

# 7

## Public Health & Safety

The purpose of the Public Health & Safety Element is to identify the natural and man-made public health and safety hazards that exist within the City, and to establish preventative and responsive policies and programs to mitigate their potential impacts. This Element addresses geologic hazards, wildfire hazards, hazardous materials, flood hazards, and safety services. It also includes policies on natural hazards mitigation planning, which respond to the Federal Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 and the Federal Emergency Management Agency's implementing regulations. Airport safety is addressed in the Land Use, Circulation, and Noise Elements.

### **7.1 SEISMIC & GEOLOGIC HAZARDS**

---

Geologic and soils hazards include steep slopes and landslides, subsidence, expansive soils, and soils with naturally-occurring asbestos. These hazards are shown on figures 7-1 and 7-2. Additional information on soils and erosion within the Planning Area is in Open Space & Conservation Element. Seismic hazards related to earthquakes include ground shaking and ground failures, such as liquefaction, lateral spreading, ground lurching, seiches, mudslides, landslides, and soil slumping.

#### **GEOLOGY & SOILS**

The valley floor is mostly composed of consolidated alluvial deposits which can be soft near the river and other waterways and firm in the downtown, north and northeast areas as a transition to the granitic bedrock deposits in the foothills. The Porterville Planning Area contains a wide variety of soil types which have a significant bearing on land planning and development. Porterville Clay is the most prominent soil type located within the Planning

Area, comprising approximately 18 percent of the Planning Area. The City Code Building Regulations (Chapter 7, Article XIII) require a preliminary soil report for every new subdivision.

### *Steep Slopes and Landslides*

The majority of the urban area is at elevations between 400 and 800 feet. However, the eastern portion of the Planning Area is in the Sierra Nevada foothills where elevations reach almost 1,800 feet above sea level. Slopes can be greater than 30 percent grade. Development which occurs on slopes greater than 25 percent exacerbates soil erosion, risk of landslides and wildland fires, as well as impacting the visual aesthetics of the area. Figure 7-1 shows the steep slopes in the Planning Area.

Areas with fractured and steep slopes, where less consolidated or weathered soils overlie bedrock, have a higher risk of landslides. The California Geological Survey determined that no areas in Tulare County are at risk for catastrophic failure due to landslides.

The City is adopting a Hillside Development Ordinance which includes development, design and landscape standards for the Hillside Development Zone. The Ordinance will limit the number of housing units allowed per acre in sloped areas in order to protect the public health, safety and welfare; protect and preserve natural and biological resources for the long-term benefit of Porterville and the broader community.

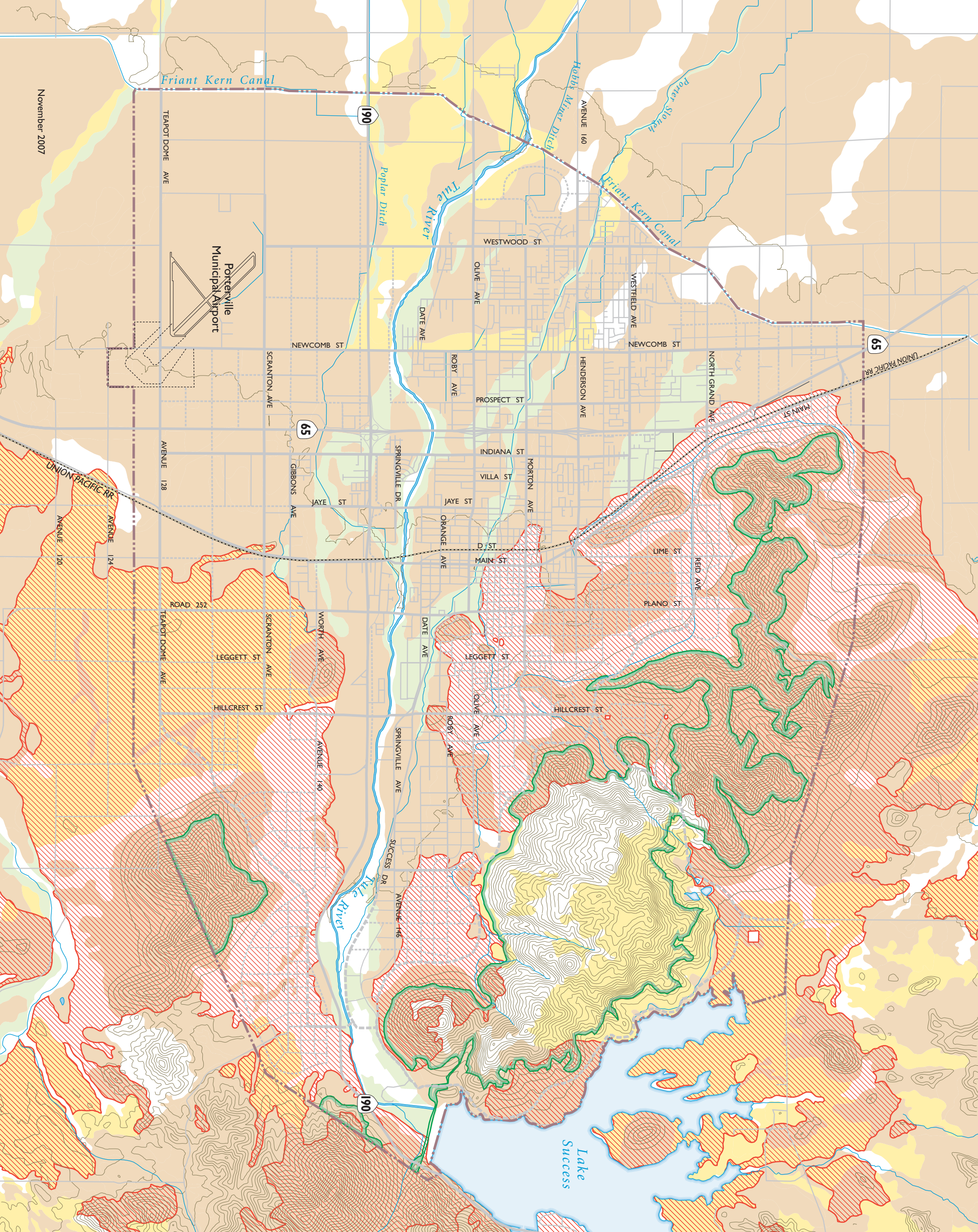
### *Expansive Soils*

Expansive soils have the potential to shrink or swell significantly with changes in moisture content, which can limit the development capacity of an area. The type and amount of the silt and clay content in the soil will determine the amount of shrink or swell associated with the various levels of water content. Soils comprised of sand and gravel are not expansive soils.

Expansive soils are most likely to be found in basins and basin rims. Any structure located on expansive soils can be significantly damaged should the soil suddenly shrink or swell. Structural damage may result over a long period of time, usually from inadequate soils and foundation engineering or the placement of structures directly on expansive soils. Construction in areas of expansive soils may require major sub-excavation and replacement of existing materials with more stable soils.

As shown in Figure 7-1 the eastern portion of the Planning Area contains clay soils with high expansion potential. Table 7-1 summarizes the distribution of soil expansion potential for the Planning Area as a whole.

Figure 7-1  
Geological and Soil Hazards



**Erosion Susceptibility Index (K Factor)**

- 0.17 - Low
- 0.20 - 0.28 - Moderate
- 0.32 - 0.43 - High

High Soil Expansion Potential

Slope greater than 25%

Planning Area

Source: California Division of Mines and Geology.





