

# BRANFORD POINT ANNEXATION

## PRE-APPLICATION

*APN 060-020-044-000*

### **CITY OF MERCED**

JANUARY 21, 2022

#### ***APPLICANT***

Precision Civil Engineering, Inc.

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## 1. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

<b>Property Owner</b>	Greg Opinski Construction 145 Riggs Avenue Merced, CA 95341
<b>Applicant</b>	Precision Civil Engineering 1234 O Street Fresno, CA 93721
<b>APN</b>	060-020-044-000
<b>Location</b>	West side of Lake Road between Bellevue Road and La Loma Road
<b>Zoning</b>	A-R – Agricultural Residential (County)
<b>Existing Land Use</b>	Vacant
<b>Planned Land Use</b>	A-R – Agricultural Residential (County); CP – Community Plan (City of Merced)

The proposed project, Branford Point (Project), is a mixed-use development located northeast of the city of Merced (see *Figure 1*). The site is approximately 47.7 acres according to the tax bill. The following document is analyzed based 45.89 acre according to the Merced County GIS layer (Updated\_Merced\_County\_Assessor\_Parcel.shp, downloaded 8/24/2021). Branford Point includes diverse housing (apartments and townhomes), hotels, retail, entertainment, restaurant, employment, and research and development. The Project is designed with walkable, pedestrian-oriented, and energy-efficient characteristics.

The property is located on the west side of Lake Road between Bellevue Road and La Loma Road (APN 060-020-044). University of California Merced is located approximately 0.35 miles northeast of the Project site. Yosemite Lake and Lake Yosemite County Park is approximately 0.84 miles north of the Project site. The site is located within the City of Merced's Specific Urban Development Plan (SUDP)/Sphere of Influence (SOI). The Merced Vision 2030 General Plan designated the site as CP – Community Plan, within the boundary of the Bellevue Community Plan (BCP).

The UC Merced Campus is expected to reach a capacity of 25,000 students and over 6,500 faculty and staff employees by full buildout. Consistent with the vision of the Bellevue Community Plan, Branford Point will support the expansion of UC Merced with housing, commercial, and research facilities, while generating employment that could benefit from its proximity to the campus.

### *Circulation*

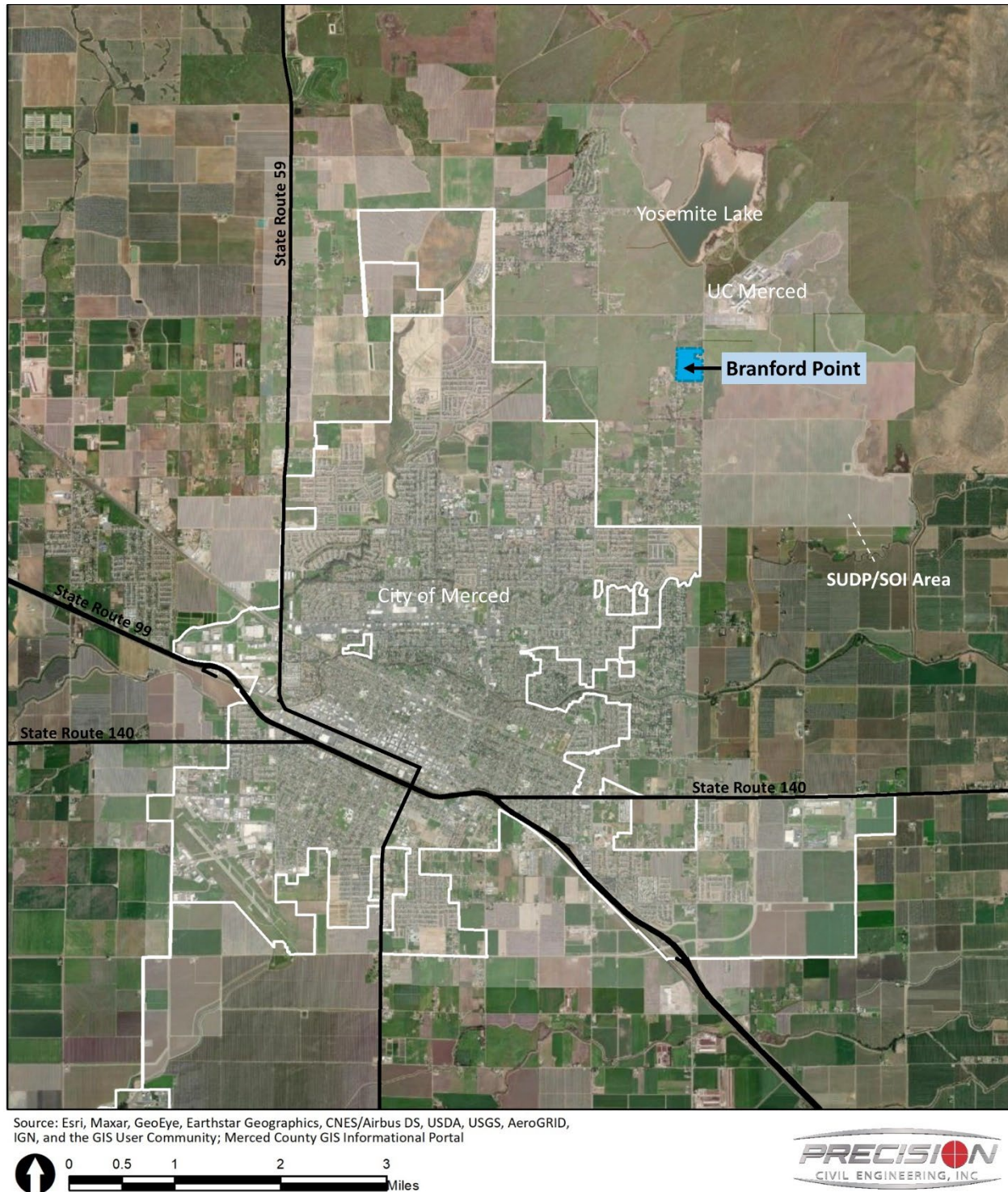
The BCP proposed two (2) east-west collector, Foothill Road and La Loma Road, and three (3) local roads in the Project area as shown in *Figure 6*. *Table 1* presents the standards for the street classifications in the BCP. Branford Point proposes the extension of Los Olives Road to connect

to Foothill Road and the extension of La Loma Road to connect to Lake Road, as collectors. Two north-south local roads are also proposed.

