

FILED

## Notice of Determination

2018 MAY 15 AM 10:18 Appendix D

## To:

☒ Office of Planning and Research

U.S. Mail:

P.O. Box 3044

Sacramento, CA 95812-3044

Street Address:

1400 Tenth St., Rm 113

Sacramento, CA 95814

☒ County Clerk

County of: Stanislaus

Address: 1021 I Street, Ste. 101

Modesto, CA 95354

## From:

Public Agency: City of Ceres

Address: 2220 Magnolia Street

Ceres, CA 95307

Contact: Tom Westbrook

Phone: (209)538-5778

Lead Agency (if different from above):

Address:

Contact:

Phone:

**SUBJECT: Filing of Notice of Determination in compliance with Section 21108 or 21152 of the Public Resources Code.**

State Clearinghouse Number (if submitted to State Clearinghouse): 2017052063

Project Title: City of Ceres General Plan Update

Project Applicant: City of Ceres

Project Location (include county): Ceres, Stanislaus County

Project Description:

See attached.

This is to advise that the City of Ceres has approved the above  
☒ Lead Agency or ☐ Responsible Agency)

described project on May 14, 2018 and has made the following determinations regarding the above  
 (date)  
 described project.

1. The project ☒ will ☐ will not] have a significant effect on the environment.
2. ☒ An Environmental Impact Report was prepared for this project pursuant to the provisions of CEQA.  
☐ A Negative Declaration was prepared for this project pursuant to the provisions of CEQA.
3. Mitigation measures ☐ were ☒ were not] made a condition of the approval of the project.
4. A mitigation reporting or monitoring plan ☐ was ☒ was not] adopted for this project.
5. A statement of Overriding Considerations ☒ was ☐ was not] adopted for this project.
6. Findings ☒ were ☐ were not] made pursuant to the provisions of CEQA.

This is to certify that the final EIR with comments and responses and record of project approval, or the negative Declaration, is available to the General Public at:

City of Ceres, 2220 Magnolia Street, Ceres, CA 95307 and online at www.ci.ceres.ca.us

Signature (Public Agency): [Signature] Title: Director of Community Development

Date: 05/15/2018 Date Received for filing at OPR: \_\_\_\_\_

# NOD Attachment 1: Project Description

## Regional Location and Project Boundaries

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### REGIONAL LOCATION

The City of Ceres is located just southeast of Modesto in central Stanislaus County in the San Joaquin Valley of California. The city is almost 80 miles southeast of San Francisco by car, 60 miles from the nearest Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) station in Dublin, 35 miles south of Stockton, and 10 miles north of Turlock. State Route 99 (SR 99) runs through the city. The regional setting is depicted in Figure 1: Regional Setting.

### PROJECT BOUNDARIES

The Proposed Project covers a Planning Area that encompasses 14,700 acres including the City of Ceres, its Sphere of Influence (SOI), adjacent unincorporated areas, and Mancini Park in the City of Modesto. The Planning Area is the same as that used for the 1997 Ceres General Plan. It is roughly bounded by the Tuolumne River on the north, Carpenter Road on the west, Grayson Road on the south, and Washington Road on the east. Although Ceres does not have jurisdiction in areas outside of its city limits, what occurs in those areas bears a relation to the city's planning and must be considered in the General Plan, per California Government Code Section 65300. The Planning Area is shown in Figure 2: Planning Area.

## Purpose and Objectives of the Proposed Project

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### PURPOSE

California Government Code Section 65300 requires each city and county in California to adopt a General Plan "for the physical development of the county or city, and any land outside its boundaries which...bears relation to its planning." The Ceres General Plan can be considered the city's development constitution, containing both a statement of the community's vision of its long-term development as well as the policies to support that vision by guiding the physical growth of the city. The proposed General Plan contains policies to guide decision-making related to development, housing, transportation, environmental quality, public services, parks, and open spaces. The proposed General Plan is a document to be adopted by the City Council that serves the following 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 City departments, Planning Commission, and City Council decision-making;
- Provide a basis for judging whether specific development proposals and public projects are in harmony with plan policies;

- Plan in a manner that 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 enhance the character of the community, preserve environmental resources, and minimize hazards; and
- Provide the basis for establishing and setting priorities for detailed plans and implementing programs, such as the zoning ordinance, subdivision regulations, specific and master plans, and the Capital Improvement Program.

Due to the general and long-range nature of the proposed General Plan, there will be instances where more detailed studies will be necessary in order to implement the Plan's policies.

