
6. AGRICULTURAL AND FORESTRY RESOURCES

This chapter describes existing agricultural and forestry resources in the planning area. The chapter includes the regulatory framework necessary to evaluate potential environmental impacts resulting from the 2040 General Plan, describes potential impacts that could result from the General Plan, and discusses General Plan goals, policies, and implementation programs that would avoid or reduce those potential impacts.

6.1 SETTING

The environmental and regulatory setting of the planning area with respect to agricultural resources is described in detail in Section 7.5 (Natural Resources: Open Space and Agricultural Resources) of the General Plan Existing Conditions Report (City of Burlingame, 2015). Regarding forestry resources, the planning area does not contain any forest land as defined in Public Resources Code Section 12220(g), timberland as defined by Public Resources Code Section 4526, or timberland zoned Timberland Production as defined by Government Code Section 51104(g), as referenced in the State CEQA Guidelines (appendix G, Environmental Checklist Form, item II.c). The Existing Conditions Report does not discuss forestry resources, and General Plan implementation would not have an impact on forestry resources since no such resources exist in Burlingame.

Pursuant to Section 15150 of the State CEQA Guidelines, the General Plan Existing Conditions Report is incorporated into the Draft Program EIR by reference. The Existing Conditions Report is available at the City of Burlingame 2040 General Plan website at:

<http://www.burlingame.org/GENERALPLAN/>

Copies of the Existing Conditions Report may be viewed during regular business hours (8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.), Monday through Friday, at the City of Burlingame Planning Division, 501 Primrose Road, Burlingame, CA 94010.

6.1.1 Environmental Setting

The Natural Resources section (Section 7.5) of the Existing Conditions Report describes agricultural resources within the planning area and vicinity. The major findings of the Natural Resources section relevant to agricultural resources are described below.

- According to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, Burlingame is designated as Urban and Built Up. No land in the City is designated as Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance.
- Burlingame and the surrounding area are urbanized. The City is not zoned for agricultural use, nor does it contain any properties under Williamson Act contracts.
- Burlingame does not have areas zoned as forest land or timberland, or timberland zoned as Timberland Production.

6.1.2 Regulatory Setting

The Existing Conditions Report Natural Resources chapter (Section 7.5) discusses the following regulatory setting relevant to agricultural resources.

Federal

No Federal regulations apply.

State

Williamson Act. The California Land Conservation Act, known as the Williamson Act, has been the State's premier agricultural land protection program since its enactment in 1965. Land under a Williamson Act contract is restricted to agricultural uses. The Williamson Act is a non-mandated State policy providing for preferential assessment of agricultural and open space lands that meet local size and land use criteria.

Senate Bill 275. SB 275 created the Agricultural Land Stewardship Program Act of 1995, a California Department of Conservation (CDOC) grant program for local governments and nonprofit organizations to aid in the acquisition of agricultural conservation easements. CDOC awards grant funding from the Agricultural Land Stewardship Program fund, which receives revenue from gifts, donations, proceeds from the sale of general obligation bonds, funds appropriated by the Legislature, Federal grants or loans, and other sources.

Local

Title 25 - Zoning Ordinance. The Zoning Ordinance for the City of Burlingame includes only residential, commercial, parks, and industrial zone designations, and does not have any provisions related to agricultural or forestry resources (City of Burlingame 2000, 2015).

6.2 ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS

This section describes potential impacts on agricultural and forestry resources that could result from General Plan implementation, and discusses General Plan goals, policies, and implementation programs that would avoid or reduce those potential impacts. The section also recommends mitigation measures as needed to reduce significant impacts.

6.2.1 Significance Criteria

Based on the CEQA Guidelines, implementation of the City of Burlingame 2040 General Plan would have a significant impact related to agricultural and forestry resources if it would:

- a. Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use;
- b. Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract;
- c. Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code section 12220[g]), timberland (as defined by Public Resources Code

section 4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code section 51104[g]);

- d. Result in loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use; or
- e. Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use.

The planning area does not contain any forest land or timberland, so criteria (c), (d), and (e) (for forest land) do not apply, and no impact would result.

