



## CEQA Referral Initial Study And Notice of Intent to Adopt a Negative Declaration

**Date:** September 20, 2024

**To:** Distribution List (See Attachment A)

**From:** Kristen Anaya, Senior Planner  
Planning and Community Development

**Subject:** GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT AND REZONE APPLICATION NO. PLN2024-0016 – ATWAL PROPERTIES

**Comment Period:** September 20, 2024– October 23, 2024

**Respond By:** October 23, 2024

**Public Hearing Date:** November 21, 2024

**Time:** 6:00 P.M.

**Location:** Tenth Street Place  
1010 10<sup>th</sup> Street, Modesto, CA 95354  
Chambers – Basement Level

You may have previously received an Early Consultation Notice regarding this project, and your comments, if provided, were incorporated into the Initial Study. Based on all comments received, Stanislaus County anticipates adopting a Negative Declaration for this project. This referral provides notice of a 30-day comment period during which Responsible and Trustee Agencies and other interested parties may provide comments to this Department regarding our proposal to adopt the Negative Declaration.

All applicable project documents are available for review at: Stanislaus County Department of Planning and Community Development, 1010 10<sup>th</sup> Street, Suite 3400, Modesto, CA 95354. Please provide any additional comments to the above address or call us at (209) 525-6330 if you have any questions. Thank you.

**Applicant:** Komal Atwal

**Project Location:** 1018 Welty Road, west of Highway 33, just south of the Stanislaus and San Joaquin County line, in the Vernalis area

**APN:** 016-038-007

**Williamson Act Contract:** N/A

**General Plan:** Agriculture

**Current Zoning:** General Agriculture (A-2-40)

**Project Description:** Request to amend the General Plan and Zoning designations of a 23± acre parcel from Agriculture and General Agriculture (A-2-40) to Planned Development, to allow for development of a truck parking and dispatch facility within a 4± acre area.

Full document with attachments available for viewing at:  
<http://www.stancounty.com/planning/pl/act-projects.shtm>



## GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT AND REZONE APPLICATION NO. PLN2024-0016 – ATWAL PROPERTIES

Attachment A

### Distribution List

X	CA DEPT OF CONSERVATION Land Resources		STAN CO ALUC
X	CA DEPT OF FISH & WILDLIFE		STAN CO ANIMAL SERVICES
	CA DEPT OF FORESTRY (CAL FIRE)	X	STAN CO BUILDING PERMITS DIVISION
X	CA DEPT OF TRANSPORTATION DIST 10	X	STAN CO CEO
X	CA OPR STATE CLEARINGHOUSE		STAN CO CSA
X	CA RWQCB CENTRAL VALLEY REGION	X	STAN CO DER
	CA STATE LANDS COMMISSION		STAN CO ERC
X	CEMETERY DISTRICT: PATTERSON	X	STAN CO FARM BUREAU
	CENTRAL VALLEY FLOOD PROTECTION	X	STAN CO HAZARDOUS MATERIALS
	CITY OF:		STAN CO PARKS & RECREATION
	COMMUNITY SERVICES DIST:	X	STAN CO PUBLIC WORKS
X	COOPERATIVE EXTENSION		STAN CO PUBLIC WORKS - SURVEY
X	COUNTY OF: SAN JOAQUIN		STAN CO RISK MANAGEMENT
X	DER GROUNDWATER RESOURCES DIVISION	X	STAN CO SHERIFF
X	FIRE PROTECTION DIST: WEST STANISLAUS	X	STAN CO SUPERVISOR DIST 3: WITHROW
X	GSA: WEST STANISLAUS IRRIGATION DISTRICT	X	STAN COUNTY COUNSEL
x	HOSPITAL DIST: DEL PUERTO HEALTHCARE	X	StanCOG
X	IRRIGATION DIST: WEST STANISLAUS	X	STANISLAUS FIRE PREVENTION BUREAU
X	MOSQUITO DIST: TURLOCK	X	STANISLAUS LAFCO
X	STANISLAUS COUNTY EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES	X	STATE OF CA SWRCB DIVISION OF DRINKING WATER DIST. 10
	MUNICIPAL ADVISORY COUNCIL:	X	SURROUNDING LAND OWNERS
X	PACIFIC GAS & ELECTRIC		INTERESTED PARTIES
	POSTMASTER:	X	TELEPHONE COMPANY: AT&T
X	RAILROAD: SOUTHERN PACIFIC	X	TRIBAL CONTACTS (CA Government Code §65352.3)
X	SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY APCD		US ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS
X	SCHOOL DIST 1: PATTERSON UNIFIED	X	US FISH & WILDLIFE
	SCHOOL DIST 2:		US MILITARY (SB 1462) (7 agencies)
	WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT		USDA NRCS
X	STAN CO AG COMMISSIONER		
	TUOLUMNE RIVER TRUST		

## STANISLAUS COUNTY CEQA REFERRAL RESPONSE FORM

**TO:** Stanislaus County Planning & Community Development  
1010 10<sup>th</sup> Street, Suite 3400  
Modesto, CA 95354

**FROM:** \_\_\_\_\_

**SUBJECT: GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT AND REZONE APPLICATION NO. PLN2024-0016 – ATWAL PROPERTIES**

Based on this agency's particular field(s) of expertise, it is our position the above described project:

- \_\_\_\_\_ Will not have a significant effect on the environment.  
\_\_\_\_\_ May have a significant effect on the environment.  
\_\_\_\_\_ No Comments.

Listed below are specific impacts which support our determination (e.g., traffic general, carrying capacity, soil types, air quality, etc.) – (attach additional sheet if necessary)

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

Listed below are possible mitigation measures for the above-listed impacts: *PLEASE BE SURE TO INCLUDE WHEN THE MITIGATION OR CONDITION NEEDS TO BE IMPLEMENTED (PRIOR TO RECORDING A MAP, PRIOR TO ISSUANCE OF A BUILDING PERMIT, ETC.):*

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

In addition, our agency has the following comments (attach additional sheets if necessary).

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Response prepared by:

<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
Name	Title	Date



**DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

1010 10<sup>TH</sup> Street, Suite 3400, Modesto, CA 95354  
Planning Phone: (209) 525-6330 Fax: (209) 525-5911  
Building Phone: (209) 525-6557 Fax: (209) 525-7759

## CEQA INITIAL STUDY

Adapted from CEQA Guidelines APPENDIX G Environmental Checklist Form, Final Text, January 1, 2020

1. **Project title:** General Plan Amendment and Rezone Application No. PLN2024-0016 – Atwal Properties
2. **Lead agency name and address:** Stanislaus County  
1010 10<sup>th</sup> Street, Suite 3400  
Modesto, CA 95354
3. **Contact person and phone number:** Kristen Anaya, Senior Planner  
(209) 525-6330
4. **Project location:** 1018 Welty Road, west of Highway 33, just south of the Stanislaus and San Joaquin County line, in the Vernalis area (APN: 016-038-007).
5. **Project sponsor's name and address:** Komal Atwal  
3701 West Linne Road  
Tracy, CA 95304
6. **General Plan designation:** Agriculture
7. **Zoning:** General Agriculture (A-2-40)
8. **Description of project:**

Request to amend the General Plan and zoning designation of a 23± acre parcel from Agriculture and General Agriculture (A-2-40) to Planned Development (P-D), to allow for development of a truck parking and dispatch facility that will serve a fleet of tractors with refrigeration trailers to haul goods for grocery stores. The proposal includes development of a 2.6-acre paved parking lot, consisting of 40 stalls for the parking of tractor-trailers combinations and 21 parking stalls for passenger vehicles. The project includes the construction of a 15,000± square-foot maintenance shop for minor repairs of the on-site fleet, and a 5,000± square-foot proposed office, which will be used for administrative activities for the business. The proposed buildings will be up to 22-feet-tall. The site is currently improved with a 300 square-foot shed which will remain on-site if approved and utilized for storage. The balance of the property will continue to be improved with an almond orchard.

A fleet of 25 trucks and 35 trailers will utilize the site for parking; however, a maximum of 40 tractor-trailer combinations may be able to be parked on-site at any given time. The proposed hours of operation are Monday through Friday from 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., and Saturday, 7:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m., with 29 employees per shift. Employees accessing the site will consist of five office employees, one mechanic, and the rest consisting of drivers, who will sporadically be on-site for pick up and drop off of tractor-trailer. A maximum of 20 passenger vehicle trips per-day are proposed, with up to 12 truck trips anticipated to occur per-day, arriving at and departing the site primarily for long distance trips, with drivers traveling off-site multiple days at a time. Trailers will arrive on-site empty and pick up freight off-site. The proposed development footprint will be enclosed with a new six-foot-tall chain-link fence. Either a 60 square-foot informational monument sign, up to five-feet-tall, is proposed along the road frontage of the property, or the applicant will opt to install a fence-mounted 60-square-foot sign. The applicant is proposing a 15-foot-wide strip of oleander along the project frontage to screen the parking area from the roadway. The site is separated from State Route 33 by the Southern Pacific Railroad track right-of-way east of the property; however, access will be taken via a single driveway onto County-maintained Welty Road. Domestic water and wastewater will be handled by a proposed well meeting Public

Water System standards and private on-site wastewater treatment system (OWTS), respectively. Water runoff will be maintained on-site via a proposed stormwater drainage basin.

9. **Surrounding land uses and setting:** Irrigated farmland, scattered single-family residences, agricultural and residential accessory structures in all directions; a permitted truck parking facility, a permitted manufacturing and repair facility, and San Joaquin County to the north; State Route 33 to the east; and the Southern Pacific Railroad and the Hetch Hetchy right-of-way to the south.
10. **Other public agencies whose approval is required (e.g., permits, financing approval, or participation agreement.):** Stanislaus County Department of Planning & Community Development – Building Permits Division  
Stanislaus County Department of Public Works  
Stanislaus County Department of Environmental Resources
11. **Attachments:**
  - I. Central California Information Center Records Search, dated December 6, 2023

**ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS POTENTIALLY AFFECTED:**

The environmental factors checked below would be potentially affected by this project, involving at least one impact that is a "Potentially Significant Impact" as indicated by the checklist on the following pages.

- |  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aesthetics                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture & Forestry Resources | <input type="checkbox"/> Air Quality                        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Biological Resources        | <input type="checkbox"/> Cultural Resources               | <input type="checkbox"/> Energy                             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Geology / Soils             | <input type="checkbox"/> Greenhouse Gas Emissions         | <input type="checkbox"/> Hazards & Hazardous Materials      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hydrology / Water Quality   | <input type="checkbox"/> Land Use / Planning              | <input type="checkbox"/> Mineral Resources                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Noise                       | <input type="checkbox"/> Population / Housing             | <input type="checkbox"/> Public Services                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Recreation                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Tribal Cultural Resources          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Utilities / Service Systems | <input type="checkbox"/> Wildfire                         | <input type="checkbox"/> Mandatory Findings of Significance |

**DETERMINATION: (To be completed by the Lead Agency)**

On the basis of this initial evaluation:

- ☒ I find that the proposed project **COULD NOT** have a significant effect on the environment, and a **NEGATIVE DECLARATION** will be prepared.
- ☐ I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, there will not be a significant effect in this case because revisions in the project have been made by or agreed to by the project proponent. A **MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION** will be prepared.
- ☐ I find that the proposed project **MAY** have a significant effect on the environment, and an **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT** is required.
- ☐ I find that the proposed project **MAY** have a "potentially significant impact" or "potentially significant unless mitigated" impact on the environment, but at least one effect 1) has been adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and 2) has been addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis as described on attached sheets. An **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT** is required, but it must analyze only the effects that remain to be addressed.
- ☐ I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, because all potentially significant effects (a) have been analyzed adequately in an earlier EIR or **NEGATIVE DECLARATION** pursuant to applicable standards, and (b) have been avoided or mitigated pursuant to that earlier EIR or **NEGATIVE DECLARATION**, including revisions or mitigation measures that are imposed upon the proposed project, nothing further is required.

**Signature on File**

Prepared by Kristen Anaya, Senior Planner

**September 9, 2024**

Date

**EVALUATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS:**

1) A brief explanation is required for all answers except “No Impact” answers that are adequately supported by the information sources a lead agency cites in the parentheses following each question. A “No Impact” answer is adequately supported if the referenced information sources show that the impact simply does not apply to projects like the one involved (e.g., the project falls outside a fault rupture zone). A “No Impact” answer should be explained where it is based on project-specific factors as well as general standards (e.g., the project will not expose sensitive receptors to pollutants, based on a project-specific screening analysis).

2) All answers must take account of the whole action involved, including off-site as well as on-site, cumulative as well as project-level, indirect as well as direct, and construction as well as operational impacts.

3) Once the lead agency has determined that a particular physical impact may occur, then the checklist answers must indicate whether the impact is potentially significant, less than significant with mitigation, or less than significant. “Potentially Significant Impact” is appropriate if there is substantial evidence that an effect may be significant. If there are one or more “Potentially Significant Impact” entries when the determination is made, an EIR is required.

4) “Negative Declaration: Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated” applies where the incorporation of mitigation measures has reduced an effect from “Potentially Significant Impact” to a “Less Than Significant Impact.” The lead agency must describe the mitigation measures, and briefly explain how they reduce the effect to a less than significant level (mitigation measures from Section XVII, “Earlier Analyses,” may be cross-referenced).

5) Earlier analyses may be used where, pursuant to the tiering, program EIR, or other CEQA process, an effect has been adequately analyzed in an earlier EIR or negative declaration.

Section 15063(c)(3)(D). In this case, a brief discussion should identify the following:

a) Earlier Analysis Used. Identify and state where they are available for review.

b) Impacts Adequately Addressed. Identify which effects from the above checklist were within the scope of and adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and state whether such effects were addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis.

c) Mitigation Measures. For effects that are “Less than Significant with Mitigation Measures Incorporated,” describe the mitigation measures which were incorporated or refined from the earlier document and the extent to which they address site-specific conditions for the project.

6) Lead agencies are encouraged to incorporate into the checklist references to information sources for potential impacts (e.g., general plans, zoning ordinances). References to a previously prepared or outside document should, where appropriate, include a reference to the page or pages where the statement is substantiated.

7) Supporting Information Sources: A source list should be attached, and other sources used or individuals contacted should be cited in the discussion.

8) This is only a suggested form, and lead agencies are free to use different formats; however, lead agencies should normally address the questions from this checklist that are relevant to a project’s environmental effects in whatever format is selected.