**Table 7-1: Expansive Soils**

<i>Soil Expansion Potential</i>	<i>Total Acres</i>	<i>Percent of Total</i>
High	13,722	38%
Moderate	349	1%
Low	17,563	48%
Data Unavailable <sup>1</sup>	4,707	13%
<b>Total</b>	<b>36,283</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

<sup>1</sup> Includes water, riverwash, rock outcrops, pits and dumps

Source: Environmental Science Associates, 2005.

### *Subsidence*

Subsidence occurs when a large portion of land is displaced vertically, usually due to the withdrawal of groundwater, oil, or natural gas. Soils that are particularly subject to subsidence include those with high silt or clay content. Some areas in the Central Valley have subsided more than 20 feet during the past 50 years.<sup>1</sup> Subsidence may occur in the Planning Area, particularly in areas with high clay content soils or due to groundwater withdrawal.

### *Naturally-Occurring Asbestos*

Asbestos is a term used for several types of naturally-occurring fibrous minerals found in serpentine rock, and its parent material, ultramafic rock. These rock types are abundant in the Sierra foothills. Naturally-occurring asbestos (NOA) has been identified in Tulare County and ultramafic rocks have been generally mapped in the Porterville area.<sup>2,3</sup> Figure 7-2 illustrates areas more likely to contain natural occurrences of asbestos.

Asbestos may be released from ultramafic and serpentine rock when it is broken or crushed. This can happen when land is graded for building or agriculture purposes, at quarrying operations, or when the soil is disturbed by other activities such as the digging of fire suppression trenches. It is also released naturally through weathering and erosion. Once released from the rock, asbestos can become airborne and may stay in the air for long periods of time. Airborne asbestos is classified as a human carcinogen. Exposure to asbestos can result in health ailments, such as lung cancer, mesothelioma (cancer of the linings of the lungs and abdomen), and asbestosis (scarring of lung tissues that results in constricted breathing).<sup>4</sup>

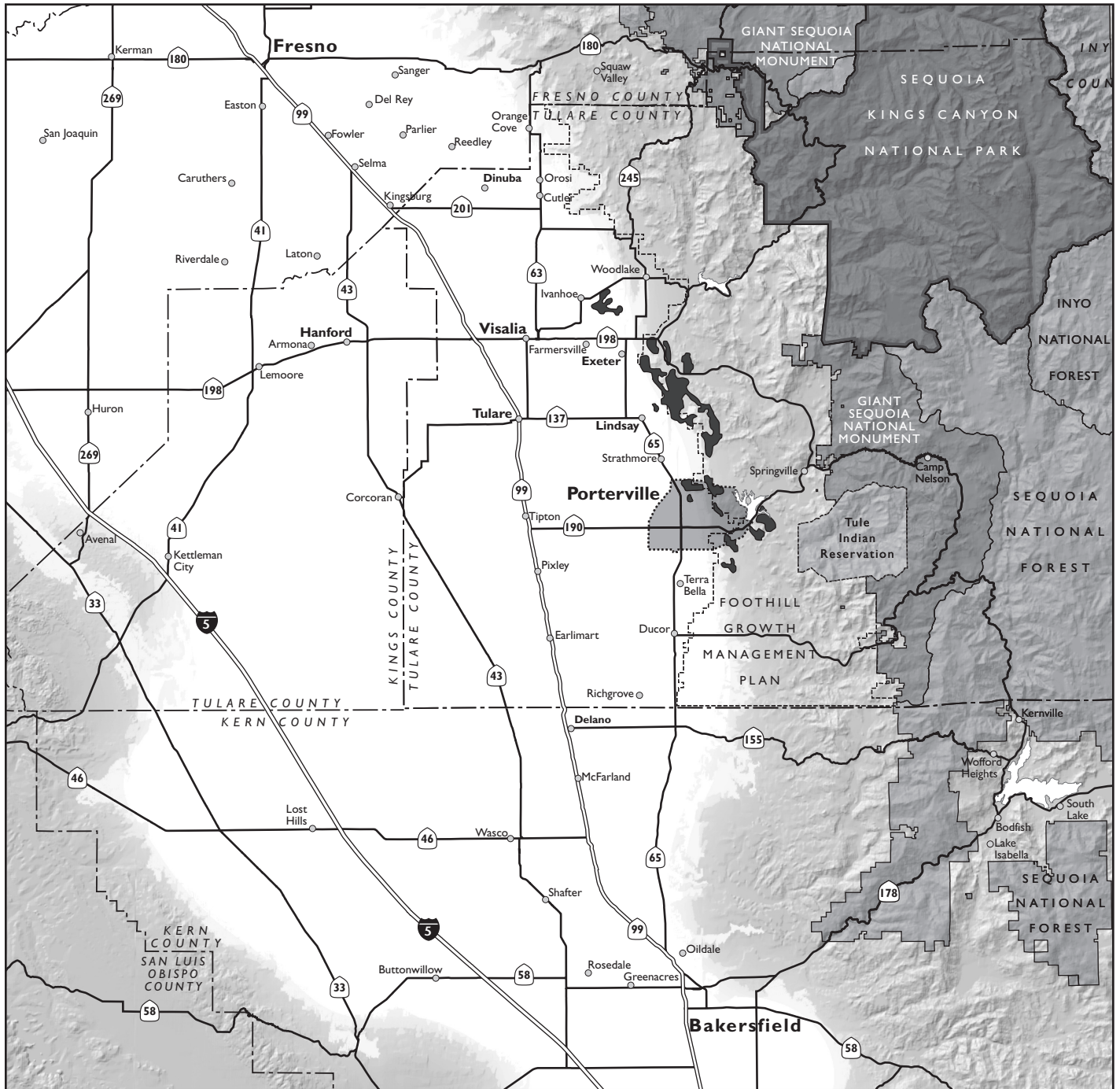
This hazard is also addressed in the Open Space & Conservation Element.


<sup>1</sup> Tulare County, General Plan Background Report, October 2004. pg. 8-11.

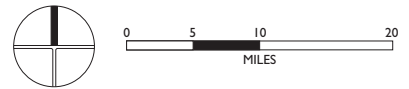
<sup>2</sup> Geologic maps are generalized depictions of the presence and distribution of rock types. Without extensive surveys, detailed maps of NOA are not feasible.

<sup>3</sup> California Air Resources Board. <http://www.arb.ca.gov/toxics/asbestos/geninfo.htm>

<sup>4</sup> SJVAPCD, Draft Staff Report Asbestos for Surfacing Applications, March, 2002.



 Ultramafic Rock Areas



The ultramafic rock areas shown on this map are adapted from Jennings, C.W., 1977, Geologic Map of California, California Department of Conservation, Division of Mines and Geology, Geologic Data Map No. 2, scale 1:750,000.

**This map should not be used to determine whether bedrock or soil on a particular parcel of land in or adjacent to areas identified as ultramafic rocks contains asbestos. A site-specific investigation would be required to make such a determination.**

*Figure 7-2*  
**Location of Ultramafic Rocks, Areas More Likely to Contain Naturally Occurring Asbestos**

## SEISMIC HAZARDS

There are no known active earthquake faults in the Planning Area. The closest active faults are Owens Valley fault group and Sierra Nevada Fault Zone (50 miles to the east of the Planning Area, the San Andreas Fault Zone (70 miles to the west), and an unnamed fault group north of Bakersfield (40 miles to the south).<sup>1</sup> Major earthquakes such as the 1906 San Francisco, 1952 Kern County, and 1983 Coalinga quakes were felt and caused some minor to moderate property damage in Porterville. Other potentially active faults exist near Tulare Buttes, about 30 miles north of Porterville. These faults are small and have exhibited activity in the last 1.6 million years, but not in the last 200 years. It is possible, but unlikely, that previously unknown faults could become active in the area. The State Geologist has not delineated any Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zones within or near the Planning Area.

