

Products: Draft Preferred Plan, Policy Framework, and Phasing Alternatives

Sustainable Development Policies Memo

Newsletter #4: Draft Preferred Plan

TASK 6: DRAFT GENERAL PLAN

When drafting the new General Plan, we will strive for brevity and clarity that enables all interested persons to tell easily what commitments Visalia is making, what it hopes to accomplish, and whether a proposed project is consistent with the vision of the General Plan.

- A. **Outline and Format “Mock-up” (D&B).** We will prepare an outline of the General Plan, including a list of figures and diagrams and a recommended format to discuss with City staff. Topics to be covered in each element will be identified, and a “mock-up” section will be prepared to illustrate the look of the Plan elements.
- B. **Administrative Draft Plan (D&B).** We will prepare the Administrative Draft General Plan for staff review. This document will include summary background information, guiding and implementing policies, and monitoring and evaluation requirements. The Plan will include an introductory section with statistics on Plan buildout, population, housing and jobs by type as well as the projected jobs/housing ratio. D&B will prepare an Administrative Draft of the policies for City staff review, in word format. With the benefit of City staff comments, Dyett & Bhatia will prepare and submit one unbound copy of the Administrative Draft to City staff, and receive one consolidated set of comments in return which will be incorporated into the Hearing Draft. Individual Plan elements will include:
 - **Land Use Element (D&B).** The Land Use Element will establish a system of land use classifications, identify the location and intensity of uses, and provide policies that would result in development that is appropriate to the character and setting of Visalia. The Land Use Element will address:
 - Land use classifications with density/intensity standards;
 - Buildout population and development;
 - Growth management and jobs/housing balance;
 - Specific geographic areas which may require master planning, such as infill growth areas and new neighborhood;
 - The character and density of new neighborhoods and expansion areas of the City;
 - Infill opportunity sites and revitalization efforts within the City;
 - Economic Development and opportunity sites; and
 - Regional issues, including coordination with the County and the San Joaquin Valley Blueprint.
 - **Circulation Element (D&B, with Omni Means).** The Circulation Element will be updated to address existing and buildout conditions for the various travel modes: driving,

bicycle, pedestrian, and transit. Alternative mobility solutions, in concert with the Land Use Element, will be documented to include the City's compact growth and sustainable design direction. Application of smart growth principles will be integral to the Circulation Plan and its policies. Omni-Means will prepare a recommendations memorandum, including recommended street improvements/classifications and recommendations related to circulation policies, including application of appropriate smart growth principles, and D&B will write the Circulation Element. Omni Means will base its work on initial meetings regarding confirmation of the current goals, objectives and policies of the Circulation Element and the technical research completed for the Existing Conditions Report. The analysis conducted earlier tasks will be summarized in text, tables, and figures to explain the proposed Circulation Element of the General Plan document and supporting technical evaluation and recommendations. Recommended circulation improvements and other changes will be incorporated. The Circulation Element will also include a thorough discussion of the planned transportation system in growth areas and connections to existing neighborhoods, schools, parks, and shopping areas. The following topics will be addressed:

- Roadway system with operations and levels of service and street design standards;
 - Transportation demand management and traffic calming;
 - Transit services, including bus, High Speed Rail, or any other potential regional rail service;
 - Pedestrian network;
 - Bicycle network;
 - Parking facilities;
 - Goods movement, such as truck routes and freight rail;
 - Aviation services;
 - Regional coordination and compliance.
- **City Design (Element) (D&B).** This section will update the existing City Design Element with policies and implementation programs related to city and neighborhood form, streetscape design, scenic highways, gateways, neighborhood design character, and other urban design topics. Strategies and policies relating to City Design may be a separate element or incorporated into the Land Use Element.
 - **Open Space, Parks, and Recreation Element (D&B).** This element will address the provision of open space, parks and recreation facilities.
 - Open space system, including types of open space and their functional relationships and an open space action program; and
 - Recreation facilities, including sports fields and indoor recreation facilities.
 - **Noise Element (D&B, J&S).** This element will address existing and future noise from various sources within the Planning Area, including standards for noise exposure for the different land uses. ICF Jones & Stokes will review the Noise Element prepared by Dyett & Bhatia.
 - **Safety Element (D&B).** The Safety Element will be updated to address changed conditions and regulations for each of the following topics:

