

# NIOS Character HW

Last updated 10/12/20

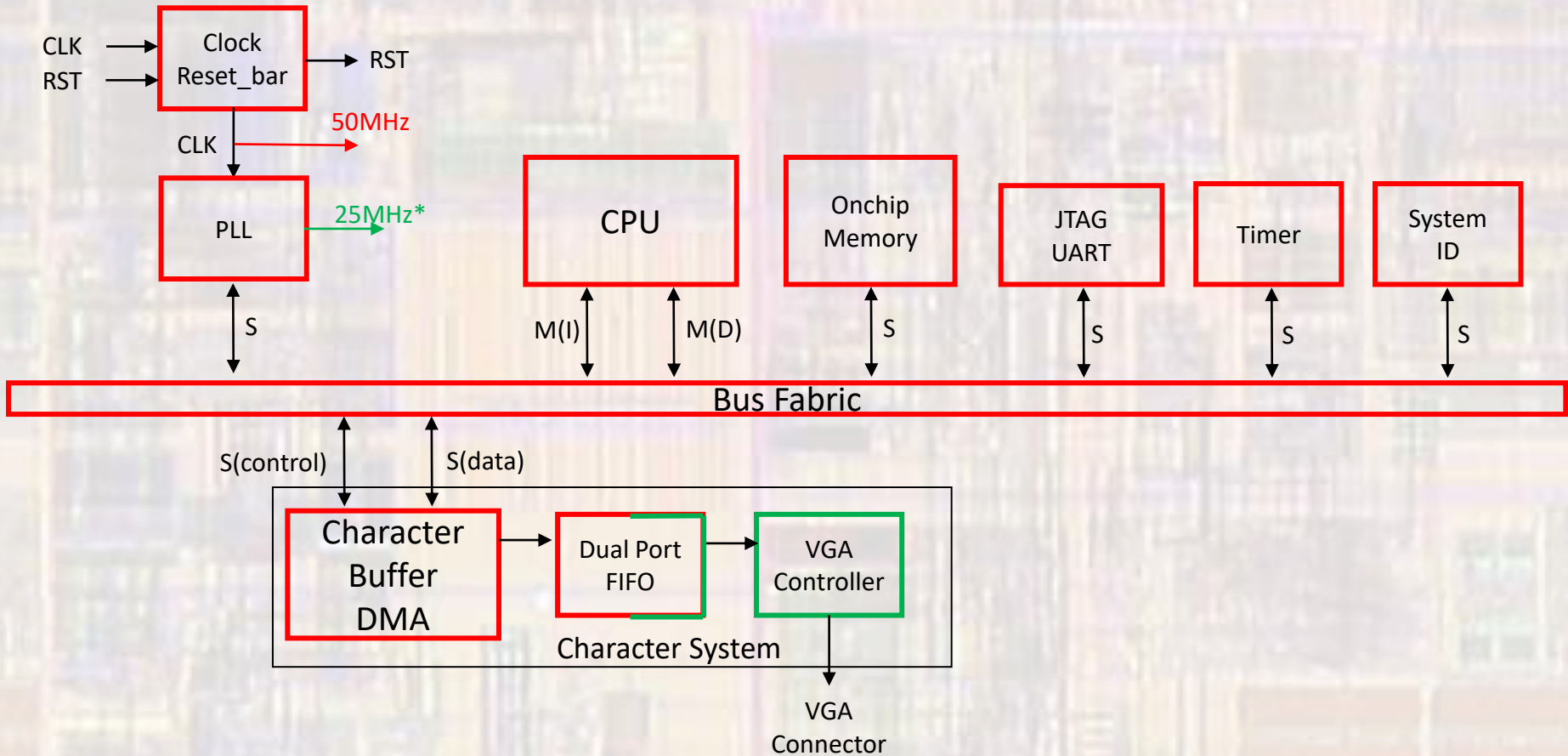
# NIOS II Character Display - HW

These slides describe the development of a moderately complex NIOS Processor using the Character Buffer IP

Upon completion: You should be able implement your own NIOS processor using the Character Buffer IP