9) The explanation of each issue should identify:

a) the significant criteria or threshold, if any, used to evaluate each question; and

b) the mitigation measure identified, if any, to reduce the impact to less than significant.



## ISSUES

I. AESTHETICS – Except as provided in Public Resources Code Section 21099, could the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Included	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?			X	
b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?			X	
c) In non-urbanized areas, substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings? (Public views are those that are experienced from publicly accessible vantage point). If the project is in an urbanized area, would the project conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality?			X	
d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?			X	

**Discussion:** The only designated scenic resource in the County is along Interstate 5, which is approximately 3.3± miles to the southwest of the project site. The proposed project will not be visible from this state scenic highway. The site itself is not considered to be a scenic resource or a unique vista. The new development is proposed to be up to 22-feet-tall and consist of metal and glass construction, which is consistent with development in the surrounding area. The balance of the property is proposed to remain planted in almond orchard, which is near the end of its life cycle. As part of this request, the applicant proposes to install a 15-foot-wide strip of oleander along the project site frontage and proposes to enclose the proposed development with a six-foot-tall chain-link fence. The applicant proposes to install either a 60-square-foot informational monument sign, up to five-feet tall, or a 60-square-foot fence-mounted sign at the entrance of the facility, located along the Welty Road frontage. The surrounding area is comprised of irrigated farmland, scattered single-family residences, and agricultural and residential accessory structures in all directions; a permitted truck parking facility, a permitted manufacturing and repair facility, and San Joaquin County to the north; State Route 33 to the east; and the Southern Pacific Railroad and Hetch Hetchy right-of-way to the south.

Building-mounted floodlights, up to 22-feet-tall are proposed to be installed on the proposed structures to illuminate the parking lot. A development standard requiring submittal of a photometric lighting plan, and for all exterior lighting to be shielded to prevent sky glow and light trespass onto adjacent parcels will be added to the project. No adverse impacts to the existing visual character of the site or its surroundings are anticipated.

Aesthetic impacts resulting from the project are considered to be less than significant.

**Mitigation:** None.

**References:** Application information; Stanislaus County Zoning Ordinance; Stanislaus County General Plan and Support Documentation<sup>1</sup>.

II. AGRICULTURE AND FOREST RESOURCES: In determining whether impacts to agricultural resources are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to the California Agricultural Land Evaluation and Site Assessment Model (1997) prepared by the California Department of Conservation as an optional model to use in assessing impacts on agriculture and farmland. In determining whether impacts to forest resources, including timberland, are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to information compiled by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection regarding the state's inventory of forest land, including the Forest and Range Assessment Project and the Forest Legacy Assessment project; and forest carbon measurement methodology provided in Forest Protocols adopted by the California Air Resources Board. -- Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Included	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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?			X	
b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?			X	
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))?			X	
d) Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?				X
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?			X	

**Discussion:** Approximately 21.5± acres of the 23-acre project site is classified as Prime Farmland with the remaining 1.5-acres designated as Grazing Land according to the California Department of Conservation's Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program. Furthermore, the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service's Eastern Stanislaus County Soil Survey indicates that approximately 50 percent of the property is made up of El Solyo silty clay loam, 0 to 2 percent slopes (110), and 50 percent is comprised of Vernalis clay loam, 0 to 2 percent slopes (125). Both soil profiles have a California Revised Storie Index Rating of 95. Storie Index Ratings are correlated to specific gradings that indicate the site's soils' production capabilities when used for irrigated agriculture. Soils with a Storie Index Rating of 95 are considered Grade 1, which equates to prime soils. Although the site is currently in agricultural production, improved with almond orchard, the orchard is at the end of its natural life cycle and is anticipated for removal within 1-2 years. Further, the project site is not enrolled in a Williamson Act Contract. Approximately 4± acres of the 23± acre site is proposed to be disturbed in order to develop the proposed project. The balance of the property will remain planted in orchard for the foreseeable future and could continue to be farmed after removal of the orchard at the end of its productive life cycle.

The project site is located within the West Stanislaus Irrigation District (WSID) and receives irrigation water from the District. The project was referred to the WSID who, to date, have not responded to the project.

Goal 2, Policy 2.7 of the Agricultural Element states that, "Proposed amendments to the General Plan Diagram (map) that would allow the conversion of agricultural land to non-agricultural uses shall be approved only if they are consistent with the County's conversion criteria." Implementation 1, of the Agricultural Element's Policy 2.7 describes the procedures for processing amendments to the General Plan land use designation from "Agriculture" to another designation:

*Conversion Consequences.* *The direct and indirect effects, as well as the cumulative effects, of the proposed conversion of agricultural land shall be fully evaluated.*

*Conversion Considerations.* *In evaluating the consequences of a proposed amendment, the following factors shall be considered: plan designation; soil type; adjacent uses; proposed method of sewage treatment; availability of water, transportation, public utilities, fire and police protection, and other public services; proximity to existing airports and airstrips; impacts on air and water quality, wildlife habitat, endangered species and sensitive lands; and any other factors that may aid the evaluation process.*

*Conversion Criteria.* *Proposed amendments to the General Plan Diagram (map) that would allow the conversion of agricultural land to urban uses shall be approved only if the Board of Supervisors makes the following findings:*

- A. *Overall, the proposal is consistent with the goals and policies of the General Plan.*
- B. *There is evidence on the record to show a demonstrated need for the proposed project based on population projections, past growth rates, and other pertinent data.*
- C. *No feasible alternative site exists in areas already designated for the proposed uses.*
- D. *Approval of the proposal will not constitute a part of, or encourage, piecemeal conversion of a larger agricultural area to non-agricultural uses and will not be growth-inducing (as used in the California Environmental Quality Act).*
- E. *The proposed project is designed to minimize conflict and will not interfere with agricultural operations on surrounding agricultural lands or adversely affect agricultural water supplies.*
- F. *Adequate and necessary public services and facilities are available or will be made available as a result of the development.*
- G. *The design of the proposed project has incorporated all reasonable measures, as determined during the CEQA review process, to mitigate impacts to agricultural lands, fish and wildlife resources, air quality, water quality and quantity, or other natural resources.*

To allow for the development of the proposed parking facility, maintenance shop, and office, the project site must be rezoned to Planned Development based on the proposed use not meeting the criteria to qualify for a use permit pursuant to the General Agriculture (A-2) Zoning District. The General Plan designation of the parcel is Agriculture and must be consistent with the proposed zoning district of Planned Development; accordingly, the application includes a General Plan amendment to Planned Development as well. However, the site is unique for a variety of reasons. Specifically, within the Stanislaus County jurisdiction, the project site is contiguous with a mix of existing commercial and industrial Planned Developments to the north that have already been approved for conversion. In San Joaquin County which begins approximately 800-feet north of the site, between Welty Road and State Route 33, additional commercial uses have been developed. Additionally, the project site is bound by a County road, state highway, and Hetch Hetchy right-of-way to the west, east, and south respectively, which act as natural boundaries to this pocket of commercial development that would both act as physical separation that minimizes conflicts with any nearby agricultural operations, preventing any additional conversion of agricultural land. As this is the only agricultural parcel within this "pocket" left to be converted, it is not anticipated that the project would lead to, directly or indirectly, conversion of agricultural lands adjacent to the project nor are impacts to those lands expected to be significant. Accordingly, the amendment of the General Plan designation from Agriculture to Planned Development is considered to be consistent with the required conversion criteria of Goal 2 of the Agricultural Element.

The surrounding area is comprised of irrigated farmland, scattered single-family residences, agricultural and residential accessory structures in all directions; a permitted truck parking facility, a permitted manufacturing and repair facility, and San Joaquin County to the north; State Route 33 to the east; and the Southern Pacific Railroad and Hetch Hetchy right-of-way to the south. The nearest parcels in production agriculture are as follows: a farmed parcel immediately to the south across the Hetch Hetchy right-of-way, a farmed parcel to the west across Welty Road, and a farmed parcel east across the State Route 33 right-of-way. The nearest parcels enrolled in a Williamson Act Contract is the 126-acre farmed parcel to the south, and the 16-acre farmed parcel to the west.

General Plan Amendment No. 2011-01 - Revised Agricultural Buffers was approved by the Board of Supervisors on December 20, 2011, to modify County requirements for buffers on agricultural projects. The County's Agricultural Element's Agricultural Buffer Guidelines states that new or expanding uses approved by discretionary permit in the A-2 zoning district or on a parcel adjoining the A-2 zoning district should incorporate a minimum 150-foot-wide agricultural buffer setback, or 300-foot-wide buffer setback for people intensive uses, to physically avoid conflicts between agricultural and non-agricultural uses. Parking lots and similar low people intensive uses are permitted uses within the buffer setback area. With the exception of vehicles arriving and departing the site, all activities are proposed to take place indoors. The project was referred to the Stanislaus County Agricultural Commissioner, and no comments have been received to date. Therefore, staff believes the project can be considered low people-intensive. The project site is proposed to be enclosed with a six-foot-tall fence, in addition, the parking lot which may be included within the buffer area, exceeds the prescribed 150-feet of distance to all adjacent farmed parcels. Further, the project proposes to install a 15-foot strip of oleander on the western parcel boundary which will help prevent spray drift from any pesticide application occurring west of the project site.

No forest lands exist in Stanislaus County. Therefore, this project will have no impact to forest land or timberland. Impacts to agricultural resources are considered to be less than significant.

**Mitigation:** None.

**References:** Application information; Natural Resources Conservation Service Soil Survey; application information; Stanislaus Soil Survey; California State Department of Conservation Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program - Stanislaus County Farmland 2018; Stanislaus County General Plan and Support Documentation<sup>1</sup>.

III. AIR QUALITY: Where available, the significance criteria established by the applicable air quality management district or air pollution control district may be relied upon to make the following determinations. -- Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Included	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?			X	
b) Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard?			X	
c) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?			X	
d) Result in other emissions (such as those odors adversely affecting a substantial number of people?			X	

**Discussion:** The proposed project is located within the San Joaquin Valley Air Basin (SJVAB) and, therefore, falls under the jurisdiction of the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District (SJVAPCD). In conjunction with the Stanislaus Council of Governments (StanCOG), the SJVAPCD is responsible for formulating and implementing air pollution control strategies. The SJVAPCD's most recent air quality plans are the 2007 PM<sub>10</sub> (respirable particulate matter) Maintenance Plan, the 2008 PM<sub>2.5</sub> (fine particulate matter) Plan, and the 2007 Ozone Plan. These plans establish a comprehensive air pollution control program leading to the attainment of state and federal air quality standards in the SJVAB, which has been classified as "extreme non-attainment" for ozone, "attainment" for respirable particulate matter (PM-10), and "non-attainment" for PM 2.5, as defined by the Federal Clean Air Act.

The primary source of air pollutants generated by this project would be classified as being generated from "mobile" sources. Mobile sources would generally include dust from roads, farming, and automobile exhausts. Mobile sources are generally regulated by the Air Resources Board of the California EPA which sets emissions for vehicles and acts on issues regarding cleaner burning fuels and alternative fuel technologies. As such, the District has addressed most criteria air pollutants through basin wide programs and policies to prevent cumulative deterioration of air quality within the Basin. The facility proposes to operate with 29 employees per shift. Employees accessing the site will consist of five office employees, one mechanic, and the rest consisting of drivers, who will sporadically be on-site for pick up and drop off of tractor-trailer. A maximum of 20 passenger vehicle trips per-day are proposed, with up to 12 truck trips are anticipated to occur per-day,

arriving at and departing the site primarily for long distance trips, with drivers traveling off-site multiple days at a time. The proposed hours of operation are Monday through Friday from 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., and Saturday, 7:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

A comment was received from SJVAPCD in response to the Early Consultation prepared for the proposed project indicating that construction and operation-related emissions for the project would have a less than significant impact on air quality and are not expected to exceed any of the District's annual emissions significant thresholds, including: 100 tons per-year of carbon monoxide (CO), ten tons per-year of oxides of nitrogen (NOx), ten tons per-year of reactive organic gases (ROG), 27 tons per-year of oxides of sulfur (SOx), 15 tons per-year of particulate matter of ten microns or less in size (PM10), or 15 tons per-year of particulate matter of 2.5 microns or less in size (PM2.5). Additionally, the project may be subject to the following District Rules: Regulation VIII (Fugitive PM10 Prohibitions), Rule 4102 Nuisance, Rules 4601 Architectural Coatings, 4641 Cutback, Slow Cure, and Emulsified Asphalt, Paving and Maintenance Operations, Rule 4550 (Conservation Management Practices), and Rule 4570 (Confined Animal Facilities). The Air District also provided comments that the project was subject to District Rule 9510 – Indirect Source Review (ISR) and therefore is required to submit an Air Impact Assessment (AIA). A development standard will be placed on the project requiring that the applicant to submit an AIA application and be in compliance with the District's rules and regulations prior to issuance of a building permit. As the project must comply with District regulations, the project's emissions would be less than significant for all criteria pollutants, would not be inconsistent with any applicable air quality attainment plans, and would result in less than significant impacts to air quality.

Further, the Air District has published Guidance for Assessing and Mitigation Air Quality Impacts (GAMAQI) which has a Small Project Analysis Level (SPAL) screening tool. The SPAL establishes specific thresholds based on land use category with projects using various metrics corresponding to that land use type, including trips per-day, development size, number of students or dwelling units. Projects which fall under the respective threshold are presumed to have less than significant impact on air quality due to criteria pollutant emissions and are therefore excluded from quantifying criteria pollutants for CEQA purposes. The closest category under which truck parking and repair facilities and a dispatch office would fall, is the General Light Industry which identifies that a project size which is less 280,000 square feet in size that also generates fewer than 550 average daily one-way trips for all vehicle types (minus heavy heavy-duty truck trips) and fewer than 70 daily one-way heavy-heavy duty truck trips would meet the screening the criteria. In this case, the proposed project would be below the District's 280,000 square-foot threshold.

