

5.12 UTILITIES – SANITARY SEWER

5.12.1 INTRODUCTION

This section assesses the proposed project's impacts on wastewater facilities and services. The analysis in this section is based on the analysis of sewer facilities in the City of Porterville 2030 General Plan EIR,¹ and the City of Porterville Sewer System Master Plan (SSMP).² Wastewater generated by the proposed project would be transported and treated using existing sewer facilities. With the improvements proposed by the project, along with payment of City-mandated sewer impact fees, project impacts would be less than significant.

5.12.2 SUMMARY OF 2030 GENERAL PLAN EIR FINDINGS

Average influent flow at general plan buildout is estimated at 12.5 million gallons per day (mgd) in 2030 using existing demand factors. If the general plan's goal of 20 percent water conservation is met, then the average influent flow would be proportionally reduced to approximately 11.3 mgd. In both cases, this future treatment need exceeds the existing waste water treatment facility (WWTF) capacity, so the City will need to increase the treatment plant capacity by 3.5–4.5 mgd.³ If water conservation goals are achieved, planning for additional capacity would need to begin by 2014. Without water conservation measures, planning should begin by 2012. In addition to increasing the capacity of the WWTF or constructing an additional facility, existing sewer lines will need to be extended and upgraded in new development areas.⁴ The proposed general plan policies ensure land is set aside for a future water treatment plant and require developers to pay their fair share of the cost of upgrading sewerage utilities. Upgrades and financing for sewer system facilities are guided by the City's SSMP.

5.12.3 EXISTING CONDITIONS

Sanitary Sewer Network

According to the 2001 SSMP,⁵ the sewer collection system within Porterville's Urban Development Boundary consists of approximately 150 miles of 6-inch- to 36-inch-diameter sewer lines. The majority of the trunk lines are 12-inch pipes. The system includes 18 sewage lift stations and associated force mains. To the east of the City limits, Porter Vista Public Utility District (PVPUD) owns and maintains sewer

¹ Dyett and Bhatia, *Porterville Draft Environmental Impact Report 2030 General Plan*, Section 3.10, "Hydrology and Water Resources," City of Porterville, November 2007.

² Carollo Engineers, *City of Porterville Sewer System Master Plan*, City of Porterville, February 2001.

³ Dyett and Bhatia, *Porterville Draft Environmental Impact Report 2030 General Plan*, Section 3.11, "Public Utilities and Services," City of Porterville, November 2007, 221.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Carollo Engineers, *City of Porterville Sewer System Master Plan*, City of Porterville, February 2001, p. ES-1.

collection services for the Porter Vista development area, generally north of State Route (SR) 190, south of Olive Avenue, and east of Main Street. PVPUD connects to the City sewer system for treatment purposes. In the unincorporated areas of the Porterville area, with limited exceptions, wastewater disposal is provided by on-site septic tank leach line systems. However, discharge of wastes from new leaching and percolation systems is prohibited in the East Porterville area by the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board.

The proposed project requires a sanitary sewer system consisting of 6-inch-diameter pipes to connect to the existing 18-inch trunk found in Springville Avenue. Trunk sewers convey wastewater to the Porterville WWTF. According to the SSMP, the sewer system operating in the vicinity of the proposed project is performing well under existing conditions. The existing 18-inch sewer trunk would have adequate capacity to accommodate the proposed project's wastewater conveyance needs.⁶

Wastewater Treatment

The City owns and operates the Porterville WWTF, located at the southwest corner of West Grand Avenue and North Prospect Street. The WWTF operates under a waste discharge permit issued by the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board (CVRWQCB).⁷ The WWTF has a plant capacity of 8 mgd; in 2008, the WWTF average influent was 5.0 mgd or approximately 117 gallons per capita.⁸ The facility includes percolation ponds, which allow reclaimed water to recharge the aquifer. The WWTF manages more than 750 acres, mostly near the Porterville Municipal Airport, for reclamation purposes; however, only about 500 acres currently receive WWTF effluent. Up to 25 percent of the WWTF water is reclaimed to irrigate this reclamation land.

