

2 Project Description

The project analyzed in this EIR is the proposed Visalia General Plan and the draft Climate Action Plan (collectively referred to as the “proposed Plan,” “proposed General Plan,” or “proposed Visalia General Plan”). Under California Government Code Section 65300 et. seq., cities are required to prepare a general plan that establishes policies and standards for future development, housing affordability, and resource protection for the entire planning area. By law, a general plan must be an integrated, internally consistent statement of City policies. Section 65302 requires that a general plan include the following seven elements: Land Use, Circulation, Housing, Conservation, Open Space, Noise, and Safety. Additional elements may be included in the general plan as well, at the discretion of the City. Optional elements in the proposed Visalia General Plan include Air Quality & Greenhouse Gases; Historic Preservation; and Parks, Schools, Community Facilities and Utilities. The current Housing Element was adopted in March 2010 as a separate volume. All elements have equal weight, and no one element supersedes another. Visalia is a charter city, which means it has been incorporated under its own charter rather than the general laws of California. Therefore, Visalia may amend the general plan as often as it wishes, unlike general law cities, which are limited to four amendments per year.

This chapter introduces the purpose and objectives of the proposed Visalia General Plan and summarizes specific information to describe the proposed Plan and complete the EIR analysis. This includes a description of the existing regional and local project setting, an outline of the projected population and employment growth rates and development patterns through the planning horizon year, the proposed land use diagram, key data tables, and key policy direction. This project description provides the basis for the environmental analysis in Chapter 3.

2.1 Regional Location and Planning Boundaries

REGIONAL LOCATION

The City of Visalia, located in the Central 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. The City of Hanford, in Kings County, lies 12 miles to the west. Most of the remaining land uses surrounding the city are agricultural in nature. With a 2010 population of 124,440, 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 along 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), Tulare County Area Transit (TCAT), and Kings County Area Public Transit Agency (KCAPTA). 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. 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. The regional setting is depicted in **Figure 2.1-1**.

PLANNING AREA

The Planning Area is the geographic area for which the General Plan establishes policies about future urban growth, long-term agricultural activity, and natural resource conservation. The boundary of the Planning Area was determined by the GPURC in response to State law requiring each city to include in its General Plan all territory within the boundaries of the incorporated area as well as "any land outside its boundaries which in the planning agency's judgment bears relation to its planning" (California Government Code Section 65300).

The Planning Area comprises all land within the city limits as well as neighboring unincorporated land, including the community of Goshen (**Figure 2.1-2**). It encompasses approximately 104 square miles or 66,640 acres. It is roughly bounded by Avenue 328 to the north; Road 158 and Mariposa Avenue to the east; Avenue 264 and Avenue 260 to the south; and Road 64 and Road 52 to the west.

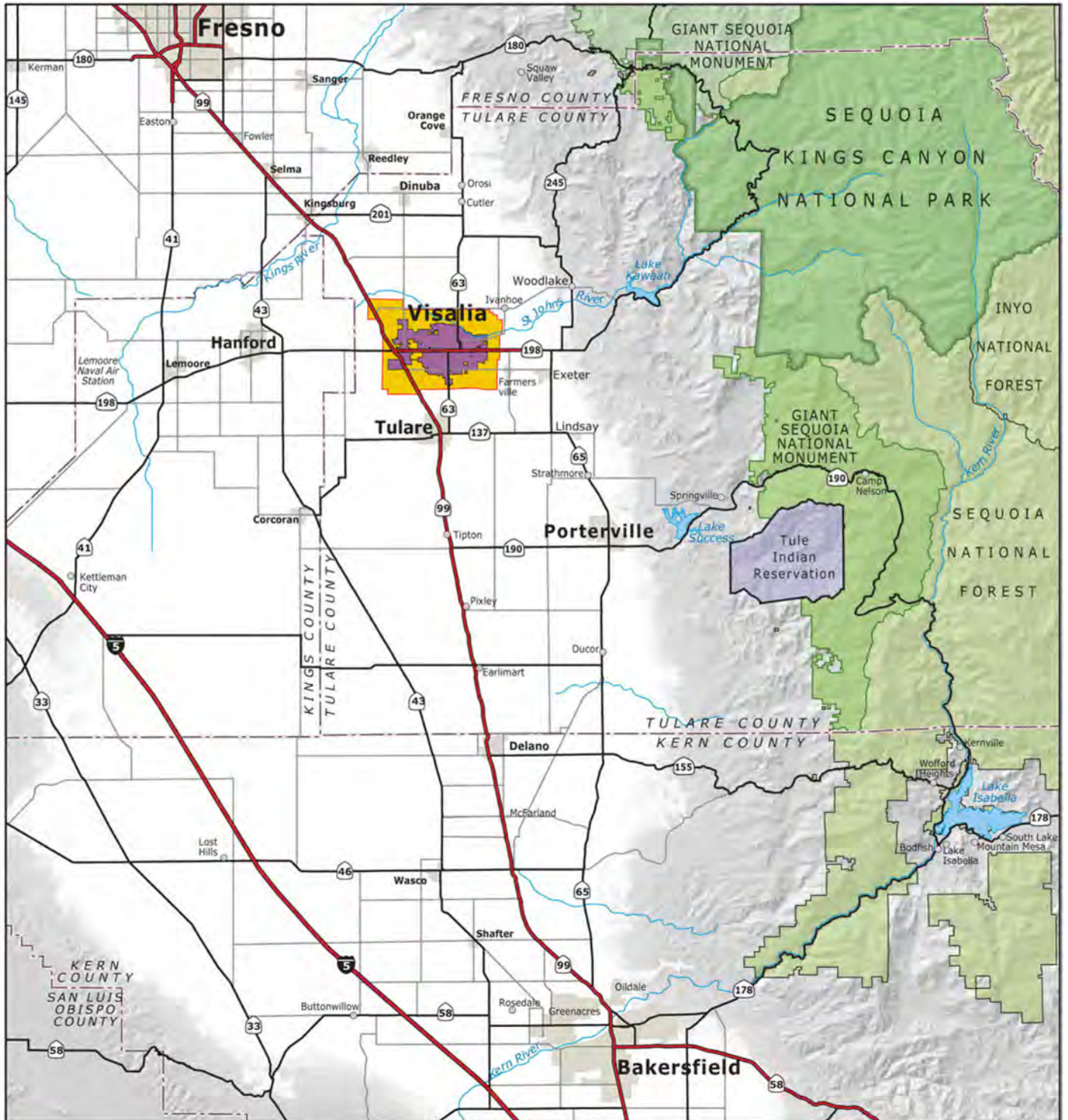
City Limits

The City of Visalia's existing city limits encompasses approximately 23,580 acres (approximately 36 square miles) of incorporated land or 35 percent of the Planning Area (**Figure 2.1-2**). The city limits include residential, commercial and industrial developments as well as public facilities, including parks and schools, and contains a population of approximately 124,440 as of 2010.

Urban Development Boundaries and Urban Growth Boundary

The General Plan establishes a three-tier growth boundary system to define stages of future development. The Tier I Urban Development Boundary (UDB) includes slightly over half of the potentially developable land under the Plan, and accommodates a population of approximately 160,000. Tier I includes the City limits, County islands (excepting the West 198 scenic corridor), and the following additional areas currently outside of City jurisdiction: R.J. Hill property, Sierra Village property, Kaweah Delta Hospital property (southwest corner of Lovers Lane and Caldwell Avenue), future East Visalia City Park, all regional commercial designated land along Mooney, all currently-designated industrial land within the current 129,000 UDB, 320 acres of industrial-designated land on north side of Riggins Avenue between Kelsey Street and Shirk Road.