Potential impacts to air quality from the proposed project are also evaluated by Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT). The calculation of VMT is the number of cars/trucks multiplied by the distance traveled by each car/truck. California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines Section 15064.3, subdivision (a), defines VMT as the amount and distance of automobile travel attributable to a project. A technical advisory on evaluating transportation impacts in CEQA published by the Governor's Office of Planning and Research (OPR) in December of 2018 clarified the definition of automobiles as referring to on-road passenger vehicles, specifically cars and light trucks. While heavy trucks are not considered in the definition of automobiles for which VMT is calculated for, heavy-duty truck VMT could be included for modeling convenience. According to the same OPR technical advisory, many local agencies have developed a screening threshold of VMT to indicate when detailed analysis is needed. Absent substantial evidence indicating that a project would generate a potentially significant level of VMT, or inconsistency with a Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS) or general plan, projects that generate or attract fewer than 110 trips per-day generally may be assumed to cause a less than significant transportation impact. The proposed project will generate a low amount of vehicle trips with up to 20 passenger vehicle trips (inbound and outbound) per-day, and a total of 24 heavy-truck trips (inbound and outbound trips for 12 trucks). As this is below the District's threshold of significance for vehicle and heavy truck trips, no significant impacts from vehicle and truck trips to air quality are anticipated.

Based on the response from the SJVAPCD, the proposed project is expected to have a less than significant impact on air quality.

**Mitigation:** None.

**References:** Application information; Referral responses from the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, dated May 15, 2024; San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District Small Project Analysis Level Screening Tool; San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District - Regulation VIII Fugitive Dust/PM-10 Synopsis; [www.valleyair.org](http://www.valleyair.org); Governor's Office of Planning and Research Technical Advisory, December 2018; Stanislaus County General Plan and Support Documentation<sup>1</sup>.

IV. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES -- Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Included	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?			X	
b) Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?			X	
c) Have a substantial adverse effect on state or federally protected wetlands (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?			X	
d) Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?			X	
e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?			X	
f) Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?			X	

**Discussion:** It does not appear this project will result in impacts to endangered species or habitats, locally designated species, or wildlife dispersal or mitigation corridors. The project is located within the Solyo Quad of the California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDDB). There are 10 animal species which are state or federally listed, threatened, or identified as species of special concern or a candidate of special concern within the Solyo CNDDDB Quad: tricolored blackbird, San Joaquin kit fox, burrowing owl, American badger, golden eagle, and California horned lark. CNDDDB data shows a record of the riparian brush rabbit, the riparian woodrat, and tricolored blackbird within 1.5 miles of the project site to the northeast along State Route 132. Per the CNDDDB, it is believed that the case of the Riparian Brush Rabbit and the Riparian Woodrat have been extirpated from the vicinity.

With the project site being presently improved with an orchard, the parcel has been historically and continually in agricultural production would unlikely allow for suitable habitat for special status species.

The project will not conflict with a Habitat Conservation Plan, a Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other locally approved conservation plans. Impacts to endangered species or habitats, locally designated species, or wildlife dispersal or mitigation corridors are considered to be less than significant.

An early consultation was referred to the California Department of Fish and Wildlife and no response was received to date.

**Mitigation:** None.

**References:** California Department of Fish and Wildlife's Natural Diversity Database Quad Species List; California Natural Diversity Database, Planning and Community Development GIS; Stanislaus County General Plan and Support Documentation<sup>1</sup>.

V. CULTURAL RESOURCES -- Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Included	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to in § 15064.5?			X	
b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to § 15064.5?			X	
c) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?			X	

**Discussion:** A records search for the project site formulated by the Central California Information Center (CCIC) indicated that no cultural or archaeological resources or investigations on the parcel. The CCIC recommended that a qualified historical resources consultant evaluate and formally record any building to be removed if it is 45 years old or older, prior to issuance of any permit for its removal. In this case, there is only a 300-square-foot shed currently developed on the property; however, it is not proposed to be demolished as part of this project. The CCIC further advised construction personnel to be aware of the potential for subsurface historic-era archaeological features. No records were found that indicated the site contained any prehistoric, historic, or archeologic resources previously identified on-site. The report concluded that development standards be placed on the project that if any historical resources are discovered during project-related activities, all work is to stop and the lead agency and a qualified professional are to be consulted to determine the importance and appropriate treatment of the find. Additionally, as this project is a General Plan Amendment, the project was referred to tribal governments listed with the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC), as required by SB 18, and a response from the Tuolumne Me-Wuk Tribal Council Cultural Resources Department was received indicating they agree with the project and have no concerns or comments. Stanislaus County has not received any requests for consultation, in accordance with AB 52. If Native American remains are found, the County Coroner and the Native American Heritage Commission are to be notified immediately for recommended procedures. If human remains are uncovered, all work within 100-feet of the find should halt in compliance with Section 15064.5(e) (1) of the CEQA Guidelines and Public Resources Code Section 7060.5. Development standards will be added to the project to ensure these requirements are met.

Impacts to cultural resources are considered to be less than significant.

**Mitigation:** None.

**References:** Central California Information Center Report for the project site, dated December 6, 2023; Referral response from the Tuolumne Me-Wuk Tribal Council Cultural Resources Department, dated May 10, 2024; Stanislaus County General Plan and Support Documentation<sup>1</sup>.

VI. ENERGY -- Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Included	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Result in potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during project construction or operation?			X	
b) Conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency?			X	

**Discussion:** The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines Appendix F states that energy consuming equipment and processes, which will be used during construction or operation such as: energy requirements of the project by fuel type and end use, energy conservation equipment and design features, energy supplies that would serve the project, total estimated daily vehicle trips to be generated by the project, and the additional energy consumed per trip by mode, shall be taken into consideration when evaluating energy impacts. Additionally, the project's compliance with applicable state or local energy legislation, policies, and standards must be considered.

The project was referred to the San Joaquin Air Pollution Control District (SJAPCD) who responded to the proposed project indicating that construction and operation-related emissions for the project would have a less than significant impact on air quality and are not expected to exceed any of the District's annual emissions significant thresholds, including: 100 tons per-year of carbon monoxide (CO), ten tons per-year of oxides of nitrogen (NOx), ten tons per-year of reactive organic gases (ROG), 27 tons per-year of oxides of sulfur (SOx), 15 tons per-year of particulate matter of ten microns or less in size (PM10), or 15 tons per-year of particulate matter of 2.5 microns or less in size (PM2.5). Additionally, the project may be subject to the following District Rules: Regulation VIII (Fugitive PM10 Prohibitions), Rule 4102 Nuisance, Rules 4601 Architectural Coatings, 4641 Cutback, Slow Cure, and Emulsified Asphalt, Paving and Maintenance Operations, Rule 4550 (Conservation Management Practices), and Rule 4570 (Confined Animal Facilities). Staff will include a condition of approval on the project requiring that the applicant be in compliance with the District's rules and regulations. As the project must comply with District regulations, the project would result in less than significant impacts to energy.

The proposed structures are subject to the mandatory planning and design, energy efficiency, water efficiency and conservation, material conservation and resources efficiency, and environmental quality measures of the California Green Building Standards (CALGreen) Code (California Code of Regulations, Title 24, Part 11). A building permit will be required for the construction of the proposed shop and office. Conditions of approval will be added to the project requiring that a building permit be obtained and that all building permits, for the structures to be utilized under this request, be finalized by the Stanislaus County Building Permits Division prior to operation. Additionally, any future construction activities will be required to occur in compliance with all SJVAPCD regulations.

Energy consuming equipment and processes include construction equipment, trucks, and the employee vehicle. As discussed in Section III – Air Quality, these activities would not significantly increase Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT), due to the number of vehicle trips not exceeding a total of 110 vehicle trips per-day. The proposed project will generate a low amount of vehicle trips with up to 20 passenger vehicle trips per-day, and a total of 24 heavy-truck trips (inbound and outbound trips for 12 trucks). The trucks are the main consumers of energy associated with this project but will be subject to applicable Air District regulations, including rules and regulations that increase energy efficiency. Therefore, consumption of energy resources would be less than significant without mitigation for the proposed project.

It does not appear that this project will result in significant impacts to the wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources. Accordingly, the potential impacts to Energy are considered to be less than significant.

**Mitigation:** None.

**References:** Application information; CEQA Guidelines; San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District – Regulation VIII Fugitive Dust/PM-10 Synopsis; [www.valleyair.org](http://www.valleyair.org); Referral responses from the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, dated May 15, 2024; Governor's Office of Planning and Research Technical Advisory, December 2018; Title 16 of County Code; CA Building Code; Stanislaus County Zoning Ordinance (Title 21); Stanislaus County General Plan and Support Documentation<sup>1</sup>.



<b>VII. GEOLOGY AND SOILS -- Would the project:</b>	<b>Potentially Significant Impact</b>	<b>Less Than Significant With Mitigation Included</b>	<b>Less Than Significant Impact</b>	<b>No Impact</b>
<b>a) Directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:</b>			<b>X</b>	
<b>i) Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42.</b>			<b>X</b>	
<b>ii) Strong seismic ground shaking?</b>			<b>X</b>	
<b>iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?</b>			<b>X</b>	
<b>iv) Landslides?</b>			<b>X</b>	
<b>b) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?</b>			<b>X</b>	
<b>c) Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse?</b>			<b>X</b>	
<b>d) Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial direct or indirect risks to life or property?</b>			<b>X</b>	
<b>e) Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative waste water disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of waste water?</b>			<b>X</b>	
<b>f) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?</b>			<b>X</b>	

**Discussion:** The USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service's Eastern Stanislaus County Soil Survey indicates that approximately 50 percent of the property is made up of El Solyo silty clay loam, 0 to 2 percent slopes (110), and 50 percent is comprised of Vernalis clay loam, 0 to 2 percent slopes (125). As contained in Chapter 5 of the General Plan Support Documentation, the areas of the County subject to significant geologic hazard are located in the Diablo Range, west of Interstate 5; however, as per the California Building Code, all of Stanislaus County is located within a geologic hazard zone (Seismic Design Category D, E, or F) and a soils test may be required at building permit application. Results from the soils test will determine if unstable or expansive soils are present. If such soils are present, special engineering of the structure will be required to compensate for the soil deficiency. Any structures resulting from this project will be designed and built according to building standards appropriate to withstand shaking for the area in which they are constructed. An early consultation referral response received from the Department of Public Works indicated that a grading, drainage, and erosion/sediment control plan for the project will be required, subject to Public Works review and Standards and Specifications. Likewise, prior to installation of the proposed on-site wastewater treatment system (OWTS), the Department of Environmental Resources (DER) provided a referral response requiring the system to meet Measure X requirements for Primary and Secondary wastewater treatment, designed to the maximum occupancy of the proposed structures based on waste/sewage flow rate, and all applicable Local Agency Management Program (LAMP) standards and setbacks to be met. Additionally, they provided a response requesting the applicant provide a site plan showing the design, layout, and location of the OWTS and future 100% expansion area. Any addition or expansion of a septic tank or alternative waste water disposal system would require the approval of the Department of Environmental Resources (DER) through the building permit process, which also takes soil type into consideration within the specific design requirements.

The project site is not located near an active fault or within a high earthquake zone. Landslides are not likely due to the flat terrain of the area.

DER, Public Works, and the Building Permits Division review and approve any building or grading permit to ensure their standards are met. Conditions of approval regarding these standards will be applied to the project and will be triggered when a building permit is requested.

**Mitigation:** None.

**References:** Referral response from the Department of Environmental Resources (DER), dated May 5, 2024 and received May 10, 2024; Referral response from the Stanislaus County Department of Public Works dated June 24, 2024; Stanislaus County General Plan and Support Documentation<sup>1</sup>.

VIII. GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS -- Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Included	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?			X	
b) Conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?			X	

**Discussion:** The principal Greenhouse Gasses (GHGs) are carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>), methane (CH<sub>4</sub>), nitrous oxide (N<sub>2</sub>O), sulfur hexafluoride (SF<sub>6</sub>), perfluorocarbons (PFCs), hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs), and water vapor (H<sub>2</sub>O). CO<sub>2</sub> is the reference gas for climate change because it is the predominant greenhouse gas emitted. To account for the varying warming potential of different GHGs, GHG emissions are often quantified and reported as CO<sub>2</sub> equivalents (CO<sub>2</sub>e). In 2006, California passed the California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006 (Assembly Bill [AB] No. 32), which requires the California Air Resources Board (ARB) design and implement emission limits, regulations, and other measures, such that feasible and cost-effective statewide GHG emissions are reduced to 1990 levels by 2020. Two additional bills, SB 350 and SB32, were passed in 2015 further amending the states Renewables Portfolio Standard (RPS) for electrical generation and amending the reduction targets to 40% of 1990 levels by 2030.

The short-term emissions of GHGs during construction, primarily composed of CO<sub>2</sub>, CH<sub>4</sub>, and N<sub>2</sub>O, would be the result of fuel combustion by construction equipment and motor vehicles. The other primary GHGs (HFCs, PFCs, and SF<sub>6</sub>) are typically associated with specific industrial sources and are not expected to be emitted by future construction at this project site. As described above in Section III - *Air Quality*, the use of heavy-duty construction equipment would be very limited; therefore, the emissions of CO<sub>2</sub> from future construction would be less than significant. Additionally, the construction of the office and maintenance shop will be subject to the mandatory planning and design, energy efficiency, water efficiency and conservation, material conservation and resources efficiency, and environmental quality measures, of the California Green Building Standards (CALGreen) Code (California Code of Regulations, Title 24, Part 11) which includes minimum statewide standards to significantly reduce GHG emissions from new construction. Compliance with these standards would be verified as part of the building permit review process. The Air District also provided comments that the project was subject to District Rule 9510 – Indirect Source Review (ISR) and therefore is required to submit an Air Impact Assessment (AIA). A development standard will be placed on the project requiring that the applicant to submit an AIA application and be in compliance with the District's rules and regulations prior to issuance of a building permit. Construction activities associated with this project are considered to be less than significant as they are temporary in nature and are subject to meeting San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District (SJVAPCD) standards for emissions.

Direct emissions of GHGs from the operation of the proposed project are primarily due to the employee vehicle trips and truck trips. As required by California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines section 15064.3, potential impacts regarding Green House Gas Emissions should be evaluated using Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT). The calculation of VMT is the number of cars/trucks multiplied by the distance traveled by each car/truck. Total vehicle trips as a result of this project will not exceed 110 trips per-day. As discussed above, the proposed project will generate a total of up to 20

passenger vehicle trips per-day, and a total of 24 heavy-truck trips (inbound and outbound trips for 12 trucks), below the OPR threshold.