5.12.4 REGULATORY PLANS AND POLICIES

State

The California Building and Plumbing Codes⁹ established by the state Building Standards Commission provide standards for wastewater disposal facilities for all occupancies based on the 2006 Uniform Plumbing Code¹⁰ and the 2006 International Building Code.¹¹

⁶ Personal communication with Benjamin Kimball, City Planner, City of Porterville, February 5, 2009.

⁷ Central Valley Regional Water Control Board, Order No. R5-2008-0034, adopted March 14, 2008.

⁸ Personal communication with Benjamin Kimball, City Planner, City of Porterville, February 5, 2009.

⁹ California Building and Plumbing Code, 24 C.C.R. Parts 2 and 5, respectively.

¹⁰ International Association of Plumbing and Mechanical Officials, 2006 Uniform Building Code, 2005.

¹¹ International Code Council, International Building Code, 2006.

The City’s WWTF operates under a waste discharge permit issued by Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board (CVRWQCB).¹² This permit regulates the quantities of wastewater that may be discharged; quality standards for treated water; operation of infiltration basins; and testing, monitoring, and reporting. Currently the WWTF has a permitted capacity of 8 mgd.¹³

Local

City of Porterville

2030 General Plan

The 2030 General Plan¹⁴ contains the following guiding policies and implementing policies that are relevant to sewer services. Guiding policies are the City’s statements of its goals and philosophy.¹⁵ Implementing policies represent commitments to specific actions and refer to existing programs or call for the establishment of new programs.¹⁶

PU-G-3	Ensure wastewater collection and treatment services and reclamation acreages are available to meet existing and future needs of the City.
PU-I-14	Update and implement the Sewer System Master Plan.
PU-I-15	Acquire adequate land to be used for reclamation purposes.
PU-I-16	Periodically review and update development impact fees, wastewater connection charges, and monthly service charges to ensure that adequate funds are collected to operate and maintain existing facilities and to construct new facilities.
PU-I-17	In partnership with county, state, and federal agencies, work to prevent illegal wastewater disposal or chemical disposal practices.

¹² Central Valley Regional Water Control Board, Order No. R5-2008-0034, adopted March 14, 2008.

¹³ City of Porterville, *2030 General Plan*, Chapter 8, “Public Utilities,” Section 8.2, “Wastewater Collection and Treatment,” 2007, 192.

¹⁴ Dyett and Bhatia Urban and Regional Planners, *City of Porterville 2030 General Plan*, Chapter 8, “Public Utilities,” Section 8.2, “Wastewater Collection and Treatment,” 2007, 192

¹⁵ City of Porterville, *2030 General Plan*, Chapter 1, “Introduction,” 15.

¹⁶ Ibid.

Municipal Code

The City of Porterville Municipal Code establishes a sewer service fund for construction, maintenance, and operation of sanitary sewer facilities.¹⁷ The City assesses sewer connection fees, sewer facility fees, and sewer service fees, all of which are deposited in the sewer service fund and used to maintain and expand transmission and treatment facilities within the City. Maintenance and expansion of the sewer system is guided by the City's SSMP.¹⁸

Sewer System Master Plan

The City of Porterville SSMP¹⁹ evaluates the existing sewer system and recommends necessary system improvements to meet sewer collection requirements through the year 2015. The findings and recommendation in the SSMP are intended to assist City staff in planning, developing, and financing the required sewer collection facilities in a timely, cost-effective manner. The City is currently in the process of updating its SSMP.

5.12.5 THRESHOLDS OF SIGNIFICANCE

According to Appendix G of the *California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines*,²⁰ a significant impact would occur if the project were to

- exceed wastewater treatment requirements of the applicable Regional Water Quality Control Board.
- require or result in the construction of new water or wastewater treatment facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which would cause significant environmental effect; or
- result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider which serves or may serve the project that it does not have adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments.