**Table 1. Street Classifications within the BCP**

<b>Proposed Street Classification</b>	<b>Right-of-Way</b>	<b># of Lanes</b>	<b>Driveway Access Restrictions</b>	<b>Street Intersection Spacing</b>	<b>Parking</b>
Collectors	60' – 80'	2 lanes with median / left turn pockets	No (rear alley access recommended)	As needed	Permitted
Local Roads	51' – 62'	2 lanes	No	As needed	Permitted

## 2. PROPOSED ANNEXATION AREA



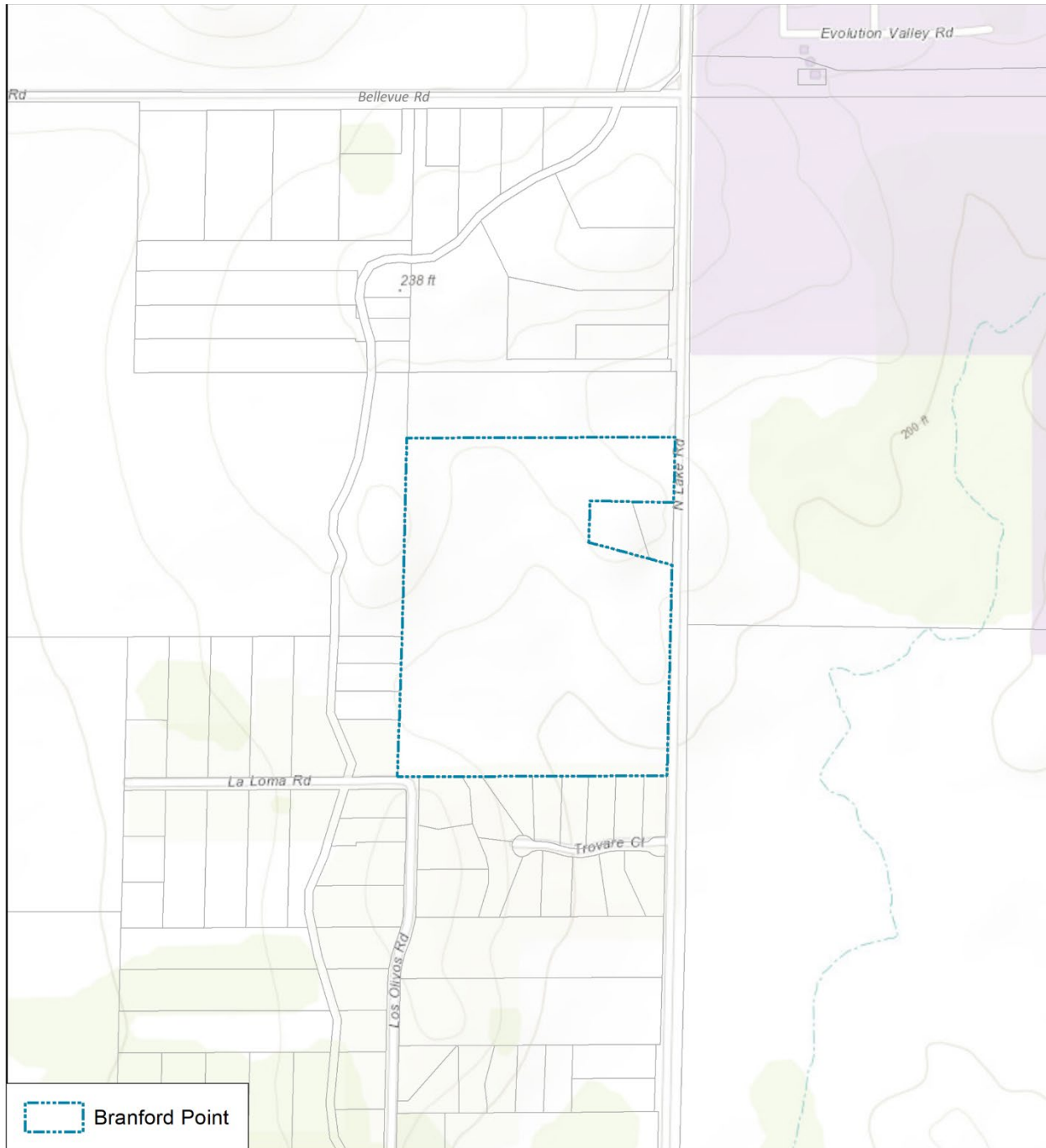
CITY OF MERCED - BRANFORD POINT  
PROJECT LOCATION

Created: 11/29/2021

### **Figure 1. Project Location**

*Branford Point is located northeast of the City of Merced. It is north and northwest of Yosemite Lake and UC Merced. It is within the SUDP/SOI area established in the Merced Vision 2030 General Plan.*