This project was referred to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District (SJVAPCD). As discussed in Section III – *Air Quality*, the project is not anticipated to significantly contribute to an exceedance of State or Federal Ambient Air Quality Standards which include standards for GHGs. Based on the Air District's referral response, the project may also be subject to other applicable Air District permits including but not limited to the following District Rules: Regulation VIII (Fugitive PM10 Prohibitions), Rule 4102 Nuisance, Rules 4601 Architectural Coatings, and 4641 Cutback, Slow Cure, and Emulsified Asphalt, Paving and Maintenance Operations. Staff will include a condition of approval requiring the applicant to comply with all appropriate District rules and regulations. Consequently, GHG emissions associated with this project are considered to be less than significant.

**Mitigation:** None.

**References:** Application information; San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District referral response, dated May 15, 2024; San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District's Small Project Analysis Level (SPAL) guidance, November 13, 2020; Governor's Office of Planning and Research Technical Advisory, December 2018; Stanislaus County General Plan and Support Documentation<sup>1</sup>.

IX. HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS -- Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Included	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?			X	
b) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?			X	
c) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?			X	
d) Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?			X	
e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing or working in the project area?				X
f) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?			X	
g) Expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires?			X	

**Discussion:** The County Department of Environmental Resources (DER) is responsible for overseeing hazardous materials. A referral response from the Hazardous Materials (Hazmat) Division of the Stanislaus County Department of Environmental Resources (DER) indicated that the project is anticipated to not have a significant impact with respect to hazards and hazardous materials, that a Phase 1 Environmental Site Assessment (ESA) and, if necessary, Phase II ESA,

prior to issuance of a grading permit. Additionally, DER Hazmat noted a leaking underground storage tank has been identified within 1.9± miles of the proposed project but would not affect the project itself. These comments will be reflected through the application of a development standards. During building permit review, the Environmental Health Division of the Department of Environmental Resources (DER) will review the on-site wastewater treatment systems (OWTS) and/or water wells and ensure that all applicable County Local Agency Management Program (LAMP) standards and required setbacks are maintained as applicable.

Pesticide exposure is a risk in areas located in the vicinity of agriculture. Sources of exposure include contaminated groundwater from drift from spray applications. Application of sprays is strictly controlled by the Agricultural Commissioner and can only be accomplished after first obtaining permits. Additionally, agricultural buffers are intended to reduce the risk of spray exposure to surrounding people.

As Stated in Section II – *Agricultural and Forest Resources*, the proposed facility will have up to 29 employees on-site at any given time. Hours of operation are Monday through Friday from 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., and Saturday, 7:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. The project was referred to the Stanislaus County Agricultural Commissioner, and no comments have been received to date. Therefore, staff believes the project can be considered low people-intensive, thus subject to the County's Agricultural Buffer requirements for low-people intensive uses of 150-feet and a six-foot-tall fence, which the proposed project will meet.

The project site is not listed on the EnviroStor database managed by the CA Department of Toxic Substances Control or within the vicinity of any airport. The site is located in a Local Responsibility Area (LRA) for fire protection and is served by West Stan Fire Protection District. The project was referred to the District, and no comments have been received to date.

No significant impacts associated with hazards or hazardous materials are anticipated to occur as a result of the proposed project.

**Mitigation:** None.

**References:** Referral response from the Department of Environmental Resources – Hazardous Materials Division, dated May 14, 2024; Referral response from the Department of Environmental Resources – Environmental Health, dated May 2, 2024 and received May 10, 2024; Stanislaus County General Plan and Support Documentation<sup>1</sup>.

X. HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY -- Would the project:				
	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Included	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or ground water quality?			X	
b) Substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin?			X	
c) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner which would:			X	
i) result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site;			X	
ii) substantially increase the rate of amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or off-site.			X	

iii) create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff; or			X	
iv) impede or redirect flood flows?			X	
d) In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk release of pollutants due to project inundation?			X	
e) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan?			X	

**Discussion:** The project proposes to develop a domestic well and septic system to serve the proposed maintenance shop and office. Stormwater capture will take place within a proposed basin located within the proposed 4-acre disturbance area. The project site is located within the West Stanislaus Irrigation District (WSID) who has not responded to the project to date.

Areas subject to flooding have been identified in accordance with the Federal Emergency Management Act (FEMA). Run-off is not considered an issue because of several factors which limit the potential impact. These factors include the relatively flat terrain of the subject site, and relatively low rainfall intensities in the Central Valley. Areas subject to flooding have been identified in accordance with the Federal Emergency Management Act. The project site itself is located in Zone X (outside the 0.2 percent floodplain) and, as such, exposure to people or structures to a significant risk of loss/injury/death involving flooding due to levee/dam failure and/or alteration of a watercourse, at this location is not an issue with respect to this project. Flood zone requirements are enforced through the building permit process. The Building Permits Division also reviews building permits and determines if geotechnical reports are required with submission of building permits. A requirement to obtain all applicable building permits will be incorporated into the project's development standards.

A referral response received from the Stanislaus County Department of Public Works indicated that a grading, drainage, and erosion/sediment control plan for the project is required and will be subject to Public Works review and Standards and Specifications, as well as the submittal of a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) prior to the approval of any grading plan. The submittal and approval of the grading, drainage, erosion/sediment control plan and SWPPP will be made part of the development standards for this project prior to issuance of a building permit. Accordingly, runoff associated with the construction at the proposed project site will be reviewed as part of the grading review process and be required to be maintained on-site. Additionally, any construction will be reviewed under the Building Permit process and must be reviewed and approved by DER and adhere to current Local Agency Management Program (LAMP) standards. LAMP standards include minimum setback from wells to prevent negative impacts to groundwater quality.

The Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) was passed in 2014 with the goal of ensuring the long-term sustainable management of California's groundwater resources. SGMA requires agencies throughout California to meet certain requirements including forming Groundwater Sustainability Agencies (GSA), developing Groundwater Sustainability Plans (GSP), and achieving balanced groundwater levels within 20 years. The site is located in the West Stanislaus Irrigation District GSA, which is a part of the Delta Mendota Groundwater Subbasin. The GSA's initial GSP has been determined to be inadequate by the California Department of Water Resources (DWR). The GSA is expected to resubmit their plan by the end of 2024 for review and adoption.

The Department of Environmental Resources - Groundwater Resources Division provided a referral response for the project indicating that the project will have minimal additional water use and accordingly did not have comments on the project.

The California Safe Drinking Water Act (California Health and Safety Code (CHSC) Section 116275(h)) defines a Public Water System as a system for the provision of water for human consumption through pipes or other constructed conveyances that has 15 or more service connections or regularly serves at least 25 individuals daily at least 60 days out of the year. A public water system includes the following:

1. Any collection, treatment, storage, and distribution facilities under control of the operator of the system that are used primarily in connection with the system.

2. Any collection or pretreatment storage facilities not under the control of the operator that are used primarily in connection with the system.
3. Any water system that treats water on behalf of one or more public water systems for the purpose of rendering it safe for human consumption.

The project was referred to the Department of Environmental Resources (DER) – Environmental Health Division which responded that the project will have a less than significant impact but will constitute a new public water system as defined in CHSC Section 116275(h). DER responded requiring the applicant to submit an application for a water supply permit with the associated technical report to Stanislaus County DER which will determine if the well water meets State mandated standards for water quality and must also obtain concurrence from the State of California Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB), Drinking Water Division, in accordance to CHSC Section 116527 (SB1263). If the well water does not meet State standards, the applicant may need to either drill a new well or install a water treatment system for the current well. Prior to issuance of any building permit for the proposed operation, a development standard will be applied requiring issuance of the Water Supply Permit. DER – Groundwater Resources Division reviewed the project and indicated that the proposed well will be considered a de minimis extractor and therefore have a less than significant impact on groundwater supplies.

As a result of the development standards required for this project, impacts associated with drainage, water quality, and runoff are expected to have a less than significant impact.

**Mitigation:** None.

**References:** Application information; Referral response from the Department of Environmental Resources – Groundwater Division, dated May 3, 2024; Department of Environmental Resources – Environmental Health Division, dated March 2, 2024 and received May 10, 2024; Referral response from the Department of Public Works, dated June 24, 2024; Stanislaus County General Plan and Support Documentation<sup>1</sup>.

XI. LAND USE AND PLANNING -- Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Included	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Physically divide an established community?			X	
b) Cause a significant environmental impact due to a conflict with any land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?			X	

**Discussion:** This is a request to amend the General Plan designation from Agriculture and zoning designation from General Agriculture (A-2-40) to Planned Development, to allow for development of a truck parking and dispatch facility within a 4± acre area, that will serve a fleet of tractors with refrigeration trailers, which will haul goods for grocery stores. The proposal includes development of a 2.6-acre paved parking lot, consisting of 40 stalls for the parking of tractor-trailers and 21 parking stalls for passenger vehicles. The project includes the construction of a 15,000± square-foot maintenance shop, and a 5,000± square-foot proposed office.

As stated by the Introduction to the General Plan, General Plan Amendments affect the entire County and any evaluation must give primary concern to the County as a whole; therefore, a fundamental question must be asked in each case: "Will this amendment, if adopted, generally improve the economic, physical and social well-being of the County in general?" Additionally, the County in reviewing General Plan amendments shall consider how the levels of public and private service might be affected; as well as how the proposal would advance the long-term goals of the County. In each case, in order to take affirmative action regarding a General Plan Amendment application, it must be found that the General Plan Amendment will maintain a logical land use pattern without detriment to existing and planned land uses and that the County and other affected government agencies will be able to maintain levels of service consistent with the ability of the government agencies to provide a reasonable level of service. In the case of a proposed amendment to the Land Use diagrams of the Land Use Element, an additional finding that the amendment is consistent with the goals and policies of the General Plan must also be made. Additionally, Goal 2 of the Land Use Element aims to ensure compatibility between land uses.

The Land Use Element describes the Planned Development designation as a designation intended for land which, because of demonstrably unique characteristics, may be suitable for a variety of uses without detrimental effects on other property. The Land Use Element also requires that the Agricultural Element's Conversion Criteria (Goal 2, Policy 2.7) be met when converting agricultural land to non-agricultural uses. Section II – *Agricultural Resources* contains the full discussion on the Stanislaus County's General Plan Conversion Criteria. However, the site is unique for a variety of reasons. Specifically, within the Stanislaus County jurisdiction, the project site is contiguous with a mix of existing commercial and industrial Planned Developments to the north that have already been approved for conversion. In San Joaquin County which begins approximately 800-feet north of the site, between Welty Road and State Route 33, additional commercial uses have been developed. Additionally, the project site is bound by a County road, state highway, and Hetch Hetchy right-of-way to the west, east, and south respectively, which act as natural boundaries to this pocket of commercial development that would both act as physical separation that minimizes conflicts with any nearby agricultural operations, preventing any additional conversion of agricultural land. Further, this is the only agricultural parcel within this "pocket" left to be converted. Accordingly, the amendment of the General Plan Designation from Agriculture to Planned Development is considered to be consistent with the required conversion criteria of Goal 2 of the Agricultural Element. Because of these factors, it is not anticipated that the project would lead to, directly or indirectly, conversion of agricultural lands adjacent to the project nor are impacts to those lands expected to be significant.

Because of these factors, it is not anticipated that the project would lead to, directly or indirectly, conversion of agricultural lands adjacent to the project nor are impacts to those lands expected to be significant.

To approve a Rezone, the Planning Commission must find that it is consistent with the General Plan. Pursuant to the General Plan, land within a Planned Development designation should be zoned A-2 (General Agriculture) until development occurs through Planned Development zoning. Therefore, the proposed Planned Development General Plan designation and rezoning the parcel to Planned Development would be consistent.

The project will not physically divide an established community nor conflict with any habitat conservation plans.

**Mitigation:** None.

**References:** Application information; Stanislaus County General Plan and Support Documentation<sup>1</sup>.

XII. MINERAL RESOURCES -- Would the project:				
	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Included	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state?			X	
b) Result in the loss of availability of a locally-important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan or other land use plan?			X	

**Discussion:** The location of all commercially viable mineral resources in Stanislaus County has been mapped by the State Division of Mines and Geology in Special Report 173. There are no known significant resources on the site, nor is the project site located in a geological area known to produce resources.

**Mitigation:** None.

**References:** Stanislaus County General Plan and Support Documentation<sup>1</sup>.

<b>XIII. NOISE -- Would the project result in:</b>	<b>Potentially Significant Impact</b>	<b>Less Than Significant With Mitigation Included</b>	<b>Less Than Significant Impact</b>	<b>No Impact</b>
a) Generation of a substantial temporary or permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the project in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?			X	
b) Generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?			X	
c) For a project located within the vicinity of a private airstrip or an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?			X	

**Discussion:** A fleet of 25 trucks and 35 trailers will utilize the site for parking. The proposed hours of operation are Monday through Friday from 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., and Saturday, 7:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m., with 29 employees per shift. Employees accessing the site will consist of drivers, mechanic, and office staff. Up to 12 truck trips are anticipated to occur per-day, arriving at and departing the site primarily for long distance trips, with drivers traveling off-site multiple days at a time. The Stanislaus County General Plan Noise Element identifies daytime (7:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.) maximum allowable average noise exposure for stationary noise sources to be an hourly average of 55 decibels and maximum level of 75 decibels, and nighttime (10:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m.) to be an hourly average of 45 decibels and maximum of 65 decibels, measured at residential or other noise-sensitive land use on neighboring properties. The nearest sensitive receptor is a dwelling located approximately 500-feet to the north on the adjoining parcel. The Stanislaus County General Plan identifies noise levels up to 75 dB Ldn (or CNEL) as the normally acceptable level of noise environment for industrial, manufacturing, utilities, and agriculture uses.

The site itself is impacted by the noise generated from State Route 33. All construction activities will be required to meet the noise ordinance and Noise Element standards.

The site is not located within an airport land use plan. Noise impacts are considered to be less-than significant.

**Mitigation:** None.

**References:** Stanislaus County General Plan and Support Documentation<sup>1</sup>.

<b>XIV. POPULATION AND HOUSING -- Would the project:</b>	<b>Potentially Significant Impact</b>	<b>Less Than Significant With Mitigation Included</b>	<b>Less Than Significant Impact</b>	<b>No Impact</b>
a) Induce substantial unplanned population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)?			X	
b) Displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?			X	

**Discussion:** The site is not included in the vacant sites inventory for the 2016 Stanislaus County Housing Element, which covers the 5<sup>th</sup> cycle Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) for the county and will therefore not impact the County's ability to meet their RHNA. No population growth will be induced nor will any existing housing be displaced as a result of this project.



