

**PUBLIC NOTICE FOR THE PREPARATION OF AN ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT FOR
CITY OF MERCED GENERAL PLAN UPDATE**

As required by the California Environmental Quality Act, the City of Merced has prepared a Notice of Preparation which announces the availability of a Notice of Preparation for public review and comment as well as the date and time of the Public Scoping Meeting for the project. The City of Merced is the lead agency and Quad-Knopf, Inc., will prepare an Environmental Impact Report on behalf of the City.

The proposed project includes an update of the City of Merced's General Plan. California state law requires each city and county to adopt a general plan for all the physical development of the county or city, and any land outside its boundaries which bears relation to its planning. The General Plan will include Urban Expansion, Land Use, Transportation & Circulation, Public Facilities & Services, Urban Design, Open Space, Conservation & Recreation, Sustainable Development, Housing, Noise and Safety Elements. The expansion of the City's growth boundary (known as the Specific Urban Development Plan or SUDP) will define the limits for extending City services and infrastructure so as to accommodate new development anticipated within the 20 year time-frame of the General Plan. The current SUDP contains 19,933 acres and the proposed SUDP/Sphere of Influence contains 34,521 acres. Policies in the proposed General Plan limit leap-frog development and provide for an orderly transition from rural to urban land uses.

Pursuant to Section 15063 of the CEQA Guidelines, an Initial Study has not been prepared for the plan. The EIR will consider all potential environmental effects of the plan to determine the level of significance of the environmental effect, and will analyze these potential effects to the detail necessary to make these determinations on significance. The EIR will address issues related to aesthetics, agricultural resources, air quality, biology, cultural resources, geology and soils, hazards and hazardous materials, hydrology and water quality, land use and planning, noise, population and housing, public services, recreation, transportation and circulation, public utilities and services systems, and greenhouse gas and global climate change. In addition, the EIR may also consider those environmental issues which are raised by responsible agencies, trustee agencies, members of the public, or related agencies during the NOP process.

Copies of the Notice of Preparation are available for public inspection at the City of Merced Planning Division during regular business hours, at 678 West 18th Street. A copy of this document can also be purchased at the Planning Division for the price of reproduction or downloaded for free from the City's website at www.cityofmerced.org.

The public scoping meeting for this project will be held on Tuesday, July 29, 2008 starting at 5:30 p.m. in the City Council Chambers at the Merced Civic Center at 678 West 18th Street, Merced.

For further information, contact the Planning Division at (209) 385-6858. Any person interested in commenting on this proposed project should submit written comments to:

Kim Espinosa, Planning Manager
City of Merced Planning & Permitting
678 West 18th Street
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espinosak@cityofmerced.org

All comments must be received by Monday, August 18, 2008 at 5:00 p.m.

July 14, 2008

JACK D. LESCH, Director of
Development Services