## OBJECTIVES

The Proposed Project's objective is to update the current City of Ceres General Plan, which dates to 1997, to reflect current conditions and community priorities, and to achieve the community's vision for the future. The community's collective vision, which informs and drives the goals and actions of the proposed General Plan, is expressed in the following statement, formulated based on an extensive public outreach program:

*"In 2035, Ceres has a continued connection to its agricultural heritage, a balance of housing and retail choices, ample job opportunities, an attractive Downtown, rich cultural and community events and an abundance of recreational opportunities. Ceres is a place where families want to raise their children and businesses want to locate and flourish. In Ceres, people enjoy a safe and healthy city with first-rate community amenities and a clean and sustainable environment."*

The vision statement is supported by 10 Guiding Principles that provide further detail on the community's desires for various aspects of the city. The Guiding Principles are as follows.

- **Neighborly Character.** Knowing that "Together We Achieve," continue to cultivate a friendly, small town feel, inclusive, and civically engaged community as the population grows and changes.
- **Safe, Family-Friendly Hometown.** Promote Ceres strong and high performing school system, and support the City's safe neighborhoods and youth activities so that Ceres continues to be a desirable place for families.
- **Agricultural Identity.** Celebrate Ceres agricultural history, support the continued success of the agricultural industry, and consider how to balance the protection of prime agricultural lands with growth and economic development objectives.
- **Health and Sustainability.** Provide well-maintained and accessible parks, street trees and landscaping, and healthy food options; and prioritize clean air, clean water, and resource conservation to help keep the community—both the people and the environment—healthy.
- **Complete Community.** Support the development of a complete and balanced community where needs can be met locally, with new commercial options, industrial growth, and a diversity of housing options that attracts new business, industry, and associated professionals.
- **Strong Downtown.** Encourage and direct public and private investment in Downtown Ceres to restore it as the physical and cultural center of the city. Enhance Downtown so it becomes vibrant, active and a place for people to assemble, dine, and socialize in a mixed-use environment.

- **Attractive Destination.** Cultivate Ceres as a unique destination in the Central Valley and for travelers on Highway 99. To the extent possible, ensure that new development visible from Highway 99 offers attractive and unique views from that travel way.
- **Economic Development.** Strengthen job opportunities with industrial and commercial growth and promote education and job training. Continue to balance provision of streamlined services and entitlements with fiscal responsibility to support the future needs of the City.
- **Revitalization.** Encourage infill development and investment within existing neighborhoods and commercial corridors in order to revitalize areas within the city limits.
- **Balanced Circulation Network.** Make it safe and convenient for residents and workers to get where they need to go and for businesses to transport goods by providing well-maintained sidewalks, connected bicycle networks, efficient connections to major transportation corridors, and regional transit connections.

## Proposed General Plan 2035

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### LAND USE DIAGRAM

The land use diagram of the proposed General Plan is shown in Figure 3. The proposed Land Use Diagram is similar to the land use diagram included in the 1997 Ceres General Plan, with some changes. Changes to land use designations in the Proposed Project include the following: a new Medium High Density land use designation (allowing residential development from 12 to 20 dwelling units per acre); greater allowable density in the High Density land use designation (new allowable range of 20 to 30 dwelling units per acre); and the potential for a wider variety of allowable uses in the Regional Commercial designation (for example, business parks may be permitted).

Changes from the current land use diagram in the Proposed Project include the following:

- Redesignating the area around the interchange of Service Road and Mitchell Road as Regional Commercial from its current designation of Business Park and Commercial Recreation;
- Changing the designation of three parcels on the north side of the intersection between Hatch Road and Boothe Road from Business Park to Community Commercial;
- Changing the designation of one parcel on the northeast side of the intersection of Service Road and Central Avenue from Medium Density Residential to Neighborhood Commercial; and
- Changing the designation of one parcel in the southeast of the Planning Area from Agriculture to Regional Commercial.

### PROJECTED GROWTH AT BUILDOUT

The proposed General Plan uses a horizon year of 2035. State law specifies that general plans take a long-term perspective; therefore, in order to effectively set goals and policies that can guide strategic decision-making, most general plans look ahead approximately 20 years. The horizon year of 2035 does not signify an “end point.” Rather, it represents a reasonable range in which to plan comprehensively for the city’s next phase of growth, change, and investment.

In the EIR, the horizon year of 2035 is referred to as “buildout” for analysis purposes. The potential population, number of jobs, and amount of development at buildout is based on existing development and

an estimated amount of potential new development in the Planning Area. For the proposed General Plan, potential new development is expected to occur on underutilized, vacant, and rural parcels as well as sites of current development projects as of 2017; however, not all of these identified parcels are assumed to fully develop. To estimate potential new development, assumptions were made about the percentage of parcels that would develop by buildout, as well as the density of new development. However, land use development, population growth, and job growth are subject to numerous forces, such as macroeconomic cycles and the decisions of individual property owners. Neither the proposed General Plan nor the EIR guarantees, assumes, or requires that the General Plan Planning Area will develop to its fullest “buildout” extent by 2035.