Figure 2.1-1:
Regional Setting



- Visalia City Limits
- Planning Area
- National Park
- National Monument
- Tule Indian Reservation
- County



Tier II UDB is the original Tier I recommended by the General Plan Update Review Committee (GPURC). Tier II is intended to accommodate roughly ten years' worth of growth, and support an estimated population of approximately 178,000. With buildout to the UDB, the City would grow to 27,936 acres. The criterion for land in Tier II to become available for annexation and development is that such activity shall only occur if it does not result in excess of a 10-year supply of undeveloped residential land within the new Tier I. This is intended to be consistent with LAFCO policies discouraging residential annexations exceeding a 10-year housing inventory. Thus, Tier II is distinguished from the GPURC-recommended Tier I in that it is not based on projected capacity and need, but rather on a requirement to be able to demonstrate that less than a ten year inventory of residential land exists.

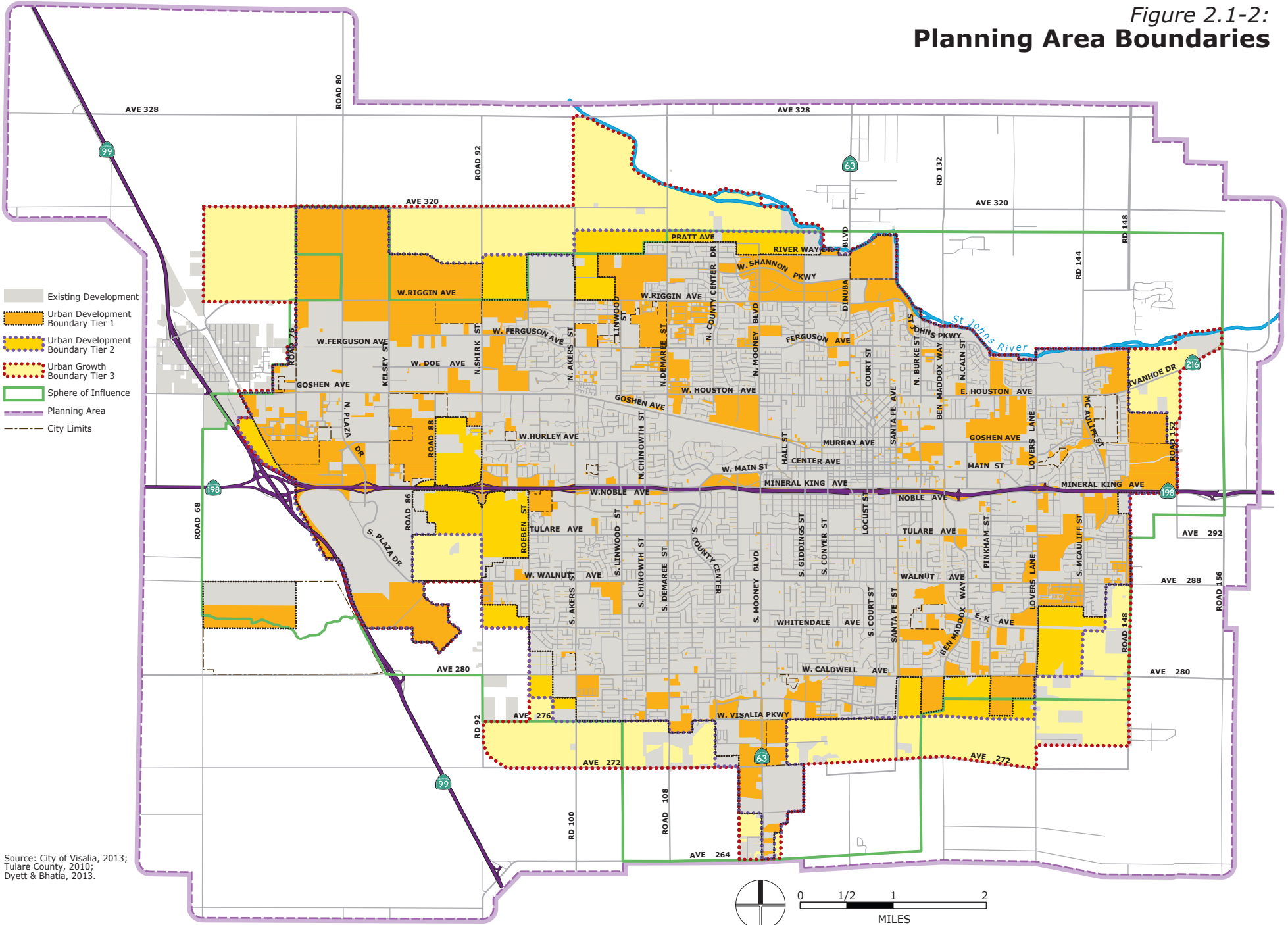
Tier III represents the overall Urban Growth Boundary, and comprises full buildout of the General Plan at 32,648 acres and could support a target buildout population of 210,000, with growth occurring in a balanced way in all quadrants. The overall urban footprint would cover 49 percent of the Planning Area, meaning that half of the Planning Area is expected to remain primarily agricultural through the planning period. The expansion criteria for land in Tier III is that land would only become available for development when building permits have been issued in Tier I and Tier II at the following levels:

- Residential: after permits for 12,800 housing units have been issued, resulting in a target City population in Tier I of 178,000;
- Commercial: after permits for 960,000 square feet of commercial space have been issued; and
- Industrial: after permits for 2,800,000 square feet of industrial space have been issued.

Sphere of Influence

Contained within the Planning Area is Visalia's Sphere of Influence (SOI). The SOI is a boundary that encompasses lands that are expected to ultimately be annexed by the City. Visalia's SOI is determined by the Tulare County Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO), which is an entity empowered to review and approve proposed boundary changes and annexations by incorporated municipalities. Portions of the Planning Area beyond the SOI may or may not be annexed to Visalia, but are still considered to be related to and influenced by the City's long-range planning efforts. The city's SOI boundary incorporates a total of 34,678 acres (approximately 54 square miles) or 52 percent of the total land located in the Planning Area.

Figure 2.1-2:
Planning Area Boundaries



Source: City of Visalia, 2013;
 Tulare County, 2010;
 Dyett & Bhatia, 2013.

2.2 Purpose and Objectives of the General Plan

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines Section 15124(b) requires a description of the project purpose and objectives.

PLAN PURPOSE

The Visalia General Plan is a document required under State law to address issues related to physical development and conservation of resources. Specifically, the General Plan has the following key purposes:

- Establish a long-range vision that reflects the aspirations of the community and outlines steps to achieve this vision;
- Establish long-range development policies that will guide the Community Development Department, Public Works Department, Finance Department, Police Department, Fire Department, Parks Department and City Council decision-making;
- Provide a basis for judging whether specific development proposals and public projects are in harmony with plan policies;
- Reflect Visalia's current planning and economic development efforts;
- Plan in a manner that improves the quality of life for the whole community and meets future land needs based on the projected population and job growth;
- Allow City departments, other public agencies, and private developers to design projects that will preserve and enhance community character and environmental resources, promote sustainability, and minimize hazards; and
- Provide the basis for establishing detailed plans and implementation programs, such as the zoning and subdivision regulations, specific and master plans, and the Capital Improvement Program.

The General Plan Update was initiated to take a comprehensive look at where the City is, where it would like to be in the future and to create a vision of what Visalia should be like in 2030. Some areas of the City may change very little in this timeframe, and others may change dramatically. The General Plan focuses on current community needs and neighborhood character, economic development opportunities and challenges, how to encourage mixed use and infill development and appropriate development outside the current City limits. Lastly, it responds to residents' preferences about where different land uses such as housing, shopping, industry, parks and recreation, and public facilities should be located and how City resources should be used to achieve the Plan's goals.