# NIOS II Character Display - HW

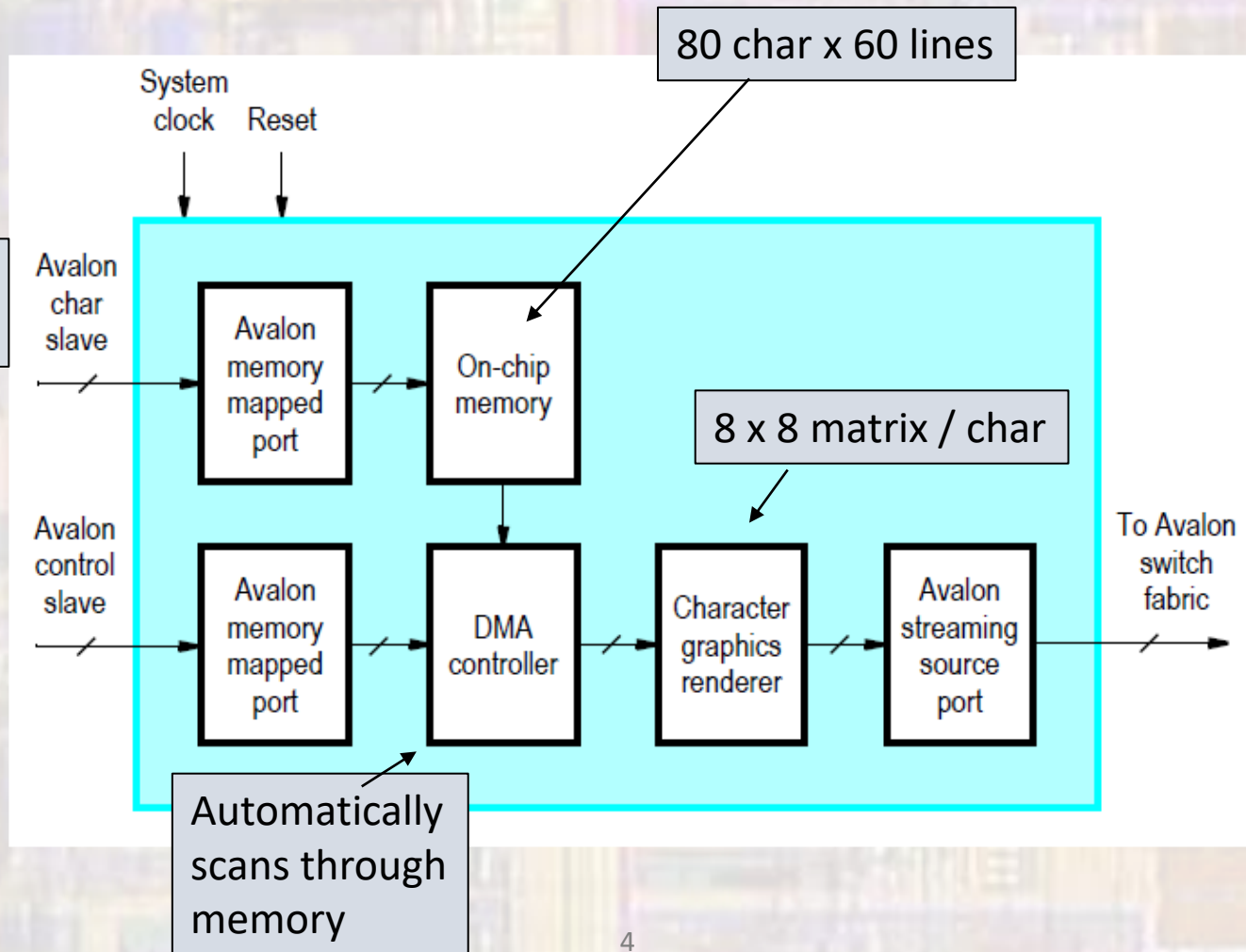
- Character Buffer Block Diagram



25MHz\*\* - VGA clk

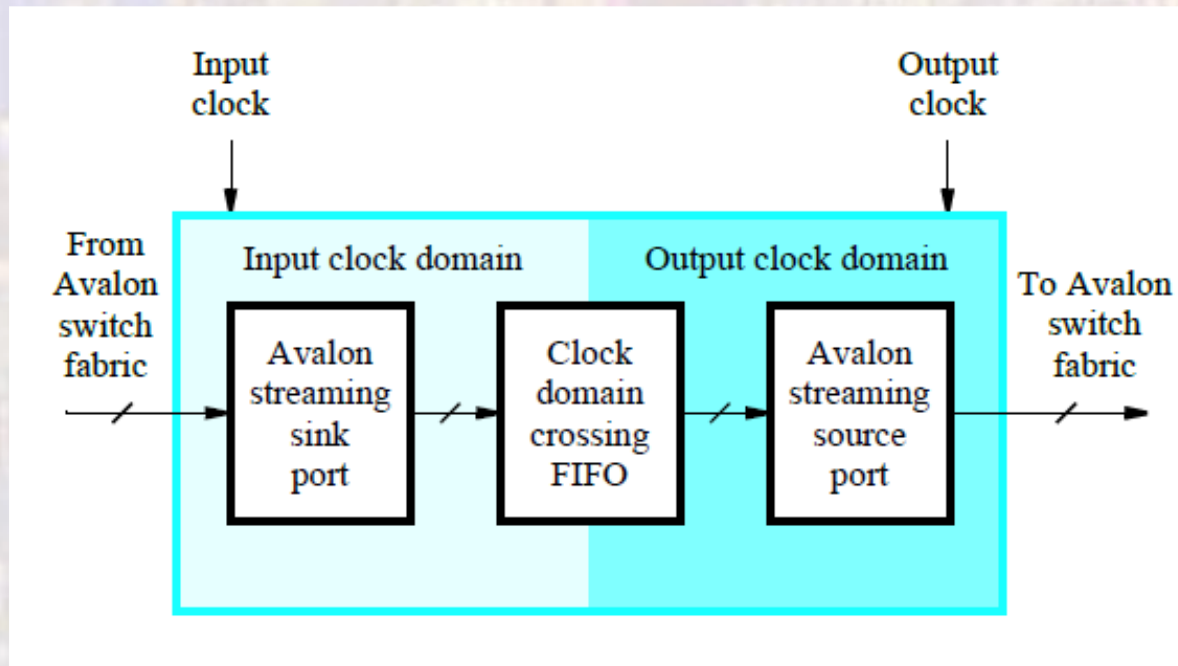
# NIOS II Character Display - HW

- Character Buffer Block



# NIOS II Character Display - HW

- Dual Clock FIFO

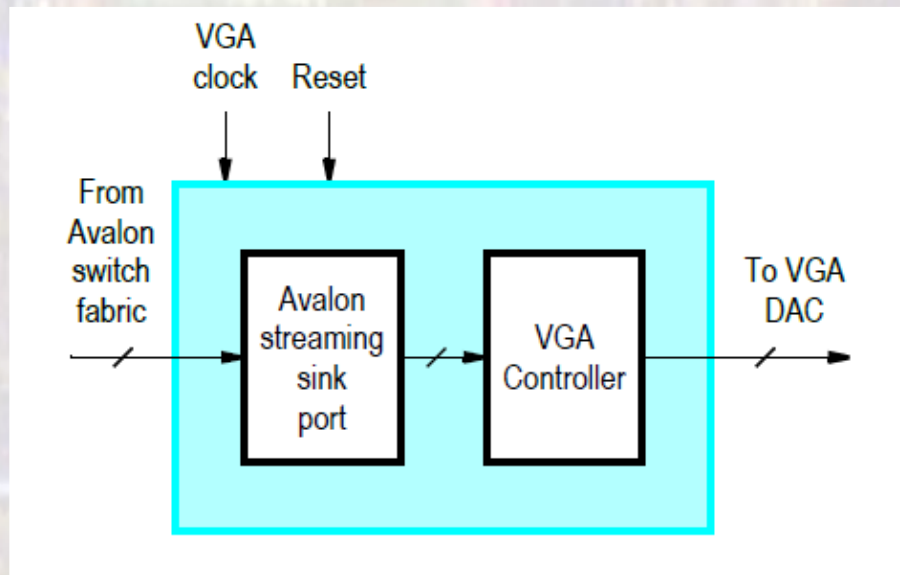


Allows different incoming and outgoing data rates



# NIOS II Character Display - HW

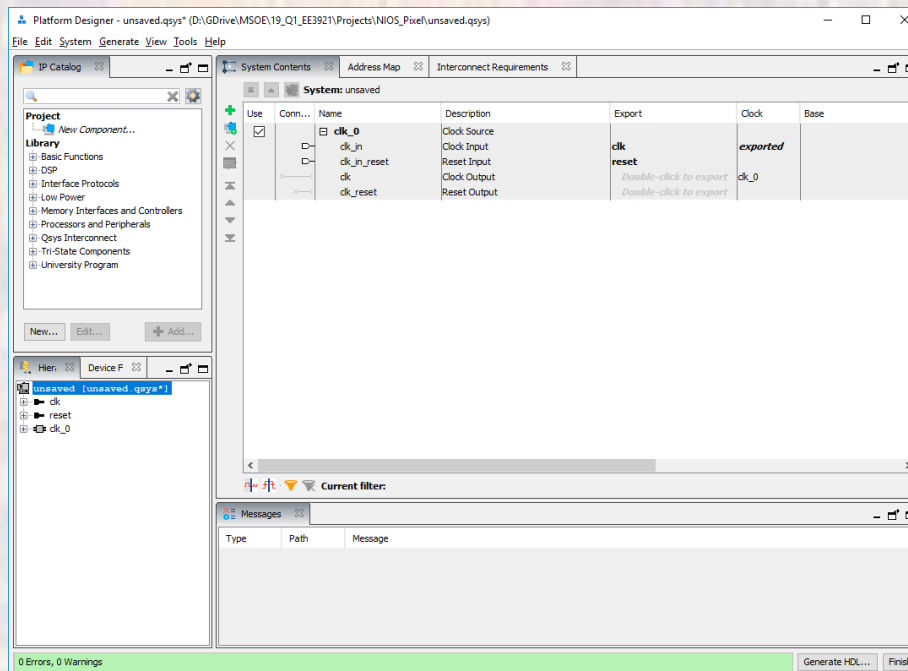
- VGA Controller Block



Creates and drives the required VGA signals

# NIOS II Character Display - HW

- Create a new Quartus project
  - Do not select a Simulation Tool in EDA Tool Settings
- Open **Tools** → **Platform Designer**



