

NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY

TO: Interested Parties

FROM: Merced County
Planning and Community Development Department
2222 M Street
Merced, CA 95340

DATE: December 28, 2007

**SUBJECT: AVAILABILITY OF DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT FOR
THE HILMAR COMMUNITY PLAN UPDATE**

The Merced County Planning and Community Development Department (Merced County) is the lead agency for the Hilmar Community Plan Update (Proposed Project). Merced County is circulating a Draft EIR on the Proposed Project for agency and public review in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

Project Location

The proposed Hilmar Community Plan area is located along State Highway 165 approximately four miles south of State Highway 99 and six miles north of State Highway 140 in Merced County, approximately three miles southwest of the unincorporated community of Delhi and five miles west of the City of Livingston.

Project Description

The Proposed Project is a component of the Merced County General Plan and would update and revise the Hilmar Community Plan for the future growth of Hilmar, with a proposed population of approximately 11,000 residents in an area of approximately 1,200 acres.

Significant Environmental Effects

An Environmental Checklist was prepared to determine whether the Proposed Project could result in a significant impact on the environment, and to focus the EIR analysis on significant impacts and those issues that require relatively detailed analyses in order to determine the severity of impacts. Based on the Environmental Checklist, this EIR analyzes in detail the Proposed Project impacts on the following areas: **Aesthetics, Agricultural Resources, Air Quality, Biological Resources, Cultural Resources, Geology and Soils, Hazards and Hazardous Materials, Hydrology and Water Resources, Land Use, Noise, Population and Housing, Public Services, Transportation, and Utilities and Service Systems.**

Based on the conclusions reached in the Environmental Checklist, no additional topic areas required analysis within the text of the EIR. For many environmental categories, impacts will be less than significant even in the absence of mitigation. In a few other instances, however, mitigation measures were necessary to render impact less than significant and avoid the need for analysis in the text of the EIR. These mitigation measures are incorporated as required policies of the proposed plan.

Document Availability and Review

Copies of the Draft EIR are available for review at the Merced County Planning and Community Development Department, from 8am to 5pm, Monday through Friday, holidays excepted. Copies are also available for review at the Main Merced County Library and its Hilmar and Delhi Branches. Copies of the Draft EIR may be obtained from the Merced County Planning and Community Development Department, 2222 M Street, Merced, California, 95340, (209) 385-7654 or on the Merced County Website www.co.merced.ca.us

REVIEW PERIOD DURING WHICH COMMENTS WILL BE RECEIVED ON THE DRAFT EIR

DECEMBER 28, 2007 TO FEBRUARY 11, 2008

Comments concerning the Draft EIR for the Hilmar Community Plan Project should be sent to:

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