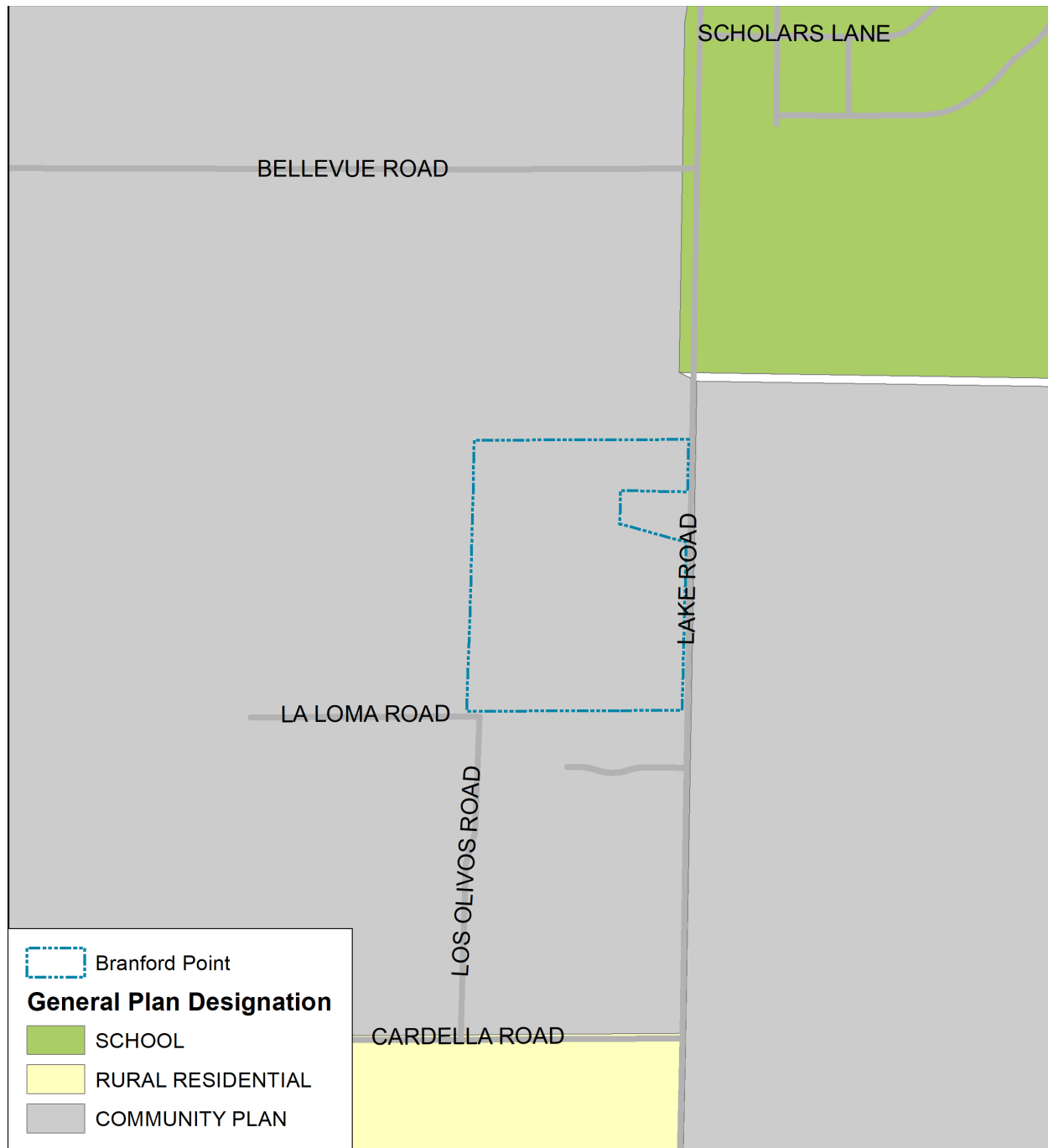


CITY OF MERCED - BRANFORD POINT  
PROPOSED ANNEXATION AREA

Created: 11/29/2021

**Figure 2. Proposed Annexation Area**

*The proposed annexation area (Project site) is located on the west side of Lake Road between Bellevue Road and La Loma Road. The site is approximately 45.89 acres, APN 060-020-044.*