### *Ground Shaking*

The most significant hazard associated with earthquakes for the Porterville area is ground shaking rather than surface rupture or ground failure. However, the hazards due to ground shaking are considered to be minimal. Ground shaking intensities are measured using the modified Mercalli Intensity Scale. This is a 12-point scale of earthquake intensity based on local effects experienced by people, structures, and earth materials. Effects range from those that are detectable only by seismicity recording instruments at M1 (I) to total destruction at M12 (XII). The Modified Mercalli Rating for the Porterville area, as determined by the California Division of Mines and Geology, is estimated to be between Intensity M7 (VII) and M8 (VIII). Intensity M7 will cause considerable damage in poorly designed or constructed buildings (including some broken chimneys), slight to moderate damage in well-built ordinary structures, and negligible damage in buildings of good design and construction. Intensity M8 will cause great damage in poorly designed or constructed buildings (including fall of chimneys, factory stacks, columns, walls, etc.), considerable damage in ordinarily substantial structures (including some partial collapse), but slight damage in specially designed structures.

### *Ground Failure*

Earthquake-induced ground failures, such as ruptures, lateral spreading, ground lurching, seiches, or mudslides, are unlikely to occur in the Planning Area because of its relatively stable geologic formation and lack of active faults. However, there is moderate risks of landslides due to the hillside topography, and soil slumping and liquefaction near the Tule River. There is also the risk of earthquake-induced dam failure at Success Dam. Potential inundation effects are discussed below in the Flood Hazards section.

### *Seismic Safety*

Existing structures in the Planning Area could be affected by the types of earthquake-induced effects listed above, but to varying degrees based on length, intensity, and distance of the earthquake from a given building. New structures are required to adhere to current California Uniform Building Code (CUBC) standards for Seismic Zone 3, providing adequate design, construction and maintenance of structures to prevent exposure of people and structures to major geologic hazards. In particular, any critical facilities such as hospitals, fire and police

---

<sup>1</sup> USGS Fault Maps, <http://quake.wr.usgs.gov/info/faultmaps>

stations, and emergency communications and operations centers must be adequately designed, constructed and maintained with the goal of remaining functional after a large seismic event. The use of flexible utility connections, building anchors, and adequately reinforced concrete can reduce the loss of life and damage to buildings for human occupancy.

## GUIDING POLICY

*PHS-G-1 Minimize risks of property damage and personal injury posed by geologic and seismic hazards.*

## IMPLEMENTING POLICIES

**PHS-I-1** Amend the Zoning Ordinance to include provisions for a geologic hazards abatement district for hillside areas to ensure that geologic hazards are properly mitigated by developers or avoided prior to, or during, development.

*Geologic Hazard Abatement Districts are potentially useful financing mechanisms for reducing hillslope hazards. They enable the formation of local assessment districts for the purpose of prevention, mitigation, abatement, or control of geologic hazards, allowing property owners to cooperate in solving a common problem and share costs in an equitable way. These districts are established on individual sites on a case-by-case basis through Zoning Map amendments.*

**PHS-I-2** Maintain and enforce appropriate building standards and codes to avoid and/or reduce risks associated with geologic constraints and to ensure that all new construction is designed to meet current safety regulations.

**PHS-I-3** Provide information and incentives for property owners to rehabilitate existing buildings using construction techniques to protect against seismic hazards.

**PHS-I-4** Support continued investigation by State agencies of geologic conditions within the City's Planning Area to promote public awareness of potential geologic and seismic hazards.

**PHS-I-5** Require, as part of the preliminary soil report, a construction dust management plan when it has been determined that soils contain naturally-occurring asbestos.

**PHS-I-6** If asbestos is present require construction work be done when soil moisture is sufficient to adequately compact the tread and prevent visible dust, which may contain airborne asbestos emissions.

*If work is to be done under dry season conditions, then water will be added in sufficient quantities to maintain adequate soil moisture. Upon mechanical disturbance by the treads of track driven equipment, the soil will be re-compacted in six-inch or less lifts.*



## 7.2 FLOOD HAZARDS

Porterville is in the Tulare County Flood Control District. Since the climate is relatively arid and development continues to increase the amount of impervious surfaces, surface run-off and storm drainage must be managed. The average annual precipitation in the Porterville area is approximately 10 inches. However, portions of the Tule River watershed which contribute to flooding in Porterville have a mean annual precipitation of 40 inches. Eighty-five percent of the annual precipitation occurs between November and April.

In the Planning Area, there are two natural channels for storm water discharge, the Tule River and Porter Slough. Flows in the natural waterways are largely controlled by the Success Dam, but still pose some flooding hazards, particularly in the lower-lying western portions of the City. Flash flooding has occurred in low-lying drainage areas at the base of the foothills. The main channel of the Tule River can pass flows of about 10,000 cubic feet per second (cfs) before extensive damage occurs. Damage to urban property would occur at flows of approximately 16,000 cfs. Porter Slough has a designated capacity of 450 cfs and is an officially designated floodway of Tule River.

There are also seven irrigation ditch companies and storage reservoirs which divert and manage surface water within the Planning Area. In addition to delivering water for irrigation, the ditches provide extra capacity to carry peak flood flows and urban storm water runoff. Minor flooding or ponding may occur on the valley floor if irrigation canals or reservoirs overflow. See the Public Facilities Element for more information about storm drainage facilities.

### FLOOD ZONES

In Porterville, the storm flood hazard is considered to be low because the City does not permit development in the flood plain without adequate mitigation measures. Flood zone mapping by the Federal Emergency Management Authority (FEMA) indicates that approximately six percent of the total Planning Area is located within the 100-year floodplain and another five percent is located within the 500-year floodplain. These two floodplains closely correspond to the watercourses that flow through the city. These flood zones are illustrated in Figure 7-3 and summarized in Table 7-2.

**Table 7-2: Floodplains in Planning Area**

Type	Acres	Percent of Planning Area
100 Year Floodplain	2,136	6%
500 Year Floodplain	1,958	5%
Success Dam Inundation Area	13,390	40%

Source: FEMA, 2005; U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, 2004.

### Dam Safety & Inundation Hazard

A breach or overflow event at Success Lake Dam could cause significant flooding in Porterville. This dam is overseen and maintained by the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) and administered by the Sacramento District of the USACE's regional office located in Porterville. Through their work, Porterville is provided with flood safety, water resources, electricity, recreation, and camping. It includes a recreation area, located eight miles east of the City of Porterville in the western portion of the Sierra Nevada foothills.

Construction of the earth-filled dam was completed in 1961. It spans 3,490 feet across the Tule River and is 142 feet high. When full, the lake holds 82,000 acre-feet of water with a surface area of 2,450 acres.

Success Dam was originally designed to withstand an earthquake with a magnitude of 8.3. However, it was built before the process of seismic liquefaction of earth-fill dams was completely understood. The USACE is planning to re-construct and widen the existing earthen embankment dam to bring it up to federal safety standards. Construction should begin in 2009. Once the seismic retrofit is complete, USACE intends to raise the spillway by 10 feet and lengthen it by 165 feet. This addition will increase Lake Success' capacity by 28,000 acre feet.