- Emergency management and response capabilities, with evacuation routes and signage;
- Hazardous waste;
- Flooding and dam inundation;
- Geotechnical and seismic hazards;
- Wildland and urban fire hazards; and
- Other topics as necessary, such as agricultural spraying and electromagnetic fields.
- **Conservation, Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Emissions Element (D&B).** The policies will cover:
 - Agricultural uses, soils, and the conversion of agricultural land to urban uses;
 - Biological resources such as habitat and special-status species, and the preservation and enhancement of trees and landscaping;
 - Water resources including watershed protection, water quality, and conservation;
 - Energy use and conservation; and,
 - Air quality including ambient air quality trends, adopted air quality plans, and air quality improvement strategies;
 - Data and policies related to greenhouse gas emissions and climate change. This section may reference policies in other chapters, since greenhouse gas emissions relate to land use, circulation, energy uses, and other topics.
 - Mineral resources (if any)
- **Community Facilities and Public Services (D&B, review by PP).** This element will update policies and standards for community facilities and services, as necessary based on existing conditions and future need. Standards for service provision, equipment, and infrastructure will be incorporated, based on existing master plans and/or research of standards in comparable cities. Policies related to environmental justice—a state mandate that must be addressed in general plans—could also be included in this Element. This element will also cover civic and cultural facilities, historic preservation and scenic highways.
 - Public schools;
 - Public infrastructure plans, including stormwater management, wastewater systems, and water supply and distribution;
 - Solid waste management;
 - Public safety services, including police services, fire prevention and protection;
 - Libraries;
 - Civic and cultural facilities, including community centers; and
 - Historic Preservation and cultural resources.
- **Implementation Program (D&B, Team).** The Implementation Program will outline the major General Plan initiatives to be accomplished over the next 20 years and how they can be carried out over time. The implementation program for the General Plan will include an overview of needed amendments to the City’s zoning and subdivision regulations, building and housing codes, capital improvement programming and fee structures. Implementation policies will be woven into the Plan document, so that policies are all grouped according to topic. In the Implementation Program, summary tables of plan implementation actions will be included. In addition, the Implementation

Program will include a phasing plan for annexations, showing a logical sequence of master plans in the growth areas that takes into account phasing of utilities.

- C. **City Staff Review Meeting (D&B).** After all of the policies for the Draft General Plan have been prepared, they will be distributed to the City staff for review and comment, with new policy initiatives highlighted. Staff will identify initiatives or identify specific refinements they would like included prior to releasing the Draft Plan for Public Review. Key issues will be discussed in one day of meetings with City staff from all city departments. Substantive changes will be made in consultation with City Staff and a Public Review Draft prepared.
- D. **General Plan Review Committee Meetings #5 and #6. (D&B)** The draft chapters of the General Plan will be reviewed with the General Plan Review Committee over the course of two meetings. Review efforts will focus on issues that have been controversial or that involve major policy choices. The General Plan Committee will not be asked to wordsmith the entire text of the document, but rather to focus on key policies and maps that are the most substantive aspects of the General Plan. Revisions to key policies and maps will be made if necessary prior to publication of the Public Review Draft.
- E. **General Plan Summary (Newsletter #5) (D&B).** A General Plan Summary will be prepared showing the land use map and major policies for different topics. The summary will show how the policy recommendations respond to the community input. The General Plan Summary will be formatted to be a fifth newsletter, so that it can be mailed.
- F. **Community Meeting #4. (D&B)** We will present salient features of the General Plan to the community in an “open house” format – after a presentation, members will be invite to ask questions and offer comments at stations. We will also present information about the Draft EIR and the adoption process.

*Meetings: City Staff Meeting (full day, multiple departments)
General Plan Review Committee Meetings #5 and #6
Community Meeting #4*

*Products: General Plan Outline
General Plan Policy Summary for Staff Review (50 bound copies, one unbound copy, one CD-ROM)
Administrative Draft General Plan
Draft General Plan for Public Review
Draft General Plan for Public Review – revised as necessary to reflect General Plan Review Committee comments
General Plan Summary (Newsletter #5)*

TASK 7: DRAFT PROGRAM ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT

The objective of this task is to complete a programmatic environmental assessment of the Draft General Plan, pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Necessary noticing and scoping will occur early in the project, and a Program EIR will be prepared in parallel with preparation of the draft elements. Potentially significant impact issues will be identified early in

the process so that appropriate mitigation policies can be developed and incorporated into the new elements, resulting in a “self-mitigating” policy structure to the extent possible.