Source: City of Merced; Merced County GIS Informational Portal

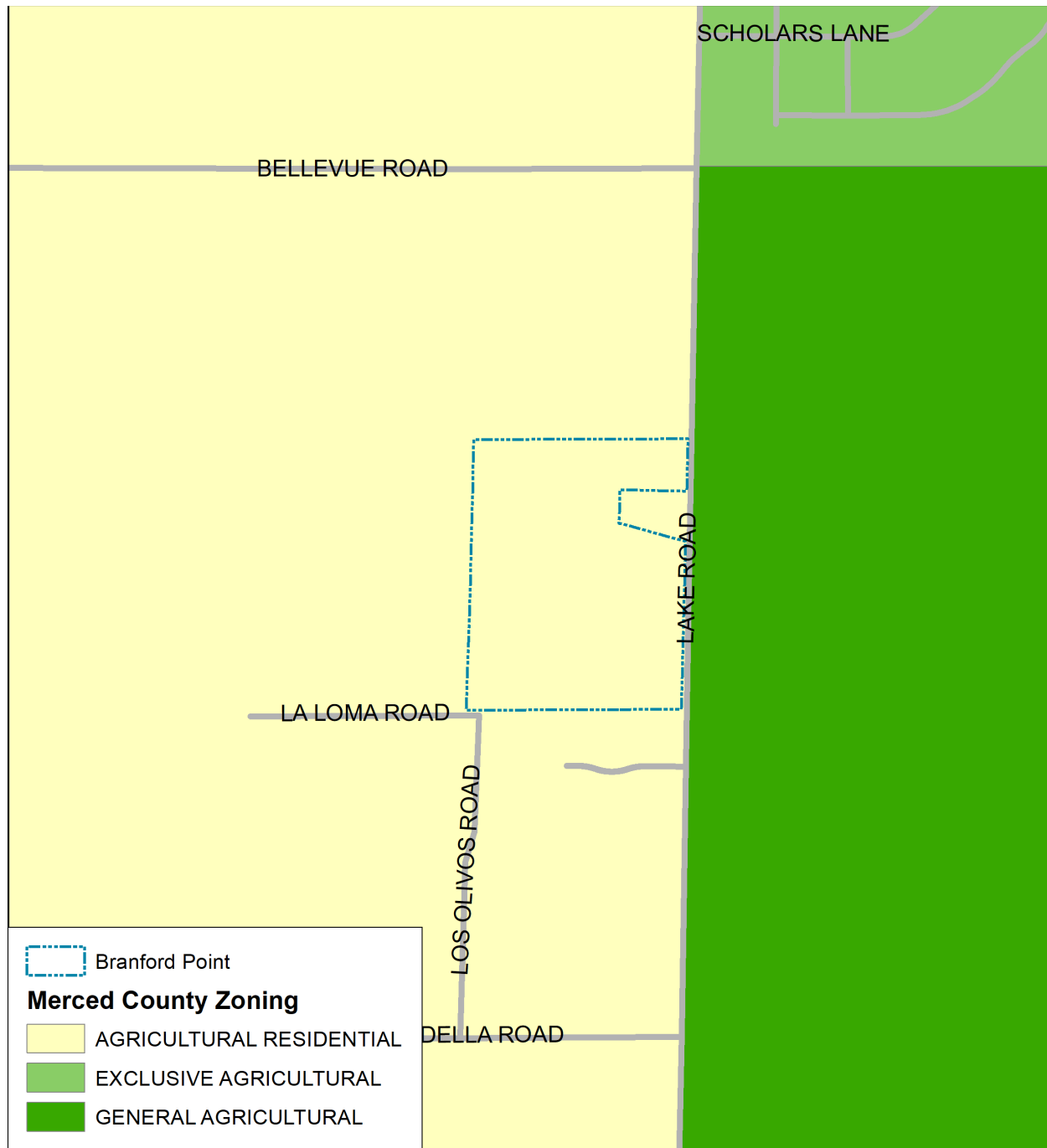


CITY OF MERCED - BRANFORD POINT  
GENERAL PLAN DESIGNATION

Created: 11/29/2021

**Figure 3. General Plan Designation**

*The Project site is planned CP – Community Plan in the General Plan, in the Bellevue Corridor Community Plan area.*



Source: Merced County GIS Informational Portal



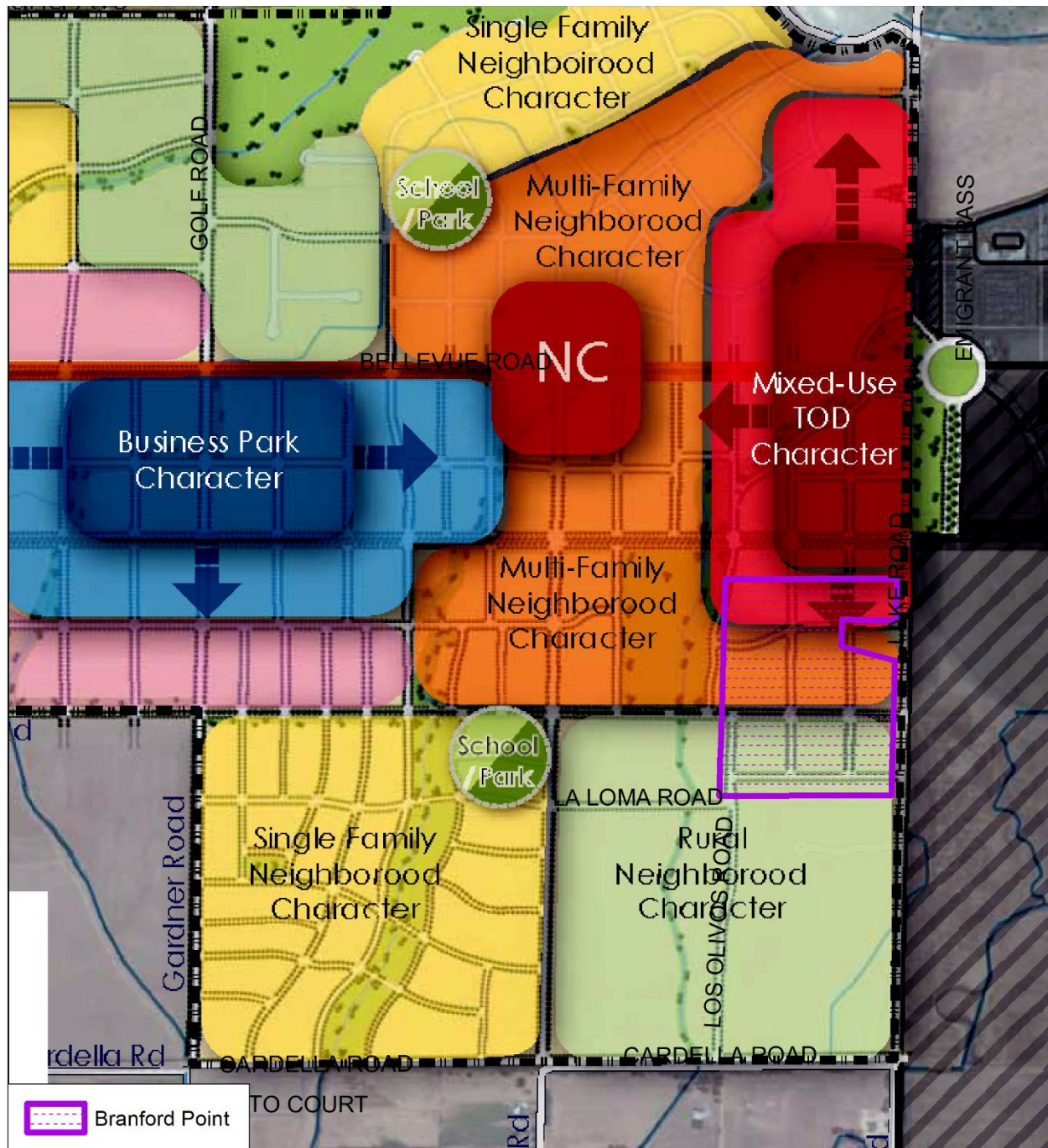
CITY OF MERCED - BRANFORD POINT  
MERCED COUNTY ZONING

Created: 11/29/2021

**Figure 4. Existing Merced County Zoning**

*The Project site is currently zoned A-R – Agricultural Residential in the County of Merced.*