**Mitigation:** None.

**References:** Stanislaus County General Plan and Support Documentation<sup>1</sup>.

<b>XV. PUBLIC SERVICES --</b>	<b>Potentially Significant Impact</b>	<b>Less Than Significant With Mitigation Included</b>	<b>Less Than Significant Impact</b>	<b>No Impact</b>
a) Would the project result in the substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for any of the public services:			X	
Fire protection?			X	
Police protection?			X	
Schools?			X	
Parks?			X	
Other public facilities?			X	

**Discussion:** The project site is served by the West Stanislaus Fire District for fire protection services, the Patterson Joint Unified School District for school services, the Stanislaus County Sheriff Department for police protections, the Pacific Gas & Electric Company (PG&E) for power, and proposes to be served by an on-site well and septic system. County adopted Public Facilities Fees, as well as fire and school fees are required to be paid based on the development type prior to issuance of a building permit. Payment of the applicable district fees will be required prior to issuance of a building permit.

As discussed in full within Section X – *Hydrology and Water Quality*, the project has proposed to develop an individual potable domestic well from use by the commercial development, which will constitute a public water system. The well will be subject to review under the County's Well Permitting Program. Based on a referral response from the Department of Environmental Resources – Groundwater Division, the well will be considered a de minimis extractor and not subject to environmental review. Construction will be reviewed under the Building Permit process and must be reviewed and approved by DER and adhere to current Local Agency Management Program (LAMP) standards. LAMP standards include minimum setback from wells to prevent negative impacts to groundwater quality.

This project was circulated to all applicable public service providers including school, fire, police, irrigation district, and the public works department during the early consultation referral period. With development standards in place, the project is not anticipated to have any significant adverse impact on public services.

**Mitigation:** None.

**References:** Application information; Referral response from the Department of Environmental Resources – Groundwater Division, dated May 3, 2024; Stanislaus County General Plan and Support Documentation<sup>1</sup>.

<b>XVI. RECREATION --</b>	<b>Potentially Significant Impact</b>	<b>Less Than Significant With Mitigation Included</b>	<b>Less Than Significant Impact</b>	<b>No Impact</b>
a) Would the project increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?			X	

<b>b) Does the project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?</b>			<b>X</b>	
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**Discussion:** This project will not increase demands for recreational facilities, as such impacts typically are associated with residential development.

**Mitigation:** None.

**References:** Stanislaus County General Plan and Support Documentation<sup>1</sup>.

<b>XVII. TRANSPORTATION -- Would the project:</b>	<b>Potentially Significant Impact</b>	<b>Less Than Significant With Mitigation Included</b>	<b>Less Than Significant Impact</b>	<b>No Impact</b>
<b>a) Conflict with a program plan, ordinance or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle and pedestrian facilities?</b>			<b>X</b>	
<b>b) Would the project conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines section 15064.3, subdivision (b)?</b>			<b>X</b>	
<b>c) Substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?</b>			<b>X</b>	
<b>d) Result in inadequate emergency access?</b>			<b>X</b>	

**Discussion:** The project proposes to install a single paved driveway onto County-maintained Welty Road. The proposed hours of operation are Monday through Friday from 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., and Saturday, 7:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m., with 29 employees on a maximum shift. Employees accessing the site will consist of drivers and office staff. Up to 12 truck trips are anticipated to occur per-day, arriving at and departing the site primarily for long distance trips, with drivers traveling off-site multiple days at a time.

The project was referred to the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) and San Joaquin County who did not respond to the project.

As stated in both Sections VI - *Energy* and VIII – *Greenhouse Gas Emissions*, Senate Bill 743 (SB743) requires that the transportation impacts under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) evaluate impacts by using Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) as a metric. Stanislaus County has currently not adopted any significance thresholds for VMT, and projects are treated on a case-by-case basis for evaluation under CEQA. CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3, subdivision (a), defines VMT as the amount and distance of automobile travel attributable to a project. A technical advisory on evaluating transportation impacts in CEQA published by the Governor's Office of Planning and Research (OPR) in December of 2018 clarified the definition of automobiles as referring to on-road passenger vehicles, specifically cars and light trucks. While heavy trucks are not considered in the definition of automobiles for which VMT is calculated for, heavy-duty truck VMT could be included for modeling convenience. According to the same OPR technical advisory, many local agencies have developed a screening threshold of VMT to indicate when detailed analysis is needed. Absent substantial evidence indicating that a project would generate a potentially significant level of VMT, or inconsistency with a Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS) or general plan, projects that generate or attract fewer than 110 trips per-day generally may be assumed to cause a less than significant transportation impact. The proposed project will generate a low amount of vehicle trips with up to 20 passenger vehicle trips per-day, and a total of 24 heavy-truck trips (inbound and outbound trips for 12 trucks). As this is below the screening threshold of significance for vehicle and heavy truck trips, no significant impacts from vehicle and truck trips to transportation are anticipated.

The project proposes access via a 30-foot-wide asphalt driveway onto Welty Road, a 60-foot-wide County-maintained Local Road; however, the right-of-way directly in front of the proposed project parcel is currently 40-feet-wide. It is not anticipated that the project would substantially affect the level of service on Welty Road. The project was referred to Public Works, who

responded to the project with requirements for a grading permit, an irrevocable offer of dedication (IOD) for the remaining 10-feet east of centerline needed for full build-out of the road, an encroachment permit, installation of signage and striping as needed, and prohibition on unloading or parking in the right-of-way. Public Works' comments will be added to the project as development standards.

Impacts associated with transportation are expected to have a less than significant.

**Mitigation:** None.

**References:** Referral response from the Department of Public Works, dated June 24, 2024; Governor's Office of Planning and Research Technical Advisory, December 2018; Stanislaus County General Plan and Support Documentation<sup>1</sup>.

XVIII. TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES -- Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Included	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in Public Resources Code section 21074 as either a site, feature, place, cultural landscape that is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California native American tribe, and that is:			X	
i) Listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, or in a local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code section 5020.1(k), or			X	
ii) A resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set for the in subdivision (c) of Public Resource Code section 5024.1. In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resource Code section 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.			X	

**Discussion:** As this project is a General Plan Amendment, the project was referred to tribal governments listed with the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC), as required by SB 18, and a response from the Tuolumne Me-Wuk Tribal Council Cultural Resources Department was received indicating they agree with the project and have no concerns or comments. Stanislaus County has not received any requests for consultation, in accordance with AB 52. A development standard regarding the discovery of cultural resources during the construction process will be added to the project. A records search conducted by the Central California Information Center (CCIC) indicated that there are no historical, cultural, or archeological resources recorded on-site. As stated previously, the parcel has been historically and continually disturbed as part of agricultural production, which would be less likely to include undisturbed cultural resources. A development standard will be added to the project which requires if any cultural or tribal resources are discovered during project-related activities, all work is to stop, and the lead agency and a qualified professional are to be consulted to determine the importance and appropriate treatment of the find. Impacts to historical, cultural and tribal resources are considered to be less-than significant.

**Mitigation:** None.

**References:** Application information; Referral response from the Tuolumne Me-Wuk Tribal Council Cultural Resources Department, dated May 10, 2024; Central California Information Center Records Search, dated December 6, 2023; Stanislaus County General Plan and Support Documentation<sup>1</sup>.

XIX. UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS -- Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Included	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment or storm water drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects?			X	
b) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry and multiple dry years?			X	
c) Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider which serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments?			X	
d) Generate solid waste in excess of State or local standards, or in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure, or otherwise impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals?			X	
e) Comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste?			X	

**Discussion:** Limitations on providing services have not been identified. The project has proposed to develop an individual potable domestic well and private septic system. Stormwater capture will take place within a proposed landscaped basin.

A referral response received from Stanislaus County Department of Public Works indicated that a grading, drainage, and erosion/sediment control plan for the project is required and will be subject to Public Works review and Standards and Specifications, as well as the submittal of a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) prior to the approval of any grading plan. The submittal and approval of the grading, drainage, erosion/sediment control plan and SWPPP will be made development standards for this project prior to issuance of a building permit. Accordingly, runoff associated with the construction at the proposed project site will be reviewed as part of the grading review process and be required to be maintained on-site. Additionally, any construction will be reviewed under the Building Permit process and must be reviewed and approved by the Department of Environmental Resources (DER) and adhere to current Local Agency Management Program (LAMP) standards. LAMP standards include minimum setback from wells and septic systems to prevent negative impacts to groundwater quality.

As discussed in Section X – *Hydrology and Water Quality* the proposed well for the project site will meet the definition of a Public Water System as defined in California Health and Safety Code Section 116275(h). To become a Public Water System, the applicant must submit an application for a water supply permit with the associated technical report to Stanislaus County DER which will determine if the well water meets State of California mandated standards for water quality and must also obtain concurrence from the State of California Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB), Drinking Water Division, in accordance to CHSC Section 116527 (SB1263). If the well water does not meet State of California standards, the applicant may need to either drill a new well or install a water treatment system for the new well. Title 22 compliant well testing will take place during the test well process. Potential contaminants of concern that would require treatment include Total Dissolved Solids and similar naturally occurring minerals, Hexavalent Chromium, Arsenic, organic compounds, and Nitrates. This requirement of issuance of a water supply permit will be added as a development standard, to be met prior to issuance of a building permit. Based on DER's review of the project the public water system will be a de minimis extractor pursuant to the requirements of the County's Groundwater Ordinance and therefore have a less-than-significant impact on groundwater supplies.

The project site is located within the West Stanislaus Irrigation District (WSID) who has not responded to the project to date.

The project is not anticipated to have a significant impact to utilities and service systems.

**Mitigation:** None.

**References:** Referral response from the Department of Environmental Resources – Groundwater Division, dated May 3, 2024; Stanislaus County General Plan and Support Documentation<sup>1</sup>.

XX. WILDFIRE – If located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Included	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?			X	
b) Due to slope, prevailing winds, and other factors, exacerbate wildfire risks, and thereby expose project occupants to, pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire?			X	
c) Require the installation of maintenance of associated infrastructure (such as roads, fuel breaks, emergency water sources, power lines or other utilities) that may exacerbate fire risk or that may result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment?			X	
d) Expose people or structures to significant risks, including downslope or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes?			X	

**Discussion:** The Stanislaus County Local Hazard Mitigation Plan identifies risks posed by disasters and identifies ways to minimize damage from those disasters. With the Wildfire Hazard Mitigation Activities of this plan in place, impacts to an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan are anticipated to be less-than significant. The terrain of the site is relatively flat, and the site has access to a County-maintained road. The site is located in a Local Responsibility Area (LRA) for fire protection and is served by West Stanislaus Fire Protection District (WSFPD). The project was referred to the WSFPD, but no response was received. California Building Code establishes minimum standards for the protection of life and property by increasing the ability of a building to resist intrusion of flame and embers. All construction is required to meet fire code, which will be verified through the building permit review process. A grading and drainage plan will be required and all fire protection, and emergency vehicle access standards met. These requirements will be applied as development standards for the project.

Wildfire risk and risks associated with postfire land changes are considered to be less-than significant.

**Mitigation:** None.

**References:** Application information; California Building Code Title 24, Part 2, Chapter 7; Stanislaus County Local Hazard Mitigation Plan; Stanislaus County General Plan and Support Documentation<sup>1</sup>.

XXI. MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE --	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Included	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Does the project have the potential to substantially degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, substantially reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?			X	
b) Does the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? ("Cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects.)			X	
c) Does the project have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?			X	

**Discussion:** The project is located on the west side of State Route 33, in the northwest section of Stanislaus County, approximately 600-feet south of the Stanislaus and San Joaquin County jurisdictional lines. Surrounding land uses consist of irrigated farmland, scattered single-family residences, and agricultural and residential accessory structures in all directions, a permitted truck parking facility and a permitted manufacturing and repair facility to the north, the Southern Pacific Railroad to the east, and the Hetch Hetchy right-of-way to the south. Four parcels located immediately north of the project site, have been rezoned to Planned Development for commercial and industrial uses.

Currently one other discretionary action is being processed by the County in the vicinity, a parcel map application, located northeast of the project site near the intersection of State Route 132 and River Road. The application will only be for the creation of parcels consistent with the General Agriculture A-2-40 zoning district and not include any physical development. Additionally, a General Plan Amendment and Rezone application was approved by the Board of Supervisors on August 20, 2024, on a 15-acre parcel located at the Stanislaus and San Joaquin County jurisdictional lines off State Route 132, one mile to the northeast, to allow development of a fueling plaza and retail commercial development. As part of that project, a traffic impact analysis was prepared to mitigate project related traffic impacts.

The project site has a General Plan designation of Agriculture and a zoning designation of General Agriculture (A-2-40). A rezone to a Planned Development district is necessary for the development of the project as the use is not permitted under the current A-2 zoning.

Section II – *Agriculture and Forest Resources* and Section XI - *Land Use and Planning* contain a full discussion of the land use action and amendment of the General Plan, however, because of the unique nature of the site, including the end of life of the existing orchard, the project site being bound to the north by a mix of commercial and industrial Planned Developments that have already been approved for conversion, to the east by a state highway, and to the south by the Hetch Hetchy right-of-way which provides a natural barrier for any future expansion of commercial/non-agricultural development, the amendment of the General Plan Designation from Agriculture to Planned Development the proposed project would be consistent with the required conversion criteria of Goal 2 of the Agricultural Element. Because of these factors, it is not anticipated that the project would lead to, directly or indirectly, conversion of agricultural lands adjacent to the project nor are impacts to those lands expected to be significant.

As discussed in Section X – *Hydrology and Water Quality*, the proposed well for the project site will meet the definition of a which requires the applicant must submit an application for a water supply permit with the associated technical report to

Stanislaus County DER which will determine if the well water meets State of California mandated standards for water quality and must also obtain concurrence from the State of California Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB), Drinking Water Division. If the well water does not meet State of California standards, the applicant may need to either drill a new well or install a water treatment system for the new well. Title 22 compliant well testing will take place during the test well process. DER has determined the well will have a less than significant impact on groundwater resources.

Additionally, the project was referred to both Caltrans, County of San Joaquin, and Stanislaus County Department of Public Works who have not indicated concerns with respect to transportation and circulation impacts to local or state facilities.

Review of this project has not indicated any features which might significantly impact the environmental quality of the site and/or the surrounding area.

**Mitigation:** None.

**References:** Initial Study; Stanislaus County General Plan and Support Documentation<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup>Stanislaus County General Plan and Support Documentation adopted in August 23, 2016, as amended. **Housing Element** adopted on April 5, 2016.

