



City Of Merced Wastewater Collection System Master Plan

DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT

CHAPTER 3.14 RECREATION
September 2020



Prepared for:
City of Merced
678 W 18th Street
Merced, CA 95340

Prepared by:
Stantec Consulting Services Inc.
3875 Atherton Road
Rocklin CA 95765-3716



**CITY OF MERCED WASTEWATER COLLECTION SYSTEM MASTER PLAN UPDATE DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL
IMPACT REPORT**

Environmental Impact Analysis — Recreation
September 2020

This page intentionally left blank.

CITY OF MERCED WASTEWATER COLLECTION SYSTEM MASTER PLAN UPDATE DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT

Environmental Impact Analysis — Recreation
September 2020

Table of Contents

3.14	RECREATION.....	3.14.1
3.14.1	Basis for Analysis	3.14.1
3.14.2	Regulatory Framework	3.14.1
3.14.3	Environmental Setting	3.14.2
3.14.4	Environmental Impacts	3.14.2
3.14.5	Recreation Mitigation.....	3.14.3
3.14.6	Abbreviations.....	3.14.3
3.14.7	References	3.14.4

**CITY OF MERCED WASTEWATER COLLECTION SYSTEM MASTER PLAN UPDATE DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL
IMPACT REPORT**

Environmental Impact Analysis — Recreation
September 2020

This page intentionally left blank.

CITY OF MERCED WASTEWATER COLLECTION SYSTEM MASTER PLAN UPDATE DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT

Environmental Impact Analysis — Recreation
September 2020

3.14 RECREATION

3.14.1 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):

- Increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated; or include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have adverse physical effect on the environment.

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 recreation that may result from implementation of the Program and identifies mitigation for significant impacts, where feasible.

3.14.2 Regulatory Framework

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

3.14.2.1 Federal

There are no Federal regulations that apply to the Program pertaining to recreation and recreational facilities.

3.14.2.2 State

California Government Code Section 65560(b)

California Government Code section 65560(b) defines "open space land" as any parcel or area of land or water that is unimproved and devoted to an open space use. State law requires that the local general plans include an Open Space element to promote the retention of open space for recreational purposes.

3.14.2.3 Local

The City of Merced Parks and Open Space Master Plan

The City of Merced (City) Parks and Open Space Master Plan is a long-range planning guide for parks and recreation services within the City (City of Merced 2004). This plan contains an assessment of park, open space, and facility needs within the City, as well as recommendations and policies related to acquisition and development and improvements to existing and future park sites. Through the planning efforts completed in this plan and the 2030 population projections of 116,800 people identified in the 2030 General Plan, the City has identified the need to expand the existing park system.

CITY OF MERCED WASTEWATER COLLECTION SYSTEM MASTER PLAN UPDATE DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT

Environmental Impact Analysis — Recreation
September 2020

Merced Vision 2030 General Plan

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

Goal Area OS-4: Open Space for Public Health and Safety

- **Policy OS-4.1.** Preserve open space areas which are necessary to maintaining public health and safety.

3.14.3 Environmental Setting

The Program Study Area includes approximately 238 acres of developed parks which are scattered around the City and surrounding areas. These developed areas include mini parks, neighborhood parks, community parks, school parks, special use areas, urban plazas, athletic parks, and linear parks. Historically, the City has used the standard of having five acres of park space for every thousand residents, with supplemental areas such as Lake Yosemite and school grounds which provide additional open space not included in the 5 to 1,000 ratio. In addition to the parks located within the Program Study Area, there is also an extensive bicycle system which covers approximately 13 miles and crosses through four creek corridors and numerous City roadways with plans for expansion. Other recreational facilities including sports fields, gymnasiums, pool space, and tennis courts are less used by the general public within the City (City of Merced 2010).

3.14.4 Environmental Impacts

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

3.14.4.1 Impact Analysis

Impact REC-1	Potential to increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated; or include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment.
---------------------	--

Impact REC-1 Analysis
Combined Program/Proposed Project Impacts

Construction and Operation

Implementation of the Program would allow the City to address existing system deficiencies such as replacement of aging infrastructure, provide new infrastructure to meet the growth projections identified in the 2030 General Plan (i.e. pipelines and pump stations), and expand the existing WWTRF to meet these increased flows. Because the 2017 Wastewater Collection System Master Plan (2017 WCSMP) would be designed to meet these designated growth projections, no indirect effect would occur from the increased sewer capacity that could induce growth beyond these

CITY OF MERCED WASTEWATER COLLECTION SYSTEM MASTER PLAN UPDATE DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT

Environmental Impact Analysis — Recreation
September 2020

projections. As identified within the 2030 General Plan, the City’s plan to accommodate growth is consistent with that that described in the 2017 WCSMP and the City would continue to implement its policies and ratios governing development and park facilities. Specifically, Section 3.13, Recreation, of the 2030 General Plan EIR concludes that with implementation of 2030 General Plan policies, implementation actions, and with adherence to the guidelines and standards in the City’s Park and Open Space Master Plan, as well as with payment of development fees, impacts related to service ratios for parks would be less than significant under reasonable build-out. Compliance with this stipulation in the 2030 General Plan would ensure that future development within the Program Study Area would not create a need for construction or expansion of recreational facilities beyond what was anticipated in the 2030 General Plan. Therefore, because the 2017 WCSMP used the growth projections in the 2030 General Plan as a basis for reasonable build-out assumptions, the Program itself would not result in additional growth beyond what was previously analyzed, and no additional recreation facilities would be required. Additionally, the construction and operation of the Program would not directly or indirectly increase use of or require expansion recreational facilities due to the underground and infrastructure related nature of wastewater systems. Therefore, substantial deterioration of existing parks or other recreational facilities would not occur nor would the expansion or new construction of parks be required as result of the Program activities.

Level of Significance Prior to Mitigation: No Impact

Mitigation Required: None Required

Level of Significance After Mitigation: No Impact

Impact REC-1 Findings

Impact REC-1 Overall Level of Significance Prior to Mitigation: No Impact

Impact REC-1 Mitigation Required: None Required

Impact REC-1 Overall Level of Significance After Mitigation: No Impact

3.14.5 Recreation Mitigation

No mitigation required.

3.14.6 Abbreviations

CEQA	California Environmental Quality Act
City	City of Merced
EIR	Environmental impact Report
MMs	Mitigation Measures
NOP	Notice of Preparation
WCSMP	Wastewater Collection System Master Plan
2030 General Plan	Merced Vision 2030 General Plan

CITY OF MERCED WASTEWATER COLLECTION SYSTEM MASTER PLAN UPDATE DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT

Environmental Impact Analysis — Recreation
September 2020

3.14.7 References

California State Parks. 2005. <https://www.parks.ca.gov/pages/795/files/recpolicy.pdf>. Accessed September 25, 2017.

City of Merced. 2010. Merced Vision 2030 General Plan Draft Program Environmental Impact Report. <https://www.cityofmerced.org/civicax/filebank/blobdload.aspx?BlobID=9183>. Accessed June 2018.

_____. 2004. Parks and Open Space Master Plan. <https://www.cityofmerced.org/civicax/filebank/blobdload.aspx?BlobID=19400>. Accessed October 2018.

_____. 2012. Merced Vision 2030 General Plan. <https://www.cityofmerced.org/departments/development-services/planning-division/merced-vision-2030-general-plan#:~:text=The%20Merced%20Vision%202030%20General%20Plan%20was%20adopted%20on%20January,which%20can%20be%20downloaded%20below>. Accessed June 2018.