



# City Of Merced Wastewater Collection System Master Plan

## DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT

CHAPTER 3.12 POPULATION AND HOUSING  
September 2020



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## **3.12 POPULATION AND HOUSING**

### **3.12.1 Basis for Analysis**

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines' Appendix G Environmental Checklist was used during the Notice of Preparation (NOP) scoping process (included in Appendix A) to identify the Program components that have the potential to cause a significant impact. The following potential impacts were determined to warrant further evaluation within this Environmental Impact Report (EIR):

- Induce substantial unplanned population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure); or
- Displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere.

The remainder of this section describes the regulatory and environmental setting to support the evaluation of the potential impacts and describes the potential impacts to population and housing that may result from implementation of the Program, identifying mitigation for potentially significant impacts, where feasible.

### **3.12.2 Regulatory Framework**

This section discusses the federal and state regulations and local policies and objectives that are related to population and housing and are relevant to the Program.

#### **3.12.2.1 Federal**

There are no federal or state laws pertaining to population and housing that are applicable to the Program.

#### **3.12.2.2 Local**

Merced Vision 2030 General Plan

The City of Merced's (City's) Vision 2030 General Plan (2030 General Plan), adopted January 3, 2012 (City of Merced 2012), contains several policies that directly or indirectly pertain to population and housing, including the following:

##### **Goal Area UE-1: Urban Expansion**

- **Policy UE-1.2.** Foster Compact and Efficient Development Patterns to Maintain a Compact Urban Form.
- **Policy UE-1.3.** Control the Annexation, Timing, Density, and Location of New Land Uses Within the City's Urban Expansion Boundaries.
- **Policy UE-1.4.** Continue Joint Planning Efforts on the UC Merced Campus and University Community Plans.

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- **Policy UE-1.5.** Promote Annexation of Developed Areas Within the City’s Specific Urban Development Plan /Sphere of Influence (SUDP/SOI) During the Planning Period.
- **Policy UE-1.6.** Consider Expansion of the City’s SUDP/SOI boundary for Areas within the Area of Interest when Certain Conditions are Met.

**3.12.3 Environmental Setting**

The Program Study Area is located in the Central Valley of California, approximately 100 miles southeast of Sacramento, 50 miles northwest of Fresno, and 115 miles southeast of San Francisco. According to the United States Census Bureau (USCB) since the City was incorporated in 1889, the population has grown to approximately 83,081 people in 2017 (USCB 2017). The 2030 General Plan includes population estimates and approximate growth projections from 2000 to 2030, which are shown in Table 3.12-1.

**Table 3.12-1: Population Estimates and Projections, 2000-2030**

	2000	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030
Merced	63,893	80,985	89,400	97,700	106,800	116,800
Merced County	210,554	258,495	307,300	340,800	377,400	417,200

Source: City of Merced 2010

As further stated in the 2030 General Plan, the projected population within the City of Merced SUDP/SOI would be approximately 155,000 by 2030 (City of Merced 2010).

Housing within the City included 27,446 total units in 2010, with 24,899 of those units classified as occupied and 2,547 of those units classified as vacant during the 2010 Census (USCB 2010). Additionally, employment within the City includes a range of industries, including agriculture, education, and construction. Table 3.12-2 shows the breakdown of employment industries and number of workers in each industry.

**Table 3.12-2: City of Merced Employment by Industry**

Industry	Number of People
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, and Hunting, and Mining	1,173
Construction	1,272
Manufacturing	2,387
Wholesale Trade	691
Retail Trade	2,466
Transportation and Warehousing, and Utilities Information	923
Finance, Insurance, Real Estate, and Rental and Leasing	954
Professional, Scientific, Management, Administrative, and Waste Management Services	1,859
Educational, Health, and Social Services	5,624
Arts, Entertainment, Recreation, Accommodation, and Food Services	1,695
Other Services	989

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Industry	Number of People
Public Administration	1,323

Source: City of Merced 2010

## 3.12.4 Environmental Impacts

This section analyzes the Program's potential to result in significant impacts to population and housing. When a potential impact was determined to be potentially significant, feasible mitigation measures (MMs) were identified to reduce or avoid that impact.