According to a 2004 report prepared for USACE, approximately 40 percent of the Planning Area is located within the Success Dam inundation area.<sup>1</sup> This inundation area runs through Porterville, to a location downstream of Corcoran, a distance of approximately 44 miles. Although subsequent infrastructure and drainage improvements have reduced the threat of flooding in many areas prone to inundation, the City requires a flood certificate and appropriately raised floor plates for any development proposed in an identified hazardous flood zone.

**Figure 7-3: Flood Hazards? Figures 7-3 BACKGUIDING POLICY**

PHS-G-2      *Protect the community from risks to life and property posed by flooding and stormwater runoff.*

**IMPLEMENTATION POLICIES**

PHS-I-7      Coordinate with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the County and local irrigation districts on potential flooding risks, including risks associated with dam failure.

*This will include coordination on training to respond to catastrophic dam failure, and maintaining adequate storm drainage capacity in the Tule River and Porter Slough.*

PHS-I-8      Implement appropriate flood control measures to assure the safety of residents, while emphasizing maintenance of natural wildlife habitats and vegetation.

PHS-I-9      Require new development to provide for the perpetual funding and ongoing maintenance of detention reservoirs.





*Maintenance may be by the City under contract, by a private entity, or by another public agency.*

PHS-I-10     Continue to require any new development in the floodway to obtain a permit from the California Reclamation Board and enforce the Flood Damage Prevention Ordinance.

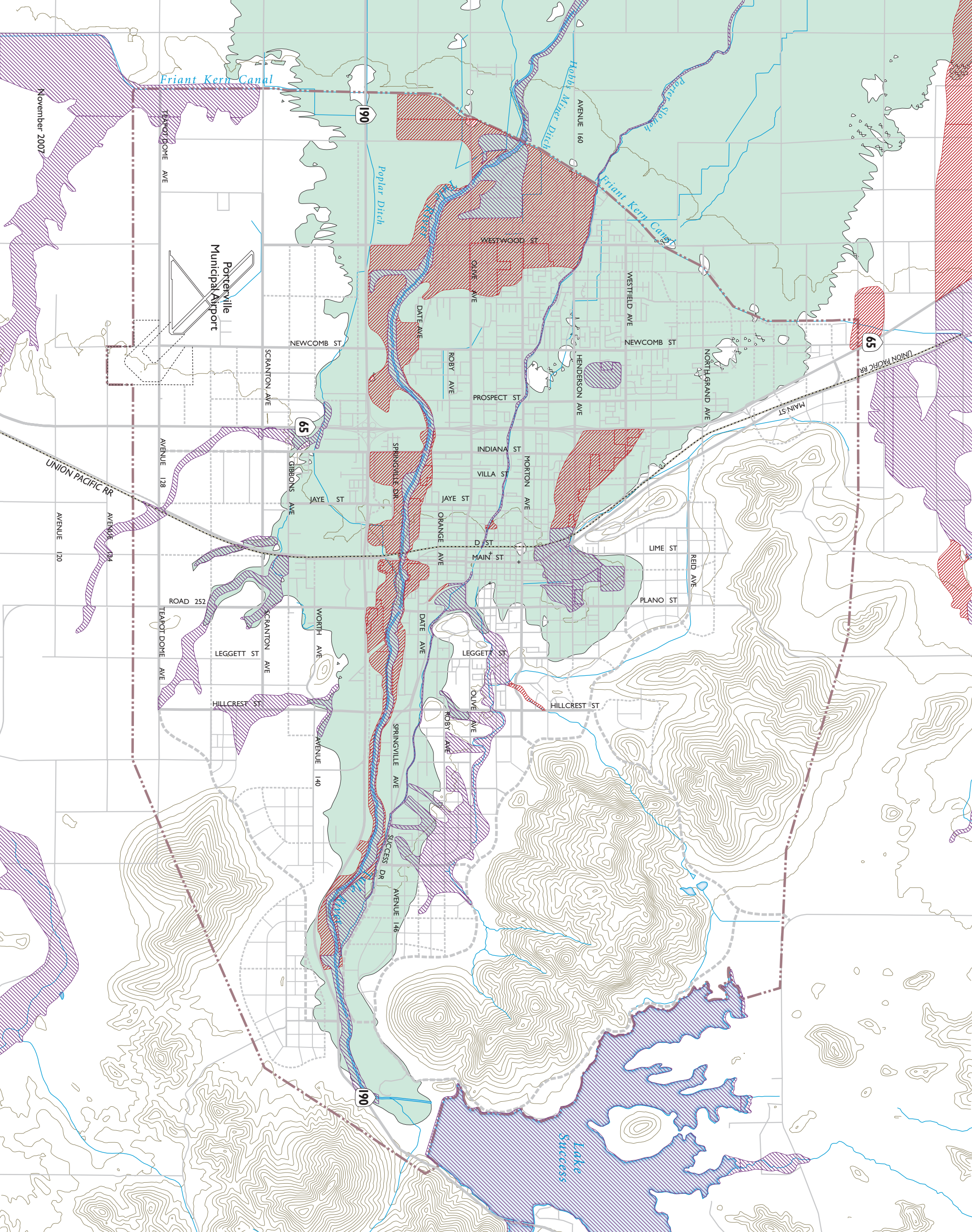
---

<sup>1</sup> RAC Engineers & Economists. *Lake Success: Flood Inundation for an Earthquake-Induced Dam Failure with the Reservoir Poll at El. 630 ft msl.* October 2004.

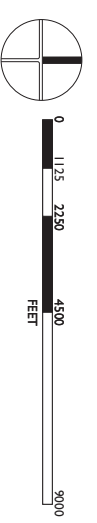
Figure 7-3  
Flood Hazards

-  100-year Flood Zone
-  500-year Flood Zone
-  Dam Failure Inundation Area
-  Planning Area

Source: FEMA, 1995.



40  
10  
Acres  
Feet



November 2007



- PHS-I-11 Coordinate with appropriate agencies to ensure that new bridges are constructed according to acceptable standards and maintained to avoid flood damage.
- PHS-I-12 Continue to participate in the National Flood Insurance Program and encourage all property owners within flood hazard areas to carry flood insurance.

### 7.3 FIRE HAZARDS

---

#### WILDLAND FIRES

Fire hazard potential is largely dependent on the extent and type of vegetation, known as surface fuels, that exists within a region. Fire hazards are typically highest in heavily wooded, undeveloped areas as trees are a greater source of fuel than low-lying brush or grassland. Suburban, urban areas, or rocky barren areas have minimal surface fuels and therefore typically have the lowest fire hazard. Figure 7-4 depicts the risk of fire within the Planning Area.

Due to the wooded nature of the Sierra Nevada foothills and hot summers, land located in the northeast portion of the Planning Area near Lake Success is considered to have a high to very high risk of fire. The fire season has over 100 days of temperatures in excess of 90 degrees Fahrenheit, usually between May and October. Forty-three percent of the Planning Area is considered to have a moderate fire hazard (see Table 7-3). Pockets of land with high fire hazards are found throughout the Planning Area, although the fire hazard currently present in these areas should decrease as vacant parcels become developed. The wooded areas along the Tule River have the potential of allowing a wildland fire to traverse the Planning Area.