# NIOS II Character Display - HW

- Add NIOS
  - Processors and Peripherals → Embedded Processors → NIOS II Processor
  - NIOS II/f

<input type="checkbox"/>	clk_reset	Reset Output	Double-click to export		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<b>nios2_gen2_0</b>	Nios II Processor			
<input type="checkbox"/>	clk	Clock Input	Double-click to export	unconnected	
<input type="checkbox"/>	reset	Reset Input	Double-click to export	[clk]	
<input type="checkbox"/>	data_master	Avalon Memory Mapped Master	Double-click to export	[clk]	
<input type="checkbox"/>	instruction_master	Avalon Memory Mapped Master	Double-click to export	[clk]	
<input type="checkbox"/>	irq	Interrupt Receiver	Double-click to export	[clk]	
<input type="checkbox"/>	debug_reset_request	Reset Output	Double-click to export	[clk]	
<input type="checkbox"/>	debug_mem_slave	Avalon Memory Mapped Slave	Double-click to export	[clk]	0x08
<input type="checkbox"/>	custom_instruction_m...	Custom Instruction Master	Double-click to export		

- Add On-chip Memory
  - Basic Functions → On Chip Memory → On Chip Memory (RAM or ROM)...

RAM

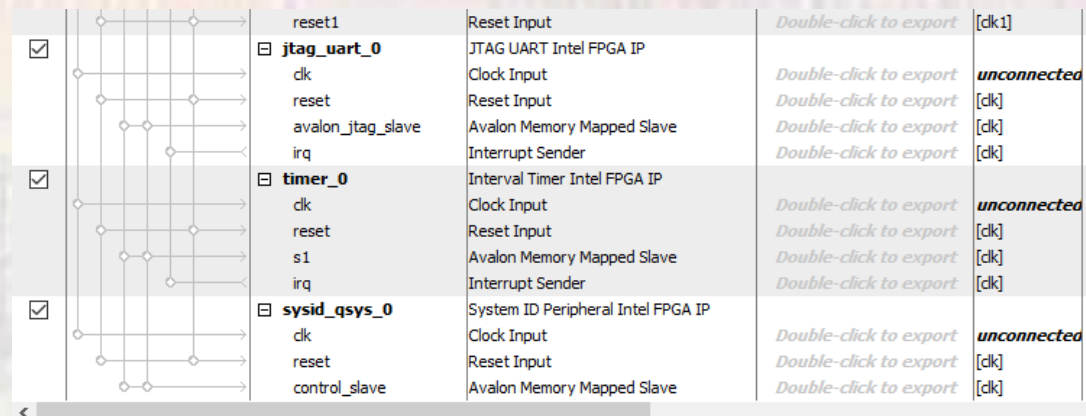
Size = 12,000 bytes

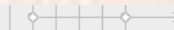


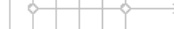
<input type="checkbox"/>	debug_mem_slave	Avalon Memory Mapped Slave	Double-click to export	[clk]	0x08
<input type="checkbox"/>	custom_instruction_m...	Custom Instruction Master	Double-click to export		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<b>onchip_memory2_0</b>	On-Chip Memory (RAM or ROM) Intel ...			
<input type="checkbox"/>	clk1	Clock Input	Double-click to export	unconnected	
<input type="checkbox"/>	s1	Avalon Memory Mapped Slave	Double-click to export	[clk1]	
<input type="checkbox"/>	reset1	Reset Input	Double-click to export	[clk1]	



# NIOS II Character Display - HW

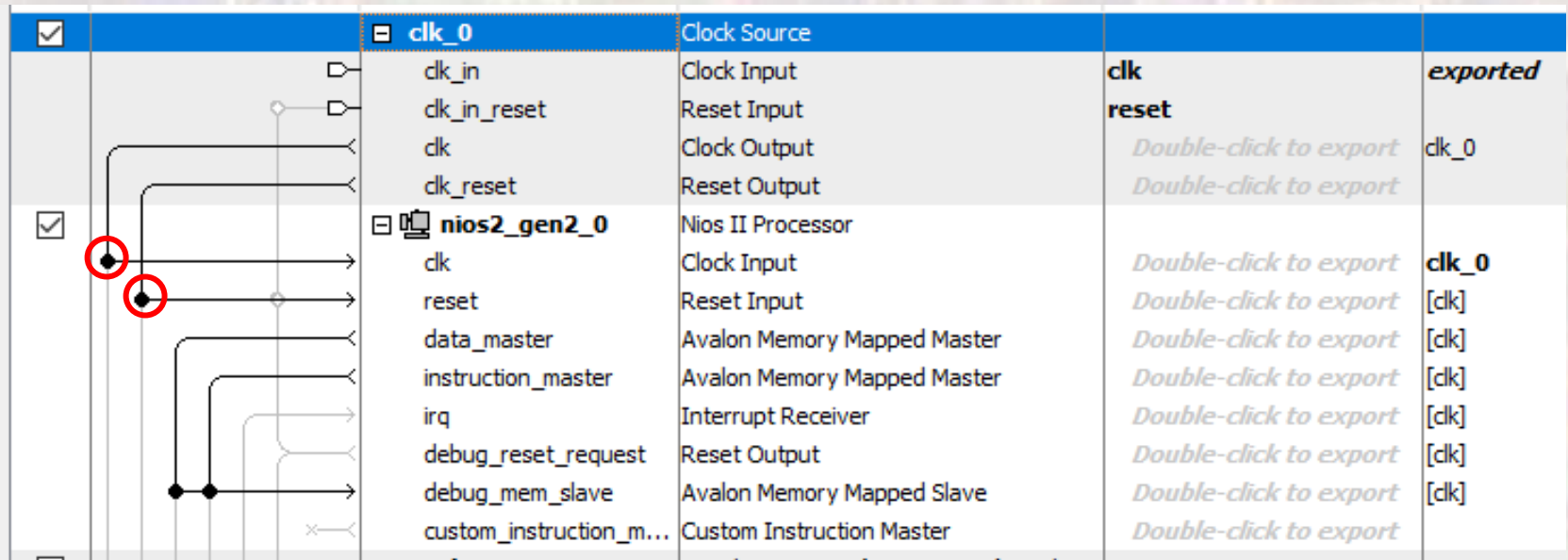
- Add JTAG
  - Interface Protocols → Serial → JTAG Uart Intel FPGA IP
- Add Timer
  - Processors and Peripherals → Peripherals → Interval Timer Intel FPGA IP
- Add System ID
  - Basic Functions → Simulation; Debug and Verification → Debug and Performance → System ID Peripheral Intel FPGA IP



<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		reset1	Reset Input	<i>Double-click to export</i>	[clk1]
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<b>jtag_uart_0</b>	JTAG UART Intel FPGA IP	<i>Double-click to export</i>	<i>unconnected</i>
		clk	Clock Input	<i>Double-click to export</i>	[clk]
		reset	Reset Input	<i>Double-click to export</i>	[clk]
		avalon_jtag_slave	Avalon Memory Mapped Slave	<i>Double-click to export</i>	[clk]
		irq	Interrupt Sender	<i>Double-click to export</i>	[clk]
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<b>timer_0</b>	Interval Timer Intel FPGA IP	<i>Double-click to export</i>	<i>unconnected</i>
		clk	Clock Input	<i>Double-click to export</i>	[clk]
		reset	Reset Input	<i>Double-click to export</i>	[clk]
		s1	Avalon Memory Mapped Slave	<i>Double-click to export</i>	[clk]
		irq	Interrupt Sender	<i>Double-click to export</i>	[clk]
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<b>sysid_qsys_0</b>	System ID Peripheral Intel FPGA IP	<i>Double-click to export</i>	<i>unconnected</i>
		clk	Clock Input	<i>Double-click to export</i>	[clk]
		reset	Reset Input	<i>Double-click to export</i>	[clk]
		control_slave	Avalon Memory Mapped Slave	<i>Double-click to export</i>	[clk]