### 3.12.4.1 Impact Analysis

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**Impact POP-1 Potential to induce substantial unplanned population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure).**

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Impact POP-1 Analysis  
*Combined Program/Proposed Project Impacts*

#### Construction

Implementation of the Program would not displace existing housing or substantial numbers of people and would not require construction of replacement housing because Program facilities (i.e., pipelines), would mainly be located in existing and future roadways and existing facilities (i.e., the existing WWTRF property), and/or located on land that would accommodate new facilities (i.e., pump stations) so as to not displace existing populations. This would be aimed to serve planned population growth identified within the 2030 General Plan. The Program would not directly induce population growth by constructing new homes or businesses. Construction workers needed for implementation the Program would likely be served by the existing construction workforce within the City (See Table 3.12-2) and would not require construction workers from outside of the area to move into the City. Therefore, direct construction impacts would be less than significant.

#### Operation

A project would indirectly induce growth if it would remove an obstacle to unplanned growth and development. This could occur through removing a constraint or adding an additional public service. The Program is considered growth accommodating and not growth inducing through the construction and operation of new and expanded wastewater collection infrastructure to accommodate growth projections identified in the 2030 General Plan. Specifically, the 2030 General Plan Draft EIR analyzed a 3 percent growth rate for planning purposes, with additional directly induced growth from the addition of the University Community, Castle Farms Community Plan Areas, and other planning areas to the City's SUDP/SOI (City of Merced 2010). The analysis in the 2030 General Plan EIR concludes that future infrastructure would be required to accommodate this future growth, and because the 2030 General Plan includes policies and standards to regulate future growth that would be allowed under the 2030 General Plan in an orderly and planned manner, the 2030 General Plan would not result in a substantial unexpected population growth. Therefore,

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the 2017 Wastewater Collection System Master Plan (WCSMP), and thus the Program, were developed based on these growth projections of the 2030 General Plan to allow for long-term planned growth within the City. Therefore, the Program would not induce growth beyond the levels of growth already analyzed and approved in the 2030 General Plan, and there would be a less than significant impact to population growth.

**Level of Significance Prior to Mitigation:** Less than Significant

**Mitigation Required:** None Required

**Level of Significance After Mitigation:** Less than Significant

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## Impact POP-1 Findings

**Impact POP-1 Overall Level of Significance Prior to Mitigation:** Less than Significant

**Impact POP-1 Mitigation Required:** None Required

**Impact POP-1 Overall Level of Significance After Mitigation:** Less than Significant

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**Impact POP-2 Potential to displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere.**

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## Impact POP-2 Analysis *Combined Program/Proposed Project Impacts*

### Construction and Operation

Implementation of the Program would not displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing. No development that would require substantial displacement of people or housing is proposed as part of the Program. To the contrary, the 2017 WCSMP sets forth a plan to accommodate future housing needs within the Program Study Area. Additionally, projected growth identified in the 2030 General Plan is anticipated to occur within infill locations and undeveloped parcels which would accommodate people requiring housing and would not be affected by implementation of the Program. Program components would be constructed and operated occur within these areas to accommodate this projected growth. Implementation of the Program would have no impact on displacement of a substantial number of existing housing units or people.

**Level of Significance Prior to Mitigation:** No Impact

**Mitigation Required:** None Required

**Level of Significance After Mitigation:** No Impact

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## Impact POP-2 Findings

**Impact POP-2 Overall Level of Significance Prior to Mitigation:** No Impact

**Impact POP-2 Mitigation Required:** None Required



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**Impact POP-2 Overall Level of Significance After Mitigation: No Impact**

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## 3.12.5 Population and Housing Mitigation

No mitigation required.

## 3.12.6 Abbreviations

CEQA	California Environmental Quality Act
EIR	Environmental Impact Report
MMs	Mitigation Measures
NOP	Notice of Preparation
SUDP/SOI	Specific Urban Development Plan/Sphere of Influence
USCB	United States Census Bureau
WCSMP	Wastewater Collection System Master Plan
2030 General Plan	Merced Vision 2030 General Plan

## 3.12.7 References

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