Key elements of the General Plan include strengthening of existing activity centers and commercial corridors in the city, as well as expansion of the city's industrial capacity, retail base, and new residential neighborhoods. Specific concepts include invigorating Downtown and East Downtown; establishing new, inclusive neighborhoods, each with an activity node, community facilities, and a range of housing types; expanding industrial land north of Riggan Avenue; and providing an enhanced open space network through conservation of natural waterways, improvements to existing parks, and provision of new parks throughout the City.

PLAN OBJECTIVES

The maps and policies in the General Plan are structured around the following key initiatives. These themes were identified and considered by the GPURC, based on input by the public and from key stakeholders:

1. **Balanced Growth.** Emphasize concentric development and infill opportunities to strengthen Downtown, revitalize existing commercial centers and corridors, and fill in gaps in the city fabric, balanced by moderate outward expansion and protection of agricultural lands.
2. **High Quality of Life.** Build on Visalia’s small-town feel by ensuring that each neighborhood is a complete, walkable area with a full range of housing types, a discernible center, and a unique sense of place. At a citywide scale, the sense of place is preserved by keeping Downtown vital and accentuating the city’s natural creek system.
3. **Enhanced Connectivity.** Improve connectivity at the neighborhood, city, and regional scale, by improving key corridors, completing missing links in the roadway network, and ensuring that new neighborhoods accommodate the City’s street grid. Create “complete streets” amenable to walking, biking, and transit use, and anticipate robust transit service within the City and beyond.
4. **Vibrant Community.** Support Visalia’s economic vitality, including higher-intensity development Downtown, the creation of a new urban district in East Downtown, the revitalization of the Mooney corridor, the facilitation of expanded medical and educational facilities, and attractive locations for expanding business.
5. **Forward-looking Retail Strategy.** Provide for new neighborhood commercial uses and regional retail development to be staged over time in order to support the City’s existing retail base. This may allow for long-term development in the Highway 99 corridor for tourist-/visitor-oriented shops or specialty retailing that can not be accommodated on Mooney Boulevard or is justified because infill sites are largely built out.

Identity as a Free-Standing City. Work with the County and the community to maintain physical separation between Visalia and neighboring communities.

CLIMATE ACTION PLAN

The General Plan process also includes development of a draft Climate Action Plan (CAP), which was created to develop and enhance actions designed to reduce Visalia’s greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. The CAP develops a comprehensive municipal and community strategy for addressing GHG emission reduction goals. The CAP includes:

- A community-wide and government operations inventory for 2005, the selected baseline year;
- Forecasts of business-as-usual emissions through General Plan buildout (2030);
- 2020 and 2030 community-wide targets, in accordance with the goals set in Assembly Bill 32, the California Air Resources Board 2008 Scoping Plan, and Executive Order S-3-05;

- Quantification of existing and proposed GHG mitigation strategies, to reach 2020 and 2030 GHG targets; and
- GHG mitigation strategies for energy, transportation, and waste and resource conservation

The CAP has been prepared concurrently with the proposed General Plan, and includes objectives and specific policies from the proposed General Plan to address long-term emissions reduction efforts by the City. The timeframe for the CAP extends from the date of adoption through 2030. The proposed General Plan and the CAP are anticipated to be adopted concurrently, and both are evaluated in this EIR.

2.3 The Proposed General Plan Land Use Diagram and Land Use Classifications

The proposed General Plan includes goals and policies that give direction to land use, transportation, conservation, and other issue areas that affect city growth and development over the next 20 years. These goals and policies, however, are only meaningful when informed by a map that shows the locations of different land uses and a land use framework that describes allowable uses and ranges of intensity/density.

LAND USE FRAMEWORK

The land use framework embodies the community's vision of how Visalia will look in 2030. The plan depicts a workable and attractive land development pattern in Visalia, responding to development opportunities, environmental resources and constraints, the needs and desires of City residents, and historic planning policies that have served the City well. The defining elements of the Plan are described below.

Vibrant New Neighborhoods and an Enhanced Living Environment Within the City. The plan focuses on strengthening existing neighborhoods and activity centers with infill and higher-intensity development, and establishing a neighborhood-oriented growth pattern to maintain the City's strong community identity.

Natural and Urban Corridors. The St. Johns River and other creeks play an important role in defining the city's urbanized edge and in providing organizational and recreational features for new and infill development. Additionally, the natural corridors provide links between neighborhoods, parks, and activity centers in the city. Likewise, transportation corridors provide an enhanced network with improved multimodal mobility; accessibility to transit, key destinations, and community facilities; and streetscape improvements along major corridors and gateways into the city.

Density and Growth Rate Following Current Trends. The Plan assumes that current development trends are largely maintained, with development densities and intensities similar to current and proposed development in the city. Its buildout population of approximately 210,000 corre-

sponds to an average annual growth rate of 2.6 percent, with an average residential density going forward of 5.3 units per gross acre. Densities and intensities of each land use category are described below.

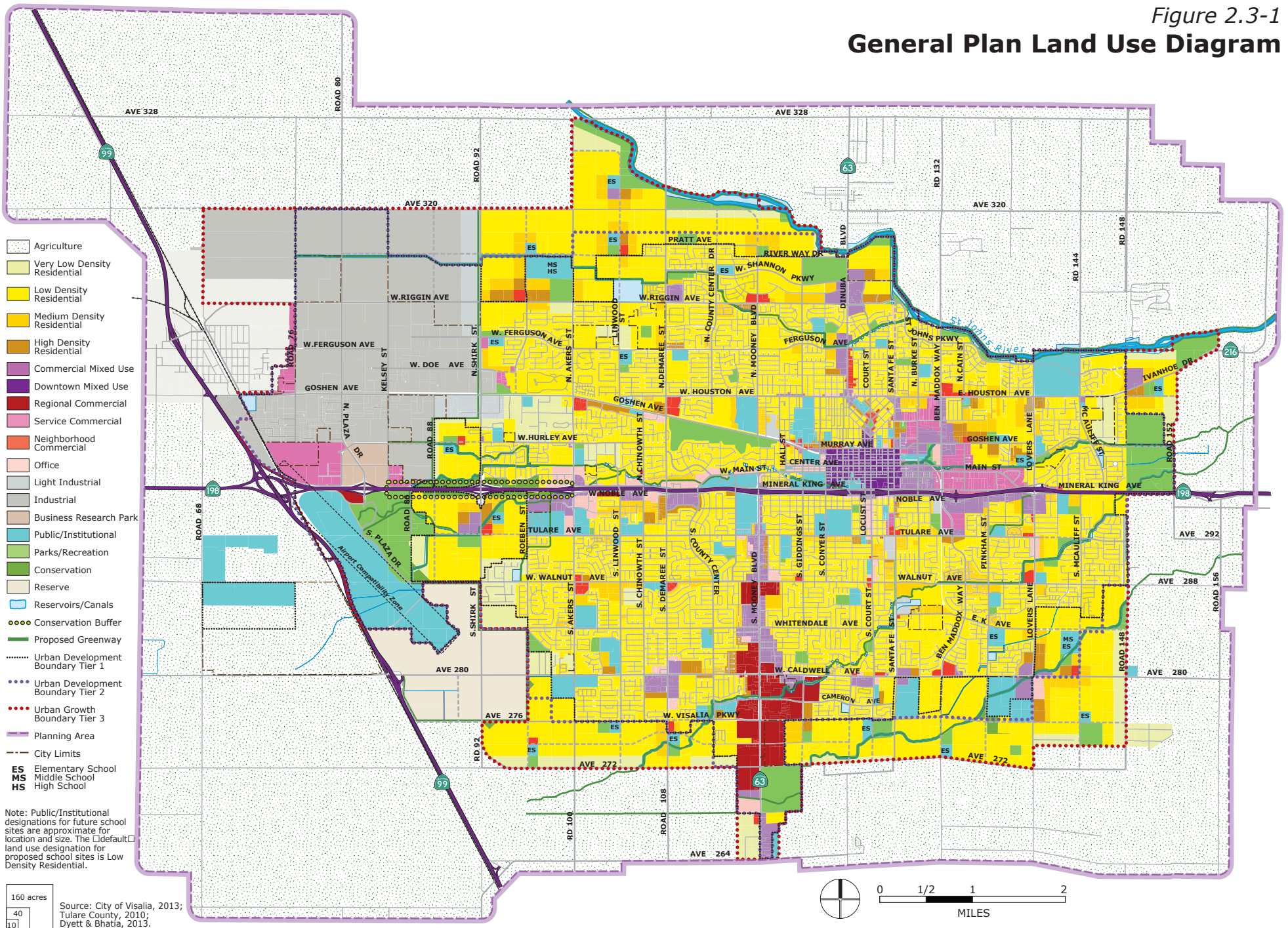
Compact Urban Footprint. At 50 square miles, the overall urban footprint represents a focus on infill and continued neighborhood-oriented development, with new growth extending in areas to the northeast, northwest, west, southwest and southeast. The St. Johns River acts as the city's northern boundary, with no new development located to the north of the river. This urban footprint is 3.5 square miles smaller than the footprint adopted under the 1991 General Plan Land Use Element Update, which accommodated buildout population of 165,000 in the year 2020. Higher density and intensity development is focused within the heart of the city in Downtown and in urban infill areas, while lower density is located at the fringe of the city, creating a transition between developed and agricultural and rural areas.