Source: Bellevue Community Plan; Merced County GIS Informational Portal

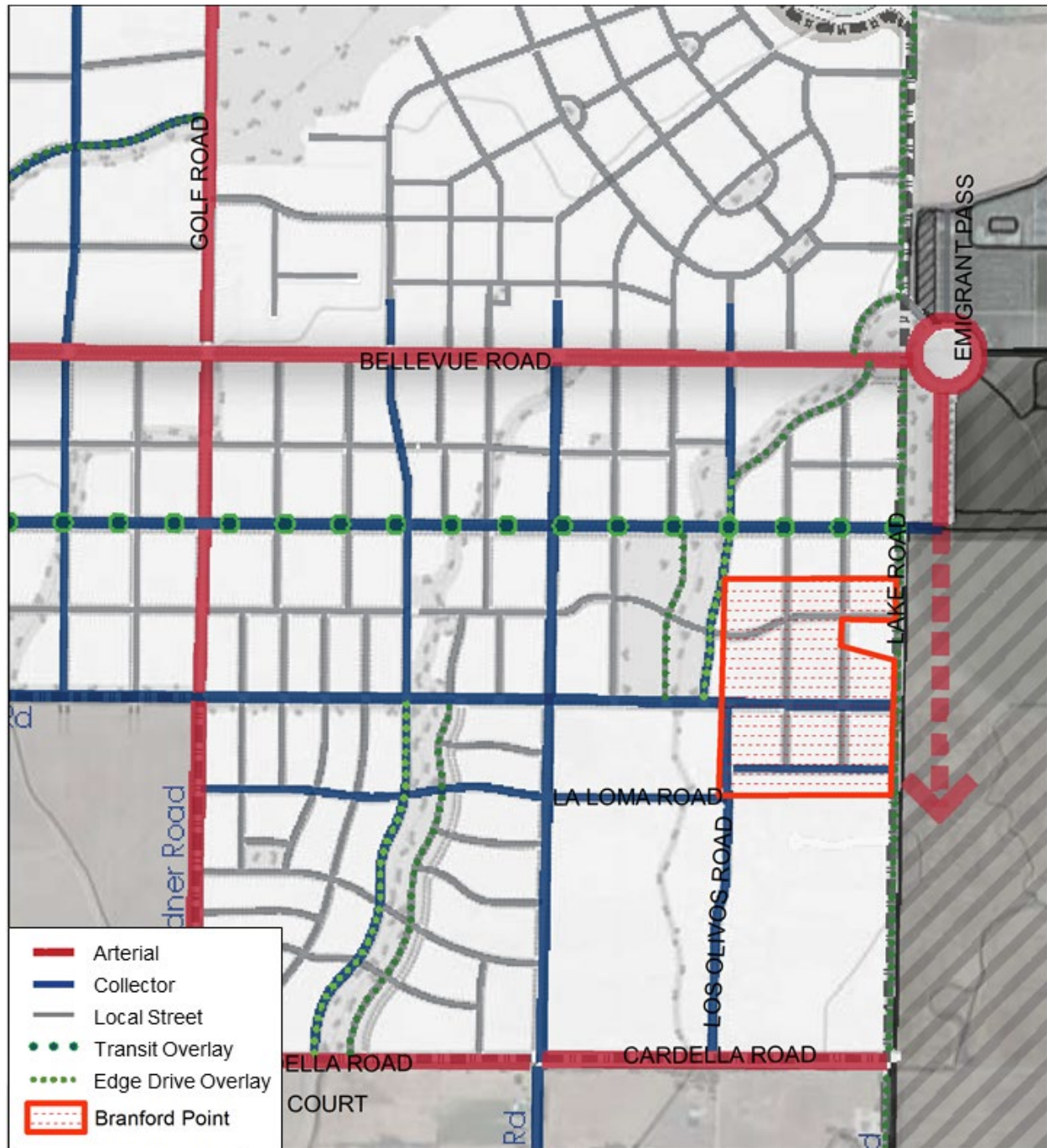


CITY OF MERCED - BRANFORD POINT  
COMMUNITY PLACE TYPE

Created: 12/30/2021

**Figure 5. Bellevue Community Character Place Type Plan**

The Project site is in the transition area of Mixed-Use TOD, Multi-Family Neighborhood, and Rural Neighborhood Character.