**Table 7-3: Existing Wildland Fire Hazards**

<i>Fire Hazards</i>	<i>Acres</i>	<i>Percent of Planning Area</i>
Little or No Threat	8,490	23%
Moderate	15,777	43%
High	7,183	20%
Very High	2,373	7%
Unclassified	2,518	7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>36,341</b>	<b>100%</b>

Level of fire hazard severity based on surface fuels analysis, California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection.

Source: California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, Dyett & Bhatia, 2005.

## **URBAN FIRES**

Even though Porterville is not considered to be a fire-prone city, structural fires pose a greater risk to life and property than wildland fires. The City of Porterville requires all new development and subdivisions to meet or exceed the Uniform Fire Code provisions (Porterville City Code: Chapter 12) which address topography, geology, climate, and development conditions. The Public Works Department and Fire Department review all development applications during the review process.

## **GUIDING POLICY**

*PHS-G-3      Protect Porterville’s residents and businesses from potential fire hazards.*

## **IMPLEMENTATION POLICIES**

PHS-I-13      Maintain automatic and/or mutual aid agreements with surrounding jurisdictions for fire protection.

PHS-I-14      Enforce weed abatement programs and building and fire code requirements to assure adequate fire protection.

PHS-I-15      Develop and expand existing public fire safety and emergency life support education programs in order to promote public awareness of fire hazards and emergency procedures.

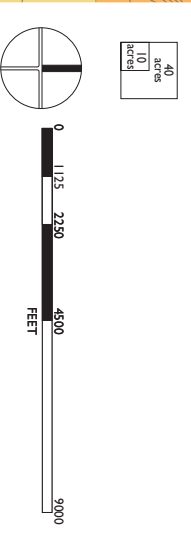
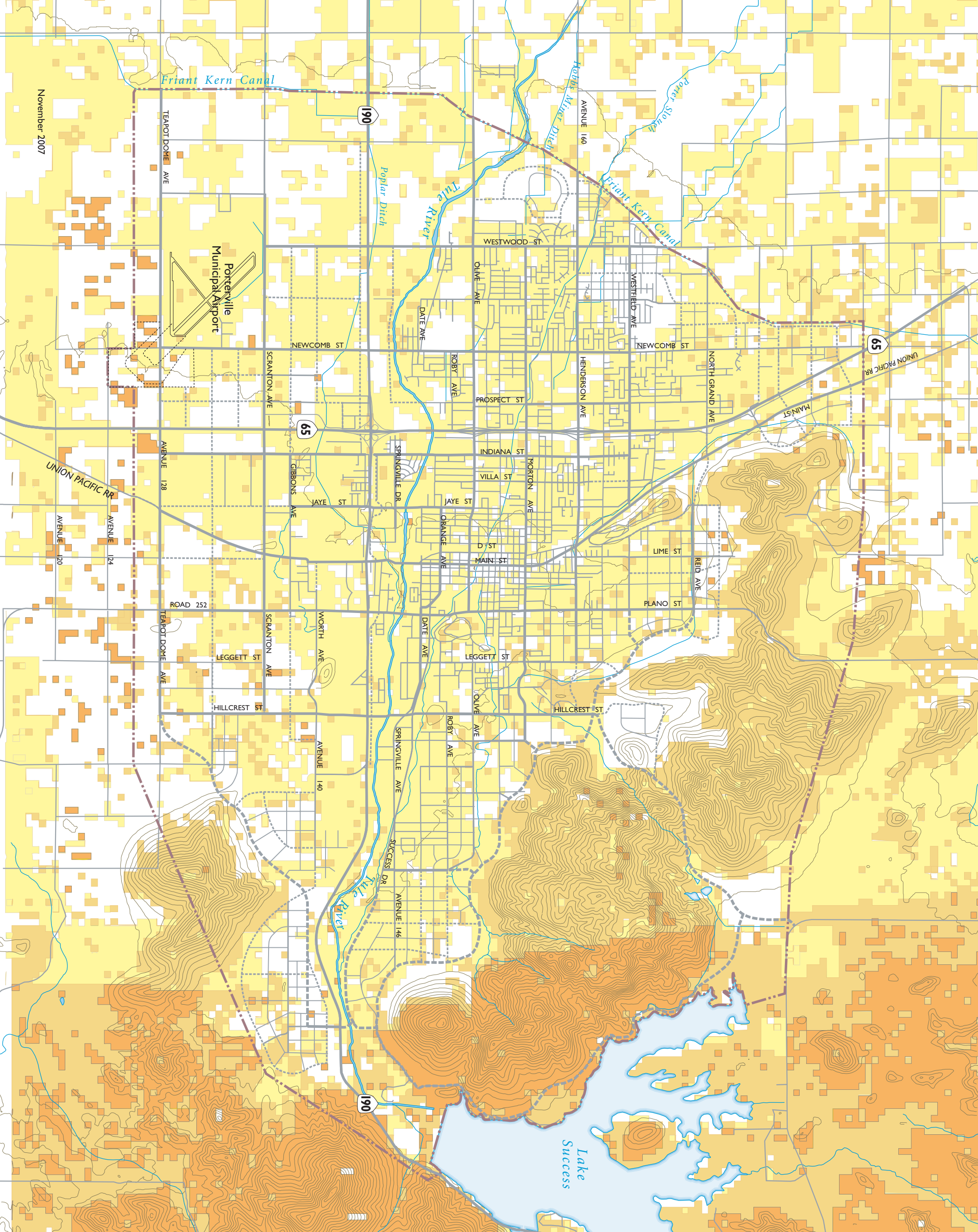
PHS-I-16      Establish fire hazard standards and review procedures at least equivalent to State requirements to protect new development on or adjacent to the hillsides.

*The Subdivision Ordinance and the Zoning Ordinance standards will require new development on the urban fringe to incorporate fuel breaks, fuel reduction and buffer zones to minimize potential fire losses.*

Figure 7-4  
Wildland Fire Hazards

- Moderate
- High
- Very High
- Planning Area

Source: California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, 2004



November 2007





## 7.4 HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

---

The California Code of Regulations defines a hazardous material as a substance that, because of physical or chemical properties, quantity, concentration, or other characteristics, may either (1) cause an increase in mortality or an increase in serious, irreversible, or incapacitating, illness or (2) pose a substantial present or potential hazard to human health or environment when improperly treated, stored, transported or disposed of, or otherwise managed.<sup>1</sup> Hazardous wastes are hazardous materials that no longer have practical use, such as substances that have been discarded, discharged, spilled, contaminated, or are being stored prior to proper disposal. A hazardous materials incident involves the uncontrolled release of a hazardous substance during storage, use, or transport.

### LAWS & REGULATIONS

Federal and State laws require detailed planning to ensure that hazardous materials are properly handled, used, stored, transported and disposed of, and in the event that such materials are accidentally released, to prevent or mitigate injury to health or the environment. Laws and regulations require hazardous materials users to train employees to manage them safely. The primary federal agencies with responsibility for hazardous materials management include the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), U.S. Department of Labor Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), and the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT). In many cases, California State law mirrors or is more restrictive than federal law, and enforcement of these laws has been delegated to the State or a local agency.

The State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) administers the aboveground storage tank (AST) program and the underground storage tank (UST) program. The AST program covers facilities that store petroleum in a single tank, or multiple tanks with an aggregate capacity in excess of 1,320 gallons, and requires that tank owners or operators file a storage statement, pay a facility fee, and prepare and implement a Federal Soil Prevention, Control and Countermeasure (SPCC) Plan. The SPCC Plan must identify procedures, methods, and equipment in place at the facility to prevent discharges of petroleum from reaching navigable waters. State laws governing USTs specify requirements for permitting, construction, installation, leak detection monitoring, repairs, release reporting requirements, corrective actions, cleanup, and closure.