THE LAND USE DIAGRAM

The General Plan Land Use Diagram (**Figure 2.3-1**) depicts the desired ultimate land use pattern for the City of Visalia by 2030. The diagram is a graphic representation of land use classifications and locations, and it should be used in conjunction with policies established in the Plan—in this and other elements. The proposed general locations, distribution, and extent of land uses show the vision of development at buildout of this planning period.

The diagram also includes a legend that shows land use categories whose densities and allowable uses are specified in the following section, Land Use Classification.

Figure 2.3-1
General Plan Land Use Diagram



LAND USE CLASSIFICATIONS

The land use designations shown in the General Plan Land Use Diagram provide the basis for new development. They are generally broad in scope, in order to provide flexibility while creating a vibrant and varied urban environment. The classifications are organized into five categories: Residential, Mixed Use, Commercial/Office, Industrial, and Public. They provide a range for housing density and building intensity for each type of designated land use. For residential uses, the density/intensity standards are expressed as the number of housing units per gross acre. For non-residential uses, a measure known as Floor Area Ratio (FAR) is specified. In design terms, FAR is defined as the permitted ratio of gross floor area to site area. The land use classifications are to be used and interpreted in conjunction with the General Plan Land Use Diagram. The land use classifications are described in detail below.

Residential

Very Low Density Residential. This designation is intended to provide for single family detached housing on large lots. Residential densities are typical of rural residential environments. The typical residential density for this designation ranges from 0.1 to two housing units per gross acre. Buildout is assumed at two units per gross acre.

Low Density Residential. This designation is intended to provide for single family detached housing. Residential densities are typical of single-family subdivisions. The typical residential density for this designation ranges from two to 10 housing units per gross acre. Buildout is assumed at four units per gross acre.

Medium Density Residential. This designation can accommodate a mix of housing types, from small-lot starter homes, zero-lot-line developments, and duplexes, to townhouses and garden apartments. Pedestrian-oriented design and clustering can support higher density. The typical residential density for this designation ranges from 10 to 15 housing units per gross acre. Buildout is assumed at 10 units per gross acre.

High Density Residential. This designation is intended to accommodate attached homes, two- to four-plexes, and apartment buildings. High density residential development is typically found at neighborhood centers and along corridors. The typical residential density for this designation ranges from 15 to 35 housing units per gross acre. Buildout is assumed at 16.5 units per gross acre.

Mixed Use

Downtown Mixed Use. This new designation characterizes development in the Downtown Core and replaces the existing Central Business District designation in the General Plan. It permits the highest density and intensity of development in the city in order to keep Downtown a vibrant, walkable environment. Vertical mixed use is strongly encouraged. Commercial, personal service, office, and residential uses are allowed. The typical residential density for this designation ranges from 20 to 35 housing units per gross acre. Buildout is assumed at 20 units per gross acre for residential uses and 0.5 FAR for non-residential uses. The maximum allowable combined FAR is 5.0.

Commercial Mixed Use. This new designation allows for either horizontal or vertical mixed use development, and permits commercial, service, office, and residential uses. Any combination of these uses, including a single use, is permitted. This designation is found both at key activity nodes and along corridors, including locations currently designated Shopping/Office Commercial or Community Center. Residential density for this designation is permitted at up to 35 housing units per gross acre; buildout is assumed at 12.5 units per gross acre for residential uses. Allowable FAR ranges from 0.4 to 1.0, with buildout assumed at 0.35. The maximum allowable combined FAR for all uses is 2.0.

Commercial and Office

Neighborhood Commercial. This designation builds on the existing Neighborhood Center and Convenience Center designations in the General Plan, by also permitting residential uses. It provides for small-scale commercial development that primarily serves local neighborhoods such as convenience shopping and small offices. Horizontal or vertical residential mixed use is also permitted. Buildout assumed at 0.25 FAR; actual intensity standards will be set by two story height limits and coverage standards in the zoning ordinance. Residential uses ranging from 10 to 15 housing units per gross acre are also allowed, but are not assumed in the buildout.

Service Commercial. This designation builds on the existing General Plan's Service Commercial designation. It is intended for a range of retail and service uses that meet local and regional demand, such as auto sales and repair, storage facilities, equipment rental, wholesale businesses, and retail not typically located in shopping centers. Ancillary office spaces that support commercial development are also allowed. Maximum FAR for this designation is 0.8; buildout is assumed at 0.3.

Regional Commercial. This designation is similar to the existing Regional Commercial use in the General Plan, and also incorporates areas previously designated Highway Commercial. It is intended to accommodate retail establishments that serve residents and businesses of the region at large. Shopping malls, large format, or "big-box" retail are allowed, as are supporting uses such as gas stations and hotels. Maximum FAR for this designation is 0.6; buildout is assumed at 0.25.

Office. This designation is intended for office complex development, including medical offices. General office uses also include administrative, financial, business, and professional operations. Ancillary supporting uses, such as restaurants, copy shops, and convenience retail, are also permitted. Maximum FAR for this designation is 1.0; buildout is assumed at 0.35.

Industrial

Business Research Park. This designation builds on the existing General Plan's Business Research Park category and emphasizes research and development uses. Land with this designation is intended for research and development enterprises, educational and office (limited customer access) uses. Maximum FAR for this designation is 0.5; buildout is assumed at 0.1.¹

¹ FAR is assumed at 0.1 for the purposes of buildout calculations. Actual buildout could be assumed to be higher, ranging from 0.2 to 0.3 FAR.

Light Industrial. Land with this designation is intended for light manufacturing, warehousing, storage, distribution, research and development enterprises, and secondary office (limited customer access) uses. Maximum FAR for this designation is 0.5; buildout is assumed at 0.2.

Industrial. This designation allows primary manufacturing, processing, refining, and similar activities including those with outdoor facilities. It also accommodates warehousing and distribution with supporting commercial services and office space. Retail is not permitted. Maximum FAR for this designation is 0.6; buildout is assumed at 0.15.

Public

Public/Institutional. The public/institutional classification applies to lands owned by public entities, including City Hall and other City buildings, County buildings, schools, the Municipal Airport, and hospitals. It also includes public facilities such as fire and police stations, recycling centers, and sewage treatment. There is no maximum FAR specified for this land use designation; buildout is assumed at an FAR of 0.3.