Source: Bellevue Community Plan; Merced County GIS Informational Portal



CITY OF MERCED - BRANFORD POINT  
STREET CLASSIFICATION

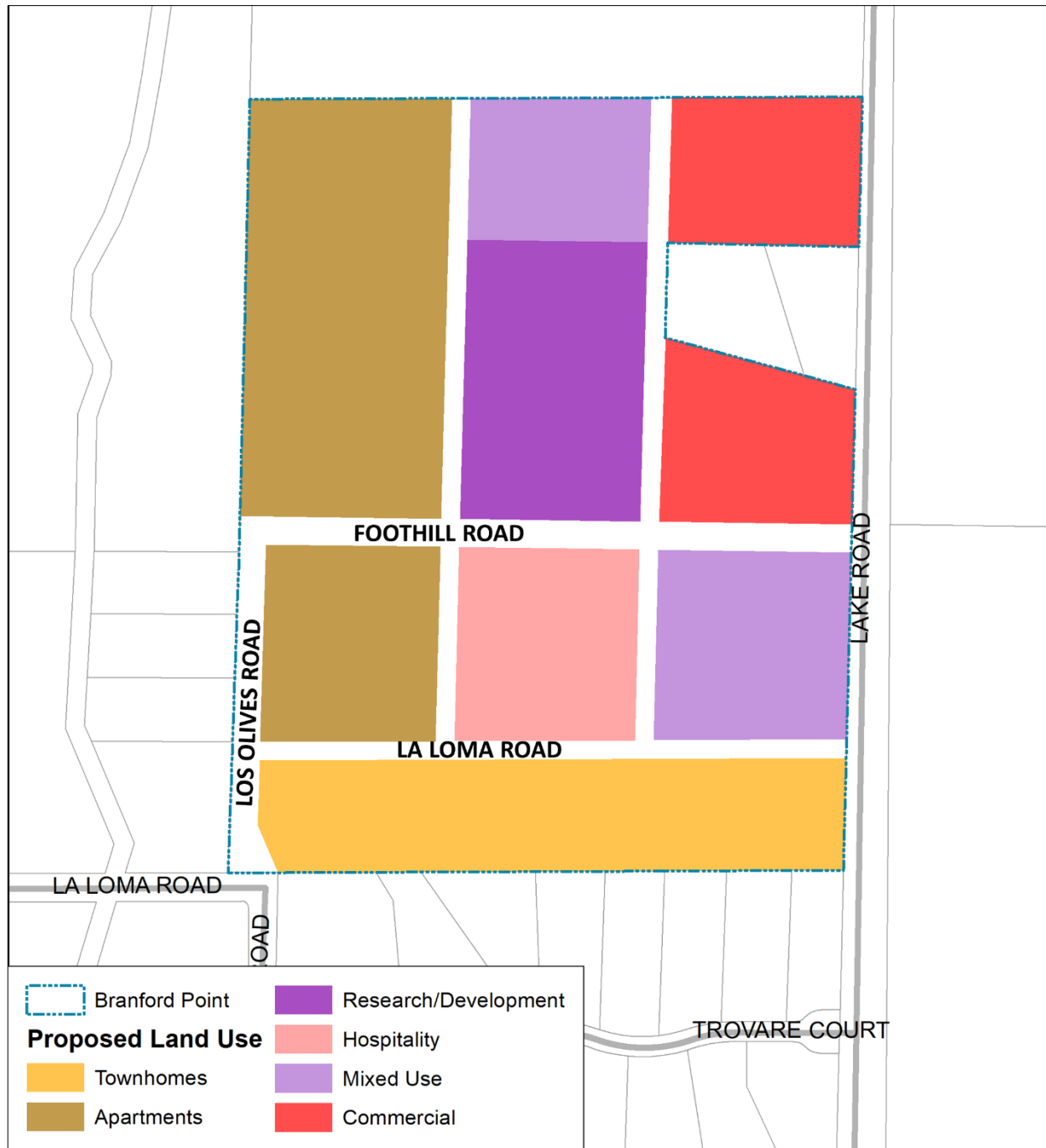
Created: 12/30/2021

**Figure 6. BCP Street Classification**

BCP proposed two (2) collector and three (3) local street in the Project site.



### 3. CONCEPTUAL LAND USE PLAN



CITY OF MERCED - BRANFORD POINT  
PROPOSED LAND USE

**Figure 7. Proposed Land Use Map**

*Bellevue Point is a mixed-use development that includes housing (apartments and townhomes), hotels, retail, entertainment, restaurant, employment, and research and development.*

**Table 2. Proposed Land Use Statistics**

Proposed Land Use	Acres	Total Units	Total Building Area
Apartments	12.06	434	
Townhomes	6.63	159	
Research and Development	5.12		89,211
Hospitality	3.53		922,601
Mixed Use	6.32	*TBD	*1,651,795
Commercial	5.97		520,106
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>39.63</b>	<b>589</b>	<b>3,176,064</b>

\* Housing units to be decided, building area includes housing

### **Proposed General Plan and Zoning Designations**

**Table 3. Proposed General Plan and Zoning Designations**

Proposed Land Use	Acres	Planned Land Use	Zoning
Apartments	12.06	HD – High Density Residential	R-4 – High Density Residential
Townhomes	6.63	HMD – High Medium Density Residential	R-3 – Medium Density Residential
Research and Development	5.12	BP – Business Park	B-P – Business Park
Hospitality	3.53	RC – Regional Community Commercial	C-C – Regional/Central Commercial
Mixed Use	6.32	RC – Regional Community Commercial	C-C – Regional/Central Commercial
Commercial	5.97	RC – Regional Community Commercial	C-C – Regional/Central Commercial

### **Proposed Density**

Density will be higher with commercial to the northeast of the Project site and transition to residential as density decrease towards the southern portion of the site. This is consistent with the community character outlined in the Bellevue Community Plan, as shown in *Figure 5*.

**Table 4. Proposed Density**

Proposed Land Use	Acres	DU/AC	Floor Area Ratio (FAR)
Apartments	12.06	35.99	
Townhomes	6.63	23.98	
Research and Development	5.12		0.4
Hospitality	3.53		6.0
Mixed Use	6.32	*TBD	*6.0
Commercial	5.97		2.0

\* Housing units to be decided, FAR includes housing

#### 4. PROJECT PHASING AND PROJECTED PHASING SCHEDULE

The Project will include five (5) phases:

**Phase 1.** Backbone infrastructure and townhomes on the southern portion of the site

**Phase 2.** Remaining infrastructure and apartments with some commercial

**Phase 3.** Commercial and hospitality

**Phase 4.** Apartments

**Phase 5.** Research and Development

*Table 5. Project Phasing*

Proposed Land Use	Acres	Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3	Phase 4	Phase 5
Infrastructure	-	6.63				
Townhomes	6.63					
Mixed Use	6.32		6.32			
Commercial	5.97			9.50		
Hospitality	3.53					
Apartments	12.06				12.06	
Research and Development	5.12					5.12

## 5. WASTEWATER AND WATER DEMAND ESTIMATES

Wastewater generation and water demands are calculated by estimating the equivalent dwelling units (EDUs) for each land use type and multiplying them by the total number of units and the generation/demand rate per EDU. EDU is defined as one (1) single-family residential household and is used as a unit of measure for wastewater generation and water demand for a unit of development. The city of Merced does not have established standards for estimating EDUs; thus, estimates shown in *Table 7* uses EDU determination standards from the city of Encinitas's municipal code, *Section 18.08.025 Equivalent Dwelling Unit Determination*, as shown in *Table 6*.