- A. **Notice of Preparation and Scoping Meeting. (D&B)** Dyett & Bhatia will prepare a Notice of Preparation (NOP) for the Draft EIR. CEQA does not require an Initial Study if it is a foregone conclusion that an EIR is required. Furthermore, we will have a broad understanding of the topics to address in the EIR as a result of the intensive planning process. City staff will be responsible for distributing the NOP to the appropriate agencies and establishing a time and place for the Scoping Meeting. The scoping meeting can be conducted as a public workshop, or at a meeting of the Planning Commission. We will participate with City staff in the scoping meeting and make notes of comments made.
- B. **Environmental Setting and Impact Analysis.** The Existing Conditions and Issues Report prepared in Task 3 will serve as the starting point for the environmental setting information in the Draft EIR. Additional data will be gathered from available sources, such as previous EIRs, facility plans, and regional programs.

We will then analyze how policies and Plan buildout will affect the environment, identify significant impacts, and recommend measures to mitigate those impacts. The impact analysis will be comprehensive in scope, covering all CEQA requirements. Significance criteria will be identified for each impact topic, based upon thresholds of significance established in consultation with City staff.

Impacts and mitigation measures will be organized and discussed by topic. As required by CEQA Guidelines, the effects of the project will be defined as changes from the environmental setting that are attributable to the project, under full buildout of the Draft Land Use Element. Maps, graphics, tables, and charts will be used to depict clearly the location and nature of any potential significant impacts identified in the EIR, and any other relevant information. Specific topic areas to be addressed in the EIR are summarized below:

- **Land Use (D&B).** Analyze sites where land use changes would occur under the project. Identify potential conflicts between existing and proposed uses, and determine alternative or supplementary policy mitigation measures that could minimize impacts.
- **Parks, Open Space, and Recreation Facilities (D&B).** Using level of service standards as significance criteria, assess the impacts of buildout conditions on use of existing parks, open space, and recreation facilities. Assess impacts of proposed additions to the City’s Parks and Open Space System.
- **Public Facilities and Services (D&B, with review by PP).** Assess the impact of proposed changes in the General Plan on public services, including public schools, police and fire protection. Contact each of the public service providers regarding their capacity to handle future growth in Visalia, and identify standards for new infrastructure required for growth. Water, wastewater, and storm drain impacts will also be studied, and the impacts of new development on the capacity of existing water, wastewater, and stormwater systems will be analyzed. The analysis will also consider the use of recycled water. The analysis will not include distribution and collection systems, pipe sizing, or proposed capital improvements. The adequacy of long-term water supplies will be ad-

dressed. For most water quality issues, mitigation measures are present in regulatory and review programs that are already in place. The EIR will identify these programs and the point at which they apply to different types of projects plus any additional mitigation required.

- **Traffic and Transportation (OM, D&B).** Omni-Means will prepare the circulation and transportation section of the EIR. Cumulative No Project and Cumulative Plus Project conditions will be forecasted from now to the future horizon year (2030). Future traffic forecasts will be derived from the TCAG City Travel Demand Model modified for the City. The analyses will consider roadway daily conditions and intersection weekday AM and PM peak hour conditions. For this section, the peak hour forecasts at up to 25 intersections and daily traffic forecasts at up to 25 roadway segments for the Preferred Alternative prepared in Task 5 will be analyzed for potential traffic impacts and for which, if necessary, mitigation measures identified. Performances measures relating to AB32 and SB375, including net new vehicular trip generation and vehicle miles of travel, will also be evaluated as well as provide inputs to other environmental analyses, including air quality and noise. The analysis will include circulation alternatives for:
 - Existing circulation network
 - With planned circulation improvements (No Project and three alternatives).

Transportation impacts associated with the alternative travel modes, including airports, railroad, transit, trucks bicycles and pedestrians will be identified.

