



Jared Blumenfeld
Secretary for
Environmental Protection



Department of Toxic Substances Control

Meredith Williams, Ph.D., Director
8800 Cal Center Drive
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Gavin Newsom
Governor

March 28, 2022

Ms. Casey Lauderdale
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Planning and Development Department
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DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT FOR WEST AREA NEIGHBORHOODS
SPECIFIC PLAN – DATED FEBRUARY 2022 (STATE CLEARINGHOUSE NUMBER:
2019069117)

Dear Ms. Lauderdale:

The Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) received a Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the West Area Neighborhoods Specific Plan (Project). The Lead Agency is receiving this notice from DTSC because the Project includes one or more of the following: groundbreaking activities, work in close proximity to a roadway, work in presence of site buildings that may require demolition or modifications, importation of backfill soil, and/or work on or in close proximity to an agricultural or former agricultural site.

Additionally, the EIR lists three DTSC sites within Section 3.8, Hazards and Hazardous Materials, that include West Shields Elementary School, Golden State Ranch Property, and Parc West Development. The West Shields Elementary School and Golden State Ranch Property are DTSC school sites with statuses of No Further Action and No Action Required, respectively. After performing a review, DTSC believes that the Parc West Development is not a DTSC site, but a Project for which DTSC provided comments on the associated EIR in a letter dated August 12, 2020. DTSC believes that the Parc West Development was erroneously listed in place of the [Westlake Proposed 430 Acre Development](#) (Westlake), which is discussed further into the Hazards and Hazardous Materials section of the Project's EIR.

Westlake is a DTSC Site with a terminated Voluntary Cleanup Agreement (VCA) and remains a potential concern. "Phase 1 Environmental Site Assessment Update,

Proposed Westlake Village, Shields, Grantland, & Garfield Avenues, Fresno, California 93723,” (Phase 1) prepared by Krazan & Associates, Inc., and dated December 13, 2011, listed site development issues that included an approximately 10,000-gallon diesel fuel aboveground storage tank (AST), a liquid fertilizer AST, and two empty fertilizer ASTs. DTSC recommends that any parties interested in developing the Westlake property enter a VCA with DTSC in order to assure that any contaminants of potential concern are addressed.

DTSC recommends that the following issues be evaluated in the Hazards and Hazardous Materials section of the EIR:

1. The EIR should acknowledge the potential for historic or future activities on or near the project site to result in the release of hazardous wastes/substances on the project site. In instances in which releases have occurred or may occur, further studies should be carried out to delineate the nature and extent of the contamination, and the potential threat to public health and/or the environment should be evaluated. The EIR should also identify the mechanism(s) to initiate any required investigation and/or remediation and the government agency who will be responsible for providing appropriate regulatory oversight.
2. Refiners in the United States started adding lead compounds to gasoline in the 1920s in order to boost octane levels and improve engine performance. This practice did not officially end until 1992 when lead was banned as a fuel additive in California. Tailpipe emissions from automobiles using leaded gasoline contained lead and resulted in aerially deposited lead (ADL) being deposited in and along roadways throughout the state. ADL-contaminated soils still exist along roadsides and medians and can also be found underneath some existing road surfaces due to past construction activities. Due to the potential for ADL-contaminated soil DTSC, recommends collecting soil samples for lead analysis prior to performing any intrusive activities for the project described in the EIR.
3. If buildings or other structures are to be demolished on any project sites included in the proposed project, surveys should be conducted for the presence of lead-based paints or products, mercury, asbestos containing materials, and polychlorinated biphenyl caulk. Removal, demolition and disposal of any of the above-mentioned chemicals should be conducted in compliance with California environmental regulations and policies. In addition, sampling near current and/or former buildings should be conducted in accordance with DTSC’s 2006 [Interim Guidance Evaluation of School Sites with Potential Contamination from Lead Based Paint, Termiticides, and Electrical Transformers.](#)

4. If any projects initiated as part of the proposed project require the importation of soil to backfill any excavated areas, proper sampling should be conducted to ensure that the imported soil is free of contamination. DTSC recommends the imported materials be characterized according to [DTSC's 2001 Information Advisory Clean Imported Fill Material](#).
5. Any sites included as part of the proposed project that have been used for agricultural, weed abatement or related activities, proper investigation for organochlorinated pesticides should be discussed in the EIR. DTSC recommends the current and former agricultural lands be evaluated in accordance with DTSC's 2008 [Interim Guidance for Sampling Agricultural Properties \(Third Revision\)](#).

DTSC appreciates the opportunity to comment on the EIR. Should you need any assistance with an environmental investigation, please visit DTSC's [Site Mitigation and Restoration Program](#) page to apply for lead agency oversight. Additional information regarding voluntary agreements with DTSC can be found at [DTSC's Brownfield website](#).

If you have any questions, please contact me at (916) 255-3710 or via email at Gavin.McCreary@dtsc.ca.gov.

Sincerely,



Gavin McCreary
Project Manager
Site Evaluation and Remediation Unit
Site Mitigation and Restoration Program
Department of Toxic Substances Control

cc: (via email)

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