5.12.6 PROJECT IMPACTS

The analysis of potential impacts to public utilities associated with construction and operation of the proposed project, including the significance criteria applicable to assessing such impacts, is presented below.

¹⁷ City of Porterville, Municipal Code, 25-38.

¹⁸ Carollo Engineers, *City of Porterville Sewer System Master Plan*, City of Porterville, February 2001.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ California Environmental Quality Act, *State CEQA Guidelines*, Appendix G, 2009, 277–291.

Impact 5.12-1 **Occupancy of the proposed commercial uses would not exceed the water quality treatment requirements of the CVRWQCB. *This is considered a less than significant impact.***

The City of Porterville Public Works Department provides sewer service in the project area. Wastewater generated by the proposed project would be treated at the City’s WWTF. The WWTF operates in compliance with the waste discharge permit issued by the CVRWQCB.²¹ The proposed commercial uses would not generate wastewater that could exceed the wastewater treatment requirements of the CVRWQCB, because the proposed restaurant uses would be required by the City of Porterville to install a grease interceptor to prevent fats, oils, and grease from entering the sanitary sewer system as required by the Municipal Code, and would not place any other special types of pollutants in the wastewater system.²² Therefore, implementation of the proposed project would not generate wastewater that could exceed the treatment requirements of the CVRWQCB. Impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation is required.

Residual Impacts

Impacts will be less than significant.

Impact 5.12-1 **Occupancy of proposed commercial uses would increase the volume of effluent requiring treatment at the City WWTF. This increase can be accommodated by the WWTF under the current permitted capacity; avoiding significant physical impacts associated with expansion of existing or construction of new facilities. *This is considered a less than significant impact.***

The City’s WWTF operates under a waste discharge permit issued by CVRWQCB.²³ This permit regulates, among other things, the quantity of wastewater that may be treated. Currently, the WWTF has a permitted capacity of 8 mgd and receives average daily flows of 5.1 mgd, leaving capacity available to treat an additional 2.9 mgd.²⁴ The project applicant has provided average sewer load rates based on existing Walmart stores of a similar design and size. According to this information, the proposed

²¹ Central Valley Regional Water Control Board, Order No. R5-2008-0034, adopted March 14, 2008.

²² City of Porterville, Municipal Code, 25-85.1.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ City of Porterville, *2030 General Plan*, Chapter 8, “Public Utilities,” Section 8.2, “Wastewater Collection and Treatment,” 2007, 192.

Walmart would generate approximately 4,584 gallons per day (gpd). Wastewater generation for the outlets was calculated based on the generation rate used in the City sewer master plan study of 936 gpd per acre for commercial uses. The estimated wastewater generation for the proposed project is 5,464 gpd, as shown in **Table 5.12-1, Project Wastewater Generation**.

**Table 5.12-1
Project Wastewater Generation**

Proposed Use	Units (acres)	Generation¹ Rate (gpd/acre)	Wastewater Generation (gpd)
Walmart Store	4.17	-	4,584 ²
Other Commercial Pads	0.94	936	880
Total Project Generation			5,464
Current Capacity of the WWTF			8,000,000
Current Inflow of the WWTF			5,100,000
Remaining Capacity of the WWTF			2,900,000

Note:

¹ City of Porterville Sewer Systems Master Plan, February 2001.

² Information provided by the project applicant based on average usage by existing Walmart stores of a similar design and size.

Wastewater generated by the proposed project and current inflow volumes would be less than the available capacity of the WWTF serving the project site. As capacity exists to treat wastewater generated by the proposed project, the project would not exceed the applicable wastewater treatment requirements of the CVRWQCB and no physical improvements to the WWTF are necessary. Impacts would therefore be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation is required.

Residual Impacts

Impacts will be less than significant.