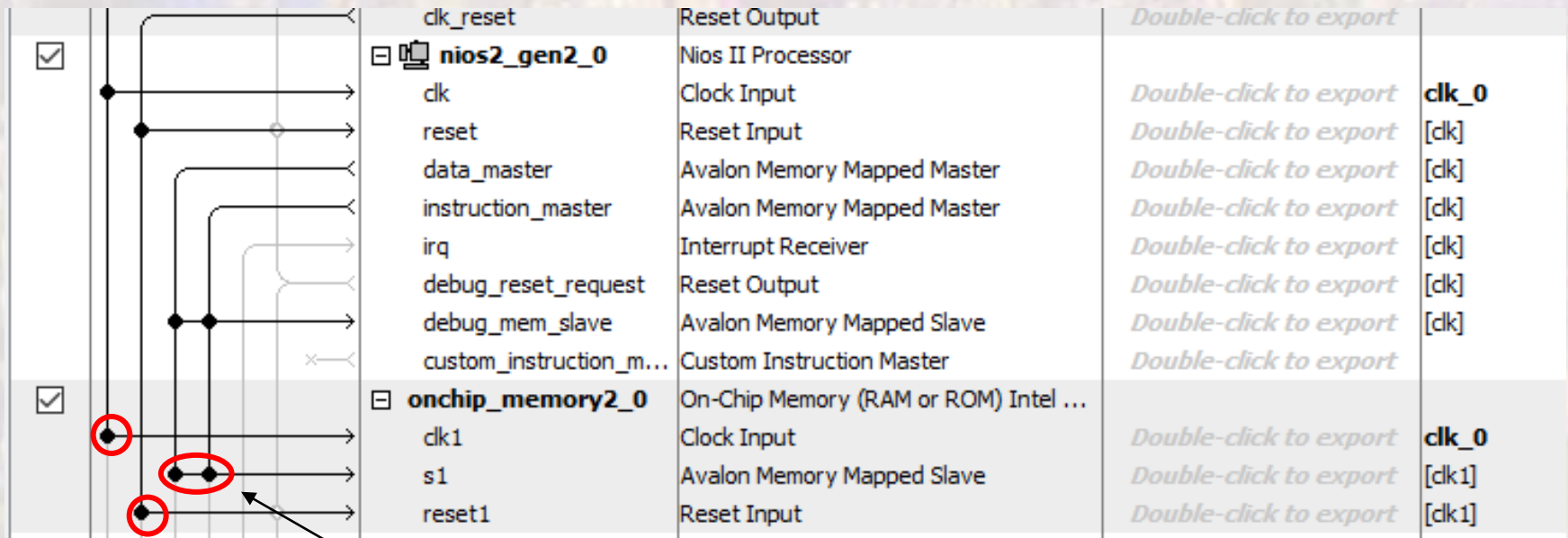
# NIOS II Character Display - HW

- Connect up basic NIOS system
  - NIOS Inputs



# NIOS II Character Display - HW

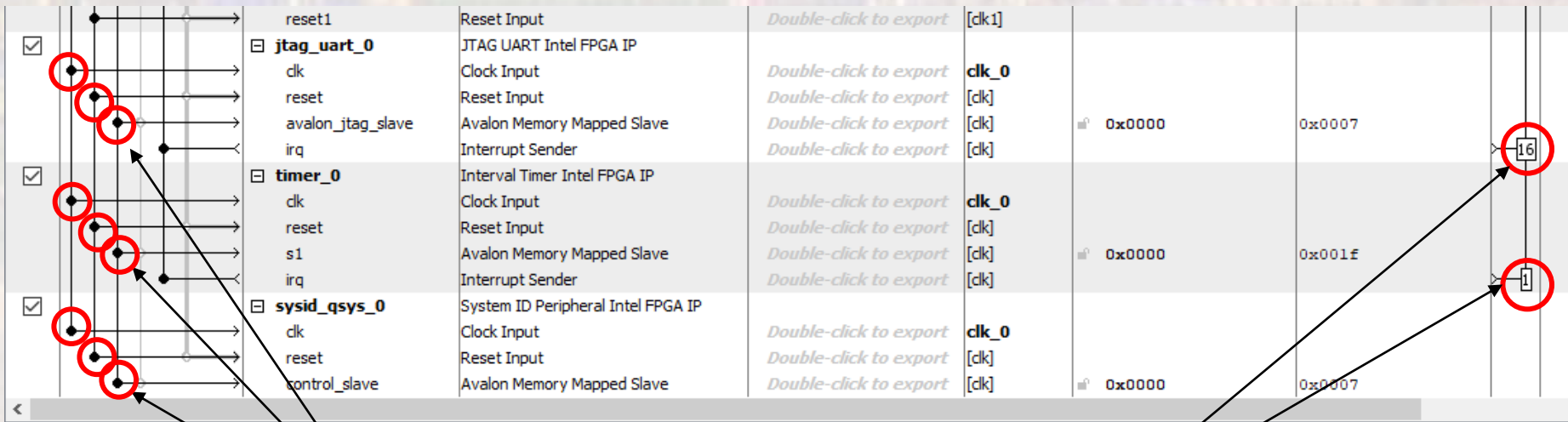
- Connect up basic NIOS system
  - On-chip Memory



Connect to data and instruction masters

# NIOS II Character Display - HW

- Connect up basic NIOS system
  - JTAG, Timer, SysID



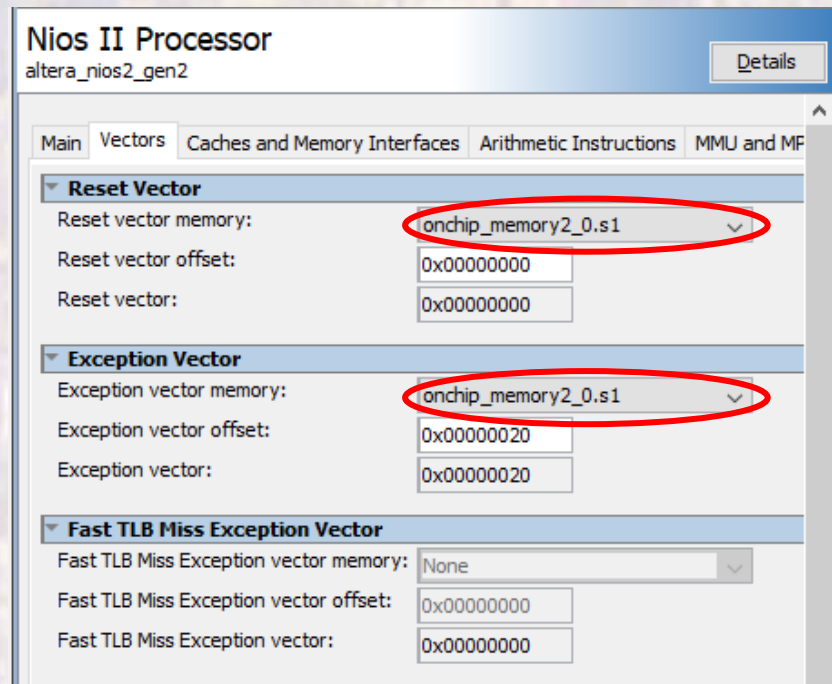
Connect to data master

Assign Priorities



# NIOS II Character Display - HW

- Connect up basic NIOS system
  - Assign the NIOS II Reset and Exception vectors