- **Biological Resources (J&S).** Assess the potential for impacts to special status species at buildout. Describe the potential impacts to biological resources related to land uses that may permanently impair or preclude resource development. Identify alternative or supplementary policy mitigation measures that could minimize impacts to biological resources. J&S will utilize the California Natural Diversity Database and literature search, interviews with state and federal regulatory staff, and other organizations to identify biological resources (special status species and habitats) with the potential to occur in the project study area. No protocol level field surveys for special status plant and wildlife species are included as part of this scope of work.
- **Air Quality (J&S).**
 - Based on information in the existing conditions report, ICF Jones & Stokes' air quality specialists will evaluate air quality impacts associated with goals, objectives, and policies established within the proposed Visalia General Plan Update. The air quality analysis will focus predominantly on vehicular emissions of ozone precursors (reactive organic gases and nitrogen oxides), inhalable particulates (PM10 and PM2.5), and carbon monoxide (CO) resulting from the proposed Visalia General Plan Update. As part of the analysis, we will identify construction-related mitigation measures that are required by San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District (SJVAPCD). Our methodology will use procedures described in the SJVAPCD's Guide for Assessing and Mitigating Air Quality Impacts.
 - Based on the results of the traffic modeling ICF Jones & Stokes will assess the consistency of the Draft Elements with the regional Clean Air Plan with reference to population and employment forecasts as well as trends in vehicle miles traveled

(VMT). ICF Jones & Stokes will also work with D&B and Urban Green to qualitatively assess the capability of policies of the Draft Elements, including the new Air Quality Element, to prevent exposure of people to substantial sources of construction dust, toxic air contaminants, or odorous emissions.

- Thresholds of significance will be discussed and defined, based on SJVAPCD standards. Where significant impacts are identified, program-level mitigation measures will be identified and discussed. It is expected that, to the extent feasible, potential air quality impacts will be mitigated by policies, programs, or objectives developed as part of the proposed Land Use and Circulation Elements.
- **Noise (J&S).**
 - ICF Jones & Stokes will evaluate noise impacts associated with new or revised goals, objectives, and policies within the updated general plan noise element. The noise impacts associated with up to three build-out alternatives and a no-project alternative will be evaluated at a program-level of assessment.
 - In the setting section existing noise regulations and planning guidelines will be summarized. The existing noise environment in the county will be described using data and information developed for the updated existing conditions report.
 - In the impact section thresholds of significance based on city noise standards will be discussed and defined. Projected traffic, rail, and aircraft noise conditions and related noise impacts associated with a future no project condition and the adoption of up to three build alternatives will be evaluated. ICF Jones & Stokes will determine projected traffic and rail noise levels conditions using applicable models and operational data to be provided by the City. Traffic noise for the no project condition and up to three build alternative will be evaluated at a program level along up to 30 roadway segments using the FHWA Traffic Noise Model (TNM) version 2.5 and average daily traffic volume and speed data to be provided by the project transportation consultant. This scope assumes that projected aircraft noise contours will be available from previous studies.
 - Where significant noise impacts are identified program level mitigation measures will be identified and discussed. However, it is expected that, to the extent feasible, potential impacts will be mitigated by policies, programs, or objectives developed as a part of the Noise Element. The EIR section will describe the types of noise sources that would be associated with development under the General Plan Update and qualitatively assess the adequacy of policies to avoid future noise incompatibility for existing and future land uses.
- **Seismic and other Geologic Hazards (D&B).** Describe existing seismic and geologic hazards and evaluate impacts related to the General Plan Update; identify mitigation measures if Plan policies are not sufficient.
- **Hydrology and Water Quality (J&S).** The EIR section will discuss the hydrological setting of the City, including its position within the regional watershed system. The EIR will address existing conditions, the potential for impacts, and any necessary mitigation related to hydrology, flooding, and water quality. The EIR will identify significance thresholds based on City guidance and State CEQA Guidelines. Based on these thresholds, we will identify impacts associated with implementation of the General Plan Update, and design feasible mitigation measures to avoid, reduce, or eliminate these