**Table 6. EDU Determination**

Proposed Land Use	Land Use Type	EDU Determination
<b>Residential</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Apartments</li> <li>• Townhomes</li> </ul>	All apartments and accessory units	0.8 EDU, regardless of number of bedrooms, per each individual living unit on the same lot
<b>Commercial/Industrial/School Facilities</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research and Development</li> <li>• Commercial</li> <li>• Hospitality</li> <li>• Mixed Use</li> </ul>	Where occupancy type or usage is unknown at the time of application for service, the following EDUs shall apply. This shall include, but not be limited to, shopping centers, industrial parks, and professional office buildings.	
	i. First 1,000 square feet of gross building floor area	1.2 EDU
	ii. Each additional 1,000 square feet of gross building floor area (portions less than 1,000 square feet will be prorated)	0.7 EDU

**Table 7. Estimated Wastewater and Water Demands**

Proposed Land Use	Total Units	EDUs	Wastewater Generation (GPD)*	Water Demand (GPD) **
<b>Residential (Dwelling Units)</b>				
Apartments	434 DU	347	66,277	104,160
Townhomes	159 DU	127	24,257	38,160
<b>Commercial (Building Square Feet)</b>				
Research and Development	89,211 SF	63	12,033	18,884
Hospitality	922,601 SF	646	123,386	193,896
Mixed Use	1,651,795 SF	1,157	220,987	347,027
Commercial	520,106 SF	365	69,715	109,372
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>2,705</b>	<b>516,655</b>	<b>811,500</b>

\* This is calculated using an anticipated 200 gpd per EDU. Inland Empire Utilities Agency (IEAU) estimates a current average flow rate for new developments, 200 gpd/EDU, for its regional sewer system consisting of 4 water recycling plants that serves 6 cities in northern California. Source: IEAU. (2010). Urban Water Management Plan – Chapter 5 Wastewater Flows. Accessed January 4, 2022, <https://18x37n2ovtbb3434n48jhbs1-wpengine.netdna-ssl.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/Chapter-5-Wastewater-Flows.pdf>

*\*\* We assume that indoor water demand is the same as wastewater generation. A 50 percent demand is added for outdoor water generation (Source: PPIC Water Policy Center. 2016. Water for Cities. Accessed on January 4, 2022. [https://www.ppic.org/wp-content/uploads/R\\_1016EH3R.pdf](https://www.ppic.org/wp-content/uploads/R_1016EH3R.pdf) “Outdoor watering accounts for roughly half of statewide urban use and more in inland areas, where summers are hotter and lots tend to be larger.”). thus we assume 300 gpd per EDU for water demand calculations.*

**Table 8. Estimated Demands for Developments per Phase**

<b>Phase</b>	<b>Total EDUs</b>	<b>Wastewater Generation (GPD)</b>	<b>Water Demand (GPD)</b>
<b>Phase 1</b>	127	24,257	38,160
<b>Phase 2</b>	1,157	220,987	347,027
<b>Phase 3</b>	1,011	193,101	303,269
<b>Phase 4</b>	347	66,277	104,160
<b>Phase 5</b>	63	12,033	18,884
<b>Total</b>	<b>2705</b>	<b>516,655</b>	<b>811,500</b>



## 6. PROJECT DESIGN FEATURES

Branford Point is still under the design process for a site plan. Branford Point will comply with development regulations and design standards established in the city of Merced municipal code and the Bellevue Community Plan. Improvements will include curb and gutter, pavement, landscaping, lighting, and sidewalks. Collector streets will include bike lands, wide sidewalks, tree wells, and street furniture, and intersections will be designed for pedestrian safety. *Figure 8* and *Figure 9* from the BCP will guide designs of the proposed collector streets, Foothill Road and La Loma Road, in the Project site. *Figure 10* shows the Project's edge on Lake Road.



**Figure 8. Collector Street through a Typical Multi-Family Character Area**



**Figure 9. Collector Street through a Typical Mixed-Use Character Area**



**Figure 10. Lake Road – Edge Drive with Mixed-Use Character Area**

## 7. JOB GENERATION ESTIMATES

The new commercial activity and business park employment is estimated to generate approximately 2,509 jobs. *Table 9* illustrates the assumptions used to estimate the number of workers for commercial development of the Project. Positions are diverse, including office and research professionals as well as retailers, restaurants, and hotel services. The Project will also generate temporary employment during construction activities.

**Table 9. Estimated Number of Workers for Commercial Development**

Proposed Land Use	Building SF	Business Type	SF per Worker	Total Workers
Research and Development	89,211	**Research and Development Center	**406	220
Hospitality	922,601	Hotels	***2,500	369
Mixed Use*	330,359	**Neighborhood Retail	**588	562
Commercial	520,106	**Community Retail	**383	1,358
<b>TOTAL</b>	-	-	-	<b>2,509</b>

\* Assuming a five-story structure, with the first level as commercial use. Only the first level is included in the Building SF for calculation.

\*\* This is assumed based on the "Building Area per Employee by Business Type" table from the city of Davis (<https://www.cityofdavis.org/home/showpublisheddocument?id=4579> accessed on 12/1/2021).

\*\*\* This is assumed based on "Local Planning Handbook Fact Sheet – Measuring Employment" (<https://metro council.org/Handbook/Files/Resources/Fact-Sheet/ECONOMIC-COMPETITIVENESS/How-to-Measure-Employment-Intensity-and-Capacity.aspx> accessed on 12/1/2021)

## 8. COMMUNITY BENEFITS

This Project implements the vision and guiding plans of the BCP and as an earlier development in the BCP plan area, the Project provides infrastructure and activities that will continue to attract future developments to this area. Branford Point provides multiple community benefits to the city of Merced, as described below.

**Public Space** – The Project includes a diversity of land uses, including employment, housing, hotels, and commercial, which will attract a variety of people with different purposes. Further, the mix of public spaces in commercial areas, corridors that are walkable, and private open space within housing areas will foster an environment that facilitates interaction among individuals.

**Walkable Neighborhood** – The Project includes many factors promotes the walkability and pedestrian-oriented characteristic of the site. This includes a high-density, mixed-use land use pattern, sidewalks and bike lanes, and street/intersection design for pedestrian safety.

**Employment Opportunities** – The Project is expected to generate 2,509 jobs.

**Research and Development** – The Project provides a five-acre research and development area to support innovative hub design elements and attract firms and industries that wish to locate near the campus. This also generates and attract job-based economic development.