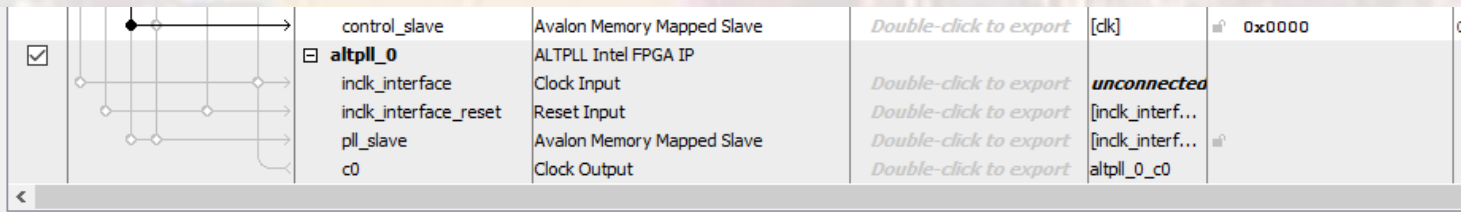
# NIOS II Character Display - HW

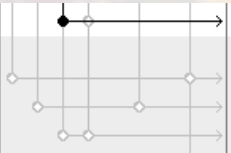
- Create Character System
  - Add a PLL
    - Basic Functions → Clocks; PLLs and Resets → PLL → ALTPLL Intel FPGA IP

50MHz input clock

no areset or locked output

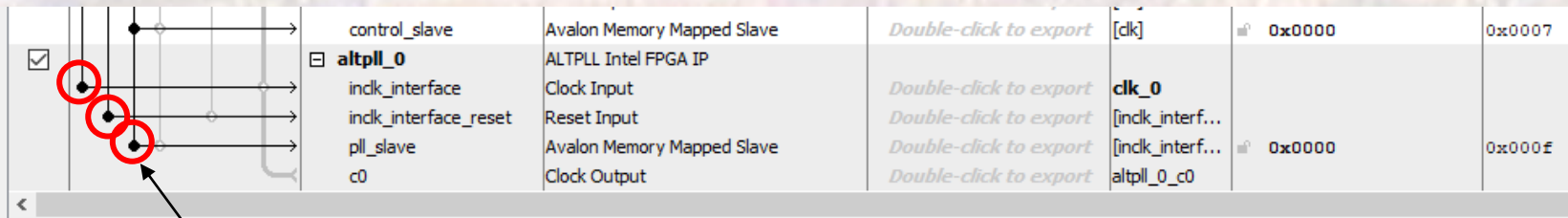
c0 → 25MHz : the VGA frequency



<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		control_slave	Avalon Memory Mapped Slave	<i>Double-click to export</i>	[clk]	0x0000	0
		<b>altpll_0</b>	ALTPLL Intel FPGA IP				
		indk_interface	Clock Input	<i>Double-click to export</i>	<b>unconnected</b>		
		indk_interface_reset	Reset Input	<i>Double-click to export</i>	[indk_interf...		
		pll_slave	Avalon Memory Mapped Slave	<i>Double-click to export</i>	[indk_interf...		
		c0	Clock Output	<i>Double-click to export</i>	altpll_0_c0		

# NIOS II Character Display - HW

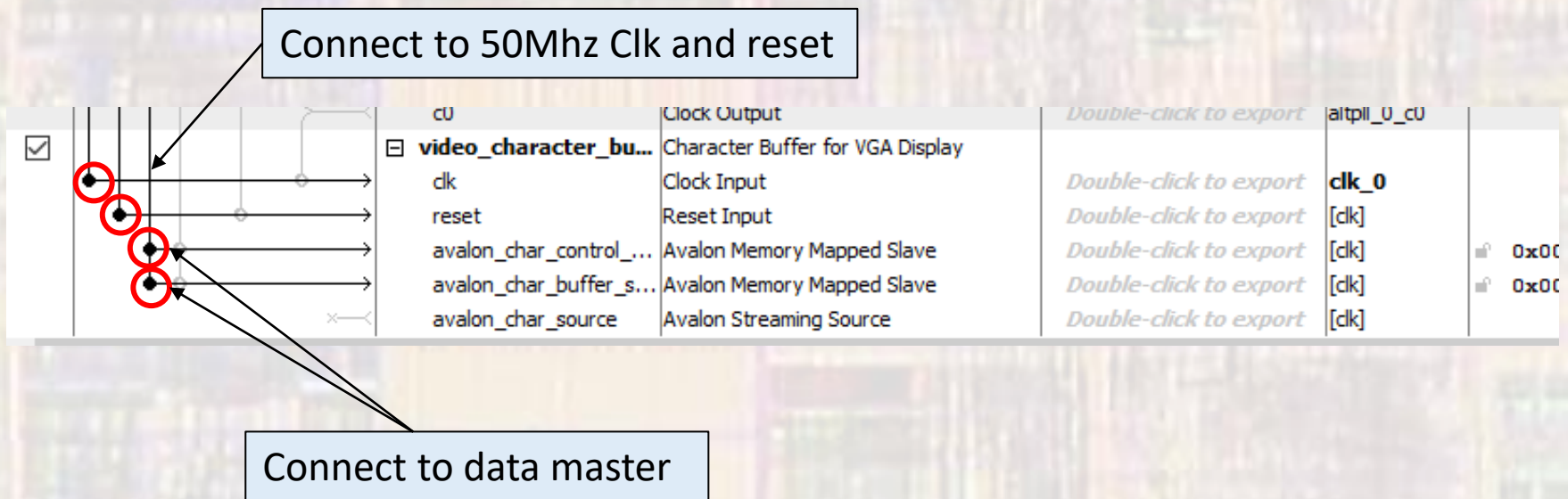
- Create Character System
  - Connect PLL



Connect to the 50MHz Clk, reset and the data master

# NIOS II Character Display - HW

- Create Character System
  - Character Buffer
    - University Program → Audio and Video → Video → Character Buffer for VGA Display