6.2.2 Analysis Methodology

The methodology for evaluating potential environmental impacts on agricultural and forestry resources followed this basic sequence:

- a. The General Plan Existing Conditions Report was evaluated to identify existing environmental conditions and problems related to agricultural and forestry resources, including the regulatory framework that applies to these issues.
- b. The CEQA Statute and Guidelines (2017), including Appendix G (Environmental Checklist Form), were consulted to identify environmental impact topics and issues that should be addressed in the program EIR. In part, this process resulted in the significance criteria listed in subsection 6.2.1 above.
- c. The General Plan Policy Document, including the associated development capacity assumptions (see EIR section 3.6), was analyzed to identify goals, policies, implementation programs (“policies” for short), and potential outcomes that address the significance criteria. This analysis resulted in two basic conclusions regarding policies and outcomes: (a) many policies would avoid or reduce potential environmental impacts, and (b) some policies or outcomes could result in new environmental impacts or increase the severity of existing environmental problems.
- d. For potential environmental impacts that would result from the 2040 General Plan, mitigations were designed to avoid or reduce each impact to a less-than-significant level. If implementation of all identified feasible mitigations cannot reduce the impact to a less-than-significant level, then the impact is considered significant and unavoidable.

6.2.3 Environmental Impacts

Potential Impacts of Future Development under the 2040 General Plan

The City of Burlingame is an almost fully developed, urbanized area that does not contain any areas zoned or designated solely for commercial agriculture or forestry resources; therefore, there are no potential impacts from future development under the 2040 General Plan. (Significance Criteria 6.2.1 [a] – [e])

How Existing Regulations and General Plan Policies Reduce Impacts

Table 6-1 is aligned with relevant Existing Regulations and General Plan policies that relate to agricultural and forestry resources. Column 1 (Objective) lists each Regulation and General Plan goal, policy, and implementation program (“policy” for short), organized by General Plan element, that addresses the potential impact identified in Table 6-1. Column 2 is a summary of the regulation and the text of the policy. Column 3 answers the question, “How does the regulation/policy avoid or reduce the potential impact?” Column 4 identifies the applicable significance criteria that is addressed by the regulation/policy.

The verbs in Column 3 are intended to be applied consistently. The verb “ensures” means that the policy is sufficient to guarantee the result identified in the policy. The verb “helps” means that the policy contributes to avoiding or reducing the identified potential impact; in many cases, “helps” is used for a policy that can be applied to avoid or reduce a wide range of potential impacts. The verb “implements” is used for General Plan implementation programs to indicate that the program provides the details to put the associated policy into action.

Table 6-1: Proposed Burlingame Existing Regulations and General Plan Policies to Avoid or Reduce Impacts on Agriculture and Forestry Resources

Regulation/Policy	Description of Regulation/Policy	How Does It Avoid or Reduce Impact?	Applicable Significance Criteria
Existing Regulations			
Williamson Act	The Williamson Act is a non-mandated State policy providing for preferential assessment of agricultural and open space lands that meet local size and land use criteria.	There are no Williamson Act contracts in the planning area.	(b) Conflict with agricultural zoning
Title 25 - Zoning Ordinance	The Zoning Ordinance for the City of Burlingame includes only residential, commercial, parks, and industrial zone designations and does not have any provisions related to agricultural or forestry resources (City of Burlingame 2000, 2015).	There are no agricultural or forestry resources in the planning area.	(a) Convert farmland (b) Conflict with agricultural zoning (c) Conflict with forestry zoning (d) Loss of forest land (e) Convert farmland to non-agricultural use

Conclusions

In most cases, no one regulation, goal, policy, or implementation measure in itself is expected to completely avoid or reduce an identified potential environmental impact. However, the collective, cumulative mitigating benefits of the regulations and policies listed in Table 6-1 will result in no impact related to the identified significance criteria and the corresponding

environmental topic listed in Table 6-1. This conclusion is consistent with the purpose and use of a program EIR for a general plan (see EIR Introduction, Chapter 1).

Based on the methodology described above, implementation of the 2040 General Plan would result in **no impact** on agricultural resources (see criteria [a], [b], and [e] in subsection 6.2.1, “Significance Criteria,” above). Furthermore, since the planning area does not contain any forest land or timberland, significance criteria (c), (d), and (e) (for forest land) do not apply, and **no impact** would result. No mitigation is required.

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