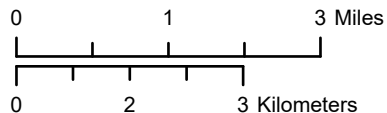
# ATWAL PROPERTIES

**GPA REZ  
PLN2024-0016**

## AREA MAP

### LEGEND

-  Project Site
-  Highway
-  Major Road
-  River
-  COUNTY



SAN JOAQUIN COUNTY

**SITE**

STANISLAUS COUNTY

132

33

5

W GRAYSON RD

SAN JOAQUIN RIVER

STANISLAUS RIVER

STANISLAUS RIVER

TUOLUMNE RIVER

LATRO SLOUGH

OLD SAN JOAQUIN RIVER










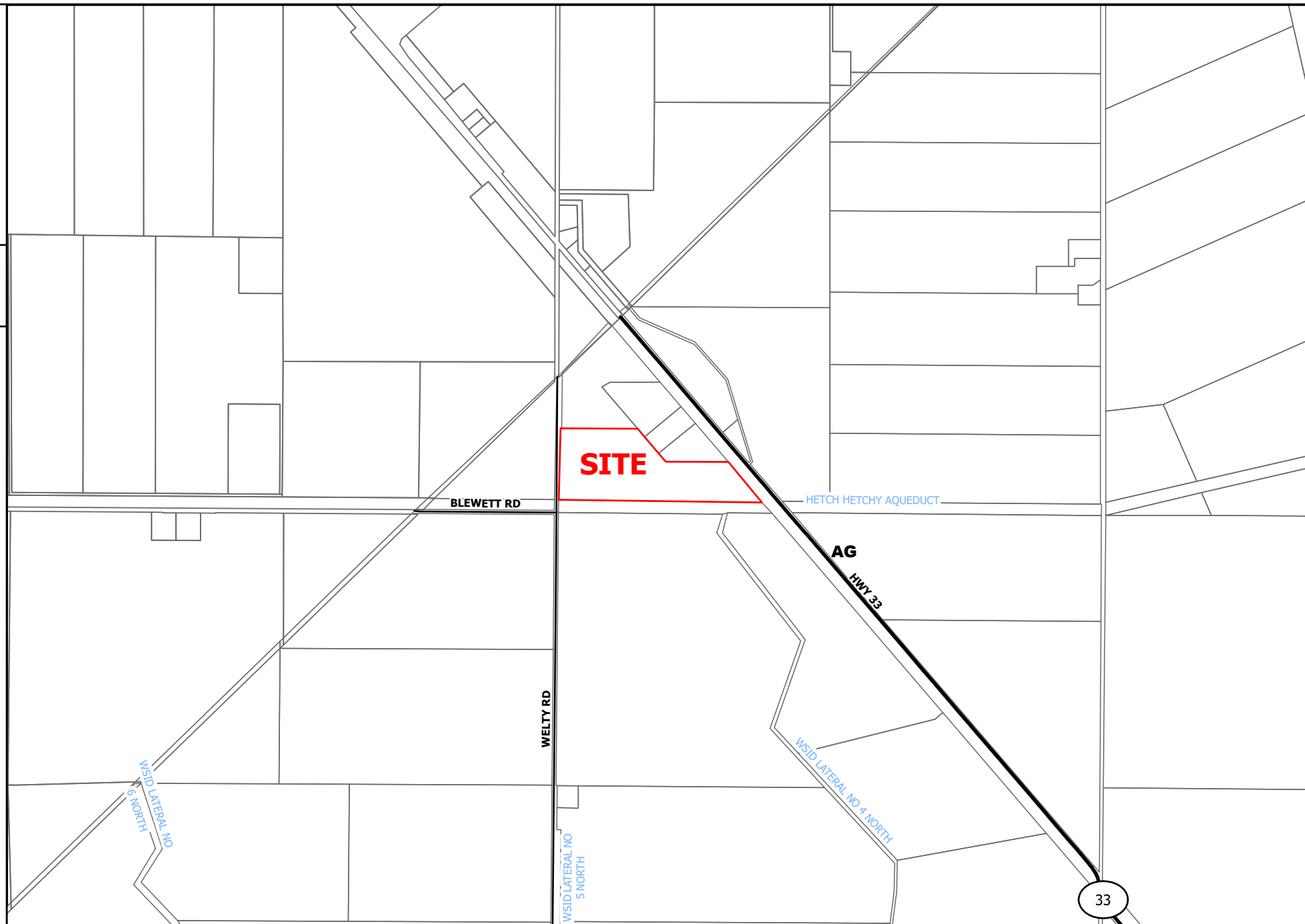
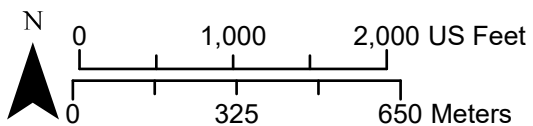
# ATWAL PROPERTIES

**GPA REZ  
PLN2024-0016**

## GENERAL PLAN MAP

### LEGEND

-  Project Site
-  Parcel
-  Highway
-  Canal
-  Agriculture
-  Street
-  Parcels







# ATWAL PROPERTIES






## GPA REZ PLN2024-0016

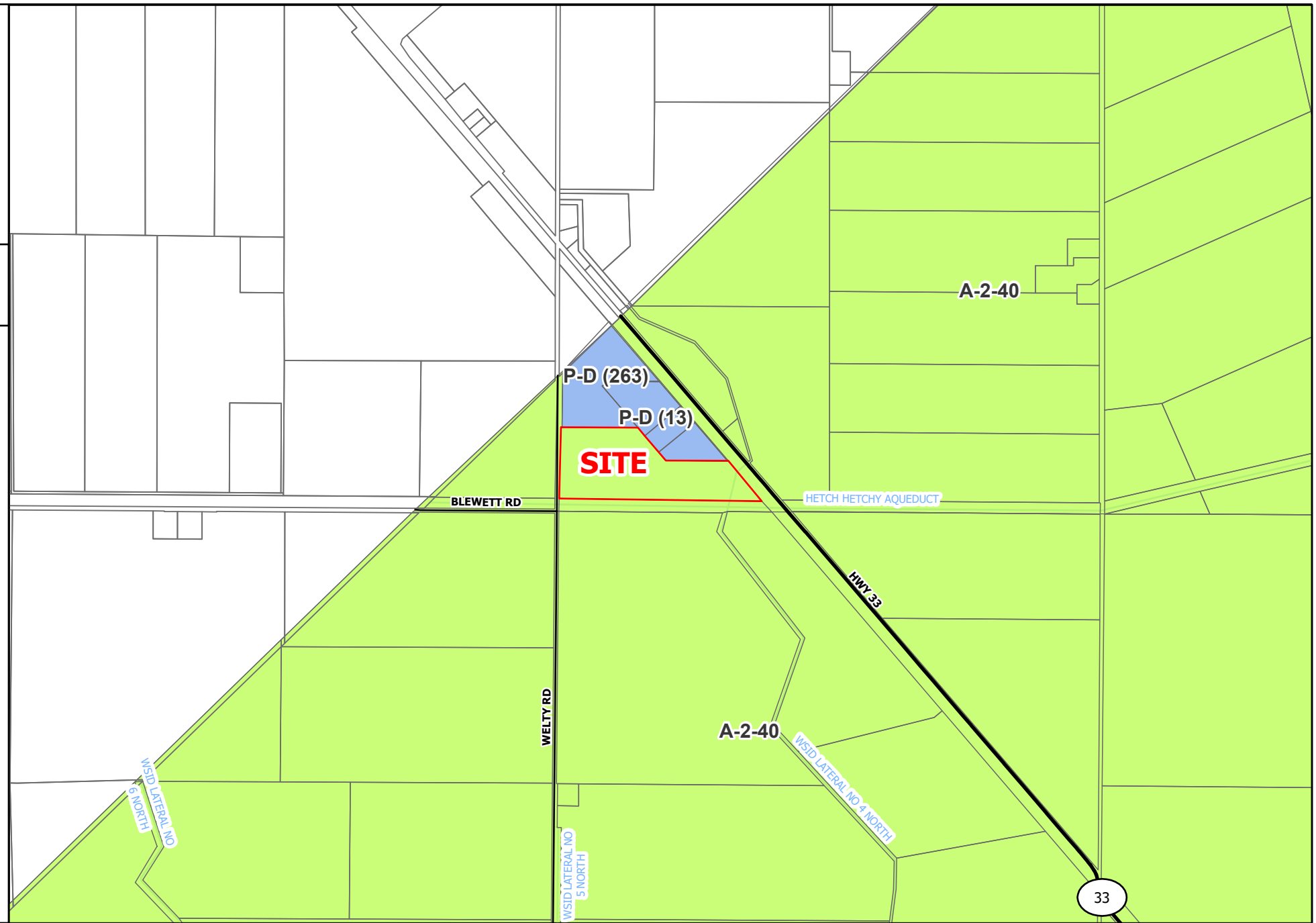
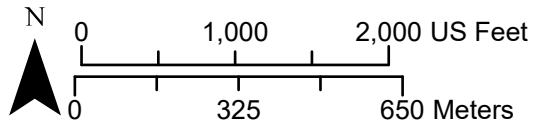
### ZONING MAP

#### LEGEND

-  Project Site
-  Parcel
-  Highway
-  Canal

#### Zoning Designation

-  General Agriculture 40 Acre
-  Planned Development; P-D (333); P-D (344); P-D (345); P-D
-  Planned Development; P-D (333); P-D (344); P-D (345); P-D
-  Street
-  Parcels