Impact 5.12-2 **Occupancy of proposed uses would increase the volume of effluent that must be conveyed to the City WWTF. However, sufficient capacity exists within the existing sewer system to accommodate the proposed project’s wastewater. *This impact is considered to be less than significant.***

Project operation would increase human presence and activity, generating the need for improvements to the existing sewer network to accommodate effluent generated by this increase. As shown in **Table 5.12-1**, wastewater generated by the proposed project is estimated to be 5,464 gpd. This equates to approximately 3.79 gallons per minute (gpm), which can be accommodated by the existing 18-inch line located in Springville Avenue. The development of commercial uses under the proposed project would be required to contribute fees to the sewer service fund established by the City of Porterville Municipal Code.²⁵ These fees would be used to fund necessary improvements to City sewer facilities as needed to accommodate future development. No foreseeable physical constraints exist to the expansion of City infrastructure needed to accommodate future development. With payment of City sewer connection fees, construction of the on-site sanitary sewer system, and transport wastewater from the commercial uses to the existing trunk line found in the adjacent Springville Avenue, existing infrastructure would be adequate to meet demand generated by the proposed project, and impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation is required.

Residual Impacts

Impacts will be less than significant.

5.12.7 CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

Impact 5.12-3: **Buildout of the 2030 General Plan, inclusive of the proposed project, would increase the volume of effluent requiring collection and treatment at the City WWTF. *This impact is considered less than significant.***

The program EIR²⁶ prepared for the City’s 2030 General Plan EIR²⁷ concluded that cumulative development associated with buildout of the general plan would exceed the WWTF’s current treatment

²⁵ City of Porterville, Municipal Code, Chapter 25, “Waters, Sewage and Sewage Disposal,” Article V, “Wastewater Discharge Requirements,” Division 3, “Fees.”

²⁶ Dyett and Bhatia, *Porterville Draft Environmental Impact Report 2030 General Plan*, Section 3.10, “Hydrology and Water Resources,” City of Porterville, November 2007.

²⁷ Ibid.

capacity. The volume of influent at the WWTF, based on historic growth trends in influent flows, has increased by an average of 2 percent per year. However, with planned housing and economic development, growth under the general plan may increase this yearly average increase. Using the general plan’s future population and an average per capita flow (117 gallons), the average influent flow that the City should plan for is 12.5 mgd in 2030. If the general plan’s goal of 10 percent water conservation is met, then the average influent flow would be reduced proportionally to approximately 11.3 mgd. In both cases, this future treatment need exceeds the existing WWTF capacity, so the City would need to increase the treatment plant capacity by 3.5–4.5 mgd. No physical, environmental, or physical constraints to the construction of necessary wastewater facilities are anticipated.²⁸

The 2001 SSMP²⁹ addresses the City’s sewage collection system capacity and operational needs, recommends a long-term capital improvement program, and sets the sewer connection fees required from developers to cover the cost of sewer infrastructure projects. Funds collected by sewer connection fees and through the City of Porterville’s general fund, are used to finance the improvements contained in the plan. All future projects will be required to pay sewer connection fees, sewer facility fees, and sewer service fees that would be used to fund improvements needed to serve cumulative development.

Cumulative Mitigation Measures

The City will require all future development to contribute to the sewer service fund through sewer connection fees. That fund and funds from the City’s general fund will be used to construct sewer connections, sewer facility improvements, and perform maintenance needed to serve cumulative development. The collection and use of these fees to fund needed improvements would offset the cumulative impacts of the proposed project and cumulative development. Additionally, the 2030 General Plan EIR contains guiding and implementing policies (as previously discussed, guiding policy PU-G-3, and implementing policies PU-I-14, PU-I-17, PU-I-16, and PU-I-15) for impacts to sanitary sewer facilities that would ensure impacts to sewer facilities are fully mitigated.

5.12.8 LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE AFTER MITIGATION

Impacts would be less than significant.

²⁸ Dyett and Bhatia, *Porterville Draft Environmental Impact Report 2030 General Plan*, Section 3.10, “Hydrology and Water Resources,” City of Porterville, November 2007.

²⁹ Carollo Engineers, *City of Porterville Sewer System Master Plan*, City of Porterville, February 2001.