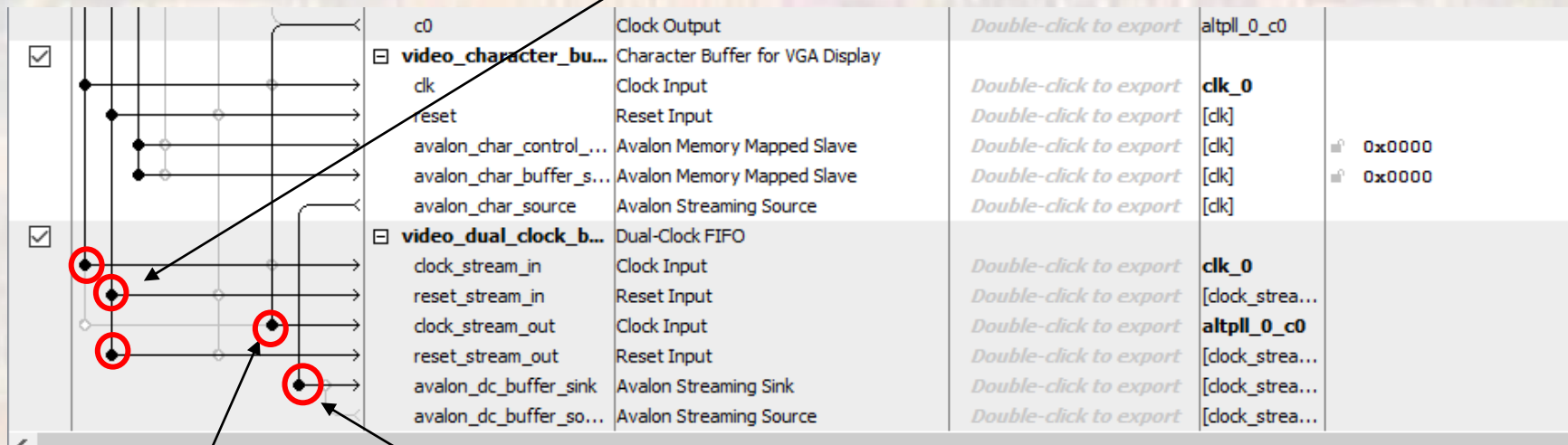
# NIOS II Character Display - HW

- Create Character System
  - Dual Clock FIFO
    - [University Program](#) → [Audio and Video](#) → [Video](#) → [Dual Clock FIFO](#)

Color Bits – 10

Color Planes - 3

Connect to 50Mhz Clk and reset



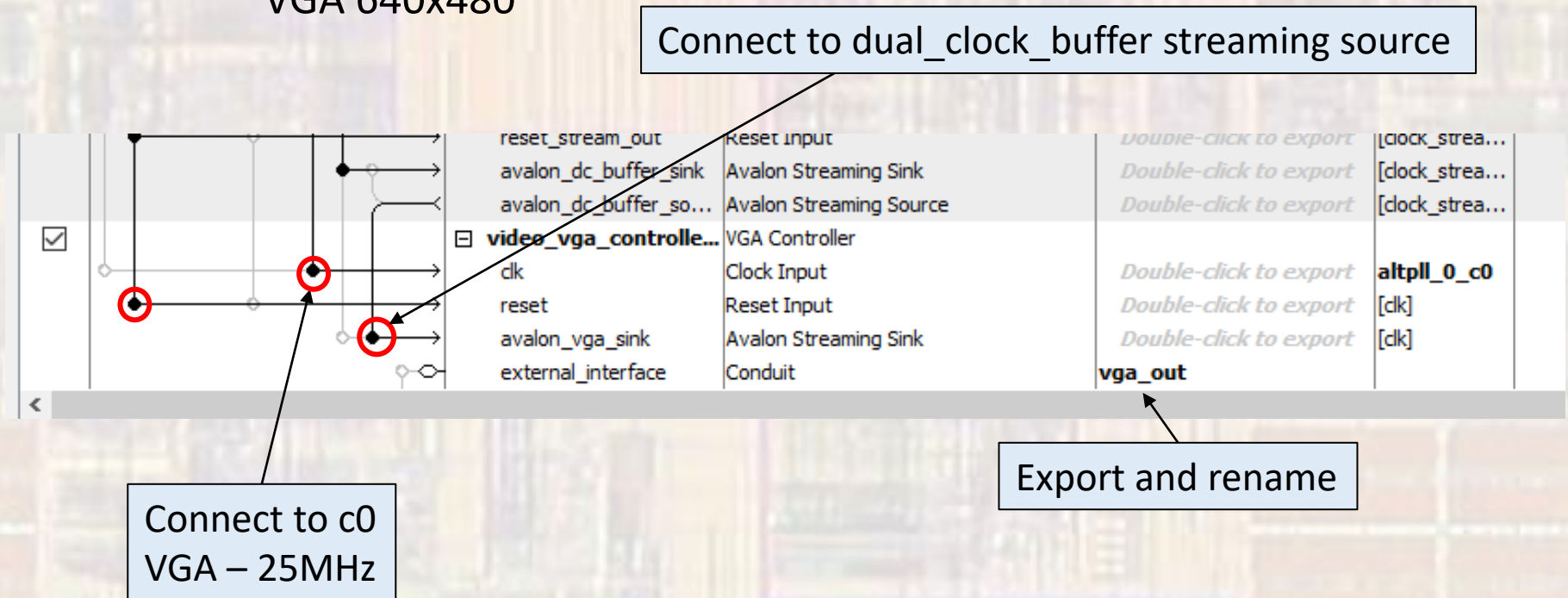
Connect to c0  
VGA – 25MHz

Connect to video character buffer streaming source



# NIOS II Character Display - HW

- Create Character System
    - VGA Controller
      - University Program → Audio and Video → Video → VGA Controller
- DE10-Lite  
VGA Connector  
VGA 640x480