**Infrastructure** – The proposed development will construct and expand public infrastructure to the planned SUDP/SOI such as roadways, water, stormwater, waste, cable, and other utilities lines.

**Diverse Housing** – Branford Point provides a diversity of residential dwelling types, including townhouses and apartments.

**Economic Development** – The Project will generate taxes for the city and school district. The Project will also indirectly attract possible future development to this area, which is in line with the city's goals to connect UC Merced campus and the city.

**Hotels and Accommodation** – The Project includes the development of a hotel, which would provide temporary accommodation for visitors of UC Merced campus.

## 9. GENERAL PLAN “MERIT CRITERIA” CONSISTENCY

Merced Vision 2030 General Plan Implementing Action *Urban Expansion UE-1.3.g* outlines “merit criteria” for evaluating future annexation requests. The following answers the questions to evaluate whether the proposed Project is consistent with the General Plan and merit criteria.

*1.3.g Evaluate future annexation requests against the following conditions:*

*a) Is the area contiguous to the current City limits and within the City’s Specific Urban Development Plan (SUDP)/Sphere of Influence (SOI)? Do the annexed lands form a logical and efficient City limit and include older areas where appropriate to minimize the formation of unincorporated peninsulas?*

A: The Project area is not contiguous of the current city limits but is within the City’s Specific Urban Development Plan (SUDP)/Sphere of Influence (SOI). The site is 0.35 miles from the UC Merced campus and is between the city and campus. Thus, the annexation of the site is logic and efficient, and could encourage the annexation/development of other areas in the SUDP/SOI.

*b) Is the proposed development consistent with the land use classifications on the General Plan Land Use Diagram (Figure 3.1)?*

A: The General Plan Land Use designates the area as CP – Community Plan. Consequently, the Bellevue Community Plan (BCP) was developed to provide a high-level planning framework consistent with the Merced Vision 2030 General Plan for the area, inclusive of the Project site. The Project proposes HD – High Density Residential, HMD – High Medium Density Residential, BP – Business Park, and RC – Regional Community Commercial land use designations, which does not conflict with the BCP. Thus, the proposed development is consistent with the General Plan land use classification.

*c) Can the proposed development be served by the City water, sewer, storm drainage, fire and police protection, parks, and street systems to meet acceptable standards and service levels without requiring improvements and additional costs to the City beyond which the developer will consent to provide or mitigate?*

A: Yes. The Project will comply with the city’s standards to be served by the city’s utilities and service systems. There are no known conditions of the site that would impede the installation required infrastructure and services.

*d) Will this annexation result in the premature conversion of prime agricultural land as defined on the Important Farmland Map of the State Mapping and Monitoring Program? If so, are there alternative locations where this development could take place without converting prime soils?*

A: The Project site is categorized as the “Farmland of Local Importance” on the California Department of Conservation Important Farmland Finder. Thus, the Project would not result in the conversion of prime agriculture land.

*e) Will a non-agricultural use create conflict with adjacent or nearby agricultural uses? If so, how can these conflicts be mitigated?*

A: The Project site is surrounded by single-family residential use (south and east) and vacant or agricultural lands (north, east, and west). The site and its surroundings are located within the city’s SUDP/SOI and is planned for urban use. The General Plan anticipates urban development on adjacent and nearby lands by 2030. Thus, the proposed Project would not create conflict with adjacent or nearby agricultural uses. In addition to this, as a condition of approval, the developer will ensure that a right to farm covenant will be executed to reduce the potential for future conflicts.

*f) Does annexation of the area help the City reach one of the following goals?*

*1) Does annexation of the area bring the City closer to annexation of the UC Merced campus and University Community?*

A: Yes. The Project area is 0.35 miles from the UC Merced campus and is located between the city and campus. The Project will provide housing, commercial, and research near the campus.

*2) Does the area contain significant amounts of job-generating land uses, such as industrial, commercial, office, and business/research & development parks?*

A: Yes. The Project includes the development of commercial land uses and a business/research & development park. Full buildout is estimated to generate approximately 2,509 jobs.

*3) Does the project provide key infrastructure facilities or other desirable amenities, such as the extension of major roads, utility trunk lines, parks and recreational facilities, etc.?*

A: Yes. The Project will develop public infrastructure, including public collector and local roads, utility lines, sidewalk and bike lanes, public open space, and recreational spaces. One (1) proposed collector road extends from the existing roads, Los Olives Road and La Loma Road, and both proposed collector roads, Foothill Road and La Loma Road, connects to the existing major road, Lake Road.



## 10.DEVELOPER EXPERIENCES

Opinski Construction Consulting, LLC, a commercial and residential construction consulting firm, will be the developer of the Project. Their firm provides a wide array of services, including master planning, architect selection, project delivery selection, cost analysis, design assistance and cost savings, legal team selection, and contract document review and modification. Opinski Construction has completed over 300 projects and over 200 school projects. Experience includes remodels and new construction.

### *Project – Castle Science Technology Center*



### *Project – Livingston High School*



## 11.FINANCING STRATEGY

The current owner of the property owns the subject site out right (no outstanding loans on the property). As a result, the property owner has a large amount of equity/value in the land. The owner/developer will be able to fully finance the first phase of the Project with a loan based on the high land equity. The first phase includes the development of 159 units of townhomes. Once the first phase of the Project is constructed and sold, the developer will finance with second phase of development with the profits from the development of the first phase. Similarly, each phase will be financed by the profits of the prior phase.

## 12.REGISTERED VOTERS

There are no existing registered voters within the Project boundary.



### 13. PUBLIC SERVICES AND UTILITIES

Branford Point will be requesting the following services and utilities from the city of Merced:

- Water
- Stormwater
- Sewer
- Trash Service
- Fire Protection
- Police Protection
- Roadway Dedications and Maintenance

The Project is subject to payment of development impact fees and will generate taxes to fund the city's provided public services and utility costs.

Other services that Branford Point will need includes:

- Electrical Supply provided by Pacific Gas and Electric
- Cable provided by Comcast and AT&T
- School District