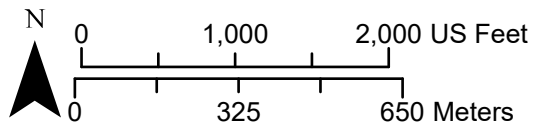
# ATWAL PROPERTIES

**GPA REZ  
PLN2024-0016**

*2023 AERIAL AREA MAP*

## LEGEND

-  Project Site
-  Parcel
-  Highway
-  Canal
-  Street
-  Parcels



Source: Planning Department GIS

Date Exported: 4/3/2024



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



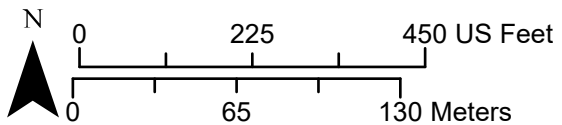
# ATWAL PROPERTIES

**GPA REZ  
PLN2024-0016**

*2023 AERIAL SITE MAP*

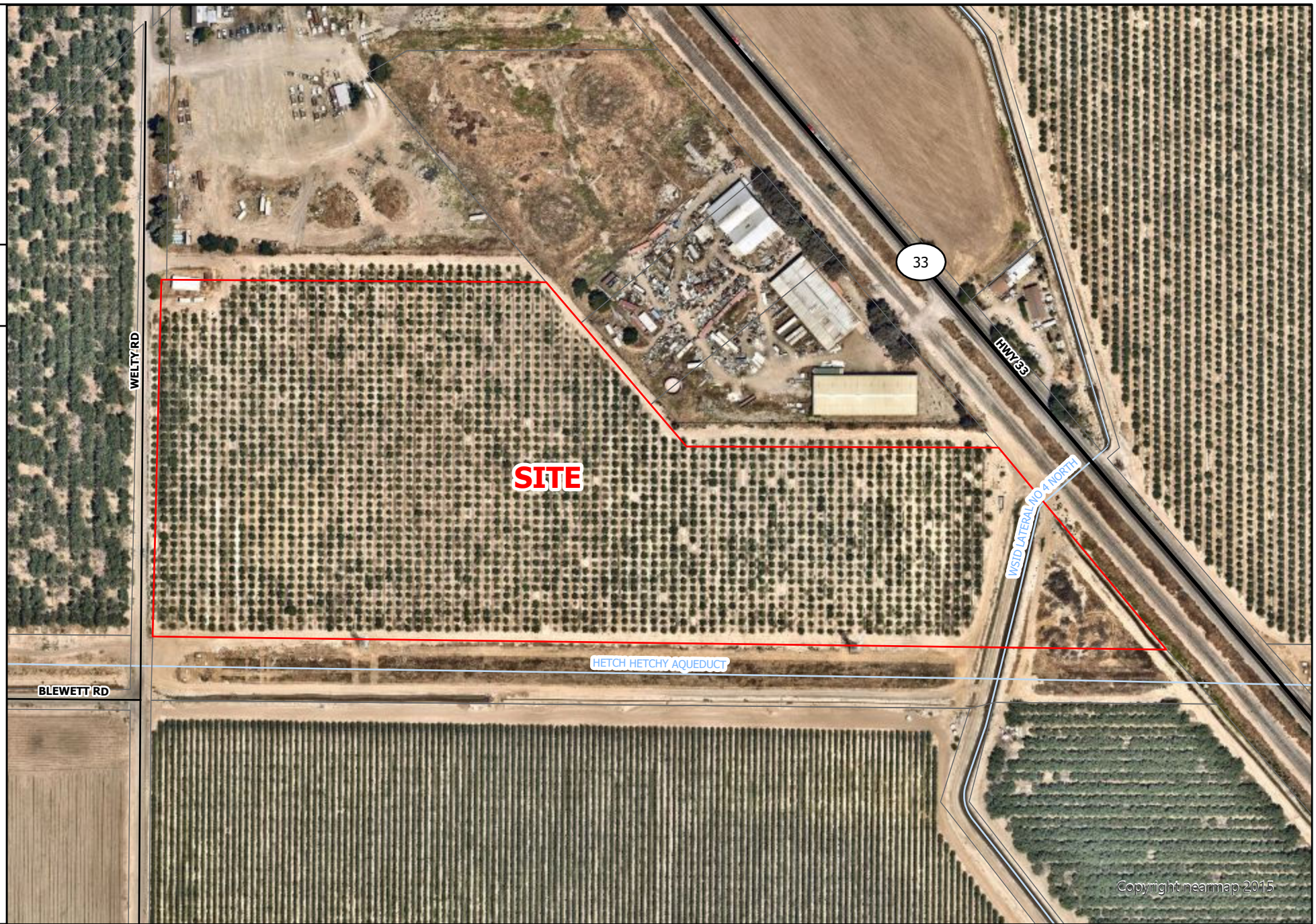
## LEGEND

-  Project Site
-  Parcel
-  Highway
-  Canal
-  Street
-  Parcels



Source: Planning Department GIS

Date Exported: 4/24/2024



Copyright nearmap 2015








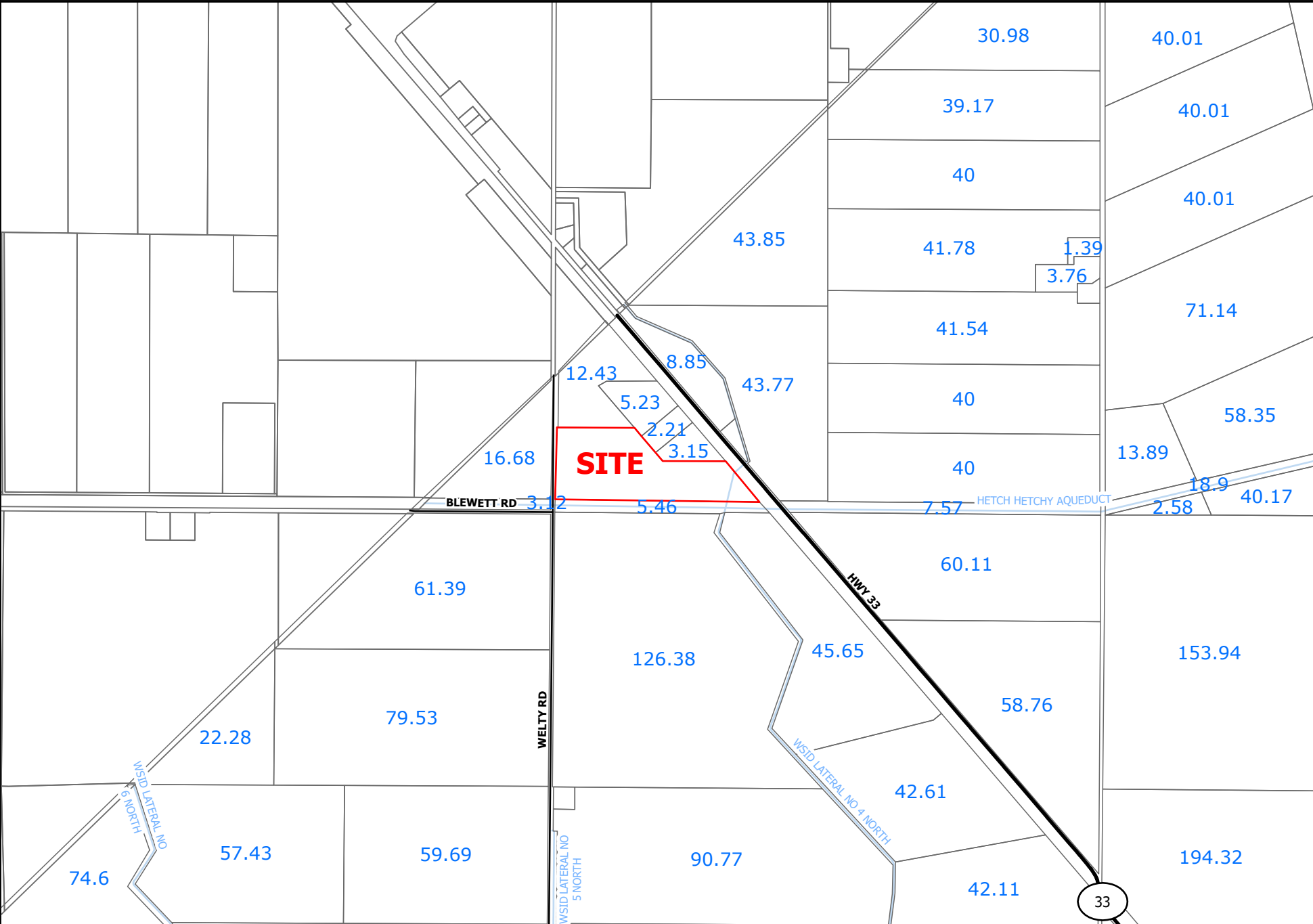
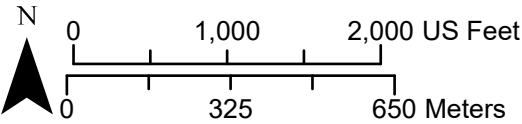
**ATWAL  
PROPERTIES**

**GPA REZ  
PLN2024-0016**

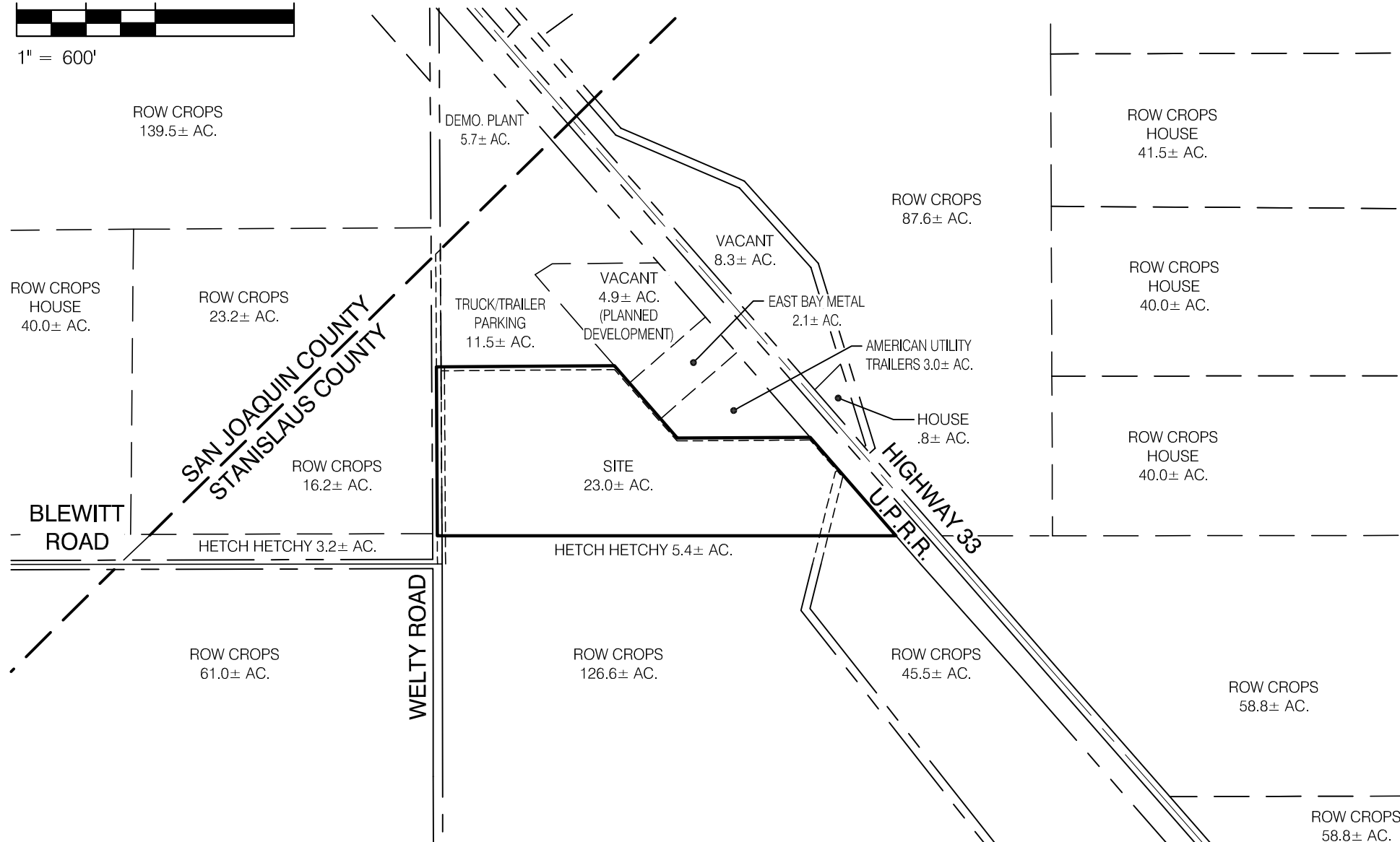
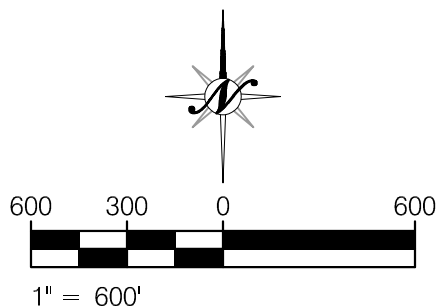
*ACREAGE MAP*

**LEGEND**

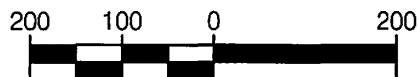
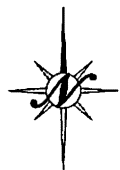
-  Project Site
-  Parcel
-  Acres
-  Highway
-  Canal
-  Street
-  Parcels