impacts. The level of significance associated with each impact will be clearly identified both prior to and following mitigation. It is expected that, to the extent feasible, potential impacts will be mitigated by policies, programs, or objectives developed as a part of the Environmental Resources Management Element. The EIR will address the potential for increased runoff as a result of buildout of the General Plan, and any related impacts to drainage systems in the City and downstream, such as the potential for increased flooding. Risks to people or structures as a result of construction within the FEMA floodplains will be addressed. The EIR will also identify any potential impacts related to water quality as a result of General Plan buildout. This qualitative analysis will consider sources and types of pollutants based on the proposed land uses. Conclusions from the assessment of water supply and availability prepared for General Plan buildout by Provost and Pritchard will be incorporated into the evaluation of potential impacts on groundwater and surface water resources. Impacts both within the City and downstream will be addressed, and feasible mitigation measures will be developed to reduce impacts below significance thresholds.

- ***Safety and Hazardous Materials (D&B)***. Review available database information on location and transport of hazardous materials. Discuss the general constraints that contaminated soils and groundwater may pose to development and all applicable federal, state, and local regulations with regard to contamination management and clean up. Identify and characterize areas at the urban fringe that are particularly vulnerable to the threat of fire. Identify fuel reduction methods and techniques consistent with protection of special status species and habitats. Identify any restrictions on land uses and intensities appropriate for areas identified as susceptible to fire hazard.
- ***Cultural Resources (D&B)***. Document any historic resources that are currently listed on the National Register of Historic Places and reference materials from the Directory of Properties, which is maintained by the State Office of Historic Preservation. Evaluate how the General Plan Update will affect or disrupt the preservation of historic, cultural, and archaeological resources. Evaluate Plan policies and recommend any additional feasible mitigation measures that will avoid, reduce, or mitigate any impacts on historic and prehistoric cultural resources. The mitigation measures will identify appropriate implementation procedures, timing, responsible parties, and any necessary reporting procedures. This work does not include a citywide historic resources evaluation. As part of this task, D&B will conduct the notification and consultation with the Native American Historical Commission and with Native American tribes required under SB18. A maximum of one meeting with Native American representatives is included.
- ***Visual Quality (D&B)***. Apply significance criteria that have been derived from CEQA Guidelines, which include view obstruction, or degradation, creation of an aesthetically offensive site, impairment of an object having aesthetic significance, conflict with adopted environmental plans and goals, or production of new light or glare. Assess how future development under the new elements may affect city view sheds, particularly views from public viewpoints (e.g. parks).
- ***Climate Change (D&B, with Urban Green)***. Evaluate the potential impacts of the General Plan update on greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) using the results of the travel demand forecasting models and buildout calculations for other potential sources of GHG and assess what policies and actions are included in the General Plan update that may

directly or indirectly affect global warming and climate change. This will include an assessment of local actions that may be identified by the State through implementation of AB 32. Urban Green will provide input on potential policies and programs.

- C. **Mitigation Measures (Team).** During impact analysis, Dyett & Bhatia and team members will identify practical and feasible mitigation measures to reduce the environmental impacts of implementation of the Draft General Plan. We will also evaluate whether mitigation measures would reduce impacts below a level of significance, identify the parties who would be responsible for implementing each measure, and incorporate them as policies into the Plan.
- D. **CEQA-Required Impact Analysis (D&B).** As required by CEQA Guidelines, the following types of impacts need to be assessed, in addition to the detailed analysis of impacts, by topic area:
- Growth-Inducing Impacts (potential for the project to cause additional population or job growth, or housing demand);
 - Significant Environmental Effects of the Proposed Project (including significant unavoidable effects);
 - Significant Irreversible Environmental Changes; and
 - Effects Found Not to Be Significant.
- E. **Project Alternatives (D&B, with Team).** The alternatives considered in preparation of the Draft General Plan will be the basis for this section. It will also include analysis of the No Project Alternative. The relative merits and disadvantages of the alternatives will be assessed and compared with the proposed Elements, and an “environmentally superior” alternative will be identified. The alternatives analysis, as discussed in the CEQA Guidelines, may be less detailed than the analysis of the proposed project.
- F. **City Staff Meeting RE Mitigation Policies and Alternatives. (D&B)** Meet with city staff to discuss the major potential impacts and policies proposed in the General Plan to mitigate the impacts. Also discuss alternatives that will be analyzed.
- G. **Administrative Draft and Draft EIR. (D&B)** Dyett & Bhatia will submit one unbound copy of the Administrative Draft EIR for City staff review, and receive one consolidated set of comments in return. After a final screen check review by City staff, a final production version of the Draft EIR will be provided to the City for distribution. The City will be responsible for printing and distributing the Draft EIR.
- H. **Notice of Completion. (D&B)** We will prepare a Notice of Completion (NOC) for the Draft EIR. City staff will be responsible for distributing the NOC to the appropriate agencies.
- I. **City Staff Meeting RE Responses to Comments on the Draft EIR. (D&B, Team members if needed).** Meet with City staff to review comments received and proposed responses. Determine if city staff will contact