Table 1 shows the estimated buildout of the Planning Area to be analyzed in the EIR. The proposed General Plan could result in approximately 24,000 new residents, 7,200 new housing units, and 20,800 new jobs by 2035 based on expected development at buildout. While ultimately market forces will determine the amount of housing and employment growth that occurs by 2035, the EIR takes a conservative approach of assuming this level of potential job and housing growth—which the developable land in the Planning Area could support—in order to fully account for potential impacts.

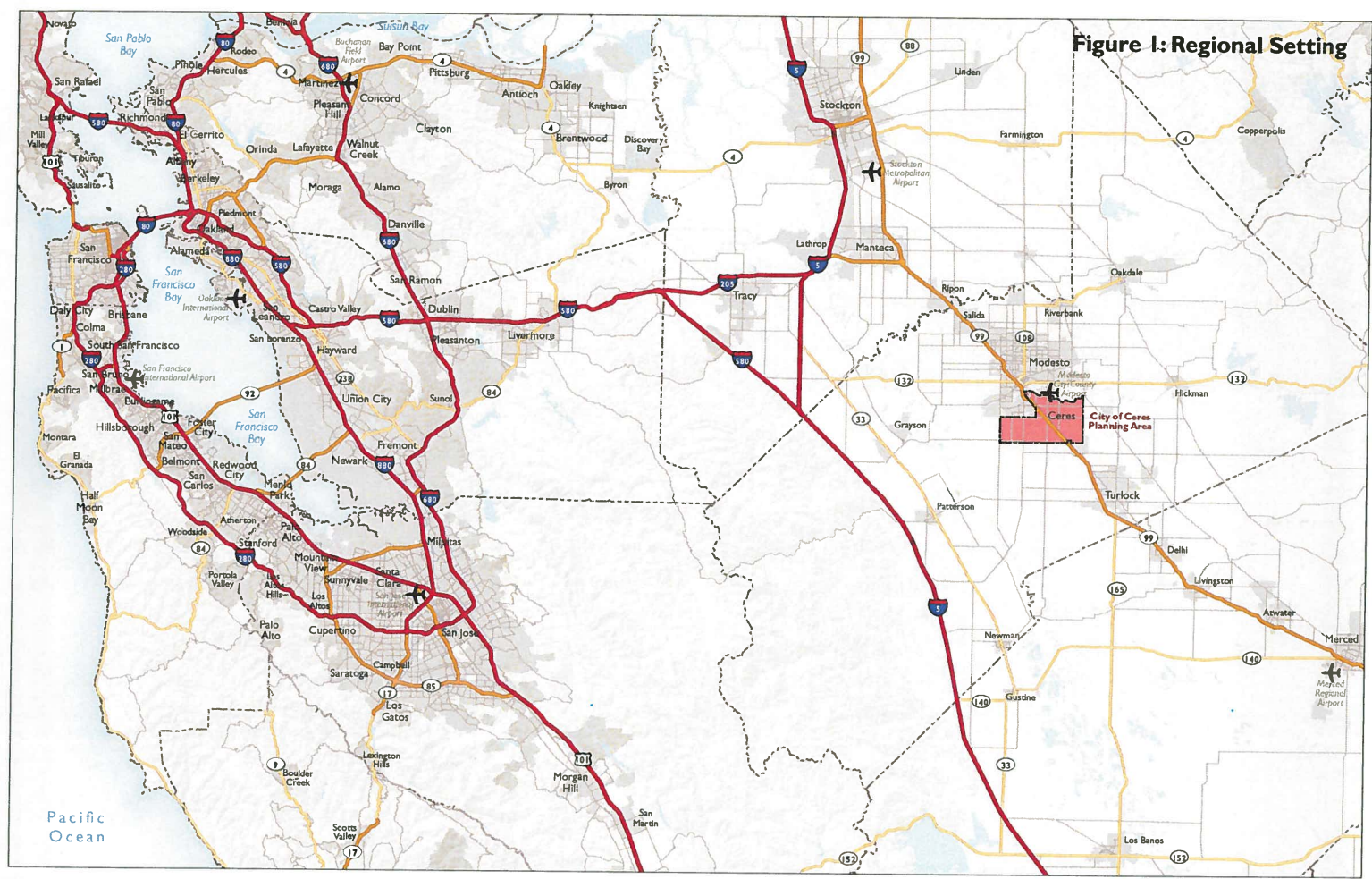
Table 1: Projected Growth in the Ceres General Plan Planning Area, 2015-2035

	2015	2035
Population	55,000	79,000
Housing Units	16,200	23,400
Jobs	10,000	30,800

Note: Numbers are rounded to the nearest hundred.

Sources: 2015 figures: California Department of Finance, 2015; EPS, 2016; Dyett & Bhatia, 2017. 2035 figures: Dyett & Bhatia, 2017.