Parks and Open Space. The park designation applies to both public and private recreational sites and facilities, including neighborhood, community, and regional parks; recreation centers; golf courses; and other open space areas.

Conservation. The conservation designation applies to open space areas that are not intended to be improved with park and recreation facilities, though public access is permitted. The conservation designation typically applies to creek buffers, areas along the St. Johns River, and in the West Highway 198 Corridor setback area.

Urban Reserve. An “urban reserve” beyond the proposed 2030 Urban Growth Boundary is only included in this General Plan for land specifically near the south end of the Visalia Airport. Land north of the St. Johns River is to remain in open space over the planning period, consistent with the principle of promoting physical separation between Visalia and neighboring communities. A policy for planning for a potential future growth area (post-2030) north of the St. Johns River is included in this Plan; however, as noted above, this area would remain undeveloped during the 20-year planning period under the proposed General Plan.

Total acreage for each land use classification is presented in **Table 2.3-1**. The land use classifications are meant to be general enough to give the City flexibility in implementing policy, but clear enough to provide sufficient direction to carry out the proposed Plan. The City’s Zoning Ordinance, which will be updated to become consistent with the General Plan once the Plan is adopted, will contain more detailed provisions and standards. More than one zoning district may be developed within a single General Plan land use classification.

Table 2.3-1: Acreage by Land Use Classification

<i>Land Use</i>	<i>Development Projects</i>	<i>Land Use Opportunity Sites¹</i>	<i>Total GP Buildout Acres</i>	<i>Percent of Total</i>
Very Low Density Residential	-	510	510	4%
Low Density Residential	2,353	3,387	5,740	47%
Medium Density Residential	-	618	618	5%
High Density Residential	52	235	287	2%
Residential Subtotal	2,405	4,750	7,154	59%
Commercial Mixed Use	12	324	336	3%
Downtown Mixed Use	0	21	21	0%
Regional Commercial	24	262	286	2%
Service Commercial	0	214	214	2%
Neighborhood Commercial Office	1	82	83	1%
	18	46	64	1%
Commercial Subtotal	55	949	1,004	8%
Business Park	0	85	85	1%
Light Industrial	0	132	132	1%
Industrial	27	1,771	1,799	15%
Industrial Subtotal	27	1,989	2,016	17%
Public/Institutional	39	468	508	4%
Parks/Recreation	0	740	740	6%
Public Subtotal	39	1,208	1,248	10%
Subtotal	2,526	8,896	11,422	93%
Urban Reserve	0	795	795	7%
Total	2,526	9,691	12,217	100%

1. Opportunity Sites refer to parcels that have the highest potential for development or redevelopment over the planning period. These are typically vacant or substantially underutilized sites, or in some cases, farmland.

Source: City of Visalia, 2012; Dyett & Bhatia, 2013.

2.4 Building Under the Proposed General Plan

Full development under the proposed General Plan is referred to as “buildout.” Although the proposed General Plan horizon is the year 2030, the Plan is not intended to specify or anticipate when buildout will actually occur; nor does the designation of a site for a certain use necessarily mean the site will be used in such a way within the next 20 years. This section describes the implications of the proposed General Plan buildout in terms of future housing units, population, and jobs.

SUMMARY OF DENSITY AND INTENSITY

The residential density and non-residential intensity (FAR) standards used in the proposed General Plan are shown in Table 2.4-1.

Table 2.4-1: Density and Intensity Standards by Land Use Classification

Land Use Classification	Density (DU / gross acre)	Intensity	
		Minimum FAR	Maximum FAR ²
Residential			
Very Low Density Residential	0.1 to 2	-	-
Low Density Residential	2 to 10	-	-
Medium Density Residential	10 to 15	-	-
High Density Residential	15 to 35	-	-
Mixed Use¹			
Neighborhood Commercial ³	10 to 15	NA	NA
Commercial Mixed Use	Up to 35	0.4	2
Downtown Mixed Use	Minimum 20	1.0, including 0.25 Retail	5
Commercial and Office			
Service Commercial	-	-	0.6
Regional Commercial	-	-	0.6
Office	-	-	1.0
Industrial			
Business Research Park	-	-	0.5
Light Industrial	-	-	0.5
Industrial	-	-	0.6

1. Mixed Use designations do not require residential use, but when residential uses are provided, minimum densities apply. Minimum ground floor retail FAR of 0.25 is required for sites designated Downtown Mixed Use.

2. Maximum FAR refers to non-residential and residential floor area combined.

3. Intensity limits are to be set by two story height limits and coverage standards in the zoning ordinance.

Source: Dyett & Bhatia, 2013

POPULATION GROWTH AND HOUSING

Buildout Population

Based on past development trends, regional growth forecasts, and the Plan’s assumptions for future growth², the Visalia Planning Area will accommodate approximately 210,000 residents at buildout, an increase of about 69 percent over the current population of 124,440 according to the 2010 US Census. Over a 20 year period, this represents an annual growth rate of 2.6 percent. The population increase will likely be driven by regional economic growth and migration. **Table 2.4-2** summarizes buildout for the proposed General Plan by population, housing units, households, students, schools, park acreage, and jobs. **Table 2.4-2** shows the breakdown of buildout acreage in the Planning Area by land use category.

Table 2.4-2: General Plan Buildout

	<i>Existing (2010)</i>	<i>Pipeline Projects (2010)</i>	<i>Net New Development (2030)</i>	<i>Total Buildout (2030)</i>
Population	124,440	17,500	68,060	210,000
Housing Units	43,900	6,500	25,700	76,100
Households	41,500	6,100	24,300	71,900
Students	26,800	3,790	13,930	44,520
Schools Provided/ Needed	32	4	20	56
Parks (acres)	650	4	736	1,390
Park Ratio ¹	5.1	n/a	10.8	6.6
Jobs	65,900	2,220	25,610	93,730

1. Parks ratio includes some future park land that is intended to be created outside of the development process.

Source: US Census Bureau; California Department of Finance; Dyett & Bhatia, 2012.

Residential Development and Density “Moving Forward”

As shown in **Table 2.4-2**, approximately 43,900 housing units (41,500 households) currently exist in the Visalia Planning Area. The proposed General Plan will accommodate a further 25,700 housing units (24,300 households) with development of planned (“pipeline”) projects and future new development. Most of the new residential developments are expected to be low density residential development, with densities similar to current and proposed development in Visalia. Approximately one-third of new development is expected to take place in more compact areas within walking distance of schools and neighborhood centers, in a mix of single- and multi-family housing formats. A small amount of new development would be in mixed-use centers. In total, buildout of the proposed General Plan will result in approximately 76,100 housing units (71,900 households) in Visalia. The estimated mix of housing units by land use type is presented in **Table 2.4-3**.

² For details about assumptions made and methodology, please refer to the proposed General Plan.

Table 2.4-3 Additional Housing Units by Land Use Type

<i>Land Use Classification</i>	<i>Existing Units¹</i>	<i>Additional Units²</i>	<i>Total Units</i>	<i>Percent of Total Units</i>
Very Low Density Residential	500	1,000	1,500	2%
Low Density Residential	36,600	19,050	55,600	73%
Medium Density Residential	3,000	6,200	9,200	12%
High Density Residential	1,000	4,850	5,800	8%
Downtown Mixed Use ³	200	100	300	0%
Commercial Mixed Use ³	100	1,000	1,100	1%
Other	2,500	-	2,500	3%
Total	43,900	32,200	76,100	100%

1 Existing units are estimated using current General Plan and zoning designations.

2 New units include both units in projects approved or in the development “pipeline,” and projected development under the General Plan based on density assumptions described in Section 2.3, and assumption that 80% of opportunity sites will be developed.