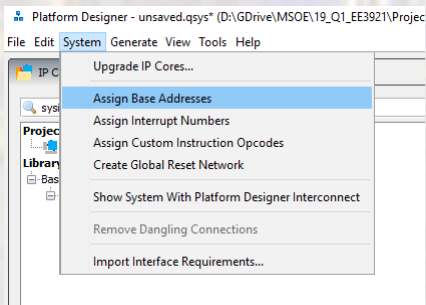




# NIOS II Character Display - HW

- Create Character

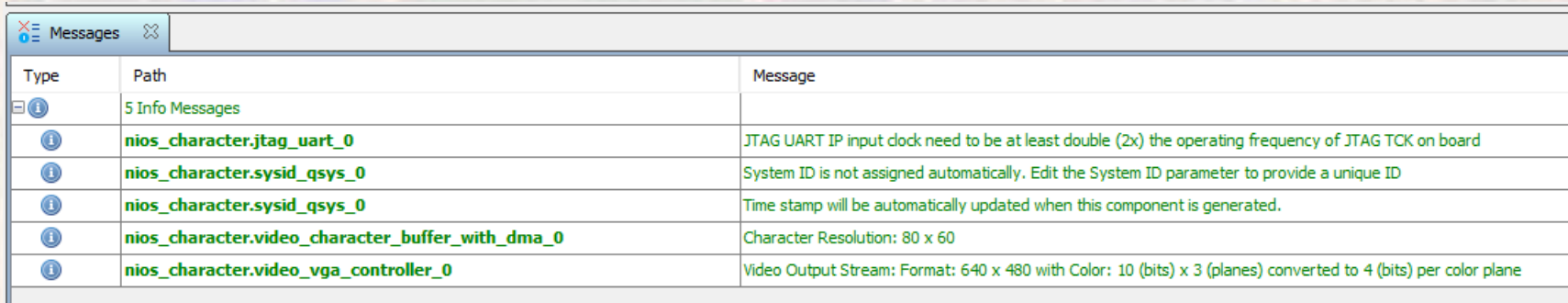
## Assign Base Addresses



Use	Connections	Name	Description	Export	Clock	Base	End	IRQ	Tags
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<b>clk_0</b> clk_in clk_in_reset clk clk_reset	Clock Source Clock Input Reset Input Clock Output Reset Output	<b>clk</b> <b>reset</b> <i>Double-click to export</i> <i>Double-click to export</i>	<b>exported</b> clk_0				
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<b>nios2_gen2_0</b> clk reset data_master instruction_master irq debug_reset_request debug_mem_slave custom_instruction_m...	Nios II Processor Clock Input Reset Input Avalon Memory Mapped Master Avalon Memory Mapped Master Interrupt Receiver Reset Output Avalon Memory Mapped Slave Custom Instruction Master	<i>Double-click to export</i> <i>Double-click to export</i> <i>Double-click to export</i> <i>Double-click to export</i> <i>Double-click to export</i> <i>Double-click to export</i> <i>Double-click to export</i> <i>Double-click to export</i>	<b>clk_0</b> [clk] [clk] [clk] [clk] [clk] [clk]		IRQ 0	IRQ 31	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<b>onchip_memory2_0</b> clk1 s1 reset1	On-Chip Memory (RAM or ROM) Intel ... Clock Input Avalon Memory Mapped Slave Reset Input	<i>Double-click to export</i> <i>Double-click to export</i> <i>Double-click to export</i>	<b>clk_0</b> [clk1] [clk1]	0x4800	0x4fff		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<b>jtag_uart_0</b> clk reset avalon_jtag_slave irq	JTAG UART Intel FPGA IP Clock Input Reset Input Avalon Memory Mapped Slave Interrupt Sender	<i>Double-click to export</i> <i>Double-click to export</i> <i>Double-click to export</i> <i>Double-click to export</i>	<b>clk_0</b> [clk] [clk] [clk]	0x5040	0x5047		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<b>timer_0</b> clk reset s1 irq	Interval Timer Intel FPGA IP Clock Input Reset Input Avalon Memory Mapped Slave Interrupt Sender	<i>Double-click to export</i> <i>Double-click to export</i> <i>Double-click to export</i> <i>Double-click to export</i>	<b>clk_0</b> [clk] [clk] [clk]	0x5000	0x501f		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<b>sysid_qsys_0</b> clk reset control_slave	System ID Peripheral Intel FPGA IP Clock Input Reset Input Avalon Memory Mapped Slave	<i>Double-click to export</i> <i>Double-click to export</i> <i>Double-click to export</i>	<b>clk_0</b> [clk] [clk]	0x5038	0x503f		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<b>altpll_0</b> indk_interface indk_interface_reset pll_slave c0	ALTPLL Intel FPGA IP Clock Input Reset Input Avalon Memory Mapped Slave Clock Output	<i>Double-click to export</i> <i>Double-click to export</i> <i>Double-click to export</i> <i>Double-click to export</i>	<b>clk_0</b> [indk_interf...] [indk_interf...] altpll_0_c0	0x5020	0x502f		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<b>video_character_bu...</b> clk reset avalon_char_control_... avalon_char_buffer_s... avalon_char_source	Character Buffer for VGA Display Clock Input Reset Input Avalon Memory Mapped Slave Avalon Memory Mapped Slave Avalon Streaming Source	<i>Double-click to export</i> <i>Double-click to export</i> <i>Double-click to export</i> <i>Double-click to export</i> <i>Double-click to export</i>	<b>clk_0</b> [clk] [clk] [clk] [clk]	0x5030 0x0000	0x5037 0x1fff		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<b>video_dual_clock_b...</b> dclk_stream_in reset_stream_in dclk_stream_out reset_stream_out avalon_dc_buffer_sink avalon_dc_buffer_so...	Dual-Clock FIFO Clock Input Reset Input Clock Input Reset Input Avalon Streaming Sink Avalon Streaming Source	<i>Double-click to export</i> <i>Double-click to export</i> <i>Double-click to export</i> <i>Double-click to export</i> <i>Double-click to export</i> <i>Double-click to export</i>	<b>clk_0</b> [dclk_strea...] [altpll_0_c0] [dclk_strea...] [dclk_strea...] [dclk_strea...] [dclk_strea...]				
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<b>video_vga_controll...</b> clk reset avalon_vga_sink external_interface	VGA Controller Clock Input Reset Input Avalon Streaming Sink Conduit	<i>Double-click to export</i> <i>Double-click to export</i> <i>Double-click to export</i>	<b>altpll_0_c0</b> [clk] [clk]				
				<b>vga_out</b>					

# NIOS II Character Display - HW

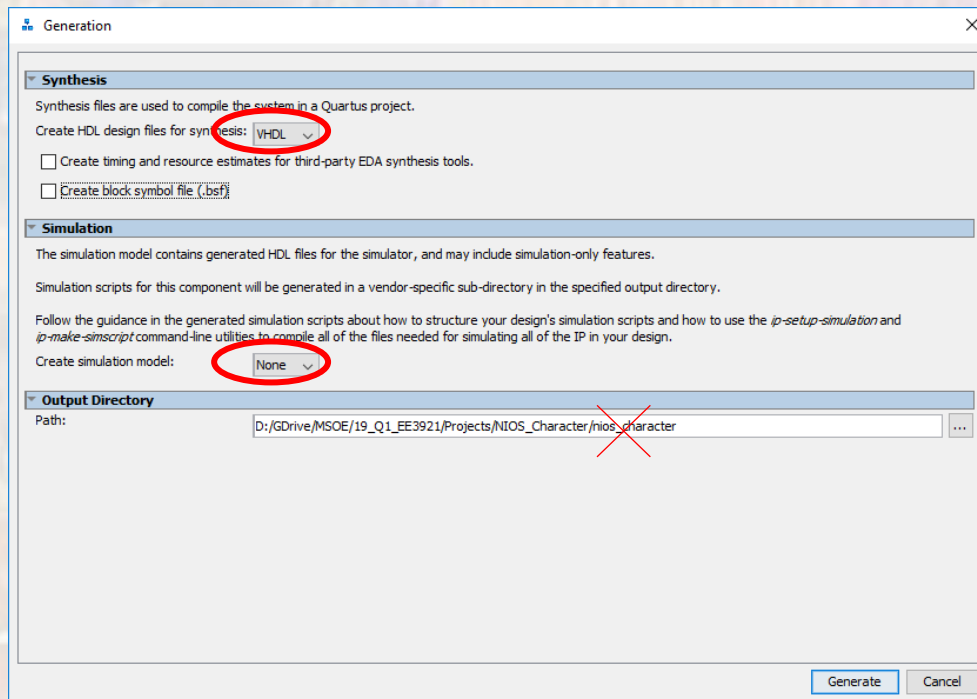
- Create Character System
  - Check for errors



Type	Path	Message
5 Info Messages		
i	<b>nios_character.jtag_uart_0</b>	JTAG UART IP input clock need to be at least double (2x) the operating frequency of JTAG TCK on board
i	<b>nios_character.sysid_qsys_0</b>	System ID is not assigned automatically. Edit the System ID parameter to provide a unique ID
i	<b>nios_character.sysid_qsys_0</b>	Time stamp will be automatically updated when this component is generated.
i	<b>nios_character.video_character_buffer_with_dma_0</b>	Character Resolution: 80 x 60
i	<b>nios_character.video_vga_controller_0</b>	Video Output Stream: Format: 640 x 480 with Color: 10 (bits) x 3 (planes) converted to 4 (bits) per color plane