**Figure 1: Regional Setting**



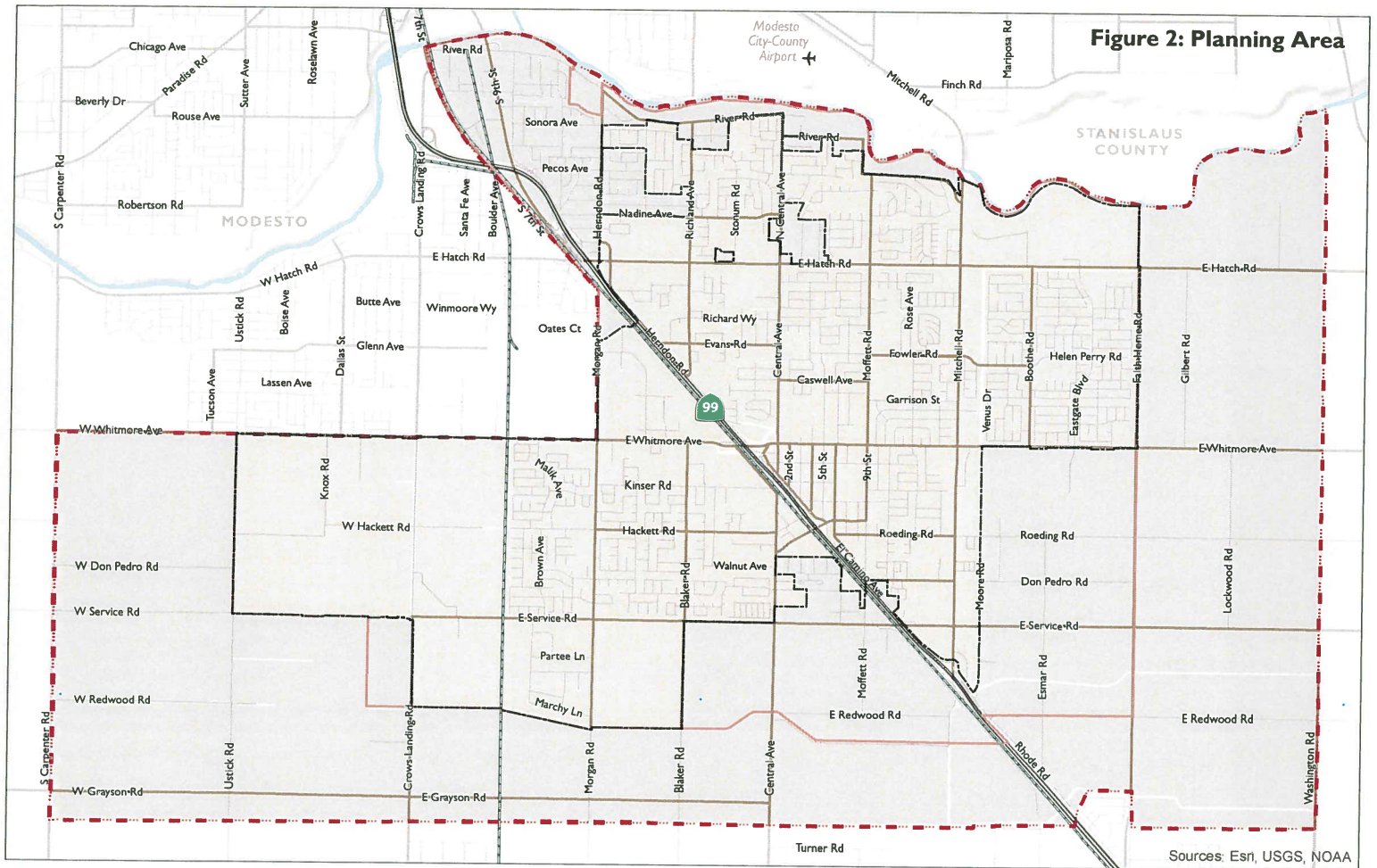
- Freeway
- Major Highway
- Minor Highway
- Major/Minor Roads
- County Boundary
- Ceres Planning Area
- Urban Areas
- Water

  
 0 5 10 20  
 MILES  
 Data Source: City of Ceres, 2015; Stanislaus County Geographic Information Systems, 2015; ESRI, 2015; Dyett & Bhatia, 2015.

**GENERAL PLAN UPDATE**  
City of Ceres



**Figure 2: Planning Area**



Sources: Esri, USGS, NOAA

- Highway
- Local Roads
- Ramps
- Railroads
- Major Roads
- River
- City of Ceres (5,989 acres)
- Ceres Sphere of Influence
- General Plan Planning Area (14,357 acres)

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MILES

Data Source: City of Ceres, 2015; Stanislaus County Geographic Information Systems, 2015; Esri, 2015; Dyett & Bhatia, 2015.

**GENERAL PLAN UPDATE**  
City of Ceres

Figure 3: Proposed Land Use Diagram