3 Residential development is assumed to occur on 25% of gross acreage of mixed-use designations.

Source: Dyett & Bhatia, 2012; Tulare County Assessor's Office, 2010; City of Visalia, 2010.

JOBS

As shown in **Table 2.4-2**, Visalia will accommodate approximately 93,730 jobs at buildout, an increase of approximately 42 percent from the current number of jobs. The number of net new jobs supported by the proposed General Plan is about 25,610 (in addition to another 2,200 jobs in proposed development projects). Over a 20 year period, this represents an average annual growth rate of about 1.8 percent.

The mix of new jobs by land use type during the planning period is shown in **Table 2.4-4**. At buildout, four out of five new jobs in Visalia are expected to be created in five land use categories: Industrial (24 percent), Commercial Mixed Use (18 percent), Regional Commercial (13 percent), Service Commercial (13 percent), and Public/Institutional (10 percent).

Table 2.4-4 Additional Jobs by Land Use Type

<i>Land Use Category</i>	<i>Square Feet¹</i>	<i>Jobs²</i>	<i>Percent of Total</i>
Commercial Mixed Use	2,777,370	5,050	18%
Downtown Mixed Use	255,810	640	2%
Regional Commercial	2,142,490	4,290	15%
Service Commercial	2,097,330	3,500	13%
Neighborhood Commercial	667,440	1,070	4%
Office	528,510	1,510	5%
Business Research Park	278,670	190	1%
Light Industrial	865,650	870	3%
Industrial	8,681,100	8,680	31%
Public/Institutional	4,590,670	2,120	8%
Total	22,751,550	27,900	100%

1. New non-residential square feet includes both approved pipeline projects and projected development under the General Plan based on intensity assumptions described in Section 2.3, assumption that 80% of opportunity sites will be developed, and assumed 75% gross to net ratio.

2. New jobs are estimated based on jobs ratios detailed in the proposed General Plan. Totals may not exactly sum due to rounding.

Source: Dyett & Bhatia, 2013.

JOBS/EMPLOYMENT BALANCE

Jobs/employment balance is defined as the ratio of the number of jobs to the number of employed residents in a given area. Visalia’s jobs to employed residents ratio would be 1:1 if the number of local jobs in the City equaled the number of employed residents. In theory, a perfect 1.1 ratio could result in no one commuting in or out of the City to find work. In reality, this balance is more of a planning technique than a regulatory tool, and successful plan implementation must ultimately recognize the myriad considerations that influence where people choose to live and work.

As shown in **Table 2.4-5**, the current jobs to employed residents ratio in Visalia is estimated to be 1.25, which means the City is a regional jobs center, supplying jobs to both local residents and workers from outside the City. The proposed General Plan is projected to add jobs at a slightly slower rate than it adds new residents. With the labor force participation rate assumed to stay the same, the jobs/employment ratio may be expected to fall slightly to 1.12 at buildout, thereby bringing the City closer to a balance.

Table 2.4-5 Jobs per Employed Residents Ratios

	<i>Existing</i>	<i>Buildout</i>
Jobs in Visalia	65,900	93,730
Employed Residents ¹	52,700	84,000
Ratio	1.25	1.12

1. The current ratio of employed residents to total population is assumed to remain constant, at approximately 40%.

Sources: Tulare County Association of Governments, 2010; Economic & Planning Systems, 2010; California Employment Development Department Labor Market Information, 2012; Dyett & Bhatia 2012.

2.5 Key Plan Objectives

Important objectives for each of the proposed Visalia General Plan elements are presented in this section. Implementation policies are included in the Plan itself. All policies are incorporated by reference into this project description and analyzed in this EIR. Asterisks (*) denote new initiatives that were not in the current General Plan. Policies also serve to mitigate environmental impacts. Specific General Plan policies are identified in impact discussions in Chapter 3, as they are relevant to reduce impacts.

LAND USE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Land use and economic development initiatives that help the city promote job growth and attract and retain new businesses, ensure orderly growth, and establish a vision for the City’s future land use pattern and neighborhood form include:

Economic Development

- Maintain Visalia’s role as the regional commercial and industrial center for Tulare, Kings and southern Fresno counties.
- Promote diversity in Visalia’s economic base to increase the stability of jobs and fiscal revenues.
- Promote tourism and conference activities as part of Visalia’s economic base.
- Enhance the City’s retail base through land use and development policies, to provide sales tax revenues, serve the needs of local residents and attract shoppers from outside the community.
- *Recruit regional-serving retail, healthcare, technology, warehousing and distribution, and agriculture-related industries.
- *Provide employers with access to a skilled, educated, and well-trained resident workforce.

- *Preserve and enhance qualities that make Visalia an ideal place to do business and promote a positive image of Visalia as a desirable place to live, visit, and do business.
- *Foster a good working relationship between the business community and the City.

Urban Boundaries and Growth Management

- Implement and periodically update a growth management system that will guide the timing, type, and location of growth; preserve resource lands, natural features and open space; and promote infill and redevelopment.
- Protect agricultural land from premature urban development.

Rural Buffers and Edges

- Maintain Visalia as a separate and distinct community.
- Provide for an orderly and efficient transition from rural to urban land uses.
- Minimize urban sprawl and leap-frog development by encouraging compact, concentric and contiguous growth.

Community Design

- Create an overall urban form centered on a vital downtown and a higher-density core, surrounded by viable residential neighborhoods with walkable, mixed-use neighborhood centers.
- Maintain and enhance Visalia's physical diversity, visual qualities and small-town characteristics.
- *Create a safe, walkable and attractive urban environment for current and future generations of residents.
- *Use the St. Johns River and other waterways as structuring elements for the City's urban form as well as scenic and recreational features.

Infill Development

- Implement and periodically update an infill development incentive program to achieve the objectives of compact development established by this General Plan.

Residential Neighborhoods

- *Ensure adequate land area is available for future housing needs, enabling an average citywide gross density of 5.3 dwelling units per acre of new residential development.
- Allow sufficient density and intensity to enable new development to support all required infrastructure, community facilities and open space.
- Preserve and enhance the character of residential neighborhoods while facilitating infill development.
- Create inclusive, compact neighborhoods with well-integrated single-family and multi-family residential development and activity nodes featuring schools, neighborhood parks, and neighborhood commercial areas.

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- Provide a range of housing types and prices within new neighborhoods to meet the needs of all segments of the community.
- Enable multifamily developments that are accessible to major transportation and transit routes.
- *Create an open space system that links neighborhoods, complements adjacent land uses, and serves multiple needs.

See also objectives and policies for the open space system in the Conservation and Open Space Element.

Commercial and Mixed Use

- Facilitate development of new, well-planned commercial areas to meet the needs of residents of Visalia and its market area.
- Provide adequate area for office developments in areas where they can be effectively integrated into surrounding areas and/or where they can provide close-in employment opportunities.
- *Promote pedestrian-oriented retail and mixed use development along transit corridors, in neighborhood nodes, and in Downtown and East Downtown.
- Ensure the continued viability of Visalia's existing commercial areas and enable the conversion of older or historic houses to office uses, where appropriate.
- *Establish a development review process that provides ease, predictability, and flexibility to developers and ensures high-quality and neighborhood-compatible development.

Downtown and East Downtown

- *Support the continued development and vitality of Downtown (generally identified as the area north of Mineral King Ave., east of Conyer St., south of Murray Ave., and west of Tipton St.) and the redevelopment and revitalization of East Downtown (generally identified as the area north of Mineral King Ave., east of Tipton St., south of Murray Ave., and west of Ben Maddox Way, as well as the stockyards).
- Maintain Downtown as Visalia's medical, professional, government, cultural and entertainment center.

Industrial

- Provide adequate land in a variety of parcel sizes for industrial development, and strengthen the City's role as a regional manufacturing center.
- Ensure compatibility between industrial lands and adjacent dissimilar land uses.