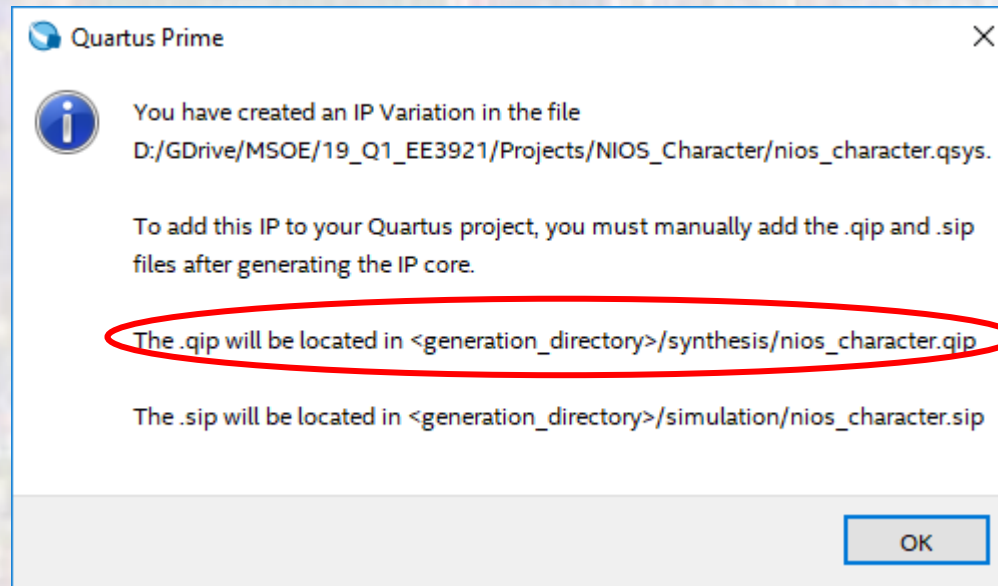
# NIOS II Character Display - HW

- Create Character System
  - Save the Platform Designer system
  - Generate the Platform Designer system
    - The first time you generate you must delete the last directory in the path – **don't use the '...'**



# NIOS II Character Display - HW

- Create Character System
  - Add the .qip file to the project





# NIOS II Character Display - HW

- Create DE10 Design
  - Instantiate into a VHDL file
    - Open a new VHDL design
    - In Platform Designer: **Generate** → **Show Instantiation Template**
    - Copy and Paste into the new design where appropriate

```
component nios_char is
  port (
    clk_clk      : in std_logic      := 'X'; -- clk
    reset_reset_n : in std_logic      := 'X'; -- reset_n
    vga_out_CLK   : out std_logic;    -- CLK
    vga_out_HS    : out std_logic;    -- HS
    vga_out_VS    : out std_logic;    -- VS
    vga_out_BLANK : out std_logic;    -- BLANK
    vga_out_SYNC  : out std_logic;    -- SYNC
    vga_out_R     : out std_logic_vector(3 downto 0); -- R
    vga_out_G     : out std_logic_vector(3 downto 0); -- G
    vga_out_B     : out std_logic_vector(3 downto 0); -- B
  );
end component nios_char;
```

```
u0 : component nios_char
  port map (
    clk_clk      => CONNECTED_TO_clk_clk,  -- clk.clk
    reset_reset_n => CONNECTED_TO_reset_reset_n, -- reset.reset_n
    vga_out_CLK   => CONNECTED_TO_vga_out_CLK, -- vga_out.CLK
    vga_out_HS    => CONNECTED_TO_vga_out_HS, -- .HS
    vga_out_VS    => CONNECTED_TO_vga_out_VS, -- .VS
    vga_out_BLANK => CONNECTED_TO_vga_out_BLANK, -- .BLANK
    vga_out_SYNC  => CONNECTED_TO_vga_out_SYNC, -- .SYNC
    vga_out_R     => CONNECTED_TO_vga_out_R,  -- .R
    vga_out_G     => CONNECTED_TO_vga_out_G,  -- .G
    vga_out_B     => CONNECTED_TO_vga_out_B,  -- .B
  );
```

TEMPLATES



# NIOS II Character Display - HW

- Create DE10 Design
  - Instantiate into a VHDL file

Instantiation template component

```
-----  
-- nios_char_de10.vhd1  
--  
-- Created 9/18/18  
-- by: johnsontimoj  
-- rev: 0  
-----  
-- Nios character system - vga driver with charac  
-----  
  
library ieee;  
use ieee.std_logic_1164.all;  
use ieee.numeric_std.all;  
  
entity nios_char_de10 is  
  port(  
    CLOCK_50 : in std_logic;  
    VGA_HS: out std_logic;  
    VGA_VS: out std_logic;  
    VGA_R: out std_logic_vector(3 downto 0);  
    VGA_G: out std_logic_vector(3 downto 0);  
    VGA_B: out std_logic_vector(3 downto 0)  
  );  
end entity;
```

```
architecture behavioral of nios_char_de10 is  
  --  
  -- no signals  
  
  component nios_char is  
    port (  
      clk_clk : in std_logic := 'X'; -- clk  
      reset_reset_n : in std_logic := 'X'; -- reset_n  
      vga_out_CLK : out std_logic; -- CLK  
      vga_out_HS : out std_logic; -- HS  
      vga_out_VS : out std_logic; -- VS  
      vga_out_BLANK : out std_logic; -- BLANK  
      vga_out_SYNC : out std_logic; -- SYNC  
      vga_out_R : out std_logic_vector(3 downto 0); -- R  
      vga_out_G : out std_logic_vector(3 downto 0); -- G  
      vga_out_B : out std_logic_vector(3 downto 0); -- B  
    );  
  end component nios_char;
```

DE10 pin aliases from .qsf file

# NIOS II Character Display - HW

- Create DE10 Design
  - Instantiate into a VHDL file

Instantiation template instance mapped to DE10 qsf pin aliases

```
begin
  u0 : component nios_char
    port map (
      clk_clk      => CLOCK_50, -- clk.clk
      reset_reset_n => '1',    -- reset.reset_n
      --vga_out_CLK => CONNECTED_TO_vga_out_CLK, -- vga_out.CLK
      vga_out_HS   => VGA_HS,   -- .HS
      vga_out_VS   => VGA_VS,   -- .VS
      --vga_out_BLANK => CONNECTED_TO_vga_out_BLANK, -- .BLANK
      --vga_out_SYNC => CONNECTED_TO_vga_out_SYNC, -- .SYNC
      vga_out_R    => VGA_R,    -- .R
      vga_out_G    => VGA_G,    -- .G
      vga_out_B    => VGA_B,    -- .B
    );
end architecture;
```

Note: these 3 signals are not used  
- comment out or remove

# NIOS II Character Display - HW

- Create DE10 Design
  - Prepare to synthesize
    - If you did not do these when you created the project be sure to do them now
      - assignments → device → device and Pin options
        - Single Uncompressed with memory initialization
      - Import the pin aliases (qsf file)
      - Setup the SDF file
  - Be sure to set your top level entity
  - Start Compilation

# NIOS II Character Display - HW

- Create DE10 Design
  - Complete the HW setup
    - Download the HW project onto the board
    - **DO NOT CLOSE** either of these windows