---

<sup>1</sup> California Code of Regulations, Title 22, Division 4.5, Chapter 10, Article 2, Section 66260.10

In Porterville, the Tulare County Environmental Health Division (TCEHD) is the local agency responsible for the implementation of the state-mandated Unified Hazardous Waste and Hazardous Materials Management Regulatory Program. Tulare County has prepared a Hazardous Waste Management Plan and a Multi-Hazard Functional Plan, that serves as the County's emergency response plan for hazardous materials emergency incidents. In addition, the TCEHD acts as lead agency to ensure proper remediation of leaking underground petroleum storage tank sites and certain other contaminated sites. TCEHD provides a permanent Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) drop-off facility located in Visalia (approximately 30 miles from Porterville) that is available free of charge to any Tulare County resident and operates mobile collection events throughout the year. Typically, two events per year are hosted in Porterville, normally in April and September.

The City of Porterville Fire Department, Fire Prevention Division provides limited oversight of hazardous materials. The Fire Department is responsible for conducting inspections for code compliance and fire-safe practices, permitting of certain hazardous materials, and for investigation of fire and hazardous materials incidents. The Fire Department regulates explosive and hazardous materials under the Uniform Fire Code, and permits the handling, storage and use of any explosive or other hazardous material.

### **HAZARDOUS MATERIALS SITES**

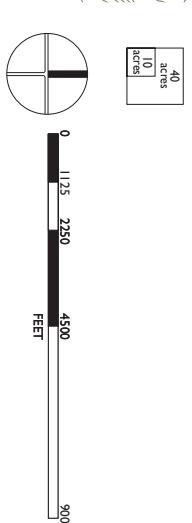
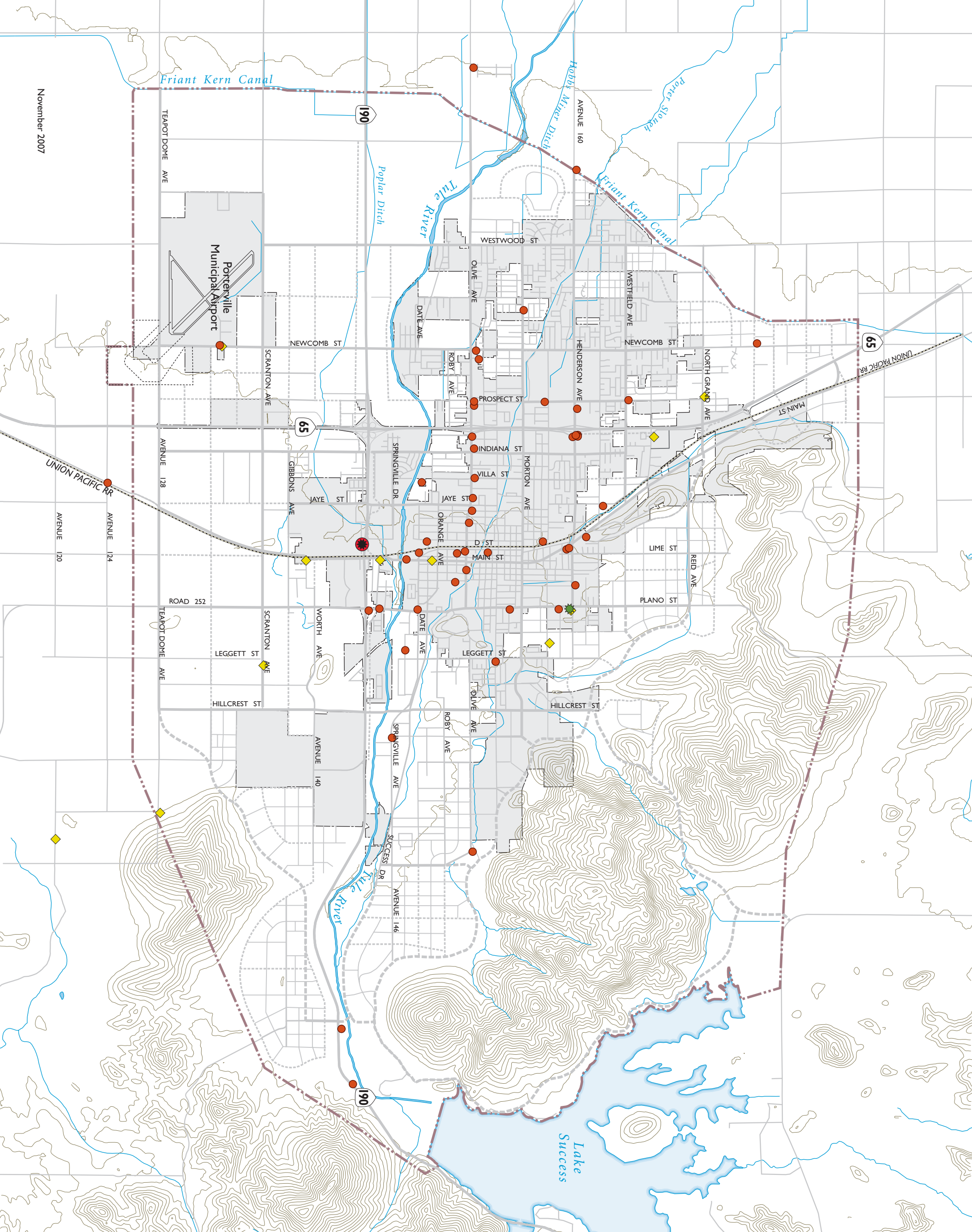
Areas where historic or on-going activities have resulted in the known or suspected release of hazardous materials into the soil and groundwater are identified by Environmental Data Resources, Inc. In Porterville, contaminated sites are largely associated with leaking underground storage tanks and are predominately clustered around primary transportation corridors including State Route 65 (SR 65), Main Street, Henderson Avenue, and Olive Avenue (see Figure 7-5). Most sites are associated with retail and commercial uses (e.g., gas stations, convenience stores, car washes, etc.), but a few are associated with local industrial and agricultural uses. Sites identified on the State's existing Brownfield database are also shown in Figure 7-5.

The City's Emergency Operations Plan also mentions the possibility of illegal drug manufacturing sites as sources of hazardous materials and incidents. Residue and hazardous waste are often dumped illegally and pose a threat to public health.

Figure 7-5  
**Hazardous Materials**

- Leaking Underground Storage Tanks (LUST)
- ◆ Spills, Leaks, Investigations, & Cleanups (SLIC)
- ★ Toxic Releases
- Superfund Site
- Planning Area
- ▭ City Limits, 2006

Source: SWRCB Geotracker, and EPA RCRA, 2007





**GUIDING POLICY**

PHS-G-4 *Protect soils, surface water, and groundwater from contamination from hazardous materials.*

**IMPLEMENTATION POLICIES**

PHS-I-17 Require remediation and cleanup of sites contaminated with hazardous substances.

*The level of remediation and cleanup will be determined based on the intended use and health risk to the public. At the minimum, remediation will be in compliance with federal and State standards. Clean up shall be required in conjunction with new development, reconstruction, property transfer of ownership, and/or continued operation after the discovery of contamination.*

PHS-I-18 Adopt a Household Hazardous Waste Program and support the proper disposal of hazardous household waste and waste oil; encourage citizens and crime watch organizations to report unlawful dumping of hazardous materials.