Civic and Institutional

- *Plan for the integration of public facilities with surrounding districts, so that hospitals, schools, and libraries act as hubs for mixed-use activity centers and are easily accessible to the majority of residents in Visalia.

- Facilitate the implementation of the College of the Sequoias (COS) Master Plan, and work with COS to resolve land use compatibility issues to ensure that Visalia continues to be home to the College's main campus.
- Facilitate a continued high level of health care services in the community.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION

Objectives for historic preservation in Visalia include:

The City's Role and Tools for Preservation

- *Assure the recognition of the City's history through the preservation of historic sites, structures and featuring zoning overlay designation and discretionary review procedures for the Historic District.
- Maintain historic residential areas as healthy, cohesive neighborhood units, and assure consistency of appearance within the historic area through conservation plans and historic preservation guidelines.
- Support efforts to use the Local Register of Historic Structures and the Historic District to identify and promote community history through the use of walking tours and other public outreach.
- Promote the maintenance and identification of historic resources in the community as key components of tourism and increased economic diversity for the City.
- *Promote the benefits of historic property ownership through programs such as tax incentives, available grants and loans, including but not limited to Federal Tax credits and similar programs for properties within the Historic District or on the Local Register of Historic Structures.

MOBILITY

The proposed General Plan includes a number of roadway improvements and programs intended to ensure the continued safe and efficient operation of Visalia's circulation system in year 2030. A summary of key policies is as follows:

Overall Circulation System Planning

- Develop and maintain a road system that is convenient, safe, efficient, and cost effective.
- Maximize the use and efficiency of the existing transportation system through application of Transportation System Management (TSM) strategies.
- Promote ways to reduce the number of peak hour trips and vehicle-miles traveled in the Planning Area.
- *Ensure that new development pays its fair share of the costs of new and improved transportation facilities.

Planned Improvements

- Plan and develop a transportation system for Visalia that contributes to community livability, recognizes and respects community characteristics, and minimizes negative impacts on adjacent land uses.

Public Transit

- Work with other agencies and jurisdictions that provide regional public transportation to provide connectivity between Visalia and adjacent jurisdictions.
- Develop and maintain a coordinated mass transportation system that will encourage increased transit use through convenient, safe, efficient, and cost-effective services.

Bicycles, Trails, and Pedestrian Circulation

- Encourage walking and bicycling in Visalia for commuting and recreational purposes, and for improvement of public and environmental health.
- Promote non-motorized accessibility through development of a connected, convenient pedestrian and bikeway network.
- Create a safe and feasible trail and bikeway system (on- and off-street) for commuting, recreation and other trips, serving cyclists of all levels.
- *Recognize and meet the mobility needs of persons using wheelchairs and those with other mobility limitations.

Parking

- Provide adequate parking to accommodate demand while avoiding excessive amounts of surface parking that disrupts the urban fabric of the city.

Goods Movement

- Provide a transportation system that effectively transports goods via trucks and rail with minimal disruption to residential areas.

Aviation

- Promote the growth and use of the Visalia Municipal Airport to satisfy projected aviation demand.

Regional Coordination

- Ensure compatibility between circulation and transportation systems in Visalia and adjacent jurisdictions.
- Work with Caltrans to provide an efficient system for regional travel that minimizes impacts on local streets and arterials.
- *Strive to minimize the effects of local travel on the regional highway system.

PARKS, SCHOOLS, COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND UTILITIES

The proposed General Plan includes policies and programs that are designed to improve the recreational, educational and community needs of Visalia's residents. It also includes policies and programs related to public utilities and services. Key policies include:

Parks and Recreation

- Design parks and recreation facilities that will enhance community identity and serve the recreation and social needs of Visalians of all ages, economic situations and physical abilities.
- Continue to develop and expand special recreation amenities and programs for teens, senior citizens, and ethnic populations.
- Ensure that a wide variety of quality sports and aquatics opportunities, including Sports Tourism, are available to the community.
- Emphasize health and wellness programs in light of childhood obesity and Type II diabetes challenges in the City and County.
- Continue Visalia's strong volunteer program by expanding meaningful opportunities for community service in Parks and Recreation Department programs.
- *Maximize opportunities for joint use of public land and facilities involving schools, stormwater ponding basins and other areas under public jurisdiction suitable for recreation.

Schools and Community Facilities

- *Support efforts to provide superior educational opportunities for all members of the community.
- Place elementary schools at the core of neighborhoods and co-locate schools with parks and neighborhood commercial areas.
- Coordinate the location of school sites in the community with the school district in an effort to assist the School District in providing school facilities at the optimum location and in a timely manner.
- Promote the development of higher education and workforce development facilities and programs in Visalia.
- Facilitate the location of day care centers (children, youth, and senior) and private pre-schools to provide facilities for year-round care.
- Provide high quality government facilities and services to the general public.
- Continue to emphasize the location of public facilities in the Core Area.

Public Utilities

- Provide for long-range community water needs by adopting best management practices for water use, conservation, groundwater recharge and wastewater and stormwater management.

- Preserve groundwater resources.
- Ensure that adequate wastewater collection, treatment, recycling and disposal facilities are provided in a timely fashion to serve existing and future needs.
- *Manage solid waste such that City needs are met, opportunities for waste reduction and recycling are maximized, and high-quality service is provided.
- *Achieve and maintain the State's solid waste management goals.

OPEN SPACE AND CONSERVATION

The proposed General Plan includes policies and programs related to Open Space and Conservation, including those relating to open space protection, water conservation, biological resources, and historical resources. Key policies include:

Open Space Resources

- Create and protect open space for the preservation of natural resources.
- Work with the County and other organizations to protect prime farmland and farmland of Statewide importance outside the City's Urban Development Boundary for agricultural production, and to preserve areas for groundwater recharge.
- Create and preserve open space for outdoor recreation.
- Create and maintain open space for public health and safety in areas which require special management for regulation.
- Create open space to shape Visalia's future urban form, including conservation corridors along the St. Johns River and along Highway 198.

Water Resources

- Protect water resources vital to the health of the community's residents and important to the Planning Area's ecological and economic stability.
- Preserve and enhance Planning Area waterways and adjacent corridors as valuable community resources which serve as plant and wildlife habitats, as groundwater recharge facilities, as flood control and irrigation components, and as connections between open space areas.
- Continue to participate in a waterway program involving the Tulare Irrigation District, irrigation companies, private water companies and state agencies.

Land Resources

- Protect agricultural land from premature urban development.

Biological Resources

- Protect and enhance natural vegetation throughout the Planning Area, especially types that are considered sensitive natural communities by the Department of Fish and Game.

Cultural Resources

- Preserve and protect historic features and archaeological resources of the Visalia planning area including its agricultural surrounding for aesthetic, scientific, educational and cultural values.

AIR QUALITY AND GREENHOUSE GASES

The proposed General Plan includes policies and programs relating to criteria air pollutants, toxic air contaminants, greenhouse gases, and other issues related to air quality and climate change. Key policies include:

Air Quality

- *Coordinate air quality planning efforts with other local, regional and State agencies.
- Strive to improve air quality by implementing emissions reduction efforts targeting mobile sources, stationary sources and construction-related sources.

Greenhouse Gases and Climate Change

- *Reduce emissions of greenhouse gases that contribute to global climate change in accord with federal and State law.

SAFETY AND NOISE

The proposed General Plan includes policies and programs related to safety and noise. In addition, the noise section includes noise contours associated with General Plan buildout. The key policies include:

Seismic and Geologic Hazards

- Minimize risks of property damage and personal injury posed by geologic and seismic hazards.

Flood Hazards

- Protect the community from risks to life and property posed by flooding and stormwater runoff.