- J. **Administrative Draft Final EIR and Final EIR. (D&B, OM and J&S)** Following the 45-day public review period, we will prepare responses to comments. Omni Means will prepare response to comments for the Traffic and Transportation Section. Jones & Stokes will prepare response to comments for their respective sections. The Comments and Responses together with the Draft EIR will constitute the Final EIR. The document will be searchable and contain GIS constraint maps; Dyett and Bhatia could share final GIS shape files, if desired. This work program assumes that the changes needed to respond to public comments will not require a complete revision of the Draft EIR. One unbound copy of the Administrative Draft of the Final: Comments and Responses will be provided for City staff review, and the Final EIR then will be prepared based on one set of consolidate staff comments. Because we expect the General Plan to be “self-mitigating,” and any mitigation identified through the environmental review process to be incorporated into the final plan presented for Council action, a separate mitigation monitoring and reporting plan will not in all likelihood be required. The City will be responsible for printing and distributing the Final EIR. Dyett & Bhatia will also prepare a Notice of Determination for the Final EIR, which City staff will be responsible for distributing.

*Meetings: Scoping Meeting
City Staff Meetings (2)*

*Products: Notice of Preparation
Administrative Draft EIR (10 bound copies, one unbound copy, one CD-ROM)
Draft EIR (30 bound copies, one unbound copy, one CD-ROM)
Admin Draft Final EIR
Final EIR Response to Comments (40 bound copies, one unbound copy, one CD-ROM) Notice of Completion
Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (if necessary)*

TASK 8: COMMUNITY REVIEW AND ADOPTION

The objective of this task will be to conduct the public review and successfully take the Draft General Plan and Program EIR through the public hearing process. The General Plan will be revised after adoption to reflect the Council’s decision.

- A. **Public Review.** There will be a six to eight week review period for the Draft Plan and EIR.
- B. **Public Hearings (three) (D&B, and Omni Means at one hearing).** We will present the Draft General Plan and Draft EIR at two Planning Commission Hearings. We will then prepare a summary of public comments on the Draft General Plan and the Final EIR (which contains the response to comments on the Draft EIR), and present them at a City Council hearing.
- C. **City Staff Meeting (D&B).** Meet with City staff to discuss direction from the Planning Commission and City Council and final recommendations for revisions to the Draft General Plan.

- D. **Statement of Overriding Considerations (if necessary).** (D&B) If necessary, a statement of overriding considerations will be prepared to address significant environmental impacts that cannot be fully mitigated.
- E. **Notice of Determination.** (D&B) This will be prepared and filed with the State.
- F. **Mitigation and Monitoring Program.** (D&B) The potential environmental impacts will be addressed through policies in the General Plan; and the monitoring program will be addressed in the Implementation Program of the General Plan. However a mitigation and monitoring plan will be prepared if any further mitigation and monitoring program is required.
- G. **Final Public Hearing.** (D&B) D&B will assist City staff with presenting comments on the Plan and recommending any changes to the Plan, including the Land Use Diagram, based on public review. At this hearing, the City Council will certify the EIR, and take action on the General Plan.
- H. **Adopted General Plan.** Following adoption by the City Council, we will revise the Draft Plan, to incorporate specific text and diagram changes made by the City Council as part of adoption. After a final screen check review by City staff, a final production version of the Adopted Plan will be provided to the City for distribution.

Meetings: Planning Commission Hearings (2)
City Staff Meeting
City Council Hearings (2)

Products: Statement of Overriding Considerations (if necessary)
Notice of Determination
“Screen Check” Draft of General Plan as Adopted
Adopted General Plan (40 bound copies, one unbound copy, one CD-ROM)