*The City will promote the reduction, recycling, and safe disposal of household hazardous wastes through public education and awareness. Collection programs should be reviewed annually and expanded where appropriate. The City will also coordinate with hazardous waste recyclers to increase the frequency of hazardous waste collection events under this program.*

PHS-I-19 Ensure that all specified hazardous facilities conform to the Tulare County Hazardous Waste Management Plan.

PHS-I-20 Prohibit specified hazardous waste residual repositories and onsite facilities utilizing incineration methods unless the facility demonstrates that it will produce insignificant levels of emissions.

PHS-I-21 Coordinate enforcement of the Hazardous Material Disclosure Law and the implementation of the Hazardous Material Emergency Response Plan with the Tulare County Health and Human Service Agency.

*State and federal legislation requires every business that handles hazardous materials report their inventories to the local fire department. The program's primary function is to identify, monitor, and assist businesses using or storing hazardous materials and allow the City to handle emergency incidents more effectively. The City will maintain and share this information with police, fire, and emergency services.*

PHS-I-22 Coordinate with the Tulare County Department of Environmental Health, and other appropriate regulatory agencies during the review process of all proposals for the use of hazardous materials or those involving properties that may have toxic contamination, such as petroleum hydrocarbons, CAM 17 metals, asbestos, and lead.

- PHS-I-23      Require applicants of projects in areas of known or suspected hazardous materials occurrences such as petroleum hydrocarbon contamination, CAM 17 metals, USTs, location of asbestos rocks and other such contamination to perform comprehensive soil and groundwater contamination assessments in accordance with regulatory agency testing standards, and if contamination exceeds regulatory action levels, require the project applicant to undertake remediation procedures prior to grading and development under the supervision of appropriate agencies, such as Tulare County Department of Environmental Health, Department of Toxic Substances Control, or Regional Water Quality Control Board.

## 7.5 SAFETY SERVICES

### POLICE SERVICES

Law enforcement services in Porterville are provided by the City of Porterville Police Department. The Department currently has 57 sworn peace officers and 22 civilian staff members. Every sworn officer is provided with the safety gear essential to their specific assignment including firearms, protective vests, and uniforms. Each officer is assigned a vehicle, either a marked police car, a marked police motorcycle, or an unmarked police car. Additionally, the Police Department has a SWAT specific vehicle, a DUI/Mobile Substation Trailer, and a Radar Display trailer. The Porterville Police Department's headquarters is located at 350 N. D Street.

Currently, the Police Department is operating at a ratio of almost 1.3 officers per 1,000 residents. Response times and the ability of the Police Department to provide acceptable levels of service are contingent on growing staffing levels, sworn and civilian, consistent with resident population and the population of visitors, merchants, schools, and shoppers with the service area of Porterville. According to the Porterville Police Department, a ratio of 1.2 police officers to 1,000 residents would support adequate law enforcement efforts at buildout. This would require a total of 129 (72 additional) sworn officers by 2030.

Even though the current police facility is nearing its capacity to support staffing levels, the Police Department will continue to maintain a central station. Due to the resources involved in providing police services to the community, a centralized station is more effective, efficient, and fiscally responsible. As the community grows and levels of service increase, satellite Community-based Policing Offices will be located with other public facilities, such as fire stations in shopping centers, community centers or high-crime areas in order to provide the required services.

The Tulare County Sheriff's Office has a Porterville substation at 379 N. Third Street. This substation has ten patrols for the currently unincorporated areas of the County. As Porterville grows, the Police Department will need to work closely with the Sheriff's Office.

### FIRE & LIFE SAFETY SERVICES

The City's Fire Department provides fire and life safety services for residents located within the city limits while the Tulare County Fire Department provides additional services for unincorporated areas within the Planning Area. City fire dispatch is handled by the Police Department.

In order to meet the service demand of greater population, four new fire stations are proposed by this General Plan. The Fire Department has planned stations near the intersection of Jaye Street and Worth Avenue,



*The Plan will support expansion of existing public fire safety and emergency life support services.*










near the intersection of Morton Avenue and Crestview Street,<sup>1</sup> near the Porterville Airport, and near the intersection of Reid Avenue and Main Street. The locations of County, City-owned, and CDF stations are illustrated in Figure 7-6, along with 1.5 mile radii from fire stations demonstrating fire coverage for Porterville residents. Table 7-4 summarizes fire station locations and facilities.

---

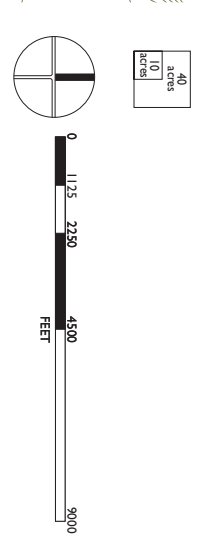
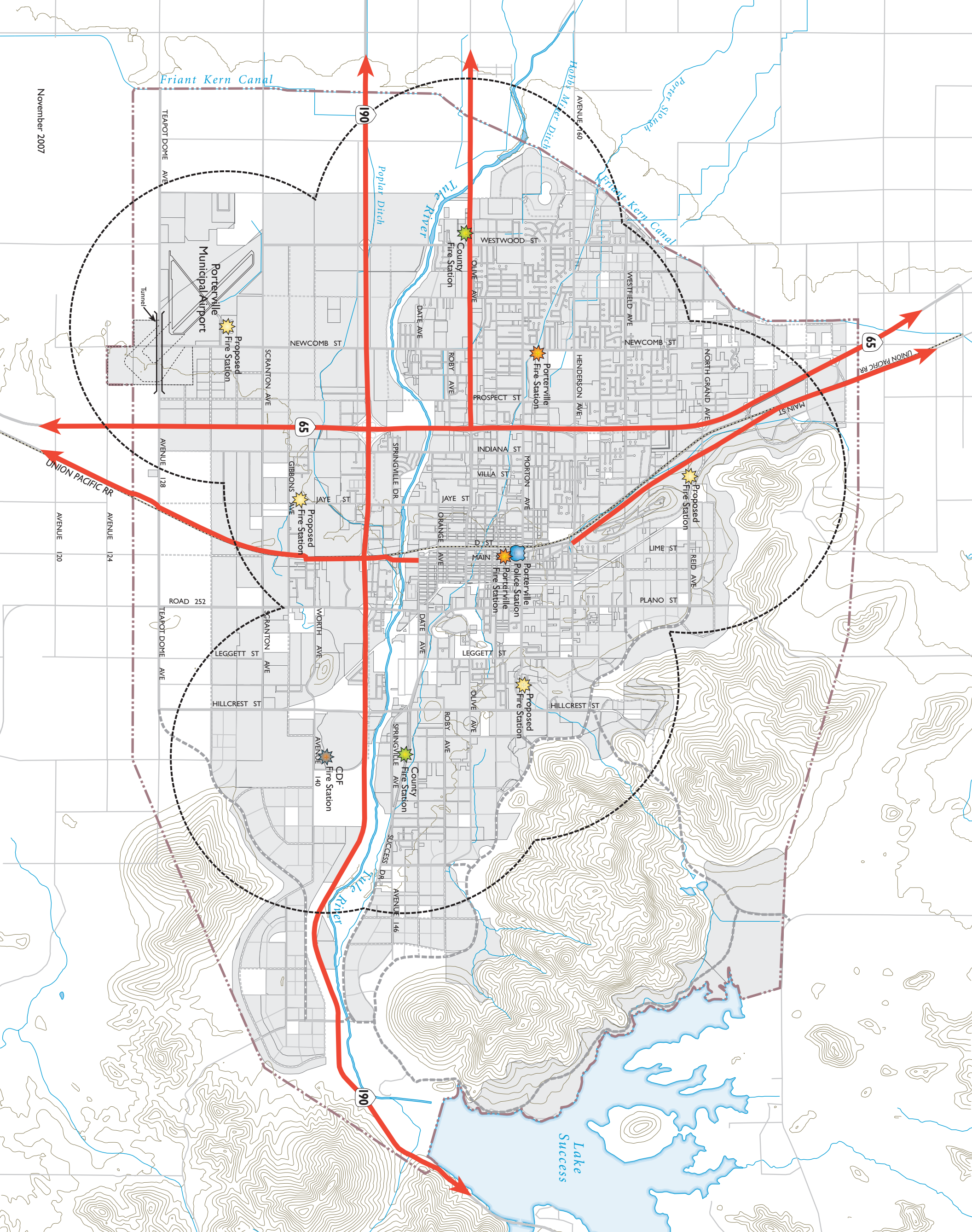
<sup>1</sup> City of Porterville Fire Department, March 29, 2007.