Hazardous Materials

- Protect soils, surface water, and groundwater from contamination from hazardous materials.

Fire Hazards

- Protect Visalia's residents and businesses from potential fire hazards.

Safety Services and Emergency Response

- Provide a comprehensive program of safety services including police, fire and medical response in all parts of the Visalia Planning Area.
- Provide comprehensive emergency response and evacuation routes for Visalia area residents.

Noise

- Strive to achieve an acceptable noise environment for present and future residents of Visalia.
- Protect the City's economic base by preventing the encroachment of incompatible land uses near known noise producing industries, railroads, airports and other sources.
- Protect noise sensitive land uses such as schools, hospitals, and senior care facilities from encroachment of and exposure to excessive levels of noise.

2.6 Implementation of the Proposed General Plan

The proposed General Plan provides specific policy guidance for implementation of plan concepts. Implementing these policies will involve coordinated actions by the City Council, the Planning Commission, other City boards and commissions, and City departments. The City also will need to work with Tulare County and other public agencies to implement policies that involve cooperation or would affect the region. The principal responsibilities that City officials and staff have for Plan implementation are briefly summarized below; details on their powers and duties are provided in detail in the Visalia Municipal Code.

CITY COUNCIL

The City Council is responsible for the overall management of municipal affairs; it acts as the legislative body and is responsible for adoption of the General Plan and any amendments to the General Plan. The City Council selects a new Mayor every two years from amongst the five council members, who serves as presiding officer during all City Council meetings and study sessions. The City appoints the City Manager who is the chief administrator of the City and has overall responsibility for the day-to-day implementation of the General Plan. The City Council also appoints other boards and commissions established under the Municipal Code. A key City Council function is also to approve annexations for filing with the county Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO).

The City Council's role in implementing the General Plan will be to set implementation priorities and approve zoning map and text amendments, consistent with the General Plan, and a Capital Improvement Program and budget to carry out the Plan. Council members serve four-year staggered terms and are were elected in November of odd-numbered years through 2013. Even year elections will begin in 2016.

PLANNING COMMISSION

The Planning Commission is responsible for preparing and recommending adoption or amendment of the General Plan, zoning and subdivision ordinances, and other regulations, design guidelines, resource conservation plans, and programs and legislation needed to implement the General Plan. The Planning Commission recommends adoption of specific plans and master plans, which they can approve as Master Conditional Use Permits (CUPs), as needed for Plan implementation. The Commission is composed of five members serving two-year terms.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

Planning Division

The Planning Division of the Community Development Department is responsible for both general planning and development project review functions undertaken by the City. The Division is responsible for maintaining the General Plan, Zoning Ordinance, and Specific Plans. Specific duties related to General Plan implementation include preparing zoning and ordinance amendments, design guidelines, providing advice to project applicants, conducting investigations and making reports and recommendations to the Planning Commission on issues including demographic trends and development activity. The Division reviews projects for compliance with the CEQA, and is responsible for preparing environmental documents such as Negative Declarations, Mitigated Negative Declarations and Environmental Impact Reports. Finally, the Division has the primary responsibility for preparing the annual report on the General Plan and conducting the five-year review.

Engineering Division

The Engineering Division is responsible for the planning, design, and construction of public infrastructure projects. Typical projects include street construction and rehabilitation, parking lots, bridges, culverts, traffic signals, interchanges and intersections. Engineering staff is also responsible for providing assistance and guidance to the general public and developers in regard to requirements and regulations for street, sidewalk, storm drainage, paving, grading, and other capital improvements. In addition to these responsibilities, the Division provides building review and inspections, issues and monitors encroachment and grading permits, maintains traffic counts and speed studies on major arterial and collector streets throughout the city, and oversees the proper operation of the city-wide traffic signal system. The Division is responsible for maintaining street standards, the Sanitary Sewer Master Plan, the Stormwater Master Plan, and the Transportation Impact Fee program. To carry out the General Plan, the Division is tasked with carrying out related policies established in the Land Use, Circulation, and Parks, Schools, Community Facilities, and Utilities elements of the proposed General Plan.

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

The Public Works Department maintains the City's infrastructure, including its streets and its solid waste and waste water utility services. This includes operating the Waste Water Treatment Plant and the storm drainage system. The Department will implement policies established in the Parks, Schools, Community Facilities, and Utilities and Open Space and Conservation Elements.

PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT

The Parks and Recreation Department manages the City's parks and open spaces and recreation programs, including the waterways and trails and the community centers. The Department provides a broad array of activities and programs for the community, and works closely with Visalia Unified School District. Specific implementing responsibilities are established in the Parks, Schools, Community Facilities, and Utilities Element of the proposed General Plan.

TRANSIT DIVISION

The City's Transit Division operates the Visalia Transit bus system, including fixed-route buses, dial-a-ride transit service, the Visalia Towne Trolley, and the Loop Route between schools and recreation centers. It also operates the Sequoia Shuttle and maintains the Visalia Transit Center. The Transit Division's transit planning will be informed by policies in the Circulation Element of the proposed General Plan.

NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION DIVISION

The Natural Resources Conservation Division ensures that the City is able to provide adequate water supplies. The Department leads efforts to conserve resources and limit waste, including recycling, energy efficiency, and air quality improvement initiatives. It operates the Visalia Household Hazardous Waste Collection Center in partnership with Tulare County, and manages the City's cleanup of contaminated properties, in coordination with State agencies. The Natural Resources Conservation Division will implement proposed General Plan policies in the Open Space and Conservation Element.

POLICE DEPARTMENT

The Visalia Police Department is responsible for the protection of life and property within the City. The Department is tasked with the preservation of peace and order, suppression of crime, regulation and control of traffic and enforcement of State laws and local codes intended to reduce public hazards. Its specific responsibilities in the General Plan are established in the Safety and Noise Element of the General Plan.

FIRE DEPARTMENT

The Visalia Fire Department provides fire and emergency services within the City. In addition to emergency response services, the Department conducts public safety education and participates in plan and building inspection to ensure safety. The Safety and Noise Element establishes certain policies that will be the responsibility of the Fire Department.

FINANCE DEPARTMENT

The Finance Department manages the City of Visalia's financial resources, including preparing the annual budget, directing the Capital Improvement Program (CIP), and auditing projects and operations, as well as doing the City's general accounting. The CIP, in particular, will be informed by the priorities established in the proposed General Plan.

OTHER COMMISSIONS, COMMITTEES AND BOARDS

The City has a number of commissions, committees, and boards. Of particular relevance to the General Plan are:

- *Citizens' Advisory Committee.* The 15-member Citizens Advisory Committee acts as a liaison between the general public and the City Council concerning community issues.
- *Parks and Recreation Commission.* The five-member Parks and Recreation Commission advises City Council and staff on parks and recreation concerns.
- *Waterways and Trails Committee.* The Waterways and Trails Committee (13 members) represents the community with regard to implementing the Bikeway Master Plan and Waterways and Trails Master Plan, and generally advocates for pedestrian and bicycle enhancements.
- *Environmental Committee.* The Visalia Environmental Committee's nine members aim to raise awareness on City Council and in the community about ways to improve air quality, conserve water, reduce landfill waste, and safely dispose of hazardous waste, among other conservation issues.
- *Transit Advisory Committee.* The nine-member Transit Advisory Committee analyzes transit needs and operations, and recommends improvements to the Transit Division and City Council.
- *Historic Preservation Advisory Committee.* The seven-member Historic Preservation Advisory Committee implements the Historic Preservation Ordinance, reaches out to building owners to participate in preservation efforts, and identifies historic resources.
- *North Visalia Neighborhood Advisory Committee.* The North Visalia Advisory Committee serves as a liaison between the City government and the North Visalia community, and aims to elevate community issues and recommendations for neighborhood improvement. The Committee has 15 members.