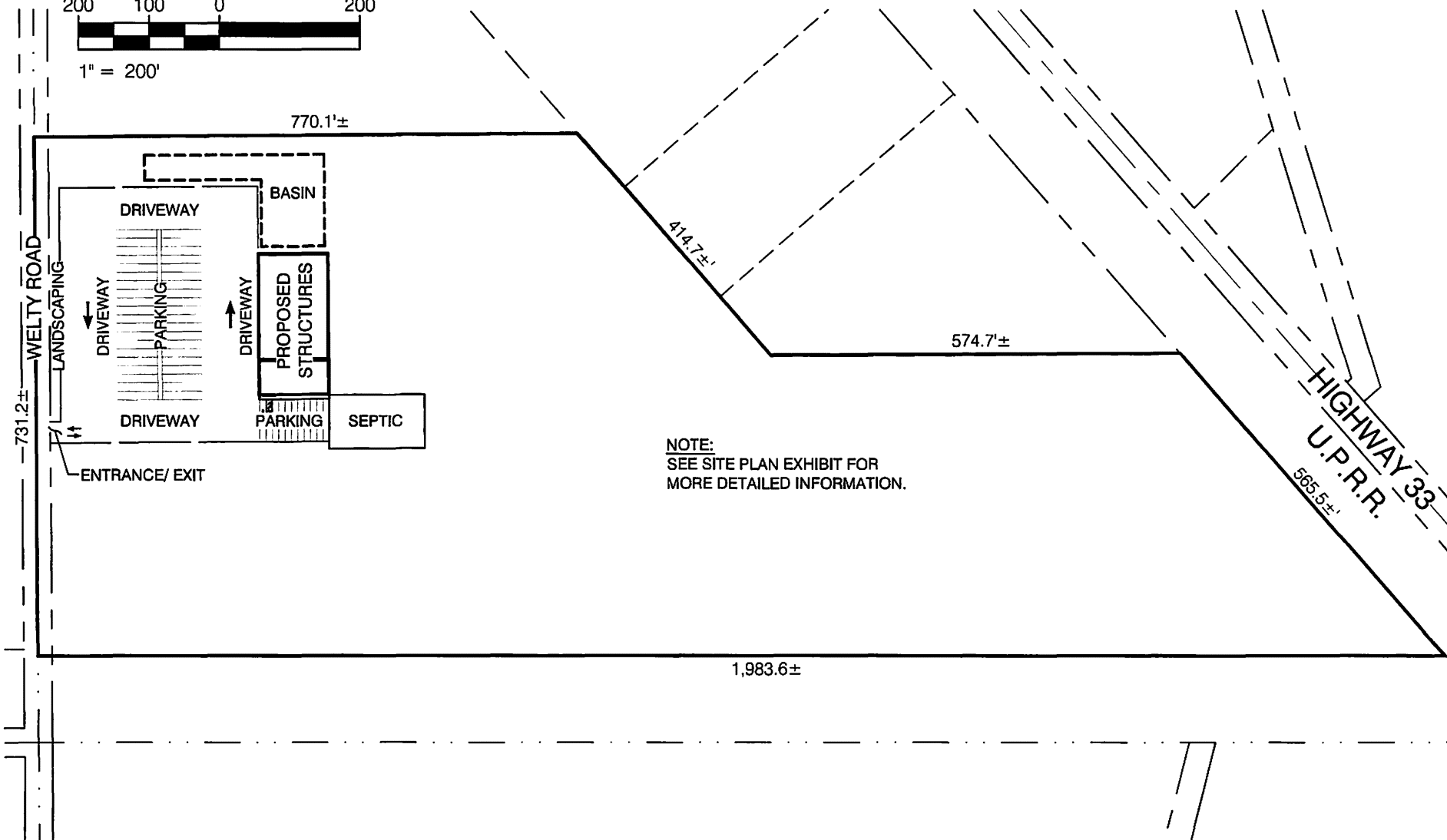
# AREA PLAN FOR ATWAL PROPERTIES STANISLAUS COUNTY, CALIFORNIA



# PLOT PLAN FOR ATWAL PROPERTIES STANISLAUS COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

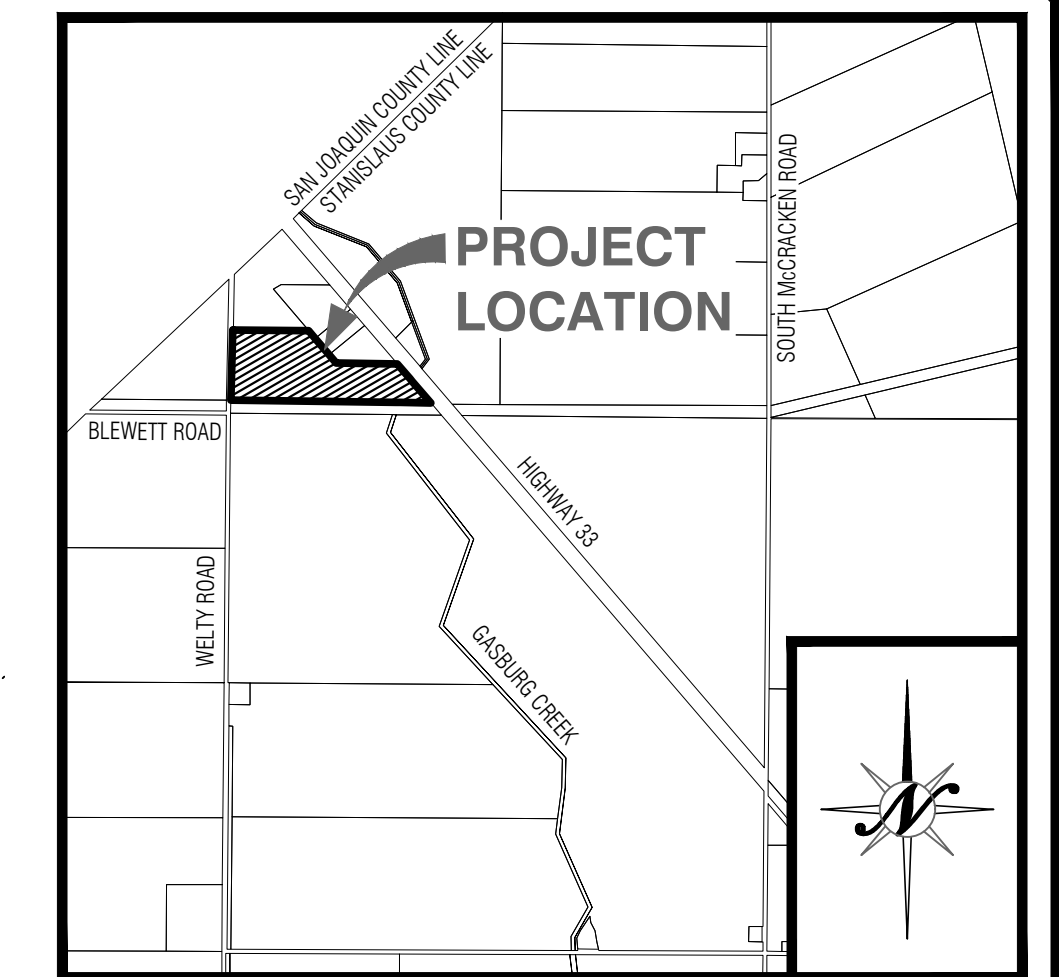
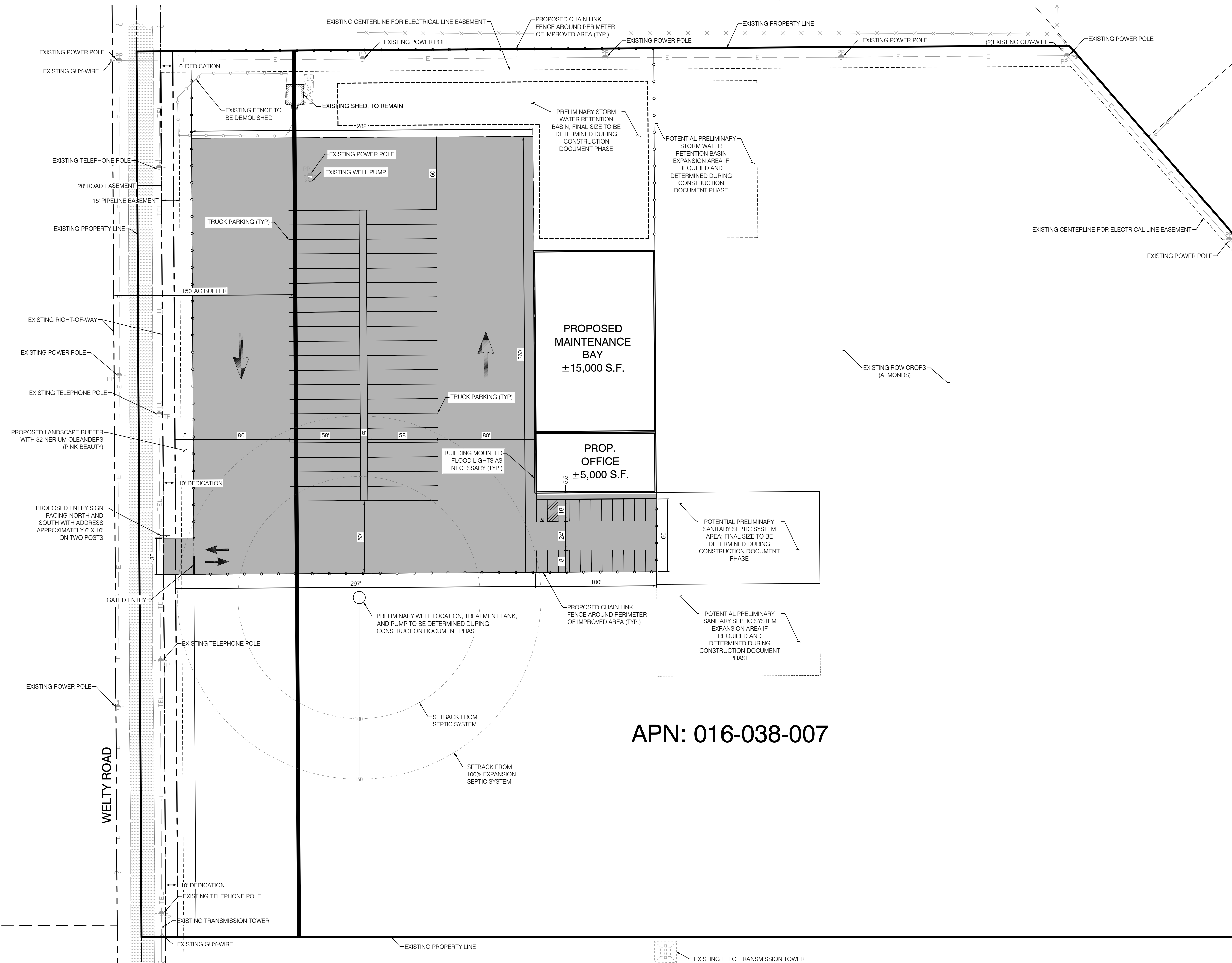


1" = 200'



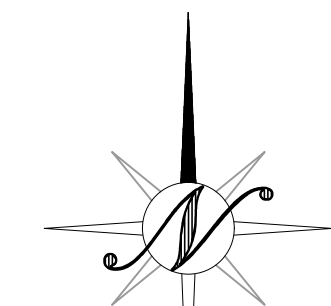
NOTE:  
SEE SITE PLAN EXHIBIT FOR  
MORE DETAILED INFORMATION.

# SITE PLAN FOR ATWAL PROPERTIES STANISLAUS COUNTY, CALIFORNIA



### VICINITY MAP

NTS



## PARKING TABLE

OFFICE PARKING:  
20 STANDARD 9' X 18' SPACES, 1 VAN ACCESSIBLE SPACE

TRAILER PARKING:  
40 12' X 58' OUTSIDE SPACES, 10 INSIDE SPACES

## LAND DESIGNATION

EXISTING ZONING/ GENERAL PLAN:  
AGRICULTURE

PROPOSED ZONING/ GENERAL PLAN:  
PLANNED DEVELOPMENT

### HATCH LEGEND



**PREPARED FOR**

CLIENT:  
KOMAL ATWAL  
3701 W LINNE ROAD  
TRACY, CA 95304  
T: (209) 298-0313

CONTACT:  
KOMAL ATWAL

## PROJECT LOCATION

APN: 016-038-007  
VERNALIS, CA 95385

[illegible]

## CONCEPTUAL TRUCKING FACILITY

**VERNALIS, AIWAL PROPERTIES**  
**CALIFORNIA**

*North Star*  
**Engineering Group, Inc.**  
• CIVIL ENGINEERING • SURVEYING • PLANNING •  
620 12th Street  
Modesto, CA 95304  
(209) 524-3525 Phone (209) 524-3528 Fax

B #:	21-2837
TE:	09/03/2024
ALE:	AS SHOWN
AWN:	NJM/ PMH
SIGN:	PMH
K'D:	JPE

SHEET  
NUMBER

## EX1.1

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ATWAL PROPERTY  
APN 016-038-007  
CONCEPTUAL MAINTENANCE BUILDING





ATWAL PROPERTIES  
APN 016-038-007  
CONCEPTUAL OFFICE BUILDING



Google Earth

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## CENTRAL CALIFORNIA INFORMATION CENTER

*California Historical Resources Information System*

Department of Anthropology – California State University, Stanislaus

One University Circle, Turlock, California 95382

(209) 667-3307

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*Alpine, Calaveras, Mariposa, Merced, San Joaquin, Stanislaus & Tuolumne Counties*

**Date:** 12/6/2023

**Records Search File #:** 12737N

**Project:** Atwal Properties APN 016-038-007

SW ¼ Section 35, T3S R6E

**Requested by:**

Pamela Hurban, Assistant Planner

NorthStar Engineering Group, Inc.

620 12<sup>th</sup> Street

Modesto, CA 95354

[phurban@nseng.net](mailto:phurban@nseng.net)

**On behalf of:**

Komal Atwal

Atwal Properties

3701 W. Linne Road

Tracy, CA 95304

209-298-0313

**Invoice to:** [komal.atwal@gmail.com](mailto:komal.atwal@gmail.com)

We have conducted a non-confidential extended records search as per your request for the above-referenced project area located on portions of the Solyo and Vernalis USGS 7.5-minute quadrangle maps in Stanislaus County.

Search of our files includes review of our maps for the specific project area and the immediate vicinity of the project area, and review of the following:

National Register of Historic Places (NRHP)

California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR)

*California Inventory of Historic Resources* (1976)

*California Historical Landmarks*

California Points of Historical Interest listing

Office of Historic Preservation Built Environment Resource Directory (BERD) and the

Archaeological Resources Directory (ARD)

*Survey of Surveys* (1989)

Caltrans State and Local Bridges Inventory

General Land Office Plats

Other pertinent historic data available at the CCAIC for each specific county

The following details the results of the records search:

**Prehistoric or historic resources within the project area:**

- There are no formally recorded prehistoric or historic archaeological resources or historic

buildings within the project area.

- There is a segment of one recorded historic structure, Lateral No. 4 North (P-50-001898), referenced with a National Register of Historic Places status rating of "6Z", found ineligible for the National Register of Historic Places, the California Register of Historical Resources, or local designation through survey evaluation.
- The General Land Office survey plat for T3S R6E (dated 1860) shows the west ½ of Section 35 divided onto two 160-acre parcels. The eastern half of Section 35 is within the historic Mexican land grant of Rancho El Pescadero Grimes et al. No other historic features are referenced.
- The Official Map of the County of Stanislaus, California (1906) shows J. Ohm as the landowner in the SW ¼ Section 35, T3S R6E
- The 1915 edition of the Vernalis USGS quadrangle shows the alignment of Welty Road on the west, the route of Lateral No. 4 North, and the Southern Pacific Railroad on the east.
- The 1953 edition of the Vernalis USGS quadrangle shows a building in the northwest corner of the project area that would be 70 years in age (or older). We have no further information on file regarding this possible historical resource.

**Prehistoric or historic resources within the immediate vicinity of the project area:**

- There are no formally recorded prehistoric or historic archaeological resources.
- The 1915 edition of the Vernalis USGS quadrangle shows buildings north of the project area possibly associated with the Ohm railroad siding (no further data on file regarding these possible historic buildings).
- The San Joaquin Pipelines Nos. 1 & 2 (segments of the Hetch Hetchy Aqueduct, primarily underground) south of the project have been recorded as P-50-000074, and the Southern Pacific Railroad to the east has been recorded elsewhere in Stanislaus County as P-50-000001.

**Resources that are known to have value to local cultural groups:** None has been formally reported to the Information Center.

**Previous investigations within the project area:** None has been formally reported to the Information Center.

**Recommendations/Comments:**

Please be advised that a historical resource is defined as a building, structure, object, prehistoric or historic archaeological site, or district possessing physical evidence of human activities over

45 years old. Since the project area has not been subject to previous investigations, there may be unidentified features involved in your project that are 45 years or older and considered as historical resources requiring further study and evaluation by a qualified professional of the appropriate discipline.

If the current project does not include ground disturbance, further study for archaeological resources is not recommended at this time. If ground disturbance is considered a part of the current project, we recommend further review for the possibility of identifying prehistoric or historic-era archaeological resources.

If the proposed project contains buildings or structures that meet the minimum age requirement (45 years in age or older) it is recommended that the resource/s be assessed by a professional familiar with architecture and history of the county. Review of the available historic building/structure data has included only those sources listed above and should not be considered comprehensive.

If at any time you might require the services of a qualified professional the Statewide Referral List for Historical Resources Consultants is posted for your use on the internet at <http://chrisinfo.org>

If archaeological resources are encountered during project-related activities, work should be temporarily halted in the vicinity of the discovered materials and workers should avoid altering the materials and their context until a qualified professional archaeologist has evaluated the situation and provided appropriate recommendations. Project personnel should not collect cultural resources.

If human remains are discovered, California Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5 requires you to protect the discovery and notify the county coroner, who will determine if the find is Native American. If the remains are recognized as Native American, the coroner shall then notify the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC). California Public Resources Code Section 5097.98 authorizes the NAHC to appoint a Most Likely Descendant (MLD) who will make recommendations for the treatment of the discovery.

Due to processing delays and other factors, not all of the historical resource reports and resource records that have been submitted to the State Office of Historic Preservation are available via this records search. Additional information may be available through the federal, state, and local agencies that produced or paid for historical resource management work in the search area. Additionally, Native American tribes have historical resource information not in the CHRIS Inventory, and you should contact the California Native American Heritage Commission for information on local/regional tribal contacts.

The California Office of Historic Preservation (OHP) contracts with the California Historical Resources Information System's (CHRIS) regional Information Centers (ICs) to maintain information in the CHRIS inventory and make it available to local, state, and federal agencies, cultural resource professionals, Native American tribes, researchers, and the public. Recommendations made by IC coordinators or their staff regarding the interpretation and

application of this information are advisory only. Such recommendations do not necessarily represent the evaluation or opinion of the State Historic Preservation Officer in carrying out the OHP's regulatory authority under federal and state law.

We thank you for contacting this office regarding historical resource preservation. Please let us know when we can be of further service. Thank you for sending the signed **Access Agreement Short Form**.

**Note:** Billing will be transmitted separately via email from the Financial Services office (\$150.00), payable within 60 days of receipt of the invoice.

**If you wish to include payment by Credit Card, you must wait to receive the official invoice from Financial Services so that you can reference the CMP # (Invoice Number), and then contact the link below:**

<https://commerce.cashnet.com/ANTHROPOLOGY>

Sincerely,

*E. A. Greathouse*

E. A. Greathouse, Coordinator  
Central California Information Center  
California Historical Resources Information System

\* Invoice Request sent to: ARBilling@csustan.edu, CSU Stanislaus Financial Services