Figure 7-6  
Emergency Services

-  City Fire Station
  -  County Fire Station
  -  CDF Fire Station\*
  -  Proposed City Fire Station
  -  Police Station
  -  Fire Service, 1.5 Mile Radius
  -  Evacuation Routes
  -  2030 Developed Land
  -  Planning Area
- \* CDF station services provided through agreement with City.

Source: City of Porterville, 2007.





**Table 7-4: Fire Station Locations and Facilities**

No.	Location	Staffing	Facilities
1	40 W. Cleveland Ave.	Min of 4, Max of 6 per shift.	3 heavy fire engines (type I), 1 75 ft. Quint Aerial Ladder Truck, 1 Rescue Unit, and 1 Light Unit (Patrol)
2	500 N. Newcomb	Min of 3, Max of 4 per shift.	2 heavy fire engines (type I), 1 Light Unit (Patrol)
19 <sup>1</sup>	22315 Ave. 152	1 full time per shift and 17 paid on-call firefighters	1 heavy fire engine (type II), 1 light engine (type IV), 1 water tender (tractor, trailer)
20 <sup>1</sup>	1551 E. Success Dr.	1 full time per shift and 17 paid on-call firefighters	1 heavy fire engine (type I), 1 light engine (type IV), 1 water tender (bobtail)
CDF	Worth Ave at Road 265		
*	Jaye St. at Worth Ave.		
*	Morton Ave. at Crestview St.		
*	Porterville Airport		
*	Reid Ave. at Main St.		

1. County-operated.

\* Proposed, conceptual locations for new City of Porterville Fire Stations.

Sources: Porterville Fire Department, 2007; Tulare County Fire Department, 2007.

## FIRE RESPONSE STANDARD & ISO RATING

The Insurance Service Office (ISO)—a private organization that surveys fire departments in cities and towns across the United States—awarded the Porterville Fire Department a Class 3 rating (1 being highest and 10 being lowest). This rating considers a community's fire defense capacity versus fire potential, and then uses the score to set property insurance premiums for homeowners and commercial property owners.

Currently, the Department responds to 60 percent of its calls within five minutes. The internal response time goal set by the Department is to provide service within five minutes of the 911 call being received, 80 percent of the time. The proposed two new stations will help the Department reach its goal.

### *Water Flow Rates & Pressure*

In order to adequately protect life and property in Porterville, water flow rates and pressure standards defined by the Uniform Fire Code are maintained.

Policies in the Land Use Element will ensure that new development will finance public safety facilities needed to serve new development. Additional policies addressing airport hazards are also located in the Circulation Element.

## GUIDING POLICY

PHS-G-5      *Provide a comprehensive program of safety services including police, fire and medical response in all parts of Porterville.*

## IMPLEMENTATION POLICIES

PHS-I-24      Provide cost effective fire, police, and emergency medical service within the City to minimize potential injury, loss and/or destruction to persons or property.

*To meet existing and future demand, the City will continue to plan for adequate law enforcement and fire-fighting services, and strive for staffing ratios and response time that meet or exceed national standards. The requirements for additional Police and Fire Stations will be assessed when the City prepares its Capital Improvement Programs and development fees.*

PHS-I-25      Maintain the City's Class 3 ISO rating, or better, for fire protection.

PHS-I-26      Promote a community-oriented approach to law enforcement.

*The City will support public education programs involving crime prevention and safety issues. Currently, the Porterville Police Department has a number of outreach and training programs in place. These include a neighborhood crime-watch program, Police Explorers, Youth Services Foundation, and police volunteer program. Continue to cooperate with the California Highway Patrol and the nearby law enforcement agencies to provide back-up police assistance in emergency situations.*

PHS-I-27      Continually assess the adequacy of current funding programs for police, fire and paramedic services and investigate new funding sources.

*These could include a public safety impact fee.*

PHS-I-28      Ensure that new development incorporates safety concerns into the site, circulation, building design and landscaping plans.

*This will be done during the development review process.*

## 7.6 EMERGENCY RESPONSE

---

### EMERGENCY PLANNING

The California Emergency Services Act (Government Code Section 8550-8668) requires each city to prepare and maintain an Emergency Plan for natural, manmade, or war-caused emergencies that result in conditions of disaster or in extreme peril to life. The Porterville Emergency Operations Plan was adopted in 2004. The Plan includes planning and response scenarios for seismic hazards, extreme weather conditions, landslides, dam failure and other flooding, wildland fires, hazardous materials incidents, transportation emergencies, civil disturbance, and terrorist attacks. It is meant to work in conjunction with the Tulare County Emergency Operations Plan and the State Emergency Plan. The Emergency Council of the Tulare County Operational Area meets for regional coordination purposes at least four times per year. In addition, the City Fire Department has specific procedures for hazardous materials emergency response.

### EVACUATION ROUTES & POTENTIAL SHELTER SITES

The City has designated several evacuation routes through Porterville to be used in case of catastrophic emergencies. The extent and the severity of a disaster will determine which routes and which direction people must take in order to escape or avoid the afflicted areas. Sierra View District Hospital in Porterville provides emergency health care services.

In the event of a natural or man-made disaster, the City will coordinate with the Red Cross, Salvation Army, and State and federal agencies responsible for providing emergency shelter for displaced residents. The sites most commonly used are schools, senior centers, community centers, public buildings, and churches.

### GUIDING POLICY

*PHS-G-6 Provide comprehensive emergency response and evacuation routes for Porterville residents.*

### IMPLEMENTATION POLICIES

- PHS-I-29 Maintain and periodically update the City's Emergency Management Plan.  
*This plan will be updated as necessary in consultation with City departments, community leaders, the school districts, Sierra View District Hospital, PG&E, and relevant regional and State agencies.*
- PHS-I-30 Initiate periodic public information programs that explain the City's emergency preparedness programs and evacuation routes and encourage each household to be self-sufficient for 72 hours after a manmade or natural disaster.
- PHS-I-31 Maintain multi-jurisdictional communication systems and cooperation for emergency training, planning and management.

PHS-I-32      Work with owners and operators of critical use facilities to ensure that they can provide alternate sources of electricity, water, and sewerage in the event that regular utilities are interrupted in a disaster.

*Public utilities are lifeline services for Emergency Command Centers, police and fire departments, and hospitals. Keeping them open and operative is especially crucial in the 72 hours after a major disaster.*